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[Subject]

[Date]

Focus Piece - Museum Paper

During my visit to the Whitney Museum of American Art in Manhattan I witnessed a number of artworks by a different artist. Each artwork depicts a different story as some paintings reflected a specific era or period, while some focused on the previous struggles and life of the painter. This museum is home to around 23000 paintings, but the one that grabbed my attention was the Mirror of Life by Henry Koerner. Similar to his other art pieces this painting also depicted how his life went through different phases. His every art piece is mostly metaphorical, historical, geographical or a depiction of fashion and the modern world. (ProQuest).

Henry is an Austrian painter born to a Jewish couple in 1915, and he majorly received his education of becoming a graphic designer in his own community of Jews. Later he moved to the United States of America in 1938 the time when Hitler became dominant. He got employed in the armed forces of America and got posted in Europe. He was mainly hired to sketch out the series of court proceedings of the Nuremberg Trials. (Rogallery.com). His name is still known for the Magical Realist work done by him in the decade of 1940s. The painting Mirror of Life was made by him in 1946, and it shows multiple things that the painter witnessed and experienced during the Second World War in a single frame.

The painting is a mixed depiction of the loss and conflicts faced by him; it includes a visual description of some specific events of his past and present. The main aspect of this painting is the naked man who is looking out of his window, according to the artist his house is not only his resting place but it is also a center from where he can witness his past and the events that have passed away. (Whitney.org).The painting initially is made on one landscape that shows how every part of the world is connected with each other. The naked man is the main connection between life inside the house and the external world. He shows how life outside the house is enclosed in the form of different activities like shopping, eating and other sorts of leisure activities like dancing.

There is a scene in which a man is portrayed in the posture of killing another man, the message that is hidden in this specific act is that everyday life is not as simple as we think and there are certain unpredictable incidents in life that can change the life of people instantly or can end their life in a few seconds. The two people are shown as the first two sons of Adam C ain and Abel and the moment when Cain murdered Abel due to his evil characteristics and jealousy towards him. Right after that and in the middle of the painting there are a few people seen in the posture of collecting bits from a forest of burned and leafless trees. It depicts the condition of Vienna woods at the time of the World War II, the main reason of including Vienna woods in this painting is that Henry came back to this place and came to know that his parents, brother, and relatives died due to the massive attacks. He used the destroyed trees to reflect his loved ones as they have died and he showed himself as the people picking up bits and remains of the place. However, that scene is connected with a part of the painting that depicts buildings and a town similar to the cityscape of New York located in the south of the united states of America. The painter is expressing the peace and happiness that only this specific part of the world consists; he has shown children as a symbol of happiness and joy. An old American couple is sketched as sitting outside of their house and enjoying the whole view.

The happy side of the painting is shown as the time that came after the world war two as people in that part can be witnessed as happy, relaxed and joyed. On the other hand, the life behind this part is depicting sadness in its own way. People are having a formal dinner, but no one is having a smile on their face due to the time and situation that they are going through. Similarly, a woman is shown as looking to herself in the mirror while trying a new coat, but she is also sad and unsatisfied. The man that is leaning outside from his window is admiring the peaceful life outside his house which is more fascinating and impressive as compare to his life inside the house with his wife.

Work Cited

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