

MARY CASSATT

JENNY SAVILLE

First Impressions

Peaceful
Loving
Idealized



Chaotic
Raw
Primal



Religious
Maternal
Focused
on the children



American
1844 - 1926

British
1970-Present

The Caress - Oil on canvas
83.4 cm x 69.4 cm 1902
Smithsonian American Art Museum
(Seen in person)

The Mothers - Oil on Canvas
106 5/16 x 86 5/8 in 2011

The Reproduction Drawing IV
(after Leonardo da Vinci Cartoon)
charcoal 89.5/16 x 69 5/8 in. 2010

Describe

A woman, presumably the mother, holding a nude child of about 18 months. Her left hand gently holds the wrist of the child and her right hand holds the ankle and foot. Her chin almost rests on the child's left shoulder. The child leans back in a pose reminiscent of Madonna and Child paintings. There is another child on the child's right. She is about 6 years old and is wearing a yellow dress. The mother is wearing a detailed green and pink dress with a high collar and ornamentation. She is seated in a high back chair in a nondescript room. The mother looks off past the children while the older child gazes at the younger child.

A woman, presumably the mother, in the third trimester of pregnancy, holding 2 nude children. The older child, about 24 months, is barely in the mother's grasp as she firmly holds the child under the arm and neck. The legs disappear like the mother's off of the frame of the composition. The baby, about 12 months, is cluttered by vigorous lines as it sits on the mother's left. The mother peers down at the space between the children. The space is flattened by a series of gray rectangles that make up the space this family occupies.

There are 2 women or 2 versions of the same women. Without considering the da Vinci artwork as the reference, it is difficult to assign one of these figures the role of mother. The children appear to be morphing into one another with a series of agitated and flowing lines. There are between 2-3 children on the laps of these women and one on the right of the composition. The figures legs fade off and the setting is nondescript.

The Artist's World

Born: 1970

Contemporary, young, **British**, female painter. Supported by her family in her pursuit to study art and become a professional artist. She is a mother. Her 2 children influence her creativity. (Hudson, The Daily Telegraph)

She is working now in Oxford and in London during a time when female artists are more common, allowed to attend school and are exhibited world wide. Although they still have to struggle in a male dominated art world. Exhibitions at galleries are still a prominent way for artists to gain notoriety but the Internet and global communication is a gaining influence. According to my observations, figurative art and realism has had a resurgence in the art world over the past 10 years.

Her themes and subjects are often formed from a critical observation of average people, even women in shopping malls, patients being prepped for liposuction, and even her childhood piano teacher. ("Jenny Saville I...")

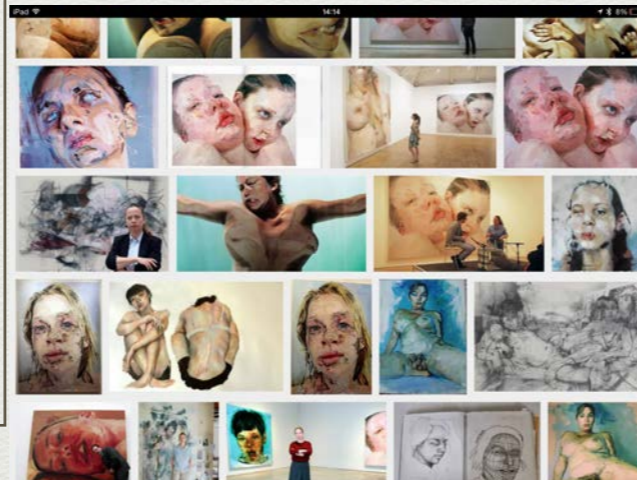
Influenced by: Lucian Freud and Peter Paul Rubens ("Jenny Saville | ...")

The Art World

Works challenge viewers.

Figurative painting and realism has been out of vogue in the art world with a few exceptions in Photo Realism and artists like Gerhard Richter and Chuck Close. However it has been making more of an appearance in the art galleries of NYC and in art magazines more and more since the early 2000s. They have seen her work develop...

Images:google search screen shots



The World

Western Political and Social Issues at the forefront

- Working mothers balancing several roles.
- Super mom's / Social Media highlighting the do it all moms that juggle career, travel, fitness and still manage to pack a lunch with organic carrots shaped into hearts and motivational notes for their children.
- Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest are some of the largest platforms for women to see other women in social and familial roles
- Getting your body back. Tabloid stories of celebrity mom's recovering their bodies in record time after birth.
- Body Shaming
- Royal Wedding- Prince William marries Catherine Middleton at Westminster Abbey
- Gay Marriage
- Gender issues
- Transgender rights

Other World Events

- Bin Laden and Gaddefi Killed
- Egyptian Revolution
- US Embassy Attacked ("2011..."), (Broomhall)

Subject Matter: generally large scale depictions of nude women that challenge gender roles and body image.

Jenny Saville - Formal Analysis -The Mothers

The **values** are soft with little contrast. **Contrast** is apparent mainly with the hair colors and the darker lines under the mother. There are not bright whites apparent either. This helps create **unity**.

The **background** is muted and neutral **colors**. The skin tones are mostly realistic with soft tones and only local color. The colors are calm in contrast to the energetic lines, tension and expression of the figures. The colors add to the flat **texture** despite the vigorous **brushwork**.



The **space** is very shallow and the background is flat with only a **monochrome** frame depicting the space as if it were a picture frame with the figures emerging from the frame.

Active-gestural **lines** that mimic the energy of the mother holding the children. The lines show outlines of various positions of the children and overlap the figures and disappear beneath them as well destroying the traditional **figure ground relationship**.

The expression on the mother and the older child are the two points of **emphasis** since they are rendered more that the rest of the figures. This adds to the connection between the figures. The emphasis on the older child is also made more apparent by the hand of the mother framing his face. The **scale** of the figures are representational and seem realistic given the relationship to one another.

Shape & Form- The fully painted figures give a sense of three dimensionality however there are areas that are not as resolved and look flatter. such as the bottom leg of the mother. The form of the older child is broken by line and painterly shapes.



