Process Portfolio

By: Luca Tanzilo

Inspiration I was inspired by Roy Lichtenstein's *Modern Art I* and *Modern Art II*. This series is an exploration of cubism, in tandem with Lichtenstein's own style. The two works are fragmented images of comic-like faces separated by hard thick lines of dark color. The lines direct the viewer's gaze around the piece, bringing focus to the many eyes and other facial features. Although fragmented the pieces have an overwhelming sense of unity, leaving the viewer to wonder just how many different faces are depicted. Both pieces are very similar to one another, being the same in concept but different in form and color.

The Spotlight, Luca Tanzilo, 2022

Block Print: The Spotlight
Planning

When beginning to formulate ideas for what this piece would be about, I decided I wanted to connect this piece to my personal experience and character. My first idea was to do a piece about the difficulties and benefits of being a teen living in 2022. While I believed my idea was both interesting and intriguing, I discovered difficulty in finding inspiration. I finally decided I would go back to brainstorming ideas, which is how I came up with the idea to do a piece based around stage fright or the anxiety commonly felt when in front of a crowd.
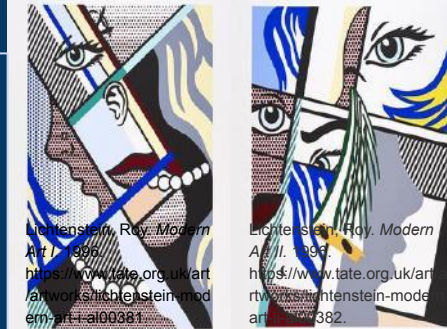
I began the process of creating this piece by looking first for inspiration. I initially looked for other block printers but found nothing I liked similar to my idea. After expanding the range of artists I was looking at, I discovered Roy Lichtenstein's Modern Art I and Modern Art II. I was immediately drawn to the many eyes integrated into the works. I decided that I would include many eyes in my piece to represent the feeling of the crowd's eyes watching during a performance. Better yet, Lichtenstein's work is made entirely of hard lines and large areas of solid color, very similar to the look of the type of print I was making. While Lichtenstein's pieces are often prints, they are quite different from the type of printing I was doing. The most glaring difference between the two mediums is the presence of color, Lichtenstein has color, mine does not.

My next step was to come up with ideas for my composition. I wanted to Include things commonly found on a stage: curtains, spotlights, audience members, etc. I also knew I wanted to fill the empty space with many eyes, similar to the ones painted by Lichtenstein, to emulate the feeling of being watched. I wanted the piece to both be easily understandable yet also strange to behold.
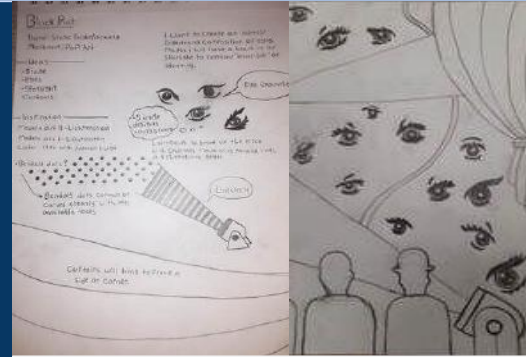
Ideation and Sketch on Linocut For *The Spotlight*

Process & Experimentation After I had come up with ideas, I crudely sketched a composition before refining it into a full sketch equivalent in size to the final printing block. I changed the sketch a few times before landing on a final design. I then transferred the image onto my linocut block by spreading graphite over the back of the sketch and then placing it on my block, tracing the linework. I then proceeded to slowly carve away the areas I wanted to remain white on my final prints. The carving process took many hours of careful work, any mistakes I made could not be done away with easily.

Lichtenstein, Roy. *Modern Art I*, 1996. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artwork/lichtenstein-modern-art-i-al00381

Lichtenstein, Roy. *Modern Art II*, 1996. https://www.tate.org.uk/artwork/lichtenstein-modern-art-al00382.

Modern Art I & Modern Art II by Roy Lichtenstein, 1996.

The Spotlight, Luca Tanzilo, 2022

Process & Experimentation

Once my carving was complete, I began the printing process. I spread a thin layer of water-based ink onto my block with a brayer, making sure to spread the ink evenly. I centered my block face-down on a piece of specialized printing paper and then used a baren to press the ink onto the paper. I then carefully removed the block and set the print off to the side to dry. I repeated this process several times, further carving and correcting parts I didn't like. After finishing tweaking my piece I completed the process another few times, being extra careful so that my final prints looked professional and complete.

While it was difficult to come up with a good quality print, the block itself turned out nice, and the lines were well carved. At one point I accidentally carved through my block so there was a hole on the left side. I developed my skills with the carving tools immensely while creating this piece. When I began using them, they felt nothing like what I expected, and it took a few careful attempts at lines before I felt comfortable using them. The tools would also slip sometimes, this was a problem not only for a clean piece but also safety. I made sure to always carve away from me so that I did not hurt myself if the carving tool slipped.

I tried many methods for printing , creating dozens of prints. My first few prints had too little ink and came out fuzzy and light. I tried adding more ink but that quickly led to me losing my thin lines and causing the print to be too dark. I mainly used a barren for pressure when i was printing but I tried to put it on a press a few times to see what would happen. I ended up not liking the press as it put too much pressure on my piece, so I went back to using the barren. It was quite difficult to find the balance between too much and too little ink.

Carving into the block after a sketch has been drawn directly onto the material (right)

Printing with the brayer and baren using ink on the metal tray in the left of the photo (right)
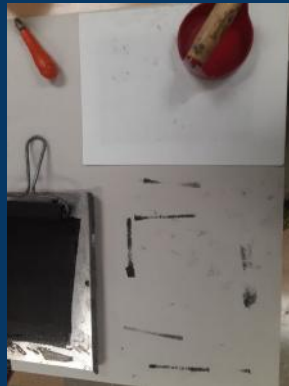
Utilizing the printing press, this was easier than the brayer and baren but I had less control over the print overall. (right)

It was very frustrating after my first few prints didn't turn out correctly, but over time I learned how much ink to use and the pressure I should put on the print.

Several failed and successful prints made using both the press and the baren/brayer (right)
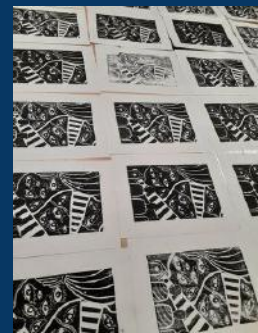
Evaluation
This was my first-time block printing and I believe I learned many valuable skills throughout this project. I found difficulty working with this new medium, especially with the limit of only a few weeks. My biggest struggles were using the tools to carve cleanly and effectively as well as the printing process itself. I printed dozens of prints, experimenting with amounts of ink as well as pressure and even after many attempts I did not come up with a perfect print. However, my printing struggles also led to the most growth. Printing is now the part of this process I am most familiar with. I like how I was able to explore the art of Roy Lichtenstein throughout this piece, whose art I have not always been drawn by. I also enjoyed the aspect of being able to create multiple copies very easily, which I have not experienced in other mediums.
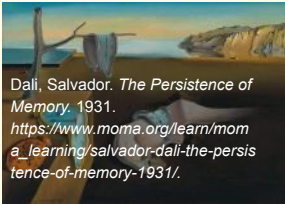
Digital Collage: Searching

Planning

When I began to think of what I sought to achieve with this project, I decided I wanted to create something different than my usual work. My initial idea was to focus on inspiration and imagination, and I began focusing on the way certain media affects these concepts. I ended up dropping the media portion and instead focusing on the idea of inspiration itself. I decided to focus on surrealism and the unconscious mind, as that fit my initial ideas of inspiration and imagination. I was initially unsure which artist I would base my work on, but after observing some surrealist works I finally decided on Salvador Dali. I then began the process of formulating my composition. I really wanted to place emphasis on the idea that this scene was occurring within someone's mind. I decided I would position an image of myself front and center within an otherworldly environment, I also wanted to create some sort of brain-like image on my head. I made a few planning sketches to try to refine my ideas and thought about how I would create my background. I had recently photographed some sunflower fields and wanted to incorporate them into my piece.

Process & Experimentation

My first step in the creation process was gathering and taking the photos I would use for my collage. Some elements I already had pictures of, but other elements such as myself required new photographs to be taken. When taking pictures I needed to make sure that they were PNG files so that I would be able to open them in most photo editing applications. I also needed to ensure that my photos were high resolution, especially the photos that would make up the foreground of the piece, because I would be scaling the images up to fit a 24 x 36 inch format. Although I could easily adjust the lighting on my photos, I tried to get good lighting when I took them which would save me from having to manipulate the lighting further down the line. I tried to take a variety of shots so that I would be able to pick and choose the best option.

When beginning to actually create my piece I first opened the picture of myself on Photopea. Photopea is essentially a free web-based Photoshop alternative that I chose to use for this project due to its availability on school Chromebooks. It is impossible to get Photoshop on a Chromebook as it is a downloaded software and the school Chromebooks are unable to download it. Once I had chosen my image and opened it in Photopea, I utilized the eraser and magic wand tools to remove the background and cut the image of myself out. Due to the size that we were printing these pieces, I needed to ensure that my settings would provide a quality, high resolution print. My initial image was fitted to a 24 x 36 inch project with 170 pixels per inch.

Inspiration

The artist this piece was inspired by is Salvador Dali and his works in the Surrealism movement. Dali was known for his exploration of the subconscious and unconscious mind. Two Pieces in particular that acted as inspiration for this piece are Dali's *The Persistence of Memory (1931)* and *The Burning Giraffe (1937).* Both of these are imaginative scenes, settings that could never exist in reality. However they are still reflections of reality. According to MoMA, *The Persistence of Memory* comes from Dali's memories of the coastlines in his birthplace of Catalonia, Spain while the burning giraffe is said to be a commentary on the conflict in Spain at the time.

Digital Collage: Searching

Evaluation

While I have used photo editing software before, I am quite unfamiliar with Photopea specifically. It is quite similar to other photo editors i have used in the past, however, it is just different enough that it is quite confusing to use. I would often go searching for tools in the places they were located in Photoshop or Pixlr which would lead to great confusion when they were nowhere to be found. Some tools and features are under different tabs or have different names, while some simply don't exist at all. Ultimately, I believe it was good for me to broaden my scope of photo editors as Photopea is really quite helpful for people who don't have a budget to spend on Photoshop. My favorite part of this project was the ability for me to showcase and use some old pictures that I thought I would never use, it was really great to actually have a use for these pictures besides just to remember the moments they captured.

Process & Experimentation

I then uploaded a picture of sunflower fields that I took on my phone, I created it as a new layer. Then I rasterized the new layer and selected the sky with the magic wand tool, deleting it. I decided I would use a third image for the sky of the background. Dali's backgrounds all have a clear horizon line and sky, I wanted to replicate this in my piece. The image I used for the sky was an image of bamboo I took in march 2022. I cropped the picture to fit the area I wanted and then lowered the opacity of the layer so that I could slightly see through it. I then took the background layer, automatically created when creating a new project in Photopea, and used the gradient tool to make a multicolored gradient. This gave the bamboo a nice rainbow effect and was meant to give further clues that this was not reality.

The second to last layer I made was above the backgrounds but below the picture of myself. I utilized a picture I took of the temple of Saturn in Rome in spring 2022. I decided to add this during the making of this piece as I already had the picture and thought that the contrast between a sunflower field and the temple would provide a fractured landscape filled with varied and partial ideas that might invoke the feeling of searching for inspiration. I removed the background using the magic wand tool and then used the eraser to erase the bottom of the pillars allowing some sunflowers overlap the base, creating a very natural and realistic transition.

My final layer was the brain. I simply created an empty layer through the layer tab. I then drew a brain shaped outline using the brush tool over my head. I used the paint bucket tool to fill the outline and then cleaned up the edges with the brush tool. Finally, I greatly lowered the layers opacity and was ready to upload it.

My experimentation for this piece mostly consisted of testing the different tools and experimenting to see what would be useful to me or not. I mainly just tested the tools on my picture. I have used photo editing software before so I was familiar with some of the tools already, although some of their qualities were unique to Photopea. The tools I found most useful were the magic wand, eraser, paintbrush, paint bucket, layers, and gradient. I also experiment with things like blur and smudge although i did not find a use for these. I initially had a lot of trouble with the magic wand which became one of my most useful tools, I was confused with the

Comparisons

This section is a reflection on some similarities between my piece and Salvador Dali's *The Persistence of Memory (1931)* and *The Burning Giraffe (1937)*. One similarity is the pieces symbolism, both my piece and Dali's are largely symbolic works not meant to simply be visually pleasing. Another similarity are the pieces strong use of foreground and background with a clear separation between the ground and the sky past the horizon line. The pieces also make use of varied colors that generally set the tone of the work, *The Burning Giraffe* utilizes dull colors to express the dark themes of struggle and conflict while mine utilizes light varied colors to show the expansiveness of imagination and the varied possibilities of inspiration.
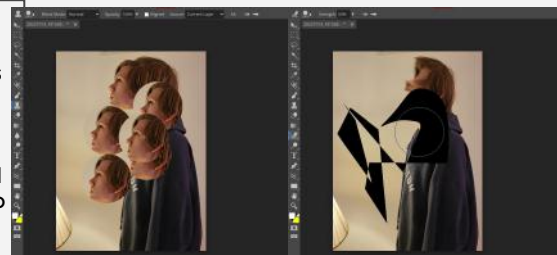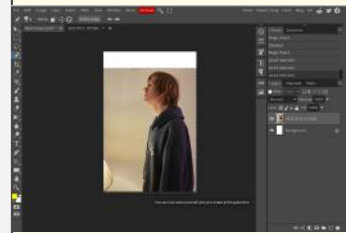
Digital Still Life: Self Portrait

Inspiration My piece is inspired by the still life pieces of post-impressionist painter Paul Cezanne (1839-1906). Inspired mostly by his later pieces and specifically their use of form and gradually changing tones to create a realistic composition. It makes use of multiple objects and attempts to highlight the shared space of the objects and their relations to one another. Light and color is also very important in my piece as I want it to feel dynamic and believable to the viewer while also making use of Cezanne's tinted pastel colors. Two pieces I found inspiration in were *Still life with Onions (1896-98)* and *Still life with Apples (1893-94). (Below left to right)*


Cezzane, Paul. *Still Life With Onions*. 1898. https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/still-life-with-onions/4gHsoRzcJ38BlQ.
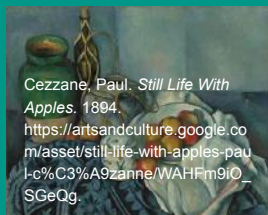
Cezzane, Paul. *Still Life With Apples*. 1894. https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/still-life-with-apples-paul-c%C3%A9zanne/WAHFm9iO_SGeQg.

Planning When starting this project I had just gotten an iPad Air for the purpose of creating digital art. For its first use, I decided I would use it to paint a still life. I wanted this piece to be personal, and similarly to my others, focus on themes of narrative. While I could have used objects such as fruit or similar household objects similar to Cezanne's subjects, I couldn't really find an effective way to fit that into my theme of Identity. I decided on a piece of self-representation, using objects important to me. This would be essentially a self portrait made in the form of a still life utilizing inanimate objects. I began searching for objects. The first idea I had was to use the journal that I modeled a month or so earlier. I also used a necklace given to me by my younger sister and a little statue of a Chinese Fu dog or lion dog that my parents brought back from China for me many years ago. The statue was important to me because it represents the first time I can remember being away from my parents for over a week. I found several more objects that would fit this overall theme.

Process To begin, I set up the layout of my still life with real objects but realized I didn't have the space to leave out the setup for the duration of my process. I ended up photographing it and working from the picture rather than the actual physical objects. Doing this allowed me to get more precise shadows and lighting but in doing so I sacrificed the unique distortion of perspective that would be caused by me doing it purely through observation. I took a couple of different pictures because I was attempting to create the most visually pleasing composition and perspective for the piece. I then began the actual process of digitally painting the work, I used an app called procreate on the iPad Air to create this piece, the app is very comprehensive with wide varieties of brushes and features that allow for very diverse creation. I began my creation by making multiple translucent layers to paint on, I realized that painting the objects on separate layers would mean that I would be able to detail them individually without having to worry about affecting the other objects. I created a background, experimenting with gradients to try to give a realistic lighting effect. In my actual set up I used a large clipboard to create a dark background behind my objects. I decided that I wanted the background to seem more solid and smooth, not seeming like a dark object but just the impression of a dark space beyond the objects. For each of the individual objects I began by creating a base color in their general shape which I would then add detail to later, I used a mid-tone so that I could keep much of the color the same, only using low opacity highlights and shadows to create the effect of a three-dimensional object. I added shadows and highlights to my objects, attempting to make them seem believable in the space. The shadows were difficult as they crossed multiple layers and I had about a dozen layers of this piece. I constantly referenced the original picture as to make it look as true to life as possible. I decided to remove some of the details of the background and environment as I wanted to instead put my and the viewer's' attention on the objects themselves. I mostly used the medium smooth paint brush to create most of the objects, but I switched to finer calligraphy and pencil brushes for the details on the various books and journals.
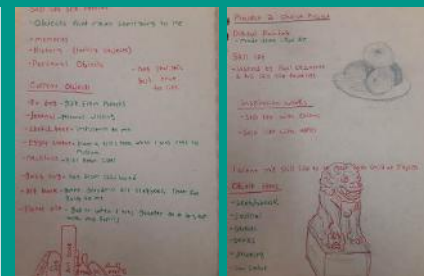
Digital Still Life: Self Portrait

Experimentation

Before beginning the piece I experimented with many of Procreate's tools and features. I first began experimenting with color and brush types, I was surprised by the variation of their different brushes, some of which gave the effects of things such as water or light. I also noticed how the size of brushes and their opacity could greatly change their effects, simple manipulation of the brushes settings could alter the result to be almost unrecognizable.
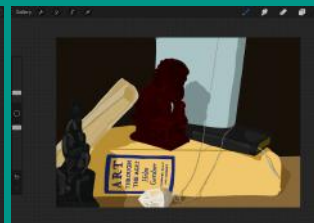
Another thing I experimented with was the various tools such as gradient and blur. There were parameters you could set to alter the color and lines of either individual layers or the piece as a whole. I was unsure if this would be useful in my piece but I did theorize that it could be used effectively for the shadowy background of the piece.

Other tools I experimented with were the color fill feature, where you could drag and drop large areas of color into outlines. As well as the shape tools, where you could create perfectly straight lines or accurate ellipses and polygons. Both of these tools became incredibly useful for the creation process as I used them to create the forms of each of the objects in my piece. I could use them to accurately convey spheres and straight edges without doing it purely based on observation.
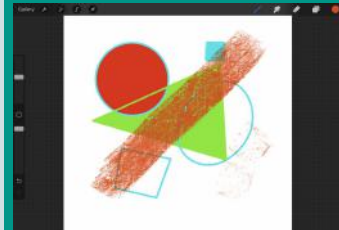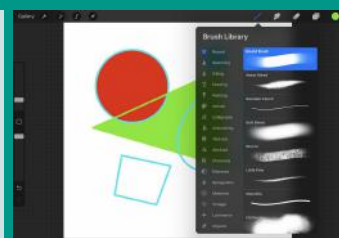
Reflection

This creation of this piece was very interesting for me as it involved me working in a new medium that I find myself enjoying greatly. I found Procreate as a program to be very intuitive and easier to use than programs like Photoshop or Pixlr which I have used to digitally edit and collage photos in the past. While the program was quite simple, the actual usage of it took some time to get used to, on an iPad there is little to no texture on the screen and therefore there is little resistance holding the pencil in place. This was quite a difficulty for me as I found maintaining full control of the pencil to be somewhat troublesome. I later learned that there were screen coverings that could change the texture of the surface of the screen to avoid this problem, but by the time I had discovered this method I had already gotten used to the way the pencil felt. Another thing I found difficult was blending, I was unable to find a good way to blend colors on Procreate and due to me basing my work off of a painter this was an issue. The way I solved it was through using low opacity strokes and simply layering them over each other although it is not smooth and the lines where the colors intersect are still visible.

(right) stages of progress starting from color blocking the sketch into the completed piece.

(Above) Basic experimentation with procreate on the iPad which was a brand new experience for me.

Similarities & Differences

Similarities
-Both my piece and the artists are still life based around an image of inanimate real-life objects.
-Both make use of a blending of values to give the objects a realistic shape. This technique was taken directly from Cezanne and as such they both share this quality.
-Similar context's between the pieces, all are indoor scenes depicting realistic object

Differences
-Cezanne's pieces are oil paintings while my piece is made digitally using Procreate, this is probably the most apparent difference between the pieces.
-Another major difference is theme, my piece is a clear collection of unique objects with individual meanings while Cezanne's are mostly generic objects such as various types of fruit, glasses, or containers.

Axiomatic Object: Pocket Journal

Inspiration- This piece was inspired by the works of Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, who created large structures that looked like enlarged versions of everyday objects. As part of the Pop-Art movement, their work focused heavily on everyday consumer products or non-unique items such as bowling pins and shovels.My piece is directly inspired by their work being an enlarged version of a pocket journal I have.The journal that inspired my piece was a small pocket journal I got while visiting Paris, France with my family. Since then, I have made daily entries whenever I have left the country, hoping to not forget the unique experiences and opportunities I have had. My piece is meant to represent memory, and the way memory changes and fades over time. The journal is a method I have used in attempts to preserve some of the things I want to remember and despite its small size, is irreplaceable.

Planning- When deciding on an object to replicate I wanted to choose something that was important to me, I struggled to find an object that was worth recreating. Then I remembered my little pocket journal and immediately connected it to the concept of memory and the way it changes over time. My memories relating to the trips I recorded in my journal are vague and I have forgotten many of the small details, but when I reread the journal I am able to reread what I did and remember what happened. When beginning the planning process of the actual design, I made sketches of the journal from multiple angles making sure to accurately measure it and its features. These sketches were based on measurements I had made of the dimensions of the original notebook. Since the artists I was inspired by make large objects, I knew I wanted to scale create a larger-scale piece. I decided to scale it all up by three times the original size. I decided I wanted to use colored cardboard to create the design on the front of the notebook.
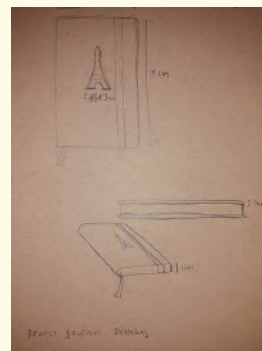

Process- I began by sketching the dimensions of my object, this piece is meant to be proportional to the original object simply scaled up in size. I sketched the journal from multiple angles so i could work when I didn't have the journal with me. Then I began gathering cardboard and card stock, I gathered many different colors because I was unsure if I would add color to my piece. I made sure to gather many different types of board so that I would have options when working and to ensure I didn't run out. I then began cutting my board, I marked out edges to cut with my exact knife. I cut the covers first and once I had cut one I used that to trace and cut my other covers so that they would be uniform. I then cut out strips for the pages and used hot glue to glue them to the covers. I then decided to add the binding so I used another large strip of cardboard for that. I then started with the cover design, I decided to make it a different color than the rest of the object. I didn't have any silver colored cardboard or card-like material so I used white instead as it was the most similar. I attempted to make the lettering but it did not turn out the way I wanted so I decided to not include the lettering as it wasn't very important to the overall effect and would make the piece unpleasant to look at. I then added the binding which was a large strip of cardboard, I struggled to get the cardboard to bend nicely like the original. I ended up being able to after about two attempts with different sized strips.
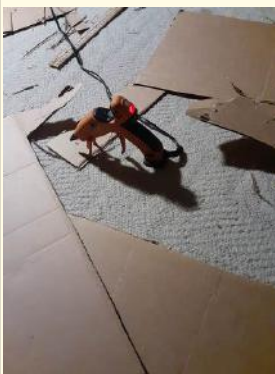
(Above) Construction of cardboard pieces using a hot glue gun. This was how I connected the individual cut cardboard together as it was stronger than regular glue.

(Below) I collected cardboard scraps from school, home, and my friends and family so that I could have enough for this project.
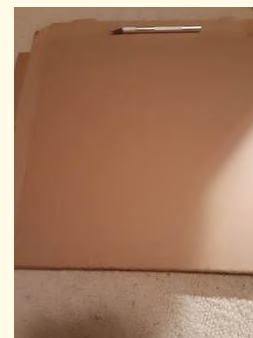
(Above) I used an exacto knife so that I could have straight edges in the cardboard. Unfortunately, as pointed out during a critique of my project, I only had one blade which became dull and led to unclean edges on my cuts.

(Above Top & Bottom) Images of some of my initial planning process. I first completed some basic ideation for what I would recreate and what themes I would explore. Then I measured and sketched the basic dimensions of the object to determine its size and how much I should upscale the piece.

Axiomatic Object: Pocket Journal

Similarities

-They are all based on real life objects and are reproductions of real items.

-Both my piece and the inspiration takes size into account and scale up the object they are based off of.

-The pieces are based on accurate measurements and proportions of the original objects, however the scale is changed.

Differences

-The biggest difference is actual size, while mine is scaled up from the original, Oldenburg's sculptures are huge with most of them being way bigger than a person

-Another major difference is materials, I only used cardboard while Oldenburg used varying materials including plastic, concrete, and fiberglass.

(Left) The assembly of the piece, specifically the basic shape that I would build the details off of.

(below and right) These two images are used as my supporting photos in my IB portfolio and exhibition. They are important for showing the overall shapes of this object as it is my only 3D/sculptural work. The topmost image is from the right side of the piece while the bottom focuses on the details of where the cover meets the pages as well as the strap that holds the journal shut.

Experimentation- It was a difficult process to determine which way I could manipulate the limited material of cardboard to achieve a form that remained true to the original object. I thought about stripping away the top layer of cardstock to make a texture for the pages in between the covers, however I decided that it varied too much from the original design. I also experimented with colors but was unable to find enough colored cardboard to accurately reproduce all of the colors present in the original work. I also couldn't find black cardboard which was the color of the cover and I decided that if I couldn't find the color that made up most of the object I should largely abandon the idea of adding color to my work. I also experimented with cover thickness as the original cover I made seemed too thin, so I attached a second layer to it and it then seemed more accurate.

Reflection-This project was a very interesting experience for me. After I was finished I presented it to professors from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, who critiqued my work and offered me advice. Their biggest concern was the state of the exacto blade I used, they told me that the edges of my cuts were unrefined due to a dull razor. I am relatively inexperienced with this tool so I was surprised by their comments but very glad that they were able to discover that mistake. They further explained to me the importance of changing out blades after a few cuts, this was something I was unaware of and will be sure to do in the future. Other than that my only other struggles was finding suitable cardboard for the project. My project was largely made of flat pieces and most of the cardboard I found had creases or bends in it. I had to gather a very large amount of board so that I would have enough to work with.

(Left) An attempt at creating an image of the eiffel tower by removing the top card of the cardboard. I didn't think it turned out good enough to use.

(Left) I attempted to create more dramatic curves in order to create the curve of the book's spine, I eventually decided to just make it flat.

(left) The strap that holds the cover shut is also curved but I decided to simply bend the cardboard rather than score it. This method looked cleaner in my opinion.
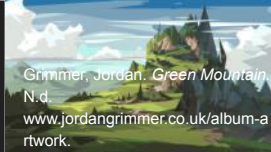
Digital Illustration: The Survivor

Jordan Grimmer
Jordan Grimmer is a working concept artist and illustrator currently based in London, UK. He is known for his work on various video games as well as his art focused YouTube channel with almost two hundred thousand subscribers. His digital art process as shown in his YouTube videos have inspired me in the past and aided me in my own digital art journey. Some of his works that Inspire me include his *Grove* and *Green Mountain.*

Grimmer, Jordan. *Green Mountain.* N.d. www.jordangrimmer.co.uk/album-artwork.

Grimmer, Jordan. *Grove.* N.d. www.jordangrimmer.co.uk/album-artwork.

Jorge Jacinto
Jorge Jacinto is a Portugal based digital artist who primarily focuses on concept art and illustrations. His work generally trends towards a fantasy or sci-fi based theme and has appeared in games, on CD covers, books, and marketing. His limited focus in terms of fantasy and sci-fi have applications in many varying pieces of media. I was inspired by mainly by his environment work such as his *Cozy Little Place* and *Forgotten Lands.*

Jacinto, Jorge. *Cozy Little Place III.* N.d. www.jorgejacinto.com/about.

Jacinto, Jorge. *Forgotten Lands.* N.d. www.jorgejacinto.com/about.

Planning
 This piece was created as part of an assignment for the 2023 Illustration Course of the MIAD Pre-College program. Our professor instructed us to create a very simple landscape sketch, with not too many defining features but still unique enough. With that we were tasked with adding around ten objects to the scene in order to tell a story. I thought about possible stories I could tell and settled on some sort of abandoned town theme. I didn't immediately construct a full list of objects but immediately started by planning out a few abandoned buildings, placing one in the background of my sketch and the other closer to the foreground. I found visualizing perspective of three-dimensional structures in such a varied and natural scene difficult but was able to remedy it by placing the objects far from each other and in no sort of alignment to one another. I also added several derelict fences to the foreground to further show how this area was once built up in the past but has since fallen into disrepair. A major turning point in my story and theme was when we were instructed to add some sort of figure to our composition. I immediately thought of creating a character inspired by the old west, which helped me further develop my ideas for a coherent story for my piece. From that line of thought I developed the rest of my objects trying to create an explanation to the viewer for what may have happened here.

Green Mountain (above left) and Grove (below that) by Jordan Grimmer

Cozy Little Place (topmost above) and Forgotten Lands (lower above) by Jorge Jacinto

Compare and Contrast

Similarities
-Medium remains consistent between my work and the inspiration works. All of them are digital illustrations.

-The color palette is also very similar between the works. Utilizing natural greens and blues due to all of the pieces outdoor settings.

-Used similar deep shading to represent natural lighting similarly to my inspirations.

Differences
-The inspiration pieces all lean into a more high fantasy theme with more focus on unrealistic or fantastical spaces.

-Pieces like Jacinto's *Green Mountain* are less finalized and more meant to give the impression of a space rather than detailing it.

-Only one of the inspiration pieces contain a figure, where it is quite small. My piece puts a lot of focus on the figure as an integral story element.
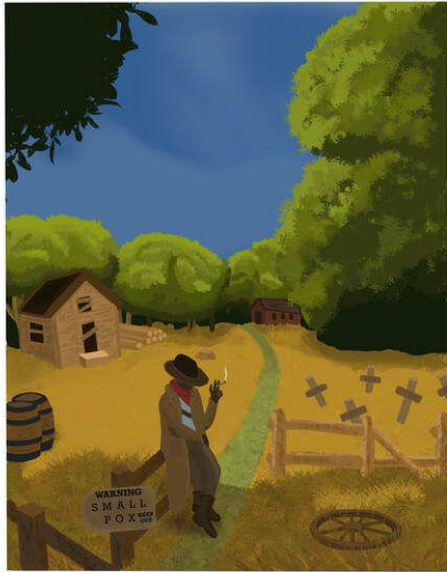
Tight sketch took many hours but allowed me to fully plan and make choices regarding composition and narrative in a medium I was very familiar with. (pictured right)

Digital Illustration: The Survivor

Process & Experimentation

  Once I had finished my planning, laying out the objects in sketch and thumbnail, I brought the entire composition to tight pencil. This was an important phase because it was where I made all of my important dec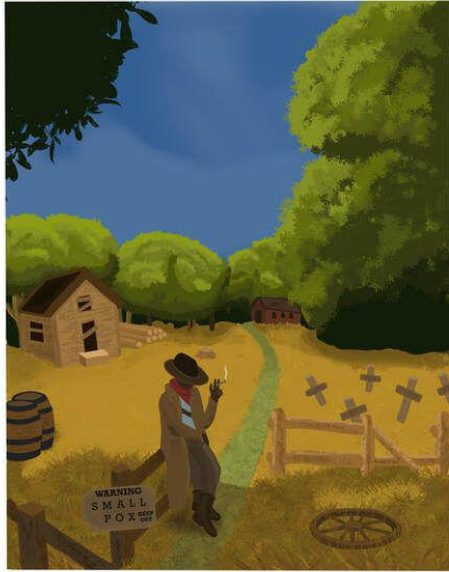ision making in terms of details, shading, and finalizing composition. The goal was to fully develop the image without worrying about color or cleanliness in a rough familiar medium. Once I was happy with my composition and had finalized all of the details, such as the text on the quarantine sign, I scanned my image into a digital format. With the image digitized I could now work over it in digital programs as my method of finalizing the piece. I decided to work in procreate, as that was what I was most familiar with in terms of digital illustration. I worked this stage using an IPad Air and Apple Pencil.

  The digital phase began with picking a color palette and blocking out large areas of background color and base tones. The benefit of working digitally here was I could really play around with giving the scene a natural color, reminiscent of a real forest area. I was also able to utilize the opacity features of Procreate to view my base image while still being able to paint over it. I then began adding shapes and details, able to very carefully edit them due to the nature of working in a digital program. I realized at this point that one of the most challenging aspects of this piece was going to be the grass and leaves of the environment. In my sketch, both had been simply areas of shape and shadow, but with this clean finalized digital image, I would have to find some way to realistically give the impression of trees and grass. The solution I found to this problem was Procreates built in leaf and grass brushes which after some testing (see Experimentation) I was able to use them effectively. I found the most success with the trees which after a lot of editing I was very satisfied with. One thing I did change in this stage was I changed the text on the sign to actual computer text because I realized it looked a lot cleaner and I could play around with fonts and sizing a lot more.

  Throughout this process I primarily experimented with the features and uses of the Procreate application on the IPad. I am still relatively new to this program and am unfamiliar with many of its more complex and powerful features. Many of the features I experimented with included brushes, layers, and other tools that affect the way layers act. I was able to use these to quickly change shading and contrast as well as saturation and color of specific areas, this was useful in creating a realistic looking setting in terms of color and shadow.

Reflection

I believe I developed greatly throughout this process. Specifically, I saw a lot of growth in terms of creating realistic looking natural environments including trees and plant-life in a digital medium. This was something I was relatively unfamiliar with before starting this piece as I had not explored the creation of natural environments much before. This was also an area I felt incredibly successful in, not just through growth, but I was very happy with the actual results as well. One thing I did struggle with was texturing the grass, no matter what I did it always seemed over textured or flat. It took a lot of tweaking and experimentation to bring the grass to a place that I thought looked accurate.

(Above) Color blocking the shadows of the grass and foreground over the tight sketch.

(Below) After color blocking I began detailing the trees and their leaves. These were both the most difficult part and the part I liked the most.

(Above) After the trees I further detailed the objects in the image and textured the grass. It was challenging to make the grass realistically connect with the background.

Watercolor Illustration: The Two Trees

Inspiration

This piece was primarily inspired by the work of Sir John Tenniel, specifically his black and white cartoons and illustrations. Tenniel was a Victorian artist and illustrator best known for his work drawing various books by Lewis Carroll including *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* His work is often in black and white or utilizing a very limited color palette. It is also characterized by his strong use of hatching and cross hatching to express shading and shadow with limited materials and color. Tenniel also created many political cartoons and is known for far more than book illustrations. As an artist he walked the line between fine and applied arts being skilled in not only illustration but also traditional painting. Although his oeuvre is expansive, I mostly took inspiration from his cartoons and illustrations, specifically those in black ink or with a limited color palette, such as those done for Lewis Carroll's various books.

Planning

This process started with an understanding that I would be working in Ink and a limited color palette to illustrate a scene from external literature. I began by deciding what piece of literature I was going to illustrate. I went to the MIAD library and began looking in the fiction section. I knew I wanted to do something fantasy related and eventually began looking at the various Tolkien books. I didn't want to base my piece off of Tolkien's *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, as those have already been readily adapted into visual media in the form of movies and TV shows. *The Silmarillion* on the other hand is one of Tolkien's lesser known works, while still being considered very popular. It also does not have a direct movie or TV adaptation (although it has inspired various works). I decided that these factors made it a perfect candidate for my illustration. I was also intrigued by the book's biblical connections which is a major theme in my comparative study. Tolkien used the Christian Bible as a loose inspiration when creating the mythology of *The Silmarillion* and many of the books central themes coincide with traditional Christian beliefs. I then selected my scene and the specific quote i was going to Illustrate. This was difficult since Tolkien uses very long and descriptive language, meaning I had to trim my quote down from a full sentence.

I then began the process of actually planning the layout of my piece. The scene in question involves two villainous characters, Melkor and Ungoliant, destroying two sacred trees that provide Tolkien's world with its light. I really thought about the implications of this story and how I could use my composition and color choices to convey the story in just one image. I experimented with thumbnails using graphite pencil, trying to create an effective composition for the scene. I had lots of trouble realistically placing the large spider-like character Ungoliant in the scene, since her arachnid appearance gives her an irregular shape. Since the scene mainly focused on Ungoliant and her actions in the story, I decided to place emphasis on her while moving the figure of Melkor into a corner with his back turned to the viewer. I experimented with the placement of his figure specifically digitally in Procreate on the iPad as it was proving difficult to make his position and size feel realistic next to the monstrous Ungoliant and towering trees. I found it easier to maneuver his figure around my already laid out scene digitally as it meant I didn't have to worry about erasing what I had or recreating the thumbnail multiple times to move the figure around. Instead, i could just have different figure positions as different layers and move them around until the scene felt cohesive.

White Rabbit Checking Watch by John Tenniel (above) Tenniel, John. *White Rabbit Checking Watch.* 1865. www.gutenberg.org/files/114/114-h/114-h.htm#alice01.

King and Queen Inspecting Tart in Courtroom by John Tenniel (above) Tenniel, John. *King and Queen Inspecting Tart in Courtroom.* 1865. www.gutenberg.org/files/114/114-h/114-h.htm#alice01.

Watercolor Illustration: The Two Trees

going then from Tree to Tree she set her black fault to their wounds, till they were drained, and the poison of Death that was in her went into their tissues and withered them, root, branch, and leaf; and they died.

Process & Experimentation

I began my physical process on Procreate on the iPad, I started a rough sketch with the basic pen brushes in the application bringing it to tight sketch after some work. I wasn't thinking about color at this point since that would come a lot later. What I was doing was trying to lay out effective line art over my sketch, I did this with a larger pen brush. I also began thinking about shading, my sketches included some shading, but this would eventually be impossible since I would be working in ink. I settled on a mix of hatching and stippling to achieve my desired effects of shading.

Once I had finalized my digital drawing a printed it onto a large piece of mixed media paper in a light gray. I then used a set of black ink multiliner pens to begin inking over the light image I had printed. This allowed me to finalize the shapes and give the image a natural look and feel. I then began hatching and stippling using the pen, this was incredibly difficult as the small details were hard to mimic using this different medium.

Color was the final aspect of my process; I chose to utilize watercolor paints to achieve this. I really thought deeply about the color and the way I could use color to further express the story without overly detailing. To do this I thought about the story itself; the two main subjects, Ungoliant and Melkor, are villainous characters so I chose to represent them with red and black. This contrasted to their surroundings, which in Tolkien's story is the realm of the gods. I chose to represent the divinity and holiness of the place with a golden yellow which contrasted greatly to the red and black of the villains. Melkor in particular was an interesting design because I gave his armor golden accents. This was alluding to the fact that in Tolkien's story, Melkor too was once divine, a similar equivalent to an angel in this imagined world. As mentioned previously Tolkien took much inspiration from biblical references meaning many of these parallels exist.

My main experimentations were with positioning and layout. With such harsh restrictions on color and material I needed to ensure I could still tell an appropriate story within the given size and limitations. I did this by making sure all-important parts were easily within view, including the figures and the trees. The main struggle I had was the positioning of Melkor, no matter what I did he seemed out of place or out of scale compared to the spider. I tried several positions using just the layers feature on Procreate, this allowed me to compare figures in the scene without redrawing it over and over. Other experimentations were mainly just design for the characters themselves as I wanted to make sure they had a unique feel that was both true to the book but differed from what is traditionally thought of as Tolkien material in pop culture.

Experimentation

My main experimentations were with positioning and layout. With such harsh restrictions on color and material I needed to ensure I could still tell an appropriate story within the given size and limitations. I did this by making sure all-important parts were easily within view, including the figures and the trees. The main struggle I had was the positioning of Melkor, no matter what I did he seemed out of place or out of scale compared to the spider. I tried several positions using just the layers feature on Procreate, this allowed me to compare figures in the scene without redrawing it over and over. Other experimentations were mainly just design for the characters themselves as I wanted to make sure they had a unique feel that was both true to the book but differed from what is traditionally thought of as Tolkien material in pop culture.

Similarities & Differences

-Both were made with stylistically similar elements, I was attempting to mimic some of the features of Tenniel's illustrations.

-Intention was a big similarity, with both my piece and Tenniel's illustrations being for translating written work into visual media.

-My piece used digital elements in addition to traditional ink and watercolor. Tenniel did not have access at the time to such resources.

-My piece also includes color which is largely significant to its final meaning and sense of storytelling. Most of Tenniel's illustrations, specifically the ones I looked at as well, were done in mostly black and white ink.
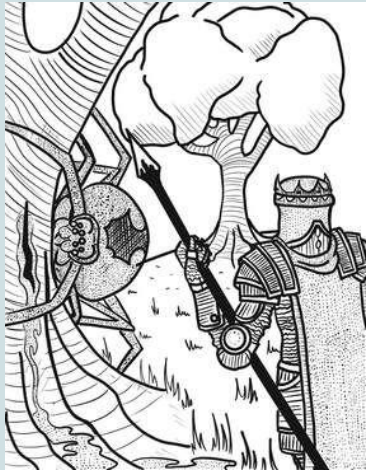
Digital illustration: The King of Diamonds

Inspiration

This piece is inspired by the historical illuminated manuscript *The Book of Kells*. The book is a copy of biblical New Testament and is thought to have been created by monks in an Irish monastery on the Scottish island of Iona. The book is visually produced in the Hiberno-Saxon style. This style is characterized by its intricate Celtic knotwork motifs and other complex designs that frame the pages. Its intricacy and beauty show that the art itself was incredibly important to the book's original creators.

In my piece, I will be utilizing the gilded colors and general idea of framing using pattern. I will also be heavily basing my work on the stylistic look of the *Book of Kells*, designing my figures based on the features seen in the book,
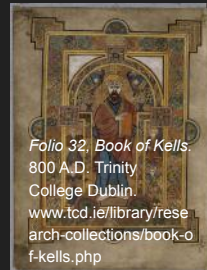
Folio 32, Book of Kells. 800 A.D. Trinity College Dublin. www.tcd.ie/library/research-collections/book-of-kells.php

Folio 27, Book of Kells. 800 A.D. Trinity College Dublin. www.tcd.ie/library/research-collections/book-of-kells.php

Folio 32 (Above Top) and Folio 27 (Above Bottom) of the Book of Kells

Process

To begin this process I first began creating the layout of my card, I did this roughly with a light blue pencil like brush on procreate. The purpose of the light base was so I could differentiate my sketch and my final drawing. Then, when I was happy with what I had in terms of composition and general proportions of the figures, I created a new layer and began the process of finalizing my line work. I did this using a thicker black brush tool, generally i tend to use brushes that can vary in width more depending on pressure, because it allows me to have more range in the types of lines I make without changing the brush size or settings. Once I had finalized my line-work I began the process of coloring, beginning with the background then moving on to the figures and the card border. I used this stage to add more details and some shading. I realized shading was going to be difficult since the card is created so that it will look the same whether it's upside down or not. Instead of realistic shading, which isn't prevalent anywhere in the Book of Kells anyway, I opted to do more simple gradients to give variation to the flat colors. I used light yellows and oranges to mimic the color of the gold leaf present in the inspiration piece. I really struggled with the aspects of symmetry in this piece. due to the fact it was both mirrored and similar on both sides, each small difference between the sides was glaringly obvious so I had to be quite careful with measurements and placement of my figures overall.

Experimentation

My biggest experimentation throughout this process was composition, I primarily explored different ways I could creatively represent what I wanted through the unique yet restrained conditions of a classic playing card layout. I made several adjustments not just in the planning but also in the process where I added details or shifted figures. It's quite difficult to mimic an older medieval style of art which isn't very realistic, in a way that looks intentional and thought out. I had to be careful with how I created the figures because I wanted to clearly express to the viewer that their odd appearances and unique proportions are in fact intentional in order to mimic the stylistic feel of the original inspiration piece, the Book of Kells. I also explored more unique Procreate features which I had previously not touched, this included line guides and the mirroring/symmetry features. Both of these were quite difficult to use initially as they had a lot of very different options and I was uncertain which would achieve my desired results. The line guides as well as assisted drawing that went with it were incredibly hard to use as I was frustrated that the straight lines I created would not always follow the grid-lines and would always be slightly off.
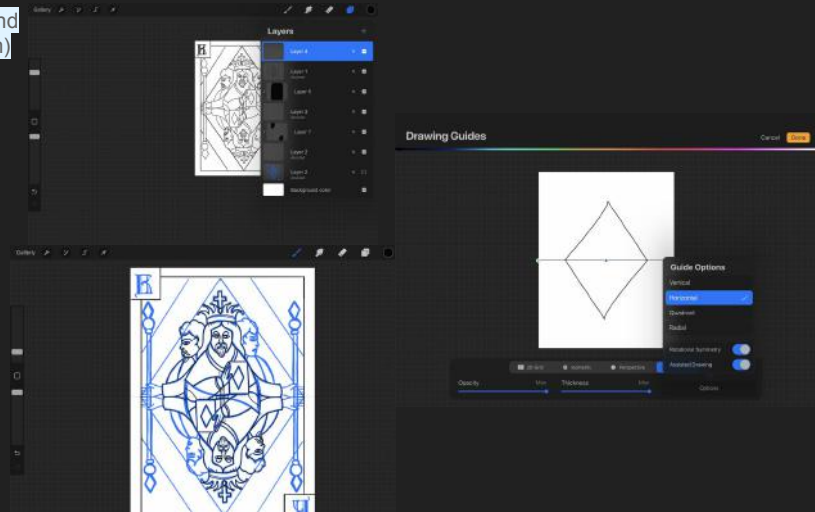
Digital illustration: The King of Diamonds

Similarities & Differences

A very simple similarity between the two pieces is format, they are both 2 dimensional pieces although the *Book of Kells* is more of a set of 2 Dimensional pieces. This could be the same for both if I continued to create an entire deck around this theme.Another very clear similarity is style, my piece is directly inspired stylistically by the *Book of Kells*. Therefore they end up looking quite similar in terms of style including form and color. A very clear difference between the pieces is medium, my piece is done digitally using procreate while the *Book of Kells* was made far before digital media was invented. Similarly the materials used in the pieces have very different value and significance. The *Book of Kells* is made on vellum with many of its pages gilded or with gold elements. The fact that the manuscript was made using precious materials differs greatly from the *King of Diamonds* which is made of only data.

Reflection

This process was quite different in comparison to many of my other digital works in the sense that I was focusing more on composition and style rather than stretching the limits of Procreate and what I knew about the medium. With that being said I did use some features and tools that I previously had never worked with including the mirror or symmetry features and assisted line drawing. These were definitely difficult to use at first but became easier with time and through using them I grew as an artist in terms of my skills with Procreate as a tool. Through this experience I think ive gained some knowledge that can be applied to many of my future digital projects. One thing I really enjoyed about this process was the feeling of making almost a product, it seems like practice for being able to make commercial work that can be sold in the future. Playing cards are something most people have interacted with and I enjoyed putting my own spin on the concept. I also liked learning a bit about more diverse historical artworks and artifacts such as the *Book of Kells.* One of the reasons I wanted to do a piece based on the book is due to previously having seen it in Dublin, Ireland and thinking it was very fascinating but knowing almost nothing about what it actually was or who it came from. This project as a whole has inspired me to make more cards and similar pieces in the future, perhaps even trying out tarot cards like I initially planned to.
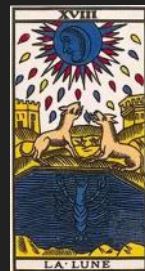
Digital Illustration: Tarot Cards I

Nu Bleu by Henri Matisse (Left)

Parlett, David. "Tarot | History, Meaning & Uses" *Britannica*, 4 May 1999, www.britannica.com/topic/tarot. Accessed 12 Oct. 2023.

17th century "Fool" card from the Jerger tarot

Example of a "Moon" card

Inspiration

Tarot is a general name for the decks of cards used in tarot games and fortune telling. They were initially created in Italy in the 1430s by adapting the traditional set of playing cards and adding 21 special cards known as trionfi as well as the Joker card. Over the years this evolved into the modern tarot decks we know today with a common 78 cards including 22 trump cards called the "major arcana." The cards illustrated here are three of the major arcana cards, specifically Temperance, The Moon, and The Emperor.

These cards are meant to imitate an art style called three dimensional decoupage, in which paper is cut and layered to give a three dimensional effect. One famous practitioner of this style was Henri Matisse who used decoupage in several famous pieces such as his *Blue Nude* series. Matisse decoupage style did not include as many three dimensional elements as the style depicted in *Tarot Cards I*, however, they have similar elements with their simplistic cut paper figures.

Digital Illustration: Tarot Cards I

Planning

This piece is primarily the combination of two main and very different ideas that I had been planning to incorporate into my art for a while. Firstly, I wanted to do something in the three dimensional decoupage style digitally using my knowledge of Procreate. I also wanted to continue my card-making by illustrating some tarot cards. I decided it would be an excellent idea to combine these ideas into one work of art. I had recently been experimenting with making three dimensional looking layers in Procreate using Gaussian blurs and knew I wanted to utilize it in a piece. A major challenge I had in this phase was deciding which tarot cards I was going to reproduce. I knew for sure that I wanted to do some of the major arcana cards as those were the most illustrated and unique pieces of a tarot deck. I eventually settled on the moon, the emperor and temperance since these were some of the more positive meaning cards found in the major arcana and I didn't want my project to seem dark.

When planning the pieces themselves I had one major focus for each of them, an emperor, a moon, and an angelic figure holding two cups. I had to construct a reasonable setting and background for all of them. The moon and emperor were easy to plan, I knew for the emperor I wanted a throne as well as some sort of globe to represent rulership. When planning the moon I had a very clear vision of what I wanted the backdrop to look like, with rolling hills and a nebula-like sky. Beyond that my planning was purely based around what the figures and scenes would actually end up looking like. Most of the color choices and patterns or brushes were chosen as I worked rather than pre-planned.

Process

I began creating the emperor first, I struggled to create a throne that took up a major portion of the canvas but still allowed for the figure on it to be the central focus and seem proportional. I also needed the entire figure in frame so the throne couldn't be excessively massive. Due to the paper cut style, I needed to utilize slight color variations to further give the impression of depth and three dimensional form. This can be best seen in places like the throne where I made the chairs back a different shade than the seat and armrests. The figure of the emperor itself was quite a challenge to create in terms of shape due to the complexity of flowing fabric as I envisioned in my design. I created seated figures but consistently was unsure how to accurately depict the connection between torso and the legs in the foreground. I also experimented with the laurel wreath I decided to put on the emperor's head. At first, they were simple green leaves which I believed were a bit too simplistic compared to the rest of the image. I decided to try to make them more complex by adding texture and variation but the leaves turned out to be very odd looking and felt out of place with the rest of my composition. I then went back to a design closer to the original but shaped it more into a wreath shape and colored it gold. I was satisfied with this design and I feel it fits with the overall look of the figure more than leaf green would. After I had completed the other two cards I actually went back to the emperor and added a pattern to the background.

The next card I created was the moon. I had a very clear vision for the composition of this card, I knew I wanted a night sky with rolling layered hills and a crescent moon with a face in the sky. I had an idea of utilizing the spray paint style brushes to add texture to the hills and give the whole piece some unity and complexity. It took several attempts to get the moon right. I was unsure how I wanted to create the crescent moon shape but settled on creating a circle where most of it was in shadow and the crescent moon was on one side. It wasn't meant to look realistic but I wanted to incorporate the idea of moon phases somehow. When I was painting the sky I also wanted to create a sort of nebula and pattern, I explored several different brush styles and eventually found two I liked. I created the nebula with very low opacity so as to not dominate the piece and draw the viewer's attention too much. I created this card over the top of the first one so as to not have to re-measure and recreate the border and layout which will be identical for all of the pieces.

Digital Illustration: Tarot Cards I

THE EMPEROR — THE MOON — TEMPERANCE

Experimentation

This entire piece was an experimentation with shadow and the use of Gaussian blur to create a three dimensional effect. I was exploring this effect through creating a piece and through its creation I have become well versed in this technique and can now easily apply it to any of my future pieces. I made a few designs outside of these cards as basic experimentation just to see what settings are aesthetically pleasing and how the shadows interact with especially darker colors. Beyond that, stylistically I experimented with the paper cut style. I was entirely unfamiliar with this style and technique so there was certainly a learning curve with understanding how to represent things with such simple planes of color. I was lucky I started with a challenging figure in The Emperor because after that many forms were easy to create in comparison. Overall I think this was also a good experimental look into card making and creating products using art.

Process (continued)

The final card was temperance, this card was actually the easiest to create as I had already completed two. Like the previous card I created it using a copy of the original simply changing the words and the image itself. I decided for this card to give it a glowing effect rather than simply shadows due to layered paper. This one depicts an angelic figure and I thought it would be more fitting to make it seem very bright and with a glow around the figure and clouds. Like the emperor, the figure and its proportions were the most difficult part of creating this card. I also needed to use lots of light colors which was difficult since there is a very limited selection of colors at the lightest shades. I chose to use a brush to add texturing to the background and bring this card closer in look to some of the others since the glow effect makes it stand out more.

Compare and Contrast

Similarities
-Comparing my piece to Matisse's, both are done in the paper cut style with simplistic shapes and forms. This involves large areas in single colors.
-Both are 2-dimensional pieces with representation of the human figure in them, though Matisse's have a very different style.
-Comparing my pieces to the designs of classic tarot cards, mine invoke many of the same elements and generally share similar depictions and images to the originals.

Differences
-While Matisse's pieces are actually made with cut paper, mine are only meant to invoke the style.
-My pieces involve far more variety in terms of color and texture than matisses. where he relies purely on blue in his series, my pieces involve many more complex layered figures with more colors and patterns.
-Comparing my pieces to the designs of classic tarot cards, mine are a lot more simplified than the originals. Many of the cards have a lot of extra symbols in them however I simplified their design in favor of aesthetics.

(Left to Right) Experimenting with papercut style in two colors, purple, and blue. Hypothetical Back of these cards.

Digital Illustration: Butterflies

Inspiration

This piece was inspired by the Art Nouveau posters created by Alphonse Mucha. Specifically, his poster for 'Lorenzaccio' and Rêverie (1898). Mucha is known for his posters and illustrations that focus on the idealization of the female figure. He became prominent designing posters for theatrical productions, notably those of Sarah Bernhardt. His designs often utilize vibrant colors and floral imagery as well as strong dark linework. My piece takes inspiration from the aesthetic elements and visual style of Mucha's work, similarly focusing on floral imagery and the human figure. A major difference between my work and Muchas is mine involves a male figure rather than a female one (due to being a self-portrait) like his works commonly do, for this purpose I took inspiration from his poster for 'Lorenzaccio' which focuses on a male figure.
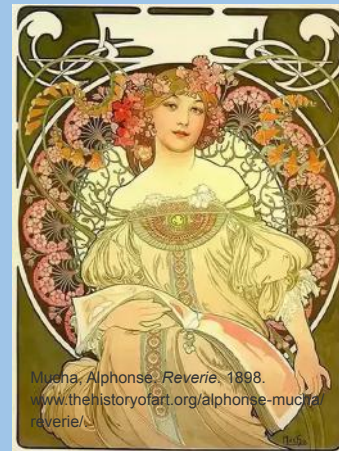
Planning

When planning this piece I initially knew I wanted to create a Mucha inspired poster similar to the seasons illustrations I completed in my junior year. I have always appreciated Mucha's style and the aesthetically pleasing way he uses line and color as well as the floral imagery present in much of his work. For this project I wanted to create a poster more similar to Mucha's overall body of work, with floral imagery and a central human figure. I decided to make it into a self-portrait as I do not have many strong self portrait pieces in my portfolio. The overall composition was borrowed from Mucha's poster for Lorenzaccio which is one of the few pieces of his I could find that included a male figure. My basis for the meaning behind the piece was self-growth, recently a lot has changed in my life and I wanted to represent that somehow in my art. I experimented with how I would texture the fabric and settled on a method of coloring that would include more unblended blocks of color for the face and clothing. I created a rough sketch detailing how I would lay out the face from a reference photo I had taken of myself. I also decided to include butterflies in the composition as I thought it would be a nice element representing the concept of growth and change. Butterflies are also an element not common in much of Mucha's work so it further adds my own touch to the piece.

Mucha, Alphonse. Reverie. 1898. www.thehistoryofart.org/alphonse-mucha-reverie/.

Rêverie (1898), by Alphonse Mucha (above),
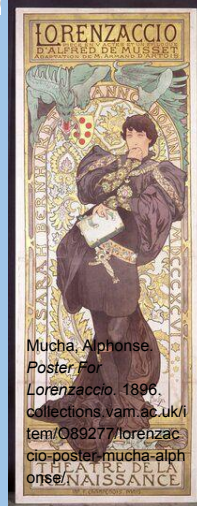Poster for Lorenzaccio, By Alphonse Mucha. (below)

Process

The physical creation of this piece was executed within the program Procreate on the iPad Air using an apple pencil. This digital format allowed me to create a piece this size at 300 DPI with a 36 layer limit. This low layer limit isn't exactly a concern with this piece since it does not involve intense manipulation of layers. Once I had generated my blank canvas I began by creating the background. I had a clear vision for the composition, being similar to Mucha's Poster for Lorenzaccio with further floral elements inspired by Rêverie. Therefore I was able to create a clear layout for the background and framing of the poster, with a circular, halo-like element in the center of the canvas.
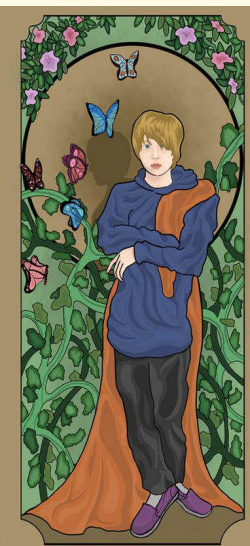
Mucha, Alphonse. Poster For Lorenzaccio. 1896. collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O89277/lorenzaccio-poster-mucha-alphonse/.

Process & Experimentation (Continued) From there I added some slight texture and began sketching out the positioning of the central figure. I also began sketching the floral elements framing the figure, as well some butterflies alongside it. I began rendering the floral elements first, including the flowers and vines. I started with color blocking then continued to texture and details. Then I used the round brush and fill tools to color block the figure and detail it with line-work using a black studio pen. I struggled a bit with proportion here, especially with the hands which I began by rendering too large. I then sketched and detailed the face, rendering the rest of the clothes and adding a shadow in the back. I finished by detailing the several butterflies in the foreground of the composition.

The main way I experimented in this piece was style, the figure mainly was in a style I have not really worked in before. Especially the look of the features took several hours to develop and tweak with me eventually settling on a style with detailed, yet unblended color blocks of varying tones. I really liked the way this looked even though it differed from the style of Alphonse Mucha, my initial attempt at Muchas style of more blended colors looked very flat and made my figures face overly feminine. I also struggled with color pallete, the initial colors i tried to use for the face and facial features were far too vibrant and felt like it differed greatly from Mucha's style. THis was all fixed through simple tweaking, though I had to focus heavily on the facial features which received more time and focus than a lot of the rest of the piece. Overall it was worth focusing on because the figures face became my favorite part of the piece and the part I am most proud of.

Reflection Throughout this process I definitely advanced and refined my digital art skills especially when it comes to the human figure and facial features. I really think I excelled on creating a more realistic face and features for this piece which is something I often do not excel at. This project was also deeply connected to its inspiration, Alphonse Mucha, whose style and art I feel I became far more familiar with during the creation of this piece. When working on this project, the biggest challenge I encountered was the self portrait aspect of this piece. I often struggle with self portraits because I never am satisfied with how they look, either not looking like me or being a warped version of myself. This made it difficult to choose reference photos for this project but luckily I was able to find some that I was happy with. While it was challenging to find references, once they were found it was quite easy to follow them to create an effective image. I would say this was probably the best figure drawing i've done digitally. I really considered the layering on this piece and how I would lay this piece out. My favorite part of the process was the detailing the final butterflies, at that point it was just the final touches and I was incredibly happy with how it turned out and was able to comfortably experiment with the way the butterflies looked. My least favorite part of the process was having to re attempt some of the figure drawing due to errors in size and proportion. I hope others are able to clearly see the meaning was attempting to convey, and I hope they take time to notice the detail, time, and effort put into the facial features, especially since that is what I am most proud of with this piece.

Similarities and Differences
Both my piece and Mucha's works are completed in a 2-dimensional medium with similar style and emphasis on the human figure. Both are meant to be posters (or in the style of a poster) and include floral/nature imagery and elements with foliage patterns or images. They also both have similar compositions with my piece invoking some of Mucha's compositional elements and layouts. This similarity in layout extends to the fact that both my piece and Mucha's works feature a border and similar poster design elements. They also both involve similar use of color and line, with thin dark outlines around elements and the figure.

The biggest difference between my piece and Mucha's is that mine was completed digitally using Procreate while Mucha didn't have access to digital tools in his time, instead utilizing traditional materials to complete his works. Another major difference is that my piece is a self-portrait while Mucha often depicted the female figure and rarely completed any work about himself. While both works do include floral imagery and patterns, Mucha's pieces are more pattern based and symmetrical than that in *Butterflies*. My piece was also not made for commercial purposes, not being any sort of advertisement or promotion.
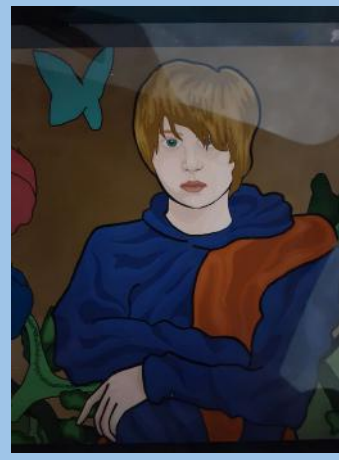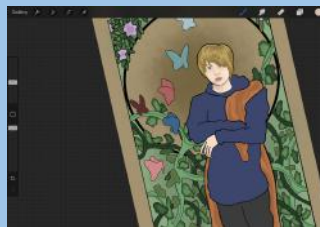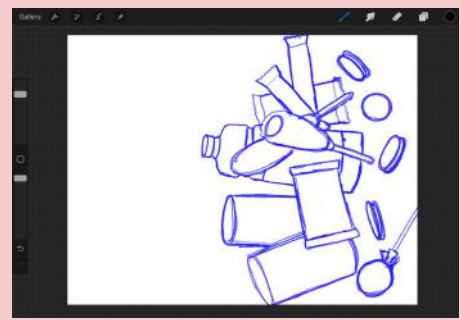
Graphic Design: Advertisement I

Inspiration

This piece was inspired by the advertisement work of Andy Warhol and his commercial-focused pop-art, specifically his *Ads Portfolio* from 1985. Warhol made such advertisements throughout his career becoming prolific in the industry of commercial art. Towards the end of his career he compiled some of them into *Ads Portfolio.* Warhol saw advertisement as an important part of modern American culture and society and sought to apply fine art and commercial art as one. Some of the pieces, including his famous *Campbell's Soup Cans* are stylistically similar to my work as well as illustrating a common food product. Warhol was known for often utilizing popular products, commercial items, and celebrities into his works. He saw these things as important for American society and therefore "worthy" or necessary to convey in the form of fine art.

