



Annika Lahr

Fall 2022

Capstone - Painting

Department of Art and Art History

**Artist Statement:**

My series of oil paintings explores the relationship between gender roles and societal expectations from a feminist viewpoint. I explore concepts of femininity and masculinity within western hegemonic ideals and interoperate ideas of the gaze through my work. I am interested in the preconceived perceptions of gender that influence ways of seeing. I aim to present these issues within my paintings by combining realism and abstraction, two art styles that I reference particularly in their abilities to have conflicting interactions and multidimensional elements.

Organic versus the structural and rigid implications of form I feel reflect a level of feminine and masculine stereotypes. In relation, Cubism and Surrealism especially influence my practice because they question our means to understand life outside of our reality. Color interactions, form, and movement are all technical elements in the production of my work. Experimenting with these elements allow me to question how images can be distorted and altered to have multiple meanings.

My process involves compiling recognizable imagery, specifically of the human body,

natural environments, and symbols which are then layered and merge together as one image. My interest in the human form comes from the idea of self-awareness of our own bodily autonomy and how this serves as a form of reflected gender identity. My reference images later develop into the physical painting which then offers a certain level of intimacy with the viewer. Viewer interaction is particularly important to me as the distortion within the paintings can vary from short to wide distances. Spatial awareness can offer a chance for the viewer to recognize patterns of seeing. On a broader scale, I am motivated to understand audience perception of my work and I question the ways they interoperate the narratives hidden within each piece. Through my studies of feminist viewpoints, I have gained a deep sense of personal understanding of my own gender identity and my creativity allows me to explore these feelings through an introspective process. While I aim to express my own experiences, my work is not meant to express a single narrative. Ambiguity is a constant motivational concept in my series, and I hope to inspire others to search for their own level of introspectiveness. I am interested in developing this series further to create a communal discussion around gender issues and pushing the limitations of traditional painting with new non-conventional ideas.

**Title****Original Format**

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Figure 1: Daze

Oil on canvas 24 in x 30 in

Figure 2: Desire

Oil on canvas 18 in x 24 in

Figure 3: Tranquility

Oil on canvas 18 in x 24 in

Figure 4: Lilly

Oil on canvas 16 in x 20 in

Figure 5: Sync

Oil on canvas 12 in x 24 in



Figure 1: Daze



Figure 2: Desire



**Figure 3: Tranquility**



**Figure 4: Lilly**



**Figure 5: Sync (Diptych)**