

Bricolage *Curriculum*

post-studio

post-media

post-elements & principles

Olivia Gude 2013

part 1

↳ On what basis do we make decisions about what to include and what to leave out of the art curriculum?

↳ One can't answer this question any longer by simply saying, "We include the basics, the fundamentals."

↳ Because.....

↳ **Because.....**

↳ For at least 30 years there have been many knowledgeable people in the world of art and art education (K-12 and college) who believe teaching modernist elements and principles and traditional drawing is not a sufficient introduction for an artist today.

↳ The field of art education must change.

↳ **Because.....**

↳ There is no guarantee that art education will remain in American schools if we do not create a field that is perceived as relevant to contemporary cultural and educational concerns.

Mapping Curriculum

post—elements & principles

post-media

post—studio practice

What is the criteria of selection?

- ↳ beyond established conventions
- ↳ beyond personal preferences
- ↳ beyond current standards

The new national Visual Arts Standards will be quite different and specific enough to be useful in planning curriculum.

On what basis do we decide? ↴

↴ affective evidence

emotions, sensations, inklings

↴ cognitive explanations

intellectual justifications

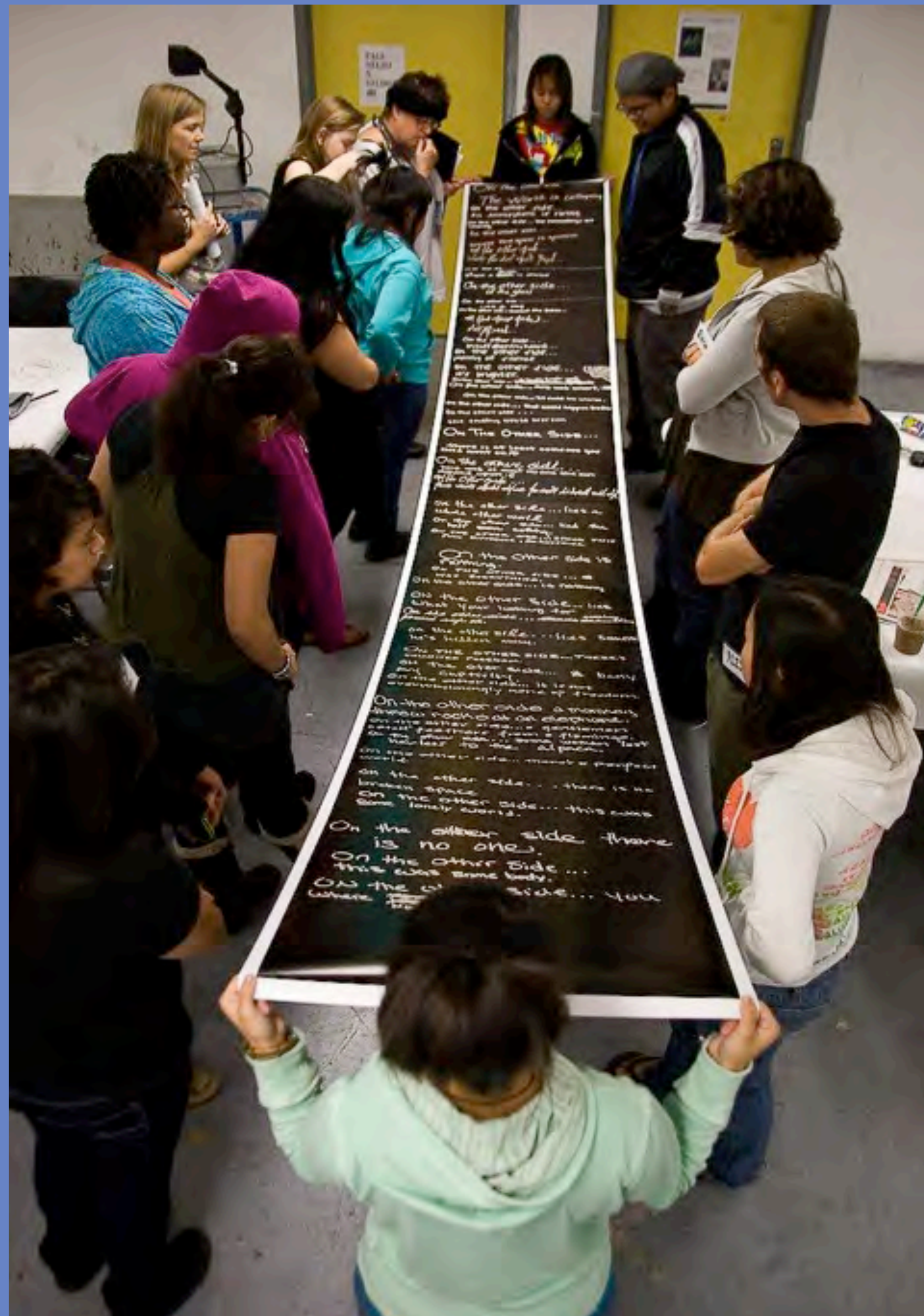
↪ affective evidence

emotions, sensations, inklings





































↗ cognitive explanations
intellectual justifications

What is the criteria of selection?



