



# Analysis and Study of the Expression of Loneliness in the Works of Modern and Contemporary Artists

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This thesis falls within the scope of fine art studies, a comprehensive cross-sectional study combining fine art with social psychology, aesthetics and art studies. Emotional expression is the most common way of interpreting emotions and the abstract medium of artistic language expression in artistic expression forms, especially after art history entered the period of Impressionism, Modernism to Contemporaryism, artists put more emphasis on self-expression, and solitude is an essential emotional embodiment in self-awareness, which is favoured by artists, who invariably inject solitude into their artworks, in order to face it directly and deal with it. This essay explores the emotion of loneliness in contemporary art based on the embodiment of the emotion of loneliness in modern and contemporary paintings as the main line of research, taking the source of the emotion of loneliness and the expression of the artist's emotion as the subject of research and discussion. By discussing different art genres such as easel painting, abstract painting and large-scale installation art, and by combining the author's dynamic analysis and interpretation of his works, the article further discusses the expression of loneliness in his works in an attempt to present a more comprehensive picture of the way loneliness is expressed in artistic creation.

**Keywords:** *Solitude; Emotion; Self-consciousness; Contemporary Art*



## **OBJECTIVE**

- 1 To discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the article
2. To examine the sources of the emotion of loneliness
3. To analyse the ways and means of expressing the emotion of loneliness in modern and contemporary artworks
4. To analyse how the emotion of loneliness is sublimated into artworks from the perspective of the artist

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Relevant literature was searched to determine the study's topic and identify the main arguments and issues to be addressed in the article. The following methods were used to obtain references and theoretical support: 1. The study used a purposeful sampling method to screen out cases of contemporary artists' works that best embodied the emotion of loneliness for research and analysis and brought artists from the same or different periods for comparison, which also cross-referenced the emotions in the authors' creations to further investigate the association between contemporary art and the emotion of loneliness and emotional 2. consult relevant theoretical books, from which we can filter the references and theories that can be used as a basis for the emotion of loneliness in art. 3. combine literature reading with problematic thinking, constantly refining the essay's arguments and combining them with real-life cases to achieve justification. This research will examine the emotion of loneliness in the work of the following artists.

1. Vincent van Gogh
2. Edward Hopper
3. Mark Rothko,
4. Pablo Picasso,
5. Francis Bacon
6. Yayoi Kusama



## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1 Introduction

Cézanne pioneered Modernism in 1874, the year of the birth of Impressionism, a period of artistic styles and schools that included Impressionism, Cubism, Expressionism, and Abstract Expressionism. The end of Western Modernism, and the beginning of postmodernism, came in 1979, when the Italian art critic Achille Bonito Oliva published his article "The Italian Avant-Garde" in *Flash Art* (Milan), No. 92-93, announcing the creation of the "neo-expressionist" wave that would later sweep Europe and America. The "neo-expressionist" wave of art that would later sweep Europe and the United States was born. The fall of Western postmodernism and the beginning of contemporary art was 1989, a year considered epochal because of the year 1989 and the series of primary world historical events that followed - the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War and the signing of global trade agreements. Art from 1989 to the present is known as contemporary art, a period in which the main artistic genres include conceptual art, postmodernism, neo-expressionism and digital art. During the modernist period, artists focused on the expression of self-consciousness. They attempted to challenge traditional art forms and styles, creating more abstract works that reflected the painter's emotions. Solitary emotional expression has an irreplaceable role in modern and contemporary art, with artworks permeated with the artist's aesthetic emotions, carrying a solid emotional character and reflecting the artist's emotional inclinations. Emotions are different, so artists present different ways of expression and artistic language. Therefore emotions are crucial in artistic creation, but solitary emotions are abstract and intangible. They need to be presented with the help of tangible objects that can be felt, but of course, this art form is not a dull, static symbol but closely combined with emotions, presenting the appearance of life.

