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PAINTER’S NOTEBOOKS

Artists of all types have often kept notebooks. I am asking you this semester to start one (if you haven’t already). This is a place to jot down ideas, questions, musings, and inspirations. In a way, the notebook should be an extension of your creative mind. Your notebooks will also serve as a place for idea/content generation. To this end I will ask you to develop several different sections in your artist notebook: Notes, Ideas, Responses.

1st:

NOTES

Often when you are working you will get into a "groove" (some athletes call this the “zone”) where intuition and intellect are working synchronistically. At this point, you will lose self-awareness and ideas/insights will flow. Unfortunately, this state doesn’t last forever. Life, teachers!, (curfews) often interrupt these creative flows. Your notebook should be used to jot down any ideas, thoughts, insights you had before you forget them! It is critical, then to keep your notebook with you in the studio.

So, after every painting session, I want you to jot down a few notes as to what you need to do next on your work and jot down any insights or ideas that may have sprung into your mind. You may think you will remember these things between painting sessions, but they are often like memories of dreams—very clear at first, but difficult to retrieve later.

Please follow the following format:
Identify date and finishing time as a heading. Underneath, identify painting followed by colon followed by ideas separated by period punctuation. For example, (from my own notes)-

NOTES
8/29 12 noon:
small table and chairs painting: Need large light green brush to come in from right side. Figure out how to emphasize little paintings. Bring white into chairs.
red painting: should have left underpainting much lighter. Need to preserve light longer so that darks can be selected at a later date in order that color and value changes for the darks are not locked in too early. May help to have darks come about as a result of the washes.

These notes will help you pick up right from where you left off last time you painted. Also helps hone your analytical abilities with regards to your paintings.

IDEAS
2nd: Get in the habit of carrying your notebook around with you. You never know when an idea or an image will strike you, and you need to record it immediately. Please separate these ideas/musings from you daily painting notes either by drawing a line between sections or by having a separate section in your notebook.
RESPONSES
3rd: You will be doing some readings throughout the semester. I want you to write 3 responses to each reading. These responses should be distillations, not lengthy essays (unless you are so moved) These responses should be thoughtful and coherent. If I call on you to read your responses, they should generate response and discussion amongst your classmates.
Please write the artist’s name that the article was about and follow with your three responses labeled 1-3.

An example courtesy of Dorothy Jackson:
Francis Bacon

➢ I loved Bacon’s comment about not wanting his subjects in the room while he paints them. I think that this illustrates an important dynamic that is rarely discussed, that being the interaction between artist and audience. It is difficult not to paint with one’s audience at least somewhat in mind. I believe that I can say that there are few pieces and few people capable of creating an entirely un-self-conscious work. Portraits are particularly difficult because while there is a certain impulse to be honest and representational there is another drive to be somewhat complimentary especially if one is painting a friend or loved one.

➢ I loved Bacon’s comment that “art is an obsession with life” and that “as human beings our greatest obsession is with ourselves”. I don’t necessarily agree with this quotation. I would say something more along the lines of, art is something representative of being engaged in the activity of life, or an attempt to capture something of the essence or experience of life (which in and of itself requires a certain degree of awareness and involved thinking). I don’t believe that art itself is an obsession unless it is the artist’s obsession with his or her artistic expression. The concept however is an interesting one, as is the suggestion that self-obsession is an inherent human trait. It makes sense, the suggestion the in order to survive one must be self-consciously aware and therefore irreconcilably self-obsessed but I had never before considered it from an artistic standpoint.

➢ Bacon seems almost pseudo-masochistic in his desire for truthful representation and dialogue within and about his work. He seems so wedded to the ideal of a factual rather than an aesthetically pleasing version of reality that he is unwittingly (or perhaps consciously) alienating other members of the art world (and from his descriptions of his interactions with the subjects of his paintings, possibly other friends and acquaintances as well).
INDEX FOR READINGS

Working From Life:
  Wiley/Hudson
  Phillip Guston
  Robert Rauschenberg
  Lucien Freud
  Magdalena Abakanowicz
  Claes Oldenberg
  Wayne Thiebaud

Different Approaches:
  Femmage
  Keith Haring
  Ad Reinhardt
  Weber
  Guston*
  Oldenberg*
  Freud*

Photo As Source Material
  Chuck Close
  Francis Bacon
  Leon Golub

Form and Content in Pure Abstraction
  Agnes Martin
  Kenneth Noland
  Ellsworth Kelly
  Bridget Riley
  Reinhardt*

Life as an Artist
  Joan Mitchell
  Martin*
  Faith Ringgold
  Rauschenberg*
  Alice Neel
  Anne Truit
Guidelines for Grading

AREAS I CONSIDER WHEN GRADING EACH PROJECT:

Contribution in class, in lectures and in critiques.

Critical analysis of your own, and other’s, work.

Consistency and quality of effort.

Commitment to pushing the exploratory process further rather than staying in a "safe zone."

Mastery of basic technique.

Creative concept for your project

Successful realization of project as result of the fusion of personal concept with appropriate form.

Perfect marks in all categories will lead to an "A". Perfection means just that. “A” level work distinguishes itself as being truly extraordinary. Generally it is work that is particularly creative, extremely well-executed, and without fault. In effort as well as execution, the student has pushed beyond my expectation for high achievement. The project embodies a level of artistic merit that is unusual for college students at the level of this course.

High marks in most but not all, or high but not perfect marks in all categories, will generally result in a "B". “B” level work is, according to Wake Forest standards, superior. Generally this means that significant effort, dedication, and grasp of fundamental issues and techniques, leads to very high quality work. “B” level work distinguishes itself from “C” level work by being of high quality across the board, but does not quite achieve the unique superiority of “A” level work.

Satisfactory marks in all, or satisfactory in most and poor marks in some, will generally result in a "C". “C” level work usually means one has applied oneself and made the effort to do the project and has tried to grasp the fundamental concepts and techniques but has not yet achieved superior results. “C” level work is essentially the baseline for doing a good job.

Unsatisfactory marks in all or most categories will generally result in a "D".

"F" should be self-explanatory.
I assume most of you have not painted in at least 3 months, are terrified to start again, are sure you have lost all painting skills and are probably convinced that any skill you exhibited was just a fluke. Have no fear, we will ease back into painting—by diving right in!

