

I-Search on Painting

Art is everywhere; it is everything, what would happen if art were taken away? If it never existed? When you think about it, you realize there would be no way to document history. We would never know about the Egyptians or the Ancient Greeks. All we would know is now. Everything would be plain, simple and white. Our houses would be big white cubes, and we would be stuck in the Stone Age. No one could express themselves, nothing, everyone would look the same, dress the same, act the same. Art is life, without it we are nothing. People today are using the internet and watching TV all the time, no one has the chance to do anything good. No one can paint because they are too caught up in the media. They know their work is nothing compared to Picasso, or Monet. People need to know about the history of painting styles, and what it's like to be a professional painter. I spent two months learning about painting, and painting styles. We need more art, and I am here to spread that message.

Art has always interested me, painting especially. I have grown up looking at and experiencing art. When I was a kid, my Grandpa Joe would take me to art exhibits or he would help me color in my coloring books. When I thought about what to choose as my Isearch topic, the first thing I thought of was art. When I started to think about it more, I decided it would be too hard to research, so I switched to Buddhism. I knew that Buddhism would hold my interest, but I didn't think I would have any good experiences. As a result, I switched to art! I knew that painting would hold my interest because it is something I have always loved and there is just so much to learn about and so many ways in which I can improve my skills.

I know some painting techniques and tools I can use to help create different effects using texture or color, but I really don't know enough. There are so many things I have yet to learn. The techniques I know about I learned from art classes I have had in the past. I have used watercolor, acrylic and house paints. I have drawn something, then painted it and I have also done abstract. I have used wall primer for painting over my paintings that I don't particularly like. When I put big globs of primer on and it dries, it cracks and gives a very nice texture. I have also used floor paint; it is very oily and thin. When you use floor paint it never fully dries because it's not on the floor. I have also used things I found around my room to make the art more intriguing. I have used yarn to make a straight line with the paint; I have used a plastic grid to make a checkerboard, and a spray bottle to give a watercolor painting of a beach more texture in the sand.

About 3 months ago, my Grandpa Joe's friend Joe McCarthy gave me \$300 worth of really nice Windsor & Newton watercolor supplies free. The set included some very nice colors, brushes, Ox Gall Liquid, Texture Medium, Art Masking Fluid and Water Colour Medium. It also came with some books on watercolor techniques. I was hoping I could possibly interview Mr. McCarthy about what it's like to be a painter.

I had a lot of questions that I wanted answered, like what types of painting are there? What are some techniques that artists I will interview use? What made people choose painting as a profession or hobby? What paint brands are the best? Is it hard to make a living as a painter? Are some types of painting harder than others? What tools do painters use? I hoped I can sit in on a class at GCC, and watch an art class of some kind, or maybe even be able to do some painting myself. I hoped I will find the type of painting I like most, like watercolor or acrylics. I hoped I could interview some professional

painters. When I interviewed people I hoped that maybe they could show me what sorts of things they do, and show me some of their work.

It was my hope that when I finished this project, I would know a lot more about painting and maybe even improve my painting skills. I had always wanted to have more opportunities to paint and learn about painting, and this project will allow me to do that. This would allow me more time to learn about painting, and broaden my knowledge on techniques, and influential painters.

Research

Expressionism and fauvism are very similar styles of painting. Expressionism came after fauvism. They are characterized by the artist not feeling compelled to use realistic colors, or to recreate an illusion of reality. The colors were used to show the emotions felt by the artist, or to make an emotional impact for the viewer (Boddy Evans). As American poet-critic Harold Rosenberg said in a *Farmers Art News* article in 1952; “The Canvas was not a picture, but an event.” (“Abstract Expression”). To most expressionists, this is a true statement, they don’t work slowly and carefully with fine point brushes, they work with passion. Their canvas isn’t just a piece of paper or wood that they paint on, it’s part of the painting. Choosing the right sized canvas is like picking out the colors that complement each other.

