IB Visual Art Diploma Program
Comparative Study Summer Assignment

(This is for all IB art students who are starting IB in 24-25 school year, not IB HL students who started 23-24 school year)

Over the summer you are to start your research for your Comparative Study. The comparative study is an analysis and comparison of different artwork by different artists. This independent critical and contextual investigation explores artworks, objects and artifacts from differing cultural contexts.
You will create the slides during 1st semester when we return to school. The summer work is the research and analysis of the work using the provided grid. Bellow is the information about the slides count for your future information.
Students will:
*Examine and compare the work of at least **3 different artworks by at least 2 different artists**, or 3 different artists, **all from different times, places and cultures**.

- At least one art piece should be contemporary (meaning current or close to current work)

*Students select artworks, objects and artifacts for comparison from **different cultural contexts** that may have been produced across any of the art-making forms, and that hold individual resonance for the student and have relevance to their own art-making practice. This is particularly important for HL students.
*Students use research and inquiry skills to investigate and interpret the selected pieces, applying aspects of critical theory and methodologies to the works examined and presenting their findings as a personal and critically reflective analysis, using both visual and written forms of notation.
***Students MUST support their interpretation with references to sound and reliable sources. (this is extremely important or it could be considered plagiarism and violate academic honesty)**

- **Students are required to submit the list of sources used and in-text referencing is required throughout the comparative study.**
- **MLA format will be used.** The following website can be used to help you with MLA formatting.

*Tasks; For each selected piece of art students must:

- Carry out research from a range of different sources (that they must be able to reference)
- Analyse the cultural contexts in which the selected pieces were created
- Identify the formal qualities of the selected pieces (using art vocabulary, analysis of color, line, shape, composition and so forth)
- Interpret the function and purpose of the selected pieces
- Evaluate the material, conceptual and cultural significance of the selected pieces to the cultural contexts within which they were created.
- Compare the selected pieces, identifying links in cultural context, formal qualities, function, purpose, material, conceptual and cultural significance.

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- Present a list of sources used during the study.

*Your Summer Assignment

- Using the Comparative Study Grid that is provided, begin to find your 3 pieces of artwork and start your research. These pieces of art should be intriguing to you and inspire you in some form or another. Have personal interest in the works you choose, do not just choose what is easy or often seen. Remember they MUST be from different cultures and different time periods!!
- Each section of the grid should be completed with a thorough amount of research and investigation.
- This is a working document and will be worked on more in 1st semester, however, the more you have completed over summer the better and the less stress it will be in November.
- Review the examples of comparative studies to help with what research is needed. **DO NOT** start making slides however. These are found in this google drive folder as well.
- Start your in-text citations **NOW**. Whenever you put down a fact or paraphrase information within the grid, make sure to cite it **right away** in MLA format. Utilize the Purdue OWL to help you with MLA formatting. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html
    - If you fail to do this it will be very difficult to find your citations later and could result in plagiarism, leading to academic dishonesty and having severe consequences.
- Keep a running works cited in MLA format every time you use a source for information. Also, keep the citations for all websites that you get your images of the artwork from.This will be due with your CS grid
- Create a Google Doc that has all 3 pieces of art on it with the correct citations underneath them. This will be turned in with your grid in the first week of School in August.
    - Citation for Artwork:

      Artist: Example: Leonardo da Vinci
      Title: Example: Mona Lisa
      Date Created: Example: 1503-17
      Medium: Example: Oil on poplar panel
      Size (in cm): Example: 77 x 53 cm
      Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mona_Lisa

Before Beginning the Research:

- Before you start your research read “Analyzing Artwork (Art Criticism)- IB Art)”.

Analyzing Artwork (Art Criticism) - IB Art

A Step-by-Step Guide

Follow these steps; answer all the questions and you can't go wrong!

1: Description (It answers the question, "What do you see?")

Pure description of the object without value judgments (Elements of Art)

List what you can see in this artwork.

- Objects, figures, colors, shapes, objects, background, etc.
- Imagine you are describing it to a blind person. Do this in as much detail as possible and use art terms.

2: Analyze (It answers the question, "How did the artist do it?")

Determining what the features suggest and deciding why the artist used such features to convey specific ideas.

Composition (organization of shapes)

- What types of shapes are used in this artwork (i.e. rounded, curved, straight-edged or geometric shapes)?
- Is there a mixture of different types of shapes or are all the shapes similar?
- Are some parts of the composition full of shapes and some parts empty, or are the shapes spread evenly across the artwork?
- Are some shapes repeated or echoed in other parts of the artwork?
- Does the whole composition look full of energy and movement, or does it look still and peaceful? How did the artist create this movement/stillness?
- What is the center of interest in the composition?
- How does the artist draw your attention to it?

