

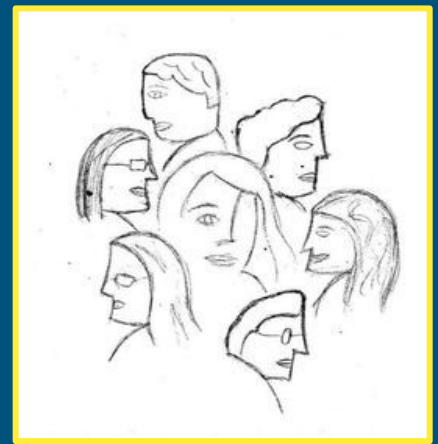
Natalia Ramirez-Vang

Zernitsky's Influence

summer project 1



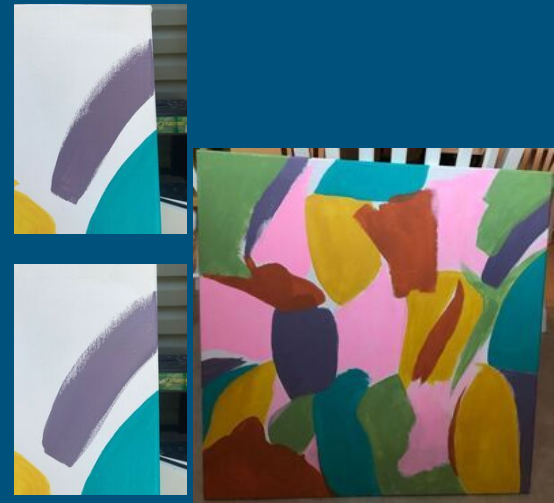
"Friendship" by Leon Zernitsky



Following the concepts of friendship and researching artists that have covered the same theme, I came across Leon Zernitsky, a conceptual artist who specializes in simplistic designs and figures. What caught my attention the most was his use of light colors in the background and the use of a single color for the faces. The contrast between the two is something I appreciated in these pieces and is something I wanted to be sure to recreate in my piece. My final planning sketch resembled Zernitsky's style the most, it includes the simple, yet different and distinct features of the different faces and faces them only sideways to emphasize the center face. My other sketches were more focused on smaller details, such as my first one playing with the thought of only the center face having filled in eyes while the others did not. However, that gave the painting a kind of creepy mood that I did not want to represent. Also, I realized that I had to be careful while shaping the mouths of every face, as making one smile too much or frown too much could make the message confusing. The main dilemma of mine was whether or not include a second eye. There would definitely be space for it on the face and it would be another difference from the surrounding faces, however the use of only one eye is something that I admired from Zernitsky's pieces. Having the ability to place the eye there but choosing not to adds to the simplistic idea and style that this painting has.

“Friends” Process & Reflection

The process of my piece “Friends” consisted of focusing on the bright colors in the background first, leading me to experiment with the colors I did not like once I used them on canvas. I remixed certain colors until I was satisfied, layering each color one at a time in different locations. The final touches of the background included filling the majority of the canvas and leaving very small spaces painted white. I also made sure to overlap some areas with different colors to show the lack of complete neatness in this piece. The next stage was to draw the outline of the painting onto the canvas. This stage took the longest time and was the most challenging as I had to proportion everything and place into the right location on the canvas. I also had to make sure that none of the surrounding faces were larger in size than the center face. The final step in the process was to trace the outline with black paint. This step was also challenging as I had to be careful while outlining because I no longer had the paint for the background, and I would be unable to paint over any mistake I would have made. Luckily, I made no mistakes and was careful while painting with a thin paintbrush. I am very pleased with this piece. I appreciate its concept and I like the way that I chose to convey my subject, however I wish I had done it differently in minor ways. I would like to recreate this piece actually following the materials that Zernitsky had used, with watercolor for the background as it created more of a transparent and lighter effect in contrast to the black paint I would have used for the faces. It would give the faces the effect of popping out more and would emphasize their overlap in color. I feel I did not have that effect as I used all acrylics which resulted in very bold colors for the background, along with thinner lines for the faces in the front. they do not stand out as much as they could have, especially since they do not take up the entire space on the canvas, but I am comfortable with the amount of space that they take up.



Pace's Influence - "Color of Community"

summer project 2

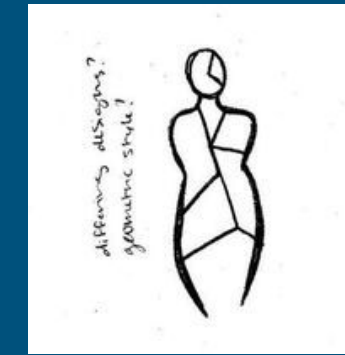


Mid Summer Night's Gathering by

Laurie Justus Pace

With this painting I conveyed the concept of community being a diverse mix of people from all different kinds of background and stories. My purpose of this painting was to capture the beauty of community and the different colors that the many people bring into life, following the inspiration of Laurie Justus Pace. I was inspired by the very colorful pieces of hers, especially the ones that included multiple people. It was almost exactly what I had in mind, and it perfectly conveyed my idea, specifically her paintings "Midsummer Night's Gathering". In this painting, she sets a mood of people enjoying each other, as they are positioned leaning towards one another as if they were embracing each other. This painting almost seems as if it were based off of a photograph of friends, and that is

something that I admired so much about these pieces. Every person consists of a different pattern and different colors making the painting so vibrant and colorful while giving each person their own identity without using faces or clothes. My main planning sketch was the full concept one, where I played with the proportions, positions and colors while maintaining the balance that Pace has in her piece. Unfortunately the colors cannot be seen, however this is the planning sketch that I based my painting off of as it does not seem as if the group of people are random people in any community, they seem as if they are friends.



