2017 Standard Setting Samples

Drawing Sustained Investigation (Concentration) Score 6

Image	Dimensions	Media
1	18 x 15	acrylic on paper
2	8 x 11	acrylic on paper
3	15 x 11	acrylic on paper
4	11 x 15	acrylic on paper
5	15 x 11	acrylic on paper
6	16 x 20	acrylic on canvas
7	8 x 4	acrylic on canvas
8	11 x 15	acrylic on paper
9	11 x 15	acrylic on paper
10	6.5 x 9	acrylic on paper
11	8 x 11	acrylic on paper
12	12 x 12	acrylic on canvas

Sustained Investigation (Concentration) Statement

1. The title of my concentration is "Equilibrium." It is a series of self-portraits depicting the complicated road that must be overcome to acquire peace, a fight against yourself, to let go and to forgive. This can be related to the idea of death. Death being the struggle of letting go or accepting the truth, and life representing the final step of overcoming and recognizing that some things can not be changed, and that it is okay. Two opposing forces reaching a point of balance, an equilibrium.

2. The first piece was inspired by the traits in Egon Schiele's "Seated Woman With Bent Knee." The finger joints being exaggerated and the unsettling look in the face was because of the anger and confusion in me. The black silhouette was it's heaviness left behind. Piece 2 is the hand of the loved one who is no longer with me. The iconic "Adam and God" painting by Michelangelo is intentionally alluded showing the loss of someone dear to me rather than the "start of life" as intended by Michelangelo. The next piece, 3, is continuing from the loss of this person and how misplaced I felt without them. One of the things I noticed when they had left, was that my physical health started to swing. I lost a lot of hair because I became more stressed, it felt like I was tied down. This is the representation of the braids. Paintings 5 and 6 are displaying my mental health and its uneasiness, my hands attempting to silence my mind. Paintings 7-8 is the final action of speaking up and asking for help, the hands surrounding mine are my friends and family. Paintings 9-10 can be connected to the action of baptism, death and rebirth. This is where I finally let go of it all. Piece 11 being the last stop and resting point, and the closing piece 12, showcasing the calm state and finally acquiring balance.

Rationale for Score

- In this excellent sustained investigation, the work and the topic are coherently and consistently integrated. The statement is indicative of a well thought-out plan to explore a personal idea that creates a narrative.

- Many sustained investigations focus on portraiture or self-portraiture. In this case, the content demonstrates informed decision-making and discovery. For example, image 1 is based on Egon Schiele's Seated Woman but the work presented does not duplicate the pose or composition of that painting; instead, the composition is adjusted to suit the topic. Image 3 is the only work that uses a fairly standard composition for a portrait. In keeping with the theme of seeking balance, the works as a group demonstrate various forms of balance such as radial balance in image 8 and balance around a horizontal axis in image 7.

- The original vision embodied in this work is demonstrated by the permutations of the expressions that are depicted. In addition, the theme enables or requires looking beyond portraiture to represent ideas. Thus, the body of work includes the mutation of Michelangelo's Creation of Adam (image 2), the figure with its back to the viewer (image 4) and the use of hands as an expression of support and comfort (images 7 and 8).

- The work and the theme are evocative and engaging. The last image is particularly compelling. The direct gaze of the figure engages attention. The way the shirt and background merge to unite the positive and negative space keeps the image close to the picture plane, apparently in the viewer's space. Another engaging aspect of the piece is that even though it includes the clichéd gesture of making a heart with one's hands, the hands do not make a perfect heart — the gesture remains natural.

- The work is technically excellent. Where there are references to the exaggerated hands in the Schiele painting, drawing and shading work together to make them effective without becoming caricatures. Paint is handled freely but with precision. For example, in image 4, delicate white lines keep the hands from becoming visually distinct from the figure's hair.