

Essay



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Comparison Essay

***Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* by Harunobu
and *The Love Letter* by Jacob Ochtervelt**

Student's Name

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***Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* by Harunobu and
The Love Letter by Jacob Ochtervelt**

The essay outlines the comparison between *The Love Letter* by Jacob Ochtervelt, 36 x 25 in. (91.4 x 63.5 cm), Oil on canvas with *the Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* by Harunobu, Suzuki, 11 1/4 x 8 in. (28.6 x 20.3 cm), ink and colors on paper. *The Love Letter* is currently held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1960s, New York City, while the *Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* is held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1766, Japan. Art museums are important cultural resources offering individuals a wealthy social and physical environment to engage with original artwork from distinguished cultures and periods. Nonetheless, despite the two pieces of artwork showing someone doing a woman's hair, they are from different regions and have drawing styles, although both depict culture.

Brief Historical Analysis of the Authors

Jacob was a Pieter de Hooch's co-pupil under Nicholaas Berchem, whereby he worked in Berchem's native Rotterdam in Haarlem. It was about 1655-1674, then afterward, he moved to Amsterdam. More importantly, the typical scene of this elegant domestic life got painted in the 1670s The Metropolitan Museum of Art. At this point, Gerard ter Borch significantly influenced Jacob. During this period, Jacob was a Dutch Golden Age painter. He was one of the leading aristocratic genre painting specialists primarily in the 17th century. Jacob was first mentioned by a Dutch biographer, Arnold Houbraken, who wrote that he was Berchem's pupil at similar moments with Pieter de Hooch. Later, Jacob abandoned the subject and style matter whereby he returned to aristocratic genre scenes as well as portraiture, and he enjoyed its success.

On the other hand, Harunobu Suzuki was one of the earliest Japanese ukiyo-e printmaker and painters masters of Nishiki-e, recognized for his special full-color printing style. He was a significant ukiyo-e artist mainly during the classical Edo era. However, little is known regarding the author. More importantly, individuals recognized him as an inventor of the Japanese color print who was Nishimura Shigenaga's pupil (Strange, 1904). He was the first individual to take full advantage of new techniques to make Nishiki-e famous. Besides, he took the Japanese art crafts that would block print-making to a new height.

Visual analysis of *The Love Letter* by Jacob Ochtervelt and *Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* by Harunobu, Suzuki art works.

The main subject of *The Love Letter* by Jacob Ochtervelt consists of a beautiful woman reading a letter. The letter seems to come from her suitor, hence the title of the painting. An individual can also observe a maid woman threading strings of pearls in her mistress's hair. The mistress's facial expression revealed an elegant domestic life and a good omen. In this case, Jacob added value in her dress code may be to differentiate different classes in society. Significantly, the woman seated reading a letter as well as the woman dressing her hair are vital motifs in the paintings in the early 1660s (Ochtervelt, 1996). The artist reveals contrast principle by showing the different dress colors and textures the maid and mistress wore. The mistress's smile and questionable expression revealed an uncertain love. Therefore, letters were used to evoke emotions and thoughts. The painting might have represented the themes of marriage or adultery in case one was not yet married and the texture symbolized a rich family.

On the other hand, the *Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* by Harunobu is one of the most insightful images of that period. The painting shows the delicateness and elegance of femininity with refined detail. The subject matter involves erotic imagery outlining Japanese poetry or culture, especially the dress code. The Edo period was generally a time individuals enjoyed peace and stability (Gustlin, 2022). The painting shows a young girl lulled by the boiling tea cauldron. The texture of her hair can be observed whereby she did not wake up despite the boy inserting something in it. This significantly alludes to the "Night Rain," a venerable theme in Japanese and Chinese painting, reflecting a mythical scene. *Night rain at the double-shelf stand*, from the series eight parlor views in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The painting has a simple yet delightful composition design. The use of tea utensils, furniture, windows, and room partition primarily gives a viewer an effective glimpse of the Japanese house in the interior at the time. The painting used a woodblock print, ink as well as colors on paper. The color used is almost the same in the painting hence showing emphasis that creates a focal point. All characters in the painting focus on the girl.

Similarities and differences in the works of art.

As stated in the introduction, the two paintings reveal major differences, especially in their locations. *The Love Letter* is from the Netherlands, revealing how individuals used to show love to their loved ones. On the other hand, *Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand* is from Japan. The design of the house shows the Japanese interior house. Another difference between the two paintings is the different styles of someone doing a woman's hair. The lady in *The Love Letter* appeared to enjoy someone plaiting her hair. She was comfortable while reading the letter and having someone make her hair. However, in the second painting, a girl sleeps with the sound of a boiling tea or water boiler. A mischievous young boy seems to take advantage of the fact that she is asleep, and one can notice him inserting something in her hair (Gustlin, 2022). More importantly, each painting represents a different

drawing style. In *The Love Letter*, the beautiful woman reading the letter is sitting while the other lady is serving her while standing, whereby her dress code reveals a high social class. The young girl sat on a mat in the other painting and revealed a different dress code.