The **composition** is central with the mother being fairly symmetrical. The older child is slightly off center to help **balance** the chaotic lines of the younger child and the pregnant belly of the mother. The gestural lines help balance the figures as well. The legs of the mother are solid and help anchor the composition
Pyramidal Composition. →



Jenny Saville - Function and Purpose - The Mothers

“POST-PAINTERLY”

(HUDSON)

"I like the dirty side of things" Jenny Saville

The mood is chaotic, raw, primal emotion, maternal **without over glorifying the role of the mother or the child**. She paints fleshy figures that fill her canvases. Works are not simply figurative but can be described as "post painterly" in merging abstract and figurative with clumps and drips which form blemishes rather than decoration. Her children are an important part of her new series. (Hudson, The Daily Telegraph) Saville had a friend photograph her as she gave birth. It was painted in England after she art gave birth with her first child and was also pregnant/and gave birth to her second. ("Jenny Saville - Gagosian Gallery.")

Physicality of motherhood and children.

By focusing on details such as the navels and her own pregnant belly she creates links to her children as another generation. She is fascinated by the aesthetic and formal possibilities of painting the **"materiality of the human body."** ("Jenny Saville - Gagosian Gallery.") You can sense the mass in her paintings. The first time I saw her work at the Gagosian Gallery in New York City, I was absorbed by their scale, tactile quality of soft flesh tones juxtaposed by almost violent brushwork.

She creates sensual work as in "The Mothers" with a **tactile impression**. Her work is **monumental in scale** with makes the view feel small in comparison. "Subjects are imbued with a sculptural yet elusive dimensionality that verges on the abstract". ("Jenny Saville - Gagosian Gallery.") In this work, the **intertwined bodies are merging and fighting to be set free**. They are lost into one another. The role of mother and child(ren) become one while they fight to separate. **It is as if to watch birth and motherhood condensed into a moment.**

"Bodies fascinate me. I find having the framework of a body essential. Having flesh as a central subject, I can channel a lot of ideas." --Jenny Saville ("Jenny Saville - Gagosian Gallery.")



Saville The Mothers
Oil on Canvas 2011
106 5/16 x 86 5/8

- Trauma
- Sensual
- Human Body
- Physicality
- Fleeting
high Caliber
Brush
STROKES.

LINKS TO
Freud
+
Raubens

Jenny Saville - Formal Analysis - Reproduction Drawing IV

Mirror symmetry of the 2 adult women heads create an almost surreal view of the mother (s).



The Reproduction Drawing IV
(after Leonardo da Vinci Cartoon)
charcoal 89.5/16 x 69 5/8 in. 2010

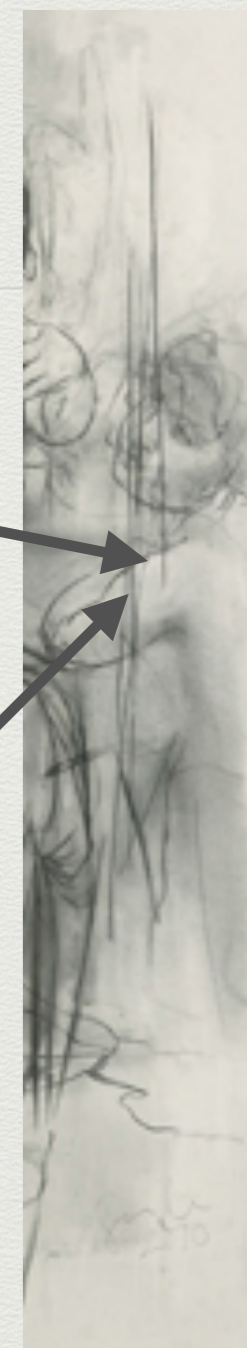
Monochromatic charcoal is applied liberally and figures reworked with varying degrees of resolution. Charcoal applied in in **gestural** lines, smudged tones and erased to create subtle **highlights**. There is little contrast due to the creamy tone of the paper. Smudged and faded figures of the children intertwine in the **foreground** while a more realized but faded cherub like child is partial cropped out of the composition on the right. A small frame set the **pyramidal composition** in place.

Seemingly random **gestural lines** run up and down the sides of the **composition** adding containment of the movement.



Soft **tones** form the **background** with little regard to interior or exterior space.

Active gestural lines that blur the figures together in a flurry of **movement**.



Jenny Saville - Function and Purpose

The Reproduction Drawing IV

This was one of several drawings in a series. They were shown in Saville's first show dedicated only drawing at Gagosian Gallery in Chelsea, NYC. This drawing (and the others) is a detailed study. She articulates certain parts of of her subject. She creates life in the anatomical details and gestural movements that "animate and underpin her visceral paintings".(Gagosian) She uses bodies, including her own, that she believes to represent the modern versions of women (Gagosian) She creates a modified version of **The Virgin and Child with St. Anne and John the Baptist** (National Gallery, London) which is an unusual composition in which the Virgin deals with an active Christ-child. This life-size portrait, entitled "reproduction" serves as a pun. It links the feat of motherhood with the copy of da Vinci's work. The figures are caught in symbiotic flux. (Gagosian) Her first child, a son was born in 2007 and her daughter in 2008. She made paintings and drawings about reflecting her pregnancies She also used several expectant mothers to model for her while working on this body of work. ("Mother and Child...") Currently in a private collection.

Other works from this series



JENNY SAVILLE
Reproduction drawing III (after the Leonardo cartoon), 2009–2010
Pencil on paper
89 1/8 x 69 1/2 inches (226.3 x 176.5 cm)



JENNY SAVILLE
Reproduction drawing II (after the Leonardo cartoon), 2009–2010
Pencil on paper
104 1/2 x 69 1/2 inches framed (265.5 x 176.5 cm)

She creates these works against the male-dominated history of idealized views of women and how their bodies are depicted.



JENNY SAVILLE
Installation view
Part of a larger installation

The Function & Purpose

- Referencing Italian Renaissance master, Leonardo da Vinci.
- It was created in England after studying da Vinci's famous cartoon.
- Connecting the artist's childhood connection to an artwork, to religion and to her own role as a mother.



REFERENCES TO DA VINCI

Saville's nod to daVinci is visible.



