GCE A Level
Advanced
Art and Design

Fine Art
Component 1

PHOEBE

Total Mark 80 (64+PS16)
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<th>AO1 Develop</th>
<th>AO2 Explore and Select</th>
<th>AO3 Record</th>
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<th>Personal Study</th>
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<td><strong>Total out of 90</strong></td>
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studies of legs/chair - movement over a prolonged time.
my desk at night -
cups / lamp / scissors / bottles / pens
still/stagnant/
on moving Objects.
- millie waiting, waiting for lesson
- hands together - hair covering face
coffee sleep
11:26
outside/inside taken
apart and put back together.
- objects and scale
disorientated
- capturing mood
- not life

[Sketches of human figures and objects]
in the computer room

sat down - wrinkled shirt
organised

chaos
Load down—side view of feet
FEET + CHAIRS ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON
Within a gallery there is a sense of escapism that allows the rest of the world to almost disappear. A single piece has the potential to inhabit a lifetime of thought and thus entices us to step into the creator's shoes and experience an entirely new perspective. In a world that is constantly shifting it is more important to embrace these moments of reflection, allowing a deeper appreciation for the lifetimes, ideas and understandings of others that is presented through art practices.
In order to make our ideas and work unique and special, the use of a variety of materials and techniques is key. The materials should reflects the emotions and ideas that we want to convey. The choice of materials can add a depth and complexity to the work. The use of mixed media can add a unique touch to the piece and can be used to create a sense of unity or contrast. The use of color can also be used to create a sense of mood or atmosphere. The use of different techniques can also add a sense of movement or energy to the piece. The use of found objects can add a sense of history or context to the work. The use of lighting can also be used to create a sense of drama or mystery. The use of text can also be used to add a sense of narrative or meaning to the piece.
In terms of the interconnective processes that define the modern and postmodern eras, it is crucial to understand the complex relationship between art, technology, and society. The advent of new media has transformed the way we consume, create, and interact with art. Digital technologies have allowed artists to explore new forms of expression and have opened up new avenues for artistic creation.

The influence of digital media on art is evident in the way it has changed the way we perceive and experience art. The use of digital tools and techniques has enabled artists to create works that are both interactive and immersive, allowing viewers to engage with the artwork in ways that were not possible before.

One of the most significant developments in recent years has been the use of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) in art. These technologies have allowed artists to create immersive experiences that transcend traditional boundaries between art and reality. The use of AR and VR has opened up new possibilities for artistic expression and has the potential to transform the way we experience and interact with art.

In conclusion, the interconnective processes that define the modern and postmodern eras have had a profound impact on the way we create and experience art. The use of digital media has transformed the way we perceive and interact with art, opening up new possibilities for artistic expression and creating new forms of engagement between art and its audience.
A1 paper project.

Everything must begin with an idea. The A1 paper project appealed to me not only due to its potential for creative possibilities, but it allowed me straight away to begin being spontaneous in the way I worked. No brief was given, nor a subject or criteria - only to transform the paper from its initial blank space. I found this concept fascinating - the idea that everybody would be creating something personal to themselves, a different approach for a different individual. I knew I wanted to begin by focusing on abstract painting as I had been drawn in by the sense of freedom and expression it allowed when I tried it last year. Looking at the paper, I found myself wanting to transform the blank space into something the complete opposite - overspilling with colour and energy. Although I set out to just use paint, as I worked I found myself reaching for paper, pens, oil Pastels, ink and chalk. I quickly became fascinated by the way the materials worked with each other; how the lines of pastel became rigid and uneven on top of the thickness of the paint and how tissue paper provided a translucent layer to arrive on top of. Using a wider range of materials therefore made me push the pieces further whereas in other circumstances I would of left them as they were. There was definitely a risk taking factor to this reworking but I found the more layers I added, the more energetic and dynamic the paper became.
Out of all the pieces this was the one that gave me the most frustration, but in fact, in the end turned out my favorite. When I began, I thought the piece lacked definition due to the messy nature of the brushstrokes and smudged appearance of the paint. The line I learned to consist in order to find inspiration and came across the work of weather gay. Although I had explored her paintings before, this time I saw them in a new light where the haphazardly smudged paint highlighted the blurred nature of the background. This stark contrast between black (which is defined and undefined) was one I attempted to portray in my own work. By layering watercolor washes and streaks using different colors, the paper's texture and surface became more dynamic, and the paint blended beautifully.
Within a gallery there is a sense of immersion that allows the rest of the world to almost disappear. A single place that has potential to inhabit a lifetime of thought and meditate on to step into the creation meant and experience an entirely new perspective. In a world that is constantly shifting it is more important than ever to embrace these moments of reflection, allowing a deeper appreciation for the stationary, ideas and understanding of others not to be reduced into art practices.
in time to the completed product, which makes it an everyday form for me. Working at my studio, I found that we are not only working on the physical outcome, but also on the emotional satisfaction that comes from completing a task. This is a process that can be shared, whether it is with friends, family, or through social media. The journey is as important as the result.

In my studio, I work on a variety of projects, from paintings to mixed media. I use different materials and techniques to create my work. I also document my process through photographs and videos. I believe that sharing my work and the process of creating it can inspire others and encourage them to explore their own creativity.

The process of creating art is not just about the end result; it is about the journey and the growth that comes with it. I find that working on a project, even one that doesn't turn out as planned, can be a valuable experience. It teaches me to be flexible and open-minded, and to embrace the unexpected.

In conclusion, art is not just a tool for self-expression, but also a means of personal growth. It helps me to reflect on my experiences, to explore my emotions, and to connect with others. I believe that everyone can benefit from the experience of creating art, whether they are artists or not.
me. The very fact that a generations preference in artistic style has been triggered by a single individual or event generates great possibilities of works in store for the future of art. In a somewhat odd way I am not going into AR with any specific aims of how I want my work to be. This is something I did the opposite of last year and found I was held back partially by my intentions surrounding the standard of work and the specific outcome I intended. Although my art became much more constrained in the second year I always ended up having a very rigid structure to what I put in my sketchbooks and what I didn't. Doing so I didn't feel like I was exhausting the creative potential of ideas I had in my head and what I ended up with was a book that prioritised the objectives of work but lacked an emotional connection to myself as an individual artist. I have no doubt I will intuitively struggle with being spontaneous as it is a trait I have to work on rather than possess naturally. However by pursuing the natural flow of creative process I hope my work this time round appears much more personal to me and others can see that too. To further push myself outside my comfort zone I also hope to develop a way of working to use my sketchbook to support what is happening outside of it. By this I mean moving onto larger scale pieces that make me think about and generate ideas in a way I feel is not possible in the sketchbook and surfaces. Though I imagine this year will be challenging I believe I am going to maximally enjoy exploring and going on to discover more of how I represent myself as an artist.
It was really interesting to get a response to the paintings I showed the group this week. Although the themes behind the pieces derived from our mind, I found that by talking about my work, what others and myself wanted to notice certain influences from other artists. For example, the scribbled lines of black ink linked to those found in the work of Cy Twombly with both having a certain "childlike" aspect to them in that the mark suggested a lack of control. Alongside this, I found the vibrant use of colours and overlapping shapes in the paintings also reminded me of the messy nature of "cut out" works, in particular "The small" which I recently witnessed at the Tate. By looking at my own work from a very aesthetic point of view, it got me thinking about whether it was essential for my work to have "meaning". Although I was happy with the way my paintings turned out, I found myself wondering if there was something about them that appeared unfinished. Whether this was due to the unpainted area of white space or whether it was more to do with the background or the essence I lose, a certain emotional component to the pieces I hear about work. More work and something about them that related more to the pure, the positive. Thus, I hope to continue to develop elements of form, to try and attain something much more finished as a result.
I believe these pieces lack the spontaneity of the paintings but they do offer a starting point for the different ways I could deconstruct and alter my A2 project. Even so, I still might try and push the use of overlapping and layering different shapes as I believe it adds a certain element of geometric minimalism.
Here I began to think about how I could rework a piece so it appeared different yet still connected to the original. Working on a smaller scale meant my mark making became much more compact and eventually overlapping. In a way this made the piece appear darker than those in my A2 project as some of the lighter colours began to get lost. Although this added a new found sense of depth, the loss of the clean cut lines of the previous pieces made this one appear somewhat cluttered.

