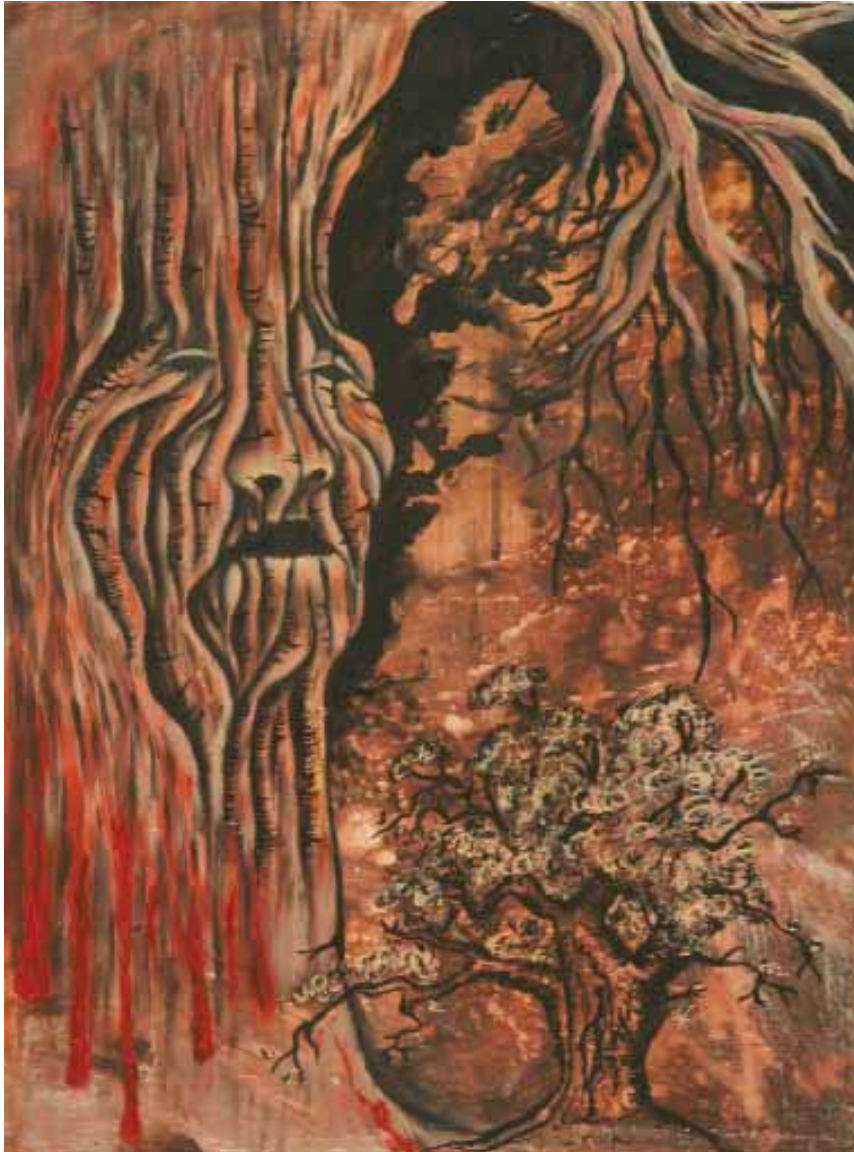


An Acrylic Painting Depicting an Environmental Issue HIGH LEVEL 4



A CRY FOR HELP

I always try to pursue my artworks with a unique approach. In this exemplar project, my goal is to express my message distinctly.

The element of texture is incorporated into the bumpy form of the tree, the roughness of the bark and the dripping blood on the tree trunk by using a wet on wet opaque acrylic technique. In contrast to this style, I used the acrylic paint like a water colour by doing wet on wet, splattering and frottage.

I looked through [Applied Arts: Canada's Visual Communication Magazine](#), for inspiration that would fulfill my goal. When I saw a painting by Jeff Garcia, I was instantly attracted to his neutral colours scheme and originality. I was impressed by the abstract background and its contrast to the distinct black outlines of his subject. I was inspired to create a similar effect with the use of my own style. Another artwork which influenced me, was a photograph by Michael Graf. It was a photograph of a woman, whose white skin blended with the white background. He used drips, as if ink had spilled on her head, to outline her features. My inspirations for "A Cry for Help" are pieces that are contemporary, unique and bold.

