

## **'The Scream', by Edvard Munch 1893**



### **LINE-**

- The diagonal lines of the bridge lead the viewer's eye into the picture.
- Wavy lines in the sky and background are distorted and seem to mirror the screaming figure's torment.

### **COLOUR-**

- The predominant use of bright red in the sky may symbolise anger or torment as red is a colour often associated with these emotions.
- The grey and beige colour of the face makes the figure look ghostly and as if all the colour and life has been drained from him/it.

### **SHAPE-**

- The curved shapes of the body, sky and water look unnatural which gives the painting a distorted feel.
- Munch reduces the features of the face to a series of simplified shapes which enhances the tormented emotions of the figure.

### **tone and FORM**

- The lack of natural skin tones in the face makes the figure look subhuman and almost alien-like.
- There is a mixture of dark, mid and light tones blended together that make the bridge seem 3D. This contrasts with the flattened, distorted figure creating visual impact.

### **TEXTURE-**

- The artist paints the bridge in great detail to create the illusion of a hard, wooden texture.
- There are noticeable light blue streaks in the water which create a fluid, watery texture.

### **PATTERN-**

- Irregular wavy patterns dominate the sky and land. They seem to mirror the figure's torment.
- Diagonal lines on the bridge and path create a linear pattern that draws the viewer into the painting.

### **COMPOSITION-**

- The screaming figure is placed centrally in the composition which makes it the focal point.
- Munch carefully arranges each object and figure so that the viewer's eye moves around the composition.
- Diagonal lines take you past the figure and into the painting.
- Wavy lines in the sky and water force your eye back to the main figure.

### **MOOD / ATMOSPHERE**

- The combination of a screaming figure, red blood sky and mysterious figures in the background create an unsettling and unpleasant mood and atmosphere.
- The mysterious figures in the background are unsettling because the viewer is unable to ascertain whether they are part of the reason for the figure's torment or simply innocent bystanders.

### **MEDIUM/ MATERIALS/ TECHNIQUES**

- Munch applies the paint quite quickly to create an energetic, expressive composition.
- Oil paint is applied with smooth brush strokes to make some of the colours look flat.
- Small linear and wavy brush strokes added with crayon and pastels give the impression of movement.

### **STYLE**

- The painting is not very realistic looking and is painted in a highly-personal expressive style.
- Munch is more concerned with the feeling and emotion of the painting rather realistically portraying figures and landscape.

**SCALE**

- The scale of the painting is relatively small but has a powerful effect on the viewer because the screaming figure looks lifeless and incredibly upset.

**SUBJECT MATTER**

- The Scream is Munch's most famous painting. It is a Symbolist painting i.e. a work of art that is symbolic of certain emotions, in this case pain.
- It formed part of a body of work that Munch created known as 'The frieze of life'.
- In 'The frieze of life' Munch attempted to tackle some of the big psychological themes of human experience such as love, death, melancholy, jealousy and death.