

Introduction



We Are Making a New World by Paul Nash

"We are Making a New World." n.d. Imperial War Museums. Accessed January 26, 2023. <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/20070>.

Although these artists come from very different cultural background, these pieces are related through a common theme. Francisco Goya and Paul Nash were both artists that painted the atrocities that occurred during wartime, and these themes are evident in their artwork.

Comparative Study By Elena Zippel

Francisco Goya created The Third of May 1808 in a response to a massacre that occurred in Spain on that date. The massacre took place a day after a Spanish revolt against Napoleon's armies. Goya started work on this piece after Napoleon's army left Spain. This piece was done in oil on canvas, and was commissioned by the king of Spain after Napoleon's army had left. Similarly, Paul Nash was a War artist during the first 2 World Wars, from the United Kingdom. Nash created "We are Making a New World" in 1918 during the first World War and in it displays a landscape of total destruction, The title is meant to mock the purpose of war, and uses that to further emphasize the destruction that comes with it. A year later, in 1919, Nash created "The Menin Road" which also displays a landscape of desolation and destruction during wartime. Similar to the purpose of Goya's "Third of May, 1808" these pieces were commissioned by the UK government.



The Menin Road by Paul Nash

"The Menin Road." n.d. Imperial War Museums. Accessed January 26, 2023. <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/20087>.



The Third of May 1808 by Francisco Goya

Zappella, Christine. n.d. "Goya, Third of May, 1808 [article] | Spain." Khan Academy. Accessed January 26, 2023. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/romanticism/romanticism-in-spain/a/goya-third-of-may-1808>.

Evaluation of Cultural Context: Francis Goya

Francis Goya was a Spanish painter born in 1746 in Madrid, Spain. Goya reached his maturity as a painter during Charles IV's rule throughout the French Revolution. Charles IV's incompetence led to a time of political weakness and corruption in Spain, which eventually resulted in Napoleon's invasion of Spain. Under the new ruler, Goya was able to grow and thrive in his life as a painter, and received many high honors. Although he had served the French ruler, after the French left Spain Goya was reinstated in his role as Court painter and was responsible for memorializing the events that had occurred when his country was under French Rule. It was at this time when he was given instructions from the new king to paint the massacre of Spanish rebels that occurred on May 2nd 1808.



The Third of May 1808 by Francisco Goya

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We can see how the emphasis that Goya has in this painting is the civilians. He portrays the one in the center dressed completely in white with his hands up in order to convey innocence to the viewer, and to emphasize the soldiers brutality.

The Third of May by Francisco Goya has a very unique cultural context. Goya's country, Spain, at the time the work was created was still in shock from the devastation of Napoleon's army at the massacre that occurred on the third of May. The massacre was Napoleon's army's response to a Spanish rebellion that occurred on May 2nd. The Spanish Rebels had become so uncontrolled it took hours for Napoleon's army to have control over the people again. After Napoleon's army had regained control of the people, they gathered the Spanish rebels and massacred them in the street. This painting by Goya depicts that massacre, with the subject of the painting being the Spanish rebels, and the army with their backs turned away from the viewer.

Evaluation of Cultural Context: Paul Nash



We Are Making a New World by Paul Nash

"The Menin Road" n.d. Imperial War Museums. Accessed January 26, 2023.
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/20067>.

Paul Nash was a British surrealist artist and war painter. He was born in 1889 and died in 1946. Nash attended art school but almost completely focused his subjects on landscapes rather than on figure, although in his war paintings the lack of figures makes the work significantly more compelling. This context can be seen in "The Menin Road" as well as "We are Making a New World". These paintings were created during WWI in response to the conflict.



We are Making a New World by Paul Nash

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When World War I broke out in 1914, many artists went to the battlefield with the soldiers to have the opportunity to spontaneously recreate the mess that they witnessed. At the beginning of the war, war artists under the employment of the UK government were expected to paint the war in a flattering and heroic manner, in order to encourage the US to join the war effort. This changed later on in the war, around when Nash was creating these works. Nash witnessed the destruction of the war around him and was outraged at the "waste of life". This fueled his creativity and led to the desolate, destroyed landscapes seen in these paintings.