Process & Reflection



The most time consuming part of the process was painting the inside of the bodies. I had to outline the patterns in pencil, then mix the correct colors, then use multiple sized brushes to fill in the bodies. I painted the darkest colors first, but upon reflection I would paint the darkest colors last, as it was very difficult to paint the lighter colors over the darker colors without them showing from underneath.



When creating the background, I experimented with the orange. I originally painted a darker orange than I had liked, and I especially didn't like the way it stood out more than the lighter, pastel colors. I struggled with the orange shading for the bodies. Since it would be a part of the bodies themselves, I found it more important as they are meant to stand out from the background. It took me many tries and experiments to find a shade of orange that was bright, neon and vibrant enough.



The hardest part of this project was figuring out the subject, but once I discovered an artist who had a piece so similar to my vision, I began to get excited. Because I did not follow her technique and style in painting, I struggled finding the right colors. I do think that the most enjoyable part of this project was being able to portray my appreciation for something that is often overlooked or taken for granted. I often find myself in very diverse communities and groups and I find it interesting that people from very different backgrounds and "colors" can end up in the same place.

Abstract Incorporation

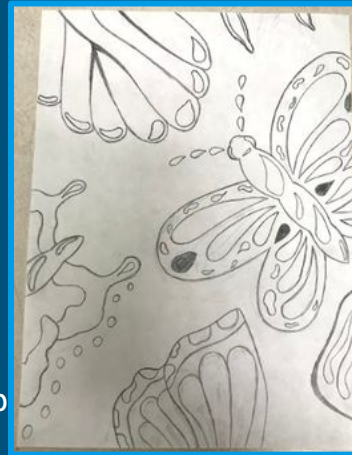
"Abstract Butterflies Triptych" by
Marcia Baldwin (2013)



From the beginning, I knew I wanted to make something very colorful and meaningful. I've already made previous pieces with the symbol of butterflies, but I was especially excited for this one as I haven't done a painting with these vibrant of colors yet. Marcia Baldwin's work has caught my attention before, but I have never been able to incorporate them into mine. Specifically the third panel of this piece caught my attention as you can see the majority of a butterfly and understand what it is, while also seeing the shape of others. I wanted to incorporate this into my piece as I want it to be obvious that there are many subjects in the painting and that it is not only about one specific person or thing. I also want to make sure that they are all going different directions and apply a sense of depth through larger and smaller butterflies to emphasize the concept of students going their own ways.



For the first and main butterfly in my piece "Migration", I wanted to make sure it would take up the most space by including the majority of its body. I wanted a variation of patterns and styles, such as larger fluid shapes and smaller strict shapes. I wanted a very fluid looking style such as Baldwin, and I would do that by including bending lines and a variation of curves and sharp edges.



For the finalized planning sketch, I made sure to evenly distribute the shapes across the paper, drawing each wing to seem as if they were flying in different directions. I also gave each one its own style and colors so that none are repeated. Most importantly, I based each butterfly off of a different species, so that it was obvious that there is a variety of butterflies and people for my meaning, none of which being the same.

Mastering Personal Technique - Blending

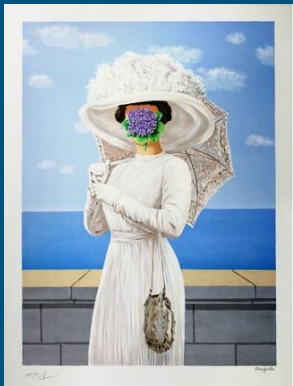


Following my idea of each butterfly having their own style, I wondered if outlining the main butterfly in white paint rather than black would turn out nicer. I only have experience in using black outlines in my past paintings, so I've never seen what a white outline would look like. I also thought that the white would compliment the brighter colors of the background, but as I began the process, I preferred the black outline more. It has more of a contrast to the bright colors of the background, making it stand out more.

To make the process easier for myself and more manageable, I worked on one butterfly at a time, starting with the main one. I began with the most obvious colors that took up the majority of the butterflies and the space, such as the oranges. To give the painting a sense of depth, I added different shades of each color and painted them where I saw best fit. I then further shaded the wings and added more color to them to make them not seem as if they were only flat shapes. Once I felt I had completed the entirety of the butterflies, I returned to working on the background of the piece and shading it in by the section. I had to be careful with this part of the process as not every section of the background is the same color and has the same shading.

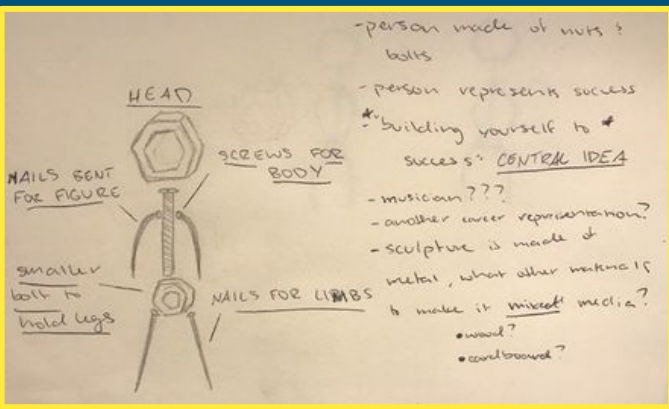


Exploring Mediums - Magritte for Mixed Media



La Grande Guerre (The Great War), 2004
"The Son of Man" by Rene Magritte (1964)

