

References to student responses have been captured verbatim; any errors in spelling or grammar appear as they do in the original handwritten response.

**AP Art and Design  
2-D Selected Works  
2020 Scoring Commentaries**

The Selected Works section of the AP Art and Design portfolio is scored according to a five-point rubric. [Review the rubric](#) for details on the criteria associated with each point on the scale.

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**SAMPLE 1**

**Student work and written evidence:**

**Work 1**



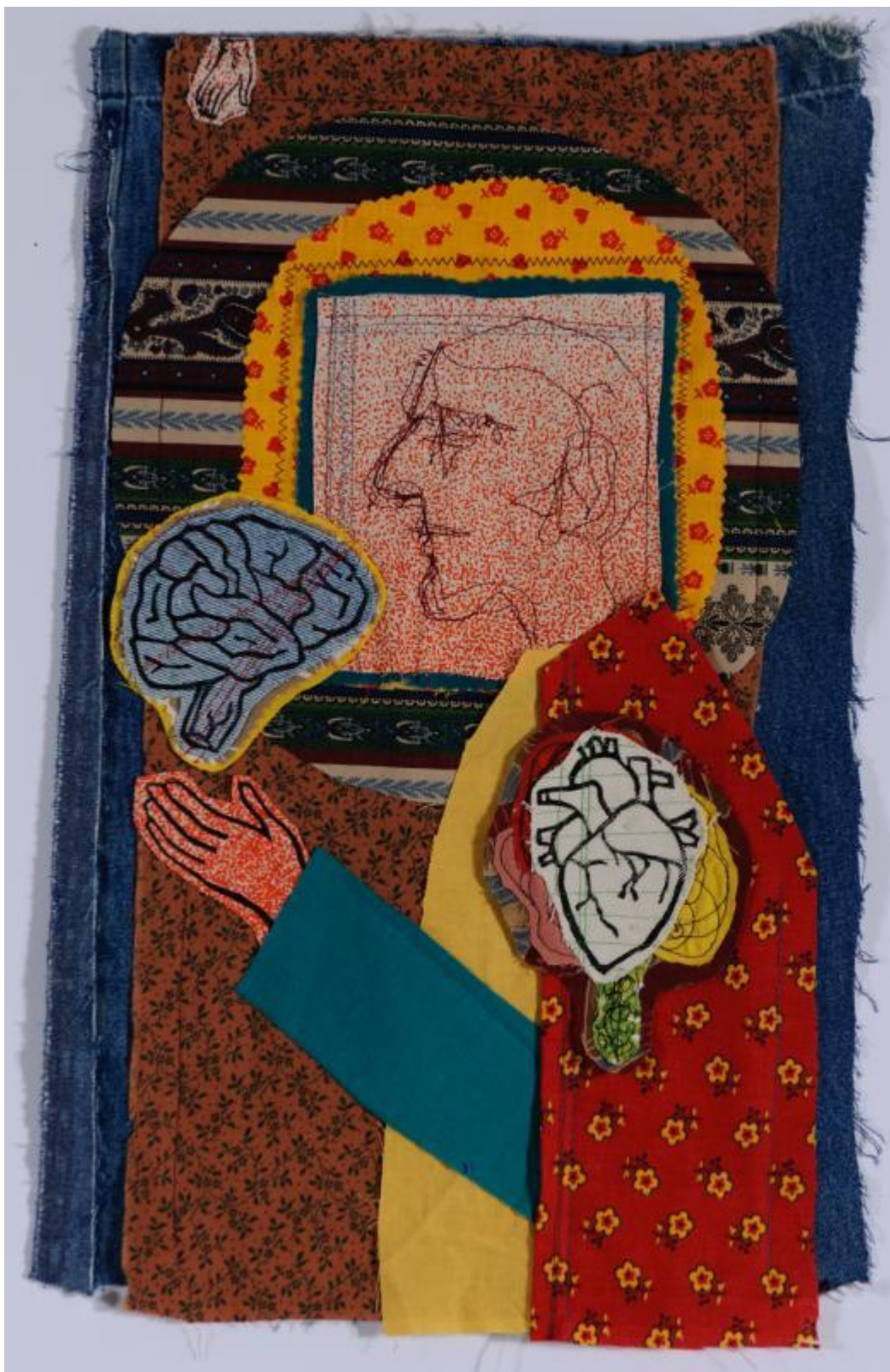
**Ideas:** Exploring my personal family history using heirloom fabrics and religious iconography  
**Materials:** Fabric, thread, ink  
**Processes:** Applique, machine embroidery, printmaking

**Work 2**



**Ideas:** Exploring my personal family history  
**Materials:** Heirloom fabric, ink, thread  
**Processes:** Applique, machine stitching and hand embroidery, printmaking

Work 3



**Ideas:** Exploring my personal family history  
**Materials:** Heirloom fabric, ink, thread  
**Processes:** Applique, machine stitching, printmaking

## Work 4



- Ideas:** Exploring my personal family history
- Materials:** Heirloom fabric, ink, thread
- Processes:** Applique, printmaking, machine stitching and hand embroidery

Work 5



**Ideas:** Exploring my personal family history

**Materials:** Paint, fabric, thread

**Processes:** Painting, applique, printmaking, embroidery

Score: 5

## **Scoring Commentary**

### **2-D Skills**

The visual evidence in these works demonstrates advanced 2-D design skills. Design elements and principles are used to guide decisions in the use of line, color, and texture that enrich the surface of each composition. The student has effectively layered and juxtaposed fabric through the process of applique but has also effectively layered different forms of imagery – portrait drawing, religious iconography, and symbols of personal and family significance – within each work. Repetition of imagery is seen throughout the five works and personal iconography is developed throughout in the form of hand-printed imagery of simplified line drawings, including the teeth and pelvic bones in work 2, the brain and heart in work 3, and the items of clothing in work 5. In all works the student uses the sewing machine to create expressive lines with colored thread, and in contrast, uses carefully chosen stitch patterns to create a variety of line work. In all works, the choice of texture, patterns, color, and form helps create unity within each composition.

### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

These pieces display advanced visual relationships through the use of materials and processes which also express the student's ideas about family history and traditions. The key materials in each work – fabrics that had belonged to family members – are deeply tied to the core ideas that the student is exploring.

The student employs a variety of processes of layering – layering of fabric, layering of sewn and hand-painted imagery, layering of symbols within a work – to convey ideas about layered family history. The student has also experimented with the compositional techniques of religious imagery in representing family members. In work 2, for example, the subject centrally placed, as is seen often in religious iconography, and is layered on top of a subdued background of muted greens and patchwork of blues. Facial features are highlighted using yellow fabric. A repeated pattern of screen-printed teeth are carefully placed in an array over the figure's head, suggesting a halo.

### **Writing**

Although the descriptions are somewhat general, the student has identified materials, processes, and ideas for each work, letting the viewer know that the intent across all five pieces was “exploring my personal family history using heirloom fabrics and religious iconography.” Materials (fabric, paint, thread) and processes (machine and hand sewing, printmaking) offer useful insight into the works, but more specific information – for example, more detail about printmaking processes that were used – might have been helpful to reviewers as well.

## SAMPLE 2

### Student work and written evidence:

#### Work 1



**Ideas:** The second face symbolizes her dream self: which is her soul that experiences other realms of existence. Nature further represents spiritual enlightenment.

**Materials:** Oil paint on wood

**Processes:** I experimented with attaching pages from my dream journal onto the canvas.

**Work 2**



**Ideas:** I get most of my inspiration from the mystical scenes that take place in my dreams and visions.

**Materials:** Oil paint on canvas

**Processes:** I experimented with attaching pages from my dream journal onto the canvas.



### Work 3



**Ideas:** Nature represents the connection between reality and the supernatural themes of life such as intuition, dreams, and souls.