Contrasting Cultural Context

While both of these works was created in response to a conflict, they differ in when they were created relative to the conflict. The Third of May, 1808, by Francis Goya, was completed in 1814. This was six years after the massacre occurred. This is unlike “We Are Making a New World” which was created during World War I, which was what it was in response to



On the contrary, to Francisco Goya’s “3rd of May, 1808”, Paul Nash’s “We are Making a New World” and “The Menin Road” were both created during the conflict that they were about (World War One). While Francisco Goya’s piece was created as a way to memorialize the victims and to reflect on the past, Paul Nash’s work was created as an anti war piece. This can be seen when looking at “We are Making a New World”.

The difference between when the works were created relative to when the conflict they were inspired by occurred when looking at the works. This can especially be seen in “We Are Making a New World” by Paul Nash. and “The Third of May, 1808” by Francisco Goya. Because Goya painted this work several years after the massacre occurred it was not intended to be seen as an anti-war piece. It is much more likely that the intention of this piece is for a memorial or reflection on the past then a call to action in the present. This can be seen with the innocent civilian in white as the subject of the painting, in the very center of the canvas.

This piece by Paul Nash uses many contrasting colors as well as dark, destroyed trees to show demonstrate the destruction of war time, therefore using the piece as an anti war painting. The title itself is ironic in the way that it has an optimistic tone to it. By contrasting this with the destroyed landscape, Paul Nash is attempting to draw attention to the long term effects of World War One., at the time that it was occurring. The way that Nash creates contrast throughout the entirety of the piece, including the contrast between title and the work itself, demonstrates how the work is a call to action to end the war.

Comparing Cultural Context

Another huge impact that cultural context had on Paul Nash and Francisco Goya's work was the art movement that they painted in and how it is reflected in their work. In this way there is a considerable difference between his work and Paul Nash's works. One of these differences is how they used color. While Francisco Goya's work mostly consists of neutral colors, including various shades of browns and blacks, Paul Nash's work often consists of more saturated colors as well as a much more diverse color palette. This differentiates the artists but they were both very inspired by the aesthetics of the movement that was taking place at the time. In this way, the cultural context of both Paul Nash and Francisco Goya had similar effects on their work, and can be seen in their pieces.

Another similarity between the cultural context of these two artists is the reason they created the work. Paul Nash created both "The Menin Road" as well as "We are Making a New World" because of the global events that were occurring at the time, as well as the destruction that he witnessed in World War I. This is similar to why Francisco Goya created "The Third of May, 1808". This painting was created after a tragedy that occurred in his country, during his lifetime (the massacre of Spanish Rebels on May 3rd 1808, by Napoleon's troops.)



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While these pieces have different aesthetics they are similar in the fact that they both reflect the art movement of their time.

Creating My Own Artwork



This piece is inspired by Paul Nash's "We Are Making a New World". In "We Are Making a New World" Nash reflects on a major conflict that is going on in the world: World War I. Through the title of the piece Nash describes how at the end of it all there would ultimately be "A New World". My artwork differs from Nash's piece because it reflects on society as a whole, rather than a specific time period or event. I placed a flowers in the center of a desolate and empty landscape in order to represent how humans have the ability to grow and thrive from conflict. I drew inspiration from the colors that Nash used in this piece, as well as the style in which he painted certain elements, particularly the trees and the ground



In this piece I drew inspiration from Francisco Goya, particularly his pieces "Senora Sabasa Garcia" and "The Third of May, 1808". In Goya's piece "Senora Sabasa Garcia", he positioned his subject in the center of the frame. I wanted my piece to be a modernized version of this piece. To do this I wore clothing of a similar color. Goya also portrays his subject sitting with her hands in her lap. I tried to copy the position that she was sitting in as well as the facial expression in order to create a more modernized version of Francisco Goya's piece. My piece is similar to "The Third of May, 1808" in the colors as well as the dramatic dark background.



Material and Conceptual Significance

“The Third of May, 1808” by Francisco Goya, is oil on canvas. This is similar to “The Menin Road” as well as “We are Making a New World” by Paul Nash. Because Acrylic paints were not developed until the 1950’s, there were limited options for artists who wanted to create rich and opaque colors in their work.

Because of the time when these works were created, there were limited options for these artists when it came to paint materials they could use. While there have been developments in painting materials, it is evident that oil paints are both effective and stand the test of time.



By using oil paints in this piece, Goya creates rich and deep colors that are able to well reflect the overall message of this painting. The mood of this painting is violent and somber. This is primarily because of the martyr in white, which the light and the guns are both pointed at. The contrast between the dark background and the light shining on the next victim, further creates a violent mood in this painting.



