To walk into the IB Visual Arts studio at Sevenoaks School and to meet the students, whose art skills and work manifest originality, skill, passion and commitment, even if many of the students pursue higher education paths outside the general spectrum of art, is to understand that Sevenoaks School nurtures creativity and provides an excellent environment for interdisciplinary practices and critical thinking, hallmarks of our curriculum at Parsons School of Design and The New School.

My excitement to contribute, even in writing, to the Sevenoaks 2019 IB Art Exhibition Private View, is not only due to the significance of this event and the place that Sevenoaks School holds among outstanding institutions, but this is also an opportunity to express appreciation for a school that provides a creative space for making and exhibiting art on its campus. On my most recent visit, I found that alongside the exhibitions of students, a larger and more permanent installation had given new shapes and colours to the landscape of the school; it was the new science and technology building!

The academic and artistic preparedness of the students whom I meet during my visits to Sevenoaks School, as well as the exhibition work and the installations that I explore, speak volumes about the creative paths that this community continues to carve. A lot of this work reflects critical thinking and an awareness of social justice and innovation. As a representative of The New School, I see this as a reinforcement of the relevance of art and design on all levels of education and in all venues. These are attributes that we embrace and encourage at our campuses both in New York City and in Paris, where students also create for an evolving world, and are embracing innovation, entrepreneurship and change.

Mike Fakih
Senior Director of Enrollment and Admissions
Parsons Paris
Florian Barratt

My artwork often explores concepts of the digitisation of the human thought process via the computer-aided or digitally influenced abstraction of the human form. The work intends to be symbolic of our melding and assimilating with the digital reality we build around ourselves, and of the intangible relationship between the human psyche and technology. This is displayed predominantly through abstraction of the human form with digital means, or with technological influences. These abstractions progress throughout my work, often phasing from reality to the digital world and back again.

Robin Breninkmeijer

The main theme running through my works is power. A force that has the capacity to contort, manipulate and transform humans, I wanted to investigate how it has adapted through history to remain present in either a conceptual or materialistic form. Throughout time it has ranged from being embodied by a uniform to more recently being contained by money, and so I took an experimental approach to see which would raise greater attraction today. With inspiration from war documentaries, traditional war paintings, and my own family’s military involvement, I attempt to portray the advantages and disadvantages of status. I continuously refer to James Chiew’s political collages and Devon Miles’s techniques, to create pieces that challenge the viewers’ emotions through the use of contrasting colours and brightness, but also brutality. While power can represent strength, assertiveness and determination, particularly in a military context, the acceptance of vulnerability also falls under the same category, and my fascination for this other unusual interpretation resulted in the creation of a painting capturing beauty, lightness and exposure. The prominence of power in every piece therefore ranges, depending on one’s personal interpretation.
Isabel De Sousa

The culmination of world exploration and the development of undiscovered skills as an artist is integral to my work. As a child, my long-term integration into contrasting situations allowed me to develop an awareness of the defining impact architecture has on social dynamics. Branching out into two styles has allowed me to evoke and discover the extent of influence these homes have had on me.

Through the focused study of tonal differences, monotypes translate the illumination of interior and exterior spaces in large urban environments or intimate natural havens. I envisioned my journey with this process as one which suggested a flavour of my childhood. Artists such as Edgar Degas and Donald Sultan initially shaped my stylistic choices, beginning with a set of monotypes grounded on the beaches of Merritt Island, NASA’s base in Florida. To balance this structured journey, I endeavoured to use atypical media for the rest of my work, ranging from a relief piece in wax to a sculpture acting as a medium for immersive projections of rural India. The idea of creating art which acts as an interactive experience for the observer became a recurring theme which describes these pieces.

Sara Cinca

The central concept of my exhibition was an exploration of the relationship between people and place. Different locations initially generate strong visual and physical impressions on the viewer, as well as a deeper emotional association. My work is an examination of this duality; the conscious and subconscious sensations effected by, and linked with, places. Throughout my pieces exists a different balance of the human and natural worlds, suggesting their inherent yet variable relationship, and the extent to which these different worlds are one and the same.

I found textural painting a particularly fruitful avenue for this investigation into natural and emotional landscapes, enabling me to convey an almost tangible sense of a setting and the corresponding force of emotion generated by certain hues and textures. The work of Vincent van Gogh was especially influential in developing my understanding of the power of landscape, a constant presence so often overlooked in everyday life. I then progressed to a more inward-looking exploration of people’s experiences of places. Here the work of Laure Prouvost was fundamental in revealing the relationship between the conscious and subconscious sensations generated by a place. I focused on the unique human interpretations of different places, and how memories of and associations with different settings can expose the multiple fragments from which human identity is composed.

