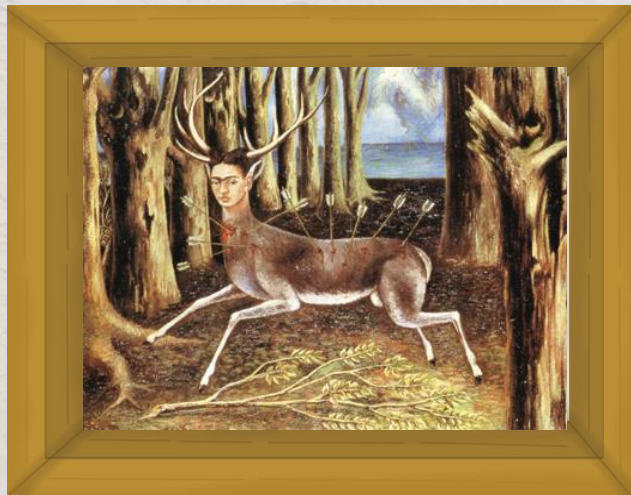
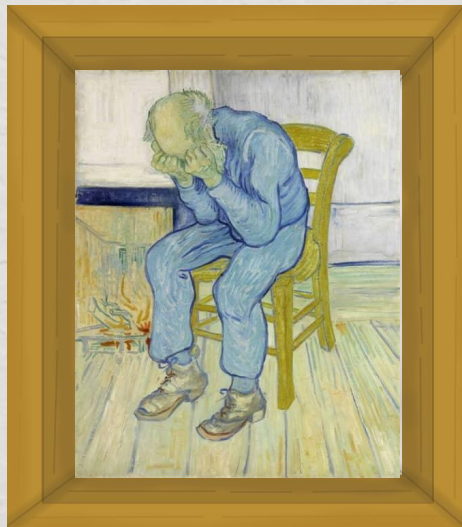


Comparative Study of Frida Kahlo, Vincent Van Gogh, and Emil Nolde

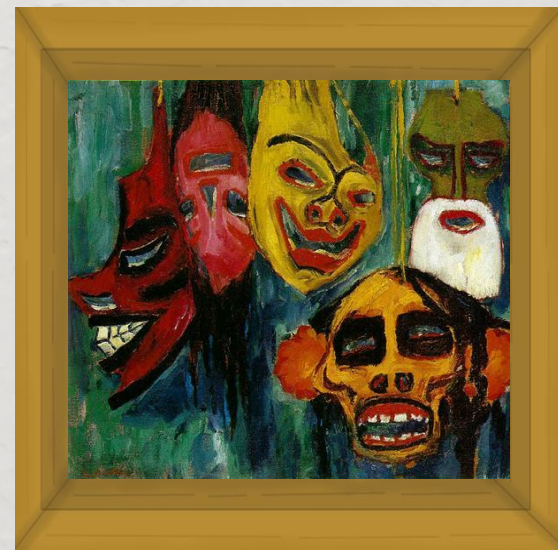
Sofia Perez



• Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. •
1946.



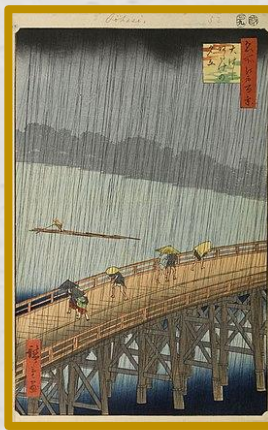
• Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. •
1890.



• Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. •
1911.

This comparative study will feature the artworks of Frida Kahlo, Vincent Van Gogh, and Emil Nolde. These artists were pioneers in their respective art movements. Kahlo in *surrealism*, Van Gogh in *impressionism*, and Nolde in *german expressionism*. This difference in art movement but similarity in message will be further **discussed** and **analyzed**, as well as how their respective art movements impacted their work. Each artist discusses the chaos and pain of emotion, and how suffering can be expressed through art. I will analyze how the difference in culture, as well as time period influenced the works (and the reason for each pieces creation). I will also compare and contrast their use of formal qualities such as **contrast**, **color**, and **movement**.

Born in 1853, Van Gogh is seen as one of the greatest post-impressionists of the time. He was born in the Netherlands, a child of a Protestant Pastor. He had connections to the art world early on in his life, working for Goupil* where he began to love the works of Rembrandt as well as other Dutch genre paintings and artists. When he moved to Paris in 1886 he was able to connect with more impressionist artists as well as find inspiration within Japanese woodblock prints. Even as a beginner artist Van Gogh was able to find ways to experience the lavish inspirations of the art world. Van Gogh's choice of impressionism allowed him to document his ever-changing emotions and capture moments in time. This transported the viewer into experiencing what Van Gogh was experiencing. His works became a way of empathy for the viewer.



Ando Hiroshige. Sudden shower over Shin-Ōhashi bridge and Atake. 1857.

Evaluation of the Cultural Context of Van Gogh and Emil Nolde

Being a very solitary person Van Gogh explored many things such as nature and spirituality. Nature was a key aspect in Van Gogh's works due to his upbringing. He felt as though nature was held back by large cities like Paris, seeing it as physically draining. Via his inspiration Van Gogh wished to perfect his craft while delivering his messaging.



Emil Nolde. The Missionary. 1912.

Emil Nolde was born in 1867 in Denmark. He specialized in German expressionism, many of his works reimagining traditional forms of art. Many of his works were fueled with his emotions, this leading to strong chaotic works. Religion was a strong cultural inspiration within his works, this being influenced by his faith. Nolde was raised within the Protestant faith and turned away from the traditional romantic portrayal of religion, instead using the literal texts of the Bible as inspiration. These texts were often more dark with their subject matter, this being reflected in some of Nolde's works. He reintroduced religious topics into the art scene, twisting it with his own style and messaging. Being strictly devoted Nolde utilized his art as a way to air his own "sin", what he deemed as sinful behavior became ways for him to create. While living in Germany during WWII Nolde had become banned from creating art as the Nazis had labeled his work "decadent". This had later impacted his own work once he had begun painting again after the war, he had stuck to many of his older themes, however religion was still prevalent. Nolde had also become infatuated by Van Gogh's own art works as well. It inspired many of his watercolor paintings.

*An art gallery/shop that began in 1857

Evaluation of the Cultural Context of Frida Kahlo

Born in Mexico in 1907 a key aspect of Kahlo's works centers around her own identity and the human body/the emotions that come from both. Kahlo's work was fueled by intense emotional reactions/outcomes from experiences within her life. This is in part due to her chronic pain caused by polio at a young age, causing her to be chronically ill for the rest of her life. Kahlo's pain also had also worsened due to the 1925 bus accident, often being bedridden as a result. This became a constant point of pain within her works, her works becoming a way for her to share how she was feeling with a widespread audience.

Oftentimes her works would be self portraits that would stare directly at the audience, almost as if asking the audience to feel her own pain. Kahlo's pain is something that is often clearly expressed in her works, it going hand and her with her identity. Even in the works that do not directly reflect Kahlo's pain she is often the main subject of her work.



