

Julia Yusem

Behind the Curtain of A Beating Heart and Aching Hands

Spring 2022

Artist Statement

Julia Yusem is an interdisciplinary artist mainly found in paint, born and raised in Portland Oregon. Some themes that the artist typically explores are but not limited to: color, shape, memory, human experience, feelings, recycling/upcycling. Art as practice acts as a meditative, intuitive and cathartic experience, and is ultimately a dumping ground for the artist's human experience and a tool for self reflection.

Thesis Proposal

During my practice, I've been using painting to express my thoughts and feelings. Through this process of shape, line and color, I'm learning about myself and my connection to where I am, what I would like to say and what I would like to do. I would like my thesis to act as documents of myself, so they will not be representational. My artwork is the way I process life happening around me and the way I release.

I would like to explore high contrast and saturation in color palettes for these paintings. For inspiration with color I've been looking at artists ; Josh Smith, Henri Matisse. Henri Matisse's artwork feeds into what I would like to convey in saturation of color. I would like to incorporate the saturation of color, and their color palettes in my paintings. Josh Smith's pieces have a blended look.

I would also like to incorporate Hannah Hoch's attention to design through college. She made collages out of shapes and patterns and experimented in a male dominant art world.

Ideally, I would like to create 3-5 large scale pieces. I would like to work in mixed media, focusing on paint. It's not often that I work large, so this will be a great challenge for me in the aspect of support. I think that working on a large scale would allow me more time and space to tap into intuitiveness. I would like to work on these paintings in many sessions, to allow myself to look at it differently every time I sit back down in front of them.

I always have music on while I work in my studio space. Music has always been something that I've connected to far past just auditorily. Music often crosses over into my artwork through paint handling and the way the music can make me feel.

Through my thesis I hope to empower and trust myself. These paintings will be a form of healing for myself and I hope to share that with other people. This project will truly document the way that healing is not linear.

Thesis Abstract

Behind the Curtain of a Beating Heart and Aching Hands, is a series of abstract paintings exploring the process of applying intuition to abstraction. Creating this body of paintings helped me figure out how to use art and music as two tools to process, analyze, and dissect feelings. Throughout my project, I discovered how my intuition influenced my choices for mark making and choice of color. Creating and executing this project opened the door for me to be able to delve into the general human experience, as well as reflect on my own.

Oral Defense

Thank You all for coming to my thesis!

Before I begin my oral presentation I'd like to provide a content warning for harsh topics like suicidal ideation and other mental illness, the loss of a parent, and gender. There is also a possibility that I will cry, so I ask that you bear with me if so, and give me any bits of time to collect myself. If you feel the need to leave at any point, do not hesitate, and take care of yourselves.

My name is Julia Yusem and I am a 21 year old interdisciplinary artist mainly found in paint, and I'm born and raised here in Portland Oregon. Some themes I typically explore are but not limited to: Color, shape, memory, human experience, feelings, recycling/upcycling, but most of all a good time for myself as an artist. My art as practice acts for me as a meditative, intuitive and cathartic experience for myself and is ultimately my dumping ground for everything in my head.

My entire academic artistic career, I became very comfortable creating representational artwork (or art that incorporates recognizable imagery or content). Entering my senior year of college, I had a change of heart and began to explore abstraction after thinking it was one of the most awful and “cop out” things I had ever seen. I at first did not know what this change of heart was or meant, and I still don't really know, but I find a great deal of freedom in that. I began to pay closer attention to directionality, shapes and color.

When being proposed with the idea of a thesis and then executing one, I began using painting to express my thoughts and feelings. Through this process of shapes, color and abstraction, I learned about myself and my connection to where I am, what I would like to say

and what I would like to do. My artwork is the way I process life happening around me and my human experience from the past and present.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines intuition as “the power of attaining direct knowledge or cognition without evident rational thought and interference”. Previous to this project, I knew what intuition was, but did not consider it as a tool for creating. Instead of suppressing my emotions, the way I typically would to make something, I decided to lean into them and allow them to guide me through mark making and color choice.

Throughout my thesis experience in this body of work, I've explored the high contrast and saturation in color palettes. I worked on these paintings in many sessions, to allow myself to look at it differently with fresh eyes, every time I sat back down in front of them. While exploring color, I also began to incorporate a dialogue between the way I handled paint with my physical body, and in creating abstract shapes.

An important part to my life, practice and thesis, is music. I always have music on while I work in my studio space, and I find it incredibly difficult to create without it. I've tried, it sucks. Music has always been something that I've connected to far past just between my ears. Music often crosses over into my artwork through paint handling, mark making, and the way the music can make me feel. While I created this series of paintings, I curated playlists of the music I was inspired by from September to April. The paintings were not created in direct translation of the music, but more in the intuitive sense. My only rule for myself for curating these playlists, is once I've placed the song onto the playlist, I cannot remove it. In conclusion, this body of work documented my personal and artistic journey, from the past, present and then formed me for the future.

Artistic Influences:

Charline VonHeyl is a German abstract painter born in 1960 in Germany. Von Heyl claims herself artistically to have “desires to invent images that have not yet been seen”through the combination of shape, line and mark making, as well as contrasting colors. She also makes a point, where it is possible to use other non traditional materials like for example spray paint, collage, ink and wax to communicate a painterly language. This artist's work appeals to me because they are very visually and compositionally full pieces of work and establish themselves within the constraints of the canvas. I'm really attracted to the way Von Heyl incorporates mark making and direction through shape and lines. Her artwork also provides a skewed and disorientating view, in which your eye does not sit anywhere. In reference to my work, i referenced the way that Von Heyl wants to establish a relationship of the “now”, where you are in the moment, in front of the painting, and something happens to you as , activating a space between the painting and the viewer, and pushes the viewer to form a relationship with the painting. This point specifically ties to my intuitive process of mark making.

Wassily Kandinsky was born in Moscow Russia in 1866, and began his career teaching law and economics. In 1896 Kandinsky would see an exhibition of Monet's work, and was floored at the way color and shapes were used to provoke an emotional response, rather than the images that were used themselves. In the same year Kandinsky would also attend Wagner's opera “Lohengrin”. The experience of witnessing Monet's abstracted images, and the freedom of expression through music, led Kandinsky to abandon his law practice and become an artist. While Kandinsky did begin his artistic career in using representational images for artwork, I focused on his exploration of the relationship of color through sound. This is also connected to Synesthesia, which is when information that stimulates one of your senses, stimulates more senses. Some examples are hearing music and seeing shape or color, reading words and hearing accompanying

voices, or biting into food and associating shapes to textures. This resulted in abstracted artwork that is colorful and does not use representational imagery or objects, or anything found in the real world. Kandinsky claims that “the more abstract the form, the more clear and direct its appeal”, which is something I've discovered in my paintings when using music to aid in my intuitive decision process for color and mark making. Kandinsky also claims “Music has been the art which is devoted itself not to the reproduction of natural phenomena, but rather to the expression of the artists soul”, which again ties back to the way i've created work in art and music with the processing of my life through both of these outlets.

Rosy Keyser is a contemporary painter born in 1974, from Baltimore Maryland. She explores large-scale gestural abstraction, with a focus in the use of her body to create an almost sculptural style of paintings. In an interview about her piece “Monterey”, a painting she made in response to Jimi Hendrix burning his guitar at the Monterey International Pop Music Festival in 1967, she claims “ in the studio it's important to have a level of fearlessness and to give yourself the space to do things and making sure a stable ground does not exist”. In relation to my work, throughout this project and discovering abstraction, I removed myself from all the “rules” I learned as a student in the classroom, that previously had shaped my practice. At the beginning this was extremely daunting and I felt very lost because of all the possibilities this had opened for me. I began to use non traditional tools to paint like my hands and a palette knife. I also began to use traditional drawing tools such as oil and chalk pastels, in the same way I handle paint. Crossing my traditional drawing skills into the way I paint, dramatically shifted the way I thought about paintings, and I found that they don't need to always be done in a singular medium or traditionally whatsoever.

Musical Influences:

Elliott Smith was a singer/ songwriter (folk, indie, pop) from Nebraska, after the age of 14, residing in Portland, Oregon where he gained most of his early fame. Elliott was gifted in many instruments (cello, drums, piano and bass), while primarily playing on an acoustic guitar. Smith croons over his acoustic in layered vocals and accompanying harmonies and some themes that he exposes through poetic lyricism are but not limited to: addiction/substance abuse, depression/mental illness, memory, love/lack of love, being a pariah, observing the world, and general distaste for the world.

Although my artwork for my thesis isn't music, Elliott Smith's music has greatly impacted my life and my thesis. While I've been working on my project, he is someone I caught myself falling into listening to more often than others. I find a great deal of comfort through his choice of words, as well as the softer and somber style of guitar and piano. In an interview he expresses that it is far easier to represent the presence of something rather than an absence, and I associate that with the way I'm processing my feelings through creating paintings. I think what pulls me to his music the most, is the sheer and utter rawness, which is what my thesis feels like to me, and what I hope to be able to provide for my audience.

On MTV, Elliott is seen in discomfort and unease. He is rarely seen being interviewed out of not wanting to be on tv in front of numerous people. He claims he “is the wrong kind of person” to be big and famous. For me, this feeds an anonymity for him, that I am also drawn to in my practice. I resonate with this hesitation for vulnerability when having to show my work to peers and even more so with friends and family. This claim for me also reinstills that this person created purely from their soul, as do I.

In another interview in Europe, where Elliott played a few songs, he pauses mid-song and says “I can't do this song, I've done it too many times. I've played it hundreds of times and I'm

just sick of it...what's the point in playing a song badly, it would be better to play it and mean it than just walk through it.”, and that is what I feel in my intuitive process for my paintings. When a color or mark I've made does not fit for me, instead of just continuing, I'll try to undo or alter what I had just done, until it is to my liking.

