

Gallery Review

Celene Han

Art 311

Dr. Elliot

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This gallery review will be based on Jasper John's work at the Greenville County Museum. The exhibition he was featured in is called, "But wait- There's more" which opened on March 19, 2022, and is currently on display. This exhibition displays his work along with features of works of other artists that were a part of the process. Jasper Jones is 92 years old and was born on May 15, 1930, in Augusta, Georgia. The two pieces I have chosen for this analysis are both untitled pieces.

All of John's works use facial features as a repeating motif, these are abstracted through these prints and he sometimes uses these motifs to create illusions. He seemed to have a specific interest in the subject of sight and the eyes. He was also heavily influenced and related to an article about a child that had schizophrenia and the art that they had made. Another huge inspiration that the artist noted was Picasso and his mangled, abstract figures. This is shown in both pieces and had a focus on the idea of the 'fractured mind' as well as having religious imagery and themes. These themes include demon-like creatures and torture. Another aspect of his piece is the one of the old versus young lady illusion that plays on perspective. This was a very popular piece that circulated on the internet, so it was a surprise for me to learn that Jasper Jones was the original artist of this image and to see it in person.

The first piece was created in 2017 that is two of the same prints but with two different colorways. He created this piece with linoleum prints and printed it on a handmade leather sheet. They feature these same themes of distorted facial features and include other themes he reuses things like galaxies and stars such as the “Big Dipper.” The second untitled piece was created a year later in 2018 that showcases the same motifs of the mangled faces but he abstracts them with other body parts that are contrasted against a dark background. This is highly abstract and John explains that this is seen as a visual representation of the depicted demons and tortured souls. This is the piece that showcases the infamous old and young lady illusion. The 2018 untitled piece was a print made of carborundum on paper.

Overall, this gallery was very enjoyable, all of his pieces require you to think about them and have you looking at every detail. These take you a long look to discover more and more illusions and hidden figures to guide you through his intended theme. In my opinion, I found it difficult to understand the concepts at first but after doing my research I enjoyed it more and more. The overall technique and use of dull colors gave it a eerie and peculiar feel. It was also fun to see such a famous piece in my local museum!