Contextual Context: Saville's modern interpretation of religious artwork as a personal narrative. "I had thought about doing mother-and-child images because I have never done anything with children before. I've tried to stay away a little bit, about the issues surrounding biology being determinate and that women are here to have babies. But, it's so powerful and I thought, well, I quite like tackling grand, old subjects. It's a challenge to make a painting with a child that isn't sentimental. It's a real challenge to actually make the sort of physicality of a baby's body, and not be cutesy and Baroque and bubbly; to find a dynamic within the body. Children are quite animalistic and that is difficult to create." Saville (Mother and Children)

"... some artists idealize motherhood while others seem a bit more traumatized" (Huffington Post)



da Vinci Virgin and Saint Anne Cartoon
(The Burlington House Cartoon)

1499-1500 charcoal on tinted paper. National Gallery, London

A quick comparison to da Vinci: da Vinci's drawing was a reproduction in Saville's home and constant source of inspiration. 3/4 turned head is similar in all 3 works. Light and shadow on face's of daVinci's were of particular interest. The chiaroscuro, especially visible in the faces of the women are similar. The background in daVinci's is non descriptor but clearly will be an outdoor scene. The figure child standing on the right is identical in pose and position as Saville's, slightly faded and cropped child. Saville's comments on how daVinci's depiction of beauty is from a different time in history. She comments that contemporary beauty is more temporal. (Durante, The Times).



Mother and Child(ren)

A common theme in art evoking both maternal and religious connections.

Formal Analysis - Mary Cassatt- The Caress

Cassatt's paintings of mother and child were considered as an icon of universal ideas. Her works share particular formal qualities. They are half-length compositions, like The Caress. They are set with little background detail. They are in closed off spaces and a fixed mood.

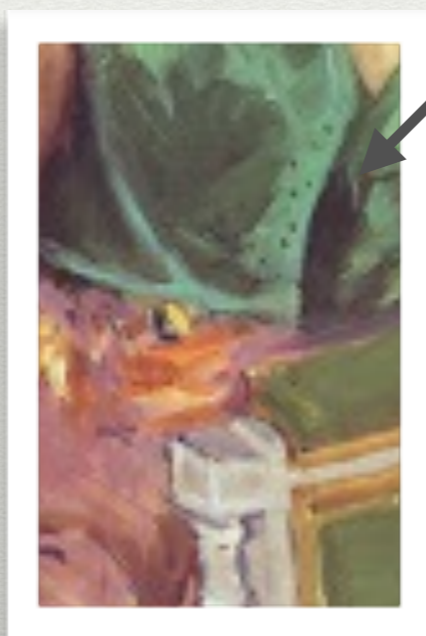
Space is closed off and depth is only alluded to by the angle of the chair and the corner of the wall that seems awkwardly highlighted behind the mother's head. The **figure ground relationship** is shallow.



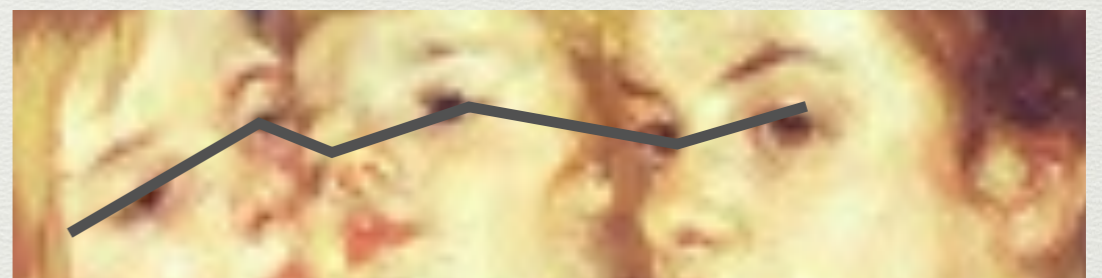
Soft **complementary colors**. The soft yellow **tints** of the skin are balanced by the pink/purple of what appears to be the skirt of the mother. Soft pinks and purples are also prevalent in the fingers and toes of the figures. The green of the bodice of the dress complements the deep sienna tones of the hair. There is an **undertone** of a soft purple and muted green in the background.

Lines of the chair direct the viewer's eye in to the frame along with the mother's arms. The **focal point** is the youngest child's face framed by the sister and mother.

Unblended **brushstrokes** articulate the green dress alluding of a rich fabric with a possible sheen.



There is an unorganized **pattern** on the mother's skirt and small dot like patterns on the bodice.



The dark eyes are all aligned creating a **pattern** of dots across the upper part of the composition this also creates **movement**.

The Caress - Oil on canvas
83.4 cm x 69.4 cm 1902
Smithsonian American Art Museum

A modified pyramidal composition



Cultural Context Mary Cassatt

The Artist's World

- Artist Mary Stevenson Cassatt American 1844 - 1926 Female, American painter and printmaker.
- Friends with artists.
- Never had children.
- Cassatt was from a prominent family from Pittsburg and was one of seven children, of which two died in infancy. She was well travelled throughout Europe with her parents and siblings.
- Family objected to her being an artist (her father declared he would rather see his daughter dead than living abroad as a "bohemian")
- In 1864 she attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia (National Gallery of Art). The male faculty and her other students were patronizing and resentful (Mary Cassatt 1844). She studied old master painters in museums in Europe (Italy, Spain, Belgium and France) including the Louvre. In 1874 she moved to Paris.
- Main body of work created in the late 1800's
- Works accepted at the French Salon under the name of Mary Stevenson (Mary Cassatt 1844)
- The archbishop of Pittsburgh commissioned her to paint copies of two works by the Italian master Correggio (Mary Cassatt 1844)
- Cassatt was of the few American artists in the nineteenth-century French avant-garde invited by Degas to join the Impressionists in 1877
- Influenced by Degas and had a close working relationship with him. Shared bold compositional structures, asymmetry and interesting Japanese prints. Created prints with both Degas and Pissarro.
- She advised wealthy American patrons on art purchases. She also played an important role in forming some of the most important collections of impressionist art in America. (National Gallery of Art).
- Painting was a gift by William T. Evans to the Smithsonian Art Museum

The Art World

Impressionism: Developed in the 1860's in France that marked a break from traditional painting. An art movement identified by loose brushwork and light color palettes. These artists used new scientific research into the physics of color to get a more exact representation of color and tone. (Impressionism) While many of her fellow Impressionists were focused on landscapes and street scenes. Mary Cassatt's painting style continued to evolve away from Impressionism in favor of a simpler, more straightforward approach. Her final exhibition with the Impressionists was in 1886, and she subsequently stopped identifying herself with a particular movement or school.

