

Process Portfolio

Planning and Development of Ideas: *Piece of Mind*

As I ventured into my mind to come up with ideas for my digital collage, I found it quite difficult to focus on and stick to a single concept. My mind is constantly flowing with ideas, and they aren't always good ones. It is my goal for every art piece to create high-quality and outstanding visuals that evoke meaningful ideas that are very personal to me. While I believe I was able to achieve this to an extent through my digital collage, I regret not choosing my better ideas instead. Working with Photoshop was a new experience for me, and considering that I never used digital art as a media before, I'd say I did a pretty good job inquiring my creativity with the different aspects of the program that I used to produce my digital collage.

Creating my planning sketches was one of the most important and fundamental steps towards creating my digital collage. My plans and intentions are expressed through my sketches and are also presented in the final piece. Through my digital collage I meant to create an image of what I think my mind would look like as a location or even to create a glimpse of what I believe goes on in my head based on the ideas and emotions that I encounter on a daily basis. Randomness and disorder are key components of the paintings by artist, Salvador Dali. His painting style perfectly matches with the format of art that I am utilizing as well as enhances the quality of the presentation of my work. This is a piece about the mind and the ideas and images that float around in it. While the images may seem absurd and random, there is a great purpose and significance for a certain object to construct an image of itself in my mind and in this collage. That aspect is also reflective of the unpredictability and disorder of my thoughts.



Planning Sketches

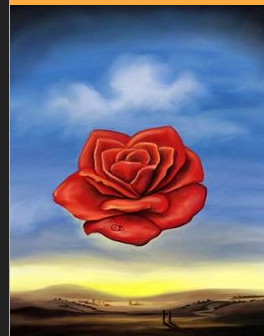
Artistic Inspiration and Experimentation: *Pieces of Mind*

Experimenting with the different tools on Photoshop was a very fun and interesting experience. By doing this, I was able to familiarize myself with the different aspects and capabilities that Photoshop offered. Once I figured out how to do certain things such as changing the color of objects, using different layers, cropping and cutting images and manipulating the overall image, I was able to put my piece together and create the art that I want to present as my final work. The first image shows how I was changing the background pattern that would establish the color scheme and emotion evoked by my piece. At this point of the process, I had figured out that I wanted my piece to be colorful and give off a strange, surreal vibe, much like the art by Salvador Dali. The second image is evidence of my creative flow starting slow down and me starting to incorporate random elements into the piece. I had added images of butterflies, a wolf, a coyote, and even a giant egg-roll that appears to be floating above the lake and the light house up in the sky. The sort of imagery that I created here is very imaginative and wacky, some may even deem it to be tasteless and uninspired. I can admit that at this point I didn't really know what I was doing anymore, but the end result was what I chose to stick with because I really liked how it was random and zany like a dream can be. This ties into my inspiration in the way that Salvador Dali's works always looked like scenes from a dream. The third image is where the piece had the most changes done to it, as some of the pieces were cut and copied back on to create this sort of almost "broken glass" effect. It worked out very nicely and was able to create a great contrast to what the rest of the piece looked like. In the last image I tried to further develop that contrast by changing the color of the pieces that were cut to something that lacks color to look unlike the colorful and bright images that were behind them.

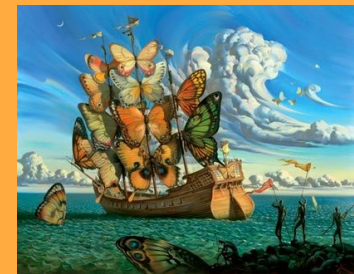


Artistic Inspiration: Pieces of Mind

This art piece was heavily inspired by the works of Salvador Dali. Salvador Dali was famous for creating art that looked grotesquely distorted and realistic. The two pieces by him that bare the greatest similarities to my digital collage and that I used as my inspiration are "Ship with Butterfly Sails" and "Rose Meditative". His piece "Rose Meditative" displays a large, overbearing red-rose in the vast, blue sky.



Rose Meditative, Salvador Dali, 1958



Ship with Butterfly Sails, Salvador Dali, 1937

Artistic Inspiration and Experimentation: *Nymph*

My greatest inspiration for this piece was the appearance and music of Marina Diamandis. Her music perfectly embodies vanity and issues that pertain to beauty and stereotypical femininity among adolescent girls. The songs by her that inspired me the most when creating this piece were "I am Not a Robot," "Teen Idle" and "Girls". While music was the inspiration behind the meaning of this piece, visually my piece is meant to be a combination of American pop art by Roy Lichtenstein and the works of Alphonse Mucha from the Art Nouveau movement. Both Lichtenstein and Mucha typically paint attractive females and have art that focuses on the beauty of the female figure. Lichtenstein's peculiar style is more cartoony and bold while Mucha's art possesses a touch of realism along with intricate patterns and small vivid details that surround the subject of the painting. My art piece presents a somewhat cartoony style like Lichtenstein as well as the ornamental and visually stunning aspects of Mucha's that center around the beauty of females.



Pierres Précieuse, Alphonse Mucha, 1900



Crying Girl, Roy Lichtenstein, 1964



- I was very proud of how well this print turned out, it was my best print out of all the ones i did. Unfortunately, it was smudged due to improper care.
- This is what the print looked like when I didn't spread enough ink over the surface of the linoleum carving.

Reflection: *Nymph*

Admittedly, working with this new medium, linoleum and relief ink, was very difficult. I had struggled a lot in carving the linoleum, and even harmed myself accidentally on several occasions throughout the process because it was quite hard to handle the sharp tools that I used to do the carving. Although the process was arduous and even frustrating to execute at times, the end result made me overall proud of my efforts. That's the great thing about working hard, the satisfaction and feeling of accomplishment that is felt once the task is complete. I was especially happy with how this piece turned out because it is beautiful and visually appealing and interesting in the way that it inquires many intricate patterns and small significant details that work together to present the image that i foresaw at the very beginning of the process when I was planning it all out. The only aspects of my final piece that I wasn't satisfied with were the very small details that didn't turn out as clean or defined as I imagined they would be. More specifically, the mouth and eyes were the parts that could have definitely been improved. I was expecting more defined-looking lines but unfortunately, because I found carving quite difficult, especially for smaller details, was not able to deliver the high expectations that the piece had potential to meet.

