



ORIGINAL ARTWORK

Nature Texture (2019)
Created in the style of
youth photography in
grades K through 8.

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Further information
on images
presented can be
found at

https://www.pinterest.com/becca_michael/child-art-study/

YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY

Introduction

For my research on youth created art, I focused on how students in grades kindergarten through 12 approach photography. The use of photography has become more accessible to students now with the use of smartphones with cameras. Younger grades can use photography in their art lessons because it is no longer using dangerous chemicals to develop film and photographs. After looking through images from various online galleries, I have found that there are some common techniques and subjects that are addressed in different age groups. These include objects, digitally manipulated images, and nature.

Elementary School Photography

In *Untitled* (David29690, n.d.), the student uses symbols that are commonly seen in a variety of media. The iconic smiley face shows how the artist is borrowing graphic images that they have seen to incorporate into their own work. Most of the elementary photography uses images from other resources to create new environments that are not able to be explored outside of their work (Malin, 2013). In *The Head* (Natalia2572, n.d.) and *Untitled* (David29690, n.d.) the photographers used physical objects to create a story. Instead of photographing in their natural environment, such as *Untitled* (Brandon2854, n.d.), they constructed the story they were telling in a controlled setting. Abstraction and digitally constructed environments become more apparent in the older elementary students, but can be seen in *Untitled* (Mia12090, n.d.). In this work, the student was prompted to find faces in everyday life.



David29690 (n.d.). *Untitled*.



Brandon2854 (n.d.).



Mia12090 (n.d.) *Untitled*.



Natalia2572 (n.d.) *The Head*.

While this is still using objects, the students had to look around them and image a face in things they saw. This creative thinking is important because it shows students the importance of observation. Manipulation of other images can be seen in *Untitled* (Jaxon3038, n.d.) and *Me and My Imaginary Friends* (Kam i236, n.d.). Both of the artworks are from the same project that focused on surrealism through digital manipulation. This manipulation is at a higher level than *Untitled* (David29690, n.d.) because these students are older and have a better understanding in incorporating the external images to make a story. The student in *Me and My Imaginary Friends* (Kami236, n.d.) has used the medium of photography to communicate what her imaginary friends look like, giving the viewer insight into her creative imagination. More manipulation takes place in *Rolls World* (Kekoa44, n.d.), but it is done through the use of nature. This is a common topic that is seen in *Untitled* (Brandon2854, n.d.).



Jaxon3038 (n.d.). *Untitled*.



Kami236 (n.d.). *Me and My Imaginary Friends*.



(Kekoa44, n.d.). *Rolls World* .

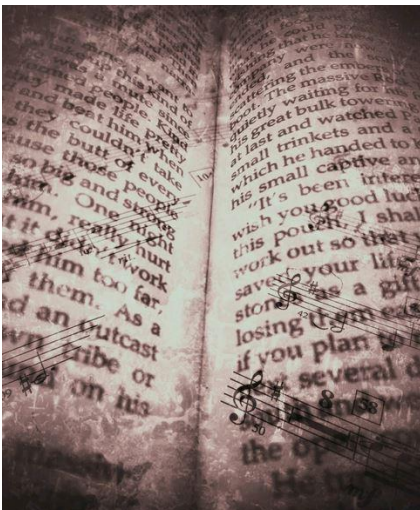
Middle School Photography

The middle school photography shows a heavy use of digital manipulation and filters that have been applied to the artwork. This can be seen in *A Belt* (Zachary25286, 2018-2019), *Favorite Subject- Using Perspective* (Makayla10930, 2018-2019), and *In the Wind* (Wyatt13103, 2018-2019). *A Belt* (Zachary25286, 2018-2019) uses simulated depth of field by blurring the sides of the image to create emphasis. This was added after the photograph that had been taken to bring the subject forward. *In the Wind* (Wyatt13103, 2018-2019) shows oversaturation and



Zachary25286 (2018-2019). *A Belt*

enhancements of the colors to create a more interesting photograph. *Favorite Subject- Using Perspective* (Makayla10930, 2018-2019) uses a more advanced technique of double exposure to combine multiple images on top of each other, but still utilizes a vignette effect to make the image appear worn. Compared to the elementary photographs, the images do not use as many objects to create a narrative and focus more on using



Makayla10930 (2018-2019).
Favorite Subject- Using Perspective.



