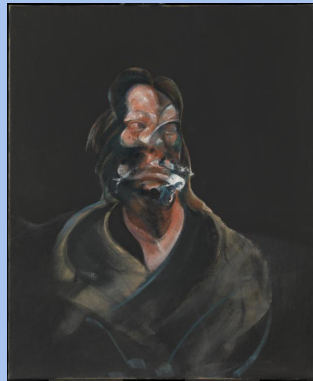


Comparative Study of Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon

Helena G. Mcelrone

In this case study, I will be investigating artist Francis Bacon, and Pablo Picasso. With each artist, I have selected two pieces to focus on, exploring the formal elements and principles in the artworks. Picasso and Bacon both share similarities in **color**, **contrast**, and **movement**. Both artists contributed to various movements, such as surrealism, cubism, and figurative art. This may be because Bacon took inspiration from Picasso, captivated by his manipulation of **line**, and unique expression of figures. Even though the two artists were from different time periods, both share rebellion and critique of societal constructs and status quo of artistic expression. This will further be investigated and **analyzed** throughout the case study, and the artworks from both artists will be evaluated accordingly.



Cultural Context of Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*



This piece was created in 1903 when Picasso was at the age of twenty two years old, in Barcelona, Spain. This was the start of what many know as his 'Blue Period'. *The Old Guitarist* was painted after his beloved friend, Casagemas, died. During this time, Spain was in economic crisis and social unrest due to their defeat by America at the end of the Spanish-American war. Many of Barcelona's populus, including Picasso, were impoverished and struggling to make ends meet. Seeing the many poor residents, as well as being able to relate himself as a struggling artist, Picasso had created this piece. This painting depicts an old, floundered man on the street. His pose expresses great sorrow and anguish through his straggled gesture. Picasso often drew inspiration from El Greco, (a spanish renaissance sculptor and painter during the 15th and 16th century) whom lengthened his figures limbs and **positioned** their bodies to emulate **movement** within the static painting. This correlation can be seen in Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*, with the man's sinuous posture over the guitar. This piece can be considered a reflection of the state of Spain in the early 19th century.

The Old Guitarist by
Picasso

Date: 1903-04

Medium: Oil on Panel

Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5
inches

Location: Art Institute of
Chicago, Helena Bartlett
Memorial Collection

This was not the first hardship Picasso had experienced in Spain. April 26th of 1937, Picasso had begun an oil painting depicting the Spanish Civil War. This became known as Guernica, and is considered by many "modern art's most powerful anti-war statement" (pbs.org) Picasso often drew inspiration from those struggling during the war and was very headstrong in pressing social matters during his time in Spain. Like Guernica, Picasso aimed to be politically aware and raise attention to those of the lower class residing in Spain.

Formal Qualities: Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*

The various tones and values of blue create line in the neck, arms, as well as the background of the piece. The powder blue can be seen as a highlight to the figure, which creates line and helps shape the form of the guitarist.



The left side of the piece contrasts with the right side because of the difference in lighting and use of color, creating highlights and shadows displayed within the painting.



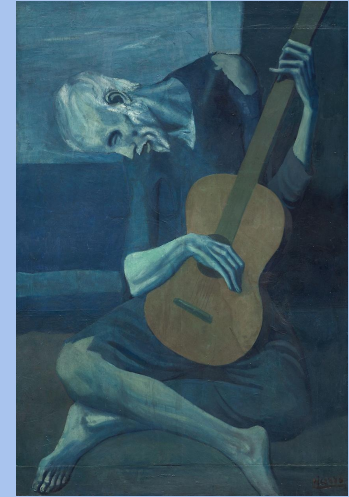
“Observe his closed eyes, averted from the world and the instrument he plays. It's suggested that a key influence of *The Old Guitarist* was Symbolist literature, which often employed blind characters to suggest a vision beyond this world.” (Puchko, MentalFloss)

The guitarist is positioned in a way that forms a triangular shape. He sits on the floor, legs crossed, arms stiff. He is the focus of the piece, centered in the middle. His head and arms create movement, emphasizing the suffering in this piece.

