Jason Reade

My journey in art has been a mirror of my personal development; life's many challenges have been softened through art. Art has long been a place for me to find solace when otherwise I felt anxious and ill at ease. It allows me to focus in, to just flow and glide, to just be. My hope is to provide a therapeutic portal through my art for viewers to feel authentic and connect to their center.

Decades ago, starting with darkroom and digital photography, I published a volume of my photographic vision, then progressed through three dimensional textiles, ceramics, and metal art. All along, these artistic ventures slowly allowed me to make sense of the world. Their many facets provided various filters for me to understand people better. Next, I turned to works on paper, exploring numerous different media until I finally found my voice in oil painting, a voice I was happy to hear.

I've been influenced by and developed an affinity for Renaissance and Impressionist painters including Caravaggio, DaVinci and Van Gogh. I could relate to these troubled young men. Caravaggio and I have a likeness because early on in my creative journey, I felt close to the darkness of the world. His choice of subject matter and use of chiaroscuro emboldened me to embrace contrast and the beauty of imperfections. DaVinci's brilliance inspired me to expand my own mind. Van Gogh helped liberate the artist in me since his canvases were so innovative and expressive, not confined. He, too, had his own unique voice that stemmed from his disability. I relate to Van Gogh's personal struggle, his discipline and exploration of color, all that carried him through.

As my art has evolved, I've continued to brighten up emotionally and in my use of color. My current work reflects how painting uplifts me and demonstrates my personal use of color families and interrelationships as a symbolic language. Like the alphabet, colors build from one unit into a word then a sentence and finally a paragraph that convey meaning. Nuance of shades and hues, primary, secondary and tertiary added with contrast become like sign language to express what lies within. The selection of works in my Capstone exhibit represents a culmination of years of building up my ability to communicate my vision through paint: my selection of colors, brushes, strokes, rhythms, patterns, shapes, and textures. While I aspire to a greater degree of professionalism and finesse that will only come by continuing my exploration of the medium, this collection shows my advancement thus far.

Oil painting and the ability to use my own voice in the arts means the world to me. I feel that being able to create what I want and change things into what I envision them to be is one of the greatest gifts a person can have. A unique visual "voice" is a beautiful thing and that is what I aim for.

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