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Use the elements/principles to reflect upon the art form

- Determination of subject matter through naming iconographic elements, e.g., historical event, allegory, mythology, etc.
- Selection of most distinctive features or characteristics whether line, shape, color, texture, etc.
- Analysis of the principles of design or composition, e.g., stable,
- repetitious, rhythmic, unified, symmetrical, harmonious, geometric, varied, chaotic, horizontal or vertically oriented, etc.
- Discussion of how elements or structural system contribute to appearance of image or function
- Analysis of use of light and role of color, e.g., contrasty, shadowy,
- illogical, warm, cool, symbolic, etc.
- Treatment of space and landscape, both real and illusionary (including use of perspective), e.g., compact, deep, shallow, naturalistic, random
- Portrayal of movement and how it is achieved
- Effect of particular medium(s) used
- Your perceptions of balance, proportion and scale (relationships of each part of the composition to the whole and to each other part) and your emotional
- Reaction to object or monument

3: Interpretation (It answers the question, "What is the artist trying to say? What is going on in the picture")

- What do you think the artist is trying to say in this artwork? What does it mean?
- What is the main theme or idea behind this piece?
- If you were inside this artwork, what would you be feeling/ thinking?
- Does the artwork have a narrative (tell a story)? Is it a religious artwork?
- Is it abstract? Is it realistic? Why?
- How would you explain this artwork to someone else?
- Evidence: What evidence inside or outside the artwork supports your interpretation?

4: Evaluation (What do I think about this artwork? How do I feel about whether the artist was successful in conveying an idea?)

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Based upon what you have observed already, give your opinion of the artwork. You MUST give reason.

- Use aesthetic theories to help evaluate
- Is it a good artwork?
- Criteria: What criteria do I think are most appropriate for judging the artwork?
- Evidence: What evidence inside or outside the artwork relates to each criterion?
- Judgment: Based on the criteria and evidence, what is my judgment about the quality of the artwork?
- “Franz Marc has created an effective expressive painting, because the hot colors and lively brush marks he has used add to the overall feeling of energy and excitement his is trying to create.”
- “The overall mood of this drawing would be improved if Kathe Kollowitz had used strong, dramatic shadows, instead of pale tones. Dark tones would develop the feeling of fear and loneliness in this image.”

Example:

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This artwork contains a sad little girl that is bleeding from the nose and holding a teddy bear, all while she is standing in a landscape of rubble. There are five people in the background that are looking directly at the little girl; two men are photographing her, a woman with a clip board and headphones has her arm extended that prevents two men wearing red crosses from interfering with the sad event that is occurring.

The artist used jagged lines to create the disorder and destruction surrounding the little girl. The little girl is placed slightly off-center in the foreground for the viewer in order to place greater emphasis on her, while placing the observers in the background. The most noticeable use of the elements of art is the use of only one color, red. The artist used an intense red to draw the viewer's attention to the blood on the girl's face and on the Red Cross men that want to help the child. The placement of the people in the artwork and the use of red place great emphasis on the child being depicted because it makes the viewer's eyes refer back to the little girl.

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The destruction surrounding the child, blood on her face, and her facial expression tells us that it is a sad and uncomfortable environment. The scene is also disturbing because the adults are not helping the innocent and crying child. Instead, they are taking advantage of her situation and documenting it for their own benefit. The artist utilizes this scene to make his audience aware of the great lengths that the news media is willing to go to in order to obtain a "touching" story.

This artwork is very powerful and thought provoking because the artist provides a different perspective for his audience about the news media. He confronts the viewer with a dramatic scene of helplessness in order to get his social message across. Therefore, this artwork successfully achieves and meets the criteria for the aesthetic theory of instrumentalism.

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COPY OF GRID- Use this to help you create your own grid if you do not have access to the google drive folder over break.

	Artwork 1	Artwork 2	Artwork 3
Introduction • Title: What are you studying? • The reason you selected this group of works • Approach: Thematic, Conceptual or historical, Stylistic • How each artwork represents this reason			
Context • Background information about Creator/artist- brief unless it applies to the Approach • Cultural Context in which the piece was created(significant events or belief systems) • Learner Profile attribute of the artist: Inquirer, Knowledgable, Thinker, Communicator, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk Take, Balanced, Reflective • Artist's influences and mentors			
Description • Title • Artist • Size • Media • Technique/Process • Date of Artwork • Location of Creation and Current Display • Unique feature/s			