Wyatt13103 (2018-2019). *In The Wind.*

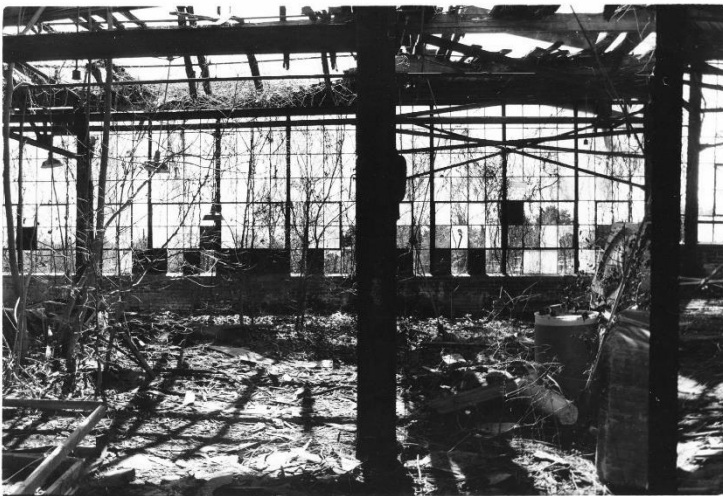


Untitled (1970)

the environment around them to create the story. The use of filters may be due to the increase in social media usage of students. Filters and additions of symbols can be used in applications like SnapChat and Instagram, which are both popular with middle and high school aged students. *Untitled* (1970) uses collage to create a story, similar to the elementary school art, but the craftsmanship of the image is at a higher level. This image is also physically collaged, as opposed to digital collage. This is due to the fact that it was created in 1970, before digital manipulation. This collage uses images from magazines to create the story. This incorporation of objects to create a story shows similar ideas as the elementary photographs.

High School Photography

The High School work shows more focus on experimentation and self-exploration. The use film is shown in *Untitled* (2017a) and *Untitled* (2017b). These images were created by the same student who was interested in the traditional method of photographing on film. From the images, there is more emphasis on Elements and Principles of Art, as opposed to the creation of a story. Their pieces, also, show more influence from other artists, which can be seen in *The Canal* (Drew6190, n.d.). High School students are able to analyze



Untitled (2017a).



Drew6190 (n.d.). *The Canal*.



Snow On Car (1980).



Untitled (2017b).

other artwork and borrow styles that they find interesting, such as Ansel Adams, to create their own images and narratives. *Snow On Car (1980)* is one of four images that show experimentation with different methods. This student manipulated the image to enhance colors, as well as remove the color from the image. Experimentation is what makes this series interesting and how the student uses different methods to create interest. These students may have had less guidelines to work with and focused on what they wanted to learn. Instead of creating work that was exactly what the teacher wanted, they might have been able to direct their own learning (Feldman, 1987).

Conclusion

After looking at these photographs, I have seen the common trends in what interests students and what they want to include in a photograph. All of these images are created based on a student's interpretation of a prompt or their own directed learning. Each have a unique interpretation of a style or a borrowing of a style. This shows that even in a classroom that has assignments, there can be choice-based learning that encourages students to create images that appeal to them (Jaquith, 2011). In this set of images, there is a rough scale of development that is being presented, while not concrete, can show insight into student development through

photography. This scale starts with the physical and moves to more abstract concepts as the student develops further. As the student moves through their education, they are exposed to more concepts and artists that they can borrow the styles from to create their own interpretations. Through guidance and coaching, the teachers can bring out the best of their students based on their own interests and motivations to create creative, unique work.

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