

Comparative Study:

Pablo Picasso & Édouard Manet
Dareion Wertz



Jeanne (Spring), Édouard Manet, 1881,
oil on canvas, 74 cm x 51.5 cm
blogs.getty.edu/iris/the-radical-artistic-vision-of-manets-spring/



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm
www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/en/collection/journals/the-artist-mother/index_en.html



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

This comparative study compares Édouard Manet's *Jeanne (Spring)* with two of Pablo Picasso's works; *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* and *Guernica*. The study will investigate the stories that these works tell, along with their historical and cultural contexts. It will also breakdown the different pieces function, purpose, and formal qualities. The study will also examine the similarities and differences between these two artists.

Cultural Significance of Édouard Manet

"It has always been my ambition not to remain the same, not to repeat the next day what I had made the day before, to constantly be inspired by something new, to register a new note."

Manet was born into a comfortable life in Paris. He studied the work of the art masters by traveling abroad. Only two of his works (one being *Jeanne (Spring)*) were ever accepted into the prestigious Paris Salon. This was due to Manet's radical take on art. He was constantly accused of violating the conventions of color and technique. He challenged the past in order to create new techniques, gaining high esteem from his young contemporaries like the Impressionists, even being named the 'founding father' of modern art. He never allowed himself to be constrained by the traditions of his time. This allowed him to create works like *Jeanne (Spring)*; works bursting with the color and life they capture.

Manet often paired women and flowers in his portraits. He seamlessly blended colors in both the surroundings and in the subject. *Jeanne (Spring)*, a portrait of the successful young actress Jeanne Demarsy, presents a young woman to embody the season itself. Manet created two other portraits featuring woman as seasons; summer and autumn. However, the relationship between women and flowers goes beyond feminine beauty. It shows how Manet arranged his portraits like still-lives in order to capture life as he saw it. He was able to use a genre that seemed limited to create vibrant and beautiful pieces.



Jeanne (Spring), Édouard Manet, 1881, oil on canvas, 74 cm x 51.5 cm
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Analysis of Function & Purpose



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“Manet understands the human countenance....A portrait by Manet is the physical and moral counterpart of an individual.”

Charles Flor, *Le National*, 11 May 1880

Jeanne (Spring) was one of four portraits of young women commissioned from Manet by Antonin Proust, a French journalist and politician. Each of the portraits were to embody one of the four seasons. This portrait beautifully represents Spring. The lush background of a blooming garden is complemented by Jeanne’s floral wardrobe, which was chosen for her by Manet himself. The parasol give the impression that she may be going for a walk somewhere on a fresh spring day.

The portrait was the young Parisian actress Jeanne Demarsy’s debut five years before she found fame on the stage. The garden in the background underlines her budding femininity. Manet would often pair women with flowers while using **colors** that would complement both subjects.

The overall **purpose** of the piece for Manet was to capture Jeanne in her youth. The portrait was exhibited at the Salon of 1882, and it was admired for its masterful showcase of Manet’s skills with **color** and a paintbrush. It remains a favorite of many who view Manet’s art.

“Since we are speaking of living flowers, let me introduce you to Jeanne by Édouard Manet. She is not a woman, she is a bouquet, truly a visual perfume.”

Maurice Du Seigneur, *L’Artiste*, 1 June 1882

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Analysis of Formal Qualities

The **colors** of the flowers in the dress match up with the color of the sky in the background, creating a sense of **unity** between the foreground and the background.



The **colors** used in the background have a similar **value**.



The rich green background is **contrasted** by Joanne's white dress and pale skin, making her stand out in the **composition**.



The painting's **colors** are bright, adding to the new feeling alluding to the **theme** of spring.



If Joanne didn't have the parasol the **composition** would be very simple. She would be standing alone, dead center. The umbrella makes it **unbalanced** and more **dynamic**.



Upon closer inspection Manet's masterful repetition of **brushwork** can be observed. In this **detail** of the sleeve, careful dabs and **strokes** of color can be seen.

Jeanne (Spring), Édouard Manet, 1881, oil on canvas, 74 cm x 51.5 cm

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Cultural Significance of Pablo Picasso

Pablo Picasso grew up in Spain. His parents supported his art studies, and his father did a lot to help him get the best possible education. At a young age, Picasso mastered realism. His early sketches reveal his mastery of the human form. This led him to begin to challenge conventional style, exploring what he could do when he focused on the absurd. However, sketching remained a central part of his practice, as it allowed him freedom to explore. He filled many sketchbooks with them, and they reveal how his approach to creating art changed and developed over the years.

