



Comparative study

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This comparative study focuses on analyzing Van Gogh and Niki Johnson's; *Starry Night*, *Sunflowers*, *Hills & Valleys*, and *God & Country*. Through the use of color, design and meaning. I will be comparing not only the artist to each other but also their art work.

Evaluation of Cultural Significance of van Gogh

van Gogh was a Post-Impressionist painter known for the emotion and color that went into his art works. Van Gogh used matching colors and short brush strokes that were very controlled and concentrated in his paintings. This would create a sketch like painting. While Van Gogh lived in Paris he changed the style that he preferred to paint with from controlled short brushstrokes to more looser brush strokes. This style became Post-Impressionism. The Post-Impressionism style has more of a reality versus fantasy feeling. The way that van Gogh chose his colors through his mental state and the colors he saw while he was painting. He would use blues and darker colors when he was feeling distressed or melancholy. He used art as a way to keep him grounded and emotionally stable. The Post-Impressionist movement was to changed the smooth realistic style to a more whimsical dream like painting and make it a window into artists minds. This style influenced future art movements and the people that joined the Post-Impressionists.

Interpretation of function and Purpose

Colors like yellow are used to create exuberant feeling. Darker colors like black blue are used to convey a melancholy feeling.

Time plays a factor as this was the view he saw at night

The bright lights contrasts the dark city and convey a sense of hope through dark times.

The work takes advantage of the contrast between the dark and light creating a balance through color.



There is a hidden religious connection as the church stands out in from the smaller less detailed

The Starry Night by Vincent van Gogh
Oil on canvas, 73.7 x 92.1 cm

Very short and controlled brush strokes, Paint is not layered but it is placed side by side creating a gradient and creating the allusion of mixed colors



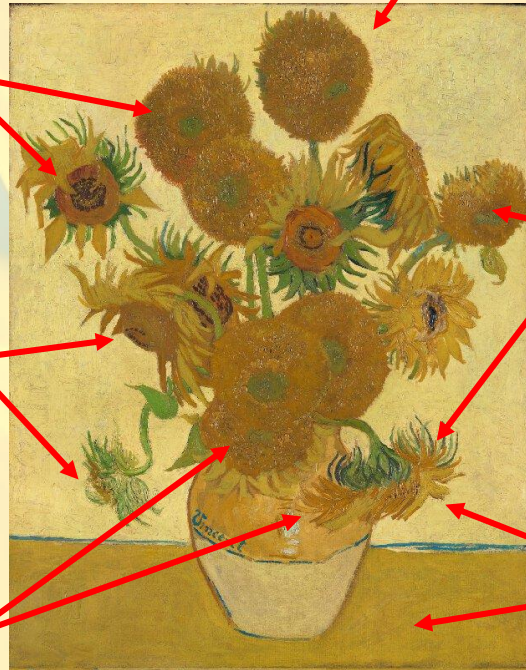
Sunflowers by Vincent van Gogh oil on canvas, 95 cm x 73 cm

Van Gogh uses dull hues of yellows and orange through the whole painting.

The bright yellow gives off a feeling of joy and new life lying next to the darker yellow creates a scene of death and loss

Each phase of the flowers represents a faze in life. A new flower symbolizing new life all the way to the wilted flower symbolizing death

The closeness in proximity between the dying and living expresses the idea that death can happen at any moment



A wilted and dead flower is a symbol of death and an emblem of someone close to van Gogh that had just passes

The context between the lighter wall and dark table give the piece balance

Interpretation of Function and Purpose

He expressed emotions of sadness, happiness through the use of blues and yellows and the movement. He used the short sketch like brush strokes to easily create the idea that the painting was moving, as seen in his painting “Starry Night”.



Analysis of Formal Qualities of van Gogh



He played with the sense of space and texture in his paintings. The way he textured the paintings was through his brush strokes and him overlapping the paint and creating depth, this was similar to his painting “Sunflowers”. The painting uses many layers of colors to created the effect of petals overlapping

Van Gogh was inspired by the reflection of color in different lighting. The viewpoint gave him the ability to create balance not only in the objects in his paintings but in the colors. He would create balance through size of shapes such as the building and moons and through color like the blue and yellows or browns and yellows.

