



Comparative Study

My comparative study was made to identify and analyze the aspects, qualities and cultural significances of Evelyne Axell's *Ice Cream*, *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone* and Susi Schuele's *Blues Beaches*. The artworks are followed by comparisons of likeness and differences that are interpreted through function and purpose. All three artworks are then compared and contrasted against two of my own personal works. These works are looked over to evaluation each piece's cultural and conceptual impacts, that have made a difference to past and present societies.

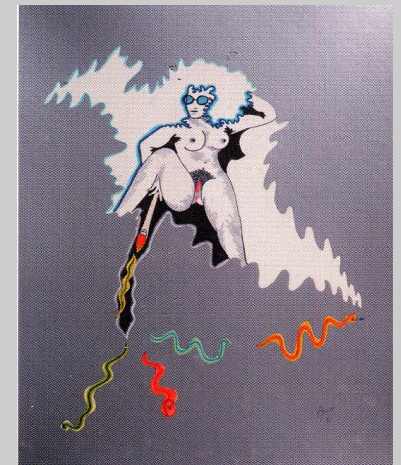
By Luz Acosta

Formal Introduction to Works of Evelyne Axell

Evelyne Axell, a famous Belgian Pop Artist of the 1960's was best known for portraying erotic paintings of the female body. In a time period where female artwork was being dismissed by art galleries and showcasers, Axell became a lead member of womanpower's art. Axell's work had been put under the name of 'Axell' in order to be taken seriously despite her female gender. Once people started becoming interested in her work, Axell began to showcase the sexual nature of women through her art, leading to a feminist, sexual revolution that expressed strength and denounced sexism within the Pop Art movement. With boldness and no fear of consequences, Axell aimed to re identify female artists within the movement through subversive content. Axell's works *Ice Cream* and *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, were two works from her erotic art collection, that displayed sexual liberation and female pleasure, as opposed to the objectified female figures that had dominated the male leading Pop Art movement.



Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.



Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.

Analysis of Cultural Content: Axell

Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.

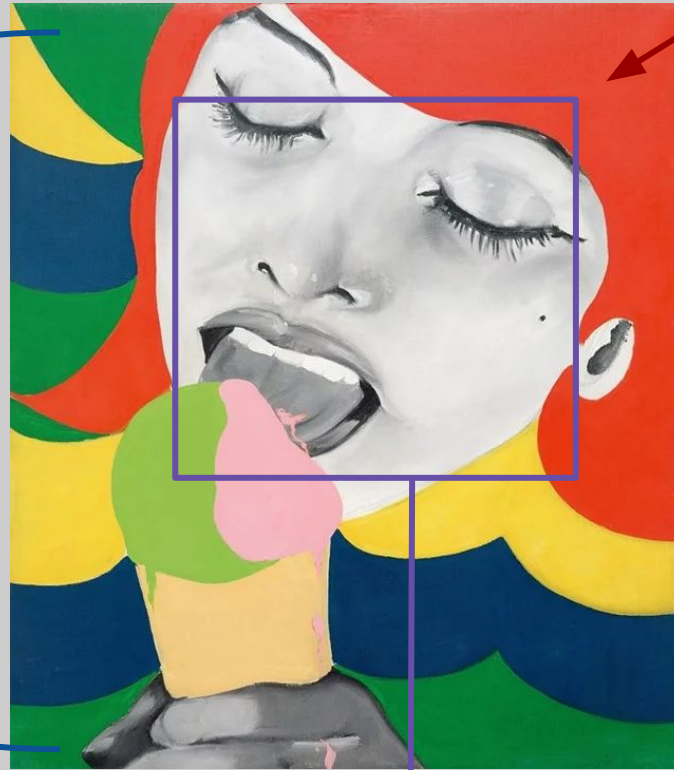
Ice Cream explores the idea of confident women by fixating the work's subject around the female model. When being looked at in the perspective of women as sexual objects, the piece comes off as passive, contrary to what it's actually meant to present. This piece depicts fierce women unafraid of pursuing enjoyment, through the female model's facial expression. The eyes are shut closed, looking away from the male gaze, expressing that women are not objects to be looked at.



Axell presented playful characteristics in efforts to portray female satisfaction being performed on their own terms for no one but themselves. This is presented with a spiritual ice cream cone and a woman enjoying her dessert. This played into the woman's power revolution, that Axell had been apart of during the 1960's. This thematic piece has made an influence in present society, where feminism has evolved in Pop Art, in order to communicate the ideas of pleasure, seduction and female liberation.