Themes and Artistic Inspiration: *Humans and Nature*



This piece addresses both the nature of humankind as well as the external forces that affect what it revolves around. The nature within a person can corrupt them and break them while forces of nature such as plant life like trees and flowers can positively affect humanity. Nature should be appreciated, although its importance is often overlooked. In my piece I use the example of the branch that supporting a cup of tea that the woman is drinking to represent how external nature is helpful and aids in supporting human life. The woman's body is made of a sort of glass case, somewhat like a fish tank, and inside the fish tank is a squid that is using its tentacle to embed a dart into the glass chest of the woman, willing it to break and cause the woman to fall apart.

These two images shown to the right are examples of how I failed to properly create a drypoint print. Either by applying an insufficient amount of ink.



The Therapist,
Rene Magritte, 1937



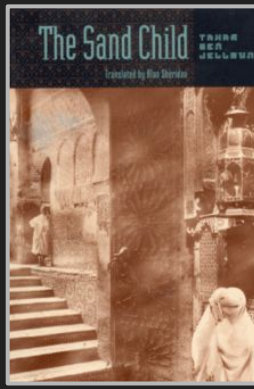
Perpetual Motion, 1935, Rene Magritte,
1935

Artistic Inspiration: *Humans and Nature*

I incorporated a similar style as Belgian surrealist painter, Rene Magritte. He often depicts human figures in surreal situations and with their body parts being fused or combined with animals or inanimate objects. These assets are applied to my dry point in the way that I present a female figure with random objects interacting with her. Aesthetically as well as meaningfully, my piece is meant to resemble Magritte's earlier works. It was also my intention to create a piece that is both thought-provoking in the same way that Magritte's paintings are.

Artistic Inspiration: Ephemera

The Sand Child by Tahar Ben Jelloun, is a book that I read in my HL Literature Class in my junior year of high school. It was a very powerful book that addressed self-identity and how it is influenced by society and culture. It was during a class discussion regarding the meaning of the title, "The Sand Child", when I realized the artistic potential of sand sculptures breaking and falling apart. The story is about a Moroccan man named Mohammed Ahmed who was born biologically a female but was raised by his father to be a man in order to fulfill his wish of bearing a son. Ahmed soon learns that his role as a man and his actions are greatly influenced by his Moroccan society and he begins to feel inadequate as he is. He begins to fall apart, much like sand, and then becomes his own person and create an identity that he is comfortable with. The allegory that sand holds in the title and in general is that no matter what the sand is molded into, it will eventually fall apart.

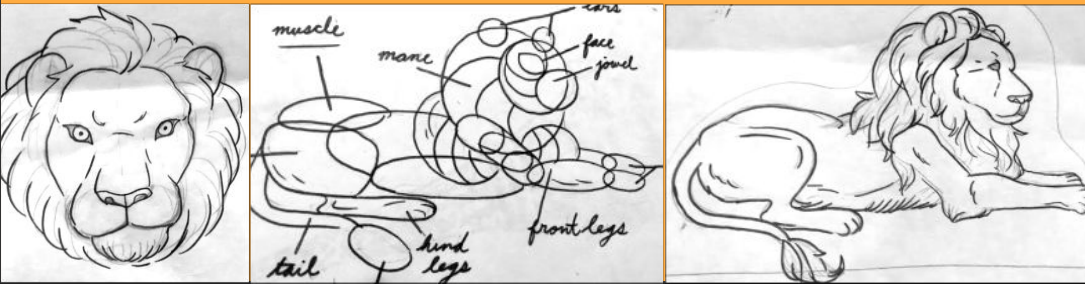


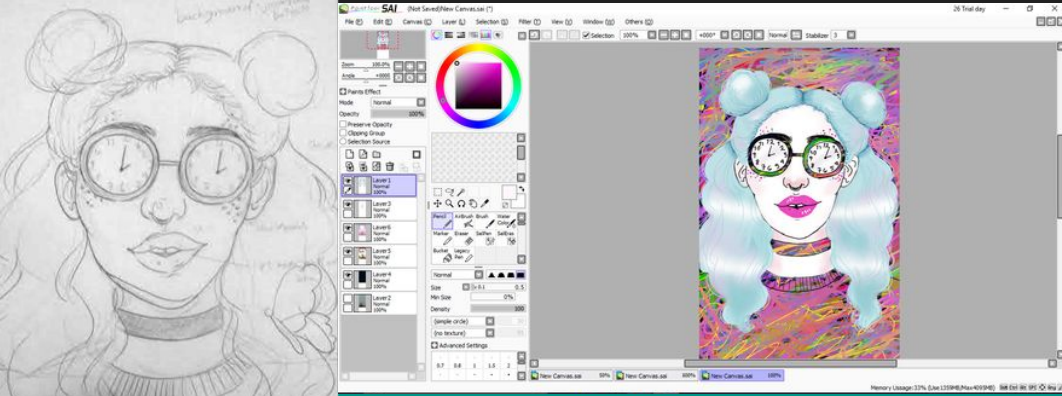
The Sand Child, Tahar Ben Jelloun, 1985

Planning and Process: Ephemera

The practicality of working with sand to create an ephemeral piece worked well to establish the technical qualities of my piece as well as the meaning behind it. Working with this new medium required extensive planning in regards to the material that was used which is sand. During the planning stage of this project, I decided that sand was the appropriate medium and that the subject that I was going to sculpt is a lion. I was able to relay the meaning of this piece by making connections to a novel by Tahar Ben Jelloun, The Sand Child. As sand sculptures are a very fragile medium that are easy to destroy, I had to work cautiously to create the foundation of the sculpture. The part that was very tedious to inhibit was creating the details that would further integrate the physical qualities of a lion. This required the incorporation of clay carving tools and interval applications of water to keep the sand dense and moldable.

Planning Sketches





The first step was to create the colorful background by acquiring painting techniques that were used by Jackson Pollock to create his works. I used the video below to help me develop the techniques I required to emulate Jackson Pollock's unique painting style. After creating the background, I teared out some pages from my notebook and laid it on the canvas to create the face and neck of the girl in my piece. After gluing down the paper, I used acrylic paint to paint the face details and hair. The final step was acquiring the clocks and placing them on the canvas to serve as the lenses of the glasses.