**Materials:** Oil paint on canvas

**Processes:** I experimented with subject matter and materials

## Work 4



**Ideas:** This piece in my dream series shows realistic portraits and nature. My art mostly incorporates nature in some way because I believe it is where people's true soul is most visible.

**Materials:** Oil paint on canvas

**Processes:** I experimented with subject matter and materials

Work 5



- Ideas:** More surreal elements are included in this artwork
- Materials:** Oil paint on wood
- Processes:** I experimented with subject matter and materials

Score: 5

### **Scoring Commentary**

#### **2-D Skills**

At first glance, it may appear there are issues with the student's rendering of form and proportion in the way that figures are portrayed in some of these images. However, the student artist has intentionally chosen to make distortions to communicate further the idea of mystical scenes created from dreams and visions (works 3 and 5), reflecting a thoughtful approach to the use of 2-D design principles. The layering of forms, materials, and play of opacity and transparency to communicate ideas demonstrates a conscious use of materials providing visual evidence of advanced 2-D skills. Advanced 2-D skills are also evident through the juxtaposition of reality and supernatural themes.

#### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

Synthesis of materials, processes, and ideas is demonstrated through the development of the figures from realism to surrealism as well as the inclusion of nature to further symbolize supernatural themes of life such as intuition, dreams, and souls (work 2).

The visual relationships demonstrating the juxtaposition of realism (work 4) and surrealism (work 1) in this portfolio to advance the idea of mystical scenes emerging from dreams is evident. The text accompanying work 1 states, "I painted a second face emerging from the main figure. This other face symbolizes her dream self: which is her soul that experiences other realms of existence. Nature further represents spiritual enlightenment and being intertwined with our higher self." The processes supporting this idea indicate the intentional use of painting processes: "the face is faded and not noticeable at first glance, which signifies how we don't acknowledge our astral self in our daily life."

Each artwork seems to visually represent a transformation into a mystical world where the educated use of color, form, space, rhythm, repetition, and figure/ground relationships effortlessly combine portraiture and nature in visually intriguing ways.

#### **Writing**

Written evidence clearly identifies materials, processes, and ideas for each work. The notes on materials are necessarily straightforward – this is a collection of oil paintings, but the written evidence on process allows the viewer to understand more about the ways that these works developed. In work 1, for example, the student notes that "I experimented with attaching pages from my dream journal onto the canvas."

In identifying the ideas that guided the creation of the artworks, the student identifies the symbolism and imagery that is most central to this work. In work 3, for example, the artist notes that "nature represents the connection between reality and the supernatural themes of life such as intuition, dreams, and souls." The written evidence furthers the viewer's understanding of the artworks presented.

### SAMPLE 3

#### Student work and written evidence:

##### Work 1



**Ideas:** Biblical stories in a contemporary context: Adam and Eve  
**Materials:** Digital photograph  
**Processes:** dramatic lighting/desaturated colors

**Work 2**



**Ideas:** Biblical stories in a contemporary context: reveal the flaws within our modern culture  
**Materials:** Digital photograph  
**Processes:** the illuminated dryer chair signifies divinity

### Work 3



- Ideas:** Biblical stories in a contemporary context: the birth of Jesus
- Materials:** Digital photograph
- Processes:** Provoking an emotional response for the viewer and a call to action

## Work 4



- Ideas:** Transcending religion by analyzing the state of our current political system
- Materials:** Digital photograph
- Processes:** I desaturated each color except for red, referencing the Baroque period



Work 5



**Ideas:** Biblical stories in a contemporary context

**Materials:** Digital photograph

**Processes:** American flag, which I altered to convey the hidden political subtexts within the images.

Score: 5

## **Scoring Commentary**

### **2-D Skills**

Ample evidence of advanced 2-D skills is most markedly apparent through narrative use of both subtle and dramatic shifts in value and hue contrast within limited color palettes.

All of the photographs show thoughtful application of unity, balance, emphasis, movement, proportion and hierarchy within highly developed scenes that require careful placement of a variety of figures within the compositional situations. In work 1, the viewer's attention is pulled between the apple being held by Eve and the snake poster hanging on the wall, all through brilliant value shifts and attentive triangular visual movement among the focal points in the space. Figure/ground relationships are mastered in a range of approaches from the more minimal in work 4, to the multi-layered in work 3.

### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

Throughout the five photographs, there is clear evidence of materials, processes, and ideas coalescing visually in the works. Synthesis is apparent in the student's choice of contemporary settings, use of props within the spaces, and the placement of costumes on models who are masterfully directed in service to the idea of exploring historical biblical narratives in contemporary society. In the Adam and Eve scene (work 1), the characters appear young and are sitting intimately in bed. While barely visible, Eve holds the apple and the snake symbolism looms from the sometimes politically controversial Gadsen Flag hanging on the wall.

Research into historical painting was obviously a part of this artist's process as well, and the student has used contemporary materials (photographic processes) and settings to reinterpret historical imagery. This portfolio is reminiscent of Caravaggio paintings in both the symbolic use of red as well as the use of dark shadows and bright shafts of light. The most clear reference to the Baroque painter can be seen in work 4 that is instantly recognizable as a re-interpretation of the *Calling of St. Matthew*.

The recognizable nativity scene in work 3 becomes contemporary when depicting modern homelessness. Jesus lies within an Amazon box, among soda cans and plastic bags. Joseph and Mary hover in the cold over him, and they are surrounded by three wise men barely visible in the dark alleyway. The student approaches their photographic process much as a film director, attending to every detail in each scene. The entire portfolio transcends the religious narratives to address the state of our current culture.

