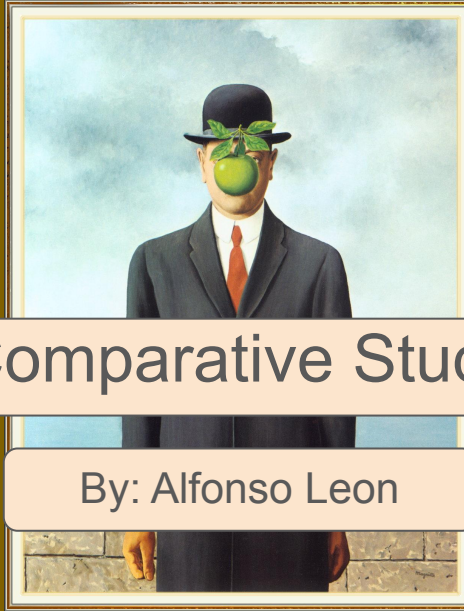


Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946



Comparative Study

By: Alfonso Leon

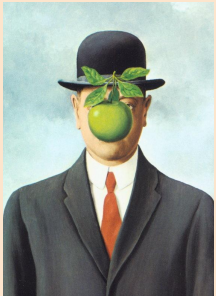
My comparative study will examine the work of Mexican Female artist Frida Kahlo and the Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte. Through this study, I will focus on examining and comparing these three pieces of work. I will be looking for how they use formal qualities such as the cultural context in their works and their artistic style. Such as their use of shape and balance, also I will analyze and compare their cultural significance and inspirations. Although they have different backgrounds, they share a similar kind of style with their use of medium and theme. I will keep this in mind when comparing and analyzing their work to see how they used their background to implement these elements in their work. Lastly, I will be examining the connection between my creations and these pieces.

Analysis of Cultural Significance of Salvador Dalí

While growing up René Magritte didn't have the best childhood, with his family facing financial difficulties and his mom committing suicide. The only place where he found comfort was through painting. While René Magritte is well known for being a surrealist painter, that wasn't always the case. He started his artistic career as an impressionist but ended up falling in love with surrealism. Due to all the bad criticism of his work when he started surrealism, he chose to move to Paris, where he met surrealists like Salvador Dali and Max Ernst. While his move to Paris probably helped him learn a lot he failed to make a lasting impact as an artist and chose to move back to Belgium. While Magritte's work often had a dark and chaotic mood of surrealism he then adopted a colorful style to oppose all of the chaos going around the world due to WWII. This influenced his work to be more joyful and to bring some light to all of the darkness that is going on in the world. We can see this in his piece "The Son of Man" with how he is using more vibrant colors, like with the apple, the tie, and the background.



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964



René Magritte. The Son of Man 1964

Magritte's work always had this mysterious feeling to it which cause people to really wonder and think about its meaning to it. While people wonder about the meaning behind his paintings, Magritte just wanted his pieces to be mysterious. He said, "It does not mean anything, because mystery means nothing, it is unknowable". By adding things that wouldn't be possible in the real world, like things defying gravity. This helped his work to give it that mysterious feeling he wanted to implement because of how much it stood out. Later on in his life, René Magritte started facing challenges in his life, being diagnosed with pancreatitis cancer. During this time he started to experiment with other media like film and sculpting. His work proved to be influential in pop art.

Analysis of Function and Purpose: The Persistence of Memory

René Magritte's paintings consist of oil on canvas. This gives his work a clean, smooth, and simple look. This simplicity helps the viewer to be able to detect absurdity in the painting with more easiness.

Magritte's use of smooth long straight line helps his piece to give it that simple look to not take much away from what he really want people to pay attention to in the piece. Since it's surrealism and nothing much else is going on this simplicity helps it not take much away from the apple.

The green apple can be seen as a religious symbol for Christians and temptation because of the biblical story of Adam and Eve.

René Magritte creates simple pieces of art but reaches people's curiosity due to the strange placement of objects and the sense of mystery his work gives.



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

The Son of Man appears to have a somewhat normal form and shape. The man's body and the way he stands seem normal until you get to his face where you see an apple floating in front of it. This creates curiosity about what is behind the apple or what the man looks like.

The green floating apple is the brightest hue in the painting which brings the viewer's eyes straight to it. By drawing that attention to the apple it gives his piece that mystery and curiosity feeling.

