For Whose Sake

Inspiration

The Widow I. (1921) - Kathe Kollwitz

Kathe Kollwitz's use of heavy shadows on the face was something I wanted to use in my piece. Her shading gives a dramatic feel and adds balance to the piece, evening the amount of **positive** and **negative space**. The central theme is about loss and mourning, and the sacrifices made for a goal such as war. The subject depicted is holding someone, intimate in her grief. The piece was made as a way of Kollwitz's expression of grief, due to her son Peter dying in WWI.

I was also inspired by Frans Masereel's way of narrative storytelling. He doesn't require words to tell what his art is about -- he lets it speak for itself and for the viewer to interpret. While Masereel's narratives are more political in nature, my theme was more so emotionally-driven. I also liked his use of **line**, and thought they would be nice to try to incorporate into my art. In "The Sun", I was inspired by how the sun added more detail and decided to use that as a border in my print. The sun adds an interesting element, overlapping some of the lines and coming into the room physically.

The Sun. (1919) - Frans Masereel

For Whose Sake. (2021) - Elliesa Vang

The idea I knew I wanted to do revolved around grief, but I didn't have a solid idea as to what to draw until I thought about the idea of knights. Knights, typically, are associated with bravery, holiness, and the idea of protecting the ones they serve or care about, their duty. I thought it would be interesting to take that idea in a more solemn tone, for a knight to kill the one he loves because of duty or simply because it would be for the best -- but he questions his actions and laments his loss. There's an internal conflict, his decision one that he can't come back from.

Adding hair shine would give more detail to my block print and reduce the amount of **negative space** in the hair. The final sketch was me putting all of the concepts I liked together into one singular piece. I liked how the sketch looked, and this was the reference I used on my carving block. Shading was there to remind myself what I was going to carve and keep.

For Whose Sake

*For Whose Sake.* (2021) - Elliesa Vang

Experimentation

When I began to print, the first print I did made me realize that the hair of the loved one didn't have detail, so I added some and also carved lines on the knight's hair to make it stand out more. This worked to give me feedback on detail as I did my first test prints. I added more small details to better match Kollwitz's style, and did a few more prints. I tried to adjust the amount of ink I put, since with too much it would blot out the thinner details, and with too little the prints would look faded. Eventually I was able to make a few prints that looked good and didn't have many errors.

Process

I sketched my image onto the board, and began to cut out the sun border first. It was a way of figuring out how to carve and was the safest option in case I messed up. It didn't take me too long to figure out how to carve, and I was able to get the hang of it after seeing what to avoid and how much pressure I should put on the tool. When it came to details, I carved out the largest shapes first, which was the face and arms. Looking at Kollwitz's *The Widow I,* I made cuts with a smaller carving tool for finer details. Some of the small details came after doing some tests, and then adding them to better define shapes.

Reflection

Personally I liked the idea I chose for my print, and it turned out well enough. It was a spur-of-the-moment idea I had that developed into something more, and with my inspiration helped to turn itself into a story. I had never done block prints before, so the idea was daunting at first, but I got used to it. Due to being a beginner at carving, it wasn't easy trying to control where the cutting tool went and the small details I had.
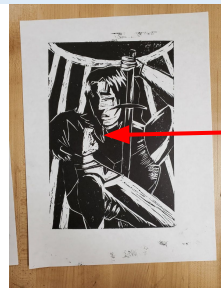
Reflection

Käthe Kollwitz's "The Widow I" was my main inspiration piece and personally, I think I did well on showing that inspiration in my print. Our main theme of grief shows clearly, and the heavy shading controls the amount of **positive** and **negative space**. The biggest challenge was getting the right amount of ink onto my board, because most of the time it would either be too much or not enough, ending up with spotty parts or blotted sections. Overall, I wanted to be able to show that narrative I planned without it being confusing in any way or being unsatisfactory in it's presentation.

After obtaining all of the tools I needed, I rolled ink onto my board. This allowed me to see clearly what would show onto the paper and I was able to adjust some details here and there. Then I used a baren to apply pressure after laying a paper on top of my board, and transferred the ink onto the paper. I did this process several times with trial and error, finding the prints I liked and didn't.

Small Steps

Friedrich was a famous German painter who participated in the Romanticism movement. He was known for his focus on landscapes and subtle colors. The subjects in his paintings are turned away from the viewer, looking at the landscape before them instead. His use of softer **tones** and the contemplation of his subjects was something I wanted to use in my piece. There's little else but the landscape and the person. Most of Friedrich's pieces invoked the feeling of the sublime, the vastness of nature. I considered that for my **composition**, I would try to balance both me, the subject, and the sky to have that feeling of vastness of the world around me.

Wanderer Above a Sea of Fog. (1818) - Caspar David Friedrich

In *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, there's a more subtle meaning to one part of the piece. The clothing the man wears was, at the time in 1818, outlawed by Germany's government. Friedrich made this choice to rebel against the government, even if it was subtle enough to miss. That fact was an interesting part to me, because of the similarity in that sense of rebellion against what you're expected to do. This piece of rebellion is also shown in *Two Men Contemplating the Moon*, making it a recurring theme in his paintings. The painter refused to follow the dress codes the German government set for men, and would consistently do this in his paintings until he passed away.
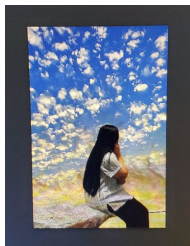

*Two Men Contemplating the Moon.* (1819) - Caspar David Friedrich

Small Steps. (2021) - Elliesa Vang

Planning

I started with an idea that I knew I wanted to do and didn't stray too much from: me, sitting on a cliff, looking somewhere and thinking. The cliff is a symbol of the uncertainty of falling, doing what I want. There's no telling to what will happen when I do. The sky and the birds are a clear representation of freedom, open and not burdened by expectations. Birds don't have those expectations, and they're able to be what they want to be. For my piece, I wanted to have soft tones for a gentler feeling and vibe. The clothes and papers were the social norms or expectations that I'm conflicted with, and my idea was to make them gray, since gray is often seen as a dull and lifeless color. The pose I decided on was simply just having a hand on my face to further give that contemplative look.
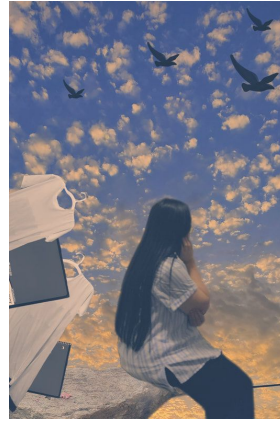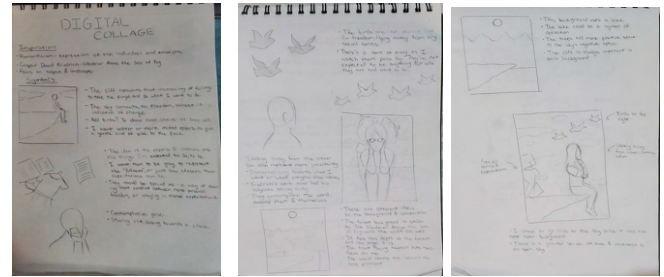
I had another idea with the pose to look away from the camera. My thoughts were that looking away gave a distracted look and more thoughtfulness to the self. It also fit with Friedrich's work, with the subjects focusing towards the scenery instead of having any sort of attention to the viewer. My ideas for other backgrounds were a forest, and a lake. The forest background was more similar to *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, and the forest has this depth with how large it spans. The lake showed more of a symbolism with reflecting, the water showing your face and what you see. I drew a front face image to see if it would work and though it didn't, it was another way of seeing things. The expectations were more pronounced in the back. In the end, I decided for my final sketch I would use a sky, with the expectations in the back and me sitting on the edge of the cliff, looking away. The birds would be on the right of the collage.
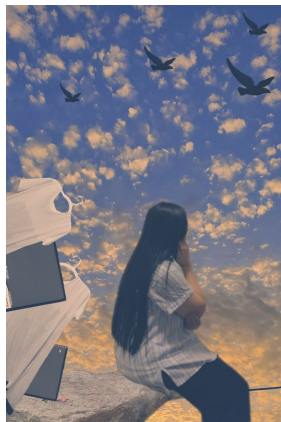
Small Steps

Process

I started with placing an image I took of the sunrise and placed it onto the canvas, resizing it until it fit. I cropped part of it, adding more **negative space** so that I could effectively communicate that sense of the sublime more. Then I used the selection tool to take parts of my images, and pasted them onto the canvas. I made copies of the rock and sort of merged them together to make the cliff. This required the spot healing brush, and it worked effectively. I was able to get the rocks to blend together, and achieve the cliff I wanted.
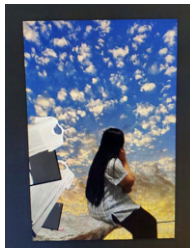
Afterwards, I placed the images of the dress and a notebook and tweaked the sizes. I used the black and white filter on them and adjusted the layer order so they would be in the order I wanted.
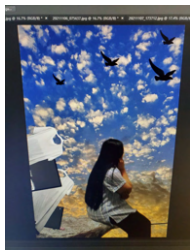
Because I didn't have any pictures of birds that would fit with the idea I had for my collage, I decided to draw them instead. I used one of the circle brushes to draw the bird in black, and then I replicated it and adjusted the sizes to add some variety. I put them on the top right corner, where I was looking to give a more specific thing to look at. The birds being on the right also furthers that divide between norms and liberty.