Painting II will be a transitional period. I hope that you will expand the way you think about, practice and approach painting - broaden your awareness and experience of ways of manipulating various technical elements of painting and broaden the conceptual basis from which you work.

As a transitional period, Painting II may be difficult for those of you who were just getting comfortable in Painting I. We will be working in a variety of ways, some of which will suit you, some of which will not. We will look into the work of a variety of contemporary artists, some of which will suit you, some of which will not. We will start off with technical concerns within the picture frame and then examine how to think about paintings outside that frame. Hopefully, this examination will lead to greater mastery of painting in the broadest sense. By expanding your concerns and skills as a painter, you will be able to make more effective and intelligent decisions about why you paint, how you paint and what you paint.

The art of painting is the search for the appropriate relationship between form and content, between the HOW and the WHAT of a painting. WHY one paints is inextricably related to decisions about HOW and WHAT. In Painting II we will focus on the relationship between form and content with the hope that it will lead not only to more sophisticated paintings but to a clearer understanding of why you are interested in painting as a medium of expression.

Advanced Painting, extending directly from Paint 11, concentrates on the maturation of understanding the WHY and its relation to WHAT&HOW. In Advanced Painting you determine what you want to paint based on why you like art and I help you develop the best paintings possible based on the goals you set for yourself. Painting 11 helps lay the ground work for your mature paintings by exposing you to various technical and conceptual approaches and starting points. Not all approaches will work for you, but at least you will be aware of them so that you can make informed, appropriate choices for your own artwork. Paint 11, then, is the stage where you are exposed to skills (technical and conceptual) in order to create completely independent work and master those skills in Advanced Painting.

What follows are some brief statements and suggestions of issues in painting for you to think about. These are very broad issues and can provide fuel for thought for years, not just the few weeks we have in a semester. Consideration of one aspect of your work can, and may, provoke more questions of the how, what, and why of your painting and of painting in general. It is the willingness to ask the next question that will strengthen the technical, personal and conceptual aspects of your artwork.
*HOW  WHAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Structure</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color</td>
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<tr>
<td>Style, Paint Quality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
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*Decisions of style, imagery and structure
often fall somewhere on these continuums:
representational< -------->non-representational
naturalistic<------>expressionistic<---->abstraction

Part 1: TECHNICAL EXERCISES; Basic HOWS
Value Sketch
Focused Color
Inventive Approach

We will begin with a simple WHAT (straightforward formal stilllife). And I will run you through several HOWS, several technical approaches. This will get you back into painting and will give me a chance to see how your "hand" and your "eye" work. Hopefully you will become more flexible in your approach to painting. There will not be time for mastery of each technique. However, I expect concentrated analysis of the characteristics of the “means of expression” (i.e. of the qualities of each technique) and of the way form, light and space may be translated through these means. This will require thought, analysis, trial and error, courage and consistent effort. (AND, believe it or not, I want you to have some fun with this! You should think of it as getting the chance to “ride” alot of different types of “bicycles”!!)
Part 2: ADVANCED HOWS
Alternative material project
Appropriated image project

By this point, you should be warmed up. I hope you will be moving fluidly in painting and will be able to approach the last projects in a sophisticated manner. You will be asked to work with an inventive HOW [(create a painting using alternative media (and/or using appropriated imagery)). This project should originate from your own interests and desires, and you will focus on developing the appropriate format for you. It would take a year to run through the possibilities presented by all these different formats; obviously, that is not possible in one semester. But, I want you to be aware of these possibilities and I want you to brainstorm through different ideas related to these approaches. It is good exercise for concepts for future work.

Part 3: Starting from an Idea, the WHAT
The LIGHT Project

Then we will shift emphasis from a mere technical starting point (How), to starting from a concept (from a conceptual WHAT). You will have to determine first the subject matter/content (WHAT, WHY) and then decide which format can best be manipulated to express your WHAT and WHY. You will have to determine the specifics of WHAT & HOW based on the concept you choose from the broad theme of light. This may sound intimidating, but you really will just be consciously determining and analyzing what you already do intuitively when you develop your art projects.

****FINAL NOTE:

Though I initiate the assignments, it will be up to you to decide on your specific subject matter and concept and how best to paint them. Projects will start to overlap; you will be finishing one while starting to plan the next. This pacing takes getting used to and requires concentration. Once you get into the rhythm, however, the painting process becomes more fluid and you will accomplish a great deal of learning. Begin EARLY to develop ideas and formats you would like to explore for each painting. This is not something you can do the night before. We can adjust the pace, if necessary, but we will not lessen the intensity!!

HAVE FUN WITH THE ASSIGNMENTS! LET YOUR IMAGINATION AND INTELLECT ROAM OPENLY! THERE ARE NO RIGHTS OR WRONGS IN ART, ONLY BETTER OR WEAKER SOLUTIONS. There is a great deal of self-determination built into all the assignments. Use that freedom (it is a privilege); challenge yourself. The return is authentic; the rewards are lasting.
LIGHT, SPACE, & TIME

The essential elements of our perception of the physical world are light, time, and space. Most obviously, all we see is a function of light. Time is measured by light traveling through space, and space is established by the distance light travels in a given time period.

Most of what we perceive in a painting could be considered a function of one or more of these elements:

LIGHT: The illusion of color, form, space etc. is a result of the manipulation of the perception of light. Consider: What are the different qualities of light at different times? How is light registered differently on different forms or different atmospheres? How does it feel? What are the metaphorical possibilities of light? What is spiritual light?

SPACE: Within the picture frame, the illusion of space is one of the more dynamic elements. But, we should also consider the space (literal and metaphorical) that exists between the viewer and the painting -- the physical and conceptual framework.

TIME: An illusion of time within the framework, within the picture, affects our reading and response to the picture. Is there time within the painting as narrated by the imagery, by perceived actions and/or movements through the picture space? Is there a sense of a "place in time" as indicated by the painting's style? Beyond our picture plane, the context/framework is set in the immediate present. In what time is the painting set? What is the relationship of context to content?

Throughout the semester we will consider these elements (directly and indirectly) as they relate to painting.
1. LIGHT

Everything about your painting is dependent on the way you manipulate light. Always, light will be present as a formal element, otherwise we wouldn't see anything in the painting nor have much spatial illusion. Light can play a more substantial role, however, by evoking mood, acting as metaphor and by being the subject as well as the modifier in a painting (consider the Impressionists, the Luminists, or more contemporary artists such as Jane Dickson, Stephen Mueller.) No light (Ad Reinhardt) or flat light (Phillip Guston) are also powerful qualities of light in a painting, if appropriate to the content and meaning of the work.

