

Case Study: Identity Persepolis



Marjane Satrapi, "Persepolis", (2007)

Self-expression through art and storytelling allows the author/artist to express their identity unfiltered through creation. Art is instinctual and personal, formed from what we see through our eyes as our individual identities. Sharing your identity through what you create allows others to relate and identify with your experiences and passions. Animation as a form of artistic expression through creating is an immersive and personal way to show your identity and how you see things in the world. Animation allows your story to have flexibility, symbolism, and metaphors, allowing your personal vision and individuality to exhibit a life and sentience of its own.

Marjane Satrapi's "Persepolis" (2007) is an animated film that lays out her childhood and life struggles as a young girl being witness to the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 and the war between Iran and Iraq. Marjane animates the struggles of her family, country, and herself through emotion, movement, and comedic candor. Her animation is about her own story through her eyes in an expressive artistic way to show the world her life using drawings to explore her memories, imagination, and experiences. The monochrome color scheme coincides with the memory, dreamlike storytelling, and gives a contrast between the dark and light. Marjane uses the dark as a symbolic way to provide emphasis on the darker emotions in the more traumatic hardships her family and herself have. Sorrowful silhouettes highlight specific events and experiences that were particularly dark and impactful to Marjane. The light is used as a symbol for hope and freedom. Though there are many political and religious themes in the film, as the two present to be very important pieces to Marjane's identity and life story, the film is heavily a representation of Marjane finding herself as a classic coming-of-age tale. Her journey to finding her identity is told through the artistic expression of Marjane's memory and the world only she sees.

References:

Marjane Satrapi, "Persepolis", film, (2007), Accessed 13 Feb. 2023

"The Texture of Retracing in Marjane Satrapi's 'Persepolis.'" Chute, Hillary. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 1/2, 2008, pp. 92–110. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27649737>. Accessed 13 Feb. 2023.

Nima Naghibi & Andrew O'Malley. "Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*", *Auto/Biography Studies*, 35:2, 305-309, DOI: (2020). Accessed 13 Feb. 2023.