Picasso spent most of his adult life in France. He continued to experiment with his style, constantly changing it as new inspiration emerged. He led the Cubism movement with a close contemporary, Georges Braque. With Cubism he worked to continue art history, avoid repetition, and constantly change purpose. He captured history with his work. For example, with *Guernica*, Picasso commented on the horrors of war by drawing attention to the pain and terror it caused.

Picasso was constantly changing in response to the cultural influences around him. As he was inspired, he adapted.



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm

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Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm

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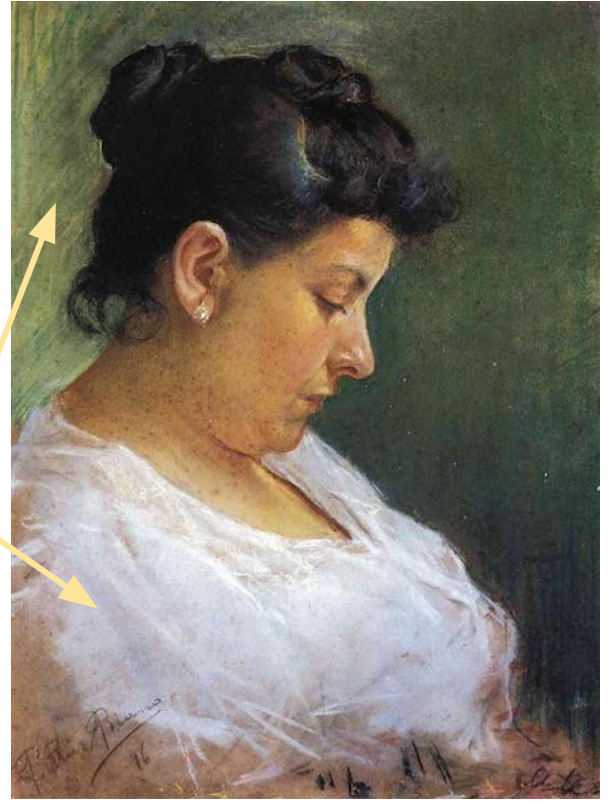
"Basically I am probably a painter without a style....I shift about too much, I move too often. You see me here, and yet I've already changed, I'm already elsewhere. I never stay in one place and that's why I have no style."

Analysis of Function & Purpose

As a young art student Picasso focused on realistic techniques. His father began educating him at a very young age, leading to a mastery of oil painting at just eight years old. Obviously, to become better at his work, Picasso had to do a lot of practice. This included many sketches of what he observed and of who was around him as he grew up in Barcelona. He filled many books with sketches as he experimented with using his advanced skill set to approach art in different ways. He continued to sketch like that for the entirety of his career.

Picasso's mother María and sister Lola were perfect models for him to work on his skills on a daily basis. However, this piece was different from Picasso's smaller format sketches of his mother. It's a full scale portrait done masterfully in pastels. It was a way for him to explore the media and a natural color palette with a model he was familiar with. He would do this often in different mediums and with different people.

When Picasso made this portrait, he was simply working to become more fluent in creating art. He used it to capture his mother as he saw her in the moment, trying to infuse the living being she was onto the page. That was something he continued to do throughout his entire career, no matter what style he was working in at the time.



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm

www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/en/collection/journals/the-artist-mother/index_en.html

