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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Content for Research Papers: If you wish to submit a research paper for a future edition, consider what is original to that paper. Research papers, done in the compressed time of an academic semester, tend to be critical summaries of what others have said on a topic—and that's perfectly fine. For *Artemisia*, however, papers should go a step or two beyond. Students submitting a research paper should ask themselves what they see as being *original* or in some way a *contri–bution* to what is known about the topic. "Original" and "contribution" do not necessarily imply brand new research; that type of originality is what would be expected for a thesis or dissertation at the graduate–school level. For this journal, originality should be thought of as perhaps applying a fresh methodological approach to a familiar topic, asking a new question, arguing a point, and so forth. Originality in research means what you are doing is from your own perspective although you are drawing arguments from other scholars' research to support your arguments.

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Format: Entries should be 1–4 double–spaced pages in length. If possible, include an image related to your experience.

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PRAYER THROUGH ILLUMINATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

Alexa O'Day

Off the treacherous rocky coast of Northern England sits a small stone priory, and within its candle–lit scriptorium one of the most spectacular illuminated manuscripts was created: the Lindisfarne Gospels. The Lindisfarne Gospels are composed of each of the four gospels written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, portrait pages of the saints, and cross–carpet pages for meditation between the gospels. The monks of this priory and other monasteries throughout Europe were some of the few who were literate in the seventh century. However, despite the immense amount of work that went into the creation of these codices, they were not for mass consumption. Both the creation and appreciation of these illuminated manuscripts were forms of private devotion for the monks, nuns, and aristocracy who saw their meticulous transcription and illumination as a personal act of devotion to God as well as a meditative practice akin to prayer recitation. The colophon of the Lindisfarne Gospels (Fig. 1) reads "for God and Saint Cuthbert," demonstrating that the audiences for this gospel book were the monks, the patron saint of Lindisfarne, and God.[1] Knowing this gospel book was symbolic of the monks' devotion to God, the pages were covered in elaborate decoration, precise geometric knots and designs, and a perfect gloss of the four gospel books. This remarkable artistic achievement kick–started the illuminated manuscript production of the Northumbrian region of England, later declared the Northumbrian Renaissance.

This paper will investigate how the Lindisfarne Gospels embodied the lives of the monks on Holy Island through the materials used to produce the codex, how the geometry of the cross–carpet pages acted as a form of prayer for both the illuminator and the reader, and how the Celtic identity of the monks in a post Whitby era (after Roman Catholicism was chosen over Celtic Catholicism) is on display in this manuscript. The identities of the monks at Lindisfarne need to be

[1] Carol Farr, "The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Performative Voice of Gospel Manuscripts" In *The Lindisfarne Gospels: New Perspectives,* ed. Richard Gameson (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2017), 134.

analyzed in tandem with the artistic study of the pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels to understand the cultural magnitude of this codex.

The Lindisfarne Gospels are not merely a beautifully decorated manuscript, but rather a symbolic expression of the landscape of Northumbria and both the monks' Catholic faith and Celtic heritage. The landscape of Holy Island is present on the pages of the gospel book via the binding materials, pigments, and vellum and is inextricably tied to the locality of Lindisfarne. It is not only the location of the priory that imprints itself onto the gospel book, but also the monks' Catholic faith. The tedious work of transcribing each gospel book was the monks' spiritual vocation for years. The Lindisfarne Gospels should be seen as a manifestation of their religious devotion to God in addition to the book's artistic contribution. In addition to the monks' religion, the Celtic heritage of the monks of Lindisfarne is imprinted on the book through knots, zoomorphic designs, and metallurgy. The Lindisfarne Gospels are more than just beautifully decorated gospels. They are an expression of the monks' home, faith, and heritage. The locality of the resources used in the Lindisfarne Gospels' creation, the spiritual act for both creator and reader of the gospel book, and the Celtic symbolism used throughout the ornamentation make the Lindisfarne Gospels a complex amalgamation of the monks' identity.

Previous scholarship has focused on the materials used to create the manuscript and how the monks acquired them. However, while a chemical analysis on the inks provides data to examine the natural pigments sourced throughout the region, it does not connect that information to the community effort in creating the Lindisfarne Gospels. It was by the hands of the monks at Lindisfarne that the natural pigments were collected, turning the rocky landscape of Northumbria into a rainbow of colors for the scribe to use. Expanding on the importance of locality for the monks creating this manuscript allows for a unique analysis of the importance it would have had for the monastery.

In addition to viewing the local materials only through a chemical lens, scholars have examined the geometry and creation of the cross–carpet pages through both mathematical and organizational lenses. This type of technical analysis chooses to focus on the quill and compass during creation instead of the meditative and religious purpose of these designs. There is a disconnect between

the research done on these cross–carpet pages and the practical purpose of the pages for the monks. Not accounting for the purpose of these mathematical designs to assist the monks in meditative reflection ignores the ethos of the geometry. The geometric shapes and organization of the cross–carpet pages are a unique and stunning element of the Lindisfarne Gospels that tell only part of the story. For the monks, the designs were not solely geometric ornamentations: they also served as prayers. Both the act of illuminating the designs and reading the book upon completion was akin to prayer for the monks of Lindisfarne. The purpose of the geometry has often been ignored when studying the cross–carpet pages.

Another area of study surrounding the Lindisfarne Gospels that needs to be further examined is the Celtic heritage of the monks living in a Roman Catholic priory. The Celtic influence of knots, zoomorphic elements, and metallurgy are all clearly displayed in the Lindisfarne Gospels. The political atmosphere of Northumbria and how the Celtic monks would have felt utilizing these Celtic themes in the gospel book is a third missing element in the scholarship that thus far has not been adequately developed.

The Location of Lindisfarne in The Creation of the Gospels

The monks living at the remote monastery at Lindisfarne devoted their lives and their work to God. A monk's prayer, study, manual labor, or transcription of the gospels at Lindisfarne all would be representative of their lifelong commitment to piety. The unique location of Lindisfarne allowed for an insular lifestyle for the monks to focus on how they could best worship God through their life's work. In addition to the rural location of Northumbria, the monastic lifestyle on the two square mile "Holy Island" where the priory was built allowed Lindisfarne to be isolated from the outside world. This gave the monks a heightened focus on their devotional work by living a remote and ascetic lifestyle in service to God.[2] Bishop Eadfrith is cited in the colophon of the Lindisfarne

[2] Walter Horn and Ernest Born, "The Medieval Monastery as a Setting for the Production of Manuscripts" *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 44 (1986): 33. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20169021.

Gospels as the sole scribe and illuminator for this magnificent book.[3] The remote location of Bishop Eadfrith's scriptorium on Holy Island would have aided in his ability to focus on the knots, illustrations, and text of his manuscript. No outside distraction would have separated Eadfrith from his scriptorium. His desk was like a chapel and the quill was his prayer to God.

In addition to the geographic location of the priory, the physical lands of Lindisfarne helped create the gospel book through their natural resources. The pigments used for the illuminations are all derived from locally sourced materials that include arsenic, ochre, red lead, soot, and minerals.[4] By foraging the pigments needed for the text and illuminations, the monks incorporated the colors of Lindisfarne into the pages themselves. It is the very plants and minerals of Lindisfarne that are lending their colors to the pages of the gospel book. While the physical materials needed to create the Gospels would have cost a small fortune and hundreds of hours' worth of work in the eighth century, the process of writing and illuminating the gospels was a religious experience for the scribe, acting as a meditation between them and God.

The Lindisfarne Gospels were the life's work of Bishop Eadfrith and display his personal devotion to God through the intricacy of the illuminations. However, though the transcription and illumination was done alone, the creation of the gospel book represents an effort from the entire priory and surrounding areas. Creating an illuminated manuscript required the work of not only a scribe, but also an incredible amount of money for the materials and labor. Binders and metalsmiths are cited by name in the colophon having assisted Bishop Eadfrith in his work to finish the Gospels after his death. The monks at Lindisfarne would have been trained in every skill needed to create these codices since there were

[3] There is some discussion about whether Bishop Eadfrith wrote the gospel of John due to a translation inconsistency in the citation. Some scholars believe that Eadfrith was only the commissioner for the gospel book and not the scribe and illuminator. While the colophon does credit other monks with their assistance in the binding, metallurgy, and other production tasks, Eadfrith is cited as the scribe and illuminator. Had an outside craftsperson been commissioned to illuminate the manuscript or transcribe the text, they would have been credited by name. Further discussion on authorship, see Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 38–40, 104–10.

[4] An extensive chemical analysis has been done on the pigments of the Lindisfarne Gospels after doubts were raised on their origin. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, 280, 439–51.

no local craftspeople who could have been hired to assist them. Metal, leather, and vellum were needed to bind the book, and it is estimated that over 150 cattle skins were dried and treated to create the vellum for the entire manuscript.[5] This large amount of resources shows the monetary investment the monks were willing to spend on their craft for the grace of God. By Eadfrith's hand the words and decorations of the gospel book were put on vellum, but it took the entire priory of Lindisfarne to produce the codex.

Eadfrith enlisted his fellow monks to help with the production of the Gospels. Mixing the pigments, preparing the vellum, crafting the quills, and marking the margins of the page all would have been done by his fellow monks to allow Eadfrith the time and energy to focus on the transcribing and illuminating.[6] In order to help with the meticulously organized text on the pages, both the lead pencil and a primitive version of the light box have been suggested to have been first invented at Lindisfarne by the monks. Where there would have been indentations left by a hard point on the paper to rule each page are instead thin lead lines, suggesting a pencil was used. A set of drawings on the back of a sheet of vellum that also appear on the front is an anomaly amongst medieval manuscript illuminations which suggest a light box may have been used to trace the designs on the front of the vellum. Eadfrith may have drawn the design on the back of the vellum and then used a light source to trace those designs on the front. Metal rods attached to windows were found at Lindisfarne, and could have been the mechanism used by Eadfrith.[7] While the validity of stating that these were prototypes of the first pencil and light box has been questioned, it would explain how Bishop Eadfrith maintained such precision throughout the pages. The process of transcribing the words of four gospels was the *opus dei* for Bishop Eadfrith, proving to be the culmination of his life's work starting in the early eighth century up until his death in 721.[8] A few areas of the gospel books were left unfinished and scholars have assumed that after Eadfrith's death, work on

[5] Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, 200.
[6] Carol L. Neuman De Vegvar, in *The Northumbrian Renaissance: A Study in the Transmission of Style* (Selinsgrove, London and Toronto: Susquehanna University Press, 1987), 171.
[7] De Vegvar, *The Northumbrian Renaissance*, 213–17.
[8] De Vegvar, *The Northumbrian Renaissance*, 10.

transcribing and illuminating the book halted.[9] The gospel books would remain true to their colophon because Eadfrith seems to be the only scribe and illuminator for the original gloss.

In addition to Eadfrith being cited in the colophon, there are consistent spelling discrepancies throughout the manuscript that allude to the fact that the entire text was written by the same hand. In words that use a hard "e" sound (ē) the scribe chose to use the spelling "ae" for this sound instead of "e."[10] In addition to this, the proximity between the text and the illuminations is consistently spaced. If the text was indeed created before the illustrations or by another hand, there may be inconsistencies in the spacing or illuminations that cover the text, yet there are none. It is by these examples that scholars conclude that Bishop Eadfrith was the sole scribe and illuminator of the manuscript. Through the dedicated work maintaining consistency in the ink, line spacing, and letters, Eadfrith diligently copied each word and each letter onto the page. This tedious work of meticulously writing each letter perfectly, page after page, was both a meditative practice for the monks to allow them to focus on their relationship with God, and a physical gift for God as per the dedication.

The embodiment of the region of Northumbria through materials and pigments as well as the monks' collaborative labor add depth to the Lindisfarne Gospels' significance to the monks of Holy Island. The decorative pages of the gospel book were created as a physical representation of their piety and devotion to God, but the act of meticulously creating these precise knots and transcription was a unique undertaking. The beautiful illuminations are more than just decorative pages, they are also meant to be used as a tool for prayer. Focusing on the purpose of the cross–carpet pages and ornamental decoration, as well as how Eadfrith's work of transcribing the text of the gospel books was an act of devotion, show why the Lindisfarne Gospels are more than just a decorative manuscript and are truly an instrument for the monks to use for worship.

[9] De Vegvar, *The Northumbrian Renaissance*, 397.

[10] Alan S. Ross, "'Scribal Preference' in the Old English Gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels" In *Modern Language Notes* 48, no. 8 (1933): 519. https://doi.org/10.2307/2911691.

Prayer Through Illumination

The ornamental details and geometric designs of Eadfrith's manuscript are what have made the Lindisfarne Gospels one of the finest examples of medieval manuscripts. His work transcribing the gloss of the gospels along with the careful act of illuminating the book was a way for Eadfrith to show his devotion to God by creating this testament to his faith. Michelle Brown compared Eadfrith's journey of meticulous transcription and illumination of the gospels to Christ wandering in the desert. Both Eadfrith and Christ embarked on their arduous journeys to find internal peace between themselves and God, with the hope that enduring the hardship would bring divine tranquility into their lives.[11] Eadfrith sought to transport both himself and the reader after each of the books and before the next via the knots and ornamentation of the cross–carpet pages. The Lindisfarne Gospels' highly decorative cross–carpet pages allow the reader of the gospel to have a moment to ruminate on the deeper meaning of the books while following the patterns and lines and provided the illuminator a meditative experience while creating a labyrinth of knots. The cross–carpet pages are geometrically planned pages filled with Celtic knots, animals, and figures which would have required the utmost focus and precision by the illuminator to capture the perfect geometric design.

Art historian Jacques Guilmain analyzed these cross–carpet pages and has created simplified versions of them to see their perfect geometric organization.[12] Folio 210v of the Lindisfarne Gospel is the cross–carpet page (Fig. 2) that introduces the gospel of John. Guilmain took the decorative elements out of the design leaving only the structural formations of the page. He then reconstructed the decorative keys and knots of the cross–carpet page step by step to show the

[11] Michelle P. Brown, "'A Good Woman's Son': Aspects of Aldred's Agenda in Glossing the Lindisfarne Gospels" In *The Old English Gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels: Language, Author and Context,* ed. Julia Fernandez Cuesta and Sara M. Pons–Sanz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2016), 13. https://discovery.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=a3f5a302–d16c–3024–b5ed–995ffcc09f90.

[12] Guilmain's analysis of cross–carpet pages is a fully comprehensive study of each geometric element found in the Lindisfarne Gospels, the Book of Kells, and the Book of Durrow. For additional information, see: Jacques Guilmain, "The Geometry of the Cross–Carpet Pages in the Lindisfarne Gospels" In *Speculum* 62, no. 1 (1987): 21–52. https://doi.org/10.2307/2852565.

geometry and precision required by Bishop Eadfrith when illuminating these gospel pages. Guilmain suggests Eadfrith would design the overall layout of the page using large shapes. Once the overall composition was planned, he would begin to add smaller geometric shapes from which the Celtic knots would be derived. What started as a small circle could evolve into a coiled snake, floral designs or even a bird. If this was done haphazardly, the page would end up disorganized, transforming the page from a meditative experience into a tangled mess.

By maintaining strict geometrically balanced elements in the cross–carpet pages, the illustrations don't appear confusing or muddy, but instead perfectly symmetrical and organized. Ensuring geometric precision allowed the reader their moment of contemplation of the allegories from the gospels while following the labyrinth of designs with their eyes. The action of both illustrating and admiring the Celtic knots produced a mental atmosphere for quiet contemplation with God and heightened the cultural value of the Lindisfarne Gospels from a simple gospel book to a transportive experience for both scribe and reader. The gospel book and its ornamentation was a tool the pious monks used for prayer. This transformative nature of the cross–carpet pages shows the need for a fuller understanding of the Lindisfarne Gospels that has been missing in scholarship thus far. The cross–carpet pages are about more than just geometry, and only focusing on the intricate patterns ignores the true purpose of these pages.

Before each book of the gospels are portrait pages showing the personification of each saint writing his gospel. Small floral clusters ornament each corner of the borders surrounding the image, yet the portrait page is relatively plain compared to the overwhelming details on the cross–carpet pages. The portrait page of the book of Matthew shows the personification of Saint Matthew writing his gospel and is accompanied by the icon image of the man or angel (Fig. 3). Saint Matthew sits in an open room with little decoration other than the curtain and his icon. The book of Mark's portrait page follows the text of the book of Matthew and shows Saint Mark accompanied by his iconographic symbol of the lion, stylized fabric drapery, as well as the same small corner details seen in the portrait page of Matthew (Fig. 4). Continuing, the book of Luke's portrait page shows Saint Luke writing about the life of Christ, accompanied by his icon of the

ox and filigree in the corners (Fig. 5). The filigree in the corners of the portrait page of the Book of Luke have evolved from the clusters seen in the book of Matthew and Mark and show influence from the Celtic artistic tradition with decorative knots on each corner. While the perspective of the figure and chair in the portrait page of Saint Luke has not reached the level of naturalism via linear perspective yet, the precision in the decorative knots of this page shows a mastery of these Celtic designs. The final book of John's portrait page shows Saint John accompanied by his icon of the eagle and simplified corner knots (Fig. 6). Each gospel's title page shows the personification of the evangelist writing his gospel in the same position that Bishop Eadfrith would have been at Lindisfarne as he meticulously transcribed the gospels. While the portrait pages are relatively simplistic in style and design, it is not due to the lack of decorative talent by the bishop, as proven by the cross–carpet pages.

Bishop Eadfrith would have approached the act of illuminating the cross–carpet pages with prayer–like focus. Had Eadfrith been distracted during his illumination process there would have been mistakes or inconsistencies, yet there are none in the gospel book. His relationship and devotion to God is seen through every precise line, knot, and pattern on the cross–carpet pages. The perfection of the geometry is a representation of the perfection of God and Christ. While Eadfrith may have been a trailblazer, in the world of medieval manuscript production, turning calligraphy and illumination into a devotion to God was not a unique concept amongst the Abrahamic religions.

Calligraphy has been seen as a religious experience and a way to show devotion to God in the Islamic faith and would have been a similar experience for Bishop Eadfrith in his transcription of the gospels' text and illuminations. The geometrically influenced designs are reminiscent of Islamic artistic style and some historians believe there may be influence from the East in the layout of these designs. John Bradley believes Islamic influence could be at play in the Lindisfarne Gospels due to the similarities in craftsmanship, the portrait pages, and the geometric knots. Europe in the seventh century certainly had cross–cultural trading, leading Bradley to believe this may be one of the first artistic examples of

Eastern influence in Occidental manuscript.[13] Islamic geometric designs represented the naturally occurring geometric patterns found in the cosmos, though this was unlikely the inspiration for Eadfrith's knots. Although few sources connect the Celtic knot designs to Islamic geometric ornamentation, Bradley's analysis remains an interesting counterargument showing a connection between Eadfrith's devotion via script and illumination to the Islamic practice of calligraphy.

Celtic Identity

The Celtic designs throughout the Lindisfarne Gospels speak to a larger conversation happening in Northumbria at this time between the Roman Catholic Church and the Celtic tradition of Catholicism. Although it is very likely the Bishops at Lindisfarne had Celtic ancestry, the Roman Catholic church had actively worked to ensure the monasteries in England followed Roman cultures and procedures and not Celtic.

The Lindisfarne priory was founded in 653 by King Oswald who recruited monks from the historic Iona monastery in Scotland to help him establish Lindisfarne as a powerful monastic community. The Iona monastery was responsible for the conversion of the British Isles to Christianity and had become a pilgrimage site for early Christians. However, the Iona monastery was still practicing the Celtic tradition of Christianity instead of Lindisfarne's Roman tradition. Seeing how successful Iona had become as a site for both Christianity and the pursuit of knowledge through monastic service, King Oswald hoped that by recruiting these monks to his territory of Northumbria he could create a strong kingdom founded in Christian values. The monastery at Iona, from which King Oswald drew inspiration when founding the priory at Lindisfarne, practiced Christianity in the Celtic tradition; however, in the year 664 at the Synod of Whitby, clergymen decided to maintain Roman practices and traditions in the Anglo–Saxon region and not the Celtic traditions.

[13] John William Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, UK: Bracken Books, 2006). Bradley's comprehensive study on illuminated manuscripts contains information regarding vellum production, Greek and Roman manuscripts, all the way through to the invention of the printing press.

The Synod of Whitby declared that Catholic churches must follow the same calendar for Easter celebrations and also specified the methods of tonsuring priests. However, a larger decision was being made that the Roman Catholic Church would be the only entity making legislatorial decisions for the Church. It was important for Rome to maintain specific dates for the liturgical calendar as they were tied to the solar calendar (Easter being the Spring Equinox). Rome was trying to avoid any schism from occurring in the Church by prioritizing its own calendar, but the relationship between the Celtic and Roman Catholics would be tainted by this decision.[14] By choosing to include overtly Celtic designs in the Lindisfarne Gospels, Bishop Eadfrith is making a subtle nod to his fellow monks at Lindisfarne that the Celtic culture was still a part of their lives. In the Lindisfarne Gospels, marginal notations state that certain books were to be read on particular liturgical dates. However, these marginalia dates align with the Celtic Catholic liturgical calendar and not the Roman Catholic. This Celtic dating inclusion in the gospel book reveals that the Lindisfarne priory still followed the Celtic liturgical calendar.[15] The Lindisfarne Gospels prove that while the monks were Roman in their faith according to the Catholic Church, they were Celtic in their heritage.

The Celtic arts and practices lingered in the isolated monastic communities as evidenced by their illustrations in the manuscripts produced.[16] Had it not been for the Celtic knots, zoomorphic designs, and artistic traditions of the Anglo–Saxon region by influence of the Celts, the Lindisfarne Gospels may not have had the cultural importance that it has today. One source of inspiration for the ornamentation in the gospel book may have come from the Sutton Hoo burial site.[17]

Flora and fauna designs, interlacing knots, and geometric ornamentation can be found in the metallurgical helmets and jewelry found at the Sutton Hoo burial site. Although the burial site predates Eadfrith's gospel book, the designs look contemporary. This may be from where Bishop Eadfrith sought inspiration for his cross–carpet pages, decorative knots framing the portrait pages, and

[14] Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels,* 32.
[15] Farr, "The Lindisfarne Gospels," 137.
[16] De Vegvar, *The Northumbrian Renaissance*, 275.
[17] Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, 273.

interwoven zoomorphic designs. The interwoven knots organized into geometric patterns found on the shoulder clasps at Sutton Hoo appear to be a physical representation of a corner of the cross–carpet pages made into metal. The exact date of the Sutton Hoo burial isn't known, though experts suggest the burial may have taken place in the early 7th century.[18] This was only a few years before Bishop Eadfrith started his work on the gospels. Although the Sutton Hoo burial site is more than three hundred miles from Northumbria, the similarities between the Celtic designs demonstrate the cultural exchange between monks at Lindisfarne and the Celts in the south. The territory of the British Isles housed different tribes and peoples, but the Celtic design program links them together.[19] It appears that Celtic heritage throughout the region followed a program of decoration that stretched across the Anglo–Saxon and Hibernia region. The unique decorations found on the pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels truly come to life due to their Celtic influence, and they represent the monks' heritage on Holy Island.

The relationship between Celtic culture and the monks at Lindisfarne is instrumental in understanding the historical importance of the Lindisfarne Gospels. The meditative experience of illustrating and viewing the knots make the Gospels an immersive experience for both the creator and the viewer. The Lindisfarne Gospels are a personal project of devotion to God by Eadfrith who still maintains the Celtic traditions and artistry, but the other monks who saw the Gospels experienced the same prayer–like focus while reading them. The interlacing Celtic knots were to be followed with their eyes while they absorbed the message of the gospel books, giving them a specific page designed for contemplation. These moments of intention within the gospel book used Celtic designs, knots, and zoomorphic ornamentation to facilitate reflection for the monks of Lindisfarne. It was unlikely in the mind of Eadfrith that any clergymen from Rome would have ever seen his gospel book, which is why his Celtic identity is on display. The Celts, who had been using runes and ogham (a medieval Irish alphabet) as a system to convey messages before their writing system developed,

[18] Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, 275.
[19] Michelle Brown, *Painted Labrinth: the world of the Lindisfarne Gospels* (Hong Kong: South Sea International Press, 2004), 8.

understood how powerful words and symbolism could be. The Celtic identity of both the Northumbrian region and the monks of Holy Island is found in the ornamentation of the Lindisfarne Gospels and represents the complex cultural identity and strength of the region.[20] The knots represent generations of Celtic families, whose tradition and religion on the British Isles will not be forgotten despite Rome's official proclamation. The opulent illuminations achieve an almost iconic effect as they symbolize the Celtic culture in each interlacing pattern.

Conclusion

The Lindisfarne Gospels are a physical representation of the hearts and souls of the monks living on Holy Island. The landscape surrounding them is shown through the inks and vellum of the book. The vibrant colors were harvested from the plants and flowers around the priory. The monks' piety and devotion to God is shown in each geometric labyrinth that their eyes would have followed while they processed the previous chapter's lessons and stories. Finally, their Celtic heritage is on display through the precise knots, zoomorphic elements, and ornamentation. Despite Lindisfarne's remote location, the monks traded knowledge and goods with their neighboring cultures. Yet while they were open to new ideas and artistic styles from these communities, they never lost touch with their Celtic heritage. The Celtic influence in the geometrically designed cross–carpet pages transformed the gospel book into an immersive experience for both the scribe and the reader. By including these meditative pages in between each gospel book, Eadfrith is teaching his fellow monks and future readers to take time in between reading the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to ruminate on the lessons and stories one had read before starting the next book. Eadfrith viewed quiet contemplation as an equally important aspect of one's devotional practice as understanding the text itself.

The Synod of Whitby marked the beginning of the end for Celtic Christianity in the eyes of the church, but for the monks of Lindisfarne, their pride in their heritage continued to show in their artistic creations. The Lindisfarne Gospels

[20] Some scholars argue that the Celtic identity should be considered Irish identity. For further reading, see Clare Stancliffe, "The Irish Tradition in Northumbria after the Synod of Whitby" in *The Lindisfarne Gospels: New Perspectives* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2017), 19–42.

were a deeply personal work for Bishop Eadfrith and his fellow monks, and their passion and dedication show in each illuminated page. By analyzing the materials used, the intention behind creating labyrinths for the eye to follow, as well as the cultural atmosphere in the Anglo–Saxon region during the eighth century, the Lindisfarne Gospels transform from a medieval illuminated manuscript into a physical manifestation of the life's work of the monks at Lindisfarne priory.

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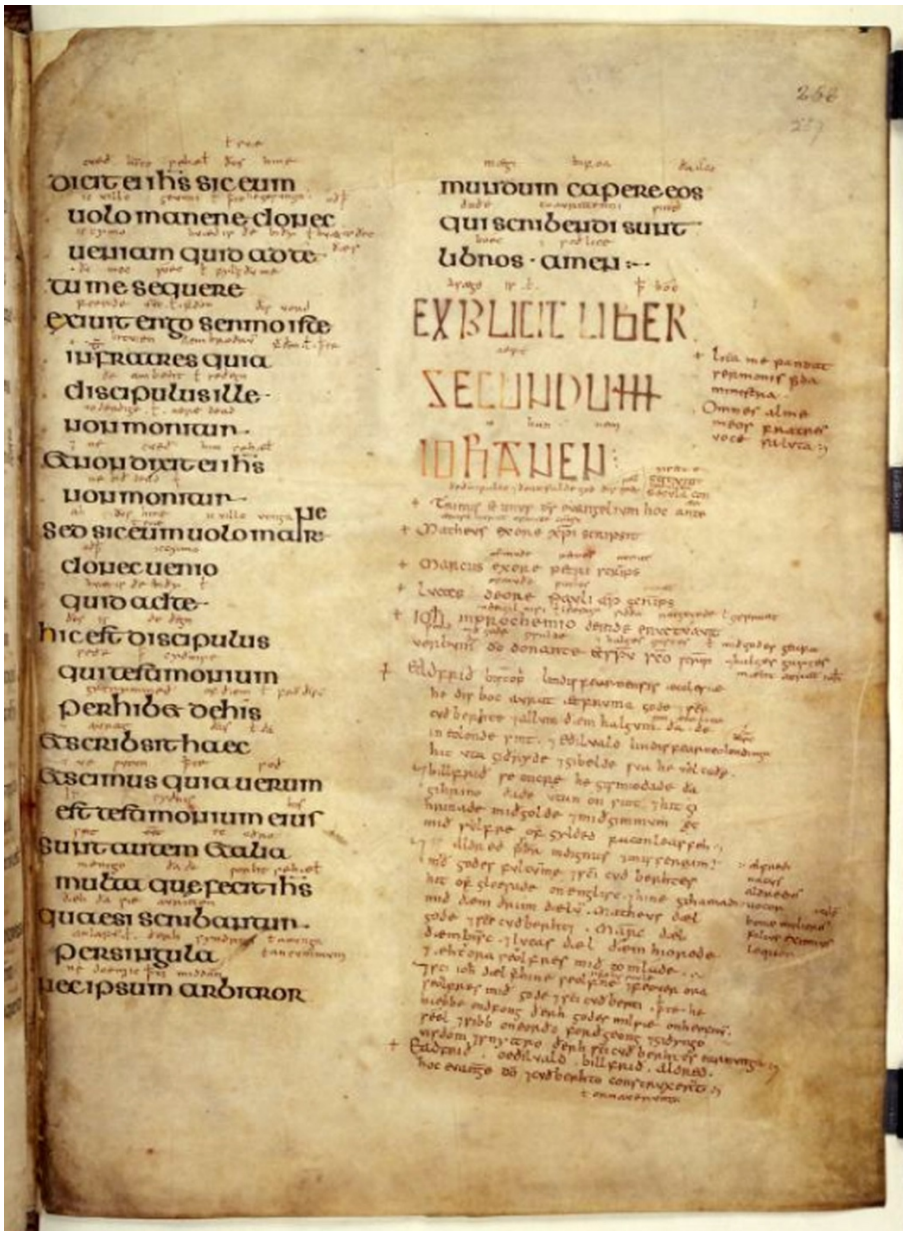

Figure 1. The Lindisfarne Gospels, Folio 259, The Colophon, c. 700. Photograph courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

Figure 2. The Lindisfarne Gospels, Folio 210v*, Cross–carpet page*, c. 700. Photo courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

Figure 3. The Lindisfarne Gospels, Folio 25v*, Saint Matthew Portrait Page*, c. 700. Photograph courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

Figure 4. The Lindisfarne Gospels*,* Folio 93v*, Saint Mark Portrait Page*, c. 700. Photograph courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

Figure 5. The Lindisfarne Gospels, Folio 137v, *Saint Luke Portrait Page*, c. 700. Photograph courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

Figure 6. The Lindisfarne Gospels, Folio 209v, *Saint John Portrait Page*, c. 700. Photograph courtesy of The British Library, London, UK.

DUALITY IN THE FIGURES OF MANET'S *THE RAILWAY*

Holden Davis

In 1995, Beth Archer Brombert included in her biography on Édouard Manet an interpretation of the artist's *The Railway* (Fig. 1), an enigmatic painting that has intrigued many scholars and critics since it was first exhibited in 1874. At the center of *The Railway*'s mystery are the two figures in the foreground. Scholars who have analyzed the painting often mention the lack of clarity regarding the relationship between the woman and child, questioning whether the woman is the child's mother, sister, or nanny. Creating further puzzlement is the railway itself, which does not physically appear in the painting, creating a disconnect between the title and the subject of the painting. This disconnect suggests the work is not simply an objective scene of life but contains a deeper meaning. Brombert posits that *The Railway* symbolizes the passage of time and the importance of focusing on and enjoying the present.[1] While Brombert addresses the possible meaning behind the connection between the painting and the railway, she does not provide an interpretation regarding the relationship of the two figures. By analyzing the contrasting visual elements in the painting, the contemporary events surrounding its creation, and Manet's life and other works, this paper will strengthen and enhance Brombert's interpretation of *The Railway* and also introduce a new interpretation that claims the woman and the young girl in the painting are representations of the same person at different stages of life.

In the foreground of the painting sits a woman looking out at the viewer. She holds a book and a sleeping puppy in her lap. Next to her is a young girl facing in the opposite direction. The girl holds onto the black bars of a fence and looks out towards what lies beyond—the Gare Saint-Lazare, the largest and busiest train station in Paris. Despite the painting's title, one doesn't see the railway in the image, only the smoke left behind by a passing train. While the painting is seemingly a peaceful and objective slice-of-life scene, it is replete with mystery and themes of the passage of time and modernity.

[1] Beth Archer Brombert, *Édouard Manet: Rebel in a Frock Coat* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Company, 1995), 334.

The concealment of the railroad, despite the title implying it is the subject of the painting, suggests the railroad has an emblematic purpose.[2] Brombert claims that the train represents the passage of time. Of the child watching the passing train, she writes, "[The child] is beguiled by the steam . . . She is unaware that the railing on which she rests her hand separates her from the knowledge that comes with age: there is no beyond out there. . . . But there is a here and a now."[3] The train represents the passage of time, and the young girl represents looking towards and longing for the future. The concept of time would have been relevant to Manet who was in his early 40s, a watershed age full of uncertainty, and who had witnessed a constantly changing and industrializing city under Baron George-Eugene Haussmann.[4] Haussmann's drastic changes to Paris created feelings of uncertainty to many, including Manet.

Haussmann was hired by Napoleon III to rebuild and expand Paris in the Second Empire. Under Haussmann's direction, Paris became a new city with new housing, new markets, new sewage and drainage systems, and new railway stations. However, this change to Paris wasn't met entirely with welcoming arms. Haussmann's projects led to many in the working class losing their homes. People criticized the project, believing Haussmann's new Paris was divided in two due to the high rents and displacement of those who were evicted, segregating the classes more severely.[5] T.J. Clark writes about the uncertainties caused by Haussmannization:

> It was said that the new city Haussmann had made . . . was given over to vice, vulgarity, and display. It was not, except superficially, a city of the bourgeoisie at all, if one meant by that word the solid men who made their fortunes on the Rue Saint-Denis . . . This was the city of courtesans and bull markets. Here was ostentation, not luxury; frippery, not fashion; consumption, not trade. And here above all was *uncertainty*—a pantomime

[2] Paul Abe Isaacs, "The Immobility of the Self in the Art of Édouard Manet: A Study with Special Emphasis on the Relationship of His Imagery to that of Gustave Flaubert and Stephane Mallarme" (PhD diss., Brown University, 1976), 224.
[3] Brombert, *Édouard Manet*, 334.
[4] Brombert, *Édouard Manet*, 334.
[5] T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 45.

> of false rich and false poor, in which anyone could pretend to be anything if he or she had money for clothes.[6]

The Paris that people were familiar with was disappearing, causing feelings of anxiety that affected both the working class and the middle class. Manet, who was born in Paris to a wealthy family within the bourgeoisie and who experienced society before the Haussmannization of Paris, would have been aware of and possibly felt these same feelings of uncertainty as he watched his city change drastically before his eyes.

These feelings of anxiety regarding change are understandable in someone like Manet, who loved Paris and the fashionable high society of the bourgeoisie.[7] French writer Emile Zola wrote of Manet, "He confessed to me that he adored society and discovered secret pleasures in the perfumed and brilliant delights of evening parties."[8] He was an active participant in the social scene and frequented boulevards packed with theaters, restaurants, and cafés.[9] He began to create art that captured scenes of bourgeois life. Zola also described Manet's art and said it "could only have developed in Paris; it has the slender grace of our women, made pale by gaslight; it is truly the child of an artist who loved high society and exhausted himself determining to conquer it."[10] The rapid changes to Paris under Haussmann must have caused feelings of uncertainty in one who loved Parisian Society as much as Manet did. While some scholars believed Manet celebrated industrial innovation such as the railway, others, like Harry Rand, believed that, "Manet's most unromantic vision of modernity derived from the quiddity of his inhabiting it rather than from a desire to celebrate its driving progressive spirit."[11] Whether or not Manet admired certain changes under Haussmann, the city he loved was changing due to a strong progressive spirit of those industrializing it.

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[6] Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life,* 46.
[7] Theodore Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris: One Hundred Paintings, Drawings, prints, and Photographs by Manet and his Contemporaries* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1982), 14.
[8] Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris*, 13.
[9] Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris*, 14.
[10] Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris*, 18.
[11] Harry Rand, *Manet's Contemplation at the Gare Saint-Lazare* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 113.

Manet's *The Railway* provides viewers with a glimpse into some of the feelings he may have felt regarding this renovation of Paris.

In *The Railway*, though the garden in which Manet paints the scene is not shown, there is a sense of comfort expressed in the relaxed pose of the woman who wears a hat with flowers.[12] Paul Isaacs discusses this sense of calm in contrast with the industrialized world beyond the fence. He suggests that the garden on the figures' side of the fence represents a calm and peaceful paradise. He supports this by pointing out the bunch of grapes that lie on the ledge in the lower right corner of the painting. Manet had used a bunch of grapes in another painting, *Le Vieux Musicien*, where they symbolized abundance, youth, and paradise. However, in *Le Vieux Musicien*, Manet included a thistle with the grapes, symbolizing hardship and challenges in life.[13] The grapes in *The Railway* are not accompanied by a thistle, further suggesting that life on this side of the fence represents paradise and tranquility. Of the railway, Isaacs claims that Manet, whose studio sat right next to a railroad, "would not have been unaware of the threat of the railroad and modern industrialization to the kind of world represented in this painting . . . Perhaps a loss of paradise is suggested. The good life is in the present, on this side of the bars. But the future, represented by the railroad and the girl's immobility with respect to the bars, is not so bright."[14] In both Isaacs' and Brombert's readings of *The Railway*, there is a theme of the passing of time, aging, and appreciating the current moment. These interpretations are supported by the current events surrounding Paris at the time Manet created this work. The garden and tranquility seen on the figures' side of the fence represents the enjoyable, leisurely bourgeois life that Manet was familiar with and enjoyed. The train beyond the fence, completely hidden in smoke, represents the uncertainty that the future holds amid change and industrialization. Therefore, Manet's painting may be an expression of his desire to enjoy the present moment that is given to him rather than focus on the uncertainty that age, progress, and technology brings. These ideas of the passage

[12] Isaacs, "The Immobility of the Self," 223.
[13] Isaacs, "The Immobility of the Self," 223–24.
[14] Isaacs, "The Immobility of the Self," 224.

of time and enjoying the present are further supported by the two figures in the foreground.

The passage of time is shown in the various stages of life represented by the figures in *The Railway.* The sleeping puppy represents infancy, the little girl represents childhood, and the woman represents adulthood.[15] As mentioned earlier, Brombert interprets the young girl as naive and unaware of the knowledge that comes with age. Of the woman, Brombert writes, "[she] knows better than to be fooled by steam; it is nothing to hold on to. The plume of steam is only the memory of what has passed by. But some things last: the book in her hands, even if unread."[16] The woman represents a state of maturity that has come with age and experience. She is not a child enchanted by the speed and movement of the train, daydreaming and eager to experience the future and grow older. Instead, the woman enjoys everything the present has to offer her. She sits contentedly in the tranquility of the garden, reading a book and taking advantage of the present moment. Therefore, the figures in the painting are not simply figures captured happenstance in a slice-of-life painting. They hold specific meanings that relate to the passage of time and are closely connected as they together represent maturity that comes through age and experience. This idea of aging, along with the number of contrasts that visually connect the two figures supports the idea that the woman and child are the same person represented at different ages.

Many scholars have pointed out the number of visual contrasts between the figures, implying that the contradictions within *The Railway* serve to draw attention to and connect the woman and child together in a mysterious way. Theodore Reff describes these contrasts and states, "one is mature and has been reading, the other is young and watching a train go by; one is seated and facing us, the other standing and turned away; one wears a blue dress with a white collar and cuffs, the other a white dress with a blue sash and bow; and if both have reddish brown hair, one wears it down in long tresses, the other swept up and tied with a ribbon."[17] The woman and child show no indication of familiarity

[15] Brombert, *Édouard Manet*, 334.
[16] Brombert, *Édouard Manet*, 334.
[17] Reff, *Manet and Modern Paris*, 56.

with each other. This lack of interaction added to the number of contradictions, pointed out by Reff, implies a mysterious connection between the two figures. Harry Rand suggests that this connection lies in the unconscious:

> In the painting's every aspect Manet expended extreme care to afford counterparts for each level of consciousness. . . . Victorine Meurent's book, with the white of its pages—vessels of meaning with the potential to convey all the world of ideas, of discursiveness—is utterly differentiated from the girl's reverie. . . . These different measures of consciousness might at first be taken to represent a thematic coincidence. But certain symmetries begin to appear, such as the obvious spatial one in which the adult turns toward us, and out of the painting, while the child turns away, into the picture and its blank world. Not coincidentally, the child stares raptly at the "blanc," the white emptiness. An emissary, perhaps from the white world, the child wears white and a blue sash; the adult is attired in exactly the opposite colors, blue with white highlights. Were this opposition of states of mind happenstance, Manet's intentions for *The Gare Saint-Lazare* would not be indicated clearly enough to fashion a case for his methodical calculation. But the insistent reinforcement of the theme of consciousness and the spectrum of its various states appears throughout every part of the painting.[18]

As Rand suggests, Manet's use of visual contrasts in the painting serves as a tool to draw attention to not only the visual differences between the two figures but also the differences between their states of mind. While the figures are physically close, they are emotionally and psychologically distant from each other, due to the older woman having aged and matured through her life experiences. If the figures in the painting represent the same person, then they would further enhance the image's themes of time and levels of consciousness. The image no longer only symbolizes different states of mind between adults and children, but the different levels of consciousness with which one views the world at different

[18] Rand, *Manet's Contemplation,* 37.

stages of his or her own life, thus adding a more introspective and personal meaning to the painting.

Other connections exist between the woman and the child that further strengthen their relationship to each other. Rand has said of their hair, "They have the same hair color, so it is not hard to see one as the harbinger—the "anterior shadow"—of the other, with childhood reverie akin to, but not the same as, adult musing."[19] The similarities between the appearance of the woman and child, together with the contrasts, suggest, as Rand pointed out, that one is the "anterior shadow" of the other. The child represents the older woman's younger self who has not yet matured and apprehends the world in an innocent and childlike manner. She hasn't yet understood the realities of the world clouded by the steam. Of the young girl, Krell has described her as "a strange combination of child and adult (the nape of her neck and hairdo belie her youth)."[20] This description adds another interesting link between the girl and the adult, suggesting that the young girl may not be all she at first appears to be. An element of maturity in her visual appearance connects her to the older woman sitting next to her, as well as the inclusion of a black ribbon tied in the girl's hair as well as around the woman's neck. Their shared hair color and shared black ribbon, as well as the young girl's interesting adult-like nape and hairdo, serve as further evidence that the woman and child may be the same person.

Representing the same person in two separate figures would not have been out of the ordinary for Manet, who played with themes of duality in other paintings like *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (Fig. 2). The setting of this painting is the Folies-Bergère, a café-concert hall and popular place of entertainment in Paris. The central figure of the painting is a barmaid, selling goods from a table such as wine and fruit. However, there is also an element of seduction and prostitution. The barmaid is not simply a saleswoman selling goods on a table, but she herself is also for sale. This painting has garnered attention from many critics and scholars primarily because of the enigmatic and emotionless expression of the barmaid and the inaccuracies of the images reflected in the mirror behind her.

[19] Rand, *Manet's Contemplation,* 119.
[20] Alan Krell, *Manet and the Painters of Contemporary Life* (New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 128.

Manet ignores accurate perspective by moving the reflection of the barmaid to the right of the painting when it should have been directly behind her. In so doing, one sees both the front of the woman as well as her back. The odd perspective is not the only inaccurate aspect of the painting. Not only is the woman's reflection not where it should be, but there are also inconsistencies in her appearance. T.J. Clark writes, "Looking out at us, the woman is symmetrical, upright, immaculate, composed; looking in at him, the man in the mirror, she seems to lean forward a little too much, too close, while the unbroken oval of her head spouts stray wisps of hair. She looks a bit plumper than she ought to; the pose she adopts is more stolid and deferential."[21] He also points out that while the woman in the reflection seems to be part of some narrative, the "real" barmaid looking out at us has no sense of narrative with her emotionless expression.[22] Therefore, Manet creates a duality here. The number of differences between the two images of the barmaid suggest that although they are the same person, they are meant to represent two different sides of her—one a saleswoman selling goods at a café, the other a prostitute, selling herself as a commodity.

Other scholars, such as Pierre Bourdieu have also discussed this split image of the same figure in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. He has explained that the mirror divides the bar into two zones of reality and illusion, creating two separate images of the barmaid, one that is emotionally distant and one that speaks with a customer.[23] Of this duality, he says, "femininity is presented as double and split. She is both vestal and hetaera, virgin and prostitute, and these two faces of femininity are to be found in the image not separately, but conjoined, simultaneously."[24] In *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, Manet creates two images of the same person, one seen from the front, and one seen from the back, just like the figures in *The Railway*. The front facing woman in both paintings stares directly at the viewer in a mysterious manner. Both pairs of women share several similarities found in their hair and clothing, but both also have differences that

[21] Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life,* 250.
[22] Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life,* 250.
[23] Pierre Bourdieu, *Manet: A Symbolic Revolution,* trans. Peter Collier and Margaret Rigaud-Drayton (Newark: Polity Press, 2018), 478.
[24] Bourdieu, *Manet: A Symbolic Revolution*, 479.

separate them. If Manet split the identity of the woman into two in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* to strengthen the symbolic meaning and challenge the ideas surrounding commodity within the painting, it would not be out of the question for him to do the same in *The Railway*. By doing so, he challenges viewers to think deeper and more critically about the passage of time and how it relates to them on a personal level.

Though the meaning of *The Railway* is often debated, scholars such as Brombert have suggested the work to be a metaphor for the passage of time and enjoying life in the present. This reading is probable given that the 40-year-old Manet might have been experiencing feelings of uncertainty in a time of constant change and progress under the industrialization of Paris under Haussmann. With these interpretations in mind, the possibility that the woman and child in *The Railway* are the same person adds new meaning and depth to Brombert's interpretation. With this reading, the image not only represents the passage of time, but the passing of one's own personal time as they age. It also provides a commentary on how age and experience affect how one apprehends the world around them. The painting now invites introspection into viewers' own lives and encourages them to examine their level of consciousness at their current age and view the world and enjoy it as it really exists in the present time.

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Figure 1. Édouard Manet, *The Railway (Gare Saint–Lazare),* 1873. Oil on canvas, 36 3/4” x 45 1/8”. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 2. Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies–Bergère,* 1882. Oil on canvas, 27 3/4” x 51 1/8”. Courtauld Gallery, London. Photo: Wikimedia Commo

THE EXPRESSION OF NATURE IN MUSIC AND CONSTABLE'S CLOUDS

Aleena Anderson

The idea that nature, the arts, and personal expression go hand in hand was one of the core tenets of early nineteenth–century Romanticism, and so nature became a primary vehicle for expression among Romantic artists. What makes nature such an incredible source of inspiration is that it is a natural phenomenon that is constantly changing and sometimes fleeting right before our eyes, just like so many moments of our human experience stimulated by visual images, music, and words. The British painter John Constable made nature his passion by reflecting in his art, especially his cloud paintings, his emotional states during specific periods of his life. Like Constable, Romantic composers such as Frédéric Chopin and Ludwig van Beethoven also had the innate ability to convey their own emotions and human experience through their music. This paper examines correspondences between the mood and composition of Constable's paintings and the music of Chopin and Beethoven to demonstrate how Constable's cloud paintings can be better understood in relation to Romantic ideas about nature, change, and expression shared by the sister arts of painting and music.

Something magical and sometimes whimsical can be found in clouds. Clouds are merely a reaction to pressure and moisture in the air, yet they evoke such strong emotion in humankind with their grandeur and beauty. They can signal current weather conditions, fuel our imagination as we look for how they form surprising recognizable shapes, or they can bring us to tears with their vibrant colors at sunset. William Wordsworth even alludes to divine associations in his poem "Intimations on Immortality": "The Clouds that gather round the setting sun/Do take a sober colouring from an eye/That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality."[1] Part of what makes clouds so mesmerizing is how they are constantly moving, swelling, breaking, and dissipating. When thinking about parallels between perceptions of clouds and music, we realize how much music is constantly changing. Each new movement, chord progression, or note can evoke numerous emotions from the listener. Just like the clouds in the sky, each piece of

[1] Paul B. Davis, *Western Literature in a World Context,* vol 2, *The Enlightenment through the Present* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 898.

music is up for our imagination to decide what it means to us. We can let it inspire us, help us grieve, or heighten our celebrations. While music of many forms and styles is characterized by change, it is the additional infusion of personal emotion in Romantic music that offers us a chance to feel some sort of cathartic release.

As one who was raised in the English countryside, John Constable understood the idea that nature is more than just what we see around us. He took clouds and their ephemeral beauty and made them come to life on his canvases. His cloud studies convey a sense of passion and intrigue that cause the viewer to question the intentions behind those particular paintings. It is tempting to conclude that Constable studied cloud movements and patterns just because he loved the English countryside, but it seems there is so much more to it. He spent countless hours and even weeks out in the fields trying to capture the essence of the natural landscapes around him and the mood of the sky above him.[2] He later enlarged his sketches into compositions of massive proportions, sometimes reaching six feet, which heightened their visual statement.

Could it be that Constable was using the clouds as an emotional expression, giving the viewers the ultimate fleeting imagery of the human experience, showing us that sometimes the most unappreciated things in nature are the most beautiful?[3] Many artists at this time were toying with this idea. They wanted to express their emotions by capturing personal moments that often happened so quickly, much like the momentary experience of listening to music, hearing beautiful words, and seeing breathtaking clouds that are constantly changing and never the same. Constable captured the most unpredictable natural forces on this Earth and made those natural phenomena relatable through the emotional reaction of the viewer. He did this through his personal reflection and intuition, which for Romantics was the basis of natural thought. Because of this, Constable's paintings, and many works by his contemporaries, are more personal than their predecessors.[4]

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[2] T. H. Tuckerman, "John Constable" *Bulletin of the American Art–Union* no. 6 (September 1850): 90.
[3] Tuckerman, "John Constable," 90.
[4] Davis, *Western Literature*, 543.

The Romantic Movement reached its peak in the mid–1800s, and Constable was a leading proponent of the movement during his lifetime. This was a time for artists to break away from the authoritarian imagery and rigid rules of Neoclassical artists from a few decades prior. Romantic artists were free to explore how nature elicited feelings of both awe and terror at the same time, a feeling of sublime emotions.[5] A key principle of Romanticism was looking to the future and towards progress but mixing that with one's emotions, which is what Constable seems to have been doing with his clouds.[6] The sister arts of painting, music, and literature have almost always worked in harmony, but during the era of Romanticism, it was as if they were able to work together without the boundaries of form. There was a feeling of oneness within these sister arts and nature. Constable, for much of his time, was fully immersing himself within England's countryside and rural landscapes, and he embraced the nature around him through depictions of simplistic beauty. While much of his focus was on romanticized landscapes of quaint English farm life, he found himself quite literally with his head in the clouds.

In so many ways, Constable embodied the ideals of the Romantics. He chose to work alone more often than socializing with fellow artists, which followed the Romantic sentiment that to express oneself more honestly and deeply, one must retreat into introspection and withdraw from society.[7] Constable did not have to be constantly discussing his ideas with other artistic contemporaries to get his point across in his work. His work was personal, and to him it was beautiful and did not rely on some narrative to be deciphered. It is difficult to know exactly what Constable's thinking was behind all his paintings. However, when we consider our own personal emotions in relation to nature as well as references made by Constable in some of his letters in relation to the chronology of his paintings, we can, perhaps, get closer to understanding what Constable was trying to say in some of his cloud studies.

[5] Tuckerman, "John Constable," 91.
[6] Nina Athanassoglou–Kallmyer, "Romanticism: Breaking the Canon" *Art Journal* 52, no.2 (Summer 1993): 18.
[7] Davis, *Western Literature*, 542.

One of Constable's warmest pictures is *Weymouth Bay* (Fig. 1) from 1816, a painting that is half clouds and half landscape nestled into a charming bay. At first glance, there does not seem like much to be deciphered. However, Constable was married that same year, possibly even during that same season when he painted that landscape, and his art was never more perfect than during this period in his life.[8] Studying the picture closely, it is possible to draw deep emotion and personal expression from *Weymouth Bay*. The scene is made up of almost entirely warm tones of golden yellows throughout the sun–drenched rolling hills, with pinker tones appearing in the highlights of the clouds above. The whole painting feels warm and inviting. Yes, there are large and somewhat stormy clouds above, but they seem to be passing through after a rainstorm, reflecting a feeling of hope and new beginnings. When looking even closer into the painting, we can see a figure standing in the open field looking towards the bay, possibly taking in the awe and beauty of nature and enjoying the moment of being there. It is possible that Constable painted that figure looking out into the bay as himself, embracing the emotions of this joyful time in his life.

In contrast to the warmth and happiness of *Weymouth Bay*, Constable conveys a more somber mood in his *Rainstorm Over the Sea* from 1824–1828 (Fig. 2). During those four years, his wife became ill, and Constable and his family packed up and moved to Brighton in the hopes that better weather would improve his wife's health. After four long years of battling her sickness, Constable's wife passed away on November 23, 1828.[9] Constable did not have to write anything or even say anything to show what he was feeling during this time. Instead, he painted it. Looking at *Rainstorm Over the Sea,* Constable's message is more than clear. The dark and weeping rain clouds that sit over an almost completely black sea most likely represent Constable's hopelessness and pain at the loss of his wife. The abrupt and strong brushstrokes from Constable's paintbrush over the canvas seem to echo his anger and frustration of her illness

[8] Charles Robert Leslie and Jonathan Mayne, *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable: Composed Chiefly of His Letters* (London: The Phaidon Press, 1951), 72. Leslie describes the warmth of the painting and the feeling of Midsummer in the English countryside.

[9] "She was then on a sofa in their cheerful parlour, and although Constable appeared in his usual spirits in her presence, yet before I left the house, he took me into another room, wrung my hand, and burst into tears without speaking," Leslie and Mayne, *Memoirs*, 168.

and her declining health. The painting feels almost abstracted, again giving the viewer a sense that he painted this piece out of passion, grief, and anger. Those feelings of melancholy and pain are almost tangible. These two contrasting examples suggest that Constable's works are more than merely faithful renderings of nature—they reflect the nature of life and how much it changes. He conveys his emotions through his perspective of landscape and clouds and the ever–changing quality of nature from day to day and minute to minute just like events and emotions in every person's life.

Similar effects can be found in the music of early nineteenth–century Romantic musicians in their ability to create emotional and visual effects through various forms and styles of music. One of the most notable composers and musicians in the early nineteenth century was Frédéric Chopin. Much like Constable, Chopin beautifully captured his wild and oftentimes melancholic emotions in his music. However, unlike Constable, he is known to have surrounded himself with many different artists of his time. He attended different salons throughout Europe and was even put in close social circles with authors, poets, and visual artists.[10] It was not uncommon for these groups of Romantics to share thoughts and ideas with one another even across different parts of Europe. It is possible that Chopin may have even been inspired by the same English countryside that inspired Constable when he paid a visit to London the year that Constable died.[11] For example, while he was on his way back to Paris, Chopin passed through Brighton, enjoying the same coastal scenery familiar to Constable.[12] George Hogarth wrote a review of Chopin's music in *The Daily News,* and it is striking how terms that could easily describe Constable's paintings were used to describe Chopin's music heard during his London performances in 1837:

> It is exquisite delicacy with liquid mellowness of his tone and the pearly roundness of his passages of rapid articulation which are the peculiar features of his execution, while his music is characterised by

[10] Halina Goldberg, "Chopin in Literary Salons and Warsaw's Romantic Awakening" *The Polish Review* 45, no. 1 (2000): 53.
[11] Iwo and Pamela Załuski, "Chopin in London" *The Musical Times* 133, no. 1791 (May 1992): 226, doi:10.2307/1193699.
[12] Załuski, "Chopin in London," 226.

> freedom of thought, varied expression and a kind of romantic melancholy which seems the natural mood of the artist's mind. [13]

While reading Hogarth's description, it is easy to picture Constable's painting from 1826, *The Sea Near Brighton* (Fig 3.) The painting is dark, moody, and somewhat melancholy, but bits of light sprinkled throughout the scene of the brewing sea and sky offer up some hope. The swirling and swaying of the gulls in the cloudscape reflect the same "passages of rapid articulation and freedom of thought" that Hogarth mentions in Chopin's music from the quote above. Chopin's work that comes to mind when viewing Constable's, *The Sea Near Brighton* and reading Hogarth's description is *Nocturne No.8 in D–Flat Major, Op. 27 No.2*, composed in 1836 and published in 1837. This piece evokes the rising and swelling of the waves and quickly moving clouds depicted in Constable's painting with the constant chord runs that makes the listener feel like they are being pulled back and forth by emotions of hope and sadness. Chopin's music is similar to Constable's painting in how the emotion conveyed holds deeper meaning than just setting a mood. Chopin composed his *Nocturne No. 8* during the time of his relationship with Maria Wodzińska, which ended in a failed engagement because of her mother's lack of consent.[14] Both artists demonstrate their passion, a depth to their work that clearly comes from the heart, again linking both artists back to the ideals of the Romantics. Their art is an expression of their souls, because it is such a beautiful articulation of their emotions these two arts work together harmoniously.

Chopin approached the piano's keyboard the same way Constable worked with his canvases. Constable used his paintbrush to add color and texture, creating visual juxtapositions that evoke emotions from the viewers. Chopin used his pedal within his music creating the same juxtaposition, texture and "color" creating different tones of sound in his compositions, that could give us an idea of what he is thinking.[15] This is especially felt when listening to Chopin's nocturnes

[13] Załuski, "Chopin in London," 228.
[14] Fryderyk Chopin, *Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin,* compiled by Bronislaw Edward Sydow, trans. Arthur Hedley (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963), 141.
[15] James Parakilas, "Disrupting the Genre: Unforeseen Personifications in Chopin" *19th–Century Music* 35, no. 3 (2012): 173.

that were meant to evoke a haziness and dreamlike quality, encouraging the listener to reflect on their daydreams when listening to them.[16] This idea of the power of dreams once again coincides with the ideals of the Romantics at the time. When thinking of Constable's visual equivalent to Chopin's nocturnes, *The Edge of a Heath by Moonlight* (Fig. 4) from 1810, comes to mind. This work has a sense of a dreamlike haze to it. The moon just barely peaks around a tree evoking the beauty and mystery of a clear night. Adding to the somber yet peaceful mood, Constable created it in a very tonal style, mostly painting with blues, greens, and silvery grays. The moon stands out in the painting beautifully with its brightness illuminating the scene so the viewer can just get hints of what is being shown. Constable's brushwork in this work feels like Chopin's nocturnes: soft and deliberate. The brushstrokes go in one direction when looking at the night sky and then move the opposite direction when looking at the landscape, giving a sense of swaying and drifting into sleep.

The subtle hints of stars in the sky can also be reflected in Chopin's strong trailing run of keys that gives a sense of relaxing into sleep or into dreams. For Romantic artists such as Constable and Chopin, the expression of self–thought and emotion was the core of nature, and dreams were part of that. They were a part of the uncontrolled thoughts of humans, just like the uncontrolled and unpredictable change of time or seasons in nature. Chopin's nocturnes have a dreamy quality that evoke emotions ranging from melancholy to love as equally visually seen in Constable's, *The Edge of a Heath by Moonlight* and as described by James Parakilas about Chopin: "In the Nocturne, the long, lyrical lines of the melodies and accompaniment allow the illusion of a nocturnal love scene in song to be represented on the piano."[17]

Just like Constable's extensive study of clouds, Chopin created extensive musical etudes and nocturnes. The purpose of Chopin's etudes is like that of Constable's cloud studies or even his landscapes. There are so many of them that it is possible to just lump them together as nice studies, but it seems that each

[16] Halina Goldberg, "Chopin's Oneiric Soundscapes and the Role of Dreams in Romantic Culture" in *Chopin and His World*, ed. Halina Goldberg and Jonathan D. Bellman (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), 15.
[17] Parakilas, "Disrupting the Genre," 175.

one has a slightly different emotional expression behind it. Though Chopin's quick little "studies" of music were written as technical pieces to develop a pianist's skill, each one of them has a different story and touches different corners of the human soul. For example, in *Etude in A Minor Op. 25 No. 11*, better known as *Winter Winds*, Chopin uses nature in the same way as Constable. Chopin is giving us, audibly, the aggression that the changing season of winter can bring with it. He is showing us that nature can be extremely unpredictable and powerful, a mirror reflection to the human experience. The harsh pound of chords before the quick run of notes down the keyboard provides an audible experience that we can almost feel. That hard chord makes the listener feel that cold winter wind coming out of nowhere and the run of the keys emulate the wind that cuts through, right to your bones. Chopin was an incredible composer in the way he was able to create music that listeners can physically feel and visually see in their minds.

While Chopin focused on applying Romantic principles primarily to piano compositions, Ludwig Van Beethoven was doing the same with his orchestral compositions. His approach to nature was sometimes slightly less mystic or emotional than Chopin's approach; however, references to awe and beauty of nature were still clear in his work. Beethoven did his best to use his music to bridge the gap between man and nature and combine the two to create a transcendental realm.[18] The Romantics believed that being one with nature and one's emotions was a sacred realm, much like what Beethoven was using his music to achieve. He was also intrigued with the ideas and emotions that are correlated with tragedy. Beethoven thought that feeling tragedy in life was a way to understand heroism, an interesting juxtaposition that as listeners we can feel in some of his musical scores.[19] Upon close examination, these same sentiments of heroism and tragedy can be found in Constable's paintings, such as *Storm Clouds Over Hampstead* from 1822 (Fig. 5). Here the artist pairs dark storm clouds with reflections of hopeful light, following the idea of the sense of tragedy in nature, that when depicted next to a brighter element like a brighter horizon line, the

[18] Kieran Fenby–Hulse, "Beethoven, Literature, and the Idea of Tragedy" *The Musical Times* Vol. 155, No. 1927 (2014): 50 http://www.jstor.org/stable/24615622.
[19] Fenby–Hulse, "Beethoven," 53.

feeling of hope or heroism is highlighted for the viewer to understand and appreciate.

Beethoven, like Constable, was a master at bringing nature into his work to achieve a visual or audible experience. In Beethoven's *Symphony no. 6 in F major, Op. 68*, or "Pastoral Symphony," he beautifully creates and evokes natural imagery with his music. When listening to Beethoven's symphony, we can almost picture Constable's *Cumulus Clouds over a Landscape,* from 1822 (Fig. 6). Although the painting reveals a lovely pink sunset reflecting off the clouds, the viewer knows the moment will not last long. Nature is always subject to quick transitions of the elements and these fleeting moments are usually contrasting each other through moments of joy or despair. Each movement in Beethoven's symphony, just like the painting, reflects a changing or transitional element in nature, either time or weather. The movements give the listeners an experience of the fleeting moments that happen throughout nature but are incredible to witness or feel. In different movements of Beethoven's symphony, he depicts a thunderstorm and different birdcalls.[20] The mere fact that Beethoven chose a "pastoral" setting is a Romantic notion, supporting the idea that it is important for man to be a part of nature and reflect its awe and sublime forces. His symphony was not intended to conjure up just a few images and sounds of the countryside; it referenced deeper cultural meanings that were tied to the eighteenth– and nineteenth–century idea of the pastoral landscape.[21] Beethoven's ability to conjure up the Romantic feeling of nature and landscape through music is truly incredible. Nature is something we can observe and explore physically. It helps us to ground ourselves to further self–reflection. To be able to pair Beethoven's remarkable symphony with Constable's work lets the viewer/listener step into that feeling and power of being in nature without actually going anywhere.

When comparing Beethoven's and Chopin's techniques to evoke natures imagery through their musical compositions, they may seem different. But when considering the attitudes they had toward the more emotional part of nature, assume greater similarities. Both musicians break down their music into

[20] Richard Will, "Time, Morality, and Humanity in Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Symphony" *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol. 50, no. 2/3 (1997): 277 doi:10.2307/831836
[21] Will, "Time, Morality," 277.

characteristic pieces.[22] Chopin's etudes, nocturnes, and waltzes are each characteristic pieces of music that portray different moods or emotions throughout the human experience. In Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, he incorporated into each movement different sounds of nature experienced in the countryside, such as a gurgling brook, the thunder and lightning of a sudden thunderstorm, and the calls of different birds. Throughout the symphony, Beethoven introduces sounds of joy and jubilation but often places them next to uncomfortable or detached tones. This technique for him not only adds a sense of reality to his music but also a description of the balance of tragedies in life and nature.[23] Each musical characteristic has an underlying moralizing quality because all these moments are exactly that, momentary and they must all come to an end. That is the tragedy that Beethoven seemed to have loved. This idea that the human experience itself is tragic, each moment in time comes to an end. This implies that there is no control to when or how the sense of joy or discomfort is placed throughout life, but there is some control in how the person experiencing it can react and how it can make them feel.

To have the chance to view Constable's cloud paintings in conjunction with the sounds of Chopin and Beethoven's music gives listeners and viewers the ability to experience how harmoniously nature and the arts can work together to be the vehicle for personal expression. To experience these arts together with nature at its core is the ideal way to understand how the Romantics viewed life. They saw and understood the value of fleeting moments in the human experience. They knew that these ephemeral instances could be reflected in our own attitudes and emotions. John Constable knew what it meant to use his emotions as inspiration by drawing from nature around him to convey his personal expressions on the canvas. Chopin and Beethoven did the same within their beautiful music and the relationship with nature. To pair the sister arts of painting and music together with nature gives us an inspirational opportunity to better understand these Romantic artists as well as gives us a chance to confront our own personal emotions.

[22] Will, "Time, Morality," 280.
[23] Fenby-Hulse, "Beethoven," 50.

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Figure 1. John Constable, *Weymouth Bay,* 1816. Oil on canvas, 21” x 30”. National Gallery, London. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Figure 2. John Constable, *Rainstorm Over the Sea,* 1824–1828. 9 1/4” x 12 3/4”. Oil on paper laid on canvas, Royal Academy of Arts, London. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 3. John Constable, *The Sea Near Brighton,* 1826. Oil on paper on card, 6 3/4" x 9 1/4". Tate Britain, London. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 4. John Constable, *The Edge of a Heath by Moonlight,* 1810. Oil on canvas, 5 3/4" x 10". Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 5. John Constable, *Storm Clouds over Hampstead,* 1822. Oil on millboard, 16” x 27 1/4”. Private Collection, USA. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 6. John Constable, *Cumulus Clouds over a Landscape,* 1822. Oil on paper laid on board, 6 1/2” x 10 1/2”. National Trust, England. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

VENUS OF WILLENDORF

Macaslin Workman

In high school, I was exposed to the world of art history when I decided to take AP Art History. I remember sitting down on the first day of class and the first art history piece that my teacher showed to us was the *Venus of Willendorf*, which was followed by her enthusiastically proclaiming, “Isn’t she beautiful!”

I thought nothing could be further from the truth because this tiny figurine was nothing short of hideous. However, as I learned about the history of the figurine throughout the school year, my views changed drastically. *The Venus of Willendorf* became one of my favorite art pieces, and still is one of my favorites to this day. The *Venus of Willendorf* is over 25,000 years old, and meaures 4.5 inches in height. The people that made her were hunter–gatherers who did not have a set home as they were constantly moving their whole lives. Their lifestyle meant that personal belongings did not exist outside of what they could carry. This means that someone, somewhere, thousands of years ago, felt that what that figurine represents was important and significant enough to carry around and painstakingly carve each node and limb. Only theories can be made as to what this figurine represents exactly, though most theories point to the importance of reproduction, as children would have been a rare occurrence. These theories consist of the adoration and worshiping of the female figure, fertility, and childbearing. It has also been theorized that this was a totem carried by a man for either personal purposes, or as a totem in marriage. Regardless, it is clear that this was a revered image.

The amount of care and love they must have poured into its creation is simply astounding. It shows that someone loved something, or someone, to the point of creation. They took time to create something beyond themselves and then carry it with them. How could I not fall in love with a figurine so full of adoration? How could she not be important to me when it was so clearly

important to another? Not only did I love this small figurine because of her history of being carefully made, carried, and cherished 25,000 years ago, but I also loved her because she marked a major turning point in my own life.

This little figurine was the beginning of my love for Art History and helped guide me towards what I would pursue in college: Art and Design and Art History. It led me towards a new passion, a new understanding, and helped me empathize on a deeper level. Later during my time at UVU, I was able to expound upon my love for the *Venus of Willendorf*. I took the class ARTH 2710, "History of Art to the Renaissance," from Travis Clark, where I did a research project on the *Venus of Willendorf*. My goal for this project was to better understand the *Venus of Willendorf* on a more personal level. In response to this desire, I decided to recreate the figurine on paper with graphite with as much accuracy and detail as I could so that it would allow me to explore every part of her and reflect on her past. I wanted to get a sense of the time they poured into the making of the figurines by pouring in my time to render it as accurately as possible, albeit in a different medium. I wanted to study every detail of her, to try and understand what its creators saw everyday and held in their hands.

The main problem that I had while doing this project was finding an image I felt was best suited for the project and then executing the image on paper. The Venus image I chose was photographed in dramatic lighting, with a dark background that created deep shadows. I felt this better highlighted its physical history along with prominently displaying what she looks like. This meant that I had to adjust how I drew the image, adding a dark 'halo' around the entirety of the figurine to account for the dramatic lighting which exposes the textures and details on the sculpture.

This project helped me gain a greater appreciation of the *Venus of Willendorf*. While this figure is not particularly complex in its design, I cannot imagine carving out every part of the *Venus of Willendorf* to the amount of detail that it has. While drawing this piece, my mind repeatedly returned to the image of someone sitting down at night painstakingly carving every curve and pattern as they rested from their daily travel. If anything, my love has grown even further for the *Venus of Willendorf*, and I feel that this project was a success regarding my

goal to better understand the people and the figurine, increasing my understanding of art, and creating an even deeper and stronger love for her.

Original drawing by Macaslin Workman

TO EXPERIENCE ART: AN ART ENCOUNTER

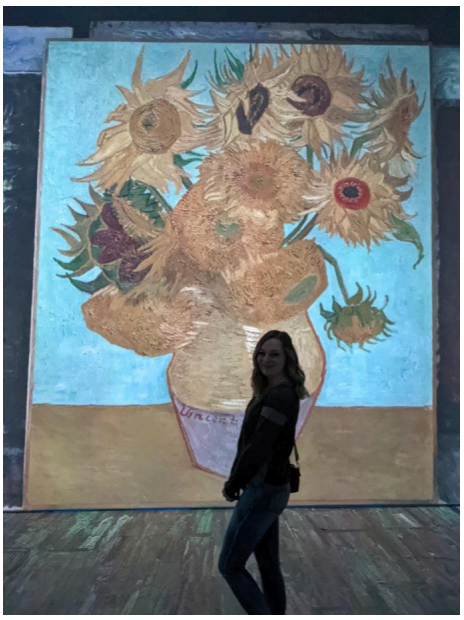
Marli Aslett

My grandma passed away when I was eight. I got to know her primarily through stories and pictures and some vague memories. I love and value the short time I spent with her, but because it was so brief and I was so little, I now, more than ever, value the stories that others are willing to share with me. My dad had a special relationship with her. Being her youngest child, he had experiences with her that his siblings didn't. His experiences with his mom instilled in him a deep appreciation of the arts. While I do not share in those same experiences, I have felt their impact nourish my connection to my grandmother and the arts.

I seem to remember always having a love for art; photography, painting, music, dance, etc. Even as a little kid, I went to art classes and one that I remember specifically was a painting class. I wouldn't say that I have a talent to paint, but that class impacted my life forever. That class opened my eyes to the art of the world and I realized how art from unknown areas of the globe, unknown eras, and unknown people can affect even a small child in Utah as a developing individual. I remember coming home one day after this painting class and telling my parents all that my developing mind could remember about Vincent van Gogh, as though no one else knew this brand–new information. He was my new favorite discovery, so my parents and I talked about his paintings. I showed them my adolescent version of *Starry Night* and talked about his sun–flower painting that my painting teacher showed that afternoon. We had giant sunflowers in our backyard under which I played that helped me connect to Van Gogh and his work, it seemed we had a favorite flower in common. That's when my dad explained that Van Gogh's sunflower painting was my grandma's favorite painting. In his childhood home, they had prints from Van Gogh's harvest series and sunflower series above their living room couch. In that moment, I started to

develop a new connection and relationship to art through my dad and his mom. I started to take more classes, explore more hobbies, and conduct more research.

Not only have I had multiple opportunities to study Vincent van Gogh since then, but I also had the opportunity to go to the *Van Gogh 360* exhibit that came to The Leonardo in Salt Lake City recently. This exhibit was truly an immersive experience. I had the opportunity to see over 300 pieces of Vincent van Gogh's work through a digital art experience. This exhibit transported every viewer beyond his paintings and into Van Gogh's thoughts and feelings as an artist. As we walked along a path to enter the main exhibit, we read excerpts from Van Gogh's journals and letters to and from his brother. In a letter to his brother, he wrote, "The sunflower is mine," and he expressed that they communicated gratitude; sunflowers eventually became synonymous with Vincent, just as he had hoped. In a room where the walls served as projection screens, we gained an intimate glimpse into the life that Van Gogh was experiencing as he was creating his now famous works. This exhibit further plunged me into the heart and soul of Van Gogh..



This 360° exhibit projected Van Gogh's paintings, sketches, and quotes from letters with his brother that reflected his life at that time. Pieces of his work flashed upon the walls as a representation of how Van Gogh saw each scene before him in his world, and how his eyes, mind, and heart interpreted it. Van Gogh's life was full of struggle and suffering, which was experienced by all as his paintings filled the room. However, to Vincent, the symbol of the sunflower expressed gratitude despite those challenges. Others also related to the gratitude in struggle and the beauty of the sunflower. After he died, his friends brought sunflowers to his funeral to honor the impact that symbolism had throughout his life. When a single piece of his work would fill the exhibit hall, I felt I was struggling with him in his efforts, a companion in his journey, a very part of his own life. I was filled with not only awe and inspiration, but with the deep emotion of Van Gogh that seemed to emanate from the paintings and quotes that were

lighting up the room and flashing on the walls. I felt that this experience, the immersion into the artist's creations, was the best way to get to know Vincent van Gogh as a whole: his mind, his struggles, his world, his work, him.

As you wander museums and shows and look at paintings behind ropes or pieces of glass you can see brush strokes and appreciate the skill and the design of a creation. To be surrounded by paintings that take up the room is a different experience; it brings the artists' pieces to life. Van Gogh didn't just use bold strokes and striking colors to paint. His work reflected his experiences. As he looked out the window of a hospital room, he painted new versions of the night sky that he could see, he painted fields of gold, he painted sunflowers out of gratitude, still hoping they'd become eternally linked with his name. To study a man and learn of his life while examining his works of art is amazing. To apply those things you learned of him while experiencing the emotions of his creations is nothing short of astonishing.

As an artist, I try to deeply experience life to inspire me and to be expressed in everything I create. Learning more about Van Gogh's life and having this immersive experience where I could truly feel a part of his world and immerse myself in his mind made me understand how art connects us one to another. Learning that my favorite painting was also one of my grandmother's, gave me a deeper connection to my grandma, the piece, to the artist, and to the art world as a whole. Being able to study Art History, specifically Van Gogh, throughout my life and college career has given me greater curiosity and greater appreciation for the emotions behind the art I see. I love gaining a greater understanding of artists' intent, mindset, passion, and world that inspired their creations. At this point in my experiences not only am I connecting to their art, but to them as individuals.

Although I only had a short in–person opportunity to get to know my grandmother for eight years, her love of life and for art continues to impact me every day. I hope that as I share my thoughts and my art, I will be able to impact others in the same manner as my grandma impacted me.

NOTWENDIGKEIT AND ABSTRACTION

Mckenna Goade

> Our materialistic age has produced a type of spectator or 'connoisseur,' who is not content to put himself opposite a picture and let it say its own message. Instead of allowing the inner value of the picture to work, he worries himself in looking for 'closeness to nature,' or 'temperament,' or 'handling,' or 'tonality,' or 'perspective,' or what not. His eye does not probe the outer expression to arrive at the inner meaning . . . We realize that these things, though interesting and important, are not the main things of the moment, but that the meaning and idea is what concerns us . . . When this becomes general the artist will be able to dispense with natural form and colour and speak in purely artistic language.
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> Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* [1]

In 2021, I visited the Wassily Kandinsky *Around the Circle* exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum. I had previously read Kandinsky's book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* and was deeply impacted by Kandinsky's ideas about the inner need of the artist and his ideas concerning color and form. The spiritual nature of his works pushed through the surface of the paintings, seemingly extending toward me. I thought about Kandinsky's ideas of pursuing the *innere Notwendigkeit* (inner need)—the impulse an artist has toward spiritual expression and the expression itself.[2] I spent a long time standing in front of Kandinsky's 1926, *Several Circles,* observing the subtleties that could only be detected in person. I attempted to view art the way he intended, not for its likeness to reality, but instead for its *innere Notwendigkeit,* the pure expression of meaning and

[1] Wassily Kandinsky and M.T.H. Sadler, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1977), 49.
[2] Kandinsky and Sadler, *Concerning the Spiritual,* 26.

idea. The day before I had spent time in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and felt deeply impacted by the realistic works of the Renaissance, I wondered if Renaissance masters also wondered about these spiritual subtleties. I realized that both abstract and realistic works held more meaning than in their aesthetics, but that the inner meaning could transcend art movements and time periods.

The shift from objectivity into abstraction was evident in a global change in the twentieth century, but also in individual shifts in the lives of artists. Chromatic Abstract Expressionist, Mark Rothko stated that "the progression of a painter's work, as it travels in time from point to point, will be toward clarity: toward the elimination of all obstacles between the painter and the idea, and between the idea and the observer."[3] Rothko presents the theory that the presentation of the idea is the end goal. To reach clarity, one must eliminate "obstacles." Abstract and non-objective artists argue through their paintings that achieving a *likeness* is an obstacle to clarity. Kandinsky elucidates, "the more abstract is the form, the more clear and direct its appeal."[4] Both artists searched for the clarity of idea and the spiritual effects that the creation of works had on the artist. They express in outward form the innermost human feelings with a lack of recognizable imagery. In following the inner need these artists learned that spiritual truths are found in non objectivity.

Rothko's statement that the progression of an artist's work will be toward clarity is evident in Pablo Picasso's journey from representation to abstraction. The dilettante's argument against abstraction is that these artists lack skill and also assumes that the production of ideas is not a skill in itself. However, the technical abilities of many abstract artists are easily viewed in their early work. Picasso claimed, "It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child."[5] Although this statement seems arrogant and blasphemously denigrates Raphael, the point is the same. Learning to represent the idea—the internal world—was more difficult than learning to represent the physical world. Contemporary artist, Susan Avishai continues this idea, she states, "Abstraction

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[3] Mark Rothko and Miguel López-Remiro, *Mark Rothko: Writings on Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 65.

[4] Kandinsky and Sadler, *Concerning the Spiritual,* 32.

[5] Boudicca Fox-Leonard, "Street Art Tour, London," *Sunday Telegraph,* October 10, 2021. https://www.pressreader.com/uk/the-sunday-telegraph-sunday/20211010/282480006972148

demands more from me than realism. Instead of reproducing something outside of me, now I go inward and use everything I've learned thus far in my life."[6]

As an artist involved with abstraction, I often feel that abstract work is less valued by the average viewer because we do not paint realistic or representational works. In the work that I love to make, I attempt to follow the inner need. I often feel pressured to pursue realism because the viewer is more likely to understand it. However, abstract artists realize that not everyone will understand their work. They dispense with the idea that art is only for an audience to understand. Ann Temkin, the Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, stated that the viewer should "set aside all expectations of that ["getting" it] and surrender yourself to the physical experience, and the psychic experience of being in the space of this picture . . . It wasn't easy for them as painters to make the art that they were making, nor should it be easy for the viewers to experience what they made."[7] The more the viewer understands the effort required to sense these works, the more likely the viewer is to enjoy the full experience of them. Mark Rothko stated, "When a crowd of people looks at a painting, I think of blasphemy . . . I believe that a painting can only communicate directly to a rare individual who happens to be in tune with it and the artist."[8] Rothko makes it clear that not everyone will understand abstract works. It is the role of the artist to listen to their inner need. It is the viewer's job to abandon the notion of "getting it" and instead search for the *innere Notwendigkeit,* to attempt to experience the works, to "probe the outer expression to arrive at the inner meaning."[9]

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[6] Gualala Arts, "Pursuing Lines & Curves: Abstract Impressions of Unity & Duality," accessed December 15, 2022. http://gualalaarts.org/2020/07/fiber-art-mixed-media-sculpture/

[7] Ann Temkin, "Barnett Newman/AB EX NY," The Museum of Modern Art, YouTube video, 2:28, 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyT4IvTGSwk&t=272s.

[8] James E.B. Breslin, *Mark Rothko: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 290.

[9] Kandinsky and Sadler, *Concerning the Spiritual*, 49.