Identification of Formal Qualities: Axell

Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.

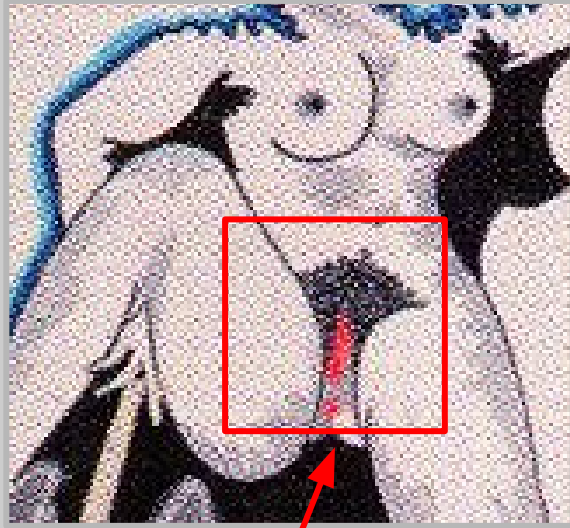


Color and Contrast: The main feature of this painting is meant to be the woman's face, showing an unbothered expression. This is emphasized using a bright red color in the hair in order to create contrast against the black and white face of the woman. The contrast produced by the red hair outlines the face bringing the audience's attention the piece's center, drawing one's eyes towards its facial expression.

Color and Shape: *Ice Cream's* background is presented in three monochrome colors: green, yellow and blue. The colors are used to create swirling shapes that surround the woman in order to individualize the face that's being made the main subject of the piece. This abstract approach provides a bright presentation with dizzying effects when the colors swirl.

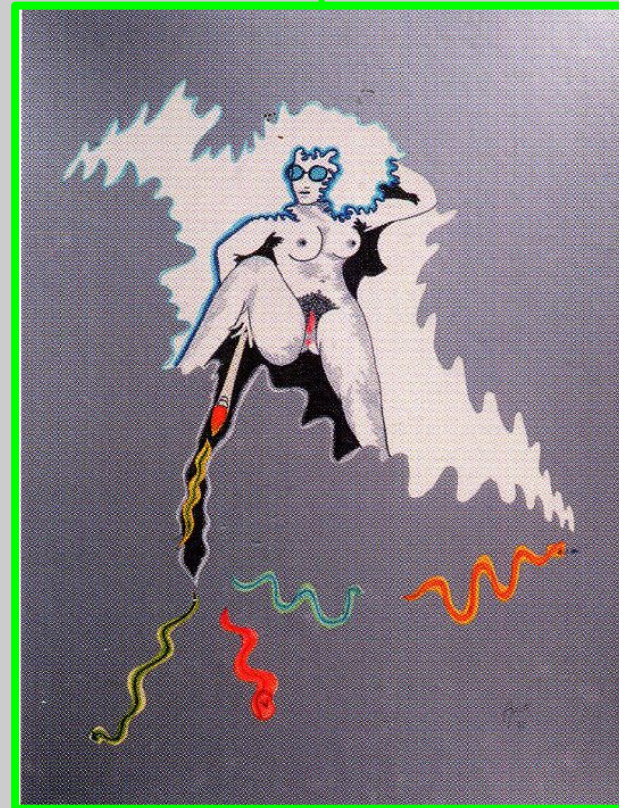
Contrast: When looking at the overall painting, the face and the hand are the only subjects that are presented less figuratively. The face in this piece acts a drawing or photograph that is put over the painting in the form of a collage, in order to contrast with the background shapes and emphasize the appeal of a woman.

Interpretation of Function and Purpose: Axell



Axell creates this art piece using a felt-tip pen in order to accurately portray the body parts of a female figure. The felt-tip pen is especially used in the genitalia of the figure drawing to show likeness to an actual woman's body. The precise attention to detail in this area enhances the erotic dimensions of the overall piece, resulting in a provocative image.

For the subject of this piece, Axell uses the pose of the female figure and repositions it, adding a paintbrush in the hand of the female. This specific attribute is included to represent Axell coming out naturally as a naked woman and an artist.

