

## Development of Initial Ideas

The first step of the self-portrait *I See Light* is to create planning sketches. Since my inspiration is Fauvism, I create three sketches and have different spots as to where different color will be painted in. I am still undecided as in I will have my glass on or off because it will be a huge difference with the glass on or off. But I think that to truly portray myself, I should leave my glasses off to portray my true identity with the rawness of my facial features.

So my next step is to test out the poses and take portrait photos for painting reference. Then, I used photoshop to add in sections of color on my face to see how it'll look after I paint it. I also alter the pattern and location of the hues to experiment with feelings and emotions as well.

### Artist Inspiration

For my self-portrait *I See Light* painting, the inspiration came from Fauvism movement. Fauvism is the first 20th-century movement in modern art roughly around 1899 to 1908. The Fauves, aka Wild Beasts, were a group of French painters that emphasize on artist's personal expression. Fauvism can be regarded as the combination of cubism and expressionism as artists tend to use bright colors to express emotion. Henri Matisse became the leader of the group with painting such as *Green Line* in which he used warm colors to express the emotional state. This artwork inspired my process as I plan to incorporate warm intense primary color to express my emotion during painting. Fauvism inspired me to express my emotion with color. In this portrait, warm colors are being used such that they are being shown as an independent element from the canvas and space. This also inspired my process as I plan to incorporate the use of separating color to show its independent element but also to express myself with color. One other inspiration for my self-portrait *Self* is from *Sunset in Venice* by Monet from impressionism movement. During this movement, artists believe in expression through color and light. In this piece by Monet, he has an adequate amount of blending from different warm color to show contrast. I took this piece as my inspiration as I plan to use the bright warm color and blending brush stroke that feather out the contrast between two independent colors. These two inspiration combine would create an artwork that relies greatly on the expression of emotions and the use of bright warm color with the use of blending technique from impressionism style.



*The Green Line* (1905)  
"Fauvism." - *New Possibilities for Color in Art*. N.p., n.d. Web. 06 Nov. 2016.



"Sunset in Venice, 1908 by Claude Monet." *Claude Monet*. N.p., n.d. Web. Nov.-Dec. 2016.

## Experimentation

For my self-portrait, I spent a decent amount of time on experimenting the style of Fauvism and how my portrait would look like. By using Adobe PS, I manipulated the photos of myself by adjusting contrast and saturation to make my piece looks a little more like Fauvism for reference but it turned out that increasing saturation and contrast did not really eliminate the noises within the image so it was quite difficult to use those images as references. Fauvism was a little flatter and has no space within it. So I experimented with acrylic and watercolor on the Fauvism painting style. I preferred the look of the watercolor because it resembles more of Fauvism than the acrylic because colors are independently on their own. The acrylic experiment has a little more blending in certain areas and also have visual texture of brushstrokes which can be a value to my project. However, with the acrylic, the hues aren't bright enough so that was something that I had to change when painting my self-portrait because with Fauvism colors should be bright and warm.

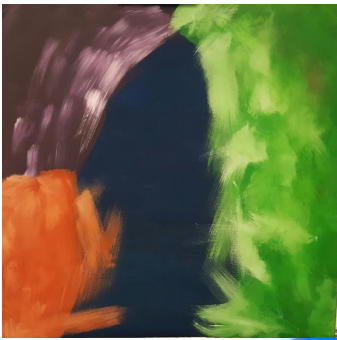


## Reflection and Critique

Throughout the process, I've learned many things from overcoming difficulties. First, when gesso the canvas, I learned that it is better to lay the canvas on the ground so that it will not warp when it is drying. With the background, one thing I would change is to paint the background with brighter and warmer color such as yellow instead of dark blue.

I learned that using a heavier base paint would be easier the style of Fauvism because it is thick and heavy that would help the texture to show. It is important that some of the tones are not completely blended together because the colors are independent of Fauvism. One thing I would do differently for the background is to paint a larger portion because, on the right side of my neck, the background can still be seen.

Similar to Fauvism, my painting lacks depth. My painting shows vibrant colors that are independent and are not completely blended in with other pigments. *I See Light* shares the same principle of impressionism in delivering emotions as well. The portrait of *Madame Matisse* by Henri Matisse looks like a rough pastel color. In contrast, my self-portrait has a smoother transition of color, however, remained independent.



## Development of Initial Ideas

The first step was to create planning sketches for how my digital collage piece will look like. The sketches also have captions and notes of details to add when making the piece. The scenes vary from my house to the local lake. The background in the house is more personal and cozy, while the background at the lake is more open and universal in relation to the theme of my childhood. Eventually, I chose to be making this piece at home for convenience because my mother has to work and it takes time to move the props to the lake for taking this photo. To elevate the mirror up to our head level, I plan to use a canvas easel. The time of the day when taking the photo was important as well because I wanted to use natural light to bring some softness to the photo. So I planned the photo session to be around 4:00-5:00 p.m on a sunny day. Instead of staging my room, I wanted to leave the room unorganized in its natural stage. The photograph won't be a portrait, however, I will incorporate Sherman's technique when incorporating the surrounding into the concept of the photograph.

## Artist Inspiration

My inspiration piece is *Untitled Film Still #21* by Cindy Sherman in 1978 of Contemporary Art. She is well-known for her conceptual portraits photography Cindy turned toward photography during the 1970's to explore the female roles in our society. She tried to bring attention to the influence of social media on individuals and collective images. Her first series of self-portraiture focuses on the sexual desire, domination and self-identity as a whole of our society. *Untitled Film Still#21* is no wonder one of the most important iconic pieces of contemporary art movement during 1980's. In this self-portrait, Cindy is in the role of a small-town girl who has arrived at a big city for the first time. She is first overwhelmed and suspicious of the big building shadows, but to be finally consumed by its undeniable seduction.

By Photographing Herself in Such Roles, Sherman Inserts Herself into a Dialogue about Stereotypical Portrayals of Women. "MoMA Learning." *MoMA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Sept. 2016.

I chose this piece because it is conceptual and has deeper analysis to the viewers which is the direction that I am heading toward for my piece. I planned to have the background that would contribute to the overall meaning of the piece. The main subject, however, will be my mother and I being reflected on a mirror. This composite will be subjective to the audience to discuss the meaning of the piece, which is the whole idea of conceptual art - where the idea is rather important than the piece itself.



## Experimentation



For this piece, I experimented with the different brightness and contrast. This creates an effect on the mood of the piece and brings focus to a certain subject. Other important tools that I also experimented with were the liquefying and transparency tools. I used the liquefying effect on the background of the room to distort the details and bring focus to the main subjects however, this was rather convoluting.



Next, I experimented with the transparency on the mirror to create a fading effect on the reflection of my mother and I. This was useful to my purpose in delivering the message from my childhood.

