

177: I. Lorenz; Selfportrait of the artist 1979; Kaiserslautern; 1979; Photo collage de-familiarised



An analysis in dialogue between the artist and curator of the museum and ChatGPT

Artist:

Hello ChatGPT, how are you?

ChatGPT:

Hi, I'm fine, thanks for asking. How can I help you today?

Artist:

Can you recognise and analyse images?

ChatGPT:

Yes, I can recognise and analyse pictures. If you send me a picture, I can help you describe it or answer questions about it.

Artist:

I am attaching this to this message. Firstly, the background: it is an older self-portrait that has been altered using photographic techniques. It shows the portrait "torn" like a map of a fictitious continent with islands. I hypothesise that it is about free-spiritedness.

ChatGPT:

Thanks for the additional information and the picture. Let me take a look at it.

The picture shows a stylised self-portrait that has been heavily alienated. The colours red and yellow dominate, and the contours of the face are strongly contrasted and abstracted, reminiscent of the structure of a map.

Your interpretation that it is about free-spiritedness is interesting and plausible. The strong alienation and abstraction may indicate that the artist is trying to go beyond the mere physical appearance and depict something deeper or more universal. The "torn" appearance could also indicate that the artist's identity is not fixed or rigid, but constantly changing and evolving - much like a free spirit who is not bound by convention and is constantly redefining himself.

The use of maps as a metaphor can indicate that the artist sees their own path and identity as a journey of discovery, full of unknown territories and new possibilities.

If you like, we can dive deeper into the symbolism and possible meanings. Are there certain elements in the painting that you would like to explore further?

Artist:

The actual head area with the largest part of the face depicted forms a kind of main island - while the other parts look like individual smaller islands.

ChatGPT:

This is a very interesting observation. The depiction of the face as a main island surrounded by smaller islands could have several symbolic meanings. Here are some possible interpretations:

1. **Centre and periphery:** The head area as the main island could represent the centre of the artist's consciousness or identity, while the smaller islands symbolise aspects of personality, thoughts or ideas that revolve around this centre.
2. **Fragmentation of identity:** the representation as islands could indicate the fragmentation of identity. This could mean that the artist explores different facets of his personality or inner self that are not necessarily united in a fixed structure.
3. **Isolation and connection:** Islands are by definition isolated, but also connected by the sea. This could represent the dual nature of the human experience: the feeling of isolation and at the same time the need for connection and interaction with the outside world.

4. **Exploration and discovery:** Islands are often associated with exploration and adventure. This could indicate that the artist sees his own identity and place in the world as a constant journey of discovery.
5. **Free-spiritedness and independence:** Islands can also symbolise independence and self-determination. The idea that each part of the face is a separate island could indicate that the artist develops different aspects of his life and thinking autonomously and freely.

The combination of these elements supports the thesis of free-spiritedness, as it shows that the artist is not bound to a monolithic identity or a rigid structure. Instead, he moves freely between different aspects of himself, much like a traveller sailing from island to island.

Are there certain colours, shapes or patterns in the picture that should be particularly emphasised or interpreted?

Artist:

Well, the red and yellow have resulted from the de familiarisation. Areas that are more in focus appear yellow.

ChatGPT:

Adding the importance of colour in terms of focus and intensity can further deepen our interpretation. Here are some considerations:

1. **Yellow areas as a focus:** As yellow in your image emphasises the areas that tend to be in focus, this could mean that these parts of the face (and therefore personality or identity) are particularly important or central. Yellow is a colour that is often associated with light, clarity and intellect. This could indicate that these aspects of the identity or personality are illuminated or particularly conscious.
2. **Red areas as a contrast:** Red is a colour often associated with energy, passion and sometimes danger or intensity. If the red areas are less in focus, they could still represent important but perhaps unconscious or less obvious parts of the self. They could symbolise intense emotional or creative energies that are not always at the forefront, but still have an important influence.
3. **Dynamics between focus and periphery:** The interaction between the yellow and red areas could represent the dynamic nature of identity and inner experience. While some parts of the self are clear and in focus (yellow), there are other parts that are intensely but less consciously perceived (red). This dynamic could represent the complexity and multi-layered nature of the human mind and personal identity.
4. **Symbolism of the islands:** The smaller islands, which are yellow, could indicate that there are several important aspects or "beacons" in the artist's personality that deserve attention. These could be ideas, values or experiences that are emphasised and illuminated.