One thing I didn’t want to do was let the colours of the piece begin to overpower the mark making. As I believe an equal balance of the two works best. Therefore in the 2nd piece I experimented with different types of
I have found in my collages so far the marks I am making are often geometric—defined by their sharp edges and angular appearance. I have begun to feel this is possibly retarding the ‘natural’ quality that comes with abstract work, and have therefore decided to focus on my painting methods. In a way my relationship with painting has been limited in that when I create abstract work I automatically return for other materials as well—whether it be paper or plaster to layer over the artwork. Although this creates interesting textures—sometimes I feel I might be losing this added layer of collage as a distraction from painted marks I wasn’t happy with at the time. Therefore I am pushing myself to point to achieve a new level of flexibility in my work that feels very raw and unventured (even if I do not like it at first). In these works for example I am attempting to let the rough nature of the thin paint lines define the title brushstrokes in the background although there is no particular subject matter I am still using the environment to help inspire my marks. When I paint I look at the tables, chairs, even the people around me; letting their silhouette and movements direct the way I draw and think. Even though this is not visible in the painting, I believe it adds an emotional element that was not coming through previously. As I work I often find myself drawing in my mind, this allows me to understand the very spirit of childhood freedom I am exploring.
engulf him his use of white/cream coloured backgrounds that emphasize the use of white marks has made me think about my own starting point. By experimenting with the use of grey/neutral and I hope to highlight the cool neutral quality of the social worker to room-by-rooming.
The shots in my colours so far: the marks from making one...
outside this his use of white/cream coloured backgrounds that emphasize the use of white make has made me think about my own starting points. By experimenting with the use of grey-brown card I hope to highlight the cool formal qualities of the pieces suitable to mumiji spalter.
As I have been working I have begun to think about the factors I control when painting and wondered what would occur if I limited or expanded these boundaries. In the first piece I decided to only use acrylics and pen with a colour scheme of whites, yellows and greens. This made me start to question the way I mix particular colours - for example, how light could I make the yellow before it turned white? I also began to look at how I defined my mark making from background to foreground. I found the softer, thicker lines blended together as a good base for the fine uneven lines of darker colour that I added on top. This contrast is one in particular I would like to further explore with my mark making - possibly using different materials for background and foreground.
I decided to turn one of my previous ideas around and instead of using the environment to influence my mark making - I used my mark making to influence the environment. By transposing one of my paintings onto acetate I could therefore use this to alter my own and others perception of what was in front of them. I had never used my artwork like this before, creating it more like an object than something to be simply hung on a wall and observed - and it felt somewhat intriguing. With my camera I worked out that the picture worked best when I used the painting as a filter in front of a subject. This in particular was successful when I used the sky as a background as the white and blue of the clouds complemented the wide spectrum of colors within the piece - however I found when I used a person as the subject I had to make sure their facial features were not entirely in focus - as if they were the piece took a certain abstract quality.
By working back into the already distorted pieces I wanted to explore how the colours and shapes within the photographs affected my mark making on top of them. This approach I found was similar to that of Richard Kitcher, whose pieces inspired the dragging motion of paint I used in the background of my pieces. Kitcher’s works often play between the relationship of realism and abstraction; of which I also hoped to portray. Even though a lot of the original photographs disappeared under the layers of paint, I still believe the pieces retained a sense of energy from within the environment of the pieces. For example, the circular motions culminating in the centre of the past piece outline the positionning where a face once was.

Although the content isn’t directly visible, there is still a sense of motion due to the repetitive nature of the layers similarly in the second piece the cross that are still partially visible create depth that the eye is automatically attracted to in some ways. However I wish I had limited the colour scheme of these pieces, or even simply blurred out the colours that were already there. This is because I find when I use a wide spectrum of colours, sometimes the illusion between each individual shade is lost and the piece appears slightly muddy.
Looking at the photos I was struck by the way delicate cracks of light had appeared in between the trees and it made me think about the varying contrast between dark and light and how such a palette could be used in an abstract painting. With this piece however I also wanted to push myself to work straight onto my book using complete spontaneity. I think this sense of freedom therefore is reflected in the painting, with its built up uncontrived layers and loose lines that depict an ‘in the moment’ way.

I am especially happy with how this painting turned out by using a colour scheme that ranged from the darkest green to the lightest white, in turn creating a sense of depth that can be recognised from and is reminiscent of the original photographic light sources.
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Rauschenburg:
Rauschenburg's combination of painting and sculpture attempt to bridge the gap between art and objects of real life. This integration of abstract and the ordinary is a concept that on paper appears oppositional, however when assembled the contrast creates a very direct and personal conversation with the viewer. Rauschenburg appeared to go against the conventional ideas of what art should be at the time, his work sparking criticism and debate with its non-adherence to the traditional practices of abstract expressionism that were popular in the 1950s. However what strikes me most about what he created was how something so simple can be transformed into a signifier of a much larger concept. For example in his piece 'Bed' a quilt loses its traditional intimacy and instead is presented with a new type of exposure; the paint and the uneven folds in the sheets demonstrating almost violent connections. Even so, although the paint has been added on top of the sheets, in a way I view this use of layering in a somewhat contradictory fashion as it paints a much more vulnerable and exposed picture of Rauschenburg who at one point most likely slept under them. Paint therefore is an essential part of Rauschenburg's
Bauhausburg

Rauschenberg's combined painting and sculpture attempts to bridge the gap between art and objects in real life. This integration of abstract and the ordinary is a concept that he popularized in opposition to traditional processes of abstract expressionism that were popular in the 1950s. However, what strikes me most about what he created was how something so concrete can be transformed into something of a much larger concept. For example, in his plate "East," a quilt becomes a traditional narrative and instead is presented as a new type of experience: the paint and the woven pieces in the quilt become assembling almost violent connections even though the paint has been added on top of the quilt in a way that I know was a legacy in a somewhat art-musical form as it paints a much more accessible and expanded picture of Rauschenberg, who as one point, most likely could see them. Thus, in a musical part of Rauschenberg's career and similarly to how I have been using a poem to illustrate the world around me, he used the gestural means of dipping, spilling and spreading it to establish a deeper sense of attachment with his experiences and the conditions of life around him. There is no doubt this fluid and almost invisible mark making was partly influenced by Cy Twombly, who was his partner for a short time, but his work features a particular use of a rhythmic slowing in movement that can be seen as a process of thought that is apparent in his often abstract, yet detailed, poetic imagery and iconography from popular media, only all the aspects of his work are in what I find myself most drawn to the rigid structures and reality of the photographs capturing yet still balancing out the randomness of space-it is as if he is working with life itself. This jarring aspect can be seen in "Umbrella," where the formally nude, minimally gestural cut of the piece but its rectangular composition gives up putting into the context of other black squares and spacers of points on top. The overall artistic feel of the piece is something I would also like to explore myself.
Hoffman and the learning:

The significance of distinction is something that cannot be ignored in the paintings of Hans Hoffman. To me, his works represent a variety of contrasts: contrast in colors, texture, even in the different physicalities. Hoffman used up on creating a piece. Although they are almost each painting suggests a story, exemplifying Hoffman’s idea that “painters must speak through paint, not through words.” When I look at “the copy” for example, I see a light, bright energy emerging from the deep, dark, black, suggesting a sort of enlightenment. Whereas when I look at “the wind” there appears to be a confusion mixed with energy due to the dripping of paint in a chaotic manner.

