

IB Visual Arts Journal

The visual arts are an integral part of everyday life, permeating all levels of human creativity, expression, communication and understanding. They range from traditional forms embedded in local and wider communities, societies and cultures, to the varied and divergent practices associated with new, emerging and contemporary forms of visual language. They may have sociopolitical impact as well as ritual, spiritual, decorative and functional value; they can be persuasive and subversive in some instances, enlightening and uplifting in others. We celebrate the visual arts not only in the way we create images and objects, but also in the way we appreciate, enjoy, respect and respond to the practices of art-making by others from around the world. Theories and practices in visual arts are dynamic and ever-changing, and connect many areas of knowledge and human experience through individual and collaborative exploration, creative production and critical interpretation.

The course encourages students to actively explore the visual arts within and across ***a variety of local, regional, national, international and intercultural contexts.***

The IB Diploma Program visual arts course gives students the opportunity to study a wide variety of visual arts disciplines and forms. ***Students are expected to explore and engage with art from a variety of contexts.*** Through making, investigating and critically analyzing and appreciating differing art forms, students deepen their understanding of the visual arts, as well as their knowledge, understanding and experience of ***the visual arts within the global community.*** They become more informed and reflective, and develop their abilities to become enriched practitioners, communicators and visual thinkers. ***They learn to acknowledge the aspects that appear in all art forms and art cultures, and also to recognize the unique ways in which particular cultures express and represent their values and identity visually.***

Culture

For the purposes of this visual arts guide, ***“culture” is defined as learned and shared beliefs, values, interests, attitudes, products and all patterns of behavior created by society.*** This view of culture includes an organized system of symbols, ideas, explanations, beliefs and material production that humans create and manipulate in their daily lives. Culture is dynamic and organic, operating on many levels in the global context—international, national, regional and local, as well as among different social groups within a society. Culture is seen as fluid and subject to change. Culture can be seen as providing the overall framework within which humans learn to organize their thoughts, emotions and behaviors in relation to their environment, and within this framework “cultural context”, which specifically appears in both the taught syllabus and assessment tasks of the visual arts course, refers to ***the conditions that influence and are influenced by culture. These include historical, geographical, political, social and technological factors.***

(These italics are mine – to emphasize the need for you to engage with ***culture*** and ***context***. If you choose to ignore this, your grade and score will be affected. NO ART IS EVER MADE IN A VACUUM including your own. Art is always influenced by what surrounds it and very often affects its surroundings).

Throughout the course students at both SL and HL are required to maintain a visual arts journal. This is their own record of the two years of study and should be used to document:

- the development of art-making skills and techniques
- experiments with media and technologies
- personal reflections
- their responses to first-hand observations
- creative ideas for exploration and development
- their evaluations of art practices and art-making experiences
- their responses to diverse stimuli and to artists and their works
- detailed evaluations and critical analysis
- records of valued feedback received
- challenges they have faced and their achievements.

Students should be encouraged to find the most appropriate ways of recording their development and have free choice in deciding what form the visual arts journal should take. The aim of the visual arts journal is to support and nurture the acquisition of skills and ideas, to record developments, and to critique challenges and successes. It is expected that much of the written work submitted for the assessment tasks at the end of the course will have evolved and been drawn from the contents of the visual arts journal.

Process Portfolio – the Assessment and your final goal

SL

- SL students submit 9–18 screens, which evidence their sustained experimentation, exploration, manipulation and refinement of a variety of art-making activities.
- The submitted work must be in at least **two** art-making forms, each from separate columns of the art-making forms table.
- The submitted screens must not include any resolved works submitted for part 3: exhibition internal assessment task.

HL

- HL students submit 13–25 screens, which evidence their sustained experimentation, exploration, manipulation and refinement of a variety of art-making activities.
- The submitted work must have been created in at least **three** art-making forms, selected from a minimum of two columns of the art-making forms table.
- The submitted screens must not include any resolved works submitted for part 3: exhibition internal assessment task.

