



# COMPARATIVE STUDY

My comparative study will focus on analyzing and interpreting the artist Kathe Kollwitz and Edvard Munch, their works and my own. The works I will be analyzing, critiquing and comparing are 'Hunger' and 'Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht' by Kathe Kollwitz to 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch. Based on their artwork, I will be critiquing the themes of loss and perspective in the art pieces that provoke emotion from audience, such as eeriness and sorrow, and how the mediums are used in order to create those particular emotions. I will also be taking into account the movements they influenced and their intentions as well as comparing these different aspects of their artworks and comparing them to my own pieces.

# EVALUATION OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF KATHE KOLLWITZ

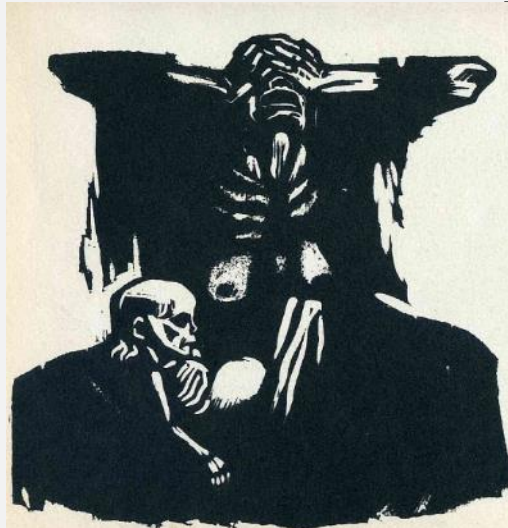


## **Self-Portrait with Hand on the Forehead**

Käthe Kollwitz  
Etching and Drypoint 1910  
(44.8 x 31.1 cm)

In her self portraits, she often has a serious and tired expression as an effect from living in a time period where war was almost the norm. She further expresses her thoughts of war in letters such as stating, "People have been transformed so that they have this capacity for endurance... Worst of all is that every war already carries within the war which will answer it. Every war is answered by a new war, until everything, everything is smashed." Knowing she was going to die due to the war her last letter stated, "War accompanies me to the end."

Kathe Kollwitz was considered of the most important artist in the German Expressionist movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Her art works mainly focused on the depictions of women during a time period where men dominated the art world. Her ability to depict emotion through strokes and contrast between light and dark were a reflection of the time period.



## **Hunger**

Käthe Kollwitz  
Woodcut 1923

Her art was meant to express the realities of war and trigger emotions such as sorrow, anguish and loneliness. Her artworks consisted of war victims and the loss of loved ones. Due to the amount of death during WWI, she was hostile towards the arrogance of the philistine of Germany, Communism and the subject of war. Having experience the atrocities of war, she understood that war brought along poverty, hunger, hatred, guilt and death. Thus, these themes are often conveyed in her artworks.

# INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

## ANNOTATION OF 'MEMORIAL SHEET OF KARL LIEBKNECHT' BY KATHE KOLLWITZ

Expressions and hand placement add emphasis to the feeling of sorrow.

Large amount of people expresses how influential Karl Liebknecht was and how he affected a large population.



The death of the Communist Leader, Karl Liebknecht, caused major grief during WWI. Kathe uses a stiff form to emphasize the effect of death on a person and how precious a life can be.

Dark shadow made from the ink make the cheeks look hollow  
Repetitive strokes make the texture look worn out contributing the mournful atmosphere.

Uses black to add shadow and uses beige and white as highlight to indicate that the death was devastating.

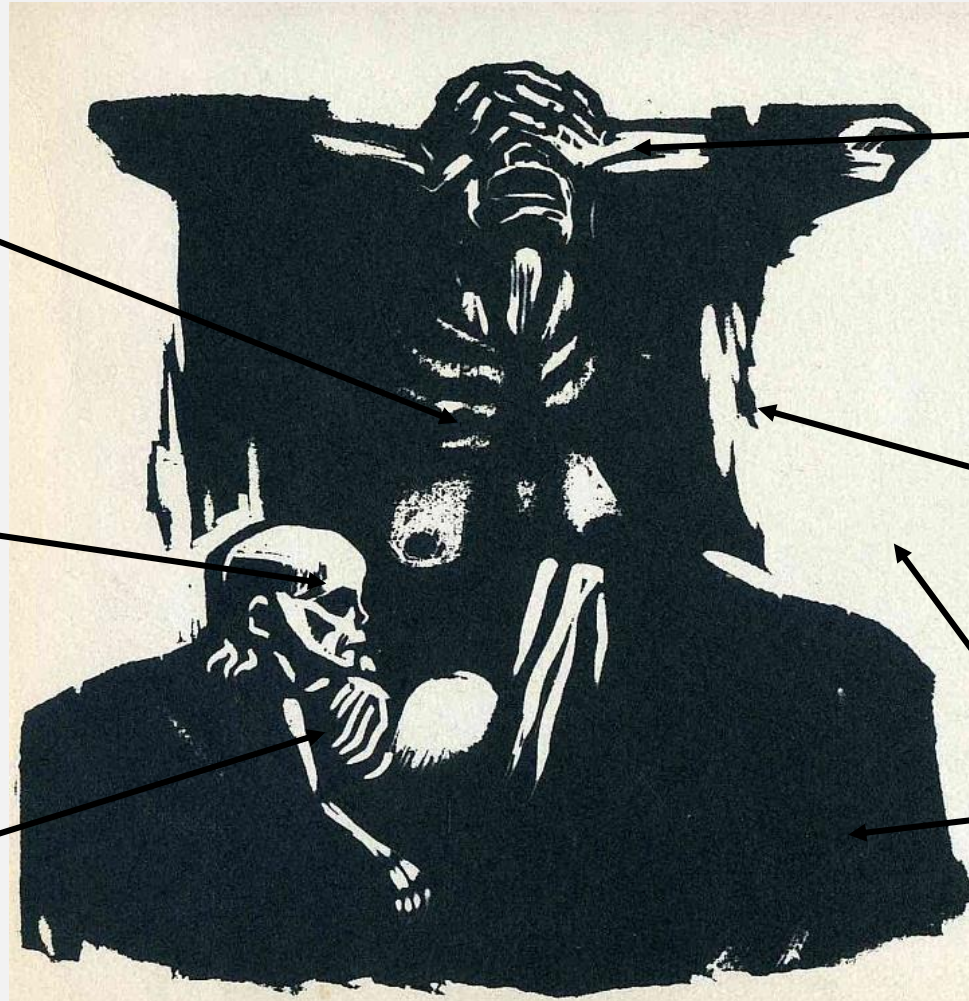
# INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

ANNOTATION OF 'HUNGER' BY KATHE KOLLWITZ

White lines on the mother contrast from the dark clothing to reveal her ribs.