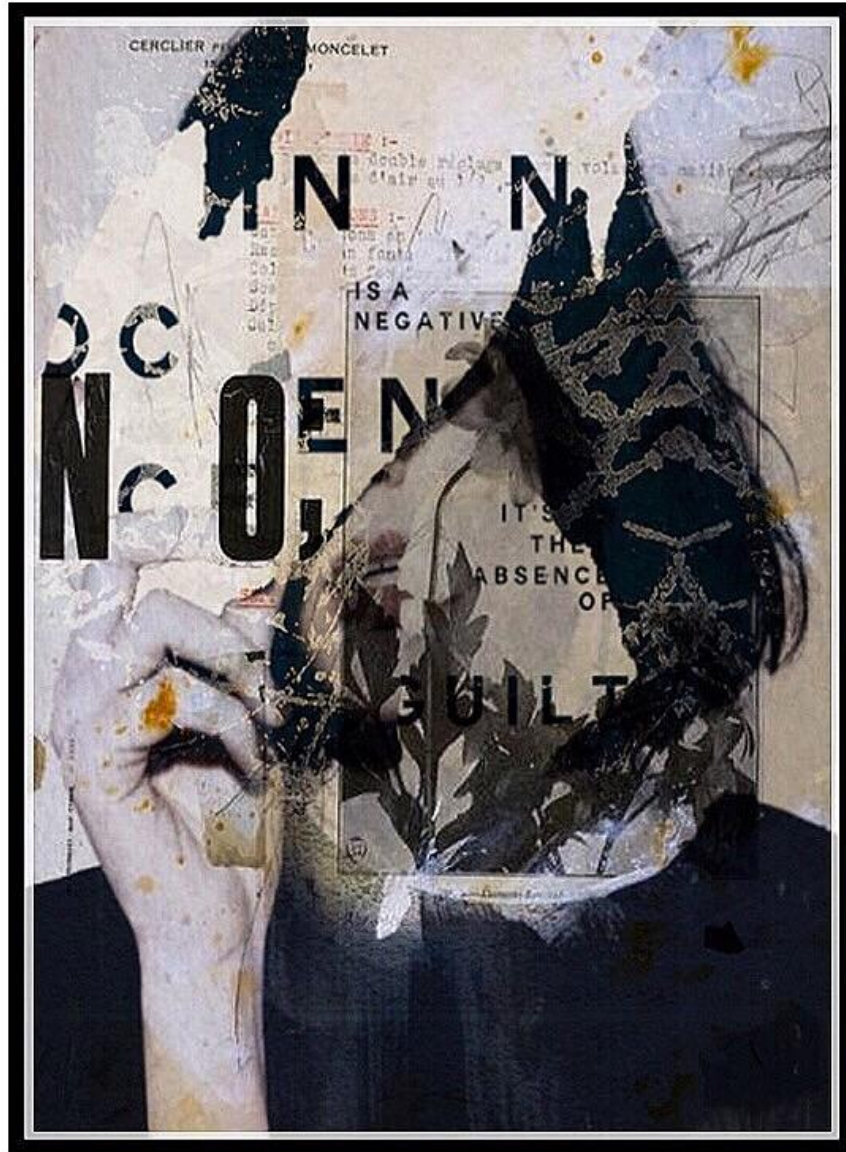
### **Writing**

In the five photographs, the student clearly identifies the materials, processes, and ideas and elaborates on how they are used to elicit an "emotional response for the viewer." The "biblical stories in a contemporary context" are told through careful use of "dramatic lighting" and "desaturated colors." Although the student wrote about red as a remnant from the Baroque period in the process on work 4, it is clear that this approach was used throughout the entire portfolio. The student explains their thoughtful use of symbols such as how the "illuminated dryer chair" in work 2 "signifies Jesus' divinity" thus appearing as a halo over the figure. Or, how the American flag in work 5, used instead of the traditional biblical garments, "conveys the hidden political subtexts."