Frida Kahlo. *Two Fridas*. 1939.

Kahlo was of Hungarian, Mexican and Native American descent. Kahlo would often discuss these cultural identities within her work, feeling as if they constantly conflicted with each other. This can be seen within her work of the *Two Fridas* from 1939. While her cultural identities are a key part of who Kahlo is the distance between each identity is clear. Her marriage to controversial artist Diego Rivera had also fueled this inner conflict within Kahlo, he would often refer to her other identities as less than, him preferring only certain (European) aspects of herself rather than the others. This led to her to feel more isolated within her own identity. Identity was something that Kahlo expressed often and dealing with the mix of cultural conflicts and pain led to her creating works such as the *Two Fridas*, 1939.

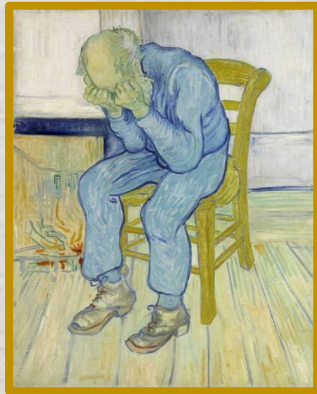
Many of Kahlo's works are abstract or literal self portraits of herself. Her influences as a result came from indigenous Mexican culture (as previously stated). Her Mexican side was a key aspect of her inspiration, it often being entwined with her feelings of pain and suffering. She used a mix of bright saturated colors, as well as heavy symbolism. This symbolism is due to her culture as well as her perception of self.

Contrasting Cultural Context & Influence

Art style is a key influence within each artists works and messaging. Each artist has similar messaging when it pertains to these works, that being the array of emotions and how pain/sorrow can be represented. However there is a contrast within their style that allows them to demonstrate these aspects differently (whether that be direct or indirect). The differences between surrealism, impressionism, and german expressionism are heavily demonstrated within these works, the style playing a role in how the artist is influenced with their own emotions as well.

Since Kahlo specialized in and was inspired by surrealism, many of her works are very symbolic when it comes to their meanings. Van Gogh's style (post-impressionism) gives his works a more dreamy effect, however they can be seen as more direct than both Kahlo and Nolde, Van Gogh directly presenting his own subjects pain. However each artists works are able to present the audience with an emotion, making them sympathize with it. Nolde focuses on the barbaric nature of art, and as a result it is an extension of his meanings, his own perspective on religion influencing how he presents his work.

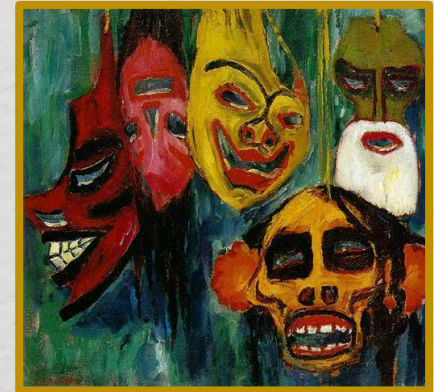
Another major influence of the artists is their identity. Identity can be seen as something that influenced all of these artists, however the way that this can be seen is very different. Kahlo's identity was an integral part of her art, sometimes being seen in positive ways but also painful. She was always the key subject in her art, along with her own culture as well. Identity can be seen as something that caused inner turmoil within Kahlo, this is reflected in her art. Her identity as a women can also be seen as a point of contrast in comparison to Van Gogh and Nolde. There is inner turmoil in relation to the identities of both Van Gogh and Nolde, however Nolde's is due to his own faith and Van Gogh's is due to his own mentality. Overall, the cultural context (more closely identity and art inspiration/style) influenced each artists and how they went about their own works, but it lead to a difference in approach of messaging.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. 1946



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.



Van Gogh. *Sunflowers*.
1888.



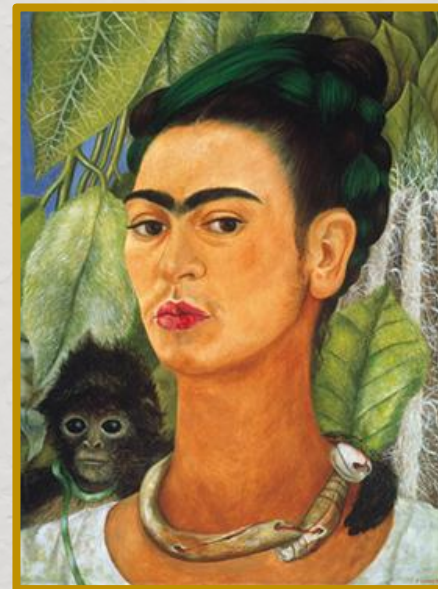
Nolde. *Glowing Sunflowers*. 1936.

A Similarity between each artist (apart from their messaging) is the way they display emotion in their works. Each art work discussed deals with the pain and conflict within emotion, and by extension identity as well. This type of messaging was something significant within each artists cultural influence as well. It can also be concluded that one artist directly impacted another, as seen with Nolde and Van Gogh. Van Gogh's own cultural impact on the art community had deeply inspired Nolde's work (mainly in watercolor). This link of inspiration demonstrates the spread an artist can have on their own community. An artist from a whole different style (Van Gogh impressionism to Nolde's german expressionism) shows how those inspired can interpret tone, presentation, meaning.

Each artist had also been impacted by symbolism. This concept can be seen within Kahlo's work the most, however both Nolde and Van Gogh also utilize symbolism within their works. Symbolism was something that allowed them to display their meanings in a new way. Since Kahlo utilized symbolism heavily, many of her works/self portraits can be seen as abstract. It can be concluded that there was confusing imagery that does not directly give away what the work is attempting to convey. Many times when Kahlo was the subject within her work she would use objects around her to symbolize certain emotions while not directly spelling it out for the audience. Nolde and Kahlo had also shared similar inspirations when it came to abstract messaging/work. Nolde is also similar but in a more direct way. His works can be classified as abstract due to the style of his work, while he doesn't appear to use symbolism as heavily as Kahlo did.

Overall there is direct inspiration between the artists and their works, as well as their choice of style as seen with symbolism and abstract which lends to their similarities.

Comparing Cultural Context & Influence



Kahlo. *Self Portrait with Monkey*. 1938.



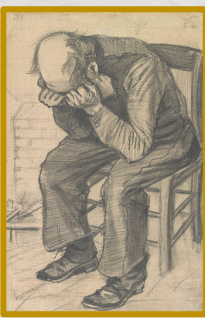
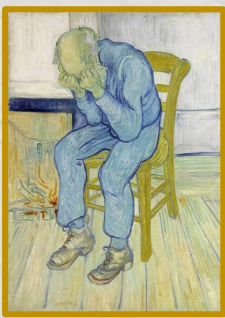
Both of my works pertain to similar ideals of the works being analyzed. Identity was a core inspiration within these works, it inspiring what I looked for via my inspiration. Similarly both these works can be classified as being an outlet for emotion (this being similar to Nolde, representing a spectrum of emotions). This was in part influenced by my overall cultural inspiration/context as well. I create art in order to represent emotions within a person's identity and how a perception of oneself can impact them. Similar to both Kahlo, Nolde, and Van Gogh identity and the painful emotions that can transpire with identity were heavily influential in all of the inspired works.

