

Student A

October 2001

ACE English

Composition # 2

Lady Standing at the Virginals

The Lady Standing at the Virginals was painted by Vermeer in the 1600's. This painting seems to have been composed as a testament to true love. In the painting there are many icons and clue to support this deduction.

The focus of this painting is the woman's head. Her head is in approximately the center of the painting. Also the woman's head is the vanishing point. All the lines of the window and the lines that form the virginals, are all pointing to the woman's head. This reinforces the idea of what the focal point of the painting is.

Behind the woman's head is a painting of Cupid. Cupid is holding his bow and a card. Not only is Cupid in the painting he is also on the tiles that create the baseboard of the room. Cupid is a symbol of love, true love. The fact that Cupid is holding his bow shows that he is ready to shoot his arrows of love, but he is holding his bow in a resting position signifying that he is also waiting. Cupid is holding a card up perhaps indicating that the person that the lady is waiting for is finally coming. The tiles with Cupid on them are circling the room surrounding the woman with love.

In the foreground of the painting there is an empty chair. This chair could be meant for the person (true love) that the woman is waiting for.

The woman's face is shown to us, and we see that she is looking out from the painting. It seems as if she is looking right at us, but in truth the woman is looking at the painter. The woman's face is softened by the upward curl of the corners of her mouth. Her eyes although focused, they are not hard or harsh, but soft and caring. Her expression is one of patience and tolerance.

Therefore all of these icons symbolize the "wait for true love". The Cupids, the lines, the vanishing point, the focal point, and the woman's expression all point to how the woman is waiting, for true love.