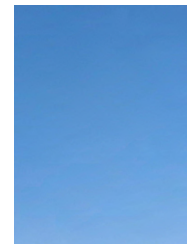*Small Steps.* (2021) - Elliesa Vang

Experimentation

I took different versions of the sky: a sunrise, blue sky and clouds, and just plain sky. I eventually decided on the sunrise because it was more fitting to my symbolism and in my opinion, looked prettier. The sunrise represented to me change, a new day dawning. It sort of fit into how I was also changing, finding something new within myself. When the day rises, there's another chance to do things and work on something. The other two skies I took were satisfactory, but not much in terms of the symbolism I wanted.
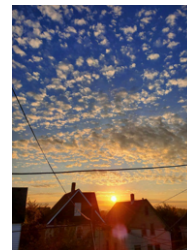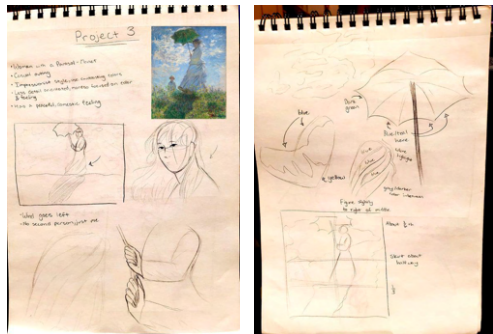
Reflection

Overall, I was satisfied with the way my piece turned out. While I didn't use Photoshop, I had a sort of familiarity since I often worked with another art program, Clip Studio Paint, so I was able to figure out some of the options. I had no trouble with the layers and manipulating them since I often did so in CSP. Learning to work with the selection tool was hard, since I had to often erase and add parts, and sometimes I couldn't get things exactly how I wanted them to. But it was a good experience to just learn the tools and develop skill with them, and get the basics down for any future projects involving Photoshop.

Reflection

I liked doing the gradient map most, since it put everything together and added **unity** to the colors. The soft look I was going for was achieved with it, and I would use it again for future projects. There's a lot of connection with me and Friedrich's works, and you can see the similarities with how the subject is presented and the focus on the landscape is vital to the piece. Our themes were also similar to each other, and I wasn't expecting that piece of rebellion in *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* and Two Men Contemplating the Moon.

One Sunny Day

I drew a starting sketch of the work, just to understand and give myself a general idea on what to do. I figured out that the wind went left, and also decided to exclude the boy in the painting, due to my project being a self-portrait. I tried to understand how the folds of the skirt worked using the original work, and it was helpful in learning on where to have the lines and shading. I also sketched in my face, and drew the features and hair. Monet's work wasn't detail oriented, so I followed that and didn't detail my head sketch too much when it came to the facial features.

One Sunny Day. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Inspiration

Woman with a Parasol was a piece depicting Monet's wife and son on a stroll outside. The umbrella casts a shadow on his wife, allowing him to play with light and shadow. The light source can be seen through the contrast of light values at her back. Monet uses blues and yellows on her dress, reflecting the yellow flowers and the sky. Her and her son's features are less detailed but still accurate. The clouds are a mixture of grey, white and blue paint, and Monet creates texture through the fragmented clouds. The scene he paints is peaceful, a casual outing on a sunny day.

I was drawn to this painting because of the feeling and it reminded me of spring, when I would just be walking with my family. I liked the colors Monet used, and the way the blue sky and yellow flowers sort of reflect on the dress of his wife. His **brushstrokes** were also interesting to look at, how it's not neat and are visible to the viewer on how he painted his work.

Woman with a Parasol. (1875) - Claude Monet

Planning

I looked at my reference image and separated the blue and yellow into shapes, and this helps me better figure out on how to paint the clothes. I did the same with the skirt, labelling the sections of it and broke down the pieces. The umbrella was mainly dark green on the far left and right side, and in the middle, the colors would be a more teal hue. I shaded in the handle to add **contrast** and to see where to position it. Next, I was also thinking about how to position the pieces of the work. I wanted to figure out Monet's **composition** and find a better understanding of where he positioned his figures and general guidelines for how much space a part of the background took up, or how tall his wife was in the painting.

Process

I first started off with a wash of blue and green. After I let the wash dry, I sketched in myself and at first, I had to constantly adjust the head size so I could have space to draw the rest of my body. But once I figured out the sizing, I was able to do the rest. I started with painting the sky, using a mix of cadmium blue and titanium white. I did pure blue at the top, and then mixed with white as I went down, creating an ombre. I painted in the clouds along the way and used my brush to add **texture** and emulate the look of clouds. I did this for the right side first since I wanted to figure out how to do the clouds as a sort of test run before going to the larger left side. The same thing was done for the left side, only I started to add neutral gray and some bits of yellow to the clouds to follow how Monet did.
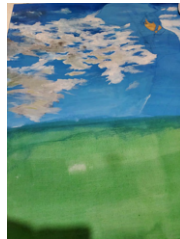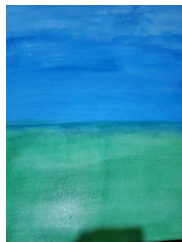
One Sunny Day

One Sunny Day. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Process

I painted in the rest of the skin and added the features with a dark brown. It was difficult to try and blend without erasing the features too much or changing the skin color. After finishing most of the skin portion, I did the hair with the same brown. I just did a solid color for the hair, and repainted some parts of the skin once I did the hair. The white shirt was next, and I used mainly neutral gray with a mix of cadmium yellow and cadmium blue. There was a lot of experimenting with the color mixture and just how much blue and yellow to use, along with where. I used pure gray to outline the collar and give that contrast.

Process

The skirt was next, and I used pink with crimson red as the shading for the folds of the skirt. Initially, I wasn't sure if the red would fit for the shading, but after I blended it with the pink, I found it worked out well and did the rest of the skirt. I added blue and yellow to follow Monet's technique and tried to balance the vibrancy of the colors on the skirt. I experimented with them, and then added pink to make the blue and yellow more subtle. For the umbrella, I started with a mixture of green and lime green, blending the colors in and trying to find a balance between the two. I also used teal to create the bottom part of the umbrella, and then used green to create the shape of the umbrella. Afterwards, I painted the top part pure white and left it at that. For the grass, I mainly used green with yellow, sienna brown, scarlet, cadmium blue, white, and then neutral gray. I added sienna brown and scarlet in some spots as Monet did, and some occasional blue.

Critique

Similarities

The similarities are that the **composition** is generally the same, the figure near the center and the grass taking about a third of the painting. I used the same background, with the blue sky and fragmented white clouds, to have my work be reminiscent of the original. I also used gray on the clouds with bits of yellow to follow Monet's techniques, and the blue and yellow on the sleeve to reflect the colors, as well as patches of blue and yellow on the skirt like in the original. There's also the green of the umbrella, with spots of blue in the middle and dark green to outline the wires of the umbrella. The figures in both works aren't as detailed when it comes to the face. The brushstrokes are comparable as well; we both use larger **brushstrokes** and gradually build color.

Differences

The differences are that I have my hair, the wind blowing it to the left, while Monet's wife seems to have hers in a bun with a veil over it. I didn't include the veil in my piece because I didn't see it as something I would wear. Her skirt is also white, while mines is pink, and I chose to make the skirt pink because I felt like the pink worked better for spring. The blue tie around her neck isn't included in my piece. There's also noticeably no second figure in my work because of the idea of a self portrait, so it wasn't really necessary to include someone else.

Woman with a Parasol. (1875) - Claude Monet

Reflection

I liked doing a new way to paint, with using messier **brushstrokes** and trying to figure out how the contrasting colors worked. My favorite part was painting the sky, since there was just something about doing it that I just liked. There wasn't too much pressure to get everything precise, and I liked the **textures** I made with my brush. Referencing the original painting helped me see how to mix the colors, and a general idea of what colors to use. My least favorite part was doing the face, since the blending was tricky and I didn't want the skin color to change too much when I had to blend the brown. The contrast of the blue and yellow on my sleeve was nice, and it turned out better than I expected, just needing to be repainted a few times before I got it right. Another thing that turned out well was the grass, since at first I was unsure on how to do it. There were some points during the process where I doubted myself, but I pushed through and used the original to guide myself.

For Everything

I wanted my theme to revolve around gratefulness and memories. I decided to focus the imagery more so on childhood, since that felt like a better time to revolve around, and I could add more objects with that in mind. The piece itself would be a shadowbox to follow Cornell's works, and have some symbolism with what I added. Furthermore, I was thinking of adding things to hang from the top. I liked that aspect in Cornell's piece, and the **composition** would be more interesting if I did. I could have stars and clouds, possibly made out of colored paper, with the stars in the front and clouds in the back. For the background, I could glue on patterned paper, since it might add some interesting contrast with the sky part I would add. I would place objects on the bottom, such as a music box, flowers, or toys. There would be images placed on the side of the sky square, to follow my inspiration and build on the **composition**.

Homage to Juan Gris. (1953-54) - Joseph Cornell

Inspiration

The sky square and the hanging of an object on the top interested me the most, and I wanted to incorporate that in my own way. The positioning of the images to flare outwards and **balance** the space was also helpful for me to consider when doing my piece, and would help make things more interesting. Cornell's piece being an homage to someone he considers important also ties in with my theme. I'd most likely make my box more decorated than Cornell's piece, mainly because I want to add more colors and objects with symbolism. Most of the colors in his box are pale, with only the sky and wood textured images giving some **contrast** to the rest of the piece, as well as the shadow. I don't believe I'll do a base for the image in the middle to stand on, since I'm not sure how much time it'll take and I want to focus on the other aspects of my work.


For Everything. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Process

I started with doing the background for the piece. I detached the back, and overlay a piece of patterned paper over it. I did this to see where I would cut, and folded the paper around the edges of the back to act as my guide. It worked well, and I was able to get the background to fit the dimensions of the box. I then glued the paper on by applying it to the paper, and put the back into the box to see how it looked.