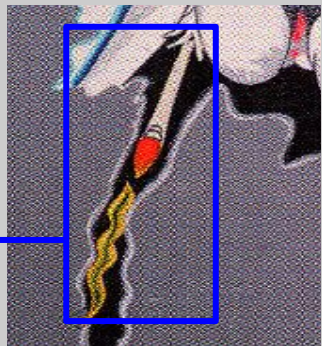


Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.



In Axell's artwork, the female gaze is an important aspect of her representation of women. In this piece, she places glasses over the eyes to show the subject is unapologetic towards the audience. Her position shows the freedom women have gained over their bodies.

Evaluation of Material and Conceptual Significance: Axell



Ice Cream makes a bold statement of female power that says women are strong and there's nothing wrong with the way one puts herself out in the world. This is created by the painting's showing of liberating bodies and pleasure.

Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.

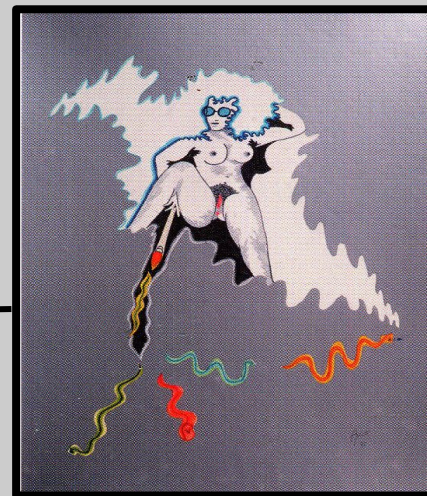


Both art pieces were made with the understanding that women are not consumers goods. The audience is meant to face the organic lasting of a woman's desire and beauty which significantly liberates energy for a new generation of feminism.

Axell combines figurative imagery with everyday objects, such as an ice cream cone or a paintbrush in order to subtly show the male genitalia. The object being figuratively used is in the grip of the woman to portray females holding male dominance. This is to challenge existing orders of men being in control, allowing women to bloom equally.



Le Pinceau de la Gorgone presents the idea of a female painter, shown as an idyllic woman, coming through a slit of the grey world and releasing her colors. This is to say that our culture is something for us to shape, allowing women to embrace and share the mindset of a rather luxuriant nature.



Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.

Formal Introduction to Work of Susi Schuele

As a self-taught artist, Schuele began as an abstractionist, creating vibrant paintings on wood and canvas. Her artworks evolved around staining cradled birch wood to recreate her everyday societal landscapes that were seen by her throughout all of Wisconsin. This long line of creative endeavors developed into interior decorating, functional art and acrylic painting. Schuele has moved into performing unique, emotionally charged work. One of Schuele's more unsettling artworks is *Blues Beach*, which captures her visual depiction of Milwaukee's beaches. The aim is to reproduce the moment in time, where one is face to face with a body of water and its horizon and reliving the emotions that were brought on by an Earthly element.



Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

Analysis of Cultural Contents: Schuele

Schuele expresses that our world isn't dull and brown or a monotone color. It is because of this idea that her work is done in vivid colors that capture the natural bodies of water one can overlook on a daily basis.

As if standing in front of the ocean in person, Schuele strives to make artwork that everyone can enjoy by exploring every range of **bursting sunsets**, **natural landscapes** and **sublime metallics**.

The wood canvas is chosen to connect the audience with yet another element of nature. The wood is able to do what it wants to do with the paint when the color is poured over it. It is infused and figuratively brought to life for a personal piece of the Earth's natural beaches to be placed right in the palm of one's hand or across one's view in a closed room.



Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

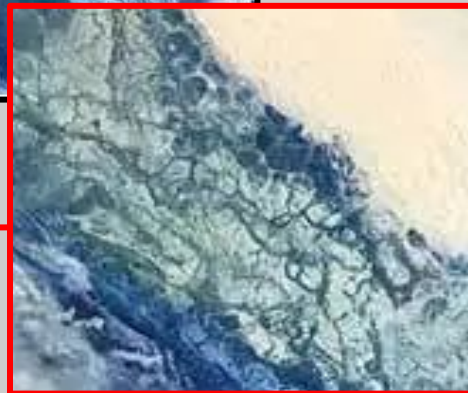
Identification of Formal Qualities: Schuele

Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".



Movement and Color: To create movement, the recurring element of lines and the range of the color blue are used to draw the eyes of the audience in the direction of a flowing movement. This is meant to match the natural blue color of the sea and the unsettling waves in the water.