My first mixed media piece "Built for Success" was created to express the work someone puts into themselves in order to build their success. In order to make this piece a mixed media I included the materials of scrap metal pieces, wire, electrical tape, fabric, coins, and wood. I wanted to cover the concept of self appreciation and pride to giving yourself credit for your own success, creating multiple sculptures to further enhance the concept. Following the inspirations of Andrew Myers, I incorporated the technique of using metal scraps to create a sculpture within the styles of Rene Magritte and John Singer Sargent. Because creating a mixed media sculpture was the concept of the assignment, creating figures of only metal would not be considered a mixed media piece. I had already created the main concept of what I wanted to portray through my piece, and I wanted to dress the figurines. I wanted the idea of class through a suit and tie for the first and centered figure, and I referred back to "The Son of Man" by Rene Magritte. By using this painting for my sculpture, I incorporated the red tie and black bowler hat. This painting was perfect to translate to my sculpture because it represented class and sophistication perfectly, as well as the hat and purse in "La Grande Guerre". While sketching my thoughts, I had a pretty clear idea of what I wanted my sculpture to look like. After researching the regular welded metal sculptures, I knew what parts were needed for each specific body part and how they would work.



Metalwork



Deciding between a longer, thinner screw and a shorter, thick screw I chose the long screw. The flat head would make it easy to attach the top washer and the thinness of it would allow the nails to be glued on easily as well. However, because it was much longer, I needed to cut it to an appropriate length. I measured it to match the length of the shorter screw, and using a power saw, I cut the screw to an appropriate length. I had to make sure that I cut the bottom straight because if not, then the washer used for the hips would not be aligned with the rest of the body.



My original piece only consisted of one sculpture, however critiques recommended that I add more sculptures to solidify the concept, and I did. I also changed components like the wooden platform and the gluing technique at the bottoms of the feet to not be sloppy. Things that I believe I could have performed better include the material used to cover the top hat. In person, the bronze color of the copper pennies can be seen through the gaps of the fibers and shine under light. If the sock had not been pulled back so tightly or the pennies had been painted over, the hat would be a solid black. I also believe I could have welded this piece together to combine the metal pieces used, and although I have all the materials to weld, the time restriction that I was given for this project and my personal abilities would not allow me to.



While creating the tie for the center sculpture, I experimented by having to re-cut and tie multiple times in order to discover the correct length for it to tie properly and tightly. As shown in the photograph, I started out very short and small and gradually made the length much longer until I got the perfect length. This process was especially difficult because the kind of material that the fabric is made of peels apart easily with each strand, making it difficult to grasp onto the cloth tightly without pulling it apart.

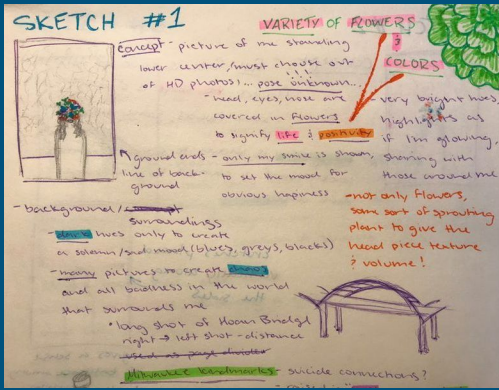
Digital Manipulation

Created from the same inspiration as my mixed media piece, "Optimist" resembles my mindset only ever paying attention to the beautiful in life and to focus on moving forward to greater things, no matter where I grew up or live. This piece represents Milwaukee being an unhappy place, as the most segregated city in the United States. It's showing how I will overcome the negativity that surrounds me in my everyday life by having a positive attitude. Using Rene Magritte as inspiration, I followed the concept of covering my face

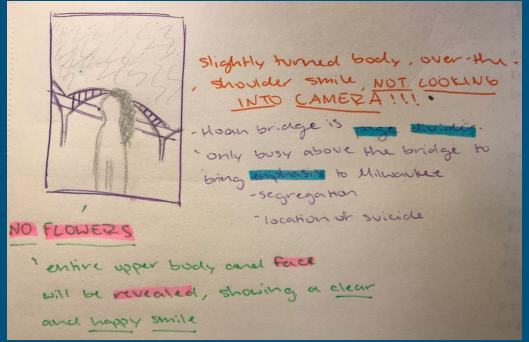


La Grande Guerre (The Great War), 2004
The Son of Man by Rene Magritte (1964)

the face of someone, you're also covering up their emotions and feelings often carried by the eyes; a classic tactic used by modern day brands and companies. The main facial feature that shows emotion is the mouth. However, I specifically wanted my smile to show in order to express the theme of my happiness and confidence. The flowers were a way to objectify my feelings and allow the viewer to easily focus on the top portion of the piece, as well.



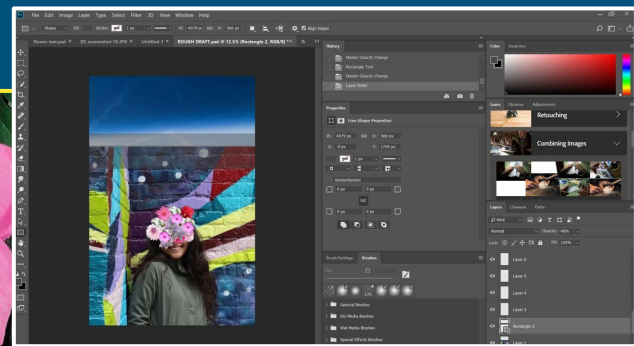
My first sketch included everything surrounding me from half of my body and up being the "chaos" and dark hues, while a sort of wall would be behind me such as in "The Son of Man" by Magritte. I specifically wanted to include the Hoan Bridge, as it is arguably what symbolizes Milwaukee the most. I also wanted a long and angled shot of the bridge as a simple side shot would seem too flat. My third and final sketch had the most differences than the other two, considering my face would not be covered up with flowers.