Oil paints are significant because they have a unique flexibility and a greater depth of color. For an artist like Paul Nash, oil paints allowed him to achieve more prominent colors in his work. In “We are Making a New World” Nash uses very deep and rich colors. This can be seen in the deep greens of the ground as well as the rich browns and reds of the mountain.

Comparing and Contrasting Material and Conceptual Significance

The conceptual significance of these pieces are similar in the fact that they both have themes of war and destruction, and from that they both have violent and somber moods. While both Paul Nash and Francisco Goya have similar themes, they differ in the composition of the pieces, and the ways in which they express these themes. This stems from the fact that they belong to different art movements, and therefore must maintain the aesthetic of that time period, as well as the artist's personal style of expression.



While both Paul Nash and Francisco Goya used oil paint in the composition of these pieces, the ways in which they used them differ. Paul Nash uses very rich and opaque colors in "The Menin Road" as well as "We are Making a New World". This is different from Francisco Goya who, in "The Third of May, 1808" uses darker browns and blacks, as well as primarily neutral colors.



Comparing and Contrasting Material and Conceptual Significance

While there are significant similarities in the conceptual significance of these pieces there are also significant differences. This can be seen in the forms that the artists use in the pieces as well as the details. Paul Nash does not often use human figures in his piece, and instead directs the viewer's attention to the landscape. When he does paint humans, they are not the subject of the piece. He portrays a somber and violent mood, using a landscape of the aftermath of a battle. In addition to this, rather than using an extensive amount of detail in his work, there is a simplicity to his work that adds more attention to the total destruction of the war. This can especially be seen when looking at his piece "The Menin Road". In this work by Paul Nash, there is not much detail used, however in this piece he does depict humans. However, rather than making them the subject of the piece, they are portrayed as another element in the landscape. This is different than Francisco Goya, who often uses the human form as the subject of his work.



Section from Paul Nash "The Menin Road"



Section from Francisco Goya "The Third of May, 1808"

Differently from Paul Nash, Goya makes people the subject of the work. This can be seen in "The Third of May, 1808" when looking at the man in the white. As he is the only person wearing white, a color that is symbolic of not only innocence but also surrender, the viewer's eye is automatically drawn to him. This is accentuated by the lantern at the foot of the soldiers, as well as the soldiers guns, all of which draw the viewer's eye to him. By looking at this, it can be seen that the subject of the piece is the man in white. This is different from Paul Nash, who rarely makes the human form the subject of his work.

Comparing My Work with Paul Nash

Culture

While the cultural context between these two pieces is different in terms of setting, there are comparable elements of the culture behind these pieces. Both my piece and Nash's piece are about a conflict that is observed in the world. Nash's piece explores the first World War, while my piece explores the internal conflict that I have witnessed in many people, and how they grow from it. Although Paul Nash's piece explores the a major historical event, overall the cultural context of both of these pieces is similar because they both explore conflict that the artist witnessed and the result of it.

Function and Purpose

Although the function and purpose of these pieces might differ more than they relate, there are still similarities. Because both of these pieces are about the result of conflict, they have a similar intention behind them. In Nash's piece "We are Making a New World" his intention is to cause the viewer to reflect on the outcomes of the violence of World War I, and how that will "make a new world". My piece is about how, by going through a conflict, humans can grow. Overall, in both Paul Nash's artwork and my own, the function is to cause the viewer to reflect on a conflict and the result of it.

Formal Qualities

In both my piece and Paul Nash's piece, there is similar use of color and value. Paul Nash uses a varying range of green and brown hues in the ground as well as dark colors in order to make the ground appear as a desolate and decaying landscape. Similarly I use a varying range of blue and green colors for the same purpose. Both Paul Nash and I also similarly use darker values in the trees in order to make them appear as almost silhouettes against the mountains or clouds. Overall the way that Paul Nash and I use color in our pieces is comparative in the way that it helps to express the themes of the painting.



Interpretation of Function and Purpose

The purpose of these works by Paul Nash has changed over time. Originally, he was commissioned by the British government during World War I, to create these pieces. Originally, they were meant as a way to protest the war, and show the brutality of human nature. Overtime these pieces have become a way to memorialize and remember the devastation that occurred when they were created.



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Originally the purpose of these pieces were to serve as a way to share the devastation of World War I. At this time, war artists in the UK, including Paul Nash, were hired by the War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC). The official purpose of the WAAC was to create propaganda, and to promote the image of the UK abroad and locally. However, artists like Paul Nash found the purpose of their work to be recording the devastation of the war. This can be seen when looking at his piece "The Menin Road". The landscape is one of total destruction and, even years later, can show the wreckage of the war.

