

Visual Arts Exhibition (SL)

May 2018 Session

Curatorial Rationale

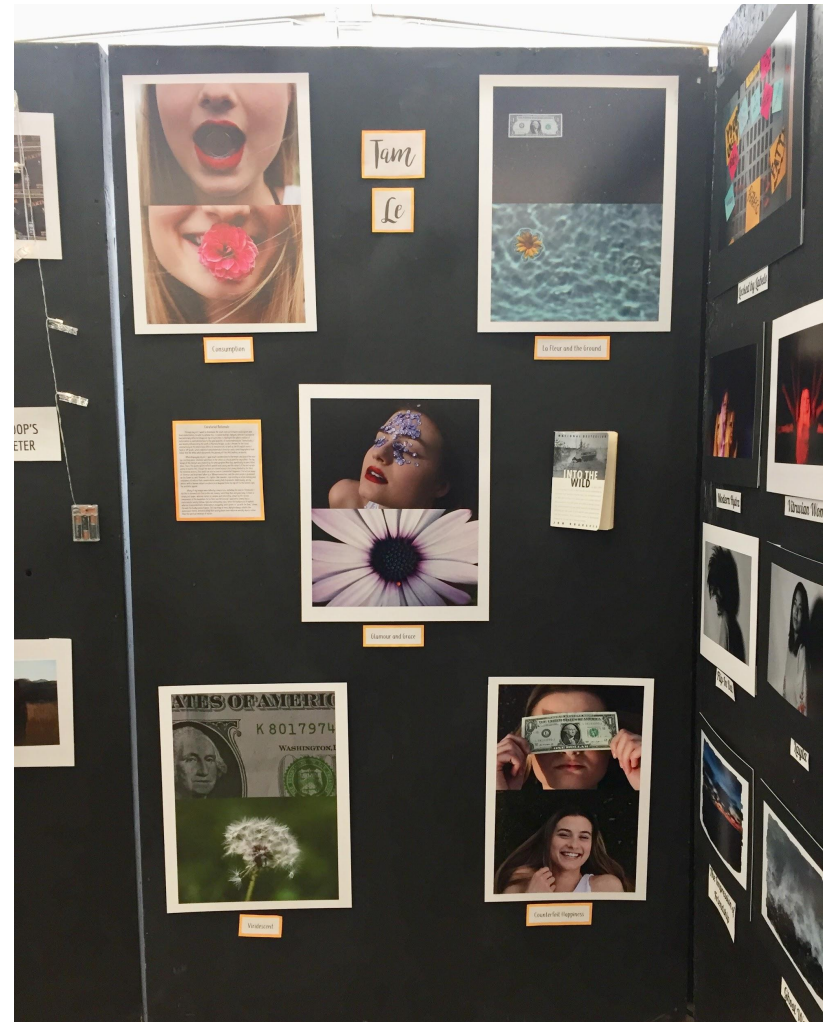
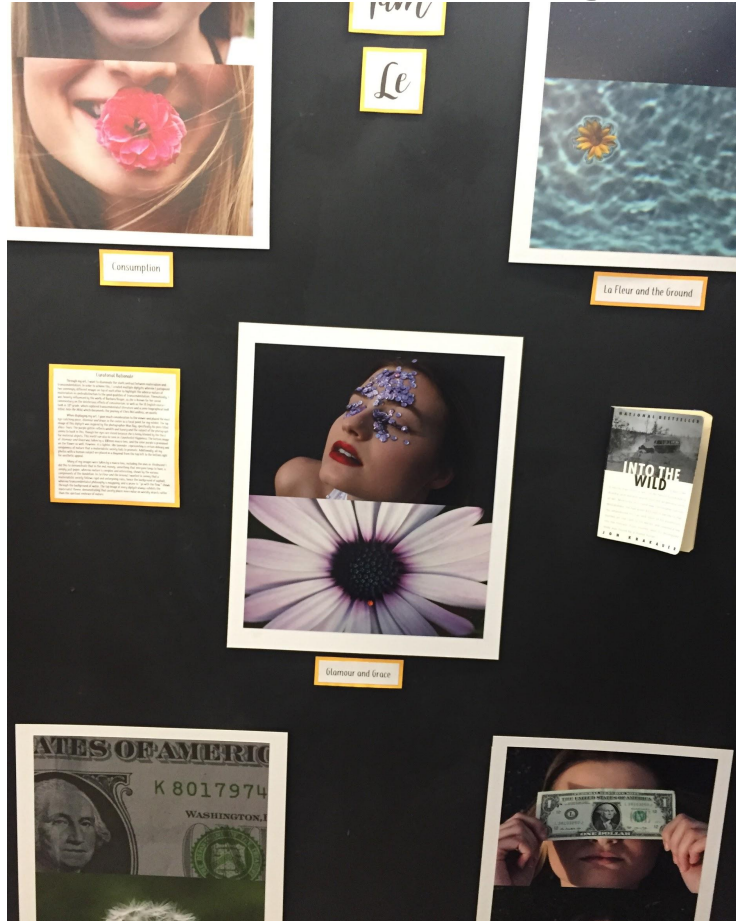
Through my art, I want to illuminate the stark contrast between materialism and transcendentalism. In order to achieve this, I created multiple diptychs wherein I juxtaposed two seemingly different images on top of each other to highlight the adverse nature of materialism in contradistinction to the good qualities of transcendentalism. Thematically, I was heavily influenced by the works of Barbara Kruger, as she is known for her social commentary on the deleterious effects of consumerism, as well as the IB English course I took in 11th grade, which explored transcendentalist literature and a semi-biographical book titled *Into the Wild*, which documents the journey of Chris McCandless, an ascetic.

