

COMPARATIVE STUDY

In this study I will be comparing, “Representatives of the state” by Toyin Ojih Odutola and “Borders: A mexican family the martinez” by Liu Xiaodong, along with “Three girls watching TV”, Through this comparison I will focus and learn about these artist’s conceptual and technical applications . I will explore and compare their cultural significance, function/purpose, and formal qualities which I will then apply to my own artwork.



Representatives of the State
Toyin Ojih Odutola, 2017

Representatives of the state by Toyin is a drawing of charcoal, pastel, and pencil on paper located in the Whitney Museum of American Art. This piece is part of the “to wander determined” exhibit which is a fictional narrative of the connection between two aristocratic Nigerian families, this specific piece depicts four Black women elective officials in commanding positions.



“Borders: A Mexican family the Martinez”
Liu Xiaodong, 2019

The second piece by Liu Xiaodong, Borders: A Mexican family the Martinez is a part of the “Borders” series located in Dallas Contemporary Art Museum, where he highlights diversity and individual histories through a trip he made along the US-Mexican border. This specific piece is a portrait of a Mexican family standing outside, composed of 6 individuals from different generations.



Three girls watching TV, Liu Xiaodong, 2001

Three girls watching TV is a piece by Liu Xiaodong which focuses on the lives of ordinary people, this piece is part of a series made after a trip to Singapore which features three prostitutes caught off-duty gazing with different expressions at a TV.

ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

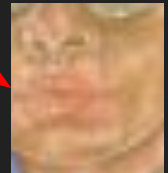
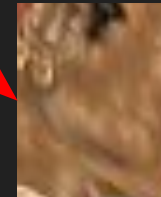
Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola

Toyin Ojih Odutola is a Nigerian-American contemporary visual artist who is focused on the fictional narratives of her pieces creating an alter-ego revolving around Nigerian beliefs and social norms. The piece "Representatives of the State" by Toyin Ojih Odutola represents four empowered Nigerian women who convey a strong aura. This piece begins to contradict the social norms placed on Nigerian women as they are often expected to be inferior to white men. In this piece she imagines a world where colonial conquest never occurred, thus through this piece she is allowed to imagine an unattainable world where historically oppressed people exist outside of their unrepairable and damaging events of years of slavery and colonialism.

In such a place where their wealth does not only allow them to be in control of their own bodies but also of their surroundings. She begins to imagine how "wealth would look" if such tragic events never were to have occurred. By allowing her individuals to be in a relaxed and comfortable position with wealthy looks she is able to represent this idea and further connect with their culture as she contradicts the traditional ideals and beliefs of a broad community.



Diversity is included as well portrayed by their skin tone despite the connecting culture between individuals. The culture is present and important throughout the piece as it creates more symbolic elements on the piece that allows the audience to sympathize with the message portrayed.



INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola



This piece was made to represent Nigerian culture and the difficulty Nigerian women face in order to attain powerful positions. Toyin has these Nigerian women portray a powerful aura with a sense of superiority. By doing this Toyin is able to allow the audience to interpret the connection between power and these women despite whatever prior knowledge they hold about the specific piece and its implied purpose. By doing this Toyin is able to further neglect the current and past social standards of Nigerian women. Toyin's purpose was to highlight this and deliver the message that Nigerian women in positions of power is rare which will allow others to become aware of issues like these.



Toyin is able to depict the idea of neglecting social norms and creating an alter ego through the powerful gaze each individual shows towards the audience. The gaze of the individuals here works to emphasize the emotions the subjects are experiencing in this case being a feeling of confidence and superiority as they stand in powerful positions. Toyin then highlights her ideas by allowing her subjects to be descriptive of individuals in the real world who are part of a community who face discrimination which in this case is the community of Nigerian women. Toyin also uses their similar gazes to emphasize the purpose of family in her collection of work. Because all subjects share a similar gaze despite their different physical qualities, Toyin can successfully connect them.

This piece's functions outline the historical significance on our present society and how dependent the world is on the past. Its functions to remind the audience of the past and allow the viewers to sorrow and reflect upon the effects history has brought upon modern society and certain communities' freedom and opportunities. It is clear that the work's elements function to arise questions within the audience which allows for the audience to fully comprehend the idea of this work.

ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES

Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola

Toyin's artwork usually emphasizes parts of her work through the application of movement created by rich colors and textures visible by the different mediums. In this piece she emphasizes the 4 individuals portrayed as powerful through the contrast between the background and the individuals. When looking at the patterns and colors applied on the individual's skin and clothing we are able to imply their importance. The colors utilized to highlight the individuals are more rich due to the pigmentation of the color pencils and the patterns used have more movement than the background. Due to this she is also able to apply a form of unity and balance between the individuals further highlighting the relationships within her fictional narrative. Due to the fact that they are all full of pattern and color in contrast to the other elements of the piece Toyin is able to unite these individuals together into appearing close and of similar qualities.

One example of Toyin's movement is seen in the patterns within the left center individual's skin. The base of the skin is flat but she brings more movement as she applies highlights flowing through different directions. This application of pattern is also clear in the individual's clothing as there is a visual repetition and rhythm in the cloth of the wardrobe of each one.

The background is more dull and lacks the patterns and values the individuals hold further allowing Toyin to emphasize these individuals and show the contrast between the power they hold towards their surroundings and their individualism.



ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

“Three girls watching TV”, along with “Borders: A mexican family the martinez” by Liu Xiaodong.

Liu Xiaodong is a Chinese artist whose artwork relies on more than one culture and community. He creates portraits of natural and realistic subjects from different communities that convey a complex message of societal and cultural struggles. Part of Liu Xiaodong's art education was taught through the central academy of fine arts which was rooted in Chinese socialist realism, these contradict the beliefs and values that Liu Xiaodong portrays in his own paintings. The academy depicts traditional grandiose political ideals, whereas he reflects the realities and hardships of everyday life. Liu Xiaodong reveals he mainly rejects these cultural and societal values and develops his own ideals and artistic beliefs. One of his greatest artistic influences is the British painter Lucian Freud. Most of Liu's pieces reproduce Freud's technique to an extent however he is able to apply his own artistic view to distinguish it from Freud's work.



In the piece “Borders: A Mexican family The Martinez” he develops a portrait of a typical Mexican family on an afternoon under a tree in their backyard. His approach to this piece is to represent the extreme poverty in which these individuals are placed on due to the struggles they face caused by governmental flaws and discriminatory laws. Through the telling of their story he is able to connect with their culture and their struggles as he is the one who spreads the message through his canvas.

In the piece three girls watching TV he is focused on 3 prostitutes with different facial expressions staring at a TV on a trip he made to Singapore. His piece isn't made for the audience to sympathize for the women neither is it to critique the women in any way this piece simply focuses on the relationship-

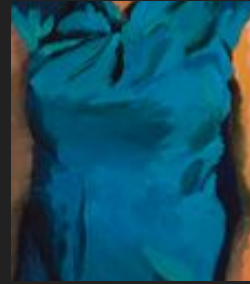
...relationships between the women and the different expressions they create. He wants to explore their natural habitat and present this to his audience. Unlike his other pieces where he is focused on the corrupt messages behind the piece here he is focused on presenting a different perspective of the day to day life of an idea often viewed as immoral and pitiful.



INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

Borders: A mexican family the martinez by Liu Xiaodong, 2019

Liu Xiaodong work often depicts simplicity and realism. His purpose is to “show people the way they really are” and to do so he utilizes heavy marks of brushstrokes to emphasize his idea of naturalism. His heavy brushstrokes can be seen throughout the entity of the piece. His piece is a collaborative piece as he illustrates the struggles of other communities.



This piece serves a conceptual an expressive piece while commenting on some political aspects. This piece is meant to bring attention to migrational issues within the border of Mexico and the USA. Through this piece Xiaodong emphasizes the economic status these individuals live in due to their disadvantages as an oppressed community. One could imply the audience is the general public. However like any other piece of art, the reactions will differ based upon the experience of individuals and in this specific work of art, the members within the Mexican community will relate and empathize with the work while the members outside the community will begin to be informed and are rather meant to be shocked or disturbed.

ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES

Borders: A mexican family the martinez” by Liu Xiaodong.

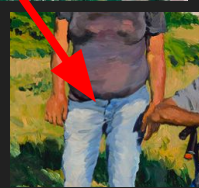


Liu Xiaodong uses space to show the poverty/ context behind the people in the portrait. In most of his pieces he uses the surroundings of the individuals he portrays to provide context/ significance to the piece. In this piece by placing the individuals in a location where the grass is dead and lacking water whilst having the surrounding ground be alive and colorful he is able to provide a symbolic grass which represents poverty and wealth as the lack of water can be used to represent the lack of money and resources.



Liu Xiaodong applies a strong brushstroke throughout his piece to create a form of texture. By boldly applying colors and lines in his piece with no straight lines whilst still creating a realistic image he highlights his theme of organic and natural habitats. By using these elements of texture and line he is also able to apply the principle of unity as the individuals relationships is seen through not only through the context but also through his uniform application of brushstrokes, to further connect the individuals.

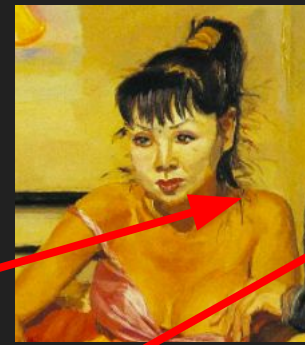
He uses a strong value in his piece which allows the realism in the piece to evolve. Due to his use of value he is also able to create movement amongst the piece by allowing the viewer to follow the traces of the paint where the individuals move. His use of impasto can really bring harmony and connects each element of the work to provide further context of the symbolism, this painting can be used to represent the social struggles of the mexican community living in the border



INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

“Three girls watching TV” by Liu Xiaodong

Like all of his pieces this piece without exception has an application of strong and imperfect brushstrokes, the purpose of this is for Xiaodong to emphasize his idea of naturalism and create a piece which can be relatable and impactful to the audience he focuses on. The audience he is focused on more specifically are the individuals within the community of prostitutes, this piece will allow for them to relate. Outside that community people will begin to understand them from a different perspective. His purpose if for the audience to question the meaning for this piece and identify the conditions of this community through his aesthetic.



This piece is focused on the expressions of the individuals portrayed. All individuals are watching TV and therefore viewing the same thing, however their facial expressions and body language all differentiate this allows Xiaodong to highlight the idea of different perspectives and identities of the subjects. Xiaodong allows his individuals to appear comfortable and natural in their space which is why the way he utilizes body language in his individuals allows the viewer to further connect his concept to his technique.

Xiaodong also focuses on the concept of feminism and identity as he is focused on portraying the prostitutes through a different perspective through the use of his vantage point. By allowing the individuals to appear comfortable and like any other they are able to be portrayed in a different sense than what their stereotypes imply.

Xiaodong utilizes the space around his individuals in order to provide context of the individual's life. In this piece we are able to identify their financial status through the place in which they are in. From the small bed to the unmatched colors of the walls and the string lamp. Xiaodong takes advantage of the space to symbolically represent his message.



ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES

“Three girls watching TV” by Liu Xiaodong



Liu Xiaodong is able to create texture in his piece through the implication of shades in his work. In the blanket the women are holding he applies various shadows and highlight with the soft impasto to allow for a softer texture. He does this repeatedly throughout the piece.



This piece emphasizes the negative stereotypes of prostitutes. Xiaodong illustrates their human qualities allowing for them to be portrayed in a relatable manner to the rest of the audience judging them. Through their comfortable positions he is able to show how relaxed human they are. He also uses juxtaposition to highlight even more his concept of viewing these individuals from a different perspective as we view this portrait from an outside perspective.

Liu Xiaodong is able to incorporate unity and balance in this piece as he connects the three individuals in his portrait through the gaze they present. Despite the individuals having different expressions which allows them for us to interpret them as different perspectives show their unity through the direction they are looking, they're all looking at the same thing which represents their unity.