Black areas are used to indicate hollow eyes and cheeks and that the child has passed away.

Thin white lines outline the bones and emphasize how malnourished the child was.



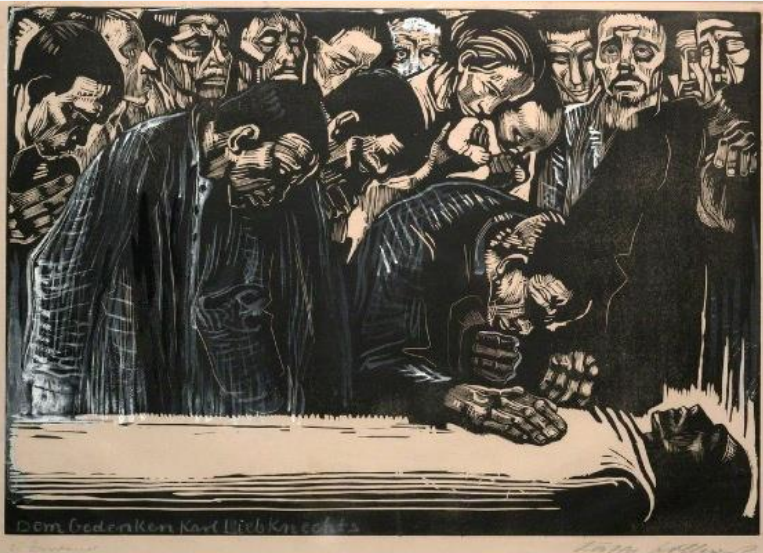
Her boney hands cover her face to indicate her grief for the death of her child.

The white is used to create gaps and holes in the clothing.

Large patches of black and white space is left over in order to not distract from the mother and child.

# ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES OF KATHE KOLLWITZ

Kathe Kollwitz is able to express intense emotions such as anguish and grief. Immediately after looking at the public's expressions while surrounding the dead figure, draws out the emotions of misery and sadness. Her first hand experience of WWI, contributes how the death of a leader can greatly impact those who admired the figure. She is able to create a memorial and acknowledge the leader without advocating his communist ideologies. Although she was not communist, she admired his charisma and agreed to create a memorial for Karl Liebknecht.



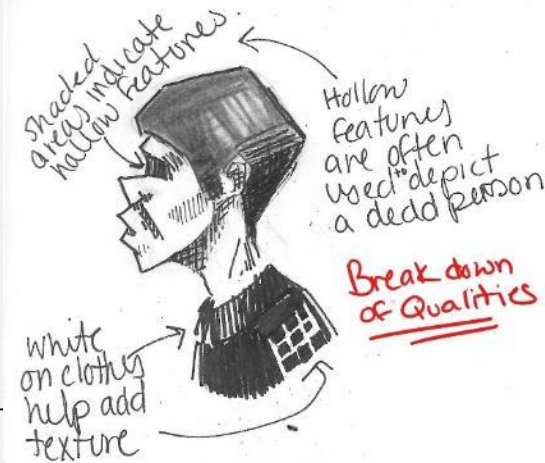
## **Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht**

by Kathe Kollwitz

Woodcut heightened with white and black ink, 37.1 × 51.9 cm

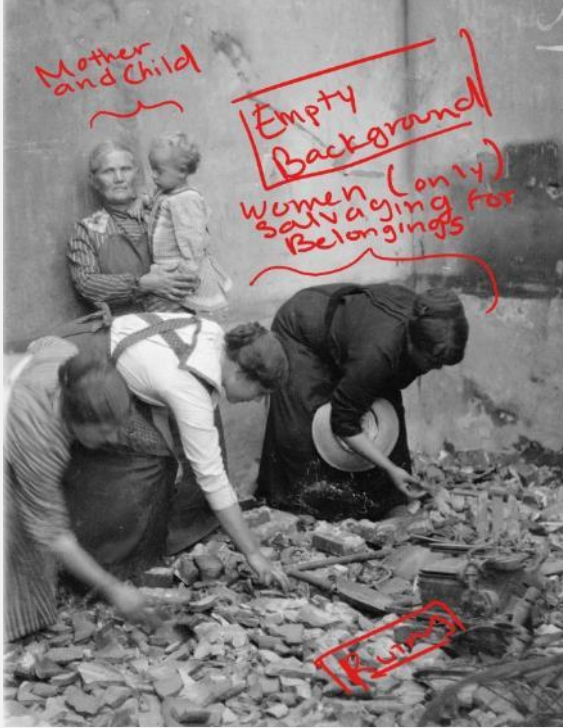
The repetition of strokes adds on the balance between black and white. Both aspects add emphasis to the emotions of grief and sorrow making the theme of death clear to the audience. The stroke's patterns add texture and highlight the cheekbones making them give a hollow effect suggesting the idea of grief in the crowds face as well as portraying the face of the dead. The thin and thick lines in the hands are used to create a worn look suggesting how much death and war can wear down a population.

Sketch Breakdown by Me



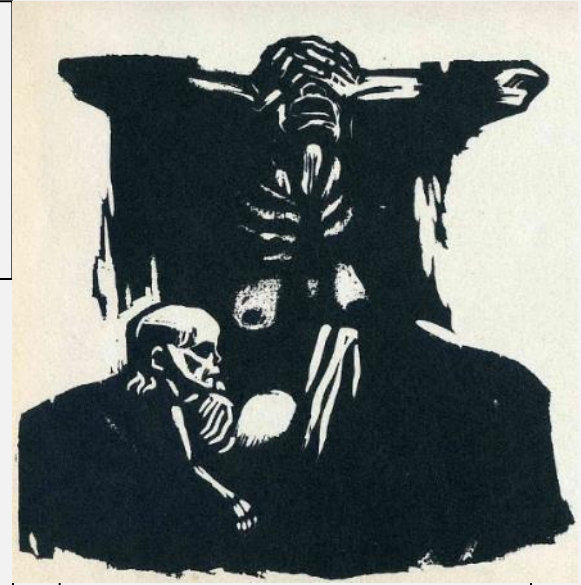
The emotion of hope the communist leader gave to the population must have been great considering the how many people are depicted in Kollwitz's art piece who mourned for his death. In addition, Kathe Kollwitz uses a limited color palette creating large amounts of contrast between black and white giving a somber atmosphere. The overwhelming use of contrast combined with the amount of strokes and forms, leaves no empty space in the 'Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht', further suggesting the amount of influence Liebknecht had. The way he is laid, with a white robe and stiff position resembles the death of Christ and the mourning of his disciples.

