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SMP, Fall 2014



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## Introduction

As an artist, I've always struggled finding a medium that best suited my style of work. I've explored many different mediums from different paints, charcoal, pencil/ink, to now found objects and materials. After years of visiting various museums and attending art courses I've come to realize that I am most drawn to forms of installation art. I enjoy pieces that require interaction or pieces that take up a space.

It was from here that I began my experimentation with materials in SMP in hopes of creating something more spatial. During the twenty-piece marathon in the beginning of the semester I explored many different mediums and ways in which to present different ideas. I realized after experimenting with found glass during this time that I was highly interested in the material for its aesthetic properties. I became enveloped in this vision of creating installation pieces from the glass working with its properties in reflecting light and being rigid/sharp. Unfortunately, after creating multiple wall installation pieces from the found glass and spending some time trying to better understand this medium, I came to the realization that creating my SMP solely with glass was hindering my inspiration and making my SMP experience less enjoyable. I was appending all my time trying to force a medium like glass into doing something it was not physically capable of doing and stressing myself out over it? I reevaluated some of my artistic ideas and set forth a new course.



Amber Fryza, *Untitled*, 2014, glass bottles, plywood, String lights.

Self-exploration through the realm of photography and mixed media became my focus from this point forward. With the experience I do I have with photography; I understand that images capture a moment. I realized the documentation of myself and the importance of people, places, and things around me could very possibly help me as an artist discover more about who I am. Capturing these moments (both past and present) through photography while making them more physical/sculptural in a sense allows the audience to experience the more physical aspects of the objects and forms I am including, promoting a different experience of that moment.

I took multiple pictures depicting specific moments from my past that I felt made an impact on who I've become. I also incorporated aspects of my physical/emotional environment with tactile objects that could be found in the image and are also physically present. Through the use of props and staged atmospheres in the images I created, I am depicting the way in which I felt in that moment. Incorporating physical objects and elements into the pieces I create to make a body of work creates a more tactile and interactive experience for the viewer while



Amber Fryza, *Looking Back*, 2014, archival inkjet on watercolor paper

documenting this effort in defining me through my own experiences. I continue to use glass as an element of application with the pieces I'm making in an attempt to potentially alter the photographs I take by experimenting with the idea of forced perspective. Forced perspective in my work includes amplifying the physicality of some areas of my work to draw your attention to that element in particular because of the properties and associations it carries. I am also creating forced perspective in overlapping areas of my images with paint or found objects to force a different tone or experience on the viewer in order to capture all aspects of that moment in time for myself. These aspects include what you as a viewer can physically see and the personal logic you can't. This document book is created to show the progress I've made thus far in the semester while explaining the process along the way and future plans I have from this point on.



Amber Fryza, 2014, raw materials, glass bottles

## **My Personalized Definitions:**

To begin, there are some words that I would like to define in relation to my work. The definitions I've chosen to provide are words that are significant in connecting to the work I've been making and my artistic exploration.

- **Found Objects:** (1) Artifacts that have been acquired from my surrounding environment or previously existing items (2) Preexisting items that now function as a part of my work (3) Objects that are chosen because of specific attributes or associations they embody.

Significance to SMP: My SMP is exploring the ways in which I can use found objects to contribute to my installation pieces in helping them come off the wall and become more tactile. Many of the objects I've used thus far have been lights, glass bottles, and scrap fabric. I continue to incorporate found objects into the pieces I make according to the theme of my pieces or connections made with them.

- **Photography:** (1) A mechanical means to capture a moment in time (2) An accessible portal to work in a fast pace (3) Capturing the essence of what I, as the photographer, want to be seen again or want to be seen differently.

Significance to SMP: After deciding to change the medium and goals of my SMP I've grown fond of the use of photography as a medium. While my project has become an exploration and documentation of myself, photography allows me to stage and candidly take photographs representing different parts of myself.

- **Self-Exploration:** (1) Attempting to better understand who you are as an individual (2) Evaluating your past, present, and future while discovering new aspects of yourself along the way (3) Reflecting on previous and new experiences and struggles encountered to understand their impact on who I've become

Significance to SMP: The focus of my SMP is the exploration of myself as both an individual and an artist. I am discovering what about my history, present experiences, and future contributes to who I am. Through this effort of reflection and artistic experimentation I can recognize what I want my artwork to reflect.

- **Installation Art:** (1) Art that takes up space (2) Art that is created in the area where it is exhibited. (3) Required assembly to be shown

Significance to SMP: During the first half of the semester I was creating off the wall installation pieces that required assembly to be shown in the annex. The art I am currently making is also an off the wall installation body of work that requires Plexiglas to be hung in front of my images, making them more 3-dimensional and interactive. My work also includes found objects and tactile materials that create the physical and spatial aspect of installation art.

- **Forced Perspective:** (1) Directing the audience's attention to certain aspects of your work in an attempt to shift their focus (2) Amplifying the physicality of some areas of the work to draw attention to that element in particular because of the properties and associations it carries

Significance to SMP: I am currently working on ways in which I can use forced perspective while altering some of the pieces I make with the intention of eliciting different meanings and

drawing attention to specific areas of my work. I am also obstructing some areas of my work to illicit a different effect in forcing the audience to see the work differently.

