Paintings and Explorations

A Senior Project
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Bachelor of Fine Arts

by

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Abstract

My senior project consisted of a large series of paintings on canvas. I created seven large scale paintings (36” x 48” size) which involved minimalism, typography, a “painterly” process, and abstraction. It was a series of explorations in working with my own two (physical) hands, rather than working on a computer as is the standard method of working for graphic designers. These paintings were done in hopes that the series would help me further define my artistic style, accumulate a larger body of work, and possibly discover a new form of painting.

This paper explains how I came to choose painting as my senior project, the process involved in creating the paintings, research involved, as well as documentation of ideation and final works.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Statement of the Problem:

Often, when I design something on the computer, I feel disconnected from my work and more recently, I do not have as much passion, heart, or motivation for the art that I create. Painting, however, helps me experience a physical and emotional involvement with my artwork. I want to explore painting because I enjoy the interactive and hands on approach involved in the process. I produce the best work when I actually have some sort of emotional connection to it. Because that connection is lacking in my digital work, I would like to explore some of the possible ways of working with paint in order to reestablish that connection.

I want to explore paint as a medium itself. I will be attempting to tackle an undiscovered form of minimalism (a reductive style of art utilizing only simple colors, shapes, and patterns, characterized by repetition of figurations, and obsessive structural rigor) which will also involve the use and application of typography (words and letters). Through my explorations, I will also address the question of ‘what is art’?

Purpose or Objective of the Study:

The first and most important goal in completing this project is finding and developing a painting style for myself. I would like to further develop my style, technique, and also explore new ways of applying paint to a support. Because I enjoy both graphic design as well as painting, my second goal is to find a unique and hopefully undiscovered way of combining these two separate forms of art together. By the end of this project, I would like to find a new form of minimalist painting. Almost all prior forms of minimalist painting involve either working with color (fields) or with landscapes and rarely has minimalist painting been incorporated with design and typography. My final
goal in doing this project is acquiring a large enough body of work that I might be able to have my own gallery showing of my paintings. I may pursue painting as a career and would benefit greatly from this exploration as well as the resulting body of work. I would benefit in the fact that my artistic style would be further developed (and professional) and I would have a large body of work to show to potential buyers and galleries.

Limitations of the Study:

The major limitation that has been placed on this project is time. In order to fully and comfortably explore painting in the manner that I am, I would need about four to six months. I have been forced to compress this process, research and all, into a matter of about three months of work (side by side with other classes and work). Pressing such an extensive project into such a short spectrum of time adds numerous factors into the senior project. One factor is an emotional one. Quite simply, stress becomes a part of the project that can limit productivity. Another aspect of time is the depth of exploration. With shorter production times come less “full” explorations of the possibilities that could be had within the paintings. If I was producing two canvases over the course of the quarter, I could spend much greater deals of time with each idea and how to paint that idea. However, I will be painting upwards of six or seven canvases throughout the quarter (because one of my goals is to have a larger body of work) by the time I am done. One aspect of this project that I see as a bit of a limitation is the fact that I will not be stretching the canvases myself. I will not be doing this because not only do I not have the budget for it, but I also do not have the time to stretch my supports. I see this as a limitation because I have to deal with supports that are not made very well or are made without much care to details.
Glossary of Terms:

Canvas: any fabric of linen, cotton, or hemp of a coarse loose weave used as a foundation for painting, and often stretched across wooden “stretchers”

Composition: the arrangement of type, graphics and other elements on the page

Concept: the major thought or idea portrayed through a work or art or the driving force behind the making of a piece of art

Contrast: the tonal gradation between the highlights, middle tones and shadows

Hierarchy: categorization of visual elements according to importance

Highlights: the area of most intense light on a represented form

Kerning: the spacing between individual letters

Leading: the vertical space that separates two lines of type

Legibility: the quality of type that affects the perceptibility of a word, line, or paragraph of printed or painted matter

Mark: the specific visual imprint made on a support by the painter and the paint

Minimalism: a reductive style or school of modern art utilizing only simple colors, shapes, and patterns, with minimal embellishment complexity, and characterized by protracted repetition of figurations, and obsessive structural rigor

