

Elements of Art and Design Paper

Siara Brown

Prof. Roberts

New York City College of Technology

Abstract

In this paper, you will see how a painting taken from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a current window display from a store have some similarities and differences. I'll compare both the window display and painting, discuss the color, tones, shades, tints & values of both the painting and window display as well as the texture, line formations rhythm, balance contrast, proportion and more I'll also explain how art can have an impact on life, the similarities and differences in both the painting and window display and the elements of design shown through both artworks.

Elements of Art and Design

The Painting I chose to use is done by John Singer Sargent and was done with oil. Its a portrait of Madame X that was created around the 1880s. The full name of the woman is Madame Pierre Gautreau and she was known for her artful appearance (Met Museum). Sargents goal in this portrait was to emphasize her daring personal style so he showed the right strap of her gown slipping off her shoulder (Met Museum). His painting wasn't taken as serious as he wanted it to be and ended up repainting the shoulder strap and kept the work for 30+ years and eventually sold it to the Metropolitan Museum and asked the museum to disguise the sitters name.

The window display I chose to use was from the store Bergdorf Goodman. It is a clothing store located in New York and sell very expensive products. They sell many designers items from people like Giorgio Armani, CHANEL, Donna Karan and many more (Bergdorf Goodman). Their window displays are very unique and are extremely different from each display that is shown. It differs from colors, textures, accessories, and the clothing put on mannequins.

Part A: Color

The color of the painting has many neutral colors. The dress is black and the background is brown, and Gautreau's skin tone is white and her hair is brown. The tones found in the painting are neutral tones. There are only three colors in this painting, which are brown, black and white. The tints found in this painting are the middle of the painting. As stated before, the background is brown but when you look at Madame X, you see the background of where she's standing is a lighter shade of brown which gives the painting a spotlight effect and leads your eyes to that area first. The shades found in the painting are some small amounts in her hair that

show darker shades of brown and the floor mostly so that we can tell when the background starts becoming a floor. The value of the painting is in the middle which has lighter parts and the area outside of Madame are darker.

The window display from the store Bergdorf Goodman has similar colors from the painting. The background of the display is a beige, there's also a random bathtub that is white, a picture of a waterfall that is black and white and the dress the mannequin is wearing is black just like Madame X's. The tints in this display are found in the background since it's a beige, off white color. The shades are found in floor where the bathtub is placed. There's a shadow where under the tub it is extremely dark compared to the rest of the floor area. The value of the display the middle area has the lighter areas where there are several mini spotlights pointing to the middle area of the display and the darker areas are the very top because there is no light hitting that area.

Part B: Texture

The texture of the painting done by Sargent is extremely soft and smooth. There's no rough paint brush strokes found throughout the painting; it's all even and flat. Since the paint strokes are smooth and even looking, it gives the painting an elegant, calm feel. It's a simple painting there isn't much going on.

The window display at Bergdorf Goodman is very different. On the bathtub, there is this long piece of a picture that has a very bumpy, roughness to it. It's a painting of a waterfall and on the sides of it are rocks and in the middle is the water coming down into the bathtub. The rocks give off the bumpy look and the water coming down into the tub is more smoother looking but it's still not evenly painted. There are small bumps that come down with the water so it gives off

that water feel. Another texture is found through the dress on the mannequin. The fabric of the dress doesn't look as smooth and it looks like a nylon material that is kind of rough and sheer as well. The fabric is shown all over the dress but mostly the bottom of the dress. The overall feel of this window display is also calm and elegant but in a different way from the painting. The painting gives off a princess, royal vibe while the windows display gives off a more sophisticated, serious and mature feel.

Part C: Line Formations

Line is seen in the window display. The painting of the waterfall is a rectangular shape that consist of four lines and it leads the eye to look at the picture from top to bottom because the vertical lines are longer than the horizontal ones. Tension and balance are seen in the painting with the waterfall painting as well. The only thing the waterfall painting is leaning on is the bathtub and the painting is really tall and narrow so it looks like it can easily fall. Rhythm is shown through repetition in the window display. The black dress that is seen on the mannequin has about 7 layers of a sheer nylon like fabric through the bottom of the dress. Contrast is found in the window display because the entire background is beige color and the dress on the mannequin is black so your eyes should immediately go to the dress. Proportion is shown in both the window display and the painting. In the painting, Madame X is leaning a small table, and she is tall in this portrait so there is a relationship between Madame X and the table she is leaning on. In the window display, the small bathtub there is a large painting of a waterfall so it gives the effect that water is falling into the tub so there is a relationship between the bathtub and the painting of the waterfall.