Although the paintings explore spatial relationships and color in a contrasting way, they are both connected due to being deeply entwined with an emotional intensity because of their diversity and dynamic nature. The colors used within Hoffman paintings are bold, contrasting and unsurprisingly often linked to his use of color in his work. Hoffman heavily influenced his ideas concerning color and form, with his Californian and French roots, cut outs and the more structured and rectangular work of Hoffman showing this. What was most prominent about Hoffman however was that he was not only a painter, but a teacher in the artistic practice. This, allowed him to develop ideas that could be accurately depicted on his works, for example his “push and pull” theory which looks at movement and depth with a depiction. In his later works, a type of abstract energy was created by combining abstract elements with the spontaneity of very fine and fluent mark making. Such a contrast makes the piece unique and distinct as although the eye is initially drawn to the solid blocks of defined color, gradually one intricate detailing of the background can be perceived and understood in comparison to the foreground. Looking at the piece “wind” for example the background colors are one shade lighter and much more blended than those in front. Therefore combined with the slight nature of the rectangles it appears as if there was some motion or distortion that affected the background but
ne the foreground. Hoffman developed into one of the most influential artists of abstract expressionism. Within the 20th century, however, he was only one of many exploring this newly emerging style at the time. Another highly acclaimed painter was William de Kooning, who similarly to Hoffman focused on creating intense dynamics within a piece by using a wide spectrum of colors and marks. Both artists had moved from Europe to America and came to be surrounded by the similar art scenes that favored expressionism and abstraction. However, there is an aspect of their work that is significantly different: the painting of a woman. It is apparent straight away that a woman is the subject matter. In keeping with the opinion at the time, that the figure as an abstract subject, Hoffman instead worked mainly without a defined subject matter and thus the impact came from his striking degree of abstraction. Even though both artists were well acknowledged in their paintings, de Kooning's work was characterized by a more emotional and somber nature, while Hoffman's work was more subdued in comparison. Hoffman's primary interest was in colors, and the colors in his work therefore represented this 'flashy' tones in his paintings. Adding a naturalistic element to something so abstract: some of his later works do reveal that his work, for example, the composition of a heavy, fingered, drawn with his hand, overlapping large sections of color and lack of smaller details. Still, he offers some sense of paint that seem to have been made with extremely violent gestures that seem to offer the fluidity from Hoffman's much more contoured style. Both Hoffman and de Kooning took advantage of spontaneity and color in their paintings—a route that I too am continuing to explore, but how their work has influenced me in new ways as well. Looking at the work of de Kooning, his use of color, his reinterpretation of a figure as an abstract concept has made me think about how I could take specific sections or even just lines and turn them into a way to make the subject more instantly recognizable as human. This sort of understanding could also be explored in my work with color. As similar to Hoffman, I could use it in large, solid sections, then contrast this with areas containing a wide variety of colors and blended in colors.
The human figure has always been a key subject and inspiration to artists. After looking at the drawings, I have begun to see the figure in a less traditional light. Nowadays, I used to have to draw the figure on an exact plan as I now had to reproduce a sense of the body. Having completed a much more believable portrayal of the life in front of you, I felt that I was helping the model to understand the pose and rather than through the lens of a camera, when the drawing the model often interacted for position and at a rapid pace, although at first I felt frustrated as I couldn't see the detail I wanted to, I eventually learnt to pick out key lines and elements of what I saw. Alongside this, my drawings began to grow fluidly and naturally more - establishing the movement of the model. I have also come to appreciate drawings where it may not be obvious that the lines are drawn, but rather they are intuitive. Anyone can see, as similarly to the memory, this has, imprinted marks and was that have really begun to interest me.
I wanted to begin working on top of the life canvas, but in a way that was focused on developing the abstract lines and markings, rather than the more realistic aspects. The idea of the piece turned out to be more abstract and less identifiable as a figure. This was the case with the piece, due to its unstructured sense of energy that seemed to be changing from one form of the piece. However, in the second piece, the form showed a more defined structure. Instead, I focused on the background, with its separate aspects, in order to work on them. In both these works, I had reflected on the paintings of John Marzullo and enjoyed the same use of abstract, overlapping forms and dark, moody colors. I like the idea of using the same approach to painting and even using some of my works to explore other aspects of color in my paintings. I have been inspired by the way the paintings have a sense of structure and I have worked on a form of abstraction that is a result of working with various forms of color and material. I would like to continue working with this relationship between abstraction and the figure, but possibly in a more focused manner for the next piece, or even to have a more structured piece that is multi-layered.
Reconstructing the figure is something that I wanted to explore more in detail. To can erase the full body sketches I had previously done because there would be less focus on the form. Therefore, I decided to angularize my use of colour, using mainly prominent combinations of yellow, green, and red. For this work, I have found myself consistently coming back to Anna Schulek. I feel where my work is heading, with its combination of abstraction and representational elements, closely ties with Schulek and her attempts to portray three-dimensional form in a way that is not directly obvious to the viewer. In future work, I want to try and work in a more minimalist fashion inspired by Schulek. As at the moment, my work can become too busy and overly intricate. Another artist I also turned to was Georgia O’Keeffe.
His drawings of figures encapsulate the different positions and physicality of the body I want to look at. Alongside this, he often used the environment around his models within his pieces, which I think is a really intriguing concept. I could for example begin to use the chair, people are sat on as the main feature of a piece, arching of the actual figure on top.
After life drawing and looking at the works of Anna Smedley, I had become interested in the relationship between the human body and the objects to which they sit upon. There was something about the right structure of a chair in comparison to the flexibility of the body that created a juxtaposition that would be interesting to portray through painting. When creating the new series of pictures, therefore, I had been partly inspired by the work of sculptor artist Elain Brown who made 1 minute works on the spot using objects or people that are around him. There is a true sense of improvisation and spontaneity about Brown's sculpture alongside a surreal element that comes from placing these items in situations they are not meant to be in. When I created my set of photos, I asked my model to sit on the chair in ways she wouldn't normally and then tracked her movements. This created a fluid changing of physically meaning I could potentially explore how such movement effected individual limits.
I wanted to interpret these pictures through drawing and capture a sense of the movement and life in them - yet I didn't want to simply do a direct copy. My aim was to have an unreferenced version of the work, so that all is rough and chaotic. For example, you could note other elements would come across more abstract and lacking realism. The drawings of Tracey Emin have helped me explore this - with their personal/emotional connection to the artist making them more and free floating as if they are thought and memory represented as a drawing. In my own work I am most happy when the piece floating on the single chair turned out as due to the abstract green and yellow marks that is telling me that is present as initially appears.
Schuldt and Bacon:

