

My work has moved through various themes such as beauty standards and environmental impacts of human presence which all center around the broad theme of how human influence had shaped the world. Societal standards have not only shaped the ideas we have on male and female ideals but also on topics such as environmental beauty. I have related these themes to my own personal experiences as well as the stability of the world we live in in an existentialist manner by questioning the reason behind the societal structures we know. The primary medium I used throughout my pieces was painting since I felt that I could more easily manipulate the materials to give the piece a smooth, simple, and sophisticated aesthetic so that this could show the viewer how we are conditioned to see these things as more beautiful.

The piece that most accurately demonstrates the existentialism in my piece is my piece titled *Reaching*, which is inspired by Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* piece. More specifically, the element in the piece where the hand of Adam and God nearly touch which generates a feeling of longing to the way in which both their hands are positioned, not stretching yet still reaching out. Although this piece has a religious theme to it I decided to use it in my own piece to create a feeling of emptiness through the use of a black background. I wanted to depict the theme as showing the way societal standards have made us lack compassion as a society and see the world as a sink or swim scenario, regardless of other factors and how this has harmed our world.

These pieces were created with the viewer in mind since I hid these messages with beauty and pleasing mellow colors to show how we often don't see the harm our societal standards and opinions harm people around us. We, as a society, are too focused on the end result and often disregard the journey and all the effort and obstacles that it takes to get there which means that more often than not we disregard the inequality of obstacles certain people face over others. An example of this is my piece *Gatorade* (cool blue) which shows the positive way we are marketed products even though we often forget the way in which they harm the environment through the constant use of plastic that pollutes the planet. Another piece that shows this is my piece *Patronage* which uses vibrant hues to provide a high contrast ratio in the image and therefore provide emphasis to the products placed around the image. The background also consists of monotone black and white hues to show how advertising often exaggerates hues to make their products seem better than they might be to persuade us to purchase them. Throughout my works I wanted the viewer to see that the messages behind my pieces were hidden, and that this itself was a motif in my work for the way in which our own societal standards and opinions influence us to only look on the surface of things.

The order in which I chose to lay out my exhibition related to the chronological order of the flow of the theme in mind. The flow of theme starts off broad with the overall theme of existentialism at its core which then shifts into the exploration of the influence of this on societal beauty standard which shifts into the idea of how not just societal standards shape our perception of beauty but also the fact that these beauty standards are typical of caucasian features and how that shapes not just beauty standards but our environment as well. The focus starts as the impact on political climate and then shifts into a focus on actual climate and how we shape our views on climate and the overall wellbeing of the environment. Although I had various subthemes the overall theme remains existentialism and how human influence had shaped the world and impacted our society in the present time. This had always been an interest on mine since I have always noticed the big differences in standards there are for different people whether they are based on gender on another factor, standards shape people on how they chose to act and express themselves as well as how they chose to live their life with some accepting the standards and following them as closely as possible and some rejecting them and actively rebelling to them to take a stand.