The key here is to approach the development of light (in whatever form) as a critical aspect of your painting. You need to manipulate more consciously the light in your paintings--this is tied to color and value- and consider its impact on mood and meaning and choice of subject matter.

SEE:
Focused Pallette Project
Light Project

2. SPACE, SCALE, SIZE

Space
Space can exist within a painting -- an illusion of space: cramped, active, expansive etc. You establish the depth and breadth of the space by manipulating light, form, paint etc. within the painting and by determining the relationship of those elements to the edge of the canvas. The edge of a painting is an important element in determining the boundaries of spatial illusion. The edges of the canvas can be viewed as the edges of a window through which you look into the space. You can create the illusion that space extends way beyond those edges or that it is contained within the frame.

As well as moving space beyond the edges and deep within the painting, you can also choose to flatten it toward the surface thereby reaffirming the picture plane. Once you flatten the space, the surface becomes dominant, and the surface is read as a shape defined by the edges of the canvas. No longer do you have an illusion which denies the surface plane of your canvas. The painting can now be seen as a thing-- a square, a rectangle, a circle etc. -- an object. Consider what the relationship is between subject matter and content and the shape of your canvas.

In considering this edge/frame, we should consider the size, scale, space, shape of the canvas (and even whether we should use canvas), and examine these elements in relationship to what we are trying to communicate. In this way we do not take the canvas for granted. Instead we recognize that the relationship of viewer-to-canvas-to-image is an important one. We see that there is a dynamic relationship beyond the edges of the frame as well as within.
**Scale & Size**

Scale becomes a component of space, as scale helps establish spatial relationships. Scale implies a relationship. You can change the scale by changing the relationship of: image size to image size, image size to size of the picture plane, image size to human size. Obviously, since scale can be established in relation to the size of the picture plane, we need to consider the size of the picture plane as an active element that interacts not only with images within but also with the viewer outside.

We tend to use ourselves as a standard of measure. Shifts away from a conventional norm or physical norm have impact. Consider: the effect of large objects next to small, small items in a very large frame; a vast landscape in a small frame; a painting 2 stories high; a 10' painting with 2" images etc. If you work on a large painting and have small scale images, what are the implications of this large size/small scale relationship? What kind of space does that create? What is the relationship of size of canvas to body of the viewer? Does it envelop the viewer or does the viewer envelop it? What does it mean if a painting is very small? What does it mean if you are forced to move up close to read a painting or if you are forced to move far away? How can size/scale be manipulative? Should space and scale be neutral in relationship to the viewer (i.e. everything in harmonious proportion) or dynamic?

SEE:  
*Alternative Material/Format Project, version2*

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**3. TIME**

(a) **Inside The Frame**

Paintings (as opposed to film, music or even sculpture) are fixed. You see everything at once, beginning and end simultaneously. In the painted world then, what creates time?

There are many ways of approaching time in a painting:

- Is it a literal reading of the representational illusion in a painting (i.e. time of day, morning for example)? (Monet landscape, Eric Fischl).

- Is it a frozen moment-- a still-life for example? (Gordon Cook, John Sparagana).

- Or can time become active, expansive? This can be achieved through the illusion of movement, motion in the painting.

In the physical world, time is a function of light moving through space. You do not have time unless you have movement. In painting this motion may come through following the illusion of representational actions (a man falling, a nude descending the

(a) inside the frame, contd.
staircase), through the implied movement of repeated shapes (Matta), through changes from light to darkness and the time implied following this change (Chris Brown, Caravaggio). Through narrative, too, time can expand beyond the confines of literal action on the canvas (Sue Coe, Eric Fischl, Bosch).

In a narrative painting, there is a sense that something is happening, has happened and/or is about to happen -- action, activity, movement through time. If your audience has a shared history, a common mythology, illustrating one moment may trigger a response to fill in the whole story. The narrative could be illustrated by activity B on an implied continuum of activity A to-> activity B to-> activity C. Or, the narrative could be created through a more abstract montage of images from various times within the complete narrative.

SEE:
Inventive Approach Project
Narrative Project

(b) **Beyond The Frame**

So far, I have referred to time as something that can be represented by imagery and actions within the painting, within the frame. We can look to implications of time in a more expansive way by examining the framework/context outside the painting and the painting’s relationship to it.

Paintings are created during a fixed point in time and are always seen/experienced in the present. Because paintings last for hundreds of years, the dynamic between the time a painting is painted and the time it is seen changes radically. The current political, artistic, social, physical climate may be very different from the context in which the painting was made. Indeed, the role and place of a painting may have changed dramatically from when it was made. In what way is the meaning/role of the painting affected by the painting being seen outside its original context? For example, consider religious tableaux which have been removed from the churches and placed in museums. In what context (physical, conceptual) do you want your work to be seen? How does it affect the meaning? Does it matter that your work is going to be seen in an ever-changing context?

Often paintings can be dated through the examination of their style, technique and content (literal, conceptual). Painting has been commonly used to illustrate contemporary conditions and concerns. One of painting's broad roles has been to communicate about the times in which they were made - to record, illustrate, and comment on conditions at that time. What happens to the vitality or significance of a painting if it refers to events occurring one hundred years ago? What distance does history create? Does this distance make the painting more acceptable now than during the time period it was made?

(b) **Beyond the Frame, contd.**
Think about controversial artwork today, how will it be viewed in 50-100 years (Serrano, Sue Williams)? What does it mean if we are more willing to collect and support art from the past than to support contemporary work?

Does contemporary art need to address, on some level, in some way, the current life condition, the current needs? Is art, in the traditions in which we know it, capable of this role?

Do paintings still communicate? And if so, what and how? If the content of a painting is contemporaneous should the style be contemporary too? How do we read paintings created today that use/appropriate styles from the past?

For some, the need to involve art in contemporary life leads to political art. Can art be political? Can art be apolitical? For some, art speaks only about art. Is that enough?