Process

The majority of the original picture is the bright blue as seen on the bottom, however since I was fading it into an even darker color, I found it best to keep it as is. Also, the dark hues of the painted walls would not have blended well with the brighter colored sky, unlike Magritte's paintings who often colors his skies a brighter shade. Using the same quick selection and copy and paste method used on the flowers, I pasted the picture of the Hoan bridge onto the piece. Because there were black power lines and lamp posts in front of the bridge, I used the Spot Healing Brush

Tool to erase them, and it worked quite well. I also ran the outline of the bridge through smoothing and feathering, to make the edges not so rough and pointy. I then adjusted the bridge's opacity to 27% in order to fade nicely into the background, and used the gradient tool to blend the background pictures and later darken the image towards the sky. It took a lot of clicks and adjustments to get the correct fade that I wanted, I would have to be careful not to click and drag towards the right or towards the left, otherwise the darkened areas would dramatically rise in that direction. However, I learned through much time spent on trial and error and ended up satisfied with both the blending and the darkness.



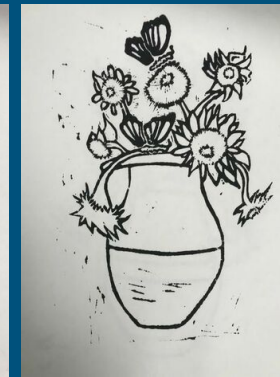
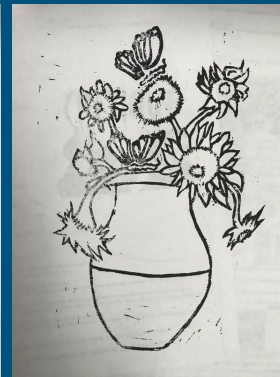
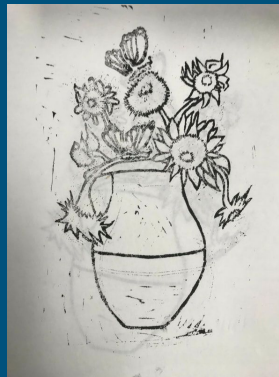
Developing Theme - Relationships

"...and then there were butterflies" was created to display the relationship with my father, the first of many to display my appreciation for a close bond I have with someone. Using inspiration from Van Gogh, I created wilting sunflowers to represent the sunflowers that my father and I attempted to plant in our backyard one summer. The planting ended up failing, but we found that the flowers attracted many caterpillars that we watched turn into butterflies. Once the cutting process could begin, I only used two different blades. For the open spaces along the sides and inside the vase, I used the largest blade in the set with the curved end. The smaller and more tighter areas such as the flower petals and the sharp turns in the butterfly wings were carved using the smallest, triangle shaped blade to make more accurate cuts. Throughout my attempts to print successfully, many were not as good as I wanted them to be. The main issue I ran into was the lack of ink being properly printed. Often times, the light printed spots were on the left side of the piece. I first thought it was because I did not put enough ink, so I made sure to the second time. When it turned out the same, I figured the problem was not pressing down hard enough.

This process was repeated many times before I got a print that satisfied me. The biggest challenge was carving out bigger areas with the smaller cutting tool. It took a lot of time that could not have been done with a bigger blade and required a lot of patience. However I appreciate its simplicity in the process and the ability to complete the process anywhere.



"Sunflowers" by Van Gogh



MIAD Workshop

Inspiration



On a trip to Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, I participated in a workshop involving graphite sketching of live models. Going into the trip I was not confident as I have worked with still life before, but only inanimate objects. Realistic drawings, especially of people, are never my strong suit. However, once I began the process of starting outlines of 30 seconds, I felt more confident in my skills as the duration of time lengthened. I incorporated shading and improved at the outlining of the bodies. Because of this workshop, I was able to return to my art pieces and widen my comfort zone and challenged myself in my next piece to create bodies similar to the figures I created then. The project I challenged myself with was my triptych, creating bodies for the first time. Different from the workshop, however, I had to create multiple bodies of different people rather than just the one. Similarly though, my sketches from the workshop and my piece lack the faces of the models as the faces have the power to change the entire mood of the piece if not done correctly, and faces were also not my strong suit.

Inspiration - "Family to Feminist"



"Crying Girl" by Roy Lichtenstein
1963



"Crying Girl" by Roy Lichtenstein
1964

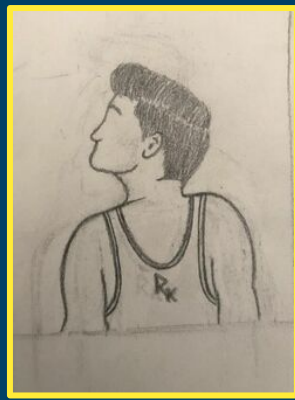
"Crying Girl" by Lichtenstein was created in order to focus on the female identity and her emotions. Immediately, the viewers can notice she is crying and feel her emotions through the piece because of her facial features expressing stress and sadness. I appreciated the style of the illustrations of the piece and planned to recreate

it, however I did not like the feelings being expressed through it and intended to keep those out by excluding any facial features of my portraits. I made note of the simplistic lines outlining her face and her hair, and how the thickness varied between them in order to emphasize the certain parts of the piece. I wanted to recreate this feeling of simplicity while also keeping the intended meaning. He continues to use the simplicity of lines and color throughout his paintings and I was given multiple pieces to refer to for inspiration but this particular piece made me take note of his repetitive use of the side view. The side view is a more creative way of portraying a person without using the regular front view to express their emotions. Often times, a person is leaning more towards a certain side of their body rather than just forward. I decided to create my portraits from views of the back in order to create uniqueness between the three. Based off of these pieces, I came to the conclusion that I and Lichtenstein do not agree with the societal views of how fragile women are, but we both wanted to exploit and share the widely shared views of women and how they are dramatized and should be changed.