British rock band Queen formed in London in 1970 is one of the most iconic and known bands ever worldwide. With the brilliant stage presence of Freddie Mercury, and the tightness of Brian May on lead guitar, Roger Taylor on drums, and John Deacon on bass, establishing the “Queen” sound, that has yet to be and will never be replicated. Queen is a band that sticks out to me the most in my musical memory from my lifetime. In reference to my parents, this band is a familial favorite, and my mother always reminds me of the way that Queen took the world by storm, specifically from an international viewpoint. One of my favorite things to do is ask my mother about her experience seeing Freddie Mercury live in Argentina when she was about 16 years old, through tickets from her older sister's boyfriend. After a couple hours of digging online one day, I was able to track down the exact audio from that concert from decades ago and show it to her, bringing her back to that time.

The band Nirvana formed in 1987, is arguably one of the most influential bands for the alternative/rock music scene (especially the Pacific Northwest), defining the odds, and paving a new way for music. Kurt Cobain communicated and expressed :feminism, forwardthinking, poeticness, snarky and slyness, intelligence, rebellion, and was an all around Genius in every regard. Cobain teamed up early on with bassist Krist Novoselic and a few drummers later, Dave Grohl. The three went onto kick off and pushed the sound of grunge music which stemmed from punk, but ultimately was the fusion of hooky pop type melodies with noise, changing the musical landscape that had been set for this time. The sound of Nirvana was revolutionary for the world,

and for me as well. I can remember the very first time I actually sat down to listen. I played through the entire Nevermind album released in 1991, and frankly felt my soul set on fire, in the best way possible. At this point in my life I was 16 and experiencing the first of many identity crises, and really resonated with the way that Kurt Cobain created music through feelings of being outcasted, ignored/isolated, anxiety/depression, a distaste for the world and the people in it, and parental abandonment.

Personal Anecdotes

I began to quarrel with mental health when I was around 14, concluding in the diagnosis of depression. For the longest time I felt as if this diagnosis was a branding on my forehead and a fault in my code as a human being. This began to really warp the way I viewed myself as Julia both physically and mentally, and I frankly thought this made me weak. My depression worsened even though I was seeing a therapist, and I had had my first failed suicide attempt at 15. In desperation, my parents decided that the use of medication may aid in my mental stability, but it ultimately wasn't up to me, which I don't agree with. In my personal experience with the use of SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), while they did help on general wellbeing, there seemed to be a constant rise and plateau that pissed me off. There came a point over the last summer where I had had enough because I felt terrible all the time even though I was technically "better". I decided to stop taking medication, as all I could see in the mirror was a shell of this jaded version of myself that I no longer recognized. Getting off of SSRIs was arguably one of the worst of times, as my eating and sleeping habits were pulled from underneath me. I began to grind my teeth, not sleep for days and somehow make it through a day wide awake, and cry for days at nothing and about nothing. I would like to acknowledge that this is not to say that medication works for no one, just not for me.

That being said, I had revisited my love for music, which brought back a lot of the color I had previously been able to see in myself that I thought I had lost, this time instead of listening to other greats before me, it was my turn. I began to write poetry again, something I had done since the beginning unravelings of my mental health as a coping mechanism, and attaching it to simple chords. I used the basic songwriting skills of rhyming words at the end of sentences together. My songs were/are bad and I am pretty unskilled at guitar for the sole fact that when I began to play at the age of 15, and I never wanted to practice or learn traditionally(which tracks through learning other instruments and art school), but I have the greatest time, and at the end of the day that's all that really matters to me. I also discovered I have embarrassing stage fright! This has nonetheless ultimately been one of the greatest, if not the greatest coping mechanisms I have yet to come across, and exposed itself as a means of creating that was under no pressure or stress, the same way, in which my experience was in discovering abstraction.

It was only within the last two years of my life that I felt a separation from my depression. I used to feel as though I was supposed to be fixed and repaired, but that is worlds away from true. There are days where I lay in the same spot for hours, in the same folds of my comforter, in the same clothes from days before, and I cry. There are days where the sun kisses my face, I turn the page, and I laugh. My depression is a part of who I am but it does not make me up, or define who I am as a person.

Something else I thought alot about while creating this specific body of work, was my gender. When I think about my life in the grand scheme of things, I've been pretty androgyneous. I have a specific memory of being about 7 or 8, in which some random kid came up to me at daycare and asked me “ are you a boy or girl”?. I remember thinking that was hilarious, because I was/am just a person. Being a triplet, my mom tried to get us to dress the same , and this was

effective until I got my own brain. Growing up I was a tomboy, though I wouldn't find that term out until much later. I have memories of my mother asking me why I didn't want to be more girly and when I got older, why I didn't want to wear more form fitting things. I was always the bigger kid, especially among my siblings which in turn led to a lot of internal distaste for myself from a pretty young age. This again turned me to refuge in music. While anatomically, I've got all the parts of a woman, I do not tie myself to either points of the gender binary, and I never really have. This scholastic year was the first year of my life, where I felt safe to be who I am, without having to fit the mold that I felt was previously set for me. To me my gender is mine and mine only.