Ask 2 questions:

↳ Does this curriculum support students in engaging and making personally satisfying and meaningful works of art, craft and design?

↳ Does this curriculum adequately represent a range of the art, resources, aesthetic practices and cultural concerns in this society at this time?

↪ Is this curriculum faithful to the needs of students and communities?

↪ Is this curriculum faithful to the complexity of the discipline?

curriculum mapping

theme curriculum

is an excellent method for building conceptual complexity...

content or focus:

self and others in urban space

└→ What methods?

└→ What models?

└→ What projects?

Though the field of art education increasingly advocates for the importance of having clear criteria for judging the quality of a student's arts learning, we have not yet been as thorough and rigorous with ourselves in articulating the necessary qualities of the basic building block of visual arts curriculum—the *art project*. Perhaps the assumption that visual arts education will be *project-based* (unfortunately often translated in actual practice as *product-based*) has been so dominant and unquestioned, the field has not adequately theorized the structures, uses, varieties, and sequencing of these projects as an educational form.

In 1976, Arthur Elland published "The School Art Style: a Functional Analysis," in which he pointed out that there were distinct styles of art made in schools that were unlike art made in other settings. He argued that these school art styles did not actually create possibilities for free expression for youth, but instead served the symbolic purpose of representing to others that there were opportunities for creativity and free play in otherwise regimented school systems. Looking at the actual work produced based on a given project, Elland noted the lack of meaningful variation in the "art" that was created and famously concluded, "the self same creative activities may not be as free as they [initially] looked" (p. 41).

Drawing on characteristics identified by Brent Wilson, Elland described school art as "game-like, conventional, ritualistic, and 'rule-governed.' He also observed that "the school art style does not seem to be a pedagogical tool for teaching children about art in the world beyond the school, though this is its manifest function" (1976, pp. 38–39). Elland's conclusions that many of the art activities in schools do not actually support creative self-expression and that they are not effective in teaching students about methods of artmaking outside of school contexts, echoes in the literature of art education over the ensuing decades. Almost 40 years later there is lingering uneasiness among thoughtful scholars and teachers as they continue to observe and analyze the everyday practices of art education and as they question whether art projects made in schools can provide opportunities for students to truly explore personally meaningful subjects while supporting clear learning objectives about art content.

Many art educators and art education historians have grappled with questions of the appropriate philosophy, content, theory, scope, and sequence of visual arts education (Elland, 1990; Eisner & Day, 2004; Stankiewicz, 2001). What's striking is that whether the dominant or proposed paradigm is Discipline-based Art Education, creativity enhancement, visual culture, or another formulation,

Explore new strategies for making meaning in art projects, breaking free from traditional molds, and employing a variety of aesthetic strategies.

New School Art Styles: The Project of Art Education

OLIVIA GUDE

the range of projects that are actually taught in most schools has remained strikingly similar for several decades.¹ When I scan the suggested projects in popular project-sharing art education magazines, I see that many of the projects are eerily similar to those I saw in magazines as a young teacher in the 1970s, despite the many dramatic changes in the styles, materials, and methods of making meaning in contemporary art practices (Foster, 1983; Gude, 2004; Harrison & Wood, 1992; Riemenschneider & Grosenick, 1999; Wallis, 1984). The fact that suggested projects in such magazines are now routinely paired with a national art standard seems to have done little to encourage careful analysis by authors or editors of whether the instructions or resulting projects are actually in sync with the stated standard.²

We cannot envision and manifest new styles of art education without examining and reconsidering art education curriculum as it is currently taught. We must be willing to let go of some of the old familiar projects (and their myriad variations) in order to make room for other sorts of projects and other kinds of art experiences.

Sometimes it is suggested that school art rooms don't need projects at all, that students should be given the freedom to pursue their own creative agendas (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). While this is the ideal end point of quality art curriculum, most students today could not initially make good use of this sort of freedom without a great deal of individual support. When students are not introduced to a wide range of meaning-making strategies (and encouraged to analyze and re-purpose strategies they absorb from popular culture), they tend to fall back on hackneyed, kitschy image-making techniques. Because of logistical constraints of availability of materials, space, and time as well as the number of students in an average class, it is not realistic to assume that most art classes in school settings can (at least initially) function as open studios in which each student re-invents his or her own methodologies of making—discovering

artistic precedents, materials, and methods on a need-to-know basis, supported by teacher input when needed.

Thus, art projects are appropriate building blocks for visual art curriculum because good art projects encode complex aesthetic strategies, giving students tools to investigate and make meaning. Good art projects are not old school art-style recipes to achieve a good-looking product. Quality art projects are also no mere exercises in which students manipulate form according to teacher-prescribed parameters without any intrinsic purpose.

Good art projects are not assignments to illustrate or symbolize a theme, even an important theme, in students' lives. In an article inspired by Elland's "School Art Style," Tom Anderson and Melo Milbrandt list three strategic goals for curriculum that authentic engages students: "(1) the use of discipline-centered inquiry, (2) the construction of knowledge (rather than its passive acceptance), (3) teaching and learning that make connections beyond school" (1998, p. 14). Note that discipline-based inquiry is first on the list recognizing that there is no contradiction between teaching discipline-based knowledge and skills and making work that explore meaningful connections in students' lives. Indeed, choosing applicable contemporary means of artmaking (often emerging out of traditional methodologies) is a prerogative of making meaningful art that investigates contemporary life.

