

Inspiration

Reflecting Upon Holy

Process Portfolio: Elaine Santiago-Soto

Most of Butler's works take on natural beauty within places he visits. When he is outside of Canada, he's at Chicago. It's where he takes a majority of his cityscape pictures. The liveliness of the people paired with the city's forefront is inspiration enough for him to pick up his camera. When he does so he focuses on locations that won't need superficial lighting to highlight certain aspects of the image. This technique results in either a picture full of clarity or one with prominent shadows. However, both outcomes have a subject in focus and easily viewable.



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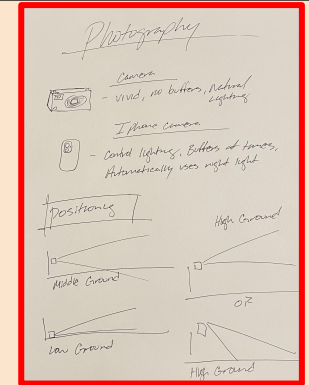
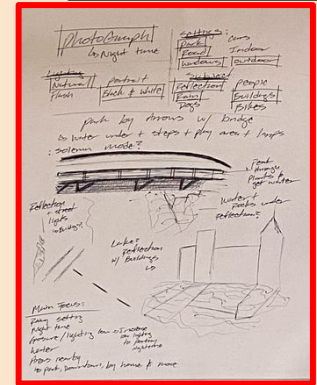
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Golf #43

Planning

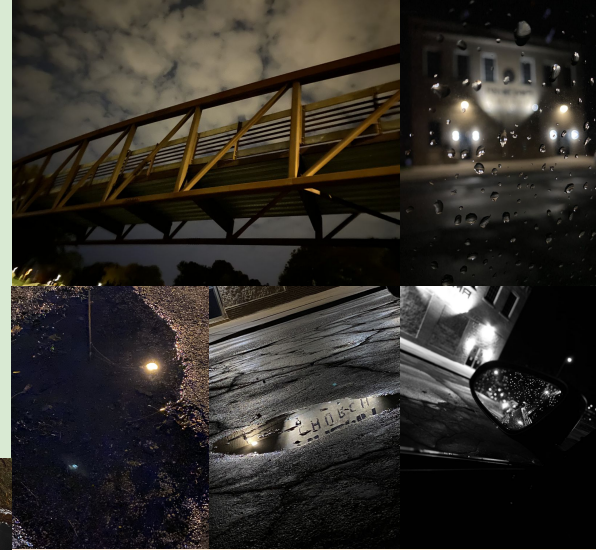
Before choosing the piece, I had made sketches and plans on different photographs that revolved around water and rain. I wanted to see if composition would play a role within the planning phase and tried to study it. My locations were the park, downtown, lake and anywhere outside. With each destination they all had their own features that would correlate to Butler's image. The park has a small river and a bridge that overlooked it. From there I would either focus entirely on the bridge, the water or both. This was a decision that I saved for later when experimenting. Downtown had a lake but I wanted to focus on the puddles within the roads and sidewalk. Those pockets of water would reflect the buildings or nearby structures like Butler had down.



Lakefront in Milwaukee

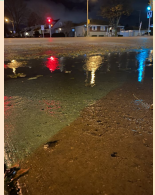
My first location was the park, that is where the bridge was. It was hard to take candid pictures as the lighting was too poor. Instead I experimented with the exposure to see if it would make a difference. Low exposure caused the area to become more dim, yet it allowed me to focus on one area which was helpful. High exposure only made the image too bright and as a result would make some photographs seem like it were taken during the day.

Outside my house on the road, there were holes that had filled with water. When standing in a certain direction and angle, a reflection of nearby structures could be made out. It wasn't until a few pictures in that I realized that my positioning mattered. After the realization, the rest of the pictures afterward were improved. Across the street a church resides in the neighborhood and in the middle of the road it could be made out of the water. Due to the extreme lighting of the building, no edits were needed to capture its essence. Upon reviewing the pictures I noticed how well the reflection had turned out and made my way to take more of the building. Eventually I was able to choose a piece that I felt correlated to Butler's photograph the most.



Reflecting Upon Holy

Process



Reflection

Photography isn't something that I am accustomed to so this project proved to be challenging. It wasn't until I started experimenting that I realized how much of an effect positioning and lighting played a role in every picture. Standing from afar as opposed to close will focus on a subject as a whole instead of solely. Sunlight is different from lamp lights or any superficial lighting which can change the coloring of highlights and shadows.

The theme of reflecting within oneself was inspired by Butler's ability to capture candid pictures. Taking photos of subjects without tampering their natural features will represent the truth within a person. I was able to achieve this by taking pictures that didn't use flashlights and more. However, if I were to do this project again, I would take pictures during the day instead of the night. The daylight provides more natural lighting and would have corresponded nicely with Butler's photographs. In addition, I would try to find a softer lighting for the subjects as the darkness seems to be a tad too harsh. Despite the contrast of lighting being prominent and slightly distracting, I liked how some of the images turned out.

Inspiration

Blurred Glance

I took inspiration from Maurice de Vlaminck due to his ability to capture abstract artworks that are based upon realistic subjects and settings. He was the founder of Fauvism which is a movement in where artists use unrealistic colors that are vivid with expressionism. It was why a majority of Vlaminck's works were depicted with primary colors that wouldn't fit with the realistic highlights and pigments of landscapes. Yet, most of his works feature water and farms. The artist's inspiration was from Van Gogh and his impressionism style. It's why areas with blotches of paints are put in a direction to mimic movement. This is seen in his piece, "Tugboat on the Seine, Chatou" as he layers the paints in the water to replicate a steady stream moving on. His use of colors and brush strokes help the style come to life and appear as if it were moving in a sense.



Tugboat on the Seine,
Chatou

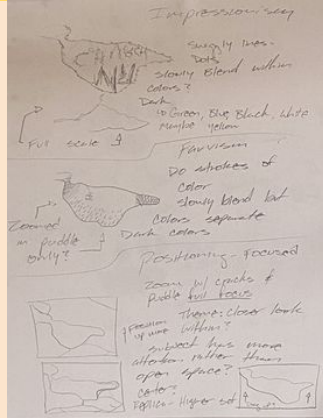


Maisons au bord de la
Seine à Chatou

Planning



Reflecting Upon Holy



Since the project focused on a previous artwork that I created, the planning phase was focused on the painting aspect. I knew I wanted to make an abstract painting rather than a realistic style, due to the image of inspiration already being a photograph. That is how I looked for different artists that would best meet the criteria.

Vlaminck proved to be the best option, as he connected to the photograph the best. Most of his works were of landscapes and water. In addition, his painting style was similar to a disoriented look. This helped me discover the theme of the work, which would be the opposite of the photograph. I wanted the two themes to connect and in this style it would offer contrasting views. The painting being a glance past one's self instead of within.

Process

With the reference picture and composition in mind, I was able to sketch the outline for the painting. After that I experimented with colors I was sure to use in order to get a handle on how they would present upon canvas and blend with one another. Cool colors were the main focus of the painting, so I tested those colors for the most part. Each pigment was different from the next when they were laid atop one another. At this point I wasn't sure which brush stroke I was going to use, so I dabbed the paints on top and besides each other. This allowed me to see how the colors reacted without blending boldly, instead adapting a gradient blending method.

With my experimentation as a guide I began the process of painting upon the canvas. I used the size 3/4 brush since it was the largest and would cover more space. The sizing would allow me to apply the paints without blending due to repeatedly going over the same areas in order to cover large amounts of space. In addition, it was easily forgivable if I were to blend colors too much on accident. A lined technique was used in order to replicate Vlaminck's style, despite being thin. After coming upon the conclusion that the lines were too thin, I broadened them within the reflection. This also allowed the puddle to be the subject of attention, which was the original idea.



