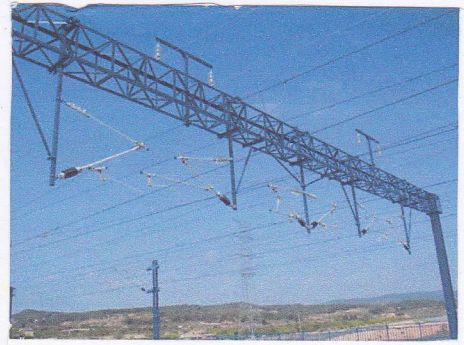
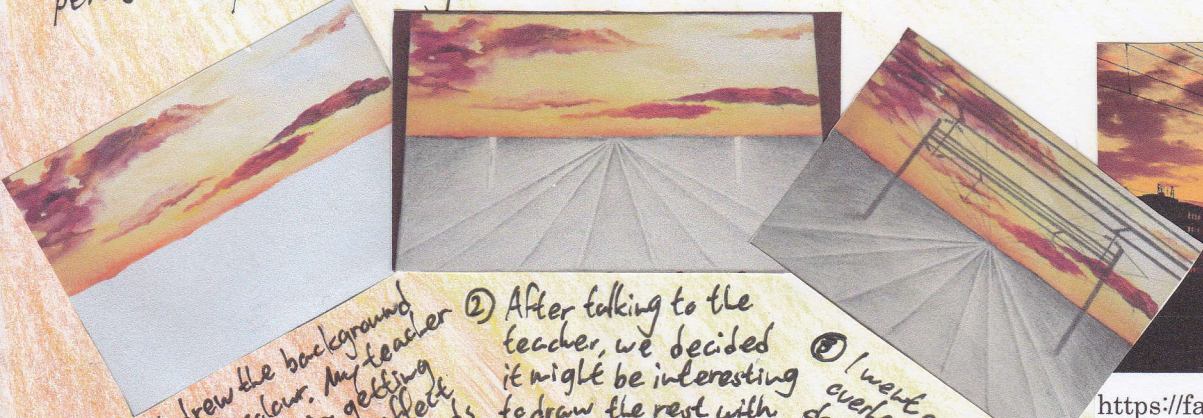


# Elementary

When I was working on the sketch of my first IWB page for the studio work, I quickly realized I had difficulties drawing all the detailed components in an unique perspective. Therefore, I decided to do this in single-point perspective and scrapped the scene to its simplest form. I looked at photos of railway overhead-lines and painted the background based on a picture I saw on the internet. The product is something very "elementary" I am satisfied with the oil-colour sunset background, but I think I need to improve on my percision in pencil drawing.

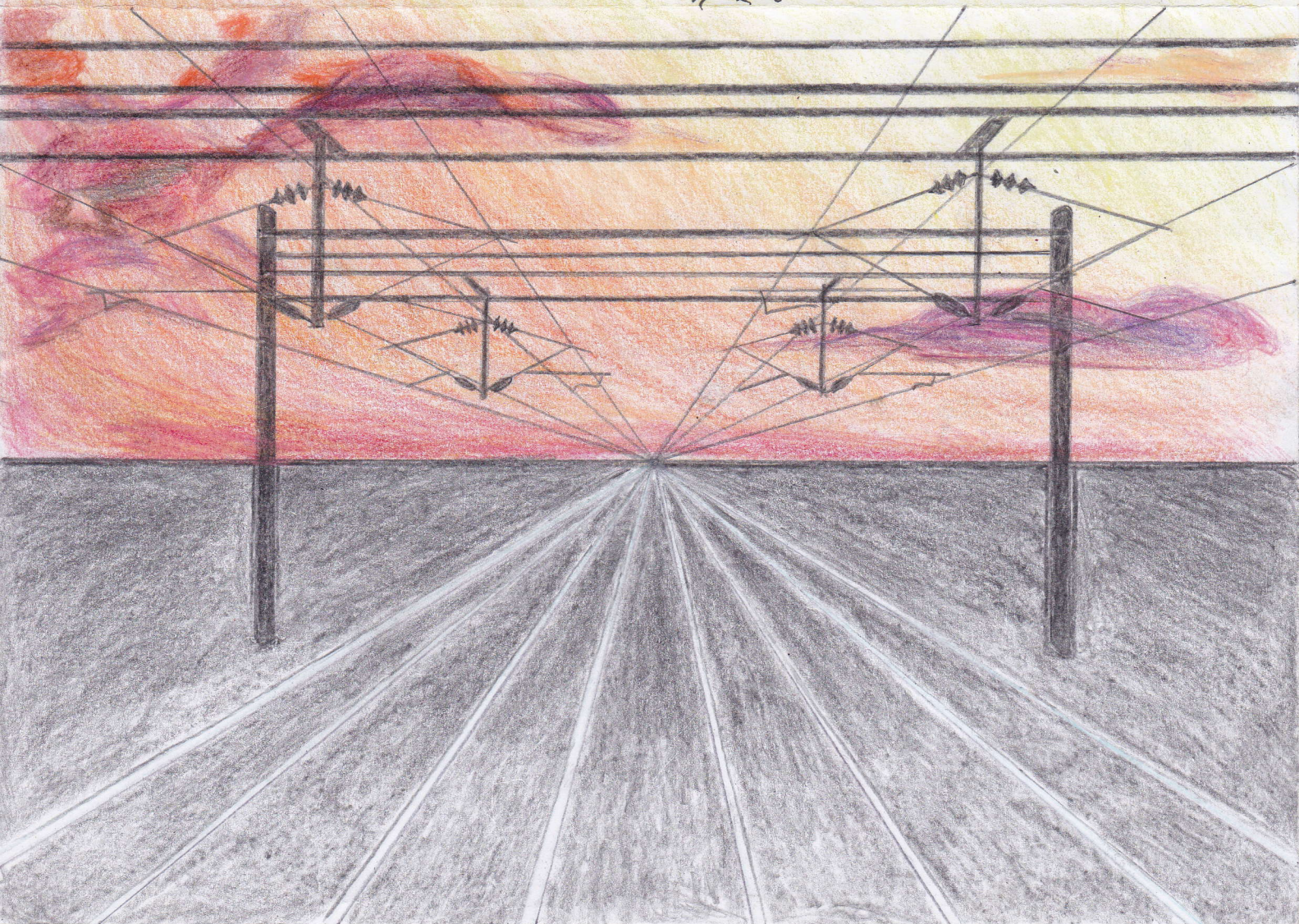


[http://www.semi.es/ftp/transporte/ferroviario/catenaria\\_alta\\_velocidad.jpg](http://www.semi.es/ftp/transporte/ferroviario/catenaria_alta_velocidad.jpg)



[https://farm4.staticflickr.com/3100/2914182529\\_616c71f701.jpg](https://farm4.staticflickr.com/3100/2914182529_616c71f701.jpg)

- ① I drew the background in oil-colour. My teacher aided me in getting the right effect on the clouds.
- ② After talking to the teacher, we decided it might be interesting to draw the rest with pencil colours. I drew the bottom half first.
- ③ I went over the overhead-line details with a black colour pencil.



# Memory

For more than a century, iron tracks have slithered through the land, cutting, dissecting, and yet leaving the nature undisturbed. Lately, the railway has been gaining attention as an environment-friendly form of transportation, promising a harmonious future with nature. But, with every setback in the railroad construction, we are reminded of the power of nature and the men and machines which battled the ugly side of the land.



<http://www.railart.co.uk/gallery/images/cuneo4.jpg>

his attempt to capture the moment represents his passion for the beauty of mankind's creations.

