



Applying a range of critical theories, identifying, discuss and evaluating an artwork of your own choosing?

In this Essay I study the signs semiotics. I will explore the symbols and emotions behind the painting and the expressions on the figure's face. Also, theories of how color equals emotion and how details in the painting show wealth. Also, in this essay I will talk about how the digital world and consumerism is taking away from the beauty of the original artwork. A small introduction to pre raphaelite movement. Also how the atmosphere makes the viewer feel when looking at the painting.

Above you can see a painting by Frederick Sandys called "Medea," Sandys is a British pre-Raphaelite artist. His art is full of emotion and expression which you can see in the painting above.

Sandys painting is about an enchanter tearing her beaded necklace off while making a potion to use for murder. In the painting the woman looks agonized while looking into the distance unable to look directly at her actions. However, the way we see the painting today is mainly by look on a scene, in John Berger's book "Ways of Seeing" he describes the way we see art today as "mere documentary evidence" which is shown in everyday life by seeing art in books as photocopy's, seeing low quality images of the artwork on screens and buying the art work on postcards in museums. It degrades the way we see art

and that less of the population are going to see the actual beauty of the work in person, people will miss how paintings and artwork like "Medea" through the lens of an eye how it is four Dimensional. in person you see texture, age, and feel more emotion in person. Also, in the book of ways of seeing burgeres goes on to say "the art of the past is being mystified because a privileged minority is striving to invent a history which can retrospectively justify the role of ruling classes" which is what is happening to the artworks of the world they are being sold to people of a higher class never to see the light of day again and to never be seen by the public population, why do the higher classes get to see the beauties of the art world and not the rest of the classes?

Now that works of art can be reproduced and replicated, theorized by burgers that if that is the case already existing art can be used in everything such as art books, magazines, films, and gifts for people's living room. If this is the case, then the art works beauty will not be seen to its full standard and will just be seen as something to hang on a wall or a tiny image in a book barely seen, are we living in a age where originality is not seen any more?

The painting "Medea" has many symbolic meanings such as hatred towards an old lover which and be seen in her eyes and the way she is ripping away her necklace in anger while making a potion ready to commit murder. However, there is also passion and love due to her past love for Jason who abandoned her. The painter is telling a story by using expression and showing a peice of art with high emotion to make the viwer see and feel emothion when looking at the art but not over expsresing the emothion portrayed by the woman in the painting.

When looking and decoding this painting you can see a woman that is in confusion or in pain looking into the distance while burning something into the fire. With a gold background that makes the woman seem like they are form an expensive background the background slightly washes out the woman which also makes her standout in the painting and makes her the center of attention. She also looks like her heart is burning due to the light of the fire glowing upward. However, the intended meaning is an enhancer with a deep anger and revenge preparing to commit murder on an old lover who had left her. You can see the sorrow in her face. The color gold in the background resembles wealth and power. However, because the painter painted a story that took place before this time his painting will be an imagined version of how the interarea would have looked in that time. Also, in the artwork you can see she is wearing heavy gold earrings and a gold headband which also represents wealth because only the richest could wear gold, as gold was extremely hard to import due to its weight therefore it was harder to ship across the sea. The material of here dress/robes looks as if it is made from silk material which was also hard to import. The red necklace she wears could symbolize the anger that she feels for her ex-love hen because Shes is making a position to murder him. When looking at the painting you do not look at the lady as an evil or bad woman you look at her with enlightenment due to the fact she has been painted so although she expresses heat break, she is still seen as a beauty.

The atmosphere of the painting is free and charming with the way the colors are a warm colour palette that gives the viewer a type of peace while still visually seeing the story of a woman with passion and anger, however her skin was painted with a mix of a warm and cold toned palette to present a more ghostly witchy figure, however the cool tones could also be the paint oxidizing over time due to the different pigments that they used. her eyes almost look into your eyes as if she is looking through your soul. Madea is portrayed as a strong and powerful woman which is not usually seen by male painters as thy usually tend to paint nude or hyperfeminine portrayals of women, also the way that the painting is

framed in a gold frame indicates that he wanted natural light to reflect on the frame to make it more visible to the viewer,

The painting was created to give life to a story that was only seen in imagination and into a physical form to be seen by others across the world who do not know the story or to whom cannot imagine. Hence because the pre-Raphaelite is a movement.

Pre-Raphaelite paintings are created through imagining story's, plays, mythology and religion. Sandys style of painting is inspired by the Italian painter Raphael who started painting biblical imagery based on the bible. His style is very illustrative and shows a story in full emotion through detail and colour. Paintings of mythological story's were excessively big and a main subject when painting in the 1500 to 1900 this is shown in the book ways of seeing.

In conclusion, I have gone through many critical theories and analyzed the painting *Medea* by Frederick Sandys and what symbols and colors represent in painting and how they are used, I have also discussed the topic of art works losing their charm by being over used in media due to books and the digital world. I have found out many types of information and theories that have opened my mind to think differently about the art world and what viewers of art see and how they interpret, understand and feel when looking at different art pieces. I have also learnt how different classes view art and how they view art with a strong female in a painting. Also the insight that I gained while reading *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger and that the book was a big influence in my essay on analyzing a range of critical theories, identifying and discussing and evaluating the art piece *Medea*.

References

Figs, L. (2020). *Representing Medea: the tale of a mythical murderess* | Art UK. [online] artuk.org. Available at: <https://artuk.org/discover/stories/representing-medea-the-tale-of-a-mythical-murderess>.

Berger, Jb. John [1972] ways of seeing, digital copy whole book

Figes,LF, Lydia [2020] representing Medea:the tale of a mythic murderer