Some Impressionists:

Edouard Manet
Eugene Boudin
Frederic Bazille
Alfred Sisley
Edgar Degas
Pierre-Auguste Renoir
Camille Pissarro
Claude Monet
Walter Richard Sickert
Berthe Morisot



Mary Cassatt

Images: google search screen shots

The World

Mary Cassatt lived during the Victorian era. Women were only allowed out with an escort and were covered from the chin to the ankle (notice the high collar green dress in *The Caress*). Any hint of sexuality was looked down upon. (Kenney)

In 1870, Franco-Prussian War had already begun and, Mary Cassatt reluctantly returned to live with her parents in the States. (Mary Cassatt 1844)

Time line of Events

1848	Communist Manifesto
1848-52	Revolution in Europe
1859	Charles Darwin publishes Origin of Species
1863	Salon of Refusals
1861-65	American Civil War
1891	First movie camera patented
1884	1st Salon des Artistes Independants
1886	8th and last Impressionist exhibition
1900	Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams
1903	First flight of the Wright brothers
1905-15	Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity
1914-18	World War I

(Kenney)

Cassatt's influence: Strong impact on American art. She sent paintings back to exhibitions in the U.S. They were among the first impressionist works seen in America. She convinced her brother Alexander, to purchase paintings by Manet, Monet, Morisot, Renoir, Degas, and Pissarro. This made him the first important Impressionist collector in America. (Mary Cassatt "Art Icons")

Function and Purpose - Mary Cassatt - The Caress

Subject matter: Social and private lives of women.

The function and purpose of The Caress can be seen in many of her works. The majority of her work deals with mother and daughter relationships. There is attention to the caress. There is a tenderness in the works that allow the viewer to glimpse into the private lives of these families. Cassatt frequently used her family and friends as models. She depicted in their bourgeois pastimes. (Mary Cassatt "Art Icons") However in contrast to the Madonnas and cherubs of the Renaissance, she created unconventional portraits that are direct and honest nature. Commenting in American Artist, Gemma Newman stated that "her constant objective was to achieve force, not sweetness; truth, not sentimentality or romance." (Cassatt 1844)

This painting is often referred to as "The Florentine Madonna" because the pose is reminiscent of a typical Italian Madonna and Child. (Met Museum)



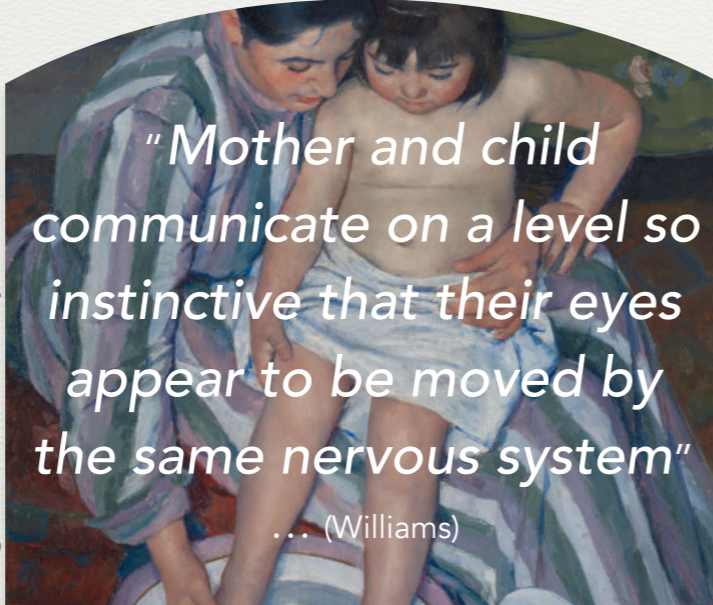
Mother and Child (The Oval Mirror), ca. 1889 Oil on canvas; (81.6 x 65.7 cm)

The Child's Bath, 1893

Oil on canvas

100.3 x 66.1 cm (39 1/2 x 26 in.)

Signed lower left: "Mary Cassatt"



"Mother and child communicate on a level so instinctive that their eyes appear to be moved by the same nervous system"

... (Williams)

In The Caress, the mother shows tenderness in her hands and cradling gesture of the younger child but the gaze is disconnected.

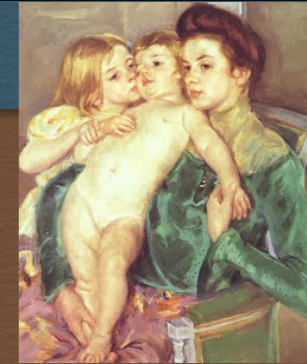
Child in the moment. Mother's gaze is off somewhere else as in "The Caress". Visible brush strokes. Arm forms like a seatbelt. The limbs are very important to the composition. (Harris)



Mary Cassatt, Breakfast In Bed, 1897, oil on canvas, 25 5/8 x 29 in. (65 x 73.6 cm) (Huntington Library, San Marino, California)

The formal qualities (half length compositions in closet spaces) could be her attempt to create "modern Madonna's." These then contemporary creations focus on the theme of new life and motherly love. She used gesture and psychological subtlety to modernize the scenes. Cassatt created detailed plans for her composition despite there effortless impression. In fact the models were not always mother and child. Contemporaries of Cassatt's would have realized both the religious connections and her departure from their traditional representation. She was a keen observer and focused on intimacy rather than idealization. "Cassatt not only painted in a modern way; she reflected the most advanced 19th-century ideas about raising children".

(Mary Cassatt "Art Icons")



Influences: Cassatt saw Japanese woodcuts at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and afterwards she strove to create prints that had similar bold motifs and type of simple beauty. Sometimes the models are friends of the artist. Cassatt frequently used her friends' and relatives' children as models in her paintings, drawings, and prints. ("Maternal Caress")



Maternal Caress, 1890-1891 color drypoint and aquatint on cream laid paper plate: 36.8 x 26.8 cm (14 1/2 x 10 9/16 in.) sheet: Mathews and Shapiro 1989, no. 12, State vi/vi Chester Dale Collection

Images of Mother and Child in Art Throughout History A couple examples

I have seen the New Kingdom, Amarna, Duccio, Bouts, Sherman, Raphael and da Vinci's work in person

Leonardo da Vinci

Virgin and Saint Anne Cartoon
(The Burlington House Cartoon)
1499-1500 charcoal on tinted paper.
National Gallery, London



Well established male artist living in Italy during the Renaissance.
Subject Matter/Comparison: The virgin and Child with St. Anne which was a common theme of the time. Complex composition. Knees and feet establish strong vertical rhythm. This is similar to the legs in Saville's painting. The lines of the bodies lose clarity as they approach the head's and cause a bit of confusion about whose head belongs to what body.



