# “Spider with Christ Child”

spiders

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| Positive? Negative? Neutral?This painting shows the spider as positive in terms of a replacement for the Virgin Mary or an angel. The spider is surrounded by a halo and has human hands. It also uses humour as it’s a parody of famous Christ child paintings. Some, who are particularly religious, may interpret it as negative as they may feel it mocks religious art.InfluencesThe painter, White, comments that in art there are 2 approaches which intrigue her: art as a religious message/medium and “art for art’s sake”. “My work is an attempt to wrestle with these two approaches, creating out of the struggle to join my personal faith in God into my mixture of influences; insecurities, doubts, vanities, and culture. The work is an exploration of theology and imagination, Christ working through chaos and diluted ethos to establish hope, a reconciler for the graceful and the grotesque.Using symbolism exploring Biblical text, diagrams from scientific hypothesis, and visual psychedelia produced by an influx of cultural influence seemingly aimed at searching for the “unknown” the work serves as a catalyst to further reflect upon topics of belief and wonder as intellectual and spiritual intersections between fact and faith” (Featured Artist). Poem #1A Noiseless Patient SpiderBY [WALT WHITMAN](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/walt-whitman)A noiseless patient spider, I mark’d where on a little promontory it stood isolated, Mark’d how to explore the vacant vast surrounding, It launch’d forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself, Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them. And you O my soul where you stand, Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space, Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them, Till the bridge you will need be form’d, till the ductile anchor hold, Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.POSITIVE? NEGATIVE ? NEUTRAL?The poet seems to show the spider as positive – comparing its attempt to weave a web “patiently” to the speaker’s attempts figure out the world and make connections:“seeking the spheres to connect them”The spider seems quiet and harmless and persistent “Launched forth filament, filament, filament… tirelessly speeding them.” |  |

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| Hilary WhiteIn short, she is influenced by her artistic background and training as well as her personal religious beliefs. She attempts to use both influences to be creative. |
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Influences:“A poet who ‘abandoned the regular meter and rhyme patterns’ of his contemporaries, Whitman was ‘influenced by the long cadences and rhetorical strategies of Biblical poetry.’”(Biography Walt Whitman) We can see this influence in the structure of the poem. Also America was growing and changing, developing its own cultural identity separate from Europe. As one of the first truly American poets, Whitman strayed from the conventional European poetic style. The subject matter of his poetry is extremely diverse and reflective of his rapidly evolving environment.” (About Walt Whitman). Whitman chose to write about nature and spiders and did not use the usual forms to be able to make a truly American style poem. Also, according to “About Walt Whitman” Whitman instead chose to write about the human experience and the natural world. In this case he compares his attempts to wonder about his soul with the work of a spider. |

Works Cited

"Walt Whitman." *Poetry Foundation*. Poetry Foundation, n.d. Web. 04 Jan. 2017.

Whitman, ByWalt, Asked ByJeet D #593839Answered ByAslanon 1/1/2017 7:05 PM, Jeet D. #593839, Asked ByBob M #588096Answered ByAslanon 12/10/2016 9:00 PM, Bob M. #588096, Asked Bybreanna E #585279Answered Byjill D #170087on 12/5/2016 5:00 PM, and Breanna E. #585279. "Walt Whitman: Poems Study Guide." *GradeSaver*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Jan. 2017.

Works Cited

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