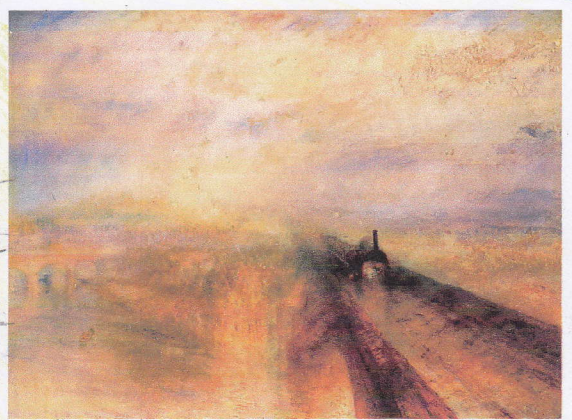
William Turner (J. M. W. Turner), on the other hand, had a more impressionist's approach. His painting, titled 'Rain, Steam, and Speed - The Great Western Railway' (right), shows a steam locomotive on a bridge, barely visible in the rain. Turner tried to express the feeling of the rain, steam, and speed, more focused on motion of these elements.

Both artworks express power, but while Terence Cuneo is presenting the might of human machinery in his works, I think William Turner was more trying to put across the message that no matter how strong we are, we are no match against nature.

I would also like to paint a scene of the railway. Mine would be based on what I have seen through the train window during my summer holiday trips. I would like to paint in in Cuneo's style, because I like railway as a system.

Two artists, Terence Tension Cuneo and J. M. W. Turner both <sup>expressed</sup> this relationship in their paintings, but each with a different perspective.

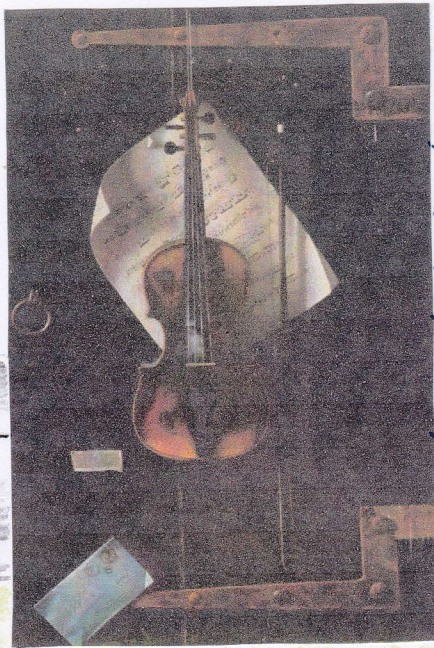
Terence Cuneo is a 20th century artist famous for his paintings of vehicles and machinery. 'Signal Success' (shown on the left) is one of his works, showing a modern signal



[http://www.artble.com/imgs/c/9/3/58154/rain\\_steam\\_and\\_speed\\_the\\_great\\_western\\_railway.jpg](http://www.artble.com/imgs/c/9/3/58154/rain_steam_and_speed_the_great_western_railway.jpg)

# The Colours of Music

A violin is present in the painting of all three artists, William Harnett, Raoul Dufy, and Georges Braque. Aside from the instrument, the artworks share the same media; oil on canvas (except Braque's, which additionally has charcoal and pencil). However, even with identical key element and method of painting, these pieces of art differ in level of detail, what they express, and how they use the elements in the picture to visualize their purpose. These differentiations can be compared/contrasted by looking at the various movements: Realism, Expressionism, and Abstraction.



www.nga.gov/feature/artaction/harnett/

## Realism

▲ The Old Violin  
by William Michael Harnett (1886)

Although it is very technical, I believe that a feeling of melancholy is transferred through this painting.

In Realism, objects are drawn exactly how they are, or close approximation is attempted. Realistic paintings, thus, are full in detail and the object drawn is a complete reflection. In this painting, for example, the violin is painted with no interpretation by the artist. Unlike in Realism, an expressionist adds interpretation to his painting. He tries to convey a feeling through his work. The element present thus receive a change in colour or, possibly, in shape.

## Expressionism

► The Yellow Violin  
by Raoul Dufy (1949)

This painting makes me wonder about the artist's choice of colours. What did he want to express with yellow?



www.wikiart.org/en/raoul-dufy/

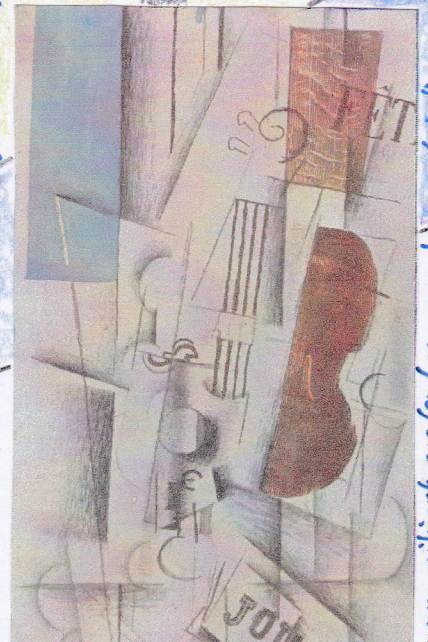
the yellow-violin-1949 with-ar-violin-1949

Abstraction is on the opposite end of the spectrum, when related to Realism and Expressionism. The violin no longer serves the centre point of the painting, but is broken up into simple shapes to represent something else.

## Abstraction

► Musical Forms  
by Georges Braque (1913)

The combination of different medias (oil paint, charcoal, and pencil) and the study of perspective drawing are attributes shared with Braque's work and my first studio piece.



www.wikiart.org/en/georges-braque/violin-and-newspaper-musical-forms

# Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon

I was born in the year of the tiger. Back in Japan, my home, we follow the Chinese Zodiac calendar, a cycle of 12 animals; each representing a year. Tigers are said to be daring and generous, but also aggressive and rebellious. The violent face is a side of my personality I rarely reveal, and I believe some think it is non-existent within me. However, I believe I do hide a predator; a crouching tiger.



<http://www.duedatecalculator.org/images/chinese-zodiac-calendar.png>



[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-BNDXFHogWs8/TVX1f9yiw6I/AAAAAAAAARg/3\\_nThCzyFL4/s1600/cthd2.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-BNDXFHogWs8/TVX1f9yiw6I/AAAAAAAAARg/3_nThCzyFL4/s1600/cthd2.jpg)

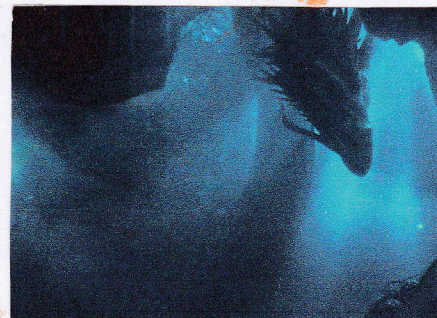
Thoughts flowed to a Chinese martial arts film I enjoyed watching - Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon. In Chinese culture, tiger and dragon are counter parts of each other, representing yin and yang, but are harmonious as a whole if they come together. (I am a tiger according to the zodiac calendar), but I think

I should also visualize the dragon, as it acts as a counter-balance.

Thinking about dragons led me to another film I watched which was also based around the concept of yin and yang - The Last Airbender.

Although the film was highly criticized, one thing I liked was how they presented the spiritual world. In the film the non-tangible objects in the non-physical space had no distinct borders; everything merged.

It might be interesting to implement a similar style in my studio piece. By merging the separate components of the painting. I can express how they are part of a bigger whole.