- **Alteration:** (1) Slight changes made to the original piece to create a different affect for the viewer (2) Modifying content in my work to illicit a different depiction or response

Significance to SMP: I've been using different mediums to add to or detract from certain aspects of the images I'm using. Some may be altered with paint while others may have physical objects that play a part in the alterations being made to the work I'm showing. All of the alterations will be different considering the images are different, however some of the tactics may be repeated along the way.

## Summer Lovin in the Art World

Last semester I applied for the Travel Award, an award offered to uprising seniors here at St. Mary's to travel anywhere they choose with \$1000 given to them by the college to collect research and inspiration for their SMP. After winning the award I traveled to New York City and spent four days seeing some of the largest collections the city holds and well-known pieces we study in the art department. My first day in the city was spent in the Museum of Modern Art where the Sigmar Polke collection was on display. He tended to use various styles of overlap to create pieces that enforce the act of concentration in order to see the actual images and ideas within the work beyond the first layer of distraction. While some had glass overlay over top and image he had created, some were paintings he had made and then drawn/painted over in order to distract you from the information painted before it. I was highly inspired by his successful tactics in creating a forced perspective in overlaying materials and images to distract the viewer from other things.

While touring the Guggenheim, I was highly inspired by this room of colorful geometric shaped glass. The entire room was white with these two to three feet tall geometric shapes made of what seemed to be colored Plexiglas. Having an interest in light and glass I was so highly inspired and in awe of the simplicity and beauty within this room. This was one of the installation pieces I witnessed over my summer break that inspired me to work with the glass medium I chose for the majority of my first semester this year. I had been interested in the physical reflective and translucent properties of glass before the trip, but had never really been engulfed by it like I was the day I entered this geometric glass room on display in the Guggenheim.

My final day in the city was spent in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, some local galleries, and The Whitney. It was in The Whitney that I experienced one of the most inspirational art displays I've seen to this day. I experienced the most incredible Jeff Koons exhibit while there. His work on banal objects had been referenced multiple times in many of the art courses I had taken in my major. However, his Made In Heaven collection was something that was new and incredibly inspiring to me. I fell in love with his use of colors, bold approach to art, and almost cocky attitude towards the message he was conveying through his works. Many of the images presented in the collection were very provocative and caused a lot of chaos during



their time of release because they were made during a time in which the AIDS epidemic was still at large. It was inspiring seeing his vision and approach on such an extreme topic while others would undoubtedly disapprove of his display.



Jeff Koons, *Made In Heaven*, Image source <http://jeffkoons.com/artwork/made-in-heaven>

As an artist I've always been drawn to bright colors and uncomfortable art forms. Reflecting back on my experience in the New York over the summer, I can say that Jeff Koon's *Made In Heaven exhibit* has inspired me a lot during my SMP. I understand that everything I want to say or show as an artist may be uncomfortable or unaccepted at times and that my approach in presenting them is just as important as the content within the work I make.

Over the summer break we were given an assignment to create three experimental works of art. One of the three was a brightly drawn elephant from pastels, another was a box with a glass front containing etched words into the surface to look through to the inside, and the last was a series of photographs I had taken in correlation to a feminine theme. Ironically from two of the three experimental pieces I created, two elements seemed to carry on with me throughout the semester. One element I continued to work with was glass and the other being photography. I've come to work with photography similar to that of Sigmond Polke in that I overlay the images I alter with found objects or other mediums (such as Plexiglas) to distract or alter my viewers attention and understanding from more concentrated areas in the images to an area where forced perspective is guided.

## My Intentions...

Intention Statement 1:

As an artist I enjoy works that expand my mind on preexisting thoughts or ideas about the world and the simplicity of its total existence. I desire to make people self-reflective on certain aspects of life I find disturbing. I see people living in a world they no longer admire because they are too distracted by the list of things they need to do and the timely deadline they have to accomplish them by. I want to emphasize the ways in which many of us are being taught what to think instead of how to think in order to fit into the system. I like to step back and admire simplicity.



*During this point in the semester I was uncertain of what exactly I wanted to make. I knew what I liked as an individual and understood I had a lot to say but had no true intentions on how to exemplify them. It took time to find a medium that would allow the audience to be interactive with my work while also demonstrating what I wanted my work to reveal to the audience. Now reading this intention statement, I can see I had no real plan for how to execute the work I eventually created and no concrete explanation on what it was I wanted to say. While the ideas behind what I felt and believed were present in the statement, the ways in which I could actually display them artistically were not. I needed to spend time experimenting with different idea and mediums before my goals as an art student could be accomplished.*

Intention Statement 2:

I see found objects as interesting pieces in themselves because of the multiple things they are capable of. My intentions as an artist working with found objects is not to completely deconstruct and transform them, but to give them a purpose other than the one they were initially created for. I like to focus on the beauty of simplicity both within the world and the objects that inhabit it, whether they are natural aspects such as light or human made objects such as glass. Creating a place for people to finally take the time to step back and admire this beautiful simplicity constructed of found objects and natural elements is my goal.