Out of all the artists I have looked at so far, Anna Schuldt has had the biggest impact on my work. My initial intrigue with her paintings was the way each suggested a narrative, even those which at first glance appear completely abstract. Whether it be a particular person, situation or object, Schuldt's paintings encourage you to look between the lines and decipher the faintly drawn lines surrounded by slashes of green paint. Even the office chair that's out line is only barely visible on top of solid blocks of orange and grey. Her colour schemes are restricted yet brought to life by highly contrasting whites and blacks layered on top of each other whilst her mark making ranges from the most delicate of etchings to those which appear heavy and dramatic. There is a certain ambiguity to the work of Schuldt, with her paintings making you question whether a collection of lines are meant to represent a person's body, or if they are simply shapes: rich in energy but not form. Either way, in every painting the brush strokes create a sense of fluidity and presence that makes up for the limited 'realistic' figurative attributes. Schuldt once depicted she had a 'drawing like approach to painting'. This can be seen in my approach.
artist interpretation, whereas there is a sense of
tension in Schulte's work that is calm and reflect.
ive, in Bacon's work it appears sterner and even dis
turbing. This significantly darker tone comes from
the faceless, paper figures are illustrated, suggesting
a nightmarish vision that is heightened with his
colour palette of dark reds and blues with gloomy
undertones of grey. In contrast, Schulte uses colour
very subtly and limits blending so that layers are
created in order to build depth, simply by compa
ding Bacon's 'Studies for a Self-Portrait' and Sch
ulte's 'Two People Ago', the artists differing later
n influences become evident. Bacon had began
to explore self-portraits later in his life, after
claiming 'there is nothing else to paint but myself'
in response to the death of his closest
friend and golf pro. This sense of loss and
loneliness has been keen reflected in the
figure, with its surreal distortion contrasting
with the smoothness of the background. As a young
artist working in the 21st century, Schulte has
instead depicted her work as 'a strange taking
sense of everyday moments' - a much more proa
metrical approach to painting and the world ar
nal her instead of Bacon drawing upon emo
onal turmoil. Although their approaches differ
I hope to continue using both artists as inspiration
for further works. This could mean pushing the
limits of how far I can make a figure appear
abstract, to the point where it is simply a roll
action of colour and marks. On the other hand,
I could also look into using photography to pick up
on the overall disposition of the figure and then
use their emotional state to dictate the style
of colour palette I use within a piece.
alist interpretation. Whereas there is a sense of isolation in Schiele's work that is calm and reflective, in Bacon's work it appears sombre and even disturbing. This significantly darker tone comes from the fact Bacon's figures are distorted, suggesting a nightmarish vision that is heightened with his colour palette of dark reds and blues with gloomy undertones of grey. In contrast, Schiele uses colour very subtly and limits blending so that layers are created in order to build depth. Simply by comparing Bacon's 'Studies for a Self-portrait' and Schiele's 'Two People Ago' the artists differing external influences become evident. Bacon had began to explore self portraits later in his life after claiming 'there is nothing else to paint but myself' in response to the deaths of his closest friends in their old age. This sense of loss and lonesomeness has thus been reflected in the figure, with its surreal distortion contrasting with the smoothness of the background. As a young
Upon beginning this book it was my intention to start working outside of it; however in some ways I had been putting this off. At this point, therefore, I decided to push aside my insecurities of the piece going “wrong” on a larger scale and proceed to working on the wall. The piece below is what I started with; there was no direct intentions behind it apart from using the imagery I had already been working with as a basis. 

[Image of the piece below]
So far it has turned out minimalist, with the contour lines of the face and the hair giving it its main structure. However, because of this, it also appears quite flat and so I want to add more layers of paint so that it reflects an external aspect and their energy rather than a simple outline. In my next research I have decided to use an alternative technique of creating a relief effect will take me. By layering or acrylic paint over wax while surrounding and spatializing this but on the paper, I am now using a more direct and tactile expression of the one on the wall. Even so, I like this unrestrained quality as it creates a sense of movement and shows the process the painting has taken through. These pieces in place have affect in common with the work of Alma, Maria, and many more with the figure through sections of color much more definite times. But I believe because of her use of a background color, her paintings have a ‘completeness’ which I believe misses lack. To combat this in my next works I am going to begin with a strong color to define the rest of the picture.
On the original photos, I did a similar technique by rubbing away the ink. However, I don't think this works as well as the pencil is already on the figure, so any addition to it only appears subtle. It feels almost as if the abstraction and realism are fighting against each other, whereas in the painting there is a better balance between the two concepts.
Both in this book and on the larger pieces I have been using colour in conjunction with outlining the body. This resulted with the lines and sections of colour becoming a strong focus within the piece, however I often found these sections of warm hues against the stark white background to be somewhat digressive. By starting with a cool tone brown base and adding white as the very last component, the pieces appear much softer and putting them in a sequence allows the main focus to settle in different areas instead of appearing chaotic. I'm gradually finding myself however becoming less happy with the drawn elements of the pieces, even though focusing on chains and other ordinary objects has allowed me to find beauty in everyday items. I feel my drawing of them is the weakest part of my work, despite the fact I'm not trying to create realistic portraits. Possibly therefore I need to further explore my mark making and the different mediums I'm using for it.
The sense of dislocation is made exaggerated in these pieces due to the use of photographs underneath them. The impact is a sense of disoriented space. The use of photographs underlying the figures creates an ambiguous sense of location and distance. The photographs are placed in the background and in the foreground, creating a sense of disorientation and confusion. The use of a grid and line work creates an intriguing visual effect. The paintings are detailed and precise, with a focus on the use of color and line work. The figures are presented in a surreal and surreal manner, creating a sense of dislocation and disorientation.
By taking photographs in the park, I wanted to explore how different environments change the way people sit and how I maintained the through a more revealing way of drawing. Taking my work outside was inspired by urban beauty and promoting social interaction created an opportunity for work. It was a chance to capture the essence of the environment and the people within. I attempted to recreate the experiences in my studio by creating life drawings and blank paper. My goal was to explore how the scene became a part of my own identity. My studio played a critical role in shaping the final piece.
Whilst creating the larger piece, I always use pieces of paper to test out different colors and brush work. I wanted to try something new, so I decided to use a color that I wasn't used to. I found this concept interesting because I could be experimenting with new colors, and you might forget that I am actually using paper. I am gradually learning to see the potential in artworks, or even just using paper. I needed to actually discontinue this approach. It was also frustrating when the larger piece wasn't successful. It took me a while to get the most out of it. I don't want to ruin the piece because it is not as good as the other pieces. I need to try something new in order to make the piece more successful. However, by pushing myself, I have found the act of experimenting with different tools and materials has made it so the composition of the piece is much more successful, in comparison to before.
When I began this sketchbook I would never sit straight. I would be fascinated by objects, such as chairs. Everywhere I was figurative work where the modelling was drawn. I am mostly drawn to the relationship between them and the chair. I find that in my work the mess of chaos and other objects offer a sense of stability. Unlike the inconsistent nature of the human body, their straight edges and rigid structure somehow ground the painting. The sketch of David Nash especially emphasised the powerful presence of simple objects, inspiring me to similarity to other objects that are currently near me, and draw them out. Doing these laymythic arm and legs unit got me thinking about how I could physically layer up the chair myself. The photographs show how doing this transformed the stability of a chair, the impression given suggesting they were about to fall in the next moment. However, through the use of lines of the chair in thin unstable strokes, high textural layers of paint, and the leg of the room, the results make sure I have a better balance between evoking the amount of painting I do manage.
In this sketchbook I would be fascinated by objects that always had a particular arrangement, even if it was just in a row. I am especially interested in the relationship between them and the light they receive, as well as the different aspects of the work that interests me. The way they are arranged, how they interact with each other, and the way they are perceived by the observer are all factors that I try to capture in my paintings. The simplicity of the shapes and the way they are arranged in the paintings, the way they are created, the way they are perceived by the observer, all contribute to the overall composition of the work.