Conversely the difference between the works art style/the influence that the style plays in the overall works is approached differently. As stated previously Kahlo utilizes symbolism with personal subjects to convey her messaging, this is due to her own identity and her desire to demonstrate her own pain. I do not feel the desire to represent myself and my identity within my works, instead wanting it to apply to a wide range of people/be applicable to anyone within the audience. Kahlo does this in an opposing way, wanting her audience to sympathize with her identity and culture, instead of experiencing their own in a way. Because of Nolde's background his works are influenced heavily by religion and the barbaric carnal nature within humans. This is unlike my own work as well as cultural background, instead of being messy and carnal my works sometimes emphasize a clean and childlike appearance. This is due to my overall upbringing and how I have not experienced levels of pain congruent with Kahlo, Van Gogh, and Nolde. Likewise, while I wanted to utilize the concept of memory from the impressionist movement it did not influence my works overall style. Instead my works contain a more modern appearance.



Comparing & Contrasting Cultural Context/Significance

An impact on cultural significance can also be seen with the difference in time. Time is a key part within society as well as culture, the way society perceives emotions as well as others identities being everchanging. All of the analyzed works were created in similar time periods (the late 1800's to mid 1900's), during this period melodramatic art works were common. Artists like Van Gogh, Kahlo and Nolde used their art as a way to visualize their own identities or own inner turmoil. While this sentiment is still prevalent in art, the way this is done is somewhat different. My inspired works do not contain a similar melodrama to that of the inspirations, instead taking an almost comedic tone of how it conveys its desired message.



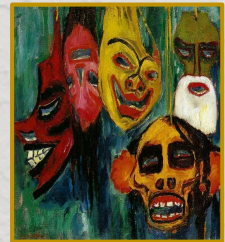
Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate) is a painting made with oils, Van Gogh's primary material. Initially this piece began as a pencil drawing with Van Gogh using a war veteran/pensioner (Zuyderland) as his model. After abandoning the piece he later revisited it until creating the final oil painting. The models posing is a significant aspect of the painting, the obstructed face and almost dejected posing reflects Van Gogh's own misery and emotional turmoil. The posing also allows the audience to feel as though they are the subject, due to the obstructed face of the model. The use of color (in the final piece) is also a significant concept. While the background and fire are muted, the man in the chair almost seems to be jumping out to the viewer due to his bright blue coloring and dark blue outlining. Since this piece was meant to emulate sorrow and one's own suffering, the main focus is on the person themself.

Van Gogh.
*Sorrowing Old Man
(At Eternity's
Gate)*. 1890.

Van Gogh. *Worn
Out*. 1882.

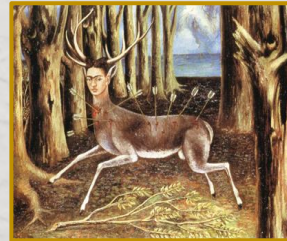
Material And Concept Significance

The Wounded Deer by Kahlo is oil made on masonite. This painting is one that exemplifies Kahlo's technique and conceptual meaning deeply. Like many of her works Kahlo herself is the subject of her painting, she is depicted as a literal deer with multiple arrows sticking out of her body. Since she is the subject she is in the foreground of the piece. This is significant because it makes the viewer get "up close" and personal with the physical, and by extension emotional pain Kahlo is experiencing. This pain can be seen from the multiple arrows that are strewn across Kahlo's body. Subject posing is the most important aspect of this piece due to the fact that Kahlo appears to be staring directly at the audience. Further lending to the emotional pain of Kahlo herself, and the audience.



Mask Still Life III is an oil painting on canvas. Since Nolde's style lends itself to a more barbaric nature, his technique reflects that. Things like the color and brush strokes were important in achieving the desired message, that being the utter chaos of emotion. Nolde utilizes bold and somewhat messy brush strokes in order to reveal what he stated was an "elemental force". Color is also an important characteristic because it lends to the overall emotion of the piece. Each mask is a different color, some appearing to bleed into each other.

Nolde. *Mask Still
Life III*. 1911.



Kahlo. *The Wounded
Deer*. 1946.

This shows the flexibility and variety of emotions, for example the red masks can represent anger or happiness while the yellow mask can represent jealousy and sickness. This paired with the overall composition and expression the models reflect give the piece a more chaotic feel to it. This is significant because the piece is meant to convey chaos, more specifically chaos of emotion.

Comparing Material/Concept Significance

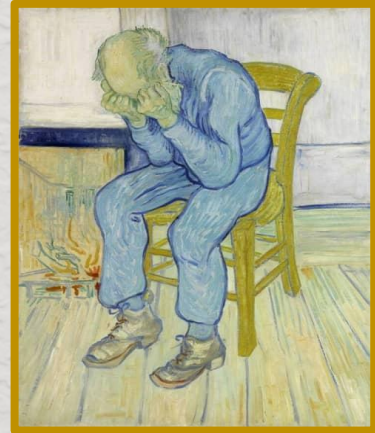
While Van Gogh and Kahlo's techniques can be seen as very different, due to their difference in style there are many conceptual aspects that make them similar. Things like the coloring and composition. Similarly their use of oils and how they utilize them is also similar.

Kahlo and Van Gogh (and Nolde) utilize oils in order to get depth within their paintings. While the colors themselves are different their works both utilize darker shades in order to bring emphasis, this is easily achieved with their own techniques and use of oil.

Both Kahlo and Van Gogh utilized their art as a form to express their own emotional turmoil, with themselves and the outside world as well. Composition and posing was important within both of their works, this is because they wanted the focus to be on one center emotion and subject. For example when looking at their own self portraits (*Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)* can be seen as a self portrait due to the sorrow of the piece) the primary focus is on themselves. They utilized the style of self portraits to express events or emotions that shaped who they were.

Via this method Van Gogh and Kahlo are also able to transport the viewer into their works. This is the desired outcome since they want the viewer to feel as though they are experiencing the emotions in their works. This is prominent with the obstructed posing in *Sorrowing Old Man* as well as the deliberate positioning of Kahlo's eyes in *The Wounded deer*. This is also apparent in other works from both Kahlo and Van Gogh as well. Having the subject stare directly into the viewer, they are able to form a connection.

Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.



Kahlo. *The Wounded Deer*. 1946.

Both artists can be seen as melancholy within their own works. This is also expressed with their own color as well. They use color to further exemplify the emotions within their piece. Many times focusing on darker more mellow colors like blues, browns, yellows, etc. Overall these methods further push both artists messaging as well as their desired emotions of pain.