*It was during this time that I discovered my love for found objects. While many points I made in this intention statement were true, the ways in which I now present them are different. Initially, my intentions were to create a physical space for people to admire the works I create from the found objects I obtained. However, after changing my senior project from attempting to make the found objects into something they were not, I am now using them as appliqué or extensions of my work.*

## **My Visit from Katy Arnett**

For my first studio visit I invited one of my education professors Katy Arnett to come view my studio and reflect on the pieces I showed her. I explained my fascination with glass in the way it reflects light and how I plan on creating works that exemplify and work with that aspect of his presence. She made a remark that I found to be very interesting in that it related more to the experience of the viewer taking notice of the glass' reflection. Katy mentioned that the vision I had in mind reminded her almost of a backwards Kaleidoscope in that the reflections of the glass itself could potentially be controlled by the viewer depending on where they stood in the installation I create. Looking at one of the test pieces I had created with very finely pounded glass pieces, she noticed that when she stood at different angles the light reflected off the glass would change. I found this to be very interesting and potentially something to work with in one of my next few pieces. The reflections themselves could be something I work to create something with as well, perhaps the refracted light onto the wall or floor could be turned into something more that just what the piece reflects in that area of the room. Katy also mentioned that I could potentially guide the audience through my installation pieces in the

ways in which I orient them. This was also something I had been thinking about doing and plan to experiment with in the next piece I make. Overall I found her advice and take on my work to be very helpful and thought provoking in that I hadn't thought about some of the ideas she proposed.

## Questions (with Conor Colgan)

1. What was your first memorable art experience and how is it relevant to what you are doing now?

My first memorable art experience was a field trip to the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore. We were looking at a lot of Egyptian artifacts and mummified bodies. I suppose it relates to the work I am creating because we were looking at many of the found objects from the Egyptian tombs and the various artifacts they used everyday as extensions of themselves or places they inhabited. The work I am creating now relies heavily on found objects. I do remember the museum having an actual mummy on display and it was really cool to see. I set off the museum alarms though by entering a room I wasn't supposed to go into; I didn't know there were invisible lasers!

2. Who is your favorite artist and why?

My favorite artist is Jeff Koons because he likes to poke fun at banal objects, things that we see and use every day but don't take notice of. He's not afraid to disagree with people. My favorite of his works is his *Made in Heaven* collection because it was all about sex and provocative imagery. I enjoy works that are controversial and out of the ordinary. It's always entertaining to see people seemingly uncomfortable and feeling awkward when they walk up and look at the images, but its sex, it happens all the time.

3. What inspires you? What are some of the sources, both within art and outside of art that you turn to?

Nature inspires me a lot. I feel like most of the world's natural elements that we have no control of are things I'm really fascinated by. In my art I try to reach something on that level where I'm on that boundary of being in control of what I'm making, but not being in control of what happens after I make it; if that makes sense. I like using the world as my inspiration. People's reactions to what they see are also my main inspiration. I like to think of the reaction



of the audience when making my work, not just the teacher or my classmates but people who would see it otherwise.

4. What draws you to the medium and materials you work in? / How does your choice of medium(s) affect your work and contribute to its meaning?

I'm really inspired by natural elements and the world in general so I'm drawn to glass because elements of it are very natural but

Image source <http://jeffkoons.com/artwork/made-in-heaven>

it's still man made. The way it carries light is so different, the way it catches the natural light waves of around it and displays them in an almost distorted way. I guess I like glass because it allows you to see something new that you see every day. It relates back to Jeff Koons who wants people to notice things people don't notice every day through his exploitation of banal objects.

5. How is your art a response to the world you live in?

I like to make my work reflect the world I live in it's kind of like my world in relation to the world I actually live in. I like to take things that I see around me and reflect on how they relate to things other people see everyday.

6. Is your work ultimately more about your process or about the final product? Why do you feel that way?

I feel like it's both. I feel like I'm working towards the end goal but in the process during it if I'm not happy with the experience I'm having then I just change my piece in general. I suppose I feel that way because your work is supposed to be a reflection of you and I feel like if while you're making it you can't relate to it then the ending piece is not going to be what you want it to be.

7. Do you have a mission? What do you consider to be your purpose for creating art?

The mission behind all of my art actually is to help people be a little bit more self-reflective about themselves and the universe. Instead of people doing what they want to do, they do what they have to do, and I want to make people stray away from that even if it's just for a minute. Sometimes you need to expose yourself as an artist and put that out there for people to relate and understand.

8. What about making art intimidates you?

I guess having an image in my head of something that I want to create and when I get to the end result it's not what I saw in my head. Its about the challenge of making what your mind sees but your hands can't do. That's intimidating to me. Some people worry about their art not being considered art and that doesn't worry me so much because if I say its art then its art!

9. If you could have your portrait done by anyone who would it be and why?

Giacometti, I like the way he distorts his portraits in a way that their realistic but they're also an interpretation of what he sees when he looks at you. When you look at them you can see what the person looked like when he painted it, but there are still all these other lines and things that only he saw while looking at you. Its interesting to briefly see what he sees.