SEE: Appropriated Imagery Project
### HOW

How you present the “What”

= Decisions about—
  * Style
  * Compositional Structure
  * Scale
  * Space
  * Light
  * Color
  * Paint Quality
  * medium/materials

*choices in these areas usually fall along a continuum, for example:

- representational--nonrepresentational;
- naturalistic--expressionistic--abstract

### WHAT

**Content:** meaning, concepts, ideas conveyed in your paintings.

**And**

**Subject matter:** what you actually paint in order to convey your ideas/content

### WHY

source of inspiration and why you choose the Hows that you do.

### ROLE/INTENT

- painting as a/an:
  - narrative device
  - window onto a scene/illusion
  - object/thing
  - phenomena
  - spiritual expression
  - personal expression
  - socio/political expression

*can you add to this list?*

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**IN MAKING A WORK OF ART, ONE MAKES DECISIONS IN EACH OF THESE AREAS. THESE CATEGORIES ARE INEXTRICABLY BOUND TOGETHER. I HAVE MERELY TRIED TO LAY THEM OUT SO THAT YOU CAN BE MORE AWARE OF SOME OF THE AREAS OF CREATIVE DECISION-MAKING.**
1. Technical Exercises

Goal:
to reacquaint you with the activity of painting and to briefly expose you to several new technical approaches to painting. Specifically: wipe-out, glazing, impasto, and block painting.

Wipe-out- Essentially a thin value painting that gives you a value structure over which you can glaze with color. You need a smooth, gessoed board. Your composition is roughly painted in flat tones of a single color- warm brown. Then with rags, brushes, q-tips, etc. the light and the whites are created by wiping away the excess wet paint.

Glazing- A classic “old master” technique that involves laying one sheer color over another; the effect is much like creating a painting out of colored sheets of acetate. Transparent colors lend themselves to glazing; opaque colors, like the cadmiums, can not be made transparent. Glazing allows for painted light to show through color. You start with an underpainting that is light in tone so that there is room for paint to darken the layers of colors. Usually this monochromatic (value) painting is known as grisaille. Glazing colors are thinned out with medium and applied from lighter to darker in subsequent layers. Each layer must be dry before the next is applied.

Impasto -This is the term for painterly texture in painting. One builds up a heavy surface to the paint, giving the painting a tactile quality and making it more of an object and less dedicated to pure two-dimensional illusion. Working with a textured ground creates an immediate surface that catches and holds color. Initially concentrating on layering areas of different color over one another is very effective since bits of color will start to show through at various layers. Using a palette knife to create strong textures, particularly later in the painting, helps enhance surface appeal. Again, emphasis on value changes that are strong and broad will help establish form. Any “fussy” detail will only be lost in the texture.
**Block painting**—color, volume and planar changes are all indicated by a myriad of color patches. You are probably familiar with the “block” painting method if you have seen Cezanne’s paintings. You will start your block painting with broad, simple strokes of different color/value, and then proceed with smaller and more complex break down of areas into strokes of different color and value. The big difference is that you are not mixing wet-into-wet. Instead, you make decisions about how to break an area down into color/value changes and then you mix the colors on the palette and apply to the canvas. The effect is chunkier—more like a mosaic. Round objects will look more like they are carved out of color since you will avoid blending down to intermediate tones between colors.

We will do a series of exercises where you try your hand at all these techniques. You will work from life for the subject matter of these paintings. You will need to set up a simple, single object still-life. Because we will be working quickly, we will work on small panels. This eliminates (unfortunately) much manipulation of scale and spatial relationships within the paintings. However, as with all paintings involving imagery, light—how it operates across and around forms, how it is absorbed and reflected by the surface, and the overall mood and quality it establishes—is key. Therefore, success of these paintings is dependent on your choosing an object over which light and space moves in an interesting way (i.e. no teeny-tiny things; no objects so broken up that they neutralize light.) And, success depends on your setting up an effective lighting arrangement. Your best bet is to find a good balance between simplicity and complexity. Take your time to make a good set-up. If you go on in any design field—graphics, architecture, professional photography, commercial art and advertising, filmmaking, etc-- you will use the same skills and aesthetic eye necessary to create a good set-up. Start practicing now!!

A final word of advice:
All these paintings require you build your paintings up in terms of broad color/value changes. Details are only added at the very end of the painting. Look for the broad, underlying structure. This is the key to all visual work, whether it is fine art, commercial, graphic, etc.
PAINTING 2

2. FOCUSED COLOR PROJECT
Create a painting of a simple still-life using a focused palette of color, for example, a green focus palette would be all possible greens and green family with some accent colors. The illusion of light should be well-developed so that forms are very volumetric and so that there is a sense of deep space within the painting.

WHAT-
Subject matter:
Still-life of flowerpots, balls, etc. Simple shapes of various size and value. These are simple shapes that capture light, shadow and have volume.

Content: No content in terms of meaning, neither intellectual, psychological, political, emotional, nor spiritual. However, the visual message conveyed is one of very deep, illusory space. Essentially, the viewer should feel that they could climb in or reach into your painting. The focused color should create a unified painting.

HOW-
Scale: Objects should be painted approximately life-size and should fill the picture plane to the edges. No isolated still-life floating in the center of the canvas. One should have negative spaces between some of the objects. These negative spaces should be a strategic part of the composition.

Space: Strong spatial illusion is key to this project. The furthest items should look way far away; the closest items should look like they float off the picture plane.

Light: The illusion of light in the painting should be very strong. You may need to exaggerate the natural lighting. This will create a convincing illusion of form, volume and space.

Color: Color is going to be focused. With focused color, you will have a unified painting which makes a strong visual statement. This is not a value painting with just one color and white. Instead, you will choose one color family (primary or secondary) and establish a **full range** of that color family and then **mix them into every other color** you have. Then, the addition of different degrees of white will change the values of all these colors that have a related color/bloodline.

Style/Paint Quality: Aim for loose painting style that has a degree of control so that illusions are convincing. Do not be too “tight”, you will “kill” the life in the painting. Work with thickness and texture to help create movement and volume.

PAINTING 2
2. **FOCUSED COLOR PROJECT, contd.**

**ROLE/INTENT-**  
Painting as an illusion.  
A formal exercise.

**WHY-** To help you gain mastery over form, light, space & color in oil paint.

**WHERE-**  
Exhibit in the classroom, and later, after you are famous, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art!
3. Inventive Approach Project, variation of Focused Color Project

Same formal concerns (the HOW) as in FC project with focused color, emphasized light and space. But, in terms of style, paint quality and materials, you are going to be more experimental. You are going to work with long handles attached to your brushes, brayers to roll layers of color over sections of your painting, spatulas to scrape away sections of paint, sticks to inscribe the paint, even, your fingers if you wish.