Blurred Glance

Painting is especially tricky for me as I find it difficult to move the brush steadily. Brush strokes are hard to keep consistent as the amount of paint on a brush affects the penmanship. In addition, oil takes longer to dry than acrylic and blends easily. This made it hard to keep the strokes apart from one another and still show the vibrancy within the colored pigments. However, after experimenting and concluding this project I'd like to think I have a better handle on the medium. I now know to tap the paint on rather than drag it across the canvas.

If I were to do this project again I would experiment with a different art technique. Impressionism or realism would be ideal as they would blend colors in order to get different outcomes. This allows me to further my understanding of oil paint and how colors work alongside each other. I'd also like to keep the theme within the piece as it can be interpreted in multitudes of art styles. A Blurred Glance derives from a past project so it'd be interesting to keep the small collection consistent.



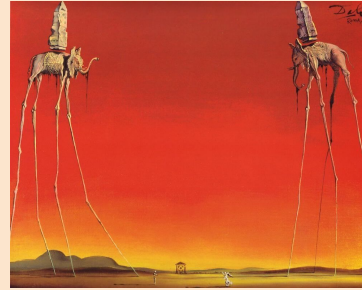
Reflection

Inspiration

The Persistence of COVID



The Persistence of Memory



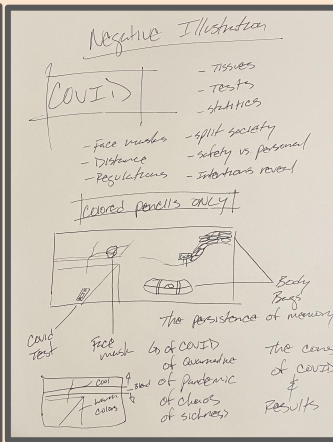
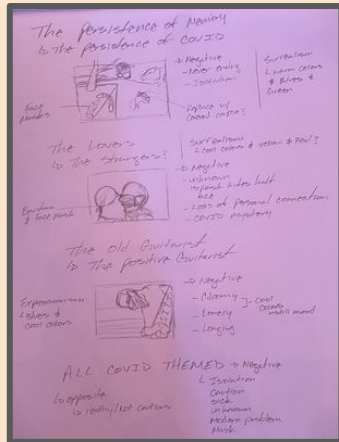
The Elephants

Planning

The Persistence of Memory was the piece that caused Salvador Dalí to become well known. This was due to it being a heavily debated work as people struggled to interpret its meaning. Some believed it was a story of decay as the watches drooped whilst others thought it related to Albert Einstein and his theories on relativity. However, the painting was part of the surrealism movement which allowed artist to capture their consciousness in the form of juxtaposition. It took elements of real life and twisted them to make viewers ponder what they were seeing, and why they were seeing it. This art movement allowed for multitudes of interterperations and that is why Dalí enjoyed creating artworks with vivid colors and often times, disturbing subjects.

There is a lot of negativity in the world and I wanted to focus on the theme first in this two piece project. I thought it would be easier to distinguish an opposite as opposed to vise versa. Following along, I knew I wanted to focus on a modern day problem that is well known in society today, which was COVID-19. Masks have become a symbol for the disease and it was why I incorporated them into my sketches.

Each plan had correlating themes that revolved around COVID. For instance: Isolation, caution, unknown, loss of connection and more. It wasn't until the themes were laid out that I picked an artist for inspiration. With Dali his seemed to connect with current times as much as possible. The most relatable themes being; never ending and isolation. These are easily expressive within the piece as there are no companions in sight and due to the space being so open, it highlights the idea of isolation. In addition, the themes are easily compatible with Dalí's interpretation of realism and subconscious theories.



Process

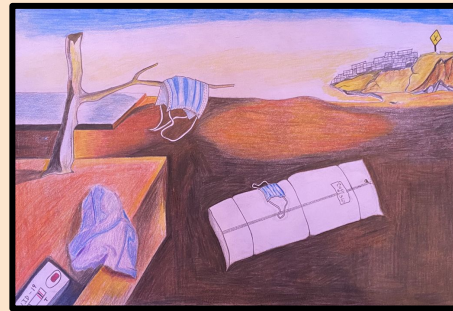
In order to start the sketch I had marked the board in half both vertically (5.5 in) and horizontally (7.5 in). This allowed me to proportion the piece by looking at the reference image. From there I sketched in the prominent features such as the table, tree, mountain and body bag in the middle. In addition, I marked the sky based on which color would go where. Blue was the top margin and it was followed by white and yellow as the image progressed down.

Once the sketch was done I started to experiment with the colored pencils. It was proven to be a challenge as I was unfamiliar with blending techniques and what colors compliment others. To begin the process, I did a layer of light brown because I figured it was a common color I was going to be using throughout the piece. I then followed it with all the colors that were available to me to see what new highlights or shadows I could make. After doing this, I realized that I should have pressed down harder on the pencils in order to get a more defined color. Using my new found knowledge from the experiments with the colored pencils, I applied it to the beginning stages of the drawing. Shadows were a very prominent feature within the illustration and it is the main reason as to why I began with it. I then followed it with the highlights leaving the white parts bare to lightly go over afterwards.

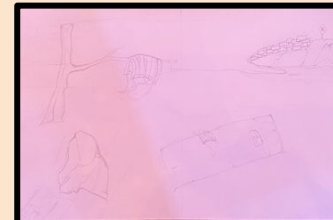
Reflection

Colored pencils on an illustration board is a first time medium in a serious context for me. Colored pencils are unfamiliar territory as color isn't my strong suite, so doing this project was interesting. However, as I progressed I learned how different pigments contrast to others, especially when applied to value. The lighter tones within the shadows are subjectively more focused upon when viewing the piece. I learned that this was very helpful when making subjects the center piece, like the bags and mask, which is why I made the tissue a cool color with highlights.

If I were to do a negative illustration again, I would go in depth on the conscious mind. In addition, since I had issues layering and blending with colored pencils, it'd be interesting to try out different brands to see how they compare.



The Persistence of COVID

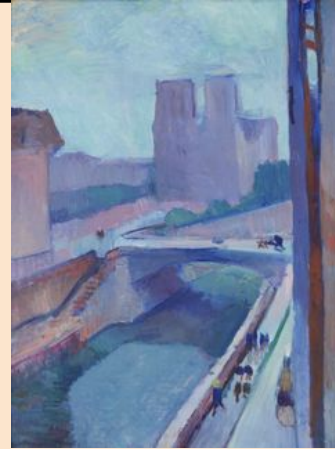


Inspiration

Afternoon Celebration



The Green Line



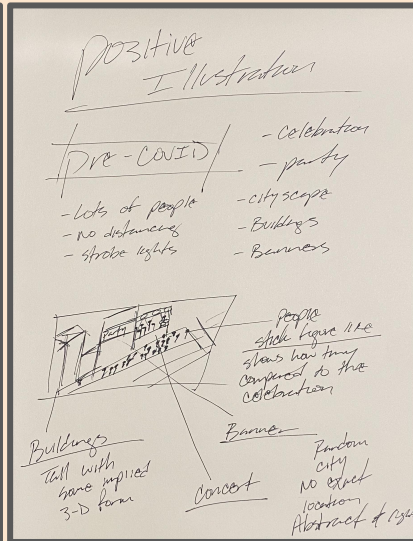
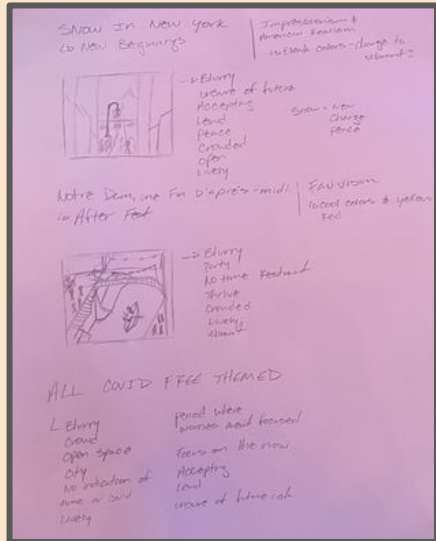
Notre-Dame, une fin d'après-midi

Planning

This piece was to be based off of my previous illustration in this set, The Persistence of COVID. Big gatherings, celebrations, happy, normality, and more are all themes I wanted to focus on. Choosing a single one out of the 4 options with the possibility of more, was difficult. Instead I researched for artworks that featured cityscapes so I could add people to the works. Putting people inside the drawings would allow the piece to connect to the overall theme of COVID.