### 1.2 Theoretical support

The theoretical basis of the article is mainly derived from Gestalt psychology and Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Gestalt psychology was born in 1912. It emphasises the holistic nature of experience and behaviour, believing that the whole is not the sum of its parts, that consciousness is not a collection of sensory elements, and that behaviour is not a cycle of reflex arcs (Koffka, 2013). Its object of study is, firstly, direct experience and, secondly, behaviour. Direct experience is everything that the subject feels or experiences at the time, i.e. the experience that the subject grasps in perceiving the phenomenon. This experience is a



meaningful whole that does not correspond precisely to the direct objective stimuli of the outside world. Gestalt psychology divides behaviour into subtle behaviour, which refers to the activities of individuals in their behavioural environment, and manifest behaviour, which refers to the psychological mechanisms behind human behaviour. Gestalt psychology is the study of manifest behaviour.

Freud's psychoanalytic theory, psychoanalytic theory, was founded by the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Psychoanalytic theory is the cornerstone of modern psychology, and its influence is far from being confined to the field of clinical psychology; it has had a profound impact on the whole of psychological science and, indeed, on all areas of the Western humanities and its influence can be compared to that of Darwin's theory of evolution. He proposed that behaviour is motivated by powerful internal drives and impulses, such as sexual and aggressive instincts. He also believes that the root cause of adult behaviour is an unresolved psychological conflict left over from childhood experiences. What psychologists need to do is to understand this internal drive, whether it is conscious or unconscious, to give energy to and guide behaviour (Taylor et al., 2003).

Freud believed that the preconscious was between the conscious and the subconscious, which was the quest for a more authentic self and the expression of people's innermost solitude. The first is the 'ego', the primitive self, which contains the basic desires and principles necessary for survival and is governed by the principle of pleasure-seeking, which is unconscious and unobserved by the individual. The second is the 'ego', the preconscious, which is closer to consciousness than the subconscious, and since the subconscious has been described as psychological, the latent subconscious is also psychological. The third is the 'superego', consciousness, and moralised ego. Its function is to limit psychic impulses and is guided by "moral principles". The "superego" is the true solitude, and the core of the subconscious is the quest for the true self, the understanding of the solitude of the self.

### **1.3 Emotions of loneliness and their sources**

Loneliness is an emotional state in which a person feels lonely and isolated, arising from social connections, close relationships, life changes or self-perceptions. Loneliness is not a negative emotion, as some people understand it, or a negative effect on a person. However, instead, it is the essence of existence. It is one of the leading representatives of atheistic existentialism. In *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 2019), he introduced existentialism and



contributed to the systematisation and clarification of existentialist theory. On the question of "how does man exist", he pointed out that man, as a "being", is confronted with "nothingness", alone and in perpetual distress and suffering. Man suffers because he is disconnected from his bottom-up condition and is confronted with an incomprehensible world of absurdity in which he can only ever worry and fear. It is apprehension and fear that reveals man's actual existence. Man has the freedom of self-choice and self-control; worry and fear lead him to the existence, and only existence can speak of the freedom of self-choice, which is linked to light and joy. This view suggests that the emotion of loneliness is universal and exists alongside human existence and that loneliness is also an awareness and experience of self-existence as part of human existence. There are several broad sources of the emotion of loneliness:

(1) The loneliness that comes with the loss of personal idealisation

This is the loneliness that comes with the process of integration. People long for the idealised object, a compelling one through which they become good. However, as integration continues, they gradually realise that this is an artificial fantasy and an expectation of goodness. At this point, the subject begins to compromise, so the idealisation is lost. Beneath the perfect object are many flaws and shortcomings, and what comes from this discovery is a sense of loneliness. Another loss of idealisation comes from a bias in the perception of the self. People aspire to be great and great in the future but then constantly recognise their shortcomings: intellectual, character and persona building. As Freud said: the ego is formed mainly from the role of identification, which replaces the abandoned penetration of the ego. (Freud, 2001). This cognitive bias is also a source of loneliness. The third type of loneliness is that brought about by intimate relationships. Love is the most representative of intimate relationships. Love is beautiful, and we all want to be loved and cared for at every moment of this relationship and expect to be understood and tolerated. However, even though love is beautiful, it is accompanied by suspicion, misunderstanding and coldness. This feeling makes one realise that in an intimate relationship, one is still alone in life and the world.