Contrasting Material/Concept Significance

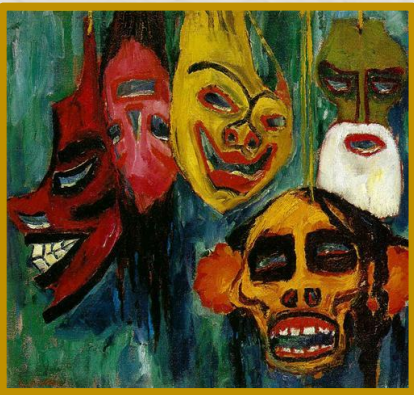
It can be argued that each artist utilized their art as a way to express their own unique inner turmoil, however they each went about it very differently (specifically in terms of visuals). Along with the overall visual difference of the artists, their techniques varied as well. This adds to the overall significance of material, since each of the artists works utilized oil.

Nolde's focus on German expressionism creates works that are often rough and chaotic, this reflects Nolde's own emotions as well as what he wished to express. This can be said for both Kahlo and Van Gogh as well.

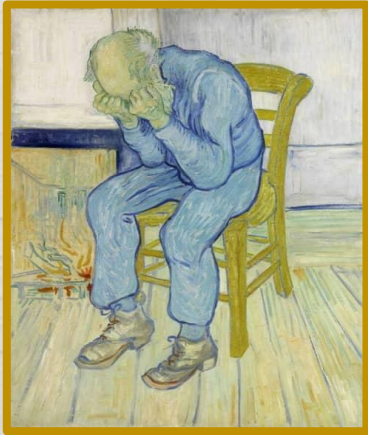
While both Kahlo and Van Gogh's technique stayed the same for most of their careers, Nolde often had a varied technique that focused on overall control and emotion. In contrast, both Van Gogh and Kahlo had a more focused controlled technique. The still explored their own emotions and turmoil, however they did it in more contained ways. Each artist's primary media was oil, however the way they utilize this varied greatly. Nolde often had a preference for thick blocky lining with simple, less complex colors. The colors in his works can be seen as more flat, in comparison to both Van Gogh and Kahlo.

Kahlo's technique often focused on utilizing more vibrant colors with shading that both complimented her works and leaned towards her realistic style. Her style is also supported by her usage of masonite due to its smoothness. Conversely, even with a somewhat similar technique Van Gogh's coloring is often dark/muted with a more liberal definition of shading. Due to Van Gogh's impressionist style he focused his overall application of paint by using a technique called impasto (thick paint application), this caused for less focused or smooth shading.

Instead of actively blending his colors to create a smooth canvas his use of impasto creates his well defined lines and obvious differences in color, unlike both Kahlo and Nolde. While Kahlo's style and technique is grounded in realism the work being analyzed specifically shows a more muted side of Kahlo, the visuals supporting her surrealist style while the colors themselves are more realistic.



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.

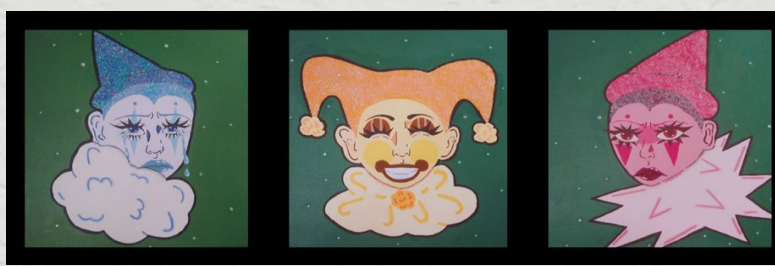


Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. 1946.

Comparing & Contrasting Material/ Concept Significance



This work emulates both Nolde and Kahlo, representing the vast array of emotions within the human identity. It shares emulated techniques as well as formal qualities like line, color, and composition. I had wanted this work to be of a similar medium/technique (painting) in order to better display a similar messaging.

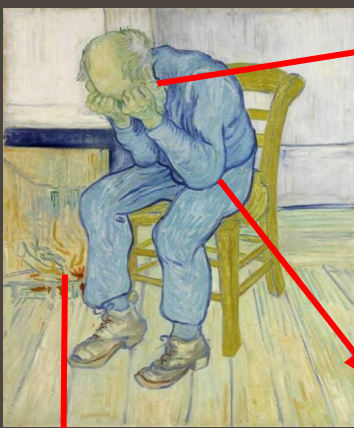


This work emulates Van Gogh and his overall sense of sorrow and hopelessness. Its use of line is similar as well as overall compositions/posing. Material is also similar and impacted the end product, similar to both phases of Van Gogh's Sorrowing Old Man.

All of the inspired works were paintings on differing types of canvas, but mainly in oils. This is due to each artist's techniques and style. Kahlo has a surrealist style with realistic coloring and shading, something that is attributed to oils. Both Van Gogh and Nolde also used oils as a way to show chaotic coloring within their works. The overall material used for the analyzed works plays an important role within the artist's pieces and how it correlates to their messaging.

Similarly, my work's medium emphasizes overall message. I utilized both paper illustration as well as acrylic canvas for my inspired works. Something that was emphasized within each work was color. Color plays a key role in each work: Kahlo utilizing warm tones to remain natural, Nolde using darker colors to emulate darker emotions, and Van Gogh utilizing pale colors that blend into one another to distract from the subject. In my works color is used as a way to emphasize subjects, this is most similar to Kahlo who utilizes cooler/brighter colors as a way to guide the audience's eye toward her.

Unlike Nolde my works remain in similar techniques throughout each piece. This is due to the overall cleanliness I had wanted to convey, in contrast to Nolde's overall chaotic perspectives as well as messaging. Nolde had also utilized oils to form messy almost unfinished works to further emphasize the muddiness within emotion. I had conveyed a similar notion in regards to how one may view certain emotions, and how they can be perceived. However my work is in stark contrast to Nolde's due to the simplicity I use and how my work defines emotion (as something foolish and simple rather than something complex and varied like Nolde). Similar to Van Gogh the initial use of illustrations/line plays a major role within how we had wanted our subjects to appear. In Van Gogh's first version of *Sorrowing Old Man* the use of a simple pencil drawing is able to further emulate the hopelessness within the subject, this was something that I wanted to be reflected within my own illustration as well.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.

Van Gogh utilizes an obscured face to demonstrate that the subject can be applicable to anyone, this is most prevalent with Van Gogh himself since he finished the piece in order to express his own inner anguish. He puts himself in the shoes of the *Sorrowing Old Man*

The use of color provides contrast between the subject and the background. Unlike most of Van Gogh's works he outlines the old man's suit to provide an obvious point of contrast. This allows the audiences overall focus to solely be on the subject. Van Gogh wanted to deliberately have all the attention on the subject, rather than it getting lost somewhere else.

Similar to the subject, the color of the background is key to the overall contrast of the piece, just in the opposite way. However even if the main focus is the subject, aspects like the fire are important to the overall meaning. The fire itself can represent the mans dwindling hope, it becomes faded like the rest of the background while the man's sorrow is the only focus.