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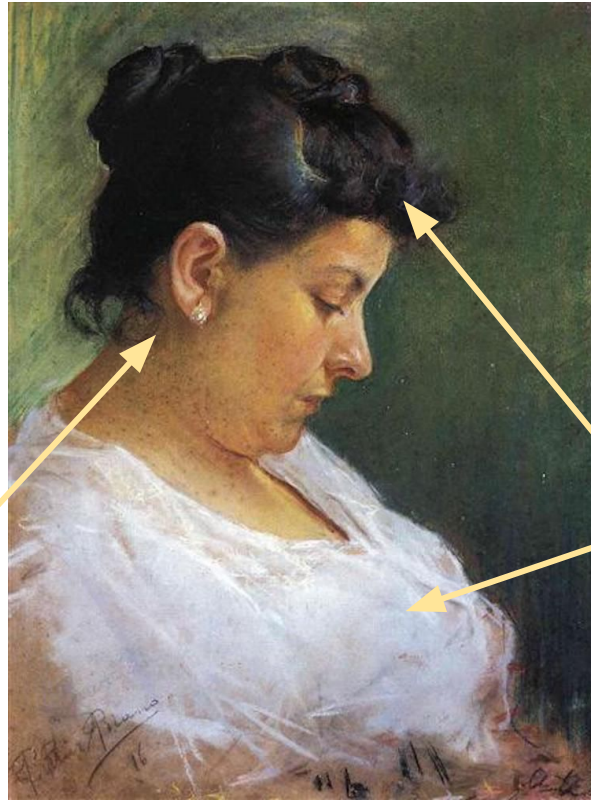
mymodernmet.com/pablo-picasso-periods/

Analysis of Formal Qualities

Picasso chose a **color** palette that was natural and featured earthy tones.

The **texture** of the piece is smooth, giving the impression that if the viewer were to reach out and touch the part of the work, it would be soft. In a way, this comments on Picasso's view of his mother.

Picasso's mastery of Realism can be seen in his accurate **gradation** skills from shadow to highlights.



Picasso manages to communicate the **shape** of his mother without obvious lines

There is a simple sense of **movement**, but not in the usual way. The viewer is invited to follow the shape of the face and where the eyes are looking, traveling down the painting.

There is a drastic **contrast** between the darker **shades** of the top of the painting, of her hair, with the bright, almost ethereal, **color** of her dress.

Picasso made the **composition** interesting by not directly centering the subject, instead filling it more heavily on the left.

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Analysis of Function & Purpose

At the beginning of 1937 Picasso was commissioned by the government of the Second Republic to create a large painting for the Spanish pavilion at the Paris World's Fair scheduled for that summer. In April, two months before the show, Picasso was struggling to create the perfect work. Then, on 26 April, 1937, German and Italian forces bombed the Basque town of Guernica to show support for the nationalist forces fighting the Republic government in the Spanish Civil War. This event gave Picasso the inspiration he needed.

French newspaper coverage of the attack that Picasso read while living in Paris. Left: *Ce Soir*, 28 April 1937. Right: *L'Humanité*, 28 April 1937.



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

During the short period of a month and a half, Picasso worked tirelessly on the canvas. He made many sketches, allowing him to fully flesh out his ideas. He made constant modifications to the large canvas. It was unveiled at the World's Fair, then travelled extensively before being sent to Spain.

Despite being inspired by the bombing of Guernica, the work doesn't contain any specific allusion to the event. Because of this it has a much broader message about the terror and barbarity of war. It is a huge work, capturing the horror of the Spanish Civil War. It has become an emblem of the tragedies in modern society, and it remains a warning against further violence. Picasso didn't shy away from showing the raw emotions and explicit consequences of war. The **purpose** was to call attention to those things.

Leal, Paloma Esteban. "Guernica." *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia*, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica.

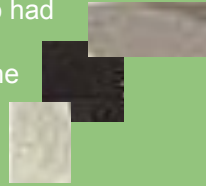
"Rethinking Guernica." *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia*, Telefonica, www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica.

"Soldier, Writer, Artist, Photographer: Accounts from Europe, 1914-1945 @ Pitt Special Collections: Case IV - The Bombing of Guernica, Spain, 1937." *Course and Subject Guides*, University of Pittsburgh, 12 April 2019.

pitt.libguides.com/c.php?g=405564&p=2788792

Analysis of Formal Qualities

The black, gray, and white **color** palette in differing **values** allows the viewer to focus more on the message the work is trying to convey. If Picasso had used a complicated **color** palette it could have distracted from what he was trying to say with the work.



There is an interesting **variety** among the shapes in the work. Different sized triangles, organic and geometric shapes, as well as **variation** in subject matter from humans to animals.

There is a strange **harmony** about the work, mostly because all the aspects match each other and are painted in the classic Cubist Picasso style.

There is a sense of chaotic **movement** in the scene due to the horrific event it is illustrating.

Picasso mainly uses geometric **shapes**, but in a more complicated way than one would think. He combines them to create new objects in the painting.



