



Pearson

GCE A Level Advanced Art and Design

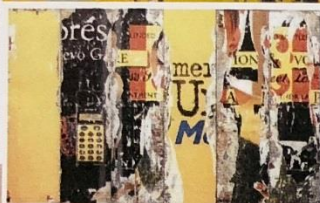
**Photography
Component 2**

AARON

Total Mark 36

	A01 Develop	A02 Explore and Select	A03 Record	A04 Realise
Mark	8	10	10	8
Performance Level	3	4	4	3
			Total out of 72	36

ENVIRONMENT



Statement of Intent

For this project I am going to focus on surfaces and textures of the environment following close links with Abstract Expressionism. I am going to begin with a broad approach, exploring different types of surfaces of an environment and deciding what sort of marks/techniques/surface/imagery I am interested in. With my interest to Abstract Expressionism I will be researching into a number of artist who have close links with Abstract Expressionism and will collect images by carrying out shoots with initial responses from my researched artists to the idea of surfaces and practicing 'straight photography'. I want to collect a variety of images focusing around different surfaces of an environment such as water, decaying surfaces and other surfaces looking specifically at marks or colour pallets to see what kind of surface imagery I am interested in, urban environments may be interesting to look into as well. I also intend to explore further with mixed media photography as I have a particular interest in manipulating photographs using unexpected materials to create unique results. I like to pull away from the frozen perfection you now see in digitally processed photography and focus on the more disruptive and tactile photography to create something meaningful and unique with unexpected context behind it.

Experimenting with surfaces



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DSC_4282.jpg



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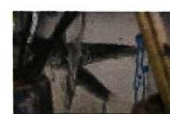
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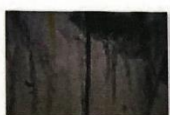
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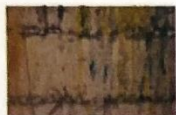
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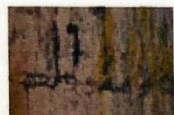
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Photo experiments from Practice shoot Analysis

For this photoshoot I went out with the intentions of practicing finding and photographing a variety of different, interesting, textual layers which had the appeal and idea of perhaps becoming something abstract. For the start of this photoshoot I wandered inside and out of the building I was photographing inside, searching for anything that had an interesting surface, form and structure looking at things on the floors, walls, sinks, doors etc... After I completed this shoot I printed off my favourites and started working on top of them with different techniques taking inspiration from the style of Abstract Expressionism, and looking into the idea of turning the everyday more abstract. I first bleached the photos to make them less structured and neat by making the colours run and distort. When doing this I discovered that by splatting on the bleach it created an almost splattered paint like effect and this started to make the photos hard for our minds to separate what was originally on the photo and what was added after. I then decided to add felt by using the colour palette of the already featured colours of the photos and the distorted ones from the bleach. I added this by using an embellisher machine which created an effect of a light layering of colours and also started adding texture to the photo different to the bleach which is flat on the surface of the picture. This also meant I didn't have to add any glue or unnecessary stitch that I couldn't control in order to add the felt. I lastly stitched over the photos again using the colour palette given to me following the structures and also creating my own. This added thin streaks of layers with the same colours that was originally in the picture adding to this effect of making it more abstract and harder for the viewer to see the original photo. At the end of these experiments I decided to scan the pictures which brought all the techniques and layers together and presented the final pictures as flat surfaces which created a new abstract image out of them.

The idea of these photos was to turn something of the everyday into something abstract. These photographs had turned from a simple structure or mark we see everyday into a layering of marks and action painting. What worked well is that because there are so many layers of techniques on top you don't know when the photo stops and the painting begins as its hard to decipher what was originally on the picture and what had been bleached, sewn on etc... Moving forward I am going to research into Abstract photographers and Expressionist artists who's ideas turn the everyday into a more abstract scene.

Aaron Siskind – Artist Research

“We look at the world and see what we have learned to believe is there. We have been conditioned to expect...but, as photographers, we must learn to relax our beliefs.”

Aaron Siskind was an American photographer widely considered to be closely involved with, if not part of, the ideas and styles of the Abstract Expressionist artists in New York in the 1940s. Siskind's work focuses on the details of nature and architecture. He presents them as flat surfaces to create a new image out of them, which, he claimed, stands independent of the original subject. His work has been described as crossing the line between photography and painting. Siskind turned towards abstraction in the 1940s, using his camera to capture the graphic patterns, shapes, and forms he observed around him. By carefully framing his subjects, he would transform strands of seaweed on the sand into calligraphic brushstrokes, peeling paint into low-relief sculptures, or graffiti on a wall into a Franz Kline canvas. Siskind influenced and was influenced by the Abstract Expressionists, his photographs frequently exhibited alongside their paintings. Siskind made some of his most successful and well-known documentary photographs from *The Harlem Document* (1937-40). His work then assumed a more abstract focus in 1941 with the series *Tabernacle City*, a series of photographs depicting the architecture of Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Siskind's main interest was taking pictures of found objects that were simultaneously true-to-life and abstract, he was one of the first photographers to combine what was known as “straight” photography (recording the world as the lens “sees” it) with abstraction. Like the Abstract Expressionists he admitted his interest in expressing his own inner drama and found emotional joy and tension in the process of discovering subjects and photographing them in a way to emphasize his reading of the world as essentially abstract, a series of echoing forms, lines and textures. The abstraction in Siskind's photographs of this kind encourages and frees the viewer to determine the nature of that drama. Like the Abstract Expressionists, Siskind turned away from the social/political world post-World War II and instead looked inward to seek meaning in mostly inanimate forms he observed around him.

Aaron Siskind - Franz Kline

Franz Kline

Kline is recognised as one of the most important yet problematic artists of the Abstract Expressionist movement in New York. His style is difficult for critics to interpret in relation to his contemporaries. As with Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and other Abstract Expressionists, Kline was said to be an action painter because of his seemingly spontaneous and intense style, focusing not at all on figures or imagery, but on the expression of his brushstrokes and use of canvas. Kline's brushstrokes were completely non-representative, fluid, dynamic and at one time just black and white. Kline explains how his monochrome palette is meant to depict negative and positive space by saying, "I paint the white as well as the black, and the white is just as important." His use of black and white is very similar to paintings made by de Kooning and Pollock during the 1940s. Because of Kline's impact and his concrete style, Kline was dubbed the "black and white artist". At the age of forty, Kline had secured a personal style which he had already mastered. There were no real vessels for which Kline could further his investigation, he only had the potential to replicate the style he had already mastered. To move on, there was only one logical direction for Kline to go, which was back to colour, which was the direction he was headed at the time of his premature death from heart failure

As a result of his personal friendship with Franz Kline, Siskind uses media such as broken walls and flaking plaster to achieve similar effects on film to those Kline achieved in paint. Most of the photographs were taken after 1972 and reflect Siskind's memory of the feelings of experiment and discovery that characterised the 1950s and the artists known as the abstract expressionists.