Middle Tones: also called a halftone; a value intermediate between light and dark

Overt: obvious and easily seen; not hidden

Painterly: characterized by qualities of color, stroke, or texture perceived as distinctive to the art of painting, especially the rendering of forms and images in terms of color or tonal relations rather than of contour or line

Scraper: a tool used by painters (both commercial and fine arts painters alike) which has a large flat surface used to apply (or remove) paint and texture
**Shadows:** the representation of the absence of light on a form

**Support:** the material, as canvas or wood, on which a picture is painted

**Type:** individual letters/single letter forms that form words and sentences

**Typeface:** size or style of a letter or character on a block of type

**Typography:** the art or process of working with type

**Wet-on-wet:** when painting in oils, wet oil paints are applied with/on top of other paint that is also wet (not yet dry)
Chapter II: Review of Research

Background:

During my Advanced Painting class in the spring of 2009, I was introduced to numerous artists who might help guide me in my pursuit of a “painterly” style within the confines of minimalism. A few of these names included: Frank Nitsche, David Schnell, Dirk Skreber, Tim Eitel, and Daniela Brahm. I was introduced to these artists for a number of reasons. First of all, they were intended to simply broaden the scope of my artistic knowledge. Secondly, these artists were supposed to open my eyes to some alternative ways of painting and present some concepts that would be similar to those of my own.

The focus of my project was “design”. I mean this both literally and figuratively because I was using the word “deSign” as well as using design (a design aesthetic) in concept. In my paintings, by either building or tearing down the word “deSign”, I am conceptually ripping apart or rebuilding some kind of a design aesthetic. This idea was the basis for most of my Advanced Painting class. In doing such, I explored both subtle and overt ways of doing such. Also, because I was painting in such a flat, planar, and 2D manner, often relying heavily on the use of scrapers, artists such as Dirk Skreber, Tim Eitel, David Schnell, and Frank Nitsche were brought to my attention. These artist painted in a manner that, although it was often representational and figurative, relied heavily on the use of scrapers and painting the subject matter using flat planes of color.
The focus in studying artists like these was in learning their techniques and the unique ways in which they use paint as a medium. While working for my Advanced Painting class, my emphasis was about the application of paint and the use of paint as an object itself. The paint was both the subject, the content, and the concept all in one. It was truly an exploration of paint as a medium. As I painted more and more canvases, I began to feel that my work was full of visual interest but very lacking in concept or a “deeper meaning”. The following are examples of my more “visual” works, works with limited concept.

In Figure I, it is clear to the viewer that there are numerous layers of paint that have been put down, most of which were done in a more overt fashion. There are lots of paint splatters, heavy use of paint thinner, as well as paint put down in a thick manner. What I attempted to portray in this piece was the destruction of design (both the word itself as well as the “design aesthetic”) accomplished through the application of paint. I was unsuccessful in my attempt because the word “DESIGN” is hardly visible and the “design aesthetic” is still very visible and intact below the paint (noticeable through the use of a grid and strong linear elements). In Figure II, there is clear evidence of paint being applied. The viewer can see the brush strokes, the scraper marks, and lots of texture on the surface as well as the process associated with those marks.
The problem is that this large field of brush strokes and marks are placed next to a stencil of John Mayer. There is no connection between the two either visually or conceptually. They are disparate. Following these works, I began in my series to move towards a more conceptual approach in painting.

In working towards a more conceptual approach, I tried many different approaches. I tried visually to complicate the layout in some pieces and simplify it in other pieces in hopes of finding a successful method to better convey my concept. I usually complicated things by adding numerous layers of paint together or on top of each other, or simplified by making the painting one simple layer of paint. At this point, my concept and reason for painting was to figure out a way to destruct a “design aesthetic” through the (painterly) application of paint. I was very passionate in pursuing these goals and therefore, my concepts were well articulated (visually). Things began overlapping and creating complex visual designs and destruction through repetition, while other pieces had a single layer of paint applied and then all scraped off.

