Living Trompe-l'œil Painting Project

Trompe-l'œil (French for "deceive the eye"); is an art technique that uses realistic imagery to create the optical illusion that the depicted objects exist in three dimensions. Forced perspective is a comparable illusion in architecture.

Alexa Meade is an American installation artist best known for her portraits painted directly onto the human body and inanimate objects in a way that collapses depth and makes her models appear two-dimensional when photographed. What remains is "a photo of a painting of a person, and the real person hidden somewhere underneath." She takes a classical concept — trompe l’œil, the art of making a two-dimensional representational painting look like a real three-dimensional space — and turns it on its head by doing the opposite, making real life appear to be a painting.

Meade’s Living Paintings series is a collection of portraits painted directly onto models, using acrylic paints to make the three-dimensional subject appear two-dimensional. Only the unpainted parts — typically the hair and eyes — reveal “an optical illusion that blurs the lines of where reality ends and art begins.” The work combines painting, photography, art installations and performance art.

STEP ONE: RESEARCH Alexa Meade artwork on-line and ANSWER the questions on this attached handout “Alexa Meade’s Living Trompe-l’œil Paintings”.

STEP TWO: BRAINSTORM and DRAW/PAINT in your sketchbook 3 different conceptual sketches of colour schemes, use of line and clothing/sunglasses (used/old). Consider basic colour theory:

1) Monochromatic Colour Scheme (One chosen colour – apply a variety of different values - shades & tints)
2) Analogous Colour (Three chosen colours beside each other on the Colour wheel - apply a variety of different values – shades & tints)
3) Complementary Color Scheme (Two chosen colours that are opposite to its complementary on the Colour Wheel - apply a variety of different values - shades & tints)
4) Split Complementary Color Scheme (One chosen colour and the two colours adjacent each other on the Colour wheel - apply a variety of different values - shades & tints)

Have your sketches approved by the teacher before starting your painting. WRITE your Artistic Statement Template to document your artistic process. REVIEW: the acrylic painting techniques in this handout.

STEP THREE: PAINT your work following your approved conceptual sketch and begin painting your composition.

WRITE your Artistic Statement Template to document your artistic process. PHOTOGRAPH your model and add a background in Adobe Photoshop and then PRINT your finished mixed media work in colour.

STEP FOUR: REFLECT: Answer the following questions using the elements and principles of design and complete your Artistic Statement Template for formal evaluation.

1. What part of your finished project did you find most successful and why?
2. What part of your finished project did you find least successful and why?
3. If you had to do this project, what part would you change or improve on & why?
Painting Techniques
There are so many ways of painting with acrylic that no book can possibly do justice to them all. However there are certain basic techniques:

Opaque Technique: The simplest way to work with acrylic is to squeeze the color directly from the container onto the palette, brush in just enough water to produce a creamy consistency, and then apply masses of solid colour to the painting surface. And the second layer of colour will hide the first. For obvious reasons, this is called the opaque technique. It’s a rapid, direct way to paint.

Transparent Technique: If you add much more water to the colour, you’ll produce a pool of tinted water called a wash. You can see right through it to the surface of your palette, and you’ll also see through the transparent colour when you brush it onto the painting surface. The dried paint is like a sheet of coloured glass. A second coat will modify the first coat, the two will mix in the viewer’s eye but one coat won’t conceal another. That’s why this is called the transparent technique.

Scumbling: To create tonal gradations from dark to light, or shade one colour into another - it’s important to learn how to handle the brush. Scumbling is a kind of scrubbing motion that spreads a veil of colour across the surface. When scumbling, you want other colors to show thru each layer.

Dry Brush: is a painting technique in which a paint brush that is relatively dry but still holds a paint load is applied to a dry support such as paper or primed canvas. The resulting brush strokes have a characteristic scratchy look that lacks the smooth appearance that washes or blended paint commonly has.

Masking: can describe materials used to control the development of a work of art by protecting a desired area from change. Masking or painters tape can be used to cover a particular area from another paint layer. Usually used in painting to create a precise, sharp, hard or straight lines.

Combining Techniques: Naturally, there are many ways of combining these techniques. In painting a portrait head, it’s common to paint the lighted areas opaquely and then paint the shadows in transparent colour. Scumbling might produce the soft transitions from light to shadow, at places such as the cheeks or the brow. As you spend more time working with acrylic you will find your own combinations.
Living Trompe-l'œil Painting Project
Artistic Statement Template
Artwork Title: __________________________

A) Influences from past and present works:

1. What is Alexa Meade’s background? (1)

2. How does Alexa Meade create her Living Trompe-l’oeil paintings? (1)

3. Using 6 elements and principles of design and analyse one of the works by Alexa Meade on the internet or this handout. (6)

B) Mixed Media techniques used in my work and how they support my intended visual message:

C) Reflect on the following questions:
   1. What part of your finished project did you find most successful and why?