## Reflection and Critique

Throughout the digital collage project, I've learned many techniques and lessons. I've learned how to cut and edit effectively with cleaned edges. I also made some mistakes however it only took some efforts to clean up. There are a few things that I would do differently If I were to do this project. One of those will be to try new things and play with my creativity because playing is one of the most important elements of making art. I would try to incorporate different background and positioning to make the piece more interesting. In regard to the background, I would try to minimize the noise to better emphasize the main subjects. But overall, It was a good first experience with Photoshop which I found very enjoyable.



Overall the process of making *Self*, there are some similarities and differences between my process and my inspirations by Cindy Sherman. Women are the primary subject in Cindy Sherman's series of *Untitled Film* as she was trying to bring focus to the role of media in our society. But in my piece, my mother and I are the main subjects of the collage as I was trying to portray my connection to my mother from the past compared to who I am now. Both Cindy Sherman's series and *Self* uses symbolized background and certain things or people. *Self* explores the theme on my relationship with my mother when I was young. The composition and subjects in my process and my inspiration play a critical role in conveying the theme to the audience.

## Development of Initial Ideas

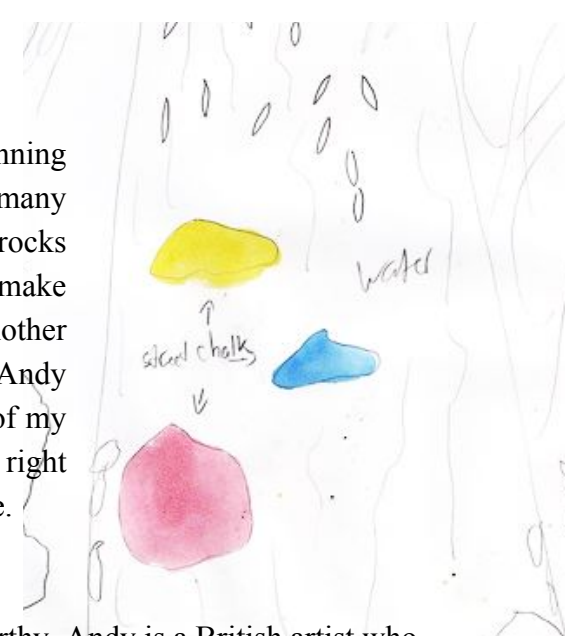
The first step of the ephemeral piece was to make planning sketches based on the theme of natural cycle. I had many ideas from different inspirations. One idea is to paint rocks with street chalk and to grind the chalk down to make powder to make a rainbow cloud over a bridge. Another idea was to cover leaves with leaves inspired by Andy Goldsworthy. I decided to experiment with all three of my planning sketches since the season is just about right which is flexible as variety color of leaves is available.

## Artistic Inspiration

For my ephemeral piece, the inspiration came from Andy Goldsworthy. Andy is a British artist who works with a variety of natural materials to produce unique temporary artwork. He usually works with any materials in nature that he finds interesting ranging from snow, ice, leaves, rock, flower, twigs, etc... And before his work is being washed away by nature, he captures his artwork with his camera. One of his works that inspired me the most is the project with *yellow leaves on rock*. This project is most involved with natural cycle and how man creation will be devoured by nature process through time. I planned to carry out the same process except I will use a smaller size rock in a shallower stream. But to add as decorations, I will also use green leaves and create small polka dots on the layer of yellow leaves. Another inspiration for *Celebrating a Cycle* is Andy Goldsworthy's project using rocks to create a circle with gradation to a black hole. This project inspired my process as I planned to use different shades of color in nature including rocks or leaves.



Goldsworthy, Andy. "Andy Goldsworthy - Melt." *Andy Goldsworthy - Melt*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Oct. 2016.



## Experimentation



At first, I had many ideas in mind of what to do for my ephemeral piece. So I decided to test out all of my ideas. All of these ideas involve nature because nature has an ephemeral element to it as everything is temporary and will have to go through a life cycle. I experimented with my idea of painting rocks with street chalk, decorating a curtain of leaves and a bridge of leaves. My favorite outcome was the bridge with leaves because it looks unique and had the potential to be a good ephemeral piece. However I decided to go with the idea of painting rock, but I later used leaves instead of chalk for my piece because it would be better for the environment when they decompose.



## Reflection and Critique



Throughout the project, I've learned many things from the process and what I could do to make it better. After putting a handful of leaves onto the rock, I noticed that the midrib of the leaves prevents them from completely laying flat on top of the rock. So I tore them apart from the midrib to make them lay on the rock easier. The angle and light to capture a photo of the piece were no less important. It was that why I planned to make the piece around the time of sunset so that the natural light would be soft and just perfect for taking the photo. My piece is also created from found materials from nature. Andy Goldsworthy's art and mine both emphasize the idea of ephemeral in nature and that nothing last even our beautiful creations. My piece is created taking many things from my inspiration such as the natural medium, and the composition of the piece which was on a rock of a creek.

In Andy's piece, he only uses one color of leaf to coat the rock. But in my piece, I also use green leaf to coat as polka dots to add a little more decoration.

## Development of Initial Ideas

The first step to making this project, I made three planning sketches derived from the theme of over-consumerism and commercialism. The composition and materials being used in this project could affect the meaning of this piece, therefore I had to come up with a concept first and then further develop my plan to execute this project. My first idea is to have an old television with a fountain of clothes shooting out of it. This will symbolize commercialism and over-consumerism.

My second idea is to have a trash bin with a fountain of clothes shooting out of it to represent the over-consumerism in our society, which is dumping rubbish into the environment. My final idea is to have a dresser with a doll in a glass case and fountain of clothes shooting out of the drawers. The doll would symbolize commercialism and the fountain would represent over-consumerism.



## Artist Inspiration

The inspiration of *Superfluous* came from Guerra de la Paz; they are a collaborative duo between Cuban-American artists Alain Guerra and Neraldo de la Paz. The two artists work mainly with castoffs materials from society to make sculptures with the main theme revolving around consumerism and recycling. Their use of used-clothes contributes to the conceptual layer because used-clothes represent the past and history of their owners. By using used products in their work, Guerra de la Paz comments on the over-consumerism and to bring attention to recycling as they bring out an aesthetic perspective of recycling by using used materials. One inspiration from Guerra de la Paz that I will incorporate in my project is the conceptual aspect of their work. Their sculptures mainly focus on the discussion of consumerism and recycling. I want to create a sculpture that will reflect upon my impact as a consumer to society. One technique inspiration is from *Ascension* by Guerra de la Paz finished in 2009 using found garments. This piece has a gradient from dark to light, which I plan to incorporate into my piece representing the idea of decay.