Color: Schuele performs with the use of her own fingertips to blend the colors together and unite and unexpected color. This piece contains an ironic beauty of blues and white that give life to the wood, resembling white capped waves that evoke calm emotions.



Texture: Schuele spreads paint over wood so the acrylic is able to get sucked into the natural grain of bare wood, to create the texture of a cracked, rough surface. The texture adds to the portrayal of an inspiring landscape, with the natural textures of the sea.

Contrast: The colors of blue and white are set side by side in order to contrast each and highlight the different areas of colder properties in the water being portrayed, This is similar to the contrast of elements in nature, such as deep and shallow waters.



Interpretation of Function and Purpose: Schuele

Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".



The purpose of including texture and movement into the artwork is to create an Earth inspired surface of a landscape. The surface chosen for this piece was the ocean, which can invoke another level of peace by simply gazing at the art piece.



Every single application of paints was infused into the living wood canvas and blended into the grains using the palm of a hand. This allowed the paint to stain the wood to create colorful abstract.

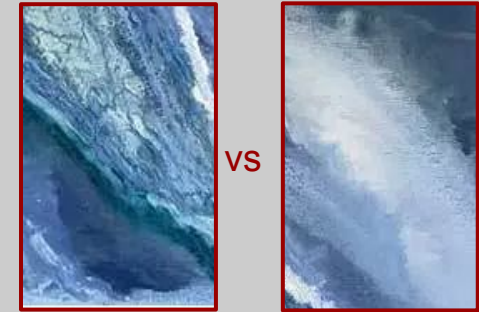


Once the acrylic paints are stained onto the solid wood, areas of the applied paint fade as it begins to seep into the grains of the wood. While the paint spreads throughout the wood, the paint that remains on top of the wood's surface dries darker, in order to create tense areas on the canvas piece. These areas are what creates the shadows on the wood and differentiates the absorbed paints as highlights on the piece as if created on a canvas using brushstrokes.

Evaluation of Material and Conceptual Significance: Schuele

Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

Schuele uses acrylic paints rather than oil for better control in creating the lines that give movement and textures to the art piece. Rather than using her fingertips, Schuele uses a small paint brush for details, which adds emphasis to the natural grains of the wood, for a more precise image of the Earth's waters.



Once the paint is applied onto the wood, Schuele blends the paint in circular movements to create the visual cloudiness or fog of water foam, in order to exhibit a more peaceful feeling through the aesthetics of the blue hues.

The paint that is then absorbed by the wood is sucked into its pores. The wood canvas creates a deep and powerful section which is able to give the overall piece a sense of depth with the bare concepts of applying highlights and shadows, to look similar to a body of water.

shallow
vs
deep



Comparing Cultural Contexts

similarities

- In both artworks, Axell and Schuele aim to revolutionized their work through vibrant colors and radiant tones.
- Both artists are successful in reinventing mindsets through their work. Axell changes the norms of male centric Pop Art the way Schuele is able to emotionally change an audience through the unique colors of their work.



Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.

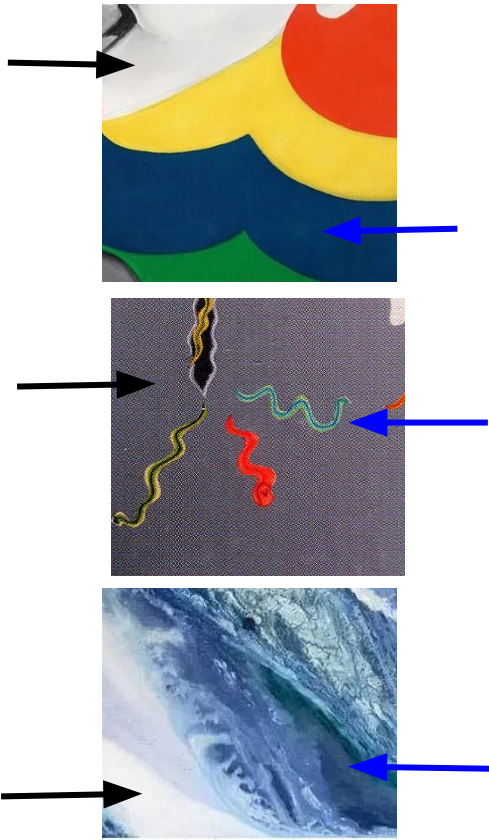
- Axell's work challenges artistic conventions, such as depicting women as the main subject of her work in order to show their power, rather than being shown as ornamental figures.



Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

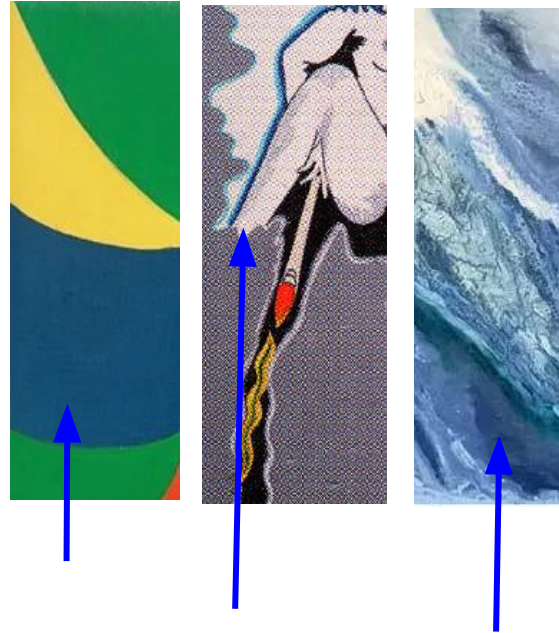
- Schuele's artwork drives it's focus on natural landscapes of nature. The image of natural elements are meant to act as therapeutic creations that evoke another level of emotion, such as relaxation and give life to the canvas.

Comparing Formal Qualities



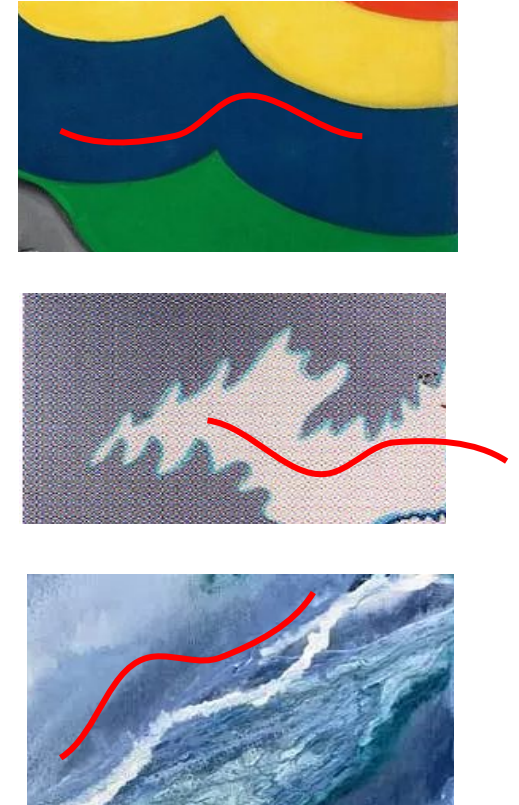
Contrast

-all three artworks share the juxtaposition of different colors, the primary colors contrasting against black and white



Color

-each of the art pieces share the element of bright colors, with the primary blue, red and secondary green being the most present



Movement

-the pieces share a flowing movement by means of shape and color that carry the eye all throughout the piece

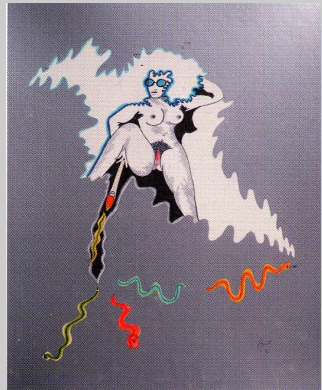
Comparing Function and Purpose



Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.

This painting was created to portray a Pop-feminist perspective. The provocative image of the female figure embodies the emotions of fearless women and feminism through the figure's acts of generating male counterparts. It's portraying an overall understanding of the battleground within one's body. The colors holistically make this artwork a bold image of strong, redefined women.

Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.



Axell depicts herself as a naked woman in order to put the female figure into aspect. The figure is seen breaking through a grey barrier that symbolizes the male driven Pop Art movement. The erotic works of art and use of upfront sexual imagery show that it's okay to showcase the explicit nature of women. The purpose of this painting is to give okay to producing a new narrative of self assured women making strong art.

Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

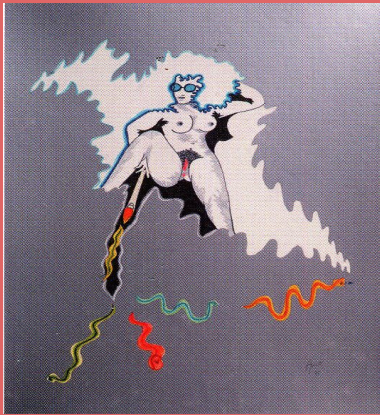


The purpose of Schuele's art piece is to depict a new world of colors and tones that captures a personal and unique vision of the ocean and the waves that bring the audience unsettling emotions. The attention to color detail are enough to create a realistic image of water and substances that make up the Earth's natural elements. This is enough to give life to one canvas, crowd or room.

Comparing Material and Conceptual Significance

Le Pinceau de la Gorgone
by Evelyne Axell

- oil on canvas, collage and felt
- the female figure is drawn on to look like she's stepping into a colorless world in order to add her own touch of hues.
- the felt-tip pen gives Axell the ability to pay precise attention to detail, resulting in an accurate depiction of female bodies.



Both

- vibrant colors are used to infuse powerful emphasize on the female figure and nature

Blues Beach by Susi Schuele

- acrylic on wood, glass and sandalwood
- mixed media piece of stain and acrylic paint
- allows wood to absorb the paint, creating visual cracks that create a visual tide of a wave coming in on a cool day, presenting a calm emotion



Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.

Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".

Formal Introduction to Own Works

A piece I created, titled “Fault”, was inspired by the works of Evelyne Axell. In a triptych canvas, I chose to pursue the societal issue of our rape culture and the empowerment of women. The visual Pop Art movement coincided greatly with the youth culture, which is why I chose to mimic this movement and the style of Evelyne Axell. My artistic inspirations is able to communicate feminism and women’s power through the intrepid female figure, which I had chosen to also include in my own personal work. The first panel shows my portrayal of self entitlement to touching one’s own body. This leads directly to my second panel that highlights the voice of women, using it to fight against those who look to take advantage of them and their bodies. The third panel expresses the fear of being harassed based on what one does or does not wear, being given the fault of verbal and sexual abuse.



“Fault”

Size: 60.96 x 30.48 cm

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

January, 2017

Formal Introduction to Own Works

A second piece I created, titled “Dry Earth”, was inspired by the works of Susi Schuele. Similar to the artists work, I explored the essence of nature and how it is perceived through my perspective. I pursued nature as deteriorating and progressively getting warmer, drying out and suffering. Rather than invoking a calm emotion like Schuele’s *Blues Dream*, I chose to evoke anger and hopelessness. The emotion of anger connects to my society’s environmental issue of global warming, that greatly impacts the planet I live on and our everyday lives. To express this view I put emphasize on the texture of my piece by creating a rough surface to seem as though the surface of the Earth’s ground was perishing.



“Dry Earth”

Size: 91.44 x 60.96 cm

Medium: Oil on Canvas

August, 2017

Comparing Cultural Context and Formal Qualities: Axell

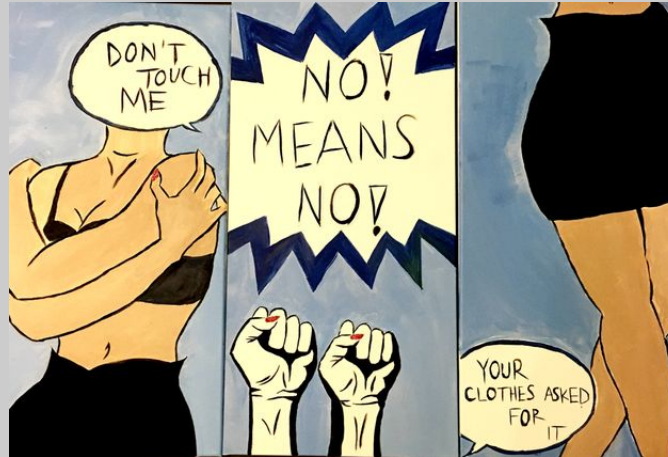
Axell,

Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm.

Own Work

Axell,

Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.



-inspired by the Pop Art movement, the hues and content include vivid colors that are intended to be taken in by the younger audience.