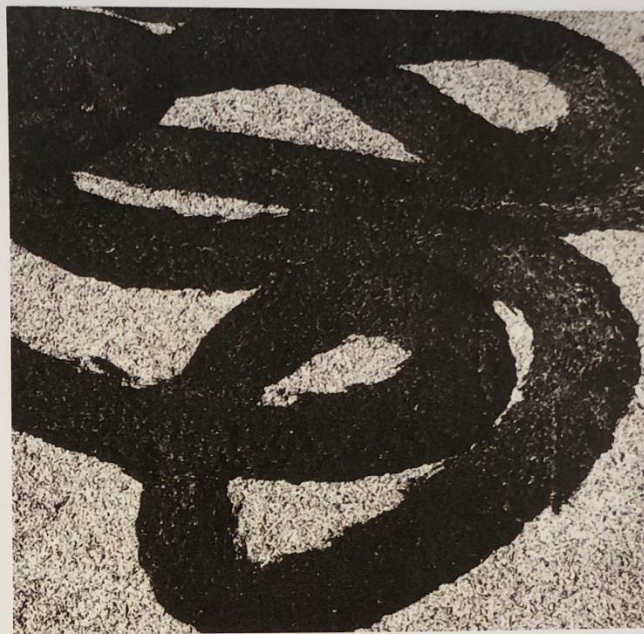
My Response to his work

The close range of his photographs is something I particularly like about his work and how it prevents the viewer from gaining any foothold into the space of the picture, emphasising its flatness. I am fascinated in how he makes the everyday surfaces resemble to the canvases of the Abstract Expressionist painters, a similar idea to my work but instead I am creating everyday surfaces into something more abstract. His use of "straight" photography is also what I think makes his photos unique and abstract as it is creating a flat surface in order to work on top. It is also interesting to see an image from the lenses point of view and I think it is particularly effective when capturing the details of different surface textures.

Pollocks work with Franz Kline interest me on how he has visually linked an everyday scene such as graffiti with an Abstract Expressionist piece. His visual links between these two works is something I need to take into account throughout this project as even though I am turning something into an Abstract Expressionist piece of work I have also got to look out for things that are already there.

I am going to do a photoshoot around Wymondham based on Aaron Siskind's work and using this idea of "straight" photography to capture different surface textures of the environment around me. I intend to experiment with close range and discover subjects which forms, lines and textures explore the link between photography and Abstract Expressionism within my environment around me.

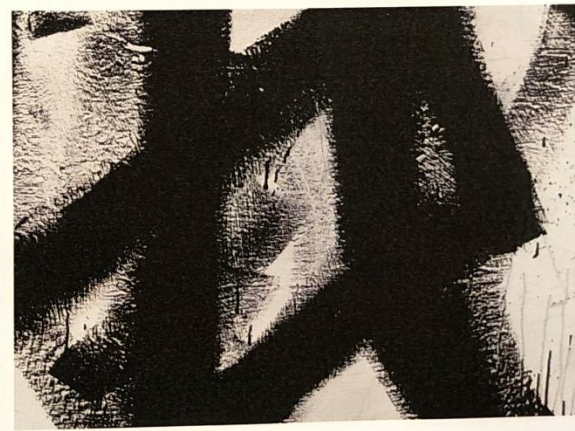
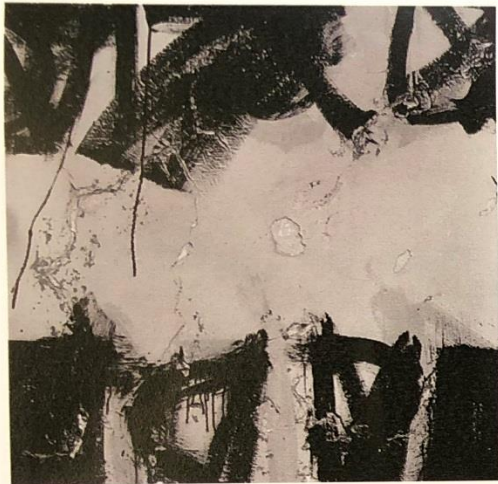
Aaron Siskind's work



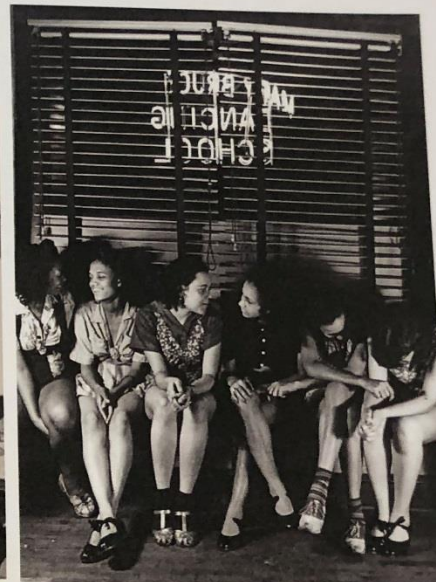
Franz Kline



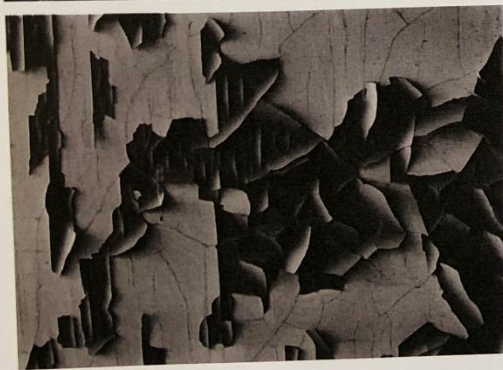
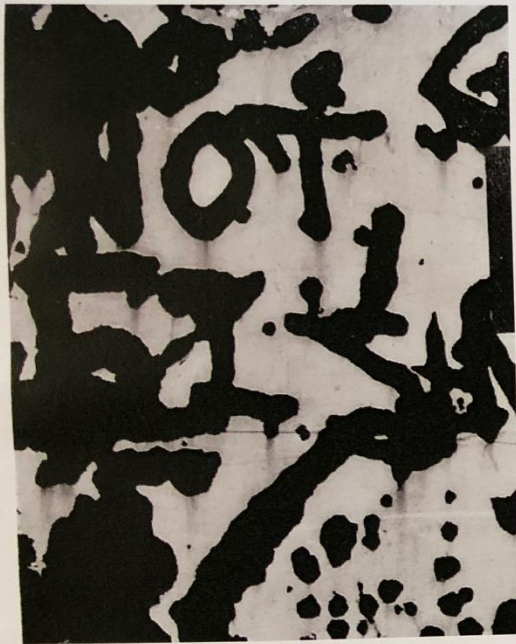
Aaron Siskind - Franz Kline



