

“Liberty Leading the People” Eugene Delacroix, 1830. Oil on canvas.

- The painting literally symbolizes the events that took place in 1830, the same year as the French people’s struggle against oppression that led to the French Revolution.
- The painting was viewed as an extremely radical form of art during its time.
- Delacroix literally presents “Liberty” as a woman, carrying the banner of the French Republic as well as a bayonet. The bayonet can be symbolic of the French people taking power literally into their own hands. She wears the cap of liberty on her head as well. The woman herself looks almost goddess like, she is portrayed to be a strong, thick looking woman capable of leading a revolution.
- The painting has been composed to have a very triangular form, the top of the triangle emphasis’ Liberty herself. There is a definite division between the upper left half of the painting and the bottom. The bottom is the dead and dying while the upper left is the figures of the revolution marching onward.
- Chiaroscuro is used almost in a diagonal way in which emphasis is placed on the French people being led into light and away from their repressive lives.
- The overall style of the painting is very romantic, very Pro-French Revolution.

