

## DRHSART

**Below are two examples of the Assessments that I gave students after their senior shows.**

**02-08-12**

**Emma Taggart**

**“Ephemereality”**

**Senior Show Assessment and Questions**

**Grade: A**

### **Questions to Answer Via Email:**

1. How has your perspective about art changed throughout the process of organizing your own exhibition?
2. What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to do it over?
3. If you had unlimited time and resources, what else would you have done to complete your show?
4. What was the value of this experience for you?
5. How could this process be enhanced for future Art 5 students?

### **Overview**

I'm incredibly proud of the amount of time and energy you put into this show. I think it's very difficult to get an entire show together in just a few months, especially with all the pressure that your college applications, portfolio preparation, academics and social life put on you. Though proud, it's my duty as your teacher to give you constructive criticism to help you grow as an artist. Below is a rubric with my commentary that I'm using to measure the success of your senior show. Please print this email and paste it into your journal so it stays as a memory. Please also paste your responses into your journal, as your thoughts are even more important than mine in terms of your senior show experience.

### **Conceptual Integrity**

The artist's statement that you wrote was very refined, and a clear reflection of the work that you had installed in the front portion of the gallery. When I read your statement, it was evident that you really spent time crafting the language that describes what your work is about. There was a clear cohesion of the work there, and the works on wood “felt” very ephemeral. I was incredibly proud of the statement you created, and of the design-oriented installation. I believe that the time and energy you spend doing your own research on design and illustration played a huge role both the overall aesthetic and conceptual quality of the show.

The work on the longer wall of the gallery didn't quite reflect that same “Ephemereality” that was so clear in that front portion. The idea of “constant change” from your statement was very well reflected, but there wasn't quite the same visual unity that existed in the other part. This is a completely normal thing for the senior show, and it recurs simply because there is just not enough time to dedicate to fill the entire gallery with a cohesive body. It may have been a good idea to edit down your work a little bit more, and leave a little more room to breathe. There was more of a claustrophobic feel than an ephemeral one on that long wall.

### **Craftsmanship**

The craftsmanship of your work impresses me, but there is always room for improvement. I'll give you this constructive criticism, but please know that I think you did a tremendous job given

the materials, space, and time with which you had to work. What most impressed me was the amount of time and energy you put into the large mural that acted as the back drop of your show. That front portion of the hall, especially, became the signature of the entire show. You are always careful as you work, and the effort you put in pays dividends in the end. What impresses me about how you work is the intricacy of the line you use. All those hours studying anime, and creating illustrations in your sketchbook were the practice you needed to hone your technique. You are an illustrator at heart, and illustrators are required to know their craft. I really enjoyed the work that you made last, which speaks volumes about how you've grown as an artist. The careful line work, the subtle quality of the gradation of the translucent white paint over the wood grain, and the sharpness of the colored shapes made your work sing. Your craftsmanship is top notch, and I honestly believe you have the dedication to find great success in the field of design, illustration, animation or architecture. There is no real need at this point for me to point out the small imperfections in any of the work you create, as you are already aware when your work has or doesn't have the resolution it needs.

### **Presentation of Work**

The presentation of your work was thoughtful. You put a lot of time into preparing the gallery to look just as you wanted it to look. You spent a long time sitting down to plan out what should be where, and in the end, the show ended up impressing a lot of people. You did a tremendous job with the front of the gallery specifically.

To put this show over the top, I think a couple extra little things could have been done. This is not a criticism, but rather something to think about for your professional future, when you have the opportunity to show your work again. The typography, in my opinion, would have been better if it were a little bit tighter. I thought it was really well done, don't get me wrong, but I want you to pay special attention to the typography in some of Richmond's premier galleries, as well as the VMFA. Look at how it's done. Study the fonts that are used their size, alignment, and proximity to the work. Look to the top level in order to understand what works looks like when it is professionally presented. Take notes, and absorb it for the future of your own work.

### **Promotion**

I was really impressed with how well you promoted your show. The card that you made, the announcements, the Facebook event page..... it was clear how well they all worked by the number of people who showed up to see what you created. Making the work is only a small portion of being successful. The brand and the promotion are almost more important to the success of the artist than the work that is made. Everything you put in the public eye is a part of your brand as an artist. Being sure that it is received well takes research, time, and a heck of a lot of energy. As a high school student, you should be incredibly proud of the brand of work you have created for yourself. Take this information about your brand you into the future. If you were to have another show, what other ways, what other social media could have been used to promote your show even more. What would you do to make it received even more professionally by the audience? These are not questions you have to answer to me, but they are questions to consider, as it is likely that you will show again.