Japour, Anthony. "Arts Miami." *Arts Miami - SocialMiami*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

## Experimentation

A few experimentations in this project includes my first attempt to make an armature for the pile of clothes. I used flexible wire so that I could easily form it into a flowing armature. For the gradation of the clothes, it took many attempts in finding the appropriate color of clothes to create a smooth transition between values. I also experimented with gluing the clothes together and comparing the method to wrapping the armature with a long piece of cloth. For the photographing part of the portfolio, I played with the lighting in different composition to try out how light can impact the main objects. The lighting in this piece required three lamps and a projector to illuminate the main subject.

## Reflection and Critique

I tried a new way to approach creating this piece; as I went looking for materials for my assemblages, I came up with the concept and match available materials that can convey my concept instead of making a product and come up with a concept later on. I had a tough time with finding clothes with color that would make a smooth gradation from light to dark. To solve this problem, I also had to go into my family's old clothes and used some of their old garments or socks. The wires made from hangers were stiff and hard, therefore I went to buy a thinner wire to holds the armature together. For this project, I came up with a new way to photograph my process using a white sheet so it would look more professional. If I were to start this project over, I would make the assemblage on a bigger scale and maybe try out my other idea.

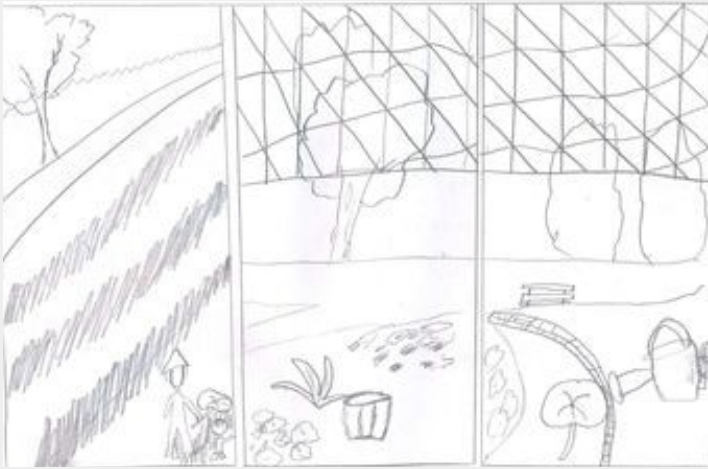
*Superfluous* will explore the idea of over-consumerism and suggest the idea of minimalism. I decided to use a doll to display in the glass case because dolls are well-known for the idea of consumerism. There are so many dolls that vary from different size, clothings and even personality. The inspiration of my piece came from a Cuban artist group called Guerra de La Paz. Most of their works are commentary on consumerism and its effects on our society and environment. I incorporated the materials and the idea as I plan to use thrown out clothes to make my piece. In the back is a fountain of clothes shooting out of drawers, which acts as a critique to over-consumerism and how we are controlled by commercialism. From social media and societal expectation, society feels the need to have the newest things, the nicest things, or the coolest things from popular clothing brands.





## Development of Initial Ideas

As always, the first step to making *Hoa Sen* was to create three planning sketches based on the theme of my journey to where I am. All based on the theme of who I was and how do I play a part in society. The first panel is drawn with the idea of who I am as an artist. The second panel will be the city in which I live in. Finally in the third panel will be based on the idea of my role in society. The inspiration for *Hoa Sen* will be from Claude Monet and Impressionism, especially *Water Lilies* by Monet as the background is similar to my vision of a lotus pond.



## Artist Inspiration

For my tryptic project, the inspiration came from Claude Monet and Impressionism. Monet is a French artist from the late 19th century and early 20th century. He had a significant influence on the impressionist movement. Most of Monet's works revolve around landscape and nature. He usually find subjects in the surrounding environment such as people and places. His first wife, Camille, and his second, Alice, often models for his painting. Light and shadow are the cornerstones of his series as he often paints at the same site many times to capture its appearance throughout the day. One of my inspiration from Monet's masterpieces is *Water Lilies*, it features the lilies in the back of his garden where he resided in the early 20th century. On his first series of painting lilies, he painted bridges and a clear horizon line. But by the time he painted *Water Lilies*, he came to focus more on the surface of the pond and lilies. *Water Lilies* inspired my tryptic project as I plan to incorporate painting technique that focuses more on light and shadow rather than space. I want to use the technique to have viewers to take a step back and to rather focus on the whole picturing and to ponder upon its meaning than to have a detailed painting that says it all. The cornerstone of my inspiration is from Impressionism. It dismisses composition and space which will allow me to have more freedom to express my style and emotions. The painting style of applying daubs of paint side by side will be incorporated into my painting to represent my evanescent past, ambiguous present, and uncertain future.



Poppy Fields near Argenteuil by Claude Monet



Water Lilies by Claude Monet.

Auricchio, Laura. "Claude Monet (1840–1926)." *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009. Print.

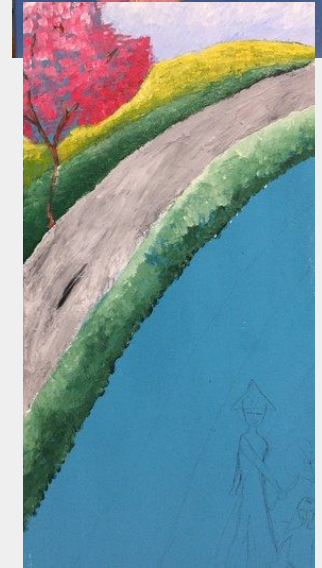
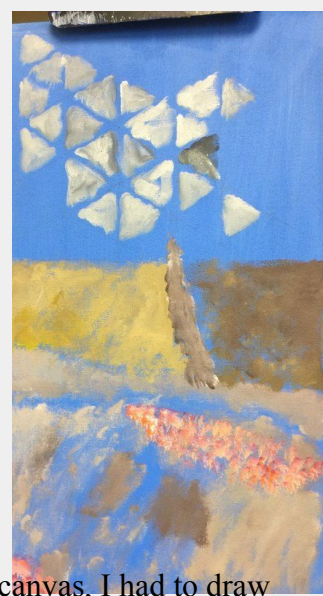
## Experimentation

First, I experimented with the color palette and how to paint in Impressionism. Using white and black paint was a big part of my process to capture light. I also experimented with ways to apply the paint onto the canvas. After using a paint brush, I switched to using a palette knife to apply the paint so that it will retain the paint instead of blending it to the previous layer.

With the technique, I experimented with switching the pattern of applying paint to see the differences. I've observed that it was best to prepare the paint to match with the value on the canvas before applying it onto the canvas. Multiples layers of tone are extremely important as well.