Planning and Technique: *Time's Lenses*

The main idea that I was hoping to get across with this piece is wonderment and calamity." Wonderment" are "calamity" are both ideal word's to use when describing adolescence. The concept of time is a big theme that I wanted to make apparent with my piece, as I express how time is the catalyst of such wonderment and calamity that is experienced throughout adolescence. The subject of the piece is meant to be a representation of a teenage girl who is going through a transitional and experimental phase in her life. Her strange hairstyle along with accessories and exaggerated makeup composes an appearance that is meant to be desirable and aesthetically pleasing to teenage girls. The most important aspect of the piece is of course the glasses. The lenses of the glasses are made of functioning clocks. The clocks hold a significant purpose that is meant to symbolize how everything that is observed by the eyes of a teenager is ultimately affected by time. The lenses which are made of clocks are meant to obscure the vision of the wearer and this provokes mixed feelings. Those feelings are expressed by the flying colors that outline the subject and serves as the background of the piece. Another notable aspect of my piece that holds great significance is the use of notebook paper as the complexion of the teenaged girl. The purpose for this was to express how teenage girls are stereotypically "thin skinned" meaning they are overly emotional and very sensitive. I used pages from my notebooks to represent the essence of the teenage girl consuming her time by doing school work. In a way, her story is written on her skin, with doodles, notes, and school work being present among the notebook pages.

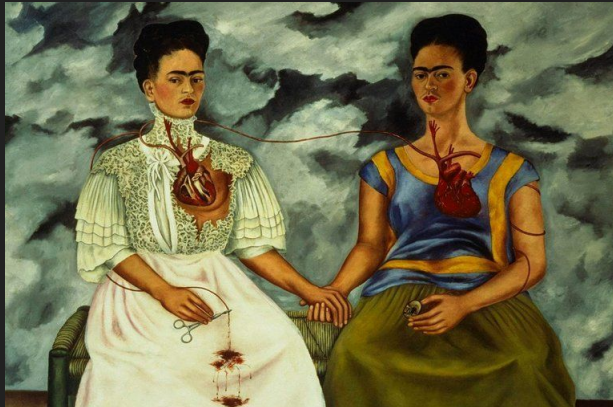


Intentions and Inspiration: *Volatile*

My triptych, *Volatile*, is a set of three canvases that represent how I perceive myself in my environment. It is greatly influenced by the styles of Frida Kahlo and Kaneoya Sachiko. The first panel, represents how I view myself as an influence to my environment, the second panel represents how my environment affects me and drives me to certain actions, and the third panel represents how I wish to be viewed as well as how I would like to influence my environment. For this piece, I wished to combine the cartoon-like elements of Matisse's works with the format of Frida Kahlo's iconic self portraits and bring it all together with the strange and imaginative style and aesthetic of Kaneoya Sachiko's artworks. The three panels are essentially self portraits of myself as viewed from different perspectives to reflect the unique properties of my character from those separate viewpoints. Frida Kahlo is well known for her artistic interpretations of herself through her meaningful self portraits. The themes explored by Frida Kahlo's artwork included spirituality, confrontation, and nature. I tried to include similar themes in order to give my art more depth and give the audience a better vision of my perspective. A few themes that were included in my artwork were mental illness, feelings of inadequacy in a school environment, and social ineptness.



Self Portrait, Frida Kahlo, 1940

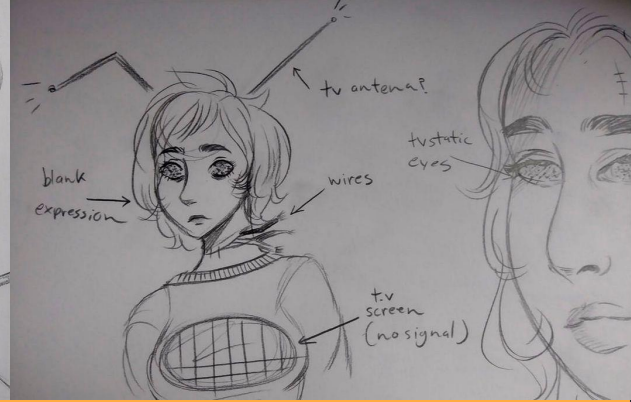


The Two Fridas, Frida Kahlo, 1939

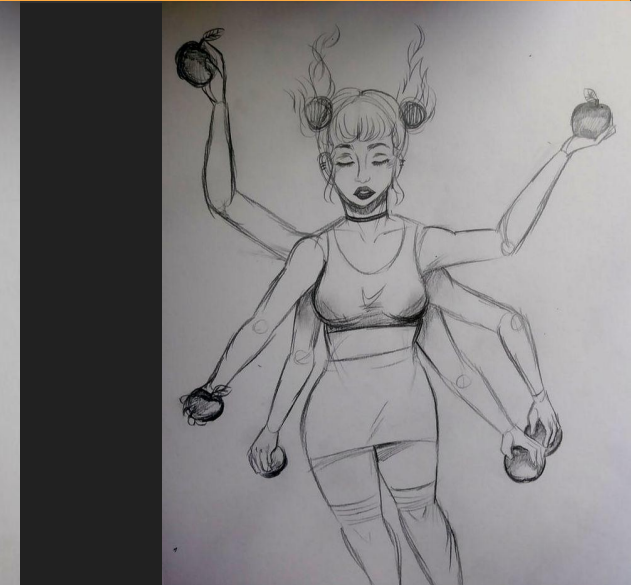


Details and Conceptual Qualities: *Volatile*

The first panel displays myself being coiled by vines of red roses that bloom around me throughout the painting while also binding my body and causing me harm. This panel represents how I affect my environment in a way that is meant to please others while also being detrimental to myself. The roses hold a great significance by being the product of my being, the manifestation of my self-expression. I feel that in any environment, especially school, I am hardly given the freedom to do things for myself or my own enjoyment, my actions are usually dictated by the expectations of those in my life that I wish to please. The second panel represents how my environment affects me. This piece represent how I feel like I am being manipulated by my environment as if I were a marionette and how that is detrimental to me. In the piece you can see me holding a pill bottle which is meant to be a medication that I use to control my anxiety. From the pill bottle emerges a colorful flower that blossoms and presents a large pill. This aspect of the piece addresses my mental illness as a result from my stress-inducing environment, more specifically, my school environment. The third panel has to do with my desired effects on my environment that I strive for. In this panel I painted myself having multiple arms to represent different aspects of my personality and the reach that I wish to make in the world. Other important symbols are embedded to my artwork.



Planning Sketches: *Volatile*



Developing Style and Concept: *Wild Youth*

By having Takashi Murakami as my inspiration for this choice piece, my intention was to emulate the aesthetics that are found in Murakami's artworks. Murakami creates very fun and imaginative pieces that are reminiscent of many cartoon styles. Cartoon-like styles are very fun to experiment with and as they are very flowy and allow a lot of creative freedom. Having a personal interest in cartoons and animation myself, I found it easy to develop an interesting concept with corresponding visuals.