The goal is to loosen you up and to create a visually exciting painting that has a sense of space and light and references the still-life objects. This painting may end up being fairly abstract, but the structural elements of light, deep space, volume, etc. will still be very evident. The degree of looseness and experimentation with paint application you achieve will lead to the varying degrees of abstraction.

ROLE/INTENT-
Still to give an illusion of space and light, but also to create a visually arresting painting through the imaginative, creative application and manipulation of paint.

WHY-
To help loosen you up and stimulate your creativity!
In discussing the format of a painting you should consider size, scale, painting material. For the most part, we have employed the very old tradition of canvas stretched over a wooden frame and oil paint (it tends to be a convenient and durable format). What if you change this format?

Canvas is a relatively neutral ground -- what happens if you paint on wood, cardboard, or over newspaper ads etc.? What is the relationship of images to the ground you paint on? How much should images dominate ground or ground dominate images? Should they inform each other (for example, wood grain used to create water, advertising imagery melded with painted imagery?)

Different paint materials read differently—airbrush, sign enamel are very industrial; acrylic and modeling pastes are plastic, modern. What happens if you combine different painting materials? Look at the work of Anselm Kiefer, for example, worked on huge scale, over 10 ft. in each direction and combined oil paint, tar, lead, straw etc.

Consider using found materials in your work. If you add an object to your painting, don’t think of it merely in terms of its original context (actual playing card used in picture of a card game). Instead, how can you transform it? Consider using an object in terms of its formal qualities (shape, texture etc.) and/or for its metaphorical implications. Vernon Fisher used the metaphorical and formal qualities of a wooden column and painted a scene of the ocean on it. If you paint on an object, does it become sculpture or painting (look at Willie Birch)? In other words, form and content must be considered.

Do a painting which alters the format you generally use. Experiment -- consider scale, shape and size of canvas, type of ground (canvas or...?), mixed media, alternate media. Examine form in relation to content (you decide what you want to paint about). Think about the role of the painting to the viewer and the role of the painting to the subject matter.

EXAMPLES:
Sara Kuseske, for example, used pieces of stripped down corrugated cardboard on which she painted images of sheep as a metaphorical and personal expression of her religious beliefs. These were atmospheric paintings where the corrugations blurred the images in a beautiful way. The paintings spoke of the transformation from mundane to divine, from refuse material to precious art object.

Molly Hughes combined appropriated images and alternative format. She created a large black and white, mixed media piece that combined a top layer of B&W transparencies of nude female images from art history superimposed over a B&W painted self-portrait. The transparencies both revealed and distorted the painting underneath, an interesting comment on the image of women.

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Generally, we think of painting oil paintings on canvases or panels. This is such common practice that we accept the format as being relatively neutral and as reading as a window onto a scene or as an object.

One of the ways to learn about painting, and how paintings operate, is to shift away from that given format. Much in the way moving away from home often makes you focus on yourself and your own qualities, creating a painting within a new context often makes one aware of choices in color, light, scale texture, imagery, etc that you may be taking for granted.

For this project, you are going to work with found material and create a painting with the found material/object that responds to the qualities of the material and transforms the “information” inherent in the material.

Your project may manifest itself as a more “literal” response to the physical structure of the material. For example, you find corrugated metal; you are intrigued by the play of light and shadow over the ridges and valleys of the metal. Therefore, you create an abstract painting with stripes of different values that try to visually flatten the ridges in some places and exaggerate the ridges in other places. This, then, is not just a rippled piece of metal with paint on it. Now, it is transformed into a breathtakingly beautiful abstract painting that deals with issues of optics.

Or, you may respond to the material in a more metaphorical way. William Crow worked with old pieces of rusted metal, playing off the references to “the past” inherent in the rusted parts. He also played off the notion of parts creating a whole. For his project, he worked with paint and wax to paint portraits based on old family photos, on the rusted parts. The rusted metal acted as a “framing” device and looked like a collection of old, framed family portraits. The paintings resonated with the found material and read as a personal “archeology”—a looking back to understand the present.

Note: if your alternative material is a found object, you will need to interact with the “image” presented by this object in a metaphorical and/or conceptual way.

For example, Vernon Fisher’s work employs objects in a wonderful, metaphorical way. Using an old wooden column, Fisher scraped away some of the paint and painted an ocean scene so that the found object and the painted illusion resonate poetically together.

Vija Celmins did a piece where she found rocks and made and painted an exact replica of each individual rock. This is a wonderful conceptual piece that inspires awe, while raising questions of authenticity and uniqueness.

Some other recent student projects include:
- Squeegeeing plaster through different found mesh screens. This created a variable and very intriguing surface that the student enhanced with layers of paint, thereby creating a shimmering and highly tactile abstraction.
-Painting a portrait of the family matriarch on a rusted old clothes iron, thereby creating a highly metaphorical and poetic piece.
-Erica Grace painted on layers of glass to create a painting that could be seen from 360 degree points of view. The layered effect combined the transparency of glass and the opacity of paint to dramatic effect.
-Sara Kuseske, for example, used pieces of stripped down corrugated cardboard on which she painted images of sheep as a metaphorical and personal expression of her religious beliefs. These were atmospheric paintings where the corrugations blurred the images in a beautiful way. The paintings spoke of the transformation from mundane to divine, from refuse material to precious art object.
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-Kapri Gunn painted teacups grey and then painted small landscapes on them, referencing the decorative tradition of china and representing her mother’s nostalgic wistfulness for a sense of beauty in the world.
-Ryan Busch worked to develop ways of integrating found imagery from magazines and paint in order to develop abstractions that are neither paint nor collage but a perfect hybrid.
-Emily Johnson did multiple experiments with fake fur, epoxy resin and paint in order to find the perfect way of working between the property’s of these materials.

Finding your material requires sensitivity, creativity and initiative.

Once you have your material, you will have to experiment with it. You will need to learn what information is imbedded in the surface/ structure/ form of your alternative material. How are you going to employ this information?