   2. What part of your finished project did you find least successful and why?

   3. If you had to do this project, what part would you change or improve on and why?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge/Understanding</th>
<th>Level 0</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of the elements &amp; principles of design in the Living Trompe-l'œil Painting (e.g. colour, line, texture)</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates limited understanding of the elements &amp; principles of design in the Living Trompe-l'œil Painting. 0.25</td>
<td>Student demonstrates some understanding of the elements &amp; principles of design in the Living Trompe-l'œil Painting. 0.50</td>
<td>Student demonstrates considerable understanding of the elements &amp; principles of design in the Living Trompe-l'œil Painting. 0.75</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the elements &amp; principles of design in the Living Trompe-l'œil Painting. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking/Inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Trompe-l'œil Painting Project</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Student depicts a Living Trompe-l'œil painting with limited effectiveness. 0.25</td>
<td>Student depicts a Living Trompe-l'œil painting with some effectiveness. 0.50</td>
<td>Student depicts a Living Trompe-l'œil painting with considerable effectiveness. 0.75</td>
<td>Student depicts a Living Trompe-l'œil painting a high degree of effectiveness. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity: discusses research questions; artistic influences in the artistic statement</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Student discusses research questions; influences in the artistic statement with some clarity. 0.50</td>
<td>Student explains use of mixed media techniques in the artistic statement with some clarity. 0.50</td>
<td>Student explains use of mixed media techniques in the artistic statement with considerable clarity. 0.75</td>
<td>Student explains use of mixed media techniques in the artistic statement with a high degree of clarity. 1</td>
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<td>Reflective Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Trompe-l'œil Painting</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates limited effectiveness in demonstrating the creative process and following procedures. 5-6</td>
<td>Student demonstrates some effectiveness in demonstrating the creative process and following procedures. 5-6</td>
<td>Student demonstrates considerable effectiveness in demonstrating the creative process and following procedures. 7-8</td>
<td>Student demonstrates superior effectiveness in demonstrating the creative process and following procedures. 8-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application</td>
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<td>Creative Process: Ability to solve a series of artistic problems, showing an awareness of formal qualities, visual conventions, and relevant ideas and concepts.</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Preliminary sketches are poor/incomplete. Concepts are poor/incomplete. Planning is tentative or non-existent. (0.5)</td>
<td>Preliminary sketches are somewhat clear and complete. Concepts are somewhat complete. Planning is somewhat substantial &amp; shows some alternative ideas. (1-2)</td>
<td>Preliminary sketches are mostly complete. Concepts are complete. Planning is evident &amp; shows some divergent thinking is evident. (2-3)</td>
<td>Preliminary sketches are thorough and complete. Concepts are fully developed. Planning is exceptional &amp; shows considerable flexibility in thinking. (3+)</td>
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<td>Creative Process: Demonstration of Skill Development &amp; following procedures including Clean Up</td>
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<td>Uses elements &amp; principles of design and mixed media techniques to produce an effective artwork (e.g. colour, line, texture)</td>
<td>Work does not meet assignments expectations for this category. Incomplete.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates limited use of the elements &amp; principles of design and mixed media techniques to produce an art work of limited effectiveness. 1</td>
<td>Student demonstrates some use of the elements &amp; principles of design and mixed media techniques to produce an art work of some effectiveness. 2-3</td>
<td>Student demonstrates considerable use of the elements &amp; principles of design and mixed media techniques to produce an art work of considerable effectiveness. 3-4</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a high degree of using the elements &amp; principles of design and mixed media techniques to produce a highly effective art work. 5</td>
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A1. The Creative Process: apply the creative process to create a variety of artworks, individually and/or collaboratively.
A1.1 use various strategies, individually and/or collaboratively, to generate, explore, and elaborate on ideas and to develop and revise detailed plans for the creation of art works that address a variety of creative challenges (e.g., use brainstorming, concept webs, and/or group discussions to formulate original ideas for thematic works and/or works of personal expression; use research and discussions with a partner to explore and elaborate on ideas; use diagrams, notes, and/or outlines to help them formulate detailed plans for the art work; revise their plans on the basis of reflection)

A1.2 apply the appropriate stages of the creative process to produce and revise two- and three-dimensional art works using a variety of traditional and contemporary media (e.g., explore, experiment with, and refine their use of a variety of media; choose a medium/media appropriate for their planned art work; reflect on the effectiveness of preliminary versions of their work; revise their art work on the basis of reflection and useful feedback)

A2. The Elements and Principles of Design: apply the elements and principles of design to create art works for the purpose of self-expression and to communicate ideas, information, and/or messages;

A2.1 explore how elements and principle of design can be used to convey emotion and enhance personal expression, and use a combination of these elements and principles to create two- and three-dimensional art works that express personal feelings and communicate specific emotions to an audience (e.g., explore how variations in line, value, form, proportion, and emphasis can be used to convey various emotions; adapt their findings to enhance expression in their art work)

A3. Production and Presentation: produce art works, using a variety of media/materials and traditional and emerging technologies, tools, and techniques, and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of ways of presenting their works and the works of others.