Expressionism really started in the 1940’s, and flourished in the 50’s. This was thought of as the golden age of art in New York City. This movement was marked by the use of color, texture, and the use of wild brush strokes. Artists used massive canvases frequently during this movement. All the art was very different, but at the same time very similar: they had somewhat the same outlook, which was freedom of individual

expression. Some of the famous artists who started this movement, and were major parts in it were, Mark Rothko, Jackson Polluck, Franz Kline, Williem de Kooning, Josef Hoffman, and Clyfford Still ("Art Movement" Abstract).

The abstract expressionist's goal was "a raw and impulsive art. What mattered were the qualities of the paint itself, and the art of painting itself" ("Abstract Expression"). Fauv is French for "wild beast". It was named Fauv because of its bright, unusual and wild colors used, and by the simple subjects. Sadly, this movement only lasted about four years starting in 1905 ("Styles of Art"). Fauvism is a style that uses color as a major emotional force. Feeling expressed by colors with severe righteousness and clumsiness marked this style. The use of simplified lines was used to reveal the subject. The artists of this movement preferred spontaneity and freshness to a finished piece of art. Gustave Moreau was the Pioneer of this Style (Dubey). This was the first major avant-garde movement in European 20th century art. This movement was especially subject to mockery and abuse, but began to gain interest when major art buyers took interest. Although it was short lived, it was an extremely influential in evolution of the 20th century art ("Art Movement" Fauv).

Realism is a style that most people regard as "real art". The subjects look like they would appear in real life (Boddy Evans). The most famous realist was Leonardo da Vinci ("Styles of Art").

Impressionism is a style most loved by people today, but it was first thought of as being an unfinished and rough painting style. It is now loved and thought of as the impact of light and nature filtered through the artistic eye to show the rest of the world what can be seen if you look properly (Boddy Evans). It's painted as if someone just took a quick

look at the subject, it uses bold colors like with Fauvism. Impressionism developed in France in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Claude Monet is one of the most famous impressionists of the 19th century (Dubey).

Realism and impressionism are associated with French painting of the 19th century. These movements include not only art, but also music and literature. Realism and impressionism actually present two phases of comprehensive style. Classicism and romanticism were earlier French arts. From the late 18th century to the greater part of the 19th century realism, and impressionism thrived. They were very different in styles; the only common thing was the preference for what was considered important subjects, and interesting stories in events. Only certain “elevated”, exotic or unusual subjects were fit themes for these styles.

French officials favored classicism. The Bourgeoisie gave more enthusiastic support to romantic themes, especially those far removed from the routines of daily life. With Jean François Millet (1814-1875) and Gustave Courbet (1819-1877) new horizons opened. “They turned sympathetic eyes on the unprivileged populace and found esthetic interest in the average man going about his day in an ordinary environment.” (Zucker 322-323).

Courbet introduced new means of expression using dense color, dark shadows, heavy contrast, and a variety of expressive and sometimes even crude devices. This helped him realize his innovations in a painterly approach as well as subject matter (Zucker 322-323). Painterly is a style like realism, but it celebrates the use of paint more. It tries to make a painting show texture, not smooth and finished (Boddy Evans).

Abstract is a very common style of painting; it doesn't try to look like anything from the "real world", it's an art style that is intentionally non-representational. The subject or point is the colors used, the texture in the artwork, and the materials used to create it. At worst, abstract looks like a mess of art, but at best it has an impact on you the moment you see it. Abstraction is basically abstract, but it's a little different. It is about painting the essence of the subject, and not the detail. It still retains the "echo" of whatever it is that prompted the idea (unlike pure abstract) (Boddy Evans).

Surrealism is a style of painting that is a mix of realism and abstract. It is generally based in dreams, and the subjects are painted to look strange and mysterious. The artists of this style hoped that their paintings would make people look at things in a different way, change the way they felt, and stir up feelings in the back of people's minds ("Styles of Art").

Cubism is a fairly well known style of painting; it is modern art, mostly paintings, which are not supposed to look real. They use geometric shapes to show what they are trying to tell the world. Early cubists used grays, browns, greens, and yellows, but after 1914 painters started using brighter colors. Cubism was the beginning of abstract and non-objective styles of art. Pablo Picasso is probably the most famous cubist. Two others are George Braque and Marc Chagall ("Styles of Art").

Photorealism is a style which often seems to be more real than reality. The detail is usually down to the last grain of sand or wrinkle on someone's face. Some other names for this style are hyperrealism and sharp-focus realism (Boddy Evans).

Interview with Jen Simms

I had just played four Frisbee games in cold rainy weather. I was so tired, but I knew I had to do this interview. We drove up to Jen's house; it was a cute little red house on top of a hill, we got out of the car and there she was. It was done, there was no turning back no matter how tired I got, I had to follow through. We exchanged hellos, and she brought us down and around her house to her studio in the basement.

The first thing I saw when I walked in was an unfinished watercolor painting hung up on the wall; the paint had managed to drip from the top of the painting down to almost the floor. As I looked around my dad and her started talking. We sat down to start the interview. I grabbed my notebook, but they would not stop talking. I looked at my dad and thought to myself "I thought this was supposed to be my interview." "Well, I don't want to keep you from your interview" my dad said, and he sat down on the other side of the room.

I asked Jen what made her start painting. She started to tell me tons of information, and answers to questions I had written down, but hadn't even asked yet. I went through my paper crossing out questions as she answered them. Her family didn't have a lot of money, so the only college they could afford to send her to was GCC. Since she grew up in Greenfield, GCC was the last place she wanted to go. She was thinking about becoming a photojournalist or anthropologist and had never even thought about painting before. Instead of staying and going to college, she took a trip abroad, and went to Barcelona. When she was there, she stayed with her cousin and saw his studio. Her whole life she hadn't really been interested in art, but when she saw his studio she was mesmerized. When she got back, and started going to GCC, she saw the art in the

galleries, and loved it all. Soon after, she changed her mind about what she wanted to do and went to GCC to study art.

I hardly had time to write this all down, and probably missed a few things she said. She was starting to quiet down, but I was still writing, she must have felt like she had to keep talking, and started telling me about the rule of 7. When you are 7 you know what you want to be and almost everyone will grow up to do what they wanted to do when they were 7. For her this was when she was 6. At 6 she told her dad that she wanted to be an artist, but growing up she never paid any attention to it. In high school she didn't take any art classes. She just kept going and going, I butted in, "so what's your favorite type of painting?" "I change my subject matter a lot" she starts to tell me. She started about 20 years ago with oil on canvas; it was very large, abstract and autobiographical. "Now I do mostly watercolor and charcoal drawings," she says as she points to the wall to my left, which is covered with watercolor Birdseye view landscapes, and the wall behind her with 4 charcoal landscapes. As I admire her paintings, she starts telling me about how drawing is essential to painting, and that she teaches drawing at GCC. "I can see you are drawing and painting a lot of landscapes, is this what you usually paint?" I ask. She stumbles to find the right words " yes...lately I've been doing a lot of landscapes...but...well...I guess I've never really done many landscapes before." She used to do a lot of abstract art using color and composition much more then she does now. She started painting by just pulling things out of the air; she would paint and paint until it felt right, until a faucet or a boat would appear.

I turned the page in my questions. It read, "have you ever torn apart a painting out of rage." I laughed a little inside, remembering that Winston had thought of this question.