Then you need to adjust your painting to work with, and enhance, the reading you want to generate with this new format. Do you need to get small brushes and work in a very tight and refined style on your alternative material? Do you need to work in layers of paint, and sand in between, in order to play off the grain of wood on your found material? Do you need to adjust your colors so that the color of your paint melds into the found object, almost like a mirage? In other words, you cannot just launch into your painting on found material just like you would a painting on a standard canvas. A new, transformational, relationship needs to be established between your painting and the new material. You need to consider surface, light, metaphor, placement, scale, style, etc. in light of this new, found context for your painting.

REMEMBER--Experimentation takes time, persistence, ingenuity, sensitivity and creativity!!

1st-Collect possible materials
2nd Brainstorm your visual, visceral, and intellectual responses to these materials
3rd Experiment with how to paint on these materials
4th Focus on a project
5th Execute the project
5. APPROPRIATED IMAGE PROJECT

With the advent of photography, our way of viewing and recording the world changed. Till then, painting, drawing, graphic arts had been the primary means of holding and presenting a "vision". While the "death of painting" has been an annual cry since photography's inception (why need to translate a scene into paint when photography can freeze the actual moment of seeing?), painting has not died. Instead, it has used photography both as a source material and as an impetus to broaden the definition of the possibilities of painting.

The broadened subjects and meanings of painting can be traced through the development of modern and post-modern art. The tie between painting and commercial commodities (Warhol or Allan McCollum), the purity of painting as primary (Reinhardt or Mondrian), the "bad painting" of the 80's, are all, in some part, reactions to the access, ease and impact of photographic images. These images, whether in advertising, home snapshots, film or TV, are a prevalent part of our reality. It makes sense then that in "painting from life" photographs can serve as subject. In some cases, the still photo has replaced the still-life.

The best paintings from photographic material explore and exploit photos strengths and characteristics instead of using photographs as a crutch to avoid painting from life. These paintings embrace the actuality of the photo, the look, the gloss, the distortion (Paschke, Wojnarowicz, Tansey). They use photography as away of seeing, a way of scrutinizing reality (Chuck Close, Leon Golub). They use photography for its aura, its potential for nostalgia, for its "memory", for its illusion (Christopher Brown, Gerhard Richter).

For this project, use appropriated images as a starting point for your paintings.

Consider what you want to say through your painting and determine if there are images (and implications associated with images) that will work for your subject.

Consider the role of the image. What does it say beyond its literal information; what does it signify?

For instance:

The Marlborough Man
- cigarettes
- American ideal of the rugged individualist
- market propaganda / manipulation “buy our brand and you will be associated with this ideal.”

You could decide, then, to do a painting that is socio-politically oriented and talk about market manipulation of society. Or, in a very different style, you could do a painting that reveled in the American romantic ideal and explore what this means to you.

STUDENT EXAMPLE-

William Crow used photographs found in his grandfather’s attic in order to explore his relationship to his family ad his identity as a young, gay man. The photos were starting points for paintings that combined images and collaged elements (wire, rusted metal, nuts and bolts). The paintings had the impact of a “scrapbook” and a sense of personal archeology, of looking back to understand the present.
PAINT 2
6. NARRATIVE PAINTING PROJECT

Read TIME section in NOTES ON PAINTING ELEMENTS

Make a narrative painting. Create the sense that something has happened, is happening, or is about to happen. Which points do you want to represent? (Look at Leon Golub.) How literal do you want to be? How dramatic? How subtle? (Look at Sue Coe.) Is there such a thing as a common history/experience today? Can you rely on a common mythology? Do we have symbols or images that we can "read"? With how broad an audience do you want to communicate? Does the breadth of audience affect decisions you make about your narrative? (Look at Keith Haring.)

EXAMPLE-
Matt Jones did a wonderful narrative series on education. He carefully orchestrated the shape of the canvas, scale of images, distortion of space, color and light for dramatic effect. The best in the series were the most pared down; you can say a lot with a little if you present it correctly.
PAINT 2

7. LIGHT PROJECT, version 2  (In this class we are trying to expand your options in terms of the possible subjects for your painting and the options for developing formats appropriate to those subjects. This (the light paintings project) is a good model to consider when developing your own ideas.

Paintings are always a combination of form/formal qualities and content/concepts. So far this semester, we have focused on refining form (the HOW)--we have worked from different technical beginnings: value sketch, focused palette, inventive technique. We are working, now, from an alternative material in hopes of coming up with content/concepts generated from that new form. The alternative format project is a “bridge” project that moves us from strictly “HOW” to experimenting with HOW and What in tandem. Next, we will start from “the other end of the equation,” from the WHAT. For the Light Project, we will start from content/concept and develop an appropriate format for conveying this concept. In the end, one hopes for a perfect union of form and content.

Basically for this project you will consider the varied meanings of the definition of the word light and create at least two paintings that interpret one or more of those meanings.

Deceptively simple as an initial concept, the varied forms and meanings of the word light provide rich material for painterly exploration. As either a noun, a verb or as an adjective, light can be an object, an action or/ and a modifier. Your paintings, too, can be about very simple “things” (content/subject). But the way you modify those “things”--through the process, action and form of your painting; through the “adjectives” you create for your subject--takes your work beyond the mundane to be a significant visual statement.

Consider carefully all the possible meanings and implications of light. Consider the potential poetics of some of the definitions of light: "having little weight" (read Unbearable Lightness of Being by Kundera); "a thing by means of which something can be started burning"---passion, or an incendiary comment.

Consider the potential paradoxes between some interpretations of light. For example, the paradox between light as a spiritual metaphor/positive force and as a destructive potential (to light a fire)—consider the recent tragedy of the church burnings, and the World Trade Center disaster: in both cases passion and religious fervor led to destructive fires. Working from the definitions of light, can you brainstorm a list of ideas/concepts for painting subjects?

Then, you need to think about how light works in the format of your painting. How do you use light in a formal way so that it impacts and enhances the reading of the subject of your painting AND serves as the subject itself??

