

Dr. Brendle

ART 201

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A Visual Analysis of Andrew Wyeth's *Late Fall*

In Andrew Wyeth's watercolor from 1981 titled *Late Fall*, one's eye is immediately drawn to the red fruit hanging from a complementary colored green-leafed tree. The scene depicted in the painting on paper shows the viewer an intimate view of an apple tree bearing its last remaining product of the season. A scene such as this makes sense, as the title tells us it is late fall, and having a singular apple left would not be anything out of the ordinary. Thus, leading one to conclude that this painting was done with reality in mind or even in sight.

As previously mentioned, the complementary colors red and green are employed by Wyeth. While it might be "late fall," these colors remind us of nature seen during other seasons: blooming red flowers and lush green grass in spring, the hot red sun of summer along with the green palm trees lining coastal towns, and concluding with red poinsettias and green pines in the winter months. The thinnest lines in the painting are towards the top, displayed as diagonal branches coming off of the central tree and other nearby trees. These lines, or branches, also help hint at other seasons, particularly winter, which is right around the corner, as they seem bare, resembling branches found during cold months. Moving downward into the middle- and foreground, the viewer is greeted with more dispersing branches, leaves, and a thick tree trunk. The sturdy tree trunk, while it is losing its leaves and fruit, is constant and shall stand through all seasons, weathering each storm and day. The final apple of the tree dangles perfectly where the foreground dissolves into the middle ground, making the viewer's eye linger in awe. However,

this is not the only place where the color red is spotted in the painting. If one were to survey the painting more in-depth and not just with a quick glance, one would soon notice the fallen apples lying on the ground below. While it is sad that the apples that were not successfully picked lie helplessly, one can think of the more-than-humans that live close to the ground that will benefit from this circle of life.

The employed elements, line and color, help convey a beautiful scene of the closing of a season but help welcome and foreshadow what is to come. The lines remind us of the present moment, fall, but hint at branches that consume the environment during winter months. This painting is a part of a plethora of Wyeth's other works that pay homage to two states that he called home: Pennsylvania as his birthplace and Maine as his home since boyhood. The colors, style, and lines seen in this painting are also used throughout his other works, helping display other messages with the same visual conventions.