A3.2 explore a range of traditional and current materials, technologies, techniques, and tools used by visual artists (e.g., Claude Monet’s use of optical colour mixing; Andy Warhol’s use of silkscreens; George Segal’s use of plaster bandage; Jean-Paul Riopelle’s use of a palette knife for impasto application of paint; Daphne Odjig’s use of interconnecting black lines), and adapt and apply them to create original art works

B1. The Critical Analysis Process: demonstrate an understanding of the critical analysis process by examining, interpreting, evaluating, and reflecting on various art works;

B1.1 analyse their initial response to art works (e.g., describe their initial reaction to an art work and determine which specific aspects of the work and their personal experience led to their reaction)

B1.2 deconstruct the visual content and the use of elements and principles of design in their own art work and the work of others (e.g., identify individual elements and principles and aspects of the visual content in an art work, interpret their function, and analyse how the artist has manipulated them to create impact, emphasis, mood, movement, and meaning; compare The Abduction of the Daughters of Leucippus by Peter Paul Rubens to the cover of a contemporary comic book about an action hero, with reference to the artists’ use of colour, line, shape, value, balance, and emphasis)

B1.3 explain, with reference to particular works, both historical and contemporary (e.g., J. M. W. Turner’s Rain, Steam, and Speed: The Great Western Railway; Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial), how knowledge of an art work’s cultural and historical context, achieved through research, has clarified and enriched their understanding of the work’s intent and meaning

B1.4 describe and reflect on the qualities of their own art works and the works of others, and evaluate the effectiveness of these works, using a variety of criteria (e.g., the works’ ability to convey a message or emotion; their technical merit; their stylistic qualities; the use of technique and successful manipulation of media/materials; the connection between form and message)

B2. Art, Society, and Values: demonstrate an understanding of how art works reflect the societies in which they were created, and how they can affect both social and personal values;

B2.1 analyse the function and social impact of different kinds of art works in both past and present societies (e.g., the use of art works for ritualistic and religious purposes; for social and/or political commentary; as propaganda; as symbols of economic or social power; to commemorate people and/or historical events; to instruct)

B2.2 reflect on and explain how creating and analysing art works has affected their personal identity and values and/or changed their perceptions of society and social issues (e.g., with reference to their emotional awareness and their ability to express themselves; their awareness of stereotypes; their understanding of the meaning of objects and symbols associated with a variety of cultural groups; their awareness of and relationship to their physical environment; their position on social issues such as censorship, discrimination, inequality)

C1. Terminology: demonstrate an understanding of, and use correct terminology when referring to, elements, principles, and other components related to visual arts;

C1.1 demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of design, and use terminology related to these elements and principles correctly and appropriately when creating or analysing art works (e.g., when describing how they have used elements and principles in a sculpture to convey a sense of movement)

C1.2 explain terminology related to a variety of techniques, materials, and tools (e.g., additive and subtractive techniques, blazing, gesso, intaglio, layering, palette knife, scumbling, transfers, single-lens reflex [SLR] cameras, software used to edit digital photographs), and use this terminology correctly and appropriately when creating, analysing, and/or presenting art works

C1.3 using appropriate terminology, explain the creative process and describe in detail the critical analysis process, with particular reference to the role of reconstruction in the latter process

C2. Conventions and Techniques: demonstrate an understanding of conventions and techniques used in the creation of visual art works;

C2.1 demonstrate an understanding of a wide variety of techniques that artists use to achieve a range of specific effects (e.g., techniques used to create the illusion of depth and perspective and to create texture on different surfaces; the use of additive and subtractive sculpture, layering, positive and negative space, and relief to create effects)

C2.2 demonstrate an understanding of a variety of conventions used in visual arts (e.g., allegory, expressive exaggeration, juxtaposition, synectics; conventions associated with heroic, narrative, naturalistic, propaganda, realistic, and satirical art), and explain how they are used in different types of art works

C3. Responsible Practices: demonstrate an understanding of responsible practices in visual arts.

C3.2 demonstrate an understanding of health and safety issues and conscientious practices associated with the use of materials, property, techniques, tools, and technologies in visual arts (e.g., the appropriate use of aerosol products, utility knives, printing presses, electrical tools, computers; an awareness of appropriate precautions to take when exposed to physical and chemical hazards), and apply these practices when creating and/or presenting art works