New Kingdom, Amarna
Period
ca. 1353-1336
B.C. Limestone, paint
Metropolitan Museum



Duccio di Buoninsegna
Tempera on Gold Wood
1290-1300 Overall, with
engaged frame, (27.9 x 21
cm)



Dieric Bouts
Oil on wood 1455
21.6 x 16.5 cm)



Raphael, Madonna della
Sedia, Oil on Canvas, Tondo
(1513-14) Palazzo Pitti,
Florence



Dorothea Lange: American photographer
"A Destitute Mother: The Type Aided by the WPA" 1936,
Gelatin silver print
(25.5 x 19.6 cm)
The New York Times Collection
Destitute pea pickers in California.

Mother of seven children. The look of despair can be easily related to Saville's work however the connected but staring off past the children is apparent in Cassatt's work.

Jean Fouquet ca. 1420 - 1477/81
Virgin and Child (Melun diptych)
tempera on panel (93 x 85 cm) — c. 1450
Royal Museum Antwerp



Cindy Sherman, Untitled #216, 1989
color photograph
95 x 64 inches (241.3 x 162.6 cm)

Portraits of mother's throughout history are shown with suspicion and awe. They are depicted with superpowers, the power to give life. Alluding to father just out of frame. (Williams) The sentimental idealized portraits of motherhood attached to a child by men were later created by women mostly initiated by Cassatt.

Contemporary views of motherhood or maternal identity are mostly a reaction to its idealized depiction throughout history. (Williams).

"About 1,500 years ago, mothers held superpowers. Now we are merely ordinary women who ask impossible things. It's progress of sorts".

(Williams)

Comparison Function and Purpose



Mary Cassatt-The Caress
Oil on canvas 1902
83.4 cm x 69.4 cm



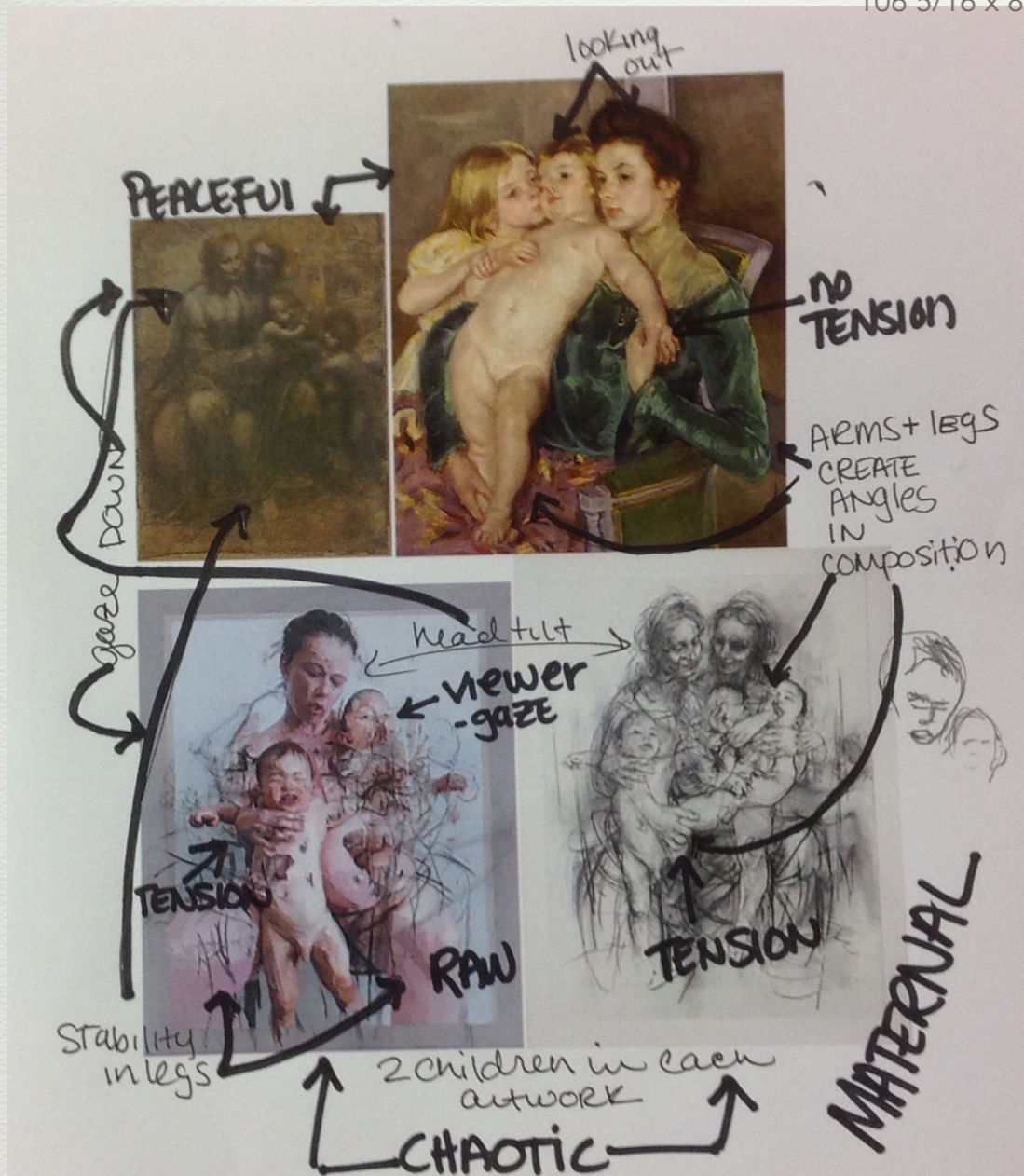
Jenny Saville-The Reproduction Drawing IV
(after Leonardo da Vinci Cartoon)
charcoal 2010



Jenny Saville-The Mothers
Oil on Canvas 2011
106 5/16 x 86 5/8



- Depict everyday life of women
- Roles of women
- Mother and child relationships
- Paints friends/people they know
- All contain peace and tension
- Non commissioned artwork
- Both artists describe motherhood and mother/child relationships within a certain context of class, race and both in western culture.
- The roles of the mother vary greatly between these time period between stay at home dad's/working mom's of contemporary life and the wet nurses and nanny's of France in the 1900's yet each work depicts the tenderness yet challenges of motherhood.
- All are modern interpretations (for their time period) of Madonna and Child depictions.