(2) The loneliness that comes with the desire for a symbiotic relationship

People usually expect to have a symbiotic and integrated relationship with people, like close friends, lovers, and family members who love each other. This warm relationship can be perceived without words. However, as people become more aware, it becomes clear that human beings are inherently separate individuals and that being an individual entails separation and the formation of a separate self. The desire to return to a symbiotic



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relationship arises, and this desire is also the source of loneliness.

People are in a complex network of social relationships, and these relationships strongly influence their emotions. The first kind of loneliness comes from work, where the pressure and busyness of work often make people feel alienated from the people around them. Behind the seeming harmony is a sense of detachment that does not lead to empathy and a lack of genuine understanding and communication.

The second type is the one that comes from the circle of life, where warm conversations and intimate conversations are superficially about conformity, but behind the conformity is an artificial sense of alienation. People whom a group surrounds feel increasingly alone, deeply aware of the social form of people who prioritise profit, self-priority and exchange of interests. Maturity is nothing more than being worn down by custom, becoming worldly and practical, not maturity but premature spiritual decline and the premature death of individuality.

The third means of communication has changed. When communication was not developed, people relied on letters to send their love over thousands of miles. Even though it took a long time to reply, they looked forward to it, so face-to-face communication was the primary way of communication then. Unlike today, technology has made it possible for people to receive messages and make video calls at any time. However, even though communication is convenient and easy, people are more lonely. Such communication was fragmented and relied heavily on traffic to maintain contact. People are reluctant to show their inner truth, and the only thing they can show is the falsity of traffic.

## **2. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

Contemporary art reinforces the existence of self-consciousness and focuses on the expression of self-consciousness; therefore, the emotion of solitude occupies an important place in the artistic expression of this period. The work of artists such as Vincent van Gogh, Edward Hopper, Mark Rothko, Pablo Picasso, Francis Bacon, Yayoi Kusama and many others reflects the emotion of solitude. The following essay discusses the emotions expressed in each artist's classic work.

Artist 1: Vincent van Gogh



***Figure1 Van Gogh's Bedroom(Van Gogh ,1888)***

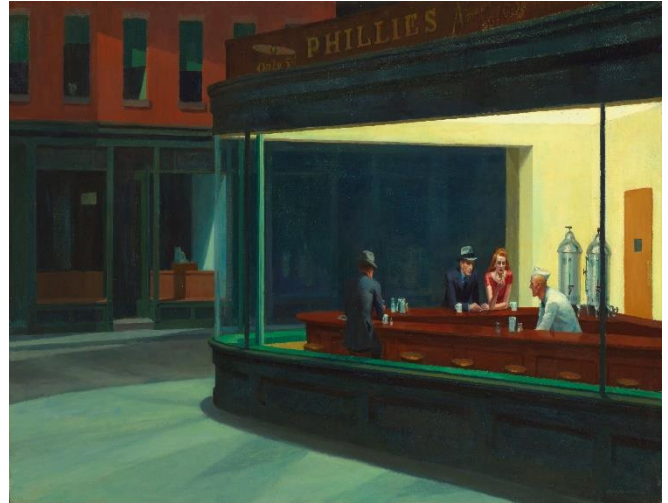
Vincent van Gogh's style and emotion of loneliness are the most distinctive features of his work. They are known for their solid colours and direct emotional expression, interpreting his tragic life experiences through thick brushstrokes that map the suffering and loneliness of his life. His work Van Gogh's Bedroom in Arles(See *Figure1* ), with its seemingly bright and vibrant colours, conveys to the viewer a sense of closure and solitude; the room has a door and window, and two portraits of friends hang on the wall, but it feels more like a small, wholly enclosed world. The painter is in this room, unconcerned with the world, and in the same way, the world has no time for his bitterness, happiness or sorrow. Van Gogh treats this room as a haven in the world, what Foucault called a 'heterotopia', a heterogeneous, quiet space that embodies everyday life, a small space that profoundly expresses the painter's love of life and his desire for family. Confronted with the image, the viewer connects the warmth of the bright colours in the picture with Van Gogh's unstable and exhausted mental state, sensing the painter's loneliness and desire for companionship. His loneliness is obvious and subtle, which informs the author's expression of the painting's emotions.