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Nicole John

I began creating my art by looking at the emotion behind every piece of artwork and the impact it has on the public. I took to the idea of art being an immersive, sentimental and, in some ways, simplistic form. Art, in modern society, is an overload of different images always being adjusted to the satisfaction of the public, and the idea of art being simplistic yet immersive is a relief to the eye, something enjoyable to our senses.

I originally took inspiration from Magdalena Abakanowicz due to the organic nature of her artwork, which inspires a powerful sensation of shared experiences. Other artists, such as Bill Viola, gave inspiration to the way art captures the subject’s emotions and triggers the viewer’s senses and through being highly immersive. I decided to fabricate the theme of fragility. I believe art is a forever-changing concept and constantly influenced by the surrounding environment. I looked at using multiple types of media such as sculpture, photography and paints. I also used multiple layers of different media, such as my monoprint painting. My photographed wax sculptures were a creation of abnormality and mystery. My work is created on a large scale and made with intent and passion. I took on a rough style to each piece, creating organic and natural aspects. My work ultimately aims at creating something for the viewer to interpret and feel.

In what is considered the ‘digital age’, my artistic exploration began with a simple desire to showcase humanity and the human form, raw, unfiltered, unedited and beautifully blemished in a time where imperfections are not what gets you ‘likes’ on social media. In an effort to change this conversation, I particularly focused on the portrayal of emotions, using eyes and facial expression as the focal points of my portraits. My artwork is a social critique of the phenomenon that is the worldwide takeover by Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram, and how a bid to appear to have the perfect life is incredibly damaging, especially to my generation. Behind the stoic oil paintings screams a voice saying: ‘It’s okay to not be okay!’ Energetic and elegant, vibrant and monochromatic, I have used visual contrasts such as mark-making to symbolise the contrast between the public face and the private face we present. I aimed to achieve a degree of realism within my works, and a familiar recognition by the viewer of the human form, but with an unexpected distortion to challenge how we consider physically, and indeed how we may consider our own social identity.
My mixed parentage and experience living in both Europe and Asia has made the abstract concept of identity even more ambiguous for me. Our heritage and environment, our ideas and passions, our habits and inclinations—all these contribute to the making of one’s identity, and my artwork is primarily an attempt to express this. Through different media, I have tried to convey the multifaceted nature of human disposition and emotion. My series of smaller portraits in different styles aim to reflect how identity is ever-changing and cannot be fixed or categorized, while the intricacies of my inked drawings reflect the complexity of an individual.

Alongside portraiture, I used landscape as a means of expressing the emotional and mental state of an individual, leading me to term these pieces “mindscapes”. I drew much of my inspiration from traditional East Asian art, as well as from modern artists such as Kim Nam Pyo and Fu Baoshi, which itself was a means of exploring heritage. The balanced composition, poignant use of space and appreciation of nature typical of these works were aspects I hoped to capture in my own art to act as a foil to the tumult of human nature. Ultimately, my art is an expression of an individual’s growth and self-discovery.

My works are a continually evolving series of experiments that deal with documenting human gestures and movements, studies of systems and discipline. Inquiries into my subconscious state echo acts of mapping; abstraction and reduction are my exercises to investigate space, composition and self-awareness. Contrastingly, my print and sculptural works create mechanical, seemingly robotic experiences to explore ideas of individuality, promoted by an increasing sense of conformity to society’s expectations that I have observed.
Oscar McKenna-Brown

I believe colour is what decides how an image is perceived, and how that image comes across to a viewer. In a world where cityscapes of greys and blacks are more and more present, I think that vibrant shades and hues are increasingly important to remind us of the power of colour. My exhibition aims to capture how colour alters an image. I believe that monochromatic or black and white images showcase detail, whereas colour enables the eye to perceive an image as a whole. Using this thought process I have tried to show how when colour and detail meet, it is possible to find a balance between the two.

In another way I have tried to show how different colours emulate and provoke different feelings and moods in a viewer. This is important to me as colour is slowly being phased out by concrete and brick in the modern world, so my work is meant to show how different processes like stencilled graffiti-style art or detailed biro drawings can capture colour and detail, opposing the influx of flat greys and blacks in cityscapes.
Renée Ojikutu

The ability for art to affect those that observe it is a mantra that has fuelled my work over the past two years. Architecture, for me, one of the most interactive and exciting forms of art that exists. The rules and boundaries are constantly expanding and changing in order to keep up with the progression of society, and this evolution is something I aimed to channel with my art. Throughout the course this concept of taking something and reinventing it has inspired my work. A particular example of this was one of my later pieces where I took the idea of cocoon-like structures and how I could take the fundamental concepts of the shapes they formed and remake them via my own interpretation, combining nature with design. Like this piece, my other works were constantly inspired by my surroundings and in particular the sounds I observed and how I could construct art that connected these different senses and sensation in a holistic way, much like artist Kengo Kuma who produced work for one of my favourite installations, Sensing Spaces where he aimed to highlight the prominent use of other senses.