Part D: How art influences life

Art influences life because it's a way to express yourself and is seen in our everyday lives. You can show your emotions, dreams and fears all through art. It's a way for someone to feel like nothing is holding them back and they have all the power. They can do whatever they'd want without feeling like they have to constantly listen to someone or they are being judged by society. Life influences art because there are many small little posters people see while going on public transportations. It can be a simple way to change someone's opinions or inform people about something serious going on. People walk around and see the smallest posters around the street and don't really think of it as art but it is. It's creative and there's a small but different message found in each one. When people think of art, they necessarily think of it as drawings, paintings, clothing designs etc. But art is seen in our everyday lives and gives humans something to think about.

Part E: Understanding of Color and Texture

This project helped me understand color better because it made me realize how important color can be in art. Simply adding a bright or dark color can change the entire mood of the art piece in a good or bad way. Color is what the human eye would see first and if all the colors shown are dark, you can easily tell the mood the artist wanted to show in their piece. Color is a way for store owners to design their layouts. For example, having brighter colors put in the back could be a marketing strategy because they can be seen from farther away and your customers eyes would go to the area first. Texture is important because it can also show a mood. Having soft colors, a soft painting in your display can show calmness and make one feel at ease while having more bumpy pieces can give off a more serious feel. There are many clothing that look soft, like a cashmere sweater but texture can easily change your opinion on a garment. For

example, if you like a dress because of the color and style, but go up to grab it and see it's made out of a stiff fabric that doesn't feel as smooth as you like, your opinion about it would change a lot and you wouldn't want it anymore.

Part F: Comparing the art and visual display

The painting done by John Singer Sargent and the window display from Bergdorf Goodman have many similarities and differences. The painting and the mannequin from the display are both wearing black long dresses that are about floor length and there is only one person in both the display and painting. The part that's different is that the dress on the mannequin is more wider while the dress on the painting is tighter to the body and more close-fitting and shows the figure more. Also, the dress on the mannequin is wearing a black and clear plastic coat which makes the dress look long sleeved and the dress from the painting has no sleeves and chain-like straps. Another similarity is the background of both artworks are one color. The difference is the actual color, the painting has a simple brown background and the window display has a beige, off white background. The next similarity are the poses of both Madame X and the mannequin. They are both slightly turned to the right and even though the mannequin doesn't have a head, the neck is turned to the right and the body has a very similar pose where it is standing slanted, facing the right. The last similarity is the colors of the overall artwork. They both have a neutral shade range shown through the pieces and both have a maximum of three colors. The only difference are the colors themselves. The painting has black, brown and white while the display has black, beige and white.

Part G: What I learned from assignment

What I learned from this assignment is that art can be demonstrated in many beautiful, yet different ways. Showing your talent in window displays are a great way to not only attract your customers but gain new ones as well as getting them wanting to see what more products the store has to offer. Having a creative window display that makes the customer interested is extremely effective. I also learned that it's very easy to tell a story using window displays. Each one could be extremely different but they would all have the same theme going on and it works well.

Part H: Definitions

Color: various qualities of light that individuals can perceive with eyes. **Example:** having a windows display in pastel colors to show an Easter theme.

Texture: how a surface feels to a touch, may convey a mood or feeling. **Example:** a fuzzy coat

Proportion: the relationship between the size, mass, scale or optical weight of two or more objects. **Example:** a female mannequin and male mannequin next to each other

Direction: describes the design element of tool that leads the shoppers eye from one place to another. **Example:** having a sale sign in a store with the arrow pointing to where the sale items are

Line: guides the eye to a feature or is a linear element that sets a mood. **Example:** having a string of lights hung on a window display

Shape: spatial form that helps the viewer identify various objects. **Example:** a rectangular bookshelf

Size: all about proportion, ration, mass or scale. **Example:** a pair of heels next to thigh high boots

Sequence: the particular order items are presented in viewing, graduation from small to large or color presentation. Example: a stack of books in size order

Tension: arrangement of objects that causes the viewers to wonder if opposing forces will disturb the balance of equilibrium. Example: a stack of glass cups.



Madame X Painting, 1883-84. Met Museum



Bergdorf Goodman Window Display. 5th ave

Reference

Bell, J and Kate Ternus(2010). Silent Selling: Best Practices and Effective Strategies in Visual Merchandising 5th Edition. Fairchild: Bloomsbury, NY. ISBN-13: 978-1501315497

Bergdorf Goodman Top Navigation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.bergdorfgoodman.com/c/designers-a-z-cat000001>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/12127>