[http://img3.wikia.nocookie.net/\\_cb20110805100231/avatar/images/5/5b/Film\\_-\\_Dragon\\_Spirit.png](http://img3.wikia.nocookie.net/_cb20110805100231/avatar/images/5/5b/Film_-_Dragon_Spirit.png)

The medias I want to explore with this studio piece are ink-wash and ink-on-water techniques. I chose them, because they are medias traditionally used in East-Asia, and thus have a connection to the subject of the studio piece and to my home; Japan. Doing these medias will pose a new challenge for me, as using ink does not facilitate corrections. I need to practice these medias to master their flow.

# Floating World



A leafless tree resting on top of a gentle hill... The air is tense with the energy released from the duel between the dragon and tiger... But nothing can alter the sharp peaks looming at the back; they dominate full control... I chose this scenery, a scene so often represented in traditional East-Asian art, to facilitate my practice in ink techniques. The painting is a combination of layers, each with a unique media. First, I used a dry-brush to form the mountains. These were given over with a wet-brush, as instructed in an online video. Then I painted the foreground hill with the tree using the ink on water technique I practiced in class. When paper was dry, I drew the dragon and tiger using a pen. The shape of the dragon was inspired by an online image while the tiger was a two-dimensional copy of a carved wooden tiger I own. Although I am very satisfied with the alignment of each element in the painting, my studio piece will have a different composition. Instead of a landscape painting, it will be a self-portrait, with the heads of the dragon and tiger flanking me.

Online Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofcgkd6Bz0E>

Online Image: [http://thumbs161.shutterstock.com/display-pic\\_will-legs/242707/203790793/stock-vector-chinese-dragon-silhouettes-on-the-white-background-203790793.jpg](http://thumbs161.shutterstock.com/display-pic_will-legs/242707/203790793/stock-vector-chinese-dragon-silhouettes-on-the-white-background-203790793.jpg)

# The Best of Both Worlds

## *Ryu Sho Ten by Ogata Gekko (1896)*

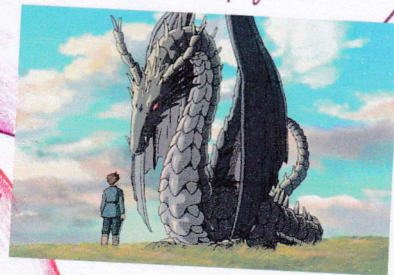
Ogata Gekko's artwork shows a dragon rising up to the heavens. The media used here is the woodblock technique, in which a piece of wood is carved to serve as a print. The dragon shown in painting looks as if it is half dissolved into the surroundings. I believe this symbolizes how dragons in most Asian cultures, are wise beings which live in harmony with nature. This opposes baseline European ideas that dragons are poisonous to the land.



[http://data.ukiyoe.org/jaodb/images/Gekko\\_Ogata-Free\\_Brushwork\\_by\\_Gekko-Ryu\\_Shoten\\_Mt\\_Fuji\\_and\\_Dragon-00033472-050221-F12.jpg](http://data.ukiyoe.org/jaodb/images/Gekko_Ogata-Free_Brushwork_by_Gekko-Ryu_Shoten_Mt_Fuji_and_Dragon-00033472-050221-F12.jpg)

## *A Scene from Tales of Earthsea by Studio Ghibli (2006)*

I believe the dragon illustrated in this film has a mix of both Eastern and Western attributes. Like the dragons portrayed in Europe, this dragon breathes fire and has a violent nature. However, it is also wise and resourceful, like an Asian dragon. I theorize that this is the result of Japanese influence on a western story. What makes Studio Ghibli's work unique is that every frame is drawn by hand using water-colors and that the process is rarely aided by CGI. I think this gives the picture a certain quality which lacks in CGI films.



[http://filmykino.pl/uploaded/photos/12299/1366653827\\_0\\_full.jpg](http://filmykino.pl/uploaded/photos/12299/1366653827_0_full.jpg)

## *Saint George and the Dragon by Paolo Uccello (c.a. 1470)*

Paolo Uccello oil painting, "Saint George and the Dragon", illustrated a scene from an ancient story, where Saint George slays the dragon which threatened the peace of a village. This represents the common way in which dragons are depicted in Europe; as violent monsters. However, due to the dragon's lack of size compared to other elements, I believe that Uccello failed to express the dangerousness of a western dragon.

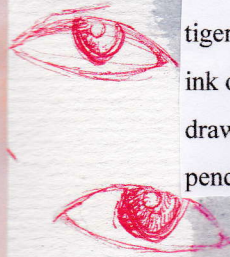


[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/50/Paolo\\_Uccello\\_047.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/50/Paolo_Uccello_047.jpg)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Studio Piece - Reflection

My second studio piece, in simple terms, was a failure. I believe low concentration led to longer working time and unsatisfactory quality. The piece looks pleasing over all, but as viewer closes into specific elements, he/she will flinch at the flaws in the few details presents.

If I could redirect some of fault, I would attribute the failure at the poorly chosen media used. The ink-on-water technique required me to slow down. This resulted in the work dragging on, losing the spontaneous effect I would gain if I used different mediums. Although this provided me an extended time to consider possible additions and alterations, which led to improvements in the original design, the work became a burden and it lost a lot of the pathos. It was perhaps also a mistake to implement a media I had very little experience with. In ink-on-water technique the ink should flow from a point, changing shades as it spreads out. During my attempts, however, the ink would either spread in a singular shade, or not flow at all. In both cases, I manipulated the spread of ink, using a brush to 'even it out'. This practice contradicted the original technique, removing its essence. As a result, I was not able to gain the desired results.



The studio piece in its later stages of development. The face of the tiger on the left was shaded using ink on water, while its eyes were drawn with pen and colored pencils



The portrait, while having a slight resemblance to myself, is disproportionate in many areas

The complete studio piece: it is lacking detail and texture. Multiple mistakes are visible in several places. The faces are unclear due to the lightness of their shades.

The background of this IWB was part of the sheet of paper I used for practice and to experiment different tones of ink.

For my next studio piece, I think I would revisit a media that I am already familiar with. This will help me maintaining my drive and make great progress on my work while the idea is still fresh. I need to do that anyway, because I really need to speed up.

# Ideas Made Public – Murals

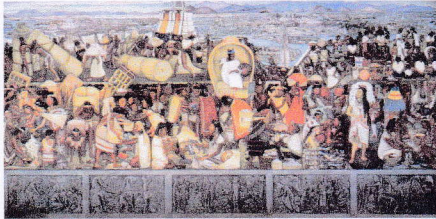
Although the term 'Mural' is given to any artwork applied onto a wall or ceiling and thus can include private pieces, many Murals are done on surfaces visible to the public. These works often symbolize certain religious, political, or economic ideas. Murals are purposed to evoke certain emotions and/or revolutionary thoughts in the hearts and minds of the people.

## The Last Judgment (Sistine Chapel) by Michelangelo (1534-1541)

The grand piece occupying the altar wall of the atrium is a fresco painting, in which color pigments are applied onto wet plaster with water. As the name reveals, Michelangelo's work portrays the Day of Judgment; how the blessed are lifted to heaven and the damned are condemned to hell. This mural appeared during a decisive time which not only marked the transition from High-Renaissance to Mannerism, but change in religious ideas. People, including Michelangelo himself, began to question the true meaning of belief and faith. I think this artwork is revolutionary, both practically and conceptually.



[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a5/Michelangelo\\_-\\_Giudizio\\_Universale\\_02.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a5/Michelangelo_-_Giudizio_Universale_02.jpg)



## The Great Tenochtitlan by Diego Rivera (2006)

Diego Rivera was a leading artist of the Mexican Mural Movement, a government founded program aimed at gathering support for the Mexican Revolution. It was thought that visuals were the best way to convey the myriad Mexican culture and history and thereby encourage nationalism to a largely illiterate population. "The Great Tenochtitlan" shows the Aztec capital, a symbol of Mexico glorious past. Diego's fresco murals were greatly influenced by Aztec art, composed of simple shapes in bold colors. Using visuals instead of writing to convey ideas is a brilliant, but I believe some level of literacy is required to appreciate visual arts as well.

<https://quintessentialruminations.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/tenochtitlan22.jpg>

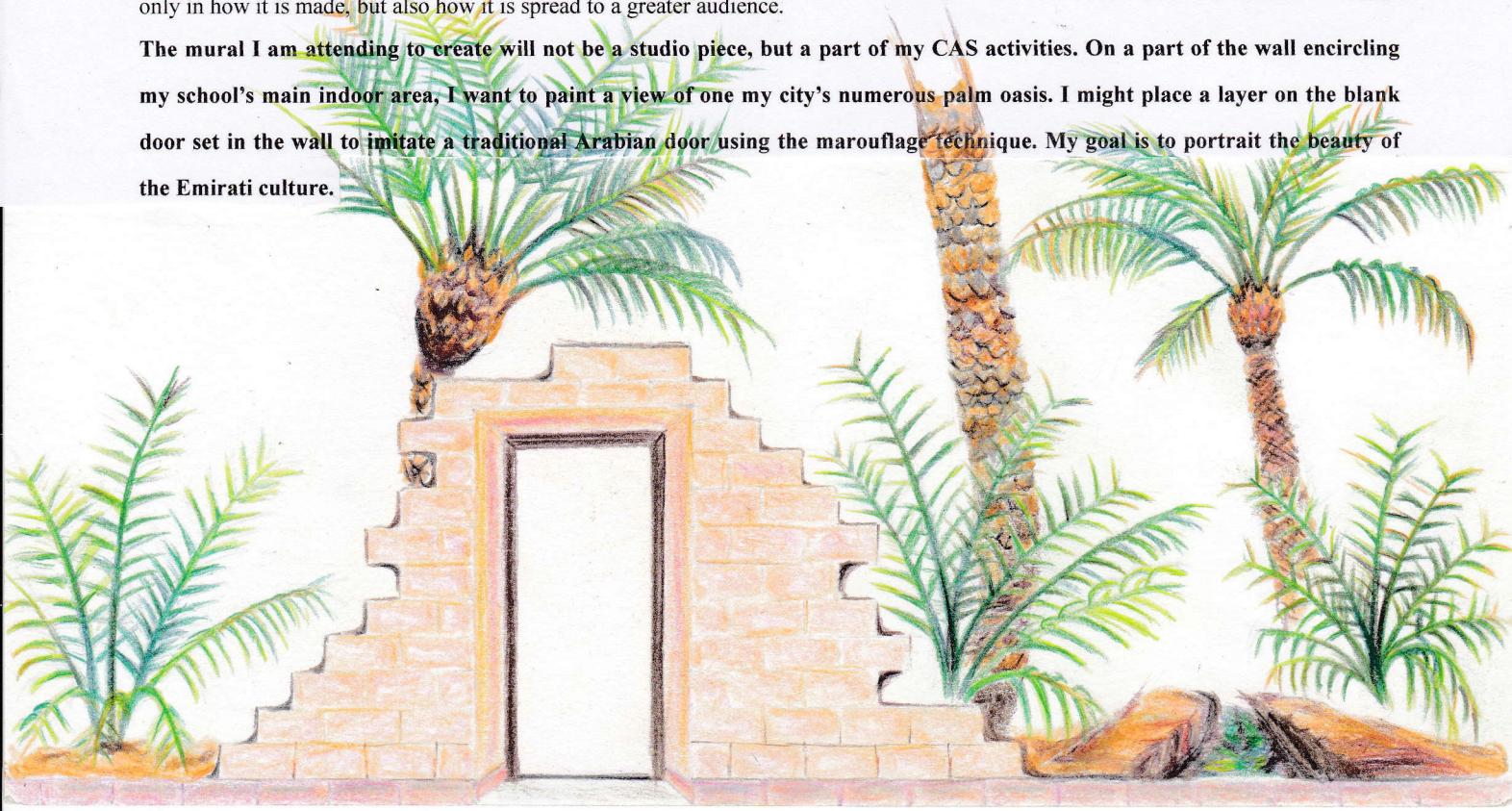
## Several Wallscapes Advertisements at New York Times Square (2000s.)

'Wallsapes' are the modern adaptations of murals. Often in forms of advertisements, they cover building surfaces or billboards. Wallsapes are not drawn onto walls like fresco murals, but premade and then placed on walls, similar to marouflages. These advertisements are not hand drawn either. Most of them are designed digitally and printed. A similar method is used Frescography, where digital templates are 'tailored' before printed out and stuck to a wall to create the illusion that it was hand drawn. I think modern technology revolutionized art not only in how it is made, but also how it is spread to a greater audience.



<http://media-2.web.britannica.com/eb-media/37/100437-004-122DF4E8.jpg>

**The mural I am attending to create will not be a studio piece, but a part of my CAS activities. On a part of the wall encircling my school's main indoor area, I want to paint a view of one my city's numerous palm oasis. I might place a layer on the blank door set in the wall to imitate a traditional Arabian door using the marouflage technique. My goal is to portrait the beauty of the Emirati culture.**





# Absent

The initial idea came to mind when my visual arts teacher showed me the painting (on the right). This image, although I do not know its title nor the artist who made it, inspired me to try different materials to paint on other than normal canvas or paper. Especially this painting, in which a palette is shown, made it clear to me that I could also draw on what I spread my paint on.



<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/04/Oil-painting-palette.jpg>

Then <sup>it</sup> occurred to me the idea that I could make a follow up piece of my 2<sup>nd</sup> studio piece. As I need to complete about a dozen pieces of art during the 2-year course, I believe it to be appropriate that I create several series of studio works.

My last studio piece was portraying myself with a dragon and a tiger. I tried to express what I believe is the hidden strength in me. In this studio piece, as a contrast, I want to portray the more realistic truth that I sometimes feel weak and useless.



I believe a good way to visualize this feeling is the act of being curled up; trying to escape the problems this world holds. This

composition works well with the palette as the canvas, because they have similar shapes. My body fits better into the oval palette than the normal rectangular canvas.

Also, as I mentioned in my reflection

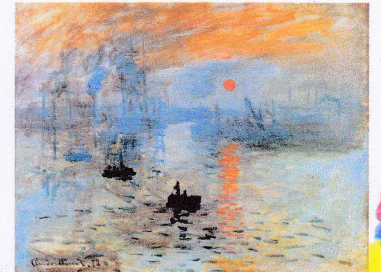
of my previous studio piece, I was greatly frustrated by the long time it took to finish my artwork and thus want use a media with more spontaneity. That is why I believe it is a good choice to return to oil painting; something I have done partially for my first studio piece.

# The Artistic Method – Impressionism

Impressionist was a name given to a group of young artists in the late 1800s who rebelled against the traditional view of visual arts; those who exited the constraints of the studio and took their canvases out into the open – painting en plein air. Focusing on the perception of light, air, and movement rather than realistic detail, these artists covered their canvases with short unblended brush strokes of bright colors. Although specific styles and techniques varied, this type of became collectively known as Impressionism.

## Impressionism – Impression Sunrise by Claude Monet (1872)

One of leading pioneers of this movement, Claude Monet practiced the purist form of Impressionism. One of his earlier impressionists works, *Impression: Sunrise*, captures a misty dawn over the French LeHavre Harbor. The fluently placed strokes enabled Monet to capture the warmth and coldness of a precise frame. A common observation taken is that the sun hanging amongst the clouds is no brighter than the surrounding mist. I saw in this painting the spontaneosity that my previous studio piece lacked.

