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Senior Project

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### Senior Project Paper

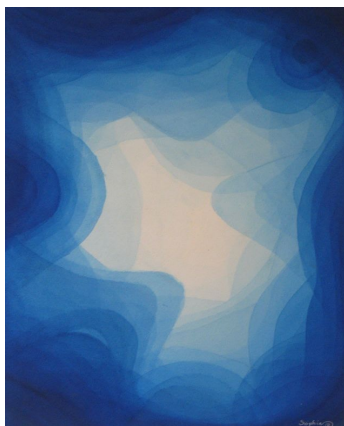
Everyone needs to find something that helps them escape from this world. A way to get away from the busy way of life that society has created for us. I have taken to many different art forms over the years to express myself. I have always needed a form of expression so I can make it through my day. Come home and find a way to relax at the end of a long school day. A singular way to expel all the negative energy that is built up inside me. Art has always been my form of therapy, even when I swam. After my swimming days were over, I fully switched to art as my therapy.

Like I said before, swimming was my outlet beforehand. I had spent over 13 years of my life swimming. Going to the pool before and after school just to get my practice in. I would go to swim even when there was ice on the deck and I couldn't stop shaking from the cold. My commitment to swimming was what fueled my motivation in almost all my other aspects of my life. Knowing that I could push myself through grueling practices and countless hours of training helped me believe in myself. Swimming helped me calm down and focus on what I needed to do to succeed in life and once I lost that outlet I didn't know what to do. I broke my ankle and I wasn't able to swim or compete anymore so I needed to find another outlet to help me focus on

myself. That outlet was art. I am able to sit down and recenter myself even while the world might be falling apart around me.

Having my outlet being art is very convenient actually, I don't need to have to go anywhere specific. When I come home, after my homework is done, I paint with watercolors and journal endlessly. I express my feelings and thoughts onto the paper hoping to let go of my anxieties and concerns that I have. Because of my extensive background with watercolor painting, I started looking for the idea of my project with that in mind. I went through so many ideas before I settled one. I knew it was the right choice because I was so excited to try new things with my new idea. I wanted to jump in, I didn't care if I sunk to the bottom. I was going to swim my way through this new challenge that I had set out for myself.

But before jumping into how I did everything, what is veil painting? Veil painting is a Waldorf type of watercolor painting. The main purpose of this style of painting is to build the color up on the paper. The watercolor paints used for veil painting are very watered down and liquidy. Unlike acrylic painting, when applying the pigments the paper must be completely flat or the paint pigment will run the paper ruining the whole painting. Each painting takes multiple days or weeks due to the fact that you must let each layer of each color pigment dry completely before you add the next. Here is a very good example of singular color watercolor veil painting.



#### THE PROCESS BEGINS

I hadn't found a new art project in a very long time so I set forward with many expectations for myself. I went in, not only wanting to

gain understanding of this new technique I was going to try, but also somehow gain a deeper understanding of myself. Over the many months of working on my paintings, I wouldn't say that I am that happy with the outcome that I have worked on for so long, I am not saying that I haven't met my expectations, but I just need more time to work on the paintings. I need to perfect what I have made because I don't think I am happy with what I have developed.

I chose veil painting as my senior project. I needed to push myself further than just regular water color painting. I first learned how to veil paint when I was in sixth grade so I knew I needed to teach myself something new. I thought about different mediums and finally settled on acrylic paint. Although this paint dries fairly quick it has many bonuses. It is a fairly cheap paint and there are many mixing mediums I can add to find the correct level of pigment needed in the paints. It was also very hard to find the correct amount of liquid and viscosity to not have the pants run down the canvas and ruin the very time consuming painting.



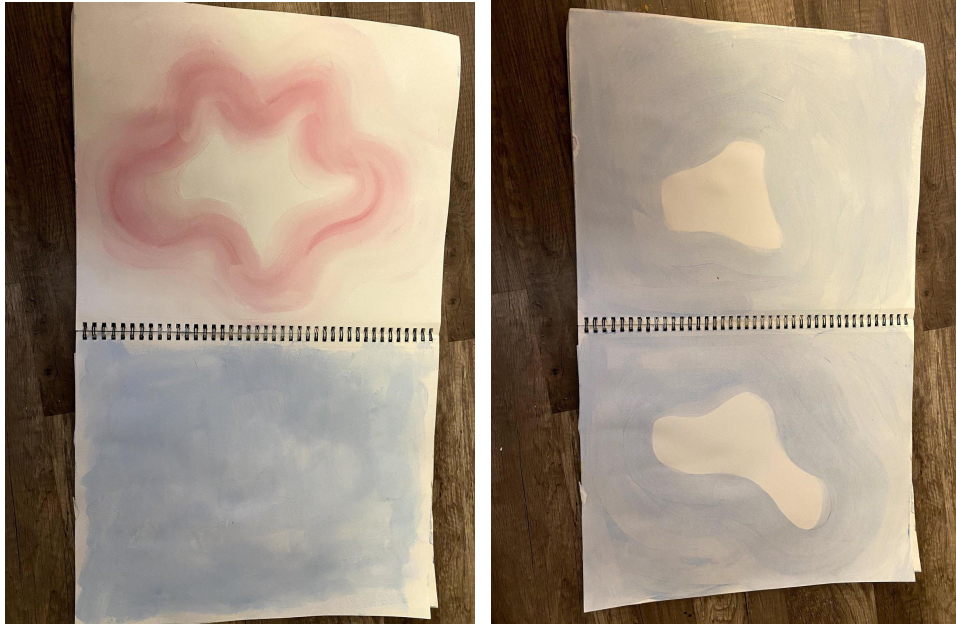
Here are some of my first paintings I finished and felt somewhat happy with