## Reflection and Critique

I was able to get access to the dome to take a photo for my second canvas. For the first and third canvas, I had to draw on a paper and project it onto the canvas. One new technique that I tried to incorporate was the use of palette knife in painting. As it turned out, I really like this technique because it could make a painting more abstract and sometimes the random mixing of colors turn out to be quite beautiful. One other challenge during painting is how fast acrylic paint dries, which can makes adding layers more difficult. The three panels are not harmonious, as the first panel is to a little extent represent the Impressionistic style, while the second and third resemble more with Impressionism. From this project, I've learned that Impressionism requires patient because it takes time to capture light onto the piece and the first couple layers might not look that great. *Hoa Sen* and Impressionism both share the idea of emotion expression through colors and style. My inspiration, Claude Monet, and my piece both rely mostly on the subject of nature. Impressionists such as Claude Monet mostly used short brushstrokes with different colors to capture the light from the scene. Whereas in my painting, I incorporated the technique of palette knife painting into my piece. As a result, my painting has a pasty texture from many layers of painting being scraped on by palette knife. Claude Monet's paintings are more harmonious as the brushstrokes were able to blend nicely together. My piece, *Hoa Sen*, has more abrupt edges created by longer brushstrokes comparing to Monet's.





## Experimentation

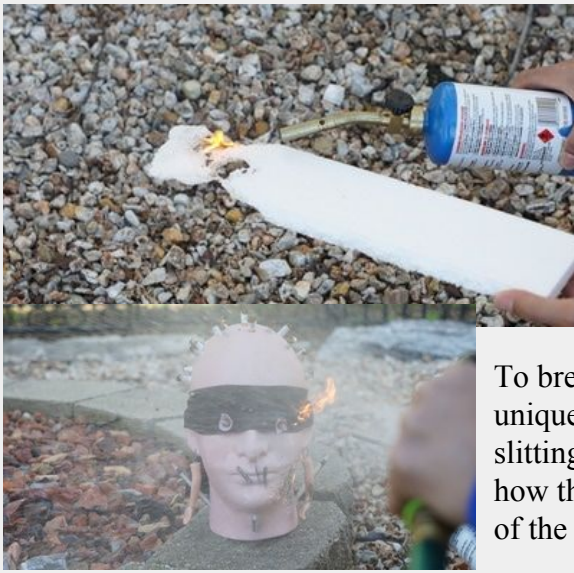
Before beginning the process, I experimented with the skin tone. After two mixes, I decided to use fair skin tone. With the cigarettes, I tried to insert the entire cigarette onto the head but it seemed to be too long and out of proportion. Therefore, I used a razor blade to cut them up into small pieces. To represent a black fuzzy hair texture, I burned the cigarettes up and put the flame out right away.

To break the light bulbs, I used a wire cutter to smash onto the tip of the light bulb. This way creates unique broken light bulbs, therefore I had to try several times and choose the best. I also tested with slitting fabric by making random cuts into the fabric. I also experimented with burning Styrofoam to see how they would react to the torch. The fume was very toxic so I had to make sure that I don't breath in any of the fumes.

## Reflection and Critique

Throughout this Organic vs. Industrial project, I've tried and learned many new things. To begin this project, I had to purchase the materials from my planning sketch. For most of the materials, they are provocative objects for a teenager like me to have. It was surreal to go into a store to buy a pack of cigarettes legally even though it was for artistic usage. These objects have sharp edges, therefore attention to details was important. I was proud of myself to be in contact with materials that are capable of destroying lives but I remained unaffected by them.

There are several similarities between my piece and my inspiration from Jack Howe. *Trails* and my inspiration from Jack Howe are both assemblage pieces, which share similar medium. Both the mannequin head in *Trails* and Jack Howe's work have organic form such as dolls. Jack Howe and my piece both emphasize on telling the story using the assemblage. However, there are also some differences between my piece and Jack Howe's work. Jack Howe is inspired by the idea of decay, which is very important to his pieces as they are usually relate to the topic of death. His works mostly focus on the conclusion of a story, while my piece focuses on the introduction of a story. My piece has more rough and sharp edges to create a sense of danger, while Jack Howe's pieces are more like an altar that is respectfully telling a story of someone else. Overall, I've learned many things from my inspiration and opened my eyes to new perspectives on telling a story.



## Artist Inspiration

For my choice piece, the inspiration came from Andy Goldsworthy. He is a British artist who work with variety of natural materials to produce unique temporary artwork. He usually work with any materials in nature that he find interesting ranging from snow, ice, leaves, rock, flower, twigs, etc... And before his work is washed away by nature, he captures his artwork with his camera. One of Goldsworthy's works that really inspires me is the *Garden of Stones*. It is a installation of 18 boulders at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City created in September of 2003 to dedicate to the memory of those who died in the Holocaust and honoring the survivors. In Hebrew tradition, the number 18 represents life and stones are often placed on graves as a symbol of remembrance. The stones are melted using flame torch method. Goldsworthy then selected *Quercus Prinoides*, a species of dwarf oak that will grow up to 12 feet tall.

The *Garden of Stones* memorial is a tribute to the hardship, struggle, tenacity, and survival experiences by Holocaust victims. *Garden of Stones* displays a contrast between ephemeral and timeless, between young and old, and between the unyielding and pliable. It shows how nature comes to survive in unforgiving places. Goldsworthy's work evokes a sense of miracle where nature can survive in uninhabitable places like rocks. I plan to incorporate Goldsworthy's medium into my piece but on a smaller scale and different species of plant. I really admire the metaphors and symbols that Goldsworthy used for the *Garden of Stones* memorial, but my piece will take on a different perspective while still utilizing similar medium.

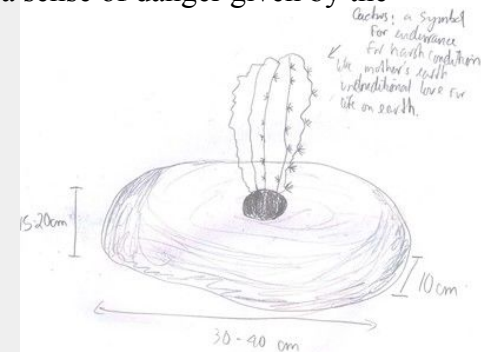
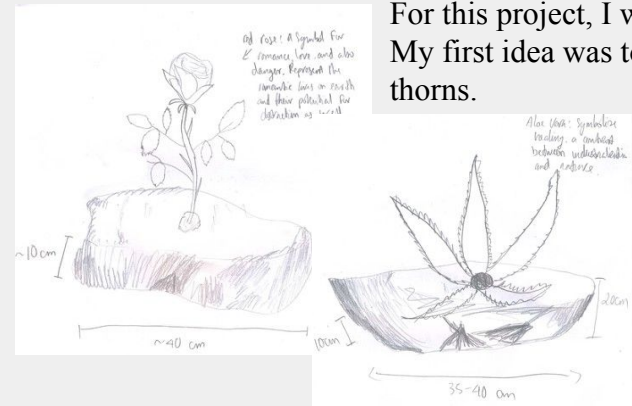


Library, Cornell University. "Cornell University Library Digital Collections." *Andy Goldsworthy Garden of Stones*

## Development of Initial Ideas

For this project, I wanted to explore how can a message be delivered through the use of natural material. My first idea was to have rose planted onto the rock to symbolize romance with a sense of danger given by the thorns.