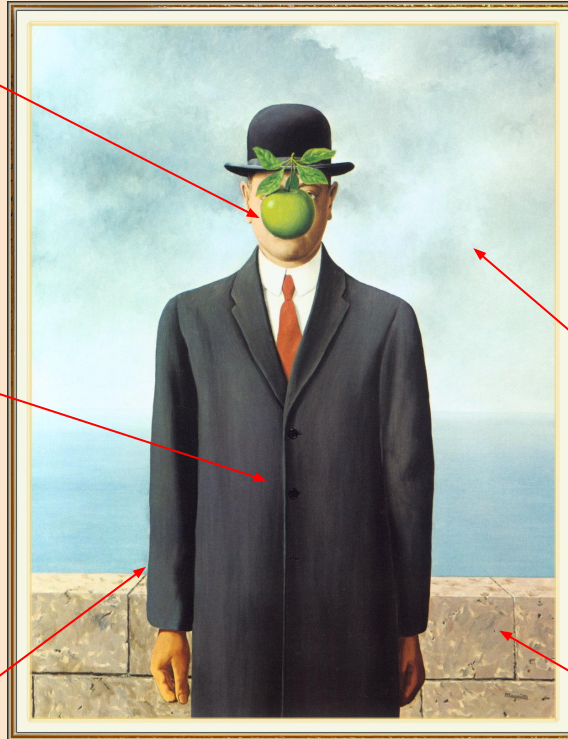
There's a good amount of positive space in this piece. This helps the man in the painting to get all of the attention.

Analysis of Formal Qualities: The Persistence of Memory

The apple has **form** by how the shading and use of thin lines make it look three-dimensional. The same can be said about the face behind it or the clouds in the background. The use of a bright hue on the apple helps draw attention to it and emphasize it at the same time.

By keeping the man's body close in with little **space** in between this gives it a three dimensional effect that makes it look like there's space between the man and the brick wall. The same can be said about the brick wall and the background.

There's a lot of use of long straight smooth **lines** in this piece. It's being used throughout the man and his suit. Also being used on the brick which is used to define the cracks on it. These smooth lines being used help give it that 3D effect.



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

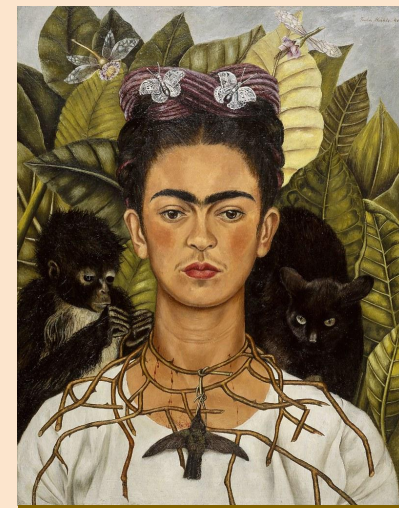
René Magritte's medium for this piece was oil paints. This gave him more flexibility and gave him more in-depth colors. Overall the piece is quite simple with repetition with colors and a very symmetrical balance.

This painting obtains **balance** with the simple use of textures and shapes. Just how the man is all the way in front then the brick wall is in the middle and how the clouds are in the background.

Here we can see how Magritte added **texture**. Mixing different tones and shades gives it that smooth real stone-looking texture. We can also see this smooth texture throughout the man's suit by using different shades.

Analysis of Cultural Significance of Frida Kahlo

Frida Kahlo is known as one of Mexico's greatest painters. With her passionate painting, she was able to create and be known for her self-portraits. Also her implementation of Mexican and indigenous culture in her pieces. Not only that but her pieces are also celebrated because of her depiction of the female experience and form. We can see how she adds these elements to her work with the bold, vibrant colors she uses and how she depicts female experiences and forms by painting herself naturally and without edits. Just like in her self-portrait with “Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird” she painted her unibrow and mustache which really shows how she embraces who she is as a woman. During her life, she has experienced many tragedies, from having poor health as a child to suffering a really bad injury that was life-threatening. Throughout her paintings, we can see that she implements her life experiences into her pieces. She does this by using symbolism to show her physical and emotional pain. Just like she did in “The Wounded Deer” by making the deer herself and painting arrow wounds on it.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940