“A woman holds a young child as other women search for belongings among the ruins of their homes, which were destroyed by the Germans, in the Belgian village of Melle in September 1914” –Johnny Goldsmith August 2014



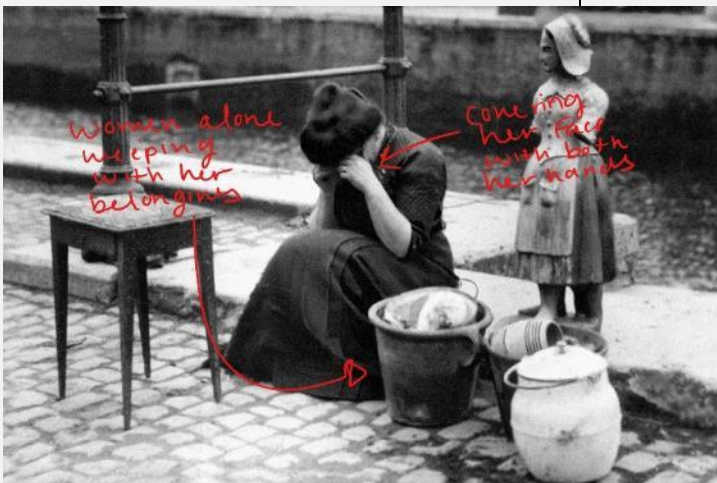
# ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES OF KATHE KOLLWITZ

In Kathe Kollwitz piece, ‘Hunger’ she uses highlight on both the mother and child’s chest areas to indicate protruding ribs suggesting that both figures are malnourished. A variety of thin and thick lines are used to portray details in their limbs to exaggerate how thin the mother and child was at the time of death.



**Hunger**  
By Kathe Kollwitz  
Woodcut 1923

Highlights and shadows are also used in the child’s face to darken the eyes and show hollow cheeks in order to show that the child has passed, causing the mother grief. This is shown by the position of the mothers hands, which are covering her face. Covering the mother’s face with her hands reveals that only the mother’s mouth and positions are needed to impact the audience with the emotions of grief and despair. Her hidden face implies the mother having feelings of self-guilt, blaming herself for the death of her child. Kollwitz has her facing upwards towards the sky as an act of repent as well as expression.

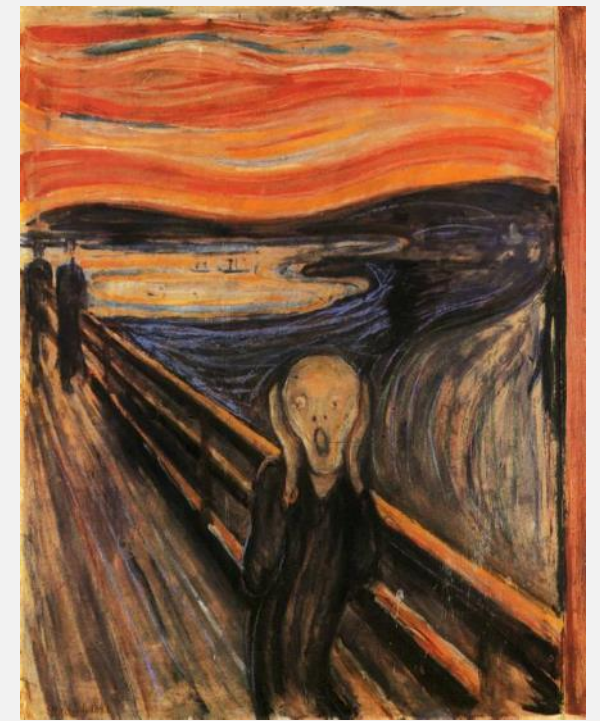


The space is equally divided by black and white to direct attention to the focal points of the piece, the details on the mother and child. The blank background and plain clothing are left this way for the same purpose. Simple details, lines the holes and tears on the mother’s sleeves and the lack of clothing on the child suggest their economical status to be of the lower class. The piece is symmetrical with slight imbalance to disregard what may have been happening in the background and show how background noise is insignificant when the death occurs.

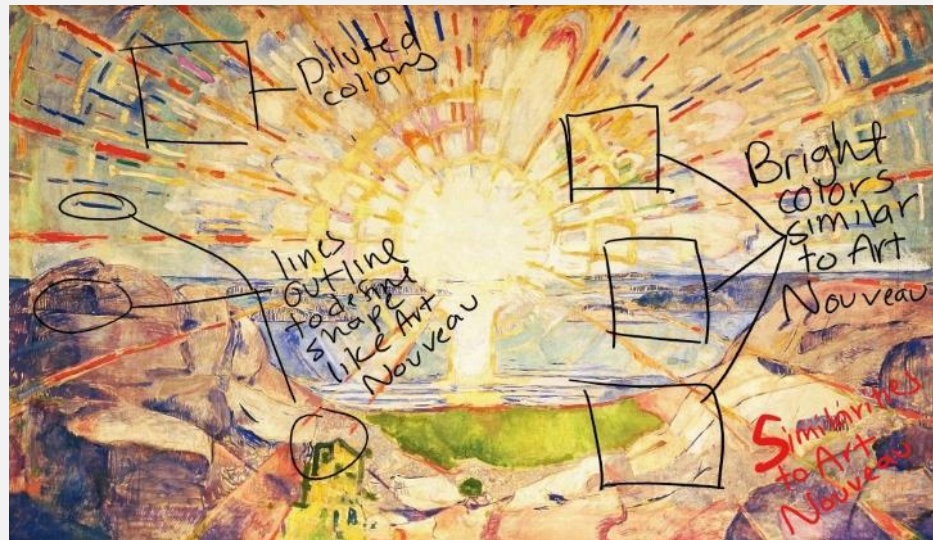
“A woman weeps at the roadside in Antwerp next to her worldly possessions – a table, some pots and pans and a stone statue in August 1914” –Johnny Goldsmith August 2014

# EVALUATION OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EDVARD MUNCH

Edvard Munch is an expressionist painter and printer who played a major role in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century German Expressionist movement. He grew up with a family with ill health where he lost his mother and sister to tuberculosis, later lost his father and brother and another sister who was diagnosed with a mental illness. Thus, many of his works in his early years represented the repressed emotions he grew up with due to the many deaths he's witnessed. In addition, another important factor that influenced him, was a circle of artist and writers, called the Karitiana Bohème, who opposed bourgeois thinking and narrow mindedness. This influence him and created works that focused on how the objects should be viewed internally rather than only focusing on how they look visually.



