

June, 2026

Dear Advanced 2D and AP Studio Artists,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 AP Studio Art/Advanced Art cohort. You are here because you have a voice, a unique eye, and the technical drive to move beyond "pretty pictures" into the realm of visual inquiry.

The College Board inspires rigor, but I am looking for your unique expressions. This summer isn't about busy work; it's about establishing a rhythm. In a world saturated with AI-generated imagery and fleeting digital content, your task is to create something undeniably human, intentional, and physically resonant.

The Summer Requirements

To ensure we hit the ground running in September, please complete the following:

- **2-3 Finished Portfolio Pieces:** These must be "Sustained Investigation" quality. Size: 11x 14 inches or larger.
 - **Piece A:** Must be a finished graphite drawing showcasing a full value range (7+ distinct tones/ use an Ebony pencil). Push your blacks until they are velvety and deep, draw with an erasure and make your highlights glow!
 - **Piece B:** Must be a full-color composition in the medium of your choice (Oil, acrylic, digital, mixed media, etc.).
- **8 Sketchbook Spreads:** These should document your "messy" process—brainstorming, courageous experiments, color swatches, and quick observational sketches.

The Summer Options

Choose 2-3 of the following to inspire your finished pieces. Feel free to remix or combine them.

1. **The Digital Ghost:** Create a work exploring the tension between our physical bodies and our digital shadows. Think: reflections in black screens, the "glitch" in a natural landscape, or the ergonomics of tech.
2. **Psychological Architecture:** Use 1, 2, or 3-point perspective to draw a space that shouldn't exist. Distort the vanishing points to create a feeling of anxiety, nostalgia, or euphoria.
3. **The Macro-Anthropocene:** Observe a tiny intersection where nature meets human waste (e.g., a weed growing through a discarded microchip, or moss on a plastic bottle). Draw it at 10x magnification.
4. **The Remix:** Visit a museum or gallery. Select a "Classical" work and completely recontextualize it for 2026. What does a 17th-century portrait look like in the age of climate change or hyper-consumerism?

5. **Internal Cartography:** Map a feeling or a memory without using literal imagery. Use "The Glitch," "Fluidity," or "Collision" as your guiding principle.
6. **Obsessive Texture:** Create a 3D "found object" assemblage from synthetic materials, then create a hyper-realistic painting of it, focusing on the tactile contrast between the objects.

Inspiration for the Journey

"I am interested in the space between things, the gap, the void. That is where the truth lives."

— Yayoi Kusama

"Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it."

— Bertolt Brecht

The AP Standard: Expectations

In this course, we move past the "object stuck in the middle of a white page" phase. Every inch of your substrate must be considered.

- **Work the Edges:** Treat the entire composition as a unified field. The background is a character, not an afterthought.
- **Intentional Mark-Making:** Whether you use hatch strokes, stippling, or fluid washes, make sure the technique supports the *mood* and rhythm of the piece.
- **Visual Maturity:** We are looking for "High Quality." This means refined technique combined with a concept that makes the viewer stop and think.

Final Notes

- **Supplies:** See me before the last day to borrow watercolor, markers, Ebony pencils, charcoal, specialized paper, etc.
- **Deadlines:** Bring your finished works and your sketchbook to our very first meeting in September.
- **Email me at any time with questions, process images or anything!**
- **Your work from visual arts courses taken over the summer fulfills this assignment.**

Take an artistic risk. Be unexpected, bold, and disciplined. I can't wait to see what you create.

Stay inspired,

Mr. Pickman

What medium are you most excited to push to the limit this summer?