I asked her, and she laughed, “no, I haven’t torn apart a painting, but I’ve thrown many away.” She said you can never like your own painting. If you do, then you won’t get any better because you’re not pushing yourself to be better. The conversation starts to die down. “So, is it frustrating to be a painter?” I ask. She tells me for her it’s not hard because she has another job. You can’t be just a painter, or you would have no money, so you have to have another job. She gets to make art, and teach college kids how to draw for her job. Jen doesn’t sell her paintings, and she doesn’t seem to want to. She has sold a painting to a family friend, and one to a gallery. She was paid \$10,000 for the installation. She starts to tell me how you can never get attached to a painting; you can feel good about a painting, but that feeling will eventually pass.

Jen got her associate’s degree in art, and her MFA at UMass. “I had some really great mentors,” she tells me. This led me to ask, “Why were they good mentors.” She explained that they taught her how to be a good critic of her own work, and to do something related to art everyday. And everyday she does something related to art, whether it’s painting for the day or simply looking at something in a different way. I asked Jen what she thinks the pros and cons of painting are. “Lets’ start with pros” she tells me after a brief pause. Painting pros: makes you look at everything in a different way, good content, keeps you looking for new possibilities, good ideas and it helps you express who you are. Painting cons: a lot of ups and downs, your mood and emotions really show in your work. If you are having a good day you would create a beautiful painting, but if your day was horrible it might show up in your paintings.

I flip my page of notes again and ask my next question, “What would you say to someone who wants to become a painter?” As she pauses to think about the question I think about

how boring this must be for my dad, I look over my left shoulder at him expecting him to be sitting on the mustard yellow circular couch. “What! Where did he go?” I thought to myself for a brief second. I looked up; of course, he was sitting on the top of a ladder. “I have such a strange father,” I thought as Jen started to speak, “I have to answer that question everyday. I’ll tell you what I tell all of my students. “Imagine a world without art. There would be no way to document current situations, no way to express yourself.” I look down at my questions, nope can’t ask the next one, she already answered it, and the one after that, and the one after that. It is dead silent, and I struggle to find a question, I look around trying to think of something. “What is your favorite painting that you have done?” She points behind her to the middle charcoal drawing of a pipe sticking out of a hill. She feels like this one is doing the most for her, but she doesn’t know why yet. I tell her my favorite of hers is the drawing to the left of the one with the pipe landscape. It is a landscape of the back of her house. When you look at this one your eye goes straight to the car with the crisp black lines, travels to the right and to the house, then down and around back to the car.

I ask her how much it costs to be a painter and she gives me a puzzled look. “I mean like is the paint you get expensive.” She buys good paint, paper and brushes, but she looks around for good deals on them. She switched to watercolor partly because it was much cheaper than oil. With watercolor you can use the smallest little drop, and when you mix it with water and start to paint, it can last you the whole painting. She tells me that she is good at being resourceful, and that to be a painter you have to be, unless you are at the Chicago Institute of Art, because they get told where to buy everything, or

it is given to them: they don't have to look for their own supplies. She tells me more about being resourceful, and how some painters even use coffee as brown.

I tell her that's all the questions I have and she brings me over to look at some of her previous work, she talks about what kind of work went into them, and how one of her installations took her and an assistant 80 hours to put together. As she flips through some more she pulls out one, and tells me about how this one was a present for Sam when he was 5, it had a fire truck on it. "Sam really loved trucks a lot when he was young" she laughed. "It was all about Sam, every year for his birthday, I would paint him something new." It was all about Sam she kept saying. "It was all about Sam, until Hannah, then it was all about Sam and Hannah." She laughed. She turns around and opens the basement door and lets her dog in. I start to pet the dog, and my dad says, "Well it was nice talking to you." I thank her for the interview, and my dad and I walk back up to his truck.

Interview with Joe McCarthy

My Grandpa Joe and I drove up to Joe McCarthy's house, it was a big house at the end of a road near the Stop&Shop in Greenfield, a place you would never think holds a whole community of houses. Joe McCarthy was up on the deck of his studio. I walked up and greeted Joe, and waited for my Grandpa to catch up, he has something very wrong with his knee, and can't bend it. I immediately got a good vibe from him, and thought, "This guy is cool." We walked through his sliding glass doors and he turned down the music that was playing, I quickly recognized it as "Connection" by Phish.