*The Scream* by Edvard Munch 1893



The Sun by Edvard Munch 1909

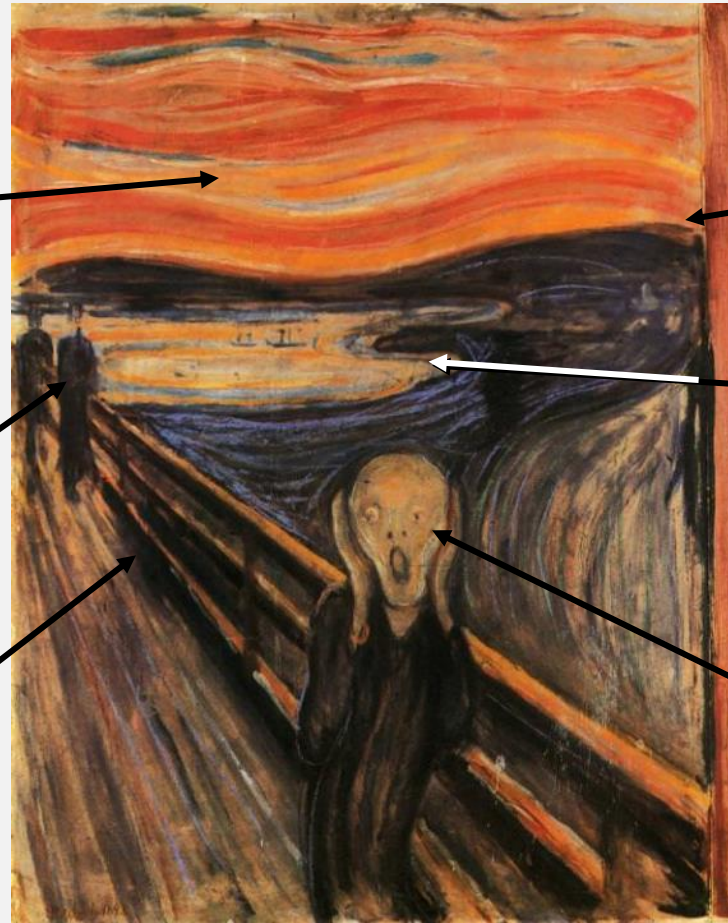
His artistic style developed around 1892 where his work reached a psychological revelation and a style similar to Art Nouveau. He portrayed aggressive emotions, unusual imagery and representations of sexuality that lead up to controversy. The controversial themes spread his name and influence because of critics who disliked his art. Later, he experimented with graphic art like etching, lithographs and woodcuts. Munch experimented by using actual grains of wood to express messages more effectively and succeed. He inspired later artist as well as provided advocacy for German Expressionism and the universal aspects of human experience. Overall, he concentrated on emotions that later led onto expressive forms and use of color rather than using them as a descriptor. He expressed his ideas by using contrasting lines, dark colors and exaggerated tones. Munch summarized his art work by stating, "Nature is not only all that is visible to the eye... it also includes the inner pictures of the soul."

INTERPRETATION OF FUNCTION AND  
PURPOSE:  
ANNOTATION OF 'THE SCREAM' BY EDVARD MUNCH

Expressionist interpretation of Munch's actual experience of a scream he heard while on a walk. The lines and curves represent the effect the scream had.

Two figures in the background suggest the companions that kept walking while feeling a scream distort nature around him.

Being at the perspective near the screaming figure makes objects in the background smaller and almost unidentifiable.



The combination of the curved lines and contrast of blue and orange cause an eerie atmosphere.

There are limited color values of blue and orange making the land, sky and water be divided.

Figure takes up a large part of the artwork, acting as a focal point, creating an imbalance of space in the art piece.

**The Scream**  
by Edvard Munch 1893

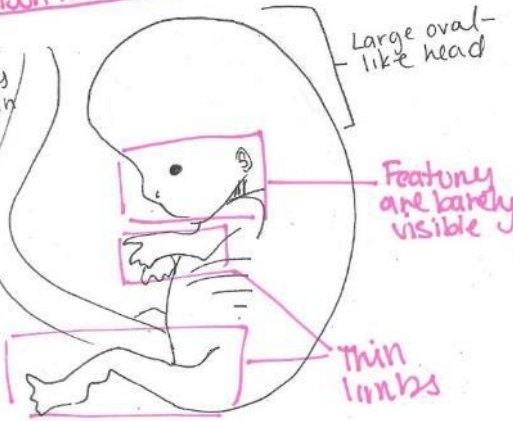


# ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES OF EDVARD MUNCH

Munch expressed his obsessions of human mortality such as chronic disease, sexual liberation and religion by using intense colors and hue's to help depict a subject. When the audience experiences 'The Scream' they can't help but question why the human like figure is screaming and who the figures in the background are.

## Comparison to a fetus

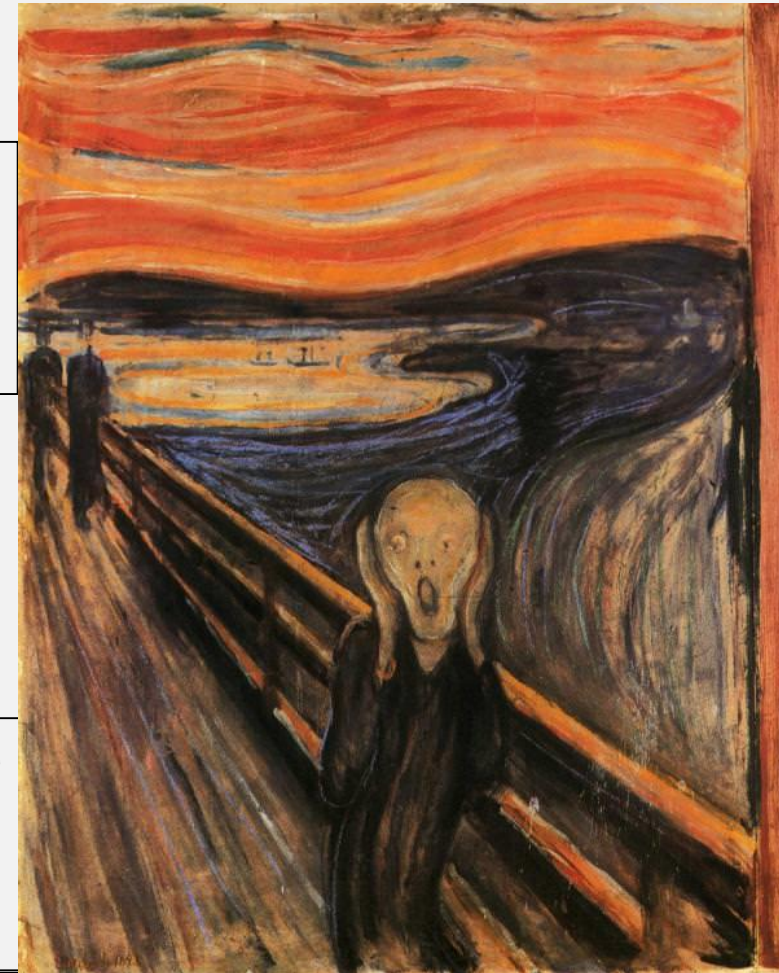
Features of a fetus are unhuman-like and look distorted compared to a fully developed human