Liu Xiaodong uses color to create a warm feeling to the piece. Xiaodong applies different hues of orange, red and yellow tones throughout the piece to allow the piece to formulate a warm ambient. By doing so he is further highlighting the idea of showing these prostitutes in a “better light”.



SIMILARITIES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #1 & #2



Representatives of the State, Toyin Ojih Odutola, 2017
And *“Borders: A mexican family the martinez*, Liu Xiaodong, 2019

Both of these pieces is general function/ purpose is to show their cultural struggles. Toyin piece “representatives of the state” depicts an imaginary world where the struggles of nigerian people are gone and they are portrayed as powerful individuals. One is able to relate this to the purpose of Xiadongs piece, “Borders: A mexican family the martinez” through the way he visually represents the poverty in which the family lives in and their struggles faced through the unattainability of unjust opportunities . Overall these two pieces aim to represent the struggles each of their communities face due to the unjust treatment they are given by a society of prejudice.



Both of these pieces are portraits that have the individuals gaze directly towards the audience. Their surroundings are able to further depict their purpose. For example Toyin’s work includes a fancy and rich background with luxurious clothing and confident poses which allows the individuals of the piece to connect with their surroundings and further emphasize the contrast between the two to represent the difficult attainability of wealth and power within the nigerian community. Xiaodongs portraits has the individuals in comfortable positions and clothing along with the implication of dead grass which is able to symbolize a sense of poverty through their humbleness.

Xiaodong and Toying both use lines to create patterns and texture in their pieces. For example xiaodong piece focuses on the line of strong brushstrokes without blending in the piece to emphasize the naturalism and real world context of the cases he portrays. Toyins piece uses line to create pattern within the individuals skin and clothing in order to emphasize their importance in the piece



SIMILARITIES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES OF ARTWORK #1 & #3

Representatives of the State, Toyin Ojih Odutola, 2017 and Three girls watching TV, Liu Xiaodong, 2001



One clear purpose present within both of these pieces is to show the empowerment of women of color. Toyin is able to illustrate the empowerment of women through her choice of individuals. By choosing to illustrate Nigerian women in powerful positions she is able to give them power which is difficult to attain in the real world for women in the Nigerian culture. In Xiaodong's work he depicts the empowerment of women as he illustrates prostitutes from Singapore outside their job. Prostitutes are often described as "filthy" due to their job requiring to go against majority of societies morals/ values and therefore they are faced with a large negative judgement from society. Xiaodong shows their empowerment as women as he illustrates their ordinary life apart from their jobs and how they are just regular people who must work to survive like any other human and face struggles not only through their financial stability but through the societal judgement against them. He therefore depicts their strength in a unique way.



Xiaodong and Toyin both utilize space and line along with texture to create their piece. In Xiaodong's piece all of these elements are present through his work by the implication of line to create texture within his individuals and surroundings. Much like most of his pieces Xiaodong focuses on strong brushstrokes to create depth within the piece to allow a 3-dimensionality within the 2-dimensional space, through his use of line he is able to create different layers of color to create depth. The space that Xiaodong uses allows him to strengthen the conceptual aspect of this piece. He utilizes the empty and humble space around the individuals to highlight their state of living along with the comfort amongst themselves. Toyin's piece uses line to emphasize the individuals, we see a different application of the medium as it contrasts of pattern and color, in Toyin's piece the lines and colors used to draw the individuals' skin tones allows for a sense of unity, by allowing the individuals to obtain texture from color and line Toyin is able to unite the individuals.



SIMILARITIES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES OF ARTWORK #2 & #3

And “*Borders: A mexican family the martinez*”, Liu Xiaodong, 2019 and
Three girls watching TV, Liu Xiaodong, 2001



The purpose behind these two pieces fall under one general concept of representing social issues in the real world, however each piece has a more specific purpose that fall under their respective cultures. Because both of them are created by Liu Xiaodong these pieces share a majority of similarities. “*Borders: A mexican family the martinez*” represents the struggles that the mexican community face while living in the border. “*Three girls watching TV*” represents the struggles prostitutes in singapore face due to their jobs.