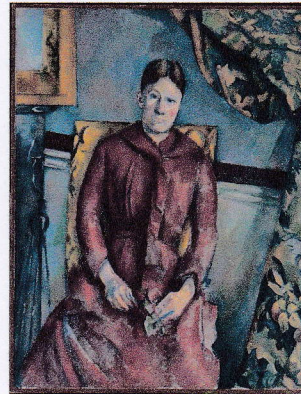


<http://www.monetalia.com/paintings/large/monet-impresion-sunrise.jpg>

## Post-impressionism –

### Madame Cézanne in a Red Dress by Paul Cezanne (1888–1890)

Post-impressionism developed from Impression and served as a response to the initial forms of this movement. Although they are similar in technique, Post-impressionism focuses on symbolism, as oppose to Impressionist's focus on effects of light. Paul Cezanne is renown for his post-impressionistic paintings. The shown artwork is one of the 27 portraits Paul painted of his wife, Cezanne's style changed over the years, but one notable attribute is that he carefully examined the objects he paints; placing a brush stroke only after great amounts of consideration. I only wish I am given the same amount of time to complete my studio pieces.

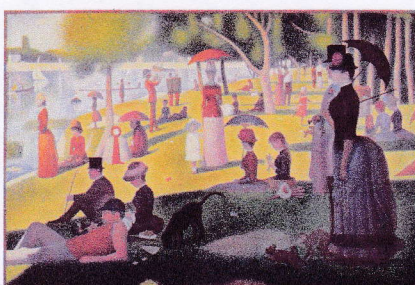


<http://www.metmuseum.org/collecion/the-collection-online/search/435876>

## Neo-impressionism –

### A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte by Georges Seurat

The painting by Georges Seurat is a leading example of the use of Neo-impressionism. In Neo-impressionism, dots of color are dropped equal distance from each other, creating a whole picture when look at from a certain distance. Instead of the artists' perception, Neo-impressionism draws its shapes from scientific research and works with a generally fixed composition. Rough foundations help set up the art piece, but I believe placing limitations greatly reduces the creativity needed to produce a unique piece of art.



<http://www.artchive.com/artchive/s/seurat/jatte.jpg>

I believe, out of these three Impressionists styles, my studio piece leans towards the traditional Impressionism and general Post-impressionism. I do try to capture the effects of light on my face, but I am choosing the colors to exhibit certain thoughts. What I want to accomplish is to maintain the spontaneity with which I started.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Studio Piece - Reflection



The initial idea was to create an artwork with a message opposite that of the second studio piece.

In the pencil sketch I drew for the IWB, the skin came out as lines and shapes of bright and bold colors. My art teacher then introduced me to impressionism.



This is a photo taken of me by my brother

## Good: Choice of Style

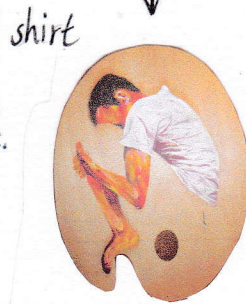
I am really happy that I have decided to paint the face, arm, and leg in impressionistic style. Although it was initially the result of my failed attempt to capture the right shade of the photo taken in my IWB pencil drawing, I believe the broad strokes and the bright reddish colors help express the strong presence of life and will to survive in the body.

## Bad:

I am generally content with the overall outcome of this studio piece; I believe it is the <sup>best</sup> piece so far. However, just like my last artwork, I dislike looking at the details, which are flawed at some parts. Especially the white shirt, on which I painted with large amounts of linseed oil, has a lot of the underlying wooden texture showing through. Showing the texture of the palette through the shirt may be desired, but it leaves the impression of an incomplete work.

Initially, I thought of painting the skin and hair realistically. Then I decided to do this in an impressionistic style.

Additionally, I find some of the colors applied on to the painting to be "polluted". Reason for that is the inappropriate way I used my brushes and palette (a piece of wax-paper). To get the right amount and desired shade of color, I mixed the paints uncaringly, using the same brush over and over for the process. The palette became a trash can of colors, all the paints having impurities. The brushes I used received coats of paints - continuously applied and rarely washed. All this caused the colors to be impure, thus creating an unclear piece of art.



I also think the choice of color and style for the skin works well in contrast with the realistically painted shirt. Although I have doubts about the details of the folds, generally, it looks quite accurate.

I got suggestions from my parents that I should leave the rest of the palette blank. Opinions also varied on the color of the trousers.

Initially, I was going to paint the space surrounding the body in a dull green. Instead I only added a shadow and kept the rest of the wood untouched.

## Speed:

As always, completing this studio piece required more time than I originally thought. However, compared to my last studio piece, I felt that I was making more progress in less time.

# Surrealism (Still Life + Dawn Sky)

The morning sunlight bending on surfaces, morphing the boundaries of reality

朝の歌

Morning's Song

- Sakanaction -

あとどれくらい僕は深く潜れるだろう

How much deeper can I dive?

何気なく見た窓の外はまだ夜

Outside the window I casually looked out of was still night.

あとどれくらい僕は深く潜れるだろう

How much deeper can I dive?

眠りの中で迷うように泳ぐ

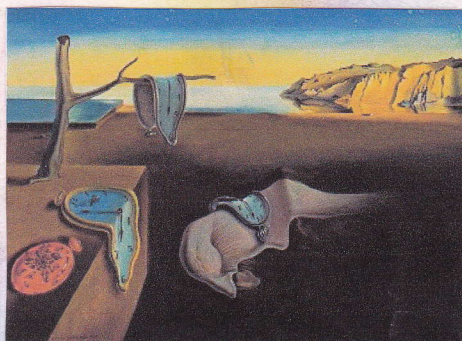
Swimming like lost in sleep

Surrealism - Persistence of Memory  
by Salvador Dali (1931)

Surrealism was a movement in the 1920s encompassing various fields such as the arts and literature.

Surrealist attempted to express the power of the subconscious and dreams unbound by the restrictions of reality and rational thinking.

Salvador Dali is a leading artist of the surrealist movement.



<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/d/dd/>

The\_Persistence\_of\_Memory.jpg

In his painting, the Persistence of Memory, Dali places realistic objects in unrealistic relations to each other to create a dream like scene.

This surrealistic style is also exercised in Sakanaction's "朝の歌" (above) in which the sky is juxtaposition to the sea each substituting the other to focus the blur transition the dawn offers. And it is this scene which I want to capture in my studio piece.

ほら 朝が星や月を食べてく

Look the morning is eating away the

今夜がそれに気がつく

Now the night realizes that

表と裏

Front and back

表と裏

Front and back

and dream

Sakanaction is a five-member-band from Hokkaido, Japan. The song, "朝の歌" is my main inspiration for this studio piece. Listening to it reminds me of the unreasoned joy I feel watching the sky lighten after a night of working at the computer. I become enveloped in an illusion that the world is only half as bad as it is. I always enjoy listening to their music, because I believe they are one-of-a-kind and I feel I can relate to them the most. I am planning to create more studio pieces inspired by Sakanaction's music later in the course. ▽ ▽ ▽

My experiments using different media

moon and the stars.

Media - Since I foresee transparent still life as a great challenge for me, I want to face it with a tool I began to feel comfortable with: oil on canvas. However, for the creation of the background of this IWB page, I experimented with different medias on blank post cards. Above, from left: water-color, crayon-pastels, and color-pencils. The background is done in water-color on acrylic paper. Below is the photo taken by Alan Dyer which I used as a sample to compose these skies.