The Old Guitarist by Picasso demonstrates many forms of the elements of art through his capturing artistic style within his Blue Period. The **monochromatic** blue tones bring forth a feeling of desolation and despondency echoed in this piece. The varying degrees of the blue **hues** emphasize the **form** of the male figure Picasso painted. He uses powder blue as a highlight on the male form to add dimension to the figure, as well as **movement**. The persian blue serves as a contour of the guitarist, which gives it the three dimensional illusion within the painting. The midnight blue, used both in the background, and as the man's clothes **contrasts** to the persian and power blue used for the skin of the guitarist.

The piece reflects that of a realistic scene, which is achieved by the use of **asymmetrical balance**, as people and objects in real life are not perfectly mirrored. Through the use of **color**, **line**, and **value**, the elements together create unity within the painting. The monochromatic color palette of blue **values** and **hues**, as well as the use of **proportion** and **line**, **unify** all the elements and principles to capture the dramatic melancholic image Picasso had sought after.

Formal Qualities: Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*



Annotation - Function and Purpose:

At the time, Picasso had lived in Spain for a large portion of his life. He grew up poor and never had much money or recognition as an artist throughout his life. Most of his work is known for being melancholy and expressive. His most famous and recognizable periods from his painting career is the blue period. During this time, a collection of blue paintings were created with one central theme: an overwhelming sadness. Picasso's manipulation of tone and line to create elongated and dramatic figures and objects allowed him to convey the message of grief and sorrow to the audience. It is because Picasso had used these colors in different shades of blue that he was able to bring such powerful significance not only pertaining to the struggles then, but also provide relevance even in a world like today.

The Old Guitarist by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago,
Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection

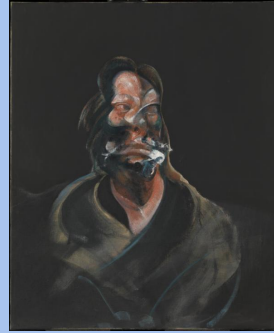
Cultural Context of Bacon's *Self Portrait* (1956) and *Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne* (1966)

Francis Bacon uses various elements and principles within his expressionistic and surreal artistic style. Bacon was forty seven years old at the time he painted this piece in 1956. During the 50s, Bacon had taken two trips to South Africa, in which inspired and changed stylistically, Bacon's paintings in the years following. When painting Bacon often used lens-based photographed subjects, as well as subjects from books he had discovered. These often served as models, or inspirations for many of his pieces. In fact, his trips to South Africa resulted in him exploring "a wide range of subjects from exotic animals such as elephants, polar bears and monkeys to dogs and owls. Suited businessmen featured in his imagery as well as the eminent popes, crouching nudes and the death mask of William Blake; they were often painted in series or loosely related groups." (Francisbacon.com) The purpose of this artwork was to shock and disturb like many of his works. He loved going out of the normalization of acceptable rules during that time. It can be seen as both expressive and symbolic of his character.

Other than his photographed subjects, Bacon often was inspired by Picasso, and was captivated by Picasso's style and technique of **line**. He began to make art after seeing one of Picasso's exhibits in 1927. Bacon often painted what he had experienced, thought or felt at the time. Having a rough childhood, as well as no formal artistic teachings, Bacon developed his own techniques and skills over time, through inspiration from reality, as well as other artists, like Picasso.



Self Portrait by
Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on
Canvas
Date:
January/February
1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54
inches
Location: Modern Art
museum of Fort
Worth, Fort Worth



Portrait of Isabel
Rawsthorne by
Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on
Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 ¾ x
18 ½
Location: Tate
Gallery, London

Isabel Rawsthorne was one of Francis's good friends for many years. He often used Rawsthorne for inspiration for portraits, amongst other things such as animals, from his trip to South Africa. In 1963, Bacon had met a man in which he fell in love with, and soon, Mr. George Dyer was one of his many subjects in his paintings. Bacon often used John Deakin's photographs as reference, as Deakin would photograph a variety of his friends and people he admired. Deakin and Bacon came to be great artistic friends, gaining inspiration from each others work. The purpose of this artwork was to serve as an expressive piece to shock and disturb the more reserved art world as well as tribute to one of his best friends, Isabel.