### **Overall Professionalism**

You have been incredibly motivated, thoughtful, and hard-working throughout your entire time at DRHSART. This show is a clear demonstration of your willingness to do whatever it takes to get the work done. You asked the right questions, took the right classes, hung out with the right people, looked at the right digital resources, and approached learning with the right attitude. I hope you keep doing it, and that this show only acts as a catalyst for making your work even better as the year progresses. It's been such an honor teaching you, and I look forward to remaining one of your mentors as you continue your creative journey. One bit of

advice I'd like to give you for the future is that you don't take those for granted who provide and support your opportunity. It's too easy to overlook the hard work of those who support you, and I encourage you to imagine the work being done by your teachers, parents, and fellow artists who play such an important role in shaping your vision and work.

Proudly,

**Mike Guyer**

Fine Arts Department Chair  
Deep Run High School

**12-06-11**

**Sophie Eichner**

**Senior Show Assessment and Questions**

**Grade: A**

**Questions to Answer Via Email:**

How has your perspective about art changed throughout the process of organizing your own exhibition?

What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to do it over?

If you had unlimited time and resources, what else would you have done to complete your show?

What was the value of this experience for you?

How could this process be enhanced for future Art 5 students?

**Overview**

I'm incredibly proud of the amount of time and energy you put into this show. I think it's very difficult to get an entire show together in just a few months, especially with all the pressure that your college applications, portfolio preparation, academics and social life put on you. Though proud, it's my duty as your teacher to give you constructive criticism to help you grow as an artist. Below is a rubric with my commentary that I'm using to measure the success of your senior show. Please print this email and paste it into your journal (also save it in Evernote)

**Conceptual Integrity**

You already know how happy I am with your ability to think conceptually about your artwork. It was such a great idea for you to attend SFAI this summer, as it clearly lit a fire under you to make your work even more conceptual, cohesive, and ambitious. I can tell that you sometimes BS the meaning of your work, or talk yourself into believing in the invented meaning of the work... but that is not a problem at all. Art as a commodity relies on its perceived value by the consumer, and you have done a good job articulating the meaning of your work. Continue to remember that the work you create will only be as valuable as the brand you give it.

**Craftsmanship**

The craftsmanship of your work is good, but there is always room for improvement. I'll give you this constructive criticism, but please know that I think you did a tremendous job given the materials, space, and time with which you had to work. The craftsmanship of the large sculptural pieces lacks the finished quality that would make them really sing. They almost read

as sketches when viewed in person. Having said that, they photographed beautifully! These sculptural pieces are the added punch you needed for scholarships and scholastic awards. They demonstrate such a strong work ethic and an incredible amount of ambition. The right school is going to offer a lot of money to have the opportunity to work with you.

### **Presentation of Work**

The planning and engineering that went into the installations were impressive. I remember seeing your sketch for the large stalactite grid and thinking “ This is more than she can handle before her show”. Thank you for proving me wrong. It took every last minute of your time, a few tears, and some sleeplessness..... but you pulled it off! I want to warn you, that feeling you had of “OMG, what did I get myself into?” will happen again and again when you are in art school.

I think the overall aesthetic of the gallery is refreshingly minimal and clean. Though it has the appearance of being minimal at first glance, it is highly complex. The time and energy you spent removing color from the environment is the aesthetic, and it feels sophisticated.

One piece of design that I think needs work is the typography of your artist’s statement. The black outline around the characters don’t help the legibility of the statement at all. Typographic elements that involve reading and comprehension should be designed with more simplicity. The color your chose is fine, just eliminate the outline around the characters, and you’re statement will be much more effective.

The way you adhered the labels to the wall could use some tightening up as well. In the future, I think you’d be better served with double sided tape, as it would help the labels lay flatter against the wall. Labels should be flush, and should be the same color as the wall. They should be very legible, cleanly designed with a san serif font, and should not cast any shadows.

### **Promotion**

I was really impressed with how well you promoted your show. The card that you made, the Facebook event page..... it was clear how well they all worked by the number of people who showed up to see what you created. You went above and beyond the call of duty by professionally printing post cards for your show and distributing them well ahead of time. I know it was a lot of work, and I know it cost you some of your own money to get it done. The learning that occurred in the process of the promotion was certainly worth the cost of admission. I hope you feel the same way. Overall, you nailed this portion of the show.

