

Expressionism

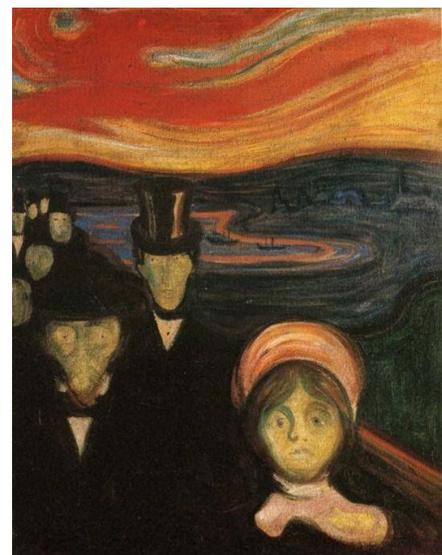
The Expressionism movement originated from Germany around the year of 1912. Expressionism is defined as the style that tries to express the emotions and emotional experience instead of showing an impression of an object or landscape. Shapes are lost and/or nonexistent. Details are also not as dominant. This art movement involves a lot of contrast between colors. Most of the time the images can be distorted, jarring, or they can express an intense subjective point of view. The variety between dynamic colors are essential to expressing emotions in a non representational way.



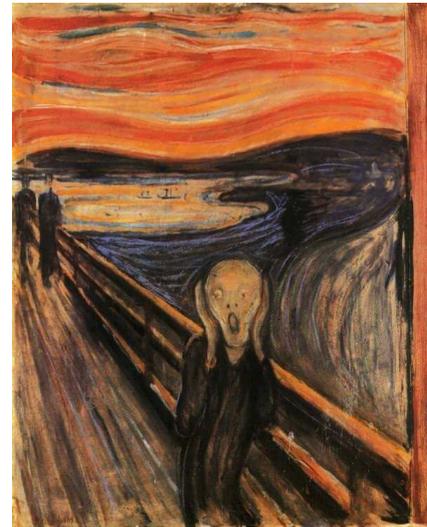
When Expressionism is brought up, most people think of Vincent Van Gogh's *Starry Night* painting done in 1889 (image on the left). In the image there aren't any fine lines or distinct shapes, but there is texture. The texture can be seen through the painted strokes of the brush. This is accentuated by blending different shades of color together. This painting displays a night seen in an almost majestic way. The stars are not in star shaped form and instead are painted like spheres. The color blue is used to create a calming

environment when looking at it as if you were the one looking out towards the night sky.

The artwork I chose from the Expressionism period is a piece called *Anxiety* by Edvard Munch in 1894 (image on the right). He is another known artist during this movement. Most of his artwork during this period involved the concepts of a depressed or altered mind. Edvard Munch is recognized by his famous piece *The Scream* done prior in 1893 (image below *Anxiety*). In both pieces, Edvard Munch tries to express an altered state of mind of anxiety and fear. The textures are not as defined or obvious as they are in Van Gogh's work, but Edvard Munch does incorporate distortion through the use of curves and swirls. In *Anxiety*, the use of red and yellow gives us a sense of worry, urgency, and pressure. Red is a strong and fiery color that along with yellow brings out the separation



between the dominant and the accent color. I consider the accent color to be the red because it is one of the primary colors and it is also the color with a distinct value. I consider the dominant color to be black. Majority of the painting consists of black from the people standing one behind the other to the black enveloping within the shades of dark blue from the water. Similarly can be stated for *The Scream*. The black is still dominant here because it still engulfs around the dark blue of the water and it is found around the edges or cracks of separation. In *Anxiety* we can also see that there is an imbalance that is created by the people present. There is asymmetry from the left being crowded with people and with the right side being empty and full of water. The people present in the painting don't show details but the expression can still be implied. The woman at the front is the only one that carries more detail than the rest of the face. When the colors and the expression and the imbalance of symmetry come together, it really helps in expressing anxiety and panic when observing it.



Edvard Munch's painting resonated with me because of what we are going through today. During quarantine we went through different emotions in trying to get ourselves together. Anxiety and depression were and still are concerns during these times. Just in Edvard Munch's *The Scream* or in *Anxiety*, these are related emotions that the majority of us are going through. This brings me to a commercialized version of Edvard Munch's famous painting, *The Scream* (image below).



I see this as an inverse of Edvard Munch's piece. In *The Scream* we can see the contrast between the bright red and orange against the dark hues of black and blue. There are no straight lines or forms. In this mask, lines are incorporated to give a similar texture that the colors and brush strokes do on the painting. The color palette here is monochromatic with tones of black, white, and gray. The content is relatable to how we feel from being closed in and limited in the actions we take. The composition of the painting as a mask works well because it shows the expression if we were screaming deep inside. Overall, it is interesting how

we receive color to try to feel the distress and anxiety from Edvard Munch's painting, but in the mask the colors are taken away leaving us with the literal action of distress and anxiety.

Works Cited.

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