

ART 306

Lazevnick

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*Seated Male Nude*, by Egon Schiele, upon first glance reminds me of the medieval and Byzantine style figures. The body is flat in space, but features detailed muscularity and fascia. The clear depiction of skin so thin one can see the ribs, individual muscles, and protruding bones give this piece a darker quality to it. The pose adds to the dark sense of distraught and anguish.

The figure's colors of sickly green yellow, bright pink and deep blue create quite a stark and unsettling effect. These colors are arbitrary, but are relational to reality, with over exaggerations of the lighting and undertones in skin saturated to these vivid hues. The emphasis on color serves to represent the emotion of this piece. Even the eyes glow this bright magenta, signalling strong emotions from within. Despite being a very physical piece, there is nothing besides the figure, which centers the intention on the internal state of the subject. It evokes a state of distress on an emotional level, but also physicality and bodily discomfort.

The pose is yet another element that conveys extreme emotional discomfort. The figure sits in a vulnerable position, with legs spread, but no feet. The face hides behind twisted arms which grasp the head and hair. His eye peeks out from over his arm, as though he wants to avoid something but can't look away in an attempt to comprehend it.

I really like this piece. Expressionism is one of my favorite styles and greatly influences my own work. The colors work very well together to create the sense of unease, malaise and internal unrest. Not only the colors, but the physical discomfort in this twisted body, is quite compelling. Schiele makes effective use of the white space, highlighting the self-portrait and

leaving room for the emotional state to be interpreted. Lastly, this piece reminds me of early depictions of Christ, making me wonder if there are some metaphorical connections to spiritual or religious struggles.