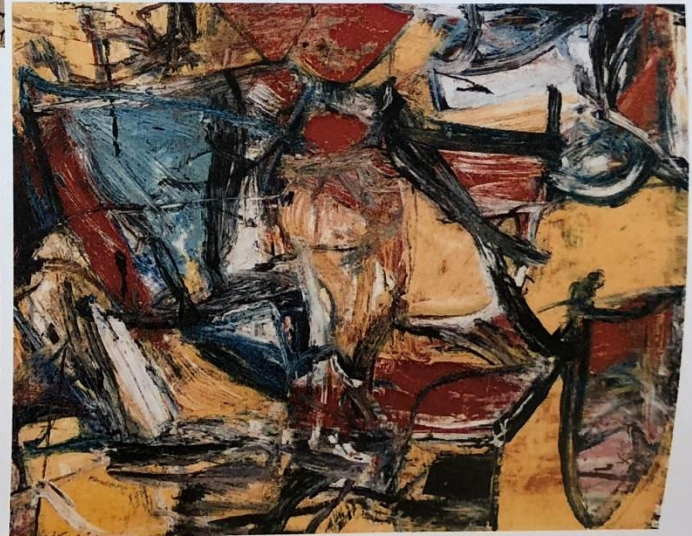
Aaron Siskind The Harlem Documentary



Turning more abstract –
Aaron Siskind Tabernacle city



His inspiration - Abstract Expressionism



Aaron Siskind Photoshoot



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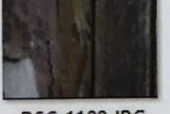
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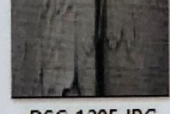
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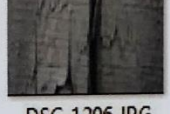
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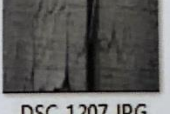
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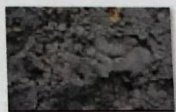
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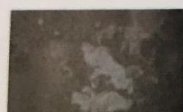
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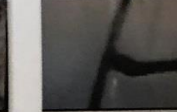
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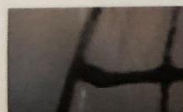
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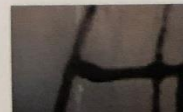
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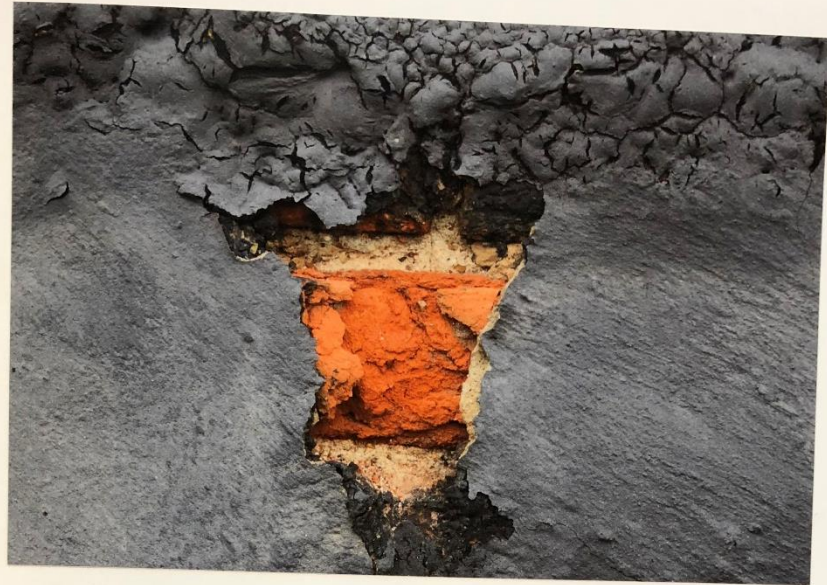


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Raymond Hains

Raymond Hains was born in Saint-Brieuc (Côtes-d'Armor) and studied at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Rennes before coming to Paris to present his first exhibition of "hypnagogic" photographs and starting a body of work with torn posters from the streets. In 1960, he signed, along with Arman, Dufrêne, Klein, Tinguely, Villeglé and Pierre Restany, the Manifesto of New Realism. However, he soon distanced himself from the movement to develop his own line of research through the tools of language, analogy, chance and coincidence, revealing the hidden connections between these disparate elements.

Hains and former classmate, mixed media artist, Jacques Villeglé collaborated to create decollages of torn posters from the streets, billboards and became known as *affichistes*, forming an opposite to American Abstract Expressionism and French art informal with their "ready-made paintings". Creating vibrant provocative collages from layers of torn posters, Hain's work explores the world through its underlying linguistic framework, applying himself to the freedom of destruction and reinvention. Like Siskind, The streets were his workshop, and they gave rise to the *affiches déchirées* (torn posters) that he began working on in 1949 with Jacques Villeglé, transforming them into large scale abstract compositions. Both artists captured fragments of old, ripped posters, and transformed them into large-scale abstract compositions. With these works, Hains produced a sui generis version of Informalism, and offered an ironic take on Abstract Expressionism, calling himself an "inaction painter". In 1959, these works led to his *palissades* (palisades), which were also an ironic response to American Pop and a prelude to the conceptual practices of artists such as Daniel Buren.

My response to his work

What I found fascinating about Hain's work is his method on deductions and comparisons, starting out from a systematic creative deconstruction of the world around him. His work transgresses and explores all of the established theories of contemporary art. I am amazed at how he can create something new out of something so simple in everyday life that we would usually walk past and not think of as art. The fragments of posters are extremely impersonal, found on the streets rather than created in the studio – as Hains puts it “My works existed before me, but nobody had seen them, because they were blindingly obvious.” His work, like Siskinds, focuses on recognising things we see everyday and turning them into pieces of art that captures and changes our views. Following the inspiration from both Hains and Siskind I plan to go out and take photos of abstract pieces of art already existing around me to see if it would work with me experimenting on top like I'd done previously.

Raymond Hain's work



Mixed media artist – Jacques Villegle



Raymond Hains Photoshoot



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DSC_1233.JPG



DSC_1234.JPG



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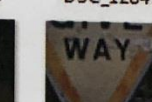
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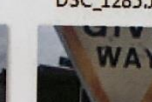
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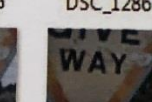
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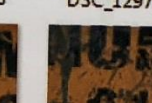
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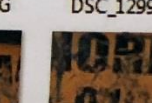
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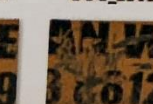
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Siskind and Hains Photoshoot response

These two shoots were based on Abstract photographers Aaron Siskind and Raymond Hains. These shoots focused mainly on discovering more structures of everyday objects that had an abstract scene and seeing if I could do what I previously did and experiment on top. After completing this shoot and looking at the pictures I decided that the abstract compositions which already exists within these photos was based on its structural detail of lines and forms. If I experimented with different medias on top like I had done previously it would become to obvious that I had added textures and layers and the abstract composition of the photos would become to forced. What worked differently with the previous experiments that I did was that there were already colours, lines and compositions that had an interesting layering of abstraction featured and by experimenting on top this idea of when the picture ended and the painting/techniques began featured more of an interesting take on Abstract Expressionism and everyday life which is what I will definitely focus on during this project.

