

# **A Talk on Edvard Munch**

## **'Edvard Munch & Shock'**

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In the below presentation, the talk itself is in the column in the middle ("Talk on Edvard Munch"). In the right column ("Slides") there is the title of those of Edvard Munch's paintings accompanying the presentation, and the left column ("Overview") give certain details connected to the presentation.

# Edvard Munch & Shock

Overview	Talk on Edvard Munch	Slides
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><b>Ed. Munch &amp; Shock</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New way of painting</li> <li>• His new vision</li> <li>• Lifestyle</li> </ul> <p><b>Biography: Edvard Munch</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born in 1863</li> <li>• Mother died 1868</li> <li>• Sister died 1877</li> <li>• Father died 1886</li> <li>• Brother died 1895</li> <li>• 1915 Gold medal USA</li> <li>• Sister died 1926</li> <li>• Aunt died 1931</li> <li>• He died 1944</li> </ul>	<p>The artist I chose to talk about today is <b>Edvard Munch</b>. We know him as an expressionist artist.</p> <p>Munch &amp; Shock – how is it related, and what’s so shocking about his work?</p> <p>There are three areas of his life and his work that in my opinion significantly was shocking:</p> <p><b>Firstly his new way of painting</b> which was basically about his <b>emotions</b>, with strong use of colour and unrestricted forms.</p> <p><b>Secondly his new vision</b> during 1907-08 created scandal and talk about immorality.</p> <p><b>And thirdly his life and his lifestyle</b> with family tragedies, health problems, habits and unhappy relation to others surrounding him</p> <p>Edvard Munch was born in Løten in Norway in 1863. His family moved to Christiania (now Oslo) soon after he was born. He was 2<sup>nd</sup> of five children. His mother died of tuberculosis when he was 5 years old. Then to his despair, his sister died of tuberculosis at a age of 15.</p> <p>He lost his father in 1886. And after 9 years later, his brother died too, followed by another tragedy when his sister Laura died in 1926. He had way too many deaths to deal with, for being just one man. In 1937 Munch was left to deal with yet another death. His aunt Karen died, who took care of his family after his mother died.</p> <p>He was severely wounded by these tragic incidents of his life, as expressed in most his work , and the sickness and death left a permanent mark in his life.</p> <p>In 1885 Munch went to Paris where he became influenced by the impressionist paintings.</p> <p>Impressionist were fascinated by light and colour, painting in pure pigment using free brush strokes, they were also <b>radical</b> in their choice of subject matter concentrating on landscape and scenes of every day life.</p> <p>In Paris, he explored new ways of painting, while his</p>	<p><i>Self Portrait with wine, 1906</i></p>