The main focal point of 'The Scream' is the distorted, fetus like figure who is screaming while facing the audience. The screaming figures raises the question of why, who or what the figure is screaming at.

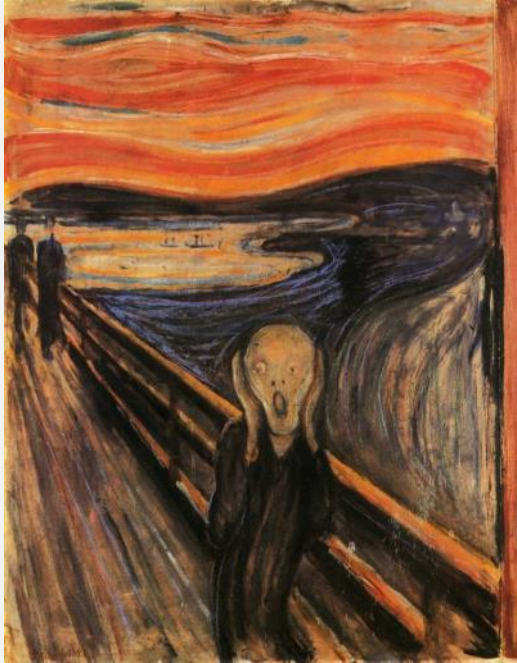
The figure is surrounded by a deformed orange sky and dark blue water, enhancing the atmosphere which is a combination of anxiety and uneasiness.

The way the figure is screaming is very unhuman like the unnatural distortion in the background which is suggesting that the figure is being affected by the surrounding environment. The 'scream of nature' caused the distorted background as well as the figure, making it form indistinguishable but the figures don't seem distorted which reveals that the figures were not affected or did not notice the 'scream of nature' that occurred.



**The Scream**  
by Edvard Munch 1893

# ANALYSIS OF FORMAL QUALITIES OF EDVARD MUNCH



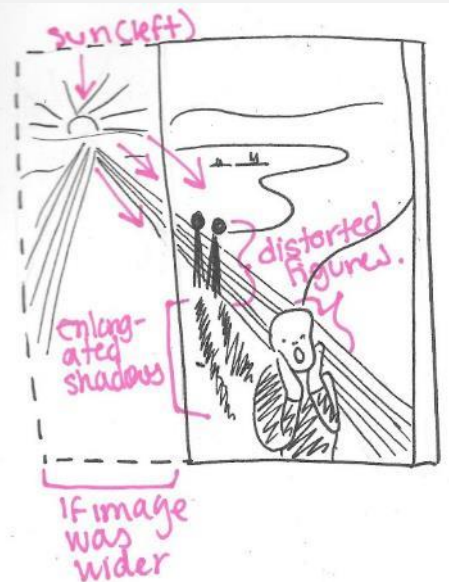
The skewed perspective creates an imbalance causing the piece to have an asymmetrical composition. In addition, the skewed perspective leads up to the two distorted figures in the background contribute to the sense of agony the main figure is expressing making the viewer question the context of this art piece. Questions that are typically asked are 'why is it screaming?', 'who are they?', 'Did something bad happen?', etc.

The figure appears to be fading near the bottom of its torso, illustrating it as if it was fading from the walk way. Thus, the figures in the background are walking away as if the screaming figure was never there or they didn't notice it. Although the space isn't confined, the contours surrounding the figure enable a claustrophobic feeling which connects to the theme of fear.

'The Scream'  
by Edvard Munch 1893

Diagram Sketch by Me

The orange sky reveals the time, in the afternoon, in which the 'scream of nature' occurred. This is supported by the slight shadows on the walkway created by the figures in the background. The positions of the figures and their shadows indicate where the sun was in the background, which was towards the left side of the art piece. Since the shadows are elongated it is inferred that it is the dusk or the end of the day, hence why the sky is a dark orange rather than a blue.



# CONTRASTING ARTISTIC STYLES



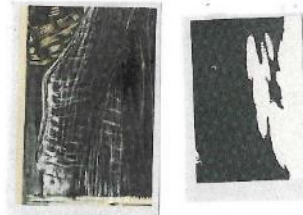
Uses a variety of strokes (thick and thin) to add detail.



Variety of lines are used to emphasize shadows and help portray grief. Features are sharp.



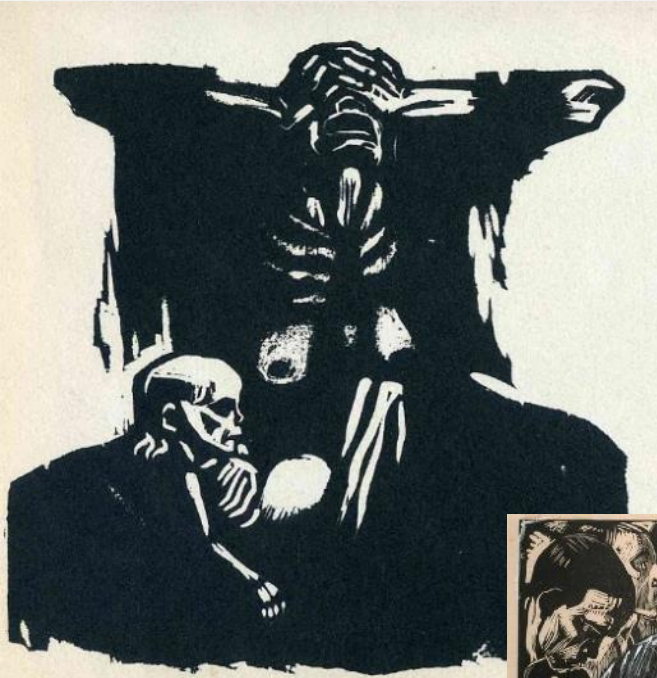
Has specific focal points that provoke most of the emotions, mainly grief. Ex. Mother and child because of how thin they are and the mother covering her face.