Interpretation of Function & Purpose

*Each artwork can be described as being expressive, since each deals with the artists grievances and emotions

Kahlo positions her subject (herself) to be staring directly at the audience. This allows the audience to better connect to the piece overall. With the subject staring straight forward the audience is able to feel the pain she is experiencing. Since Kahlo has depicted herself as a deer, an animal that oftentimes is hunted for sport their is a strong tone of helplessness. Almost as if Kahlo, and by extension the audience is unable to stop experiencing painful emotions.

The subject is shown to have multiple arrows in her body. This is used to express Kahlo's inner turmoil and the pain she often experienced. Despite these arrows, instead of looking in pain or even being on the ground Kahlo appears to be standing/jumping while having a calm expression on her face. This can represent the perseverance through pain, something that is applicable to not only the audience but Kahlo herself.



Kahlo. *The Wounded Deer*. 1946.

While majority of the color in *The Wounded deer* is varying shades of brown the background deliberately has blue. This coupled with Kahlo's expression can represent the figurative other side when it comes to dealing with painful emotions.



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.

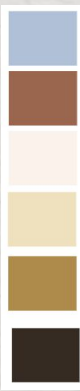
Nolde's *Mask Still Life III* specifically uses color as a way to express the scale of emotions and how they can conflict, or be similar. Oftentimes colors like yellow can be seen as happiness, green as disgust or jealousy, and red as anger or love. This notion can be seen in Nolde's own work, since each mask is meant to represent a different emotion, the masks donning different expressions. The overall color also demonstrates the expressionist style this piece and Nolde was known for.

The overall composition and blending of the subjects lends itself to the meaning of the piece. None of the masks appear to be overshadowing each other, instead almost blending together. The audience does not have one point of focus, this allows for an overwhelming tone. This tone amplifies the messaging that emotions can be chaotic, while expressing the inner turmoil that can result as well.

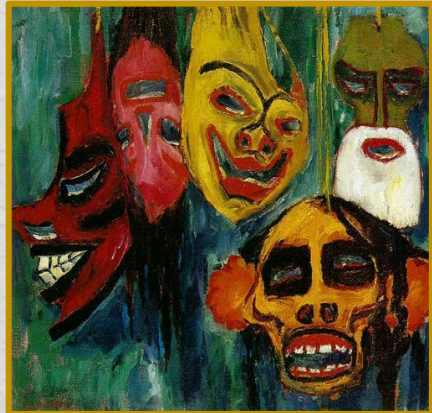
Contrasting Function & Purpose



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. 1946.



While Van Gogh does utilize color to contrast the subject, his overall color palette can be seen as more muted, leaning towards cooler blue tones. Similar to many of Van Gogh's works, the color palettes tend to lean towards blue accents (as well as contrast) while overall not being too saturated or bright. Unlike Van Gogh both Kahlo and Nolde use more bright colors. Specifically Kahlo utilizes saturated tones, in *The Wounded Deer* brown tones are used the most. These colors, while similar do not obviously blend into one another. Unlike Kahlo's colors (that do not blend into each other) both Nolde and Van Gogh use blending as a key point in their works. Nolde utilizes it to express chaos while Van Gogh utilizes it to demonstrate the depressing/stagnant nature of emotions.

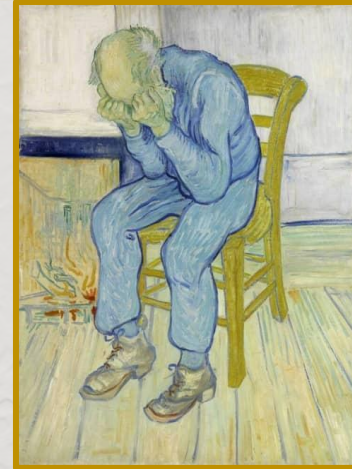


Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.



While the pieces also utilize contrast their ways of doing so are different. Van Gogh utilizes a darker blue to outline his subject, whereas Kahlo uses subtle shading with shadows as a way to pull the audience's attention to herself. Nolde also utilizes shadow but does so with a dark blue/black that almost blends into the background.

The overall composition of the pieces reveal different intentions of the artists. Both Kahlo and Van Gogh make sure the audience's attention is solely on their subjects. This amplifies the intended emotions while offering one main focal point. Whereas Nolde has many subjects that causes the audience's attention to bounce around. Utilizing this composition allows the audience to feel certain emotions as well. The purpose of having one main focal point in both Kahlo and Van Gogh's work is to exemplify the subjects pain. In Nolde's work the purpose is to demonstrate chaos.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.



Van Gogh. *Almond Blossoms*. 1890.

Comparing Function & Purpose

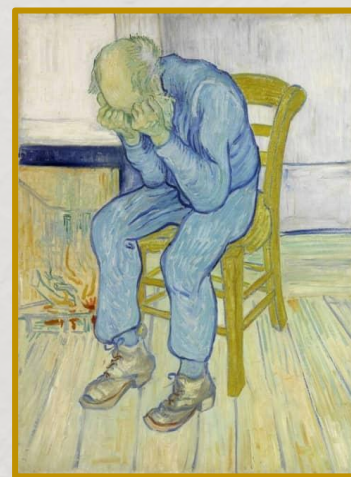


Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. 1946.

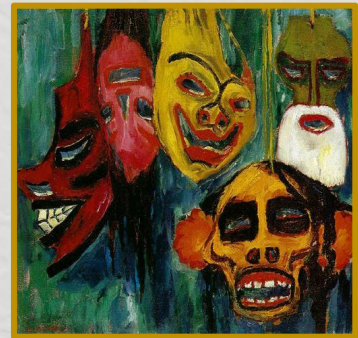
Similarly, the works highlight the subjects expressions as well. Van Gogh abstracting his subjects expression allows for further emotion. Having his face obstructed make the audience speculate 'why'. In this case the 'why' is an immense amount of grief, so even though there is no obvious expression there is still a focus on the expression. Kahlo's expression is neutral, almost unbothered by what her subject is experiencing. By not obstructing this expression and having Kahlo stare directly at the audience, they are able to feel the intended pain from *The Wounded deer*. The importance of expression can be most obviously seen in Nolde's *Mask still Life III*. While there are multiple subjects/areas to focus on, each subject has a different expression.

Each artist wants to display the inner turmoil that comes with emotions. This is reflected within both their messaging as well as their subjects. While overall subject composition is different in each piece, the subjects themselves are meant to demonstrate these emotions. Kahlo's subject (herself) is shot with multiple arrows, and while her overall expression is neutral, the audience is able to feel the pain from her experience. Kahlo framing her subject as a deer, an animal that is traditionally prey/hunted down further pushes her overall messaging of her pain. This is similar to Van Gogh, since his subjects face is obscured while having a hunched in sad pose. With this subject Van Gogh wants the audience to feel like they are the one experiencing the obvious pain and sadness. Similarly, in Nolde's piece his subjects take on a more literal form of expressing emotion. Each mask represents a different emotion, some even blending into each other.

