

Fragility-Love-Clothing

Frida Kahlo's imagery

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MA Visual Effects

Question

How do artists convey imagery? How is metaphor expressed in animation movement? How to

Looking at that metaphorical aspect and bring it into visual effects?

Keywords

Metaphor Imagery Iconography Frida Kahlo

Draft Introduction

Frida Kahlo (1907-1964) was a Mexican painter known for her meaningful and introspective artworks. Kahlo's early experiences of illness, including polio at the age of six which left her with a deformed limb and her accident, instilled in her a profound sense of her own mortality and the fragility of her body. (Tanya, B.,2005)Between 1926, the year she painted her first self-portrait, and her untimely death in 1954, Kahlo produced over one hundred images that explore aspects of her complex identity in relation to her body, to her genealogy, to her childhood, to social structures, to national, religious and cultural contexts, and to nature. (Ankori, G.,2005)Frida created an innovative, multifaceted poetics of identity out of the ontological exploration of emergence.This paper aims to explore the intentions conveyed by Frida around fragility, love, and clothing, and how the emotions conveyed by the painting can be represented through animated movement.

Research Design Methods

Regarding the design methods, I will begin with conducting a portrait study of Frida's self-portraits by analysing his paintings, and secondly, I would like to analyse the metaphors in the images according to the personal qualities of the artist and the imagery they convey. In the research section, I will substitute the theoretical basis of animated metaphor and psychological research methods for further explanation.

The visual practice section will focus on three analysed topics: love, fragility, and clothing. In terms of visual practice techniques, I will introduce movement and texture into Frida's paintings.

Symbolic elements extracted from the paintings, such as thorns and water, will be recreated.

Overall, the practical part will aim to provide an open representation.

Draft literature review

In the process of understanding metaphors and animation, numerous books and journals have discussed their subjective approaches. Firstly, Paul Wells' book *Understanding Animation* provides a theoretical foundation for comprehending and analysing symbolic elements and metaphors in animation. Metaphor essentially grows out of symbolism and serves to embody a system or ideas in a more appealing or conducive image system. (Wells, P., 1998)

In another article: *From Melbourne Cooper to Match of the Day and Mo-Cap: Motion as Metaphor and Metaphysics in Animated Sport*. The author explores the relationship between the aesthetics of sports and metaphors. This source provides insights into how motion is used as a metaphor and metaphysical principle in animated sports. In animation, these become intrinsic to the inherent purposiveness of aesthetic choices. (Wells, P., 1998) Metaphor allows for the exploration of abstract concepts, such as the fluidity of identity, or the interplay between and imagination.

In this analysis of Frida's paintings I also bring in the concept of transference, one of the things that psychologist Freud explains about transference is that it is a derivative of love. This concept helps us to understand Frida's imagery.

Taken together, these Three sources establish the theoretical basis for this paper's research on how we can analyse metaphors in Frida's images, how metaphors are integrated with the aesthetics of movement and the role of technology in visual communication.

Title and general outline of each chapter

Chapter 1: What is the imagery?

Explain the concept of imagery and the directions to be taken in this paper

Chapter 2:Frida Kahlo's imagery

Fragility-Love-Clothing

Frida's paintings are analysed in three separate ways, including their metaphors and symbols

Chapter 3:Represent the imagery

Representation of Frida's imagery, with examples of the reproduction of costumes. Extending to the reproduction of Frida's imagery by animation and 3d techniques, and the role of VFX in the visual transmission of emotion.

A Draft Chapter

What is the imagery?

Imagery is an expression that links the world and the self. Frida paints her own reality, connecting the self to the world and conveying the imagery of the self. the purpose of this form of communication is not to make explicit statements.it is evoked and directs attention to psychological. In this paper, I will describe the connection to Frida's world to feel the imagery and receive the emotions it conveys.

Frida Kahlo's imagery

Fragility

About fragility, I would like to analyse it mainly through *What the Water Gave Me*(1938). Mirroring supports the process of self perception as well as threatening disintegration through its illusory nature. (Tanya, B.,2005)In *What the Water Gave Me* (1938), the apocalyptic scene of being thrown into the bath water of a bathtub, with empty clothes floating and the woman's bleeding, cracked feet reflected in the sink. Frida visualises her early experiences, the fragile experience of body and mind.

The painting is frequently categorised as surrealist, the self-portrait is for her a constructed alter ego, Frida and the self-portrait become images of each other's situation: contradictory, ambiguous, and uncertain. Frida's work implies metaphysical suffering, It abstracts some universal truths and phenomena that also follow the real rather than the imaginary. Her work in general undoubtedly derived elements from surrealism, but she never wholly subscribed to its philosophy in her work, she knowingly included and adapted surrealistic aspects and devices, but made them serve her own independence purpose. (Tanya, B.,2005)



Figure 1 What the Water Gave Me (1938)

Love

There are many expressions of love in Frida's work, where she describes her relationship with her lover and her place in the relationship. love is not a sentiment which can be easily indulged in by anyone (Fromm, E., 1956), but Frida is obsessed with it. Regarding the imagery of love, I will analyse it through the concept of Transference.