The main message of "A Cry for Help" is that nature suffers because of mankind. I have incorporated many elements and principles of design in my piece to support my message. Unity is achieved through a monochromatic colour scheme. The different thickness of my lines have created variety and interest. The bold black lines emphasize the expression of suffering and sadness of the tree. I wanted the facial expression to project my message. My branches and lines are drawn in a way to create a cyclical rhythm promoting the line of vision to begin at the face moving through the hanging branches, onto the smaller tree and back to the face. With the use of the tree's face on one side, and a smaller tree and branches on the other, asymmetrical balance is accomplished.

I chose a background that was chaotic and confusing to symbolize humanity. People today are too busy with their lives concerning themselves with other matters less important than Mother Nature. They are too focused on other things and therefore cannot see that the earth, trees, animals, sea, and sky are slowly dying. The layering of thinned paint with random splatters in the background suggest a busy and chaotic atmosphere.

My hope is that my painting will help develop concern for the environment.

Teacher's Notes**Knowledge/Understanding**

- This student demonstrates an exceptional degree of understanding of the elements and principles of design in the painting. The work illustrates a complex use of line: texture is implied through sophisticated line quality (e.g., the bold vertical lines of the large tree contrast with the softer curved lines of the small tree), and the repetition of lines (e.g., in the trees) gives wonderful rhythm and movement to the composition. The student shows abundant knowledge of colour as a design element in the apt choice of a limited colour palette (e.g., the monochromatic scheme matches the sombre mood of the painting), bold use of red (e.g., to represent blood), and well-positioned black values, all of which support the theme of suffering nature. The student shows a superior understanding of compositional organization (e.g., in the placement of subject matter) and balance (e.g., in the work's asymmetry). The juxtaposition of negative and positive space in the painting produces an extremely powerful impact. The student skilfully balances contrast (e.g., in the line quality) and harmony (e.g., in the monochromatic colour scheme) to create a unified, powerful composition.

Thinking/Inquiry

- The student depicts an environmental message in the painting with a high degree of effectiveness. He or she delivers the message that nature is suffering in a powerful, thought-provoking manner, through the personification of the sad, bleeding tree, the haunting emptiness of the painting's negative space, and the juxtaposition of the two obviously different trees. The contrast between the heavily painted, clearly defined subject matter and the less-defined, layered soft washes of the negative space or background adds a nuance of uncertainty to the message, thereby making it richer.

Communication

- The student discusses artistic influences with a high degree of clarity. He or she refers to two artists and clearly explains his or her attraction to their

styles (e.g., of a painting by one of them, the student writes, "I was impressed by the abstract background and its contrast to the distinct black outlines of his subject.").

- The student explains his or her use of painting techniques with a high degree of clarity. He or she says how and where they are used (e.g., "wet on wet opaque acrylic technique" on the tree trunk) and describes in an interesting way how they support the intended mood of the painting (e.g., "The layering of thinned paint with random splatters in the background suggest a busy and chaotic atmosphere.").

Application

- The student uses elements and principles of design and acrylic painting techniques to produce an outstandingly effective art work. He or she shows exceptional compositional skills (e.g., in the use of space on the picture plane). The student shows mastery of a variety of acrylic painting techniques and applies them in a highly effective manner (e.g., wet-on-wet, splattering, frottage; a sensitive response to the gessoed underpainting.) The result is a superb acrylic painting that makes a poignant environmental statement.

Comments

This work is representative of a high level-4 performance. The student demonstrates a high degree of achievement of the expectations in the Thinking/ Inquiry and Communication categories of knowledge and skills, and an outstanding level of achievement in the Knowledge/Understanding and Application categories.

Next Steps

In order to improve his or her performance, the student could:

- expand the discussion of artistic influences used in his or her painting by citing specific works by the artists named in the artistic statement.