**SAMPLE 4**

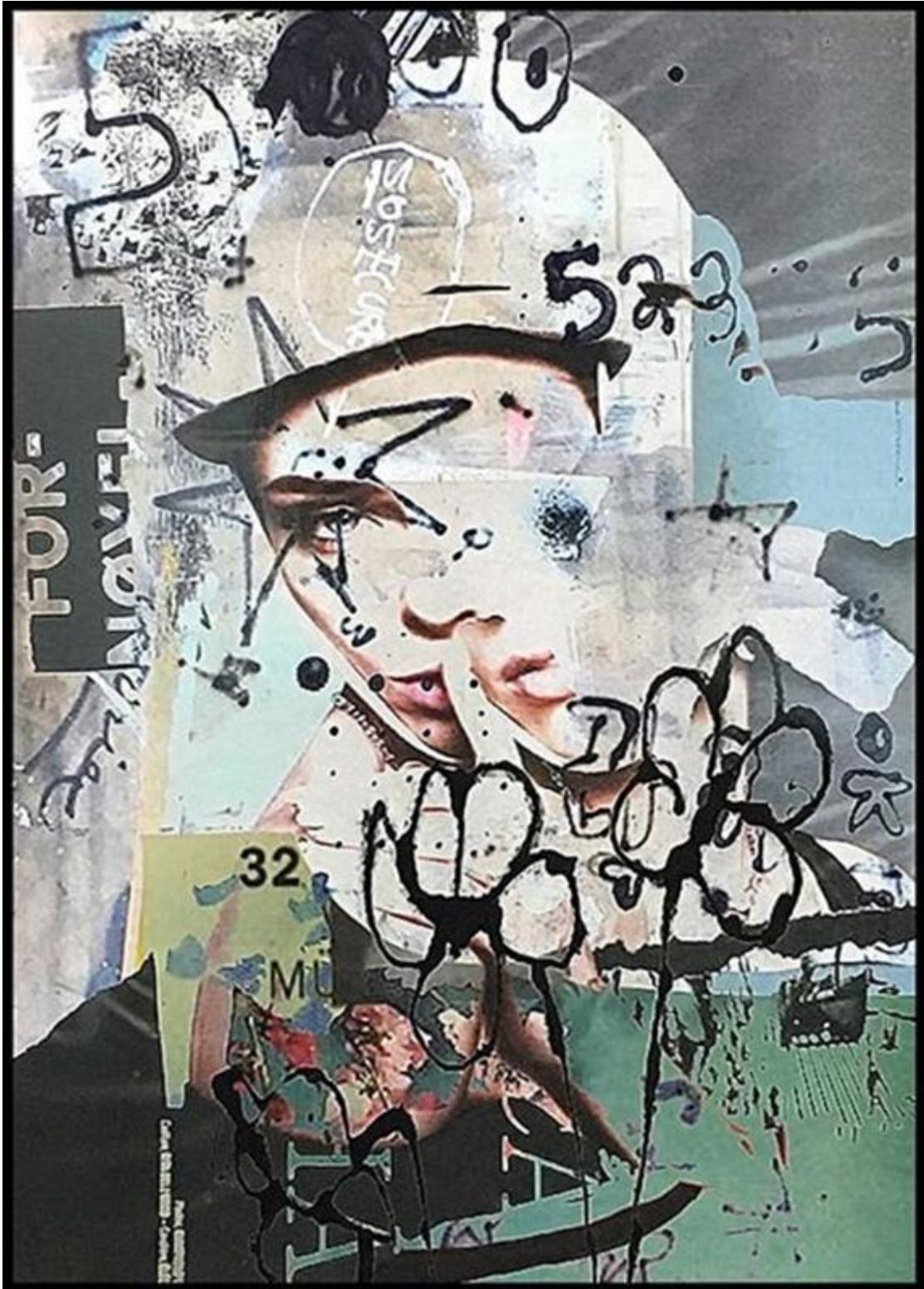
**Student work and written evidence:**

**Work 1**



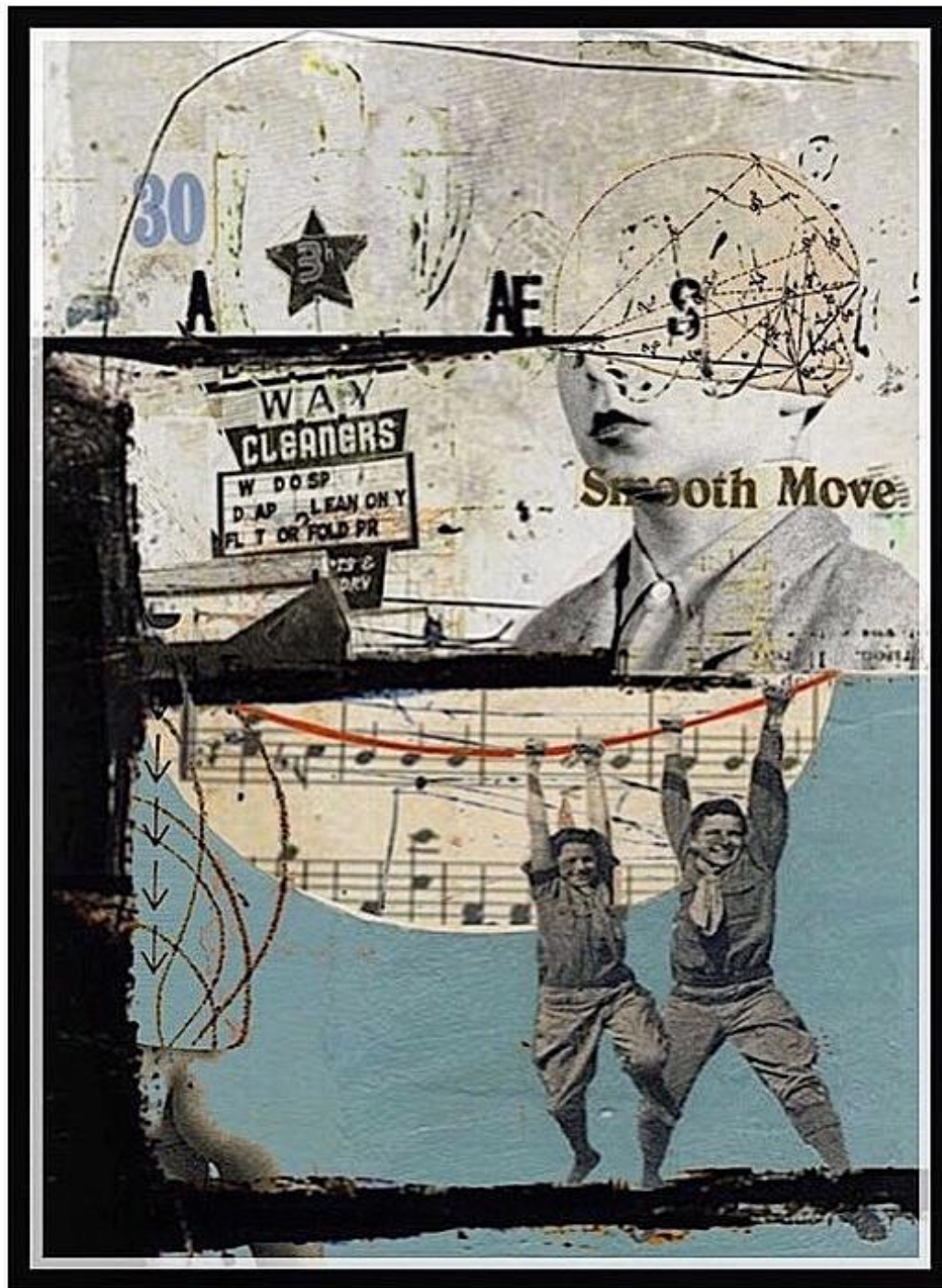
**Ideas:** Societal standards and the effects of social media  
**Materials:** Digital media  
**Processes:** Digital collage

Work 2



- Ideas:** Representing human emotion through texture
- Materials:** Digital media using imagery from vintage magazines and newspapers
- Processes:** Digital collage

Work 3



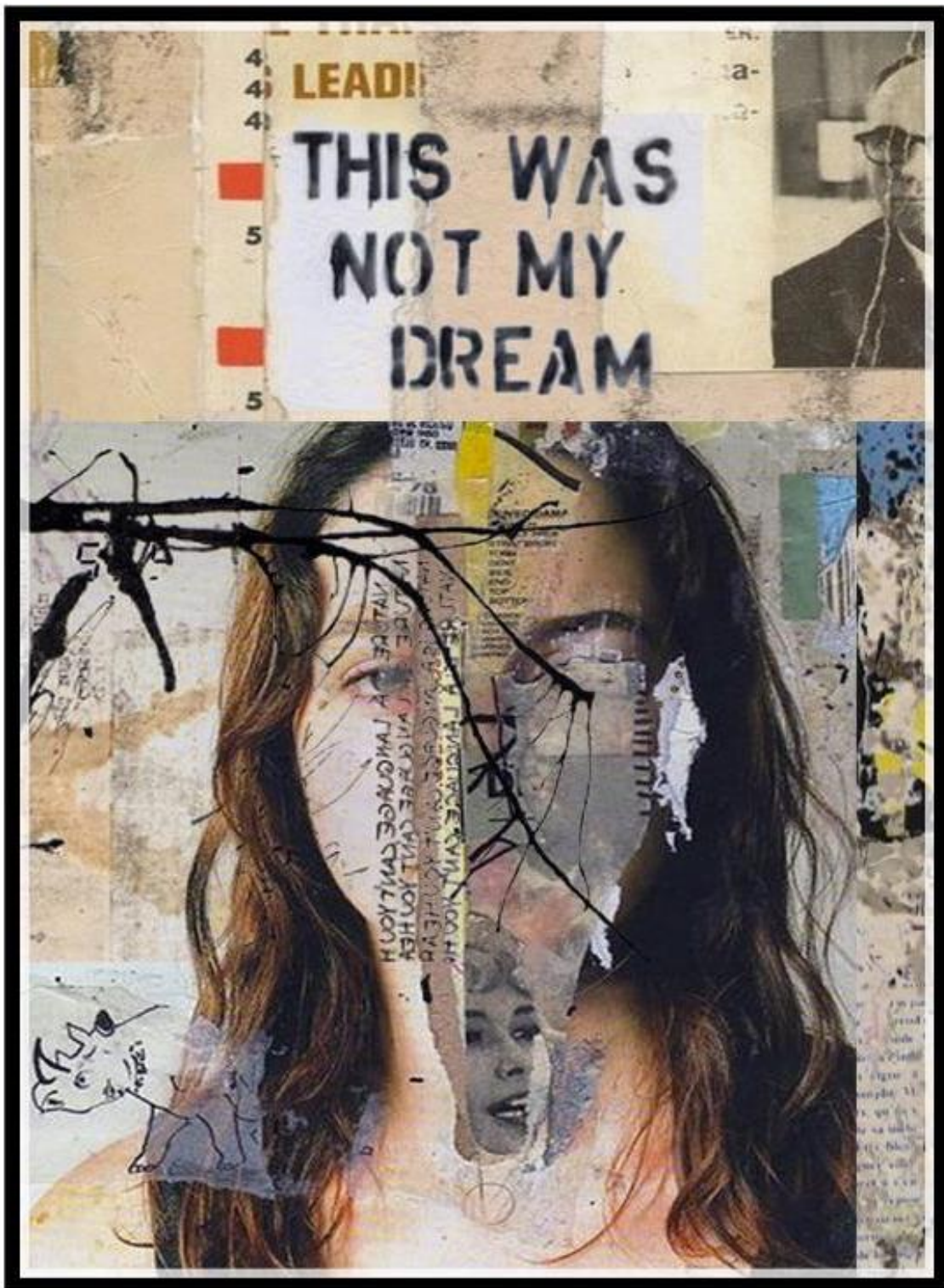
- Ideas:** Representing human emotion through texture
- Materials:** Digital media using imagery from vintage magazines and newspapers
- Processes:** Digital collage

## Work 4



- Ideas:** Societal standards and the effects of social media
- Materials:** Digital media using imagery from vintage magazines and newspapers
- Processes:** Digital collage

Work 5



- Ideas:** Societal standards and the effects of social media
- Materials:** Digital media using imagery from vintage magazines and newspapers
- Processes:** Digital collage

Score: 5

### **Scoring Commentary**

#### **2-D Skills**

There is visual evidence of advanced 2-D skills in this collection of surrealistic digital collages. In all the work, the student clearly demonstrates a highly developed skill in exploring the 2-D principles of figure/ground relationships, rhythm, contrast, hierarchy, opacity, transparency, emphasis and balance. Work 4 exhibits thoughtful consideration of the use of texture on a 2-D surface, as the student alternates between cut and torn edges in fragmenting the imagery. The composition is balanced, with text and imagery effectively integrated. Color is used selectively but thoughtfully, as the pink background contrasts with the greens in the plant imagery obscuring half of the woman's face. The visual evidence throughout all five pieces shows a sophisticated level of selecting, integrating and altering magazine fragments, text, painterly calligraphy complimented with a rich understanding of color harmonies.

#### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

Visual relationships among material, processes, and ideas are not only evident but are fully integrated with one another. Across all of these five works, the student is exploring emotion through texture, and also noted a specific interest in representing the effect of media on teenagers. To borrow the language of print media – magazine typefaces and photos – reflects a thoughtful consideration of the ways that materials can effectively relate to ideas. In building these digital collages, the student has employed processes of layering and repetition that deepen the exploration of the ideas at hand. In each work there are motifs that are repeated in subtle ways that lead the viewer's eye across the page: the repetition of calligraphic loops in work 2, the echo of repeating line of a bar code with lines of text in work 4 and the black brush marks in work 1. The multiple layering of vast amount of imagery could easily overwhelm but the student clearly shows a sophisticated understanding of hierarchy with collage.

#### **Writing**

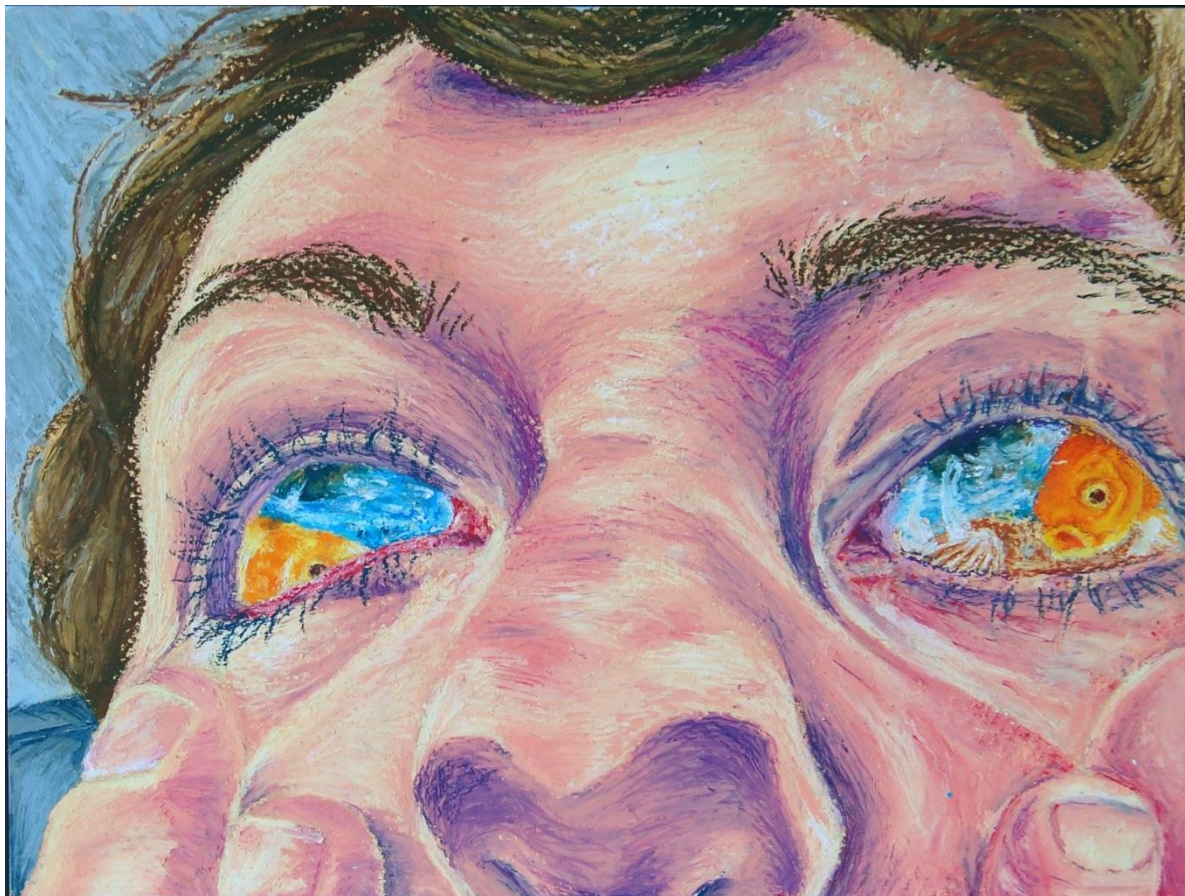
Written evidence identifies materials (vintage magazines), processes (digital collage techniques), and ideas (representing emotions and the effects of the media through the use of texture and layering in surreal collages).



**SAMPLE 5**

**Student work and written evidence:**

**Work 1**



**Ideas:** Symbiotic relationship  
**Materials:** Oil pastels on charcoal paper  
**Processes:** Scraping, baby oil, layering

**Work 2**



**Ideas:** Mutualistic relationship  
**Materials:** Oil pastels on charcoal paper  
**Processes:** Scraping, baby oil, layering

**Work 3**



**Ideas:** Painful, infectious relationships  
**Materials:** Oil pastels on charcoal paper  
**Processes:** Scraping, baby oil, layering

**Work 4**



**Ideas:** Parasitic/toxic relationship  
**Materials:** Oil pastels on charcoal paper  
**Processes:** Scraping, baby oil, layering

Work 5



**Ideas:** Toxic relationship; painful, parasitic  
**Materials:** Oil pastels on charcoal paper  
**Processes:** Scraping, baby oil, layering

Score: 4

## **Scoring Commentary**

### **2-D Skills**

Throughout each of these five pieces, there is evidence of consideration of a range of 2-D design elements in making the images as dynamic as possible. In most of the works, the student makes effective use of color contrast to convey a sense of uneasiness and represents a range of believable textures through drawing and scraping techniques using oil pastels. Works 3 and 5 demonstrate especially effective figure-ground relationships, and the use of pattern and repetition in the skin textures in these pieces creates visual emphasis as well.

### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

The work and writing indicate an intent to symbolically represent kinds of relationships by interpreting qualities like “infectious,” “parasitic,” or “toxic” literally, as physical infections. The materials and processes relate to the ideas being explored, but they could perhaps have been pushed further with additional experimentation. In work 3, for example, the use of color, perspective, and the texture represented in the skin infection powerfully represents the idea of “infection,” but the work is still rendered in a tightly controlled way that is somewhat at odds with the student’s overall ideas. The noted processes of scraping and layering of oil pastel lend themselves well to the ideas being explored, but they are difficult to detect in the work. The student might have found ways to extend the application or removal of materials or worked with other additives and or subtractive methods to push this idea further. In these five works, the materials and processes never become fully integrated into the same work at the level of depth and richness of the ideas.

### **Writing**

The written evidence notes that the student is aiming to symbolically represent a number of relationship types – for example, a “symbiotic relationship,” a “toxic relationship,” and “painful, infectious relationships,” in a series of oil pastel portraits. The writing is minimal—further elaboration on the ideas might have been helpful to the review process. Similarly, processes of “scraping” and “layering” have been noted for some works; more information on exactly what was scraped and layered, and how, might lend further insight into a viewer’s understanding of the work.

**SAMPLE 6**

**Student work and written evidence:**

**Work 1**



**Ideas:** I looked for shadows as the emphasis in this photo.  
**Materials:** Digital photograph  
**Processes:** Digital photograph adjusted with photo editing software

## Work 2



**Ideas:** I increased the saturation bringing out the red in order to add emphasis and looked for the green lines to add structure.