Artist 2: Edward Hopper



*Figure 2 Chair Car (1965)*



*Figure 3 Nighthawks (1942)*

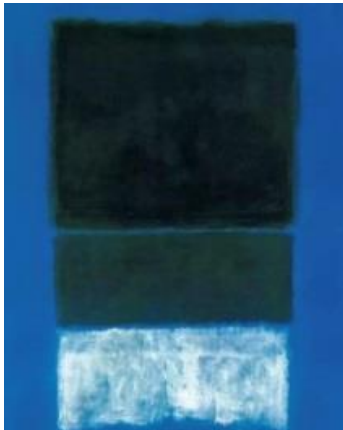
Unlike Van Gogh, Edward Hopper's use of relatively tranquil scenes and strong contrasts in light are crucial to his creation of a solitary atmosphere, showing the alienation and loneliness of people in a bustling urban scene. Throughout art history, no one has painted a more spiritual portrait of Americans in the 20th world than the artist Edward Hopper. He knows that his paintings continue to be widely known and recognised today. In his wake, Alfred Hitchcock, David Lynch and many other directors have paid tribute to him in the language of film. With a single canvas, he spoke of the most resonant stories of loneliness in the quiet corners of the city. Some have categorised 20th-century American culture as 'loneliness', a common sorrow of today's middle class. His work still resonates today, and it is in his work that people can find their own emotions, as he is an 'anti-utopian' painter who brings out the collective loneliness of the times with his brush. Hopper's cities appear to be bustling but full of loneliness and indifference. His emotions are mainly due to the loneliness brought about by his circle of life. He is naturally introverted and was often isolated by his classmates at school due to his silence. Hence, he transfers his inner loneliness to his paintings, where Hopper uses a voyeuristic perspective to present his thoughts on reality by using large areas of contrasting light and dark. Roadside restaurants, convenience stores, petrol stations, hotels, cafes and subways are all scenes of loneliness that he captures from a unique perspective. As the writer, Alain de Botton once remarked: "He has created a new genre of art that places figures and subjects in a kind of liminal space: these buildings



outside the home and office, these "transitional" locations that allow for a sense of isolation. These "transitional" locations give us a unique and detached poetic feeling".

In Hopper's painting, the brighter the colour, the more it inspires a sense of inner loneliness, using light to create contradictions and enhance the acute loneliness of the figures in the painting. The restaurant is bright and harshly lit at midnight, casting light through the window glass onto the street outside. There are four people scattered around the restaurant. However, there is no communication between them, they are as far away from each other as strangers, each going about their business, and one can feel the alienation of being in a social relationship throughout the painting. In Hopper's art world, the inner city fever becomes hollow in its self-seeking, and if his work can still resonate more, then the communal isolation of the times continues.

Artist 3: Mark Rothko



***Figure4 White and green in blue  
(Rothko, 1957)***



***Figure5 Houston Rothko Chapel Fresco  
(Rothko,1964-1970)***

Few artists have focused on one philosophical proposition all their lives and delved into the essence of life like Mark Rothko, whose paintings feel cosmic and religious and whose tragic ideas have a lineage from ancient Greek tragedy to Nietzsche's spirit of the god of wine. His work is full of tragic atmospheres and emotions, perhaps because of the inherent detachment of abstract work, which makes it impossible to approach. He was a very insistent painter, obsessed with abstracting large blocks of colour. He considered it a sacrilege for a group of