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Formal Qualities • Formal Analysis: Elements and Principles of Design terms, Composition • choose 3-4 that are in all 3 artworks • Style, School, Movement, Period, or Category			
Interpretation of Function and Purpose • What is the function or purpose of the artwork? • What is the Artist Message? • Identify visual Motifs, Symbol of Meaning?			
Evaluation of Cultural Significance • What is the significance of the materials? • What conceptual ideas are present in the work? • What is of cultural significance in the work? • How has this work contributed to culture or informed its audience? • Was this work Successful? • Then and Now			

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Making Comparisons and Connections-
• Through the Approach you have chosen, Formal, conceptual, contextual, function and purpose, material, cultural
  • Connections
  • Similarities
  • Differences			

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Example of a Comparative Study (DO NOT DO THE SLIDES YET) Look at this so you understand how to analyze and compare artworks.

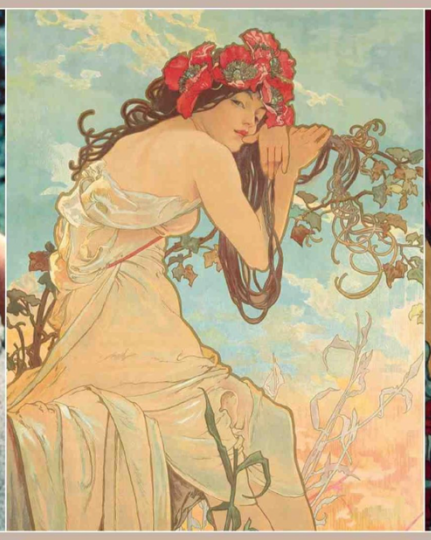


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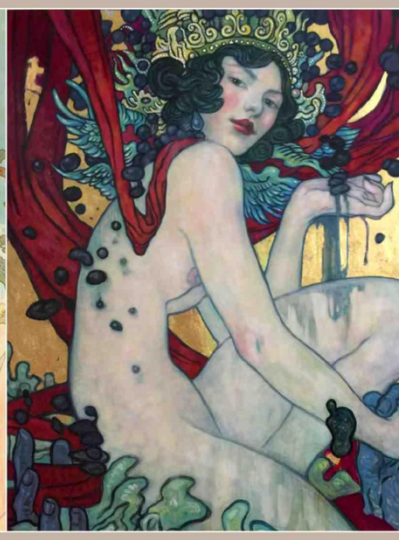
The Comparative Study: Nature, the Female Form and the Portrayal of Empowerment



Frida Leaning on a Sculpture by Mardonio Magaña
by Nickolas Muray



The Seasons: Summer
by Alphonse Mucha



What Lies Beneath
by Rebecca Léveillé Guay

Rebecca Léveillé Guay: Cultural Context

Rebecca Léveillé Guay biography
Is an American contemporary artist. She graduated from the BFA Pratt institute in 1992 and worked as a professional illustrator until 2011 under the name Rebecca Guay. She worked with Marvel and DC Comics until she decided to follow her own path as an artist. Rebecca Guay began creating her individual artwork as Rebecca Léveillé Guay and as part of her studies she took a Sex and Gender Roles course that deeply influenced the concepts she works with.
(Rebecca Léveillé Guay, n.d)



Rebecca Léveillé Guay
What Lies Beneath
2016
Oil and Gold Leaf on Canvas
30 x 24

Themes:
Léveillé Guay's themes fall upon the Female Form, Sexuality and the Modern Woman. She believes that the female form is usually expressed by the reinterpretation of the male gaze. The artist wishes to portray the ideas of sensuality, narrative points of view and the media imagery. She weaves these elements of perspective and the meaning behind a woman and her body with the use of various stylistic models and references. Her inspiration comes from Renaissance artworks, mythology and fairy tales.
(Rebecca Léveillé Guay, n.d)

How does the context influence the work?
What Lies Beneath belongs to a series titled Below the Surface.
Rebecca Léveillé Guay's is strongly influenced by the comic illustration style in which she worked for many years. Her own personal identity as a woman deeply relates to her themes of the female perspective.



Walter Robinson, Griffin's Way.



Katsushika Hokusai, Under the Great Wave off Kanagawa, c. 1830- 1832, Polychrome woodblock print with ink and color on paper, 25.7 x 37.9 cm

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Function and Purpose

The Seasons: Summer

- This artwork was a commission as part of a series depicting the four seasons
- The purpose was for it to serve as a decorative panel

Frida Kahlo leaning on a sculpture by Mardonio Magaña

- This photograph belongs to the artist's private collection
- The photographer's aim is to capture his lover in her in her natural composure

What Lies Beneath

- This piece was created by the artist to form part of a series titled Below the Surface
- The purpose of this painting is to convey the message of female sexuality through symbolisms that depict the female form

Timeline

1850 | 1880 | 1910 | 1940 | 1970 | 2000

1880- 1914: Art Nouveau

1931- 1941: Muray and Kahlo's affair

1970- today: Contemporary art

1853- 1867: The Japanese artworks arrive in Europe

1896: Mucha makes: *The Seasons* in Paris

1940: Muray takes Frida Kahlo's portrait

2016: Léveillé Guay exhib... Beneat...