During the late 50s and early 60s many of Bacon's work began to develop into more divulging precarious figures, specifically in his portraits. He was transforming as an artist and truly started to understand the beauty within his brushstrokes. He was at a time in his life where he was unequivocally happy. This allowed his artwork to hold a much more powerful captivating grasp, as the art was made from raw emotional elation.

Later, in 1992, Rawsthorne had passed away at the age of 79, just three months before Bacon had passed, at the age of 82. It is rumoured that Bacon and Rawsthorne had had an affair, and that because of their strong connection, Bacon simply could not go on without her in his life.

Formal Qualities: Bacon's *Self Portrait* (1956)

Bacon uses various elements and principles to create this self portrait. He uses a variety of dark, cool-tone **values** in color. These dark hues and values express a feeling of angst and eeriness. The distortion of the face through line and shape disrupt the **proportions** and overall figure of Bacon himself. His swivelling posture has an effect on the **balance** of the figure. Bacon places himself as the foreground, whilst he is surrounded by emptiness expressed through the oxford blue and midnight black background. The gold pole stands as the middleground of the painting, and creates a break in the surrounding darkness of the various **saturated** cool colors. It acts somewhat of a **highlight** in the piece, considering the canary gold and eggshell white highlights **contrasting** to the background, as well as Bacon himself, as the foreground.

The increments of the eggshell white, appearing to illuminate a sort of stage setting that, the figure, Bacon, can be seen sitting on, anchor Bacon within the painting. The position of Bacon creates a sense of **movement**. Like Picasso, and El Greco, Bacon has somewhat elongated his limbs, as well as seated himself in that of a hunched position, much like in *The Old Guitarist*.



Annotation - Function and Purpose:

Bacon had always wanted to be unique and different in his stylistic choices. He wanted to shock and disturb others with his work when they would see it in a museum surrounded by Baroque, Renaissance, and more established accepted artists. Emotional utilization was a large factor in how his paintings were constructed and formed to become what they were. Most of his paintings and work, consists of dark earth tones, like oxford blue and brick red when doing portraits of individuals. Bacon gave whole new meaning to how the art world accepted and admired more abstract and dark artists as well as their works.

Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum
of Fort Worth, Fort Worth

Formal qualities: Bacon's *Self Portrait* (1956)

The distortion of the face through line and shape disrupt the proportions and overall figure of Bacon himself.



The increments of the eggshell white, appearing to illuminate a sort of stage setting that, the figure, Bacon, can be seen sitting on, anchor Bacon within the painting. The position of Bacon creates a sense of movement.



The gold pole stands as the middleground of the painting, and creates a break in the surrounding darkness of the various saturated cool colors.

Slightly similar to El Greco painting style for his elongated figures, Bacon often elongated the noses of his subjects faces, creating an exaggerated feature through highlighting and value of hues and colors.



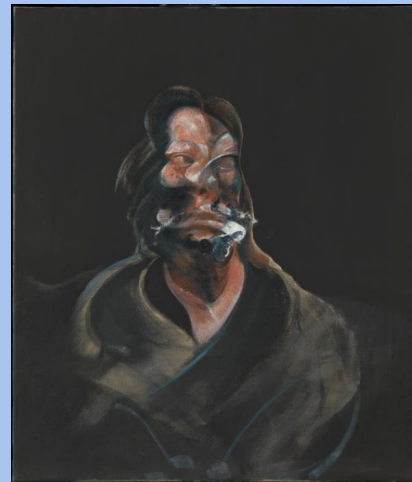
Formal Qualities: Bacon's Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne (1966)

The portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne depicts many formal **elements** and **principles** emulating Bacon's unique artistic style. Like in many of his paintings, Bacon often uses brush strokes, of varying line widths in order to imitate **movement**. The rose red and prussian blue tones, as well as the chignon white highlights provide structure to Rawsthorne's face. This adds emphasis on feature points such as the tip of her nose, and the right side of her chin, as well as the lower part of her neck. Bacon uses the prussian and midnight blue **tones** to bring out the contrasts and shadows on Rawsthorne's face. This heightens the **highlight** and adds **depth** and **shape** to the portrait. In this portrait, Isabel's jacket is made using sweeping brushstrokes of a range of cool **colors**, like midnight blue and obsidian black, as well as tortilla brown.