Uses a variety of strokes (light, heavy, straight curved) to create different textures.

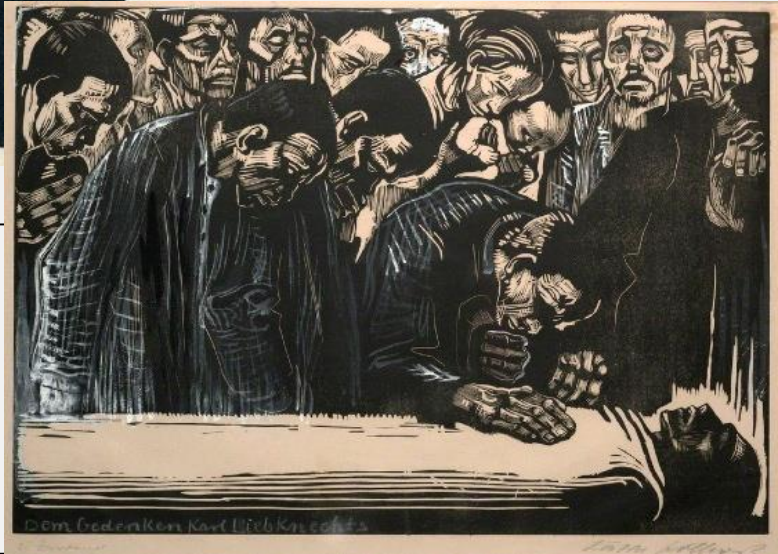


Large amount of contrast between white and black.

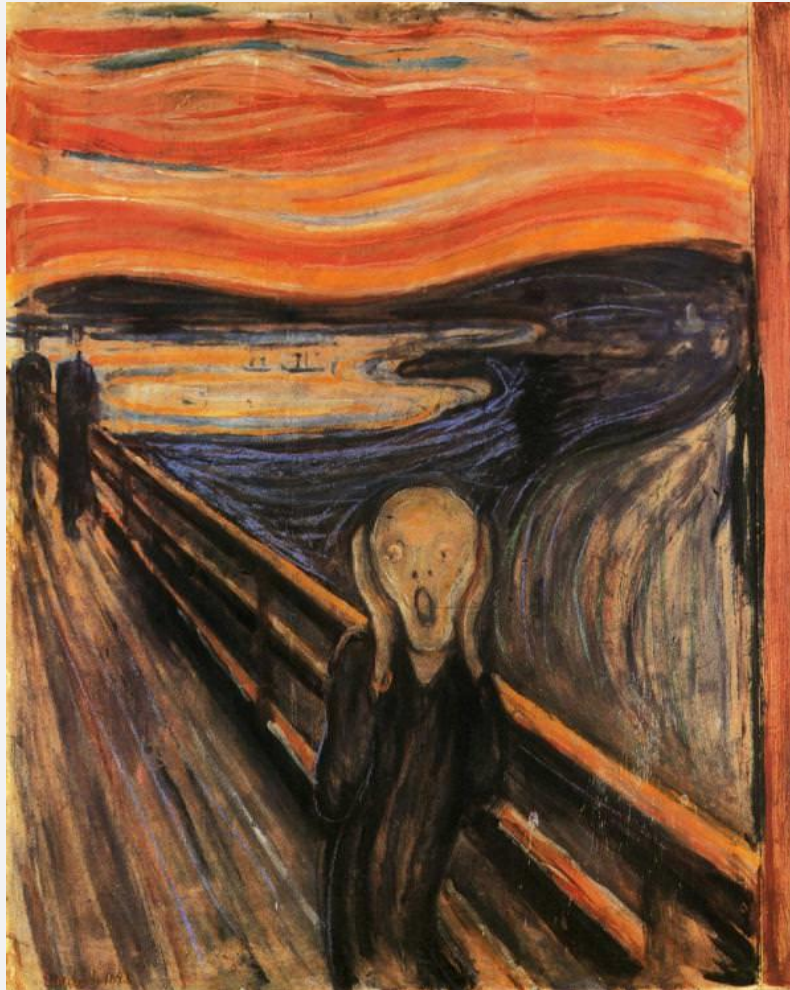


**Hunger**  
By Kathe Kollwitz  
Woodcut 1923

**Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebkecht**  
by Kathe Kollwitz  
Woodcut heightened with white and black ink, 37.1 x 51.9 cm



# CONTRASTING ARTISTIC STYLES



**The Scream** by Edvard  
Munch 1893



- Has one main focal point.
- Uses unhuman like features to make figures undistinguishable.



- Lack of detail make it difficult to distinguish figures and shapes in the art piece.



- Uses heavy lines, dark colors and exaggerated tones (blue and orange) to create a contrast between land and water.