people to look at his paintings. A painting could only communicate directly with one unusual person alone, who happened to be on the same channel as that painting, that painter. Rothko denies that he is a painter of colour and strives to make the viewer see the tragedy that lurks beneath the canvas. He was obsessed with the spiritual expression of painting, using it as a medium to communicate with the world, until 1970, when his friends died one by one, and he committed suicide. Rothko once said, "When I was very young, art was solitary for me. There was no such thing as a gallery, no such thing as a collector, no such as art criticism, and certainly no money involved. However, that was my golden age because we had nothing to lose and nothing to expect to gain." (Breslin, 2012) Rothko was ahead of his time, so his artistic path was bumpy and lonely, which is why his images are full of tragic overtones. *White and Green in Blue* is Rothko's masterpiece (See *Figure 4*). The picture shows rectangles of green and white arranged on a blue background. The colours are pure, overlapping in layers with blurred edges and no clear boundaries; the colours permeate and blend into each other, which makes the blocks seem to emerge vaguely from the background and hover and float constantly. They create a certain rhythm in the picture, warm, soothing and deep. The dark colours lend a mysterious, tragic feel to the picture. In Rothko's later works, the tones are black and grey, as if drowning in a deepening pain. He even goes so far as to turn the picture all black to express his sense of tragedy. Rothko created three triptychs and five monoprints for the Houston Chapel (See *Figure 5*), which hang in the octagonal church, one of the triptychs and four of the monoprints being black. In the darkness of the Rothko Chapel, we see his work and his lonely, tragic and painful emotions, and some of the viewers who immerse themselves in the chapel even cry. Through these works, we not only read about Rothko's emotional world, but we are constantly looking at ourselves through them.

Artist 4: Pablo Picasso



***Figure6 Blind man's breakfast(Pablo Picasso,1902 )***



***Figure7 The Soup(Pablo Picasso,1903 )***

Between 1900 and 1904, Picasso's style was not accepted by the Parisian painting scene of the time, and with the pressures of poverty and language barriers, he felt more than a little lonely as an outsider. I started painting in blue when I thought of Casagemas", he said, and blue tones, melancholy blues, dark greys and morbid greens characterise each painting. The faded figures of beggars, drunkards, blind men and older men, combined with the cold grey tones of blue, give his paintings a sense of loneliness and melancholy. The blind man's Breakfast depicts a blind man eating his Breakfast(See *Figure6* ). The figure in this painting is skinny, with a face devoid of vitality and energy, but with the unbearable and painful feeling of being repeatedly beaten by society, with a slim figure and a dull expression, looking even more negligible in front of the big world. This work, The Soup(See *Figure7* ), depicts a hunched woman handing a bowl of hot Soup to a young girl, who reaches out her hands to receive it, a warm moment conveying the deep love between mother and daughter. The painter's actual state of mind at the time is highlighted through the contrast between the ideal warmth and the reality of cruelty.

Artist 5 : Francis Bacon



***Figure8 George Dyer's Exercises(Francis Bacon,1971)***

Francis Bacon was at his best when he used brutal, powerful brushstrokes to express the terror, barbarism, isolation, excitement and anger of the figures in his images. Bacon's brushstrokes imply inner thoughts and emotions; although the figures are mutilated or distorted, they remain recognisable. In Bacon's writing, the image is no longer a repetition of reproduction but rather shows the true face of fate. Bacon describes his work as "an attempt to visualise certain emotions", and he likes to show loneliness and anguish. Gilles Louis Rene Deleuze refers to Bacon's isolation of the image into a circular field of movement or a quadrilateral enclosed space to avoid figuration and achieve a sense of the real. To avoid figuratively and to achieve pure figuratively. (Deleuze, 2005)

Always painting with the human being as his subject(See *Figure8* ), he elevated the feelings of tension, pain and horror conveyed by the depiction of the figure to a sublime level. He once said that he wanted his paintings to look as if they were traces left behind by the passage of human beings, memories that were already disappearing. His paintings reveal to people the pain of existence and the pitiful and horrific aspects of human nature, provoking thoughts about life.