The dark background of the piece helps the viewer focus on Isabel, making her the foreground of the portrait. The subtle chestnut brown strokes near her head help create an illusion of her hair, which give shape to the face and structure of the head in the painting.

Annotation - Function and Purpose

Bacon had created this piece on behalf of his adoration for Isabel, one of his closest friends. When he had needed a subject to paint or model for him, Isabel, amongst many others would always offer to help and pose either in person or through photographs.



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne
by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
Location: Tate Gallery, London

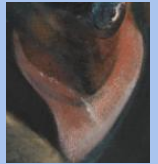
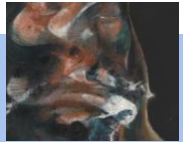
Formal Qualities: Bacon's Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne (1966)

This adds emphasis on feature points such as the tip of her nose, and the right side of her chin, as well as the lower part of her neck. Bacon uses the prussian and midnight blue **tones** to bring out the contrasts and shadows on Rawsthorne's face.

Unlike Bacon's "Self Portrait (1956)" the features are more muted both with color and line. The rose red with chiffon white placed on top creates a muted hue in color. The nose on Rawsthorne is less emphasized than that of the self portrait, however there is still movement and shape created because of the stroke of the paintbrush with the chiffon white paint followed by a hint of the prussian blue for shadow.



The rose red and prussian blue tones, as well as the chiffon white highlights provide structure to Rawsthorne's face. This adds emphasis on feature points such as the tip of her nose, and the right side of her chin, as well as the lower part of her neck.



In this portrait, Isabel's jacket is made using sweeping brushstrokes of a range of cool **colors**, like midnight blue and obsidian black, as well as tortilla brown.

Comparison of Bacon's Self Portrait (1956) and Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*

Bacon uses various elements and principles to create this self portrait. He uses a variety of dark, cool-tone **values** in color. *The Old Guitarist* by Picasso demonstrates many forms of the elements of art through his capturing artistic style within his Blue Period.

Like Picasso, and El Greco, Bacon has somewhat elongated his limbs, as well as seated himself in that of a hunched position, much like in *The Old Guitarist*. Bacon often drew inspiration from Picasso and his different tones and colors used throughout his works

Picasso sticks to a rather monochromatic color palette, similarly, Bacon is focusing his tones and hues to each color, he is not limiting his palette to a specific color on the spectrum



The Old Guitarist by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago, Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection



Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth

The persian blue serves as a contour of the guitarist, which gives it the three dimensional illusion within the painting. The midnight blue, used both in the background, and as the man's clothes **contrasts** to the persian and power blue used for the skin of the guitarist. Similarly Bacon uses the prussian and midnight blue **tones** to bring out the contrasts and shadows on Rawsthorne's face. This heightens the **highlight** and adds **depth** and **shape** to the portrait.

Like Picasso, and El Greco, Bacon has somewhat elongated his limbs, as well as seated himself in that of a hunched position, much like in *The Old Guitarist*.

The highlights on both Picasso's and Bacon's figures give value to the amount of expression and sadness each piece omits through the use of color and tone, as well as value within the color spectrum.

Comparison of Bacon's Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne (1966) and Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
Location: Tate Gallery, London

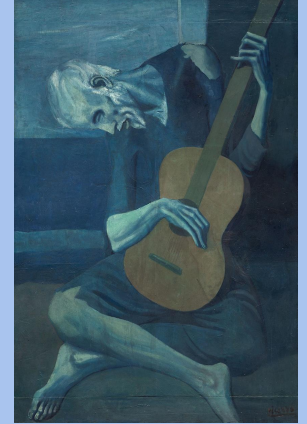
Picasso and Bacon both use subjects to represent their piece best. Both artists cared about the delivery of the message of the painting, and how they would choose to create a piece of work containing emotion and expression that was different from other artists during their time period.

Bacon and Picasso also both use the triangular structure to create balance and unity in their pieces

The two artists both had used oil paint, which is a more rich and thick medium when compared to acrylic paint, which can make a difference in the appearance of color in a body of work. Both artists utilized color to create line, shape and form in their figures. The oil paint on both Bacon and Picasso's painting allows for the work to be more rich and vibrant in color making both figures unique and noticeable.