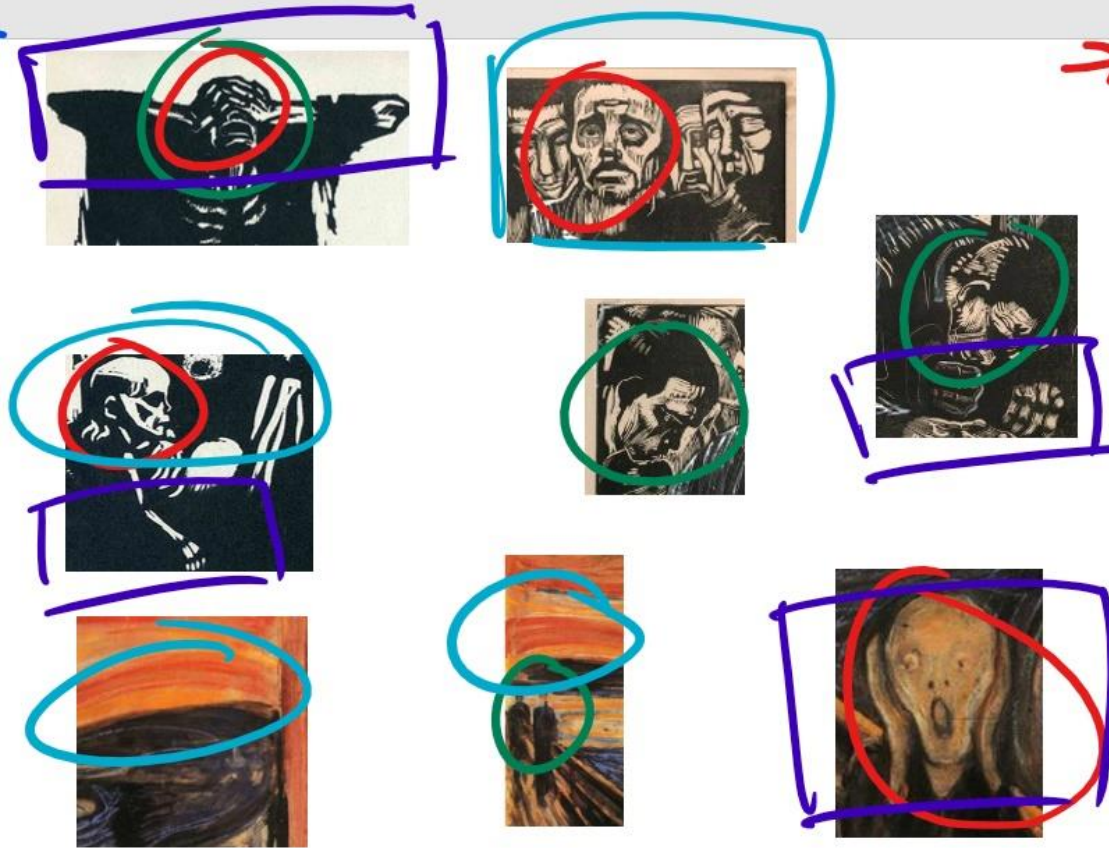


- Uses thinner lines to create a blended effect for the background.
- Uses bright and dark colors.

# COMPARING THE USE OF EMOTION

→ Holds a sense of responsibility over the death or event.

Appeals to those who can relate to the art piece or have had a similar traumatic, psychological experience similar to that expressed by the artist.



→ Facial expressions are one of the focal points and are used to convey strong emotions.

→ Use hand placement to enhance the emotion the figures are showing / expressing.

→ Contrasting colors evoke strong emotions of sadness, grief, guilt, mystery and fear.

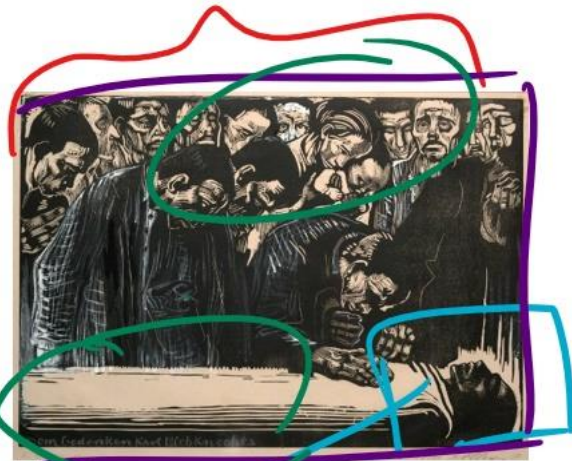
CONTRASTING THE USE OF EMOTION:  
KOLLWITZ V. MUNCH

→ depicts themes such as poverty, hunger and war as well as their effects on individuals  
→ Greatly influenced by the atrocities of war

→ Bold, strong lines evoke emotions such as grief.



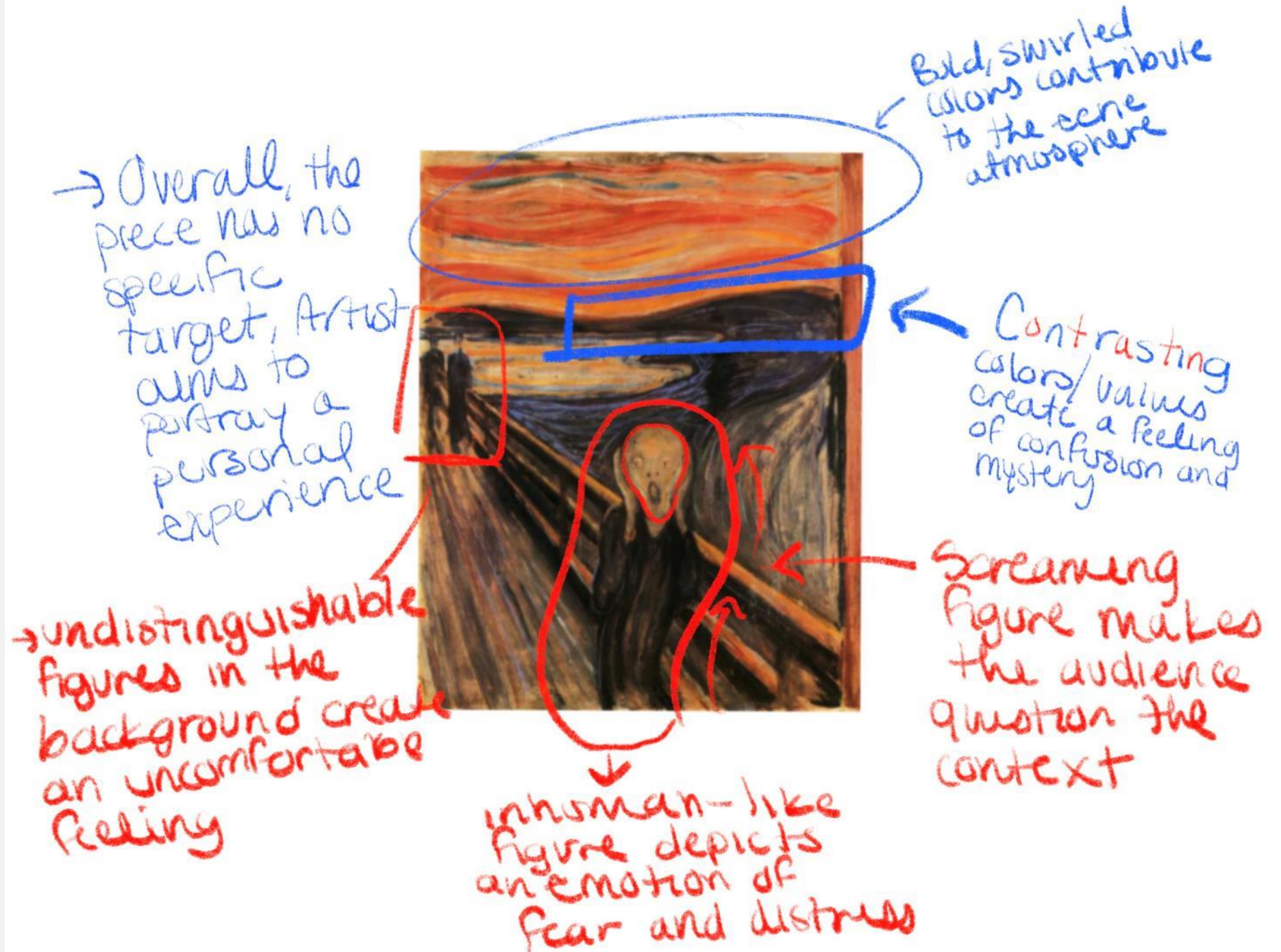
Kathe Kollwitz captures the emotions of the people who mourned



Creates empathy, nostalgia, sadness and grief

Targets those who have lost someone important in their lives.

