

Artist: Edvard Munch

Title: The Scream

Date: 1893

Location: Norway

Essentially this famous picture is autobiographical, an expressionistic construction based on Munch's actual experience of a scream piercing through nature while on a walk, after his two companions, seen in the background, had left him. Fitting the fact that the sound must have been heard at a time when his mind was in an abnormal state, Munch renders it in a style which if pushed to extremes can destroy human integrity. Depicting his own morbid experience, he has let go, and allowed the foreground figure to become distorted by the subjectivized flow of nature; the scream could be interpreted as expressing the agony of the obliteration of human personality by this unifying force. Significantly, although it was Munch himself who underwent the experience depicted, the protagonist bears no resemblance to him or anyone else. He soon abandoned the style and rarely if ever again subjected a foreground figure to this kind of radical and systematic distortion. The Scream has been the target of several high-profile art thefts. In 1994, the version in the National Gallery was stolen. It was recovered several months later.

<http://www.edvardmunch.org/biography.jsp>