I knew my themes were to be positive but I also wanted the image to appear fuzzy in order to portray the unknown. These were found within two paintings, one of which being Matisse's. From there I started to incorporate details that would enhance the feeling of celebration. Strung lights and people were the original concepts.

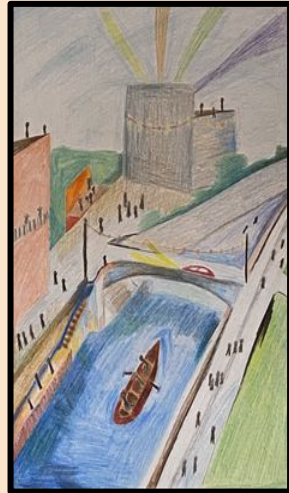
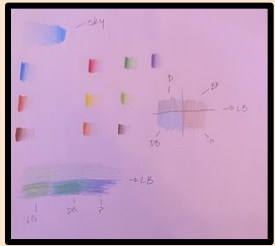
Henri Matisse was born in Nord, France and is where he remained for a majority of his life. He'd occasionally travel France and to London in order to study art and find new subjects of interest to paint. One of his famous works was The Green Line and is a representation of his collections. The strokes he uses are bold and thick, barely blending with one another. Lines are either hardly visible or thick in order to highlight certain features of the paintings. He was able to create the Fauvism period through his newfound skills. The movement is similar to Impressionism yet relies upon thick bold brushstrokes that disrupt the peace of the artwork and the colors are vibrant.



Process

Although I knew how the colored pencils looked individually, I wanted to experiment with those colors once again. With this testing, I did an ombre effect by starting off dark to light. This would help me determine which color to use as my undertone throughout the piece. Matisse had used light blue as his, so I used different colors to replicate his shadows and highlights. Black paired with both light and dark brown were the best combos to use for shadows. As for highlights, light blue proved to be the best.

I was able to create a rough outline for the drawing as I added more people, strung lights, concert, boat, and strobe lights. These would all add to the celebration vibe that was to be instilled in the piece. In order to make the piece relevant to current times, I switched the carriage for a car. Concerts are also features that are of today, especially ones constructed with stages and technology. These are all concepts that would have been acceptable before COVID. From there I started to fill in the areas that didn't need much attention like the grass and buildings.



Afternoon Celebration

Reflection

Despite having used the same materials in the previous project, I was still a bit unfamiliar with the tools. Blending was a skill that I had yet to master in order to get certain colors that would have added more detail. An example was the under bridge, as it was difficult to create the blue tone. This was one of the reasons as to why I chose warm colors instead of focusing on cool colors entirely, like Matisse.

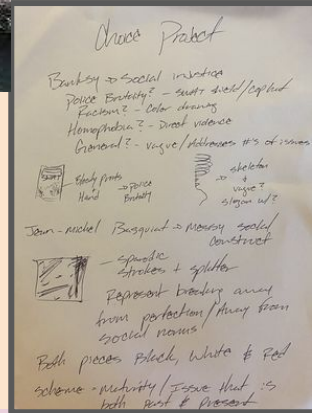
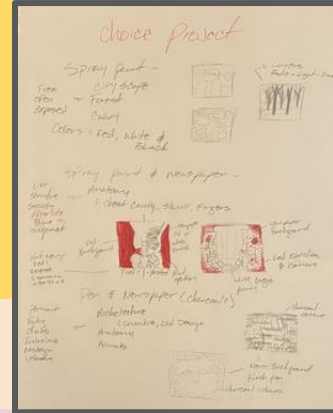
The theme of life without COVID and celebration were all ventured upon as colors were used cohesively. Yet if I were to do this again, I would use different colored pencils in order to achieve the right pigments. In addition, I would challenge myself to look into different art works and themes as they could be seen as common. For instance, an evening inside a restaurant could have achieved the same message. Positives within this project could mean anything and it would have been great to explore different themes.

Inspiration

X-Ray to Justice



Migrant Child



Planning

Banksy is an anonymous artist whom is rumored to be from London, Bristol to be specific. He is well known for his political statements he expresses through his arts. Originally, the artist would spray paint pieces randomly about with a group known as DBZ. It wasn't until his discovery of stencils that his works have progressed and became quicker.

His themes for his works ranged from a variety of social injustice topics, from immigration to the over exposure of violence. The majority of his art pieces are colored in black and white, with a sporadic coloring within. They are mostly spotted on random walls of London which are then transferred to prints. These prints are then sold, yet the artist makes original artworks that are sold at auctions for charity.

For the this project I knew I wanted to do something with spray paint as my choice. The only colors I had to work with, however, were black, red and white. This could either create an almost monochrome effect or I could find a subject that complements the the color scheme. The first thought was a landscape, whether it be forests or cities. It then transitioned to anatomy, where the skeletal system is represented. This is due to the colors clashing well with one another, especially with how skeletons are originally depicted with black and white. Eventually I found inspiration through Banksy as he used primarily black and white. Each artwork had a theme of social injustice. With that info I was able to come up with different social injustice scenarios that I could depict through either a landscape or the skeletal system. With the landscape I knew that I could focus on society as a whole. Whereas the skeleton I could make the subject a bit more broad yet well known. After viewing Banksy's piece, "Migrant Crisis" I was inspired to follow the almost stenciled yet sketchy feel to the piece. From there I planned different backgrounds from red to newspapers. Eventually it came upon red as I figured it would bring out the black and white better.

Process

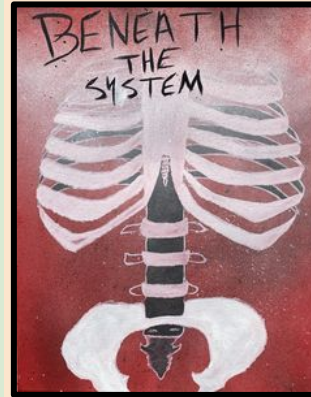
Laying a piece of cardboard upon the floor, I was able to create a station to spray paint. Red was the decided background color and became the first layer. I layered it down sporadically leaving few white spaces. Despite the coloring being light, the red seemed too plain by itself. That's what inspired me to use both the black and white paints, even in spite of them being the coloring of the subject. The splatters were created by barely pushing the button down as I sprayed the canvas. This allowed the paint to come out in droplets rather than a steady stream. However, as I continued to create the splatter effect, I realized that the white was overpowering the other colors. That would drive the whole attention away from the subject. So as to remedy that, I sprayed another thin layer of red over which allowed both the white and black to dampen.

Using a pencil, I sketched the outlines of the ribcage and found that it was too hard to see the markings above the paint. To remedy this I used a white paint marker to instill a final sketch. Each space was then filled in with the white acrylic pen and at first they were layered so some areas were brighter than others. It would act as a way to detail the piece further. However, it instead seemed void of pigment. So I went further into filling the spaces and noticed how plain the whole piece still looked. Deciding to stick with the whole scheme of black and white, I used black to act as the shadows and the length of the spine. This added more dimension to the piece. The end result was still void of detail. That was when I came up with the idea to spray the top layer lightly with white to act as the smoke like Banksy's piece, "Migrant Child." It was then coupled with red to blend the colors both into the background and skeleton.

