Analysis of a Realistic and Abstract Piece

Realistic Piece – “**Jean-Léon Gérôme, *View of Medinet El-Fayoum*, c. 1868–1870”**

In this piece, Gerome uses a very wide depth of field. Viewing this piece, I can see detail very clearly up until the large white building. The vanishing point appears to be behind the building in the background where the crowd of people in dark clothing is standing.

Gerome also uses a very muted, natural color palette. The most prominent colors in this piece are the browns that are used in the sand, and the blues that make the water and sky. The colors that he uses in this piece are very realistic. Nothing appears to be overly bright or dark. Also, all of the shadows and highlights seem to be drawn in a uniform way. The reflection of the person walking on the bridge in the river also makes the piece more realistic. Also, the way he uses shading and color value makes this painting very realistic. Every object/person in this piece is seen to be lighter on their ‘right’ side. From this, I assume that the sun is coming from the upper right corner of the scene. The way Gerome painted the scene; he creates a sense of movement through the repetition of the shapes of the bodies. This motion carries itself from the very bottom left, where the man and woman on the horses are, all the way to the crowd in dark clothing next to the white building. I’m not sure of the historical background behind this piece, but I can infer that the man and woman on the horses in the bottom left corner could be very important. It appears that the crowd of people is leading them to the white building – they are also drawn with the most detail. What drew me most into analyzing this piece was Gerome’s use of color. Although it may not be the most detailed painting I viewed that day, his usage of color illustrated a bright, beautiful day of a landscape I’m not familiar with. The size of the piece itself was also interesting, my experience with viewing it felt more intimate because I had to step much closer to it than others – in order to take in the detail I had to become closer to the piece. I enjoyed this interaction much more.

Abstract Piece – ***Louis Lozowick, Constructio Lithograph. c. 1930***

Lozowick’s pieces all seem to be characterized by incredibly geometric cityscapes. Nothing drawn in this piece is geometrically inaccurate, as opposed to many other abstract artists. However, there seems to be a pretty rapid shift in perspective from the scene with the truck and the scene with the staked pieces of wood. From my analysis, there seems to be two distinct scenes, however I’m not entirely sure that this is the case. The way he uses shading to divide the most space-taking objects make it seem that there are two distinct scenes. On the top scene, Lozowick uses mostly dark greys/blacks, with highlights only on the truck, and behind the truck on the building. The inconsistency and softness in the shading make it appear to be at night in this scene. Softness, meaning that the outlines of the shapes aren’t as clear, especially when compares to the bottom scene shading. That, of which, is very harsh, and very crisp. The highlights in this scene are significantly brighter, and the shadows are a lot darker. The difference in contrast of both scenes seems to create a better sense of separation. Because of the title of the piece, I can infer that these are two difference scenes of the process in construction. In the top of the two, I can see a construction worker loading something on the back of a truck. In the second scene, it looks like a factory or plant. The unnaturally harsh lighting makes me infer that this is in a building with non-natural light. The placement of the ladder and the scattering of a few workers to the left makes it appear to be in a large indoor space. Also, it almost looks like the man within the white chunk to the left of the stacked wood is a photographer. (It looks like he is holding a camera, standing next to a tripod). He could possibly be there to take progress pictures of the building to be constructed – he could possibly be outside, in a completely different scene. What drew me to this piece is its apparent realism – based on the accuracy of the objects, it seems like this is a real scene. However, as you continue to view the piece, you can eventually depict multiple scenes in this one print.