

Sunday Afternoons

Margot Ward

The Creative Endeavor/ Portfolio Description

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Introduction

In the beginning of my undergraduate career, I was exposed to several modern artists who had strong voices in their artworks. These artists created large works of art with cohesive themes tackling issues in society while also incorporating deep symbolisms. When compared to my own artwork, my artwork felt flat that did not have clear themes in it. In the past my artwork was based on assignment criteria. I struggled with finding inspiration from my life to add meaning to my artwork. In my last year I had a project based on identity and a person's background. I was inspired to create a painting showing the process of baking my mom's chocolate pie recipe.

The painting was focused on portraying movement while baking a pie and connecting my memories from baking with my mom. I realized that my work did not have to portray societal issues. I have been inspired by artists such as Will Yu who uses movement to highlight normally ordinary actions. I am inspired to portray a normally mundane task like baking alongside my family members.

This body of work is inspired by various forms of baking memories. I'm painting a series of portraits of the women in my family and scenes of baking family recipes with these women. My work is inspired by the connection between these women and with their own mothers. I created these paintings to encapsulate the movement of baking along with the connection between me and these women. The multiples of arms, hands, and heads are meant to show the long process of baking. These are inspired by my memories of Sunday Afternoons spent baking with my mother and grandmother.

These paintings look back onto precious memories of moments with these women. They celebrate the connection between these women and their mothers

through baking recipes. Which have been passed down through the generations. The medium and materials are acrylics and oils on canvas, but the technique is incorporating movement in the act of baking. The paintings represent the closeness of my family when we bake together while also connecting both sides of my family. I also painted portraits of me, my mother, and grandmother separately to show the women as individuals who are tied together in the act of baking. The paintings will alternate between one horizontal scene of baking placed next to a vertical portrait of a woman in the scene.

Background

Throughout my undergraduate classes, I have been exposed to several different artists. I'm inspired by a Taiwanese artist named Will Yu, his work represents men and women and highlights typically mundane moments by creating an illusion of movement. His work incorporates the use of multiple hands combined with blurring effects to highlight those mundane moments. Simon Birch also incorporates movement when painting his models, he also uses color blocking to capture the complexities of skin tone. I take inspiration from him to add vibrant colors to portraits as a way to give the subjects more life.

These artists are incorporating a new technique for portraiture by incorporating movement into their artwork to bring more life into their artwork. I am combining that technique with the act of baking to capture the closeness and energy of baking to show the closeness of family.

Purpose and Explanation of the Project

My project focuses on the connection between my mother, grandmother, and myself through the act of baking. It is meant to capture the hecticness of baking as a family while also showing the bond between my family when we bake together. One of my paintings portrays a memory of when I would make homemade applesauce with my grandmother, which was a recipe passed down from her mom. Next to this painting was a portrait of my grandmother painted in a classic size. The following painting was of me mixing the ingredients of a chocolate pie placed next to a self-portrait. Then, a painting portraying my mother and myself mixing the ingredients of chocolate chip cookies was placed next to a portrait of my mother. Each painting portrays a member of my family placed next to a painting portraying the process of making these recipes.

Approach

Three of my pieces are acrylic paintings on canvas and the portraits are acrylic and oil on canvas. Each painting was started with an understructure of charcoal to map out the details then overlaid with an acrylic underpainting of complementary colors of the ones in the final composition. I intentionally left some parts of the underpainting visible to show the history of each painting. I incorporated multiple hands and heads to create the illusion of movement in the act of baking. The multiple limbs are also blurred and transparent to create a ghost of that limb.

Closure

In conclusion, I want my piece to communicate a connection between the women in my family through the act of baking together. My work follows traditional painting styles while incorporating movement to represent the action of baking. The focus is on baking desserts together rather than the final dessert. The movement is also meant to represent the hectic atmosphere when several people are baking together.