“Graduation” album cover, Takashi Murakami, 2007



Kaikai Kiki, Takashi Murakami. 2009

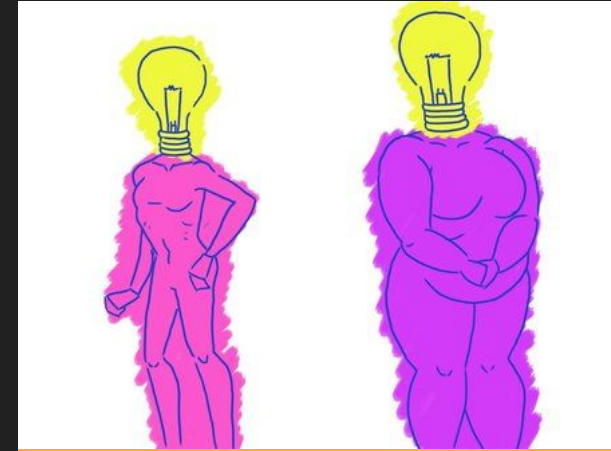
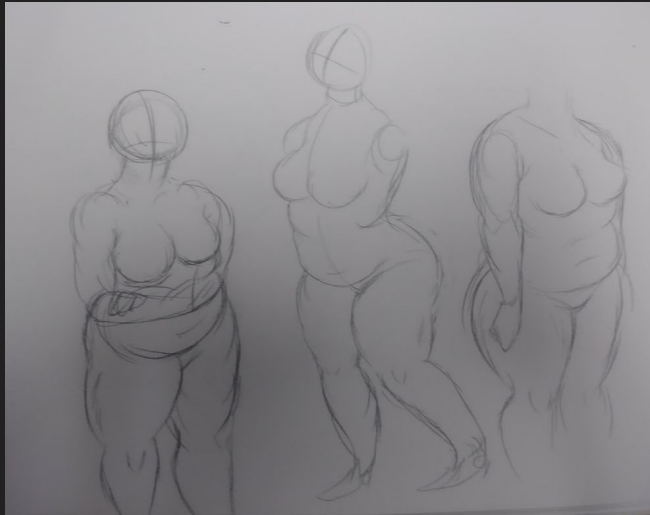


Artistic Inspiration: *Wild Youth*

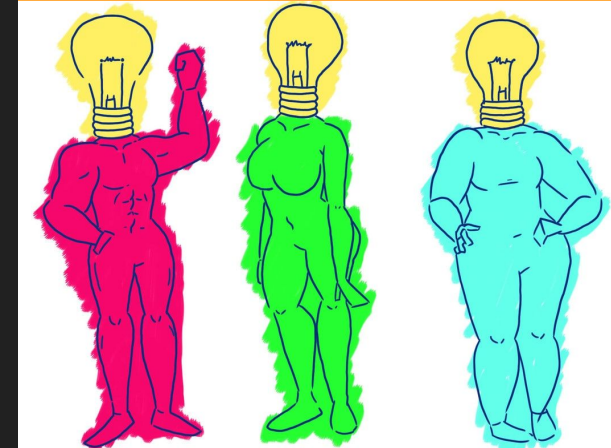
The artworks of Takashi Murakami were my greatest inspiration for this piece. Murakami's unique and fun art style was very appealing and visually pleasing. Murakami is a contemporary artist from Japan who specializes in commercial arts. Murakami's most outstanding works tend to be the ones that he creates in collaboration with other enterprises. Murakami is best known for being the designer behind Kanye West's album “ Graduation” in 2007. Overall, Murakami exhibits very powerful and colorful pieces that work well in modern advertising as well as individual artwork.

Planning and Experimenting with Different Body Types: *Incandescent Females*

My intention for creating this piece is to celebrate the diversity of female body types. A crucial step for developing a design for my piece was to practice drawing the different body types and familiarizing myself with the human anatomy. First I created sketches on paper with pencil to allow my ideas and technique to flow better. Another step that I took was creating digital sketches on Photoshop to get a better sense of what I wanted my sculptures to look like. Originally, I wanted to create models of five or more body types including, thin, plus-size, curvy, muscular and pear-shape. To further develop my message of diversity and acceptance, I was also going to include the sculptures with different types of clothing. Adding clothing to the sculptures would have allowed me to explore the idea of how anyone can wear whatever they want, despite their shape, size, color or gender. I didn't go with this idea because I wanted to instead focus on one idea and that idea was the one about body positivity. It is important for me to express my beliefs and stances when it comes to certain social issues such as body shaming and idealizing female beauty.



Digital Sketches



Process and Development: *Incandescent Females*

In order to make my vision into reality and create the sculptures, I utilized clay, carving tools and paints. I decided to go with two main, contrasting body types, thin and plus-size. The more difficult of the body types to mold was the thin body type, mainly because I made the figure standing rather than sitting down like the plus-size figure. It was a challenge to create a figure that is both thin and could stand on its own. Aside from adding a thick foundation at the feet of the figure, I also had to include a wooden dowel inside of the sculpture to allow it to stand. Originally I was going to have the clay figures fired in a kiln but I didn't want to risk having them break or any other complications destroying or distorting the sculptures. Instead I allowed the clay to dry gradually and without heat. That way the original shapes of the sculptures could be maintained. After the clay completely dried, I then painted over it using silver paint. Then I used a hot glue gun to place the lightbulbs at the top of the sculptures. The final step was to add small fragments of cd pieces. This was done to further emphasize imagery that has to do with light in connotation with body positivity. To do this, I placed the cd's in warm water for a few minutes in order to easily cut them into small pieces. After cutting the cd's, I used a hot glue gun to attach them to the sculptures. The fragments of cd were arranged in a way to hide any flaws in the sculptures such as cracks or chipped paint.



Assessment Questions: *Zephyr*

1. How does your work create a relationship between land and water?
The walls embrace the lake shore by creating pathways and obscuring the view of the lake to the eye of the beholder, in this case, the person viewing the lake.

2. What feelings will people have upon seeing, entering, walking through your structure?
Confusion over the architectural decisions of the walls and overall structure, sometimes wonderment.

- Explain the feeling people will have on their journey through your structure.

In general, the people will be focused on the lake, but the journey they will take in order to achieve that will be interesting and thought-provoking.