In your painting could you use light as a metaphor, as a role in a narrative, as a subjective, expressive element? Could you combine several aspects of light into one painting? For example--you choose to focus on light as a spiritual metaphor (content) and use the image of a lighted candle (subject) in a painting that employs Chiaroscuro (format) as a stylistic technique to enhance the drama and impact of your content. Could you work with light on a more conceptual level--marking the pattern of light as it moves across a landscape, for instance?
Use your How, What, Why sheet to expand your thinking about ways to approach these paintings. How will you structure these paintings-- what style, what role will the paint and imagery play? How do these support your content/concept?
DEFINITION OF THE WORD LIGHT

Light (lit), n. [ME. liht; AS. leoht; akin to G. licht; IE. base *leuq-, to shine, bright, seen also in L. lucere, to shine, lux, lumen. light (cf. LUCID, LUMINOUS), luna, moon (cf. LUNAR). etc.]. 1. a) that which makes it possible to see: opposed to darkness; form of radiant energy that acts upon the retina of the eye, optic nerve, etc., making sight possible: this energy is transmitted at a velocity of about 186,000 miles per second by wavelike or vibrational motion. b) a form of radiant energy similar to this, but not acting of the normal retina, as ultraviolet and infrared radiation. 2. the rate of flow of light radiation with respect to the sense of sight: it is measured in lumens. 3. the sensation that light stimulates in the organs of sight. 4. brightness; illumination: usually with reference to a particular case. 5. the thing from which light comes; source of light, as a lamp, the sun, etc. 6. the light from the sun; daylight or dawn. 7. a thing by means of which something can be started burning: as, a light for a cigarette. 8. the means by which light is let in; window or windowpane. 9. knowledge; enlightenment; mental illumination: as, early writings shed light on our past. 10. public knowledge or view: as, every day new facts are brought to light. 11. the way in which something is seen; appearance due to what is presented to view; aspect: as, he put the matter in an unfavorable light. 12. facial expression showing a mental or emotional state: as, a light of recognition came into his eyes. 13. a person whose brilliant record makes him an example for others; outstanding figure: as, a shining light. 14. in the fine arts, a) the quality suggestive of light. b) the part of a picture upon which light is represented as falling. adj. [ME. liht; AS. leoht], 1. having light; not dark; bright. 2. pale in color; whitish; fair. adv. [<the adj.], palely: as, the ribbon is light blue. v.t. [LIGHTED (-id) or LIT (lit), LIGHTING], 1. to set on fire: ignite: as, let’s light a bonfire. 2. to cause to give off light: as, she lit the lamp. 3. to give light to; furnish with light: as, lamps light the streets. 4. to brighten; animate. 5. to show the way to by or as by giving light: as, the beacon lighted the planes safely to the airport. v.i. 1. to catch fire: as, the fuse lighted at once. 2. to be lighted; brighten (usually with up).

according to one’s lights, as one’s opinions, information, or abilities may direct.
bring to light, to reveal; disclose.
come to light, to be revealed or disclosed.
in the light of, with knowledge of; considering.
light up, 1. to make or become light. 2. to make or become bright, cheerful, etc.
3. [Colloq.], to begin smoking (a cigar, etc.).
see the light (of day), 1. to come into existence. 2. to come to public view. 3. to understand.
shed (or throw) light on, to give facts about; clarify.
stand in one’s own light, to harm oneself or one’s reputation by acting foolishly, thoughtlessly, or unwisely.
strike a light, to make a flame, as with a match.

light (lit). adj. [ME. liht; AS. leoht (< *Gmc. linxta); akin to G. leicht, not heavy, not difficult; IE. base *lengwh-to < *legwh-, light in weight or motion (LIGHTS, LUNG), 1. having little weight; not heavy, 2. having little weight for its size; of low specific gravity. 3. below the usual or defined weight: as, light coin. 4. less than usual or normal in amount, extent, intensity, force, etc.; specifically, a) falling or striking with little force or impact: as, a light blow. b) of less than the usual quantity or density: as, light vote, a light rain. c) not thick, coarse, or massive; delicate and graceful in structure: as, light tracery, light architecture. d) not violent or intense; mild: as a light wind. e) soft, muted, or muffled: as, a light sound. f) not prolonged or intense: as, light applause. 5. of little
importance; not serious or profound: as *light* conversation. 6. easy to bear; not burdensome: as, a *light* tax. 7. easy to do; not difficult: as, *light* work. 8. not burdened with grief or sorrow; gay; happy; buoyant: as, *light* spirits. 9. flighty; frivolous; fickle; capricious. 10. loose in morals: wanton. 11. dizzy; giddy. 12. of an amusing or nonserious nature: as, *light* entertainment, *light* reading. 13. containing little alcohol: as, *light* wine. 14. characterized by qualities suggestive of little weight; not dense, hard, full, etc.; specifically, a) not as full as usual; moderate: as, a *light* meal. b) easy to digest. c) well leavened; soft and spongy: as, a *light* cake. d) loose in consistency; easily crumbled; porous: as, *light* sand. 15. moving with ease and nimbleness: as, she is *light* on her feet. 16. carrying little weight: as, we shall travel *light*. 17. unstressed or slightly stressed: said of a syllable in phonetics, prosody, etc. 18. having light weapons, armor, equipment, etc.: as, a *light* tank. 19. in meteorology, designating a condition (*light air*) in which the speed of the wind is from 1 to 3 miles per hour. adv. lightly. v.i. [LIGHTED (-id) or LIT (lit), LIGHTING], [ME. lihten; AS. lihtan, lyhtan; also aphetic for alight], 1. [Rare], to get down from a horse or vehicle; dismount; alight. 2. come to rest after traveling through the air: as, we waited for the ducks to *light*. 3. to come by chance; happen (with on or upon). 4. to fall or strike suddenly, as a blow.

*light in the head*, 1. dizzy. 2. simple; foolish.

*light into*, [Slang], 1. to attack. 2. to scold; berate.

*light out*, [Slang], to depart suddenly.

*make light of*, to treat as trifling or unimportant; pay little or no attention to.
EXAMPLES:
See attached proposals.

How/What/Why Proposal
By, Amy Bumgardner

What:
I have chosen to use light as “radiant energy.” I am using abstract “design” (for lack of a
better word) to portray the energy. I want the energy of the act of painting to jump into
the painting and bring it alive and turn into the light’s energy. I want to create a depth,
sometimes a deceiving back and forth of different levels.

Why:
My source of inspiration is my clayboards. Although I found working on the clayboards
difficult at first, I found that the freedom of being able to scrape, scratch, and paint over,
etc. so easily made me realize the actual energy that the act of painting produces in me.
I have never found so much energy actually coming from myself; I think that I found it in
the freedom working of the clayboards, so I wanted to continue to convey this energy on
a larger scale and see how far I can push the concept.