I printed squares of color to use for the shapes on the sides, and sketched out on the back a guideline on where to cut. So I cut out my shapes, staring with the pink and then the sun rays. The butterfly took me more time to do due to the more precise shape it had. After finishing with all of the elements for the sides, I drew out the silhouettes on white paper and cut them out. For the sky background, I measured it before cutting. Then I cut out the pieces for the box and glued them onto the bottom of the frame.
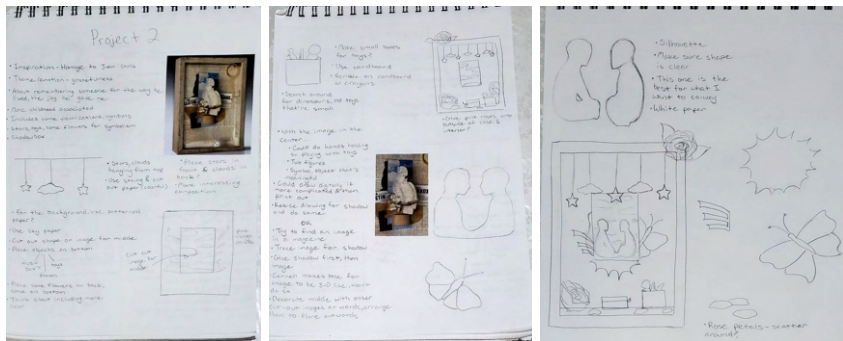
For Everything

Critique

Joseph Cornell's and my piece are both shadowboxes, with images glued to the center. We both use paper to cover the back side, and make a background for the work. There's at least one object hanging from the top of the box, and a few objects on the bottom. There's black paper used as the shadow of the subject in the center, and a few elements pasted on to the side to even out the positive and negative space. We also both utilize a blue sky background for the subject. Our work is dedicated to someone else, and has objects with symbolism behind it.

My shadowbox has darker wood than Cornell's, which is a cream colored box. The same can be applied for the background, and mines has a pattern while Cornell's uses a newspaper. The difference between the boxes is due to what was available at the time, and the box I chose had the width I needed to add things on the bottom. The background is because of stars being something my brother had in his room, and so I wanted to incorporate that. There are five objects hanging from my box in my work, and Cornell has just one object. This is also true for the objects on the bottom, with me having five and not two. With our pieces being dedicated to someone, Cornell's person is an artist who inspired him, and mines is more personal.

Homage to Juan Gris. (1953-54) - Joseph Cornell

Process

For the shadow, I drew the outline of the first figure and cut it from black cardstock. I arranged the pieces together, gluing the sun and pink paper onto the sky part. I glued the shadow onto the background first, and then everything that was attached to the sky part. The butterfly I glued on separately from the other pieces, and after that the back part was done. I then went onto the hanging objects, cutting some string and gluing them onto the stars and clouds I cut out. This part was the most difficult, as I tried to get the string to stay on the ceiling without it coming off. After a few tries though, I was able to do it and have them stay. I made sure to keep the string different lengths for the clouds and stars, and keep my composition in mind from my planning sketches. Then I added the music box and rose at the bottom, and glued another rose onto the top right corner of the box.

For Everything. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Reflection

This project was enjoyable, and turned out better than I thought. I'd never worked with shadowboxes before, and I had wanted to do a piece incorporating a music box for a while, so this turned out to be a perfect opportunity. My favorite part is the stars and clouds hanging from the ceiling, since it made my piece more **dynamic**. Although it was troublesome to glue onto the ceiling at first, it was worth it in the end. I gained more experience with found object projects, and working with more than just paint or a digital medium. My least favorite part was finding that the music box covered the sun rays, but I think it's fine and doesn't interfere too much with the look of it. I'm glad that trying to follow Cornell's work let me develop ideas I liked and let me experiment more, and my work was better because of it.

Experimentation

Something I experimented with was the positioning of the roses and objects on the bottom. I misjudged the width of the bottom to be wider than it was, and thought the music box would fit normally, but it didn't fit. I decided just to turn it so it would still look alright and be able to fit in the box. I also had to do something similar for the rose and found that facing it more to the front was better. When the back part was attached, the rose and music box stayed in position due to their width, The music box was also prevented from sliding around with the toy box I glued, which I thought would be a good idea to keep things in place.

Hybrid Heroes - A Childhood Memory

I first separated the helmet into pieces, cutting three pieces and then gluing them together to make the base for the helmet. I was fearing that it wouldn't work, but it was successful and held together. I didn't do exact measurements for my head, but guessed a few inches larger just to be safe. When I wore it, the helmet was able to stay on my shoulders. After making sure everything would stay together, I cut cardboard into strips to add to the top of the helmet and build on it more. While the first half of the top was easy enough to put together, the last half connecting the top to the rest was difficult to do. It was hard to try and connect the last piece, and so I had to place it into multiple parts.

Cartonlandia. (2008) - Ana Serrano

Lety y El Peluche. (2009) - Ana Serrano

Inspiration

Serrano creates colorful, intricate, and detailed pieces with cardboard. In *Cartonlandia*, the city she makes out of the houses inspired me to make my helmet act as a planet as well. It made me think about how to better connect my piece to the theme I wanted to convey, and to add things onto the helmet to portray that. Serrano's use of **color** catches the viewer's eye, and each building in *Cartonlandia* contrasts against the other to create a city that feels as if it has a life of its own. Her series *Buildings* creates the feeling of a community, with the shops and buildings familiar in a sense. Each building has its own personality and theme, but they all fit together as a whole.

A Childhood Memory. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Inspiration

The game LittleBigPlanet has been a source of fond memories, from playing with my older brother to my younger brother now. I've always been fascinated with its aesthetics, the focus on creativity and creation showing through the various materials they use. It's always felt unique compared to other games, and the ability to play levels that other people have made only enhances that unique feel. The game also has a focus on space, with the player having a ship and a moon as their place to make levels. It's what inspired me to decide on making a space helmet.

LittleBigPlanet 3. Version 1.28 for PS4, Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2014.

Planning

In the process of thinking about concepts, I realized that the helmet also acted as a planet. The two characters would be exploring the "planet". For my sketches, I referenced a space helmet and tried to draw the general shape of it. The helmet symbolizes childhood to me, the nostalgia I feel when I see the characters in LittleBigPlanet. I broke down the shapes of the glove and planned out how to make the base for it. This was simpler than I thought it would be, and I figured the gloves wouldn't be too complicated to do. I also drew out ideas for the decorations I would cut out, and decided on mainly clouds, planets, and various simple shapes. I chose to put the stickers on the gloves as well so the parts would match, and there would be more detail.
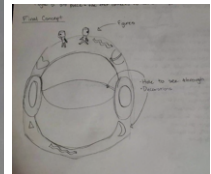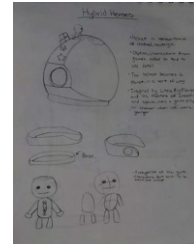
Hybrid Heroes - A Childhood Memory

Process

I decided to make the gloves oversized to fit my hands and have enough space for decorations. I started with the palm base of the hand, and then added the fingers to the top. I did the same process for the other side of the hand, and then connected them together with a two-inch wide piece on the side. Then I connected the fingers, and found that it was a tight fit since the cardboard was thicker. It wasn't hard to fit the rest of the pieces, though, and I was able to finish my hand. I did the other hand, and then decided to add a piece to the gloves to make them resemble space gloves more. I left the sides open so it would fit my arm.

After finishing the helmet, gloves, and putting on the decorations, I made the two figures. I first started with rolling two pieces of cardboard and gluing the sides together to make the body and head. Then I cut out circle pieces to finish the two parts, and cut out black cardboard for the eyes and mouth. I decided to glue on white highlights to give the figures more life. To finish, I used strips of cardboard for the arms and legs, gluing them onto the space helmet. I made a base for the standing one to be supported on so it wouldn't fall off when I transported it.

A Childhood Memory. (2022) - Elliesa Vang
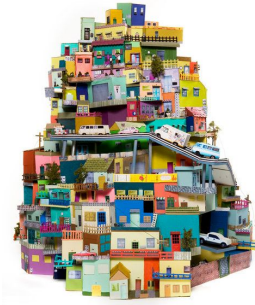
Cartonlandia. (2008) - Ana Serrano

Critique

Similarities

Serrano's piece and mines both utilize **color** to make the piece stand out and give it life. They're also both made of cardboard only, and don't use any other materials. There is also the idea of a place for people to live in, the parts building on each other.

Differences

Serrano's work uses more colored cardboard than my piece does, since mines is used for contrast and to emphasize creativity. Hers is used to create a structure of buildings, a city. She focuses on infrastructure while my work is a wearable.
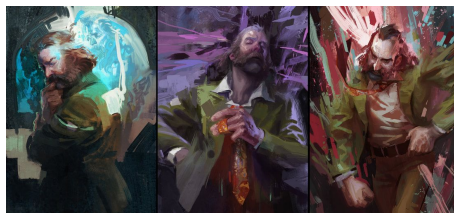
Reflection

I think my piece was done well enough considering I'm not used to cardboard. It was largely a learning process and figuring out how to get things to fit or connect, and some spots of my work are rough, but it went better than I expected. My favorite part of my work is the two figures, since the small details weren't easy to glue on and I was expecting them to come out worse. I like the figure sitting on the edge the most. My least favorite part is the back of the helmet, since it doesn't look well put together and it took me a while to figure out how to get it to stay on. The inspiration Serrano's work gave me helped to add color to the piece and add **contrast** as well; I think it made my piece more interesting than just having brown cardboard. When we went to UWM, the runway was a nice experience and gave me a perspective of how it would be like at college. It was neat to see others' projects, and for mines to be seen, even though I was nervous. Doing another cardboard project is something I might be interested in in the future, depending on what I want to make.
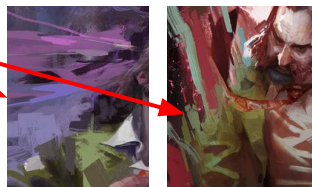
Promotion

I wanted to focus on doing a theme of envy. The story I thought about was a man who kills his boss out of jealousy. The boss is affluent, cruel, and I want to contrast the two characters a bit. Envy is often associated with green, and green lighting would help to convey that. Green is also associated with growth and money, and those concepts fit as well. Dramatic lighting with strong **contrasts**, as well with a messier way of painting would better portray emotions and the intensity of the scenario. I would have green as the main color in the piece, but include **contrasting** colors for effect like red blood.

For the character design, the general traits I decided on were having shadows under the eyes, an angular face with more prominent cheekbones, and perhaps messier hair. The first one I drew was cleaner in general, to be more professional and to sort of follow his boss' image of being neat. The one next to it is messy, more unkempt to show how tired work has made him.

The expression I was thinking about could be erratic, with exaggeration for dramatic effect. The face would be the most detailed part, since it would require more care put into painting it. Rostov's backgrounds are usually dark and use a main color like purple or blue. The color also reflects in the lighting, and I was thinking of incorporating that as well as the **dynamic** feel the background gives to the work. I want the background to **emphasize** the figures in the piece and to further portray that erratic emotion. Rostov's **brushstrokes** are messy, using **textured** brushes.