- Please note: that last point about resolved work – you can include final pieces in the journal and Process Portfolio, but they must be included to support your reflection and critique about your own work. Or your final pieces can be used to show how your work is contextualized within a larger study you are making. This would be done if you are comparing your work to a professional's. Or, for example, say you are discussing body image and you have photos where you explore this topic.

Please see the Columns for Reference of what you must include in your Journal (and eventually in the Process Portfolio)

Art-making forms

Throughout the course students are expected to experience working with a variety of different art-making and conceptual forms. SL students should, as a minimum, experience working with at least two art-making forms, each selected from separate columns of the table below. HL students should, as a minimum, experience working with at least three art-making forms, selected from a minimum of two columns of the table below. The examples given are for guidance only and are not intended to represent a definitive list.

Two-dimensional forms	Three-dimensional forms	Lens-based, electronic and screen-based forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing: such as charcoal, pencil, ink• Painting: such as acrylic, oil, watercolour• Printmaking: such as relief, intaglio, planographic, chine collé• Graphics: such as illustration and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sculpture: such as ceramics, found objects, wood, assemblage• Designed objects: such as fashion, architectural, vessels• Site specific/ephemeral: such as land art, installation, mural• Textiles: such as fibre, weaving, printed fabric	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time-based and sequential art: such as animation, graphic novel, storyboard• Lens media: such as still, moving, montage• Digital/screen based: such as vector graphics, software generated

Art Journal Summary Points

Overall, try to make your art journal pages dense with information but not over complicated (I know this sound contradictory – see samples).

Photographic Entries

- You eventually will need to turn in entries of photoshoots with at least 50 digital images or 24-36 for film in your contact sheet.
- You will need to select your top 10 digital images (top 4-6 for darkroom) from that shoot and make those larger in the journal and discuss why these are the best images. Critique them
- Discuss some of your weaker images and why you did not select them
- Include in this journal entry Post Production on some of these images. What this means is you edit your images in Photoshop or Lightroom and take several screen shots as you go through your editing. Include a “before” and “after” image so the evidence of your editing is clear.
- When working in the darkroom, keep all the drafts of your prints and test strips. Scan or photograph these artifacts and include them in your journal (your cell phone camera will work – just shoot in good light – outdoors in the shade or under clouds). You should also include digital touch up Post Production in Photoshop of these images.
- Contextualize your work as much as possible. This means connecting your work to culture, other artists, other areas of study (biology, psychology, math, sociology, ethics, philosophy, politics, aesthetics, etc.)

Art entries

- Include documentation photos of your process and the stages of your art pieces as you make them.
- As with your photos, contextualize your work

Absolutely must for every entry

- Always date your pages when you make them
- Always include f-stop, shutter speed and ISO of digital images you select as your best photos
- Cite your sources using MLA format and cite on the page that you reference the source (do not do a works cited page)
- Consider the 15 pages for each submission a minimum, but know that quality is more important than quantity

Eventually you must have somewhere along the line in your journals:

- Research and cited sources
- Contextualization!
- Famous artists/photographers researched and seen in reference to your work and process
- Evidence of production and post-production (screen shots of Photoshop/Lightroom, photos of art in process, photo or scans of darkroom process) and detailed explanation of your process
- Contact sheets
- Lots of reflection upon your work and the world around you as it relates to your art