To use the colour scheme with the existing structure of the floor and also remind me of the colour schemes of全国各地.
Even though this piece didn’t come out as I intended it to, I do like the colour scheme and the contrast between the darkness of the red and black against the light blue, especially as it also reminds me of the colour schemes of Holmby.
Out of all the papers I have worked on so far, I am finding that which is mid to dark brown is best to work with and on top of, especially due to how prominent it makes the highlights of white. Alongside this, I have begun to concentrate on single arms and legs when drawing after being initially inspired by Anna Schuleit. The convoluted underwear lines of these pieces appear to complement the elongation of the limbs. This is something I am particularly happy with and thus would like to continue in this way of doing lengthy leg pieces so that the composition does not cross the ability to fit in such lines. The parts of the body themselves and the way their edges are rounded has made me begin to think about pieces that I saw in a MACBA Cougar's exhibition this summer, her fabric sculptures of stripped arms and legs constructed in a striking red material. Not only the same shape as my line drawings but also their connection of being part of something more than what one can see. Like a dog in the three legged Sadik Kabzdak's piece, in all legs we could pull. Sadly use the metaphor to start doing repeated sections of my drawings, of everything to pull actually since the same way that I do it turn my paper at a different angle every time.
In this series I wanted to continue looking at just using mark in the pieces however this time I felt that it was done in a different way. I was drawing legs, face. The drawings here are extracted from a mixture of previous photographs and memory, because of this there is an inherent sense of accuracy but even here ones which look slightly out of proportion still fit in with the overall combined style of drawing. I am finding I like the pieces better that have a paucity mindful and then the main features of the place focused on the centre - like the one with the far legs. Still, even though the pieces at the far right is almost entirely oriented in detail I am pleased with the need that the details have created behind the fact that the last look like more emerging from somewhere. In terms of colour I am using tempera on a mixed grey toned palette as I think the suggestions of colour like the red and blues are good at making certain areas stand out. That would not of otherwise.
The way these pieces remind me of the very first ones I made in the A1 project. Subsequently, they focus on colour rather than a particular subject — even though there is suggestion of the body within them. I really like the use of grey areas that are suddenly contradicted with areas of orange and green, especially when these are made with oil pastels as there is the added effect of waxy textures. Recently I have found myself getting more inspired by the colours and overall composition of Helen Frankenthaler works, which is why my paintings/ Drawings have become more bright and organic in shape. Her approach to the painting above is almost observational, the mass of colours in her work and contrasting patterns on top of a simple white background, but this is more like painting all the more fluid. There is a looseness to her medium because of this which contrasts to mine where the edges are much more sharp and tight contained.
In a way these pieces remind me of the very first ones I made in the A2 project. Similarly, they focus on colour rather than a particular subject - even though there is suggestion of the rocky within them. I really like the use of grey ones that are suddenly contrasted with areas of orange and green, especially when these are made with oil pastels as there is the added effect of waxy textures. Recently I have found myself getting more inspired by the colours and overall composition of Helen Frankenthaler works, which is why my paintings/drawings have become more bright and organic in shape. Her approach in the painting above is almost childlike, the mess of colours in twisting and convoluting patterns on top of a simple white background - but this is what makes the painting all the more fluid. There is a softness to her marks because of this which contrasts to mine where the edges are much more sharp and this contained
I love the awkwardness of the US9 and the feel that translates from the photos into the drawings. The thin and angular nature of the lines evokes a type of realism; these are not drawings of someone sitting comfortably, they are unnatural and disjointed in the way our feet meet the floor. Even though I have limited myself to only using a pen, I don't feel like I am losing a sense of accuracy in my work. Stripping away the layers of thought process has allowed me to get a clearer idea of the subjects currently in my mind. The foot studies were the starting point, which are the main focus.
I feel the work on these pages is some of my favorite so far. I'm understanding now how I want to portray the relationship between emotion and the figure when I come to do my final piece. Although the space in the right especially is devoid of any context this would make it a choice for me. I can still see it being a part of a sculpture. This piece contemplate it representing the presence of the figure. I've also found that using mirrors that would make an image within an image to extend it distantly. I think it's a device that allows me to use a device that allows me to use the space, creating something empty-like the large scale one did.
The cut-up sections of these pieces were made whilst I was sat in the computer room - watching and translating what I saw deliberately made it so I could focus on the re-creation of the pieces, but more on the movement of people and their interaction with objects such as chairs and curtains. Consistently turning my paper on different angles meant the pieces ended up with the same chaotic circular complexity that reminded me of the world of turkey’s with its curving forms. Carla’s works often suggest a subject matter - yet her choice of unnatural lines and disorienting continuity hints at something unique, a form similar to my own drawings. Layering paper and using my materials such as oil pastels in a more explicit manner has also added a contrast to the aleatoric bird lines which I really like, and is an approach I would further explore.
The coat moves. Their grey with the rigid, unyielding sense of the chair. The entire collection of chairs. The work. Again, there is an unanswerable question concerning the work of sculpture is art. Some of the sculptures carry the enormous, striking, significant, intellectual, theoretical lines to portray the flesh of the figure, the chair, the life of the chair's reality in the unorganized parts of my contact.
I think this one where the legs have changed position works well. My idea of the composition showing the movement of the model.
There is a softness to the yellow tones: the angles of the limbs and posture are not severe and even in the photos where the model to sit down, the light has been done with comfort. It spread itself from underneath the model’s arms. "Cafe Terrace at Night" with the same luminous yellow UNDERCUTS that contrast with the balmy/blurry edges of the composition. I found the minimalist approach elsewhere in painting/drawing to be working as well, although I could add more layers of acrylic to create thickness. I like the scrunched up paper against the fragile black lines.
Outside of the book, I have also been making work to help bring my ideas together for a final piece.

I hope to create something that has a companion piece, similar to the second piece of work, as I feel the piece looks cluttered due to its use of space. The negative space insted of the second piece makes the theme and story of the piece more.

I'm thinking of using this idea as the piece with the negative space and making the line more playful and natural. This would make the piece more interesting and visually appealing.

Simpler to create, these pieces use the same figure and colour palette, however the different sections are layered on top of each other and more ideas are used to create them.
I created this after completing my initial planning and found myself in a free up where I was able to work through it further.
I like the simplicity of this. I could potentially layer 2/3 like this on top of more complex sections.

After doing some experimenting with this, I decided to use chalk for my final piece. I found that using chalk for the other sections I could see multiple depictions of the same area. Similar to the work of Menes & Manci - it created a sense of movement that may not come across in this piece as they didn't look as diverse as angular lines.

For this piece to work better the background would have to be more simply 2D to feel it was connected to the legs.
I ended up making more 'final pieces' than I intended to as I only used the four that I thought worked best. I selected them in terms of the color/values/shapes that worked best in a series (e.g. the continuous lines that blend together all the way through). In a somewhat odd way I chose the pieces that appeared more 'untouched' and 'undenied' opposed to the more complicated and detailed hands. There's something about their raw quality that makes these pictures appear war (sort of).
of making more
was than I intended
ly used the four
eight worked best. I
am in terms of the
nagging that worked best
and the continuing
of making the final day
reminders and the pieces that appeared
and had a somewhat cold.

This is probably
my favourite out of
all the pieces all
the pieces are
both sense of
entertainment and the
mass of colour that
the hands came out by.
Stills from performance piece—looking at the relationship between objects and human physicality.
Exploration of putting my mark making onto the surrounding environment - using paintings printed onto acetate as a filter.
During my first year of art I seem to have unrealistically taken two separate artistic routes. In the first unit we were introduced to a brand new landscape of creative opportunity and out of what I assume to be 'playing it safe' I opted for portraiture as I found this to be interesting during class. However, in the second unit I deliberately made my work more abstract and included more fluidity and movement. I was more interested in creating abstract pieces full of colour and movement. Because of this, in the second unit I had to use a different artistic process and more spontaneously use the art process which I found more relaxing and less stressful. In the first unit, I found myself struggling at times and finding it difficult to achieve the desired outcome. In the second unit, I was more confident and felt that I was producing more work. Many of the items I have created did not make it into my work books as I did not view them to be good enough. Looking back, this was only hindering my progress and I should have been more confident in my work. In the next year I hope to rid of my own conversely critical attitude and instead try to consider what I dislike in a much more positive light.

