

Mes Voeux

Mes Voeux/ My Vows, 1989 by Annette Messenger collected from The Warehouse in Dallas, Texas. Size of the piece of art is approximately (356.2 * 200) cm. This piece of art consists of many pieces of small black and white photographs and each of the photographs shows a small human body part. They include; ear, mouth, nose, hand, foot, breast, genitals. They all belong to a variety of human beings: male and female, young and old, some are attractive; others seductive and others are not. Each of the photographs is attached to a string that hangs from the wall leading to the photographs intermixing, overlapping and even concealing others hence forming a thick circle.



Annette Messenger
Mes vœux / My Vows, 1989
 acrylic on black and
 white photographs
 under glass and string
 The Rachofsky Collection

Analysis of the art

The thick circle formed by the many photographs represents Earth and the many photographs of human parts represent the many people present in Earth. The photographs combined bring a sense of unity but in separate forms. The different photographs of the old, the young, the beautiful, the ugly, the happy smiles, the cold stares of the eyes, the expressionless faces, the bald heads, the attractive smiles all represent the different kind of people present on planet Earth.

Annette Messenger brings out her main artistic basis in this art. The first basis is the depth of psychology which has been expressed by the staring eyes or the shut eyes which might bring out the sense that they deny the surrounding world. The second basis is sexuality represented by

the tongues pointed out, the genitals, breasts and lip biting. As a whole, she talks about humanity and what it entails. Annette Messager's *Mes Voeux* may be the expressions of sexuality or an old religion's offerings.

Visual Elements and Principles of Design are present in this work of art. In visual elements, the art is delicate in regard to the use of simple strings to hold the photographs and one touch might disassemble the artwork. The art is also of two dimensions forming a circular shape. The range between light to dark is the same throughout the art work. The use of black and white as the main color is emotionally soothing, reason being, the photographs does not show skin color and this can be used to represent all ethnicity the black and white color also shows boldness of the art. The Implied texture of the art has an uneven pattern on the surface because of the overlapping photographs. Annette Messager used small photographs that overlap and implied the use of two dimensions for the art space.

In the principles of design, the art brings out more interest of what the work entails and what is the reason behind Annette Messager's choice in *Mes Voeux*, by the use of various photographs. There is symmetrical balance in the circular shape of *Mes Voeux*. The use of human body parts in the entire piece of work by Annette Messager creates emphasis and it brings out its unique characteristics and this builds one's curiosity on the reason for the use of human body parts. Messager carefully picked small photographs and used them for the entire artwork and although the size of the artwork turned up to be large, it brought out one entity and one can view the artwork as one. The use of black and white is consistent and no part attracts more attention than the other.

Interpretation of the art

The photographs of the body parts are what Messenger had seen in the churches at southern Europe while she was still young in form of wax offerings of limbs for she is of Catholic heritage. The work looks like the offerings left by the faithful at churches which at most times include notes that have been handwritten or small representations of sick body parts that are looking for healing.

The Mes Voeux art, has given me a bigger perspective of humanity and the notion of variety in the human world. It has created curiosity of the many explanations that might be present in the many minds of the people who might or who will view this piece of art. The theme used in this piece of artwork has given me a lot of interest in it.

Team contributions

Most people who have viewed Mes Voeux by Annette Messenger have stated that the artwork is unique and there is a clever use of collages. They have stated her work to be innovative, fine and also interesting.