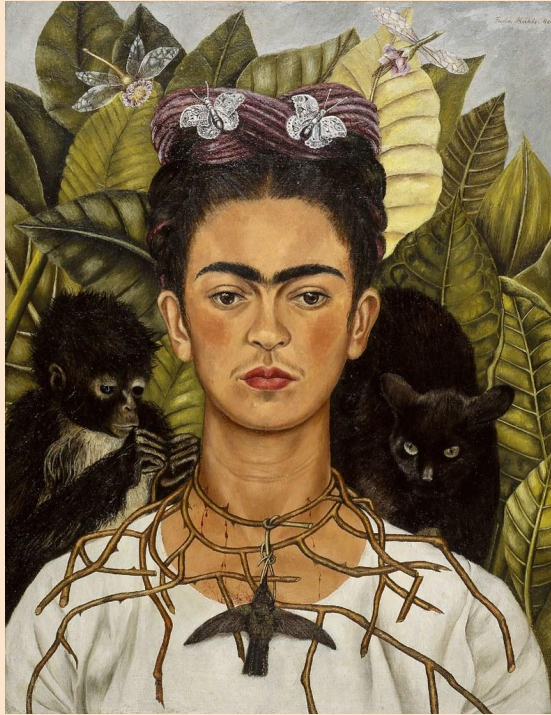
Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Frida Kahlo throughout her career has used many different art movements just as surrealism, symbolism, modern art, and many more. These movements really help her be able to express herself in her work. But what really stands out in her work is surrealism because of how it also creates symbolism which really helps her paintings connect to her. This leaves the viewers wondering what it means and what it represents to her. It leaves the viewer asking questions like... What does this mean? How does this connect to Frida?

Analysis of Function and Purpose: Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird

Frida Kahlo creates and adds a lot of symbolism in her work. The different colors, animals, and shapes she uses help her achieve that and add meaning to her painting. This is a way for her to express her feelings, which creates the main purpose of this self-portrait.

We can see how Frida Kahlo used symbolism to express her feeling in this piece. Just like the thorns in her neck which are causing her to bleed can symbolize the pain she had to endure due to her life experiences. Just like how her necklaces resemble Jesus's crown of thorns, this adds a religious meaning to her piece. Then we also have the hummingbird which appears to be colored black and lifeless and can be a representation of herself because of the tragedies she has experienced in her past. The monkey can be a symbol of indigenous Mexican culture and the black cat can symbolize bad luck. She can be describing herself as unlucky.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

With the medium being oil painting, Frida Kahlo was able to achieve really smooth shading and transitions in her work. Not only that but since there's a lot going on in this piece it helped separate everything so that the colors don't get lost.

In this piece, we can see how Frida really uses thin dark lines, especially in her background. This really helped her background so it wouldn't blend in which at the same time creates this sort of contrast with each leaf. Which creates this overlapping effect.

Analysis of Formal Qualities: Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird

We can see that the main **colors** in this piece are black, green, and white. With these colors, Frida was able to add symbolism. For example, with black, she was able to represent misfortune, with green life, and with white purity. By connecting these colors to an object in the painting.

The precise thin **lines** painted in the animal's hair and her own hair create a realistic **texture** to the piece. We can see she does short, sharp brush strokes to achieve this realism. This also helps create contrast with the smooth background.

Here we can see how a three-dimensional **form** is being created on Frida's face with shadows, highlights, and blending. This is more noticeable through her jawline and this really helps direct one's attention to her face.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

The **pattern** of repeated shapes and lines creates this illusion of busyness in the background which helps draw the viewer's attention.

In this piece, we can see that there is a lot of positive **space** in the background which helps us focus on Frida. This way she is the main subject of the painting and helps us focus on her expression and what is on her body.

The **pattern** in the thorn necklace helps add negative space to Frida's body and draws more attention to this area. This way the viewer can notice its importance because of the symbolism Frida adds to it.

Analysis of Function and Purpose: Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer

In this piece, we can see that the art movement is naïve art due to how it rejects conventional expertise in how real objects are represented. Throughout this painting, Frida Kahlo used symbolism to show her feeling like she does in many of her pieces. When seen in this piece we can see how this piece revolves around the themes of suffering and hopelessness.

Some symbolism that Frida uses to represent her theme is the multiple arrow wounds on the deer. Just like many of her pieces “The Wounded Deer” relates to an event that happened in her past. In this case, she refers to when she suffered a bus accident where her right foot and leg were crushed. This led to her getting many surgeries but even after the surgeries she has always experienced pain.