Planning - Triptych

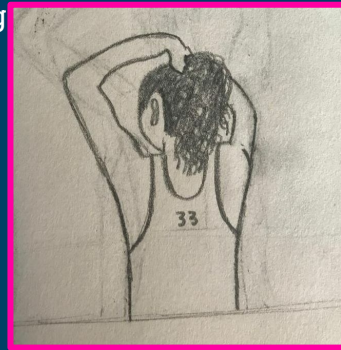
I worked off of this sketch in order to get the body proportions and the position correct. I chose specifically not to add facial features as it sets the mood for the piece, and I wanted viewers to have their own mood as they looked at my piece. I chose to draw him looking to the left because I wanted different positions for each of my canvases, and I worked off of a real picture in which he was looking to his left. I wanted his back to show so that the Rufus King logo would show and emphasize the difference between the paintings. I also wanted all three portraits to show their backs because that is normally where the identification of the school is printed and it is more noticeable to be seen as a wrestling singlet.



For the second panel, I struggled the most trying to find a unique pose. The photos in which I worked off of were all posed from the angle of the first panel, so I had to create one on my own. I finally came up with the idea of doing something with the arms instead of the head, like I did for the third panel. This included the difference that I looked for, making the head easier as it would only contain the back of the head with no face. The curly hair was a must as it is a specific trait which identifies my father. Although not shown in the planning sketch, I specifically came up with the idea of his head looking upwards, as if sending a prayer to God. This reflects the religious status of him as well which also makes up a big part of his identity.



I immediately had this position in mind once I had the idea of painting myself. Putting my hair into a ponytail is an obvious give away that I am a girl. It also has the wavy characteristic of my hair. Also, I wanted it to be out of the way in order to expose my back and showing my number 33. This is also another way to identify me and differentiate between me and the other paintings. I especially chose this pose because it is unique to the others, as they are almost just standing there. I chose to put myself as the last canvas because I wanted the piece to continue as a timeline, from oldest family member in their time of wrestling to the youngest.



Experimentation & Reflection - Triptych

Multiple times, I had to remix my paints as they were not the colors that I wanted. I originally made the mistake of using pink as the base color rather than white. This caused the mixture to result in a hot pink color rather than soft pink. When the first coat dried and I came to this conclusion, I began adding only white paint to the remaining mixture and repeating the layering process until I reached a color that I liked.

Overall, this was one of the most difficult pieces that I have ever had to create for this course. It took me very long to come up with inspiration to tell a story worth recreating, and when I finally did, I was far behind in the process. I completed the project late, but I am glad I finally was able to portray a story that had meaning to me and worth the effort I put into it. This project took a lot of patience in which I was running short of, however I was able to pull through. I appreciated how my story was already broken up into three parts in chronological order, that way the formatting was already completed for me. My favorite part of this piece is the way the portraits contrast with the colors of their backgrounds. They take enough space to make it clear that they are the main idea of the pieces, but the colors of the backgrounds do not distract the viewers from that main idea and it makes it easy and pleasing to pay closer attention to those portraits. I also like how the colors relate to the individual person, them self. Although I could have chosen a blue background for either the first or third panel, the color would share too much in common with the singlets in both panels and they would not be as appealing. Also, I specifically wanted to paint the last panel pink in order to stand out among the other two as it is a clear color representing a female and feminism, which is the basis of this project. The most challenging part was recreating the exact looks of my family members without making them look like the generic planning sketches. This took a lot of research in old family photo albums to find pictures of my family members at the right age and in a relative position that my sketches could relate to and that I could work off of. I wanted to stay true to the ideas of portraying those specific family members in a respectful way that also looked enough like their old photos to be recognizable. It was even more difficult because I did not know them during their times that the portrait captures them in, so I can only create what I see based off of the very limited variety of photographs that I had. Otherwise, this project would have been easier and less stressful by creating their portraits simply by what is seen now. Also, I came to the realization that the views on the female identity are not so fragile as they used to be when the original works of Lichtenstein were created. They were created to convey the ideas of fragile women by creating them to always cry, however my piece does the exact opposite. My piece is created to express the growing empowerment of women in today's society by taking part in a mostly male dominated sport.



Hollywood Incorporation

Nebula Galaxy Watercolor Space Sky Art
Print by Olga Shvartsur



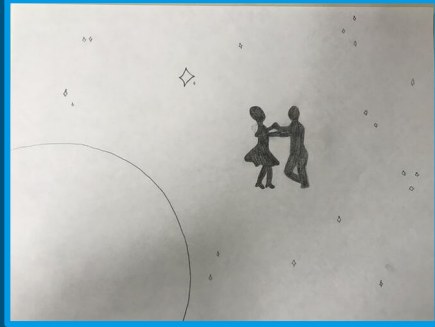
Trying to find an artist's inspiration was very difficult for me as I wanted to create a galaxy but as a painting. I knew from the beginning that that was going to be a challenge, especially for acrylic paint, but I finally found an artist that I can work off of, even though the medium is of watercolor. It was also difficult to find a plain galaxy painting as Olechka creates a lot of paintings that involve animals and rainbows when I just wanted a simple image. I do, however, need to remember to make the space effect less dramatic with the bold and bright colors as it will be too distracting for the contrast of the people dancing in the middle. I especially have to make sure to make the background more subtle than Olechka's as I do not want to make it seem childish or ordinary, as well as having a more structured background as an oval for the brighter colors and the stars.



