

1. Who was David?

Jacques-Louis David was a French painter during the French Revolution. He was a supporter of the revolution one can find proof of that in his paintings. Themes in his art were personal sacrifice, republicanism and revolutionary ideas. One of his most impressive paintings was “The Death of Marat” in which he shows his support of the revolution by making Marat seem like a Saint instead of a murderer and monster that he was.

2. Who was Marat?

Marat was a journalist and politician during the French Revolution. He was a radical who wanted as much killing as possible in order to secure the goals of the Revolution. His radical ways got him killed by Charlotte Corday.

3. Why did Corday kill Marat?

Charlotte Corday supported the French Revolution but not the way Marat did, so she killed him to prevent the unnecessary murder of many people.

4. Why does Simon Schama call *The Death of Marat* a ‘beautiful lie’? How is it beautiful? How is it a lie?

The painting is a lie because supposedly polite note of Charlotte Corday to Marat was really a list of traitors that Marat was planning to kill. The polite note makes Charlotte look bad instead of showing Marat as the kind of monster he was. Also the letter of a widow and the donation Marat was planning to send her make him seem like a kind hearted person that the people of France could relate to. Another point that is left out in the painting is Marats skin condition as well as the fact that the knife should be in the wound, not on the floor. The whole painting is bias because of David support of the French Revolution, so he wanted Marat seen as a good and selfless person caring for humanity. The beauty in the painting is the delicacy with which David painted the dead body and especially the wound which is even compared with the incision of Christ as well as the white sheet which makes him seem softly wrapped. The whole focus in this painting is on Marat, the huge part of the wall behind him could have shown his personality or his convictions even clearer was left empty by David, the only other clue on his personality that David included is the box that seems so simple that it is easy for the people to identify themselves with Marat. All this makes one believe Marat was a great person which makes the biggest lie.

5. Describe your own aesthetic of Beauty.

Beauty can be found everywhere, in nature by seeing a colorful flower or a butterfly as well as in humans. Artists often try to capture beauty but it is always in the eye of the one who is looking at the art. For me beauty comes from balance and proportion, color can also make things beautiful on the other hand in photography black and white can make a photo very beautiful as long as the proportion and balance is given. The feeling that I get by looking at art is what makes it beautiful. The Death of Marat, while being a well made painting, does not seem beautiful to me because it

makes me feel uncomfortable looking at it. So in the end beauty lies in the moment for me, influenced by my emotions towards what I see.