I began applying separate layers of paint wet-on-wet as done in Figure III. In this piece, I painted the background color and then painted the words “de” and “Sign” on top. Once my composition was entirely laid out, I took a scraper and pulled off as much of the paint as possible so nearly all that was left was the canvas itself, in order to
bring light to the fact that the canvas was the only thing left. I dragged the scraper so hard that I got white lines on the canvas showing the frame/support of the canvas itself. This approach brought light to both the paint and canvas as a material object and literally removed and destroyed the “deSign”.

In Figure IV, by combining the words “destroy” and “design” numerous times and in different ways, I got the words to cross so many times that they imploded on themselves and degraded into nothing more than simple shapes and forms, once again destroying the design. I felt this piece unsuccessful because I also presented the words “destroy design” in a light stencil at the top of the painting. This made it feel too “spoonfed” to the viewer and unnecessary.

I began experimenting with destruction of type and design through repetition of elements like line, color, and form itself in order to see if my concept could be pushed any farther. In Figure V, after painting the background, while the word “deSign” was still wet, I laid a piece of paper on top of it in order to make a sort of stamp of the word and then placed that stamp in different vertical positions on the canvas. The point was that as I made more and more stamps, the word would morph further and further away from letterforms and become simple textures and shapes.

With Figure VI, I used line repetition and overlapping of lines in a way that
made the word unreadable at a certain point. I also experimented with a new process in which after I painted the (grey) background color, I let the painting sit for about two days so that the paint might dry, but not entirely. After two days, I took the stencil that I made of the word “deSign” and a mechanical pencil (with no lead in it) and traced the stencil with the pencil, removing the grey paint and creating the word. Using the mechanical pencil gave a very fine line quality that I enjoyed.

In Figure VII, I used a single color for the entire painting including the letters (except the letters “de”, which were a darker shade of the same color). In doing so, I was forced to differentiate the letters (word) from the background through nothing more than the use of brushstroke which I felt to be a very subtle and effective use of paint and a painterly technique.

At this point, my paintings were moving closer and closer to accomplishing their goal of applying paint in a manner that is destructive to the painting’s overall design and composition. Now that I was getting closer to reaching my goals, I began to question the validity of those goals and was unsure of exactly what it was that I was hoping to accomplish through these paintings. It started to feel as if what I was painting, although successful in achieving its goals visually, did not accomplish anything conceptually. I felt that even when a painting had reached my goals, the viewer was not motivated to enjoy the canvas for more than a few short seconds (and that is why I began to question those goals) My paintings had no “depth” to them and very little viewer experience. It was then that the quarter came to an end and I felt that I still had a numerous concepts worth pursuing and some processes undiscovered.
Other Works Created in Advanced Painting (Prior to Senior Project):

Figure VIII

Figure IX

Figure X

Figure XI
In preparing for my Senior Project, I once again began to research artists. This included retracing and covering previous artists I had referenced as well as discovering new ones. I discovered such artists as Edward Corbett, Franz Kline, Pierre Soulages, Robert Ryman, Monique Prieto, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Christopher Wool, Glen Ligon, and Michael van Ofen.

Some of the artists that I found most inspirational were ones who worked with typography in a very obvious, “in-your-face”, and witty way. These were artists such like Christopher Wool, Glen Ligon, and Monique Prieto. Other artists that I found such as Michael van Ofen, Robert Ryman, Franz Kline, and Edward Corbett were working
in the minimalism mode. I have long been interested in both typography and minimalism and felt a great draw towards both of these styles in painting. Working with these two separate styles of art also seemed to be the next logical step to pursue in my work following previous paintings. I felt this to be the most logical conclusion to my Advanced Painting class because I was already working with typography and very interested in minimalism as a subject matter. I also felt the subject matter was something that I brushed against in my work and felt that it could be further explored and beneficial to my painting techniques and concept development. However helpful and inspirational all of these artists and work of my own was, I found inspirations for a majority of my Senior Project in a single man.

My major inspiration came from an artist (painter/photographer) named John Baldessari. My enchantment with Baldessari stems from statements such as this:

“I’m very interested in both language and imagery; I don’t really know why, but I find word and image equally important. So if I go back to my
example of taking a photograph of a house: I can use the word ‘house’ and an image of a house interchangeably. A lot of my early work was simply that. With the images that I was getting off of the TV, I would have an assistant write on the back of the photograph a surrogate for the image. So if it were an image of a house, she might write ‘house’ on the back of it, and I’d work out different strategies and games where sometimes I’d use the word and sometimes I’d use the image. But if they saw an image of a house, they would say, ‘Yeah, that’s some kind of shelter’. They would get it. So it really depends on how you apply it – language is pretty arbitrary, whereas imagery is not arbitrary.

