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Writing About Art - Sample Papers

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SAMPLE-SHORT PAPER 3 OUTLINE



Figure 1. Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913, casted 1950. Bronze, 47 ¾ x 35 x 15 ¾ in. (121.3 x 88.9 x 40 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2. Unknown, *Dancing Celestial Deity (Devata)*, Early 12th century. Sandstone, H. 33 1/2 in. (85.1 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

subject
arguments
claim

thesis→

Working Thesis:

The sculptors of *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* and *Dancing Celestial Deity* strove to convey movement through balance and orientation.

Body Paragraphs:

Section 1: Topic - Visual Description

Body Paragraph 1 (descriptive): Use terms such as mass, volume, surface, texture, balance (symmetrical/asymmetrical, light... to describe *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*)

Body Paragraph 2 (descriptive): Use terms such as mass, volume, surface, texture, balance (symmetrical/asymmetrical, light... to describe *Dancing Celestial Deity*)

Section 2: Topic - Balance

Body Paragraph 3 (persuasive): Explains how the asymmetrical balance of mass and volume of Figure 1 contributes to the idea of movement

Body Paragraph 4 (persuasive): Explains how the symmetrical balance of forms in Figure 2 communicates the idea of movement and compares it to the previous paragraph

Section 3: Topic - Orientation

Body Paragraph 5 (persuasive): Explains how the orientation of Figure 1 conveys the idea of movement

Body Paragraph 6 (persuasive): Explains how the orientation of Figure 2 conveys the idea of movement and compares it to the previous paragraph

Fully Developed Sample Section 2:

topic sentence → In Boccioni’s *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, the asymmetrical distribution of volumes suggests a propulsion of the figure, prompting the perception of movement.

evidence → Boccioni positioned the heavier, abstract volumes towards the left of the sculpture, creating an unbalanced arrangement. As a result, the figure looks like it’s leaning towards the left,

analysis → blurred as though it were caught in the middle of moving forward. The pinched endings of the volumes resemble air moving past the figure, suggesting an especially fast speed in which the figure is moving. Boccioni thus “brings together the movement of the striding figure with that of the displaced air around that figure.”¹ With these organic volumes and their unbalanced placements, the undefined figure is seemingly undulating under the pressure of movement, as though it’s being sculpted by speed rather than by hand. Through asymmetry, Figure 1’s volumes create the illusion that the figure is rapidly moving forward through space.

evidence →

analysis →

concluding sentence →

topic sentence → The sculptor of Figure 2 employed symmetry through his arrangement of volumes around a central axis, to imply a rotational motion of the figure. In *Dancing Celestial Deity*, the heavier volumes – the head, breasts, buttocks and left leg – are distributed evenly around a central axis. With this equal distribution around an axis, “the dancer’s body is contorted in an improbable pose, her legs projecting right as her upper torso and head turn sharply left.”² This symmetry exaggerates the twirling stance of the figure further amplifying the apparent movement of the dancer. Unlike asymmetrical balance of *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* that communicates the rapid, forward movement, the symmetrical, central arrangement of Figure 2’s volumes serves to emulate the round motion of a spinning dancer.

evidence →

analysis →

concluding sentence →

& comparison to the previous paragraph

¹ Rosalind McKeever, “Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916),” The Met’s Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, August 2016, accessed September 29, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/umbo/hd_umbo.htm.

² Mark Polizzotti, *Recent Acquisitions a Selection: 2014-2016* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 21.

Annotated Bibliography

Antliff, Mark. "The Fourth Dimension and Futurism: A Politicized Space." *The Art Bulletin* 82, no. 4 (2000): 720-33. doi:10.2307/3051419.

Antliff's article explores the implications of the Futurist era of art, as well as its major contributors. This article would be used as a source of background information on Futurism, Boccioni, and Boccioni's piece in relation to the overall Futurist message.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, i.e. The Met Museum. "Dancing Celestial Deity (Devata), India (Uttar Pradesh)." 2017. Accessed September 29, 2017. [http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/38153?sortBy=Relevance&ft=Dancing+Celestial+Deity+\(Devata\)&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1](http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/38153?sortBy=Relevance&ft=Dancing+Celestial+Deity+(Devata)&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1).

This website, sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, provides information on the Dancing Celestial Deity including its measurements and the time period in which it was crafted. This website would be used for general background information, including the unique elements the sculptor employed in making the sculpture.

Lamp, Lucy. "Elements of Art: Movement and Time." SOPHIA Learning. 2017. Accessed September 29, 2017. <https://www.sophia.org/tutorials/elements-of-art-movement-and-time>.

This article explores sculptures that convey movement, including Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space. This article discusses how Boccioni in particular uses different visual elements to show movement in his sculpture, which would be useful for this essay.

McKever, Rosalind. "Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History." The Met's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. August 2016. Accessed September 29, 2017. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/umbo/hd_umbo.htm.

This essay, provided by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, discusses Umberto Boccioni. McKever examines the history of Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space as well as Boccioni's view of Futurism.

Polizzotti, Mark. *Recent Acquisitions - A Selection: 2014-2016*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016.

Polizzotti's book, which is a publication from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, discusses recent works that the Met has acquired including the Dancing Celestial Deity (Devata). In this book, background information about the piece is provided, including its origin, significance and compositional elements, which would be valuable to this essay.

Rajarani Temple: Indian Devata of Orissa. Angkor Wat Apsara & Devata: Khmer Women in Divine Context. "Rajarani Temple: Indian Devata of Orissa." 2016. Accessed September 29, 2017. https://web.archive.org/web/20100703030825/http://www.devata.org/category/devata_apsara_photos/.

This article provides background information on a devata, a Hindu representation of a goddess. This information would be useful for this essay as Figure 2's subject is a devata.