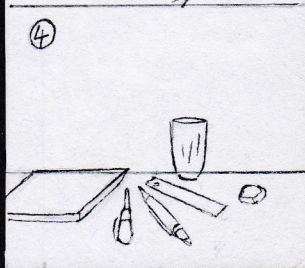
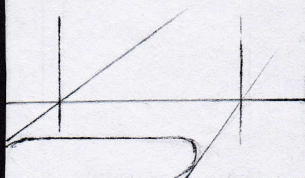
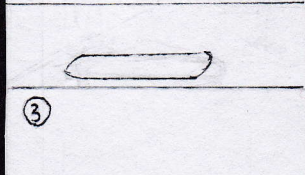
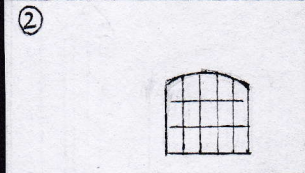
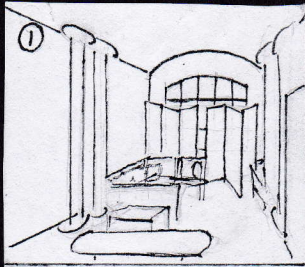
<http://amazingsky.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/venus-jupiter-moon-july-14-2012-3.jpg>

面白くない朝日が染み込む

An uninteresting morning sun is soaking in

This may not be a completely accurate translation. I refrain from looking at other translations or the official interpretations of the songs by Sakanaction for the fear of realizing what I believed is their meaning to be false. I consider Sakanaction's songs to be the melody of my struggles and the anthem of my ideals. And I do not want that to be taken away from me.

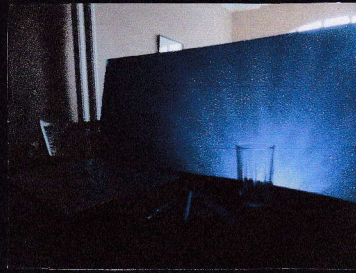
## Composition



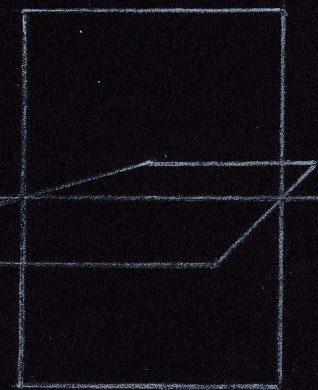
① The whole layout of the room, with the desk in the foreground and the window at the back ② the position of the desk relative to the window ③ the desk's surface placed onto the plane. ④ the desk's surface placed directly against the vertical plane.

The composition of this studio piece can be "derived" from my main studying room. Objects are removed and the desk is brought nearer to the window until only the desk's surface and the sky outside remain (left). The sample photo (middle) was taken by placing a blue board directly against the desk and placing a light beneath the surface.

The objects on the desk help define the setting, both location and time. I changed the composition from horizontal to vertical (right), because I felt the "landscape" to be too stretched.



This composition maps the state of my mind at a specific time. If the vertical plane represents the mind, the desk's surface on the horizontal plane creates a boundary between the positive consciousness and negative sub-conscious. The transition between night and day symbolizes the merging of the real and the imaginary.



## Color

Although this piece is supposed to represent a positive thought, I believe cool colors help visualize the sensation more appropriately than warm colors.

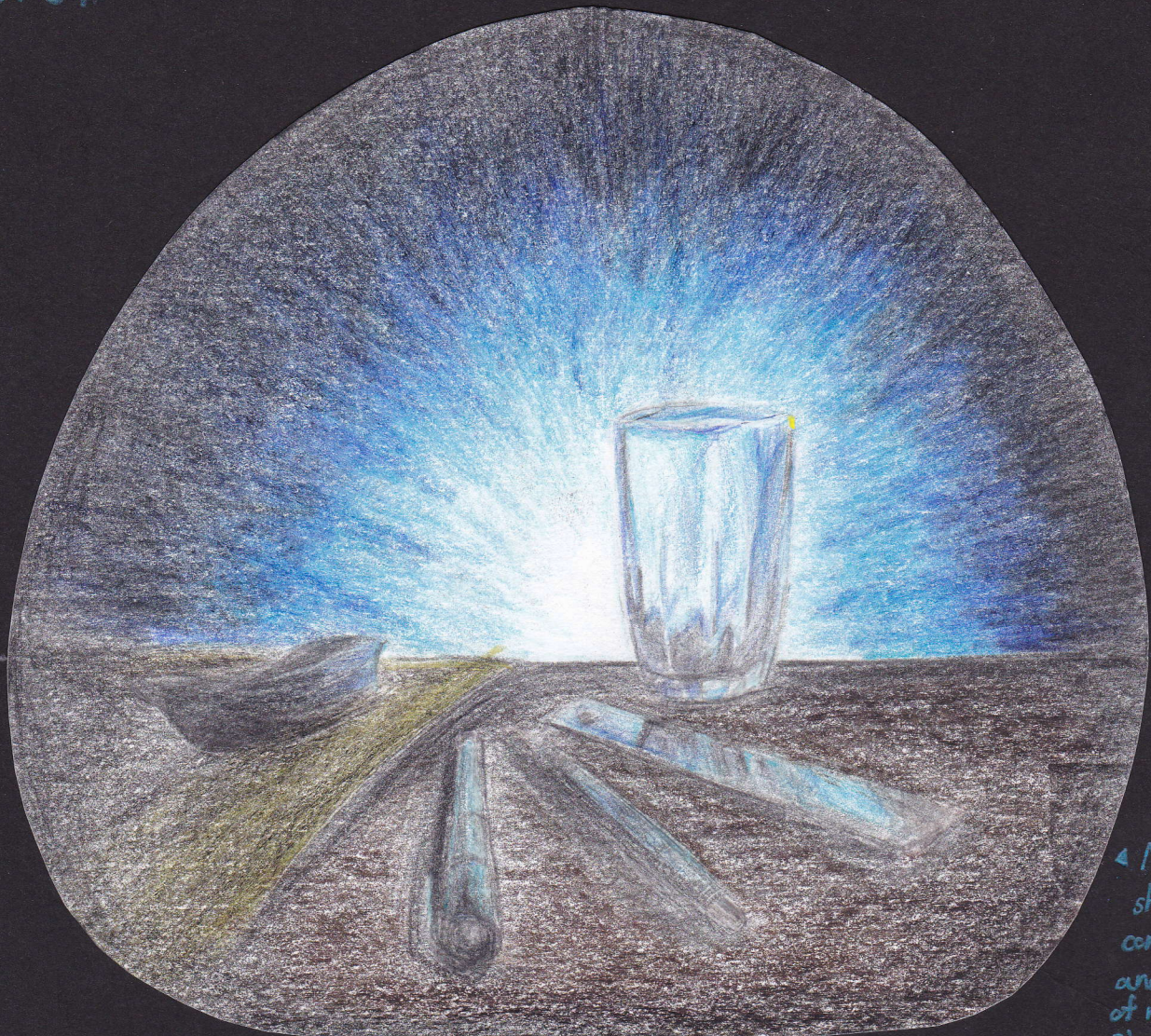


"04:59"

The computer whines loudly for the last time before becoming silent completely. Bowing down to switch off the main power, I am suddenly assaulted by a wave of nausea; different thoughts blending into one, forming an unreal reality. My mind drifts to the new day lying ahead, just as usual and troublesome as yesterday. With dream-like steps I walked to the door, switching off the lights on my way out.

Then I turned around: the room is filled with blue light shining through the large window. The light's rays dancing on the computer and in the glass. The moon is slowly sinking into the sea of the dawn sky. The negative thoughts washing away; the tide of misery retreating, a calm breeze went through my mind. My body loosens - exhausted, but awake; like the remains of a camp fire; dark, yet still warm. An undeniable smile appears on my face as I walk away, into the dark space of the corridor.

It is 04:59.



◀ My drawing, showing the composition and color scheme of my Studio Piece.