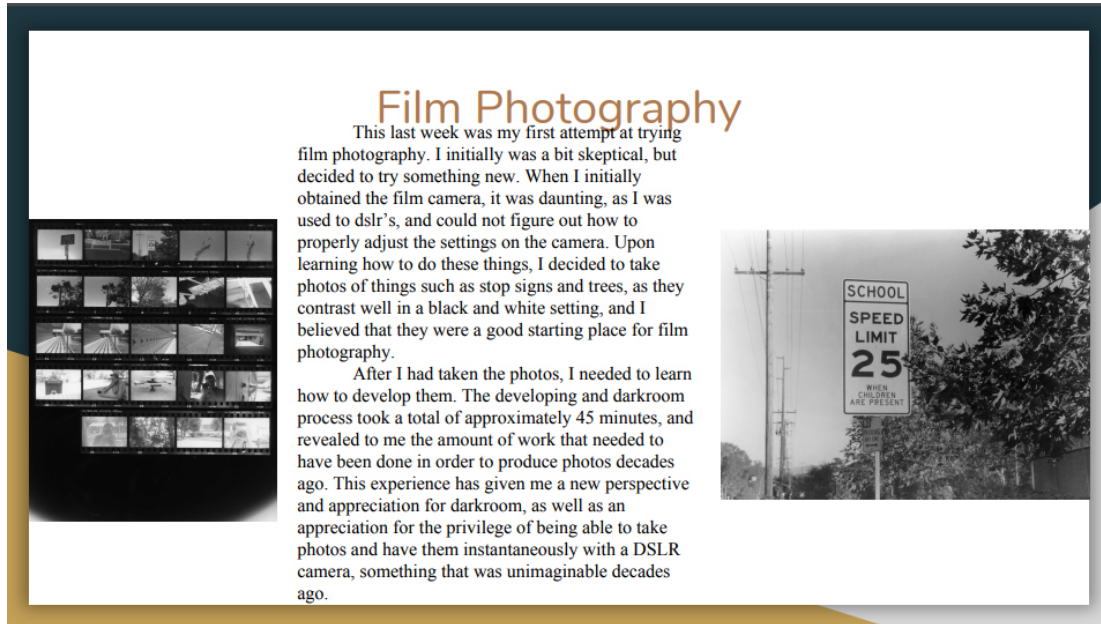
How to make a screen shot and save it?

1. On a PC, have your image open on Photoshop and make sure all of the adjustment layers or adjustment window are showing. Strike the Print Screen button on your keyboard.
2. Go to the File tab on Photoshop and select "New". It will say "Clipboard" in the Preset box. Click "OK" and the image will screen shot will appear on a PSD. Save the file as a JPEG and then save it.
3. You can also use other programs such as Paint to open and save your screen shot.

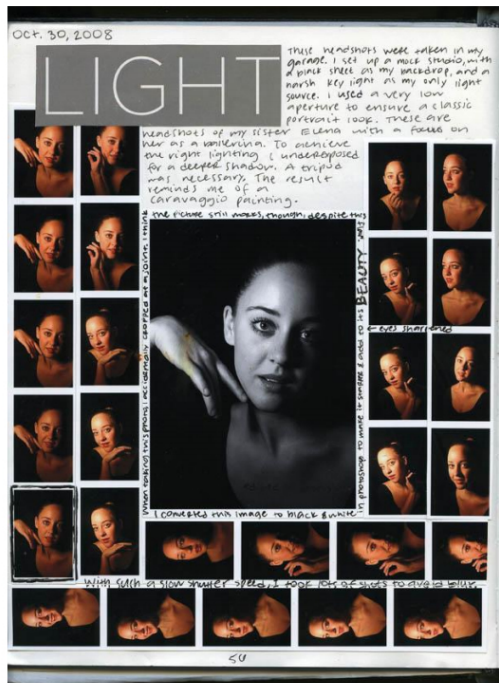
Samples from NPHS Students

Contact Sheet Examples

Matt Au: darkroom contact sheet and final image included



Kat Light: digital contact sheet and one of the final images



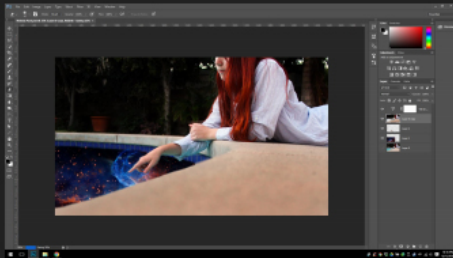
Process Evidence - photography

Delaney Buchanan: post-production

Photoshopping a Hot Tub Nebula



Taking the original image that I modeled in (left) I cropped it, adjusted the levels and saturation in PhotoShop, then began inserting the nebula. I used the eraser tool and feathered the edges of the layer for a smoother transition.