Barkat Mehra

My art can be encapsulated by the words of Francis Bacon, ‘If you can talk about it, why paint it?’ This statement has nurtured both the process and themes behind my artwork by intertwining the disciplines between academic theories and different artistic media. My aim is to illustrate emotions and ideas which cannot be expressed in words by forming a connection between our physical and natural world. For each piece that I create, my vision follows the theme of distortion between humans and nature, and how our physical and imaginary interpretations drive us to believe or associate reality with assumptions.

I began this exploration of distortion via portraiture and used family and friends in order to connect culture with practice. Having explored various media: painting, etching, photography and life drawings individually, I decided to experiment with mixed media. This is displayed in my later artworks linking dysmorphia to nature, expressing the ease at which humans have the ability to take nature’s place. I combined the technique of marbling with photography and juxtaposed the colours with the simplicity of nature in order to achieve this series of work.
Nell Rudd-Jones

I have always struggled to express myself using words. As a result, I have used art to reify abstract states of emotion that do not possess a simple definition; a process that helps me understand what cannot be described. This past year I have struggled with the consequences of leaving childhood; as an adult I expected myself to be many things, but I am none of them yet. I am still vulnerable, still scared of uncertainty, still dependent and still struggling to be myself. Having found it difficult to express these emotions to friends and family, unconsciously I started expressing them through my art. As a result, this collection expresses and deals with my fears about becoming an adult and growing up. The process of creating the collection was time-consuming and challenging. Having always preferred to create art that involves the tangible manipulation of material with my hands, it took many long hours of physical work. Furthermore, trying to create art that was directly reflective of my emotions and simultaneously aesthetically elegant was frustrating. Writing this blurb was similarly incredibly difficult. Oh, the irony of me struggling to describe my art which itself is describing emotions I struggle to describe.

I hope this blurb was not too complicated, and I hope you enjoy my IB exhibition.

Martha Reeve

Everything that we can see we see because of light. I chose to enhance people’s experience of how they view the world through highlighting important parts of the paintings. Light is the main theme in my pieces, creating both points of interest that immediately attract the human eye and also support the central theme of the piece. If something is highlighted it is often there to show its importance or draw the viewer’s attention, but I wanted there to be light everywhere, showing the importance of all aspects of a piece, not just the idea in the middle. I showed this mainly through the central piece of my exhibition, The Supertree. Each individual dot of spray paint and every painted line has a purpose, but deeper than that, the background, although it is dark, is the reason that all the paint on it is visible. This creates the contrast between the bright colours in the foreground and the dark background, and shows their equal importance.

I took to creating pieces containing multiple layers, shown in my prints. This meant that each time the viewer looks at the piece there’s something they didn’t notice before, something that didn’t catch their eye the first time. I wanted to create a sense of excitement and feeling that there was always more to look at, not just what jumps out on a first look.
Rachel Sparkes

Before I found the underlying theme that ran through my artwork, I found the idea of turning a simple photograph into a 3D painting captivating. Through this one piece that took up most of my Lower Sixth, I realised that I wanted to explore further into the idea of layering and perception – hence leading me to the theme of using layering and composition to convey meaning. Through more buildings and architecture that I came across in my travels, I was able to create monoprints and lithographs that expressed depth and allowed, with a heavy dark tone, a change of the source itself. With these pieces I was able to use layering to add expression as well as create something that had a completely different perception from what it once had.

With the death of Stephen Hawking, I became reflective of his theorems and work, which inspired my interest to delve into the idea of perception, as Hawking said, ‘There’s no way to remove the observer from our perceptions of the world’. With this inspiration that quickly followed the inspiration from the MCU Marvel’s *Infinity War* ending and the artist Yuichi Ikehata, I wanted to express the ideas of composition of the human body and the breakdown of that. I tried to portray this in paintings and then sculpture, both of which created a different feel to the overall perception. The idea is that the onlookers themselves can choose whether the pieces are breaking away from each other or coming together to form something as complex as the human body. I aspire with my work to have the onlooker’s perception change even if just for a moment on the body or a simple building.