Role/Intent:
My intent is to portray an illusion of personal expression, and possibly a spiritual
expression. From the paint itself and how it is applied and manipulated, I want the
texture, the color, the light, etc. to convey, in fact to radiate, with the energy that I put
into making the painting.

How:
I am starting each painting with some sort of non-representational structure that gets
abstracted as I apply more paint and manipulate it. I am building up overlapping and
interacting levels of space that vary in size. The light will emanate from the levels, not
with stark brightness, but with a brilliance that jumps around and reflects off the different
sections. To convey the sense of heat energy, I want to build complex structures of
different textures made by scratching with my palette knife, or scraping fresh paint away
to leave a haziness underneath, or sanding away sections that have fully dried, or
smoothing out sections with long, even brush strokes. The act of painting and the paint
itself will create my sense of light as radiant energy.

Where:
My paintings will be seen by other classmates and other people that may roam around
the art building especially if it is hung in the hallway. I want the viewer to feel the energy
of the painting, not in the sense of being blinded by its brilliance, but almost as feeling
the energy as heat (but not as heat from the sun, heat from say, a machine that is
working very fast and gets hot just from the motion).

Lightness
I am painting a lightness of life. I will manipulate light and subject matter to create a sense of the light of spirit that I see as “lightness” or “lightheartedness.” I intend to use an image of a child playing with an egg. I will focus on the child’s hands in the action of holding or squeezing or dripping the egg white and yolk.

The delicacy or lightness of the egg, as well as the lightheartedness of the child, will both be caught in the overhead light. I want to emphasize the bright jovial light especially as it highlights the child’s features and especially as reflected in the liquid yolk and white of the egg in and on the child’s hands. I intend to work on a large (for me) canvas, maybe twice the size of our still life supports. I want to paint detail on a large scale to procure that curious study and pure scrutiny of children as well as paint more loosely to suggest the impetuous and unbound spirit of lightness. I will depend mostly on a yellow palette contrasted with blue background and some red, blushy flesh tones (again breaking things down into the basics, the primary colors).

I want to focus on a scene so enlarged and focused that it slightly dwarfs the audience, perhaps taking them back to the times when they stood full height at their mothers’ elbows. Both the child and the egg are potential. The child is the inevitable adult and the egg symbolizes life force. In essence, they are precious and heavily significant beings in their own right. However, to retain a certain lightness, and we treat this more as insignificance. In one painting I want to cast this scene in the bright, soft lightness of a child. Almost drenched in light to signify the giddy brightness of sentiment. In the other painting, I want to use one definite light source that casts a stark, high contrast light on the subject. I intend to use the same subject but not exactly the same perspective or setup of the child playing with the egg for both. In one painting, I want to evaluate this lightness as I appreciate it (and I think that most people at least recall it) as elated, resilient, and playful, and in the other painting I want to evaluate its “worth” (or lack thereof) to the world at large in real life.

I want to go back to basics, when I studied odd little things because it was fun. When I snuck off quietly to take a closer look at something or to do something I knew my parents would disapprove of. I want to remember and hopefully reapply this lightness of spirit. I think it will come in handy for the challenges ahead. I feel on the cusp of graduation, this is the way I should be looking at life. However, I recognize the internal and external conquest for maturity discourages this lightness that is often seen as weakness or foolishness. I have strived to retain a great deal of this lightheartedness that some people read as immaturity. I would like to evaluate both perceptions. Ultimately, I seek to glorify this lightness and rekindle it in others.

I seek to illustrate that frivolity does not equate triviality. I want this frivolity to arrest the viewer who would otherwise pass it by in the hallway or in a gallery. I recognize that this will be as challenging as getting my father to stop and sate at clouds. I want that level of consideration and wonder and lightness of living for the viewer.
How/What/Why Proposal
By, Jim Argenta

WHAT:

I decided to approach light in the context of how people think they see color and light and how the human eye actually receives light and color sensations. I plan to use the physiological effect of “after image” to achieve this purpose. I will paint six paintings in the “after image” manner. Then I will place six more neutral gray canvases of the same size below the paintings. The viewer will be able to stare at the painting in its negative, after image form, then look to the gray canvas and see the image in the coloring inverse to those in the original paintings. These paintings will be similar to the flag series done by Jasper Johns but with more three-dimensional qualities.

The subject matter I have chosen for this work is roses and violets. I have chosen this subject matter because of the familiar phrase “Roses are Red and Violets are Blue.” Out of the six paintings, none of them will have both red roses and blue violets. Of the six “after images” that will appear to the viewer on the gray canvases, only one will be the correct, typical painting of red roses and blue violets.

WHY:

I hope that the series of paintings will be able to be read in several ways.

1. That common and traditional assumptions, often accepted by people without question, are often corrected by science. The common perception of color and how the human eye senses this color is often misunderstood. Few people realize that primary colors of pigment and light are actually different. This series of paintings will explore this difference and hopefully enlighten the viewer to the science of light and how color is transported to the human eye by it.

2. Because only one out of the twelve paintings is the common image of red roses and blue violets with all the colors are in the correct places, it will hopefully make the viewer realize that there are many different ways to look at a single subject. The fact that this “correct image” is an “after image” means that the viewer must acknowledge and experience the process involved in #1.

3. Hopefully this series of paintings will also cause the reader to question bounds of what they believe to be reality. Questioning the concept of what color really is and how it is transported through light waves will hopefully lead the viewer to question other aspects of their life which they have never really questioned before by simply accepted.

4. Finally, I hope that this painting will have people question the idea of painting just a simple flower. Painting a simple flower the way it is seen in a photograph is just one way to see the flower. However, this series will hopefully question the view of “fine art” and the seemingly lack of meaning and content in the image of a flower.

HOW:

I have chosen an image of roses and violets. All of the six actual paintings will have the same subject matter. The colors will shift from the three primary aspects of
The paintings: the roses, the violets, and the background. None of the paintings will have the same color pattern between the three aspects and the three colors that will be used.

The paintings will be on six canvases. Each canvas will be 1.5 by 2.5 feet in size. Six more canvases of the same size will be made and painted a neutral gray color. These will be the canvas the viewer looks at to see the after image.

The colors used will be:

- Black in painting for white in after image
- White in painting for black in after image
- Blue-green in painting for red in after image
- Red in painting for blue-green in after image
- Yellow-orange in painting for blue in after image
- Blue in painting for yellow-orange in after image