I spent hours practicing the correct formulas over and over again until I finally found what I needed. I am, and was using heavy body liquitex acrylic paint. This paint is very creamy and pigmented so I needed to thin it out so it could resemble more of a water color consistency. I tried water and the paint being mixed but it would dry too fast for me to get the correct layering effect. I rummaged through all my painting supplies and found a matte liquitex painting medium. I began to try mixing the medium with the paint and it started to help. I eventually found the correct ratio of paint to medium being a 3:1 ratio. After I found the correct mixture just needed to practice.

Here are the pictures of first tries at painting with a veil painting technique but on paper.







The blue blob of paint was when I got very frustrated with myself because the paint wasn't working with me. This was when I deep in working with different products and hand mixing colors. The primary colors I didn't hand mix but purple, orange and green I hand mixed everytime I needed to paint with them. Sometimes it was annoying to mix my paints, but then I started to look at it as a quick break from the tedious painting.



Here are all my mixing products I used. I have gone through multiple bottles of each due to the fact that I had to try everything over and over until it was just right. The satin glaze is what

I used first until I branched out and found new products. I had been using the satin glaze to seal my own personal paintings for a long time and I knew it was a good product. The liquitex basics products are also very good. I purchased each bottle off of amazon due to the fact of cheaper prices and fast delivery. My first bottle of medium I bought, I accidentally purchased gloss instead of matte. It's easier to have a matte base so then when you add the next layer, you can distinguish between the wet and dry. I also used the vanish to seal the finished paintings because I had used all of my satin glaze to practice. The use of mixing mediums was the success to me being able to achieve the veil painting effect.



The first picture shows the paints that I used to do the primary color paintings. The second picture shows the three greens that I used to mix the perfect green. The purple was fairly easy to mix mainly because I had a pre-made magenta so all I needed to do was add a little bit of blue. The orange was the hardest to mix due to the fact that I needed to use so much yellow. Red is the strongest, most overpowering colors in the rainbow, so when mixing you need to use very little red otherwise it becomes more crimson.

I began practicing with only the primary colors. This is how we started our water color veil painting course with Isabel W. We learned how to control each color and how to place the



pigment on the paper. I slowly filled a large sketch book with practice paintings and slowly the color distribution began to improve. I was finally starting to feel accomplished with my work and I was hopeful for moving onto canvas. But canvas is a completely new territory that I didn't know how to work with. The canvas didn't soak up the pigment water mixture like paper did. I soon learned and pushed through it though.

Once I had mastered the primary colors I moved onto the secondary colors. Creating these secondary color paintings was much more labor intensive due to mixing each color trying to match the last batch. But even though it was tough to mix the colors, I like my secondary paintings much more. I had much more experience with the paint and the technique by the time I began to work on them. The color distribution and viscosity was perfect.





During my tenth grade year, unlike my other classmates who had the luxury to learn how to veil paint from Isabel W. I learned from my sister. My sister took the teacher training with Mr. B. In her training she had to do a senior thesis herself. She chose veil painting but regular water color veil painting. It's not the matter of being like my sister, but more that she taught me very well. She was very patient with me and showed every little detail. How to hold the brush, to the angle it should be hitting the paper. Even though Sydney is my sister she was one of the best art teachers I've had. I am very happy to have had her.

Once I moved to canvas I found myself feeling completely out of my league. The mixture of medium and paint didn't absorb into the canvas like it did with the sketch paper. The paint looked streaky and I didn't know what to do. I found myself starting over many times. When I start over I'd paint the canvas with a layer of white over my mistakes. Slowly the layers of white



built up and the paint mixture began to stick better and better. I think I had found a solution to my problem but then I ran out of medium. I had to order a new medium off of amazon but instead of ordering a matte medium I ordered a gloss medium. You need the matte medium so you can see the wet layers of paint from the dry. The gloss medium dried with a glossy finish making it very hard for me to create clean layers.