Frida Kahlo created this painting as a wedding present for her friends. She gifted them this painting because she wanted them to remember her. But through this painting, she depicts the sadness caused by her past.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Another part of this painting that ties it all together with the themes is all of the dead trees and broken branches. This could be connected to her back pain caused by the bus accident where the broken branches can represent how she feels broken or unfixable.

Frida Kahlo was also able to show her feelings in this piece through the type of hues she used. We can see that in this piece she used dark and earthy colors to give it a sadder feeling to it. This way she would be able to express her feeling.

In this piece, we can see there is a good balance amount of negative and positive space which helps the deer be the main subject of the painting.

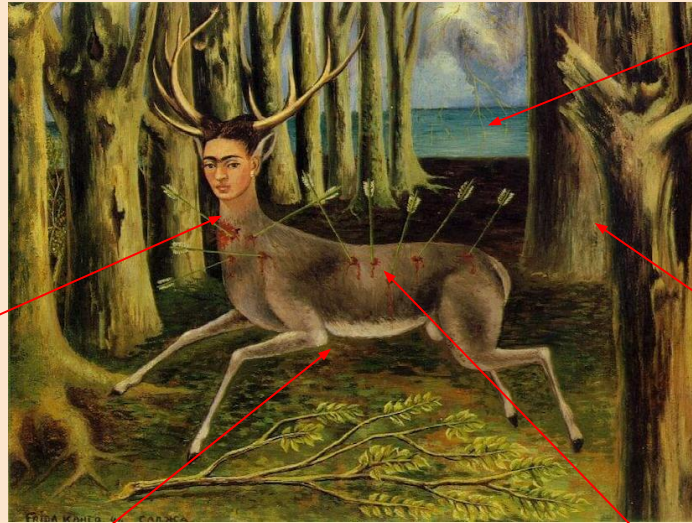
Analysis of Formal Qualities: Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer

For this piece we can see that the main **colors** she uses are blue, white, brown, black, and green. The way she uses these colors we can see a similar consistency throughout the piece.

For her face we can see how it has **form** and is bold to help it contrast from the background and the deer body. We can see **shading** on her face and around the deer body, also on the trees.

Frida uses smooth thin **lines** for the deer which makes it flow pretty well. Then we can also notice how she made the background where the deer is darker so it wouldn't blend into the ground and it makes it appear three dimensional.

For this piece we can see how organic **shapes** is mostly utilized in this piece.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

There's a lot of negative **space** for this piece. Most of this negative space is being created by all of the trees which makes the piece quite **balanced**. Also how Frida creates movement in the background and with the deer also makes this piece balanced.

We can see that Frida uses **texture** in the trees and she manages to do this with how she layers her colors and creates these shadows in the trees. This makes the tree look more realistic and is able to make the trees appear dead.

Here we can see that brightest **hue** is her blood. By making the blood a bright red it helps the viewer attention be directed to the wounds. This really help emphasize the meaning she wanted to give this piece. Which is that she is in pain.

Similarities in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

The Son of Man and Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

Function and Purpose: Both of these pieces use symbolism to try to portray their feelings and create a mood. We can see how René Magritte uses the green apple to create a feeling of mystery and Frida Kahlo adds many different kinds of animals which makes the viewer wonder the meaning of them, creating that same mysterious feeling. We can also see how in both pieces there's a person in the middle of the painting looking straight, which can be seen as a similar function that both artists thought about.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

Cultural Context: When René Magritte painted this piece, we can see that the person in the painting is wearing a suit, which is characteristic of him. René Magritte chose to apply to the character in his piece. We can infer that the way René Magritte dressed was influenced by his culture. In a similar way, we can see that the apparel that Frida Kahlo chose to add in her self-portrait is inspired by her Mexican culture, and so is her hair style. We can really see how both artists implemented some of their culture in their paintings.

Formal Qualities: The way how both artists used lines and shadows is quite similar in a way that they were able to get quite a similar result. For example, the way they both use shadows in their pieces helped them create a three-dimensional form for their bodies and faces. Also, the way how Magritte and Kahlo both use thin lines in the pieces so they would be able to create texture. Magritte uses thin lines in the stone to create that texture, and Kahlo uses thin lines for the hair to be able to create texture.