In both pieces Liu makes sure to imply strong brushstrokes with imperfect shapes while still including realism.. More specifically in both pieces there is emphasis, movement, and unity. The imperfect lines that allows of the viewer to follow along help create movement. His emphasis clearly on the subjects but also on their surroundings. The work focuses on the individual's state of living so although the individuals are the ones being portrayed in the piece, Liu makes sure to emphasize their surroundings as well which allow context for the piece and further depict their state of living. The piece connects the individuals along with their surroundings for a better sense of unity. In “*Three girl watching TV*” he is able to create a sense of warmth, as it mainly includes yellow and orange tones. In the other piece Liu uses blues and green switching to a cooler tones however the subjects’ skin contrast those tones The space plays a big role in both these works as Liu focuses on the individual's surroundings to visualize his concept. Through the humble and poor surroundings Liu highlights the state the individuals and their communities live in.

DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #1 & #2

Representatives of the State, Toyin Ojih Odutola, 2017

And *"Borders: A mexican family the martinez"*, Liu Xiaodong, 2019



Both these works are from different cultures and therefore focus on different struggles within their cultures. Toyin's work is focused on emphasizing the difficult attainability of power for women within the Nigerian culture through her portrait of Nigerian women with power. Xiaodong's work is highlighting the real financial struggles that the Mexican community faces due to prejudicial beliefs, through his humble family portrait.

Both works present a social struggle however they use different methods with specific functions. Toyin's specific purpose for this piece is to narrate an imaginative world based on real issues whereas Xiaodong's purpose is to utilize real people and a specific case to narrate a social struggle, the difference between the two is the way in which they imply their message. Toyin is very specific with the community she presents as she narrates her piece utilizing women of color while Xiaodong utilizes his piece to represent a more general community of Mexican people. Toyin focuses on showing what could be achievable if society was different where Xiaodong depicts the concept of what has already been caused.



Toyin utilizes color pencil and oil on canvas and her work appears cleaner and cohesive in comparison to Xiaodong who has a more complicated style where his objects don't appear as clean and rather messy making the shapes more organic and natural. One of the biggest differences in their applications is that Toyin utilizes more patterns to create value in her piece while Xiaodong utilizes more impasto and color. As seen in the clothing of both works the different techniques can be visualized.

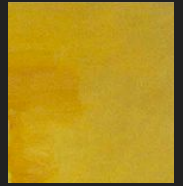
DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #1 & #3

Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola
and Three girls watching TV, Liu Xiaodong, 2001



Toyins is culturally influenced by nigerian women while Xiaodong is influenced by singapore women. Toyins work compared to Xiaong's work is based on a more historical narrative while Xiaodong is focused on expressing his concept through a more modernized community.

Both artist portray these women and their power through different ways. Toyin is able to depict the individuals in a imaginary position where they can be respected and be seen with power and control over others, in contrary Xiaodong almost contradicts that idea and shows women in a position they are not respected in but is still able to convey their power and control over themselves.



Toyin utilizes color and repetition differently than Xiaodong. The colors in Toyin's work are more varied generally consisting of cool and neutral tones while Xiaodong's piece generally only include warm tones. Toyin is able to depict the true disconnection between women in nigeria and power in her piece despite the imaginative narrative by the way in which the colors differentiate between the background and the individuals along with the patterns making up the piece. Due to the fact that both the colors and the patterns differentiate Toyin depicts the idea that they are not closely related. She is also able to depict uniqueness between the individuals, as they all form a different color and pattern despite their similar function. Xiaodong utilizes warm tones equally throughout the piece in order to show the connection between the individuals and their surroundings, and by utilizing warm tones he is able to create a certain positive mood in the piece allowing him to convey the idea that prostitutes are not to be associated negatively just because of their jobs..

DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE, CULTURE, FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #2 & #3

“Borders: A mexican family the martinez, Liu Xiaodong, 2019 and Three girls watching TV, Liu Xiaodong, 2001

Both of these works focus on communities and cultures who face struggles constantly due to societal prejudice. “Borders: A mexican family, the Martinez” emphasizes the state of living within the mexican border on their communities based upon the impact of a community outside theirs. “Three girls watching TV” on the other hand focuses on a community facing judgement from the community that they are within along with the community outside. “Borders: A mexican family, The Martinez” is a more specific culture and community while “Three girls watching TV” is a larger and more general culture/community.

