

# The Scream and beyond

Norwegian painter Edvard Munch's exhibition was in town and I did not want to miss this once in a lifetime chance to see a convenient display of his works under one roof.

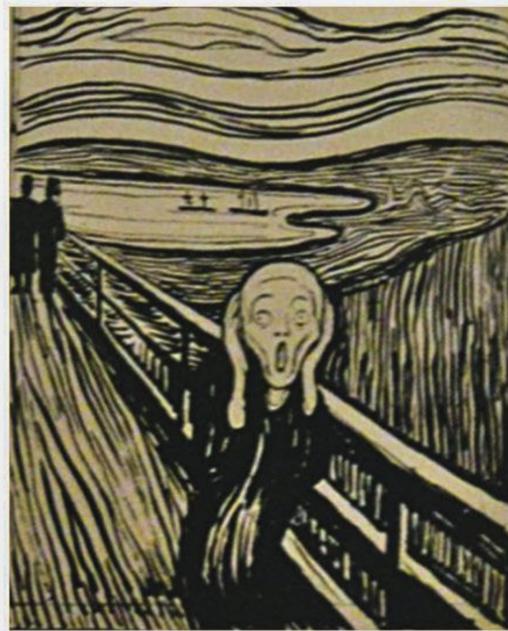
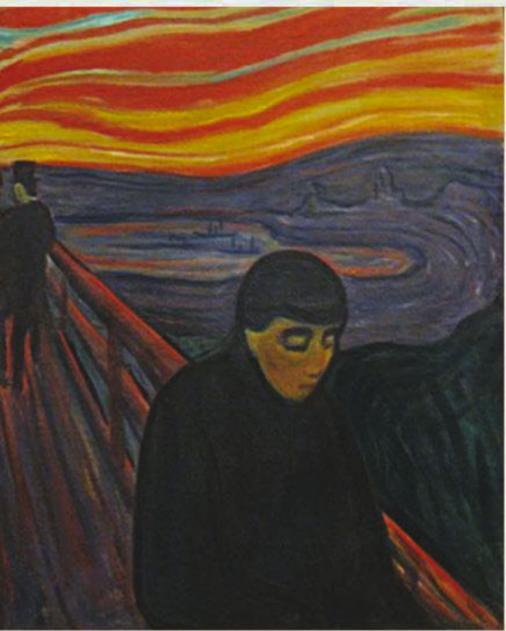
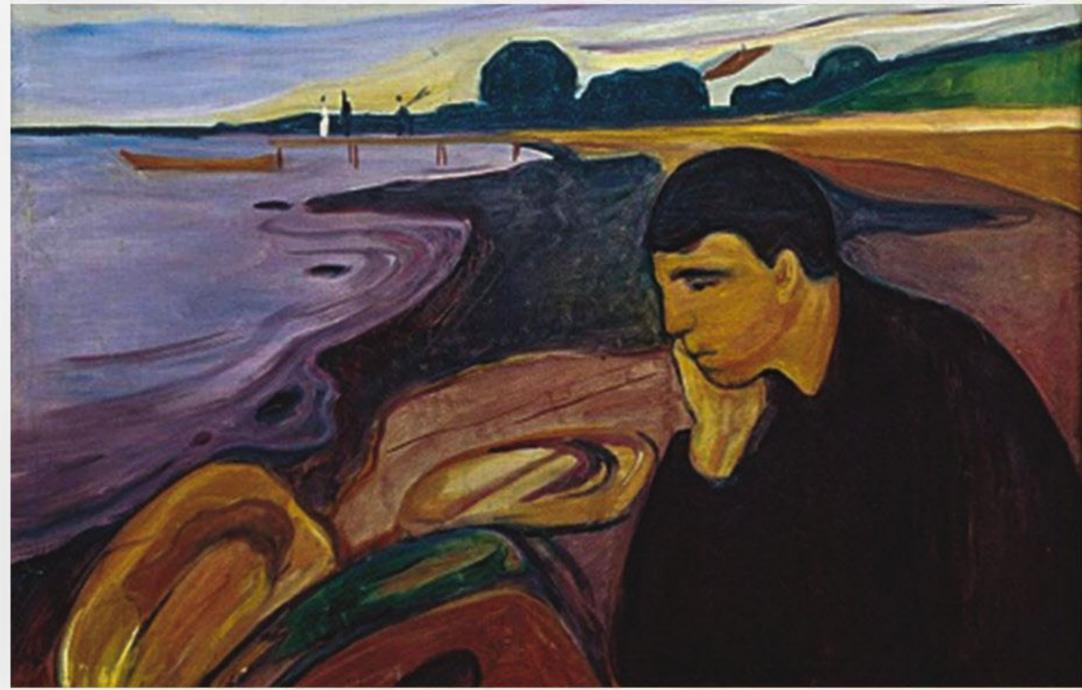
The exhibition was held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) from November 2016 to February 2017. I had read about Munch and his way of developing a personal style to convey fear, anxiety, loneliness and melancholia. Although he is known for his iconic pre-expressionist work The Scream or (The Cry, 1893) - which is a Mona Lisa of our time - in Norway he has always been hailed as the national artist, along with Henrik Ibsen and Edvard Grieg.