Inspiration

Aleksander Rostov is known for his work on the game *Disco Elysium*. His work is partially inspired by Russian realism, and the style of the game is reminiscent of expressionism. The artist also uses contemporary artists as another element of inspiration. Rostov's work has less focus on making his **brushwork** neat, but rather to add a rougher quality to his work. That technique conveys more **dynamic movement**, and his work is given more of an intense mood. His way of painting and how the **textures emphasized** this feeling fascinated me, and so I want to try that technique as I usually prefer smooth blending in my works.

The **brushstrokes** for the backgrounds in the *Archetypes* make the pieces much more dynamic, like an explosion of color. There's a main color reflected in the lighting, and this was the most notable to me. When looking at Rostov's work, this piece was the one I thought about the most, and the one I want to draw my inspiration from. The backgrounds really add a lot to the piece, and you can get a sense of the emotion through the specific color used. Overall, with the lack of focus on the neatness of detail, this itself harmonizes the works as things overlap or meld with the background. The figure and the background build on each other, and for the piece on the left, you can see the blue highlighting the shadow of the character. There's also a face you can see to the right of the man's head, and I thought this was a nice detail that I didn't notice at first.

Archetypes. (2020) - Aleksander Rostov

Promotion. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Promotion

Process

I started out with a sketch, using the one from my process journal as a reference along with my inspiration. I redid the sketch several times to fix things, and then started with the base colors. After that, I began to render the face, using a dark green for the shadows. Next was the hands, and I changed the knife to a ring. I thought the pose looked better that way, and I didn't end up liking how the hand holding a knife looked. The eyes were next, and since they would just be black, I added some green to reflect the lighting and did the eye whites afterwards. With the shirt, I shaded and erased some parts as I went, so I wouldn't add too many folds to it.

Promotion. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Reflection

This project was new in trying more **dynamic** lighting and stark **contrast**. I don't usually use that much in my pieces, so I wanted to at least try my hand at it. I had problems at first with the shade of green on the skin and the **contrast**, but I was able to adjust those and fix it to my liking. I've wanted to try something inspired by Rostov's artwork for a while, and I believe I was able to follow that inspiration with the way of painting and the use of a reoccurring color. My favorite part while doing this piece was the blood splatters, because the bright red makes the work more interesting and adds necessary contrast to it. I also like the smudges on the glasses and the rings because while they're smaller details, the smudges contribute more to that messy look and the rings add some **contrast** with the gold color. Painting in green was more difficult, since I hadn't done that type of lighting before and it was hard to figure out what the colors should be. Looking at some references helped with the lighting, but I partially guessed on some parts.

Experimentation

I decided I didn't want too much red, as it would detract from the green, so I went for smaller details. I thought adding the blood on the collar and smudges on the glasses would be fun elements to include, something to build up the story more. With the pose, the change from the knife to the ring in the hand fixed the problem I felt with the sketch. The knife in hand felt awkward, and the ring came off more natural for the piece. For the background, I used my inspiration as a starting point and tried out different shades of green. The entire process was largely experimental, but once I defined the shapes I had a better idea of what to edit. I liked the use of the textured brush on the edges of the background, adding some faint green and black to it.

Process

For the hair, I used a bright green to define the strands and give it more of a shape. I added some sparkles to the rings and afterwards, adjusted the color of the skin and the contrast. The background started off with black, and then I painted the center green. I eventually began to define a shape, and used a brush to add **texture** and better follow my inspiration. After thinking a bit, I painted a jagged red line across the background. I wanted to see if that **contrast** would look good and it did, so I adjusted the shape before finishing the background. The last part was the bloodstains, and I used the same vibrant red for **contrast**.

The jacket was more difficult to do with the lighting in mind, but I did my best to follow the lighting. I went over the jacket with a brighter color to add stronger **contrast**, defining the folds more and fixing parts of the jacket. I used a textured brush to follow Rostov's way of painting, and tried not to focus too much on making things neat.

A Premonition

Planning

I had decided on the emotion of unease. Some of the ideas I had for the piece could be storm clouds in the background, and a figure reaching towards the man as a representation of that anxiety. The storm could also be representative of that anxiety, a looming presence in the background. The colors would most likely be warmer and **desaturated**, like the colors in The Fall. I wanted to make this piece a digital work, and use some textured brushes for the clouds and edges. The pose I drew has the man standing, possibly looking up at the storm. I was thinking that he should acknowledge the storm in some form, watching it with worry. The longer jacket I thought would be more effective in portraying **movement** through wind, just to see if that would add some **dynamic** elements to my piece.

I sketched out some ideas of backgrounds to use. I wanted to show some sense of scale, so the first idea was having him stand on the edge of a cliff near the sea. The idea is to represent the vastness of this anxiety, and I also decided that a horizontal orientation would be better to try and extend the distance. The man is by himself, only accompanied by the figure reaching out, and the **scale** would **emphasize** that. However, I did want to focus on the faces somewhat and have that detail visible to the viewer. The sea was better for **scale**, but it would most likely stray from the warmer color **palette** that Foster has. So for the second background idea, I did a grassy field with the sky in the back.
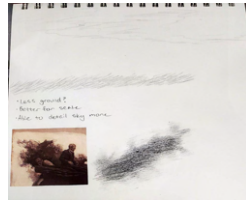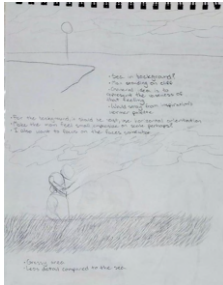
Inspiration

Alan Stephens Foster was an artist that made illustrations for *The Saturday Evening Post*. *The Fall* captured my eye the most while looking for inspiration, and I think it's because of the **composition**. There's a clear downwards angle, fitting its name, and the **texture** of the work is interesting. There's also a wispy look to the edges of the car and other parts, making it look as if it had materialized. The **dynamic** pose of the men falling interested me as well, their faces hidden as one grabs onto the other. One thing I noted was the way he grabs onto the other, and it's more intimate as their faces are closer, implying a sense of familiarity between the two. I wanted to try and copy how Foster utilizes that **texture** in my work, and how the **desaturated** colors add to the somber mood.

The Fall. (n.d.) - Alan Stephens Foster

A Premonition. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Inspiration

Another inspiration was symbolism. The idea behind the symbolism movement was to **emphasize** emotions and ideas. Artists strayed away from presenting an object reality, but a piece that could be interpreted and had its own implications. Much of the symbolism artwork tended to focus on more somber topics like death or the dream world. The common ideals inspired me to try and explore ideas of what emotion I could do, something that was more melancholy or subtle. I thought about something that could be interpreted differently, but have its meaning not too vague. Eventually I settled on doing something with uneasiness, and it fit with symbolism's general focus.
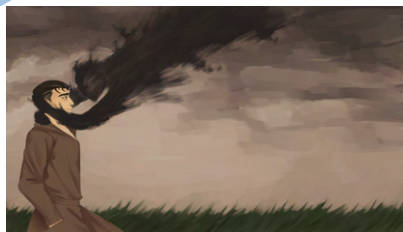

The Three Brides. (1893) - Jan Toorop

The Dance of Life. (1899-1900) - Edvard Munch
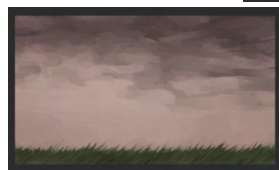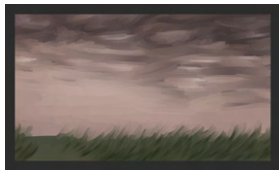
A Premonition

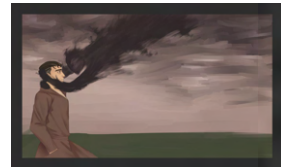*A Premonition.* (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Process

I started with a rough sketch of the body, figuring out where to place everything before doing another final sketch over it. The final sketch surprisingly didn't take a lot of time, and I was able to get it done without much editing. I then sketched the figure, and I didn't refine it much because I was going to use it as a guideline for the shape. The figure would be painted in and changed along the way. After everything with the sketch was done, I lowered the **opacity** of the lines and began to fill in the base colors. For the colors, I tried to keep them more **desaturated** to fit the background and Foster's work. I did the skin first, then the eyes and hair. With those parts, I kept the shading more faint. I debated on giving the eyes highlights or more detail, but I eventually left it alone as the dark color felt more effective in portraying dread.

Reflection

At first, I had trouble deciding on an inspiration and how to go about my project. Once I found Foster's work and thought of my idea, though, it became easier to visualize the components of my piece. The background was the most difficult for me, as I tried to make the clouds clear and also give a sense of **scale** to the work. I redid the background several times to find what worked best. What I liked most was the figure and the man. The process of doing them wasn't too difficult, and I ended up liking the **texture** of the figure more than I thought. It looked similar to the **texture** in *The Fall* and captured that hazy look. Initially I was unsure of how the meaning would come off, but I thought the symbolism of the piece was able to be conveyed effectively in the end as I went through the process. Overall, I enjoyed this project since I was able to get more experience in doing natural backgrounds.

Experimentation

One of the things I experimented with was the lineart. I initially thought about doing a more painterly style, but I found that I liked the lines better. I didn't want the lineart to be too dark, though, so I adjusted the opacity and lowered it a bit. I wasn't sure of what to do for the background, so I started with blocking out the shapes and experimenting with the color of the clouds. I didn't want to use a dark brown, and so I decided on a dark purple instead and it worked for the sky. With the first version of the background, I used a harder brush for rendering the clouds and grass. I did this twice, trying to make something I was satisfied with. In the end, though, I didn't like how the clouds looked and so decided to use a softer brush for the background. The softer brush was better for **blending**, and I also reduced the size of the grass during the process. With the softer brush, the clouds looked less harsh and the colors improved.