Although not the same colors are used, their use of line is similar in technique though it not may be very apparent in the look of the paintings. The brush strokes, besides creating movement, create a light airy feel. Each stroke is intentional within both pieces.

Bacon often uses brush strokes, of varying line widths in order to imitate **movement**, whereas Picasso uses powder blue as a highlight on the male form to add dimension to the figure, as well as **movement**.



The Old Guitarist by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago, Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection

Comparison of Bacon's Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne (1966) and Bacon's Self Portrait (1956)



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
Location: Tate Gallery, London

Bacon has the same balance and aesthetic. It's a recurring theme for Bacon to use rather dark earth tones, like the muted blues and dusty reds. He wasn't one for vibrant bright colors in his work, this made his paintings dark, and abstract.

These two artworks were both made under the intention to showcase Bacon's unique lens of the world and how he portrays and see individuals like himself as well as his friends and figures that he was close to during the time.



Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth



Both of these artworks have similar distortion and abstraction elements like many of Bacon's pieces. The distortion on the face is both on the right side, using values of the muted blue and some eggshell white to offer some highlights in the face among the features.



This painting depicts an old, floundered man on the street. His pose expresses great sorrow and anguish through his straggled gesture. Bacon's self portrait conveys a similar message, the blue tones produce a saddened man, in a similar position as the guitarist, crouched and lowered to the ground.



The Old Guitarist by
Picasso

Date: 1903-04

Medium: Oil on Panel

Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5
inches

Location: Art Institute of
Chicago, Helena Bartlett
Memorial Collection

Bacon places himself as the foreground, whilst he is surrounded by emptiness expressed through the oxford blue and midnight black background. The dark background of the piece helps the viewer focus on himself, making him the foreground of the portrait. Picasso however, uses light blue tones in the background, giving the effect of a street corner.



Self Portrait by Francis
Bacon

Medium: Oil Paint on
Canvas

Date: January/February
1956

Dimensions: 78 x 54
inches

Location: Modern Art
museum of Fort Worth,
Fort Worth

Contrast of Bacon's Self Portrait (1956) and Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*

Other than his photographed subjects, Bacon often was inspired by Picasso, and was captivated by Picasso's style and technique of **line**. He began to make art after seeing one of Picasso's exhibits in 1927. Bacon often painted what he had experienced, thought or felt at the time. Having a rough childhood, as well as no formal artistic teachings, Bacon developed his own techniques and skills over time, through inspiration from reality, as well as other artists, like Picasso.

Like Picasso, and El Greco, Bacon has somewhat elongated his limbs, as well as seated himself in that of a hunched position, much like in *The Old Guitarist*.

Contrast of Bacon's Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne (1966) and Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
Location: Tate Gallery, London

The Old Guitarist by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago, Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection



The rose red and prussian blue tones, as well as the chignon white highlights provide structure to Rawsthorne's face. This adds emphasis on feature points such as the tip of her nose, and the right side of her chin, as well as the lower part of her neck. The self-portrait and *The Old Guitarist* uses blue tones and cool colors, whereas the Rawsthorne portrait uses some rose warm colors.

He was at a time in his life where he was unequivocally happy. This allowed his artwork to hold a much more powerful captivating grasp, as the art was made from raw emotional elation. This was the start of what many know as his 'Blue Period'. *The Old Guitarist* was painted after his beloved friend, Casagemas, died. During this time, Spain was in economic crisis and social unrest due to their defeat by America at the end of the Spanish-American war.

Bacon had created this piece for Isabel, for expression. Whereas Picasso had created his piece for more of a political message on the Spain's current state at the time

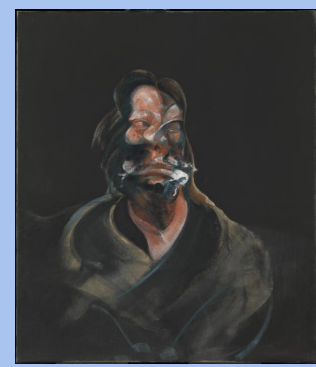
In this portrait, Isabel's jacket is made using sweeping brushstrokes of a range of cool **colors**, like midnight blue and obsidian black, as well as tortilla brown. Unlike Picasso's more defined stylistic strokes.