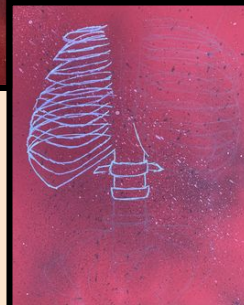
Reflection

This project was something that I was both familiar and unfamiliar with as spray painting is new to me. It was easy to cover the background instantly and blend the colors together in order to create the splatter effect. However, if I were to do this again I would like to create a stencil for the subject. This will ensure the whole piece is primarily spray paint and would correlate to the inspiration even more. Despite that, the piece turned out how I'd like it to.

Next time I'd like to try a broader scheme in order to see how colors can blend with the spray paint. Particularly with either warm or blue colors. However, my favorite part of this artwork is the way the skeleton goes from dim to bright. It almost pushes another message than the one I created. The mist allows the detail to fade which was helpful during the process period. I was struggling to finish the rib cages, but had I done so the piece would have followed Banksy's stencil outlook.



X-Ray to Justice



Inspiration

Thick Skinned

Joshua Miels is a contemporary portrait artist whose works focus primarily on emotion, which range from numb to anguish. The messages demonstrate an advocacy for mental health, especially in men. It expresses a story of how men are forced to suppress their emotions in society. However, Miels works to shed light on the subject in order to demonstrate that mental health is not wrong. It is something everyone goes through, including men.

Each portrait is painted in an abstract concept where paint is layered thick upon the canvas. His only tool throughout the process is a palette knife that stretches the paint to cover areas. The colors are often vibrant and occasionally blend together, except when layered upon the canvas. Highlights are often warm colors and shadows cool. This allows the artist to differentiate the coloring and provide an almost realistic portrait.

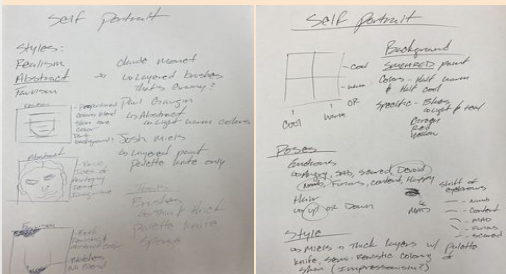
Planning

The two ideas of where I wanted my self portrait to go was either surrealism or abstract. Whether they were towards specific movements like Romanticism or Fauvism. Primarily I knew I wanted a close up shot of my face, not a full body nor in a style where my face is distorted into another being. I wanted to be real with my artwork and portray myself in a way that was new to me but also representative of who I am. This followed abstract and I researched even more artists that I could find inspiration in. However, Miels was the one that inspired me with his globs of paint that created a portrait.

With the artist and style chosen I sketched ideas and portraits. Emotions are a key feature in these types of paintings and it was why I took pictures of emotional poses. From anger to slight disdain. The picture I ended up choosing was a furrowed look where my face is slightly scrunched. It is a face that causes viewers to ponder the emotion. Next, I tried to decide on the coloring and tools. Eventually, it was decided that warm colors would be used for the face and all other colors for the background. This will ensure that the subject won't blend with its surroundings.



Let Me Be



Eye - Detail

Before I painted on the canvas, I experimented both with the paint and the tools I had. The paints were very vibrant by themselves as I layered them next to each other. In order to dim them, I sprayed the area where the paint was and stroked the palette knife through it. Using the same concept, I used each palette knife with the same techniques in order to see which provided the most ease. All knives were numbered and then noted of their most helpful feature. For instance, the knife numbered 3 was diamond shaped and offered fine detail.

Using both warm and cool colors, I was able to spread the paint evenly without too much texture. One side of the canvas was primarily cool colors with bursts of warm and the same vice versa for the other side. This allowed the contrast between the colors to be greater. In order to replicate the skin tone in a warm setting, I mixed; red, orange, yellow, white and brown. The shadows were mostly prominent in the eye areas, wrinkles and lip area. Additionally, highlights were paired with a plain white that would overlap the coloring. This was placed in the chin, eyes and forehead. I then differentiated the outlines with black in the eyes, eyebrows, nose and lips to add more depth.



Process

Reflection

This project proved to be more difficult than I had originally thought. Palette knife art is something I am unfamiliar with, yet it seemed easier to manipulate than a brush. I was proven wrong when it came down to fine detail. It was especially hard in areas that needed shadowing, as certain areas needed highlight. Despite this, I was particularly fond of the left eye as it held the most detail. The result of layering the paints added a vein effect in the cornea.

If I were to do this project again I would like to create a series. A portrait in cool colors and another in realistic tones. It would be interesting to see the differences between the three and how colors can affect a piece. In addition, I'd like to add paint brushes into the tool mix in order to see how exactly it'd differ from a palette knife and what details it can create that the knife can't. Overall I enjoy the piece I have made despite the few things I would change for next time.



Thick Skinned



Inspiration

Loss of Familiarity

Planning

Gordon Matta-Clark turned away from the concept of perfection and instead he created anarchitecture with fellow art members of the community. The movement allowed sculptors to dismantle an already made building and mold it to their liking. Clark liked to cut circles into the framework of the building in order to let viewers see in the inside of the house. Other times he would shift the areas he cut out and put them in peculiar places in the building. He was most famous for reconfiguring everyday life and making people question his art's purpose.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude was a artistic duo that enjoyed creating mundane objects ominous. Their works feature fabrics strewn atop peculiar objects that one wouldn't see in everyday life. To trees and monuments to oceans and buildings. The fabrics were recyclable and were assured it would be easy to take off if it were to harm the environment in any way.

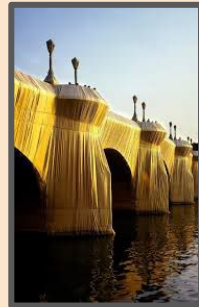
Starting off this project I sketched different ideas into two general topics. These were both architecture and abstract. Having these genres allowed me to comprehend how fluid figures attest to strict measured buildings. Each image was either from past recollections whilst others were from general artists. Looking back into the pieces, I decided to choose ones that I was interested in. In the end, I chose the destroyed building, tunnel sticks and clothed fountain.

With my options broadened I decided to only make two figures. Having three would make the focus point uneven and it would be harder to concentrate on one thing. The details would be lack luster as one installation would compete with the other for the viewers eyes. Having two allows people to spot the differences and compare and contrast them to the general them. It also depicts two familiar objects that people see in everyday life, only in a different format. This will make them question the projects importance and how it connects to real life.

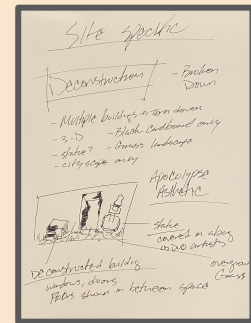
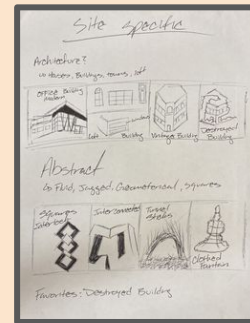
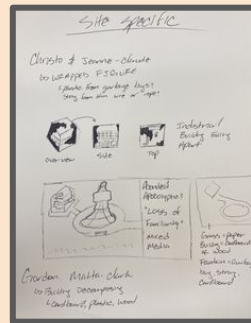
Deciding on the materials that would be used was the next step. Cardboard and paper were the obvious choices, yet I didn't know how to conduct the inside of the destroyed building. It was between the thin wooden slabs or paper, in the end the wooden slabs won. With these in mind, I sketched the placement of the site installation and its foreground. Grass would be on the ground with the monument in the middle and the destroyed building towards the back left.