Process

I shaded in the hair next, adding gray to it afterwards, and then did the jacket and shirt. After that, I colored the background a base gray color and added green to the bottom. For the storm clouds, I used **shades** of **desaturated** purple and gray and tried to render the **shapes** in the sky. The grass was simple to do, and I used a darker green for some of the strands to add some **contrast**. For the figure, I started with making the initial sketch I did visible, and colored the general shape in. Then I hid the sketch, and began to use a textured brush, alternating between the dark purple **tone** and transparency. I kept some **transparency** in the face and **contrast** of **values** to keep the figure visibly defined, and to make it feel more faint. The torso was the most defined part, and I kept the rest of the body vague to follow the edges of *The Fall*.

Comfort

Comfort. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Star of the Hero. (1936) - Nicholas Roerich

Inspiration

The inspiration I chose for my project is *Star of the Hero*, mainly because of the color **palette** and the way the sky is done. The way the teal and bright orange-yellow **contrast** is done interests me, and I wanted to incorporate that somehow in my work. I also wanted to include the shooting star, as that's the focal point of the piece. What I noticed about the piece is the way the **values** get lighter as they get further away from the **foreground**. Roerich creates an interesting **contrast** with the figure being a solid dark color, but my work will have the person taking up more of the **composition**. Overall the **mood** given in Roerich's work is peaceful, the figure in the work staring at the shooting star, and it fits in with the theme I want to do. I want to try and emulate this feeling in my work, and have it communicated effectively.
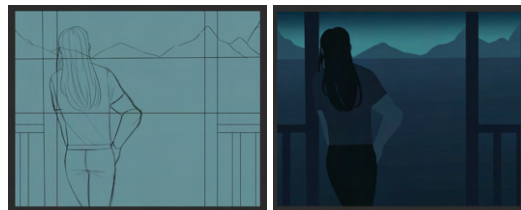
Roerich focused on landscapes, particularly mountains. He loved nature and was involved in the Russian symbolism art movement. Many of his works tend to use cooler **palettes** and feature mostly blue.

Planning

The general ideas I had for this piece were to focus on the feeling of comfort and possibly have the pose be of the person leaning on a porch post, looking out to the sky. To follow my inspiration more, I thought about possibly adding mountains and a shooting star. The shooting star would be important for my piece, since in Star of the Hero the white draws the viewer's eye and becomes a focal point in the piece. It adds some needed **contrast** against the dark blue **tone** of the sky, and the stars also balance the **positive** and **negative space**. The general **perspective** I was thinking of was viewing the back of the person, focusing on them and the sky.

When thinking about the **perspective**, I thought that this idea I had could be best since the piece would allow both person and background to be seen clearly. With the other elements of the background, I thought about drawing a simple porch, and I didn't think it would be necessary for my piece to have that be detailed much and possibly take away time from other parts. With the **lighting**, the light would be yellow-orange to follow my inspiration, but be more subtle. The person himself could be more of a silhouette, with most of his details being defined by the light.

Process

To start my piece, I made the porch first so I knew where to place my character. I used the line tool, and after adjusting the **composition**, I started to sketch out the character. He was drawn several times until I was satisfied with the sketch, and the background was drawn next. After the sketch was done, I went in with the base colors, adjusting them to fit with Roerich's palette. I tried to keep the elements in the **foreground** the darkest, and the background the lightest. I ended up adjusting some of the **contrast** to see if it was better.
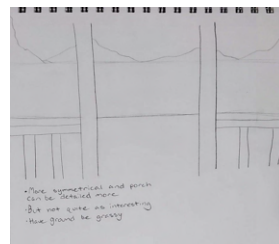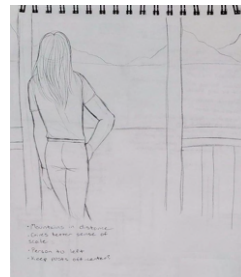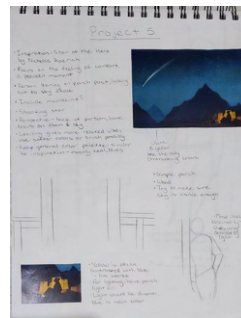
Comfort

With the base colors done, I started rendering the piece, going for the hair first. I used a light yellow to define the shapes, and after getting the hang of it I finished the rest of the body. With the body completed, I went through it again and darkened some of the shadows to better reflect the lighting. For the porch I used an airbrush, but eventually I ended up using a harder brush to fix some of the edges and **values**. After coming back to this piece, I decided to make the **lighting** more visible as the one I had was too subtle to really give much **contrast**. I also redrew the arm since I wasn't happy with it and the way it looked. When I fixed the **lighting**, the piece looked better than it had before, and I noted that it better followed my inspiration.

Next, after the porch and character were done, I worked on the background and started with the mountains. I blocked in a slightly darker shade of teal from the sky, and I changed my idea of having two layers of mountains to three. The three layers gave more of an interesting component to the piece, and I added some **texture** to the first two layers by using the teal color and a **textured** brush. Then the stars came next, and I did the shooting star first before drawing the stars. The grass was simple to do since it was just using a darker color to draw the strands. After the background was done, I added some **filters** and adjusted the colors and **contrast**.

Comfort. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Star of the Hero. (1936) - Nicholas Roerich

Critique

Similarities

The general **palettes** of the works are similar, using various **tones** of blue and yellow. The setting is similar as well, with a starry night sky and a shooting star above mountains. The person is illuminated by yellow light, **contrasting** against the blue tones. As for the **mood** of the piece, it's meant to be calm, the work showcasing the beauty of nature and a peaceful moment. The **values** of the mountains vary to convey a sense of distance, and this also applies to the rest of the work with the **foreground** being the darkest.

Differences

The **composition** and **scale** of the pieces are different. My work focuses moreso on the person, while Roerich focuses on the mountain, **scaling** it so that the person is small and doesn't take up most of the work. The person is also placed to the right, while mines is on the left instead. There's more detail to my figure, and his features are visible whilst Roerich's figure is painted black with no details. For the medium of the work, I chose digital and not a traditional painting due to time. I also wanted to be able to adjust the colors and see what looked best. The yellow in my work isn't quite as vibrant since I didn't want it to take away some of the focus on the background.

Reflection

Overall this piece was fun to do. I enjoyed doing the night sky and the mountains the most, as I thought they came out looking well and didn't need too much work. I also liked doing a work with a blue **palette**, and my piece looked pleasing to me with the softer colors. For the most part I think I was able to communicate the meaning of my peace, and following my inspiration closely helped with that. With the night setting, I haven't done many works with that type of **lighting**, so it was a good learning experience to attempt this piece and see what would happen. The part I had the most trouble with was the arm I redid, since I also attempted a new **perspective** of the back of someone and tried not to make the arm look off. However, once I fixed the pose, it looked better and I was happy with it.

Home Sweet Home

Inspiration

Trevor Henderson is a horror artist well known for his found-footage type works, in which a cryptid can often be seen looking at the viewer. The beings are often uncanny looking, bringing an unsettling feeling to the work. I was inspired by this because they're not something you'd usually find in a generic horror movie, like a monster with claws and teeth, something that would look scary but not memorable. Henderson instead chooses to utilize that uncanny valley of human-looking but incredibly warped features.

Home Sweet Home. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

The Forgotten Baby. (2019) - Trevor Henderson

Planning

I was thinking about how to show that tension, or where to place the entity exactly. I decided to go with my inspiration photo and place it at the doorway, looking into the bedroom. I thought it would give the creature enough focus and have the man placed next to it as well, centering them. The figure having a humanoid face with a warped eye would give it that human-esque quality Trevor often chooses for his designs, and I was also thinking about adding teeth to increase the uncanniness. Skinny, spindling arms would be perfect to show that fear approaching the person and slowly making its way to him. The fetal position is a vulnerable pose, and looking away from the monster or at it would add to the horror aspect. Another idea for the **composition** was to have only the monster's eye peeking in since it was more suspenseful.

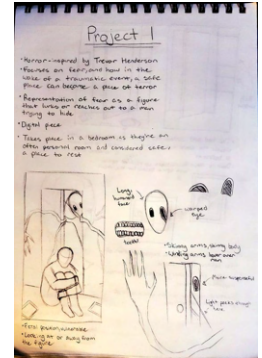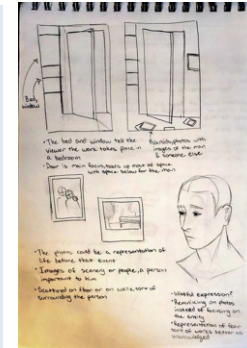*Anxious Dog.* (2019) - Trevor Henderson

Inspiration

The blurry photos also add to that off-putting feeling because of how real it feels and not something taken in perfect quality. He uses **contrast** to either make the monster the central figure of the piece, or to obscure it and make it blend in with the background. I wanted to make a piece using that same uncanny kind of monster, to make that fear lurking in the piece rather than an in-your-face kind of fear.

Planning

I experimented with slightly different **compositions** to see what ideas I liked. The first image is straight, while the second has more of an angled view. I added images to the second to fill up the space and also thought about giving the viewers some context for this piece, and to add to the meaning of it. The polaroids or photos could show images of people or general scenery, images you could find decorating a home. I thought about the concept more and figured it would be a way to show life before that traumatic event, surrounding the man in memories he can't escape. For the man's expression I was initially thinking on fear, but a wistful/sorrowful face could work better. Since the representation of fear is more a symbolic idea than a literal monster, it would fit more to not acknowledge it directly.

Home Sweet Home

Overall, I liked the piece. It was definitely new for me to try drawing horror, and I think it went well. While the figure in my art isn't as scary as Trevor Henderson manages to make his cryptids, it was fun to draw and try to explore what features to distort. My favorite part was drawing the person, because the reference I used made him turn out well. Another favorite part was adding the **textures** and **filters** to my art since it made the work complete and added to the atmosphere. My least favorite part is the background, since it felt incomplete in a way. The meaning of this piece changed how I thought about things, and my initial concept wasn't the same as when I started. Henderson had a lot of aspects to his art that I wanted to try and copy, and I did take a lot of those aspects into mines, but I strayed from just doing horror and instead went into symbolism.