The Advantages of Being a Woman Artist:

- **Self-Expression**
  - freedom to explore different themes and ideas that are relevant to their gender experiences

- **Support System**
  - opportunities for networking and mentorship within the art community

- **Empowerment**
  - encouragement to push boundaries and challenge traditional roles in the art world

- **Visibility**
  - increased representation in galleries and exhibitions, providing more exposure and opportunities for success

- **Community**
  - support from fellow artists and community groups dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in the arts
In contrast to the rest of the exhibition, the work as singular pieces may normally appear as assuming in a way a function to serve large abstract works when in conjunction to some larger abstract works however, when displayed together the surrounding area of works and a context of when works are on a canvas and is an essential element to keep or to have as finished work as it makes the viewer focus on each individual piece better than as a collection as a whole. Each individual piece better than as a whole, which impress me most in this particular work is the context which is not usually the case of negative space in the canvas as it makes the piece better as a whole. Each line is deliberate yet still handmade. The paper texture, the way she draws or paints. I still think she needs to be a bit more confident. Each line is deliberate yet still handmade. Her work lacks confidence. A feature of all her work.
Franz Erne-Meyer 1979

Among the quick lines, manually applied study, I find more of a particular frequency in their various manner. The way the provisional way of mark making as the painted curves of gesture lead to the place as if it is a memory that is gradually building up.

The mark-making process seen in scars not appeared to have been influenced by these lines. Due to its Newmanised nature of marks, lines in biomorphic works before the composition giving them a somewhat artificial or artificialistic feel. I repeatedly return to this biomorphic approach to learning that at some time will keep developing and has no true purpose.
blue hues
I love the way blue has
used throughout - the
way the bold blue and
starkly
white contrast so starkly
against the white background.
There is even a dynamic
tone of movement and
density especially in the
bottom left, giving the
impression.

intense, graphic, surreal
Looking at Blue's work makes me
want to paint. It seems like too
much colour and self was put into
the pieces and I too need to
experiment and still composing
observations.
Laura Taylor

Lovers and a certain type of harmonious light...
It's hard to capture the same empathetic sense of infinity without working on a larger scale. Here's my latest attempt to capture the energy and intensity of Leonardo's colors and swirling forms.
Dearest Art Collector,
It has come to our attention that your collection, like most, does not contain enough art by women.
We know that you feel terrible about this and will rectify the situation immediately.

All our love,
Guerrilla Girls

CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD

LONDON.
A play of memory and perception, and a shift of register between representational and abstracting. Jersey 2008.

Interior of a membership in Kingston, Jamaica.

Being in one place but thinking about another.

What particularly interested me at the Tate Britain were the modern art paintings and a much more contemporary influence. Perhaps my mother, who was my interest in the most, it made me want to look in colour but in size, against other much more abstract minimalist pieces in the room. There was a feeling of distance in the work, however, though it was visually represented, the block of colour held depth as if the artist was trying to make more a memory that was on the verge of being forgotten.
Although these pieces were in the same room, they were not exhibited together. Whenever I found their understandings of grey and muddy earthy values held the same artistic kind of evocative colour schemas, I charted them by the same natural geometric shapes and their placement in correspondence to each other.

12.00 between late Britain and late Modern

For example: the use of negative space. In this piece I wanted to soften the contrast of shapes of the shapes, whereas in another second very lack pieces this wasn't quite so much used to separate the rocky nature of the paintings.
in both the late modern and late Britain I was surprised at the fact I had begun to favour much more conceptual pieces. Originally when I had begun it as I continued along the lines of traditional portraiture, an idea which looking back on now, possibly to stay within my comfort zone at what I could already do. However, exploring the galleries I had visited, now I see the vast impact of pieces that are more about what visually meets the eye. The idea was particularly relevant to the work of Douglas Beres. As one had understood that a selection and discussion was the scope of the piece, it's spontaneity became much more apparent as a whole aspect of what makes it so pleasurable.
In both the late modern and late, Britain, was surprised at the fact I had woken up to discover much more conceptual pieces originally when I had begun. As I continued along the lines of traditional portrait the act of looking back on past images to stay within my comfort zone or what I could already do was a particular exploration I had allowed me made me think of what is more what I really mean. What the idea was particularly prevalent in the work of Joseph Beuys as one had added wood to a sculpture, and discussion took place about the place. As spontaneity became much more apparent as a vital aspect of what makes it so proud. Beuys.
women and art, a lot of the art work at that time, modern appeared to have come from a feminist perspective and focused on the issues that came alongside breaking down least for the female gender roles. The "guinea girls" pieces portrayed the lack of representation women had in the art communities and other artists such as Hannah gilbert documented masculinist women. "we" went about city life. it's interesting to think about how many of these female artists will be remembered as "true" forerunners in the future. as although the impact of these "true" women in the future, if we think about what we need to do as a society and what we need to do as a generation so that the art world is not continually occupied by men?"
I WANTED TO LOVE YOU MORE

THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF LOUISE BOURGEOIS'S WORK WAS DEFINITELY ITS MOST

COMPPELLING AFFECT. THE INTENSITY OF THE

COLOURED SCULPTURE WITH ITS VARIETY OF

TEXTURES, EXPRESSED THE VERSATILE NATURE OF

HUMAN EXPERIENCE. THE AWARENESS OF THE

WEIGHT OF THE BODY AND THE SEXUAL EXPERIENCE, I

BELIEVE THESE ARE AS SEEN IN THE WORKS.

WE CAN'T SIMPLY REJECT THEM. ALTHOUGH ON

THE SURFACE THEY CAN BE SEEN TO

MADE IN THEM, THE WORKS HAD A

POWERFUL RELATIONAL QUALITY WHICH IS LOST

UPON LOOKING.
WHAT DIVIDES HUMAN BEINGS IS SMALL AND MEAN.
O'Keeffe’s up close studies of flowers suggest both a fascination and femininity and appreciation for the intricate structures of the plants. The perfectly bounded edges of the flowers and clean cool undertones of the subject water paintings make each appear somewhat delicate. Likewise, the subject water itself, I found great joy in recreating the natural forms as if I gave you a true sense of the different components of a flower that would otherwise been ignored.
As individuals we have never had a complete concept of our true selves. We exist as a number of versions from how society views us to our own perception and ideas of who we are. Through art, we have attempted to depict the ever-changing concept of self, by appropriating an aspect of our humanity and the human condition. It is the stripped-down version of ourselves, the visual representation of how we choose to present who we are to the world. Sometimes the figure can be deceiving, for it is essentially a shell that contains the true essence of our being. However, looking at how the depiction of the figure has gradually developed throughout time demonstrates much more than changing surface aesthetics. Instead, it shows us the adaptive nature of art, how the traditional purpose of figurative art for communication or religious purposes has today become expressive and conceptual, providing insight into the inner self just as much as what we see on the outside. Therefore, in many ways we have begun to question, is it essential for the figure to be a full, realised version in order to represent the human form?

The figure has been an integral subject matter throughout the history of artistic endeavour. With the exception of gender, what is essentially the same form has been repeatedly interpreted in sculpture, painting and drawing for centuries till today as one of the main inspirations behind works. If we look at some of the most renowned art pieces—Michelangelo’s ‘David’ and Botticelli’s ‘Birth of Venus’ the figure is presented in striking realism. In both there is a defined curvature of limbs, a slightly leaning posture and intricacy of the hands, portraying nothing but a very real and very vulnerable humanity. Despite the fact this sculpture and painting depict a biblical character and an ancient goddess, the artists have replicated the essence of the human form almost perfectly. This similitude is something historical Lee Stanfield epitomises in David as the brilliant projection of the ideal, focusing on the figure’s unadorned yet powerful body as the personification of renaissance belief in man’s ability to face impossible odds and nevertheless succeed.