Compare and Contrast

Cassatt

Cultural Context

Family did not agree with Cassatt's being an artist. Friends with Degas and Impressionist. American living in Paris.

Function and Purpose:

Depict the everyday private lives of women during Cassatt's time period. MOOD: is calm, sweet and loving.

-sense of tenderness in the connection between the subjects by their hands. The children have a more intimate connection. Her dress is more formal considering the baby is nude. The location appears to be in her home.

Media: Generally resolved imagery through suggestive and visible brushstrokes

Formal Elements:

Complementary colors. Asymmetrical composition is barely discernible. The children's arms create a visual line that allows the viewer's eye move throughout the painting. Shapes are mostly fully realized and representational.

Cultural Context:

Female, Young, Mother
Tounge English, Established artists in a competitive male dominated art culture, in Europe.

Function and Purpose:

Mother with 2 children sitting on a chair. Images of the lives of mothers as they relate to their children. Reminiscent of Italian Renaissance Madonna and Child paintings. Specific to the concept of motherhood at that point in history. The placement of the mother's right hand is key to the mood. The mothers' expression is slightly disconnected to the children. The mother doesn't look directly at the children. The youngest child is nude.

Media: Visible brush strokes/marks
Representational, Local color (mostly)

Formal Elements:

Attention to chairoscuro. Defined light source and rendering to appear 3D in most areas. A range of values depicted. Colors are not overly saturated. Brush strokes give real and simulated texture. Limited special depth in the environment.

Saville

Cultural Context:

She reference daVinic's work in the subject matter and composition as well as in the sketch quality. The role of care taker is still traditionally the mother however there is some more equality in parenting roles than there was during Cassatt's time. The mother's role is not limited to being a mother alone (career and other responsibilities).

Function and Purpose:

This is a self portrait. The scene is stressed and chaotic. The expressions are emotionally charged. The tension in the hands shows protection and a lack of control at the same time. The white non description space should feel serene but comes off as clinical. The mother is connected to the children in a raw and primal way. She is giving all she can to her children but it doesn't seem to be enough. She is covered by them and losing herself in her children. She is sitting in a way that conveys the preparedness to attend to the children. They are her and she is part of them.

Media:

Parts are fully resolved while other parts are sketched

Formal Elements: More symmetrical composition. More visible mark making. Line shows movement and rhythm. Limited palette, bordering on monochromatic. Emphasis on the face of the baby on left and expression of the mother.

Comparison

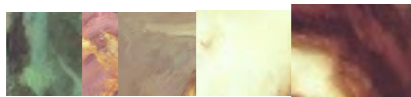
Cassatt's depictions of maternity and womanhood are gentle and less primal than Saville's.

Caregiving
Roles of women
Human Experience
Connectedness and disconnectedness



The Caress - Oil on canvas
83.4 cm x 69.4 cm
1902
Smithsonian American Art Museum

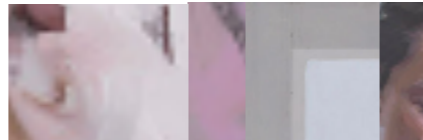
Smaller and more intimate



Yellow tones to skin. Green, burnt sienna, pink and oranges create a soft complementary color palette



Large scale. Artist used a ladder to paint it.



Monochromatic with some soft, light and sometimes synthetic pink tints



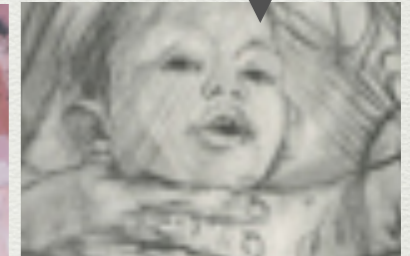
Monochromatic with no bright whites or deep blacks

Gaze and Expression of children
All are disconnected with no eye contact to the figures in the composition.

Interacting with other child

Frustration/Pain

Calm/Content



Touch
All show a mother touching a child but with different degrees of intimacy and force.