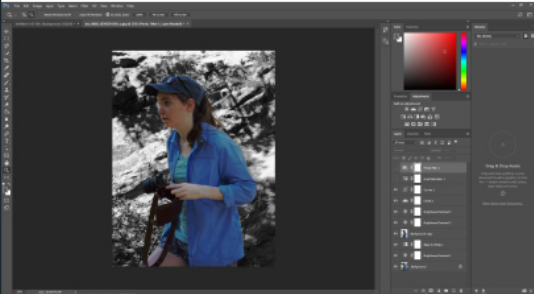


Left is a screenshot showing the layers in PhotoShop. I decided to flip the final image (above) because then the viewer's eye sees the figure first, then the pool, which seemed to make sense for the sake of telling a story.

Editing this image was great for practicing PhotoShop, which I admit I don't have much experience yet using.

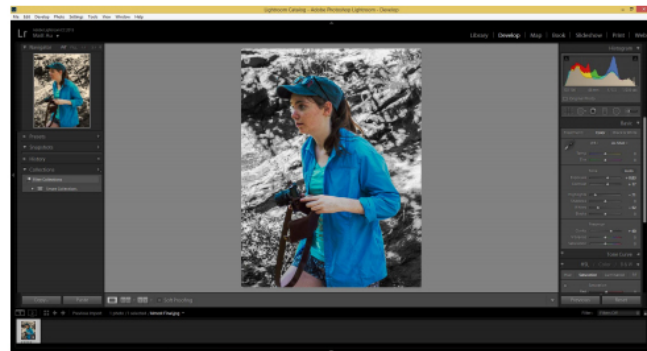
Matt Au: post-production and before and after

PPA Editing Process



For this photo, I began by duplicating the initial layer of the picture in Photoshop, and then making one layer black and white. Then, I decided to erase the background of the foremost layer, by using the magnetic selection tool to select only the background, so that only the subject would remain in color after the background was erased. Also, I decided that I would attempt to alter the lighting.

Because of the fact that I feel more comfortable with adjusting lighting in Lightroom, I decided to import the from Photoshop into Lightroom. Then, I increased the exposure slightly, as well as increased the contrast and shadows, while reducing the whites in the photo. This allowed for a lighter photo with not has sharp and concentrated blacks in the background of the image.



Before



PPA Before and After

Overall, I believe that my editing of this photo made it a brand new photo entirely for various reasons. First of all, the initial photo has the subject in the shadow, with a lot more light in the background than foreground. With the editing, I was able to make it appear to be the opposite. Also, with the black and white background that is present in the after photo, the focus is directed more towards the subject than at the surrounding foliage and rocks. Then, I brightened the subject entirely, increasing the saturation of the blues and making the subject more exposed in general. This allows for it to appear as though the photo was not taken with the subject standing in front of the light source, but rather at an angle. If I were to take this photo again, I would try to not have to saturate the blues as much, as it also affects the color of the subject's sunglasses. But, I would say that this is overall one of my better post-processing works because of how drastically changed the photo was from the before to the after.

After



Kylie Kelleher: post-production

Self Portrait Photoshop

In order to get more acclimated with Photoshop, I edited two self portraits I took.

The first photo was one where I wore red lipstick and put glitter below my eyes. I erased the background of the photo then proceeded to duplicate the picture. Once there were three copies I changed one photo to black and white, then made the hue and saturation of one purple, and the other a teal tone. I overlaid the photos on each other and then offset each of them slightly.

The second photo I was wearing a white shirt and had a piece of black tape across my mouth that read "Condemned by a Chromosome". I erased out the background, brightened the photo and then changed the background to a bright pink. I chose pink in order to emphasize the comment I was trying to make about injustice towards women. Pink is often thought of as a feminine color so it fit with my comment about being judged based upon gender.