Ads Portfolio by Andy Warhol, 1985
Warhol, Andy. *Ads Portfolio*. 1985.
https://www.merrittgallery.com/andy-warhol-ads-portfolio/

Planning

When planning this piece I already knew from the beginning that I wanted to create some sort of advertisement. I was doing this project for both my IB art and MIAD Scholarship Portfolio Classes, the latter of which was requiring us to create a piece based around food. With this restriction, the clear solution for me was to create an advertisement regarding our school food selling business called the snack shack.
I started my planning process by deciding what I wanted to convey with this advertisement, the snack shack was currently undergoing a process to switch to cashless payment so I decided that would be a major focus of the poster. I also wanted to represent some of the products that we sold, so that customers may see the poster and come looking for the items displayed. This food portion was going to be hand illustrated using Procreate, while the rest of the piece would be created using Adobe Express and Adobe Photoshop. I decided this because while I could complete the entire piece in procreate, it would be far easier to utilize adobes more advanced fonts and text features. This way I could make the poster look more professional without having to hand draw many of the elements of the text as I would if I used Procreate for this portion. I began sketching out some of the possible foods I could display, I wanted to make sure the selection of products looked enticing to viewers so I decided to use very colorful and differing options. I then sketched in Procreate, using the pencil brushes, a composition for the illustration of the products that would be displayed. This illustration would be completed first, becoming an element to later be used alongside the text and graphics in the final poster.

Process

I began with linework using a technical pen tool on Procreate. This was followed with color blocking and creation of a simple background. I began detailing the food items taking care to make their logos and images accurate to the actual products while maintaining a stylized and cartoon-like look to them. I struggled slightly with the three-dimensionality of the objects and trying to capture their complex forms while maintaining the stylized look. I did this through creating highlights and changes in tone across curved surfaces and the round shapes of the candy, cans, and bottles. I also was able to capture some of the shine of plastic wrap and aluminum through this method, bringing more life to the various materials that make up the products shown.
One of the most challenging parts was the orange bottle of Gatorade. Since the bottle is clear plastic filled with colored liquid I had to somehow capture the way light moves through its complex shape and interacts with the liquid inside.In the end I was incredibly happy with how that part turned out, likely due to how much work was put into it comparatively with some of the other less-intensive objects.
Once I finalized my composition and had fully rendered each of the food and drink products, I decided to change the background to my schools color of blue. I then put the entire image into Adobe Express where I could easily add text and text graphics with manipulable properties. I added the title and all the relevant information sticking generally to a color palette of white and blue with some black text. Once it was complete I inserted the entire thing into adobe Photoshop where I could further manipulate its properties, complete color corrections and export the file in a wider variety of image formats.

REAGAN SNACK SHACK
BUY FOOD, EAT IT!
NOW ACCEPTING CASHLESS PAYMENT

Dr Pepper Pepsi Kit Kat Butterfinger

LOCATED BY THE AUDITORIUM

Experimentation

My main experimentation was in the process of creating a composition of text in Adobe Express. I had never used this program before so I explored its features before attempting to create a poster. This included a practice poster based around a rat, that I made utilizing images made with Adobes AI generative features as well as its text editing and formatting features as well as its extensive graphics library. These were all interesting tools to explore and really gave me a sense of the detail and depth that can be achieved using Adobe Express as a simpler alternative to Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator for quick graphic design. Overall I was happy with how this poster turned out and decided to begin working on my actual piece using Express. The first attempt was not very satisfactory so I decided to entirely redo it with similar composition but some differences in style, shape and size of text.

Reagan Snack Shack
BUY FOOD, EAT IT

Dr Pepper Pepsi Kit Kat Butterfinger

LOCATED ON THE FIRST FLOOR

Original design made using Adobe Express. I had this critiqued at MIAD and was overall unhappy with the way it turned out. (left)
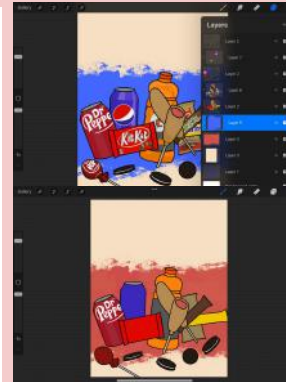

KEEP CALM
HAIL RAT KING

Test piece made using Adobe Express asset library, generative AI, and text features. This test piece allowed me to become familiar with the program. (left)

Compare and Contrast

Both my *Advertisement I* and Warhol's *Ads Portfolio* and *Campbell's Soup Cans* are created in a 2-D format with often stylized elements. My piece and *Ads Portfolio* are both created for the purpose of commercial advertisement of products and/or businesses. *Campbell's Soup Cans* also displays several commercial food products just as my piece does. Stylistically, the illustrated aspects of my piece are very similar to Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Cans* with stylized or cartoon-like imagery.

When it comes to medium, my piece is completed digitally while Warhol's were made before the digital age using more traditional printing methods. The composition of *Cambell's Soup Cans* differs greatly from my piece, being a repeated image of the same product while mine is several products arranged in an interesting composition. My piece is rather more similar to the composition and format of *Ads Portfolios* individual works but those are still incredibly varied in their layouts and in many ways dissimilar to my piece, including style and format.
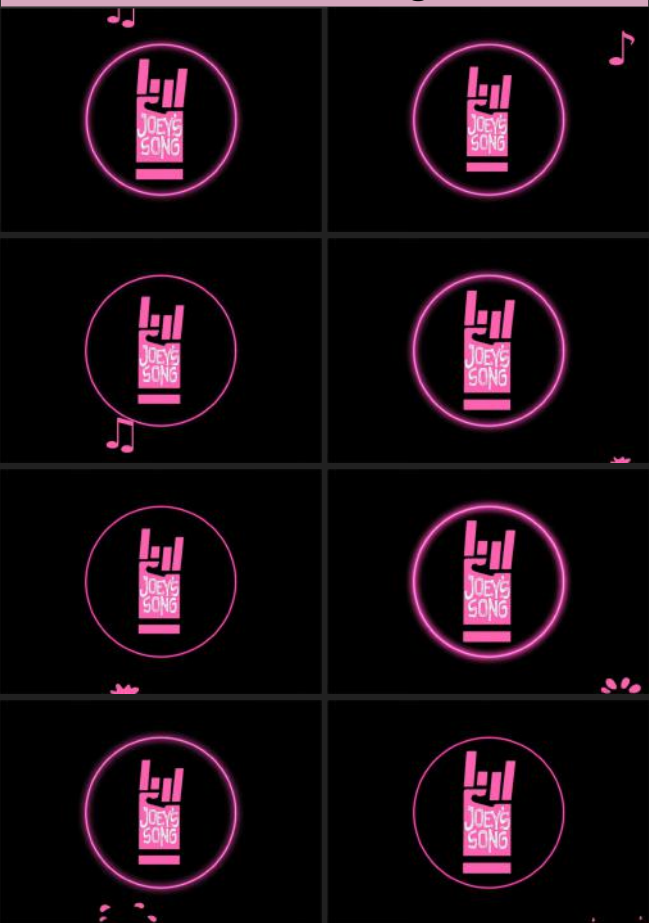
Reflection

I really do think I greatly developed as an artist throughout this process. This piece was my first large scale attempt at real graphic design and advertisement in which I actually illustrate the elements myself. Previously, all of the advertisement work I did was either photo editing or manipulation or simply manipulating and formatting pre-made graphics alongside text. I think this step away from using basic graphics to designing and illustrating my own is important for developing any sort of real graphic design skills. I am also incredibly happy with the way this piece turned out, it is one of the first pieces in my portfolio that is incredibly text heavy but I feel I executed this element well during the creation of this work. I also was glad I was able to further explore three separate programs during this process, including Photoshop, Adobe Express, and more of Procreate for the iPad. All of which are excellent creative programs that are valuable, in my opinion, for my skill set as a digital artist. This was unique because normally I solely work in one program, occasionally taking something to Photoshop in order to make necessary edits or more technical format changes. In the future I would like to attempt more advertising work such as this, possibly exploring more differing styles and mediums as seen in Warhol's work like *Ads Portfolio*.

Animation: Falling Notes

(Images Above) These are eight of the frames in the animation which is roughly 300 frames in total which then loops. These include variations in music notes as well as pulsing of the ring and logo.

Inspiration- This piece was in part inspired by the work of Keith Sonnier and his neon, mixed-material sculptures. Sonnier utilizes a wide variety of materials to create unique arrangements in space and light. His work is incredibly conceptual and experimental, usually abstract in nature. Neon is the major defining quality of his work, being used in conjunction with other materials and mixed media to create unique and dynamic compositions. His art has been described as playful and post-minimalist, often having simplistic abstract forms and an emphasis on vibrant colors.

Keith Sonnier, *Lunar Slice*, 2013, neon, acrylic, aluminum, electrical wire and transformer, 11' 1" x 9' 3-1/2" x 4" (337.8 cm x 283.2 cm x 10.2 cm)https://www.pacegallery.com/artists/keith-sonnier/
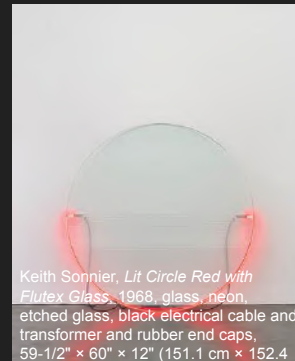
Keith Sonnier, *Lit Circle Red with Flutex Glass*, 1968, glass, neon, etched glass, black electrical cable and transformer and rubber end caps, 59-1/2" × 60" × 12" (151.1 cm × 152.4 cm × 30.5 cm) https://www.pacegallery.com/artists/keith-sonnier/
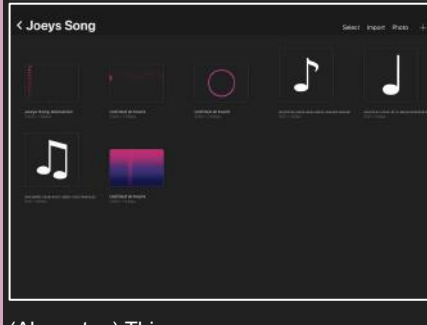

(Image right) This is the Joey's song 2024 logo (the one used for the specific year of the event that this animation was planned for) that I utilized for the creation of my piece. The inclusion of the logo was important because it solidly connected my piece with the event and the intended purpose of the animation. This way, any pictures taken of the event while this image was on stage would include the picture and make the event more recognizable

"Joey's Song | Fighting Epilepsy With Music | United State." *Joey's Song*, www.joeyssong.org.