To further emphasize the artists subjects, each work has a somewhat simple background. While Kahlo can be seen as the exception, with her forest scene and water in the background, the overall focus is still on Kahlo herself. Nolde has a background of simple shading with a muddled but monotone colored background. Van Gogh also has a muddled background, with many of the details being less than the subject itself.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911

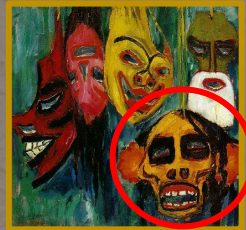
Comparing & Contrasting Function/Purpose

Similar to Van Gogh my piece utilizes a similar obstructed pose within the second illustration, however the use of this pose is different. My illustration presents my subject in two different environments/emotions. One that is polished and one that is more gritty and painful, this second illustration is most closely akin to *Sorrowing Old Man*. I replicate the initial posing as a way to obstruct the perfect imagery of the first drawing, similar to how Van Gogh uses it as a way to obstruct the 'who' of the subject.

My work also demonstrates an aspect of emotional turmoil within identity, something that can be seen within Kahlo's works as well. The way pain is expressed indirectly (in my work their being a broken mirror) furthers this aspect as well.



Conversely each inspiration piece has a varied color palette, from cool tones to warm (as seen with Kahlo) however my illustration is solely a red, black, and white color palette. I did this in order to show the 'black and white' world view of perfection and how detrimental that can be. In contrast to both Kahlo and Van Gogh's works my color can be seen as more simplistic. However similar to the inspirations I also used color as a way to emphasize focus on my subject, specifically with the first illustration. The subject itself is in the center of a bright red circle, the circle being the only point of color within the illustration. This emphasizes the first subject similar to Van Gogh's use of a darker blue as well.



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.

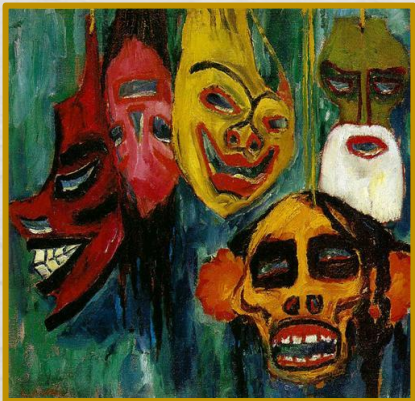
Similar to Nolde this work only focuses on the subjects while featuring a very plain background, this allows none of the audience's attention to leave the subjects. My messaging is also similar to Nolde's, its meaning meant represent a spectrum of emotion. Unlike Nolde's use of darker colors and little to no shading to demonstrate how barbaric emotions are, my work represent how foolish emotions can appear. The use of bright colors represents an overall juvenile appearance, also contributing to the subjects cartoon like appearance. Additionally both Kahlo and Nolde position their subject(s) in a way that they are looking directly at the audience. While only one of Nolde's subjects are looking directly at the audience, the others are composed in a way where their eyes are still looking forward.

Like Kahlo my subjects take a direct approach to looking straight at the audience.

In contrast, the work of both Nolde and Kahlo use very little linework, grounding their works in a more realistic or muddled perspective. Kahlo being the most realistic inspiration out of the analysed three, having no line work makes it more believable/relatable to the audience. My work in contrast is meant to be a similar character of emotion like Nolde, just presented in a different way.



Analysis of Formal Qualities



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.

- Color/Contrast
- Movement
- Structure
- Line

Similarly, the overall **structure** of the subjects furthers this chaotic feeling. Each mask is the same size and while some are in the foreground, the way they are arranged makes it difficult to focus on solely one. The audience is directed to look elsewhere in the painting. This is due to how the masks are arranged, having some overlap with each other while having most of them 'stare' directly at the audience themselves.

Nolde uses a low **contrast** to blend the subjects together with no obvious focus point. This allows the audience to feel that the emotions are more blended rather than obvious.

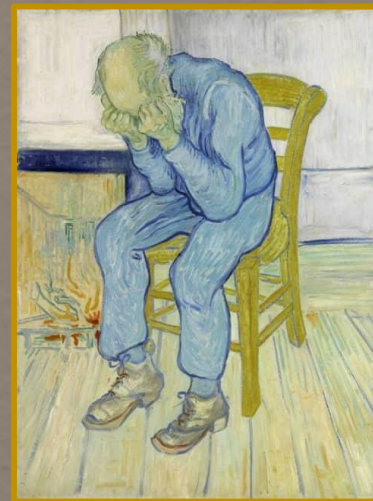
This highlights that while the emotions/subjects appear to be different they are all at their core the same and will blend into one another.

This is similar to the overall messaging as well, since this still life is meant to reflect different emotions and their similarities. This blended technique can also be seen with the use, or lack of use of **line**. Nolde's piece focuses on the masks themselves, but instead of clearly defining them with obvious outside lining he instead uses harsh blending with dark **colors**. Dark shadows blend into each other as well as the background itself, making the subjects themselves appear to be the same.

Van Gogh utilizes a muted **color** palette and **background** with thin **lines** to define the focal point of the piece and place emphasis on his overall emotion. The **lining** stays consistent throughout the piece, remaining thin and muted (specifically in the background) but once it comes to the subject his lining is somewhat different. These **lines** are now thicker and darker **contrasting** with the background. Since the **background** is muted with thin lines the audience's attention is drawn to the darker **lines**. Ignoring everything else in the **background** furthers the pain from the subject. It's as if everything else in the **background** does not matter/ the subjects pain is so much that it's the only thing him and the audience can focus on.

Overall Van gogh's use of **line** creates a consistent texture throughout his whole work. With this texture Van Gogh creates a fragility within his subjects emotions and the way he is composed, similar to an old man wallowing in his sorrow the texture is light and not abrasive.

In addition to the lining Van Gogh uses **color** to display a clear **contrast** between the subject and the **background**. This further emphasizes how much attention Van Gogh wants on to subject rather than anything else. Since there is only dark linework around the outer shape of Van Gogh's subject it becomes more separated. This **contrast** also aides in the overall **movement** of the piece. Due to the subjects closed off pose and the hands closing off the face, the **movement** is very rigid and stiff.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.