AS: So what makes you choose to use an arbitrary medium rather than an unarbitrary one, or vice versa – why use a photograph of a house in one instance, and the word in another?

JB: Really, I’m just interested in fucking people up when they’re looking at my work. I think the artist should make things difficult for the viewer.”

John Baldessari is not looking for a good idea, good painting, or even good concept necessarily. It is as if he simply finds something he enjoys and chases it to its end. I can really appreciate that because I often feel a pressure to make “good art” or have a painting with a really complex concept behind it even though the reason that I want to paint it is because I really enjoyed the colors. I enjoy involving the viewer in my work and making it somehow very difficult for them to involve themselves in the work or even understand it. I do this in order to see what they take away from the piece.

Another sentiment that I chased in Baldessari was this: “And, I said something, some art idea, and you could hear a pin drop. And someone said, “Well, how does that fit into art history?’” And, I’m thinking inside, “Who the fuck cares?” Out here you

1 “Pure Beauty”
don’t worry about how things fit into art history. You just do what you’re going to do.”

I like John Baldessari so much because he does not have much care or concern for other people’s wishes and desires. This is appealing to me because it means that he is painting for himself and his own personal benefit first and foremost.

Baldessari is not interested in “right” images or commissions or anything in particular. He sees art as a sort of fleeting expression and a rather vague and cloudy idea altogether. Art is an expression of something within and often without explanation and this whole idea is something that I greatly value. Looking at Baldessari’s work inspired me to explore and find something, and whether it be right, wrong, or otherwise was not the issue.

2 “Interview with John Baldessari”
The methodology that I developed in researching for my senior project was almost strictly visual. I have been taking an artist whose work I found relevant to my own (via concept, painterly style, or content) or enjoyable and following his or her work through blogs, arts websites, and other Internet materials. This research has often led me to other artists who work in some of the same manners but with a slightly different emphasis. My research has not been too narrow or focused on too specific of a style because I would like to keep an open mind and be open to new experimentations in any and every manner. I have found artists such as Linda Bessemer, Jenny Saville, Jasper Johns, Jason Martin, and even a minimalist sculptor named Donald Judd.

In conclusion, I would like to summarize my research in painting like so: the emphasis in my paintings prior to my senior project was the application of the paint and using the paint as an object and/or the subject/content in and of itself. I am now hoping the paintings will turn into a more conceptual exploration of ideas where the paint is secondary to the concepts and ideas present in the painting. Artist research has helped me further define the direction that I will be going in my Senior Project.
Chapter III: Procedures and Results

In order to get a heads up on my Senior Project, I began researching and painting over summer break. In doing so, going into the school year and Senior Project, I had a very solid starting point and a solid understanding of what I wanted to pursue. I knew that I wanted to work with large amounts of white space in my paintings and leave the marks and words to speak for themselves.

Size:

I decided on painting on a single canvas size for this project which was 36” x 48”. I had previously painted with both 30” x 48” as well as 36” x 48” and I liked the extra width and the more square format to work with. I also decided to continue working with the typeface Helvetica because it was what I had used in all my prior pieces, it was readily accessible (in vinyl stickers), and it was a very neutral, all-around, and well-designed typeface. I used a Myriad Pro typeface in one painting because it was very conducive to the concept.

Color:

My colors were often decided dependant on either what the words said or the painting’s theme. If I painted something based on the concept of chaos, brutality, or efficiency, I would choose a more dirty and careless color like an olive green (because olive green to me personally has those characteristics). If I had a concept based upon the act of painting, I might use the three main colors in a painter’s palette, which are red, yellow, and blue to further explain the concept that I was attempting to deal with in the painting.
Sketching:

My sketch process throughout this process was extremely limited. This was mostly due to the fact that my ideas came from fleeting moments of change or ideation that I would have. These would sometimes come in the middle of the day when I would see something that would trigger an idea or during my work on a different painting, where a brushstroke or thought about what I was currently working on would spark a thought about another idea that could be had. It is hard to describe what might trigger a thought in a brain when these “triggers” are so numerous, spontaneous, and truly untraceable so much of the time. Following is some of the sketching that I did have in order to stoke my brain:
spread your wings and fly.

spread ur

fly high

could you have done this?

sex sells

like painting, but not enough to sit for more than four hours.