Similarly to Paul Nash, Francisco Goya was also commissioned by the government to create "The Third of May, 1808". This piece was commissioned by the Spanish government in 1814. Goya told the Spanish government that the purpose of this piece was to memorialize Spanish victory over the French, and to recognize "one of the most heroic actions of Spain against Napoleon". However, the function that it serves is not to celebrate, but to criticize the actions of humans who were complicit in the massacre of the Spanish citizens.



The brutality of the war is depicted very clearly in this piece. Francisco Goya's "The Third of May, 1808" continues to be a powerful anti-war piece, many years after the massacre occurred.

Comparing Function and Purpose

Violence and conflict can greatly influence artists, and inspire them to respond. Both Francisco Goya and Paul Nash created these works in response to a violent conflict. While Goya created "The Third of May, 1808" over a century before Paul Nash created "We are Making a New World", the function and purpose of these pieces is similar because they were both used to provoke thoughts in the viewer about a certain violent event that the artist lived through. Paul Nash uses the title of "We are Making a New World" to create irony in the way that it contrasts from the desolate landscape that is depicted in the work. Similarly, Francisco Goya contrasts the man in the white shirt with his hands up, to the violent scene around him, which contains many armed guards with their weapons pointed directly at him. By portraying the "next to die" with his hands up in a white shirt, Goya emphasizes the harmlessness of the victims of the massacre. By contrasting that with the obvious brutality of the officers, Goya similarly uses irony to provoke thoughts in the viewer about the violent conflict. In these pieces the artists both demonstrate the purpose of the artwork through the irony and contrast that they create in their work,



"The Third of May, 1808" Goya contrasts the man in white, holding his hands up, with the brutality of the armed officers surrounding him for the purpose of provoking the audience.



Similarly to Goya, Nash contrasts the title of the piece with the desolate landscape that he portrays for the purpose of provoking the viewer to think about the brutality of war and violence.

Contrasting Function and Purpose

While Francisco Goya and Paul Nash were both similarly commissioned by the government to create these pieces, they differ in the purpose that the government had in for the pieces. Francisco Goya's piece "The Third of May 1808" was commissioned by the Spanish Government for the purpose of remembering the Spanish victory over Napoleon and to memorialize, a brutal massacre that occurred in the nation's recent history. He portrayed a scene so brutal, not to celebrate the victory, but to criticize the nature of humans to resort to violence and how that lead to massacre. This is different than the function and purpose of Paul Nash's works "The Menin Road" and "We are Making a New World". Paul Nash was also commissioned by the government, but for a different purpose than Francisco Goya was. Paul Nash worked as a war artist during World War I, and was commissioned by the government to create these works at that time. These pieces were meant to cause the viewer to reflect on the brutality of war at the time that the event was happening,. This differs from Francisco Goya, whose work was meant to commemorate the event several years after it occurred. While the purpose of these works by Paul Nash is to reflect in the moment, the purpose of these works by Francisco Goya is to remember years after the massacre occurred.



Contrasting My Work with Paul Nash



Culture

The cultural context of these pieces is vastly different. While both of our pieces explore various themes of conflict, there are significant differences on what that means for each piece. Nash's piece is about the violence and cruelty of World War I and how that will affect the world in the future. My piece is about how, regardless of difficult circumstances, humans can often grow and thrive from them. Nash's piece is exploring a major cultural event that was taking place during the creation of the piece. Differently, the meaning behind my piece is more general to the human experience.

Function and Purpose

Both pieces call the viewer to reflect on conflict and the result of it, however my piece and Paul Nash's piece differ in what about conflict we try to convey. My piece has a more optimistic outlook on the result of conflict, describing how humans are able to grow out of its result. In his piece "We are Making a New World" Paul Nash conveys how World War One will lead to negative outcome for the global community. Overall, although Paul Nash and I both create themes on the result of conflict. However, while mine portrays a more positive result while Nash's piece portrays a more negative result.

Formal Qualities

Paul Nash and I differently use space in these pieces. In Paul Nash's piece "We are Making a New World" there is considerably less space than there is in my piece. This can be seen on the ground as well as in the sky. The clouds in Paul Nash's piece take up considerably more space than the mountains in my piece. This can additionally be seen with the ground. There is more space taken up by the deformities and contusions in the ground than in my piece. Overall this can be attributed to the fact that I wanted the main focus to be on the flower, while Paul Nash did not have a specific subject.