Munch's most famous image The Scream exists in four different versions. He also created a lithograph of the image, using only black ink to show the figure's existential cry, and much to my joy, this was on

words, "I was walking down the road with two friends when the sun set; suddenly, the sky turned as red as blood. I stopped and leaned against the fence - shivering with fear. Then I heard the enormous, infinite scream of nature."

The fourth version (pastel, 1895) of The Scream went on auction at Sotheby's in New York selling for more than \$119 million, a record breaking price, proving its reputation as one of the most iconic artwork ever produced.

Edvard Munch was born in 1863 to Laura and Christian Munch into a middle class family in Låten, Norway. Experiencing deaths at a very young age in the family had a tremendous psychological effect on him, and continued to haunt Munch all through his life. His works expressed this isolation and loneliness. In Munch's words,



display at the exhibition.

The skeletal figure is that of Munch himself, expressing horror experienced by him, which Munch later recalled in his own

"No longer shall I paint interiors with men reading and women knitting. I will paint living people who breathe and feel and suffer and love."

I was looking at his paintings and woodworks, and to me all seemed sketched in a sombre and melancholic mood. A picture of a little girl made me stop and stare, while reading the story behind it made me feel sympathetic towards the artist.

The Sick Child I is based on the memories of Munch's elder sister, Sophie who died young from illness. There is another painting of Edvard Munch Death in the Sickroom, which has a moving scene where family gathered at Sophie's death, painted in 1893.

One of Munch's finest artworks, Self-portrait with skeleton arm, depicts only his head and collar against a black background with a skeleton arm sitting on the bottom. Munch's inscription on the top looks more like an epitaph with a dash after a year as if in anticipation of an imminent death.

After his father's demise in 1889, Munch experienced a troubled stage in his life but he became even more creatively productive,

dividing time between Paris and Berlin. He produced The Frieze of Life, a series of produced 22 works. Melancholy (1892-93), Jealousy (1894-95), Despair (1892), Anxiety (1894), Death in the Sickroom (1893) and The Scream (1893), were his most famous paintings ever produced.

The paintings and woodworks on display at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts were gathered from various museums especially for this exhibition. I saw a group of curious onlookers huddled around a corner. It was a 20th century bed sheet, neatly spread under the work, Self-portrait between clock and the bed, featuring the bed sheet!

Munch's self-portraits portrayed the fear, loneliness and emotional distress suffered by the artist. He died at his country home in Ekely near Oslo in January 1944, and left behind a treasure for the world of arts.

By Aeman T Rasul

Photo courtesy: Aeman T Rasul

## মাদার নতুন নাম

কালার গার্ড

কাপড়ের রঙকে রাখে নতুনের মতো ঝকঝকে

মাল্টি বুস্টার

কাপড়ের যে কোন দাগ-ময়লাকে নিমিষেই দূর করে

with color guard

**Fast wash**

Brilliant White

DETERGENT POWDER

সবচেয়ে ফাস্ট, সবচেয়ে কার্যকরী ..