

Practitioner's Statement

Sometimes it is during the most mundane and ordinary moments where we feel time and being most profoundly. Through my folio and paintings, I hope to explore this idea through the worlds formed by emotions within the human psyche during such moments. I have chosen to use traditional mediums of oil painting and charcoal to create my artworks. Using such mediums I am able to express myself through the raw brushwork to create various textures. I was attracted by the manipulation of light by traditional master Rembrandt Van Rin, contemporary artist Casey Baugh and Jeremy Geddes, as well as the expressive works by Jeremy Mann, Mark Demstader and Morgan Weistling. Their practices and aesthetic understanding have inspired my approach towards my own work. Particularly Casey Baugh's portrayals of the night life moved me to understand how to use lighting to exemplify the atmosphere and dominant emotion of the piece. Rembrandt did this very well in his paintings as he would shroud his subject in a haze or expose them in hard lighting to create different effects. Jeremy Mann's brushwork technique is versatile and can apply to many genres of painting. His method of expression is shown through his heavy yet neat strokes of colour.

The charcoal self portrait demonstrates the technical aspect of my skills in the charcoal medium and understanding of value. I emphasized primarily on values and tones which allowed me to approach the piece as if I was sculpting the face. This was achieved by focusing on large bodies of values and then building onto it with details. Developing such techniques helped me to experiment when producing my two paintings. The two oil paintings 'Lost Sound' and 'Lambent night' are very similar in style as the intended focus of the paintings is the person. The expression is the emphasis of both works to reflect the central idea of feeling time and being. However, the worlds created within the paintings were used to exemplify these themes through other subthemes. Such as for 'Lambent night', the illuminating flowers are symbolic for the harmony between nature and the artificial. These flowers embody the essence of beauty as nature becomes less permanent in an industrial and technology driven age. However, this piece also depicts an optimistic potential for its integration and evolution into a new form of beauty perceived by those who choose to appreciate it. The field of flowers is juxtaposed by the subtle and smeared outline of a cityscape in the background. The background connotes the idea of an inevitable separation and the lack of compatibility between the natural and synthetic. The lines of paint ascending from the field were painted to suggest light emitted from these distinctive flowers. These particular strokes are intended to look geometric yet organic which represents the uplifting sensation during feelings of appreciation and awe. I hope to invoke curiosity with the use of my subject's expression. 'Lost Sound' delivers similar ideas in a contemporary sense. The painting depicts the declining interest for creative expression in a modern society. This is where I want to delve into the mind of the person, despite being surrounded by a bustling and lively world; he is lost in his own. Perhaps the world around him is the one in his mind. I hope to blur the line between his reality and the reality surrounding him by the roughly painted city in the background.

I do believe my work encompasses aspects of my own individuality and aesthetic. I took risks to express myself in different ways while also building onto my existing experiences with oil painting. I am satisfied with the execution of the expressions of my subjects. However my main critique would be that the subject and the background lack harmony and connection through technique. There was difficulty in creating a connection between both elements of the painting as I abstracted the background which juxtaposes to the realistic portrayal of the subject. The process and approach I

took was inefficient, compromising my capacity to improve the painting. Adjustments became progressively more difficult as the layers of oil paint gradually thickened. This is because each layer dries much slower than the previous layer, if the paint mixes then the colours could potentially lose its vibrancy. Applying the fat on lean rule, this became mentally taxing which largely led to the rushed and messy look in my strokes as it was harder to control the paint especially when wet. Through this experience I was able to develop a better understanding with oil painting medium and use it to my advantage through experimentation. During the drawing workshop, I was able to develop techniques and skills involving proportion and composition. Since it is a self portrait I believe I was able to capture my appearance accurately.

The folio and creation process allowed me to be more conscientious about the purpose and ideation process behind the art I create. Rather than creating something provoking or meaningful, I aim to evoke emotions. There are things I want to reveal and things I want to conceal from the viewer in my work. I hope that the viewer may understand the themes of the painting through its atmospheric nature rather than requiring their input to analyse the work. Hence, throughout my folio I was looking for ways to achieve this by creating portraits in different styles. Though I do pursue realism in my work it should not always be the general emphasis so that the viewer may be able to relate to the work on an emotional level. I was able to see this in practice through Jeremy Mann and Mark Demstader's works. Whilst the other artists inspired me on a technical level, their works moved me to pursue an expressive and instinctive way of painting. Hence, I chose to tour between abstraction and realism to depict the world from my own perspective. I was able to expand my style and aesthetic through this and implement it in the folio to demonstrate the possible ways I could execute ideas and themes through a visual format.

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