

## IB Visual Arts (SL) Candidate Statement

Stephanie Lee

Art has always been a consistent part of my life, but since starting IB, I began physically documenting my self-exploration and look to this time as a period of growth and discovery.

From a young age, I have been privileged in experiencing different traditions and cultures through traveling. These cultural immersions have provoked strong emotional reactions that I felt increasingly more compelled to re-explore through photography and post-editing in Photoshop.

I have always been interested in the role media, marketing, publicity, and image play in society. And as coordinator of a large charity event this year, I was to embark on my own marketing campaign. Through this and other community service, I have become aware of a world community where people are denied basic human rights. I became a first-hand witness to poor living conditions while photographing in Vietnam. The most influential tool that can bring about awareness and change is publicity, as was used by Jacob Riis.

On the flip side of the effect of media is the subjection of women. From the political laws imposed on them (Sharia Law), to the images set by media (airbrushed magazines), women across the world are being imprisoned within an identity that is not their own, and are either ignored when the attention is needed, or scrutinized where it was not necessary. It is this injustice that I illustrate in my art influenced by Cindy Sherman and Barbara Kruger.

I additionally studied well-publicized artwork produced for political causes by Alexander Rodchenko (who documented conformist Russians under Stalin's cult-of-personality) which prompted me to photograph nonconformist youth culture, and then influenced me to produce a surrealist piece of work in conjunction to youth culture; and Ansel Adams (who photographed national parks to support environmentalism), which inspired me to make my own environmentalist-surrealist piece.