Conical Intersect

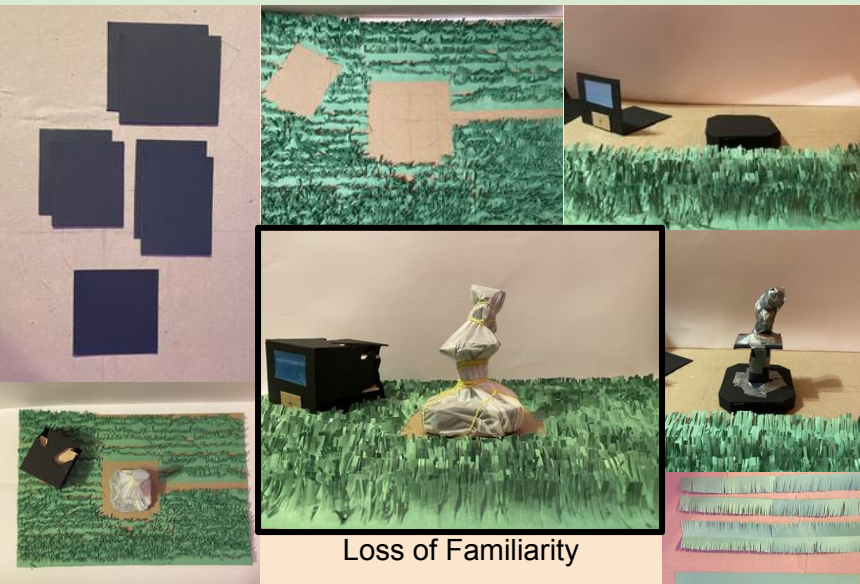


The Pont Neuf Wrapped



Before I created the the main figures of the installation piece, I made the foreground. This consisted of a cardboard the size of 12 6/8 in x 17 6/8 in. From there I marked the middle point and the lines that go both horizontal and vertical. This helped establish the area in which the monument would go, the surrounding dirt areas and the position of the destroyed building. The pathway to the monument measured to 1 in, whilst the area around was 6/8 in. However, the actual base of the monument was 3 in x 3 in. Moving onto the destroyed building, it was placed to the left back area so it wasn't too close to the monument. The measurements for its base was 3 1/2 in x 3 in. The height for the destroyed building was 2 1/2 in. However, the monuments base was 1/2 an inch as it needed to progressively build up. Adding a pole that was 2 in tall furthered the height. In addition to the actual platform and figure, the total height came out to be 4 1/2 in. The grass was cut in 2 in width with 12 in in length. Folding it twice allowed me to cut the negative spaces so it branched out and allowed for two strips of grass which covered the area well.

After, I put together the bases and balled up tape for the figure atop the monument. For the building, I cut out a spot for a cracked window, a door and random areas to show destruction. I then put all the walls together, except one of the 3 1/2 in to set 2 pieces of wood inside. They were slightly broken to match the disfigurement of the building. I then ripped a piece from a garbage bag in order to wrap around the monument. It needed to be tight so the figure can still be prominent which was done with a yellow string.



Loss of Familiarity

Process

Reflection

This project was a lot more interesting and fun than I had imagined. Although it was time consuming with the little grasses I had made, I would like to experiment with different techniques next time. The current grass didn't have the realistic feel that I was aiming for, same for the building which is why I would like to focus more on the mathematical planning than just the aesthetic.

However, I am content with the work I have produced. Pulling inspiration from both Gordon Matta-Clark and Christo and Jeanne-Claude was justified with the final result. Each style from both of their works were found within my project. Despite the holes being random within the destroyed building, it gave it a scrappy look. This enhanced the theme of loss of familiarity. It's also very intriguing how it wasn't entirely affected by the negative space.

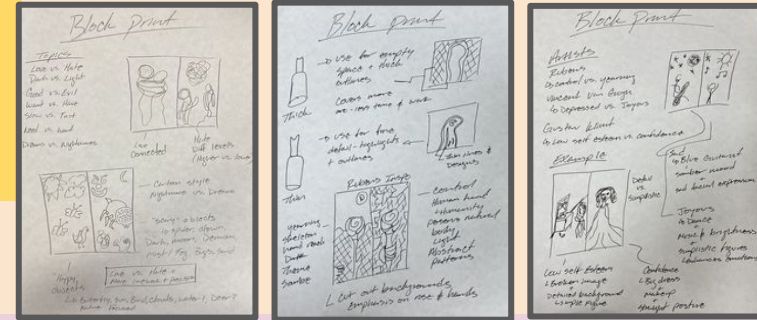
Inspiration

Reaching for Passion



Allegory of the Outbreak of War

Peter Paul Rubens is most famous for his intricate themes of presenting the consequences of war and the sensuality of humanity. The culture of war constructs a somber mood filled with angst. His subjects are positioned in twisting compositions without regard to discomfort. Portraying such objects as is allows for an expressive topic where emotions are presented through body motions and facial features. The most common emotions throughout the artist's works are: Despair, depression, longing, pride and envy. All feelings compliment each other as they illustrate each story of the subjects within. From a man returning from war with pride yet those around are affected by his presence of destruction, to a man who lives with ferocious lions to avoid the harshness of society. His ability to capture the emotions of his subjects is due to the use of a complex color palette as well as movement. He configures the human body in various positions that makes it curve into itself to show the weight of the feelings.



Planning

I knew I wanted to make a positive vs. negative prints to demonstrate the contradiction within the world. These led to topics such as: Love vs. Hate, Dark vs. Light, Dreams vs. Nightmares and so much more. Once the basic topics were laid out, I made them more specific with sketches that correlated to the theme. The first one depicted a disconnected love that is broaching onto hate. The next one presents a love that is connected like bodies that are trying to melt and morph into each other.

After inspecting the tools that were provided, I learned that one was meant for thin carvings and the other for thick. The plan was to use the thick one for empty space and thick outlines in order to cut back on both time. This is different from the thin one which would create highlights and fine details down to the outlines. From there I planned the actual design which consisted of a rose with two different hands as they're either gripping or reaching. The difference between both would be their positive and negative connotations. Additionally, they would have a majority of empty space for the background as opposed to one having a printed one that would allow for more dark space.

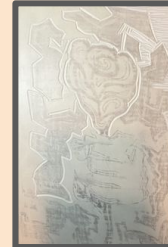
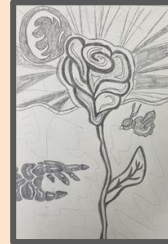
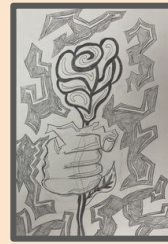
In order to start the project I needed to create a reliable sketch that would be easily transferable to the blocks. I started off with the two concepts of yearning and controlling, with a rose as the main subject. As I started with a light sketch, I went over the lines with the pencil using a harder imprint. Once I was done I flipped the paper onto the block and rubbed it to transfer the image for carving.

With the blocks already designed, the next step was to carve and the first once was the positive connotation. The sections that weren't colored in remained, as the black areas were carved. I tried to follow the horizontal line concept in order to create clean indents. The next print was the negative and I followed the same steps from the previous project. The outline of the subjects were traced with the carving tool, occasionally switching between the thin and thick ones. With this print, I started from the bottom to the top and once the basic outline was done I started on the skeleton hand.

Once the blocks were fully cut out I inked them by rolling ink on a tray with an ink roller. After the ink was evenly dispersed I transferred it onto the block and went in both vertical and horizontal motions. From this point I lined a piece of paper above the block and rubbed the paper with a pad to transfer the image clearly. After about a minute or two of using the pad, I set the paper aside to dry. This was repeated five times in order to have a variety of works and to see which patches needed more ink than others. This was then repeated for the next block.

