

Analysis of Louise Giovanelli's *Pool* and *Vanitas*

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Louise Giovanelli, *Pool*, 2020, Oil on canvas, 100 x 70 x 4 cm | 39 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 1 5/8 in

Louise Giovanelli's *Pool* was created using oil on canvas. This piece is one of the many examples of how Louise Giovanelli uses her artwork to represent her reimagination of traditional artistic techniques while blending historical aspects with contemporary ones. Giovanelli's art style has allowed her to create extremely detailed paintings that combine both the historical and the modern.

Pool, by Louise Giovanelli is currently on display at the Hill Art Foundation as part of the exhibition "*The Sea, the Sky, a Window*". Giovanelli's painting resembles a heavy curtain. The primary color used in this painting is a deep navy blue, almost ocean green. The curtain is divided into four clear segments, each with alternating ruffles. The ruffles and creases in the painting look very life-like, almost like the rippling curtains of a stage or waves in the ocean. Giovanelli makes use of shadows, lighting, and line placement to create a 3D effect. In an interview with Rory Mitchell, Giovanelli explains how she began developing an interest in this layering technique. Giovanelli shares "when I began my BA at Manchester, a tutor saw I was interested in oil paint," Giovanelli relied on historical as well as modern inspirations to develop this technique. "I instantly became very fascinated with it and wanted to learn more, so I just read lots of books and studied old paintings." Giovanelli credits some inspirations to reflections of artwork by other artists. "I went on lots of pilgrimages to see old master works at galleries and museums—to excavate with my eyes and see how artists managed to do certain things"¹

¹Art News , accessed 12/05/23
<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/neuendorf-residency-louise-giovanelli-2399048>



Louise Giovanelli, *Vanitas*, 2022, oil on linen, 2.4 × 3.4 m.

Vanitas, by Giovanelli is a 240x340 cm painting created with oil on linen. The painting looks as if it has a fibrous texture, akin to cheerleader pom poms. The painting is primarily made with a gold color palette. The color palette and the texture of the painting work in tandem to portray a shiny light that changes as the viewer looks from top to bottom. This is evident from the gradual darkening of the gold color and the increasing luster of the fibers. These aspects of this piece are a direct reference to Giovanelli's artistic interpretations, and how Giovanelli process, specifically by utilizing historical techniques in tandem with modern and contemporary influences. Susan May, global artistic director at White Cube, notes the artist's skill in "capturing the evanescence of light in the paintings, be it reflected or refracted..." as well as in referencing

“art historical tropes of Renaissance and 17th-century Dutch painting.”² In the 17th century, Dutch painters began to move away from religious paintings and move towards paintings that depicted landscape, still life, and genre. Artists like Judith Leyster, Rembrandt van Rijn and Adriaen Van Ostade are just a few examples.

Giovanelli’s unique interpretations are highly influenced by daily life. Louise Giovanelli is a thirty year old London born painter. Giovanelli was interested in painting and drawing from a young age and was drawn to specific moments in pop culture. By using zooming in on fragments, she creates a meticulous art style. Giovanelli’s goal in artmaking is to capture an exact moment, and closely examine every detail. In an interview with White Cube, Giovanelli provides some insight on her artistic process. Giovanelli says “ So I don’t think there’s been that transference from the idols, the icons, the stained glass windows, the designated sacred buildings, and we don't realize that we're participants in it, but we are if you think about it. As if, almost is the literal definition of the Latin word 'quasi'.”³ This excerpt provides an example of how Giovanelli incorporates historical concepts with modern context in art.

Pool and *Vanitas* are both pieces that are direct representations of Giovanelli’s unique art style. Both pieces place emphasis on materiality and light. Giovanelli utilizes both historical techniques used by the old masters and a reimagining of them. Giovanelli’s combination of the contemporary and historical is a great example of art changing to fit modern times. Giovanelli’s techniques are a testament to the adaptability and versatility of art. Giovanelli’s paintings incorporate historical techniques that are combined with inspirations from modern and contemporary sources.

² Louise Wise, “ Louise Giovanelli: the painter mixing the old masters with Mariah Carey” June 10 2022 <https://www.ft.com/content/a0bfd459-e1f3-4940-8ec6-93546ccb7047>

³ “ In the Gallery: Louise Giovanelli | White Cube” <https://youtu.be/dvi5eXRcqTk?si=yNjiiZmvmh9DUUp8>

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