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Formal qualities: *The Seasons: Summer*

Texture:
The lines that make up the artwork imply texture in the details like the draping of the cloth and the flowers on the female figure's head.



Description:
Summer is personified as a serene and elegant character. Her pose reveals a peacefulness and gracefulness as she sits on a rock with her bare feet in the water, leaning on a branch.



Symbolism:
Mucha's other works also accomplish the purpose of basing the theme of the artwork on a concept. The direct connection to the title of the artwork establishes that the female figure in the artwork is the **embodiment of summer.** The flowering plants, the hazy background and soft colors emphasize the passive nature of summertime.

Lines:
The extensive use of organic lines reinforces the natural flow of the summer.
The variation of thick and thin lines define the shape of the female figure. The thicker lines generally outlining the figure contrast the form, while thinner lines tend to the details.

The juxtaposition between the geometric frame of the decorative panel and the organic shapes within, creates a structured yet natural composition.

Palette:
Mucha uses mostly high key tones with the exception of the red flowers that have a stronger intensity. The use of primary colors creates a contrast in the hues.

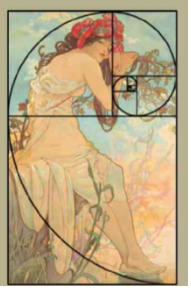


Thinner lines make up the interior details of the drapery of the cloth.



The thick lines serve as an outline of the figure.

Composition:
The organic lines in the artwork are fundamental in creating an effect of peace. The golden ratio present in this piece creates a focal point, the female figure, as well as a pleasing composition to the viewer.



Clothing:
There is a cloth covering most of the female figure's body. However there is an aspect of nudity in the draping of the cloth in the parts of her body that are not covered (the back, the legs and arms). This creates a sense of heat and passion that

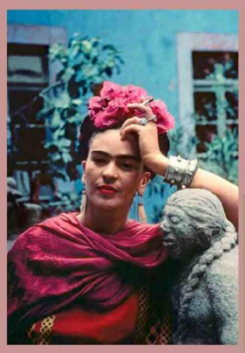
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Formal qualities: *Frida leaning on a Sculpture by Mardonio Magaña*



Description:
The title of the photograph clearly states the subject of the portrait. However, the **theme** centers around Frida Kahlo and her cultural bond.



Symbolism in the **lines:**
Vertical lines represent power strength and growth. Frida Kahlo was a feminist icon; this portrait emphasizes her influence.
Horizontal lines are restful and encourages stability.
Diagonal lines give the photograph movement and center the focus on the subject of the photograph.

Symbolism:
The traditional garments Frida Kahlo is wearing symbolize the relationship between Frida Kahlo and her heritage. Furthermore there is a connection between her confident yet elegant pose and the power she radiates from being in her own environment. Her position as an artist and a feminist icon is further reinforced by the central focus in this portrait and all the elements that place her in the spotlight. Muray captures her in her natural state as a powerful, yet with upmost agility Muray leaves space for Frida Kahlo to appear poised and self- assured.

Space:
The subject of the portrait is distinguished from the background due to the light value of the background as opposed to the darker hues of the subject. There is a striking contrast between the blue hues of the background and the reds and pinks of the subject in the foreground.

Background hues



Foreground hues

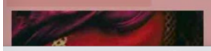


Texture:
The photograph captures real texture through light. The sculpture shows stone, Frida Kahlo's garments show geometric patterns and even her flower headwear display texture.

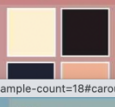








By changing the photograph to black and white a significant accentuation is placed on the texture and details of the portrait.
The black and white conversion shows a clearer distinction between the sharp foreground and the blurry background.



In the photograph there is a strong contrast with light

Light source



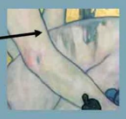
Light source:
The plants in the background, as well as the windows viewed from the outside determine that the photograph was taken outside in natural light. The light source comes from above. This creates shadows which in turn create depth and form.