Ben Hecht

Ben Hecht has been a professional artist since 1994. In addition to operating redlines Studio and Gallery, he directed Seven Direction Institute of art and science, a visual arts school he founded in February 2001. Ben Hecht's art is at once literal and highly abstract. Through his use of aerial drones and unexpected combinations of materials like beeswax and resin, Hecht is able to gain a perspective on the natural world that is immediate and recognizable yet foreign and mysterious. Hecht is a truly unique mixed media artist, using original photographs and painting over them with heated wax or beeswax. He sources beeswax locally, mixes it with dry pigments in his color of choice, and adds crystallized resin to finish the process. He prints his photographs on large scales (often over 40 inches), and then manipulates them through the use of paint. He tends to play with photographs of the ocean, manipulating them by adding greens, blues and whites, creating beautiful 3D pieces of work that is part photograph and part painting.



My response to his work

I am very interested in this idea of finding the point between painting and photograph and how to manipulate photographs with paint and unexpected materials such as beeswax to create pieces of art with unique texture and color. From the experiments early on in my project I have already been manipulating and adding materials to turn the everyday into something more abstract, creating a boundary on what is the picture and what isn't.

By looking into this artist I want to experiment with combining unexpected things to my photographs to create unique texture, perhaps using the materials of the environment I have taken the photo in to make my photos more meaningful and less sterile. Digital processes have become so sophisticated that nearly every picture you see is dusted and anti-scratched to a state of frozen perfection. In my photography I enjoy more disruptive and tactile photography to create more contextual photographs with closer links to other forms of art. I am going to do a photoshoot based on Ben Hecht's work using the materials I have around me which will be a bath for the water and food colouring to add interesting colour variations. Instead of using beeswax like Hecht uses I am going to be using flour to create a surface texture and structured lines and forms which I can later work on top to create an abstract image.

Ben Hecht Photo shoot



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DSC_0003.jpg



DSC_0004.jpg



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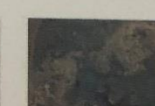
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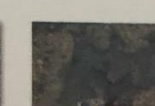
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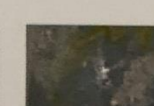
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DSC_0033.jpg



DSC_0034.jpg



DSC_0035.jpg



DSC_0036.jpg



DSC_0037.jpg



DSC_0038.jpg



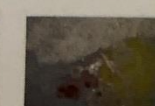
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DSC_0040.jpg



DSC_0041.jpg



DSC_0042.jpg



DSC_0043.jpg



DSC_0044.jpg



DSC_0045.jpg



DSC_0046.jpg



DSC_0047.jpg



DSC_0048.jpg



DSC_0049.jpg



DSC_0050.jpg



DSC_0051.jpg



DSC_0052.jpg



DSC_0053.jpg



DSC_0054.jpg



DSC_0055.jpg



DSC_0056.jpg



DSC_0057.jpg



DSC_0058.jpg



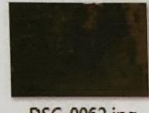
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DSC_0060.jpg



DSC_0061.jpg



DSC_0062.jpg



DSC_0063.jpg



DSC_0064.jpg



DSC_0065.jpg



DSC_0066.jpg



DSC_0067.jpg



DSC_0068.jpg



DSC_0069.jpg



DSC_0070.jpg



DSC_0071.jpg

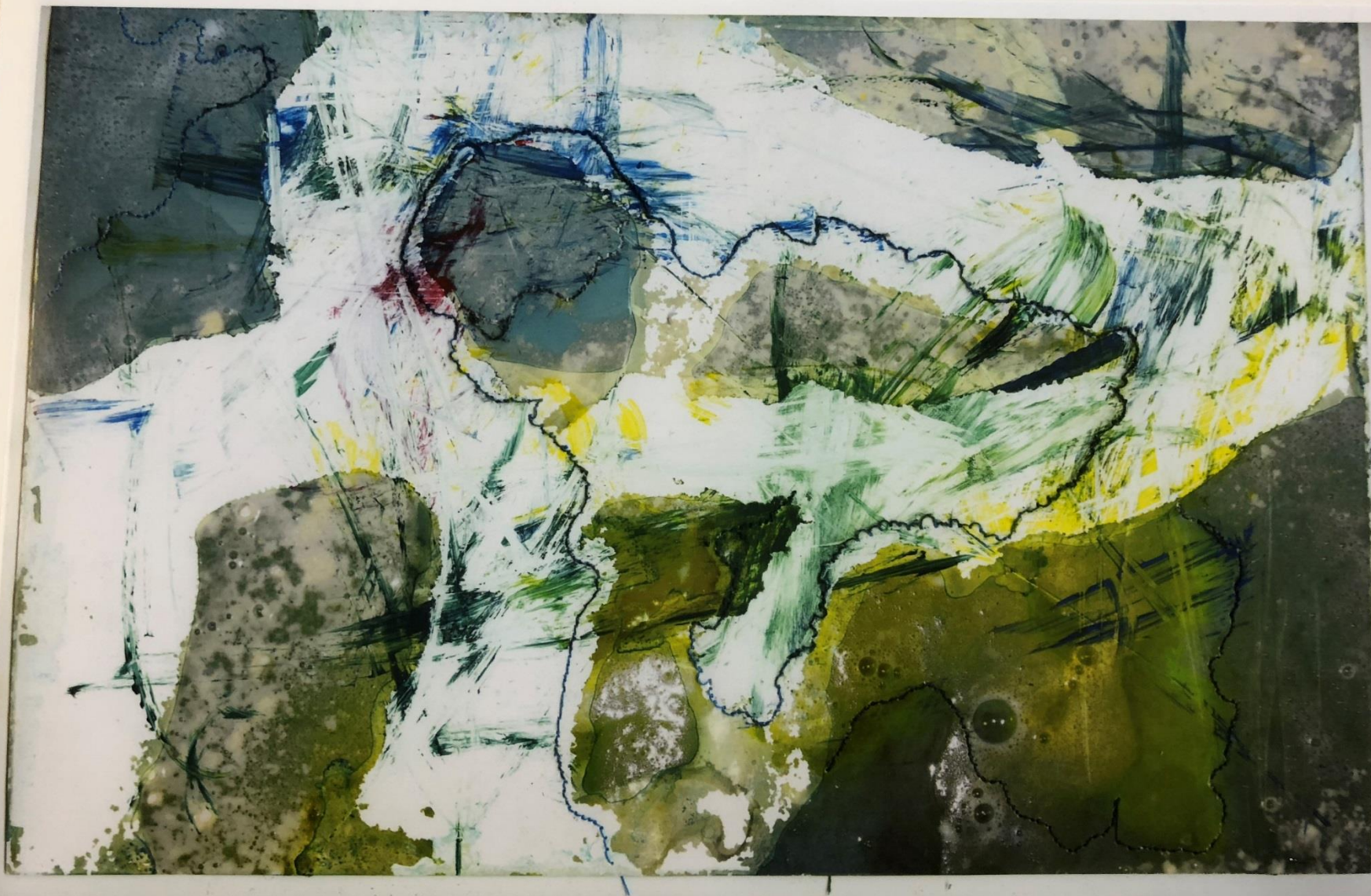


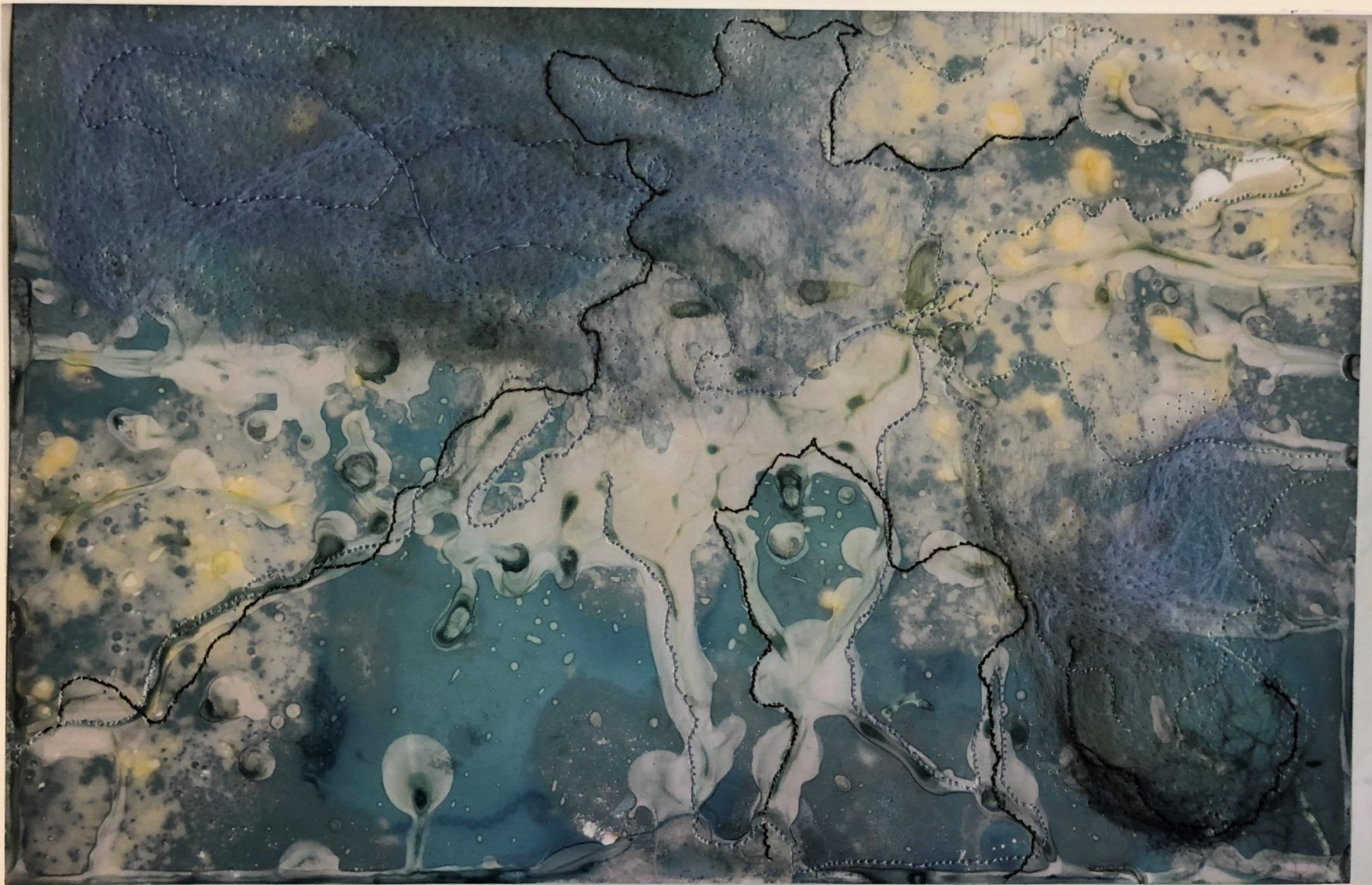
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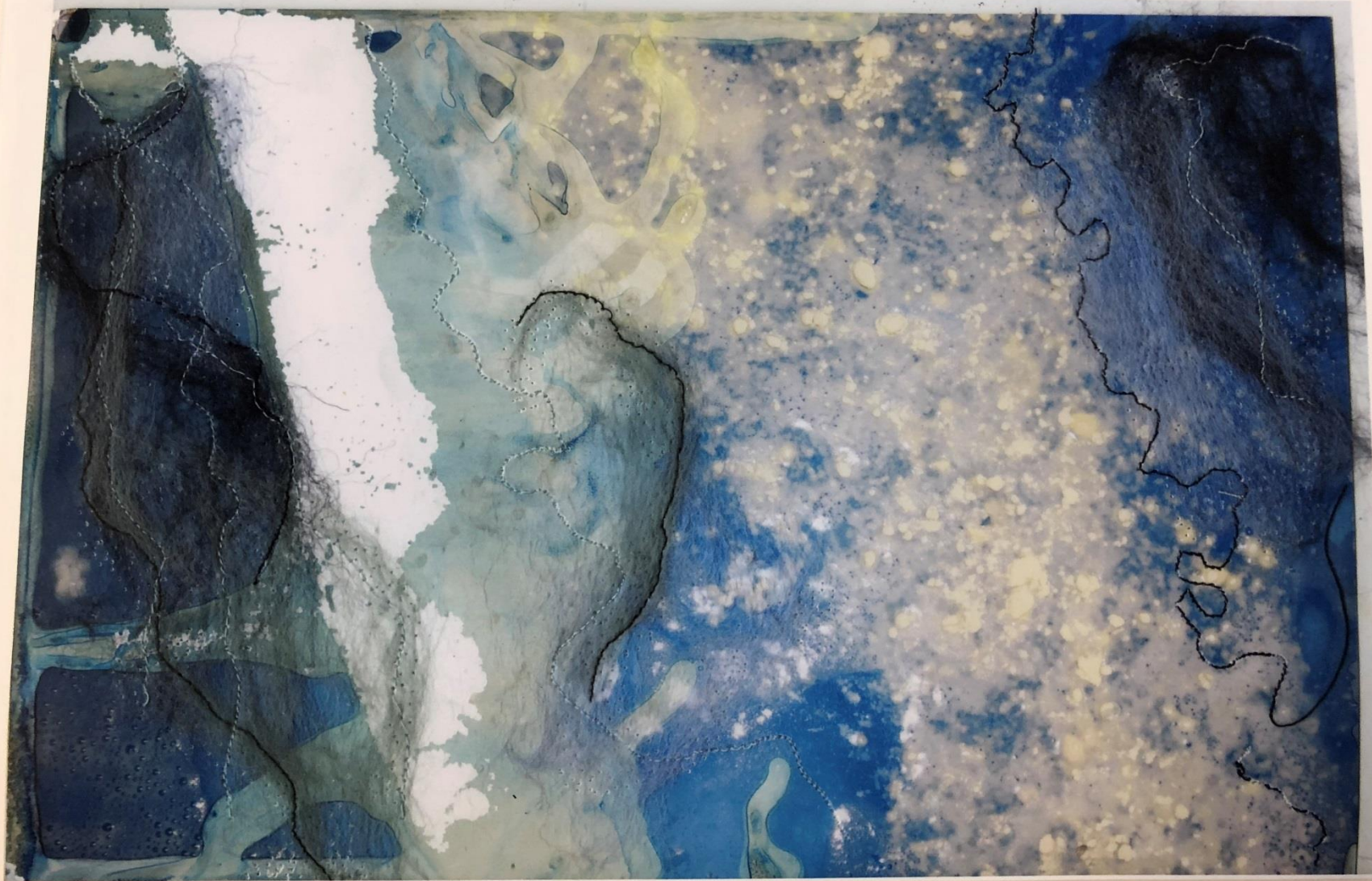
Photo Experiments from Ben Hecht Shoot