Caress

Grab

Support



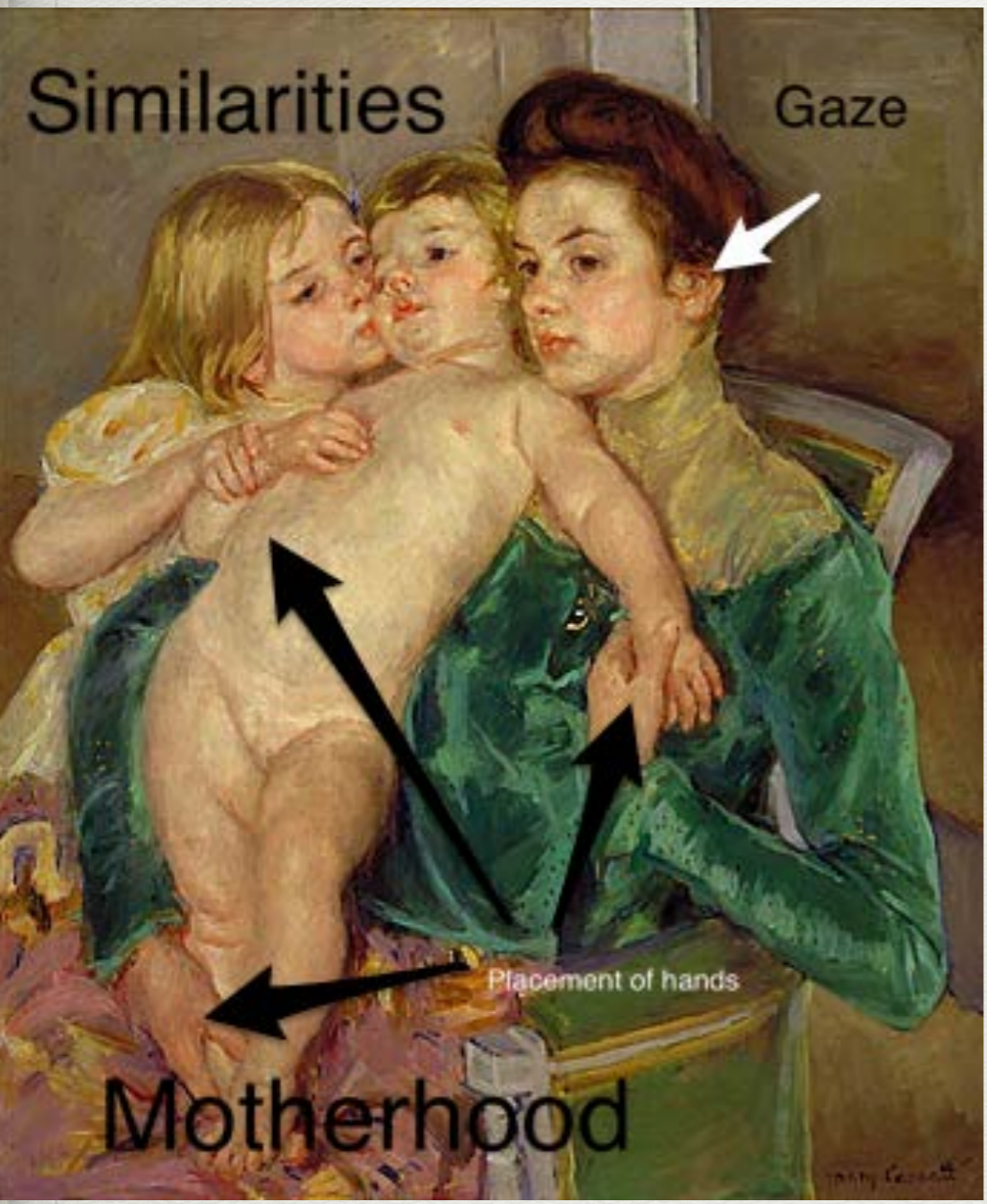
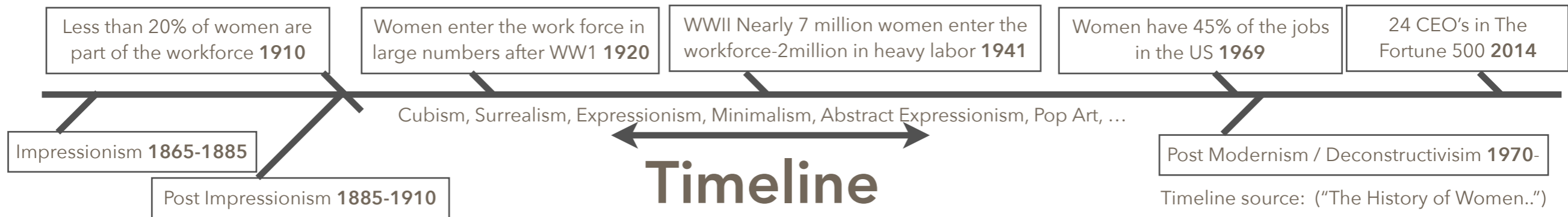
Gaze and Expression
All are disconnected with no eye contact to the figures in the composition.

Off into the distance

Content

Overwhelmed





The Caress - Oil on canvas
83.4 cm x 69.4 cm 1902
Smithsonian American Art
Museum

Similarities

Connectedness and disconnectedness. The children are somewhat isolated from the mother despite her seated position touching the children, Separated by Saville's pregnant belly or the unseen arm of the chair and mother's left arm in Cassatt's. Mother's have their hair up and are seated with at least one child central in the composition. Both artists don't idealize the children's poses. They both appear as awkward poses. The chubby bodies reflect the abilities of the artists to portray intimate moments. The depictions are serious and lack sentimentality.

Connections to da Vinci and Madonna and Child images throughout art history.
Contemporary view of maternity.



Jenny Saville, The Mothers, 2011, oil on canvas, 106 5/16 x 86 5/8 inches (270 x 220 cm)

Connection to my artwork

Recovery Series,

Oil on Masonite 20x30 cm

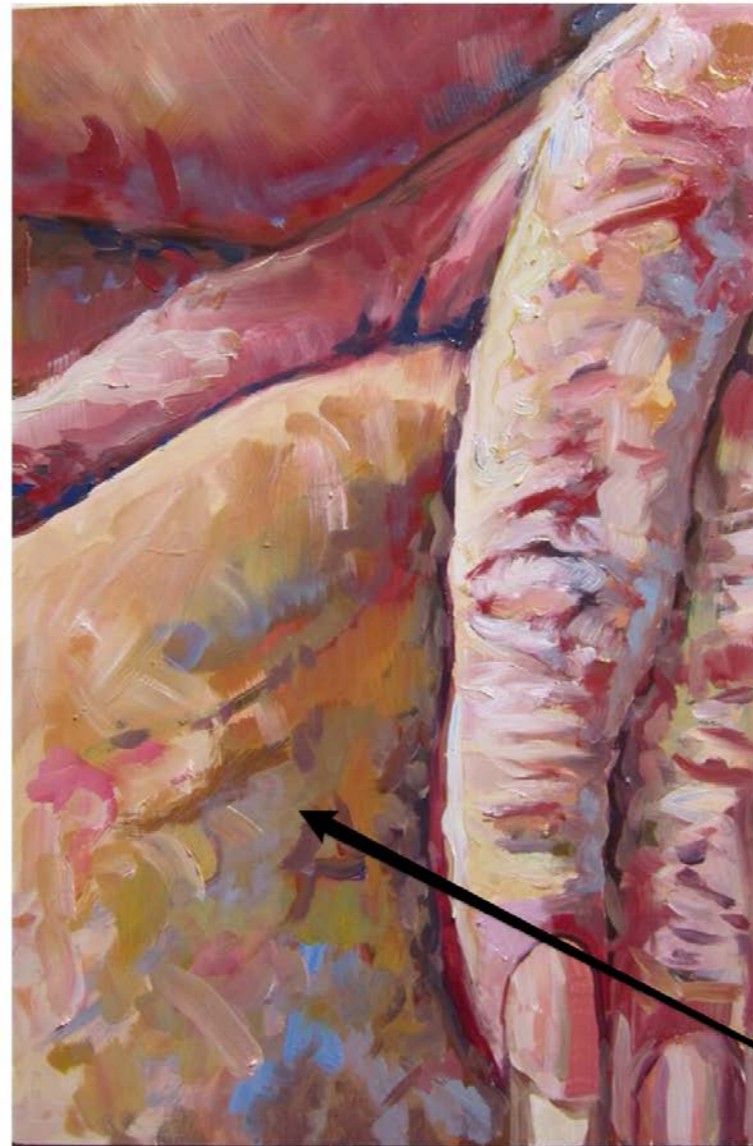
-series of works were created by the artist after becoming a mother. They investigate the physical and emotional relationship to a body when it endures physical transformation and the role of the body/ mother has changed to a more primal physical form focused on support of children.