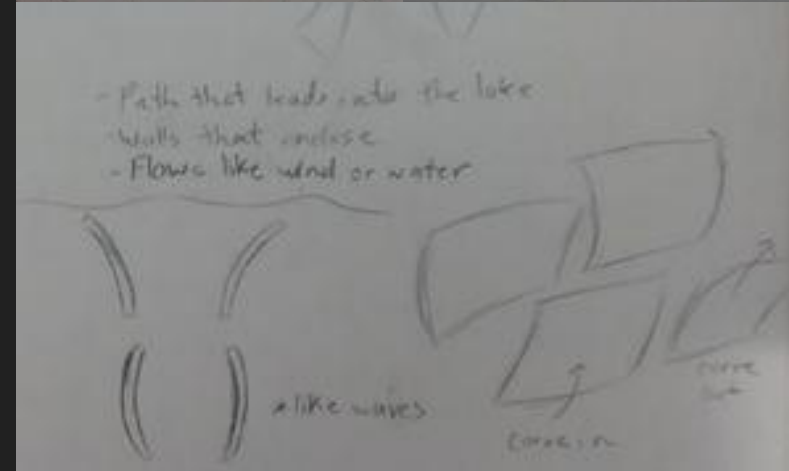
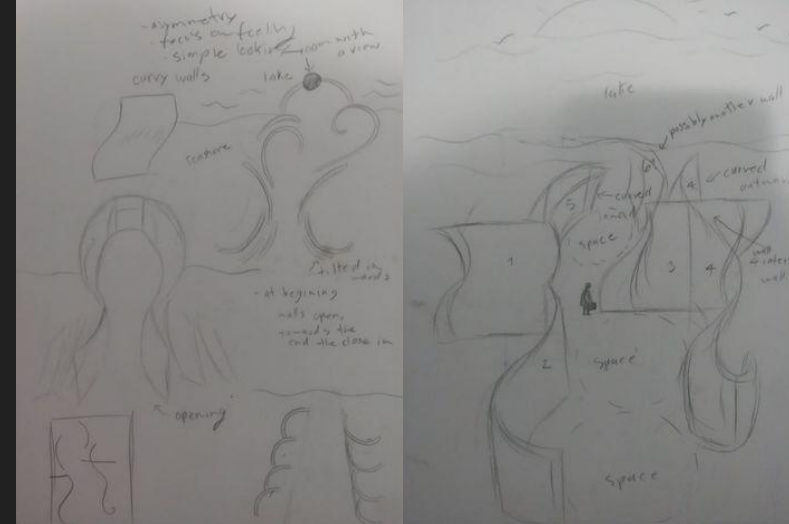
3. How does your structure relate to our world physically as well as with our mind?
The paths are inconsistent and confusing which is reminiscent of the journeys we take in life to achieve our goals. The many pathways are similar to the ones in our mind.

4. How does your structure embrace the lake?
The arrangements of the walls are mindful of the position of the lake and attempt to enhance the experience of viewing the lake.

5. How does your structure use the fundamental architectural components of?

- Path: There are many pathways that one can take to ultimately reach the same goal.
- Portal: Seen as something enchanting and mysterious; thought-provoking like art should be.
- Place: Make it something special, bask in the moment.

6. How does your structure embody meaning?
Every experience that involves beautiful scenery such as the lake should be meaningful, it is important to embrace the aesthetic of the moment.



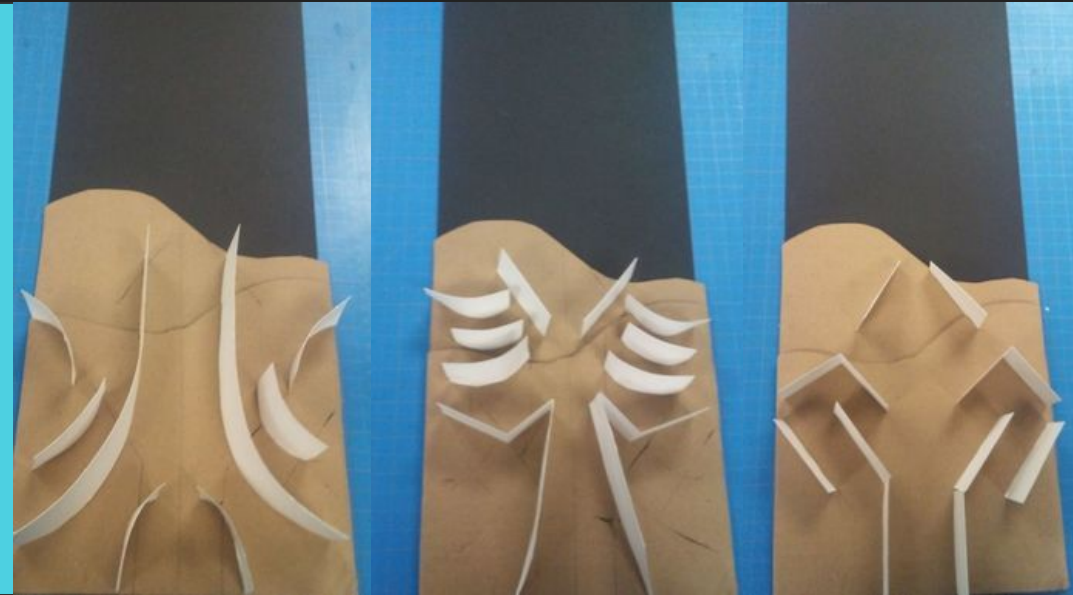
Planning Sketches: *Zephyr*

Function and Purpose: Zephyr

The lakefront always evokes certain feelings of calmness and tranquility within me, there is a sort of peaceful oneness to the scenery of the lakefront and the overall experience of visiting the lake. Through this piece I meant to create a structure that would embrace and enhance those components that are associated with viewing the lake. The design of the walls are conceived to further develop the feelings that are evoked as a result of one's immersion of the situation at hand, that is, being at the lake. When one focuses solely on their surroundings, in this case, the lake view, and thinks of nothing else at that moment in time, they "enter the oblivion" and can fully embrace and indulge in the serene experience. Like a surreal mini-vacation, interacting with this architecture will allow for a pleasant distraction from the harsh realities that people may face, the only thing that should be on that person's mind when pursuing the path of the curved walls is that very moment where they are immersing themselves in the lakeshore in a way that they have never experienced before.