Imme van der Plas

My artistic journey began with the word ‘sensation’. I was inspired by busy urban environments and wanted to capture the sensation of movement, chaos and colour within them. Through the expressive and dynamic manipulation of different media I wanted to create strikingly powerful images that capture the energy in daily life. I experimented with the middle ground between abstraction and reality by translating scenes from the real world into something more emotive and expressive of experiences as well as taking abstract pieces and working reality into them. The high level of detail in my work symbolises the eccentricity of life and makes the pieces interesting because the longer you look at the work the more you begin to notice. Artists such as Gerhard Richter, Floyd Douglas and John Piper have been my most prominent influences and are in part responsible for my artistic approach to my pieces. Ultimately my works are intended to act as an exploration and celebration of life and applying this across different cultures.
Margaretha von Boetticher
The initial inspiration for my art project came from my love for literature and books. This motivated my main piece: the ink family portrait painted on eight books. I decided to continue the use of contrast in my artworks, alongside sticking to the personal theme of family and home. I found that contrast was a compositional tool which has the power of creating the whole atmosphere or simply defining certain areas. Using the greatest degree of colour contrast, I created a series of monochrome portraits of family members on cardboard and other materials, with pastel and ink. As I wanted to go further than just portraiture I decided to also focus on the power of contrast in landscapes. Growing up near the Alps, I have always been fascinated by the different shades and the structure of mountains. In response to this, I created a series of different prints with which I attempted to capture the dramatic atmosphere they reflect. I am certain that the impact of my pieces will vary from person to person, but I find that the use of contrast groups them together parallel to reflecting the differences.

Motion occurs all around us. It is something that often goes unnoticed, whether in the form of passing vehicles in the street or birds in flight. Growing up in such a dynamic setting as London, there has never been a time where these appear to be lacking. The city had taught me to appreciate my experiences with this energy. Thus a consistent theme was constructed in my work, one that could best convey my stream of thoughts. Since the initial motivation for this theme, I always am sure that my works possess an element of motion in the contexts of liberated and restricted movement.

Using this theme as the foundation for my work, I began to realise that I could utilize several media to successfully project the concepts into reality; those primarily being oil paints, plaster and digital platforms. Contemporary artists such as Robert Proch and Russ Mills were vital in inspiring me to expand into new directions of the theme, including the incorporation of multi-layered images which communicate the contrast between stillness and action.
The ideas of this collection stemmed from a deep-rooted interest in exploring my cultural heritage through artistic media. From an early age, I found myself inspired by both European Realism and the vibrant colours used in African art. This naturally began to permeate into my developing artistic style which, in turn, became a vehicle to explore my identity as a biracial woman.

It seemed like a natural progression for me to explore how colour in art can be used to create impact, particularly since colour has the ability to evoke strong emotional responses. I immersed myself in the process of creating prints and oil paintings, mainly focusing on portraiture. My artistic process generally consisted of taking an initial reference photo and painting the subject and then the background. I found myself inexplicably drawn to certain colours due to the emotional connection I felt with the subject in the painting. As I progressed further through the course I began to develop an interest in manipulating images in order to warp perceptions and confuse the expectations of the viewer. The ultimate aim of my work is to instil in the viewer the same visceral connection I have with the subject, allowing them to see the world through my eyes.

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Melanie Yates

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Saskia Ziv-Guest

Everything you can imagine is real, according to Picasso, and this is why I make art. My study of art in the last two years has focused on tapping into my vision, both real and imaginary, to life. My portfolio engages with the theme of self, as I make art around my personal experiences and resulting feelings. One of my Lower Sixth projects involved keeping a fish alive, as I explored human ownership and relationships.

In the Upper Sixth I began making more explicit work using monoprints, adopting a confessional style. I used this medium to express my frustration at not having particularly refined artistic technique. This led to a statement piece I hope connects with other artists, entitled I Can’t Draw, I Can’t Paint And I Can’t Sculpt. But I’m A Fucking Artist. Once I had accepted this truth, I became more confident and began experimenting with linocut, neon and painting. Using text-heavy and image-laden work I try to blur the lines between the real world and art. Often raw and always honest, my work captures the universality of human experience.
Reflection on Techniques:

"Mapping Kate", Mixed Media, my work of 3D model – Solid reference image 3D model – 3D modelling left. I really like the outcome as the colours complement each other and neither of over on them and I really liked them. There was an intriguing mix of colour and the three of which are shown below. I think that the unexpected combination of techniques and materials have activities are a celebration of life.

To start with, I cut the family photo, which is on the right into eight spreads of old books and documents. Some of her paintings of trees indigenous to South Africa especially painting. During the painting process I focused on the di 1987, contrast is created between the curved, flowing contrast features predominantly in these works as well: In 1990, contrast is created between the curved, flowing erence in intensity and shape of marks used in different kinds of lines were used to capture this quality. I used a range of di

My print no. 1, Oil on canvas, 1836, The monoprints work surprisingly well and therefore I decided to make a series of prints monoprinting was an effective method to use when recreating these images due to the powerful use

The original photo 1990, contrast is created between the curved, flowing erence in intensity and shape of marks used in different kinds of lines were used to capture this quality. I used a range of di

As both writing and painting is a from of art, I found it a fascinating idea to merge the two together. My aim was to see how well the text and painting go together is what I find impose an even greater sense of structure.

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