## **First In progress Critique:**

During the first in progress critique I had been working on two projects. The first consisted of this wooden crate I had found behind the annex and painted to be a mauve color. I used some

of the glass bottles I collected from around campus and used fire and string to break the bottle necks off to make use of the remaining cup-like bottom half. I then used caulk to adhere the glass cups to the wooden crate and installed some candles hidden behind the wooden panels to illuminate the glass when lit. The bottles I chose to use were a combination of green, blue, and clear bottles. The piece was essentially more decorative than artsy and I was told to take my focus elsewhere. One possible direction was in the second project I mentioned I was working on at the time, which happened to be an in-progress piece made from broken shards of glass. I had taken a linoleum tile I had found outside and used the caulk I adhered the glass cups with to attach the glass shards together in a sculptural form. Unfortunately, the caulk was not a strong enough or fast drying bond for the glass and turned out to be unsuccessful. I was attempting to mimic something similar to the Icarus glass sculpture I had made during the twenty-piece marathon but the result was not successful and turned out to be something I wasn't interested in finishing.



(Left) Amber Fryza, *Icarus*, 2014, broken glass, Hot glue  
(Right) Amber Fryza, *Untitled*, 2014, wooden crate, broken glass, mixed media

## Chihuly-Source Artist

Dale Chihuly is an artist who has revolutionized glass blowing as a unique art form through his years of hard work and experience in the glass field. With a profound fascination in the natural translucency and reflective qualities of the medium, Chihuly has created numerous blown glass sculptures that embody his style through the repetition of specific forms. His background in and love for architecture plays a large role in the location of his installation pieces as well, while the inspirations and work processes behind them bring the art form together. Research on Chihuly shows a constant repetition of specific forms in the work he creates. There are four major forms his blown glass pieces resemble including his most well known nature inspired floral patterned shapes, coiled glass pieces, spear shaped glass forms, and lastly his glass bulbs.

Chihuly's explained how although a lot of his work is nature inspired, he doesn't look at a particular site in nature and plan to make a piece in that aspect. Instead, his creating is formulated more towards his natural "feeling for using glass and taking advantage of its transparency."

In many aspects I can relate to Chihuly's work especially in his fascination with glass in its natural properties that allow it to be both transparent and reflective of light.

However, unlike Chihuly when I create a piece of art I do not always feel the need to look at the physical space it was be displayed in before I design it. Most of the time I create a piece depending on what I am inspired by at the moment and drive on that.

The fast pace at which Chihuly works is something I do enjoy and relate to as well though, I love working through a piece and completing it within a week or two. Occasionally unlike Chihuly I will go back and alter the piece I've made or go over it and create something different, but in general that sense of movement, fast pace and energy is something I can relate to. Looking at the body of work Dale Chihuly has made through researching, the fast pace at which he explains he likes to work doesn't seem evident at all. In looking through the research all the forms he creates, all the colors he uses, the spaces in which he installs his work, and the natural elements involved are all evident. After researching the process of Chihuly I understand the fast pace at which he explains he works in is relevant to the process of design and not so much the physical construction and installation of the pieces and overall the art form in itself is extremely impressive.



Image source: <http://www.chihuly.com/>

## Midterm Critique:

After experiencing my first Midterm critique, I realized that the intentions I had in the work I was creating were not coming across as I wished they would have. I was attempting to make the found glass material become something other than what it was. However, it was still clear to the art department and my peers that the source of the found glass was still a bottle. I had used the found glass as more of an appliqué as opposed to creating something new and different from it. There were many things I took away from the meeting and noticed about my work including:

- I needed to explore the medium more first If I wanted to continue working with it
- I needed to have a greater focus behind the work I was making
- If I were intending to give the glass bottles another purpose that needed to be clear
- If I wanted the bottles to been seen as what they were, then I needed to better handle the correlation between brand and bottle
- I mentioned I wanted to create form from the glass but instead it turned more into a crafty object
- I struggled finding a proper adhesive for the materials
- I need to develop ways in which to better explain my artwork
- I need to be careful of which vocabulary terms I choose to use



Amber Fryza, *Untitled*, 2014, sheet metal, broken glass



## **My Response to the Critique:**

After reflecting back on the feedback from my midterm critique, I began questioning my intentions with the work I was creating and decided my thoughts and work needed some reevaluation. I realized during the process of preparing my installation piece for the critique that I was creating a body of work that was less about what I wanted to say as an artist and more about having something to show. I was unhappy and very stressed out in the process. I spoke with Sue Johnson and explained how I was nervous about the way in which I was going about my SMP. I was nervous to admit that I now understood I wasted so much time on an idea that I no longer wanted to continue pursuing. The most unsettling aspect of this conclusion was the fact that I was unsure about what I wanted to say as an artist and what medium I wanted to use. Understanding that we had deadlines approaching for the next body of work we were making, I was overwhelmed and upset about that fact that I may fall behind my peers. Sue encouraged me to stop holding back as an artist and to pursue whatever I wanted to do. I then decided to reevaluate and determine what my new goals and intentions as both an individual and an artist would be. I needed devise a plan that would be successful in my art making for the rest of the semester.

