

THESIS UNMASKED: Studio Art Major Senior Projects

Spring 2022
Schiltkamp Gallery, Clark University



Featured Artists

Mads Graham

Dimitri Koufis

Charisma Nguyen Lai

Esha Shetty

Anna-Li St. Martin

Nadia Sostek

Kasturi Thonagi

Beatrice Winn

Mads Graham



The Gods I Call Friends

This series explores the deification of some of my closest friends who I gained during my time in undergraduate school. Each friend, Loobna, Henley, Maxwell, and Sobia, are represented in their portraits as deities to stress their importance to me in a world where society has historically looked down on them. I raise my friends to the level of gods and provide an ethereality to their likeness because to me and many others who know them, they are saviors, beings of a higher intelligence, and so beautifully unique that it is crucial they are shared and worshipped by many more.

Mads Graham



The Gods I Call Friends
2021-22
Oil on wood panel
24" diameter

Dimitri Koufis



Dimitri Koufis

There is solace in understanding the life force within death

a transformation that brings growth

each spring

forming natural webs

Above

and

Below

Homes for beings we will never see

Nourishment for young

newts in the spring

Wet moss on a summer

We spin in a cycles

living

dying



Charisma Nguyen Lai



Be Easy on Yourself
Acrylic paint on
dry wall
97.5 x97.5"

Charisma Nguyen Lai



The state of the world can be overwhelming sometimes. Negativity is seemingly everywhere, but a little positivity can go a long way. My work centers around positivity and seeks to remind people to “be easy on yourself” in an unforgiving world. Often times we get so wrapped up in life we become hard and unforgiving to ourselves.

My positive messages take the form of murals, mirrors, and lettering in general. Through using these forms, the message’s positivity is hard to miss. Whether it is bold and noticeable, or allowing you to discover it for yourself, my work exists to let people know that they aren’t alone, and someone is cheering them on.

Charisma Nguyen Lai



Esha Shetty



The Unseen

This project “*The Unseen*” highlights people in different communities that haven’t been seen historically. While growing up, I felt like I wasn’t seen as an Indian woman. I felt that I wasn’t important enough to be in certain spaces and did not have a voice. For this project I want minorities and non-gender conforming individuals to be showcased in a majestic and powerful light to give them more representation in media. I painted four acrylics on 24 x 30” canvases. After the painting of the portraits was done, I used Procreate to re-create my paintings into graphics. Then, I printed them out multiple times to create a repetitive design inspired by Andy Warhol (and other artists). Through repetition, I want everyone to remember these faces. The maximalist water-like background gives movement to the piece to show the subjects’ emotions and personalities.

I wanted to focus on four emotions: trust, love, confidence, and healing. Blue represents trust, red is love, orange is confidence and green is healing. The last portrait (the right-most painting) is a self-portrait and different from the rest. I wanted to portray the scared and timid girl I used to be. The bottle in my hand serves as my dark past that changed my life and inspired me to do this series.

Esha Shetty



Anna-Li St. Martin



Coordination Station Advertisements
2022
Printed on Paper
18 x 24"

Coordination Station

Art and design are everywhere – from restroom signs to your phone case. As a designer, who mainly works on client-based work, I try my best to satisfy my client's need, while creating a unique, aesthetically pleasing design. My style is clean, organized, yet playful.

Coordination Station is a made-up stationery company whose vision is to help you organize your busy life with simple, fun stationery for anyone. Whether you are new to using planners or a pro, *Coordination Station* will have all the tools you need to take a moment and coordinate your everyday schedule.

The main product of *Coordination Station*, the sticky planner, was an organization tool I needed in my life but could not find anywhere. When deciding on my senior thesis project, I thought this was a great opportunity to bring this idea to life, while also showcasing my graphic design skills. As an avid planner user myself, I have noticed a pattern of unnecessarily gendered planners. By this I mean, planners are either catered to women through overtly feminine decoration according to societal standards, or a more neutral audience which is executed in a boring and tasteless way. This motivated me to design a more inclusive, accessible, and fun planner.