Process

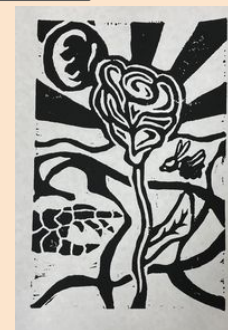
Reflection



This project is somewhat unfamiliar yet it was easy to comprehend. The difficult part relied upon the thought process of where the ink will go once a portion is carved. Will the ink hardly cover the area or will it take up a majority of space? This was a struggle as I began the process and if I were to do this again, I would use the knowledge to better plan the carvings. When I sketched it on paper it was hard to interpret which areas would be empty and others full so I carved the background from the negative, despite wanting it to be dark to relate to the somber theme. This project illustrates a sense of yearning that has left one waiting too long resulting in them wallowing into a skeleton of themselves. Yet its counterpart is controlling of their achievement as they hold it in a death-like grip.



Reaching for Passion I



Reaching for Passion II

Inspiration

Splat

Planning

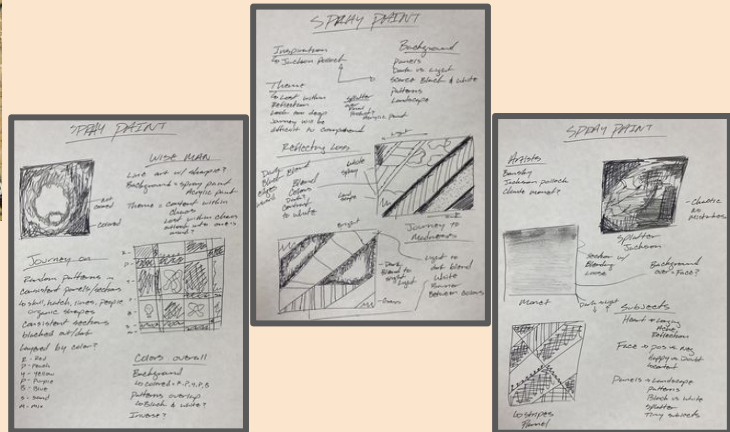
During Jackson Pollock's era, the abstract style was slowly becoming acceptable as the war culture was beginning. In the early 1940's WW2 was brewing and it caused the majority of the population to be expressive with their emotions. Most turned towards art, from visuals to poems. Pollock and a handful of artists were one of the first to present the abstract style as means to depict their emotions. This is especially seen within his loose paintings, the relaxed movements of drips to the sudden harsh flicks with a hardened brush presents contrasting emotions. The clash of colors presents the instability of feelings which progresses the culture of expressionism and its ability to unify humanity. His theme paints a perspective of personal statements through visual context, from high contrast of colors to the width of strokes.



One: Number 31



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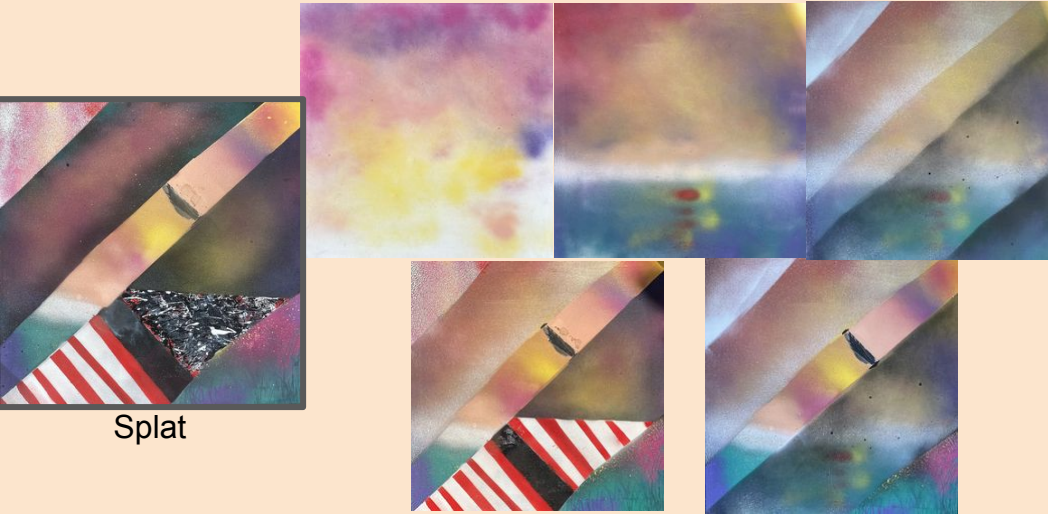
In order to start the project, I sketched differing concepts that had one common theme : emotions. This followed through each one whether it was the subject of matter or the background's varying strokes of paint. Once an idea of how the project would progress was conjured, I listed subjects such as a heart, face and panels. Each one had a correlation to emotions whether it was metaphorically or literally. Within those subjects core themes were present, for instance, the heart held longing and reflection. When these concepts are paired with a chaotic background it shifts the somber mood into one of a mental break and uncontrolled frustration.

Another concept I configured focused on the use of separated parts on the canvas to allow for different patterns. Doing these new sketches helped me realize that using panels is the best option as it allowed for more contrast within patterns and the messiness appeal. Creating diagonal sections would train the viewers eyes to look in different directions. Within them, I crosshatched the areas where the darker colors will reside. The lighter ones would remain blank with the occasional pattern, from stripes to a minimalist impression of a landscape. Listing the colors I would use helped to plan which colors would go where and it's what I used in the last two pages of my planning.

Reflection

Splat was a project that I was both familiar and unbeknownst to. The concept of messy art that is forgiving in contrast to concise lines and strokes was difficult to grasp. Every time the spray paint went over its border or turned out more pigmented than I had intention to, I would follow through and "fix" it. However, this shattered the whole notion of the abstract culture. So if I were to ever recreate this piece in mind to its inspiration, I would mute the perfectionist objective and allow for uncontrolled movements without any hesitation.

However, the drip painting is mostly dull in this piece and if I were to recreate it I would make it a more distinctive piece of an art work. The idea would follow half, if not 2/3 of the canvas in order to fully connect with the theme of imperfection. With an added subject in mind, like a face morphing into the drips would be a nice concept to adventure upon in the future.



Splat

Process

Setting up the space in which I will spray paint upon consisted of wrapping paper on outdoor pavement. I started with the warm colors first for the top portion of the canvas without any outlines. From there I sprayed the darker colors along the edges and slowly interconnected them towards the middle where the light colors resided. This created a smoky effect as the colors transitioned from harsh shadowing to a softened core. I used the same technique for another square with cool colors instead of warm to portray the different relationships of the tones.

Once the base colors were plastered upon the canvas, I used a paper to spray both black and white lines going opposite ways diagonally. These sections allowed me to create panels and the first one was of the base colors, but brighter. I was also able to create a gradient effect by putting like colors next to each other which furthered a sense of blending. As the section was drying I added a black line towards the middle and used a paper to scap the excess paint which created a texture.

After all the panels were complete I went back and taped a surrounding area towards the bottom. The portion that was inside the tape was covered in black and white acrylic. This was done by adding a splash of water into the paint, mixing it and then flicking the brush towards the space. The brush didn't have the desired result so I cut a straw in half and dipped it into the paint mix, to then hang it over the canvas and direct the paint from that point. However, the paint was too thin and it seeped through onto the next panel atop the black line. Instead of fixing it, I left the patch in order to enhance the messiness effect inspired from Pollock.

Inspiration

Faded

Claude Monet was an impressionist painter who developed the art movement. His intentions on doing so weren't in mind as he painted reality through his eyes. The artist would look at landscapes and illustrate them how he interpreted the lighting and shadows. The term for the style, "Impressionism" was displayed when he described it as the influence of new theories about the physiology of perception. This was a theme throughout a majority of his pieces. Most were of landscapes, though some consisted of everyday spectacle of life from cities to train tracks.



Pond



House of Parliament

Painting

Claude Monet

Colors pre mixed
Dab onto canvas
repeated to create
cumulative effect

Color scheme -> pastel (Pink, yellow, blue, orange)
vibrant (blue, purple, green, red)

Pastel = warm faded
Vibrant = cool number

Themes -> City scope -> water -> urban -> nature

Bridge -> Towers
Hills

Color scheme beyond
connectivity in various
areas

Bridge + water
Claude Monet style
repeated pastel!