La La Land
Planetarium Scene

In this scene, the two characters waltz to dramatic orchestral music. This has been my favorite scene for years as it expresses such a beautiful form of love without the use of words and only through music and dance. My interpretation of this scene was the elegance of romance being communicated through the waltz. This dance is very smooth moving and free flowing and it interprets to the easy and natural feelings that come with a good relationship. As for the background, my interpretation was that while the two are in such an intimate moment, what surrounds them doesn't matter, as if they get lost in space together. I wanted to convey this exactly through my own medium of painting and the techniques of Shvartsur in the background. I wanted to follow the subtle blues and dark purples of this galaxy background to make the silhouettes pop out more. Most importantly, I appreciated the concept of having the couple as silhouettes to convey the simplicity of the concept of love on the surface, but the complexity of the feelings that surround it, conveyed through the vast size of space and the beautiful colors and detail that go into it. I also decided to paint with the canvas landscape to mimic the horizontal screen of the movie.

Planning for "Waltz"



Keeping my main idea, I played with the idea of the shapes of the stars being diamonds and often being grouped together throughout the canvas in twos or threes, this way I would not have to paint the entire background with small and tedious stars. Also, I planned on painting a planet to further enhance the space concept in one of the corners, however I felt that would throw the painting off in the sense of balance and symmetry, so I did not include the planet.



I created this planning sketch pretty last second as an idea had come to me immediately before I outlined the silhouettes on the canvas. Rather than recreating the silhouettes from the movie, I realized that since this is a painting personal to me, I should search for an image that related to this topic and was also personal to me. I searched through my camera roll and found a perfect photo that I was able to create the silhouette from. I was especially excited for this part because I now made it even more personal to me.

I also played with the positions of the silhouettes by following other positions of the dance throughout the scene. I chose between these two, and I wanted to choose the one that gave the most impression of movement from the dance. This movement would come from the position of their arms holding each other and the bending of their knees, as well as the flowing of the woman's dress.



Process for "Waltz"

1. Firstly, I added the basic background colors of the galaxy, such as the dark blues and purples around the corners and the center. I made sure to start with the darkest colors in the corners as I have learned that it is easier to blend colors into the darker ones first. To make a galaxy that looked decent, and especially since this was my first time creating something so complex, I knew I would be painting and repainting layers throughout this entire process.



2. Secondly, I added many more shades of blues and purples, starting with the darkest ones first. I made sure for the edges and corners to remain the darkest with the middle of the painting the lightest. This part of the process was possibly the most difficult as I had to blend and reblend the colors to make sure there were no uneven spots and that they were blended evenly. I also made sure not to color the corners and edges a dark blue or black like in my inspiration, as I knew I would later paint in the silhouettes black and I wanted them to strongly contrast the bright colors of the background.



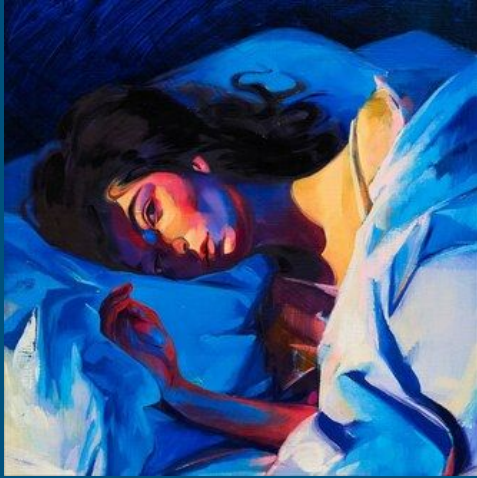
4. Finally, I outlined the shapes of the silhouettes. I also used the finest brushes that I had to fill in these figures as covering up any mistakes would be difficult, especially for the lighter colors in contrast to the black. Before making any mark on the canvas, I made sure to measure so that they would be centered. And although I did not try, I found it interesting that I had created balance and symmetry in this piece by having an area of white on each side of the dancers.



3. One of the easiest parts of this process was the implementing of the stars as I only had to use the tips of my finest brushes. I had to be careful, as I did not want to cluster too many stars together as it would be almost impossible to cover them up again because the background is almost entirely blended rather than one solid color. Although I did try to have a similar realistic effect from the La La Land frame, I did have to follow the piece of Shvartsur with the large and small dots in paint.



Album Cover Inspiration & Picasso - "Myself"



"Melodrama" album cover by
Sam McKinniss

The work of Sam McKinniss was brought to my attention through the cover of my favorite album; Melodrama. The album, itself, focuses of self appreciation and comfort, which I found to be communicated through the cover art. The chosen colors express a form of calmness and set the tone for the night-time setting in the painting. The artist, herself, is painted with a larger variety of bright colors as she displays a look of stillness and tranquility. What I appreciate most about this piece is the use of lighting and shading, it allows for an even larger variety of colors to be used especially in the artist's body. I made sure to recreate this shading effect in my own piece by using the similar darker colors in the darker areas.

The work of Pablo Picasso specifically caught my attention for inspiration as the previous album cover due to the sharp changes in color throughout the cover. The sudden changes create geometrical shapes which can be recreated and recognized as styles and techniques in cubism. Through the analysis of his work, I realized that I could recreate these geometric shapes in certain areas of the painting such as the background and the face.

By doing this, I would have the ability to make the painting look more like something I created, myself rather than completely copying the work if McKinniss.