## **Another Revised Intention Statement: (10/29/14)**

My intentions with the work I am creating are now geared towards a shift in what the material I am working with is willing to do. Initially I was attempting to manipulate the material to work in a way I thought it should without knowing enough about the glass itself. I need to delve deeper into what I as an artist enjoy making, whether that be painting, sculptural installations, or something else and stay connected with that. Making something I don't enjoy making will ultimately make the process less enjoyable and would reflect in the work I make. One of the first moves I need to make is learning more about the glass itself through experimentation. I plan on taking glass and pushing myself to see it in different ways while controlling my lighting as well in order to really clarify what it is I want my work to show.

I've also noticed through past intention statements and in the midterm critique that I mention people overlooking this beautiful simplicity found in the natural beauty of the world. Considering that continues to hold true, I need to find ways to push that aspect of my work either through representation or metaphorical forms. If I want to emphasize the fact that beauty is in simplicity and that it can be seen everyday in our world then I need to explore my options in how I can represent that.

## **Reevaluation of My SMP and Ideas**

After reevaluating my intentions with the art I am making this semester I decided the best way to better understand myself and my intentions with my art work would be to delve deeper into what I want to convey in my work and where that stems from. I decided to create a documentation of myself through the means of photography and mixed media to alter different images of myself and eventually other people/places that are most significant to who I am and



the impact they had on me. Through documenting these aspects of my life (past, present, and future) I will essentially learn more about myself in the process and discover more about the ways in which I want to work as an artist.

**11/19/14**

## **Second Studio Visit with Katherine Gagnon**

After having Katherine Gagnon come to my studio to look at the work I've been making and to hear my future plans for SMP, I found her advice to be very helpful! I explained my intentions in taking more photographs throughout the semester and finding ways to make them more sculptural through alterations and additive mediums. In showing her the first two images I've created, I explained my intentions to be a documentation of self-discovery and using forced perspective to alter the way the viewer sees the images.

Katherine suggested for me to not make things too complicated in how I choose to alter the pictures I take and to go with my own instincts to take on the sculptural form that best fit the message I am trying to convey. She mentioned focusing on the surface and when focusing on the aesthetics, to take a step back to make sure things are still as they should be. Katherine also mentioned that she liked the images better in color as opposed to black and white because it depicted a deeper meaning and added to the image itself. She continued to remind me not to over complicate the pieces that I make and to understand the references being made in the one image I had.

According to Katherine, in the image I took of myself wearing white cloth and looking over my shoulder, there were religious references being made in both the pose, the style of the photo, and the red of my hair. She referred to the "halo effect" my hair created in the image and mentioned how in the bible red hair is supposed to embody the faults of Eve. I found all of these comparisons to be very interesting and intriguing in that my work was capable of producing so many references and opinions. I also asked her if she thought it would be a good idea to continue with self-portraits or to also include images of other people. I also questioned if the images should continue to be staged or candidly taken? Katherine mentioned that it would be fine to take pictures of other people but to develop an idea of what I want to say first before including them in my work. She also mentioned that taking all kinds of different pictures would be beneficial to my work in allowing me to experiment with multiple kinds of images and eventually work to better understand which style suits me and my artwork best. Exploration in the medium was something she mentioned she really wanted me to do in order to get a better understanding of what I want to convey in my images. She said photography is a great way to work fast in that I can work out my ideas in taking multiple photographs at a time.

Cindy Sherman was an artist she mentioned she wanted me to look at. I had already been looking into her work recently and while I found it to be very interesting in that we both staged our images, my work is less about changing/playing with my identity and more

about discovering my true self. I plan to look further into her work and other artists as well to get a better sense of what I want to accomplish with this new path I've chosen to take in my work.

## **Post-Intention Statement**

After the In-progress critique, I have created a more concrete direction in where I want to go with my artwork. I have decided to experiment with the realm of photography with the intention of making the photographs become more sculptural. The images I plan on taking will be depicting staged imagery of myself with different representations of my own self-discovery. I plan to reproduce many of the same images I take and altering them in different ways to experiment with forced perspective and changes in theme according to the various choices I make in modifying them. I plan on continuing with using my initial medium of glass as well with this new direction as a means of alteration and sculptural form. I plan to use the Plexiglas as a form of appliqué in the alteration for some of the pieces I will create indirectly as opposed to creating an entire body of work only on glass as I intended to do before. In some cases, some of my work will have replicas of the images I take while others will have one image I will choose to either leave as it is or alter in some fashion.

## **Art Events I Attended**

10/3/14

### **Artist Lynn Tomaszewski: Agglomophenomena**

Lynn Tomaszewski was a fascinating artist who works in a range of mediums and showcased her exhibition on the idea of collective behaviorism. She mentioned her focus was more personal and observant as opposed to political art. After walking around her exhibition before she began explaining the meaning behind her work, I noticed the specific orientation of the paintings she had made. The larger ones showed no evidence of how they were being held to the wall while the smaller pieces associated together were hung in a different manner. This was pointed out to me as an intentional choice she made. The smaller works oriented together were clearly seen being held to the wall by hanging onto a screw. The labeling of her pieces were also numbered and left with no description as opposed to the alternative option of providing the viewer with some explanation of the concept behind the piece and the medium used to create it.