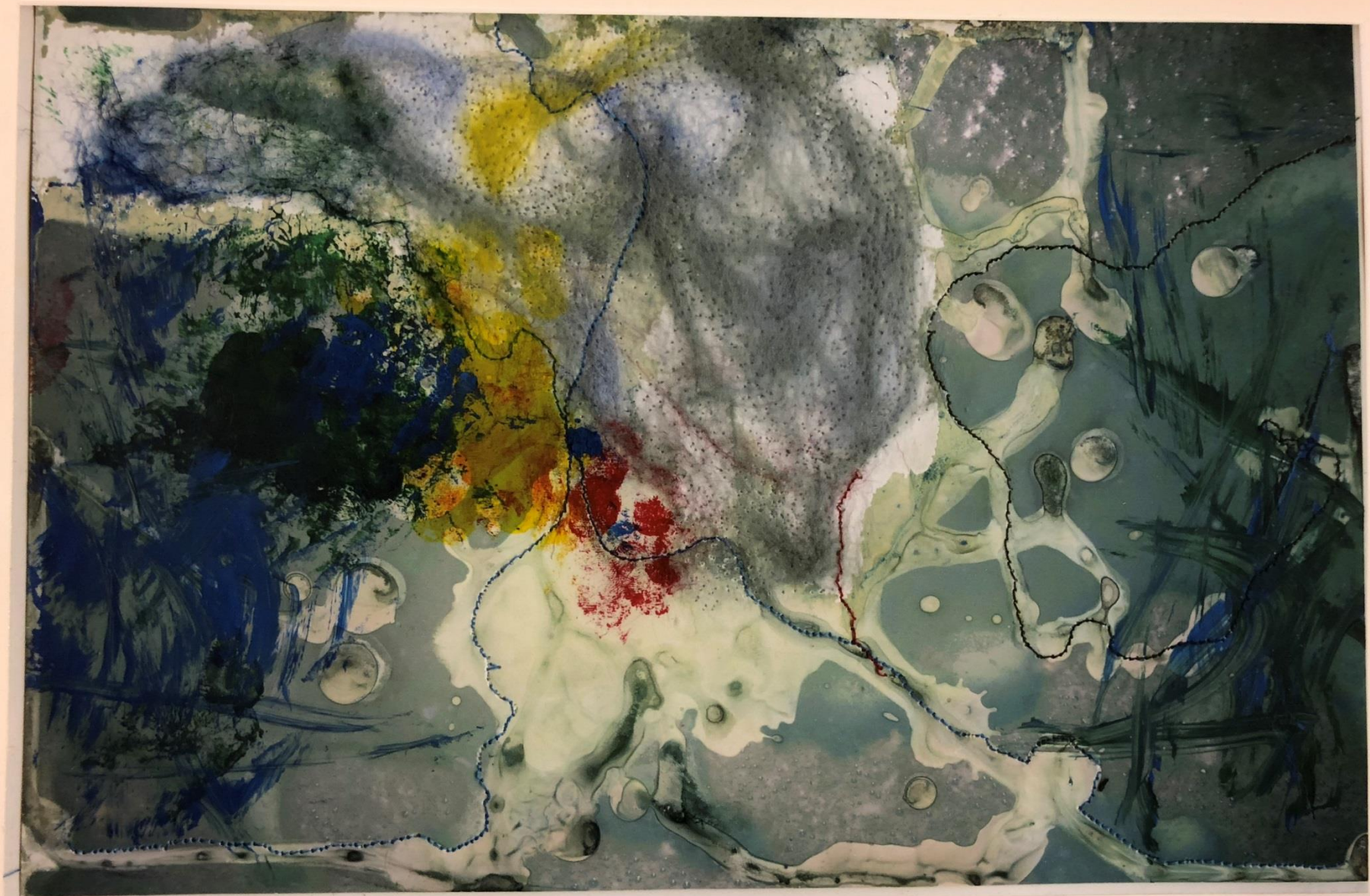














Bath Photo Experiments Response

These samples were highly successful in representing how I'm using structures from things that already exist and using abstract expressionism to experiment on top of them. The structure I've taken inspiration from is Siskind who's horizontal and vertical lines are what holds the picture together. From doing these photo experiments I've discovered that you can be very expressive over the top of structures from everyday forms. To create the effects in the photographs I filled a bath with flour and food colouring to create an artificial structure to take photos of in order to experiment onto to turn them into something more abstract. The reason I decided to use water was because theres already layers so its easy to add stuff, making it sort of organically matched. With these experiments its not just about one structure, it has the layering process of mark and action painting already happening with the flour and food colouring. I am adding to it with different layering techniques creating an abstract piece from it and bringing in ideas of not knowing when the photo stops and the painting begins.

Joan Mitchell

Joan Mitchell was an American "Second Generation" abstract expressionist painter and printmaker. Mitchell is known for the compositional rhythms, bold coloration and sweeping gestural brushstrokes of her large and often multi-panelled paintings. Her intentions were to not create a recognisable image, but to convey emotions. Mitchell's early success in the 1950s was striking at a time when few women artists were recognised. Mitchell rejected the emphasis on flatness and the "all-over" approach to composition that were prevalent among many of the leading Abstract Expressionists. Instead, she preferred to retain a more traditional sense of figure and ground in her pictures, and she often composed them in ways that evoked impressions of landscape.