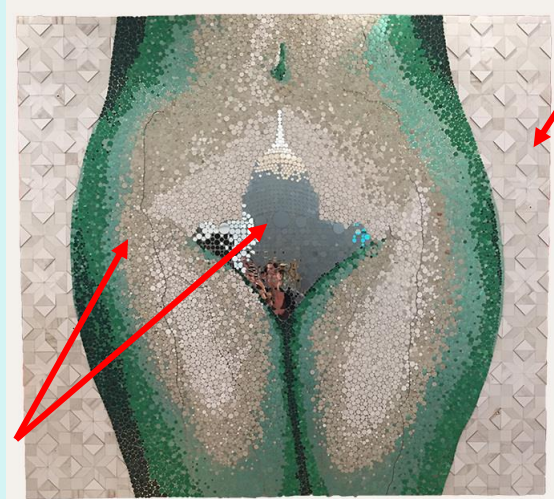
Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Niki Johnson

Niki Johnson is an artist from Milwaukee who was raised in New Mexico. She has lived all over the United States. Johnson does not stick to only one material. She uses materials that directly are affected or help play a roll in telling the story behind her pieces. The mediums she uses range from glass to quilting. Her ideas for her projects comes from everyday things that emotionally move her. Johnson's work are inspired by the culture of her surroundings. Most of her recent work's subject is based around political power. Johnson uses her art to voice her opinion rather than expressing them through writing.

Interpretation of Function and Purpose

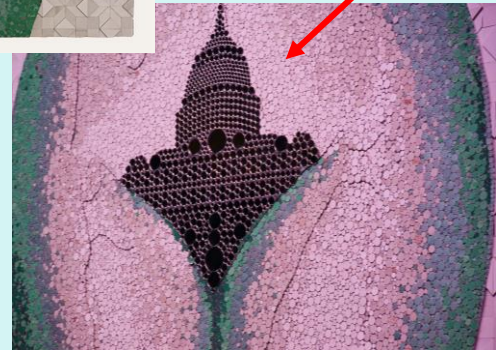
This piece is making a statement about how the government tries to control women's rights over their own bodies.

The work contrasts the color of the aluminum signs with mirror like section formed into the shape of a capital government building.



The hips represent a woman's body and the power that she has over her own self.

The mirrors reflect the image of the person looking into it. Mirrors compare someone's image of themselves opposed to what the government views are.



Hills & Valleys Signage from Planned Parenthood Wisconsin Clinics defunded under the Walker administration, aluminum, mirror, wood, 8' x 8'

God & Country Altered commemorative plates, 72" diameter

The large open white space represents the missing church in the plan creating a feeling of emptiness.

The silhouette of the missing church but the name of the church remains keeping the religious connections.



This piece is making a statement about the loss of churches and religion in our world.

The dark pattern on the outside of the plate frames the piece and helps pull your attention to the center of the plate.

Interpretation of Function and Purpose

Analysis of Formal Qualities of Niki Johnson

Johnson makes big and bold choices in her work from the subject matter all the way to the materials. Her art makes a stand for political, social and religious issues. Her style is similar to found object mixed media and fabrication. Johnson's work has powerful connections to real world problems. It also plays with the viewer's emotions and thoughts on the subject at hand.. She is inspired by current events, and uses her feeling in her work. She wants people to create their own opinions of the work and what it means.



In her work she created balance between color though using small amounts of very dark colors mixed with large amounts of and space created within her works. Johnson makes it so the piece draws the viewer's eyes to the whole peace and then to a specific area. Similar to “ Old and Country”. The longer you look at the plate you come to realize that some thing is missing from the plate.

Comparing Artistic Style

Van Gogh

- Used the colors such as blues and yellows to play with emotions
- Was a painter
- Movement is found in his backgrounds
- Short sketch like brush strokes
- Paints landscapes and still lifes

Similarities

- Both used different life experience to influence their work..
- Wanted people to question the piece
- Both create a textured look by the use of objects with moments.

Johnson

- Focuses on political and social issues
- Uses of multiple materials
- Tries to influence people's opinions
- Creates new pieces of art by changing and manipulating something premade

Comparing Material and Conceptual ideas

van Gogh

- used a lot of living and natural still life such as flowers or landscapes
- Recreates images that he has seen
- Was known for the use of oil paints

Similarities

- The use of churches
- Had a theme of life and religion and how religion shapes people's images and the way they see the world.
- The uses of different shapes formed together to make another shape.

Johnson

- The materials used literally reflect the message that's trying to be conveyed
- Materials connect to the subject but can be viewed as offensive
- Mixed materials, metal, yarn, paint.