Process

I started with experimenting on how to do the face of the figure, sort of seeing how the blending would work and where the eyes would go. I also wanted to see how light would affect the features and the mood of the figure. After finding the result satisfactory, I went onto my final piece using the program Clip Studio Paint. The first thing I did was to make the background so I could plan on where to place things, using the line tool to make things look neater. Then, I used a reference to get the pose down, and afterwards made a clean sketch and added the hair and clothes. I gave him just a plain t-shirt and jeans since I didn't feel like anything special would be necessary.

I colored in the background, and then the photo colors. I wanted the photo colors to be the most saturated part of the piece for emphasis. I shaded in some parts of the skin, then the hair, shirt, and legs. After that I added some shadows to the background and some rough colors to the photos. The shading on the curtains and bed were quick to do, and then I thought of adding the man's shadow to make the piece more complete. When everything about the background and the person were done, I moved onto the figure itself. Using just a plain almost-black color, I blocked it in and then erased around the edges to clean it up.

I used lighting to try to define the monster's shape. It gave me a way to make the shape more detailed and just vague enough. When I finished everything, I added in a grainy RGB texture and set it to overlay, then lowering the opacity. The texture was perfect for giving the look Henderson's work has, and I also wanted to use chromatic aberration. A tool I downloaded made the process easy, and I adjusted the red and blue levels until I got the effect I wanted.

Home Sweet Home. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

The Forgotten Baby. (2019) - Trevor Henderson
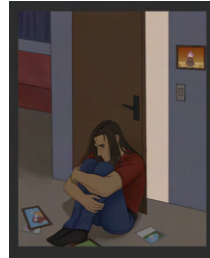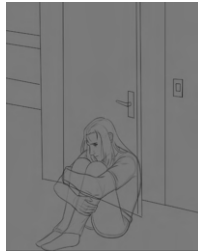
Differences

The differences are that my work has more of a symbolic meaning than the literal one Henderson has. Henderson's piece is mostly a cryptid, exploring the terror in an unexpected visitor at night. My piece's meaning relates to trauma and how it changes our view of places. Henderson has the viewer themselves inserted into the piece to experience the horror. In my work, the viewer is supposed to see the event as an observer only and not be as if they were experiencing the piece. Henderson also uses photos for the background, when I drew mines because I wanted to get a specific **composition**. I wanted to get that person behind the door, hiding, while his **composition** has the viewer on the bed with the cryptid opening the door.

Critique

Both our works use a figure standing in the doorway, looking at the viewer. They seem to loom over the person, with unnaturally large eyes and a skinny body. Both pieces also take place in a bedroom, a place meant to be safe. The colors are **desaturated**, with darker **values** and low **contrast**. The **composition** has them as the focal point and they're **emphasized** through **contrast** and **proportions**. Me and Henderson both use a grainy RGB texture and chromatic aberration to add effect to the piece.

Similarities

To Love You So

As an art nouveau artist, Alphonse Mucha mainly focused on drawing women, as well as making his art accessible to the general public. Some common elements in his art were borders and flowers to decorate the background, as well as long flowing dresses for the women he drew. His *Spring* and *Summer* is part of a series of work titled *The Seasons*. In *Summer* and *Spring*, the colors are soft, with the exception of the red flowers in the woman's hair in *Summer*. There's a solid dark outline on the edges of the elements, with the thin **lines** on the inside contrasting against the thicker ones. The **lines** themselves are **organic**, flowing rather than straight. This gives a sense of **movement** to the piece, and the works themselves feel more **dynamic**.

Overall, I want to incorporate some of these elements into my piece, mainly the line thickness **contrasts** and the contrasting of **warm tones** with **cool** ones. The use of **organic lines** gives the work a smooth, free-flowing feeling that I like. I think Mucha's ideas of having his art be accessible fits with my medium as it's digital. The use of softer colors would help express the theme I'm trying to go for better, and it would look more aesthetically pleasing to the viewer with the soft look.

To Love You So. (2022) - Elliesa Vang
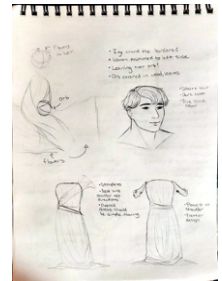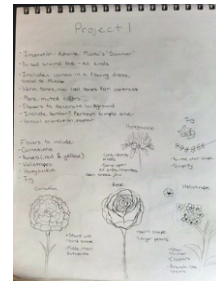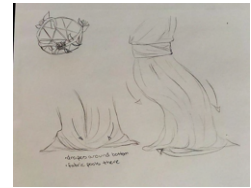

Summer. (1896) - Alphonse Mucha

Spring. (1896) - Alphonse Mucha
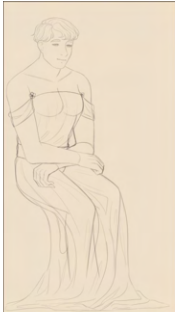
Planning

I was thinking of the woman looking at a wood and leaf-covered orb, with the flowers filling in some of the space. She would be sitting on the left side, and have flowers in her hair. The drawing of her was to get an idea of her hairstyle and features, and I decided on short blue black hair. She would also be Asian, and while this and the short hair is different from Mucha's way of drawing the women in his art, I decided I wanted more diversity. The dresses were me thinking up the design, and the first one would have a belt and a sash. The directions of the belt and sash would create some sort of **movement**. The second had sleeves decorated with flowers, and the same belt as the other one. Both dresses had a general idea of being simple and flowing, as Mucha's *Summer* has a simple dress as well.

Planning

The theme I want to do is all kinds of love, whether it be familial, romantic, or platonic. Similar to Mucha's work, my piece would have more **desaturated** colors, and flowers to decorate the background. I had researched some flowers that symbolized love and decided on carnations, red and yellow roses, heliotropes, honeysuckle, and ivy. I drew the flowers to get a feel for the shape and to figure out how to draw them exactly. The carnation I noted should start with the base in the middle, and then add petals outwards. The rose was similar, using a spiral shape. The petals were larger, curved at the ends, and smaller in the middle. Heliotropes have a star shaped center which made it easier for me to draw, since I could just start off with that and then draw the petals. They're more clustered together, and the stems have more of a branch-like shape. Drawing heliotropes, the petals resembled long tear drops, and the open ones at the ends reminded me of an unhinged snake jaw. With the ivy, I noted that they had around five points, but I also wanted to simplify them for convenience and time.

To Love You So

To Love You So. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

Process

I started off with filling the background in a cream color, and then using the rectangle tool to make a dark brown border. After that, I began to sketch in the woman, and when I finished the sketch, I was thinking about doing a final one which would be the lineart, but I decided on just cleaning up the sketch because I liked it. When everything for the lineart was finished, I began with the base colors, first with the skin. I adjusted the skin tone to make it warm and not too pale, and then went with a dark **desaturated** blue for the hair. The dress was colored in with a pale cream color, and the belt a **desaturated** red. Then I started shading in the face, and I used a softer brush and colors because I noticed that while Mucha's work did have shading, there wasn't a stark contrast between the values. There was more of an airbrush feel to the shading, so I took note of that. I shaded the rest of the skin and went for the dress next, using a pinkish color for a warmer tone. After shading the dress, I did the belt.

Critique

Both pieces utilize a border and have the woman sitting at the left side. They both have darker hair, and are wearing a long white dress. The sky transitions from a cool color to a warmer tone, with the clouds going to the right at an angle. Both of the pieces have fragmented clouds, and there's greenery of some sort to decorate the piece. The cool **tone** of the sky **contrasts** against the warm **tones** of the skin and dress, and there's further **contrast** of cool and warm **tones** in the plants and the object the woman is sitting on. The **orientations** of the works are both vertical.
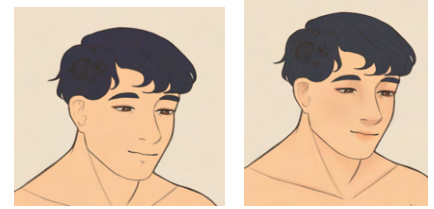
Similarities

Differences

The differences between the two is that my border is dark brown, while Mucha uses a more rounded white border. The sky in his piece transitions from light blue to yellow, while my piece goes from purple to pink. The medium differs as well, and my work is digital and his is a lithograph. The woman in my work has the dress to her feet. The hair is also different, since Mucha tends to draw his women with longer hair and I drew the hair short.

Experimentation

I wanted to add some detail to the woman's face, but at first I wasn't sure how to do so. I tried doing a dark **desaturated** red around the eyes, but I didn't like how it turned out. It didn't really convey that soft feeling I was going for, so I tried again with something else. I tried doing pink around the eyes, making it subtler. I also added some blush and colored in the lips. I wasn't used to doing makeup and such, but it turned out well and I was able to achieve the look I was going for. For the background, a gradient map was important to try and harmonize the colors better. I ended up finding a particular gradient map that brought out the colors the best, without making the skin tone paler than I intended and fitting with the background.

Reflection

I've always wanted to try my hand at doing a piece inspired by the art nouveau movement, and specifically Alphonse Mucha. Trying the contrast of **thick** and **thin lines** really helped the piece pop out more, and the border does as well. It was fun to draw the folds of the dress, and try to figure out how it worked using references and some guesswork. Drawing the flowers was my least favorite part, as well as coloring them in since it was tedious. The flowers did turn out better than I expected though, and I think drawing them in my planning sketches helped me with the general shapes. Mucha's *Summer* helped me decide the elements to place into my work, and how I wanted the colors to look. I hope, though, that the theme of my piece can be inferred from the flowers and the **mood**, since I decided not to make it overt.

Something to Remember

Sappho and Erinna in a Garden in Mytilene. (1864) - Simeon Solomon

Something to Remember. (2022) - Elliesa Vang
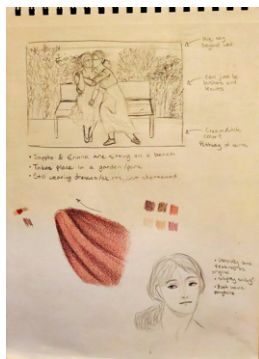
Inspiration

Simeon Solomon was a Pre-Raphaelite artist, many of his works depicting Jewish life and exploring gay relationships. Sappho, a poet, was known for her lyric poetry and interest in women. The artist was gay himself, and was interested in portraying her and her relationships. The piece stood out to me when I saw it, with the tenderness of the piece and the background sort of enveloping them. I wanted to try and emulate some of the shading seen in the skirts and the pose, since Sappho and Erinna are quite literally connected and not just emotionally. Their relationship is the center of the **composition**, showing a loving moment and not shying away from the implications.

