

Paris street, rainy day
by gustave caillebotte
and harmony in red
by henri matiss...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gustave Caillebotte and Henri Matisse were two of the most well-renowned French painters of the 19th century. Though the two existed in the same period, Caillebotte and Matisse employed different artistic styles which were Impressionism for Caillebotte while Matisse focused more on Fauvism. Generally, Caillebotte's Paris Street, Rainy Day centered on the realness of the subject combined with the traditional formal aspects of art while Matisse's Harmony in Red used a realistic object but the meaning completely changes through the employment of the vivid colors and abstraction.

Paris Street, Rainy Day (seen on p. 102 of A World of Art by Sayre) was one of Gustave Caillebotte's most famous artwork. Because of Caillebotte advocacy for impressionism, most of his paintings represented the ordinary street scene of the metropolitan Paris " usually from a middle class viewpoint" thus gained him the title, " Urban Impressionist." This painting was painted in 1887, which was in time for the unveiling of the newly revitalized modern facade of Paris. Caillebotte illustrated the " the grid-like arrangement of the space and the radial frames of the umbrellas evoke the arterial structure of this new road system" (Artfactory. com, 2006, " Perspective Drawing 11").

In terms of space, the painting made use of atmospheric and linear perspective wherein both produced height, width and depth for the whole painting. The play with the value of colors of blue and gray created the illusion of distance between foreground, middle ground and background that highlighted the scaling of the infrastructures with the people. Also, the balanced composition of shapes of the buildings and forms of the Parisians demonstrated a geometric order that captures the attention of the viewer

<https://assignbuster.com/paris-street-rainy-day-by-gustave-caillebotte-and-harmony-in-red-by-henri-matisse-essay-sample/>

because it gives a feeling that the viewer is part of the picture. The horizontal plane of the cobblestone road intersected with the vertical line of the lamp post which created the vanishing point at the center. More so, the contrast of colors between the light yellow background and the bold red foreground added to the illusion of depth and distance. In addition, the classic lines of the buildings though distorted produced a “ wide-angle view that reflects the sweeping modernity of Paris” (Art Institute of Chicago, 2004, “ Gustave Caillebotte”).

Meanwhile, in Henri Matisse’s painting of Harmony in Red (seen on p. 109 of A World of Art by Sayre), the focal point that quickly attracts the viewer is its striking dominant red background which is the main characteristic of Fauvism – a main influence of Matisse. The subject and the overall appearance of the painting seemed a product of someone’s imagination. It showed a woman preparing or setting the table which is an ordinary domestic activity but the incorporation of bold colors and expressive lines produced something that is extraordinary. The outline and the contour lines used to make the form and shapes of the objects and the woman did not create any illusion of distance. Because of this, the painting lacked depth that made it looked flat.

More so, the accents of blue flowers and vines with black lining on the wall and the table produced unrealistic scaling of the objects because it engulfed the entire space that made the other elements seemed insignificant.

However, these accents were treated with expressive lines to intensify the melodramatic and whimsical theme of the painting. There is no proportion and balance among the elements used in the painting such as the chair with <https://assignbuster.com/paris-street-rainy-day-by-gustave-caillebotte-and-harmony-in-red-by-henri-matisse-essay-sample/>

the table in the foreground and the trees wherein the table visually disappears because of the lack of classical lines while the trees and the mountains at the background appeared monotonous due to the absence of details. The intensity of the colors was the element that unified all other despite their physical differences. It can be surmised that Harmony in Red is the harmonious relationship of diverse and untraditional elements.

References

Artfactory. com. (2006). *Perspective Drawing 11*. Retrieved July 23, 2008 from, http://artyfactory.com/perspective_drawing/perspective_11.htm

Art Institute of Chicago. (August 2004). *Gustave Caillebotte*. Retrieved July 23, 2008 from, http://www.artic.edu/artaccess/AA_Impressionist/pages/IMP_4.shtml