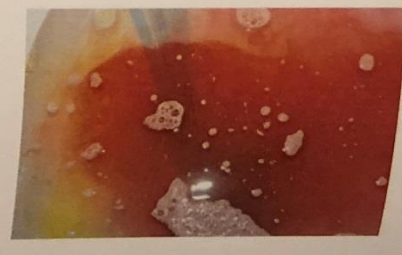
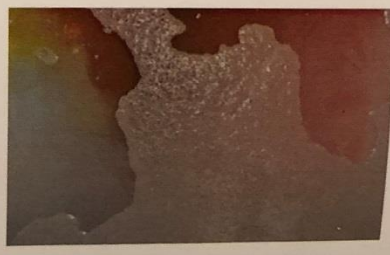
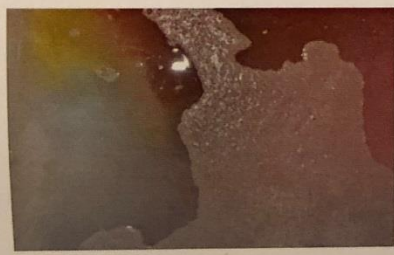
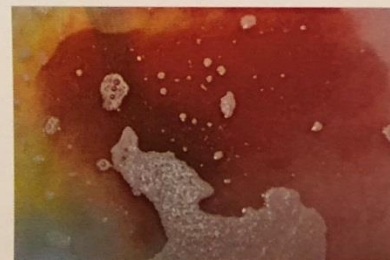
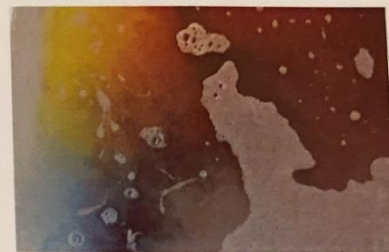
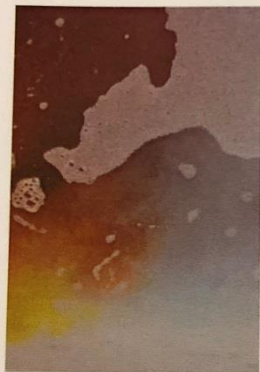
In a contrast of emotion to Pollocks work for instance, Salut Tom by Joan Mitchell is a much more brighter and lighter piece when I saw it in person at the Abstract Expressionism exhibition. It was presented on four large panels, the excessive scale you'd expect from an abstract expressionism piece. Compared to Pollocks work which mostly reflected this of dark feelings and emotions Salut Tom is much sifter in colour and meaning, its lighter on the mind when you look at it. To me it has reminiscence of a field - free and with space. In contrast, Pollock has so much on his canvases that is so entrapped it builds up. With Salut Tom there are big block of yellow and some greens, theres much less going on and as a result is much more relaxed.

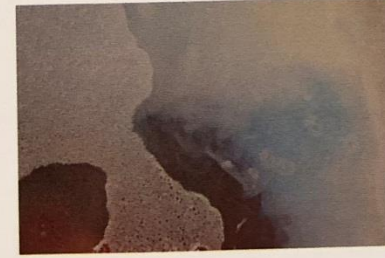
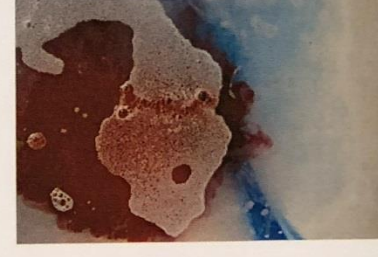
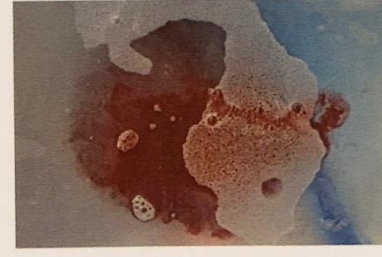
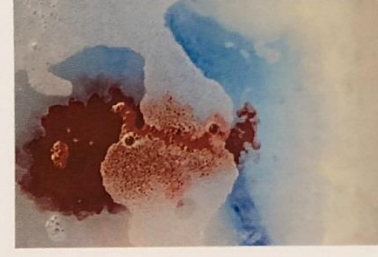
Final Phase

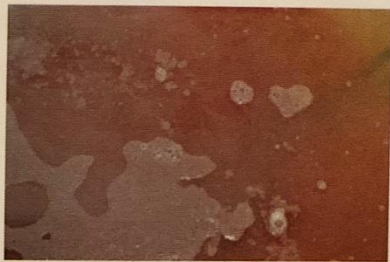
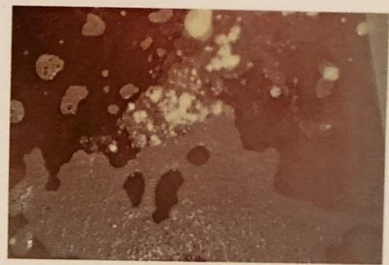
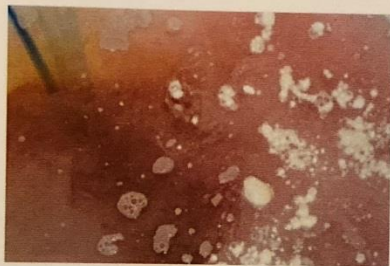
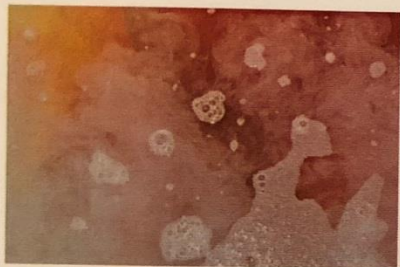
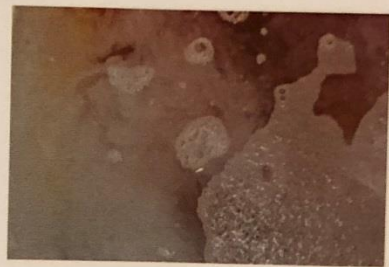
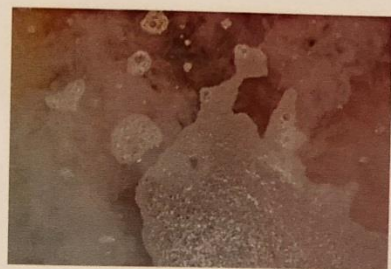
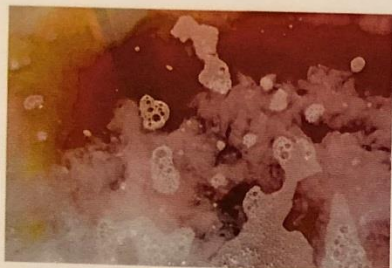
Throughout my project I have been looking into different surfaces of an everyday environment and turning them into something more abstract. With the success of my photo experiments I've realised that I'm using the structure from what already exists and am using Abstract Expressionism to experiment on top of them. I have decided to work with structure and to be able to recognise what allows me to be expressive over. With artists such as Aaron Siskind I've been able to recognise interesting structures and then start to action paint on top by embellishing, stitching and bleaching to turn it into something more abstract. Siskind and Hains's horizontal and vertical lines are what holds the picture together. Reflecting on these artists ideas I'm taking my own view and finding/recognising surfaces which have interesting compositions that will allow me to work on top. What separates me and my project from the inaction painters and the action painters is that I'm doing both by discovering that with some surfaces it has the layering process of mark and action painting already happening and I'm adding to it giving off this idea of not knowing when the picture stops and the painting begins.

