

STUDENT

ART 1113

INSTRUCTOR

29 March 2019

### Emanation of Hope

Typically, an artwork resembles the style of an artist's previous works. However, similar to Dante Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix* and Pablo Picasso's transition from realism to modernistic art, the art style of this project is a contrast to my previous works. I created a mixed media titled, "*The Wish*," in order to appreciate a new style of art and develop my own original creativity.

As I was constructing a plan for this honors project, I looked back upon my previous work and came to realize that almost all of my art pieces were recreated off of someone else's creativity. The art lacked personal expression and contained no other imagination than what was simply before me. I desired to present something new and original almost entirely from my imagination. While researching, the idea of creating a type of collage attracted me. My art compositions typically revolved around realism and impressionism, but never touched modernism. By attempting to develop and express creativity, I ventured into the "wild" side of art: modern art.

Modern art was the one area of art that I had not approached due to a lack of understanding. However, artists such as Henri Matisse and Trenton Doyle Hancock caught my attention. Both of these artists used color, shapes, objects and symbolism to display a creativity unique to them. These artists depicted this art form to me in a way I had never experienced before. Matisse brilliantly used shapes and colors to emotionally affect the viewer. "Creativity takes courage" Matisse stated, which describes the difficulty for people to intimately and openly

express their creativity publicly (“The Personal Life of Henri Matisse”). For me that quote meant daring to step out of the boundaries of my artistic comfort zone, daring to forgo perfection and a structured stigma and to authentically express my own creativity. I believe that sometimes raw creativity can suffocate under all the various rules of art. Matisse’s mother actually referred to this and advised her son of something that was unheard of in the artworld at the time. She said to not “adhere to the ‘rules’ of art, but rather listen to his own emotions” (“The Personal Life of Henri Matisse”). The early 20<sup>th</sup> century Fauve art movement developed in France, and Matisse contributed significantly through his works. The movement portrayed the “wild” side of art and contained symbolism and bright colors (Rewald). I did not want my artwork to depict an exact portrayal of a Fauve piece, but instead hoped to input certain elements. Instead I decided to lean more towards Matisse’s “plate VIII from the illustrated book, ‘Jazz’” (Wallace). He used pochoir, which is a technique using paper and stencil. I admired Matisse’s use of figures and color in inducing an intended emotion regardless of the mediums. Human figures and color are relatable and provoke curiosity in human intelligence and emotion (Dabrowski). I wanted to reflect that in the figure I used and the colors I chose.

The contemporary American artist Trenton Doyle Hancock influenced me through his use of found objects and narrative art. He collected various things for years and waited until a time he deemed fitting to use them. Hancock would then combine certain objects to collectively narrate a personal story. He combined his own personal experiences with fictional ones and created stories containing characters and sub-plots all in an organized chaos of color, pattern, and symbolism (Trenton Doyle Hancock). Normally this type of art would confuse me and gain very little of my appreciation, but by cultivating my own expression of creativity, I was able to analyze and interpret his works. Through further research, my understanding of his work

increased. I learned how his artwork told stories which deeply intrigued me and was something I could personally relate to. I have always loved stories and found myself continually creating or displaying a story through my essays, assignments, and music. His use of collecting objects reminded me of the envelope filled with fortune cookie fortunes that I had been collecting for over 2 years. I knew that somehow, I would integrate them in my project. These two artists impacted the modern art world and gave me a greater understanding in an art form that I had previously misunderstood.

The composition of my project uses decoupage. The origins of decoupage can be seen in France along with a majority of modern art influences. I used this art medium to create movement and depth by lightly painting acrylic over certain creases of the bunched tissue paper that was glued onto the support. The texture of the tissue paper gave the canvas a raw and almost rough appearance which I wanted to incorporate into the interaction with the viewer. I placed the fortunes I had been collecting from fortune cookies and used black tissue paper to outline a human's profile. In this instance, I desired to represent Matisse's use of human forms and utilize the fortunes like Hancock's found objects. The fortunes were placed in a way that appears uniform, outlining the face before breaking apart into the explosion of golden paint. I created a hand out of fortunes to hold a dandelion shaped out of white tissue paper. The figure is blowing onto it causing its paper seeds to float off on colorful streams of wind. These little pieces of paper held many of my special memories. My family would occasionally order Chinese as a surprise dinner for me, as it was my favorite food which initiated my collection of the fortunes. Each fortune depicted a certain moment in my life of fellowship with family and friends.

I used primary colors in order to illustrate the significance of foundational colors and the birth of creativity. I referred back to Matisse's use of color and Fauvism to introduce hints of

color among the dark background. Color can be seen in the flecks of plastic in the tissue paper and paint coming from various points in the painting such as above the figure's head, at the bottom of its neck, near the hand, and around the dandelion. The yellow surrounds the back of the figure's head and outlines the main focal points. I rarely incorporated glitter into my art as I used to view it as a childish material and found it difficult to manipulate. However, by releasing the reigns on my creativity, I decided to use glitter gel. Something about how the light caught the tiny pieces of plastic prompted the notion of magic. Through the use of glitter, I wanted to capture the observer's eye. The way I composed this artwork is that when the viewer actually closely observes the art and reads the fortunes, they miss the bigger picture. The image of the figure up close is lost in the combination of tissue paper and rowed lines of fortunes. This is a metaphor for when you focus too closely on the message, the meaning becomes lost. When the artwork is viewed from afar a human profile is illustrated blowing a dandelion. This is to compare the different ways the emotion of hope is produced: through fortune cookies, dandelions, imagination and the birth of creativity.

The fortunes depicted the many desires and wishes prompted from them. It reminded me of the moments of opening those little cookies and anticipating the messages within. The feeling of curiosity and wonder is followed by a nostalgic memory of a wish. I believe everyone secretly has that moment with these messages, no matter how fleeting the feeling. I hope that through this artwork people's memories of wishes would resurface. The most extraordinary part of reading the fortunes is not so much what is printed on them, but what is produced through them. That subtle, almost nonexistent, flicker of hope. That is what I wanted to capture in my artwork. The emanation of hope from the hushed wish of the heart.

In closing, my project was created in an effort to unleash creativity and grow in an area of art that challenged me. The artists such as Henri Matisse and Trenton Doyle Hancock influenced and revealed to me the personal side of art that I previously could not relate to. Fauvism introduced me to the raw, colorful, beauty of emotional art and aided me in understanding Matisse's art style. I used fortunes from fortune cookies as a found object element in my collage, which was a response to Hancock's creativity in using found objects to tell a story. Through these artists, I was able to grow in understanding and appreciation for Modern art. This project

was a stepping stone in my artistic endeavors and allowed me to grow both as an artist and a person.

Beth Pereira

*The Wish*



Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 2019



Henri Matisse,  
*Icarus*, plate VIII from the illustrated book, "Jazz" (1947)  
Pochoir



Trenton Doyle Hancock  
*The Former and the Ladder or Ascension and a Cinchin'*  
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas



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