Francis Bacon uses various elements and principles within his expressionistic and surreal artistic style. Bacon was forty seven years old at the time he painted this piece in 1956. Later, at the time of Isabel's portrait, Bacon was happy, he was at a good place in his life, and often liked his paintings.

Compare and Contrast of Personal Work to Francis Bacon and Pablo Picasso's artworks



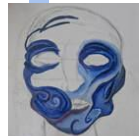
The Old Guitarist by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago, Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 3/4 x 18 1/8
Location: Tate Gallery, London

Similarities

- 1) I used the similar line work and concepts that Bacon had towards the end of my triptych. The face on the third portrait of the triptych was inspired by the structure of Bacon's faces in his portraits, usually shifting and distorting the facial features.
- 2) I used the same portrait concept for overall finished piece, with the distortion of the features and the dark tones that Bacon had used
- 3) The position of the figure in my work is similar to that of the portrait of Isabel, rather than the full body figure in Bacon's self portrait.
- 4) has cubism influenced shapes and facial features in the third piece



Differences

- 1) My artwork doesn't have much abstract quality to the three pieces as Bacon incorporates in his pieces.
- 2) My artwork is a triptych piece with various representations of one-self rather than a single portrait of a subject.
- 3) My first piece in the triptych has vibrant canary yellow background as opposed to a blue or navy background, which is different from the stylistic choices of the black dark backgrounds included in Bacon's pieces.
- 4) My artwork has a more abstract representation of the human form compared to Picasso's portraits of people



Title : Artist Journey by Helena Mcelrone
Size : 25.4 x 50.8 cm
Medium : Acrylic on Canvas
Completion : April 2019

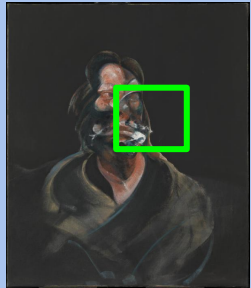
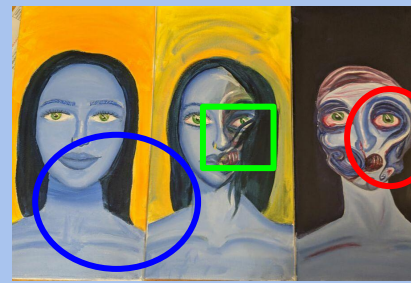
Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth



Compare and Contrast of Personal Work to Francis Bacon's and Pablo Picasso's artwork: Meanings and Concepts



The Old Guitarist
by Picasso
Date: 1903-04
Medium: Oil on Panel
Dimensions: 48.4 x 32.5 inches
Location: Art Institute of Chicago, Helena Bartlett Memorial Collection



Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$
Location: Tate Gallery, London

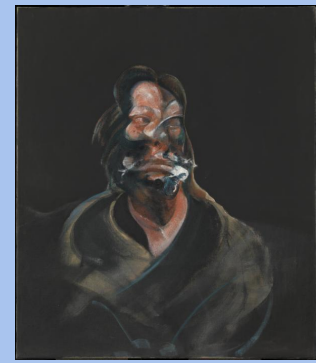
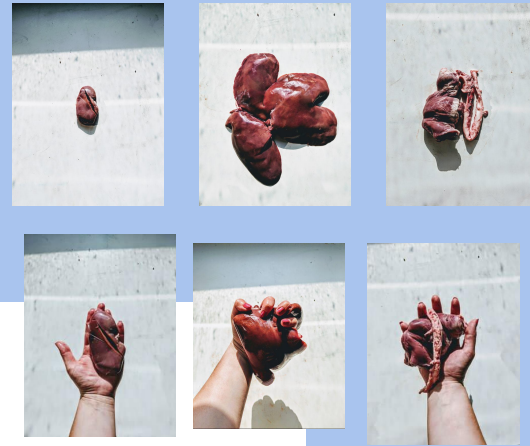


Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth

Through the inspiration of Francis Bacon's "Self Portrait (1969)" and "Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne" and Picasso's "The Old Guitarist", I was able to create my triptych using acrylic paint to represent a story. The piece symbolizes the struggle of mental health that many artists, including myself, deal with. Francis Bacon had depicted his subjects in a way that was intriguing and different from other artists. He like to be different and unique in his pieces, often dark in nature. I wanted to **transition from the blue period of Picasso**, to a more disfigured form like Bacon had painted himself as well as various other subjects of his during his lifetime as an artist. I wasn't sure if I wanted to try and emulate Bacon's style or create my own twist from inspiration from his various works and artistic style. I had tried creating a similar style to Bacon in the second one, however it didn't work out as well as I hoped and so I had brushed over it essentially to try and buffer it out and create a **more abstract appearance**. With the third one, I had tried using harsh **line work** for the shadows and contours of the piece, without any variation, or gradation between the lights and the dark. But, I found that having the gradation made the line work and contours look more prominent and three dimensional, as opposed to a more harsh two dimensional look. With this piece, I wanted to make it my own interpretation of Bacon and still emulate some of his prominent artistic choices while also using my own artistic choices in order to create one cohesive piece. Often, Bacon will distort the nose so that it is curved to the right, and almost always, there is a highlight on the nose and various other parts of the face. All of his faces have very geometric, **Picasso** like qualities of the cubism area, with various shapes in the facial figure. I wanted to exaggerate those stylistic choices and bring out his emphasized features from his portraits. However, I did decide to stick with blending out some of the blue tones and colors because it looked more clean and three dimensional than if I were to blur and dull the color.

Compare and Contrast of Personal Work to Francis Bacon's artwork

TITLE: The Bacon Series
MEDIUM: Lens based photography using the Google Pixel 2 camera
DIMENSIONS: 142.24 x 106.68 cm
DATE COMPLETED: December 2019



Similarities

- 1) The use of red and pink tones in both Bacon's painting of Isabel and my photographs have a rather similar tone and color value
- 2) The theme or element of gore and disturbed imagery within the function and purpose are present in both pieces
- 3) The use of line and shapes within the paintings and the photos are used, such as circular shapes of the pig guts are similar to that of the facial structure of the features on Bacon's portraits

Differences

- 1) Mediums used (Bacon had used Oil on canvas, and I had used a google pixel camera for shooting the photographs)
- 2) The highlights and contours in my piece, compared to the dull and matte colors featured in Bacon's piece
- 3) The use of shadows and light in the piece, Bacon's position of shadows and light compared to that of the digital photograph

Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne
by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 ¾ x 18 ⅛
Location: Tate Gallery,
London

Self Portrait by
Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint
on Canvas
Date:
January/February
1956
Dimensions: 78 x
54 inches
Location: Modern
Art museum of Fort
Worth, Fort Worth



Compare and Contrast of Personal Work to Francis Bacon's artwork: Meanings and Concepts

TITLE: The Bacon Series
MEDIUM: Lens based
photography using the
Google Pixel 2 camera
DIMENSIONS: 142.24 x
106.68 cm
DATE COMPLETED:
December 2019

Through the inspiration of Francis Bacon's 'Self Portrait (1969)' and 'Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne', I was able to produce and shoot the photographs above inspired by Bacon's unique artistic style of gore and beauty in both fiction and real. This photograph series serves as an artistic look on gore and its unique quality of beauty. Francis Bacon liked to push the boundaries of art, and be unconventional. He painted what he knew, and he painted with feeling, emotion with every stroke of his paintbrush. I had the rare opportunity of photographing a pig carcass. I was most intrigued by the pig carcasses which appear in a lot of his paintings, surrounding this dark theme. I find beauty in all of his paintings, although some people may consider it disturbing or unconventional, however, he is able to formulate such deep emotions and communicate those feelings through color, and line, and shape on a canvas. There are various **pink and red tones** in the painting, which is something I wanted in my piece as well. I found that he often used gore and pigs in some of his paintings. He would look at photographs of butchered pigs and other animals for some of his paintings. Bacon was used to this, as he grew up on a farm, relatively around lots of farm animals, and was used to it, unlike those who grew up in an urban setting.