Comparing Cultural Context

Johnson

- Art is out front about the issues it's expressing
- The issues that everyone is seeing and talking about like our governmental policies.
- Make a stance on local problems

Similarities

- Nature and political issues around them played a role in their pieces

van Gogh

- Uses the issues such as death, mental issues
- that his painting are connect to is not as obvious
- Creates things that are seen everyday and could be found outside of a window

Comparing Function and Purpose

van Gogh

- Contrasts light and dark colors to create a balanced
- Used still lifes
- Creates his own perspective on an everyday view

Johnson

- Balance is created through the objects
- To create a positive or negative attitude, a stance that the audience might have based on the work

Similarities

- Uses the elements in the pieces like lines to make swirls and circles to make the hips of a women

Comparing use of Emotion

van Gogh

- The emotion created through color and movement
- Emotions created in the paintings is reflected in the way the artist was feeling

Similarities

- All wanted to create an emotion within the audience
- Emotion created is subjective to the viewer

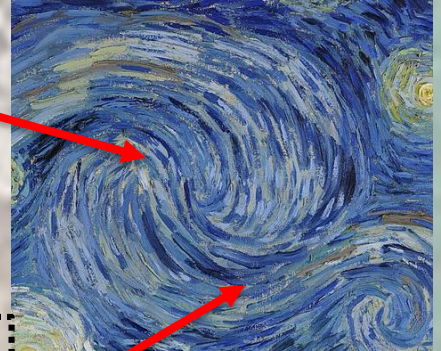
Johnson

- Emotion created by the use of materials like hills and valleys she used plan parent hood sings to create a piece to support their mission.
- Development on the viewer the emotion should be discussed of understanding of the issue at hand
- Political issues of audience influence sadness or anger or confusion

Comparing Details



The use of repetition into of small shapes to create a larger image.



Curved lines create a mystical always moving. Similar to the way circles are continues and always moving.

The mix of light an dark colors next to each other to create a shadow or a new color from farther away



A similarity is the use of buildings that have power such as churches or governmental building. An example of people having power over other



Formal Introduction to own work

I created the first work “Untitled 1”, using the artist van Gogh as an inspiration. I created a painting that represents how through darkness there is always a light. This was represented through the dark insides of the flower and the sky, and the bright yellows for the pedals and the moon.



For the second piece titled “Hidden Lies” I wanted to play off the idea on how people hide behind masks to make themselves look better and how our government uses their power to manipulate people to get the things they want.

Comparing and Contrasting Own Artistic styles to van Gogh

My work



- Inspired by past experiences of being shut out and shoved into a dark place yet I found light within the situation.
- Balance created by size of the moon and the sunflowers
- Balance between whimsical sky and realistic flowers

Similarities

- Layered similar colors next to each other to blend into another color
- Use of the Post-Impressionism style
- Use of texture within the sky and the flower pedals.

van Gogh

- van Gogh was inspired by the reflection of color in different lighting.
- Mental wellbeing and lighting affected color choice
- Bright colors balance out the dark figures
- Very detailed
- Hidden meanings



Comparing and Contrasting Own Artistic styles to Niki Johnson

My work

- inspired by the idea of hiding behind lies to fit on
- Has different interpretations, the piece itself is very simply viewers could see it as just a landscape while I would see it as people trying to cover up the bad
- has a balance between light and drack colors
- Painting with a touch of found objects



Similarities

- Simple color scheme of blues and silvers
- Create a focal point in a large piece
- Has a realistic feel through the objects that are seen everyday
- The use of reflection to create symbol. When you look into a mirror you see yourself, shows how u are apart of art work

Johnson

- Works are inspired by controversial issues and current events that have an impact
- mixed media
- Small detail to make a larger image/ impact
- Manipulates premade objects to create a new piece
- Has religious and politics are subjects of the work



Comparing and contrasting own uses of emotions to van Gogh

Similarities in emotions

My work

- Has both a positive and negative feeling
- I replaces the dark (anger, depression) city with bright and light (joyful positive) sunflowers.
- No large dark figure to balance out the large bright sun.



Van Gogh

- Work expresses the artist feeling
 - Expressed sadness, exhausted with a glimpse of joy(the bright moon)
 - Brush strokes create a mystical/ whimsical dream like state
- Uses of past traumas or dark feeling
 - Use of movement through he swirls to represent movement of time



Comparing and contrasting own uses of emotions to Niki Johnson



My work

- Uses of the generic city land scape makes anyone feel connected to the piece
- No specific reference to politics
- Symbol of the city and what the silver dots are universal



Johnson

- Had a target audience of adults and people with political power
- Emotion that views have is unknown but most people are taken a back out blunt the subjects/ ideas of the work
- Material has a direct connection to the meaning
- Mirrors reflect images of what others see and how they interact in the piece

Similarities

- Uses simple shapes like circles to create new shapes
- Wants anyone to feel a connection personally because it make eh work more interactive