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Visual arts Exhibition Student D (HL)

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Curatorial Rationale

During IB Art, I learnt to fuse art with issues relating to social justice. My final outcomes are pieces of criticism that invite viewers to reflect on the flaws of our educational paradigm. My thematic focus has evolved enormously. I started out exploring simply the theme of knowledge. I stayed within my comfort zone in terms of media and subject matter. When I finally put the aesthetics and meaning of my art on the same level and modified my theme, I opened myself up to opportunities afforded by modern media, subject matter and techniques. I wanted my works to be not mere static representations of ideas, but to invite discussions of modern social issues.

I began paying more attention to the cultural and historical significance of the concept, which also marked my transition in thematic focus, in “Judgment of Fortune,” which puts a modern twist on an the myth of the Judgment of Paris and aims to criticize the disparities in access to education. I started using more techniques in each painting. I looked at other depictions of the judgment of Paris by artists like Anton Raphael Mengs, Marcantonio Raimond, Enrique S Lombardo and Peter P Rubens. They use visual weight and tone to draw your eye to particular parts of the composition, with somber colors and bright lighting. In my painting, the baby clasping the apple (a common symbol of knowledge) is brightly lit and is proportionally larger than the other two figures, who symbolize the way that girls and poor children around the world are denied education.

My works began gaining a more modern and personal outlook. I broke out of my self-imposed limitations to traditional media and inspirations later on, when I experimented with a completely different style with “Uniformed” and “Yin-Yang of Cerebral Development,” a risk that I needed to take to discover the full potential of my art. I tried a technique inspired by Yosman Botero, who creates 3D drawings with layers of glass and acrylic paint. The stories of his pieces always hint at surrealism, and use simple and somber colors to help minimize the sense of absurdity. The way the paint is layer gives the pieces depth and a sense of movement and, in “Uniformed” it helped to show just how deeply the sense of indoctrination in Vietnamese education penetrates.