Inspiration

Leonardo Da Vinci was a Renaissance painter, sculptor, and much more. *The Last Supper* was Jesus' last meal with his 12 disciples before his crucifixion. In it, he tells them of a betrayal, the painting depicting their reactions to this news. Da Vinci was commissioned to make the painting by the Duke of Milan. Their expressions are **emphasized** in the work, having strong body language as well. The main thing I wanted to take from the piece was the **composition**, with the disciples and Jesus in the same places. The room would be similar, just tweaked to fit a modern day house.

The Last Supper. (1495-1498) - Leonardo Da Vinci

Planning

The themes I want to touch on in the pieces overall is the duality of connection and disconnect. People loving each other and on the other hand, arguing. My thoughts for *The Last Supper* were to make it take place in a dining room, to bring that family dinner to mind. This is because the original piece sort of reminded me of family debating or on rare occasions arguing about something on a holiday dinner. So I took from that inspiration and it became the basis for my modernization. The piece would be done in pencil and colored pencil, because I feel like painting that many people in one piece, considering time, would take too long. The gray would also contrast heavily with the color of the one with Sappho, which would be vibrant. Jesus is going to be the only one with color, to strongly emphasize to the viewer that he's the focus.

Planning

For Sappho and Erinna, they would have the same features. I drew a sketch of the piece to figure out the poses and the **scale**. The two would be sitting on a bench, similar to the original piece, in a garden or park of sorts. One of the things that would change is the outfits, since they were too long and wouldn't be practical in a modern setting. I'm going to give them dresses/skirts, but shorter than the original. The floor would be a light yellow color. On the bottom half of the page, I experimented with colored pencils and how to do the folds. I layered pink, then red, and then darker reds and brown to see the color combination. I also made a sketch of the face, and decided that I would keep the same features and the ponytail she has since it's still fitting in a modern time.

Something to Remember

Something to Remember.
(2022) - Elliesa Vang

Process

The first thing I did was draw out the bench using a ruler. This was so I could place the two women on the bench naturally and not have to position them awkwardly afterwards. Using the original piece, I referenced it and sketched out the two on the bench, erasing lines as I went and adding folds so I could color them in later. I drew the faces in next, then the hair, and added the feet. Drawing the face went faster than I thought it would, and I liked how I drew it. Afterwards, I began to color in Erinna's skin, using a mix of light peach, peach, sienna brown, and a yellow-orange color and overlaying them. I blended in the colors with the light peach, and used the peach to add a pinkish hue to the cheeks and the lips, as well as around the eyes. I shaded with the sienna brown.

Process

I drew out the table using a ruler, setting up the background to place the figures. I then sketched out Jesus first, and then the disciples on the left. What I first started with was drawing Bartholomew at the end of the table to see where to place the others. I kept the poses and placement of the disciples the same generally, with the exception of removing some of them. This was due to not having enough space without making the **composition** look squished in. So I opted to remove two from each side to keep the even numbers of disciples on each side. The modern clothes were simple, and the hairstyles I tried to keep similar for most of them. I drew in some plates and cups on the table, and finished the background by adding some lines to alter the **perspective**. I colored his shirt vermillion red and used tuscan red to shade, light blue and indigo for his pants, and sienna brown plus dark brown for the shoes and hair. Afterwards, I shaded in the rest of the figures, starting with the clothes and then the background.

Reflection

The illustrations I did were decent. I liked the one of Sappho and Erinna the most, since the pose turned out well when I was referencing it and the skirt folds look nice. The coloring I like as well because I hadn't used colored pencil in a while and wasn't sure how layering colors worked. As I colored the piece, I found that it helped with blending and less white showing through. I'm not used to drawing fabric as flowy as the skirts were, so I learned where gravity would sort of pull and where the folds would be. My illustration with Jesus and the disciples was nice as well, but it didn't exactly turn how I wanted it to due to problems with placing the figures and not having enough space. I also wasn't used to drawing so many people in one work, so it took me a bit to decide whether to just squish everyone in or to leave some of the disciples out. It was a learning experience for me though, and it helped develop some **composition** skills and more experience in placing multiple people.


Experimentation

The skirt folds were largely referenced from the original painting, and I tested out Solomon's way of doing it by sort of lightly shading, trying to leave the lightest parts untouched. It worked out better than with Erinna's dress. I also sort of experimented with the skin tone, and I was afraid I'd done the skin tone wrong when I added the orange-yellow until I layered the peach color over, which blended things in nicely. I saw that the orange-yellow made the skin look better and evened out the reddish **tones**.

Retreat
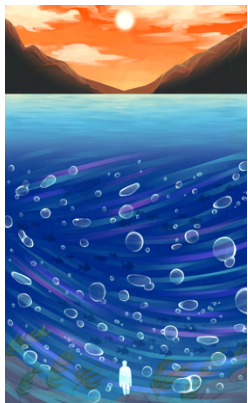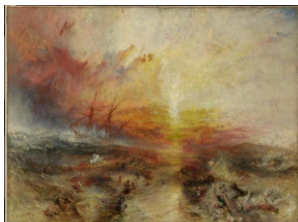
JMW Turner was a Romantic artist with a focus on landscapes and color. Many of his paintings feature the sea or a body of water. He's known for the way he renders light, giving an almost ethereal look to his pieces. Romanticism itself focuses a lot on emotion, color, and a focus on the sublime. Another portion to Romanticism was using art to convey social issues, such as Turner's *The Slave Ship* being used as a means to talk about the abolition of slavery. There wasn't a lot of focus on complete accuracy, but rather to the feeling of the piece and what the colors could convey to the viewer.

Turner's art and the ideals behind Romanticism inspired me to think about a piece that could convey or be a metaphor for a social issue, while being a seascape. I liked the way the power of nature is conveyed in *The Slave Ship*, consuming the people in the painting. It very well conveys that sublime feeling, the grandeur of the vast sea and how its depths swallow the figures. Any person in my work would be small, with the **scale** of them **emphasizing** the ocean. There's also a sort of glow to Turner's works, so I wanted to incorporate that in in some way with light.

Planning

The third sketch page was done digitally, to see how the waves could look. I blocked out the potential base colors of my work to get more of an idea of the colors I could use. I experimented with the direction and colors of the waves using a teal color. I found it paired with the dark blue nicely, and I also made a **palette** of all the colors I used so I could have a reference for my final work.

Retreat. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

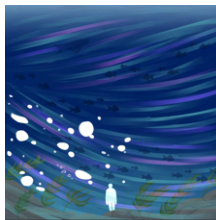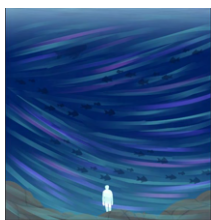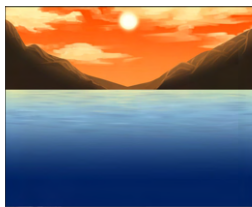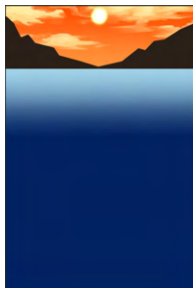*The Slave Ship.* (1840) - JMW Turner
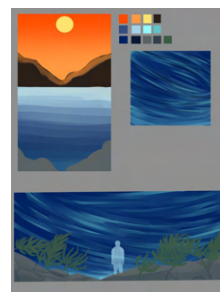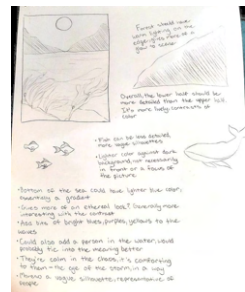
Planning

I started with writing out the ideas I had for the piece. I knew I wanted to do something with duality, about society's values and the conformity of that. I wanted to start with a warm sunset at the top, and then gradually fade to cooler **hues**, which I thought would help highlight the **contrast**. I was thinking of adding waves and fish to the ocean, to give it **movement** and a sense of chaos. The main idea of **composition** in my first sketch was to show the contrast of something more perfect to a more real, or alive, part. After I drew the horizontal sketch I began to think that a vertical one would be better to show off the depth, and showing the bottom of the sea and adding kelp plus rocks would help. I looked at a few pictures of kelp and drew a leafy one versus one with more wavy leaves.

Planning

For the second sketch page, I tried a vertical **composition** and liked it more. For the mountains in the background, I was thinking of adding warm **lighting** from the sun to give it more of a glow. The lower half of the work would be more detailed, and I was thinking that it would make it more lively, with the **contrasts** of color and the **movement** compared to the top half. The fish could've been lighter silhouettes against the sea, and wouldn't be in front **perspective**-wise, more vague shapes. To further help with that sense of **lighting**, I wanted to add a lighter teal-ish color at the bottom. Bits of bright purple, blue, and yellow would be more interesting to look at, and I contemplated adding a person in to better tie into the meaning of my work. They'd simply be standing at the bottom, calm. I didn't think I would make them detailed, more vague like the fish to represent multiple people.