### **Overall Professionalism**

You have been incredibly motivated, thoughtful, and hard-working throughout your entire time at DRHSART. This show is a clear demonstration of your willingness to do whatever it takes to be successful. You wanted it more than anyone else in the class, and you are starting to reap the benefits of your dedication. You asked the right questions, took the right classes, hung out with the right people, looked at the right digital resources, and approached learning with the right attitude. I hope you keep doing it, and that this show only acts as a catalyst for making your work even better as the year progresses. It’s been such an honor teaching you, and I look forward to remaining one of your mentors as you continue your creative journey.

Proudly,

**Mike Guyer**

Fine Arts Department Chair  
Deep Run High School

Email Response from Sophie Eichner:

**How has your perspective about art changed throughout the process of organizing your own exhibition?**

I really feel that I can call myself an artist now. This sounds very silly but that was a big step for me this summer. It was because of studying at SFAI that I really started to feel like an artist. I believe the word is thrown around a lot, (oh you can hold a pencil, you must be an artist!...) I say that very sarcastically, but I feel like it is that way sometimes. Personally, I feel that the title "artist" has to really be earned; and, not to sound cocky, I do feel like I have earned that right now: To be able to call myself an artist, and to start to be recognized and respected as one by the people around me. Its only a small beginning....

**What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to do it over? If you had unlimited time and resources, what else would you have done to complete your show?**

These two questions go hand in hand. I cannot separate them. Honestly, I would not change anything if I did it over, I couldn't. Well yes, there is hindsight bias. I learned a lot in the process, my art-work also had to take its time to evolve. There were many trials and errors, it may seem like I meticulously plan everything out but things change, a lot! And the art-making process doesn't not exist without this trial and error. Such as the large sculpture from the ceiling, I didn't originally plan to make it like a large frame, essentially it is the skeleton of another idea. Thus had I had the idea originally, I would have sanded and painted the boxes before putting them together, made the frame differently, etc... the list goes on and on...

I cannot begin to describe what I would do with unlimited time and resources. It would have been a different show, in a different place, and at a different time. Maybe the VMFA? It would be cool to hang something in the atrium...

**What was the value of this experience for you?**

I really feel that the success of the show has been the culmination of all my efforts. I have worked very hard for a long time, and it's incredibly rewarding to see it come together! (and your right.. reaping the rewards is great too! so excited about Young Arts Week!). It's great to create a piece of artwork and see it develop, but to create an entire show is something else entirely. I know how

to now, I know that I can do it now. This sounds silly, but I know that I can do anything. I set very high goals for myself, But they are always attainable, yes they change, I'm not an inflexible person, but failure is simply not an option. When people asked me if I was going to get it done, I could only say that I didn't have a choice, I was going to get it done no matter what, because what else could I do?

### **How could this process be enhanced for future Art 5 students?**

There needs to be a checklist, of what aspects are needed, advertising, and ect. I also think that you should really schedule time to sit down and speak with you about the plans for the show. While we all know that I'm always hanging around the art room and talking to you anyway, I think this will be a good idea for the others. But I will (and did) just tell you what I'm doing, what I will do; there wasn't even that much discussion about it. You just sat back and let me do what I wanted basically. But this can't be the case with everyone else, the process and experience will be different for everyone, which also means everyone can't be held to the same standards or grading. Honestly, the grade doesn't matter at this point, By art 5 it shouldn't matter at all, but that's not the case with everyone.

### **Just as a side note: and a question I think that could be asked, is how has your experience seeing other DRHS gallery shows throughout the years impacted the way you did yours?**

Honestly, It gives you something to live up to, and examples to look up to. I think that it was very important for me to have seen what had been going on I the years past, I really paid attention to what they (classes of 2010 and 2011) where doing in the hallway, it all made a very strong impression on me. I know you've heard us all joke about Cody, but in all seriousness while I may not have known them personally or very well I've really looked up to the example set my him, Jacob, and Abby. I honestly hope that my work may make an impression on someone someday, to carry on the legacy.

And just to leave you with an interesting quote I really found:

No artist is pleased...There is only a queer divine dissatisfaction, a blessed unrest that keeps us marching on and makes us more alive than the others." – Martha Graham

Sums up my feelings now....