As Lynn began introducing herself she mentioned her fascination with people and structure. She was fascinated with structure both within a system of control and a collective structure composed of a large mass of people. She further explained how her fascination first began with the collective behaviorism of animals. This could be seen in her earlier works demonstrated with paintings and drawings of birds. There were a few images presented to us over projection depicting some of her works on a large body mass of birds. She referenced the

political and social aspects of events occurring recently in Egypt and how the collective mass of such a large number of people inspired her artistically.

This inspiration then led to the majority of her work we could see displayed throughout the gallery. The medium Lynn chose to work with in representing this collective visual was an airbrushing paint technique. She primed the background of her canvases with a color palette she was most attracted to and would create multiple colorful circles contained within the parameter of her square canvases to convey the visual of the “collective”. Her large-scale projection piece she later presented was explained to us as having been inspired by the coding associated with DNA studies. She was interested in the idea of a natural hierarchy and the collectivism within it. She created this large-scale computer generated model similar to the paintings she was creating. Essentially the piece was comprised of a large shape containing multiple circles constantly being reproduced and randomly scattered within it.

Overall, I found Lynn’s artwork to be incredibly beautiful and fascinating in the fact that the powerful imagery contained in the message being collective behaviorism impacts our visual perceptions and physical manifestations we are constantly surrounded by daily. My perceptions are fairly similar in the way I constantly point out the everyday banal objects or everyday experiences we have impacting us in different ways. I like to collect found objects and give them another purpose in hopes to help make them be seen again just as Lynn enjoyed pointing out the collective culture we as people come together to have.

9/24/14

### **Artist Event: Katherine Gagnon**

Painter Katherine Gagnon explained how she enjoys learning by doing and often times focused her work around the question of “how can I make a painting speak?” Color was a major aspect of her work and played a part in her earlier works consisting of color blocking, which she thought to be animated in a sense. The square format of her painting was something she felt strongly about because of the equal proportions associated with a square. Both of these properties could be seen throughout her works she presented to us today.

The titles of Katherine’s work introduced a narrative to her paintings. She often times used the title as a way to invite the viewer in to better understand her work and hint at the image she had in mind while creating it. Many of her works became exploratory after a while of color block painting, and her work began to transition to more experimental processes. Eventually wordplay in her paintings became something she was interested in. Often times the word play would be simple or hidden in a sense within the work itself.

Katherine began painting on aluminum panels and started making her works form memory. She began questioning how certain gestures she was making within her painting meant something. Her marks were something she wanted to build up and use color to show meaning within her paintings. Katherine explained how she began experimenting with hinting at certain ideas within her works in creating pieces that reflected heavily on being still or in motion.

One idea Katherine mentioned in her panel was how she did not always know what the meanings of her works in process were supposed to be at the time. She mentioned how often times she would be inspired by memories or places and begin to paint off of that inspiration. Questioning different modes of thinking were another idea brought up by Katherine, which I found to be very interesting. I also like expanding various ways of seeing and understanding things. She said she wanted her works to be more of a visceral experience for the audience. People are free to bring their own interpretations and memories to her works. The titles she gave them were not something she wanted the audience to test check to see if their interpretations were correct, but more of her communicating her idea behind the paintings. Emotions were something Katherine felt was present in all of her works.

I found Katherine's art to be inspiring in the sense that like a lot of my artwork, I'm not always sure what I'm beginning to make. I also relate to her love for color and emotion as well, I hope to incorporate the two throughout my SMP as well.

10/15/14

### **Artist Talk: Cassandra Kapsos-Scouton**

Photographer Cassandra Kapsos-Scouton demonstrated her passion for photographing the everyday lives of people she met traveling. In the beginning of her presentation she explained how she enjoyed exploring new and unfamiliar places on her own. Baltimore city was one area she eventually began to photograph and learn more about. As an artist who grew up in Arkansas, she moved to and began exploring the area and getting to know the people of the city on a more personal level. Cassandra mentioned how she eventually realized how comfortable she felt in the area and how she became a part of the community.

Community was a huge aspect of Cassandra's work and impacted the different projects she began working on. She mentioned how she was mostly inspired by the murals, shrines, and yards she would see as she became more acquainted with the city. Zoe Straus was an artist Cassandra said she was inspired by. I researched the artist myself and found her photography to be very interesting and similar to Cassandra's in the sense that both captured the essence of everyday life and people we see on a daily basis. The personal lives of the people being photographed are almost evident in the pictures, as if the photographs themselves tell a story to the audience.

Cassandra eventually became involved with SOWEBO, a business that helps rising artists get started and looks at the place being used, the history of it, and the people of the area. She found a vacant lot in Baltimore city, a green space where she could categorize various objects, art projects, and ideas. Cassandra transformed the lot and let an area of it containing a large patch of grass in the shape of a triangle alone because she felt that its presence made the lot what it was. Within the lot she began to collect various bottles to create a bottle tree she kept in the space. Over time the tree became destroyed from both people and weather, but she and her fellow artists would recreate the tree again. Cassandra began to help collaborate with others to create a community garden for neighborhood kids and community members to come and learn how to grow various plants and better understand the gardening process.