Picasso draws attention to the figures in the painting by making them white and **contrasting** them against a dark background. It helps the viewer focus in on the emotions the people and animals are conveying.

Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm

www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

Comparing Similarities

Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs. *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* by Picasso

Culture

Both Manet and Picasso were inspired by their contemporaries and past artistic masters, but also experimented with techniques that were unique to them. Both of these works featured subjects the artists knew and had influenced in some way.

Function & Purpose

Both of the paintings are portraits realistically capturing people from the artist's life. Both of the works also demonstrate each artist's skill in their chosen medium.

Formal Qualities

- Both have an overall smooth **texture**.
- Neither use obvious **lines**, but still effortlessly communicate the **shapes** of their subjects.
- In both works, the subject fills the **space** in an interesting way. Instead of being just dead center, both of the artists offset them slightly. This makes them **unbalanced**, but also more dynamic.
- Despite being two different mediums, the **texture** looks very similar. This demonstrates both of the artists' skills.

- Both works use earthy, natural **colors**.

- Both artists **contrast** their subjects against dark backgrounds by using lighter **colors** on them.



Jeanne (Spring), Édouard Manet, 1881, oil on canvas, 74 cm x 51.5 cm
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Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm
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Comparing Similarities

Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs.
Guernica by Picasso



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

Formal Qualities

- Both have very carefully chosen **color** palettes.
- Picasso **contrasted** bright subjects against a black background. Manet used a similar technique, but with a rich green garden.
- Even though the figures in *Guernica* are more 2D, Picasso still used **gradation** to make them dynamic and intense. Manet used **gradation** to make his piece realistic and alive.
- There is **variety** in both paintings. In *Guernica* there are many different figures and **color values**. In *Jeanne (Spring)* Manet has incorporated flowers in many different ways, from the garden visible behind Jeanne to the pattern on her dress and the flowers perched in her hat.
- Both paintings have asymmetrical **balance**, making them much more interesting to look at.

Function & Purpose

Both of the paintings were commissions. Still, Manet and Picasso had some freedom in choosing what they would paint. In the end, however, the final product had to satisfy a customer. Both did, and they became famous, recognizable works for each artist.

Comparing Similarities

Portrait of the Artist's Mother vs. *Guernica* by Picasso



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm
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Culture

Both of these pieces feature parts of Picasso's culture. One is his mother, a huge influence on who he was. He created the other after seeing his home country decimated by a Civil War. What Picasso saw around him, whether in his own culture or in cultures he observed living abroad, influenced his work.



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

Formal Qualities

- In both works Picasso **contrasts** bright **colors** against dark backgrounds.
- While the paintings are different styles, Picasso uses organic **shapes** and **lines** in both to give a sense of **movement**.
- Picasso only fills the foregrounds of both, leaving empty **space** in the background.
- Both have asymmetrical **balance**.
- There is subtle **gradation** from black to white in *Guernica*, and from light to dark **colors** in the *Portrait of the Artist's Mother*.
- There is **harmony** in both. In the *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* all the **colors** are very natural. In *Guernica* Picasso uses all blacks and whites and grays.

Contrasting Differences

Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs. *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* by Picasso

Function & Purpose

The pieces were made for different purposes. *Jeanne (Spring)* was created after being commissioned from Manet. He created it with a client in mind, and with the theme of a season as they had requested. *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* was created by Picasso as a young art student investigating techniques. No one had prompted him to make it.

Formal Qualities

- *Jeanne (Spring)* is an oil painting, while *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* was created with pastels.
- Manet painted Jeanne very pale. Picasso gave his mother a very lively and warm skin **color**.
- Manet painted a detailed background, but Picasso simply drew the background as a solid **color**, leaving **negative space** behind the subject in the foreground.
- Picasso's **colors** are a bit more **intense** and bright.
- There are a **variety** of different aspects in *Jeanne (Spring)* to look at, but in *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* the only focus is Picasso's mother.



Jeanne (Spring), Édouard Manet, 1881, oil on canvas, 74 cm x 51.5 cm

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Culture

These two pieces had very different cultural influences. Picasso created *Guernica* during World War II in response to the terror and destruction war caused. While *Jeanne (Spring)* was simply a commission, there is the obvious use of French fashion at time in it. Manet specifically chose Jeanne's wardrobe for the painting.

