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| Artist | Eugene Delacroix |
| Title | Liberty Leading The People |
| Date | 1830 |
| Medium | Oil on canvas |
| Scale | 260cm x 325cm |
| Scope | Revolution  |
| Patron | No patron |
| Location | Louvre, Paris  |
| Function | Commemorate the July Revolution which toppled Charles X. |

Image:



Historical context/subject of work:

* Charles X was king of France during this period, ruling for 6 years up until the July Revolution of 1830.
* Considered Conservative, he established an anti-sacrilege law as well as rules which saw support go to the aristocracy and nobility over the lower classes.
* By 1830 Charles introduced censorship laws to protect himself. In April he suspended the National Guard of Paris, and come July he passed laws which forbade the middle class from being elected to Parliament, which resulted in the July Revolution.
* Lasting between 27th-29th, the July Revolution (or the Three Glory Days) constituted of citizens of all social standing rising up against Charles in protest, forcing him to abdicate to Britain and was replaced by his cousin.

Critical text quote:

“A strong woman with powerful breasts.” – Auguste Le Barbier.

How does this example fit the scope of work:

Liberty is an allegorical, idolised figure created by Delecroix to symbolise what the French up risers were fighting for, therefore she adopts an attractive form to display Delecroix’s support for the Revolution.

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| **Formal features -**  |
| Composition | A pyramid composition used through the reoccurrence of red (at Liberty’s feet, the flag). Focal point is Liberty, emphasized by the colours around her (she holds the bold colours, with muted ones surrounding her).  |
| Colour or texture | Tricolor of blue, white and red used to symbolize liberty, eternity and equality. Muted colours in the background such as brown and greys to emphasise Liberty and the other up risers.  |
| Light & tone | Light is shown on Liberty, to emphasise her presence in the work, and the smoke is also highlighted, casting light on various members of the uprising. Darker tones are used to push back the crowd in the background, and keep the focus on Liberty and the up risers.  |
| Space & depth or relief | Liberty is in the foreground of the piece, made up of almost entirely curvilinear lines, and uses light tones and bright colours to push her into the foreground. The other up risers are also in the foreground utilizing the same technique, whereas the scale of the crowd is smaller, and the tone is darker displaying their distance from the front of the work.  |
| Line or brushwork | Use of oil gives a smooth and refined appearance, with also a sheen to some areas of the piece, giving the impression of light radiating off Liberty and the other figures.  |

Cultural/social factors:

* Delecroix painted this piece is bias, he supported the revolution – but did not fight.
* A variety of class members are shown in the work, a display of how many different people took part in the uprising.
* The French flag is included, not only to support their country but also as a symbol of equality, eternity and liberty.

Political factors:

* The uprising was caused by Charles X’s changes, putting the aristocracy and nobility above the rest of society.
* Adding censorship laws to ensure his own security, as well as making parliament more exclusive to remove power from the public’s hands.

Artist’s involvement:

* Delecroix was a bystander throughout the revolution as he relied on commissions from the Royal Family.
* He did however have personal involvement, being friends with the Adolphe Thiers, who were a part of the rebellion.
* He merely witnessed what happened. And painted what he saw – however, he did show his support through the use of Liberty and the painting shows his bias towards the up risers.