Anna-Li St. Martin



Sticky Planners
Printed on Paper
5 x 6", 6 x 6", 7 x 5", 8 x 6", 9 x 6"

Nadia Sostek



Nadia Sostek



Mini Mart

I am an adult using childish materials. Although this statement is true, I manipulate the material in a more refined way, which can be seen as fine art. My work is the recreation of my feelings from childhood, which represents the stress-free, “I-have-nothing-to-worry-about” attitude, and being able to get lost in my imaginative world. This is my imaginative world, and these are the feelings that I have lost as I navigate towards adulthood. The possibility that I am chasing a nostalgic feeling that doesn’t exist anymore has occurred to me, but each individual creation is an attempt at experiencing something I lost a long time ago. I create these miniatures because it is comforting to me.

The incorporation of my childhood is expressed not only in the dollhouse-like presentation of my work, but in the material I use. Polymer clay is a crafty material, and because of this it is easy for children to use, which gives people the idea that any art that is made with this must be unprofessional. With my work, I hope to change that narrative and give spectators a chance to see how polymer clay can be used in a professional manner. As I went from a child to an adult, my art grew with me and expanded from craft to fine art. My character did not change, neither did the material, it is just a different, more mature, representation of the same thing.

Kasturi Thonagi



Painting a Memory

In our fast-paced world, I find that we often are so overwhelmed by stimuli that we lose sight of the smaller details around us. This series is then an exploration of the visual experience of food, asking the viewer to reconsider the ordinary. In fact, these works seek to celebrate the everyday foods that we surround ourselves with, elevating them to a higher status. In using bright color and bold linework, I ask the viewer to recollect their own memories of food. This is intended to make the viewer consider these pieces slowly and to enjoy the experience of viewing something so familiar in a fresh light.

Beatrice Winn



The Nature of Bliss
2022
Oil on paper

You Must Transcend Correctly
2022
Oil on paper

Tap Into the Unified Field!
2022
Oil on paper

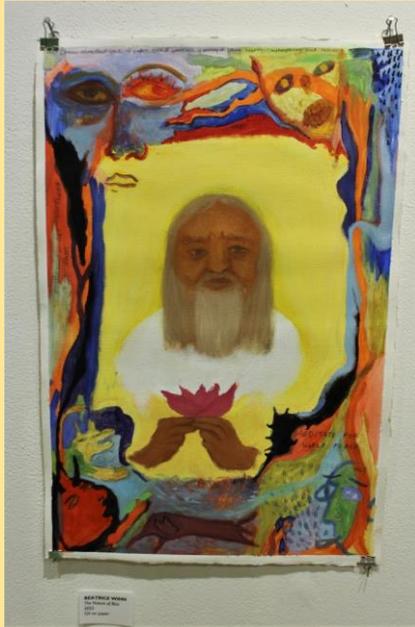
The Bubble Diagram
2022
Oil on paper

Sidha
2022
Oil on paper

*How Much Does Enlightenment
Cost?*
2022
Oil on paper

Jai Guru Dev
2022
Oil on paper

Beatrice Winn



Invincible America



This series of oil paintings called *Invincible America* are about my upbringing in the Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement in Fairfield, Iowa. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a yoga guru and physicist, began the TM movement in the 1960s when he introduced Transcendental Meditation to India and the world. The Invincible America Assembly is a part of the movement in Fairfield where you get paid to meditate for 8 hours a day to help solve world peace. My mom did this for a while when I was a kid.

From 3rd grade through 12th grade, I went to a school that practiced Transcendental Meditation and taught Maharishi's teachings and precepts. My community was small and centered around the movement. The movement has greatly shaped me in many ways I can't explain in words. I found it easier to share some of it in paintings.

I have many conflicting feelings about the TM movement and my own relationship to it, and through painting I try to understand them better. I use colors, lines and figures to express some of these feelings.