

On Society and the Human Condition
By: Abbi Heumann - Art Critic

This classic yet daring piece brilliantly entitled “Chez Terroille” speaks to the very essence of what it means to be human. The quick, vivacious style gives light to the fragility and instability of family life that is all too often neglected in modern society. This piece depicts a tidy domestic scene, complete with flowers and smiling faces. On the surface, these simple yet compelling images reminisce about the simplicity of the past, but in reality, it is much more than that.



The artist's true intent is clear. The harsh strokes and deliberately rushed technique provides a dark commentary on our culture's asphyxiation of aesthetic sincerity in favor of oversimplified outward appearances. This theme is further illustrated by the viewer's limited perception of the house, we see only the facade of the building, without any depth or dimension. The figure's sparse and forced-looking smile, which truly resembles more of a grimace, combined with the amorphous appearance of the clouds speaks of the artist's view of the outside world as nebulous, changeable and ill formed.

The use of color, or rather lack thereof is also very indicative in this piece. The sole use of yellow and black adds sardonic undertones to the otherwise pleasing image. It shows a blatant yet understated irony. The stark black used to outline the quaint domicile symbolizes the death of beauty in a culture that rejects the beautiful simplicity of the past and glorifies instead a warped definition of success. Note, similarly, the ironic use of yellow for the background in this significant and audacious choice, the artist mocks his own nostalgia with cold bitterness.

This brilliant work, which appears simple on the surface, truly holds a wealth of depth and insight into human nature in relation to a changing world.

Chris' Critique of the Critic: The post-it note artwork is that of France-confined Kai, boyfriend of the author, Abbi. They send letters back and forth and include various objects, artwork, and challenges for the other. In this piece, Abbi displays her audacious yet effective vocabulary as well as her cutting wit and the just-below-the-surface irritation that she feels for the foreign exchange program as well as with the country that has abducted her friend.