He grabbed me a stool, and we sat down. "So do you want to start the interview now?" he asked as he went over to turn the volume of his stereo down again. I said yes I would love too, and we started. "Ok so, what made you start painting?" I asked hoping

this would turn into a conversation, not just an interrogation. He was one of those people who knew early on what he wanted to do. He wanted to draw. When he was in grammar school he got into drawing, especially when he was between the ages of 10, 11 and 12. He couldn't decide which age he was but in the end he came to the conclusion of 11 to 12. In his catholic high school, he had taken some drawing classes, but never any painting. He also didn't have much going for him, and he wasn't going to be able to go to college with the grades he had. But one day, when he was 18, a nun, sister Mary Joyce, came up to him and asked if he wanted to take a painting class. That was probably the best decision he had ever made. The painting he made in the class won the state, national, or international prize in oil painting for high school students. Like the age when he was really into drawing, he could not remember which prize it was, state, national or international. But it doesn't matter which prize it was because that got him through college. "People always say this, but it's really true. It changed my life. It really did." he said with all his heart, I knew he really meant it. If he had never listened to sister Mary Joyce, he would have never had the great life he has now. He tells me that, years later he went back to that school, and thanked Sister Mary Joyce for leading him in a good direction. "If it wasn't for her, I would never have gone to college, because my academics were so bad." He says really putting an emphasis on the "e" in academics.

He pauses for a moment probably to think about how much that nun had done just by telling him he should try a painting class, then asks "is this too much, do you want me to put a little less detail into it?" I tell him that this is great and what I really need, and he keeps going. After college he did what was normal for any man back then, he married, had 2 kids, and went into the service. When he got out of the service, there wasn't really

much for someone with an art degree to do in New Jersey. He never told me when he moved to New Jersey, but I'm guessing it was right after high school; he had grown up in Massachusetts. There was nothing to do for work if he wanted to paint or draw, so he got a job at the Edward Marshall Boehn Porcelain Company. This factory didn't make porcelain bowls and plates, or tiles, they made sculptures that were sent all over the world, to Germany, places in the US, and even the Pope had some of the sculptures. He did everything there, he worked in shipping, he worked as a kiln man, which means that he put all the porcelain sculptures in the kiln, then eventually he helped to make the tiles, and sculptures. Every-so-often he would slow down, and wait for me to look up at him and finish writing, before diving back into his elaborate stories of his career. In the 1970's he moved back to Massachusetts while going through a divorce. When he got back to this area, where he had grown up, he went to GCC on the GI bill, and all the classes he took had to do with art.

“There are three major parts of my life: taking the painting class in high school and winning a national prize, working at Boehn Porcelain Company, getting a GCC art degree, and opening up my own porcelain studio.” He said, sounding very proud of much he had accomplished. In about 1980 he opened up his own small business called Berkshire Porcelain Studios. He would sell hand-painted ceramic tiles to people all over the world. He really loved what he was doing, and I could tell because he used his whole body to express how he felt, and he had a smile that seemed to be permanently glued to his face. Joe said he loved it so much because he got to own his own business, and make art everyday. In 1985 he “got rid” of his business partners, who happened to be his wife and best friend. “I don't want that to sound like I just ditched them or something, I still

love them, I'm still with my wife, and my friend is still my best friend, I just wanted to keep going." He says to me laughing and talking with his hands. As Joe talks more about his small business, I look around and think about how much I love his oil paintings, and where on earth the radios speakers are. I look around for where the sound of Jimi Hendrix is coming from, but I can't find it. "After about 20 more years I closed my business." He starts to add as I get back to listening, and not trying to find the mysterious speakers. He closed the business because he wanted to make more art, and not more business stuff.