Transference may be compared to the Cambrian layer between the wood and the bark of a tree, from which the formation of new tissues and the growth of the trunk proceed at the same time.

(Freud, S.,1920)From Frida's perspective, Frida's paintings are in fact a repetition of what has

happened before; she is painting while repeating the emotions she has had and generating new emotions from the experiences she has had.

For Frida, painting self-portraits is like a form of psychotherapy; by projecting her pain onto another Frida, she not only confronts and confirms the reality of her predicament but also alleviates it. She projects the unconscious into the conscious and manifests the conscious into the painting which is a strong emotional transference.

Plants are also one of Frida's ways of describing love, and different plants often appear in Frida's paintings. Plants are an important symbol in her work. Using plants metaphorically expresses the spiritual core of her love and desire.

Leaves in her hair sprout vein-like roots in her 1938 self-portrait, *Remembrance of an Open Wound*(1938). It also suggests how she viewed her sexual relationship with Rivera in the context of the natural world. (Kennedy, K.,2018)

In another painting, *Self-Portrait as a Tehuana*(1943), Frida is dressed in traditional Mexican dress, and then her focus is not on salvation or other social meanings, but on her husband, She painted her husband's portrait on her forehead. The flowers on her headdress are the purple trillium as well as the white petals of the 'Mexican violet' and arnica, both of which are healing plants in traditional medicine.



Figure 2 *Remembrance of an Open Wound* (1938)

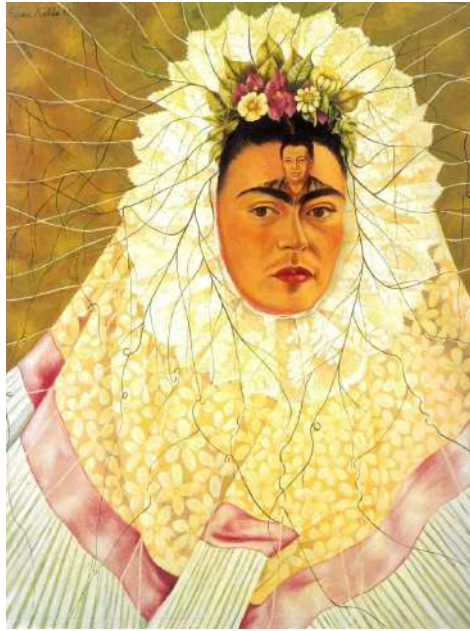


Figure 3 *Self-Portrait as a Tehuana* (1943)

Clothing

There are the clothes themselves, frequently dramatic and evocative, functioning as both disguise and protective armour. (Baddeley, O.,2018), While the outer garment can wrap people up in their ideal look, the inner garment is a natural response to the state of the human body.

In 2013 Ishiuchi Miyako was invited to photograph the personal effects of Frida, which creation of the work *Frida by Ishiuchi Miyako* (2013). Ishiuchi Miyako is adept at capturing details in materials, In her photographs, one can notice the uneven stitching and loose frayed edges of the clothes, flaws and faded fabrics. Most noticeable are the misshapen shoes and the worn corset, the close-fitting clothing that supports the body and best reflects Frida's physical traumatic injuries.



Figure 4 *Frida* by Ishiuchi Miyako (2013)



Figure 5 *Frida* by Ishiuchi Miyako (2013)

Represent the imagery

To inhale aspects of the artist and then use my perspective to tell the story. This is the goal I would like to achieve in this stage of the study, and it is also the main purpose of my analysis of Frida. The influence of Frida's art on subsequent generations is reflected in the different areas of, Jean-Paul Gaultier's famous appropriation of Kahlo's surgical corset in his 1998 spring/summer collection. The reproduction of the corset reflects this, and the collection is both a recreation and a self-expression.



Figure 6 Jean-Paul Gaultier 1998 spring/summer collection

Meaning lies implicit in the symbol image. (Digby, G.W.,1957) Metaphors open up more space for us in our ideas and technology opens up ways of practising them. We feel love, fragility, wrapping and oppression from Frida. We can reinterpret the emotions we receive through animated movement and materials, bringing movement and time to her work which she didn't have. Technology as practice is one of the views of this paper. 3D and VFX as digital medium does not only serve film or games it is also a form of artistic expression.

Words: 1573

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Available at : <https://www.fridas-photos.com/paintings/category/remembrance-of-the-open-wound>

Figure 3 *Self-Portrait as a Tehuana* (1943)

Available at : <https://www.fridakahlo.org/self-portrait-as-a-tehuana.jsp>

Figure 4 *Frida by Ishiuchi Miyako* (2013)

Available at : <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/ishiuchi-miyako-frida-by-ishiuchi-number-16>

Figure 5 *Frida by Ishiuchi Miyako* (2013)

Available at : <https://www.michaelhoppengallery.com/exhibitions/23/overview/>

Figure 6 Jean-Paul Gaultier 1998 spring/summer collection

Available at : <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-1998-ready-to-wear/jean-paul-gaultier>