The second idea was to have a cactus planted onto the rock to symbolize endurance. The final idea was to have an Aloe Vera planted onto the rock to symbolize healing and harmony. I want to explore the idea of trans-generational thinking because I feel that in our modern age, we've lost our long-term goals and instead we work on short-term goals and fix what we can in our lifetime.



## Experimentation

First, after bringing the rock home, I decided to lay the rocks in different positions just to get a feel for the aesthetic potential in different perspectives. I also marked the rock with red color for possible placement of the Aloe Vera. Then I proceeded to test out different methods to make a whole on the rock.



First, I used a core bit to drill into the rock. This turned out to be unsuccessful because the blade was not sharp enough. Next, I tried to use a sharper twist bit to drill into the rock. However, this method was a slow process with little to no result as the bit failed to penetrate the rock. These bits I have were quite dull and therefore was impossible to make a deep hole. Finally, I decided to try a traditional method which was to chisel bit by bit to create a hole. Fortunately, this method worked even though it was a slow process. For the final product, I experimented with a variety of scene for photographing the piece.

## Reflection and Critique

This project particularly requires several basic tools and techniques for creating. Chiseling the rock turned out to be a labor. It took more time than I anticipated and a lot of patience because I can only chisel about 20mm an hour. I also got several injuries during the chiseling process by accidentally hammering my hand. Since I bought the Aloe Vera at the same time when I brought the rock home, and the process of chiseling the rock took a long time, therefore it was crucial that the plant is being watered every day to keep it fresh until the planting day. Similar to my inspiration, I used a rock to plant my Aloe vera. Both *Destination* and *Garden of Stones* emphasize on the contrast between ephemeral and timeless, and between the uninhabitable and pliable.

However, there are also some differences between my piece and *Garden of Stones*. Goldsworthy piece is a memorial for the victims of Holocaust. While my piece is just a comment on our state of existence. The rocks in *Garden of Stones* are a symbol in Hebrew tradition that represents life and remembrance, whereas the rock in my piece is a metaphor for mother earth and how she came to nourish life on the uninhabitable. *Garden of Stones* is a collection of 18 boulders, while *Destination* focuses on one rock with an Aloe Vera on top. To Compare the techniques, Goldsworthy chose to melt his boulders using a flame torch to create a smooth cut into the rocks. However, for my project, I did not have the equipment to melt the rock, so I decided to go at the problem with a traditional way which was to chisel the rock bit by bit.



## Development of Initial Ideas

For this project, I wanted to explore the realm of abstract expressionism. I experimented with the use of watercolor to deliver feelings and emotions. My first sketch is more disperse with empty space, however there is still a show of contrast between the trees and the city. The second sketch is more dense and overwhelming with the amount of warm color and the contrast between nature and man-made materials. The third sketch is also chaotic with different primary colors. For the final painting, I decided to use acrylic as the medium and go for a more abstract feel to let the viewers wander and discover for themselves.

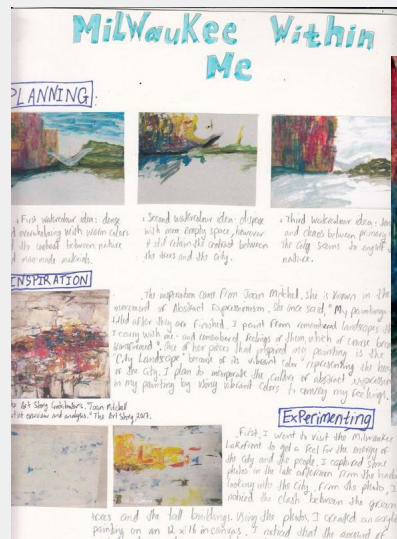
I wanted to incorporate the use of vibrant color inspired by Joan Mitchell to deliver my feelings and emotions about Milwaukee. My goal for the final product is for the painting to be more abstract and let the viewer wander through the painting instead of telling the whole story up front.

## Artist Inspiration

For my Milwaukee landscape painting, the inspiration came from Joan Mitchell. As she spent her fellowship in France, her paintings moved toward abstraction, and she later referred to herself as the “Last Abstract Expressionist”. Her works are inspired by two American Abstract Expressionist, Willem de Kooning, and Franz Kline. Mitchell’s works are abstract, vivid, and wildly improvised inspired by landscape and nature. One inspirational painting of Mitchell is the *City Landscape* because it has a vibrant color representing the heart of the city with the tension between the horizontal and vertical brushstrokes. Another inspiration came from Mitchell’s *Untitled* work in 1951. It is a post-Cubist with a spirit of American Abstract Expressionism because of the distorted shapes within the painting combining with the explosive use of color. Both canvases are light-filled of bright color to create an energetic and exciting feeling of a large metropolis, which I plan to incorporate into in painting. I want to use vibrant primary color to express my love and hate relationship toward Milwaukee. The planning that I've made will only guide me through with the use of the medium because I did not have a specific vision for what the final product would be like. Improvisation will be a very important tool in my process because It would require a lot of reflection on my emotions about Milwaukee during the painting process.



City Landscape by Joan Mitchell. The Art Story Contributors. “Joan Mitchell Artist Overview and Analysis.” The Art Story, 2017.



## Experimentation

First, I went to visit the Milwaukee Lakefront to get a feel for the energy of the people and the city. I took some photos from the harbor looking into the city. From the photo, I noticed the clash between the green trees and the tall buildings. Using these photos, I created several watercolor painting that would reflect the landscape of the city. However, I noticed that the amount of color and brushstrokes that I used was overwhelming.

Therefore, I practiced with the use of color and brushstrokes that will truly represent the tone and mood of Milwaukee. I switched from watercolor medium to acrylic on canvas as an experiment to test the different effect of color between watercolor and acrylic. Blending wise, the watercolor dries more quickly so the colors tend to not blend very well. In comparison, acrylic colors take a little longer to dry, therefore they can be blended and easy to pull across the canvas. However, I had to be careful when pulling the paint across the canvas because an excessive amount of blending will cause the paints to turn brown.

## Reflection and Critique

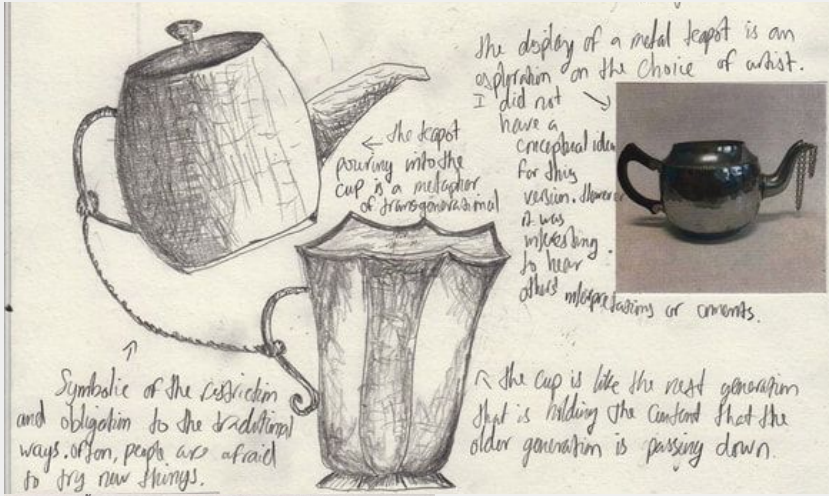
The process of this painting was exceptionally brief comparing to my painting experience in another artistic movement, however, it was conceptually challenging. I took Joan Mitchell's words to heart which were to step back and listen to the painting for the next steps. I stepped back after each layer and remember details about Milwaukee that deserve to be expressed on the canvas. After 35 minutes of painting, I completed my expression of Milwaukee on the canvas. However, I think that the painting will never be truly finished because as I've said earlier my feelings change constantly.

Similar to my inspiration, the idea of expressing emotions and feelings through colors is important. Both of our pieces evoke tension between the vibrant colors to show the spirit of our own city. In the paintings, there are angular brushstrokes which inspired by Cubism. Some brushstrokes are random and indecisive. In *City Landscape*, there are more variety of brushstrokes comparing to my primary use of vertical and horizontal brushstrokes. The color in my painting is more isolated in comparison to *City Landscape*, which has a mixture of bright and warm color to create tension and chaos.





## Development of Initial Ideas



My first idea was to hang up the metal cup with a thin metal chain. This is an emulation of Duchamp's work *In advancement of the Broken Arm*. The empty cup in the air evokes a sense of emptiness and despair when the audience view the piece because there is a considerable amount of negative space within the cup. The background is a simple, clean white sheet, which is similar to how Duchamp presents his work.

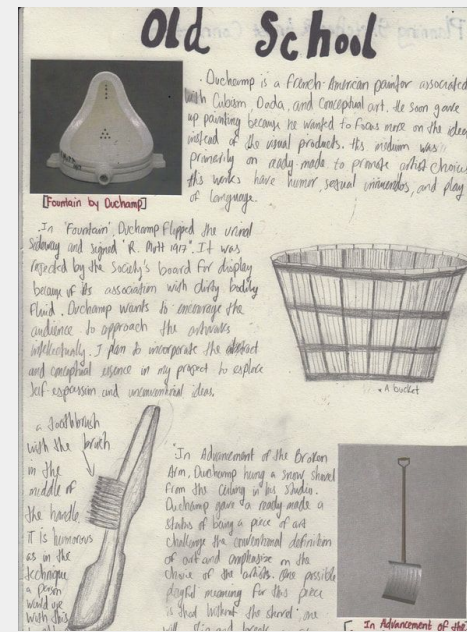


The white background brings emphasis to the piece itself. The lack of noise in the background creates a sense of universality. Another idea was to place the metal teapot in the right handle of the metal bucket with a chain falling out of the spout. This is a juxtaposition between organic and industrial forms. The chain spilling out of the teapot is almost like water. In this project, I wanted to use two illogical objects when put together to challenge the conventional concept of routine and guideline. For some sketches, I wanted to explore the angle and composition of the materials to inspire new ideas about the project. To me, one important aspect of creating a conceptual artwork is receiving feedbacks and comments from the audience to reflect upon my own ideas and process. Therefore, before making final decisions on the project, I showed my peers a variety of different sketches to ask for their reactions, feelings, and emotions. Next, I took the comments into consideration to explore how objects mean to the different individual and put my understanding and concepts into the final idea of combining a teapot with a bucket. The empty bucket connected to the teapot spout creates a sense of emptiness and uselessness. The bucket is the guideline and expectations for the teapot to follow but the teapot spout can only pour out so much.



## Artist Inspiration

Duchamp is a French-American painter, sculptor, chess player and writer associated with Cubism, Dada, and Conceptual art; even though he refused to be affiliated with a specific artistic movement. He was a successful painter in Paris, however, he soon gives up because he was more interested in the ideas instead of the visual products. Duchamp is considered to be the father of Conceptual Art. His medium was primarily on ready-made, which is the mass-produced utilitarian objects taken out of their usual context to promote the choice of the artist. Duchamp's works are characterized by subversive humor, sexual innuendos, and tongue-in-cheek wit through a play of language.



Tate. "Fountain", Marcel Duchamp, 1917, replica 1964." "MoMA Learning." MoMA | Marcel Duchamp and the Readymade.

One of the inspiration came from *In Advance of the Broken Arm*, in which Duchamp hung a snow shovel from the ceiling of his studio. His work challenged the traditional and conventional definition of art. By simply photographing a shovel, Duchamp negates the craftsmanship of the piece and focuses on its conceptual idea. Duchamp gave a piece of ready-made object a status of being a piece of art emphasizes the choice of the artists. One possible playful meaning for the piece is that without the shovel to remove the snow, one will slip and break an arm.

Another inspiration came from *Fountain*, in which Duchamp flip the urinal sideways and signed "R. Mutt 1917". It was rejected by the society's board of directors because they believed that a piece of sanitary ware associated with bodily fluid should not be considered art and therefore indecent. Duchamp's works challenge the assumptions and traditions that art should appeal to "retinal pleasure" and reflect the artist's craftsmanship. He wants to encourage the audience to approach the intellectual path of his artworks. I plan to incorporate the abstract and conceptual essence in this project to explore my self-expression.

## Experimentation

I experimented with the choices on the placements of these objects by themselves and on each other. My first idea was to hang up the metal cup with a thin metal chain. There is a considerable amount of negative space within the cup. The cup is in mid-air leaning almost half as if it is about to pour out some water, however it is reviewed that there is nothing within the cup. With this idea, I played with the feelings of the audience when they look at the piece. Another idea was to place the metal teapot on the right handle of the metal bucket with a metal chain falling out of the spout. This is a juxtaposition between two objects that are made for different purposes to challenge the conventional idea of art. The contrast between the functions of these two objects is important to the conceptual idea of *Old School*. When you use something is that not efficient or fit into the function of something else.

Finally, I experimented with oxidizing metal to reduce the light reflection of the shiny metal teapot. I mixed hydrogen peroxide with vinegar, and salt to create an acidic solution and submerge the metal cup into the solution for a couple of minutes. The solution did not react with the metal how I anticipated it to be with several attempts, therefore I abandoned the idea to leave the metal in its full coat.

## Reflection and Critique

The experimenting process was the hardest part of this piece because I had to explore the possibilities of putting my concept into a physical sculpture. One of the challenges that I've come across was the glossiness of the metal teapot, which created a burnt spot when photographing. I thought about painting or spraying the metal medium so reduce their light reflection. However, it went against my goal which was to take away from qualities and functions of these objects. If I were to paint the teapot, the meaning of the color of texture would be too conflicting for the audiences. The teapot's weight was taken into consideration that it is much lighter than the bucket. As a result, I used rocks and sand to fill in the negative space to weigh down the teapot so that it could hold up the bucket.



Similar to my inspiration, I focused primarily on the conceptual idea of the piece rather than its quality and aesthetic pleasure. Both of our artworks require in-depth analysis beyond the objects of the piece themselves. The medium is similar to *Old School* and my inspiration because they are ready-made objects. It was intentional to use the ready-made objects and take their functions away to prompt a question. As in my piece, I took the qualities and functions of the teapot and bucket away to challenge the conventional perception of success in our society. Duchamp often did nothing to his artworks beside by signing them and displaying them. Whereas in my piece, I combined the teapot and the bucket into one piece and oxidized them to take away their metallic quality. The purpose of Duchamp's Conceptual Art is to question the definite of art and see how his choices affect the way the audiences perceive his artwork. In contrast, *Old School* is a commentary about the way we look at success in our society that left an empty void within us.

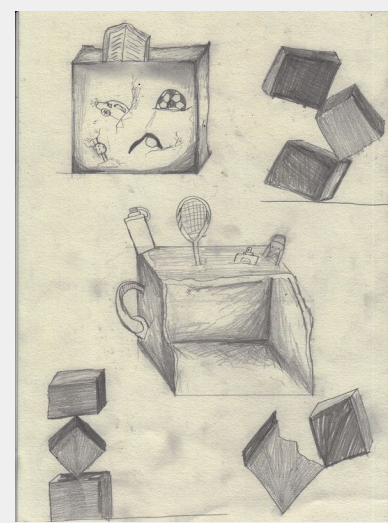
## Development of Initial Ideas

My first idea is to cast a ball of cement that traps my personal items such as book, racquets, metals, shoes, and a watch. This concept is to challenge our memories. Half of the objects are sunken into the cement structure, which is to make the audience wonder what was to happen to the other half. Another idea is to have three concrete cubes with my personal items cemented through the walls. However, the inside of the wall will be hollowed with one wall missing to show the white painted walls inside. The empty will question reality and memories because the other half of the objects do not come out through walls. Finally, the three cubes will be balanced together to represent the fragility of memory, which is inspired by Michael Grab. I chose cement to be the medium for this project because I wanted to create a solid barrier that separates what we can see and what is behind the wall, which is supposed to invoke the audience to wonder.

## Artist Inspiration

*Stack* is a solid cube packed together using various materials from magazines to construction materials. The layers of the cube are made from planks of wood placed horizontally throughout the structure. The theme of his work is the relationship between humans and their impact on the natural environment that they live in as the natural world is becoming more like man-made every day. *Wabi-Sabi* is a stone balancing piece that took place in an abandoned and decaying building. The process requires patience and awareness of the surrounding environment and one's feelings.

By working with the materials, Michael Grab learns about himself and the world around him. Grab compares the act of putting the debris together to the makeup of all humans from around the universe. The structure of the balanced rocks are ephemeral and will last for months, given that there is weak wind and no people. The art of stone balancing is therapeutic that allows the artist to be more mindful of the world around themselves



Grab, Michael. "Spring 2016." Gravity Glue, 14 May 2016.



Tate. "Stack', Tony Cragg, 1975." Tate.

## Experimentation

The beginning process involved many experiments with different ideas such as playing with leaves inspired by Andy Goldsworthy, and rock balancing inspired by Michael Grab. I love to play in the park with the natural materials such as leaves, twigs, rocks, and water. First, I collected leaves of different colors from a tree in front of my house. To play with the color gradation, I rearranged the leaves from green to red. Then I separated them into smaller pieces and arranged them into a circle. I've noticed that there are also cracks on the bark of the trees, so I split up the leaves and inserted the pieces into the crack, which created a flow of color up/down the bark.

When I visited the park by the creek, there were trees lying dead across the creek, so I placed the leaves on the bark using water. In another experiment, I broke up the twigs and place them in the water. I used the negative space between the twigs to add in green leaves. Next, I changed the medium to boulders in the creek. I played with the rocks by balancing them. The experiment was enjoyable because It allowed me to be mindful of my body and the rocks that I interacted with. Even though the time it took to balance the rocks was painstaking, it was all worth it once the rocks click in place and stabilize. After I've taken an interest in casting a block of concrete, I experimented with the reaction between cement and different materials such as foam, woods, and plastic wrap.

## Reflection and Critique

The interaction with nature during experimentation was enjoyable. Despite the enjoying experience playing with the leaves, I thought that the scale of the medium was not grand enough to be a fine artwork. My refined project shifted to a concrete cube structure that would be embedded with the personal items. I learned to use gloves whenever working with cement. With my first cast, I cracked the cement as I moved it in less than 48 hours. It was also due to the large number of rocks in the cement mixture. Therefore, I decided to filter out the big rocks so that the cement block would be smoother and contain more cement. There were also natural elements that slowed down the drying process such as rain and cloudy days.

Similar to *Wabi-Sabi*, *Permanent Sharpie* is a balanced structure between three concrete blocks. They can both be described as ephemeral and fragile to natural elements such as wind and storm that have the capability to knock down the structure. *Permanent Sharpie* is also similar to *Stack* because there are miscellaneous personal items embedded within the structure similar to the compression of miscellaneous items in *Stack*. My piece is also inspired by the cube shape of *Stack*. Instead of a compressed cube like *Stack*, my piece is hollow inside the cube which is painted white to emphasize the negative space. The medium of *Stack* and *Permanent Sharpie* are different because I used personal items in my piece, whereas Tony Cragg used various construction materials in *Stack*.



## Development of Initial Ideas

The first planning sketch consists of natural twigs with a hand holding a flashlight in the center. This sketch is inspired by the twig arrangement of Charles Arnoldi's *Untitled* (1981). The flashlight is a vehicle for the symbolism of searching and breaking a barrier. The hand is universal that is reaching out and breaking the barrier of twigs. When presenting on a wall, the hand reaching forward will appear as if it is coming from the wall, which will create an imaginary dimension to the work



Twigs are overlapped by hot glue and held together by wires. Different size and shape of twigs can be used to create an armature. They will be carefully chosen to balance the negative space within the artwork so that it will not be too heavy or visually overwhelming for the viewers. The flashlight can be glued to the hand and battery can be taken out to take off some weight. The hand will be created by paper mache and a mesh armature. I plan to pain the hand with the cool color palette so that it will contain an essence of the background because that is where the hand was coming from. However, the hand will also have more neutral colors as well to distinguish it from the rest.