**Materials:** Digital photograph

**Processes:** Digital photograph adjusted with photo editing software



### Work 3



**Ideas:** I used the shadows as repetition in this image and I looked for the contrast between the light and shadows.

**Materials:** Digital photograph

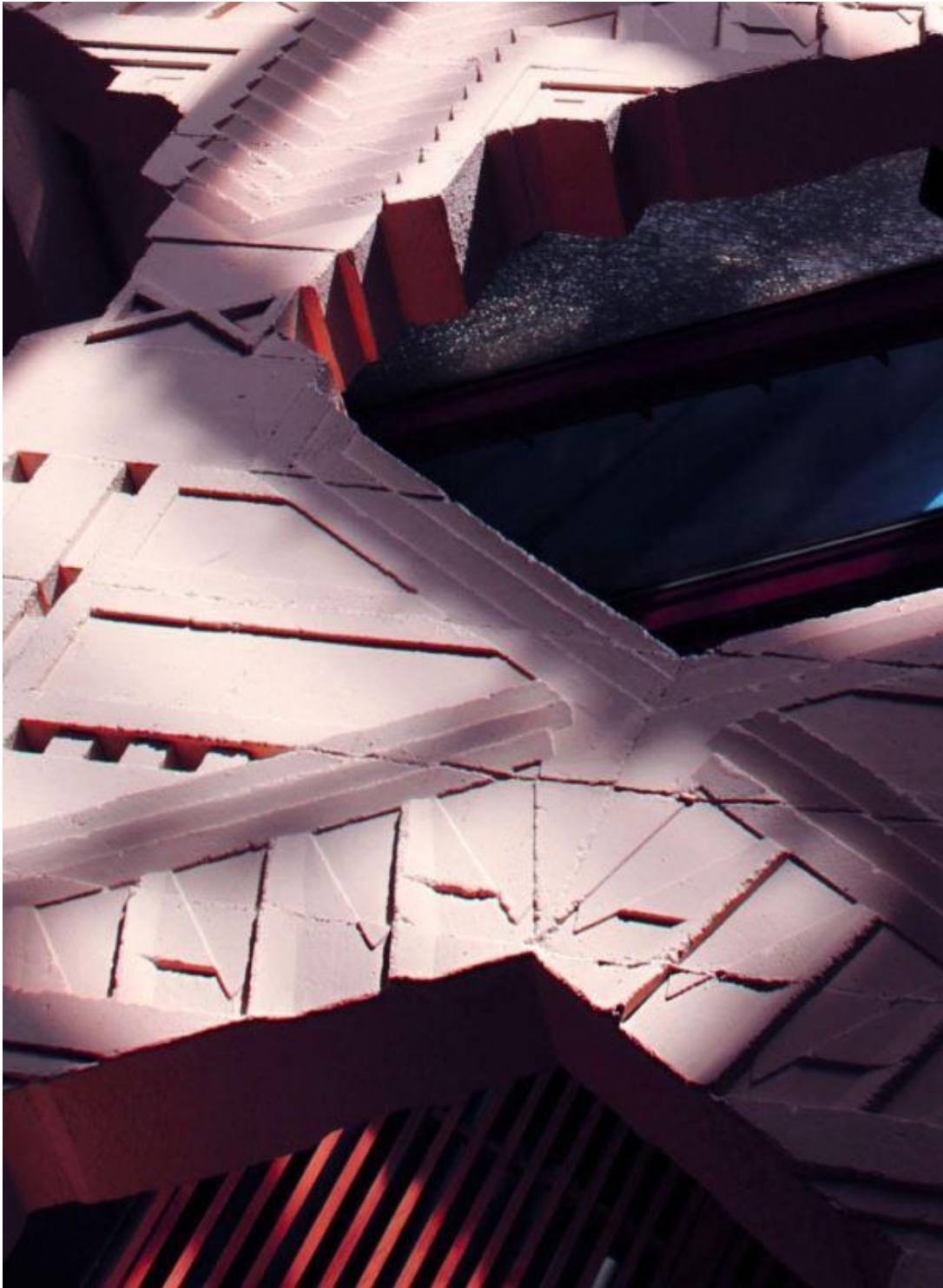
**Processes:** Digital photograph adjusted with photo editing software

## Work 4



- Ideas:** I found a primary color scheme in this photo, this adds variety to the composition and contrast between the bright red and light blue.
- Materials:** Digital photograph
- Processes:** Digital photograph adjusted with photo editing software

Work 5



**Ideas:** I looked for the bright red in the architecture as emphasis and depth between the background and foreground.

**Materials:** Digital photograph

**Processes:** Digital photograph adjusted with photo editing software

Score: 3

### **Scoring Commentary**

#### **2-D Skills**

There is visual evidence in these works demonstrating moderate 2-D design skills. In work 1, repetition and shape are used to create movement with contrast as emphasis in the sky. Shadows are used as a means of abstraction throughout the five works, but it is approached somewhat inconsistently. The work relies on shape, repetition, color and the existing line structure of the architecture in the buildings to create abstract compositions, but the images are never fully abstracted. The student might have considered exploring their interest in abstraction through more complex compositions by experimenting with aspects of opacity and transparency, time or juxtaposition to create more highly developed compositions that connect back to ideas of abstraction that go beyond repetition.

#### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

Visual relationships among materials, process and ideas are evident, but unclear and inconsistent. In the written evidence, the student's stated ideas relate to the elements of art and principles of design – for example, in work 3, the artist notes, "I used the shadows as repetition in this image and I looked for the contrast between the light and shadows." It seems possible that the student was aiming to explore abstraction, particularly through the use of balance, contrast, and repetition, using architecture as a point of departure, but it is unclear whether this is truly what was intended in these works. If the student was interested in pushing the exploration of abstraction and design principles further, it might have been beneficial to experiment with additional photographic processes that could allow for deeper exploration of the stated ideas. Experimentation with processes such as double exposure, and varying shutter speeds might allow for more compositions. As an element of process, the student might also have benefited from research of contemporary artists who explore design elements and abstraction through photography.