Experimentation: Zephyr

I entered this project with a completely different approach than that of the final piece and end result. At first I created designs for structures that were very rigid and symmetrical. When I was doing this I didn't keep in mind that the structures needed to interact with the lakeshore in an appropriate and fitting manner. My early designs were not as free-flowing as my final design and did not accomplish the intentions for this specific project. I had to make adjustments to the wall structures in order to create flowing pathways. Having pathways is important as it allows a person the illusion of having a choice as to what direction they will follow. Having varying size walls is important to obscure the scenery. Intricate design is interesting when being applied to architectural designs that are meant to be simple.



Exploration of Mediums: Self Portraits



Watercolor Paint:

Utilizing watercolors was somewhat of a challenge because of how unpigmented water colors tend to be. Depending on the amount of water that is mixed with the paint and the shape of the brush, the resulting brush strokes can vary in width, texture and hue. The thing that I did not like about working with watercolors was that the colors were very hard to separate from each other because the water tended to mix them together and bled throughout the paper.



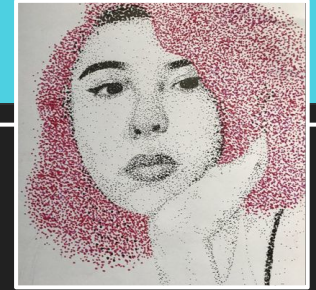
Acrylic Paint:

Unlike with watercolors, acrylic paints create very bold results in an instant. The paints do not mix together as easily as watercolors do and because of this it was quite difficult to blend the colors together. The most difficult parts to blend were the skin tones. It was especially challenging when attempting to create depth and structure. I was able to experiment with conceptual qualities by adding a somewhat surreal twist to the portrait. What I did was paint my face as a mask with flowers emerging beneath it.



Graphite Pencil:

Being familiar with working with graphite pencil, I was able to efficiently create shadows that gave the portrait depth. Aside from using a pencil to create shading and texture, another thing I did to make the shading and texture smoother was a small blending tool made of paper. If I could change the technique that I utilized when creating this portrait, I would have sketched the hair to be much smoother and more realistic.



Markers:

The specific technique that I incorporated for this portrait was stippling with markers. Stippling was the most simple technique to use and I really liked the results. By stippling with markers, I could create depth, structure and shading efficiently. I believe that working with this medium and using this technique garnered the best looking results. I am pleased with how realistically yet simple the design looks.



Themes and Ideas: Mask

Some obvious themes that are connected to the concept of my piece are promiscuity, identity, and vulnerability. The mask is meant to conceal one's identity, motifs and inner beauty by disguising them as a grotesque monster. Although the face is concealed, their body and hair is a physical aspect that remains exposed. My intention for creating these sketches was to experiment with different body positions and concepts. I personally really enjoy drawing womanly figures because of how flowy I can make the linework look. I'm very pleased with how well I was able to draw each figure as they turned out very nicely and served as great practice for creating interesting and intricate positions.

Planning Sketches: Mask

Process and Reflection: Mask

The process of creating an acrylic painting consists of painting in separate layers. The first layer I created was the green to black gradient background. This was done by blending both green and black paint towards the center of the canvas. This was easily achieved through the utilization of paint retarder, which helped by making the paint more soluble and spreadable. After allowing the paint to dry I then started creating the basic outline of the human figure in my painting. This was done by using very pale skin tone colors and using darker shades to create value. In order to create pink undertones like those displayed in Degas' nude paintings, I added very subtle and sheer layers of red and orange paint that I blended into the skin tone colors using paint retarder.

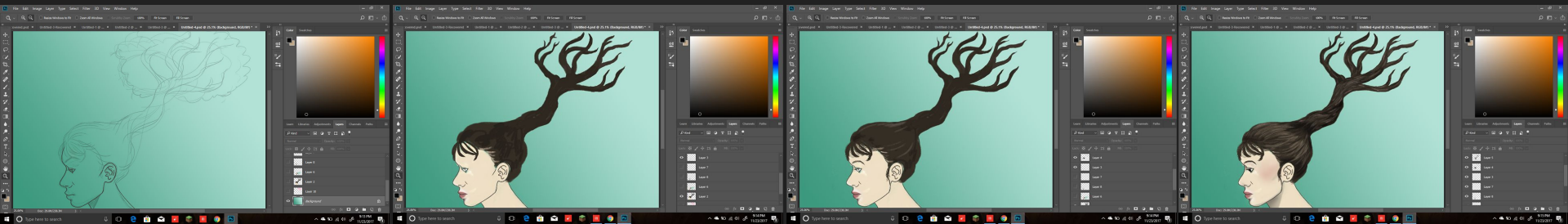
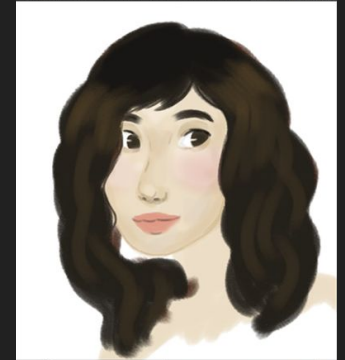
The next layer was used to paint the hair. To me, this was the easiest and funnest part to do, as painting hair comes easily. The stylistic choice that I made to paint very long, white hair was an interesting and fun choice that I am pleased with. The long, white, wispy locks were done elegantly and intricately. For these results, I utilized white and black paint.



Experimentation and Process: *Mindfulness*

This piece is one of the first successful digital paintings that I have done. I had experimented with different digital paint tools on Adobe Photoshop to create tree branches and a face. Both of those components would be combined to create the final piece. This was necessary experimentation that I required in order to master painting human faces as I was going to paint one in my art piece.

The first step in the process of creating the digital painting was creating a rough sketch to serve as an outline for the entire design. Then I added the base colors which were solid and unblended colors. Afterwards, I applied some light shading to the tree, face and hair. Other minor details were added to create texture and more depth to add to the realism. The “blur” tool on Adobe Photoshop was very helpful in blending the colors together. On the face specifically, I had to combine shading, skin pigmentation and underlying redness on the cheeks. The most prominent shading was applied underneath the chin. I believe I masterfully blended the texture of the hair transitioning into the textures of the tree. The textures contrasted each other's well but also intermingled in a complementary and fitting way.