They both serve for similar purpose but still differentiate uniquely, “Borders: a mexican family, the martinez” focuses on bringing awareness about the current state of living of people living in the mexican border, and the struggles they face. “Three girls watching TV” on the other hand is not necessarily meant to show the struggles of the individuals or for the audience to sympathize for them but rather its to show how prostitutes shouldn’t be seen as people with no morality who should be shamed all the time but rather just as individuals working as part of being humans in our society.

Xiaodongs’ use of space is different in both of these pieces. Xiaodong is able to narrate the pieces differently based on the way he utilizes the space between the individuals. In “borders: A mexican Family, The martinez” the space between the individuals is larger compared to that of “three girls watching TV”. This allows for Xiaodong to present different moods. In artwork number 2 the larger space allows for them to portray a sense of professionalism and therefore evoke a “serious” mood while artwork #3 has its individuals appear more natural and close to each other evoking a carefree mood allowing for its message to be emphasized.



SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE & FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #1 & MY ARTWORK

Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola & 17, 2022, Jolette Velazquez Gonzalez

My work's function and purpose can be described as to commemorate certain individuals along with narrating a story of itself. Just like Toyin utilizes the women in the piece to demonstrate a concept my work utilizes 3 individuals in order to represent the connection between them and form a relationship which can represent the concept of growing individual. Both works use space in order to add depth to the work. For example Toyin Utilizes the space behind the individuals along with the incorporation of line and color to add significance to the individuals. By including intricate design onto the texture to the subjects she is able to include a contrast between the surroundings to its focus which allows a sense of significance onto the work. My work does that through the space I create in the background contrasting and rather highlighting the importance of my subjects through the use of color and line surrounding the individuals.



Despite both pieces being similar in the aspect of sharing space with its subjects and the background in contrast to toyin work my work is using the space to create an ominous feeling as its a blank color with not much detail other than the butterflies, this is one in order to highlight its significance and bring focus to it, Toyin also does this in her own work however she utilizes a bright color with different shades in order to bring depth and highlight the individuals u font, and more than color she also incorporate a lot of texture and line into her piece which is different than what i did. Toyins work is also more of a historical narrative which emphasizes bringing the awareness of oppression within a larger community while my piece is more individual and focused on representing in a universal concept through a personal experience.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE & FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #2 & MY ARTWORK

Borders: A mexican family the martinez” by Liu Xiaodong & TNC, 2022, Jolette Velazquez Gonzalez

Both works are able to depict a relationship between individuals through their use of structure. Both pieces are portraits of a community of people signifying a concept. In my work, I utilize the individuals body language in order to depict the idea of comfort and joy. I also try and illustrate strong brushstrokes in order to include a high sense of detail within the work, allowing the brushstrokes to be seen through the canvas. Liu's utilizes the individuals and their surrounding in order to demonstrate their state of living and illustrate the community in general, his use of strong brushstrokes is able to depict a sense of naturalism and comfort within the work, which creates a mood. Toyin uses the structure of his work by allowing his individuals to be in the middle of the piece in order to highlight their importance, I utilize structure by separating the top of my piece and the bottom in order to create a disconnection from the rest of the place to the moment captured.



In contrast to Liu's work my work is focused on representing the idea that people tend to overthink and worry about the future and the past without enjoying the present further damaging their relationship with other and themselves. I wanted to demonstrate the beauty of life essentially which is similar to what Liu's work emphasize however in this specific pieces he is more specifically connecting his work with the mexican community and their struggles trying to live in poverty. The subjects he illustrates are a ta disadvantage trying to succeed and he is able to depict their story through the way in which utilizes hi string brushthroes and sense of line i order to highlight important aspect sfo their surrounding and of themselves, by doing this he is also able to bring a high sense of realism in an intricate way which makes the viewer curious. It allows for the subject t view and assam by first glance. He is also able to incorporate a high sense of light t include contrasts which I had attempted to do it did not manage too well. In hs piece you can see he source of light is coming from he right whichallws for depth to be incorporated within the work while my piece is all over the place and doesn't seem to have a direct source of light.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF FUNCTION/PURPOSE & FORMAL QUALITIES ATWORK #3 & MY ARTWORK