- Line
- Background
- Movement
- Color/Contrast

Analysis of Formal Qualities

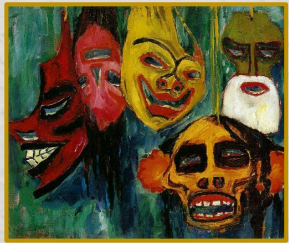
- Color/Contrast
- Movement
- Background
- Structure



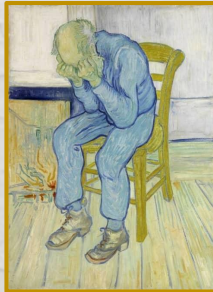
Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*. 1946

When looking at Kahlo's works there are certain repeating qualities within them. She repeatedly uses background as a way to emphasize her subject, the same can be said for color as well. Overall these qualities are used in order to bring emphasis to her subjects. The overall **color** of Kahlo's works is saturated brown, with very few darks except for some light shading. There is very little defining the subject (Kahlo) from the **background** itself. The audience is able to make out the figure of the deer, but there is very little shadowing to clearly define it. There is attention in the face, with Kahlo staring directly at the audience, however this is the only clear definition. Due to the lack of **contrast** within the subject and the background, it almost appears as if it was added in after. While this makes it blend into the **background** (**color** also contributing to this) the overall posing allows it to seem natural. The subject is almost jumping out from the background allowing it to be seen somewhat more clear.

The **structure** of this piece also impacts what the audience initially sees. Kahlo is in the very front of the piece, while the **background** tapers off in the back to a light blue ocean. This brings more light into the piece, it almost highlighting the subject itself. This is important because it brings more attention to Kahlo and the pain she is experiencing. Additionally **color** also impacts this as well, there is a lack of reds in the piece, it sticking to more neutral tones except for when it comes to the arrows piercing the subjects body. This makes the reds seem even more obvious and bright within the piece, having this bright red contrast with the brown of the body brings more attention to it. As a result the audience is able to better understand the pain Kahlo wishes to express.



Norde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.



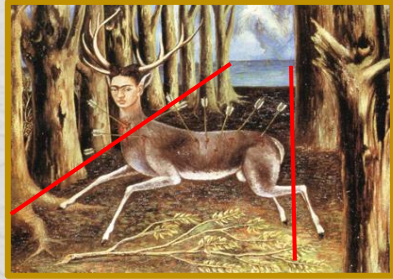
Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*. 1890.

Kahlo also utilizes the subjects posing to demonstrate **movement** as well. Since the pose itself is dynamic (a deer jumping) the movement of the piece is dynamic as well. There being a smooth transition from the subject to the background also creates a downward perspective within the piece, it guiding the audience to look down onto Kahlo.

Each piece contains dark **colors** to both emphasize and blend certain aspects of their subjects, whether that be with the posing or **emotion**. **Emotion** also influences the overall structure of the works in order to place importance on key parts of the piece. Each artist utilizes a mix of painful emotions like grief and suffering to influence the audience.

Comparing Formal Qualities

Movement, Texture, Subject



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*.
1946.



Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*. 1911.

Each work utilizes the **movement** of their piece in order to point the audiences attentions towards the subject. Most notably in both *The Wounded Deer* and *Sorrowing Old Man*, both contain a triangular shape that tapers off near the subject. Van Gogh has the subject at the top of this triangular shape, where as Kahlo places her subject at the end of the triangle. While the positioning is different in both pieces, the attention is still focused on the subject. Nolde utilizes a similar technique as well, this triangular shape reappearing in the bottom of the piece guiding audience attention up.

This creates almost a guide that can be interpreted as wanting the audience to look at certain features of each artists work first. Van Gogh wants the audience to first look at his subjects expression/position (hence being at the top of the piece). Whereas Nolde wants the audience to look at each and every detail/subject within his piece, guiding the audience's eyes upward instead of downward.

Texture is also utilized in the works as well, a rough muddled texture being continuously seen. Van Gogh creates this texture with his line, it demonstrating how muddled everything within the piece is, even the somewhat defined subject. Kahlo uses color to create texture and dimension on the foreground of her piece, and Nolde utilizes a mix of both color and line to specifically create texture in the background, Nolde's use of texture is to be messy and rough in stark contrast to the fragility conveyed within both Kahlo and Van Gogh;s work..

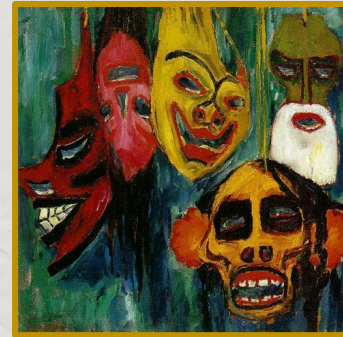
Each piece contains singular (or multiple) subjects that are the main focal points of the piece. All the qualities within the works help amplify the intended emotion from the subjects and overall work. While Nolde is an exception to having a singular subject, his background, color, and line work all work together to focus the attention on each mask. The overall attention in *Mask Still Life III* bounces around from each subject, while not really focusing on the background. Similarly both Kahlo and Van Gogh have a singular focus that emphasises emotion. Both Van Gogh and Kahlo's backgrounds can be deemed as interactive, them containing different aspects (like trees or a chair) that assists in creating depth. This depth allows the audience's attention to wander away from the subject, while still highlighting the importance of the subject. All the works main intention is to utilize their subjects to highlight emotion. Whether that be conveyed through the subjects contrast or the way the movement guides the attention.



Van Gogh. *Sorrowing Old Man (At Eternity's Gate)*.
1890.

Comparing Formal Qualities

Line, color, contrast, repetition

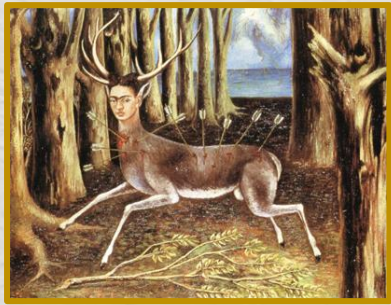


Nolde. *Mask Still Life III*.
1911.

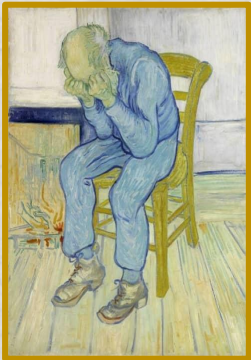
While each work contains line their use of **line** is different. Van Gogh utilizes the harshest/most obvious lining, it varying in **color** but staying consistent in length/width. Whereas Kahlo has very little obvious lining, her surrealist style contributing to this. Kahlo mainly utilizes realist techniques while putting a surrealist spin on them, as seen with her subject (herself as a deer). This is reflected within her lining as well since there is no obvious or defining lines. This gives her work a more grounded feeling while showing an absurdist subject, this further reflects the grounded message of pain and how it can be conveyed. Similarly with Nolde's 'barbaric' style there are some defining lines, but only within the subject. He uses this line work in order to more clearly define the subjects expressions, creating dark pointed lines in order to make his subjects look more uncanny and exaggerated. .

The color of each piece is very different from each other as well. Van Gogh utilizes mundane/muted colors that further the melancholy of the piece. His goal with his piece was to exemplify grief and pain, using washed out colors helps achieve this since bright and saturated colors are normally correlated with happiness or more intense emotions. This coupled with the fact that the only dark colors within Van Gogh's piece are to **contrast** the subject from the background furthers the subjects obvious grief. It can be inferred that the subjects sorrow is so intense that the dark line/color is consuming him. In contrast, Nolde does the opposite, solely using bright colors in his work. By using bright colors, even in the background, the piece feels more chaotic and less uniformed. The colors themselves are also similar making it more messy. This furthers the presented chaos as well, some of the colors bleeding into one another as well.