Painting

Colors

Warm? Red, orange, pink, purple, yellow

Cool? Blue, Green, Purple, red?

split in top = light & cloudy
middle = sun & shade!

Bottom: Darker - more vibrant

Buildings = mostly colors in warm & cool

Wave Types

Repeating
Peppery -> loose & soft - curves only

Distort
stretch out loose
curves w/ lines

Simplistic
not connected
line work

Painting

Different waves & body of water
before only on water

Beach
landscape w/
small detail on rocks of
shore

Vertical =
More focus on
city in hill, sea
cut off

Horizontal =
Focus on water
sky detail is limited

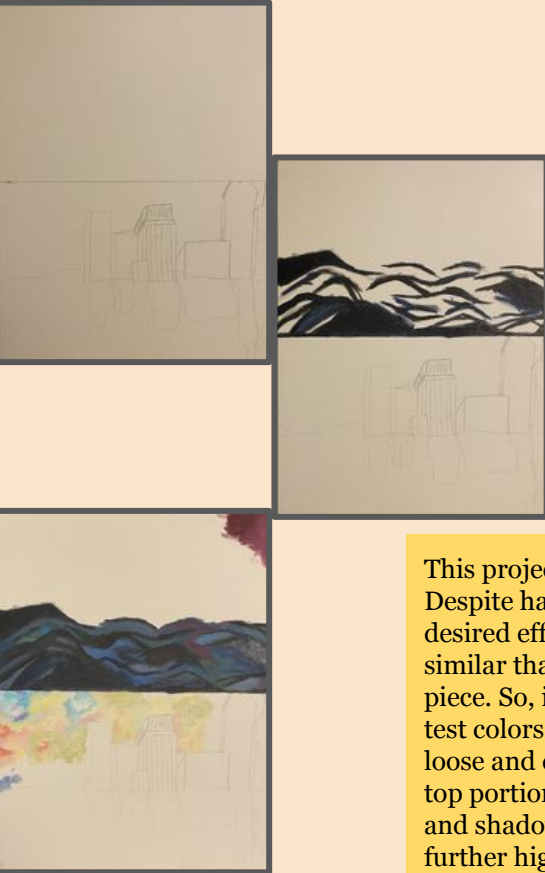
Anchor in water
of buildings

Water scope
to cool vibrancy?
City scope
to pastel!

My plan was to use pastel colors due to it relating to Monet's style and it would allow for the blending of the paint to be less drastic. Once colors were chosen it was time to determine the actual subject. Monet focuses on landscapes and I wanted to take inspiration from that by painting waterscapes, from the vast sea to a city with its reflection. However, the type of waves was needed to be determined. The concept could either focus on the sea as a whole in a close up shot or it could be zoomed out where it cascades over a beach and the barrier between sand and depth. I felt the former was a better fit because it wouldn't draw too much attention from the two ideas I wanted to connect with the cityscape and the sea. From there I sketched the concepts in both a vertical and horizontal sectioning. The horizontal seemed to fit the subjects best as the sea part would have more space to pay attention to the detail within the water. Here it was determined that the top area would be the sea with vibrant colors and the bottom the landscape with pastel.

Planning

Process



In order to split the canvas in half horizontally I measured the length and it came out to 8 inches. From there a point was marked in the middle and on both sides in order to connect a straight. The sketch continued at the bottom where the city landscape would reside and the reflection of the buildings within the water. These didn't have much detail because Monet's works lacked such things. Each building varied in height and width in order to create a diverse setting that isn't too 2D and monotone. I then produced swatches of the paints I would use throughout the process from the dark tones to the light tones. They were separated by their mediums, so acrylic and oil.

I started the top area with oil paint and used vegetable oil to dilute the pigment. The hope was to create a water effect however, it made it difficult to layer the paint and show a decent pigment. At this point I had to wait for it to dry in order to go over it so I focused on the areas that I hadn't gone over with the oiled brush. These spots were focused on the general outline of the waves which took on an impressionistic concept. From there I followed the areas with cool colors that varied in brightness. The outlines were too dark so a light surrounding was needed to create contrast. From there I played with the idea of using a burgundy for the sky which turned out better than expected. As I waited for the parts to dry I started on the bottom a little with pastel colors that derived from the original paints with added whites and slight mixing between each color.

Reflection

This project was particularly challenging due to its medium being both acrylic and oil paint. Despite having experiences with the tools, I have yet to practice enough in order to gather the desired effects I would like to translate within my art work. The values at times were too similar that it was difficult to discern the water from the sky in the bottom portion of the piece. So, if I were to do this again I would focus more on the experimentation process and test colors next to each other, as well as different forms of the subjects. The waves seemed too loose and didn't hold much structure so at times it was difficult to tell that it was a sea in the top portion of the artwork. Sketching wave patterns and paying attention to how highlights and shadows fall upon the ripples would be best if I did do this again. The details would be further highlighted with the paints so as to establish the impression that it is a realistic sea body.



Faded

Inspiration

Wonder

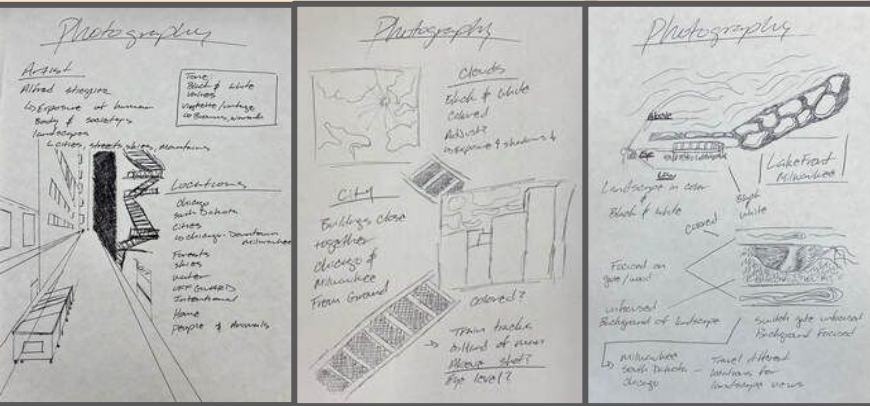
Alfred Stieglitz is a photographer who enjoyed capturing the modernized moments of life. His intention was to portray society in a different lens compared to its professional and tense captures within photographs. Individuals preferred portraits but Stieglitz did the opposite as he took photos of ominous landscapes that were often depicted with a smoky effect. The artist consistently took pictures in black and white, while some held a tanned quality to them. These were generally captured to illustrate the darkness within positive locations. At times Stieglitz would use people as subjects but took close up shots. These were often obscure and close to or nude.



The Hand of Man



From My Window at An American Place



I decided to list locations that I thought would have the best subjects to capture or influence me to take pictures. These included cities such as Chicago and downtown Milwaukee, as well as natural landscapes with water and forests. I was confident in the selection and sketched a viewpoint of an alley to see if it was something I would be interested in capturing. The city holds many buildings and life and I knew it would be one of the main points where I take pictures.

The tone of the photographs would vary from subject to subject such as Stieglitz has done with his works. They would consist of black and white, as well as colored. From this point I decided to color code the locations that will be either black and white primarily or colored. This was done by figuring out which locations would be best fit for somber moods and others for joyful ones. Another option that needed to be decided for the locations was focus points. If the camera is brought too close to the subject, it can focus on the background or the foreground. I decided subjects that have fences or wooden objects would be best fit for this and selected parks for this experiment.

Planning

Process

I started to take pictures of subjects that I found interesting within the Milwaukee area and downtown. These consisted of the buildings and how different vantage points will curate the best pictures. This was done by taking numerous pictures from eye level, below and above. The pictures I took focused on landscapes and nature, such as forests and rocks to enhance the quality that is often perceived by onlookers. Clouds were one of Stieglitz's main style when it came to photographing life and that is why I took a handful of the sky.