Analysis of Formal Qualities: Paul Nash



Paul Nash uses various formal qualities in his artwork, but one of the most prevalent one in these two pieces is the way that he uses color. The ways in which Nash uses are very important, not only to the aesthetic of the piece, but also to the way that he expresses the theme. This can particularly be seen in "The Menin Road" by Paul Nash. Nash uses muted colors throughout the entirety of the piece.

All of the colors are generally cool tones, which creates a relaxed aesthetic to the viewer. This directly contrasts with the violent and desolate landscape that he depicts in the work. In addition, Nash uses the color of the running soldiers similarly to the colors of the trees. By doing this, he is demonstrating to the viewer how much of an integral part of the landscape that the soldiers have become. By making the smoke, the ruined trees, and the soldiers on the horizon all of the same muted, tan color, Nash is exhibiting to the viewer how the violence and destruction that comes with war is a normal part of human lives at this time. n



Similarly, Nash uses shape and form to demonstrate the destruction of war and violence. This can be particularly seen in his work "We are Making a New World". The organic and round shapes of the ground, particularly in the foreground of the piece, are obviously of an unnatural and abnormal shape to the reader. Similarly, Nash uses the organic shapes of the trees to create a looming silhouette that similarly adds to desolate and bleak nature of the piece.

Comparing My Work with Francisco Goya



Culture

While the cultural context of my self portrait, and Francisco Goya's piece is more different than it is similar, there are cultural elements of this piece that do have similarities. In this portrait, both Francisco Goya and I portray a member of our own community and culture, from the time that we were creating the piece. While Goya's piece reflects the culture of the time, through the clothing as well as the people portrayed. Mine does similarly. The modern clothing that I portray myself in, in this piece, is similar to the way that Francisco Goya portrays his subjects in the clothing of the time.

Function and Purpose

The function of my piece is to portray my personal identity in a visual form. It is also intended to modernize an old piece of artwork by incorporating elements of modern clothing and culture. This is similar to the function and purpose of Francisco Goya's piece, "Senora Sabasa Garcia" where he attempts to portray the identity of the subject in through the work and the clothing that he puts her in. Goya also wants his viewer to reflect when looking at the piece. This is similar to the way that I painted this piece in order to reflect on my own identity. While the intention is slightly different both works cause reflection.

Formal Qualities

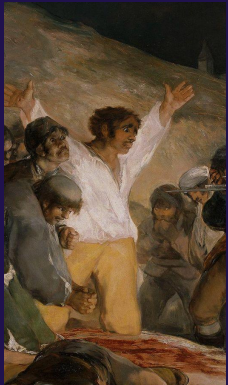
There are many similarities in the formal qualities between my work and Francisco Goya's work. This includes the use of color. Both Goya and I use neutral tones in these works, with an emphasis on more warm toned colors. This can be seen in the color of the shirt in my piece, as well as the color of the man's pants in "The Third of May 1808". These pieces are also similar in the value of the background of the piece. The darkness is able to highlight the lighter parts of the piece. This draws the viewer's attention to the more detailed, and lighter parts of the piece, that the artist wants to highlight.

Comparing Formal Qualities

Paul Nash and Francisco Goya both use formal qualities in similar ways within these pieces. This includes the way that they use colors and how they use value to portray the brutal and destructive effect that warfare has.

The colors that Paul Nash uses in his pieces “The Menin Road” and “We are Making a New World” create contrast. This is similar to how Francisco Goya uses color in “The Third of May, 1808”. The contrast that Goya creates between the man in the white shirt and the clothing colors of the rest of the people in the painting is similar to the contrast that Nash creates between the red clouds and ground in his piece “The Menin Road”.

These pieces are also similar in the way that value is used to portray themes in the work. In “The Menin Road” Paul Nash uses a similar value in the trees to that of the smoke and the people to show how they are becoming an integral part of the landscape. Similarly Goya uses the different values on the right and left side of the painting to draw the viewer's eyes to the man in the white shirt. These are both ways that Francisco Goya and Paul Nash similarly use value to demonstrate how warfare has very brutal and destructive effects.

