

Painting is a medium I became interested in about two years ago and I have continued to explore through out my IP Project this year. The work I had been creating before IP was abstract and relied on certain visual elements that create an interestingly strong composition using arrangements of circles or linear compositions that form shapes. Visual elements are important to define and utilize because when a painting consists of unrecognizable imagery, there needs to be a set vocabulary used to discuss the visual and compositional elements that become the focus, the iconography, and the visual language of the painting. Visual elements include personal details or touches like the spiral forms that I try to incorporate into paintings as well as basic elements such as lines, color theory, paint application, pattern, shape, shading, lighting and layout formulas like rule of thirds, etc. In order to create a body of work that is driven by specific interests, that are cohesive and not random, as well as something that does not limit my painting freedom and exploration, I chose to focus my senior year's IP project on color and space. Although this focus may seem vague on the surface, there are specific entities, contributors, and visual elements within the idea of color and space that are playing a role in my paintings that begin to refine my approach, my thought process, and appearance of one painting to another. This makes them familiar as a family, a body of work. Under the focus of exploring color and space in painting, color and space are obvious contributors or visual elements that lay present in my work. The last three visual elements that influence the organization of the space in my paintings are paint application, shape, and surface.

The theme of color and space was an unconscious occurrence throughout the first semester of IP, but became more conscious in my approach to creating work as the year was nearing second semester. Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Takashi Murakami, Gustav Klimt, and Salvador Dali were artists I was looking at first semester who were influenced by external factors such as the media and personal statements reflecting views on current events, personal memories or interests. Although these factors are very important in the artists' creative processes, and speak loudly through their work, my main interest in their work was not the underlying statement or meaning, but visual elements and details that

were provided. The use of color, pattern, line, shape, and compositional organization were just a few of the elements that caught my attention and presented similarities when comparing my interests and work, with the work of these four artists. In the process of transitioning my thought process from concepts of line and its use, towards a more or less refined interest, considering what all of these visual elements had in common, their purpose as visual elements was to be the foundation, the building blocks to creating space. Color beyond everything else, magnified my attention towards these artists' work, and second to color, was my interest in these artists' uses of visual elements to create the spaces in their work. Looking at other artists' work helped to inspire me and stimulate the new ideas that have become part of my process. In order to begin the investigation of color and space looking at other artists' work to help inspire and stimulate new ideas has become part of the process. Starting out fresh with the focus of color and space in mind, led me to other artists whom I found specifically presented visual ideas that relate to my interests. Some of the artists I looked at and continue to explore are Robert Kushner, Norman Bluhm, Sean Scully and Terry Winters, those of whom were suggested as having similar contributing visual elements and focuses in their paintings.

Each artist has specifically provided something new to explore in my work with painting. Norman Bluhm's work exhibits many qualities of paint application that aggressively takes hold of each painting, providing a different sensation of space in each. In his painting *blue*¹, the thinly layered and dripping strokes of blue and other hues alludes to a murky depth, where some spaces left less layered become pronounced as a light source breaking through the depths. In my *2 Panel*² oil painting, specifically the left blue panel, there is a resemblance of Bluhm's painting *blue*, not only because of the color choice, but the paint application using wash-like consistency that provides a thinness and transparency, but also stimulates the dripping of the paint. Paint application becomes one of the important visual elements of my work, because of the abstractness, and also because I am trying to provoke an allusion of space through the organization and application of color on a flat canvas covered surface. In creating space with color, layering of a variety of enclosed colored shapes also helps to build a space within the painting, the shapes themselves contributing to the vocabulary that I have defined as a visual element. Some of these shapes have softer, less refined edges, some with edges

that blend into different shapes or areas of color, and others have a bluntness that do not penetrate past the shape's boundary. These shapes that appear in my paintings also embody different forms, referencing geometry and the organic forms of nature.

Sean Scully and Terry Winters were two artists whose work inspired a creative direction and thought process for my *4 Panel*³ oil painting. This painting was the first of the three paintings I did second semester that provoked new direction addressing color and space in my other two paintings. Terry Winters's painting *color and info*⁴ displays a multitude of overlapping rectangular outlines in high and low saturated color, creating a chaotic blur of color and space that draws you into the center of the painting as the outlined shapes become more dense. The space that radiates around this center echoes in and out as the lines and rectangular outlines become more and less dense. The illusion that is created through the layering and overlapping of linear shapes provides a sense of space that inspired me work with other materials besides a paintbrush, while working on masonite. Instead of a paintbrush, I choose a plastic, partially flexible, rectangular drywall spatula in attempt to mimic the chaotic, vibrating space of Winters's painting, through layering of colors using this technique. The hard non-malleable surface of the masonite brought up many problems as well as treasures to the piece, that drew my intentions a little further from their goals. The more pressure applied with the spatula to the unprimed masonite would leave the markings more transparent, revealing the paint that lay before it. *4 Panel* had a similar feel to Winters's *color and info*, in which there were areas that moved in and out of space paint, because of consistency and colors caused by this process. Sean Scully's paintings that organized rectangular shapes of color referencing some of the natural elements he was photographing of bricklaying and stone stacking, also contributed to the use and presence of rectangular shapes in my paintings. I utilized the rectangular shape as a prominent visual element, arranging them differently in each painting, not only to provide difference scenarios and feelings of space, but also to incorporate another visually consisted element throughout all three paintings. *4 Panel* has rectangular shapes of color that run along the bottom, vertically oriented, providing a division or difference of space between the bottom of the four panels and the top. *2 Panel*⁵ uses the rectangular shapes as more of a horizontal grid marking or striping that runs across both panels creating a barrier of space, organization and color transitions. ⁵

*Panel*⁶ incorporates the rectangular shapes on the top two panels that blend with the other miscellaneous shapes and colors that swarm the composition.