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<p>shock</p> <p>Der Fall Munch” –the munch affair</p> <p>...a poem of life, love and death</p>	<p>technical execution. A photograph shows that Munch exhibited his paintings in cheap frames, that the canvas was not properly stretched on the picture-frames, and that he fastened his drawings to wall with drawing-pins, without using passepartout or frames. Munch was seriously ill when he painted "<i>The Spring</i>".</p> <p>The painting was strongly autobiographical in flavour, combining memories of his sister’s illness with the recovery of his own strength. Munch had so much feelings, passions, anguish, stress, sorrow, and pain in his paintings people did not understand.</p> <p>This was an artistic attempt to clarify his own notion of life. Fear and illness played as a vital factor for his personal and artistic development.</p> <p>In "<i>Death and the Maiden</i>", 1893 its not skeletal image of death, which is aggressor, but the young woman who actively embraces the feeble bones of death. She is seeking the consummation of her desires, so that new life, symbolised by sperm and embryos, can take form.</p> <p>His most famous and crucial work is the "<i>The Scream</i>" from 1893, which contemporaries regarded as his socking and maddest painting. I think people were socked because they didn't understand the meaning of this painting and the way it was painted.</p> <p>Here, the foreground figures in almost abstract manner personifies and gives form to a universal feeling of anxiety. Where he depicts the very symbol of modern man, for whom God is dead and for whom materialism provides no comfort in distress.</p> <p>With this motif he <b>breaks away from the traditional composition</b> with its central perspective.</p> <p>And also the light and colour effects evokes a sense of sound and vice versa. Here he manages to make the creation of space into an expressive phenomenon in itself.</p> <p>Its tremendous power of expression has been achieved partly by intensive use of rhythmic, undulating contour &amp; contrast to straight lines with violent sense of perspective.</p> <p>Although there were other artist at that time who painted symbolic art, yet no one of them developed such peculiarly "private" symbolism, consciously based on his own traumatic experience.</p> <p>The motif is subordinate to the artist's experience of it: external as well as internal reality are reduced to the raw material for <b>conveying emotion</b>.</p>	<p><i>The Death and the Maiden, 1893</i></p> <p><i>The Scream, 1893</i></p>
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<p>Munchs relation to women</p>	<p>Munchs relation to women was neurotic and he cannot see them as social being. He saw them as elemental forces, either vampires or ur-mother, implacable fertility idols and bringer of anguish and emotional ruin. He expressed them with cathartic intensity.</p> <p>In "<i>Vampires</i>" the axial position of the group in the picture and the monumentality of their shapes gives eternal love and pain feeling.</p> <p>In "<i>The three stages of women</i>", 1893/94 he shows his concepts of different aspects of Women. It shows a modern Oedipus, in the depth of wood, musing on Women who at one and same time saint, whore and unhappy lover. He sees love as a losing struggle of the male against the female mantis.</p> <p>"<i>Madonna</i>", 1894/95 gives a mysterious sensuality depicts a pose a naked woman, uneasily provocative, she exudes a challenging sexuality, but there is also an underlying sense of tragedy in her deep black hair and dark eyes. The swirling, stormy background sees to evoke a troubled soul. He also made a colour lithography version: depicts a woman at the moment of orgasm, wearing as Munch describes a <i>corpse smile</i> , by which he meant that the moment of her fulfilment was also the moment of death. Having achieved her biological role of conception, the chain binding the thousands of dead generations to the thousand of generation to come is linked together. In lit. this chain is represented by the flow of spermatozoa in the border and the shrivelled embryo which seems poised between life and death in the lower left corner.</p> <p>In "<i>Death in the sickroom</i>", 1895 everyone is experiencing the silent presence of something not usually in their midst, something transforming life itself, a sense of terror forcing each consciousness to withdraw into itself for protection against intruder.</p> <p>Here Munch depicts death not as it takes possession of dying, but as the living take possession of death: death is not supernatural event, but something terrifyingly personal. He uses symbolic colours such as red-for an ardent women, green face-passive attitude contrast to red one, which reveals an active, choleric temperament.</p> <p>"<i>By the deathbed</i>", 1895 Munch daringly presented the scene as if from the point of view of the dying girl, so that</p>	<p><i>Vampires,</i> 1893/94</p> <p><i>The three stages of women,</i> 1893/94</p> <p><i>Madonna</i> 1894/95</p> <p><i>Death in the sickroom,</i> 1895</p> <p><i>By the deathbed,</i></p>
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<p><b>Edvard Munch &amp; HIS LIFESTYLE</b></p> <p>Life style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Code of life style</li> <li>* Family tragedy</li> <li>* Drinking habits</li> <li>* Relation to women</li> </ul>	<p>the wall, the shadow on it, and the frieze- like group of mourning relatives waver as through in delirium. <i>Illness is used as a metaphor of visionary insight.</i></p> <p><i>"Dance of life"</i> made in 1899/1900 where couple dance in a green field by the coast, while two women look on. The two figures in the background on the left seem to be dancing ecstatically, while the couple in the centre appear to have stopped and are looking at each other intently. Munch based this painting on midsummer celebrations at Aasgarstrand in his native Norway. The woman in white, his girl friend Tulla Larson, symbolizes virginity, the woman in red stands for carnal (not spiritual/of the body) knowledge and the figure in black, gazing, jealously at dancers, represents old age.</p> <p>These paintings the painter depicts his deepest emotions, his soul, his sorrow and joys. They display his hearts blood.</p> <p>Munch broke up with his girl friend Tulle Larsen, who insisted to marry Munch. It all ended up with a famous shooting incident at Asgardstrand, in his summer house in Norway. He shot off part of one finger, and injured his left hand. This was to prove a traumatic fixation for <b>Munch</b> himself, serving as an explanation of his many difficulties right up to the time of his break-down in 1908.</p> <p>After breaking up with her, a year after she got married to one of his friend, he created <i>"The Murderess"</i> and <i>"The death of Marat"</i>.</p> <p><i>"The Murderess"</i>, 1906 expresses both petrified hatred as well as a desire for contact that can never be fulfilled. Although he used a model, he has clearly given the women Tulla Larsen feature</p> <p>In all these paintings he depicts his loneliness, desperation and aggressiveness.</p> <p>Even at this stage his works were often been interpreted as a picture containing a redeeming feature in the relationship between man and woman.</p> <p>Thematically this series derives from his relationship with Tulla Larson, and in most of the motifs the women has in</p>	<p>1895</p> <p><i>Dance of life, 1899/00</i></p> <p><i>The death of Marat, 1907</i></p> <p><i>The Murderess, 1906</i></p>
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<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p><i>"Between the clock and the bed"</i>, from 1941 show him on the borderline of life and death.</p> <p>Edvard Munch died soon after his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1944 in Oslo.</p> <p>He bequeathed all of his work to city of Oslo. He was never married and didn't leave any children.</p> <p>Ed. Munch was a painter, print maker and excellent graphic maker.</p> <p><b>Finally I would like to conclude with why I chose to talk about him</b> in relation to shock today is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I think Munch's life is a great story, and his feelings and emotions in his paintings were very touching</li><li>• Secondly because he had courage openly and dispassionately to reveal the inmost secrets of his life although it socked the contemporaries. His paintings was an act of self-liberation, his treatment of fear, desperation and death still exert a powerful visual and psychological effect on modern viewers.</li><li>• Finally I think he was the first modern painter to make a continuous study of idea that personality is created by conflict.</li></ul> <p>And with that I thank you for listening.</p>	<p><i>Between the clock and the bed, 1940/41</i></p>
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