THIS IS NOT A REACH PROJECT

+ paint out car seat +
AN ACCLUMULATION OF MARKS THAT
ADD UP TO NOTHING —

ONE VICIOUS, EFFICIENT MOMENT

LARGE, BRIGHT,
POWERFUL
PAINTERLY
GESTURE (WITH
SCRAPER?)

EMPT?

IS THIS CANVAS STILL EMPTY
TO YOU?

BACKGROUNDS
ACCLUMULATION OF
MARKS, GESTURES,
PAINT

ARE
THIS CANVAS
STILL EMPTY TO
YOU?

HANDDRAWN?

"AN ACCLUMULATION
OF MARKS AND
NOTHING!"
SHALL I LEAVE IT WHITE?
This painting titled “SHALL I LEAVE IT WHITE” (Figure XII) was the first painting in my Senior Project series. It had been about four months since I had last painted, which were the paintings shown in the Research and Development part of this paper. It is hard to jump back onto a very specific method, technique, and train of thought/series of concepts after going so long without giving thought to such things. Before I started this painting, I did not even bother sketching. I composed a rough image of what I wanted in my head and attempted to paint it. This painting was done “on-the-fly”, meaning that I did not plan very much and witnessed the results that came forth. The intent of this painting was to exploit the process involved in painting and present it in a manner that confronted and involved the viewer. I used the colors red, yellow, and blue which are the three primary colors in a painter’s palette. This choice was supposed to be explicative of the process a painter has to go through in order to make a painting and an indicator of where they start from. I intentionally left the letters “i”, “t”, and “e” as stickers in the painting in order to show that the painting was unfinished and awaiting the reply to the question, “SHALL I LEAVE IT WHITE?”. In order to do the lettering, I took the vinyl letter stickers (in Helvetica as discussed earlier for its neutrality), laid them out with correct kerning, and painted over the top of them in order to establish the lettering on my canvases. I also left in the horizontal pencil lines and parts of the tape used to create the straight horizontal bar to further show and define the process that I went through in order to create the painting.
Figure XIII is a painting that stems from my previous explorations in my Advanced Painting class, specifically Figure IX and X. These paintings were explorations of paint and typography incorporated (in a very overt fashion). When I started this painting, my hope was to incorporate type (the phrase “sky high”) directly on top on a soft-focus image painted on the canvas, almost like an advertising campaign (Figure XIV). As this painting developed, I began to realize that it was simply a “hip” or different version of the previous explorations. In light of that, I began painting over the background picture with no plan, only to keep the phrase “sky high”. Clouds and a sky-like atmosphere began developing and I decided to make the painting an exploration of how type can interact with its surroundings or atmosphere. I feel this painting was very successful in doing exactly that. The phrase “Sky hi” comes in and out of the clouds in a very atmospheric manner, making it seem as if there is actual depth to the painting. I was able to handle the paint quite well and in a new manner, occasionally
using towels and my hands to accumulate texture and depth. There were similar overt techniques as in previous paintings, involving large, heavily loaded brush strokes and the use of a stencil and mechanical pencil (in order to trace the type onto the painting), though my concept and reason for painting was much different being that it was based on the ways in which type interacts with its environment.
In Figure XV, I was attempting to once again establish order and “deSign” (both the word and what it represented) through chaos. By using the word “chaos”, I am referring to the way in which I used the paint as chaotic. I used the muddy green color because chaos and destruction are often forces that are not very pretty to witness. I did not however choose a color that was so bad (ugly) that the viewer did not want to engage in the piece. This painting took me about two hours total which is quite a short time for a full-scale painting. Once I had decided on a color and arrangement of type, I simply mixed the color, laid the letters behind the canvas, and drug the paint across the canvas with no particular order or reason. I chose to separate the word “design” into two separate pieces because I feel that separating them gave a major emphasis on the prefix “de”, which can be the start of other words like “design”, “destroy”, and “destruction” which are all words I feel well suited to the painting. Separating the word into two parts also overemphasized what was being implied about the building and destructing of “design”. I was “de” signing the word and making readability of the word and issue. The painting and concept for this piece were greatly derived from my previous explorations in paint (Figure III), which was the unfulfilled version of this piece. Figure III was what I describe as “unfulfilled” because the entire piece is about the materials used to make a painting and the complete removal of all those materials, where all of the paint was scraped off of the surface of the canvas. I did, however, paint the word “deSign” ONTO the canvas, rather than remove it as was done on the rest of the piece. In my new painting, Figure XV, all the paint was applied and removed from the canvas and the letters were created through the removal of the paint as well, tying the entire piece together.