Being a triplet, I always had two buddies to fall back on, or hangout with at school. I will say that my experience, especially in my younger years, was kind of lonely because my twin sisters did everything together, and for a long time I couldn't understand what I had done to be separate from them, and part of me was jealous. When I think about it now, they just got along better together than I did and specifically with triplets, that just happens. When we were in elementary school we all had the same friends, which inevitably led to fighting over whose friends were who and who couldn't hang out with who. Being from a latin background, we all started to play soccer, and I was annoyed I had to share yet another thing with my siblings. I soon discovered basketball and was obsessed with the fact that thank god I didn't have to share this sport with anyone, or so I thought (that was pretty short lived and we were soon all on the same team). This again, would tie me back to refuge in music. At this point in my life I had discovered the seattle grunge scene and would spend days in my room trying to mimic the screech of kurt cobain and see how loud i could turn up the music on my stereo before my sister came bursting in the door yelling at me to turn it down and then narcing on me to my mom. Other influential

bands from this scene like alicia keys, foo fighters, pearl jam, and soundgarden all became a safe place for me. Music and artwork had established themselves as two places I did not have to share with my siblings.

When I think about the effect of music on my life, I think I could write a book. I don't think I will ever be able to put words together to communicate the way that my life would have been far different, had I not discovered music as a tool and as an outlet. I often use songs as a tool to communicate things that I think are better said than anything I could say for a feeling or an experience.

My largest inspiration for my entire being and practice is my dad. My mother and father met in an english class in college in Argentina and immigrated to America in 1989, when my dad was given a full ride scholarship to attend Tulane University in Louisiana studying chemical engineering and my mother studying mathematics at the university of new orleans.

In 1993 my mother and father landed themselves in Oregon when my father got a job at Tektronix , a company specializing in measuring instruments, and later their printing section was bought out by Xerox, a large printing company. My father holds 13 patents including one for one of the earliest eco friendly fully vegetable based oil inks for printers. My older sister would be born in 1997 and my sisters and I would follow in 2000.

My dad was just about the best person you could ever meet. I have yet to meet anyone who reaches the bar he set and I'm coming to terms with that I never will. You'd never guess this man was too smart for his own good or even had a PHD, behind sandpaper dry humor, being covered head to toe in dirt from gardening and making sure you always ate well.

My world came to a bit of a crossroads when I was 15. I would find out that my dad had developed a rare and vicious form of brain cancer, and I would lose him a week before my senior year of highschool began in 2017 . I had no idea how his death would alter my life the way it did. My whole life I had dreamt about my future partners and friends meeting him, walking down the aisle, visiting my first apartment, coming to highschool graduation and my college graduation, you name it- I thought about him being there, and the reality of it is that he wouldn't be, and for the longest time I couldn't accept that.

I have a far more different perspective on life and all of my relationships since his death. I've found that it is not and will never be selfish to pick who you spend your time with, and what you spend your time doing. I had also come to the realization that life truly is so short and the days are in fact numbered, even if they aren't numbered the way my dads were. The way I think about death has also drastically changed. In a non concerning way, I no longer fear leaving this place and returning back to the earth. It in fact drives me to create masses of work in all shapes and forms.

When my junior year of highschool came around, and my twin sisters and I were looking at colleges, and I was nervous because I didn't want to even think about going to college, my mother gave me an ultimatum: I pick what I'd like to study and I go pursue it. My entire life making things with my hands has always been where I've found confidence, specifically when I felt outcast by the rest of my family and the rest of the world. One of my earliest memories is making a guitar out of a shoebox, various pieces of cardboard and some string. Up to this day, I have yet to find that same source of confidence in anything, which is how I know I must create. When I first told my mother about going to art school, she shot it down immediately, but I also think some parts of her knew that I knew I'd go to college if it meant I could pursue art. Her and

I battled out for a few months, how being an artist creates unstable income, no job, and what if I didn't make it ? Then what would I fall back on?

My father never questioned me in that sense- never doubted me even for half a second. I can always remember him asking me about what I was making or what I was thinking about for school art projects, because art was something he never could do but he always tried to understand. When he knew what I thought about pursuing, he told me I should do it and do it well, so here I am. My father was an artist in the way he brought people together and brought pieces of me together. Physically I've got the famous luscious locks, a soft spot for classic rock, the bad humor, and the love for my peers, family and friends, that always seems to grow. If it wasn't for my father, I would have given up on my work a lifetime ago and probably been stuck in some other “logical” degree, where I would have been miserable. Even though he physically is not with me anymore, I feel a great deal of connection to him that I haven't been able to really put words to, when I'm creating.

I referenced my father a lot in memory throughout this project, as he passed during arguably the most formative years of a young person's life, and he will be physically missing from many more milestones throughout the rest of my life. I hold many memories of singing in the car with the windows down, to the oldies radio station 106.7 very offkey. With the trauma of losing my greatest friend and my biggest role model as a senior in highschool, and fast forwarding to being a senior in college, I didn't know what I was in for in the sense of reliving that traumatic experience, and I had never really experienced anything quite like that. I would like to express my immense and deepest gratitude towards my peers for giving me hugs and allowing me the time and their ears to talk about my dad and memories of him all throughout the year, even when I was probably ugly crying.

Art Pieces

Since I've created nearly 3 times as much work as I initially proposed, I'm going to be focusing on my favorite piece of all eight, which is on my left. The title of this piece "*Moonage Daydream*", is taken from the song by the legendary David Bowie. When I first heard this song, I thought the lyrics made no sense, but then I thought about how nothing really makes any sense until YOU make sense of it, and you can essentially make sense of anything you please.

