

IB Art Candidate Statement

By Kat Light

Upon entering the IB visual art program, I found myself enraptured by the process of darkroom photography. I quickly became a light fiend, meticulously metering every shot and always bracketing. At the end of my first year, I found that I had mastered the technical side of photography—composition, lighting, texture, contrast, shape—but the content of my photography had fallen second to the technique.

Hoping to reach a central theme in my work, I experimented with different concepts and media (both digital and film), and consequently my work has matured and improved throughout this past year. I initially focused on the pieces of the body, exploring the harsh lines of muscles with sunlight and harsh key lighting, similar to Japanese photographer Eikoh Hosoe. As I explored the body, though, I found myself consistently leaving the faces of my models either out of the frame or blocked from view.

My work gradually became focused on the lack of identity in our present day world—on the mass produced human that is the result of an increasingly homogenous society due to globalization and better technology. I also found examples of this “mass produced human” in historical contexts that influenced my photography. I explored the judgments and stereotypes that come with only seeing a part of who a person is. I found that the best way to convey this message was through blocking out a significant part of the face. With paper bag masks, boards, and other physical barriers in the production stages, and hand painting and Photoshop image editing in the post-production stages, I effectively blocked out pieces of my subjects’ identities. I was greatly influenced by modern artists Rene Magritte and John Baldesarri, and I ultimately recognized a Surrealist influence in my work.