Similarities in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

The Son of Man and The Wounded Deer



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

Function and Purpose: In both of these pieces we can see an absurdity. In René Magritte's piece we can see a floating green apple in front of his face which can be described as absurd and in Frida Kahlo's piece we can see how she painted her own face in the body of a deer which can also be considered quite absurd. By doing this both artists can create this feeling of mystery, making the viewer wonder the purpose of why they did what they did in their paintings. It also works as a way for them to show how they are feeling. For example, by René Magritte covering his face, it can be said that he is feeling shy, and in Frida Kahlo's painting it can be said that she feels like she's in pain because of how she painted herself in the wounded deer's body



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Cultural Context: The title *The Son of Man* can be connected to Christianity because of how the apple could be representing the apple from the biblical story Adam and Eve and the title can also be connected to Christianity because of how Jesus is considered the son of man and is known as the son of god. But René Magritte's agnostic belief creates doubt which makes people wonder about the meaning of the piece. In a similar way, Frida's piece also creates a mysterious feeling because of how she painted herself as a deer instead of something else.

Formal Qualities: These two pieces share the similarity of implementing bright hues in some parts of their paintings so it can get people attention. Frida uses a really bright red for the wounds which makes the viewer's attention get directed there which shows it's an important part of the piece. René makes the apple a really bright green to also direct the viewer's attention to it.

Similarities in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird and The Wounded Deer



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

Function and Purpose: Frida Kahlo's Self-Portrait and The Wounded Deer both share the same function of her using symbolism to share the way she is feeling and to represent a past experience she lived through. In her Self Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, she uses the thorn necklaces to represent the pain she had endured caused by her life experiences. Then in The Wounded Deer Frida painted herself as the deer which is wounded with arrows to also show her feelings of pain and just like the self-portrait it relates to an important event that happened in her life.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Cultural Context: In both of these paintings Frida Kahlo uses similar colors which are of a very earthy tone and this can connect to Frida's Mexican culture. Also the traditional Mexican hairstyle she painted herself with was also a way she was able to implement her culture into her pieces. Another way she implemented her culture in her paintings is through the animals she chose to paint. For example, the monkey in the self-portrait and the deer in The Wounded Deer.

Formal Qualities: The use of tone-down hues can be seen in both paintings. Frida uses a lot of brown, green, black, and blue in both of these pieces. This creates a similar feel to both of the paintings, especially when they are next to each other. Also, the amount of negative space in both of the pieces is very similar which creates this illusion that makes it appear like there is a lot going on. These pieces also utilize a lot of organic shapes. In the self-portrait, it can be seen with the leaves, The Wounded Deer, and the trees.

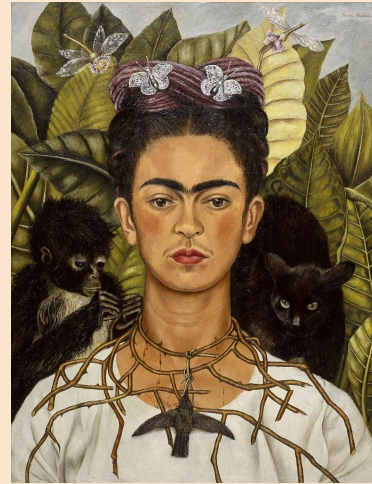
Differences in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

The Son of Man and Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird

Function and Purpose: René Magritte's piece appears to be simple due to the amount of positive space in this piece. This helps the viewer direct his vision to the man in the middle thus making them wonder about the purpose of the apple and make them wonder what is behind that apple. This creates a feeling of mystery which is what René Magritte was trying to achieve. Frida Kahlo's piece has more going on in the background thus making her piece appear more complicated. Frida implemented more symbolism by painting many kinds of animals that she was able to use to symbolize events that happened in her life and was able to use them to also show her feelings.



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

Cultural Context: In Frida Kahlo's piece her Indigenous Mexican Culture can be seen due to her traditional hairstyle and the setting she creates with the leaves and animals. Then in René Magritte's piece, it can be said that it connects to Christianity because of how the apple could be related to the biblical story of Adam and Eve but since René was an agnostic it makes people wonder about the meaning.

Formal Qualities: It can be said that René Magritte uses more bright colors in some parts of his painting to make it stand out from everything else thus making the viewer focus on that part of the painting. This can be seen in how he made the apple the brightest hue from any other color so that whoever sees this painting would focus their attention on the face and start wondering about the man and create this feeling of mystery. Frida uses more tone-down earthy colors in her piece thus creating the piece quite neutral. But she does make the animals and objects she uses to show symbolism in a darker hue so it can stand out and be noticed by the person viewing the piece.

