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Essay 1- Love Everywhere

English 1121 Prof. Scanlan

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“Like Honey”(2024)



“Rooftop Love”(2024)



“Self Love”(2024)

Love Everywhere

Photos don't have to be solely about the moment it was taken. While I can always appreciate the importance of the decisive moment behind a picture, I think a picture's lasting effect can be remembering why it was taken. As Berger(2013) states, “The degree to which I believe this is worth looking at can be judged by all that I am willingly not showing because it is contained in it.” Breaking down pictures this way, we can see that while the studium may be lacking, the value put on photos can stay the same because of its punctum. This is why I love photographing graffiti around the city. The feeling behind a piece, or the placement of a sticker, can mean something different to every person who passes by. One can see it as a nuisance, one as a piece of art, one as a good background for outfit pictures, or simply a cool wallpaper for their

phone. To me the most important emotion a photo can conjure is love. According to Songtag(2013), “After the event has ended, the picture will still exist, conferring on the event a kind of immortality it would never otherwise have enjoyed.” With the everchanging environment of graffiti in this city, no matter how they look, even three simple centered photos of graffiti can have an impact to me.

In “Like Honey”, the chaotic first look at this photo makes it hard to give it a dominant impression. Is it the Big letters “DUBIA.” at the top, the three R☆ varying in color written underneath, the various anonymous tags left in the middle, or the only written piece on the door, written by 7SoulsDeep? With the way I chose to frame the picture, and the fact that the words are nicely lined up to the doorknob and lock, I think the best answer would be the art by 7SoulsDeep. 7SoulsDeep is a graffiti artist who has been leaving short meaningful messages written around the city for the past few years. I've always appreciated their pieces, a small mysterious artist leaving work in all sorts of places, often with a message about love or love lost. “Ella es dulce como la miel” simply translates to “She is sweet like honey”. I came across this specific message close to my home on May 31, 2024. I was on my way to the train to meet with two of my best friends from high school, one of them I love deeply enough to instantly think of her when I read the words on this door. She is the sweetest soul I've ever had the pleasure of meeting, making it easy for those around her to always appreciate her presence. I feel like this can even influence the studium of the photo encouraging one to think of someone who comes to mind who to them is sweet like honey. This picture easily takes me back to that special day, spent reunited with those two friends, making the day altogether sweet like honey.

To me “Rooftop Love” was such a beautiful picture that it quickly became my phone's lock screen after I took it. The beautiful heart dominating the foreground with the distant

Manhattan skyline background is very satisfying. The dominant impression is easily the Japanese character, standing for big, painted right above the faded heart. Spotting this piece from across the rooftop it was taken on, I instantly recognized the aesthetic balance of this view and needed to take a picture of it. Notice how the pillar splits off into the rest of the rooftop, behind it a gated neighboring rooftop gives an odd sense of isolation. In the background, it's easy to see the other towering buildings towering over the tree-lined city blocks around Brooklyn, but when looking back further we can actually see the Manhattan skyline peeking through the fence. The punctum for me is the peaceful sunny day I feel coming from all elements of this photo. I have always loved rooftop views of the city, though I rarely got to see anything from my own roof because of other buildings towering around mine. This picture also comes packed with pleasant memories as it was specifically taken on my best friend Melanie's rooftop. Seeing it makes me think of all the deep conversations, rooftop picnics, album reviews, and dance practices we've shared there. Though her apartment may be small, her rooftop is where I and all her friends congregate to spend time with her, no matter the occasion. All together Rooftop Love is one of my favorite skyline photos I have to date, not only because of the beautiful day it was taken on but the memories it effortlessly brings back.

I took "Self Love" on August 30th. While I skated to work for my last Friday shift of the summer, I knew soon school would be in full swing and I would soon have a lot more on my plate. Thinking of how I was already having a difficult start to this chapter of the year, on the same street that I've skated a hundred times, I look to a passing wall to see a new piece painted on the wall with a simple but emphasized message. Though shortened I could clearly read the words Love Yourself. Something so simple meant so much to me that in that moment I stopped to take a picture. It's hard to see but this piece was fairly small and close to the ground, it's only

framed to look large and centered on the wall. I used my phone's flash to get a nice red color to show, but I was also glad to see the white paint on the top of the photo reflecting well. To me the white is almost like waves rolling over the top of the photo, while the heavy red in the center is underlined and balanced by the black tag cut off on the bottom. Though it's easy to look at the picture and read the words Love Yourself, it's also just as evident that they left out some letters in that second word. I feel this was done intentionally by the artist to keep the message short and impactful. As Webb(2014) stated, " My creative journeys typically start with an image I see in the world-sometimes once, sometimes repeatedly-an image that for some reason gets under my skin." Ive seen many bright red pieces talking about love since this encounter, each time building on my love for image. Being such a nice piece and perfectly timed on my daily route, those 10 letters I saw turned into 12, and those 12 turned into my mindset throughout that day.

All together I've appreciated talking about these three photos. I think that while part of it is because I took them, ive learned that saying anything about photos I care about is fun. This is all because of my inclination to take photos in places or at times that can bring up memories of the reason it was taken.

(1175 words)

References

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