-for my work I incorporated chat like bubbles to present a comic like piece that expressed the themes of rape culture and women empowerment visually and literally.

-inspired by the Pop Art movement, bright colors were used in the background to outline the main figures, being the female figures with contrast

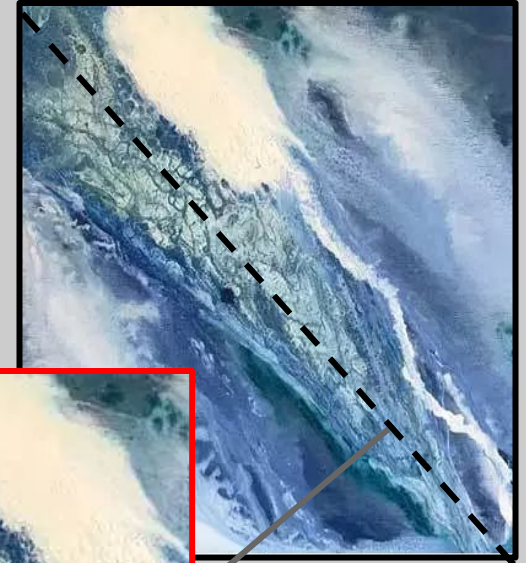
-brings attention to the sexualizing of women and how women have the only power over their bodies and sexuality.

-for my own work, there is no use of repetition, instead I divided my entire piece into three panels and presented it as a triptych

Comparing Function and Conceptual Significance: Schuele



Highlights were used to show a contrast of hues, the lighter areas are meant to symbolize the surface that has yet to deteriorate, which presents a neutral landscape



-the majority of the colors used were warm shades of red and a range of black
-this was intended to communicate the emotion of suffering and progressing anger
-the texture helps emphasize the dryness of the Earth's surface, appearing rough and decaying, this is opposite to the work of Schuele

-the intensity between the red and the black creates symmetrical balance to show a transition of the Earth's surface drying out

-the rhythm of the piece is created with the hues, they eyes are drawn from one corner of the canvas to the other, to follow the effects of a land surface perishing

-there is also a symmetrical balance in Schuele's piece, both areas contain light and dark intensities
-this shows the depth and shallow images of flowing water

-this piece is made up of a range of blue hues and white to give the work contrast
-the contrast allows the art piece to express a sense of peace
-the circular movements and blended cracks in the piece allow the texture to look smooth and fuzzy, appearing like the smooth texture of water

Schuele, Susi.
Blues Beach,
hand stained
on birch
cradled
canvas, 12" x
12" x 1.5".

Reflection

My personal piece “Fault” was inspired by the artist Evelyne Axell. My research mostly focused on the young audience, where the hues and content of the Pop Art movement are intended to be taken in by the younger generation. The main reasoning behind the chat like bubble was based upon my research of the Pop Art movement, where phrasing was used to communicate societal issues, change and growth. The central idea that was inspired by the works of Axell revolved around women and how they are often sexualized. Inferences that came forth during my research was that art can meaningfully portray a self image without having to be a self portrait.

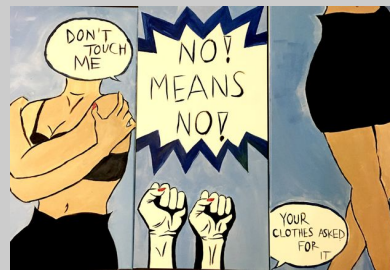
The second piece “Dry Earth” was inspired by the works of Susi Schuele. In her work she took advantage of the grains of wood to create textures in order to portray movements in nature and it’s landscapes. I chose to mimic this effect to show the activity of change by adding glass and lace underneath the first layer of paint. My research mostly focused on the way Schuele was able to create texture. As an overall approach, I used oil paints for better control of the blending as opposed to Schuele who used acrylics. The central idea around my work was deterioration, in pursuit of expressing my vision of how I see the world changing. While performing research I concluded that myself, along with other artists draw inspiration from our different cultures, that evolve into the creation of our art.



Axell, Evelyne. *Ice Cream*, 1964, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm.



Axell, Evelyne. *Le Pinceau de la Gorgone*, 1972, felt-tip on paper, 63 x 48 cm. Private collection.



Schuele, Susi. *Blues Beach*, hand stained on birch cradled canvas, 12" x 12" x 1.5".