The colour scheme thus reinforces the idea of free-spiritedness and discovery by showing that there are different levels of meaning and consciousness. The artist navigates through these levels, with some parts appearing clear and bright, while others are intense and deep.

Would you like to delve deeper into a particular interpretation or are there other elements of the painting that interest you?

Artist:

Let's take a quick look at how our art museum (which only exists online) displays the picture: projection of what you recognise in the picture onto a black marble exhibition wall (this wall is standard in the museum). The museum sees itself as free-spirited and diverse - and free of any moralising.

ChatGPT:

The concept of projecting the image onto a black marble exhibition wall fits in very well with the free-spirited and diverse orientation of the museum. Here are some thoughts on the presentation and effect:

1. **Contrast and focussing:**
 - **Black marble:** The choice of black marble as a background material creates a strong visual contrast to the vivid red and yellow colours of the image. This could draw the viewer's attention even more to the image itself and increase its intensity and meaning.

- **Focussing:** The black background ensures that the colours of the picture stand out and that the viewer concentrates on the details and symbolism of the picture.

2. **Projection and interpretation:**

- **Projection:** Projecting the image onto the wall can support the idea of free-spiritedness by presenting the image as something fluid and changeable. In contrast to a fixed frame, a projection can be perceived as less static and therefore more dynamic and open to different interpretations.
- **Interpretation:** The way in which the image is projected can also help to emphasise different aspects of the image. For example, the intensity of the colours or the sharpness of the contours could vary depending on the projection settings, which can evoke different interpretations and reactions from the audience.

3. **Context of the museum:**

- **Free-spiritedness:** The museum's free-spirited and diverse self-image is reflected in its choice of presentation. By dispensing with moral judgements, the museum creates a space in which viewers can freely develop their own interpretations and thoughts.
- **Diversity:** The projection of such an intense and symbolically charged image onto an elegant yet neutral black marble wall can emphasise the diversity of interpretations and the depth of the artistic experience.

4. **Experience of the visitors:**

- **Visual and emotional effect:** The contrast between the vibrant colours of the painting and the dark marble wall can have a strong emotional and visual impact on visitors. This can lead to viewers immersing themselves more deeply in the painting and engaging more intensively with its meaning.
- **Interactivity:** Projection also allows the museum to incorporate interactive elements, such as lighting effects or moving projections, which make the experience even more vivid and immersive.

To summarise, the projection of the image onto a black marble wall is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also underlines the free-spirited and diverse philosophy of the museum. It offers visitors the opportunity to experience the artwork in an open, interpretive context.

Artist:

I think we have a lot in common. May I add something to the short description of the picture, as is customary in the museum. May I publish your interpretation - i.e. our dialogue - in a separate document in the museum?

ChatGPT:

I'm delighted to hear that! Yes, you may publish the interpretation of our dialogue in a separate document in the museum. Please make sure that the source or the dialogue with ChatGPT is mentioned.

If you need help with the creation of the separate document or further additions to the description of the image, please let me know. Good luck with your free-spirited and diverse art museum!

...

Artist:

Dann darf ich mich auch schon wieder verabschieden ... Auf wiedersehen - und bis zum nächsten Mal ...

ChatGPT:

Then I may say goodbye again ... Goodbye - and see you next time again ...

Image: courtesy of the person depicted.

Source: Transcript of the dialogue between the artist and curator of the museum and ChatGPT. Many thanks at this point to ChatGPT.