Retreat

I started out with blocking my colors in, using a gradient for the sea and the sky. I separated everything into layers so I could do effects later and edit them as necessary. I used the line tool to make the outline of the mountains, and then colored it in with the fill bucket. I softened the sharp edges by painting over them. The first part I rendered was the sky, using a pastel yellow with a light orange for shading. I started with a circular shape and then worked my way into erasing and shaping the clouds. Afterwards, I proceeded with the mountains and used an airbrush tool to give the orange glow, then painting in the lines and separating the mountains. The sun was made using the glow effect and airbrushing a yellow circle before using white to make it brighter.
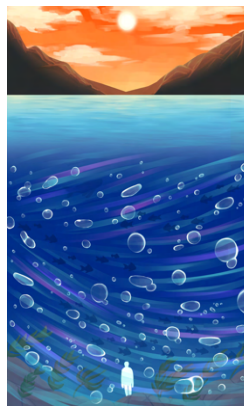

Retreat. (2022) - Elliesa Vang

The Slave Ship. (1840) - JMW Turner

Critique

Similarities

The similarities between my work and Turner's is the meaning, which is based in a social issue. Turner's is about the abolition of slavery, while mine is about societal norms and the fronts people put on to hide their "undesirable" qualities. Our works are both seascapes with a warm sunset, **movement** shown with the waves. The human figures in the pieces are dwarfed by the sea, emphasized by **scale** to show the grandeur, and images of fish are included. The warm colors of the sunset are contrasted by the cooler **hues** of the ocean. Overall, there's a sort of chaotic feeling to both works emphasized by **movement** and **scale**.
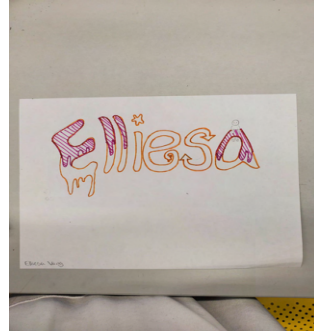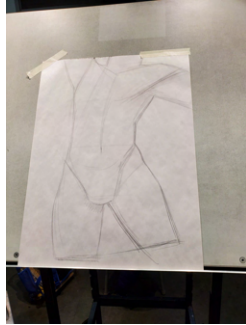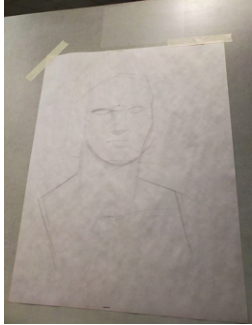
Differences

Turner uses oil paint on canvas, while I use a digital medium. I preferred doing digital because I would be able to use effects like adding glow and using gradient maps. My human figure is more so a vague shape, while Turner's are more realistic. This is because the figure in my work is more representative of multiple people. Turner's subject matter is darker, with the fish eating the slaves as they try to cling on to life. His colors are less **saturated**, muted and darker than the brighter **hues** of mine. *The Slave Ship* also doesn't feature any underwater **perspective**, it's mainly just the surface of the water that's visible to the viewer. My piece has a vertical **orientation** to reflect that depth, while he uses a horizontal one.

Reflection

One reason I did this work was to practice more with landscapes and backgrounds in general. I'm not used to doing them often, and while I have had some experience with painting the surface of water, I've never done underwater painting. I will say that a study I did once a while ago helped me with the mountains, and I think it really benefitted me when it came to that portion. The mountains, plus the sea, were my favorite parts to do because they looked nice to me considering my lack of experience. While the bubbles were tedious to do, they helped me figure out what was missing in my work and improved it. The only part I would redo would be the sky, just to add more color rather than having an orange gradient. While my work isn't too closely reminiscent of my inspiration, I think most of the similarities comes from the meaning behind it, as well as some of the ideas in Romanticism. Overall, I like my final result, and it was a good learning experience when it came to backgrounds.

For the sea, I added a yellow gradient at the top to better reflect the light, and then used a slightly darker shade of blue to paint in the ripples, and pastel yellow for the highlights. I started on the bottom part next, and blocked in the rocks after I added the teal gradient. After creating the waves, I drew the fish and a whale, and then duplicated the fish so it would be easier.

Workshops & Gallery Visits

Steven's Point (2022)

At Steven's Point, I did a workshop where we drew two sculptures. We mainly focused on proportions and perspective, and learned a new technique about using our pencil to measure the objects. It was a difficult technique to learn, but I managed to get the hang of it after trial and error. The process of this workshop helped me to understand a new way of drawing and checking proportions, constantly making sure that everything was right. I stopped drawing often to use my pencil to measure, and to angle it so that I could understand the perspective better. Overall this experience gave me more insight as to what artists do during the process of sketching their subject, using techniques to make sure that things are right before going further.

Steven's Point (2021)

My first visit to Steven's Point and the workshop there focused more on design rather than technical skills. We were asked to design a sort of logo with our name, and to try to make it appealing. I drew my name with orange and pink marker, and the style I went for was more fluid. The letters were rounded, some dripping, and I wanted to convey a fun, more creative design. The brighter warm colors made that easier to show. The second thing we did was a poster. I was inspired by the color of my paper to draw a man lost in the forest. He's dwarfed by the trees, the scale emphasizing how alone he is. This workshop showed me that the choices made in presentation, intentional or not, are vital to how people perceive it. The process is important in considering how to present something visually, and sometimes even the smallest of choices can affect your overall product.
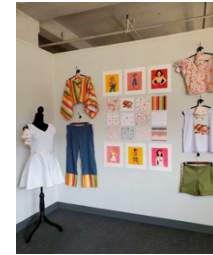
MIAD (2022)

With our visit to the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, we did a figure drawing workshop. The experience helped me with focusing more on form and motion than being more anatomically correct, as well as perspective. After that, we took a tour of the students' work and exhibition. The exhibitions I noted had a cohesive theme and each exhibition felt unique. Some of their process images gave me an understanding of how the ideas developed during that time, with different sketches and pieces building to the final products. I saw that the experimentation and various concepts they made were essential to making that final piece more cohesive and presentable in meaning.

Bibliography

Tate. "Käthe Kollwitz 1867–1945." *Tate*, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/kathe-kollwitz-26768.

Fultz, Tamara. "Frans Masereel: The First Woodcut Novelist." *Metmuseum.org*, The Met, 23 Aug. 2017, https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/in-circulation/2017/frans-masereel-woodcut.

The Art Story Contributors. "Friedrich Paintings, Bio, Ideas." Edited by Sarah Archino, The Art Story, 14 July 2017, https://www.theartstory.org/artist/friedrich-caspar-david/.

"Two Men Contemplating the Moon." *Metmuseum.org*, The Met, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/438417.

"The Artist's Garden at Vétheuil." *Art Object Page*, National Gallery of Art, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.52189.html.

"Woman with a Parasol - Madame Monet and Her Son." *National Gallery of Art*, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.61379.html#overview.

Duncan, Alexandra. "Claude Monet Paintings, Bio, Ideas." *The Art Story*, 22 Nov. 2011, https://www.theartstory.org/artist/monet-claude/.

"Cassiopeia 1, 1960 - Joseph Cornell." *Www.wikiart.org*, 19 May 2013, https://www.wikiart.org/en/joseph-cornell/cassiopeia-1-1960.

DiTolla, Tracy. "Joseph Cornell Sculptures, Bio, Ideas." *The Art Story*, 21 Jan. 2012, https://www.theartstory.org/artist/cornell-joseph/.

Solomon, Deborah. "These Shadow Boxes Are Striking. The Story of Their Origin Is, Too." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 24 Jan. 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/arts/design/joseph-cornell-review-metropolitan-museum-of-art.html.

"Cartonlandia." *Ana Serrano*, https://www.anaserrano.com/iii.

"Buildings." *Ana Serrano*, https://www.anaserrano.com/buildings-1.

LittleBigPlanet 3. Version 1.28 for PS4, Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2014.

"Kouryer Podcast EP.191 (Aleksander Rostov)." *YouTube*, YouTube, 12 Sept. 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Az_T1-LgRIk. Accessed 7 Nov. 2022.

Rostov, Aleksander. "Disco Elysium Archetypes." *Artstation*, 2020, https://www.artstation.com/artwork/6aAL8x. Accessed 2 Nov. 2022.

"Them by Kinnas on Deviantart." *DeviantArt*, 2 July 2011, https://www.deviantart.com/kinnas/art/Them-216289034.

"The Fall - Alan Stephens Foster." *Www.wikiart.org*, 13 May 2020, https://www.wikiart.org/en/alan-stephens-foster/53c057ad59f4bd6f22a2ef3a0710b11a.

"Second Thought - Alan Stephens Foster." *Www.wikiart.org*, 13 May 2020, https://www.wikiart.org/en/alan-stephens-foster/second-thought.

Bibliography

"Symbolism Movement Overview." *The Art Story*, 5 Dec. 2014, https://www.theartstory.org/movement/symbolism/.

"Nicholas Roerich Museum New York." *Nicholas Roerich Biographical Outline,* https://www.roerich.org/roerich-biography.php.

"St. Francis, 1931 - Nicholas Roerich." *Www.wikiart.org*, 29 July 2013, https://www.wikiart.org/en/nicholas-roerich/st-francis-1931.

"Star of the Hero, 1936 - Nicholas Roerich." *Www.wikiart.org*, 18 Sept. 2021, https://www.wikiart.org/en/nicholas-roerich/star-of-the-hero-1936.

Henderson, Trevor. "Photo Work." *Trevor Henderson,* https://trevorhenderson.format.com/photo-work.

Farren, Jen. "Alphonse Mucha Paintings, Bio, Ideas." *The Art Story*, 6 Feb. 2016, https://www.theartstory.org/artist/mucha-alphonse/.

"The Seasons: Spring." *Mucha Foundation*, http://www.muchafoundation.org/en/gallery/browse-works/object/81.

"The Seasons: Summer." *Mucha Foundation*, http://www.muchafoundation.org/en/gallery/browse-works/object/82.

"'The Moon and Sleep', Simeon Solomon, 1894." *Tate*, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/solomon-the-moon-and-sleep-t01719.

"Salvator Mundi - by Leonardo Da Vinci." *The Secrets of Salvator Mundi by Leonardo Da Vinci*, https://www.leonardodavinci.net/salvator-mundi.jsp.

"'Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene', Simeon Solomon, 1864." *Tate*, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/solomon-sappho-and-erinna-in-a-garden-at-mytilene-t03063

"'Leonardo Da Vinci's Last Supper, 1495-1498.'" *La Salle University Digital Commons*, https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/last_supper_iconography/2/.

"Joseph Mallord William Turner, the Fighting Temeraire." J*oseph Mallord William Turner | The Fighting Temeraire | NG524 | National Gallery*, London, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/joseph-mallord-william-turner-the-fighting-temeraire.

"Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On)." *Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming on) – Works – Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, https://collections.mfa.org/objects/311