When displaying my art, I gave much consideration to the viewer and placed the most eye-catching piece, *Glamour and Grace*, in the center as a focal point for my exhibit. The top image of this diptych was inspired by the photographer Man Ray, specifically his piece titled *Glass Tears*. The purple glitter reflects wealth and luxury and the subject of the photograph seems to bask in this, though her eyes are closed because she is being blinded by the thirst for material objects. This motif can also be seen in *Counterfeit Happiness*. The bottom image of *Glamour and Grace* was taken by a 100 mm macro lens, and the color purple is prominent on the flower as well. However, it is lighter, like lavender, representing a certain delicacy and uniqueness of nature that a materialistic society fails to promote. Additionally, all my photos with a human subject are placed in a diagonal from the top left to the bottom right for aesthetic appeal.

Many of my images were taken by a macro lens, including the ones in *Viridescent*. I did this to demonstrate that in the end, money, something that everyone longs to have, is simply just paper, whereas nature is complex and interesting, shown by the various components of the dandelion. In *La Fleur and the Ground*, I wanted to convey that a materialistic society follows rigid and unforgiving rules, hence the background of asphalt, whereas transcendentalist philosophy is easygoing, and is prone to “go with the flow,” shown through the background of water. The top image of every diptych always exhibits the materialist theme, demonstrating that society places more value on worldly objects rather than the spiritual embrace of nature.

Word Count: 390

Exhibition Photographs





Selection 1: Consumption

Digital Photography

33.02 cm x 48.26 cm

With this piece, I wanted to emphasize the control that money and material items exhibit over us. The quarter is in a position that could easily choke the subject if not careful; in addition the taste of metal is unpleasant and gross, whereas in the bottom picture of the diptych, the flower cannot really choke the subject, and she is smiling because her connection with nature allows her to focus on finding her inner happiness. The red lipstick in the top picture symbolizes desire, and how this desire can become dangerous if not kept in check.



Selection 2: La Fleur and the Ground

Digital Photography
35.56 cm x 48.26 cm

I wanted to position the subjects of the photograph similarly to demonstrate the contrast between the two ideas. The top image seems duller than the bottom one, as the colors are not vibrant, which shows that a focus on material objects can lead to dissatisfaction in life. The bottom image is bright; the yellow flower symbolizes the joy within nature. As stated in my rationale, the asphalt exhibits how society follows rigid and unforgiving rules, whereas transcendentalist philosophy is easygoing, and is prone to “go with the flow,” shown through the background of water.



Selection 3: Counterfeit Happiness

Digital Photography

33.02 cm x 48.26 cm

In this piece, I wanted to show that obsession with material objects can lead to one being 'blinded' by these desires. The top image shows the subject with a sullen and serious face because of this, as opposed to the bottom image, where she no longer has the dollar bill covering her eyes and is therefore happy. The bottom photo is also more zoomed out to demonstrate that once one is no longer materialistic, one starts to gain a broader perspective of the world.



Selection 4: Viridescent

Digital Photography
35.56 cm x 48.26 cm

In both images of this diptych, I used a macro lens to achieve the close up shots. I intended to show the viewer that when examined closely, money is just paper, whereas the dandelion (which is a representation of nature) contains a lot of intricate and complex detail, which makes it beautiful. I edited the top image to make it seem more green so the two photos could share a commonality that is aesthetically pleasing and makes sense to the viewer.





Selection 5: Glamour and Grace

Digital Photography
35.56 cm x 45.72 cm

The top image of this diptych was heavily inspired by Man Ray's *Glass Tears*. Much of my curatorial rationale explained the intent behind this piece; the purple glitter on the subject represents wealth and luxury, and how it has forced her to close her eyes, making her unaware of everything around her. Again, we see the motif of the red lips, signifying the dangerous desire for material objects. The flower is there to contrast the glitter and remind the viewer that nature can be beautiful, and completely contrasts the above image.