This took 30 seconds on my computer.
Figure XVI was where I began a major deviation in my work. It was at this point that I began to think about the ways I work with computers and how I wish that I relied upon them less. Short of ideas for a painting, I was thinking of what I had already accomplished in my Senior Project. I realized that most of the paintings that I had been making could have probably been completed in any digital medium in a very short amount of time. It was at this moment when I found my idea: why not make a painting about the translation between digital and 2D and maybe throw in a little bit of humor? Since I had been working with type so long, I wanted to continue along that route and it was extremely well suited to this painting because “setting” type (which is the laying out of letters) on a computer is extremely quick, easy, and quite thoughtless, while doing it by hand is painfully slow and requires great deals of knowledge and talent. It was with this thought that I decided to paint the words “this took 30 seconds on my computer”. The humor and awkwardness in this painting comes from the fact that stating “this took 30 seconds on my computer” is an entirely wrong misconception. I first printed the type off of the computer, then cut out every letter and traced the phrase out in pencil upon the canvas, and finally tediously painted every letter (which after all was said and done took me about four hours). This fact is supposed to be evident to the viewer. The painting is also a statement about the connection established between artist and the actual material in front of them, meaning that although I knew and could have made the exact same thing on a computer in roughly thirty seconds, I chose to sit down in front of a canvas and put time into this work. The pitfall of this painting is that it is a “mental” piece. All of the humor and excitement happens in the viewer’s head with little or no visual experience because the only paint on the canvas is very flat type and I see this as a place for improvement. If I can have both visual and mental excitement, then the piece will be complete.
Figure XVII is a continuation of paintings discussing the awkward translation between a digital medium and a 2D/paint medium. In my work, I sometimes like to grab the feelings and moments (inadequacies, frustration, anger, happiness, epiphanies) that I have while making a painting and make the painting about those feelings. The process that I underwent in this painting will be explicative of such. I started this painting based around the spinning of the letters of “design” in a circular fashion, turning letters into fully abstract shapes. Upon starting, I realized that the route that I was pursuing would bear a fruitless piece of work and upon realizing this fact, I was quite disappointed that I had just wasted an entire canvas and a good deal of time along with it. My immediate thought was, “I wish I could undo this”, and this is where my painting was born. On many occasions, myself and other designers have, upon making a mistake, thought “undo” in our heads which in graphic design terminology is Command + Z. This is the “undo” command on a Macintosh computer. The fact that the first thought to occur to me after making a mistake was one of an entirely digital function and purely mechanical in thought/motion was quite disturbing. This is what I made my painting about: the way a designer’s brain begins to function in a strictly digital environment. I first slapped some white paint over the mistake I had made in a fashion that would make it noticeable to the viewer that the application of paint over the mistake was in fact an attempt to cover that mistake. I then made a Command Z template, traced it, and painting the lettering on the canvas. I think that mistakes are a big part of art and often an inevitable fact of life in art and I wanted to bring some of that sentiment to light along with the awkward digital way of life.
Figure XVIII was the painting with which I returned to earlier explorations of paint and the way in which a painter’s mark can be definitive of something specific simply by the way that support is touched by the painter. In making this painting, my hope and goal was to make a painting that no matter the amount (and variety) of marks made on the canvas, the painting still be devoid of concept, composition, or nearly anything of meaning other than the mark itself. I did this by making a whole collection of marks that were a result of overspray, mixing of paint directly upon the canvas, accidents, notetaking, and tracings. All of the marks made were marks that might be associated with the lack of thought, prediction, and intention in any way. I also made the marks be collected together in a very static composition in order to make nothing stand out. Having nothing stand out is another way to make a canvas be boring and uneventful to look at.
A BRUTAL GESTURE