CONTRASTING THE USE OF  
EMOTION:  
KOLLWITZ V. MUNCH



# FORMAL INTRODUCTION TO OWN WORKS

I created *Frayed* using themes similar to those express in *The Scream*. I wanted the audience to question why an elderly man was screaming to what seems to be agony. I expressed what the older generation may feel when they are treated like they are unable to anything due to their old age. I felt like if I were treated as if I was useless, I would want to scream and let others know that I'm still my own being that shouldn't be treated as if I don't know anything.

My second piece, *Drudge*, I wanted to express the feeling of exhaust that many people feel when they start getting older and the effects of stress. I created a portrait to represent how I started feeling often once I entered high school. I used small strokes to emphasize the emotion of dread to better give a lifeless feeling.



**Frayed**  
By Me



**Drudge**  
By Me



# COMPARING AND CONTRASTING OWN USE OF EMOTION AND STYLE TO EDVARD MUNCH

Frayed

→ My goal was to express emotions of what I think some elderly people feel sometimes

↓  
Emotions of being fed up  
→ Also targets those who feel like they don't have a voice  
→ From what I've seen through personal experience



Hence Expression:

→ Has no specific target  
• Create to share an unexplainable experience  
→ Using long strokes and contrasting colors he is able to create a dreary atmosphere



→ The distortion contributes to an uncomfortable feeling  
→ Attempting to explain 'a scream' the artist felt while walking

The Scream

Both

→ Both are influenced by personal experiences  
→ Use the idea of screaming being done to let out strong emotions

→ This was one of the projects that made me realize how much personal experience can affect art/work. It has definitely become a major learning experience, not just technically but development as a person as well

# COMPARING AND CONTRASTING OWN USE OF EMOTIONS AND STYLE TO KATHE KOLLWITZ

Drudge

→ I target audiences that:

- feel like they have a dull life
- have felt an immense amount of stress

→ I used the cartoon culture as reference with German expressionism

→ Personal experiences



→ Kollwitz created this piece as a commission/had no pity the person who died but still complied to the people who looked up to Karl Liebknecht  
→ Not personal



• Was a communist leader

→ Rembles the death of Christ when he was taken out of the tomb

Religious References

Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht

Both

→ All audiences can relate to both pieces

- Stress or Death

→ Expressions can easily be interpreted as grief/sadness

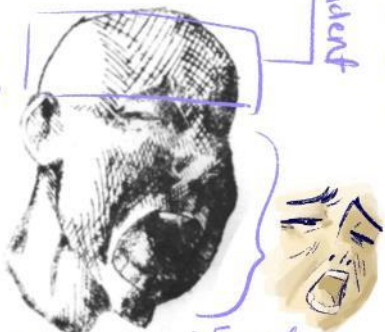
→ Monotone contribute to atmosphere

→ I was very influenced by this piece and the message. Even though Kollwitz had no pity for the death, she still had pity for those who grieved for the communist leader.

# COMPARING AND CONTRASTING OWN USE OF EMOTIONS AND STYLE TO KATHE KOLLWITZ

## Frayed

→ Contrast is less saturated in certain areas (ink)  
 • forehead, ear and left eye  
 → I used cross hatching to get different values of black and white  
 → Targets the older generation  
 • Expresses a cry of frustration  
 • Elderly who are tired of being treated as fragile or useless  
 → I decided to only draw a headshot of a person because the face plays a major role when it comes to communicating emotion  
 → Facial Expression = main focal point hence why there is so much negative space



→ Kollwitz creates this piece as a response to the war: Reveals the deaths caused by hunger and poverty  
 → Mother weeping for her dead child has a major impact because it provokes empathy  
 • has audience think about their family  
 → Uses a portrait to show body language in the mother and child (holding child covering face) (limp + curled up)  
 → Symbolism: mother covering her face = doesn't want to accept the fact that her child has passed  
 Drama moment - shows despair  
 She uses thick strokes to reveal how the child died, emphasizing the bones and hollow features



## Hunger

## Both


→ Large contrast between black and white  
 → Both use specific lines in certain areas to add detail: facial features + body  
 → Positive space is left untouched: Ex. No background  
 → The faces are the main focal points in both pieces  
 → Researching 'Hunger and creating 'Frayed' caused me to have a greater appreciation for facial expressions and body language. Both are major aspects of communication and can tell a lot about a person's state of being. It was really interesting learning about Kollwitz's motives and comparing them to my own.

# COMPARING AND CONTRASTING OWN ARTISTIC STYLES

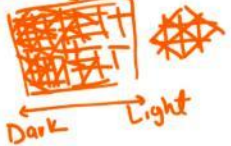
**Frayed**

→ Instead of using thick lines like in my block-print, I used thin lines that became useful when adding detail!

Better shadows + highlight




I used crosshatching to create a more realistic style



Dark Light

High contrast between black and white


Has more negative space but positive space helps add intricate details to the facial features




Eyes mouth eyebrows

**Drudge**

→ I used a man, torso to head, as the main focal point



Not crosshatching but vertical strokes contribute to someone feeling unmotivated



copy

I used thin + thick lines to add props (stack of papers) which helps portray the amount of work the figure has to do but doesn't enjoy

• Downcasted eyes  
• wrinkles  
• long face  
• visible cheekbones  
Expresses being unsatisfied

I used paper work as a symbol of time consumption and boredom

**Both**

→ They're both very simple when it comes to colors → monotone

→ Small in scale but impactful when viewed up close

→ They both rely on the face, mainly the facial expression, to explain the message

→ Both of these pieces were one of my favorites in terms of process. It made me realize that I enjoyed working with monotonous and a limited color palette. I enjoyed commenting of everyday emotions that aren't portrayed often in public or can be difficult to talk about. Analyzing my own work made me realize why I did something because I made choices unconsciously. The process of creating these pieces was very enjoyable.