Artist6: : Yayoi Kusama



***Figure9 Infinite mirror house-my eternal soul burns brightly (Yayoi Kusama , 2019)***

Born in Japan in 1929, the painter Yayoi Kusama was a lonely child, left to experience the joys of life in her young world when her father cheated on her, and her mother was cranky. At an early age, she was fascinated by the dots in her real-life vision; mirrors, polka dot patterns, and creature tentacles were all recurring themes in Yayoi Kusama's later work. Her fascination with dots stemmed from her early childhood neurological deafness. This illness made her see the world as if it were separated by a web of dots, allowing her to hide in her little world, so she began to paint these dots as cells, races, molecules, the essential elements of life, which Yayoi Kusama saw as signals from the universe and nature, believing that the earth was just one of a million. She sees the earth as just one of a million dots. She uses countless dots to alter the inherent sense of form, create a deliberate continuity between things, and create an infinite space in which the viewer cannot determine the boundary between the natural world and the illusion. She uses art as a means of emotional catharsis and healing, using visual art to recreate a world covered by a mesh of polka dot patterns. Her polka dots have influenced contemporary art, ranging from easel paintings, large-scale installations, prints, sculptures and luxury co-branded products.

In March 2019, Yayoi Kusama's "All That Love Will Last" exhibition was presented at Fosun Art Centre in Shanghai, China, featuring over 40 works, including pumpkins, polka dots, infinite realm houses, and several large-scale sunken, multi-reflective field installations. "Infinite Mirror House (2019)"(See *Figure9* ) is one of Yayoi Kusama's iconic installations. The exterior of the freestanding mirror house, with all walls similarly covered in mirrors and affixed with her signature polka dots, the work uses mirrors to create an infinite space,



blurring the boundaries between reality and mirror image. This newly created infinite mirror house constantly displays repetitive polka dots and colours, giving the viewer an 'infinite' viewing experience, as if wandering through Yayoi Kusama's personal artistic universe. The mirrors gradually dissolve the sense of time and space. The viewer's 'self' is lost in the house of mirrors, where one feels alone and surrounded by infinite reflections, keeping with Yayoi Kusama's artistic philosophy of 'dissolving the self'.

In her autobiography, Yayoi Kusama writes (Kusama, 2013): "I feel lonely, but it is not a painful loneliness. It is a creative loneliness". She once said that she would not be able to live without art. The emotions in her work are so real that each of the seemingly repetitive polka dots is an individual, and the polka dots in her work are like the trees I paint, which appear to be a forest of trees but exist in the form of a loner.

The emotion of loneliness in personal work

About the creation of trees



**Figure 10** *The Quiet Forest Series Group Painting Mixed media 120\*160cm \*3 Hou Wenfang 2020*

This group of works is the writer's most iconic mixed media work (See Figure 10), depicting sprawling trees that set the mood of silence and mysterious depths. The palette is dark, mostly in calm tones, and the contrast between lightness and lightness is weak. The group presents trees growing upwards, making the viewer look out of sight and unconsciously reverie for the negative space of the picture as if lost in a jungle of trees. There is a strong sense of immersion in this group of triptychs, perhaps because of the illusion of infinite space created by the rows of trees, which makes people unconsciously enter the virtual space created by the painter to embody the moment of dissolution, or perhaps they empathize with the painter and keep searching for their footprints in the painting, or perhaps also because this formal relationship with a strong sense of form leaves people simply defenceless. However, whatever the reason, the viewer seems to find a reason to stop the painting. The viewer's reaction to the work is genuine, with some falling into contemplation in front of the work and others looking pained, perhaps because the work itself is not pleasing to their eyes. Others react as if they have gained a clearer understanding of their emotions through the work and are looking at their hearts.