Shrines became a huge part of Cassandra's photography and practice. She began to pick various locations around Baltimore city, clean the area up, and then take the trash she collected and built some sort of shrine from them. She explained how the trash became a representation of both the area and the people within that community. Multiple shrines like this were created by herself and some fellow artists who she worked with and afterwards they would photograph the shrines and observe the interactions of people with them. A neighbor of Cassandra invited her into his home to show her his personal shrine collections. She felt deeply inspired by the infatuation with such objects and began exploring the idea of getting a little more personal with her other neighbors and members of the community as well. It was after this revelation that she began photographing people similar to her artist of Inspiration, Zoe Strauss, and started asking questions and taking pictures of people who've lived in the community for years.

All in all I appreciate the work Cassandra created because it shows a general sense of appreciation for the people of the world we live in. Her work relates to my SMP in the bottle tree she created and the concept of human interaction with her work. I myself am working with bottles in my projects and hope for my final piece to be interactive as well.

11/2/14

### **Professor Cruz Performance**

Today, I went to see Professor Cruz's dance performance in the Boyden Gallery featuring Cati Sullivan. The piece he was showing was a performance piece that was entirely improvisational. The dance performance overall was very thought provoking and very emotionally charged. There was a lot of energy and symbolism within the piece that worked well with the projection playing on the wall and the props he had around the room.

Throughout the dance there were obvious representations of defeat and power. There were moments throughout the dance that were overwhelming in sadness and this overarching feeling of not being accepted. I could correlate some of the clothing props and dance movements half way through the piece to aspects of capitalism and conforming to the standards within a particular work force. After the performance ended Professor Cruz had explained how parts of the piece were referencing capitalism in the sense that people are pressured to conform to certain attire and look in order to fit into society. This was referenced through his clothing which included a man's suit and tie with a pair of business shoes. His performance during this point in the dance piece had shifted from a more beautifully lyrical swaying movement to a more erect, uniform kind of movement. He then continued to undress himself from the suit and present himself in a more free form dance style representing the transformation of him.

There were also moments within the dance piece that I felt represented instability of the mind because of a deeper emotional battle. There were times when professor Cruz would be flopping himself along the floor amidst various articles of clothing and irrationally speak to something that was not there. He would at some point parade around the gallery dressed in different clothing styles and ask aloud "Am I beautiful?" There was a word "sehr schön" that he kept repeating throughout one part of the performance. He mentioned in the questions after the performance that the phrase meant "very beautiful" in German. He would eventually cloth himself in various articles of clothing he had propped along the floor throughout the gallery

and would take on the character of the clothing he put on. For instance, if the article of clothing was a dress then he would move in way that was much more feminine and would pose in ways that could be easily labeled as a female stance. Professor Cruz explained that the concept behind the piece had a lot to do with the idea of self-image and not feeling content with the way you are naturally. He said he felt changing into different articles of clothing and taking on various forms of movement represented the ways in which he could disguise himself to fit into a certain aspect of society but all the while remaining his true self within. I found this concept to very thought provoking and beautiful in that it allowed us as the audience to gain a personal look into his work as a different form of art. It was just as personal and representational as any other art form, just in another context. The dance itself was very beautifully executed and successful in allowing a story to be created from the performance.

He also mentioned that he would be performing the same piece the next day differently. The dance was all improvised and he said as an artist he likes the idea of change and having the power to control the different ways in which the dance can be composed.

11/14/14

### **Fracking**

Today, I attended the art event on photo documentation of fracking. There were four environmentalist photographers who had gone out of their way to explore different areas where fracking occurs in order to document and display it as a form of spreading awareness. The four artists first gave background information on how they became involved with photography and then moved further into the ways in which they became involved with the fracking documentation.

The older male photographer, Chris, mentioned how he spent 29 years hitchhiking around the country photographing various things that fascinated him and taking on notes on those things as well. He grew up in an area that was heavily involved in fracking under the surface of the earth's crust. He explained how fracking is essentially digging deep into the earth's layers to extract the natural gases coming from the shale rock beneath the surface. Essentially horizontal drilling is done to reach to layers of shale where a fracking fluid is then injected to create spaces within that layer to extract more natural gases from the material.

Bill was one of the other photographers who talked during the presentation and decided to give a little background information on how he became a photographer and later involved in the fracking project. He mentioned how he is currently a photography teacher and started his career first as a photojournalist for magazines. Eventually he moved on to becoming a documentary photographer for a number of companies who offered him different projects/jobs that were more European in tradition and more subjectively based. Bill mentioned how he became more involved in the project because of Craig's poetry he had been introduced to commenting on the environmentalist's concerns he noted on his 29-year journey.

One of the other speakers of the project had mentioned how her peak of interest in the fracking projects first began when she witnessed this large beam of light happening nearby where she was living. She said she and a friend decided to ride in a car until they reached the source of where the light was coming from. She mentioned that the light was distracting in its overwhelming illumination of everything even as night fell. It was clear to see in the beautiful photographs that she had taken, that the light from the fracking sources had created enough

light to create a “day-like” illusion even during the night hours. The other female artist present at the event explained that with her photography, she was attempting to capture “degrees of environmental disappointment.” She had read online about the project and became interested as well. She had a Bachelor’s degree in dark room photography and had made projects as an art design student earning herself a Masters degree.