Comparing these works to more modern pieces such as De Kooning’s ‘Woman’ we can see why one may argue it isn’t a true representation of the human form. In contrast to the ‘Birth of Venus’ statuesque body and idealised presentation of femininity, ‘Woman’ is bulky and masculine, with a severity coming from brush strokes and disproportionate features. Whilst there is an uncompromising energy emerging from the realism in Michelangelo’s and Botticelli’s work, for De Kooning the pieces energy derives from the very opposite of this. The essence of humanity is instead found in its complete disparity with the traditional form with the vivid colour and shifting gestures almost moving in front of us, compared to the refined stagnancy of ‘Venus’ and ‘David’. Created as one of six part series, De Kooning’s array of violent women dispelling the expected notions of elegance of women in the 1950s, would of in no doubt shocked the audience at the time. However, De Kooning was not painting out of the desire to present a fully realised image of humanity, but rather to express the energy created by its presence. The fact that his sporadic mark making, that borders on abstraction, still allows us to recognise a woman and even her temperament, exemplifies how twentieth-century artists exploring the limits of figuration were using subjective representation as an equally accurate way of depicting form.

Spurred by the 1910s movement of Abstract Expressionism, De Kooning was only one of the many artists attempting to reclaim the figure after it had been initially disregarded by avant-garde movements of the early 20th century. One of the questions that I will be focusing on therefore is how in a time of artistic rebellion, against traditionalism did artists manage to reintroduce possibly the most traditional of all subject matters? The way Picasso, De Kooning and Gorky all portrayed the essence of the body transgressed previous ideas that the figure had a fixed form that stood in direct contrast to abstraction. By focusing more on what the body symbolised such as the conflicts of human emotion and the psychology that hid beneath the skin these artists showed that two seemingly opposing artistic styles could therefore come together.

In my own work the movement from pure abstraction to incorporating aspects of realism was a natural progression inspired by the figurative artists in the era of Abstract Expressionism alongside more contemporary artists such as Anna Schuleit. Despite the face typically being the external representation of feeling, somewhat oddly became fascinated with the way that arms, legs and feet could be indicators of emotion, or even just the human presence in a painting that was mainly abstract. Uncomfortable almost disjointed imagery of limbs played a large part in this and whereas the colour schemes of light greens, blues and blues suggested harmonious coattions due to their association with the natural world, the incorrigibility of the legs distorted the composition so that the pieces appeared more chaotic and filled with movement. What interested me was however much I dissembled and disfigured the body there was still a resemblance, not necessarily to the traditional image of the figure, but the energy it rendered. Why is it then that our psyche recognises elements of humanity in what is outwardly abstract? The first artist to potentially question how one can capture this energy of the figure without directly portraying its traditional form was in no doubt Pablo Picasso. As David W. Galenson, author of ‘Conceptual Revolutions in Twentieth-Century Art’ argues, Picasso used his unconventional figurative style as a ‘vehicle for expression’. Thus his paintings mark a revolutionary turning point in the early 1900s of not representing reality, but instead distorting it to his own accordance. Claiming himself that he painted ‘objects as I think them, not as I see them’ Picasso’s development of cubism, that provided a new geometric and unfamiliar way of seeing things, signified the end of the traditionalist era of working and led to what we now define as modern art.

Picasso has created some of the most controversial works of the 20th century, not only due to their political content but because of his presentation of the human form. Often thought to have inspired De Kooning’s aggressive approach to the traditionally demure portrayal of the female seen in ‘Women’, Picasso’s ‘Les Demoiselles D’Avignon’ appalled many contemporaries at the time of its creation, including his friend Georges Braque, who went as far to suggest Picasso had been ‘drinking turpentine and spitting fire’. It was not the fact...
that these women were made however that created such conflict, it was Picasso's angular, sharp edged style that distorted the women making them appear fragmented; lacking the realism that was expected of figurative work in 1907. Described as 'ridiculing' the modern art movement by Matisse, despite being an artist who would later in 1952 create 'Blue Nude II' demonstrating the same strength he denounced, in the early stages of his career the consensus was that Picasso shored little regard for the stylistic techniques used by other prominent artists.

In 'Les Demoiselles D'Avignon' the five women appear to dominate the space within the painting, with the fleshy red and pink tones heightening their sexual prowess. Even so, contrasting their overly provocative positioning their dark hollowed eyes demonstrate a expressionless gaze that one could even interpret as melancholy. This can especially be seen in the two central figures who have the most pronounced and 'human' faces, reminding us of the prostitutes that these figures were based upon. The other three faces instead have a prominent resemblance to African Masks, objects that Picasso was known to have collected after being enthralled by their purpose to 'overcome fear by giving them colour and form'. It seems therefore that likewise to the eyes, noses and mouths on the masks, Picasso used the women in the piece as initiators of impact and not for naturalistic representation. This is highlighted due to the abandonment of perspective in the piece, where the compression of space between background and foreground confines the women inside a mass of sharp edged colour blocks that disperse into the pigment of their skin.

It was Picasso's intent to paint the figures from more than one angle which is why almost like shards of a shattered mirror, the limbs seem to have been broken apart and placed back together, giving the piece an overall feeling of fragility. What most invites me about this work however is the primitive nature of the women and I can see now why a generation accustomed to seeing the sexuality of a women being portrayed with a curvature and softness of lines, like in the paintings of Paul Cezanne, would be appalled by Picasso's work. Whereas in Cezanne's 'Femme Nu Debout' the figure holds her hands above her head and poses lazily, in 'Les Demoiselles D'Avignon' the women hold their hands with a much more exaggerated sense of purpose. These are women who understand their sexuality is simply a means of profit when it comes to men and thus pose to reflect masculine animallistic desires. By reducing the women into flat shapes Picasso therefore highlights them as metaphorically and visually hardened figures, with the lack of compositional depth also reflecting this essence. From a modern perspective, these were the first steps into the development of the Cubism. Inspired by 'Les Demoiselles D'Avignon', artist Braque would go onto develop collaboratively with Picasso until World War I this breaking down of perspective and simplification of form that we most associate with cubism today.

Picasso's contributions to Cubism and later to Surrealism influenced countless artists throughout the 20th century. Matisse in 'Bathers with a Turtle' combined the more traditionalist, rounded figuration of Cezanne with Picasso's flat planes, whilst the Abstract Expressionist artist Asheville Gorky took a much more unique approach to colour and form. Gorky, who explored Cubism prominently throughout the 1920s and 30s, described Picasso as one of the 'new masters' and studied his style closely to that in pieces such as 'Blue Figure in a Chair'. We can see resemblance to Picasso's use of open form and sharply angular figuration. Gorky's use of the figure is often interpreted as being highly abstract, but despite being an artist who often said 'I do not like to put a face on an image' there is certainly implications of the human form in the majority of his pieces. In many ways Gorky took the distortion of the figure further than Picasso did, with the viewer themselves having to piece together aspects that resemble humanity, but within his designs of abstraction; unlike Picasso who generally placed the figure centrally and quite obviously within a composition. Gorky's 'Blue Figure in a Chair' and Picasso's 'Dora Maar au Chat', two pieces that sprang from the Cubism movement, we can see the distinctions in the two artist's representation of the figure. Whereas Picasso presents a clear separation between the background and foreground of the piece, Gorky's geometric shapes have been simplified further, leaving us with a lack of clarity where the body ends and the chair and walls begin. There is almost a mechanical feeling to Gorky's work, with the strong contrast of the white and black paint exaggerating the stiffness of the figure's posture created by the angular lines. The longer I look at the piece the more I find the figure becoming part of the machinery of the chair itself, reflecting the lack of name in the title that there is a loss of identity that comes with their connection to the cold emptiness of the object. All of this is in contrast with Picasso's women, who contrives the cool tones of her colour scheme and twisted contours of clothing by appearing content or even amused in her expression. This defined sense of character is unsurprising considering this was a portrayal of Picasso's lover Dora Maar with whom Picasso not only had a close relationship, but also used her as a model in many of his paintings. Maar, showing the effect that emotional connection to one subject has on depicting its essence. Whereas there is a deep sincerity and intimate presence focused on Maar's clothing, her face appears pale and undisturbed. This matches the regality of her positioning, with the black cat also emphasising implications of Maar's sexual aggression within the piece.
I would like to think of my own drawings and paintings of people sitting on chairs therefore mirrors Picasso’s more intimate setting than that of Gorky’s. Even though in my paintings there is a clear image of the structural strength of the chair and legs holding the figure up, this does not compromise the presence of the body’s upper half that is often represented by a mass of colour suggesting an organic and alive source of energy from the human presence underneath it. In this case, I have found that the drawings of Gorky made during the final years of his career have served as a greater inspiration for my work. Thought to be a prelude to the Abstract Expressionist movement itself, Gorky’s work takes elements from Cubism, Fauvism and Surrealism, and develops them into his own lyrical abstractions where energy emerges from loose, fluid mark making. His pieces transform people and memories into an abstracted reality, demonstrating his statement that ‘dreams form the bristles of the artist’s brush’. Similarly in my own work, I have attempted to mirror the essence of humanity rather than directly portray it, using multiple layered drawings of the same person in different positions so that the focus is on the energy of the lines rather than the subject itself. Stylistically these drawings look a lot like many of Gorky’s later untitled pencil works where figures have to be sought out within the intense interlocking imagery that dominates the piece. Because of this the viewer is made to question whether the long spindly lines that could be legs or the rounded sections that look like heads are simply the means of human instinct to seek out the familiar in what we struggle to contemplate. The figure here is by no means an objective image, yet the trauma experienced by Gorky from his familial losses in the Armenian genocide and cancer in his later years seem to be demonstrated in the piece within the disassembled chaos of it all. Therefore, somehow by erasing the figure, Gorky has gone on to make the essence of it even more whole.