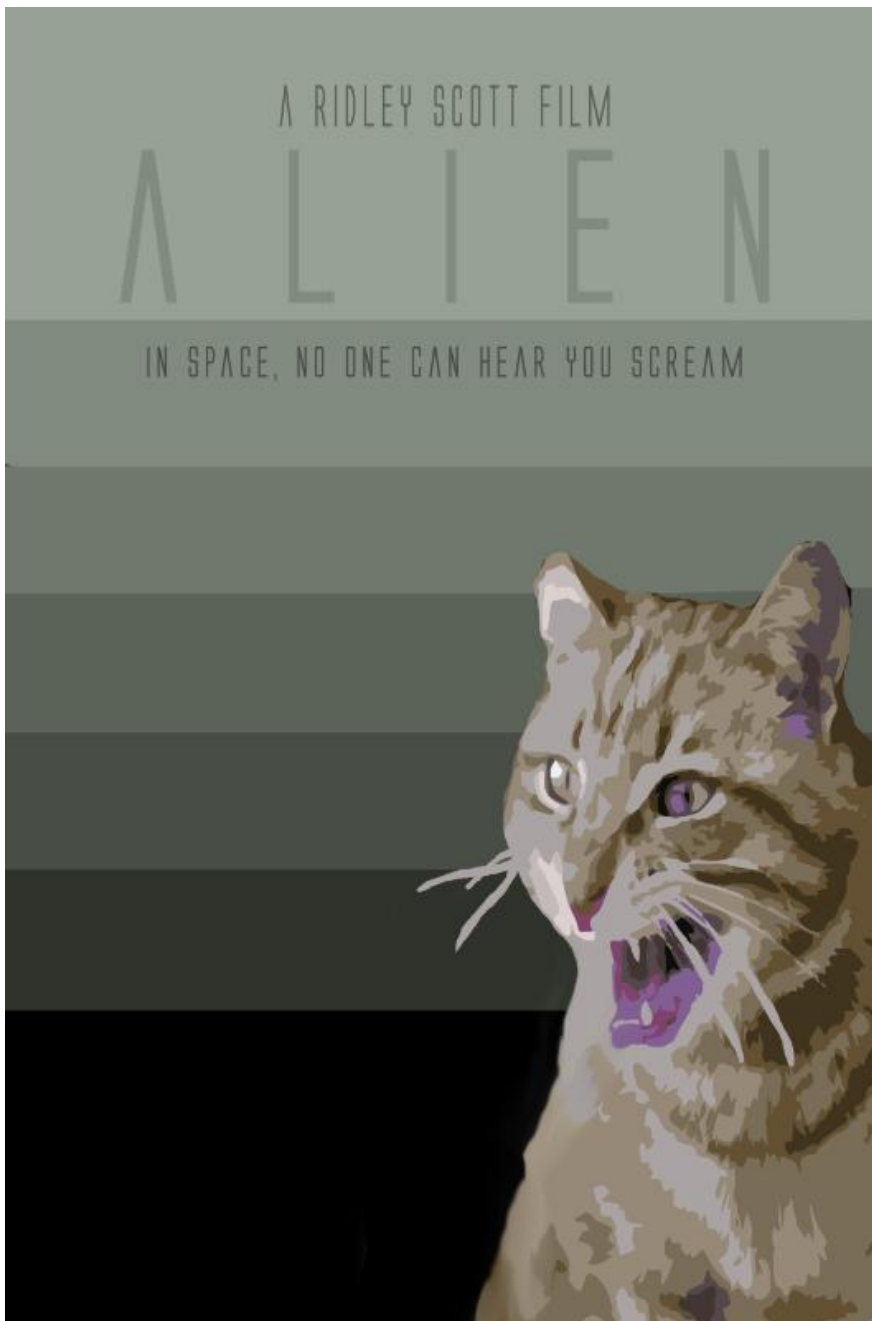
#### **Writing**

Written evidence identifies materials (digital photography) as well as general, formal ideas for each piece that has been presented. Elaboration on these ideas, as well as processes, may give viewers more insight into what the student was aiming to achieve in each work, and why particular methods were selected.

**SAMPLE 7**

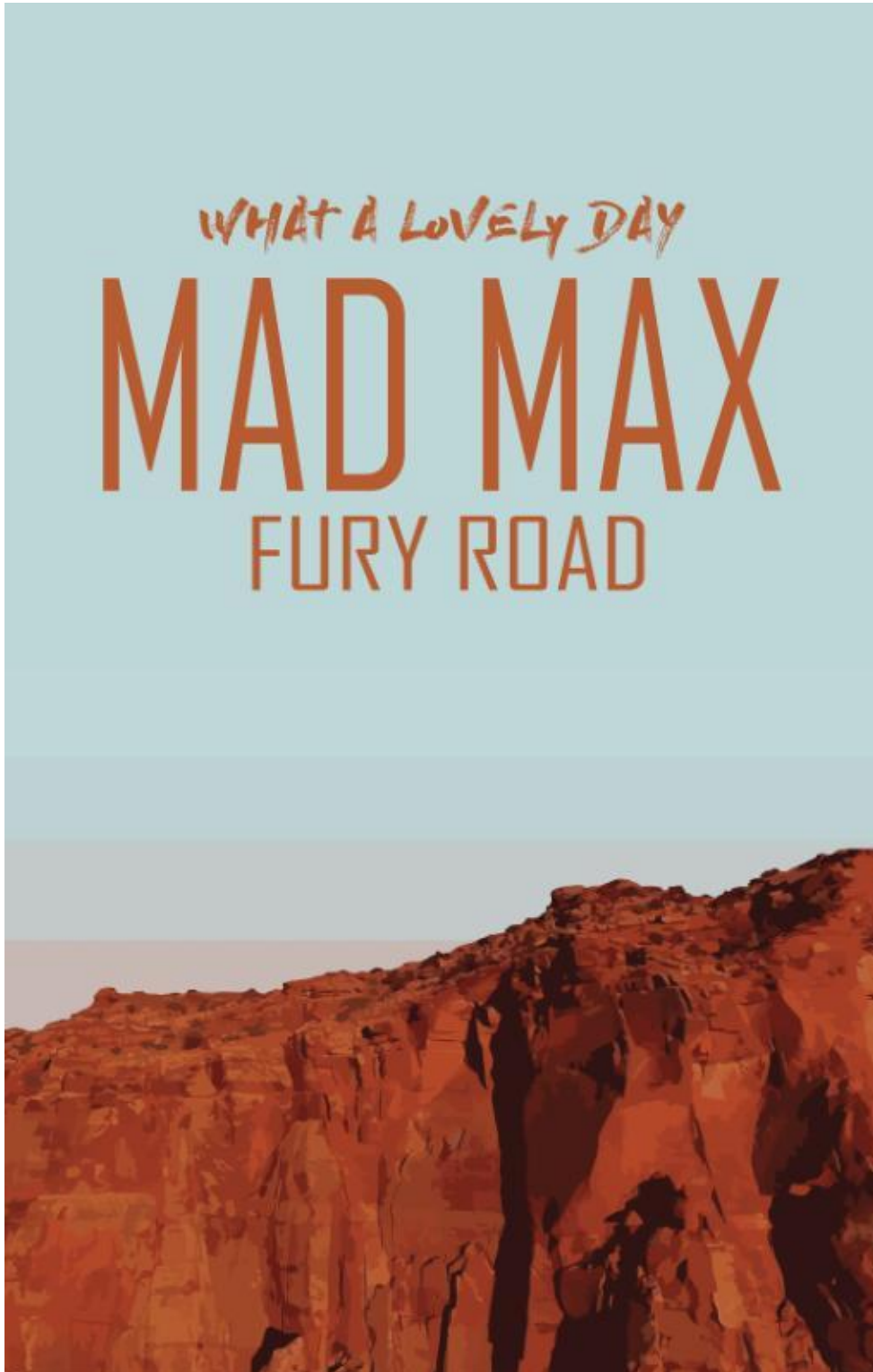
**Student work and written evidence:**

**Work 1**



- Ideas:** Make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.