Both pieces were culturally influenced, but in very different ways. They also have very different messages. One is obviously more somber than the other.

Contrasting Differences

Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs. *Guernica* by Picasso

Formal Qualities

- *Jeanne (Spring)* is in full **color**, while *Guernica* is in black, white, and gray.
- *Jeanne (Spring)* is a very **organic** piece; it has lush **colors** and plants, and a realistic subject. *Guernica* has some **organic lines**, but it is mostly **geometric**.
- *Guernica's* **composition** is very busy and full of **movement**. *Jeanne (Spring)* is much more calm.
- The **background** in *Guernica* is flat, while the **background** of *Jeanne (Spring)* is as interesting and **dynamic** as the **foreground**. Manet hasn't left very much **negative** space.
- There is a larger **variety** of **colors** in *Jeanne (Spring)*.



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
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Contrasting Differences

Portrait of the Artist's Mother vs. *Guernica* by Picasso



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm

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Function & Purpose

Picasso created *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* when he was a young art student still perfecting his skills. He was very talented, and this can be seen in the work. He wasn't commissioned to create it, unlike *Guernica*. That painting also has a much more serious purpose to call attention to the horrors of war.

Formal Qualities

- In *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* Picasso uses a rich, natural **color** palette. In contrast, *Guernica* has been painted in only blacks, whites, and grays.
- There is more **depth** to the portrait as it is much more realistic. *Guernica* has been painted on a black **background** and filled with **geometric**, unnatural **shapes**.
- There is more **movement** in *Guernica* because there is so much to look at in the work.
- There is more **variety** to the **colors** in the portrait than in *Guernica*.
- **Space** is filled differently in each work; in the portrait it is very simple, with only one **subject** taking up the entire area. In *Guernica* there are multiple **subjects** of different **shapes** and sizes throughout the painting.
- They are made from different **mediums**, but Picasso has used them both masterfully.



Guernica. Pablo Picasso. 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

Cultural Comparisons



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Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs. personal work

Manet's work was controversial because it was so different than the classic style of the time. He didn't let himself be constrained by traditions, which allowed him to create beautiful works filled with **color**. **Similarly**, my piece *Seeing Red* is completely stylized. Even today, in the age of digital art and rise of non-realism, artists are still criticized for not being hyper realistic. Some people even look down upon them if they are not skilled in realism, despite being extremely talented in many other aspects.

Manet was one of the major inspirations for *Seeing Red*. Particularly because of his use of flowers. It is a play on the well-known idiom for becoming suddenly angry, instead approaching the idea that one may "see red" when experiencing love. The flowers in the work hold hidden meanings that contribute to the theme of the work. One of the main features, the hibiscus tucked behind the subject's ear, sums up the **theme** of entire piece. Hibiscus flowers can symbolize beauty, charm, youth, first love, and the shortness of life.

Some **differences** between my cultural influences and Manet is the fact that my work was inspired heavily by digital artists. Manet forged his own path, even creating the foundations for the Impressionist movement. The combination of my classic and modern inspirations help me develop my own style.



Seeing Red, Dareion Wertz, 2020, watercolor on paper, 30 cm x 23 cm

Comparing & Contrasting

Jeanne (Spring) by Manet vs. personal work

Similarities

Floral Imagery: Both my work and Manet's heavily feature flowers. My work was directly inspired by the way Manet incorporated flowers into his work. The **colors** are bright and eye catching.

Feminine Subject: A female subject is the main feature of both works. Once again, the way Manet uses flowers to highlight feminine beauty was an inspiration for my piece.

Composition: The subject is placed directly in the center of the canvas with other details added around to create **movement**.

Colors: The **colors** in both works are bright and lively. Even in the background of Manet's painting, where the main **color** is green, there is still variety. Similar to my piece, which is monochrome, there is still a variety of different **hues** in the painting.



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Seeing Red, Dareion Wertz, 2020, watercolor on paper, 30 cm x 23 cm

Differences

Artistic Style: This particular work by Manet has much more detail in the subject than some of his other works. The woman is realistically painted. However, my work is completely stylized.

Lines: The edges of the subject in Manet's painting are not obvious. My subject is clearly **lined**, while following to monochrome theme.