Through the way I'm able to write music and make art I've been able to make sense of a lot of events and feelings that I felt disconnected from. It also became a really good way to let events and feelings go.

Visually this piece is packed with bold colors in an array of value and tone. I had a really fun time exploring how to layer paint to create pools, which resulted in interesting textures and stacks of color. Initially, this piece began mapped out as a grid of 1,728 squares that I was going to fill in with a variety of black light sensitive paint, but I quickly abandoned that when it became more about the order in which I was doing something, and I was experiencing everything except that. This piece was also how I explored the idea of painting in all different directions of the canvas, instead of using traditional painter values, like painting in one direction or from one perspective. When a layer of paint I had laid down had dried, I turned the canvas and painted again, and this is something that stuck with me throughout the rest of my project.

In reference to the titles for the rest of these pieces, I used song titles from songs I've discovered throughout the past two semesters that really stuck with me. The paintings however are completely separate from their titles. I then incorporated little pieces of my own songs written in the last few months on the very acoustic, that is by the door.

Audience/putting my work in context

When I think about the audience for my pieces, I think about myself, and then when I think about myself, I think about you. Creating these pieces made me feel like I was 7, 16 and 21 years old all at once. My intent for these pieces was to extract great and awful experiences without pictorial representation, and ultimately to continue living, even when I feel awful. An awful feeling, is just that. A feeling. Feelings come and go, the same way the tide does, the same way the days change, the same way a minute passes. These pieces represent some kind of permanence to my feelings. These pieces are for anyone and everyone who's been through anything, and that's not to say that I've been through everything, but more in reference to the highs and lows of human experience. Every single person is walking a different path, in different shoes, and even if two people have or are currently experiencing the same thing, it would never truly be the same. Whether you like to believe it or not, a lot of things that happen in everyday life are messed up, and messed up things can linger and leave stains and traces that you may or may not be able to remove. Throughout these messes, it's important to acknowledge how much you've changed from who you were yesterday or even just a minute ago. Throughout this project I have seen myself grow for what feels like the first time. I never really wanted to watch my growth to be honest, and it made me very uncomfortable, but acknowledging it ultimately left me with a better sense and understanding of myself and how I feel, or the cause and effect of feelings.

Self Critique/Levels of Meaning/Interpretation/shifts from proposal to defense:

From the proposal standpoint, I created nearly three times as much work as I anticipated. At the same time, this project was more about the act of love and care towards myself and sometimes my inner child. At the beginning of this project I was set on creating between 3 to five pieces, but I later realized that was not enough for me, and that I had more inside of me if I

just let myself make. Putting a cap on the amount of pieces I was to execute, made me feel confined in a box, and that often strained me from creating, so I decided to create until I couldn't anymore solely because of time.

I initially did not want to make any of this work about my mental health, as I feel as though that is something that is pulled out of us constantly throughout art school. The reality of mental health, especially in poor headspaces, is that it doesn't just go away, and you can't turn it off, the way you could a lightswitch or a television. It is an ongoing roller coaster that oftentimes is not fun, but you are strapped in. From my experience, my mental health can manifest itself in really blatant ways, all the way to extremely confusing states.

I also did not want to do any work connected to the loss of my father, because of spending every waking second, and every bone in my body missing him. When this project began, I decided to allow myself to grieve through my artwork and writing music, which were two ways of grieving I had yet to consider.

Something I kept the same from my proposal, was working on a larger scale. Prior to this I worked on 8.5in by 11in, and flatly on a table. For this project I decided to work up against a wall, or with my surface hung up on a wall, and on a larger scale for support. I also began to turn the canvas in different directions per session of painting, which altered the way I thought about what side is right side up. When i was finished with a painting i flipped the canvas, and decided which was right side up by just what looked best through my eyes. In my proposal I claimed that I thought the larger surface would help me use my intuitive decision making and mark making as a point to ease the act of creating, which now after the fact, i can confirm is true.

As far as interpretation, these pieces can all be interpreted in any way you please. For me, these are an extension of myself and the way I think about everything, while not holding any

pictorial evidence of my thoughts. This was a point of refuge, release and catharsis for me as an individual. The fact of creating something about my thoughts and feelings without using representational imagery, really sparked something inside of me as an artist, and brought me comfort when I knew I would have to present these in front of people. Pertaining to my mental health, especially experiencing periods of extremely poor mental health throughout the past semesters, not having to make images really aided in pulling artwork out of me. There's something far more expository for me as an artist when using recognizable imagery.

Future-Where does this take me

Thinking about the future of these paintings and what I have learned from this project, I have concluded that I need to create, to maintain a homeostasis (or common ground) for myself, and with whatever I do, I should ever lose that. When I am in distress, I should create more. When I am happy I should create more. It would be nice for me as the artist to see these paintings live elsewhere, because they were born alongside what I felt was a rebirth of myself, and I feel that they have served their purpose with and for me. I don't personally think that these pieces need to be viewed together, because they establish themselves firmly individually. For this exhibition specifically I do however think it was successful to have these hung up all together, especially with all of my personal experiences and anecdotes.