Major connections between Cassatt, Saville & Recovery Series:

- Motherhood
- Placement of hands is crucial for subject matter
- Visible brushstrokes

Major differences between Cassatt, Saville & Recovery Series:

- Focusing mainly on the mother.
- Does not explore mother/daughter relationships
- Title and tension in hands hint at the struggle which can be seen in Saville's work but is not in Cassatt/



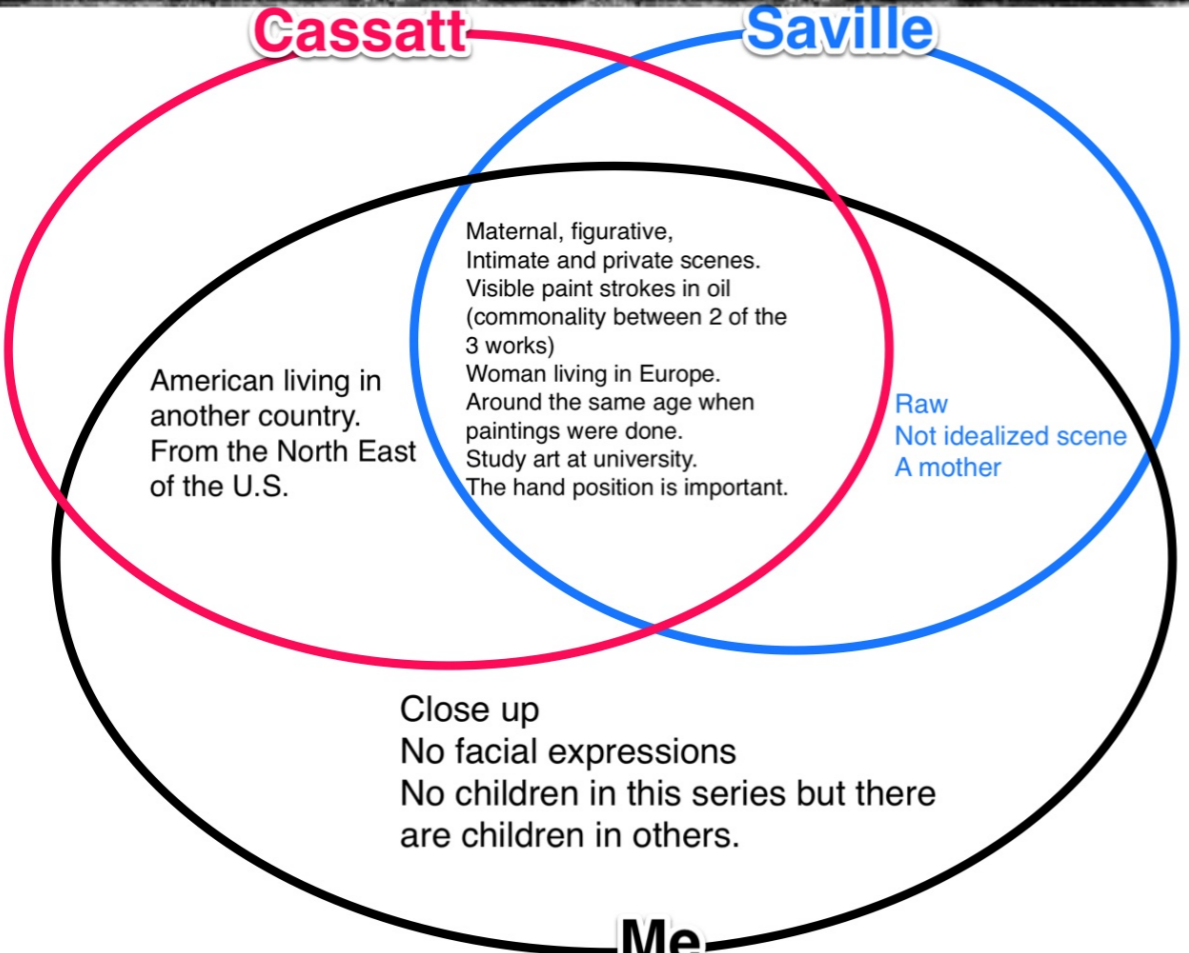
Intimate

Visible brush strokes

Subject hints at maternity/motherhood but it is not overtly identified

Cassatt

Saville



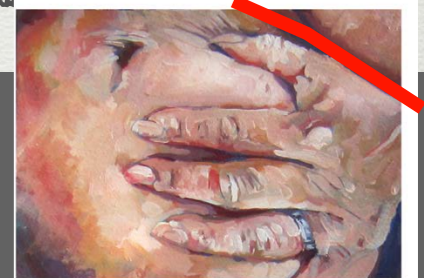
Close up
 No facial expressions
 No children in this series but there are children in others.

Me

Links to Jenny Saville

- Physicality of forms
- Active paint strokes create skin texture and movement
- Painterly with no setting
- Focus on intense grip of hands
- Non idealized view of female body
- Reaction to motherhood/maternity
- Active lines are key to the composition

Composition



Jenny Saville, The Mothers, 2011, oil on canvas, 106 5/16 x 86 5/8 inches (270 x 220 cm)



Recovery Series 1
 Oil on Masonite



The Caress - Oil on canvas
 83.4 cm x 69.4 cm 1902 Smithsonian American Art Museum

- **Green** Portrait orientation
- **Blue** - strong curve runs through each composition. It is slightly off center either side.
- **Red** - Leading diagonal lines

Conclusion

What I have learned

Saville:

Gestural brush strokes can add to the physicality of form.
Motherhood does not have to be glorified but should be real.
Flesh has unique properties that can be rendered with gestural mark making.
I would like to explore more about the roles of women/mothers and mother daughter relationships without sentimentality.

Cassatt:

The way a hand is held can portray meaning. Although gaze is not relevant for my Recovery Series, it is important in my body of work. Cassatt's use of gaze is sometimes disconnected, longing or deeply connected with seemingly little effort.

CONNECTIONS TO MY ART IN GENERAL

A lot of my art has maternity and motherhood as part of the subject matter. Common themes: my relationship to my mother, grandmother, or great grandmother or my transition into becoming a mother.



Images: various works b Jessica Russo Scherr. L to R : Mother (20x30 Oil), Siena (20x30Oil), Nan (50x70 collage), In response to Robyn's Test (30x40 Oil)

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