Figure XIX
The last painting to be made in my Senior Project was Figure XIX, a painting mostly inspired by John Baldessari, the painter and photographer who worked with type and image and awkward ways of making “right” and “wrong” pieces of art. He often brought the process of making art or parts of art that nobody wanted to talk about to the forefront of his art in a humorous way. I wanted to make this painting a painting that spoke about what was happening while making the painting as a sort of script for a play or third-party commentary about what was happening. It is meant to be humorous in the fact that although it is a “brutal and efficient gesture” (both in wordage and paint), the entire painting was something that is preconceived and well planned. This is humorous because most painters and people see painting as a very spur of the moment act and action, a more “freeform” approach to things. This painting’s words are contradictory to what is ACTUALLY happening in the painting because the words state that the paint is “brutal and efficient” (with the implication being on the lack of planning), but the entire painting was part of a long string of well-conceived decisions. The actual process of making the painting was quite short-lived. I laid out the type on a horizontal hangline with vinyl lettering (Helvetica because it is a quite neutral typeface), mixed colors, loaded up the scraper with those colors, and stood for about twenty minutes trying to prepare myself for what I had to do because I only had one shot to make it right. After gathering the courage, I grabbed the loaded scraper, ran up to the canvas and easel, and laid the paint across the type in about four seconds. I stepped back and realized that the paint was brutal, thick, and jagged, greatly portraying what the words themselves stated. It could not have been executed better in any way. I was very happy with the outcome of this painting as a whole, both visually and conceptually.
Chapter IV - Summary and Recommendations

In summary, I found my Senior Project to be a great accomplishment. I reached all of the goals that I had previously set forth previous to the project itself. I have further established a specific style of painting for myself, including concept, technique, and overall style of painting. Also, I feel that I have found a unique niche of painting for myself. My goal was to discover a completely new way to combine both typography and minimalism together and I feel that I have done so in a small way. Accomplishing that goal is a very large thing to accomplish and my having accomplished a very small amount of that was very satisfying. I did not discover a new form of “undiscovered” painting, though I did find a niche for myself. I also established a larger body of work for myself and my painting portfolio which will help me in the future to sell myself as a more well-rounded artist, sell my art, and establish myself as a painter if that is the route I choose to pursue in my career.

This project was an extremely great learning tool for me. I was forced to create this project strictly of my own creativity and for my own purpose which was something rare and exciting. It is very rare in the real world to be able to do something ENTIRELY for yourself and I took full advantage of it. I feel that this project got me better prepared for the real world in many different ways. It forced me to be better with my time management, much better organized, professional in my approach, but most importantly it gave me the opportunity to stretch myself creatively and I did exactly that. This project is exactly what you want to make it. It can be hard and extremely trying, or it can be easy and brainless. This project was a good way to let me open up as an individual artist and break out of the “graphic design” mold for a short while. It allowed me to pursue my own (exact) dreams and goals and chase them to completion.

There is much more study that can come from this project. The biggest and most immediate goal that I have is another painting. Through my Senior Project, I feel
that I briefly touched on a number of promising and well executed concepts and techniques. I had many good paintings altogether, but individually, I feel that some lacked strength. In light of this, I feel that the next step to be taken for myself is to make what I would call a single “monster” painting. It would somehow make a single painting in the same 36” x 48” format that combines all of the paintings that I have made here in my Senior Project. If I cannot find a way to make a single combination of the numerous paintings in my Senior Project, I feel that there is room for improvement in a few of my individual pieces. And I get the feeling that just as my Advanced Painting project let to my Senior Project, I feel that my Senior Project opened up my brain to new forms of creativity, taught my hand to new forms of painting, and helped me to further progress as an artist.
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