Once I had a good amount of photos I edited them to black and white. After they switched from colored, I applied the same adjustment to all the photos with : **13 exposure- , 89 brilliance , 100 highlight , -89 shadows , 53 contrast , -22 brightness , 7 black point , 44 sharpness , 13 definition , 42 vignette**

These all created somber moods to the photos whilst others seemed more ominous than before.

The next set of photos were colored with the intention of adding variance to my collection. Once the pictures were acquired I edited the one that I thought correlated to Stieglitz's style the most and left the rest as is. The choice in doing so was to keep the work honest to what another would see if they were standing in the location. However, the edited photo would demonstrate how much exposure and shadows can change a photo. To edit it I used the following arrangements :

-65 brightness , 44 contrast , 63 structure , 27 warmth , -71 highlight , -46 shadows , 58 vignette , 19 sharpen

Reflection

This project was particularly enjoyable due to the lack of restrictions and the ability to capture any subjects that caught my eye. This meant that I focused on general landscapes as well as obscure portraits. However, I felt that the later was lacking and would like to put more emphasis on it if I were to do this project again. Taking pictures of people in their everyday life or in moments that hold the most emotion would be best to try out. I feel this would correlate greater with Stieglitz's method and how he portrays his art.



Wonder

Inspiration

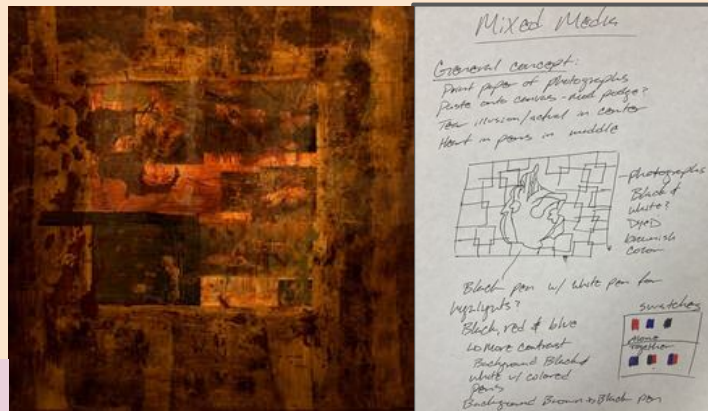
Distraught

Emma Ferreira is a mixed media artist who went to school for photography. It is there where she learned how to capture the human body in its most vulnerable and reserved form in a bold manner. She plays with the lighting of each piece, focusing on the chest areas or in her epoxy pieces, the center. When she is not photographing she is cutting paper and coloring it before pouring epoxy over the panels. This instills a cracked and deconstructed look that would soon become her theme.

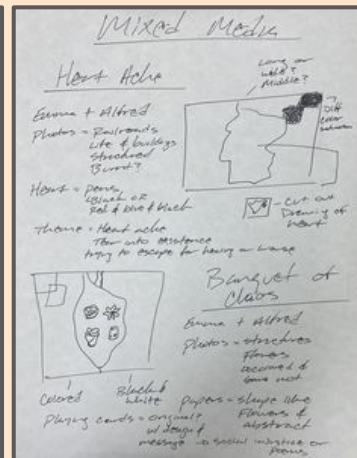
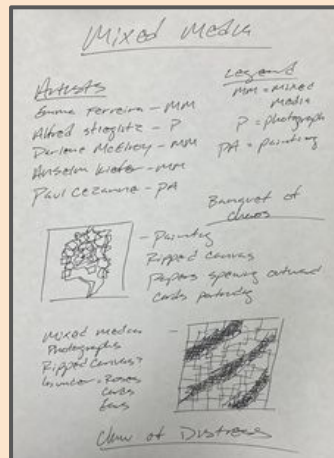
Planning

Going into this project I already knew the medium I was going to use. This would be paper mâché and pen, colored blue red and black. With these in mind I started to form ideas of the direction the art piece would go. The subject was the easiest as I knew I wanted to make an anatomical heart. Once that was created with the pens it would be transferred over to the bare canvas. From here I tried to plan out how the canvas would look. I want to keep the common theme of eruption in correlation to enrapture. How the two contrast each other in balance. This could be done by ripping the canvas within the middle and areas where the heart would fit to cause the effect of it popping outward. Colored pages would be pasted around in a vintage tone. To do this I would either drip the paints in a dark brown substance or burnt edges of the papers. Afterwards I could use either mod podge or epoxy like Ferreira did. The addition of swatches of the pens helped determine the quality of the colors.

I planned to experiment with the photographs that I would take in order to create the background. From black and white, images with low contrast and vibrant ones. The bright pictures would be scattered or focused in a certain area of interest once the heart was drawn. The pop of color would add contrast to the piece while also sticking to the theme. It would also be interesting to cut the canvas in half with a vertical line and do different images in the background, one side black and white the other colored.



Instinct to Love



Before I started the drawing of the heart, I laid out the images I would use for the background. I chose to use both colored and black and white to add contrast to the piece. These were photographs from *Wonder* and *Reflecting Upon Holy*. Trimming the white edges allowed the papers to be more clean cut and I shifted them in place where the colored ones would be visible despite the heart being in the middle. From there I glued them onto the paper and afterwards went over each section and overlapping crease with mod podge. This made the piece glossier in order to take further inspiration from Emma Ferreira's art works.

I experimented with different colors within an anatomical heart and found that shades of red was the best fit. This was successful due to a use of a palette that put the colors next to each other. From there I created the original sketch that would be used and started with the dark colors before transitioning to the lighter colors. The veins were created with blues to differentiate the dark shadows of black. In addition, areas were left white to instill a shiny highlight in the tubes of the heart.



Process

Reflection

This project was a learning process that I enjoyed partaking in. Before this, I didn't know that mod podge can be both a sealant and a catalyst for producing a glossy look. I felt this was the main tool that I used throughout the whole project and it really made the images more vibrant, opposed to their previous state of being matte. However, I would like to use solely mod podge when gluing the images as I used Elmer glue to originally paste the images, and as a result, there are areas that didn't take too well to the sharpie. Despite the little mishap, I am proud of the final product. Although there are things I would do differently if I were to do this again.



Distraught

Museum + Progress of Paintings

The Art Institute of Chicago is home to posthumous artists who have defied their era. I analyzed more than a handful of artworks, ranging from clay sculptures to oil paintings. It is the same place where I found inspiration for my *Faded* painting which consists of the same medium that is used by Claude Monet. His collection was few with only four paintings, yet his technique left numerous people in awe when critiquing it. Comparing his works to Vincent van Gogh was particularly interesting due to his ability to create texture with the paint. I found that seeing the artwork, *Water Lilies*, in person enabled me to understand the piece better. The paint was raised and the surface isn't as smooth as it is pictured online when searching for inspiration.

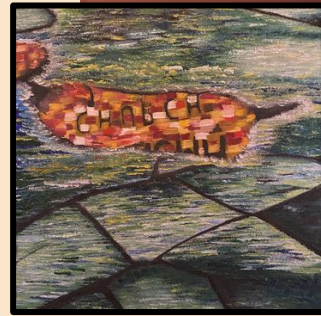
My progress throughout my painting experience has improved greatly. In *Blurred Glance* I didn't blend the colors as much, both due to my inspiration and because I was afraid to make mistakes. However, in *Thick Skinned*, I stepped out of my comfort zone and experimented with different blending techniques. In addition, I created a broad palette instead of relying only on cool colors like the previous project. In *Faded* I tied all the skills I learned and used both cool and warm colors to project my artwork. It allowed me to use highlights to my advantage to make the skies pop, rather than my first two paintings that weren't as vibrant nor had bright highlights.

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