I could not have made it throughout the year let alone thesis, without the support of all of my friends and peers. I've made so many new relationships as well as nurtured previous ones throughout the year and this project, and I appreciate every single second we've all spent together. Thankyou for the everyday inspiration, and for helping me execute a project that was a true gift and source of confidence for myself, and I wouldn't dream of trading the laughs or tears for anything. A special thankyou to my mentor Michelle Ross, for pushing me to trust myself

and pushing me as an artist. Thank You so much for taking the time to come and listen to me speak, and I hope you enjoy it !

I will now be accepting questions from the panel first, and then everyone else.

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Documentation of Thesis Project:



Moonage Daydream (David Bowie)
3ft x 4ft., acrylic paint on stretched canvas

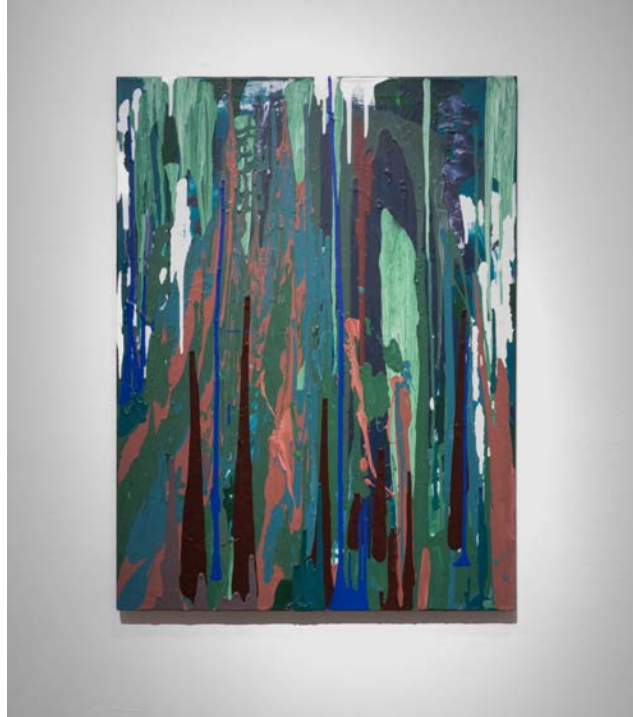
Out of time, off key, but in tune
A new song
(JY)



Self Inflicted Mental Terror (Gulch)

2 x 3ft., acrylic paint and collage on stretch canvas

The silence is deafening
neckcreaser,,Bone muncher
Dirt asleep in my fingernail bed
Swollen feet
stupid spectacle,
Idiosyncrasies of this weight
Pack it up all in my backpack and take it off
The loss of color, the intrusion of darkness
Violation
(JY)



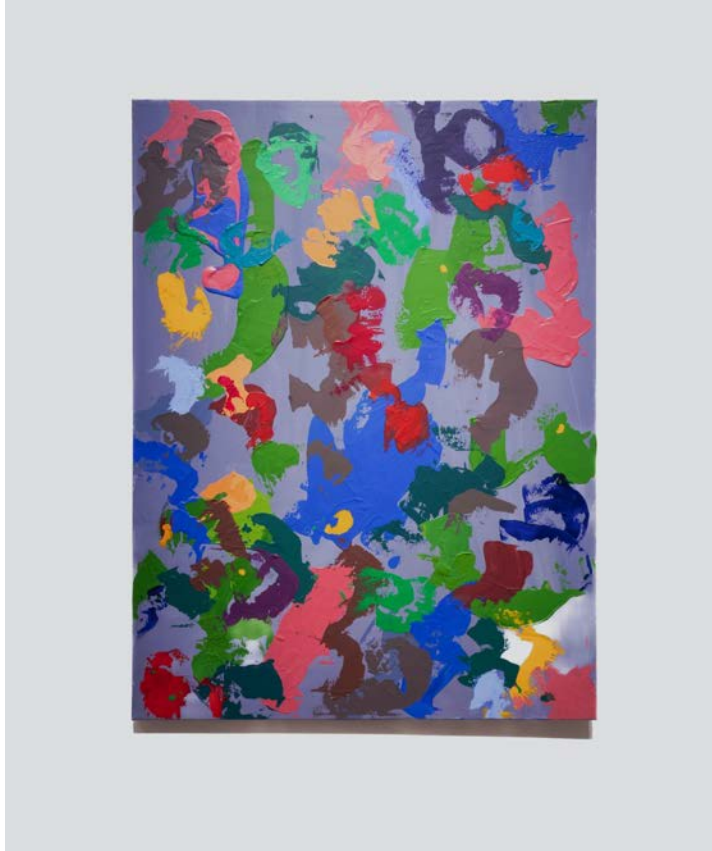
Still III (The Smiths)
30 x 40 in., acrylic paint on stretch canvas

Clarity in waves of black and blue
Not so clear
street piano smile
Bring me home
not mine, yours
The waves of clarity in black and blue,
Are they nice to you?
do they greet you the way you do me?
The waves of clarity in black and blue,
take, take, take from you
(JY)



Can It All Be So Simple/Intermission (WuTang Clan)
30 x 40 in., acrylic paint on stretched canvas

Tethered between two points with no in between
unseen,, unclean
old patterns in the same scene
Draw the curtain
(JY)