"Portrait of Dora Maar" by
Pablo Picasso

Planning & Process

The first planning sketch ended up being my favorite and the one that I followed the most. It allowed me to see the effects of the structure lines added into the blanket and the shading added onto the body and the background.



The second sketch was to focus directly on the shading of the face. I understood that only half of the face would be exposed to the light and the remainder would need to be covered in darker colors. This process included starting and ending the shading at specific facial features such as avoiding the eye and nose but covering little of the mouth and chin. I also knew I wanted to shade the cheekbones for emphasis on the facial structure.

The last planning sketch allowed me to play with the color placement of the shading and the facial expression. I liked the result of the colors, with the lighter colors on the right side of the face and blending into darker colors near the cheekbones and chin.



Examining the work of Sam McKinniss, I was able to notice which colors were the base layers while others were added later on. I followed this strategy, and began with the colors that took up the majority of the body, first. I then shaded every separate area for the body with its appropriate colors. The multiple layers of shading was especially used during the completion of the entire piece, especially for small spaces. Considering the left side lighting, I added a lighter brown to the left of the hair extending all the way to the ends of the left most strands. I also added a few at the top of the head that did not extend far, for shape.



Comparison of Musical Impact Within Art Pieces

This piece was created to express the strongest feelings and emotions that I experience daily. Inspired by "Melodrama" album cover artist Sam McKinniss and Pablo Picasso's cubist paintings, I created a self portrait that depicts the way that I feel about myself in my most vulnerable state; alone in bed. This painting was meant to express the feeling of comfort in being alone and acceptance of myself and my surroundings.



Using the inspiration of Ursula Doughty and Kit Sunderland, I created a negative butterfly watercolor painting on sheet music. This piece is meant to represent me by every element included, the symbol of the butterfly for personal growth, the vibrant colors for good mood, and the background song to have the most personal touch to me, a song that I deeply associate with my

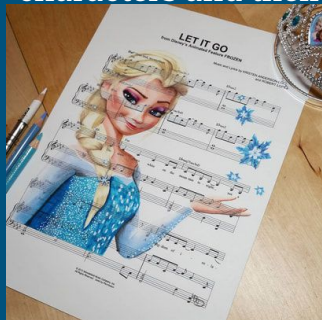
overall character. I wanted to portray the concept and feeling of my character development over time through expressing who I am now and the comfort and confidence I now have.

Music and visual arts have a way of communicating mood and theme without the need of direct explanation. Also, certain songs and art pieces may resonate with someone more than others for personal reasons leading to a deeper connection and appreciation. For these two pieces, "Myself" and "The Butterfly Effect", I wanted to convey my personal interpretation and connection with these songs, both of which have to do with self realization and growth. "Myself" was created after the majority of my pieces about my relationship with others were created, focusing on the one relationship that I neglected up until that time; the one with myself. It allowed me to take comfort in myself and my work, while "The Butterfly Effect" is meant to display my overall growth as a person. This includes my past, present, and future rather than just the present. Each piece displays a specific song or album that I strongly connect my message to because both helped me get to the place of comfort and prosperity conveyed in each piece.

“The Butterfly Effect” Inspiration & Planning

Aside from artistic inspiration, the concept of the "butterfly effect" was my main inspiration, which is the theory of how one small event can later on have a large impact on something or someone. I applied this theory to the history of my personal life, as it allowed me to appreciate both the good and bad things that I have experienced and have a brighter outlook on life. Without those experiences, either dramatic or seemingly insignificant at the time, I would not have learned and be the person who I am today. I chose to display my current self with bright colors and my commonly used symbol of a butterfly. I chose a butterfly to symbolize myself because they symbolize growth as they transform throughout their lifetime.

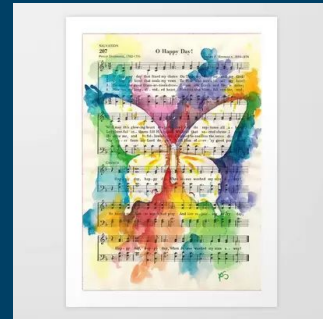
Originally being inspired by complex illustrations drawn on music sheets, I followed the path of creating a piece on sheet music. Realistic approaches were never my strong suit in my paintings, but illustrations would allow me to be more precise with my color choices and fine lines and I was willing to experiment with it. However, all of the inspiration I came across similar to this piece were only of cartoon characters and their corresponding theme songs. Although they looked very appealing and tempting, I wanted to create something that was meaningful to me, with both the image and the music sheet.



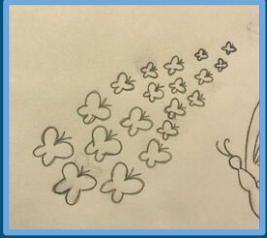
"Unknown" by Ursula Doughty

With further research, I came across the work of Kit Sunderland, an artist who works with mainly watercolor. Immediately, it was her work with the butterflies on them, as the symbol of butterflies are personal to me in my own meaning and have been used in my past pieces. Also, the use of color in my inspiration is very similar to my use of color in my past pieces, so I strongly felt a relation to Sunderland's work. Since the overall mood of this piece is upbeat and free flowing from the mix of the bright colors and the fluttering of the butterfly, I will choose a song that has an upbeat mood as well. The song will have a connection to me as a reflection of who I am and how I see myself, in terms of mood.