Now that he is a fulltime artist, he has been able to make enormous mosaics that are now on cruise ships, at airports, hotels, and even hospitals. I start to wonder if I will ever get to ask my second question, and if I do will I get another half hour long answer. But I guess it is good that he gave me a lot of information. "Oil is by far my favorite type of painting to do at the moment." He tells me after a pause to let me catch up. Now he goes to galleries, and galleries approach him asking him if they could show his work. He also joined a local art group, which has seven people in it, including my Grandpa Joe, who was the one who helped me get this interview with Joe McCarthy. He seems to be quieting down now, and looks at me as if he is ready for the next question. "Is it frustrating to be a painter?" I ask while still looking to find the source of the music. As he stops to think about the question, his cat jumps up onto the table. Joe tells me his cat's name is Jack, and I say hello to this beautiful orange cat. The cat looks like it was turned upside down and its white fur was dunked into a buckets of nice yellow-ish orange paint, like the color that I have noticed Joe really likes to use in his work. As he starts to tell me how much he loves painting, and it's not very frustrating, at least for him, "Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa" by Vampire Weekend comes on, and I think to myself "I bet this is the

River”, a radio station I like to listen to. He says that technically it’s frustrating, but not hard. It’s hard to produce a piece of work that he loves; usually out of ten paintings he does, he may only like one. Joe also tells me that the public loves about ninety percent of his work, and he might love that other ten percent, so it all works out. He paints for himself, but he does, like any other painter, like it when people buy his work. His studio is two floors, and right on the side of his house. This is a good thing because if he were to be somewhere else, he would have to pay rent, and he would have to drive back and forth almost everyday. He says his studio is “a place to go when I am happy or sad.”

His phone goes off, and it’s a nice piano melody. It was his wife, she’s inside the house. I’m not sure what she was calling for, but he says, “Honey I’m being interviewed, I’ll come in when I’m done.” I laugh a little “sorry about that. She hardly ever comes up here, and I don’t think she really wants to, unless I ask her to come critic something.” His wife calling was a perfect time for me to move on to my next question “Is there a particular painter that you admire?” Joe says he has a whole list, and he’ll say them slow for me, Van Gogh, Andy Warhol, Jackson Pollock, Monet, Wolf Kahn, Gauguin, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Basquiat was a street artist who was very into contemporary art; he did most of his street art in the 80’s, and befriended Andy Warhol. He used a lot of words and numbers in his work, which was very uncommon at that time. In the late 1980’s Basquiat died of a drug overdose, but Joe loved him the most because he was a younger painter, meaning that he was around in the 1980’s not the 1800’s.

I ask him what paints he uses, and I start to notice that he uses his hands, and even his legs when he talks. He uses Winsor&Newton paints. Winsor&Newton has been around for 177 years; they contract people to give demos to colleges around the world.

These paints are very expensive, most are about \$30 for 37 ml. He uses watercolor, oil and acrylic paints. Joe does a lot of paint demos at colleges in New England for Winsor&Newton, so this means that he gets free art supplies. When I asked him how much he gets to do this, he replied, “you don’t have to put this down.” He gets about \$300 a class, but with all the airfare and hotels, that they cover, it’s about \$4-500.

For a moment I space out, and look around the room. My Grandpa Joe is behind me, at Joe McCarthy’s desk. Joe stops talking, and I turn back, “you really need a good studio with a lot of overhead.” He tells me while scratching his large white beard. He had just finished a huge mural for the Annenberg Foundation at a hospital. They found him about 6 months ago in an art book. This made me wonder how much that must have cost for them. So I asked, “How much do your paintings sell for?” his big four by five foot paintings sell for about \$3,000, and his smaller thirty-six by forty-eight inch sell for about \$2,400, but it varies, sometimes they are more or less, it really depends on the painting. I thought to myself, “Oh man I would love to sell my paintings for that much.” Galleries sometimes buy his art, and sometimes people come by his studio to buy. I asked Joe how many paintings he sells a year. He put his head in his hands, and rubbed his head he was probably trying to estimate, and it was obvious that he really struggled with this question. He usually sells about 7 or 8 a year, but maybe more, maybe less. Then he tells me that it’s usually more. I thought that was crazy, that’s like twenty-two hundred a year, and that’s without the murals that he sells to hospitals and airports. He rubs his head, and mumbles something to himself, it was something about paint, but I couldn’t make out what he said.

