

Finley Amber Hopson

1802467

Ways of perceiving

Ryan and Rob

Ways of perceiving

The theme of the exhibition is the idealisation of the female body. Showcasing art from the modern day to the renaissance, the art shows how the idealisation of the female body has changed, and how the idealisation of the body varies from the male and female perspective. Along with this I wish to highlight how damaging idealisation can be, especially in the modern day.

“Idealisation, the action of regarding or representing something as better than that person or thing really is.” This is very prevalent in today’s media, as well as in the past. Through the ages the female body has gone through various forms of idealisation, from the way a woman should act to how her body should be presented.

Comparison of Caravaggio and Artemisia’s painting of Judith Beheading Holofernes.

The story of Judith and Holofernes, originating from the Bible was a great piece of subject matter for painters in the 1500 and 1600s. Many painters created their interpretations of the story. The biblical story of Judith beheading Holofernes who came to conquer her home of Judea. The story alone is empowering, showing immense strength to protect her home. I have chosen to look at Caravaggio and Artemisia’s interpretation, mainly for their striking differences based on the painters gender.



Beheading Holofernes Caravaggio 1598-1602

Looking firstly at Caravaggio’s interpretation it is very stylised. Looking firstly at Judith herself she is stood, pristine in her pure white dress. For such a gruesome act she seems detached. She is merely stood, feeling as if she has no energy in the action. Secondly the colour choice. Her skin is porcelain, showing no imperfections. Even the blood in the scene seems unreal, the use of the crimson further enhances the feel of this. Looking at Caravaggio, a male painter, he has shown Judith to be perfect, detaching her from the scene. Her pose, perceiving her has dainty almost creates an unreal feel to the scene due to the idealisation by the artist. Judith



Looking secondly at Artemisia's interpretation, her painting gives off a striking atmosphere compared to Caravaggio. Firstly looking at the colour scheme, the use of orange, brown and undertones of green give a sickening feel to the scene, which adds a horrible feel of realness. Compared to the colours choice and lighting of Caravaggio, it almost feels like Judith is in a spotlight while the lighting from Artemisia's feels like it's emanating from a lamp, further grounding the scene. The pose that Judith is in, gives her the appearance of her putting weight and strength in the act, her face showing determination. The overall way Judith is presented shows her strength which is lacking in Caravaggio's interpretation. Overall there are striking differences to the different interpretations, Caravaggio's showing Judith in an idealised way while Artemisia shows Judith with no idealisation.

Judith Beheading Holofernes A.Gentileschi (1612)



For the next piece of art I have chosen to look at Joseph Nollekens Venus. This is a replica of the lost original, staying true to the Greek classical ideals of the female body. The ideal Greek human form being youthful, toned bodies. This in my opinion is a positive form of idealisation. The use of marble enables Nollekens to render the human body realistically, displaying tone and muscle in the body.

Joseph Nollekens Venus (1773)

Contemporary idealisation of the female body



Jenny Saville Plan (1993)

In the modern day the female form is heavily idealised. In the media the 'ideal' body is portrayed as thin. The ideal body constantly being shown in different forms of media, television, magazines, etc. As well as celebrities and women in media all having this ideal body type, putting forward this idea that you have to have this body to be successful. With the absence of different body types in media is also extremely damaging. This is further pushing the idealisation of the thin body type as well as alienating the others. For the next artist I have chosen Jenny Saville as her work goes directly against the idealisation of the body. She shows the human body for what it is, highlighting all bodily 'flaws'. Her work challenges society's perception of the body by painting the body in an unconventional way. Jenny Saville's plan is an example of this. The body is painted in an unconventional pose, highlighting the mass of the body. The lines of the body further highlight the mass and density of the body.

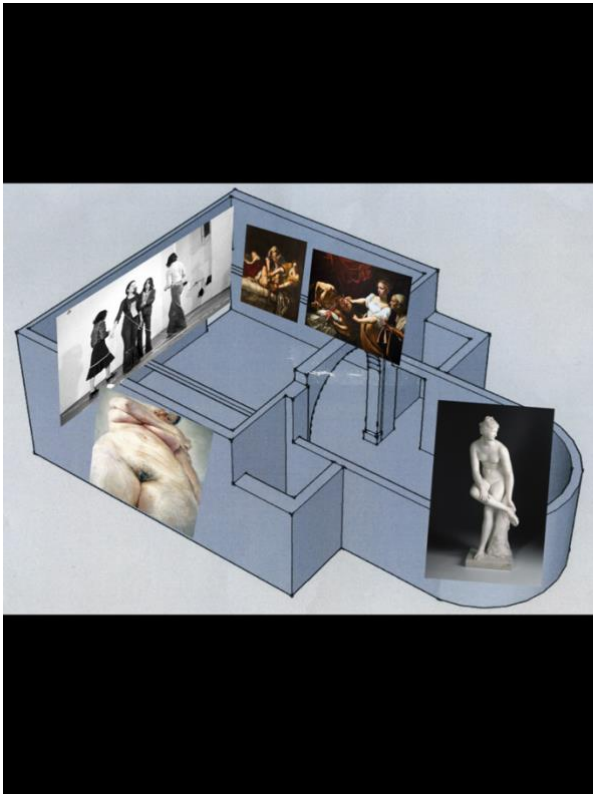


Marina Abramović Rhythm 0 (1974)

a disconnect from body and person, the people participating in the performance feeling that disconnect.

Even though this piece of performance art doesn't deal with idealisation of the body I felt it was important to include for the way the body is perceived and treated and the disconnect from person and body. Rhythm 0 is a performance art piece. Stood in a room, with a table with various objects and instructions. "There are 72 objects on the table that one can use on me as desired. Performance. I am the object". I chose this piece in particular as it shows the line that people will cross if given the opportunity, furthermore showing disrespect for Marina's body in the piece. This also highlights

Floor Plan



For the floor plan my intention was to place the art in such a way that it is easy for comparison. My intention was to make each piece of art easily comparable to the other. As the essay stems around the comparison of different ideals of the female body I made sure that I conveyed this in the placement of the pieces. Looking at different forms of art from different time periods I intended to highlight the different forms of idealisation and how they have evolved, the negative and positive idealisation.

Bibliography

[online]. [accessed 2 May 2020]. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/idealize>
J.Isbouts (2013) National Geographic Who's in the Bible
J.Polivy and C.P.Herman (2004) Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology