

# Process Portfolio

Sophia Goh, Art HL

Childhood was always a magical time for me - of purity and idyllic, unspoiled happiness, where work and adult worries didn't matter. It was where one could have an optimistic, happy and hopeful view of the world through the lens of innocence. One of the greatest memories I think most people would have of childhood is finding happiness in practically everything - interactions with others, the use of their imagination, and unadulterated enjoyment of every mundane moment of life.

However it is not uncommon to see this happiness, this "spark" of creativity and joy slowly dimming in almost all individuals as we grow older. I see it in almost every person I meet - the heaviness as they get caught up in the struggle to keep up with expectations,

responsibilities, and the pursuit of material goods we *think* will make us happy, but rather, weigh us down even more. Very often, we forget to dream, to imagine, to create. We forget to better our relationships with people - even in the smallest ways, such as giving a compliment. We forget to laugh and hug and to enjoy the tiniest, forgettable moments which are the most joyful of all.

This is the central intention around which my art revolves - the changing nature of happiness and its definition as one grows. How a teenager's happiness compares to that of a small child. The intention for my work is to explore the imagination and dreams of people as they grow older. I aim to explore a variety of ages in my art - from toddlers to teenagers, especially, where the transformation from child into adult happens, seemingly overnight. I want to explore the differences of imagination, happiness and free expression in the child versus that of the teenager, and the construction of identity through imagination as well as social order and pressures. I want to stimulate the viewer's imagination and remind them of the happiness that they experienced as a child. I will do this through my art, subject matter and colour, also with allusions and posture. Although my art is about happiness as a whole, it's also a personal exploration of my own happiness. What I have found to make me happy is exploring fictional worlds as well as spending time with friends. This could have been a source of joy for the viewer when they were children - play pretending and imagining themselves in fictional worlds. I want to remind them of their childhood, and make them feel nostalgic. I want them to ask the question: "When was the last time I felt truly happy?"



My own image



My own image



My own image



My own image

# SHEA GLOVER

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What I like about her:  
She did art as a social experiment to see what people's views were on BEAUTY. She made people feel better through her art.

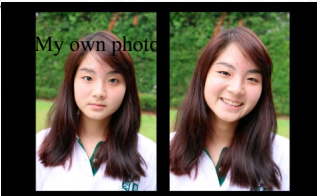
WHAT SHE DID: she asked people around her school to come pose for her and then captured their reactions after she told them they were beautiful. This inspires me because I want my art to make a difference in people's lives and to show people that the compliment can go a long way.



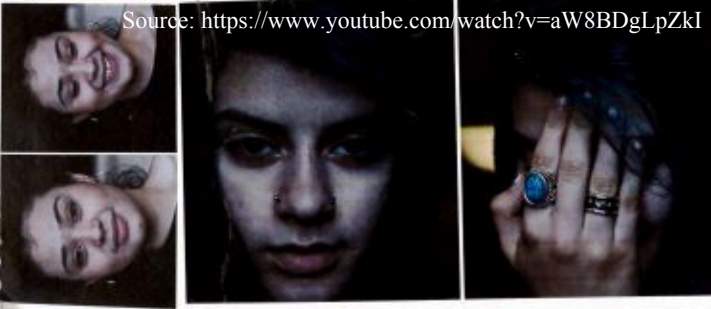
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aW8BDgLPzKI>

I want my art to make a positive impact on people around me!

WHAT OTHER THINGS WOULD I SAY TO PEOPLE THAT WOULD SHOW ME THEIR RECEPTIONS OF THEM? OR THEM? LIVES?



My own photo



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aW8BDgLPzKI>

HOW DO PEOPLE PERCEIVE THEMSELVES OR THEIR IDENTITY? IS THEIR IDENTITY SIMPLY WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY TO THEM ABOUT THEMSELVES?

One of my earliest pieces was inspired by Shea Glover who created a video recording people's reactions to her telling them that they are beautiful. I decided to use a similar concept to capture the honest and happy reactions of people. I developed my intention from this project - I wanted my art to impact people in the way they view others.

Instead of judging other people, I intended this art to allow the viewer to make a connection to the subjects and to attempt to make a positive difference and for myself to make a positive difference in someone else's life. I used this project to try and bring out the "child" in my friends through their candid smiles instead of their more "posed" selves. I have noticed as I grew older that I began taking more notice of an image that I projected to people instead of being more "candid", and this project attempted to develop this idea. Looking through her artwork really inspired me to try and emulate a similar intention - for social change for the better, and I want to do this through an exploration of childlike joy.

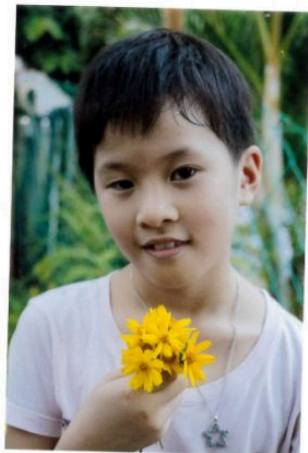
# EXPERIMENTS:

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VISUAL INTEREST

COMPOSITION + COLOUR

LIGHTING



COMPOSITION: Eyes are always on the 3/4s of the picture.



Focus on the face and use low aperture + closer zoom to make the background out of focus and the foreground clearer. The expressions need to be as distinct, clear, and eye-catching as possible as emotions are the main purpose of this experiment/ piece.

COLOUR: Background should be as monotonal as possible - all green, all greyish... etc. Colours should be in foreground + clothes. Warm skin tones + diffused lighting allow a pastel-like colour to "glow" in the picture and accentuate the details + expression of the face.

VISUAL INTEREST: Background has to be plain to detract from its interest & to allow the eyes to move to the central element - the face. Different clothes + accessories also increase interest in the foreground + display personality.

\*CATCHLIGHTS IN THE EYES OF PEOPLE CREATE INTEREST.



## Comparison with Shea Glover's in

### SIMILARITIES DIFFERENCES

- Same/ similar composition
- focus on face
- "Boring" background
- want to explore beauty + relate art to social situations.

- She took a video + screenshotted stills
- lower quality photos (Shea Glover's)
- Her backgrounds are darker => more interesting / found faces.
- Pictures are darker. (hers)
- catchlights in eyes are clearer in hers.

These are initial experimentation with photography of children - however, they were more posed and less natural. I used these portraits to experiment with lighting as well as composition - these photos were shot in a brighter area than Shea Glover's series, and helped me to achieve a more light-hearted tone as well as capturing the essence of the kids in the photos. This helped me to refine my skill of portrait photography, as kids move around more than teenagers and would therefore require me to take their photos more quickly. This proved effective when I had to take quick photos of my friends' reactions in a following project and helped me refine my skills. I developed skills in compositional skills such as framing & direction of light through exploring these photographs.

Taking these experimental photos also helped me to refine the skill of composing the photos using components such as shutter speed, f-stop and ISO in order to ensure the photographs were high quality. I learned that a higher ISO allows more light into the shutter but causes the photograph to be "grainy". A long shutter speed causes the shutter to be open for longer and therefore lets in more light, and a low f-stop in order to create a smaller depth of

field and to create greater contrast between the foreground and background of the picture. I also had to compose the images well using rules such as the rule of thirds. The props or surroundings in the photos also allowed me to emphasize the childlike-quality (such as the small bouquet of flowers in the girl's hand). These photos were taken in areas where the faces' highlights would be brighter than the background.



# LANDSCAPE PORTRAITURE

Portraiture is more commonly done in portrait orientation (hence the name). However I experimented with landscape orientation in order to see which worked best for my purpose & intention. I discovered that landscape portraits seemed more informal, candid and personal, perhaps because of the inclusion of the upper area of the body and the similarity to the way our eyes view the world.

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Taking a landscape-oriented portrait allowed me to capture more of the background compared to a portrait-oriented image. This allowed me to use depth of field more effectively as well as detail in the background of the image to supplement the portraits & to add detail to the "story" of the portrait. I explored putting more subjects in the blurry foreground and background and realised that placing many people within the frame could distract from the subjects I wanted to focus on.

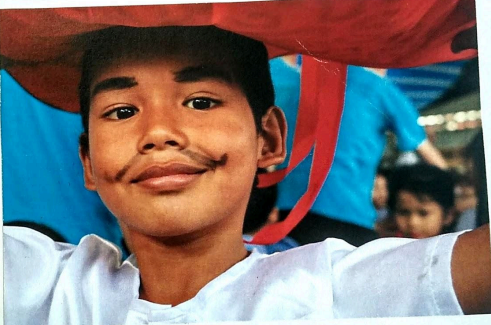


Shooting in landscape orientation also changed the tone and intimacy of the pictures. I realised that these photos were less focused on the subject and although were effective in capturing the emotions of the children, they weren't as focused as the portraits in portrait orientation. This was because the subject didn't fill the frame as much in landscape mode. After looking through these photos, however, I decided that the ones in landscape mode were more suitable to draw on (in the areas of foreground & background) in order to direct attention to the subject through drawn-on leading lines. I can take advantage of the large space of background & digitally draw on them to develop the idea of imagination.

Overall, however, shooting in portrait or landscape (as I have discovered) should depend on the positioning of the subject, for example if there is a simple background which relates or blends in with the subjects, that may be shot in landscape. Landscape is also suitable for when there are a few subjects in the frame or when the subject's position is more suited to landscape orientation & would fill the frame better.

## CATCHLIGHTS

One of the techniques used in photography and portraiture is capturing catchlights, or the reflection of light in a subject's eyes. This increases the realism of the portrait and the life-likeness of the eyes. Eyes are said to be the windows to the soul & by capturing catchlights I discovered that this made my subjects seem more alive and real. It increased the connection between the viewer and the subject.

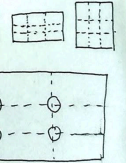


## filling the frame

In these two portraits I attempted to fill the frame as much as possible and to frame my subjects from a more unique perspective. I zoomed my lens in, in order to create greater depth of field with a smaller focal length & filled the entire frame with my subjects. By doing so and leaving the background out of focus, the eye is drawn to the faces of the children & their expressions which fill the frame. By squinting down and shooting from eye-level, it also offers a different perspective on the children, who would normally be looked at from above by adults rather than at eye level. I feel this brings the viewer down to the level of children, making them feel like they are personally interacting with them & increases the connection between the viewer & subject.

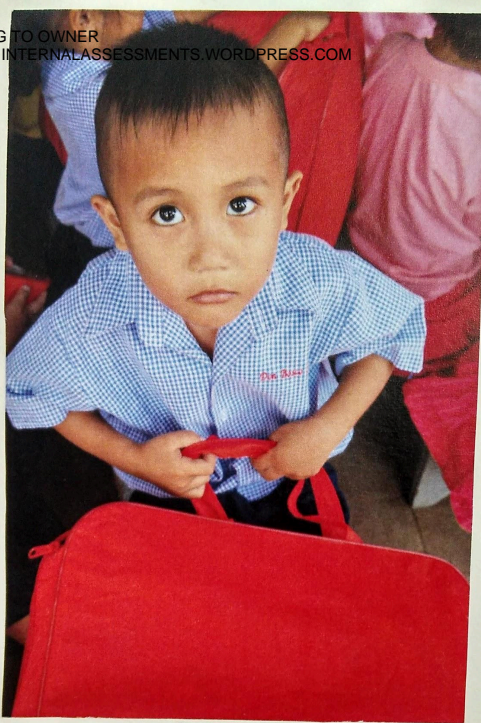
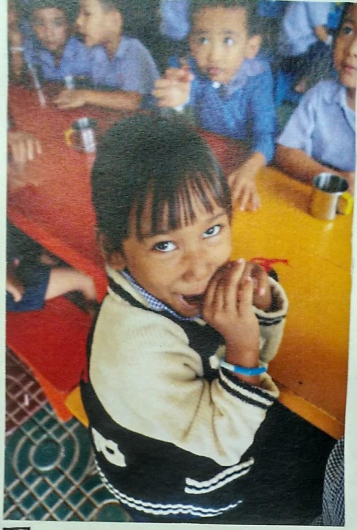
## RULE OF THIRDS

The rule of thirds in photography is a rule which states that there are "points of interest" in a frame - found by dividing the frame into thirds & then positioning subjects or areas of interest on these intersections as the eyes lead to these intersections rather than the centre of the photograph. After lots of practice I developed this skill of composition which became almost intuitive and allowed me to focus on other compositional areas of the image. If imaginary lines are drawn across these images along the thirds of the images, it is possible to see that I have positioned the important areas of the subject such as the face and eyes on the intersections of these third lines.



These are two pages from my sketchbook in which I explored the landscape orientation for portraits. I used these to practice photography, to attempt to develop skills I previously had, and to capture the pure joy and innocence of children in these photos. I took at least a hundred photos of these children in a kindergarten where I was volunteering in the span of a few days and will be drawing on these photos to develop the idea of innocence and combine real life (photographs) with the imagination (doodles). After working with portraits of teenaged people I reflected on my work and realised I needed a contrast of the happiness that young children had in order to achieve my purpose, and therefore took pictures of them. This project helped me to explore the technical aspects of photography, developing ideas for my exhibition and achieving my artist intention. I combined the technical skills I had from continuous practice and research, the medium of photography and my idea of capture childlike joy into this series, which help me to achieve my purpose of capturing happiness in one photo.

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# Leading Lines

→ ?

- In this picture below, I used leading lines of the girl's arm from the top right of the photo to lead down to her sleeve then up to her face. Leading lines
- draw the viewer's eyes to a certain area of the photo and may create greater perception of depth.
- In this photo, however, I used leading lines to "unbalance" the photo and make it seem more playful & as if the viewer is swinging with the child, transporting the viewer back to playful days.



I further explored portrait photography using the portrait orientation. Shooting portraits in landscape & portrait helped me to refine different skills & explore the different ways to compose a portrait orientated photograph. Using portrait orientation was easier in a sense as the human figure follows the portrait dimensions: longer than it is wide. It is easier for me, therefore to fill the frame & not include the background (for example, the people on the top right). This allowed me to fully capture the expressions of the children. It also seems more formal than the landscape photos. I followed the same compositional rules as the landscape orientated photographs. I ended up choosing to use ~~landscape~~ portrait orientated photos for my video project as it was more simple, allowed me to fill the frame well and focus completely on their full face and expression. I kept the idea of my work simple in this series: focus & capture the childlike innocence and beauty in simple yet captivating photos, and I developed my technique by practicing this countless times by photographing the children.

These were sketchbook pages I used to investigate different forms and ways of photographing kids and eventually led to the style in which I photographed the people for the video (next slide). This experimentation helped me to develop skills in composition as well as to refine what my intention was - of capturing the bliss of children and allowing it to be compared to that of a teenager. These children are children living in poverty in Cambodia who attend a kindergarten I go back to every year to volunteer in. They embody what it means to be happy to me, through their innocence and pure joy, and that is why I took pictures of them on my trip there to use in my exhibition.

# DIFFUSED LIGHTING

Diffused lighting is lighting which reduces sharp or harsh shadows in portraits, and I had to find locations with diffused lighting to shoot my portraits as I wanted to give the photos a gentle & soft tone. This lighting is usually found in shade near a source of light outside the shade, when it is overcast and near a place where light is reflected off a non-reflective surface. Using diffused lighting also allowed me to capture expressions better & more completely than direct lighting.



### Images for the video

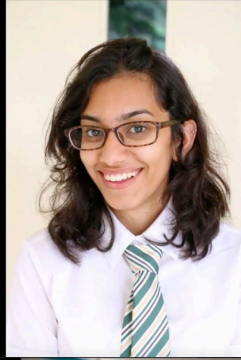
This is a screenshot of about half of the photos that I took for the video - each subject had about 5-7 photos taken of them in order to capture the happiness on their face after a I said "I'm taking photos of things I find beautiful."

### Images chosen

I chose images for the final video on the criterion that they expressed my purpose very explicitly (that is, to show the happiness and how one can affect another's happiness). Some pictures (indicated by arrows) show pictures I did not choose for the video because of this criterion.

### Skills developed

Doing this exploration allowed me to experiment with skills such as composition, lighting, and background. It helped me to refine these skills as well as to see how my art-making practice could impact people outside of the viewer - how it could impact the subject and the artist as well.



These are photos from a video I created using photographs from a shoot I did with people from my school. It was inspired by the artist on the previous page, Shea Glover. I took an initial photograph of a person and then told them that I was “taking pictures of things I find beautiful”. This project allowed me to explore portraiture and really do an in-depth study of what makes a good photo, as I took over fifty portraits of different people. When I first began, I took many blurry photos of reactions which had a shutter speed which was too long and didn’t make it into the final video. However, through practice and repetition I refined my technique to frame the face well so that the subject filled the frame and so I could focus on their expression.

I developed a few skills through this experimentation - firstly, my skill in taking portraits of people. I learned how to use the rule of thirds to compose a picture, in which points of importance in the picture are placed on thirds of the picture. I also had to find areas which were lit well with diffused lighting (indirect light) which lessened sharp shadows and harsh lines on my subjects’ faces. This allowed to capture the entirety of the subject’s face and their expression in more detail. Creating the video also helped me to develop skills and techniques - I chose the black background, for example, as it caused the brighter photos to stand out more and to be better noticed by the viewer.

It was plain and contrasted with the photos to accentuate the photos and make them stand out.



“I’m taking photos of things I find beautiful.”

**Development of the project:** Through developing this project, I realised that art can be used to impact not just the viewer but also the subjects of the photo. It also helped me to reflect on the effect my art and words can have on the viewer as well as myself, the artist, and hopefully also caused the viewers and subjects to be more mindful of what they say to others. Using words interspersed with the video footage allowed me to break up the monotony of the video and let me express better what the purpose of the video is, and adding some humour when I can.

**Artist investigation:** I investigated a few different artists when I was starting out - one was the portrait artist I looked at was Steve McCurry, and then the artist Shea Glover for inspiration. I then investigated the different ways of formatting the video as well - I added text in certain areas, and used three photos in a minority of the photos to show more detailed reactions to what I said. I also used music which was happy and upbeat in order to further my purpose which was to make people happy and to remind them to be joyful and to give others joy.



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/191403052893271198/>

## sebastian del grosso

Combines pencil sketches with photographs. The photos / art pieces, although simple, do show a deeper meaning such as trying to break through a barrier or drawing someone to love him. I can connect this to my own work by drawing wings behind photos that I took in my previous project or by drawing the faces of people onto the photographs - sort of a halfway mix of photograph and drawing.

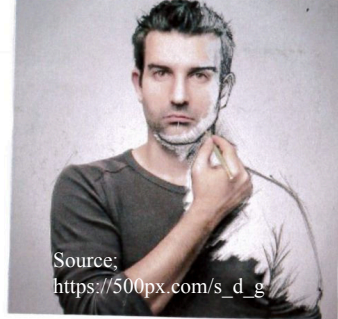
I like this style and concept because it's very graphic and simple but interests the viewer. It jumps out of the page at you as well because of the high contrast and the graphic pencil. The combination of the two elements causes interest as well as the piercing eyes + emotions seen through the eyes.

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work was Sebastien del Grosso. Before

I began the IB course I had already done photography and pencil sketching but had never thought to combine these two. To fulfill my intentions of showing the imagination of a person, I wanted to combine these two mediums and develop my own practices through experimentation with different mediums and techniques. I researched mixed media and came across Sebastien del Grosso, and his art was the "turning point" of my art being integrated pieces expressing imagination and reality.

## OPTIONS:

- use Wacom tablet
- pencil drawing of person and photoshop
- erase photo with software like PAINT or sketchbook express, pencil drawing on top of picture (printed)
- Pens on top of artwork
- use backgrounds / elements of good movies / favorite movies of the people.

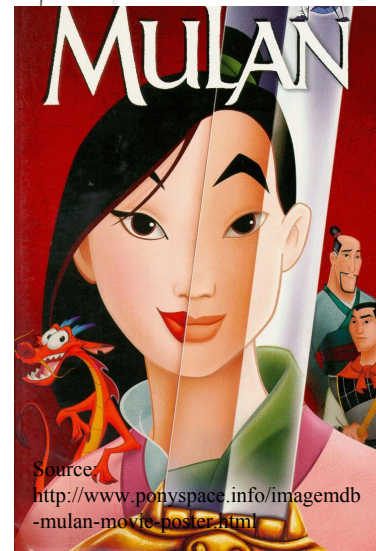


Source:  
[https://500px.com/s\\_d\\_g](https://500px.com/s_d_g)

⊙ EXPERIMENTS using computer to erase parts of the photo and using pencil to add details in. Asking people their favourite Disney / non-Disney movie. @

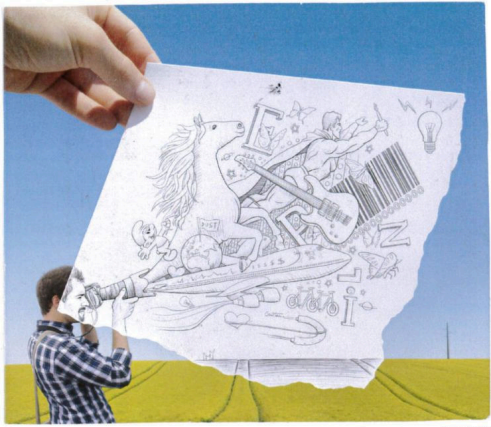
When I first saw the work of Sebastien del Grosso, I had also been experimenting with movie posters and the art work. The poster for Mulan (seen on the right) intrigued me, especially the idea of the dual "personality" in one photo, separated by the sword. This "imagery" of a dual personality or another identity carried forward into my other paintings, and I also integrated the style of Sebastien del Grosso into my pieces (next slide contains examples of this). However, Sebastien del Grosso used digital software to edit and Photoshop his images in order to smoothly integrate the pencilled images into his photos. I did not have this software and therefore simply erased portions of my image online and then printed them out to be drawn on. This combined the idea of a half-and-half identity as well as the drawing on the photographs.

Investigating the art and intention of Sebastien del Grosso (illustrating his life and the construction of his identity) also inspired me initially with my intention but then I developed my intention more to be about happiness and how a changing personality or life journey can change that definition of happiness.



Source:  
<http://www.ponyspace.info/image mdb -mulan-movie-poster.html>





# MORE BEN HEINE.

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"I just make art for people. I want them to dream and forget their dai troubles... I want to convey a poetic meaning into my pictures; each new creation should tell a story and generate an intense emotion, like a poem, like a melody... love and friendship."

(Heine, 2011)

↳ Inspired by Belgian Surrealism, German Expressionism, American Popart and Social Realism.

© People either don't know or don't say their deepest dreams, wants... Not about their futures but about now. How to make their lives better now, and the daydreams + moments of their lives. They stop imagining. I want to bring that back to them. Help them to remember what it's like to be a child again.



Source: <http://www.postersandprintsblog.com/postersandprintsblog/2011/4/24/ben-heine-scream-out-loud-mickey-mouse-at-gay-pride-prints-a.html>

"I THEN REALIZED IT WOULD BE GREAT TO MAKE SOMETHING SIMILAR IN A SINGLE IMAGE SHOWING TWO DIFFERENT ACTIONS."

A "turning point" of my artist intention

(Heine, 2011)

Ben Heine was another artist which greatly inspired me in my own art-making. From his intentions to his technique, Ben Heine's work was not only of high quality but also stemmed from the intention of how imagination can affect our daily lives and our perception of the world. This perception was linked to my "pursuit of happiness" as the imagination can affect how you perceive events happening around you. Ben Heine also wanted to make art for people and to generate an emotion (quote above) and I wanted to generate happiness as well as the underlying question of self - where is this happiness coming from? Heine's whimsical use of pop culture icons and characters also inspired me to use them in my art in order to express the imagination. Although I didn't follow his style exactly, I developed my art in its own direction drawing directly on the paper in order to lessen the break between the photograph and the drawing.



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/benheine/sets/72157623723956821/>

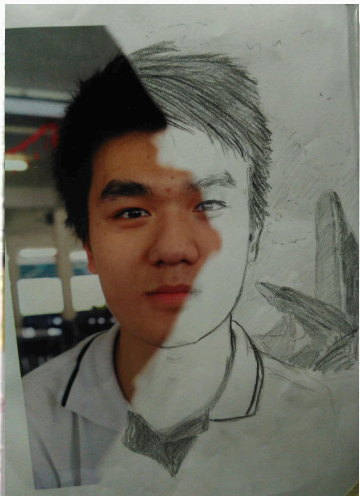
# experiments

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I used Sketchbook Express (an art program on my computer) to draw/paint over some of the photo digitally and then printed out the photo on A4 paper. I then used a pencil to fill in the white parts and draw extra details such as the castle from "The Little Mermaid" and the "Incredibles" superhero costume + flight backdrop because the two people in the pictures like the movies that are in the drawing.



One of the artists I looked at was Ben Heine, a Belgian artist who mixed photography and drawing to create new drawings full of imagination. I was inspired by him to create these drawings and to develop my art through an exploration of my friends' favourite cartoon characters. Through these pieces, I hoped to develop my sketching skills as well as my intention of reminding the viewer of the part of them that was imaginative and childlike.

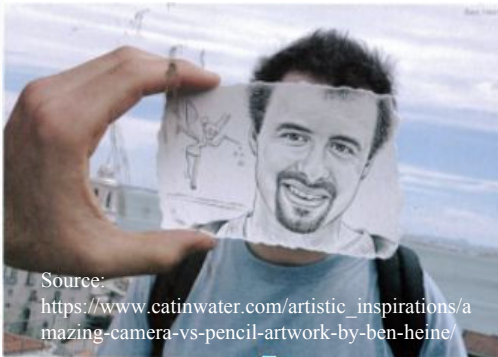


# BEN HEINE

Belgian artist who combines photography with drawings. Not using Photoshop but by "organically" mixing media by taking photos of drawings.

## WHAT I LIKE:

How he shows deeper meaning through his portraits, like the blending of fantasy creatures and hopes and dreams from the lens of his camera. He brings magic and fantasy to his drawings. I also like the composition and colour of his drawings which have a lighter mood and happier spirit than deGussone's work. There is a more useful and joyful mood in his paintings/artwork, with neat strokes and as-realistic-as-possible drawings. This has inspired me in my artwork to incorporate colours of the background into the work and to lighten the contrast of the pencil sketches.



Source:  
[https://www.catinwater.com/artistic\\_inspirations/a-mazing-camera-vs-pencil-artwork-by-ben-heine/](https://www.catinwater.com/artistic_inspirations/a-mazing-camera-vs-pencil-artwork-by-ben-heine/)

I developed my work from Ben Heine's - although I did not draw and paper and take photographs of it in front of another photo, I erased certain parts of photos from my previous project using a digital software, and then used pencil to fill in the erased parts to make my friends into fictional characters. This was in part inspired by the study of Heine's art as well as my love for fictional characters and worlds. I selected these materials in order to explore reality through photos as well as imagination through drawing in my pieces, and to present these two ideas as explicitly as possible.

Drawing in this style challenged me because I was used to drawing directly from pictures and copying them in the most realistic style possible. Doing this therefore allowed me to explore drawing from photos as well as combining them with images from my imagination and cartoons - I had to try and make the backgrounds as realistic as possible. This helped me to prepare for further projects where I would have to combine a few photos into one piece rather than just copying a single photo. However, I realised that just using pencils was quite monotonous as I was quite used to it, and I wanted to develop this style into something more different, for example, painting. This however helped me to prepare for the painting I would do in the future and on hindsight helped me to develop skills such as choosing of subjects and backgrounds. I experimented with drawing the backgrounds coming out of the original frame of the photo (as can be seen with the buildings and road in the picture on the left, and the castle in the picture in the middle) and this allowed me to explore the concept of these buildings being outside of reality. This was my take on Ben Heine's style, as I wanted to merge the imagination as well as real life as seamlessly as possible, therefore drawing straight onto the paper. However this didn't merge them as effectively as there was still a barrier between the sketch and the photo. This led to the next development - painting on the blank portion of the paper. This helped me to develop my intentions of stimulating the imagination of the viewer as well as that of the subject when they saw their own portrait, giving them joy when they remembered their childhood.

# FURTHER EXPERIMENTATION

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**Paint and photos:** The next step in developing my art was by painting on the blank spaces of photos. Instead of painting fictional backgrounds, I decided to paint the colours into their faces using colours I thought fit my friends' personalities, therefore fulfilling my purpose of bringing out the centre of who my friends are in my work and I did this through colour and re-imagining them using colour. I was also hoping to develop this into painting my friends as characters and then filling in the backgrounds, but I realised that acrylic paint was too stark and bright to do this very subtly and it didn't allow me to blend the colours into each other to create a further meld between reality and imagination.

**New experience and skills:** I had never painted faces before (all my work was done in pencil) and painting helped me to develop this skill as well as refine my choice of medium. Working with acrylic taught me how to work faster while drawing and introduced me to working with paints in painting portraiture. I experimented with different brushstrokes and styles, for example blending more (in the images on the left) compared to wilder and more messy brushstrokes on the bottom-right image. This helped me to express not just myself in my art but the personality of my friends as well.

**Textures in layers:** Personally, I realised that I liked using a lot of paint in layers as this created a very texture effect regardless of whether I blended the paint or not. This allowed me to give hair a texture that only hair had, or to give skin a finer texture using shorter brushstrokes. I didn't use much water while applying the first few coats of paint and only used it to smoothen colours into each other when I needed to such as when I was painting skin.

**Acrylic vs. Oil:** One of the main things I didn't like about acrylic is its incapability to be worked into over long periods of time. Another problem I encountered was it was difficult to work with larger amounts of paint and water as the paper would begin to dissolve (only cartridge paper was used as I couldn't print on thicker paper). This caused issues while painting as I could only apply a few layers of paint before the paper dissolved. I realised that this didn't truly fulfill my intentions and therefore went back to the drawing board for more ideas - such as getting rid of the photos completely.



This helped me to experiment with mixed media and painting faces, which I'd never really done before this. The single shades / colour scheme was what I think fits the personality of the subject - Adnan is quieter and slightly more reflective than Janis who is always speaking her mind and who smiles a lot. This helped me to develop fine tune my painting with single shades of a colour.

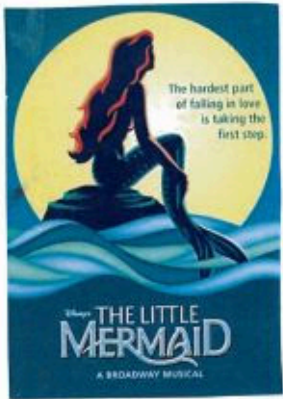
I didn't add a background because I liked the contrast between the colour and the white background.

I developed these portraits according to the personalities of my friends - Adnan is quite calm and collected, Janis is more girly and feisty and Ruhi is full of fire and life (red). I used the colours to express what I thought of them in my imagination and attempted to stimulate the imaginations of the viewers in seeing people in explosions of colour.



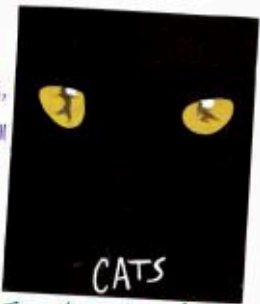
Experimental colour swatches





Maegan's favorite Disney movie is The Little Mermaid, and she can sing really well (Ariel). Try acrylic on canvas.

Source: <http://www.broadway.com/shows/the-little-mermaid/>



JAMIS loves cats, and her eyes are distinctive. Use black acrylic on yellow paper + watercolor.

Source: <http://www.broadway.com/shows/cats-broadway/>

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**experiments**

The experiment on the left into a painting done in acrylic on canvas, inspired from the Broadway movie poster of the Little Mermaid, portraying my friend Maegan's personality and her favourite Disney movie. However I have to develop this idea from this painting which can be technically slightly sub-standard and not a full expression of who Maegan is. Maegan, from this painting, seems more introverted and lonely than who she really is. I want to bring in the aspect of her singing and bright personality into the painting of her. After painting this I also realised that painting her more zoomed-in (on her face) might be more effective in showing who she is. Painting her face would help me to develop my skills in painting the human face and to make the piece more about her personality and identity than a piece modelled after the poster. This will help me achieve my intention, by focusing on tiny elements (red hair around her face) or backgrounds of the face. This will help me explore her personality better.

The next few experiments I did were pieces based around movie posters, and which were subtly paintings of my friends in the original posters. I painted my friend as the Little Mermaid in the poster. I used this image to express my view of my friend, and to try and bring out her personality as well as the child-like quality of each human being. I wanted to use this to express her personality - that of wonder and reflection. This is because movies and cartoons are so intrinsically linked to childhood and I wanted to use these iconic posters to remind people of that. This painting (outlined in red) was painted in acrylic paint. I used acrylic paint in order to bring out the tones in the painting (from the original poster, the colours are not blended and all have the same quality of being muted) and I attempted to add more brightness and shading to the painting using shading and blending of colours. For blending of paint I realised it was most effective when I used the tip of a flat bristle brush to blend the colours. Acrylic paint was also easier to do this technique of having layers of colour over the black as once acrylic dries it can't be blended. This allowed me to paint the sections of colour on black silhouette.

# MOVIE POSTERS + STYLES

Anya and Veric - two best friends, both incredibly smart and ~~the~~ similar but incredibly different. Who would be who? Oil paint on canvas.

On these pages I was looking at movie posters I could use to create paintings. I was moving away from having a portrait which was distinctly separated into imagination and reality and something more blended, like combining my friends fully with an imaginary character rather than a painting separate from them.



Source: <http://www.filmofilia.com/brand-new-megamind-poster-ferrell-vs-pitt-20049/>

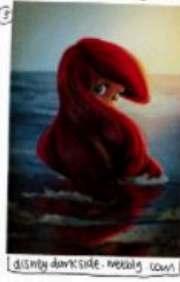


These pictures are examples of what poses / expressions I am going to explore for final studio piece. It shows Ariel's signature hair as well as her face and it will help me to explore Maegan's identity / personality better.

- 1 will be oil and a regular portrait of Maegan from the photos taken in my previous portraits.
- 2 will be oil, and will include more elements in the background showing the sea.
- 3 will have Anya's hair but Maegan's face.
- 4 Maegan's hair, Ariel's costume.



one more idea was to have a portrait of Maegan in, close-up on her face, with showing a little of her hair which would be red. Singing?

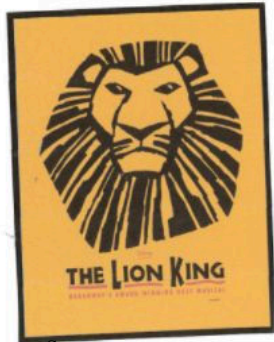


ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THIS BLOG WAS AN EXPERIMENT INTO COMPLETELY MOVING AWAY FROM A TAKEN FROM WWW.INTERNALASSESSMENTS.WORDPRESS.COM realistic style into the realm of pop-art and emulating movie posters



# FINAL PIECES

This piece is largely inspired by the Lion King Broadway poster. Calvin (the friend featured in the piece)'s favourite Disney movie is the Lion King, and after experimentation with pencils on photographs I decided that the best way would be for the artwork to be immediately recognizable in pop culture. While I was looking at movie posters for the Lion King, I found the Broadway poster. At first I considered screen-printing or painting the design onto yellow paper, but after experimentation found that spray paint worked best + with the most impact on a painted background that looks like shifting sands.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Lion\\_King\\_\(musical\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lion_King_(musical))

in order to present my idea to the viewer as explicitly as possible through a complete merging of person and fictional character. In my previous experiments I was half-merging the person and imagination, and there was a divide between the two. However I wanted my purpose to be more explicit and therefore used more bright and contrasting colours in my painting in order to make it stand out to the viewer as well as merging the fictional character and my friend completely. I appropriated recognizable posters in order to stimulate the imagination and memory of my viewer and used this as an opportunity to further my intention of bringing the viewer back to their childhood where they might have imagined themselves in that fictional place. I could also explore my friends' personalities and favourite fictional characters and therefore their idea of childhood, which is often personified by cartoon and imaginary characters.

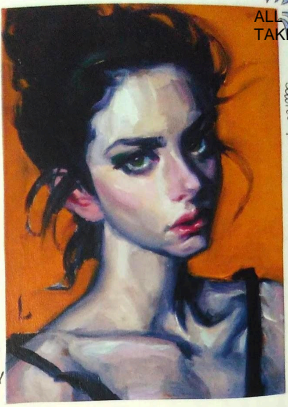
The black and gold image was created by digitally combining *The Lion King* poster and my friend Calvin's face into one stencil then cutting out the areas which I wanted to paint, then spray painting over the stencil onto a paper previously painted using a palette knife in yellows and browns. This was chosen in order to emulate the sandy background of the African plains, and brought more texture into the original movie poster (texture was something I had previously liked in painting with acrylics and wanted to bring that texture into this painting to show the texture of the sand). Spray paint was used rather than traditional media in order to show that this was a more contemporary take on the art in the poster, and more stylised to the personality of my friend, Calvin, who is the subject of this piece. At first I began wanting to paint this piece using acrylic, but then realised that using mixed media of spray paint and acrylic would have a greater effect because of the contrast of the different textures of spray paint and acrylic. I did some tests by spray painting over my stencil onto white sheets of paper in order to find what the best way to spray paint would be. I experimented holding the spray paint farther away and then close to the paper, and then eventually found that I had to spray the paint 90° to the paper and spray about 5cm away in order to fill all parts of the stencil without accidentally spraying paint under the stencil.



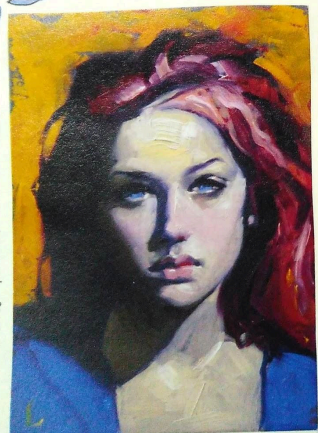
CALVIN

# John Larriva

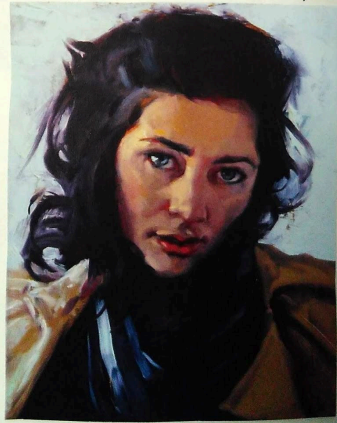
John Larriva was another artist I looked at for inspiration for my own work. His work is mostly on hard board canvas, and in small sizes, not usually larger than A5. He uses relatively small and tough brushes to paint (from what I can see of his videos) and layers his paintings many, many times to achieve the thick paint seen in his paintings as well as the rich tones and glowing colours. This made me fall in love with his work, alongside the quality of his images of being so expressive and fluid. Although his paintings aren't excessively detailed, the attention to colour and subtle expression, combined with the expressive strokes really captured my attention and inspired me.



Source: pinterest.com



Source: pinterest.com



Source: Larriva.blogspot.com

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how another of the portrait artists who I explored in making my own art. I liked his technique in painting, which is very expressive and slightly blurry but able to portray the human face extremely well through the use of shadows and highlights. He uses many, many layers of oil paint in creating his portraits and this can be seen in his visible brushstrokes which only serve to emphasize the shaping of the faces of his subjects. Through trying to paint in his process I learned how to use thick layers of oil in making texture and shades of the skin tone stand out. I analysed and explored the style of this artist mainly for his technique, but it also allowed me to explore the use of expression in my paintings and to develop the intention of showing the expression of my subject.

# Portrait Processes



John Larriva posts videos on Youtube to document his portrait-painting process. I took screenshots of his videos (below) to see and record his process of painting small oil portraits. He begins by painting in the darkest shades of the painting, then adding in lighter & lighter colours, blending them in thick layers in the end in order to achieve his classic style which looks very creamy & detailed yet expressive. The contrast in his paintings is very high and he employs the use of shadows and highlights to achieve a ~~very~~ 3-dimensional style. I especially like how he blurs shapes & features into one another and creates a very organic & flowy feel. This differs from my own style which is more detailed and less blended. I used his process as a starting point for how I would use oil paints & developed my own process from there.

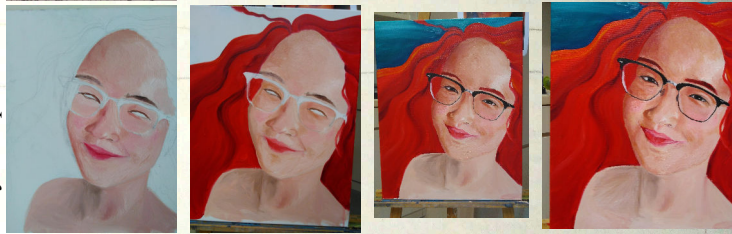


Source: <http://larriva.blogspot.sg/2013/05/romantic-painting-demo.html?view=sidebar>



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

My own photos

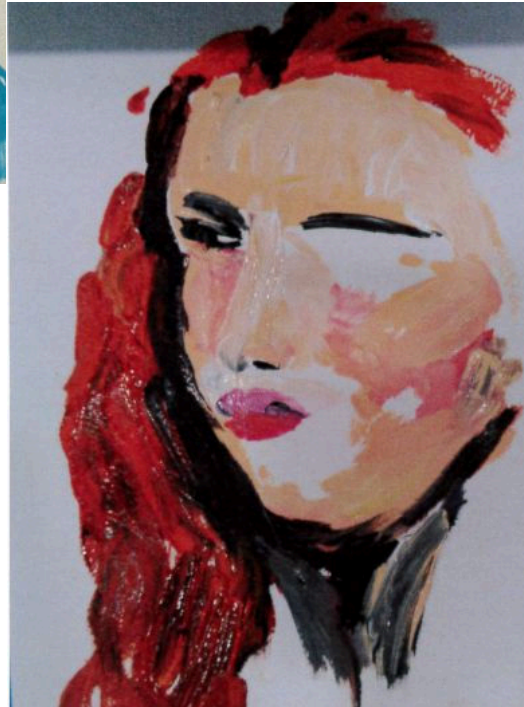


One of the first issues I had with painting on paper was the fact that I had to use acrylic or drier paints that couldn't be worked in. I then re-thought my whole method and decided that the best method might be to approach painting people "from scratch" rather than using mixed media. Therefore I began experimenting with oil paints (below) where I tried out skin tones using oil paint. This was much easier to work into and to blend than acrylic and helped me to gain confidence in painting people "from scratch" rather than painting them as part of an image.

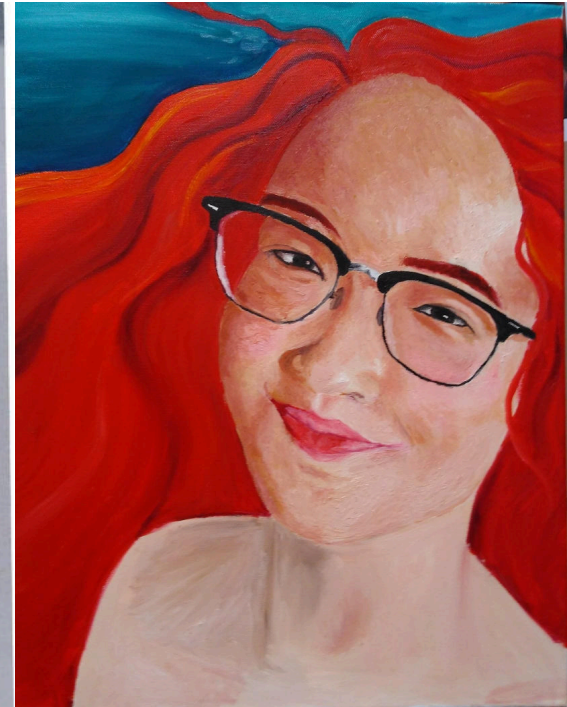


The comparison between the smoothness of the oil and acrylic paints in the blue pictures can be seen distinctly. Above, the paint strokes can be easily seen and the distinctions or lines between areas of colours are not as well blended (acrylic). In the oil paint, on the left, the highlights and shadows are blended much better. This could have been due to my developing art skill but I mainly attribute it to the different textures of the paint and the material I painted them on. Painting the image on the left also eliminated the real-fictional border which using the mixed media created.

Below are two more comparisons of experiments I did with similar colour schemes to each other. The one on the left was done in acrylic paint, and the one on the right was done in oil paint. In the acrylic painting, the tones aren't blended as much as the oil painting. The oil paint, when dried, also tended to be more vibrant than the acrylics which lost some colour. Due to the property of oil paints to dry slowly, I was able to work into the paint and show contrast in the image much better. I could paint light more effectively in my oil paintings than my acrylic ones and achieved a realistic look.



I decided to paint my friend, Maegan, as Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*. This is her favourite Disney character, and I painted her as one in order to fulfill my intention of trying to stimulate the audience to remember their childhood. One experience that was important to me as a child was imagining that I was in some of my favourite movies or books. It was something that I could do for hours on end - and is a contrast to now when many teenagers are "bored" or on their phones when they have nothing to do. I wanted to remind the viewer of this, and maybe cause them to try imagining again.



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The first oil painting that I completed was the final version of the one on the bottom right. I began it as an experiment of the colour scheme as well as techniques for oil painting. One of the first things I noticed about difference of painting on the smaller canvas was the tension of the canvas. The smaller canvas was one mounted on a flat piece of wood completely and therefore there was no “bounce” when I painted on the canvas. This led to a very even and smooth application of paint on the smaller canvas with less texture. The larger canvas, however, was mounted on a wooden frame and the canvas “bounced” or flexed when I painted. I liked this texture more than painting with canvas on a hard background. The larger piece was therefore much more textured than the smaller one.

Through this process I learned how to mix skin-coloured paint, and experimented with different proportions of white, yellow, brown, blue and red paint in order to shade different areas of the face, shadows and highlights. Also, I learned quickly not to use black for shadows as this “muddied” the colour. Instead, I used colours such as Burnt Umber or brown to darken skin tones or complimentary colours of the shade I was looking to darken in order to create shadows.

Certain colours from the same oil paint brand also have different textures - for example, black oil paint from Daler-Rowney is thicker than the white paint when out of the tube, and is more translucent than white paint when turpentine is added to it. This makes it difficult to smoothly apply black paint in thin lines to an image (for example, in the glasses in the painting). This meant that I had to apply a few layers of black paint to the lines in order for it to be black and not grey. I avoided using black as much as I could because when it thinned, it tended to leak into other colours if they were still wet.

For brush size, I used much smaller and softer brushes for the smaller painting. This helped me to achieve the small details but tended to not be able to blend the oil paints as well as the thicker brushes could. The bigger painting gave me more freedom with brush size, and using a bigger and harder brush allowed me to blend certain areas such as the neck more than when using a smaller brush. I found that using a dry brush perpendicular to the canvas allowed me to blend tones well.

Using oil paints and vibrant colours combined with realist techniques allowed me to express my intentions - showing someone who is recognizable to the audience (my peers) as well as using a well-known character to try and get people to imagine their own childhood or themselves as a fictional character.







My process of oil painting is as such - I begin by using pencil as a guideline for the oil paint on the canvas. I use oil paint to block out the vague colour areas in the painting. Then I add detail and shading over a period of a few weeks (due to the property of oil paint drying slowly). This allows me to work into the paint as well as to add as much detail as possible into the paint. One of the issues with using pencil at first is that it can blend into the oil paint and darken it, so I usually have to go over those areas a few times before the pencil tint is gone. I usually add the hair, clothing and background only at the end of each painting as these are the “props” i use to create the imaginary character. In this case, I used red hair, bare shoulders and a blue underwater background to convey the idea that my friend is Ariel. The hair, background and clothes are usually not as detailed as the faces that I paint in order to convey the sense that the character is imaginary, and the person is imagining that they are the character.

One of the issues I ran into while painting these pieces was that I usually had to paint the “imaginary” parts of the image such as hair and background from my imagination, as I wouldn’t have exact reference photos for bright red hair flowing underwater. However this was sort of a blessing in disguise as it helped me to pour more of my own imagination into the pictures and to make a subtle contrast between the subject of the piece and their imaginary or more surreal surroundings. This investigation and experimentation helped me to develop techniques in oil painting, and I learned a new skill while exploring these pieces and the ones following.

This helped me to develop my intentions as well as to become more clear-cut about how I would present these intentions to my viewer. This became the starting point of all the rest of my work - a series of oil portraits of people portrayed as cartoon characters

characters. This was the product of a lot of experimenting with different forms of expressing my intention, and investigating many different mediums. Oil painting helped me to juxtapose realism with the surreal backgrounds and igniting the imagination. I will curate the series of pieces which are of my friends as fictional characters in such a way that allows the viewer to have the full impact of these people imagining themselves in another world and to show their hidden or muted happiness through the paintings. A series of these would be most impactful as it would show these people in very personal, individual worlds - happiness is personal and individual.





# DISNEY FINE ART HEATHER THEURER

Heather Theurer's art is a mix of fine art and modern influences. From her various pieces we can see that she paints Disney characters in a fine-art style. When I saw her paintings, I was inspired by the high-quality paintings as well as the detailed expression of each of the characters. She uses oil paints in order to paint this, and I have been inspired by her work to produce high-detail pieces which incorporate background and costume to show the character of the subject.

Theurer uses composition, background and lighting to bring out the main focus of each painting - the subject's face and moving upper body. The face is often framed by a halo of hair, which accentuates the flawless features of the face. The use of the shadows and highlights shows the realism of each character. Theurer paints darker away from the main focus of the portrait, and the face is usually well-lit compared to the lower parts of the body. This contrast highlights the face and expression of the character. ~~The focus~~ The composition also emphasizes the face because of the position on a third of the portrait, which emphasizes the face and draws focus to the face. The backgrounds (such as flowers or lanterns) emphasize the character and mood of the painting. The details of the clothes and hair also emphasize how realistic the painting is.

Theurer made use of rich backgrounds and fine detail to bring a personality to her paintings. This can be seen in the folds of the clothes on the people, the hair, and the details give to frame the subject such as flowers or lanterns. I watched videos of Theurer painting, and through this investigation attempted to improve my own art through tiny details and the blending of tones and colour areas more, to achieve a more realistic painting.

making these paintings was an artist called Heather Theurer. The paintings she made were very similar to mine in the fact that she painted Disney characters in oil, as realistically as possible. However she paints in a style similar to that of the Renaissance, which is highly realistic. However her art is more vibrant than that of the Renaissance period. Sfumato is used in her paintings in order to create a blended effect of the subject and to create a very smooth and natural painting. Sfumato is a technique which blends paint in order to make the tones seem like "smoke" blending into each other, giving it the style of a Renaissance painting. It blends the tones together smoothly without letting the viewer see clear lines between tones and colours, giving a more realistic image and creating a rich atmosphere.

Chiaroscuro is also used to contrast the highlights and shadows of the paintings, causing dramatic effect. This can be seen especially in the paintings on the right where the darkened background causes more focus on the brighter subjects, and the contrast brings out the subjects. The use of chiaroscuro causes the form in the painting to "pop out" and increases the illusion of a 3D painting.



Disney Fine Art / www.disneyfineart.com

The detail in the facial features of the characters is also quite amazing. The shadows on the face as well as the highlights and catchlights in the eyes bring more emphasis to the face, and the subtle detail makes it very realistic. Every strand of hair is painted in detail, framing the face and making it seem more natural than tightly-bound and neat hair completely tied back. Using this in my own art-making would allow the characters to seem more natural and human, which achieves my purpose of presenting their natural and normally hidden selves.



Disney Fine Art / www.disneyfineart.com

# my own art

Heather Theurer's art inspired me because of the great detail and realism. The way she incorporates aspects of the Disney characters such as flowers or clothing into the classical, fine art style is also impressive and I hope to do this in my paintings as well.

The detail of the clothes, especially, is something I'd like to improve on my paintings (even though mine are mainly of the facial features of a person). One thing that differs from my art style, though, is that Theurer uses body language and props to express the character's feelings / ~~own~~ personality more than facial features.

The blended painting style Theurer uses in order to make her paintings more realistic is something I would like to emulate in my art as well, in order to make it seem more realistic. I think this will come with much more practice with painting human faces. Notice differences in the tone and colour of Theurer's portraits. The colour schemes she chooses for each portrait also allow the viewer to peek into the character of the subject and are generally colours which fit the theme and are repeated over and over again in the paintings she does. I am aiming to do this in my own art-making as well, through the colours I choose and the background colours.

The detail in the facial features of the characters is also quite amazing. The shadows on the face as well as the highlights and catchlights in the eyes bring more emphasis to the face, and the subtle detail makes it very realistic. Every strand of hair is painted in detail, framing the face and making it seem more natural than tightly-bound and neat hair completely tied back. Using this in my own art-making would allow the characters to seem more natural and human, which achieves my purpose of presenting their natural and normally hidden selves.

One of the purposes I chose these specific characters was that they were favourites to the people who are in the picture, as well as fitting their personality.

The good thing about oil paints is that I could correct mistakes I made by working them into the overall design. When I began the painting, the paint was too orange so I had to blend it into the skin tone and add more white and pink tones.

In this painting I experimented a lot with the thickness of the paint - in pictures such as the detail on the right and above, the texture of the paint is very apparent and although the brushstrokes are visible, the tones still blend into each other and look real. I achieved this by adding many, many layers of paint to every single area of the painting. This let me achieve the undertones and thickness of paint which still varied in colour despite the thick brushstrokes.

I used small brushes for this painting, and the big brushes were mostly used to blend the clothes, the background and the skin at the neck of the subject in order to create a more defined contrast between the realism of the subject's face and the background, which is colourful and slightly surreal.

Another aim of these pieces was to contrast these pieces to the smaller portraits of my friends laughing. However as I developed my intentions I found that contrasting these pieces to images of children would be more effective.

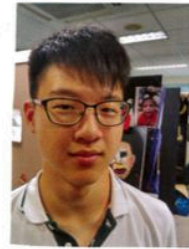
Medium: oil paint on canvas.  
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JOEY  
 vs  
 Aladdin

Painting this portrait took a shorter time because I'd gotten more practice in painting in oils and stopped having to fix many errors in my art as I used to. I started out and mixed a very orangey colour for his skin but blended it in. In this piece I paid more attention to the shading + highlights from the beginning of the piece which increased the layered and blended effect of the final piece. I also learned that using a dry brush to blend over wetter areas helps to blend them in better.



I chose to paint Joey at dusk or just after sunset because that's when the "Whole New World" scene & Aladdin takes place. Dusk (with the moon) is also easier for me & it's the feeling I want to convey in this piece.



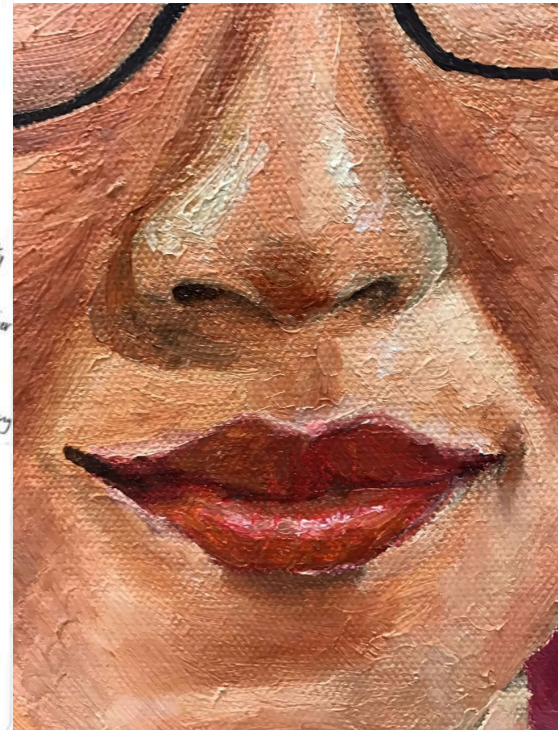
Joey's personality fits the painting colour scheme as well as the character of Aladdin who is playful and cheerful & yet is looking for something more.



OVERALL CONNECTION TO EXHIBITION  
 This piece will feature alongside a number of other pieces showing people posing for a picture. Smaller portraits in an A5 size will be of them in candid poses, to show the contrast in their "posed" selves versus that self which they showed to the world themselves & also they are when they are in candid situations. I am using Disney characters



One of the important aspects in my paintings of my teenage friends was the fact that they weren't fully smiling. I wanted to use this as a comparison to the pictures of the children who were fully smiling or laughing. Using this comparison allowed me to show the unbridled happiness of a child compared to that of a teenager, who is often much more composed and self-conscious. This contrast as well as the slightly surreal background helped me to express the fact that sometimes to become more happy we have to imagine and revert to childhood.





Here are details and process of some of the artworks (in the process of being made) as well as details of some previous paintings. While painting these pieces I had the same intention throughout - which was to use these to express the imaginary world my friends could have immersed themselves in as children and to provoke the viewer into entering that realm of imagination. In my exhibition, this collection of pieces will be contrasted to photos of children in candid and happy images, contrasting the happiness of the children to these people.



Throughout this ongoing investigation, I developed my intentions and my own art-making practices through a few ways. Firstly, my intentions developed from a light-hearted expression of happiness to a more thought-provoking one when I decided to compare these pieces to pictures of children: the comparison caused the viewer to compare the children and the teenagers, fulfilling my intention of how happiness changes over time. I wanted to use this to show the changing nature of happiness as age comes, as well as causing the viewer to question: what makes me happy?

As an artist, this investigation allowed me to slowly improve my art skills in painting with oils. Creating this series not only fulfilled my artist intention but also allowed me to refine my oil-painting skills through repetition and practice. Many skills I have acquired could not to be expressed in words as I have repeated the skills, they have become more intuitive.

Another artist I researched on was Sam J Miller (who also happens to be an author). His art was a collection of mundane / normal scenes overlaid or drawn on with digital software. What I liked about this was that it added colour & brightness to a mundane scene, and expressed the feelings & imagination of the artist while taking / editing the photo. I took inspiration from these images as well as the patterns on the mandalas to draw the doodles on my own images in order to express the mood of the people in my subjects. I took inspiration from his drawings to create my own artwork using images of people and doodling on the background using a Wacom Tablet and Sketchbook Express. Using these tools of digital art and photography allowed me to express the happiness of my subjects through the subjects' expressions as well as the "explosive" or colourful doodles I draw onto them.



Source: samjmillar.com/instagram

## SAM J. MILLER



Source: samjmillar.com/instagram

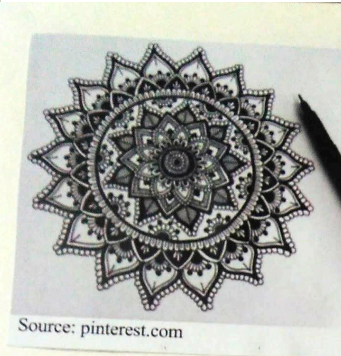
*Hand-drawn scribbles and patterns at the bottom left corner.*

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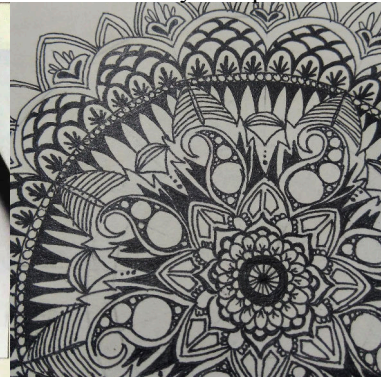
Mandalas were one of the places I took inspiration from for the doodles on my photographs. I liked the repetitive patterns on the mandalas and the fine details which could be used to compose such a beautiful repeating pattern. The patterns are very organic & natural and I used these patterns in doodling on my own work to express the very natural and organic happiness of the children. Henna patterns or mehndi was another source of inspiration for the doodles that I made. Similar to mandala designs, mehndi is very organic and incorporates flower & plant designs into the patterns to evoke a sense of harmony & peace.

These pages were on studies done for the doodles on children's photographs. The one on the right is an artist who digitally doodles on pictures, and the images below are mandalas which are inspirations for my own doodles.

My own picture



Source: pinterest.com





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These photographs are of children I taught on a volunteer trip in Cambodia. These few paintings were an exploration of mixed media (digital and photography) that I returned to after developing the series of paintings which were painted in oil. These pieces were meant to express and emphasize the unbridled happiness of children. I wanted to express how the innate happiness they had could affect their environment and “explode” onto the canvas using simple and more childish doodles than complicated paintings in order to express their simplicity.

The first experiment I did was the one above - with larger shapes and a thicker brush size, using a Wacom tablet. I did more experiments on the same picture using thick outlines and a thinner brush on the inside details, and I found that using this technique allowed me to create a more vivid picture of the imagination or more detailed imagining of the happiness that the children brought with them.

The children themselves are not drawn on as they are the cause of this happiness, and are the ones making the visual representation of this happiness appear. By using lines which extend away from the children, I attempt to show the emotion “coming out” of them.

The pieces on the right and below were done in a similar style to the ones above, just that I used different colours in order to brighten up the piece. I plan to display this as a collection similar to the way I will display the oil paintings, in order to create a contrast between the children and the teenagers, as well as between the mediums in which they are painted in order to express the contrast between the happiness.



# Bibliography

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