While in amazement, I finish writing down how much money he makes, and he asks me if I have another question. I do, I ask what he thinks what pros and cons of painting are. “A pro,” he says “is the enjoyment”. If you don’t want to just paint whenever you can, then it’s not something you should do. You have to love painting, not just like it. “It’s fulfilling” he tells me in joy. Joe tells me you have to love painting, and I think about my previous interview with Jen Simms, she says that you can never love something you draw or paint because then you won’t be striving to get better. Its self-expression, and when someone likes your art so much, that they would spend 3,000 dollars, it’s a double validation.

My stomach starts to rumble; I am so hungry! I turn the page in my notebook, good; I only have two more questions. Then I can go to Barts with my Grandpa and get some food. “So what would you say to someone who wants to be a painter?” I ask as my stomach rumbles again. Get formal training he says immediately. He tells me to take a lot of art classes, not just painting though, take sculpture, interior design, print making, and other classes. Joe loves fashion, but he doesn’t put fashion in his work. When I had walked into his studio, I had noticed that some of his paintings had bras, dresses and underwear on them.

When I asked him what his favorite painting he has made is, he looks around, and taps his leg to the beat of the music, Paul Simon I think. He jumps up from his chair, and takes down a painting that was hanging on hooks from the ceiling on my right. He moves the painting over to different hooks, and takes a painting out of a cardboard box that was in a row of more than cardboard boxes that were lined up against the right wall. It’s called Pier; it’s mostly yellow, and orange with a little bit of purple in the bottom right corner.

He sits down again, and with his arms crossed he tells me that he likes it because its an “in your face” plate, and he loves the texture. He walks over, and gets out another painting, this one is a cityscape that he finished last year. He points to what he is working on now, it’s another cityscape, but this one is nowhere near done. I start to notice a trend, he uses a lot of yellows, “This must be his favorite color.” I think to myself. He pulls out the last one he wants to show me and hangs it up. This painting looks like a smaller version of Pier, but its all purples, and blues, with a little bit of yellow.

He comes back and sits down, “you know Picasso wasn’t always Picasso, and Van Gogh wasn’t always Van Gogh.” He tells me. They worked for it, and they had to do a lot of sacrificing. He pauses, and I tell him that’s all I have. No more questions.

“Let’s see what we can give you.” He says as he walks over to these shelves that are piled high with paints. He pulls out some clean brushes; there were four, Winsor&Newton Fine Hog Bristle brushes. “Do you usually paint big or small?” he asks me. I tell him that I am limited to smaller canvases because the big ones cost so much. He marches over to where he keeps his clean canvases, and pulls out one of his smaller ones. “How’s this?” he says as he pulls out a 24x30 inch deep edge Winsor&Newton canvas! He asks me if I do a lot of painting in my free time, and before I had a chance to even think about the question, my Grandpa Joe answers, “all the time. She paints like crazy, whenever she has free time that’s all she does. She has painted like 40 or 50 paintings.” we walk downstairs because that’s where he has most of his paints. “Most of his paints” I think to myself, “Most of them! How much paint can he have?”

Apparently, he can have as much paint, brushes and canvases that an art store might have. I look around in astonishment, and he gives me a tan bag. Joe tells me I can

put all of my art supplies in this bag as he hands me a set of 18 acrylic paints. I just start to put everything in my new bag when he puts a whole watercolor kit on the table next to me. I turn the kit over, and read the back, 12 watercolor paints, 3 brushes, 2 pencils, a pencil sharpener, an eraser, a palette, a tool, 2 canvases, and an instruction book. Not to mention, the nice wooden box to put all the supplies in.