Process Evidence – art

Delaney Buchanan – painting

Painting Abstract Lupins

Concept sketches

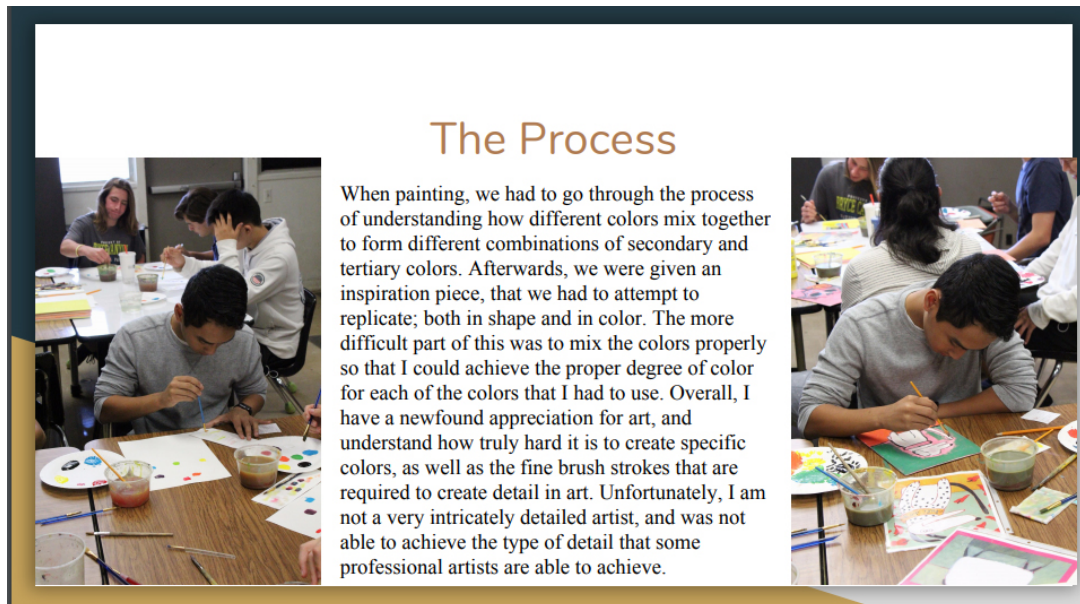


When I first set out to paint this, I expected to try out a realistic style. It was more interesting to go for a painterly effect with the acrylic, with all of the brushstrokes showing; to do this I had to apply the paint thickly and say goodbye to small details. I also decided to go for red and purple instead of blue and green, which was the original palette in the concept art.

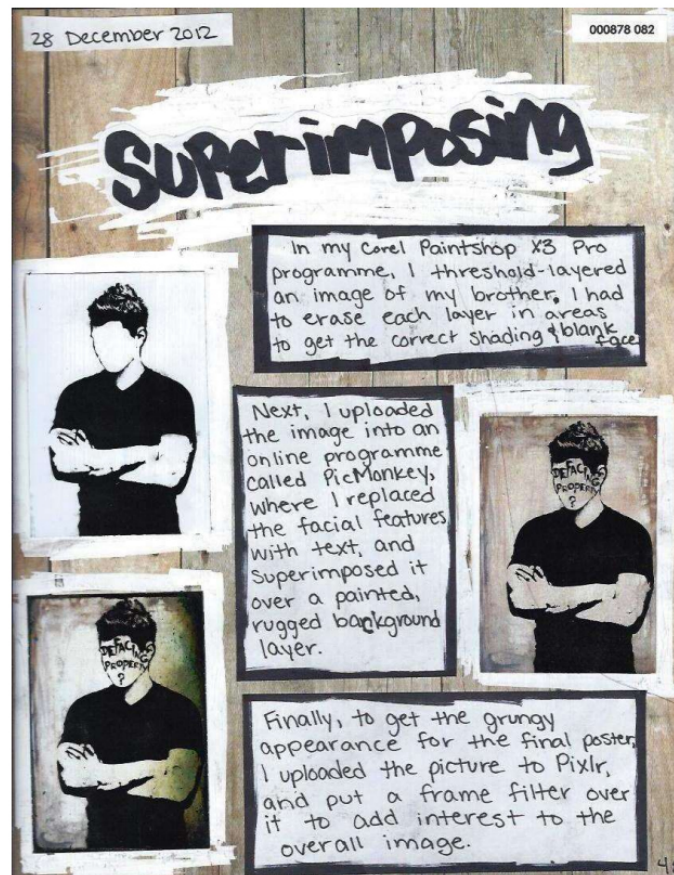
I am happy with the result, and especially the fact that I can still feel the textures strokes even after the paint has dried.