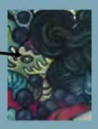
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Formal qualities: *What Lies Beneath*

Theme:
The title, *What Lies Beneath* has a symbolic importance to it dealing with the **theme** of the perception of the female. What lies beneath is a synecdochical representation of a male figure. The female figure is at the top of the pyramid but still has her hand clutched in the male figure's hand in search of support and stability. Therefore the relationship between the woman and the man is based on the empowerment of the female figure within the foundation of male support.

Lines:
The thick outlines differentiate the subject from the background. The other contour lines emphasize implied texture, like on the hair, water drops and wings.







Composition:
There is a pyramidical composition in the painting. This triangular shape represents stability and a symbolic hierarchy between the subject and the force beneath the female figure.



Symbolism:
The crown is a symbol of power and honor. In this painting the female figure is seen as confident and victorious.
Wings represent freedom. In terms of this painting it symbolizes the will to escape the male grasp and ability to move freely.
Hands are stability, honesty and protection. In this painting the female's hand is firmly held within the male's. This shows dependence on the male. However the woman's other hand is open, this demonstrates a natural calmness with which she carries herself.



Palette:
The predominant hues are the primary colors. These hues are contradicting in nature but on the painting create a sense of harmonious engagement. They are controversial such as the male hands below the surface.

Nudity:
Nudity can be represented as vulnerability and exposure. However, in this painting it expresses sexuality, empowerment and freedom. In most of Léveillé Guay's works she incorporates these themes as a sign of female strength independent from the male perception.

The juxtaposition between the geometrical composition and the organic elements of the painting creates a structured and well balanced disposition.

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Relationship to Broader Themes: The Body

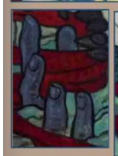
The Hand

In all three works the position of the hand plays an important role. It shows the vulnerability of the open palm as well as the confidence of the female figure in her casual and composed position.

In Mucha's work *The Seasons: Summer*, both hands are visible. One hand is resting on the vine that provides support for the rest of the woman's body. The other hand is smoothly draped over the other. Her thumb is touching her lip which gives the woman a sense of sensuality. Overall the hands convey calmness and sensuality which tie in with the femininity of the female figure.



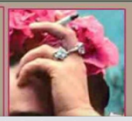






In Léveillé Guay's work both female hands are also visible but have two contrasting messages. The hand closest to her body is turned upward and has an open palm. Yet some fingers are curved in in an odd and harsh angle. This open palm gives the female figure a self-assured and even teasing aspect.
The other hand, at the bottom of the painting is harder to miss yet shares an alarming message. As opposed to the upper hand this one is tightly clutched in a stronger and bigger dark blue hand. The female's hand is almost covered by the strong grip of what can be seen as a male's hand. On the other side of the painting the complementing male hand is present. This hand is grasping for something to hold on to.

In Muray's photograph only one hand is present but it has enough detail to convey its message of power and sensuality simultaneously. The accessories such as the two silver rings, the silver bracelet, and the cigarette give the female figure a bold stance and confidence. However, the gentle touch of her



The pose:

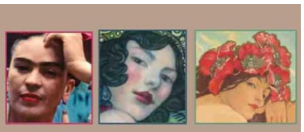
There is an aspect of clothing that goes together with femininity. *What Lies Beneath* has complete nudity but Léveillé Guay creates empowerment in vulnerability and sexuality just as Frida Kahlo's modesty makes her distinguished and elegant. Mucha's work demonstrates sensuality together with the heat of passion and passivity of summer.





In *What Lies Beneath*, the female figure is sitting in a graceful position on the surface of the water. Her pose appears delicate and her facial expression and hand position demonstrate a sense of

The Seasons: Summer's form is composed, calm and confident. The gentle lines demonstrate a lack of tension and her gaze strikes the viewer.
This artwork was created by a man so the elements communicate a man's impression of a female.



The facial expression

In all three artworks the theme of serenity, sensuality and confidence radiate from the female figures. All three women have similar characteristics that unite them. To begin, they all have their gaze directed to the viewer. Their gazes are gentle and tranquil by the tilt of their heads and with *What Lies Beneath* and *The Seasons: Summer*, the look over the shoulder. All three women show a vague smile with painted lips.
The femininity in these artworks rely on the soft gentle curves of the facial features meanwhile conveying a message of the figure's confidence in her own body and her feminine power.



In the photograph, Frida Kahlo poses as an elegant woman with confidence and tranquility. Her pose suggests a casual position that was incorporated to achieve a natural look for the portrait.

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Relationship to Broader Themes: Nature

The native flowers from Mexico that surround her head form a crown of cultural richness as well as symbolic power as a female figure expressing her identity.



Water plays a role in establishing a natural and dynamic flow to the painting. There is a symbolic aspect to the turbulent water.