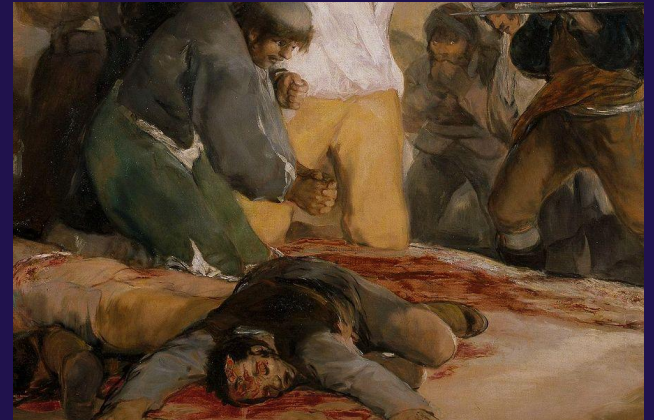
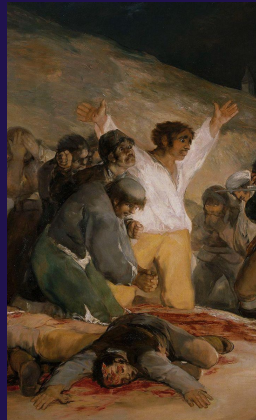


Analysis of Formal Qualities: Francisco Goya



In addition to the use of value in his work, Goya similarly uses color to portray the brutality of warfare and violence. In the clothing of the soldiers, as well as almost all the civilians, Goya uses dark cool tones of gray and brown. However, the man standing with his arms up is wearing a white shirt and yellow pants. This contrasts heavily with the other people in the painting, and draws the viewer's eyes almost immediately towards him. Goya also uses the cool colors on the dead citizens clothing to contrast with the red blood. Because Goya does not use any other tones of red in this piece, the red blood further stands out.

Francisco Goya is very unique in the ways that he uses value in his work "The Third of May, 1808". In this piece there is very stark contrast between each side. From the viewer's perspective, the left side is illuminated by the lantern, giving it a much lighter value, while the right side is made up of shadows. Goya uses this contrast between the values to draw the viewer's eye to the man with his arms up, and demonstrate the brutality and violence that comes with war.



Contrasting Formal Qualities

Paul Nash and Francisco Goya also use formal qualities in very different ways within these three pieces. This includes the colors that they use, and the ways in which they use shapes and form. While the ways in which they use the formal qualities differs, they are similar in the themes that they present.

Francisco Goya uses colors that are more natural and earth tones in "The Third of May 1808". Most of the colors that he uses are various shades of brown, black and gray. This differs from Paul Nash who uses a more diverse palette of colors, being that he is a surrealist artist. While the colors that they use are not the same, both artists use their color choice to develop themes of warfare and brutality in their work.



These artists also use shapes and forms in different ways. Paul Nash uses these formal qualities in "The Menin Road" specifically in the trees, which add a level of symbolism to the painting and help to develop the themes. Differently Francisco Goya uses slightly more abstract and organic shapes in the dead rebels that lie in the front of the painting. While the way that these artists use shape and form does differ, they both use them to develop themes of war and violence in the paintings.

Contrasting My Work with Francisco Goya



Culture

The cultural context of these pieces is vastly different. Goya created this piece almost a decade after the situation in response to a conflict that occurred in his country. "The Third of May, 1808" was created several centuries before my piece was created, so the culture that it was created in is vastly different than when I created mine. I created my piece in a time where the culture that I live in does not experience the first-hand effects of war, and violence, as Goya depicted in this painting. This demonstrates how different the cultural context of these two pieces is when they were created.

Function and Purpose

The purpose of Francisco Goya's piece "The Third of May, 1808" is to create a piece that causes the viewer to reflect on a violent conflict that occurred in his country at the time. He created this piece for the new king of Spain, many years after the massacre occurred. This is different from the purpose of my piece, which is to pay tribute to a well-known portrait by Francisco Goya, and to reflect on my own personal identity. While the function of Goya's piece is to cause the viewer to reflect on a situation that occurred in the past, my intention behind my own piece is to reflect on my own identity.

Formal Qualities

While there are similarities in the way that Francisco Goya and I use the formal qualities of art in our work, there are also many differences. This includes the way that we use space. While I include a large amount of negative space in my work in order to highlight the one subject that I feature, Francisco Goya uses space differently in "The Third of May, 1808". While the background of this piece takes up a large amount of space, compared to the amount of space that the background takes up in my piece, there is a difference. However, in both pieces, the negative space is being used to highlight certain figures.

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