Matt Au – painting



Tyler Feinberg – computer graphics



Contextualization and creating dense pages


Kat Light – includes her work alongside famous photographer – notice how she dates her page and she include the citation on the page and uses MLA format

Sept. 13, 2008


With this photo shoot, I was trying to capture extreme angles. I used my sister, a classical ballet dancer, for this image. I tried to explore lines within the body and lines made from light. The shadows add a lot to the image because they enhance the severity of the line and angle. Her body position and facial expression create a positive mood, which I feel is an aspect of theme in photography that is often traded out for more powerful and often sadder images.

Alexander Rodchenko is a photographer who immersed himself in "liberating photography from conventions and from the standard belly-button perspective" (Alexander). I tried to do the same in this shoot. I actually took this photo by standing on top of my outdoor barbecue so that I was vertically above her at an almost bird's eye perspective.

The goal of Rodchenko's extreme angle photography was Constructivism. As a key player in the Russian avant-garde scene, Rodchenko wanted to show everyday objects in unusual ways to have a social purpose. His work was created



Diagonal line of Rodchenko's use of a high vantage point allows the strong lines of the grid to create a sense of movement with the child.



Work cited:
"Alexander Rodchenko." 20th Century Photography. New York: 2001.

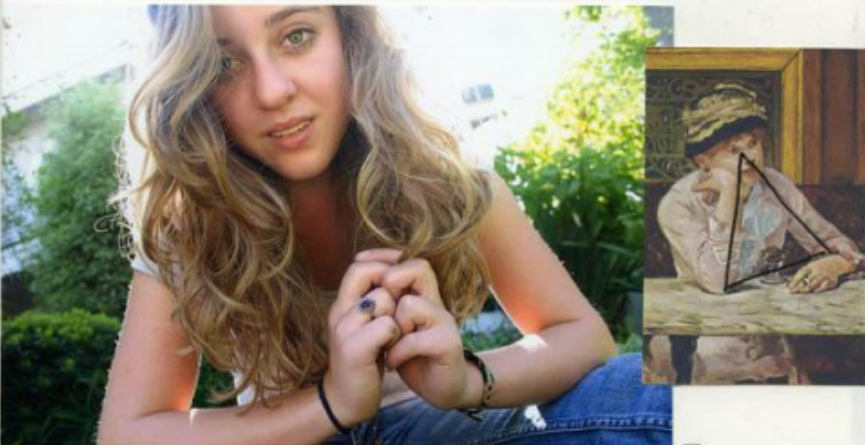

This print is too dark, should have used a second lens.

I prefer presenting this image vertically because I feel it makes a greater impact.

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Kat Light – includes her own photo, an Impressionist painter's work, and a famous photographer's work – dense but not over-complicated. Her entry sticks to one major point and shows the unity between all of these artist under the chosen topic. Notice how she diagrams on top of the works. This is recommended and encouraged in your entries (when appropriate).

Oct. 5, 2008

MARY CASSAT

EIKON HOSOE

Body language transcends cultures. Yes, some movements may differ between groups, but we all have bodies that we can express ourselves with. In this photograph, though, I did not try to express an emotion through the body. Rather, I tried to use the arms to frame the face. I asked my sister to position her arms as so in order to create a shape that would lead to her face as the focal point. The result - a triangle.