Frida Kahlo's headwear is part of her Mexican heritage. It is symbolic of her traditions and portrays the striking colors of the Mexican landscape.

In this painting the water is cloudy and turbulent. It symbolizes the unknown of what is below the surface as the title of the piece suggests.

Nature is the most important aspect of this painting. The female figure is the embodiment of the season of Summer. Flowers, leaves, water and rocks are present.





Nature is a common theme in Art Nouveau. The use of flowers and vines creates a fantastical atmosphere which further demonstrates the softness of

Nature

In the pieces *The Seasons: Summer* and *Frida Kahlo's* portrait the theme of nature is evident. There is a deep connection with nature, whether it may be a fantastical connection or a cultural reference. In *What Lies Beneath* there is another natural element present: water. Nature can be expressed into the basic four elements, and within the three pieces there are aspects of Earth and Fire, in *Summer*, Earth (figurative roots as well), in *Frida's portrait*, and in *What Lies Beneath*, the element of water.

Nature has the feminine connotation of being gentle and beautiful like a woman. However, nature can be expressed as fierce and powerful just as these female figures are represented.

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Relationship to Broader Themes: Dependence and Confidence

Dependence:

Even though the female figures are strong and self- assured in their femininity there is still an aspect of dependence. In all three artworks the females are the center of focus but there is an underlying theme of dependence whether it is on nature, a man- made statue or a male figure. Along with dependence comes the notion of stability as well as weakness. There may be weakness in finding support when unbalanced but the women in these artworks use the support to their advantage; to empower themselves and to be confident in their own abilities.

Additionally, it is important to take into consideration that *The Seasons: Summer* and *Frida Kahlo's* portrait were created by men. Mucha's perception of a woman in relation to nature was influenced by his understanding of a female through his eyes. Muray was the man behind the camera who set up the photograph, and made the final product. *What Lies Beneath* is a painting made by a woman with the purpose to distance her artwork from a male's perspective. Léveillé Guay incorporates more symbolic gestures to convey her message of female freedom.

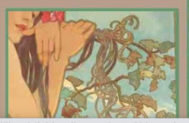
Confidence:

The female figure's confidence is shown through

- Pose: The organic shapes present in all the artworks convey relaxation
- Gaze: All the females are looking directly at the audience with indifferent attention given that their heads are leaning sideways.
- Clothing:

In *The Seasons: Summer*, the female figure is leaning on a vine branch. So even though she is confidently posing, she still relies on the branch and the stone where she sits on for support.

Frida Kahlo casually leaning on the statue shows her self-assurance. She finds support on the statue without letting it take away her status.









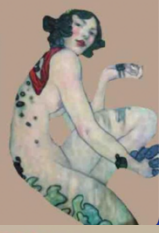
There is light clothing with only a piece of cloth covering her body, with a degree of skin showing. This conveys the feeling of warmth and passion that combines summer and sensuality.



Frida Kahlo's clothes fully represent her devotion and unity to her culture. She covers most of her visible body leaving her arms, neck and head visible. Her modesty allows the focus to be drawn to other aspects of her appearance such as her face and pose.



There is complete nudity in this painting. Instead of conveying the message of vulnerability and innocence it demonstrates confidence and sexuality.



As mentioned before, the female figure has her hand in the male figure's. However, the male's hand is larger and is surrounding the female's, showing that even though she may depend on him, it's the male figure who is dominant and

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Comparison of all Three Works:



"The Seasons: Summer"

Medium: decorative panel with lithographic printing technique
Art Movement: Art Nouveau

Made for a commission

- Artwork created by a male
- Female leaning on an object
- Female is clothed

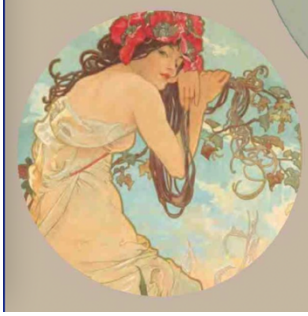
"Frida leaning on a Sculpture by Mardonio Magaña"

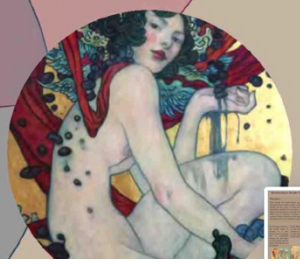
Medium: photograph (Digital pigment print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag paper)

- Elements of nature
- Female figure as central focus
- Use of primary colors

- Female's gaze directed at viewer past her shoulder

Symbolize the portrayal of feminism





"What Lies Beneath"

Medium: Oil painting with gold leaf on canvas
Art Movement: contemporary
Belongs to a series "Below the Surface"



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Connection to my work: Fantasy

Fantasy

My work is deeply influenced by the magical lands of fairytales. Within fairytales there is a world of the unknown where anything could happen. Most of my work focuses on the innocent beauty of childhood memories. However my pieces also explore fantasy in one's everyday life, regardless of one's age.