Nevertheless, there are some similarities between the two paintings that depict culture. For instance, the painting in *The Love Letter* depicted the culture of marriage/love. Men used to send letters to evoke the feelings of a woman they were interested in, especially in high-class families. This means some people from the high class were learned at the time. Similarly, Japanese culture was also depicted in *Night Rain at the Double-Shelf Stand*. There was a certain way the Japanese used to decorate their houses during that period. In this case, it would be easy to notice that the paintings also utilized the culture of color. The summer mood intrinsic, especially the landscape, was transposed in Edo's interior house, showing pleasure.

Link the works of art to the time/place/context in which they were created.

Suzuki Harunobu was devoted primarily to the portrayal of scenes for most of his life. In this case, he made a significant artistic choice to develop color print or brocade painting. He achieves his aim by mixing pigments instead of superimposing only two printed colors. Gerard ter Borch greatly inspired Jacob. His work depicts realistic living and inanimate objects. Using a letter as a way of communication played a key role in reflecting the culture of the painting. Their works mirror how culture has greatly changed.

Conclusion

I chose the two works which depicted culture; one is from the Netherlands and the other from Japan. They have different drawings of someone doing a woman's hair, which interested me in looking at the two paintings. In my opinion, the artwork plays a key role in an individual's present culture. I find it interesting how they are appealing and insightful as they remind an individual of what was happening/how it looked in the early days. One thing that made me select these two paintings is how they depicted culture in different regions. I think that the artwork has a high percentage of importance, especially on its artistic nature. Overall, both artwork present women in a different selection style.

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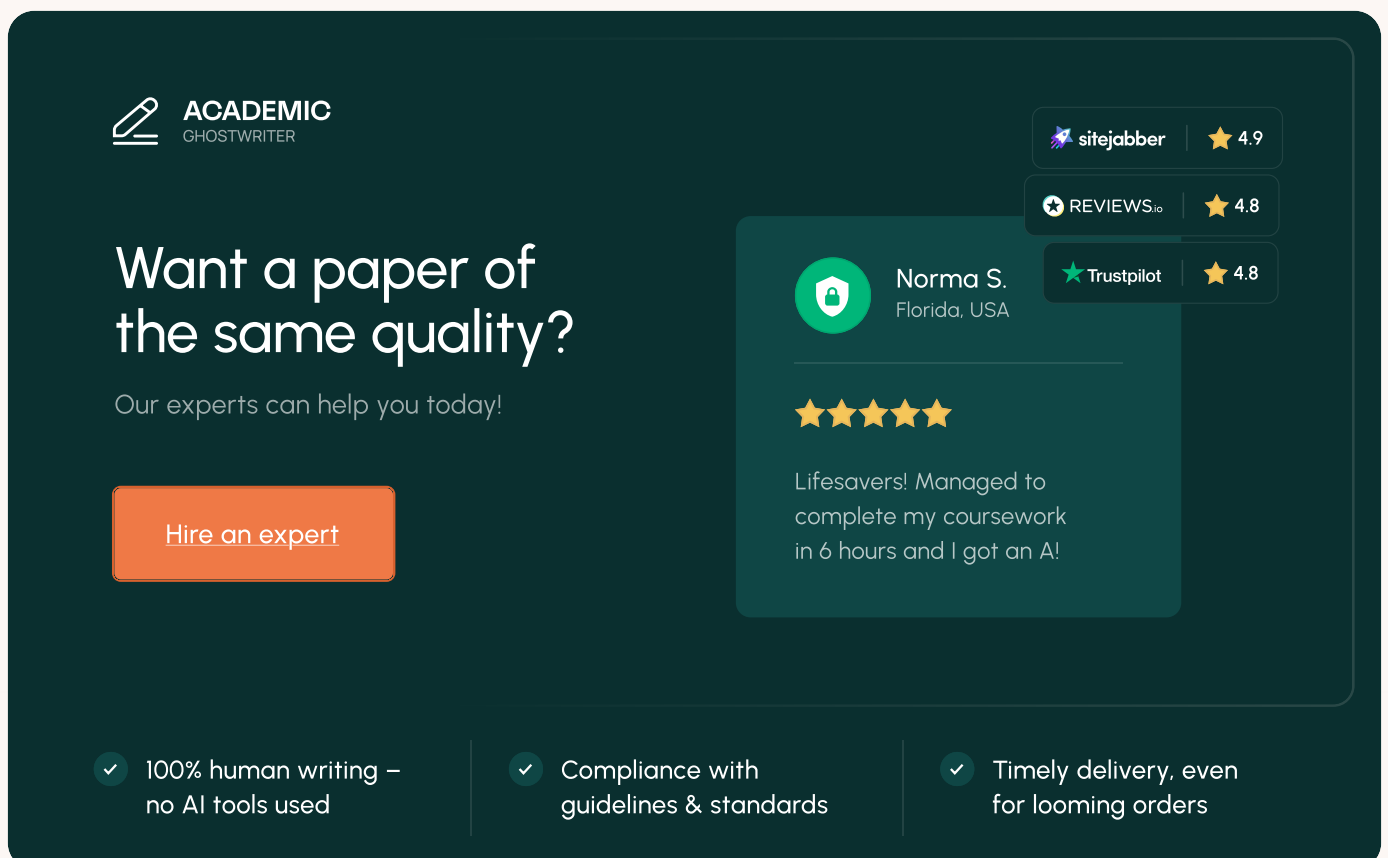
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