The arms have been used as framing tools since Impressionism. Because Impressionists tried to depict what they saw in front of them, similar to photography, and what is real isn't always pretty, people were shocked this new art movement. Impressionists used bright, broken brushstrokes to show spontaneity in their images. Mary Cassat was an Impressionist painter known for her images of parents and children. I have found inspiration in her use of cropping, which indicates the influence of photography.

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Matt Au – context with a side-by-side of his art and a famous painter's (he should have cited his source on this page)

Finished Painting + Comparison

My work is similar to that of the Expressionist movement due to: its portrayal of an animal in a completely subjective way, meaning that you can interpret the painting's message or meaning however you would like to. Initially, my painting incorporated Chili Peppers in the background, however, I did not have time to add them to this painting. Those would have furthered the establishment of the Expressionist movement, including an aspect of fantasy and attempting to further the sense of subjectivity that would have been present in my painting.



The Red Horses - By Franz Marc

My work is similar to that of Franz Marc, as we both utilized animals, an everyday occurrence, in order to attempt and create a piece that can be interpreted in many ways, and is completely subjective to the audience that is viewing the piece. Franz Marc was able to create depth using various shades of a single color in order to reflect sunlight and texture, a technique that I would like to impose on my future paintings.



Delaney Buchanan – contextualization of her work with an artistic movement (again – no citation – should be here)

Harsh Sunlight: Trying to Achieve Chiaroscuro

Chiaroscuro is a Renaissance technique, typically used in oil paintings, that describes contrast between light and shadow. It is created by light falling on uneven surfaces, and serves to define shapes in three dimensions.



KODAK TRI-X PAN 400

While shooting in the harsh midday sunlight, I noticed how much contrast could be seen between the light and dark on the figures, making them seem very stark and dramatic. In the image on the left, the chiaroscuro look helps to create contrast between the sunlight and shade on the grass, making each blade visible. Rembrandt (below) was very well-known for this technique in Italy.



(The Blinding of Samson, Rembrandt, 1636, Oil on Canvas)



ULTRAFINE EXTREME DX 135, 400/27°

In the above image, I believe that the chiaroscuro-inspired lighting emphasizes the bare lifelessness of the tree. Without leaves to soften it or create shade, the tree is fully exposed, and the texture (made visible by the harsh light) is similar to that of bone.

Literary Inspiration: *Ophelia*

This image is inspired by the character Ophelia in Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. Ophelia is a young woman in the noble class of Denmark who drowns in a river. It is unclear in the plot whether her death is an accident or an act of suicide.



Part of the tragic state of Ophelia's character is that throughout the play, she is defined entirely by her interactions with others. The symbol of water is especially prevalent to this point because water is defined by the vessel in which it is carried.

To contrast with Ophelia's dependence on the other characters in the play, I used negative space to create a sense of isolation. The stark colors contribute to this idea as well.

f/4 1/60 sec ISO-800 *Ophelia*

Romanticism Connection

During the Romantic period, art reflected a wide range of turbulent emotions, in conjunction with surroundings of nature and shadowy scenes. This photo reflects the eerie Romantic aesthetic through the use of skewed perspective, blurring, and elimination of color. The figure in the background against the far wall adds to the ambiguity of the scene, which makes eeriness all the more apparent. I named the photo *Mary Shelley's Bedroom* in reference to the author of *Frankenstein*, one of the most prominent literary works of the Romantic period.

A prime example of the Romantic era style is Henry Fuseli's painting entitled *The Nightmare* (right). Though this piece was completed during the age of Enlightenment, the influence of the Romantic movement is evident in the intense emotional quality of terror. This is emphasized by dark colors and figure ambiguity, especially regarding the horse-like figure, known in mythological terms as a "mara". My photo on the previous slide utilizes these qualities as well. "The sublime" was a prominent idea during the Romantic period, referring to a mixture of awe and terror. This concept elicited a strong emotional response to artistic and literary works.



(*The Nightmare*, Fuseli, 1781, oil on canvas)



f/2.2 1/40 sec ISO-32

Kat Light – darkroom process, compositional technique, and artistic contextualization (notice source cited in MLA format) – again dense but not over complicated