Differences in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

The Son of Man and The Wounded Deer



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

Function and Purpose: Frida's purpose in creating this piece was for it to be a wedding gift so that her friend would always remember her. Through this painting, she showed her feelings of sadness and pain by painting herself as the wounded deer. René Magritte's piece was created to make people wonder about the meaning of the piece thus creating a mysterious feeling. This feeling of mystery is created by covering the man's face with an apple because his face can be normal or something absurd which would actually match René's style more.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Formal Qualities: René's piece has more open areas thus making it appear like a simpler painting. This is because of the amount of positive space in this piece and also maybe because of the use of bright hues. On the contrary, Frida uses more space, like covering her background with trees and using more darker colors which makes it appear more complex due to everything that is going on. Also how she uses more shadows and applies more texture helps her make her piece appear more complex.

Cultural Context: René use of bright colors helps this piece appear more joyful and this was influenced by WWII because all of the negativity going on during this time inspired Magritte to do paintings that would be more joyful than negative. Then Frida's piece it's sadder because she is trying to show the pain that she lived through her life due to a bus accident she had in her past.

Differences in Function, Purpose, Culture, and Formal Qualities

Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird and The Wounded Deer

Function and Purpose: In Frida's Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird it can be seen that she uses more symbolism because of how it could have been a more personal piece since this piece wasn't meant to be a gift like The Wounded Deer. The Wounded Deer still portrays her feelings of sadness and suffering but in her self-portrait, she uses different animals and objects to show different feelings while in The Wounded Deer, we can only see that she is in pain.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

Cultural Context: In both pieces, Frida expresses her feelings but in the self-portrait, her depiction of the female form can be seen clearly. Painting herself naturally shows how she's not ashamed of her looks.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

Formal Qualities: In The Wounded Deer it can be seen that Frida used more shadows and texture because how she had more of a background, middle ground, and foreground to work with. For example, she adds texture and shadows to the trees, ground, sky, leaves, and much more other things. In Frida's self-portrait, we can see how she does a lot of contrast in the background so that the leaves wouldn't get lost with each other. She uses thick lines, different colors, and shadows to make the leaves appear like they are overlapping.

Evaluation of Formal Qualities and Function and Purpose between “The Son of Man” and Personal Piece

Comparison

Both “The Son of Man” and “MYSTERY SOLVED!” share a really similar **appearance** with the exception of the man face not being covered anymore and the apple changing to a nopal. But other than that the **composition** is quite similar. These two paintings share really similar **elements** like the **form, shape,** and **space** being used. All three pieces share that similarity of use of **lines** as they all use long thin lines to create some sort of debt.



“El Mex” (2021) by Alfonso Leon

All three pieces also use a similar **shading** and **blending** technique to achieve a three-dimensional illusion. Also making things overlap helps with this illusion which is caused by the use of **space**.



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964

The **color palette** from Magritte’s piece is more **saturated** compared to “MYSTERY SOLVED!” as they are a bit more toned down but I would say that the colors in “El Mex” are more saturated than Magritte’s. Then there’s a shared **theme** of Mexican culture between both my pieces but Magritte’s piece is more focused on creating mystery.

Contrast

The most noticeable difference between “The Son of Man” and “Mystery SOLVED!” is the difference in the face not being covered anymore and the apple being changed to a nopal. As Magritte’s goal for his painting was to be mysterious by covering the man’s face my goal for my piece was to connect it to my culture which I did by replacing the apple with a nopal since it’s a very famous plant in Mexico that is considered food.



“MYSTERY SOLVED!” (2022) by Alfonso Leon

Evaluation of Formal Qualities and Function and Purpose between Frida Kahlo's Self-Portrait and Personal Piece

Comparison

The shared formal qualities between Frida Kahlo's Self-Portrait and "El Mex" can be seen in the similar **pattern** repetition of the leaves. Then a three-dimensional **form** can be seen being created in all three pieces with the use of **shadows**, **highlights**, and **blending**. The use of thin short **lines** in "MYSTERY SOLVED!" is similar to Frida's piece since it helped with creating **texture**.



"El Mex" (2021) by Alfonso Leon

These three pieces also share a similar **theme** of personal resilience which is represented by objects that have a personal connection and connect to the Mexican culture.

Both Frida's and my piece "MYSTERY SOLVED!" are similar in that they both are self-portraits.



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

Unlike Frida's piece, my pieces used acrylic paint and since she used oil paints she was able to achieve really smooth **shading** and **transitions** in her work which really helped in creating **space** and **contrast**.