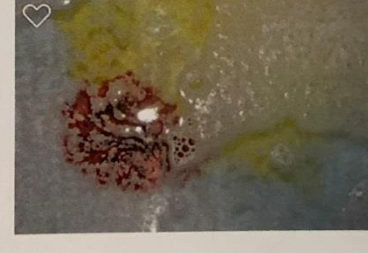
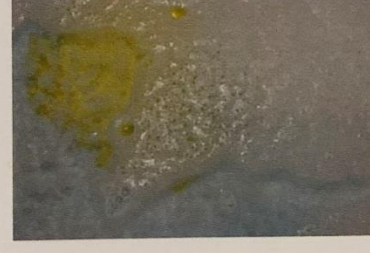
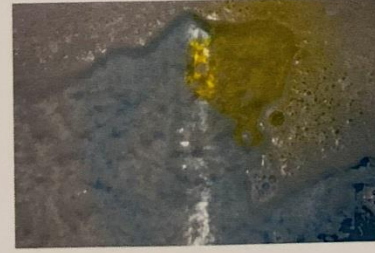
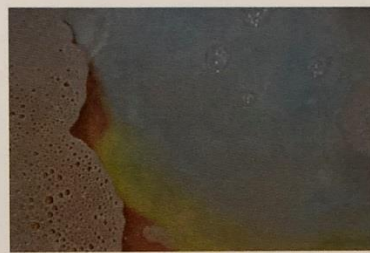
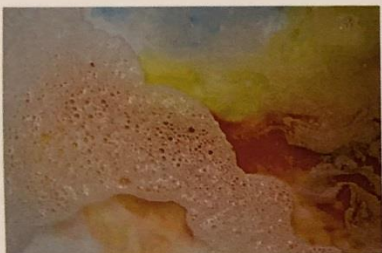
For my final phase I have decided that I want to play with scale in order to make my final piece very much on Abstract Expressionist size. After researching into Joan Mitchell's Salut Tom I've discovered panels will allow me to do this as it will put myself on an abstract scale. After responding and researching my artists I have decided to go further with Ben Hecht's experiments, however I will also take inspiration on compositions and texture from Siskind and Hains when it comes to recognising interesting structures that are held together and which I can work onto. I am going to create and recognise structures and then will start to action paint to embellish it with different techniques to turn it into something more abstract. From my photo experiments I know that I like the distorting of the bleach and how this allows you to layer and build on the photo using colour. With my bath shoot I was able to use blues, whites, yellows and reds on top of the image this will hopefully make the overall effect of my photo panels much more of a calming abstract expressionist piece whilst having things in common with my Abstract Expressionist artists.

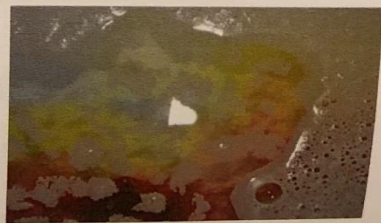
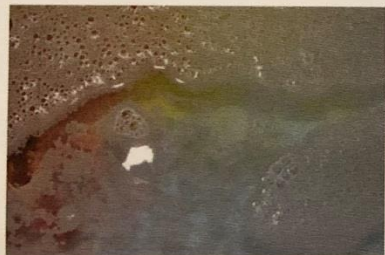
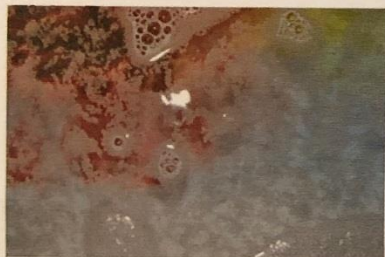
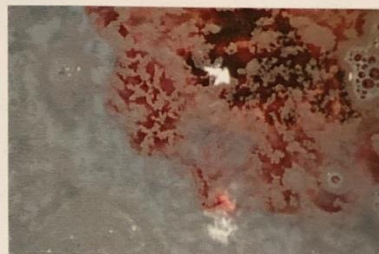
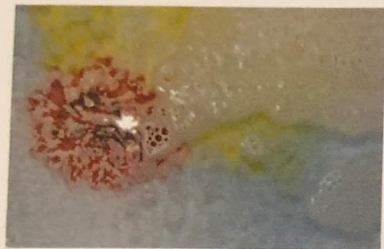
Ben Hecht Shoot 2 - Final piece

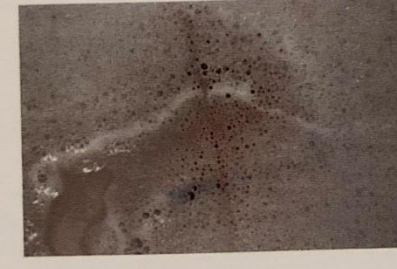
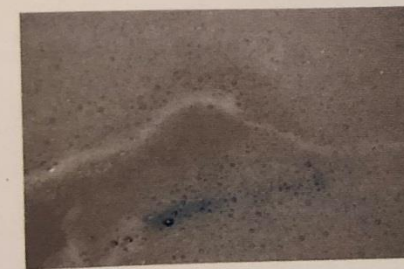
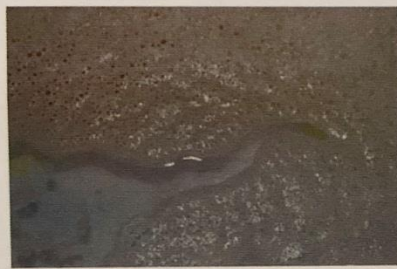


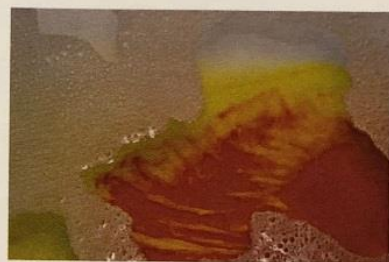


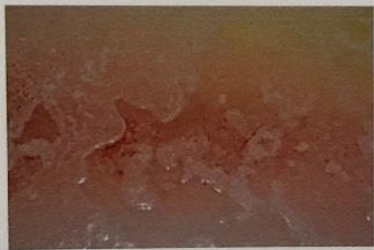
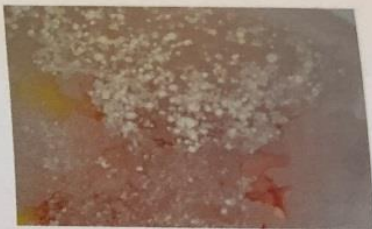
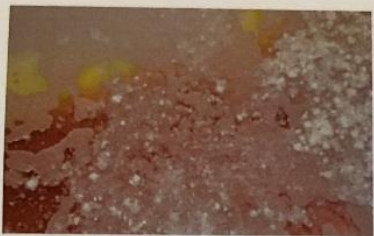












Final Piece photo