Own work
On Our Way to the Castle
Work in progress
Acrylic on canvas
110 x 70 cm

In my landscape piece I sought to enrich a colorful flowered meadow with a pink castle. The color pink has always been stereotypically girly. In my piece I wish to embrace that aspect and make it into a structure that symbolizes power.
The element of the castle also represents innocence and childhood



Own work
God Moment

The open palms and the closed eyes show peace as well as confidence. The mermaid's body is in a

Very often females are sexualized and objectified through their physical appearance. With my piece *God Moment* I wish to convey the message of comfort and confidence in the mermaid through her exposed body. There is an aspect of vulnerability together with nudity. It creates a sense of freedom and the escape from shame. The title of the artwork refers to a religious experience in which an individual has a connection with God. In my piece the fantastical creature is experiencing a God moment and in that instant all shame, vulnerability and other's opinions is washed away by the water. Only the connection between the mermaid and the

The pieces were based on girls and not adult women because the element of innocence remains in children. Girls, too, are females and at one point they experience the development into a woman. It is an uncertain time where changes occur. A girl becomes aware of herself, her body and her role as a woman. The element of nudity also plays a role.

Fairies is a series of three paintings with flowers surrounding the girls' heads. In each painting a different girl was chosen, in the blue one, an African American, the pink, a Caucasian, and for the yellow an Asian girl. The girls' race is significant because cultural diversity is a global reality that enriches traditions, concepts and thoughts and fundamentally our identity.
Alphonse Mucha was a Czech artist who worked in Paris. Nickolas Muray was a Hungarian- born, American photographer taking pictures in Mexico. These artists came from diverse backgrounds which further enriched their ability to incorporate new aspects of art into their work.



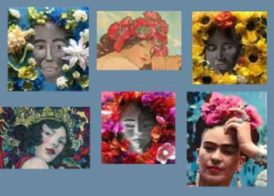
Own work
Fairies series
Acrylic on canvas with found objects

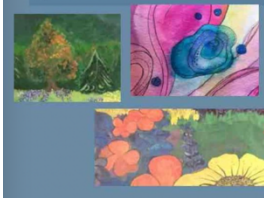
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Connection to my work: The Role of Nature and Color

Nature as a theme:
The exploration of nature as a main theme in art gives the artist a wide range of possibilities into symbolism, feeling and interpretation. Some aspects of nature create a gentle, feminine touch, commonly represented as a giving "Mother Earth". However nature can also be destructive and merciless as in turbulent water, or a scorching summer heat.

The flowers
In all the artworks a headwear of natural elements is present. Symbolically, a headwear or a crown is a symbol of power and status. It is also decoration and in these artworks they communicate a bond with nature.
Flowers represent delicacy and beauty but beyond their use as decoration they stand for growth and blossoming.







Natural elements are main components of the artworks. Clear depictions of flowers, trees, and water represent nature as a pathway into a wonderland far away from reality.
In my artwork, nature represents trust, strength and beauty all in one. The female form, as well, is based on power and gentleness. Together the female figure and nature interact and form unity in

The Primary Colors



The tri-color palette is made up of the primary colors. These are the fundamental colors that create a balanced composition and a harmonious union between the *Fairies* like as in *What Lies Beneath*.

In *What Lies Beneath*, *Frida Leaning on a Sculpture by Mardonio Magaña* and *The Seasons: Summer*, there is a fantastical element to the female figure. Frida Kahlo's portrait is a photograph meant to capture reality, but through the use of color and the artist's intent it transports the viewer away from reality. *Summer* is a mystical figure, her portrayal is extra- ordinary and means to embody a concept. In *What Lies Beneath*, the female figure is a fantastical creature with wings and has a powerful force over her surroundings. These women do not only represent the female form but go beyond reality into a dream- like fantasy

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Connection to my work: Femininity

Femininity is the characteristics of a certain type of behavior, appearance and expression.
There are misconceptions and stereotypes about what it means to be a female in today's world. However, there is a growing consciousness on this subject.
With my art I like to explore concepts of beauty, femininity and identity through my perspective.

What I wish to convey through my artwork is the female empowerment that comes from embracing your true self. This is through nudity and the sense of vulnerability from being exposed. However it becomes a liberating form of expression of one's own self.