“今年二度目の春の雷で早歩きした

雨 雨 きっと降るな

歩き慣れた道 横目で見た赤いツツジの花

おもむろに揺れたんだ”

- サカクシオン なんてたって春 -

山口 一郎

Yamaguchi Ichirō

Ichirō Yamaguchi is the vocalist and main song writer of Japanese band, Sakanaction. He is often referred to as “先生” (teacher) and receives deep respect from fans. Perhaps the main reason I listen to Sakanaction, in particular Mr. Yamaguchi words, is because I believe I share his views. We perceive the world the same way. On the left is a verse of Sakanaction's song “Nantettatte Haru” (なんて、たって春). Mr. Yamaguchi sings about the spring's second thunderstorm; how it made quicken his pace. Walking down a familiar road, he saw a blossom of an Evergreen Azalea in the corner of his eye; how it swayed slowly.

This may seem insignificant, but it reminds me of my time in Japan when I used to walk down a familiar road, pushed by advancing bad weather, and witnessed the scenery blur. We did not walk down the same path, but we saw the same landscape. And I am relieved to know such brilliant minds who think like I do. Hence this piece is not about a thought, but a way of thinking.

## Visualizing Sounds

Below is a screenshot taken by me of the music video of another Sakanaction's song, “Native Dancer” (ネイティブダンサー).

This frame corresponds to fast-beating drums. Throughout the video, colorful (or colorless) shapes, lines, and waves accompany the music. I attempted something similar above, visualizing a few excerpts from my main inspiration, “Nantettatte Haru”. I want to use the same concept in my studio piece, to represent bushes of Azalea flowers.

I also want to try a new medium this time, specifically watercolors. Besides the visualization of sounds, I want to implement other watercolor techniques such as drip-painting, forming blooms, and splashing to picture the grey weather which we, Mr. Yamaguchi and I saw. I also would like to try this in combination with watercolor pencils. Using the pencils will allow me to apply a variety of detail to my artwork. This studio piece will thus be an explosion of colors washed down by the greyness of rain.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zo4JPwCdXTU>

▲ I took this screenshot using “Snipping Tool”. This music video of “Native Dancer” by Sakanaction was uploaded on YouTube.



Tsutsuji - Azalea



# Following the Flow

## Peer Inspiration

There is a 'trend' going in our small, yet lively art class: watercolor; especially, drip-painting. A classmate who is very interested in pop-art implemented this, and as always, I was the last to get to know what is 'in' (by that time, it is no longer a trend). I saw how the unpredictability of water flow, which caused me much trouble in my 2<sup>nd</sup> studio piece, gave life and color to their works.

Normally I might be expected to present a renowned artist for my inspiration, but I believe in current day, with the internet providing so many possibilities, I can seek inspiration in my peers and the millions of artists who show their work on Google Images, DeviantArt, and other websites. One example is the mix-media painting "Our Endless Abnegation", by Agnes Cecile, which I first saw in a speed-painting video on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUv4csQw1o>). I was amazed by Cecile's courageous usage of colors. The painting inspired me to try composing a studio piece out of various techniques.



[http://fc05.deviantart.net/fs71/i/2011/201/e/6/la\\_nostra\\_infinita\\_abnegazione\\_by\\_agne\\_s\\_cecile-d412zvb.jpg](http://fc05.deviantart.net/fs71/i/2011/201/e/6/la_nostra_infinita_abnegazione_by_agne_s_cecile-d412zvb.jpg)

A sketch of my composition for my studio piece. This piece would use a variety of media and styles. These include watercolor, color pencils (both watercolor and non-watercolor) and possibly pen and Acrylic paints

I tasted different paints and methods in an attempt to find a way to paint the background without damaging the shapes in the foreground.

## Fighting Inertia

The background of this page is actually a piece cut out from a sheet on which I experimented with several techniques and color tones. A similar page is used for the reflection my second studio piece, which is also done with a water-based medium. This shows my hesitance to do non-reversible things such as applying water-paints. I mentioned this problem in a TOK presentation; that the finished piece is in my head, but each step I get scared that I detour further away from the goal. However, I learned to swim with the flow, and not against the stream.

The title is drawn using water-color-pencils smudged by water brush strokes. I will use the same technique on the chain fence to visualize how the scenery blurs with the curtains of rainfall.

Instead of painting the clouds myself, I would drop some paint on the wet surface, and let nature do its job.



For painting the flower, I will use the simple water on color-pencil technique. However, I am not sure how light or dark the shade should be.

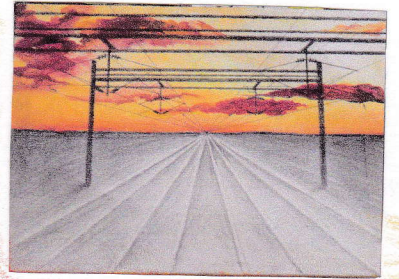
# Right Medium for the Right Piece

## A Holistic Reflection

I have already encountered a few media in my short IB Visual Arts course, but the most dominant medium was oil paints. I have used oil based paints as the medium for three studio pieces (one of which I have yet to complete). However, each piece was done on a different material; canvas, wood, and hard-paper. I quickly realized that only because the paint is the same, it does not mean I get the same result on every material. Every medium has its benefits and drawbacks.

## Canvas

My first studio piece was done using oil paints and pencils on canvas. I remember being nervous in the beginning, since I never used oils before, but turning to be very happy at the end of class, because of the great experience I had working with that medium. It was easy to work with oil paints on canvas. I did not need to use any linseed oil to thin the paint; I could spread the medium easily on the canvas' surface. I did not get to work on finer details with oil paints, because I had decided to do them with color pencils. However, I felt confident that I mastered the medium.



## Wood

After a rather unsatisfactory experience with my second studio piece, I fell back to oil paints; this time, on a palette made out of wood. Initially it was the shape, not the material, which intrigued me. Later, I was also able to appreciate the texture of the wood as well. It was appropriate in applying paint on small areas and thus creates texture. However, on larger areas, where I applied lighter colors, I required a lot of linseed oil to spread the paint. In the end, some of the wood color and texture showed through. This caused certain parts to look somewhat transparent. In other parts, however, I liked how the paint blended into the wood. I believe working with oil on wood was a good experience.



## Hard-Paper

The idea for the fourth studio piece was something I gave much thought into. I knew it required good handling in both working with large spaces and small detail. I wanted to use grey hard-paper after seeing a fellow student work with the same material. I confidently claimed that I should use oil paints since I have "experience" with it. I was negatively surprised. I had great difficulties spreading the paint over the background and used great amounts to cover the grey material. The details came out everything other than nice. I was so discontent with how it looked that I decided to put that piece to a hold. I would like to complete this studio piece, but I want it to live up to my ideas as well. Thus I believe it is necessary to change the medium to something more appropriate to the subject matter; perhaps pastels or charcoal pencils. Regardless of what I am going to do, I learned that the same art medium does not thrive in every situation.



# A Visit to the Gallery

## Alserkal Avenue (Arts District)

One day in spring break, I accompanied my family to the Alserkal Avenue, an art district in Al Quoz, Dubai. The avenue consists of a group of industrial warehouses renovated into galleries, workshops, and community spaces. It is home to artists from many backgrounds, practicing visual arts through various forms of media. I was able to get in touch with a wide range of art movements and styles. It was a great opportunity to see the artistic side of the city.

### Carbon 12 – Anahita Razmi

Carbon 12 Dubai is a gallery space in the Alserkal Avenue. During our visit, it exhibited the works of Anahita Razmi. In her 2<sup>nd</sup> solo exhibition titled “Sharghzadegi”\*, Razmi explores how western culture is infiltrating the East, Middle East, and visa-versa, and how art and culture of the Middle East is portrayed stereotypically in the West. The artist takes everyday items such as pieces of shirts and backpacks, or the works of other artists and changes a few of their features to see how adaptation and assimilation of design and styles raises questions about cultural identity and stereotypes.