All in all after the meeting had finished the project was essentially presented to the audience as a form of awareness in the environmental hazards taking place. Fracking, while not extremely familiar or present in some areas, is something that many people are being taken away from their homes for and nature is being corrupted by. The intentions of the project and the photographs being taken by this group of skilled photographers is all in hopes of promoting help for the situation at hand and to promote a general awareness of fracking.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

Salomon, Patricia. "Chihuly ENVY." *School Arts* 113.2 (2013): 17-19. *Art & Architecture Complete*. Web. 7 Oct. 2014.

#### *Chihuly Envy:*

In the article from the series *Art and Architecture Complete* there was an article focusing on a teacher who was inspired by Dale Chihuly to create a project similar to the pieces he makes. She knew blowing glass would be too complicated and too dangerous for the eighth grade class she decided to make the project with, so she invented a way to use overhead transparencies and a heat gun to create a similar look after applying color with colored markers as well. I found this article especially interesting because as an education minor I’ve learned to love the process of discovering alternative routes to similar processes and learning by doing as opposed to learning by studying. I find the foundation of knowledge extremely useful and helpful however the glass techniques I’ve come to realize are most intriguing to both my audience, and myself were acquired through experimentation and self-exploration. I also find myself doing something similar to this teacher in the way that I like to use found objects and learn alternative ways to adhere them to create something similar to what the artists who have inspired me have achieved. Respecting the limitations of the materials was something also shown in this article and also along with the practices of Chihuly. I’ve come to realize in the process of my work that I need to work with my materials and the limitations that come with them as opposed to becoming frustrated with the process of not being able to make the glass move in an unnatural way.

#### *DALE CHIHULY:*

Hubbert, Beth. "Dale Chihuly." *School Arts* 109.3 (2009): 32-33. *Art & Architecture Complete*. Web. 7 Oct. 2014.

This article was also focused on a Chihuly inspired lesson plan by an elementary school teacher. She also created alternative forms of the glass making process for her students to recreate. The teacher was similar to the ways in which we as SMP students need to create PowerPoint’s and do extended research on the artists we are studying from and the pieces



we've created. She gave a PowerPoint to the class demonstrating Chihuly's process during his glass making and the teamwork involved in the creation of his work. The teacher suggested using some wire to create some floral shapes and then sending them through a lamination machine to create something similar to the way in which Chihuly creates his glass flower pieces. Glass, lime, and soda was also mentioned in this article as a way to create sand. This was something I did not know and something I am more than interested in experimenting with. I need to look more into the process of glass creation, because in order to work with a material I first need to understand the material itself.

*Dale Chihuly: Book 1*

Chihuly, Dale, and Patterson Sims. *Dale Chihuly: Installations, 1964-1992*. Seattle, WA: Seattle Art Museum, 1992. Print.

It wasn't until 1968 that Chihuly first encountered glassblowing that redefined his craft. I learned that Chihuly collaborated with a student of his and began experimenting with the medium of glass and also neon color. I found this extremely interesting because I've been focusing my SMP on the collaboration of light and glass. However, I had never considered putting liquid light into the glass. I have no intentions of experimenting with this process but the combination of liquid neon in blown glass was extremely intriguing to me. There was an inspirational quote from Chihuly in the reading that I felt spoke my attraction to glass as a medium. The quote explained how "glass is a magical medium because it transmits light in a special way, and at any moment, it might break." I loved this quote because I've experienced the fragility of glass and also it's incredible light reflecting capabilities. Chihuly was also interested in glass and architecture, similar to myself. While I've shown no interest in architecture thus far, my intentions for my future SMP work will hopefully incorporate aspects of architecture.

There was another aspect of his glass experience where he created a woven glass piece to hang within his mother's house. I found this interesting because I personally have always pictured the glass shards that I work with becoming a form and not being used as something to hang in a woven manner. There was a small section within the book that explained how Chihuly was satisfied by the photography of his work. During the last two critiques I've had in SMP thus far, I've been told that the photography of my glass sculptures may play a large role in the pieces I've yet to make. This was interesting to find something similar and to read the reasons for why this medium was satisfying for Chihuly. I understand what he means by emphasizing the fact that after he creates his works, the lighting captured in the pictures and the durability of the pieces was carried on through the photographs. The *Artpark 1975* was also intriguing to me in the sense that he was using colored glass, just as I do, to create these large glass sheets to filter light through. I hope to establish a firmer grasp of glass as a medium and understand how to create future installation pieces that may be just as successful as some of the Chihuly installations I've been inspired by.

*CHIHULY*  
BOOK 2

Ward, Gerald W. R., and Dale Chihuly. *Chihuly: Through the Looking Glass*. Boston: MFA Publications, 2011. Print.

In the Second book I read, *Dale Chihuly*, It was mentioned in the reading how Chihuly often varies where he installs his blown glass pieces. Sometimes he creates his installations outdoors while other times he chooses to leave indoors and collaborate it with the architecture of the building. The book brought up a good point, which I found to be very true. It mentioned how “installation art provides a sensory experience that amplifies and intensifies the enjoyment of the individual pieces composing it. Another aspect of Chihuly’s blown glass installation project processes is analyzing the space he chooses to put them in. I feel as though this plays a role in my future SMP because I hope to have my work displayed outside because the space of the world and it’s natural source of light is what I need in order for my idea to function properly.