“Three girls watching TV” by Liu Xiaodong & Eating a strawberry in the living room, 2022, Jolette Velazquez Gonzalez

Both these works are really similar in its concept, as both try and illustrate the natural state of people. My own piece is focused on illustrating myself in a comfortable state while I'm enjoying myself which can be used to represent my true self. I try and include strong brushstrokes throughout my piece in order to form depth in my piece just as Xiaodong does in his own work. Just as Xiaodong does I try and incorporate color in my piece to represent a sense of being, I used neutral and cool colors for the most part in order to represent those feelings of comfort. Both these works are expressive and conceptual in a sense and they are more focused on specific natural experiences instead of focusing on large ideas and general concepts. Each work has their own story with the purpose of expressing the beauty of humans.



Liu's work is focused on illustrating another side of three prostitutes which is opposed to their stereotypical image. There is a large prejudice against prostitutes and he aims to illustrate the more natural state which often times people seem to oppose in order to dehumanize these individuals. Liu incorporates a high sense of color and light into his piece in order to bring warmth and further contrast the stereotypes of prostitutes, he utilizes a similar color palette throughout the entire piece which is able to connect all of the individuals and form a relationship within their struggles they share. Opposed to my piece I utilize the surrounding to connect myself with the symbolism of the object is strategically placed in the portrait. Opposed to that Liu just illustrates what has happened so he is there to truly focus on their natural state.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF CULTURE #1 & MY ARTWORK

Representatives of the State, 2017, Toyin Ojih Odutola & 17, 2022, Jolette Velazquez Gonzalez



Both these pieces belong to two different cultures and they both are used to represent different concepts of life. Toyins work apart from representing the nigerian culture is also trying to oppose to societal norms not only through the status that the women represent but the way in which they are portrayed. At first glance some of these women might not even appear as women because of the stereotypical image of a woman being fragile all of these women are presenting different styles in order to go against those norms, while my piece is more focused on representing what the reality is instead of trying to shock the audience by portraying something that isn't that could be. In my piece I focus on portraying the current struggle many individuals from various different communities can relate to regardless of how personal it can be to me. My specific experience with growing independent from my parents is different from others but the way that it is interpreted is up to the viewer.

Both of these pieces are used to represent a community with struggles in an empowering way. Toyins piece is focused on presenting Nigerian women with the lack of power by illustrating powerful Nigerian women in an elegant way. My piece is focused on showing the struggle children have to feel independent from their parents along with the struggles parents have while feeling disconnected from their child, through portraying a powerful gaze from each individual. Both the pieces are also able to show an aspect of their community, Toyins work focuses on the hierarchy of power in Nigerian culture while my piece focuses on the expectation that immigrant parents place on their child and how much they reinforce their own morals onto them.



SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF CULTURE #2, #3 & MY ARTWORK

Representatives of the State, Toyin Ojih Odutola, 2017,

"Borders: A mexican family the martinez, Liu Xiaodong, 2019 & *Eating a strawberry in the living room*, 2022, Jollette Velazquez Gonzalez, TNC, 2022, Jollette Velazquez Gonzalez



All of these works are focused on portraying a certain moment in time with as much naturalism as possible. They can all be universal regardless of their specific meaning which connects them all together. In general, the message is to show the simplicity of life which its beauty is captured. They all in a way belong to that culture of captivating human nature.

Toyin focuses on capturing the reality of life in a more pessimistic way specifically in "Borders: A mexican family the Martinez" As he mainly illustrates struggles in his own work trying to allow for the people to become more aware of the real world and the negative side of it, while my own work is focused on representing the positive side of life more and trying to bring out the beauty of simplicity in both works. Apart from this they all clearly belong to very different cultures that are associated with every different group of people regardless of their common general culture of humans, each piece is used to represent unique and specific negative and positive situations.