“We have to go back upstairs to get some oil paints, and more brushes for Dalila. Joe why don’t you take everything to the car, this will only take a minute.” Joe McCarthy says to us. “MORE!” I think to myself, how is it even possible someone could be nice enough to give a stranger at least \$200 worth of painting supplies. Joe grabs some instructional books, and a packet of 3 brushes, and puts them on the table. I plunk my backpack down on the table, and start to put the things in my empty pocket. Before I could put everything in, I had a pile of 11 brushes ranging in sizes from 4 to 20, 7 tubes of 37 ml. oil paints, a tube of under painting white, and 3 tubes of 300ml. oil paints. The big tubes were student grade, and the smaller were artist grade. This means that the small tubes could be worth as much as 3 times more than the big tubes. When I finish putting everything in my backpack, I thank him and say, “Wow, this is so kind of you, thank you so much.” As he walks me down to my car, he asks me if my work will be shown somewhere or if it ever has been shown. Sadly I tell him no, and he pats me on the back, and says “well, we’re going to have to change that.”

Significance and Conclusion

I learned a lot about painting, and more than just how to hold a paintbrush, or mix the right paints to make a passionate purple. I learned about all the different styles of painting from photorealism to abstraction. When I started this project, I knew very little

about painting, and I definitely didn't know about all the unique styles of painting.

In my past I had heard expressionism, impressionism, and realism. When I had decided on my topic, people started talking about cubism, and I decided I wanted to learn more about the styles I had been hearing here and there. In eighth grade when I first heard about the Isearch, the first thing I thought of was painting; I knew that's what I wanted to do. But when the time came to choose my topic, I thought painting was too broad. After we went to the Umass library, I decided I would change my topic to Buddhism, I knew that would hold my interest, and I took all the notes I needed. Later I changed my mind, and switched back to painting because I really wanted to have an experience. As it turns out, I never actually got that experience I wanted.

I had so many questions I wanted answered, every time I thought I was done making my list of questions, a huge group of questions would come flooding into my mind. In the beginning, to about halfway through the I-Search period where we were taking notes, and having our interviews, I freaked out. I had all my notes, and 6 people I had been talking to about interviewing, but I thought I didn't have enough notes, and that I was never going to have any interviews. I thought that we needed four or five interviews, and tons of notes. Once I finally had my first interview, everything was done, I had my second interview planned, I had all my notes done, and I was happy, the stress was gone, or at least it was gone for a week or two.

In the beginning of the year, I remember dreading the spring because I had heard about how hard, and frustrating the I-Search was. But boy was I wrong. It is true that I struggled a little in the middle of it, but I'm on top of everything, and nothing is hard about it. I was worried that I didn't have enough good research, but when I wrote up my

notes, I had five pages, and I had information left that I didn't think was relevant.

Overall, I think this might be one of my favorite projects so far. I got to research something that I love, and talk to people who are experts in that field for two months.

This I-Search was a great experience for me. Not only did it reassure me that I love art, and make me want to do more art, but it also helped me stop my procrastination, and it made me more focused in class. In the beginning of the year I didn't think I was capable of writing a well-written paper, and my grades didn't exactly prove otherwise. With this project, I think I have enhanced my writing, and it seems to be easier for me to just sit down and write something. I learned that I am good at interviewing, I know what questions to ask to make them talk more, I can think of follow-up questions easily, and I can remember everything from the interview when I sit down to write it up. I also learned that I really like writing up the interviews, probably because I can put myself into it more than doing something like a book report, or a research paper where you can't use I, me or you. As a researcher, I take good detailed notes that are in my own words, but I always think it not enough, and I am always trying to get more because I think I am just writing the same thing over and over. Painting is something I love, and will always love no matter where life takes me.

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