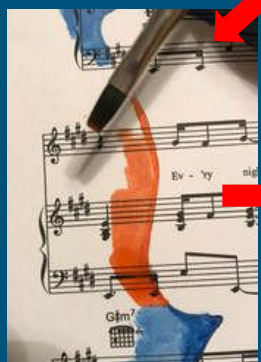
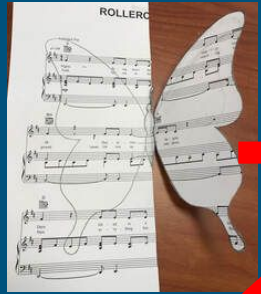
"O Happy Day Butterfly Watercolor on Sheet Music Art Print" by Kit Sunderland



Planning & Process



The concept of many butterflies flying away together and getting further away looked nice to me, but I could not find a meaning for it that could relate to me or this project, so I did not go through with this sketch. Also, I would have to keep in mind that I would be painting around the butterflies, and having many of them would be time consuming, difficult, and may not turn out as neat as I would like.



I darkly drew half of the butterfly to my liking and cut out that half while connected to the rest of the paper, this way I could trace the wings to be symmetrical without using the time to draw them to look exactly the same. I used the finest brush I had to outline it first with a lot of water and paint. By using a lot, I would be able to spread it outwards so that there would not be only one dark line of color on the outline. This one was wider to cover more room, but was fine enough to use near the edges. With this brush, I further spread the paint outwards and added more to blend the light and dark shades. Finally, I used the widest brush that was given with the watercolor pallet. Using this brush, I was able to spread the color further away from the stencil. It was also able to carry more water, making the colors lighter the further I painted away from the stencil. I tried to make each color reach outwards differently from the others, this way it would not look so neat and orderly for the colors.

My first experimental print did not go well. I did like the colors and their lightness, however I felt that I had made the sections too small and orderly. I felt that I did not blend them enough together, and the outline of the entire stencil was poor. For this trial, I did not use the method of using the different brushes, I only used the widest brush. I changed my methods with my next trial. Running out of prints, I had used a print from the song I had originally chosen. I now applied the method of using the finer brushes and larger areas of the colors, and I like the way it turned out and I will be continuing this method for the final product. I did like the lightness of the colors in the first piece, but the method of being more careful with the painting led to darker colors, and I like that better because it contrasts the whiteness of the butterfly.



Return to Block Print - "In My Own Skin"

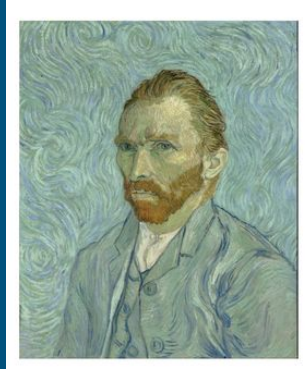


Once I got comfortable with self portraits, I chose once again portray a feeling of self acceptance by including nothing in the portrait rather than myself. I feel that the neutral pose that I am in for this piece contributes to the concept that I am comfortable in my own skin, no matter what position I am in and that I do not feel the need to do something such as pose for me to be comfortable with the way that I am.

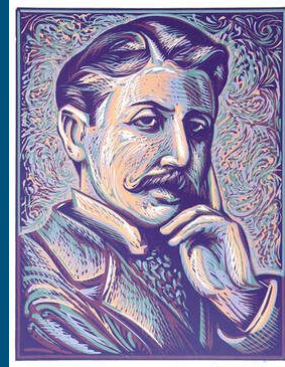
Instead of having one large area for the hair in the ponytail, I played with the idea of including lightly colored streaks that I would carve out from the hair. Because of this, the hair would then be given a sense of volume and shape rather than just one big mass. However, I decided not to go with this idea as it would look as if it were too close in comparison with the sweater and the background, rather than sticking out with the boldness of the black.



This painting by Vincent van Gogh heavily inspired this self portrait with both the position of the body and the technique and pattern for the background. When completing this, van Gogh was possibly on the verge of an identity crisis, and was already mentally unstable (Google Arts and Culture). However, this painting does not resemble any moods or feelings of instability or discomfort. I incorporated as much of this portrait as I could such as the background.



"Self-Portrait" by
Vincent van Gogh
(1889)



Unknown by
Stephen Alcorn

I specifically considered this piece due to the similarity to van Gogh's and the idea that I wanted to portray. It also has a sense of calmness or even interest due to the man's position as if he is thinking. This piece also includes the busy and decorated background, that is as intricate, possibly even more, than van Gogh's background. By analyzing this piece and other Stephen Alcorn prints, it assured me that it is possible to successfully complete a self portrait with the medium of a block print.

Process & Reflection

Following the style of van Gogh's clothing in his self portrait, I first carved out the sweater in my portrait with thin spaces in between curves so that the carving patterns would then be seen once I print it. This would add to similarities with the background for the carving techniques and contrast it at the same time by being less intricate. I used all three small, medium and large sized blades for the face due to the large empty spaces on the face and the small corners of the facial features such as the eyes and lips. I entirely focused on van Gogh's piece for this part of the process to recreate his pattern through the technique of smaller strokes. Although they are different mediums, I was able to recreate his technique of the use of smaller strokes with the medium sized blade. It was easiest for me to carve out the spiraled shapes in the piece first so that I could later on carve the looser patterns around them.



My main part of experimentation with block prints always comes with the first print. With this print, everything mainly printed successfully, however there were a few areas on the face and border that I had to add more intaglio and apply more pressure to in order for the print to come out complete. After washing the rubber, I was able to carve more of the excess spots based off of the black spots on the print.

I do regret, however, over-carving some areas on the rubber. In some areas on the upper portion of the piece, I believe I carved too much from the surface and left no surface area for the intaglio to print with. Because of this, some areas throughout the piece are blank and empty rather than having their pattern. In the future, I would make sure to prevent this possible issue and be mindful of the spaces that I am carving.