The work on the left is made using a combination of plastic paste, spray paint, gold powder and charcoal, and acrylic. Earthy yellows and ultramarines dominate the whole palette, the strong contrast between warm and cold does not make the image appear visually conflicting, and the downgrading of saturation weakens the colour relationships and reflects the richness of the warm and cold relationships. The middle painting is a single shade of blue, and the trees are varied in form and size, looking slightly mottled and with a relatively clear sense of boundary. The individual trees are pieced together in a single image, seemingly in a unified tone and setting, but each tree appears more isolated and helpless. The mood is similar to the ineffective socialization of contemporary society, in which no practical value is gained, but the individual world is made more lonely and indifferent. The painting on the right is darker in tone, with a clear relationship between warmth and coldness, and the trees are in a more opposing state, some aged and some vibrant, a contradictory relationship that also serves as a means of expressing the author's mood.

The emotional expression of the work's early summer



**Figure11** *Early Summer Oil on canvas 150\*150cm Hou Wenfang, 2022*

This work is a painting of a scene in early summer(See *Figure11* ), showing water flowing. According to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's interpretation, no one can stand outside of time and watch the passage of time as one watches the flow of a river. Feel the emotions in the passing of time. Under the combined effect of light and water, the images are richer in colour and change in form, tending towards abstracted forms. The trees, aided by the waves of water, display soft forms that are constantly changing with the tendency of the waves, just as people in a large world are changed by society as a large group. In his novel, Lu Xun says(Xun, 1990), "Society is originally a big dye pot, and what goes in must always be tainted with some colour".

It reflects the role of the social environment in influencing and shaping individuals, and this influence may change people's behaviour and attitudes and imbue them with social colouring.

In terms of colour structure, the use of cool tones to represent the work may be more direct in conveying the emotion of loneliness, with the light filtering through the water painted in orange and the prominent blue tones showing scattered warm blocks of colour, just as in Edward Hopper's work which shows lonely individuals in the same environment, using light to depict the lonely people of city life, using light to create contradictions and enhance the sense of loneliness in the picture. Such an impact of warm and cold colours may seem unbalanced and mutually impacting, but such an impact brings a considerable visual effect to the picture. The presence of several warm blocks of light in the upper right of the work animates the whole atmosphere as if trying to escape from being defined by loneliness but allowing the emotion of loneliness to be infinitely magnified, so large that it takes over the whole of one's heart.

Lonely emotions in the warm moonlight



**Figure12** *Warm Moonlight Mixed media 100\*180cm Hou Wenfang , 2022*

As Picasso's blue-period works, Warm Moonlight(See *Figure12* ) is in a blue tone, showing the night in late autumn; when the moon is complete, the Moonlight is bright, and the shade is dark, giving the scene a relatively large contrast between light and dark. The night is bleak and cold; with it, the Moonlight is also cold. In China, the full moon means reunion, symbolising the reunion of families and the success of things. In the middle of each month, people look up at the moon to remember and commemorate something beautiful. Hence the old Chinese saying that the moon is the brightness of the homeland. However, this is undoubtedly painful for wanderers because they cannot see the moon in their hometown or experience the joy of reunion in person. All they can experience is the self and intense loneliness, and this intense homesickness is also the primary source of loneliness. The whole



work presents a cool palette consisting mainly of blues and greens of different brightnesses and colour tendencies, interspersed with shimmering yellow light, giving the whole picture a mysterious and bleak feeling. The overall tone of this work is dark, as is typical of Mark Rothko's later works, showing the loneliness and desolation of his later years.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Using Gestalt psychology and psychoanalysis as theoretical references for the study, this paper explores the concept of the emotion of loneliness and the sources of the emotion. Through the analysis of works by artists of different styles from this period, the means and methods of expressing the emotion of loneliness and how they express it are investigated and summarised, showing how the inscrutable emotion is expressed in visible and concrete images from the artist's perspective. The findings show that the emotion of loneliness exists in many genres and different types of artistic expression in modern contemporary art and that artists of this period have placed more emphasis on the self, breaking free from the traditional notion of painting and therefore focusing more on the concern for the self and the expression of emotions. Loneliness is no longer just an emotion that people try to hide from; it is more a reflection of the existence and proof of self-awareness. By facing loneliness, people can better understand their existence and meaning and thus better interact with the world.

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