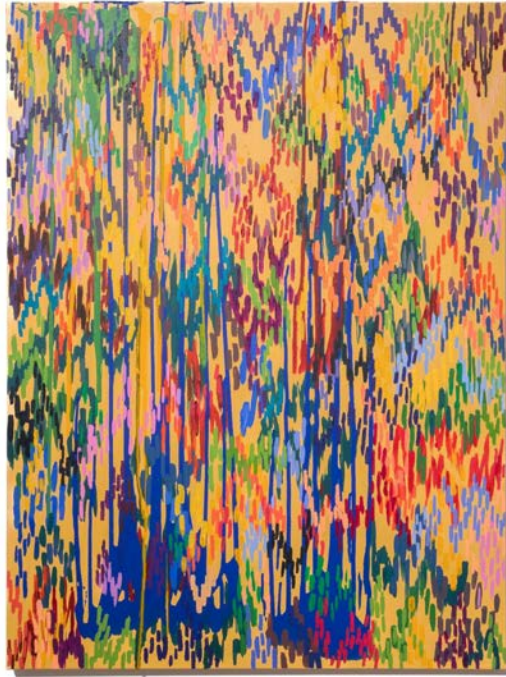
Crosstown Traffic (Jimi Hendrix)
30 x 40 in., acrylic on stretched canvas

Even when the ivy grows around my neck and the gardeners been out sick,
Even when the dinghy has sprung a leak
Up my sleeve i've got a trick
Old patterns, new heaviness
(JY)



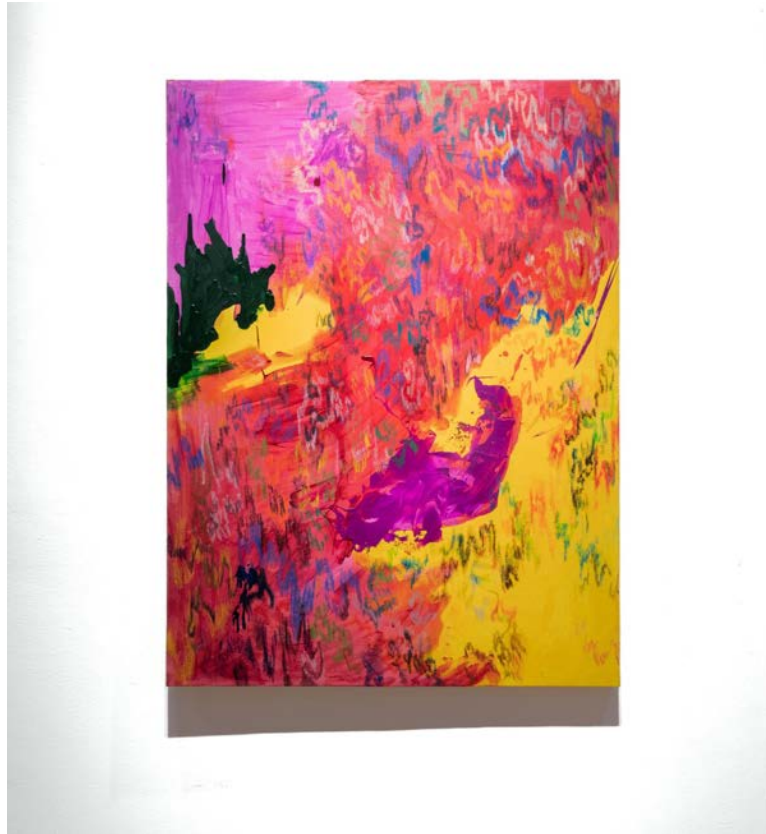
Love Will Tear Us Apart, Again (Joy Division)
30 x 40 in., acrylic paint on stretched canvas

A prickly thorn bush
Snagged my sweater
Snagged my skin
Between reality and oblivion
Which door do I pick
(JY)



Ballad of Big Nothing (Elliott Smith)
30 x 40 in., acrylic paint on stretched canvas

I'm sure I won't escape
No matter
I wander to still wind up in the same place
Tightly wound up
A red bow,, in the same place
A place so familiar
Yet maybe I've never been
Or I don't know how I got here
Or both
(JY)



Pictures of You (The Cure)

3 by 4ft., acrylic paint, oil and chalk pastel on stretched canvas over wood

I stared down the barrel of a gun
And the gun was my own two hands
A penny for your thoughts or mine?
Blood rushes and pools right behind my eyes
(JY)

Install Documentation:



Steps to getting connected with my playlists

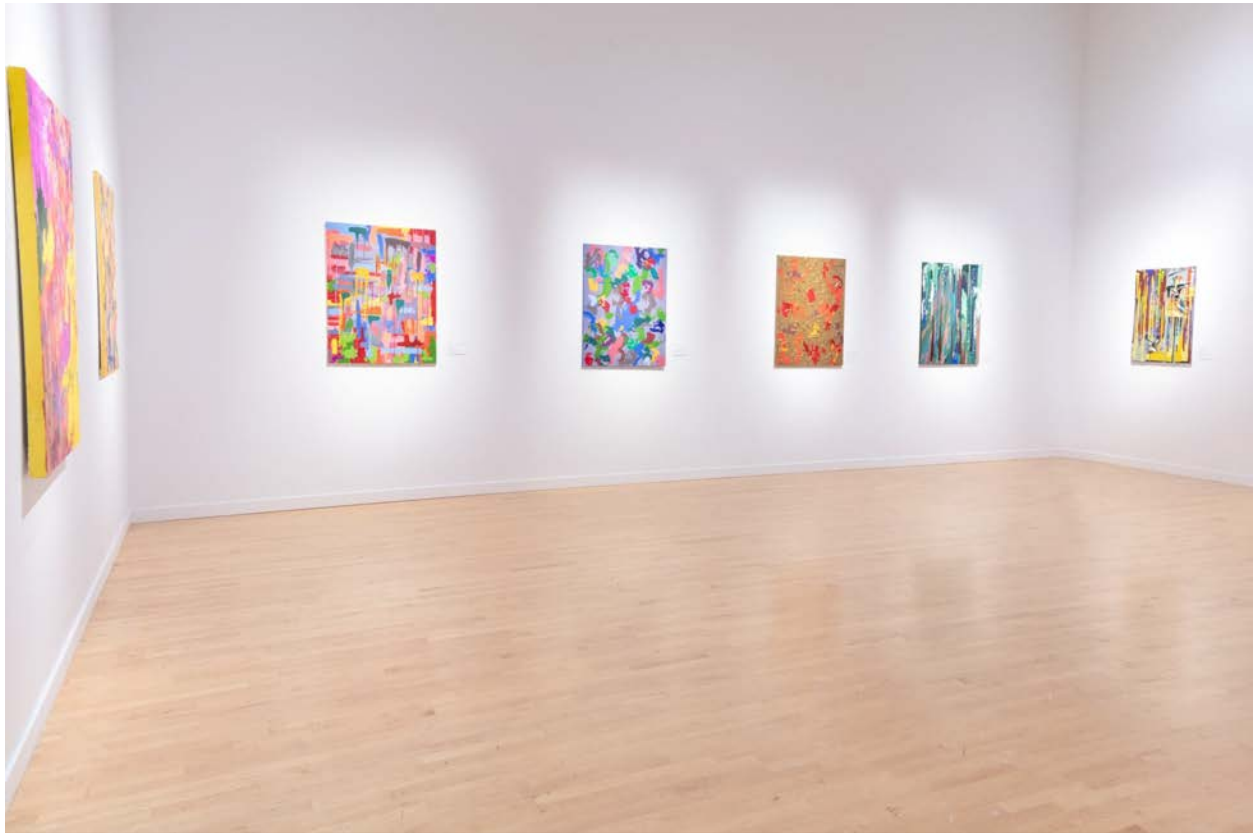
1. Open Spotify
2. Make sure your screen is on the correct card
3. Tap the controls icon on the top right corner of your screen
4. Cover your phone camera over the code



Behind the
Curtain of A
Beating Heart
and
Acting Hands





Behind the Curtain of A Beating Heart and Acting Hands





Supporting Materials:

Access to the playlists I made with every month of thesis, from first semester to second semester:

September 2021	 A Spotify playlist banner for September 2021. It features a dark green background. On the left is the white Spotify logo. To its right is a white audio waveform with vertical bars of varying heights.
October 2021	 A Spotify playlist banner for October 2021. It features an orange background. On the left is the white Spotify logo. To its right is a white audio waveform with vertical bars of varying heights.
November 2021	 A Spotify playlist banner for November 2021. It features a blue background. On the left is the white Spotify logo. To its right is a white audio waveform with vertical bars of varying heights.
December 2021	 A Spotify playlist banner for December 2021. It features a magenta background. On the left is the white Spotify logo. To its right is a white audio waveform with vertical bars of varying heights.

January 2022	 A QR code with a light green background. On the left side of the QR code is the Spotify logo, which consists of a white circle containing three horizontal wavy lines.
February 2022	 A QR code with a yellow background. On the left side of the QR code is the Spotify logo, which consists of a white circle containing three horizontal wavy lines.
March 2022	 A QR code with a light blue background. On the left side of the QR code is the Spotify logo, which consists of a white circle containing three horizontal wavy lines.
April 2022 (my favorite)	 A QR code with a brown background. On the left side of the QR code is the Spotify logo, which consists of a white circle containing three horizontal wavy lines.

Steps to getting connected with my playlists:

1. Open Spotify
2. Make sure your screen is on the search icon
3. Tap the camera icon on the top right corner of your screen
4. Hover your phone camera over the code

- Note: titles for these pieces are songs I found and collected from the past two semesters. The physical art itself was not made in direct translation. The following sections underneath these songs, are pieces of songs I've written myself, accompanied by my initials (JY).
- Note: the playlists listed above were curated by me every month of the thesis! Take a peak at April's, my personal favorite.

Preliminary artwork that initiated my thesis project idea:



Untitled, 8 x 16in., oil and chalk pastel, charcoal, graphite and acrylic paint on stretched canvas



Untitled, 12 x 18in., oil and chalk pastel, acrylic paint on stretched canvas



Untitled, 8.5 x 11 in., acrylic paint on stretched canvas