Planning

The planning for this piece began with a request and several conditions to be met by the piece. This piece was to be some sort of animation or video piece to play in the background for the benefit concert called Joey's Song. The show takes place annually in Madison, Wisconsin to support epilepsy research, the piece I was creating was to be displayed in the back of the stage behind the performers. The requirements I needed to meet were to create a sort of non-specific video that could fit a wide variety of types of songs as well as be easily loop-able for as much time as necessary. I also was to create the piece around some sort of simple theme such as music, love, dancing, Wisconsin, or any broad topic of that nature. The topic I decided to go with was music since it seemed like it would be the easiest to thematically connect to the show itself and represent it in a non-complex manner. Once I had my theme I needed to start brainstorming further ideas for what I would actually create. I knew I wanted to do some sort of animation rather than video collage or other similar format, and with my theme of music I had a fairly good starting point. I needed to ensure that whatever sort of animation I created would not be overly flashy and distracting because it needs to compliment the performance rather than draw people's attention from the performers and the music. It was for this reason I knew I would do something with a dark background and soon I decided upon the idea of falling music notes in an almost rain like pattern. The elements of the piece would be some vibrant color, and I wanted to utilize Gaussian blur and similar effects to incorporate some neon-like elements into the video.
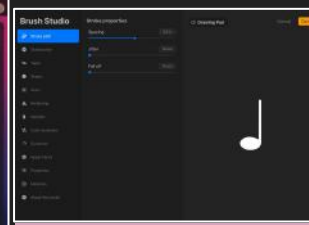
Animation: Falling Notes

Process- To begin, I first needed the shape of the music notes. I decided to create three different notes to fall during the video, an eighth note, double eighth note, and quarter note. For these, I created a unique stamp brush in Procreate, borrowing elements from the Adobe Creative Clouds asset library. I had initially attempted to draw such notes on my own, but they were time perfect and imperfect in their form so i simply decided to utilize the pre-made assets which I had already paid for access to. I created a series of frames in which the note began at the top of the screen and then each frame moved closer to the bottom. When it reached the bottom I created a short splashing animation, of something around only two dozen frames. I then repeated this process for each of the note types, creating three of these similar animations in total. I then grouped each of these together and duplicated them, changing the entire duplicated frame sets to different positions on the screen and ordering them in a unique pattern. This way an effect was created that made the notes seemingly randomly fall across the canvas. Once I had created this animation I began on a second animation, this one was more simple being a slowly flashing ring of neon. I began with a colored ring, then utilized the Gaussian blur feature and excessive bloom filters to create a series of frames in which the bloom and blur slowly increases. This gave the effect of a simple neon light ring which slowly flashes every second or so. I was able to line this flashing up pretty close to the frequency of falling notes, which worked out well for the following parts of the process. From there, I exported both animation files from Procreate into a new program called Procreate Dreams.I made sure to export them without backgrounds, so I could lay them over each other and over a dark background. At this point I also needed to fit their lengths so they would each be the same length and the video would have uniform elements throughout its duration. This involved duplicating the flashing ring video several times. From there I was able to manipulate things like the frame rate and perform necessary color corrections and other edits. I then added the final touch to my piece which was adding a version of the joeys song logo in the center of the neon ring. This logo was edited to color match the rest of the piece and was simply animated through Procreate Dreams to pulse alongside the other elements.

(Left Middle and Rightmost) Creation of the note stamp brushes

Reflection - Throughout this process I think I greatly improved my skills both with animation and with Procreate and similar programs. A unique part of this project was the process of transferring it between mediums and file types as I tried to put the files into several different types of programs including Procreate, Procreate Dreams and Adobe premiere.This was my first animation but I think things went very well on the technical side of things. I also struggled with my ideation as I had some uncertainty about what the client wanted from this piece, luckily I was provided with some examples and a more clear explanation of what needed to be done. Besides my challenges I found many successes during this piece, I was surprised by how well my Procreate skills extended into the new Dreams application.Overall I think this project went well and while animation isn't my medium of choice, I feel more confident about completing animation projects in the future.

(Above top) This is an initial version of the note falling animation. It includes the unused gradient background.

(Above bottom) All of the elements and separate animations I used for this project in a folder in Procreate.

Experimentation-I experimented with several things throughout this process, the biggest of which was an unused animation based around the image of a music staff that was to sort of flow in the background of the video. This animation began to be developed but the method I was using turned out to be a failure and so I cut this element from the video. Basically, I was utilizing procreates warp tool to move the staff, without having to redraw a scale version each time. The first attempt I misjudged the movements for the animations and had to entirely redo them in order to achieve consistency and a loop-able video. The second attempt went better but I had trouble warping the image while maintaining distance between the lines in the staff and maintaining the shape of the treble clef symbol on the side. I considered how well a music staff fit with my theme as I was unsure how this element that I personally associated with classical music would fit in a primarily rock concert.I decided to cut this element, instead coming up with the idea of the moving logo. Another small experimentation worth mentioning was the short-lived gradient background that only existed for the first iteration of the first music notes animation. This element was cut shortly after the beginning of the animation due to its overly vibrant colors and lack of transparency, meaning I couldn't layer animations as well. While that second condition could have been remedied I eventually just cut it in favor of a simple black background that wouldn't be so distracting and overtake the rest of the elements

Art Experiences: Gallery Visits

Throughout my time in the IB DP Visual Arts course, I visited several galleries in order to find inspiration and further explore artists that were unknown to me. This process was important for me and important in general for art students because it allowed me a look into a lot of very different artists and their work.

Minneapolis Institute of Art

I had the opportunity to visit the Minneapolis institute of Art in October of 2022, during my Junior year (year 1 of DP visual arts). I was able to see many works during this visit but one that specifically stood out to me was *Six Tuscan Poets* an oil painting by Giorgio Vasari depicting several poets including Dante Alighieri.

Walker Art Center

The second gallery I visited on my 2022 Minneapolis trip was the walker art Center. This location differed greatly from the Minneapolis Institute of Art due to the fact that it is primarily a contemporary art center. It has large outdoor gardens that are filled with sculptures and other outdoor pieces that were an interesting step away from other strictly-indoor galleries i've seen that mostly focus on paintings and 2D work. One such outdoor work that I really enjoyed was the *SpoonBridge and Cherry* designed by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje Van Bruggen. These artists were two that were inspirations for my previous work, specifically, Pocket Journal. It was very interesting to be able to see some of there large sculptural designs in person, especially being one of their most famous works. Inside the museum I really enjoyed being able to see several works from Roy Lichtenstein who is another of my inspiration artists. It was interesting to see his work at their intended scale rather than on the screen of a computer.

Art Experiences: Gallery Visits (Continued)

National Gallery London

In the Spring of 2023 I had the opportunity to visit the National Gallery In London. This was one of if not the largest art gallery I have seen and contained many famous paintings and other works. One work I saw that was really important for me was Raphael's original *Mond Crucifixion*. This piece was one of the works I analysed as part of my IB Comparative Study and therefore I spent a great deal of time researching it and analyzing it in comparison to other works. I hadn't even realized it was located at this gallery until I came across it and was very surprised. It was incredibly rewarding to be able to see this work in person and get a closer work at some of the fine details and material choices that I had spent so much time researching and writing about during my study. Even though I had written about it's size before it was very impressive and was much larger than most of the paintings located in the Milwaukee Art Museum or any other similar local galleries. During my visit there was a special exhibit relating to the incredibly famous painting by Quentin Matsys' *A Grotesque Old Woman* also popularly dubbed *The Ugly Duchess.* It was exciting to be able to see so many famous and talked about works close up and in person.

Haggerty Museum of Art

Another Gallery I visited was the local Haggerty Museum of Art which is a part of Marquette University in my home city. I went to this gallery specifically to see an exhibition about the art of J.R.R Tolkien, the author of many popular novels including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of The Rings.* Tolkien's work directly inspired my piece *The Two Trees* and I was interested to see the ways in which he used art to develop his narratives and depict his stories outside of his usual format of written text. This exhibition was very interesting and included several manuscripts letters and Illustrations written by Tolkien relating to his various works. The gallery offered other sights as well in the form of a fair amount of unrelated works including paintings and sculptures.

Art Experience: MIAD Summer Pre-College
Advanced Illustration Course

In summer 2023 I took the Advanced Illustration Summer Pre-College course at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design (MIAD). There I practiced many things including life drawing, comic art, illustration, digital art, and practiced incorporating narrative into much of my work.

The first week of the program was dedicated to a project based around storytelling through environment. Our assignment was to use a landscape and incorporate a multitude of objects and figures into it in order to create a sense of story. The piece that I created in this part of the program became my digital illustration *The Survivor.*

The Second week was based around illustrating from text. During this process I used traditional materials and produced *The Two Trees.* The third week was also about illustrating around the concept of literature, during which we each created a short comic strip.


Art Experience: Concordia University Photoshop Worksop

During our Junior Year our IB Visual Arts class took a trip to Concordia University in Wisconsin. We got to learn about the school and eat lunch there as well as learn some basics of Photoshop and photo editing. I edited a picture of myself and learned a bit about color filters as well as layers and eventually applied a texture to my picture. Overall, it was a fun experience and I got to learn more about a college as well as some photoshop skills.

A friend and I each working on digitally editing pictures of ourselves using Concordia's equipment. (above)
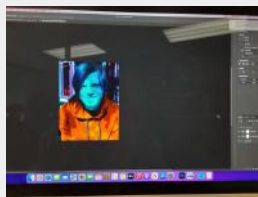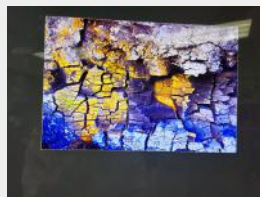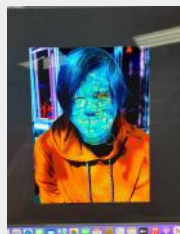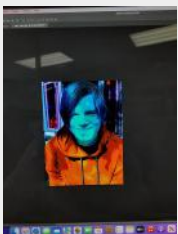
Art Experience: Interior Architecture at University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

During our Senior year I attended a trip to UW-Stevens Point where we took part in a workshop based around interior architecture and design. This was incredibly fun and exposed me to a very different aspect of art and design. We designed room layouts and picked materials and colors for the design of an apartment/Dormitory.

Art Experience: NAF Internship
At the beginning of summer 2023 I participated in a 2 week long internship with NAF and the UWM School of Architecture and Urban Planning. There we learned college readiness, as well as architecture, planning projects, working with clients, and using woodworking tools. The overall use of our time was working to create a pocket park for the community. To do this we worked with UWM Professors, Community representatives, and professional architects to design a sort of bench-like seating area for the park. We also got to experience a bit of college life, staying in the UWM dorms and eating in the cafeteria as well as being able to explore campus.

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