Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

***Copley’s Squirrel***

***Roberts, Jennifer L. "Copley's Cargo: Boy with a Squirrel and the Dilemma of Transit." American Art 21.2 (2007): 20-41.***

This selected article is written by Jennifer L. Roberts in which she is critically analyzing "Boy with a squirrel" a masterpiece of John Singleton Copley. In this article, the writer is admiring the artistic skills of John Singleton Copley who made a portrait of his half-brother Henry Pelham. Jennifer is the professor of humanities at Harvard University and her focus of attention is American art, especially, from the colonial period to date.

Artistic skills are innate and that an understanding of art comes about with time. There are only a few artists like John Singleton Copley who could change the traditional ways of painting. Pointing minute details is one of the factors that makes a piece of art different from the rest and attracts the world. Critical evaluation of this article depicts various objects are being focused on in this study. “Boy with a squirrel”, artistic skills of Copley, identification of the minor details, and transition of flatness to fullness are the main objects of this study (Armstrong,et,al,2018). This study raised questions about the aesthetic of transmission and transformation. In this article, the author is questioning sensory concertation of the viewers, as Copley for the very first time, focuses the attention of the audience from an image of heterogenous, disconnected sensation in the curtain and body of the squirrel. Pieces of evidence cited in this article show that it is the skill of an artist that makes the audience aware of things that are ordinary for common people. Copley claims that though Pelham's head is painted on the canvas, in actual, his mind is elsewhere (Rosen,et,al,2019). In this article, the author also claims that metapictorial intensity which Copley depicted in “Boy with a Squirrel” was not evident in any of his earlier work which made this work of his a masterpiece.

In this article, Jennifer critically analyses Copley's work and talks about the opportunity that success of "Boy with a Squirrel” gave him. The writer is praising Copley for painting a portrait with such minute details that show the inclination of perfection of Copley. In this article, the author is giving opinions of other artists and critics who are critically evaluating this work of Copley and comment on his work. Jennifer is also encouraging the audience to see how beautifully, Copley took in consideration of even the minor things i.e. posture, reflection, table, hand, water-glass, etc that reflect the skills of the artist.

One of the most appealing elements regarding this article is, the author is not analyzing Copley’s work through her lens, rather she has included perception and views of other artists as well. This article includes comments and arguments that show positive as well as a negative perception of others regarding “Boy with a squirrel. Margaretta Lovell argues that during the years, when Copley painted this portrait, his spatial composition was based on figure-background chiaroscuro rejecting liner perspective methods (Roberts,et,al,2007). Daniel Webb argues that painters need to attain projection and roundness for giving life to the canvas but he claimed that these elements were unreflective in Copley’s work. Taking a look at the article, it could be concluded that the author used clear language so that she could communicate her point and views regarding this work of Copley. There are many main points that this work reflects but one of the central point is that artists are the ones who could see the unseen and drags the attention of the audience to the points that they cannot even think of. Another main thing is the advertisement of Copley by shipping his work to London so that he could have an ideal start to his artistic career in Europe.

Work Cited

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