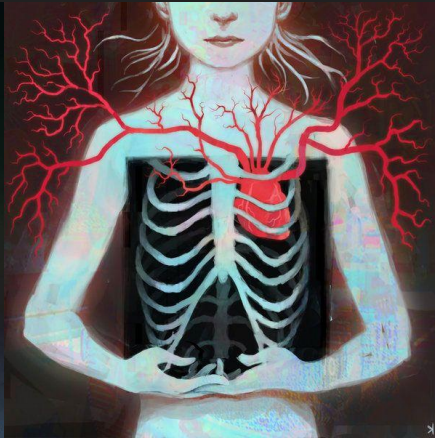


Meaning Behind the Piece: *Mindfulness*

Growth of the mind is the biggest idea that I'm striving to portray in this piece. Calmness and mindfulness are other underlying themes that are embedded to the visuals with specific symbols and stylistic choices. The first and most important choice was the decision to make the tree that is growing out of the woman's head, a cherry blossom tree. This choice was important in the way that it reflected my personal interests and items that are meaningful to me. Cherry blossom trees to me, symbolize beauty, change, and serenity. These three traits are all aspects of my own definition of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the key to being happy and carefree, which I find trouble doing. Being mindful requires living in the moment and focusing solely on your surroundings and the feelings that arise from the situation at hand. The tree being the only thing to emerge from the woman's head symbolize both being focused on one feeling, in this case calmness, and it also symbolizes one's growth of mind.



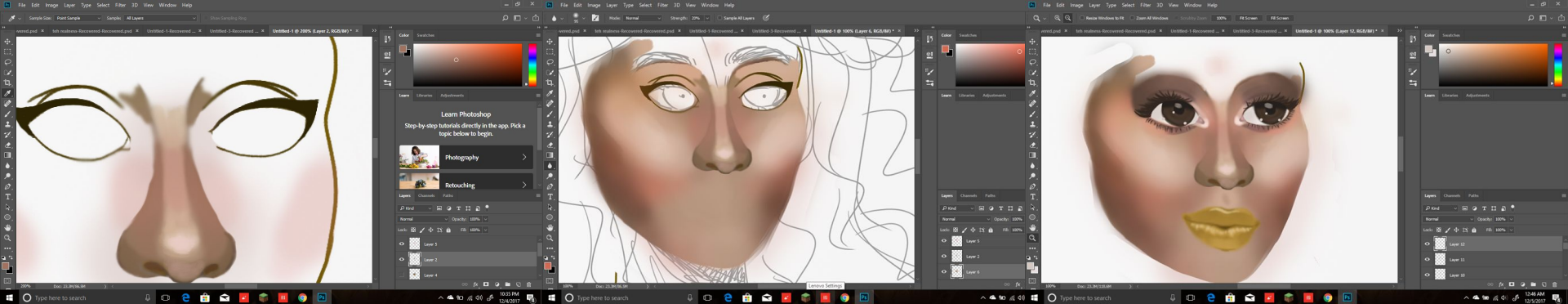
Planning Sketches: *Mindfulness*



Artistic Inspiration: *Mindfulness*

Ken Wong

Ken Wong is an Australian artist whose art mainly consists of imaginative digital illustrations as well as video game art and designs. His goal when creating art is to challenge himself and typical art notions and to introduce new and creative concepts with high levels of craftsmanship. One of the most notable things that he has done throughout his career as an artist and game designer was to work as an art director in the video game *Alice: Madness Returns*. The game was voted "Best Graphics, Artistic, 2011" by Gamespot.



Exploring New Mediums: Digital Painting

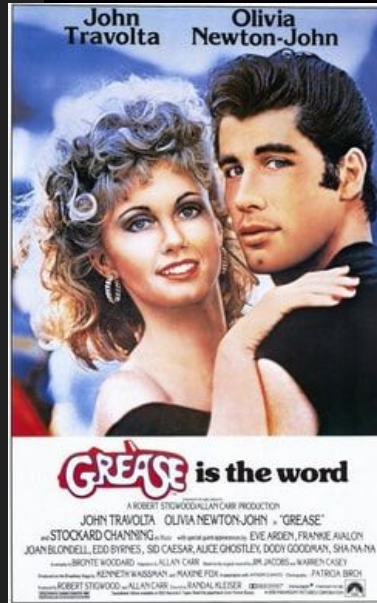
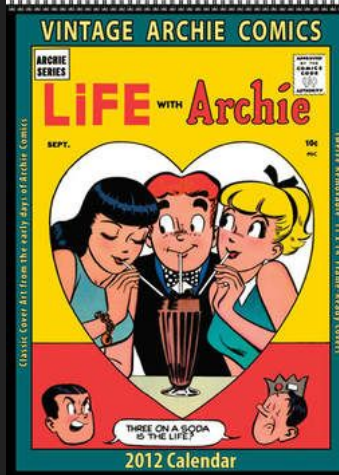
Exploring new mediums can sometimes be challenging but can also allow for great creative freedom. This was the case for my experience with attempting to create digital artwork. In an effort to improve my techniques involving digital art, I decided to experiment with digital painting by creating an image of a female with yellow roses and matching lip color. This was intended to be an official project, but due to my discontent with the final piece, I decided to have it remain as experimentation with unfamiliar media. This unofficial project was known as “Feathery” and was meant to portray a tropical aesthetic combined with themes of female beauty. I utilized Adobe Photoshop to create the piece and was able to experiment with many different tools and assets. Rather than attempting to create a digital painting with a realistic style, I aimed for creating something that was personally stylized and inspired by the appearance of Nyane Lebajoa.



Planning and Investigation: *Sweethearts*

The research I conducted for this project consisted of looking at aspects of 60's culture. These aspects included vintage comics, advertisements, and movies that depict the glamorization of that era, such as *Grease* and *Hairspray*. Despite the constant appeal and glamorization of those times, the 60's were very regressive when it came to certain human rights. This of course, was addressed in *Hairspray* with the racial discrimination and segregation of colored people. Another human rights issue that was prevalent in the 1960's was hostility towards homosexuals. Being openly gay was not very tolerated in the 60's as it is today, and the gay rights movement has come a long way since.

It was a questionable, yet bold decision on my behalf to have this specific piece be done in the form of a block print. I believe that having the piece done as a block print delivered decent results but had the potential to be more emotionally and visually engaging had it been done as a painting or even digital work. One limitation when creating a piece as a block print is that the colorization is limited. Nevertheless, the black and white color scheme of the piece could potentially work in my favor because of the 50's aesthetic that I'm aiming to achieve for this particular piece.