\*Sharghzadegi – a made-up term meaning “Eaststruckness”, taken from a Persian word “Gharbzadegi” meaning “Weststruckness”

“New Silk Road Patterns 4”  
Anahita Razmi –

<http://carbon12dubai.com/wp-content/gallery/anahita-razmi-sharghzadegi/ARNew-Silk-road-patterns-4Framed-textile-colla-ges80-x-120-cm2015.jpg>



### Freeing the Stone

This art exhibition and store displays the works of 7 Zimbabwean artists, all working in the Shona Sculpture medium; a technique native to the Shona tribe in Zimbabwe. Many of these stone sculptures express attributes of family, interpersonal relations, and personal emotions, feelings, and problems. I found it interesting that such traditional arts are regaining popularity, despite the emergence of the digital and pop cultures.



“My Witness and Eye” – Witness Bonjisi

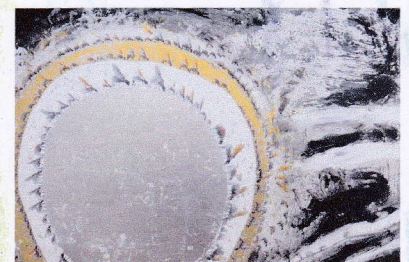
<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/54a92b8de4b041b86afc7867/54abb445e4b060bee01230b3/54d3011ee4b0ae59f78c50af/1424955073233/?format=1500w>

### Tales from Other Lands – Hadil Moufti

This is a collection of artworks which completely astonished me. Made out of insect wings and print-out animals stuck on what seems to be oil or acrylic paint backgrounds, the meaning of these paintings depicting bizarre landscapes of distant farming asteroids and planets is a complete mystery to me. Other works, showing the different faces of the sea and marine life, may be more comprehensible, but I am still clueless to what the artist’s intentions were. Additionally to the unusual subject matter, I found the style very unique. I especially liked how the artist created texture with the excessive use of paints.

### Looking at Art with context

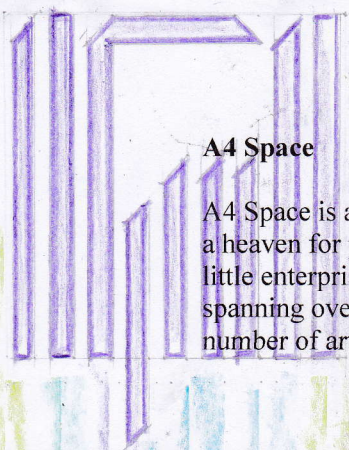
One thing that struck me as a surprise looking Anahita Razmi’s works and that of some others is how simple some of these pieces are: down to a point where you start questioning whether these are still works of art. I believe it is often considered that a work of art should instill an emotion or induce a change in thought in those who look at it. However, if the piece is so simple, or incomprehensible (like I thought of Moufti’s works), it would prove difficult for such ideas to reach across to the audience. That is when I understood the importance of knowing the context of the artwork. I think you need to know ‘why’ the artist did it before you can fully understand ‘what’ he/she did. Reading the description for each piece of art helped me understand what the artists were trying to convey. But reading the description may detract from the experience of forming your own ideas of the painting. It is a translation, which is not the original, but an interpretation. But maybe the artists do not desire it. Perhaps the simplicity of the artworks is supposed to encourage creative thinking. Perhaps that is the aim of the artists; for us to appreciate art in its purist form, without all the external influences manipulating our view.



“Asteroid Farming”

– Hadil Moufti

<http://www.thenational.ae/storyimage/AB/20150316/BLOGS/150319335/EP/1/1/&MaxW=640&imageVersion=default&EP-150319335.jpg>



### A4 Space

A4 Space is a multi-purpose community space found amongst the art galleries in the avenue. It serves as a heaven for people to refresh and replenish themselves, communicate with others, and conduct their own little enterprises. Although the store has a modest entrance, the inside provides a large open space, spanning over two-floors, which helps inducing a refreshing and positive atmosphere. It also hosted a number of artistic designs, including a mosaic created out of square-shaped stick-notes.

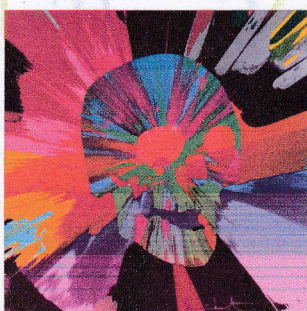
### Not being afraid to express yourself uniquely

One thing I always care about a lot is what features I would use to express certain aspects of my intended message. Normally I would consider what elements could best portray my thoughts and how they would convey these thoughts to the audience. Basically, I keep trying to materialize the ‘perfect picture’ existing vaguely in my mind. This causes me to start seeking meaning in every single feature of the artwork; everything for me needs to have a reason for being there. This may encourage me to look at different ways to express myself. However, I believe most of the time it hinders me to look at more unique methods, because I become indifferent to those things that do not fit my vision.

That is when I saw these galleries and how freely the artists expressed themselves. Perhaps, some of them think the same way I do; the artwork must be an accurate representation of one’s emotions, thoughts, or viewpoints. But I believe they are liberated from the chain which bind us to a limited mind set. I perceived this especially with the works of Anahita Razmi, who, for example, displayed 2 rows of backpacks with an altered brand name to explore the effects of cultural fusion. Damien Hirst also thought outside the ‘box’ in his work “Skulls on a spin”, by presenting skulls, normally monochromatic, in explosions of bright colors.

I may not have liked every single piece of art I saw that day, and might even think that some do not deserve all the praise they get, but this visit taught me one thing:

Art takes shape in different forms and it is not my right to restrain it in any way.

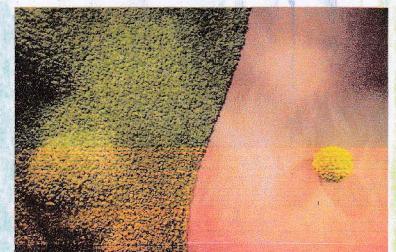


“Skull on a spin” – Damien Hirst

<http://bien.ae/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Hirst-2.png>

Aldo Cibic – “Green Dunes”

<http://retaildesignblog.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Green-Dunes-at-Design-Downtown-Dubai-2014-by-Aldo-Cibic-CibicWorkshop-05.jpg>



### Green Art Gallery (Modern Entanglements)

– Alessandro Balteo Yazbeck

In ‘Modern Entanglement’, his first solo exhibition in the Gulf, Alessandro Yazbeck explores the art of diplomacy, politics, and propaganda. He recycled notable works which represent the political differences between countries in their times. One topic which I think stood out the most was the problems of nuclear arms race and desired nuclear disarmament. I believe the artist was very bold in his opinions, especially because they were aggressive and controversial.



– Alessandro Balteo Yazbeck

<http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2015/03/18/t-magazine/18dubai-straaten-slide-NIR4/18dubai-straaten-slide-NIR4-tmagArticle.jpg>

### La Galalerie Nationale (Art Pulse)

La Galalerie Nationale, the last gallery we visited, hosted “Art Pulse”, a group exhibition by artists from around the world. Although all the artworks were made in the last 100 years, and many of them fall under the contemporary pop art, the great diversity in media and art styles made me feel like I was walking through the history of artistic movements when I moved around the room. The media ranged from oil to pencil, from simple sketches to elaborate collages to installations. My favorite piece was ‘Green Dunes’, a wall sculpture by Aldo Cibic. The feature I especially liked about this artwork was the materials used to represent the greenery.