Contrast

The biggest difference between both my pieces to Frida's self-portrait is her use of a lower color **contrast** compared to mine which is higher. There's also the **appearance** difference between "El Mex" and Frida's piece because how in her piece the main subject is her and in my piece, it's a skeleton and a landscape. Also, the use of **space** between my two pieces and hers is different because in hers there's minimal space being wasted and in my piece, there's a lot of open space that can be seen.



"MYSTERY SOLVED!" (2022) by Alfonso Leon

Evaluation of Formal Qualities and Function and Purpose between “The Wounded Deer” and Personal Piece

Comparison

Once again a similarity that can be seen in all three pieces is the recurring **theme** of personal resilience which is similarly represented by objects that have a personal connection and have a connection to Mexican culture. The use of bright **colors** in parts of the painting is used similarly in all three pieces in order to get the viewer's attention toward that area to show significance.



“El Mex” (2021) by Alfonso Leon



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946

They all also share a similar **blending** and **shading** technique to create a three dimensional **form** which really helps giving the piece some depth.

My piece “MYSTERY SOLVED!” and Fida’s piece are similar in how they are both self-portraits.

The **symmetry** between my piece “MYSTERY SOLVED!” and Frida’s is another difference since my piece could be considered to be more symmetrical.

Contrast

“The Wounded Deer” features a more toned-down and monotone **color palette** compared to both of my pieces which have more of **brighter** and more **saturated colors**. There’s also the different **medium** being used between my pieces and Frida’s, since she uses oil paints she was able to achieve a greater **blending** technique and smoother **transitions**.



“MYSTERY SOLVED!” (2022) by Alfonso Leon

Analysis of Culture between Artists and Personal Pieces

When it comes to Rene Magritte's work, he mastered the ability to create mystery and make people who see his work wonder about its significance. Since Rene Magritte is Belgian and I'm of Mexican descent the cultural connection isn't as strong between our work. But even though we're from different backgrounds I was still able to get inspiration from his work. In many of Magritte's art pieces, he chooses to use bright colors usually mostly concentrated in one area of his painting in order to draw attention to that specific spot. I was able to use this technique of his in objects that I implemented in my paintings that had symbolism so that way it'll get the viewer's attention and make it easier to create meaning in my piece. In my self-portrait "MYSTERY SOLVED!" I used this technique with the nopal similar to how he did to the apple. This way it will draw attention to the nopal and that way when the viewer sees the painting, it will show that I wanted to portray my Mexican culture. In "El Mex" I feel like I was able to incorporate the mystery factor that Rene Magritte uses in his work because how even though I know the meaning behind it, probably someone new that it's seeing this piece for the first time would be left wondering it's meaning and it being a diptych adds to that because if they are to be separated it would add onto that mystery.



"El Mex" (2021) by Alfonso Leon



René Magritte. The Son of Man, 1964



"MYSTERY SOLVED!" (2022) by Alfonso Leon

Analysis of Culture between Artists and Personal Pieces



Frida Kahlo. Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, 1940

From both of these Frida Kahlo paintings, I was able to draw out my inspiration for both of my pieces. Many of Frida Kahlo's pieces focus on having a personal connection to her and represent her culture in some sort of way. She's able to do this by really focusing on the small details like color, how she looks or dresses herself in these paintings, and by choosing carefully the objects she uses as symbolism. Frida's mixed use of tone down and bright color really shows how influenced she is by her indigenous Mexican culture and the accessories and clothes she chooses to paint herself with are also a good representation of her culture. Then the way she uses objects to show her culture is also an idea I learned from her because of how she is able to use animals, leaves, clothes, and even random objects that connect to her and her culture.



"MYSTERY SOLVED!" (2022) by Alfonso Leon



"El Mex" (2021) by Alfonso Leon

Me being of Mexican descent I wanted to be able to portray it in my work in a similar way that Frida Kahlo does in her work. I wanted to be able to use symbolism in a way that would show my culture and give meaning to my paintings. In my painting "El Mex" I was able to apply this by painting things like a sombrero, a cactus, and a skeleton which are all things that are able to be connected to my Mexican culture. Then my painting "MYSTERY SOLVED!", even though it's more simple I was able to create that connection to my culture by changing the apple from my inspiration for this piece "Then Son of Man" to a nopal which is considered a really well-known food in Mexico and can easily be related to Mexican culture.



Frida Kahlo, The Wounded Deer, 1946