Saturation and Value: Manet uses less saturated, more pastel **colors** in this painting. The **colors** in my work are highly **saturated** and bright. I only used shades of pink and red, unlike Manet.

Composition: Manet's work is much more detailed and dynamic than mine. My work is illustration based, resulting in a more 2-dimensional feel.

Cultural Comparisons



Portrait of the Artist's Mother, Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on paper, 49.8 cm x 39 cm
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www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica

Picasso vs. personal work

Pablo Picasso's artistic journey has always fascinated me. Learning about his early, highly realistic work shocked me at first as I had always known him as a Cubist artist. *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* and my *Self-Portrait* have the same basic purpose of capturing the subject as they appeared when the work was created. While Picasso's portrait is much more detailed and finely crafted, my painting is still a decent attempt at realism.

Guernica is an extremely important piece. It captures the horrors of War on a grand scale and warns against further violence. In a technical sense it is a complete contrast to the style Picasso used for *Portrait of the Artist's Mother*. My simple *Self-Portrait* doesn't truly relate to *Guernica*, but the way Picasso used the work as a broad message relates to some of the works in my collection. When creating pieces with certain themes, keeping the meaning broad helps capture the wider message and keep the work timeless.



Self-Portrait, Dareion Wertz, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 91.4 cm x 91.4 cm

Jiménez, Reyes. "Restoration of *The Artist's Mother*." *Museu Picasso*, Fundació Museu Picasso, Barcelona, www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/en/collection/journals/the-artist-mother/index_en.html.

Leal, Paloma Esteban. "Guernica." *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica.

"Rethinking Guernica." *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, Telefonica, www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica.

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Comparing & Contrasting

Portrait of the Artist's Mother by Picasso vs. personal work

Similarities

Background: Both my work and Picasso's piece feature nondescript **color** backgrounds.

Texture: Picasso was able to create an incredibly smooth **texture** on the face of the subject. I worked hard to blend and smooth out the face of the subject in my work.

Portriatature: Both of these works are time capsules as they capture the subject of the painting as they appeared when it was created. This is another interesting use for artwork; to act as a much more complicated type of photography. The artwork also allows for more emotion to translate through the composition and brushstrokes.

Style: Both paintings use a more classic, realistic style.



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Pablo Picasso, 1896, pastel on
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[www.bcn.cat/museupicasso/en/
collection/journals/the-artist-mot
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Self-Portrait, Dareion Wertz, 2020, acrylic on canvas,
91.4 cm x 91.4 cm

Differences

Composition: In Picasso's work the subject more heavily fills the left side of composition, making it off balance. In my painting the subject is in the center.

Medium: Picasso used pastels for this work, which allowed a smooth **texture** and easier blending. My painting was done with acrylic paints.

Realism: While both of these works use a realistic style, Picasso's is much more accurate and well executed.

Background: The background in *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* is dark and mostly green, with a slight gradation of **color**. The background of my painting features multiple, more **saturated colors**. They are layered on top of each other and are used to create some **movement** in the background.

Comparing & Contrasting

Guernica by Picasso vs. personal work

Similarities

Color: Both works have simple color palettes.

Emphasis: Picasso **contrasts** the subjects against a dark background to **emphasize** them. The background in my painting **contrast** the plain **colors** of my subject while also vividly **emphasizing** the center subject.

Shapes: Picasso utilizes many different **shapes** in this painting. My portrait uses **shapes** in the shirt to create a **pattern**.



Guernica. Pablo Picasso.
1937, oil on canvas,
349.3 cm x 774.6 cm
[www.museoreinasofia.es/
en/collection/artwork/guernica](http://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/guernica)



Self-Portrait, Darejon Wertz, 2020, acrylic on canvas,
91.4 cm x 91.4 cm

Differences

Style: In this painting Picasso used his iconic Cubist art style. My work is realistic, free of **lines**.

Color: In *Guernica* Picasso stuck to a monochrome, black and white color palette. This helped to convey the serious message of the painting. In clear **contrast**, the **colors** in my painting are very bright.

Shapes: The **shapes** Picasso used are mostly **geometric**, fitting in with the style of his major art movement. The **shapes** in my painting are very **organic**, going along with the realistic style.

Composition: There is little to no empty space in Picasso's work, adding to the chaos of the scene. My painting is simple and only features one main subject in the center. This allowed me to also make the background as eye catching as subject.

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