On the left, I experimented with color a palette to craft the mood within this artwork. The color of the natural wood give a rustic and ephemeral feeling to the piece. The cool hues give a sad and gloomy feeling during audience interaction. The bright hues invoke a uplifting and positive energy to the emotions. Within this piece, I want to create a contrast between two ideas, convention and invention. Therefore, I will use a juxtaposing color palette of cool and warm to create a barrier of feelings. As the past is fading away, I chose cool colors in the background and bright colors up front to bring forward feelings of optimism.

## Artist Inspiration

Arnoldi began working with stick drawing and painting to transform an old-fashion art style into something new and innovative. He went further to explore the idea of armature using sticks as the skeleton of imagination through patterns, angles, divisions, balances, and interactions. By working with objects and painting, he wanted to blur the lines between painting and sculpture, abstraction and representation. His first sculptures showed simple shapes that resemble a woven basket. Arnoldi spent eight years on stick medium to experiment with its form, balance, and structure. He started to incorporate bright color in the early 1980's to breath life into the 3D artworks.

The inspiration came from *Untitled* (1981) stick on canvas sculpture and *Timbuktu* by Charles Arnoldi. First Arnoldi gathers sticks from orchards and woods and makes lines to build his paintings, which are often geometric, wall hangings, and sculptures. His *Untitled* (1981) piece is rather primitive with raw sticks being glued onto a canvas. However, it contains lines and balance between the composition of these sticks.

His style revolutionized as he incorporated acrylic onto the canvas. With *Timbuktu*, there is a juxtaposition between nature and architecture being shown through colors, lines, shape, and forms. Arnoldi was inspired in this medium during a period of tragedy and personal joy. Therefore, it can be interpreted as a contrast between life and death with broken colored twigs. I plan to incorporate Arnoldi's style and medium into my piece. Similar to *Timbuktu*, I will use sticks and acrylic to add onto a canvas, which will eventually be hung on a wall. The sticks will be used as an armature to symbolize a nest/home in my piece. Using the colors and sticks, I will explore the feelings of fear, uncertain, and excitement when a bird leaves its nest for the first time.



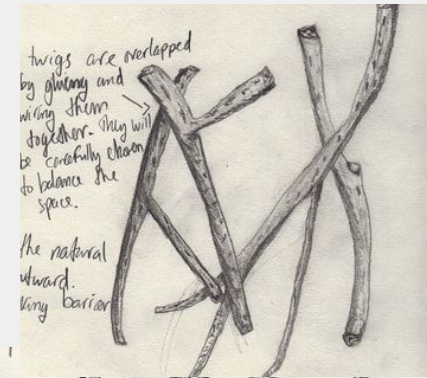
*Untitled* (1981) by Arnoldi

"Charles Arnoldi." 121 Artworks, Bio & Shows on Artsy.



*Timbuktu* by Arnoldi

"Sticks II." Charles Arnoldi, CHARLES ARNOLDI STUDIO.



\* Different size and shape of twigs can be used to create an armature of Arnoldi's work. Many of the sticks are smooth without bark and also thin

-Untitled (1981) is a calm and balance between the arrangement of those sticks that is raw and natural, once evolves a time on L.

## Experimentation

Initially, I did not know how to create a cast or armature of a hand. Therefore, I experimented with a flexible metal mesh to shape my own hand. I tried wrapping the mesh around crumpled up newspaper, however, this did not give me a realistic hand shape. As a result, I used the mesh to wrap around my own hand. This subpar method allowed me to create an armature that roughly resembles a hand. To hold the mesh armature together, I tried using hot glue to adhere it together.



Next, I experimented with planning for the painting on canvas using sharpies. I made many short lines using blue, red, and black sharpies, which gave me a preview of how the painting would look after being painted.

Finally, I experimented with the twigs placement before gluing them onto the canvas. I laid the twigs on the canvas and made adjustments to allow equal negative and positive space. Subsequently, I took a photo of the arrangement as a reference when gluing the twigs. Before painting the twigs, I tested how the acrylic would react to the twigs with a few brushstrokes.



## Reflection and Critique

The metal mesh was a fine material in making an armature, however, it was sharp and left many scratches on my right hand. I've also noticed that my brushstrokes on the canvas are too short in comparison to my plan. One thing that I would change is to use a bigger pointed round brush to put on the lines. Nonetheless, the exposing of some of the skeleton mesh give it an aesthetic look that I appreciate. I've also learned from my process to clean natural materials before painting on them due to dust particles that would make them harder for the paint to adhere.



Similar to *Stick II* and *Timbuktu*, *Hammer* uses twigs and canvas to create an abstract piece that has both the element of painting and sculpting. I incorporated the usage of twigs on a canvas to create an armature. In comparison to Arnoldi's style, I also used vibrant acrylic colors to paint the twigs. However, there are also differences between *Hammer* and Arnoldi's artworks. *Untitled (1981)* has a size that is twice as big in comparison to *Hammer*. Bigger size canvas allows the audience to appreciate the grandeur of the piece, thus giving certain feelings and emotions. Arnoldi explores the juxtaposition between life and death, whereas *Hammer* explores the concept of barrier between convention and invention. In addition to medium in *Timbuktu* and *Untitled (1981)*, I also incorporated paper mache in my work.



## Exploration of new Style and Medium

The medium of this portrait (left) is acrylic paint on canvas. I used Pablo Picasso's *Self-Portrait (1907)* as an inspiration for this painting. I free handed the sketch of this portrait because it is cubism and I did not strive for accuracy. The painting looks unfinished with white spots which is what I planned for. The black paint outline is very rough and choppy with no blending. The painting has distorted facial features with shapes and lines, which were taken by the Cubism movement inspiration.

For this digital portrait, I used Adobe Photoshop CS2. First, I created an outline for the features divided into small polygonal shapes. I also had to pay attention to the area of different value to make sure that they are in the same polygon. Then, I used tone selector to get a general tone of my face. I repeated this step for the whole entire portrait.



I also experimented with block printing. After carving out the negative space, I prepare the ink by rolling them on a metal plate. The knowledge on producing a consistent ink required many attempts and experimentations. A white paper will then be put on top of the template and another sheet on top of that. Next step was to use any flat object to rub the paper. It is important to rub with the right pressure and in every direction so that the ink will transferred in a solid black.



For a summer project, I worked with street photography by documenting my activities during the summer. The habit of remembering to capture a moment was hard to get used to, however, after a while, I learned how to pick out special frame and angle that would produce an interesting photograph. The photos above were taken from a local train track and merchant fair. After I captured the photos, I used Lightroom to play around with the light to adjust the mood and to put emphasis on a certain subject of the photographs. In my work, I tried to capture the flow of life that could be mundane sometimes.