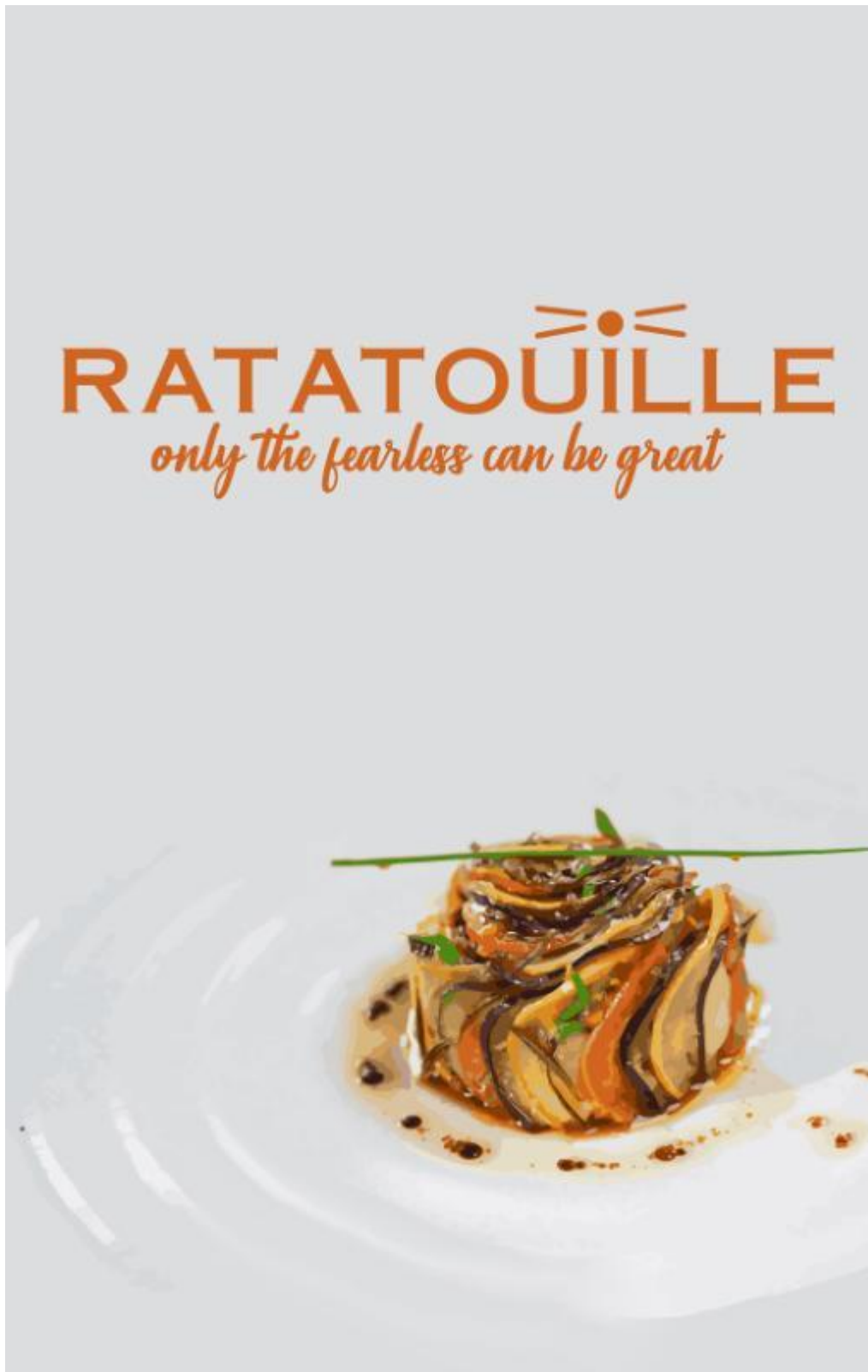
Work 2



- Ideas:** Make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.



### Work 3



- Ideas:** Make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.





## Work 4



- Ideas:** Make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.



Work 5



- Ideas:** Make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.



Score: 3

### **Scoring Commentary**

#### **2-D Skills**

The student has clearly made deliberate 2-D design decisions in the consideration of composition, balance, and use of color, but some of these choices are executed more successfully than others. While all of the works presented are clearly minimalist, compositional choices are somewhat redundant across all five examples, reflecting an overall moderate level of 2-D design skills. Placement of key factors (objects or text) remain in the lower right corner of an asymmetrically balanced layout, as in works 1, 2 and 4. In works 1, 2, and 3, there are large amounts of negative space that are not purposefully used to strengthen the design. There are design challenges related to the use of color and contrast as well: in work 1, for example, the color of the text is so similar to the background the letters are hard to discern. There is also little exploration of how the text could be further manipulated (through shape, scale and /or color) to add more “information” or emotion to the films being addressed.

#### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

These five works reflect a clear consideration of the relationship of materials, processes, and ideas, but the artist’s particular choices and the correspondence between these three elements are at times unclear.

Material and process (graphic design and digital manipulation of imagery) relates to the product being considered (movie posters), but aspects of the student’s design process and decision-making, particularly in the choice and placement of the key content of each poster, occasionally does not further a viewer’s understanding of key ideas about the films being represented. Many of the objects that are foregrounded in the posters (the cat, the rock cliffs, the food and the sword handle) are indeed included in the films referenced, but they hold minor “roles” or background to the overall plot. The visual choices in the ways that these key elements are represented can be confusing as well: it is unclear, for example, why *Ratatouille*, an animated film, would be represented solely by a large scale, low-res, realistic image of food.

#### **Writing**

Materials, processes, and ideas have been identified for all five works, and are described in a uniform way throughout: all three fields are presented identically for all five works. Written evidence describes the general parameters that the student was working in while creating these posters: “make modern film posters much more minimalist rather than giving each character in film their own spot.” Materials are noted as “digital illustration” for all pieces, and processes describe the student’s intent in the ways that materials were used: “Using color, an object or character and font symbolic or present in the film to describe or set mood.”

SAMPLE 8

Student work and written evidence:

Work 1



- Ideas:** Lies hidden in cuteness through game design: a trickster cat who invites a girl to play with him
- Materials:** Digital illustration
- Processes:** The contrast in value of the light and dark colors represent the duality of the lies

## Work 2



- Ideas:** Lies hidden in cuteness through game package design: a trickster cat who invites a girl to play with him
- Materials:** Digital print media
- Processes:** Delicate bows, soft pink colors, and playful candy cane and polka dot patterns symbolize cuteness





Work 3



**Ideas:** Lies hidden in cuteness through game design: girl unknowingly falls into trap, must fight through lies to escape.

**Materials:** Digital illustration

**Processes:** Game design format

## Work 4



**Ideas:** The youthful activities that hide the sinister side of the evil cat and the rotten child  
**Materials:** Digital illustration  
**Processes:** game animation storyboard: disguising evil intentions in cute exteriors, the innocent facade liars often show.

Work 5



- Ideas:** Video game layout: it is one's choice to be honest or not
- Materials:** Vector illustration
- Processes:** Dark color palette symbolize dishonesty

Score: 3

## **Scoring Commentary**

### **2-D Skills**

Overall, these works demonstrate moderate skills overall, with a good use of color to create unity and contrast amongst the images. The inconsistent use of figure/ground relationships to create balanced compositions and logical illusion of space is not as strong. For example, in work 4, the action is pushed to the foreground and the emphasis is awkwardly placed instead on a large, empty rug that is not in perspective correctly relative to the point of view in the rest of the space. The disc and package designs in work 2 are some of the stronger designs in the portfolio due to the repetitive pattern, playful movement of shapes in space, and flowy line use in the font choice. However, more consistent textures, different font choices, and additional repetitive patterns would further push these connections in works 3 and 5.

### **Materials, Processes, and Ideas**

All of the images presented relate to character design and packaging, and are logically created through digital processes. However, the use of digital tools is inconsistent and the student's intention appears to not always align with execution. For example, the combination of both flat vector-drawn images and painted, dimensional figures in work 3 is ambiguous, and in work 5, the icon-like elements create an over-simplified use of space within a game. The horizontal formats in works 4 and 5 clearly relate to the proportion of a screen and illustrate moments in the game. However, the choice of orientation in works 1 and 3 are inconsistent with either screen or package proportions, and the purpose of the illustrations is also unclear. Overall, the cuteness is visually evident, but the ideas of lying are lost in most of the imagery.

### **Writing**

The student concisely identifies general ideas such as "lies hidden in cuteness through game design" and they further describe the game plot with "a trickster cat who invites a girl to play with him." Materials are listed as "digital illustration" and "print media," but the student could be more clear by including specific programs to help the viewer assess the applications. They do help explain the color choices in the process notes by stating, "the light and dark colors represent the duality of the lies" and "soft pink colors symbolize cuteness."