I adjusted the **color** by upping the saturation and the warmth slightly so that the more pink and red tones would be more apparent and lively in the photograph. This gave me similar tones to the portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne



Portrait of Isabel
Rawsthorne by
Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil on
Canvas
Date: 1966
Dimensions: 26 ¾
x 18 ½
Location: Tate
Gallery, London

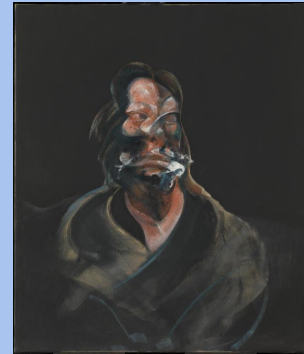
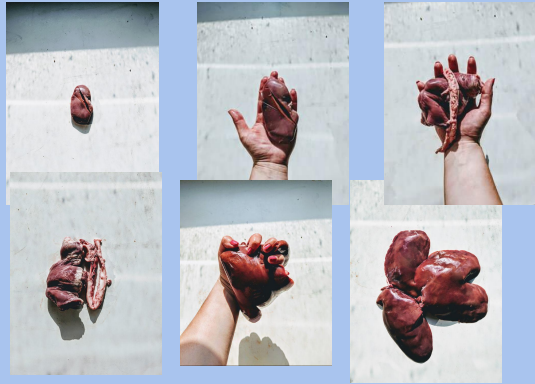
Because of this there is a strong cultural connection between both my photographs and the work of Francis Bacon. It is because of this that I had named my series 'The Bacon Series'.

Self Portrait by Francis Bacon
Medium: Oil Paint on Canvas
Date: January/February 1956
Dimensions: 78 x 54 inches
Location: Modern Art museum of Fort
Worth, Fort Worth



Connection to All Three Artists: Picasso, Bacon and McElrone

Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon surround the central theme of loss, sadness, and beauty in in the unique and uncensored. Through the use of the elements of art and principles of design, our works provide the viewer with a unique perspective on how we as the artists think and process emotions and perceptions of individuals around the world and those that are with us in our intimate moments. All three of these works incorporate the same color schemes, some more similar than others. These primary tones and earth color values provide unity to each piece investigated within this comparative study, while still sharing the unique qualities of each artists. I chose Bacon and Picasso because they were my two favorite artists. I loved how they depicted and executed their work, full of emotion and artistic elements that were very intriguing and meaningful. I took inspiration not only from Bacon's paintings but from his vision and depiction of art as well. The symbolic melancholy color of blue between all three artists signify the sadness and sorrow felt between each work. The component of emotion is a strong unifying characteristic of each individual artwork, and when put together, demonstrate expression and political voice. Through the inspiration of Francis Bacon's "Self Portrait (1969)" and "Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne", I was able to produce and shoot the photographs above inspired by Bacon's unique artistic style of gore and beauty in both fiction and real. Through the inspiration of Francis Bacon's "Self Portrait (1969)" and "Portrait of Isabel Rawsthorne" and Picasso's "The Old Guitarist", I was able to create my triptych using acrylic paint to represent a story. The piece symbolizes the struggle of mental health that many artists, including myself, deal with.



Resources

Martin Harrison and Rebecca Daniels, 'Australian Connections', pp. 32-43, in: exh.cat. *Francis Bacon: Five Decades*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 17 November 2012 —24 February 2013, Anthony Bond (ed.), London: Thames & Hudson, 2012, p.33.

Archimbaud, 1993, pp.33; David Sylvester, *Brutality of fact: interviews with Francis Bacon*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1987, p.8; Harrison, 2005, p.17.

Michel Archimbaud, *Francis Bacon In Conversation with Michel Archimbaud*, London: Phaidon, 1993

Francis Bacon Foundation. "Pablo Picasso | Francis Bacon." 7 Reece Mews, London SW7 3HE, 2017, www.francis-bacon.com/art/influence-inspiration/influence/pablo-picasso.

https://www.pbs.org/treasuresoftheworld/a_nav/guernica_nav/main_guerfrm.html

HISTORY. "Spanish Civil War Breaks Out." History.com Editors, July 28th 2019, A&E Television Networks. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/spanish-civil-war-breaks-out>.