Creating the layers of paint was the hardest part. I couldn't get the same pigment layering that I could get with watercolors. It was frustratingly hard for me because I could sometimes get the pigment layering with painting on paper versus canvas. The pigment would run down the canvas making it very hard for me, especially with my larger canvases. I need to keep the canvases level so the mixture would ruin the art. Unlike regular paint, my mixture is much much thinner in terms of viscosity. When starting my largest painting I would say this was, and is the most frustrating part because I can't always lay the canvas flat on my floor.

As time progressed, I felt more and more comfortable with my discovery of how I could move forward with my project. Even though the entire experience was a learning curve, I could start more paintings without feeling like I was going to ruin my whole project. I was finally confident in my own technique. I had spent the past months slowly teaching myself. I didn't have any outside help to learn how to work with this new medium and that made me feel even more proud of myself. I know it might sound a bit narcissistic but it's the truth. It's how I felt at that moment.

## INSPIRATIONS

When thinking about inspiration for my painting it's not only from my waldorf education but also from outside influence. Veil painting is a very different art form versus most subject paintings. Veil painting is made with form and expression. I have seen many pieces of art in my lifetime. I have been to most art museums in Paris and this has helped me develop my artistic knowledge. I see veil as a more impressionist type of art, much like most of the art that is displayed in modern museums. But when I was trying to relate my art to those who had their art displayed in museums. I thought about the monet water lilies.

I have seen the monet water lilies many times. Although when you are up close with the oil painting, it seems as though there is no detail put into the painting. The blobs of paint that are placed down are so abstract that you wouldn't believe that all of it combined to make a beautiful painting. It is as though your eyes can't focus on the writing on the page until you back away so your eyes and settle down. Although we all know that Monet was almost completely blind when painting the series of water lilies, he placed the colors in such an abstract way creating a work of art. Having seen the water lilies in person I know, and experienced the perspective changes.

Another great example of the type of paint I was trying to achieve is lazuring. Lazuring is a veil like painting technique used to paint the walls of waldorf classrooms. Each classroom is carefully painted to fit the developmental needs of that age group that will mostly use it. The carefully layered paint makes a subtitle wash of color over the usually plain whit walls. The

connections of veil painting and the Waldorf curriculum really inspired me to choose veil painting as my focus. (there are two very good websites that describe the technique and its relation of laurzing to waldorf in my bibliography) Knowing that I would be deepening my understanding of my life long education, helped fuel my passion for my new found project. It encouraged me to jump in with little to no understanding of what I exactly settled out to do.

Through my entire project I felt very hopeful with my project. I felt hopeful knowing that I would eventually succeed with my project. Even though I picked this style of art with the intention of using the products of s project, I soon let go of that notion. I let myself become completely immersed in the creative activity of creating art. I tried to not think about how my friends and family would have to see my art. I never usually show people my art, the idea of people being critical of my art gave me extreme anxiety so I desperately worked to not let that anxiety influence my art.

Once I was able to let go of my crippling artist anxiety, I was able to create art. I was able to sit down and treat this school of art as therapy. Although it was absoluting infuriating, once I succeeded I was filled with pure joy. It was as though I was finally able to get over this hill that seemed to be endless. I am so happy with the progress that I have made in my understanding of my own project. This was when I decided on the final part of my project.

My final part is the larger canvas. I am currently still working on it. It takes much longer than all my other paintings in this project because of its size. I have to lay the canvas on the floor of my



bedroom and then consciously walk or crawl around the canvas adding layers. For some reference I have a very small room and when I lay out the canvas, I can't open my bedroom door fully. Once I am done with this large piece of art I want to cast the painting in resin and then gift it to Summer Field. I want to be perfect so I don't have a definite time line one when it will be done but that is my end goal.

Although my project was an endless roller coaster of stress and anxiety, I eventually found it. I found a way to succeed when I didn't know what else to do. I took something I had no idea how to approach and I succeeded. I set out wanting to accomplish a new style. I feel like I did just that. I pushed my way up this hill, not knowing what I was going to encounter. I am happy I have reached the top.

In conclusion, I am happy I did my senior project. Going into senior year and senior projects are fairly daunting but if you do something that you are passionate about you'll be fine. That's what all the previous seniors told me and I never truly believed them until this year. I am happy I found something that made my gears turn and helped me improve understanding of myself and painting. Art is a large part of my life so this was perfect for me. The support of my family, friends and teachers helped me stay motivated. I have always struggled with motivating myself and I never really lost motivation for this project. I am glad that I did my project and now I am glad I am almost done (even though I need to finish my main painting) with my journey as a senior.

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Isabel W. I was able to bounce ideas off of her at the beginning and she helped me believe YOU could do this project.

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