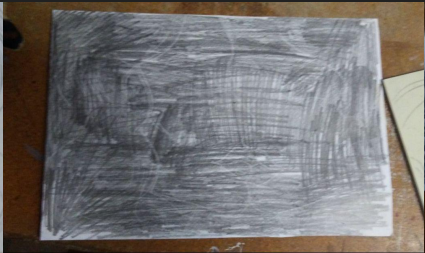
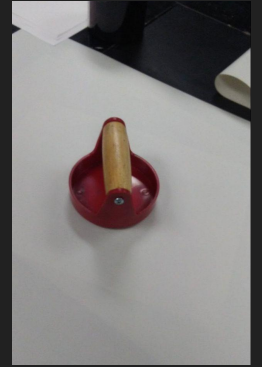
Planning Sketches: *Sweethearts*



My intention for creating my sketches was to experiment with designs that are reminiscent of 50's and 60's culture. What comes to my mind when I think of 50's and 60's are milkshakes, the Archies, and pin-up girls. My second sketch makes an allusion to the Archie comic book series by including the names of the main female characters and love interests of the titular character, Archie.

Process and Materials: *Sweethearts*

To begin the process, I first created multiple sketches to choose from for the design of my block print. I put into consideration the complexity and how compelling each idea was for me. The sketch I chose to base my block print design was a sketch of a nymph that I made during one of my classes. I liked how the design had qualities from both art nouveau paintings as well as comic book like pop art. The next step was to shade the back part of the paper on which I drew my sketch with graphite from a pencil. This facilitates the process of tracing my design onto the linoleum which I had to carve. Once the back is shaded, I then place the part of the paper that is shaded facing the linoleum and then I trace along the lines of my design to make the design appear on the linoleum. After the design has been traced, I carve into the linoleum using a carving tool. Once the design has been fully carved into the linoleum, it can then be used as a stencil to print onto paper. To create a print I had to use the following tools: ink, ink roller, smoothing tool, newsprint, pan. First I used the ink and ink roller to spread ink evenly across the surface of a pan. Then I spread the ink onto the actual linoleum design. After, I laid a piece of blank white paper on top of the linoleum and covered it with newsprint. Finally, I used a smoothing tool to firmly smooth the paper onto the linoleum. I pressed the smoothing tool against the paper and rubbed for about four minutes. Then I removed the paper and unveiled my creation, a beautiful, fresh, new print.



Exploration of Mediums: Photography

As part of my Summer project it was a requirement to explore the medium of photography with practices in photojournalism. This was a great opportunity to take different pictures of the sights and buildings found in Milwaukee and in other parts of Wisconsin. The main focus of my investigation was architecture and capturing everyday moments of my life. The photos that were taken ranged from dull and mundane to colorful and rare.

I made sure to be attentive to formal qualities of art such as space and color. Other things that I experimented with when taking pictures was the angles and the positions of the main subjects of the photographs. I liked experimenting with the balance in each photograph by changing the location of each focal point. The focal point would vary in location to enhance the balance of the photograph and sometimes emphasize a key concept or mood. I focus on conceptual and technical aspects of photographs as I do in paintings because I like to evoke an idea or feeling.

Unlike with my paintings, size and relative distance from the camera view are also put into account when taking a picture. By having this in mind when taking a picture, I am able to play with perspective and obscure or emphasize the main subject of the photograph. This, again works well when I'm attempting to give life and meaning to a photograph and have a greater impact on my audience.



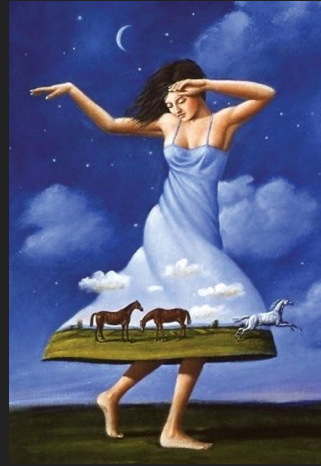
Planning and Investigation: Sea of Thoughts



I was fascinated and greatly inspired by the artworks of Rafal Olbinski. My plan was to recreate one of his paintings with myself in it. In order to be more original and extend my creative reach, I decided to instead incorporate the same aspects with my own ideas to relay a personal meaning and have a personal connection to my artwork. With Sarah Joncas as another inspiration, I also decided that I wanted my self portrait to express a similar aesthetic as her artworks. Basically, my goal for creating this self portrait is to combine the concepts found in Olbinski's artwork with the stylization and aesthetic of Sarah Joncas's work. I decided to go with an underwater theme that can also be used to hold symbolic meaning. The key idea that I stayed inclined to when planning and brainstorming was the idea of colorful jellyfishes swarming around me in a majestic and chaotic manner.

Artistic Inspirations: Sea of Thoughts

Rafal Olbinski: Rafal Olbinski is a Polish illustrator and painter that immigrated to the United States in 1981. He soon established himself as a prominent painter with an art style similar to that of Belgian, surrealist painter, Rene Magritte. Females are usually the subjects of his paintings and they usually have some strange and interesting elements in the dresses that they are painted wearing. The dresses are painted with details that contrast the rest of the painting and have some sort of separate dimension that contain objects that are protruding from the dress. This inspired me to add that same element to my painting, having jellyfishes in the background of my painting to appear as if they emerged from my dress.



Sarah Joncas: Sarah Joncas is a Toronto based painter who specialized in painting female portraits placed in cartoon and film-noir atmosphere. Sarah Joncas was born in 1986 and developed an interest in visual arts at a young age, dedicating herself to drawing detailed images of lizards and dinosaurs. What interests me most about Sarah Joncas is how she decided to move away from working in animation to specialize in creating fine art.

Formal Qualities and Reflection: *Sea of Thoughts*

My self portrait, "Under The Sea" is a surreal painting that meant to represent myself in a whimsical, underwater setting. Inspired by the works of Sarah Joncas and Rafal Olbinski, this piece is a strange, yet enchanting combination of surreal elements and elements of modern art nouveau that emphasizes the beauty of the female façade. The painting has an underwater theme as it involves sea creatures such as jellyfishes, a sea snake, and a coral reef. It has a black background to make the bright, colorful jellyfishes stand out. The black and white snake that wraps around my neck is what stands out of place in the painting as it uses dull shades compared to the rest of the objects in the painting. The snake is meant to represent fears and anxieties that coil around me and linger in my thoughts, almost suffocating me like a snake does to its prey. The Jellyfish also represent an important aspect of my being that represents my creativity and spontaneous personality.



The objects that are displayed in my painting help enhance the meaning behind my piece that pertains to the contents of my mind and being expressed. The ocean and coral reef in my dress are meant to represent my mind, my soul, and my overall being. The sea creatures are meant to be emerging from my dress that is the ocean.

