

The Four Horsemen from the Apocalypse by Albrecht Durer Painting

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Artist Albrecht Dürer's painting "The Four Horsemen, from The Apocalypse" is my first work. The painting was made in 1498, and the medium used for the painting is woodcut. It was made during the German Renaissance era and had dimensions of 1' 3.25" x 11.5". It is placed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The second painting is of Emanuel Leutze, having the title "Washington Crossing Delaware." The painting is linked with American history and was displayed in 1851 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The artist used oil on canvas as a medium for the painting with dimensions 12' 5" x 21' 3".

Common Theme

Both paintings Washington Crossing Delaware and The Four Horsemen, from The Apocalypse, are showing the theme of war and determination. When you are determined then you can face every situation easily and with full preparation even if it is the time of battle or war. The person who is determined at the time of war or carry required weapons with him always met with success.

Personal Experience

Both paintings show the theme of determination that must be present in every person's life in order to achieve success in every sphere of life. I have been very determined in many of my major decisions in life. I selected my career, and I am determined to achieve my mission. Also, determination calls for struggle in life. And I believe in struggle personally and work.

Professional Experience

I have personally observed Albrecht Dürer's work, and in this specific piece of art, he also paid attention to every detail to fully convey his message in the painting using woodcut as a medium. As a substitute for classical tranquillity, he portrays the deep emotions of people who are using their hands to cover their faces. They are hiding from the imminent horrors of the war. The message here is taken from the book of Revelation, and it is further enhanced with the use of specific colors. The revelation of St John is a widespread subject used to show bravery during the Middle Ages in different paintings by different artists.

There is white color showing triumph, the red shows battle; the black is taken as the depiction of

famine, and the pale shows death. The white horse had a rider with a bow and a voice of thunder; he also possessed a crown that showed his success in the battle. This rider is like a prince who is supposed to wear his tiara and is a human being. The second horse is in red colour and is representing the battle. The aim behind this horse is to eliminate peace from the earth. He also carries a sword with him, further strengthening the objective of depicting the horse used for the purpose of war. The third horse is painted black and is a depiction of the feminine. The rider here is shown as a tax collector. He is carrying a pair of scales in his hand and is aimed to cause starvation on the earth. However, there is a difference in the depiction of the message of revelation also. In the Bible, horses were only used to unleash hell. But in the painting, riders have a bow along with a war sword. There is also a fork carried by the pale rider. But in the Bible, there is no weapon associated with the horse.

“Washington Crossing the Delaware, 1851” by Emanuel Leutze has a theme of bravery and determination of Washington for independence. Emanuel Leutze’s painting is an idealized artistic interpretation of a real historical occurrence using oil on canvas as a medium. It was first displayed at the Stuyvesant Hall in New York in 1851. This painting was originally held in an engraved and golden wooden frame. It was 21 feet and three inches long, and it was 12 feet, five inches tall. There was an eagle at the top of the frame that was carrying a banner with words related to the bravery of the leader depicted in the painting. The huge size of the picture makes the actions of the people in the picture very close to reality (Hotez, 2012). It is included in one of the important images in the history of American art, but surprisingly, it was finished by an artist who belonged to Germany. The artist has painted three descriptions of Washington Crossing Delaware (Peacock, 2007). The situation of the Revolutionary War is depicted in the painting by showing George Washington crossing the Delaware River along with his troops.

Humanities Resources

My first source is from Cambridge University Press, and my other is from The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin.

Historical Context

Washington Crossing Delaware is depicting national myth of that time effectively; head out by an intense grey sky along with the use of Washington a symbol of unbeatable determination. The painting has everything in motion except Washington, who is shown as a leader in the picture (Cheney, 2012). His calmness in the painting shows his determination to achieve success in the war. The painting was created in Germany by Leutze, who had limited admittance to historical records. Thus, there are flaws in the painting due to this nonavailability of evidence.

I have observed some differences with reference to that era. For example, in the painting, the true

boats used at that time are not used. The painting has boats that are much smaller as compared to Durham boats. The purpose of the use of small boats is to emphasize the men in the boat instead of the boat itself. Delaware River, in reality, is not the same as shown in the painting (Barratt, 2011). Moreover, in history, this incident happened in the middle of the night; Leutze shows the crossing occurring at the break of dawn. Characters painted by the painter show racial inclusion and social inequality. Moreover, soldiers are crossing the river in the cold, and this is a true deception of that time. The swollen Delaware River had ice on Christmas day due to the falling of temperature. It was a strategy used by Washington to cross the river before a snowstorm. Furthermore, the painting mostly uses soft blues, greys, and browns. The only bright color used is red, which is used on Washington's boat.

Albrecht Dürer's painting "The Four Horsemen, from The Apocalypse" has a theme grounded in the Book of Revelation (6:1-8). The arousal of danger and determination in the war is the basic theme of the painting. The purpose is to connect the end of the world with a biblical book of Revelation. In the Book of Revelation, Chapter 6, the first of seven seals is opened by the Lamb of God. The four beings shown in the painting got summoned after the opening of the first of seven seals. These Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are in the last book of the New Testament. There is a white horse in the painting, Christ himself. According to the Book of Revelation, there is a book or scroll in God's hand, and it is sealed with seven seals. There is the Lamb of God, who unlocks the first four of the seven seals, and with this, there is a summons for four riders. These riders had white, red, black, and pale horses (Cunningham & Grell, 2000). These four riders are actually used to show the symbol of takeover, battle, starvation as well as death. These horses' hooves are crushing people from left to right. This situation in the painting is linked with the Christian belief that people should be prepared at any time under any circumstances, as Jesus Christ can come at any time. People in the painting must be aware of the coming of these horses so that they might not have been crushed under the hooves of those different colored horses.

Similarities and Differences

The end result is different in both paintings. The end results of painting The Four Horsemen, from The Apocalypse, are in the form of destruction, while in "Washington Crossing Delaware," there is success at the end.

References

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