Kahlo utilizes **repetition** within her subject, having multiple arrows pierce her body in order to further demonstrate the pain she is experiencing. Her use of repetition furthers the messaging of her piece. Van Gogh does not utilize any repetition in his work, things incorporated do not appear more than once, this makes it overall less engaging but lends itself to the attention on the subject instead. Nolde repeats/multiplies his subjects but does not have a consecutive pattern, instead each mask is different with different colors and expressions. These differences in formal qualities lend to the individuality of each piece.



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*.
1946.



Van Gogh.
*Sorrowing Old Man
(At Eternity's Gate)*.
1890.

Comparing Formal Qualities

Both mine and Nolde's pieces can be interpreted as expressing a spectrum of emotions. Nolde paints this spectrum in a more raw a muddled way, making the subjects (emotions) appear monster or demon like, this harkening back onto Nolde's religious background. My piece utilizes clean and bright **color** to create a more comedic tone for emotions.



This comedic tone is in order to show how foolish emotions can be viewed as, the subjects can also be interpreted as being dumbed down caricatures of complex emotions. This is also attributed to the low amount of blending, only using simple monochromatic **colors** like Nolde.

Kahlo faces her audience head on while being directly upfront for the audience to see her. I positioned each of my subjects to look straight onto the audience as well. I wanted a similar effect where the audience pays the most attention to the subject. Furthering this composition both of the outer subjects (sadness & anger) are facing inward, while they are staring straight ahead their bodies are positioned in a way where the audience then moves their eyes to the center subject. This was purposeful because I had wanted happiness to be the center emotion within this piece, since out of the core three happiness is the most acceptable emotion. Additionally, like Kahlo this middle subject is the only one that while its eyes are closed is positioned straight forward.

Similarly in the first illustration of my second piece the initial subject is facing directly at the audience, this was also inspired by the purposeful composition of Kahlo's work. Unlike Kahlo reflecting pain, this first subject reflects confidence and elegance. However this changes once looking at the second illustration. In this illustration the posing is inspired by Van Gogh, creating a hunched over character to represent pain and the pressure of being perfect (in comparison to the first illustration). This illustration is meant to represent how the constant pressure of being perfect can be detrimental to one's own identity, reflecting a similar sense of pain and sorrow (similar to both Kahlo and Van Gogh). Like Van Gogh my illustration also utilizes lining to draw attention to certain aspects of the subject, while the world overall line work is thin the combines use of chasing also assists with this attention.



Kahlo. *The Wounded deer*.
1946.

Contrasting Formal Qualities

While my illustration utilizes **line** work as a main way to bring attention to certain aspects of my subject, the way this **line** is incorporated is different. Van Gogh uses varied like work, while the consistency of the **lines** is delicate, they almost blend into one another to represent how muted everything is around the subject. In contrast my illustration uses a consistently thin lining, and while this removes some of the emphasis away from my subject(s) I redirect it with the use of color and background.

Similarly all of the analyzed works use a variety of **color** through their works, this is in order to further their styles as well as bring emphasis to certain parts of each work.

In contrast both my illustrations as well as my paintings do not contain complex **color**. This is due to the simplification of messaging as seen most obviously with my painting that emulates Nolde. Nolde uses a darker coloring that bleeds into on another to show how distorted/barbaric the nature of emotions are. In contrast my subjects have a simple monochromatic color palette with simple shape and blending. While the composition is similar to Kahlo the lack of blending within this piece shows how simple it is meant to be. As a result the message loses more of it's darker nature, instead taking on a comedic role.

Van Gogh.
*Sorrowing
Old Man (At
Eternity's
Gate).* 1890.

Unlike Van Gogh and Kahlo's soft brushwork my subjects linework within the illustration is more pointed. This pointed character is in order to show the sharpness of perfection and represent how intense the overall pressure to be perfect or present yourself as perfect can be. This is offset by the use of a big circle that is presented within both illustrations as a way to demonstrate the vulnerability within perfection. This type of **shape** is not present within any of the analyzed works, instead using softer versions of shapes with an included triangular movement pattern.

Nolde.
*Mask
Still Life
III.*
1911.

My painting also includes a semi-thick outer **line**, this is in contrast to both Kahlo and Nolde. Kahlo produces a natural structure within her work where as mine is produced, this is also due to the line work.

My use of **line** is meant to emphasize the multiple subjects, this is different than Nolde who uses shading as a way to blend his subject together, as well as Kahlo who uses a more realistic approach for emphasis.



Bibliography

Darcy, David. "Frida Kahlo: Toted as the Female Van Gogh, Kahlo Draws the Crowds." *The Art Newspaper - International Art News and Events*, 30 Sept. 2002,

www.theartnewspaper.com/2002/10/01/frida-kahlo-toted-as-the-female-van-gogh-kahlo-draws-the-crowds.

"Emil Nolde Paintings, Bio, Ideas." *The Art Story*, www.theartstory.org/artist/nolde-emil.

"Emil Nolde Artist Overview and Analysis". [Internet]. 2023. TheArtStory.org. Content compiled and written by Ximena Kilroe. Edited and published by The Art Story Contributors.

Available from: <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/nolde-emil/> First published on 19 Aug 2017.

"Masks." *The Nelson Atkins Museum*, art.nelson-atkins.org/objects/2223/masks.

Michael Watt Cothren, and Anne D'allea. *Fundamentals of Art History*. London, Laurence King Publishing, 2021

MoMA | *Vincent Van Gogh. The Starry Night. 1889.*

www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/vincent-van-gogh-the-starry-night-1889/#:~:text=Van%20Gogh%20was%20known%20for,palette%20knife%20are%20clearly%20visible

Sert, Busra. "The Wounded Deer – a Detailed Analysis." *ArtnSketch*, May 2022, artnsketch.com/the-wounded-deer-a-detailed-analysis.

"Sorrowing Old Man ('At Eternity's Gate')." *Sorrowing Old Man ('At Eternity's Gate') – Kröller-Müller Museum*, krollermuller.nl/en/vincent-van-gogh-sorrowing-old-man-at-eternity-s-gate.

Sorrowing Old Man ('At Eternity's Gate') – Kröller-Müller Museum. krollermuller.nl/en/vincent-van-gogh-sorrowing-old-man-at-eternity-s-gate. The Editors of Encyclopaedia

Britannica. "Vincent Van Gogh | Biography, Art, and Facts." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 26 Mar. 2023, www.britannica.com/biography/Vincent-van-Gogh.

"Worn Out Vincent Van Gogh, 1882." *Van Gogh Museum*, www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en/collection/d0378V1962.

Zelazko, Alicja. "Frida Kahlo | Biography, Paintings, and Facts." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 5 Apr. 2023, www.britannica.com/biography/Frida-Kahlo.