Among color, shape, paint application and repetition of these visual elements, multiple panels is another visual entity that has also been introduced in pursuit of organizing and creating space in the three paintings. Multiple panels became a part of my dialogue with painting my junior year after taking a class that focused on sequences and multiples. The idea that multiple panels together could exist in the same space and/or achieve a new way of organizing space was interesting, and provided a twist to my approach of painting. Each panel provides a division of space that has contributed to the way in which the painting was worked and organized. Manipulating these boundaries that occur from one panel to the next, whether stopping a visual element from carrying onto another panel, altering a visual element's transition onto another panel or mimicking the effect of that panel's boundaries in an area where two or panels do not meet, was a problem I created for myself to help improve the composition. Robert Kushner's painting series *night blooming*⁷ worked with a duality of two differently painted spaces that connect by the rendered outline of a floral bloom. I took this idea of duality by creating the painting *2 Panel* where two canvases have been put adjacent to one another, each of which is painted with a different color palate (blue and orange), each panel's space being attended to differently in the way they are painted, but having a connection between the two with the horizontal rectangular stripes and/or grid that continues across one panel to the other. Whether Kushner's painting was in actuality two panels, I am unsure, but these divisions of space he creates with the illusion of two separate panels has driven my own exploration in working with multiples. In relation to this idea of multiple parts or panels, each panel used for all of my paintings could be seen as individual paintings, but without the others they are less lively or spacious when they sit together. A body of work is merely a sequence of projects that feed off one another building new approaches and ideas for new paintings, creating a cohesive series of work.

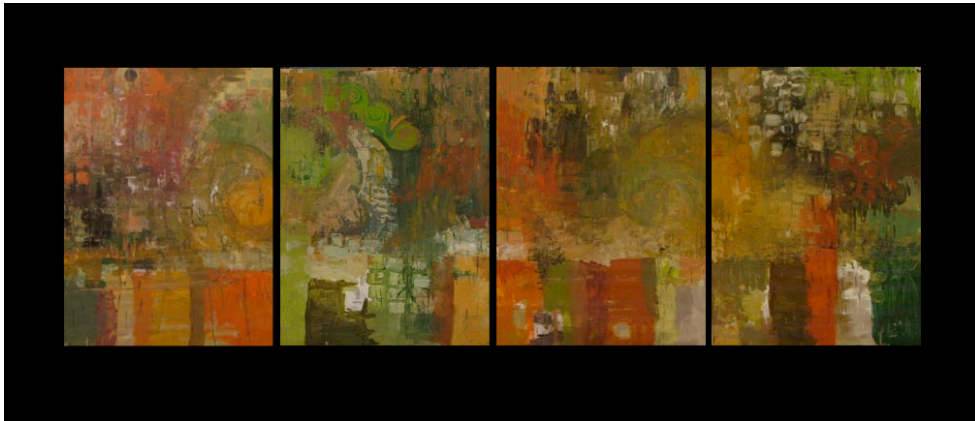
As far back as I can remember drawing and coloring has been something that I just did. It brought forth unconscious and conscious creativity, which was orchestrated through Crayola. Heaven and sheer bliss was fulfilled through a brand new unopened box of a 99 pack assorted colors of Crayola Crayons. I always wondered why they just did not

squeeze in one more crayon into the pack, but regardless, every other brand of crayons was unmatched. I remember sorting the crayons to which satisfied my OCD intentions of organizing the colors in sections by hue and gradations of that color. The company never did well in satisfying this for me with their packaging skills. Color was the refuge, the aid, to my creations of which consisted mostly of landscapes, familiar objects that surrounded my life, and the people and animals that influenced it. Some of these projects were abstracted due to the influence of my imagination and some were as realistic as my drawing capabilities allowed. But nonetheless, these little drawing projects were so much more than creations drawn by a young child. These markings using different colored crayons on paper were masterpieces of space or the allusion of it. This practice of drawing and using color started the fundamentals of organizing composition in my young life, and was the starting grounds to cementing this idea of color and space that was once an unconscious thought, which has become the conscious focus of my work this year in IP. I think if anything, whether they are drawings or paintings, I hope that my work attracts the audience of everyone's inner child, that each can just sit and gaze at the abundance of color that consumes my work, and just maybe, revive memories of being a kid with crayons or paint. By viewing my paintings, I want people of all ages to be on the same playing field in enjoying and investigating my work.





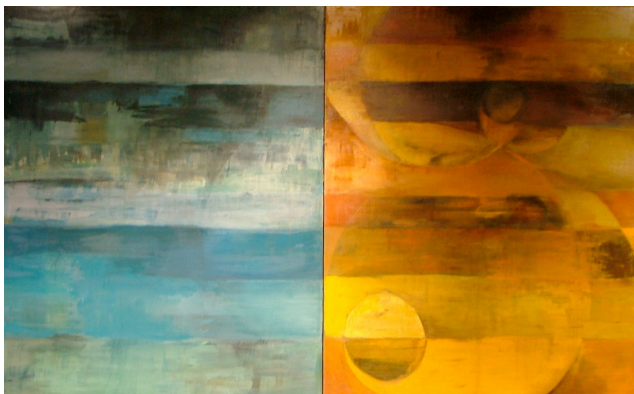
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