Frida Kahlo represents a strong female figure. Her cultural heritage gives her power through her headwear and traditional garments. In contrast to Rebecca Léveillé Guay's work where nudity empowers the female figure, Frida Kahlo has strength through her modesty and heritage.
Yet in her The Broken Column painting she depicts herself nude in full exposure and vulnerability.
In my piece *God Moment* I wished to convey peace and comfort through nudity.

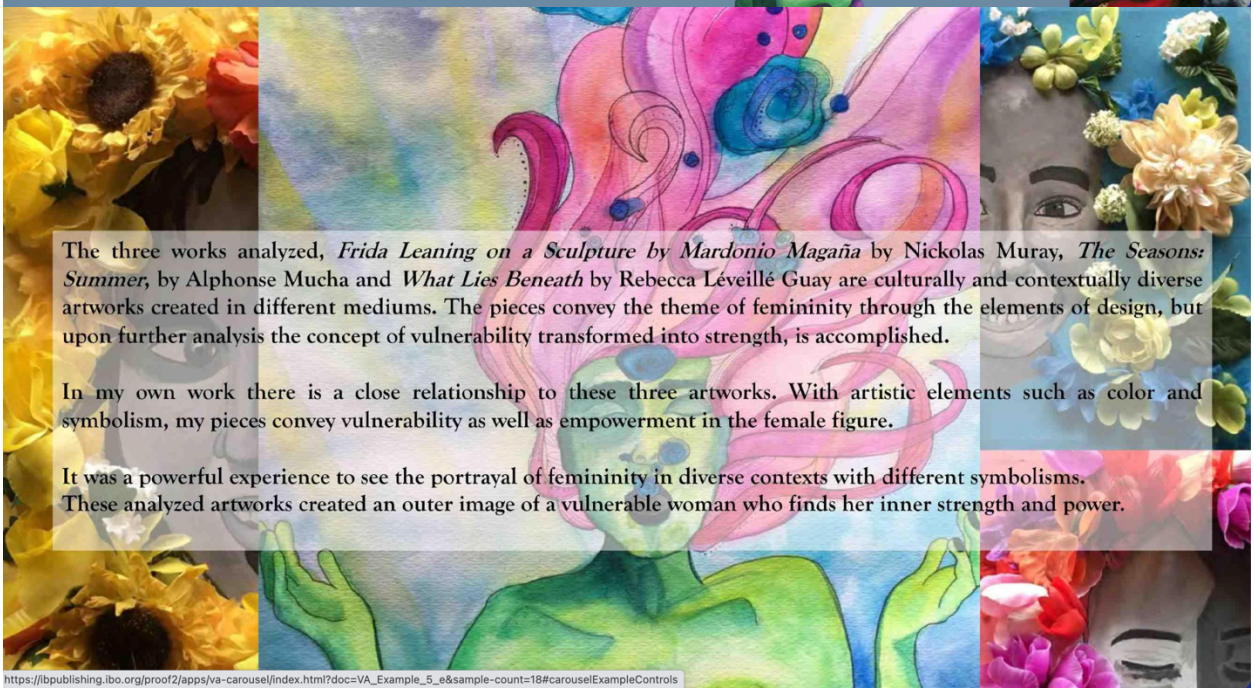
The castle is a symbolic structure of power and protection. I painted it in the color pink which represents femininity and has the connotation of being childish. I created this castle so that childhood, innocence and a girl's fantasy would not be forgotten. I converted it into a mature representation of power and strength; from the identity of a young girl changing into an empowered woman.







From a female's perspective, feminism in art creates a safe space for women to express themselves freely. Rebecca Léveillé Guay does this by adverting the male gaze past first impressions towards a deeper inner strength. She accomplishes this through nudity and symbolism. Frida Kahlo was a feminist icon, she carried herself gracefully knowing her identity and her talents. *Summer,* from Mucha's artwork is a sensual figure, liberated by aspects like the feeling of warmth and passion. In my own works, I was inspired to chose to express innocence and empowerment through femininity.



The three works analyzed, *Frida Leaning on a Sculpture by Mardonio Magaña* by Nickolas Muray, *The Seasons: Summer*, by Alphonse Mucha and *What Lies Beneath* by Rebecca Léveillé Guay are culturally and contextually diverse artworks created in different mediums. The pieces convey the theme of femininity through the elements of design, but upon further analysis the concept of vulnerability transformed into strength, is accomplished.

In my own work there is a close relationship to these three artworks. With artistic elements such as color and symbolism, my pieces convey vulnerability as well as empowerment in the female figure.

It was a powerful experience to see the portrayal of femininity in diverse contexts with different symbolisms.
These analyzed artworks created an outer image of a vulnerable woman who finds her inner strength and power.

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