Like Picasso, Gorky’s work influenced many within the Abstract Expressionist movement, and possibly the most prominent of these was William De Kooning. As a mentor to De Kooning in the 1930s together they attempted to reconcile the body’s classical form with their own modernist ideals and convictions, and although the two artist’s works differ stylistically we can still see they are sourced from the same intent to originally interpret the figure. According to Bakunin’s Green, another prominent Abstract Expressionist at the time, ‘De Kooning virtually worshipped Gorky’, which is why the influence of organic forms and surreal aspects can be seen in so many of his early works. As expressed in the beginning of this essay, De Kooning was not hindered by expectations of artistic boundaries, arguing himself that ‘he didn’t paint with the idea of art in mind’ and so with this he also strayed from the stereotypical portrayal of gender, especially throughout the 1940s. Whilst ‘Women I’ is often remembered as the artist’s most prolific piece for its controversial portrayal of the aggressive female with her crazed stare and abrupt energy, looking earlier into his career it is interesting to see how De Kooning’s perception of form began to alter. A key turning point of this would have been when De Kooning worked with Gorky and other Abstract Expressionist artists of the 30s and 40s, such as Jackson Pollock and Franz Kline, at ‘The New York School’. This group embodied by American artists and European immigrant artists following the war, combined styles derived from the differing cultures and produced one of the most influential artistic movements the world had seen. There is no doubt therefore why being surrounded by the gestural works of Pollock and witnessing physical engagement of Kline with his paintings, that De Kooning’s figure began to attain a much more loosen, unconventional form.

One of the main contrasts in the piece is therefore of stability and instability. We see, despite the solidity of the bottom half with its opaque geometric shapes sharply applied with oil pastels allowing to Picasso’s use of flat planes, there is on the top half the faded appearance of the figure as it blends into the yellow pigments. This itself looks to be the beginning of De Kooning’s exploration of a space he named ‘no environment’. Unlike Francis Bacon for example, another 20th century figurative artist who made distinctions between his grotesquely distorted figures and their enigmatically plain backgrounds, De Kooning created a method that dissolves the two into one. What results from this is De Kooning’s figures appear in a state of turmoil due to their surreal disfigurement of limbs and features, isolated from the normalcy of the world around them, for De Kooning the energy of his figures simply becomes part of this chaos of abstraction.

In this essay I have aimed to depict how traditional figuration is not always necessary in order to translate the energy and essence of humanity. Instead we have seen how movements developed in the 20th century such as Cubism, Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism have all led to much more freedom in how one captures the presence of the human form, whether it be adapting the psychology of the person or painting a figure from the basis of pure abstraction. Although these results in people who are distorted and even unrecognizable, think like the image of humanity Leonardo Da Vinci was drawing whilst studying proportions of the human body in the Renaissance, we could go on to argue that Da Vinci’s interpretations are equally dissimilar to the stick figures
being carved onto walls in 30,000 BCE. How we depict the human form therefore alters according to how humanity sees itself; whereas Da Vinci was drawing to understand in a purely mathematical fashion in a time of reasoning and observation, today, possibly because of the invention of the camera that can capture this in an instant, we are living in a world more accustomed to wanting to explore the person beneath the skin. In terms of a modern approach to the figure, artists such as Tracey Emin, Jenny Saville and Louise Bourgeois look past the body’s superficiality and delve into experiences and the past to attain a more sense of what it is to be ‘human’. Like Gericke’s works where the pieces are so distant from, yet still recognizable to the human form, Bourgeois’s disembodied limbs and shapeless sculptures all have an uncanny connection to humanity. Upon visiting the Bourgeois exhibition at the Tate I found these sculptures even had a particular presence, and thus wasn’t only surrounded by other visitors but by the memories captured in the suspended pieces.

Marina Cashman, editorial director of the website ‘Artsy’, described Bourgeois’s pieces as ‘at once figurative and abstract’, a concept which I find sums up all of the pieces I have looked at in this essay. This stylistic contrast has therefore gone on to influence the final outcome of my practical work, where I have painted realistic aspects of the figure but in unnatural, highly pigmented blues and reds, emerging from a mass of multicoloured abstracted shapes. This is where I found my real excitement and fascination with the figure lies, in reproducing the figures essence whilst consistently referencing to and switching in between aspects of realism and abstraction. I’ve found there is no distinction between the two artistic styles, as both equally portray the energy of whatever is sat in front of me or the aspects of the figure I’m focusing on. However, I do find that the abstracted elements connect me on a much more personal and emotional level with the figure. This is because I am often portraying my close friends and family, their energy and relationship with me are translated through the collection of colours and mark making in my work. There is no doubt Anna Schuleit has had one of the largest influences towards this way of working, with her gestural paintings that blur the boundaries between subjective and objective ways of seeing the human form. Throughout my own artistic process I gradually became more and more fascinated with her balance of mark making and negative space on a page, and how even the smallest resemblance to the body was used to bring these aspects together.

It is impossible to know how the figure will next be interpreted by the art world. It is one of the oldest forms of inspiration yet it refuses to die, merging and aligning itself with new movements and artistic styles that are brought about. Today, in a society focused on image, we find social developments such as the emergence of the ‘selfie’ have simply become other ways of interpreting who we are. Therefore in a way, we have created a world where we have the power to dictate the way we represent ourselves down to the smallest detail. Despite these advances in photography however, I still feel that there is a significant value placed upon life drawing and the act of the individual personally interpreting the figure. It is almost as if we will never stop being compelled to recreate what is in front of us in order to display our own view of the world, despite the difficulties and technicalities of doing so, in an age where technology has simplified and even taken over this challenge. For me, the figure is something I am continually seeking to understand and learning how to comprehend it has at times been a struggle, but in no doubt helped develop my drawing skills. At a young age we all draw completely unselfconsciously, yet if given a camera a child would be ignorant to how it worked. This instinct represents how natural and fulfilling transferring vision to action is, and why we continue to draw after all this time.

Overall, I have come to the understanding that there is no definitive way to express the energy and essence of the human form. Even though the traditional depiction of the fully realised body renders emotion through posture and expression, sometimes abstracted works that dissemble this perfected image can even evoke a better sense of what someone is truly like.
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