Art made in schools will inevitably be some form of "school art" defined by Elland as "a form of art that is produced in the school by children under the guidance and influence of a teacher" (1976, p. 37). However, the influence of teachers can support as well as stifle individual creativity and meaningful exploration of content. "School art" does not inevitably signify educational art activities that are inauthentic and rule-bound. New school art can be developed that skillfully and creatively utilize available materials, tools, technologies, critical theories and contexts to introduce students to a wide range of developmentally appropriate aesthetic



ART

EDUCATION

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- A Study of **CHANGE**
- Representing the **FUTURE** of Place
- Today's **TECHNOLOGIES**
- **ELEMENTS** of Realistic-Style Pictures

and more!

Criteria for quality projects

Explore new strategies for making meaning in art projects, breaking free from traditional molds, and employing a variety of aesthetic strategies.

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VALUE: contemporary uses and practices of a medium, over curriculum that merely recapitulates the history of the medium

Social Situations project. Rapidly changing technologies as well as contemporary commercial and fine art practices have shifted the ways in which photography is practiced and utilized. Eschewing the more traditional strategy in which photography mirrors the world as it is, many contemporary photographers (such as Cindy Sherman, Lorna Simpson and Charlie White) utilize carefully chosen costumes and sets. *Party Fight* directed by Yotiria Diaz. For the sequence of projects that led to this work, see the Spiral Workshop NAELA Portfolio, *Liminality: Alternative Practices* group.

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practices—means of artmaking based in particular methodologies of experiencing, producing, making meaning, and interpreting (Gude, 2008). With such an education, students can now (and then later as adults) utilize various aesthetic sensibilities and practices to frame and re-frame experience, to develop "their own unique idioms of investigating and making," and to generate patterns of perception that enable them to see the world with fresh insight (Gude, 2009, p. 10).

Propositions About What to Value and What to Avoid in Choosing and Constructing Curriculum

The possibilities for 21st-century art education cannot yet be fully known, envisioned, or articulated because the field is in the process of being re-imagined and revitalized. This is the contemporary research and development project of the field of art education being conducted by thousands of practitioners—art teachers, professors, community artists, teaching artists, and museum educators—in collaboration with their students and other community participants. New models, methods, objectives, contexts, and projects will be generated from a wide variety of cultural positions.³

My current contribution to this unfinished project of reimagining visual arts education is based on identifying a number of familiar, commonly taught projects and exercises. I then ask if there are other frameworks and valuing systems through which these projects can be reconsidered and then redesigned to broaden and deepen the potential for students to have meaningful experiences and to make meaningful art. This then supports students in developing more wide-ranging and nuanced understandings of the world, conducting investigations through gaining and utilizing relevant disciplinary knowledge and skills—rooted in the past and including the latest contemporary developments within various relevant disciplinary practices.⁴

↳ Criteria for quality projects

- ↳ Value engaging in authentic artistic processes over making facsimiles.
- ↳ Value contemporary practices of a medium, over curriculum that merely recapitulates the history of the medium.
- ↳ Value utilizing skills, forms, and vocabulary in actual contexts over de-contextualized exercises and recipes.
- ↳ Value: investigating over symbolizing.

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- ↳ Value: investigating over symbolizing.

↳ What is a project?

↳ What is a good project?
What does a good project do?

↳ What does a good project do?

↳ Introduces students to methods of making
complexity of the discipline

↳ Creates opportunities for students to make meaning
needs of students and communities

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projects=

vehicles of aesthetic investigation

vehicles of artistic investigation

encode methods

of experiencing

of engaging

of exploring

of working

of generating knowledge/insight

of being in the world

artistic practices

vehicles of aesthetic investigation

vehicles of artistic investigation

encode methods

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of being in the world

artistic practices=an artist's practice

What do we mean by artistic practice?

An artist's practice not only suggests the techniques or media an artist uses to create art, but also fundamentally the artist's conceptual approach or method by which he or she goes about making art.

the warhol: resources and lessons
teaching across the arts and humanities

collaborative art practice

generates a space that others can enter,
not just as viewers, but as participants.

The artist can utilize this artistic practice with
others to identify content, investigate and
make.

The artist puts into play an approach, a
method that can take the work in as yet
unknown directions.

project = borrowed artistic practice

generates a space that others can enter,
not just as viewers, but as participants.

I can utilize this artistic practice with others
to identify content, investigate and make.

An approach, a method, is put into play
that can take the work in as yet
unknown directions.

Art teachers (Artist/teachers) develop
vehicles of aesthetic investigation =
projects.

Paradoxically,
students both inhabit these projects,
these capacities for experiencing and making,
and they internalize these capacities.

How can we build high quality
vehicles of aesthetic investigation =
projects?

What is relevant to this project,
to this practice of experiencing and making?

conceptual

historic

cultural

aesthetic

technical

experiential

behavioral

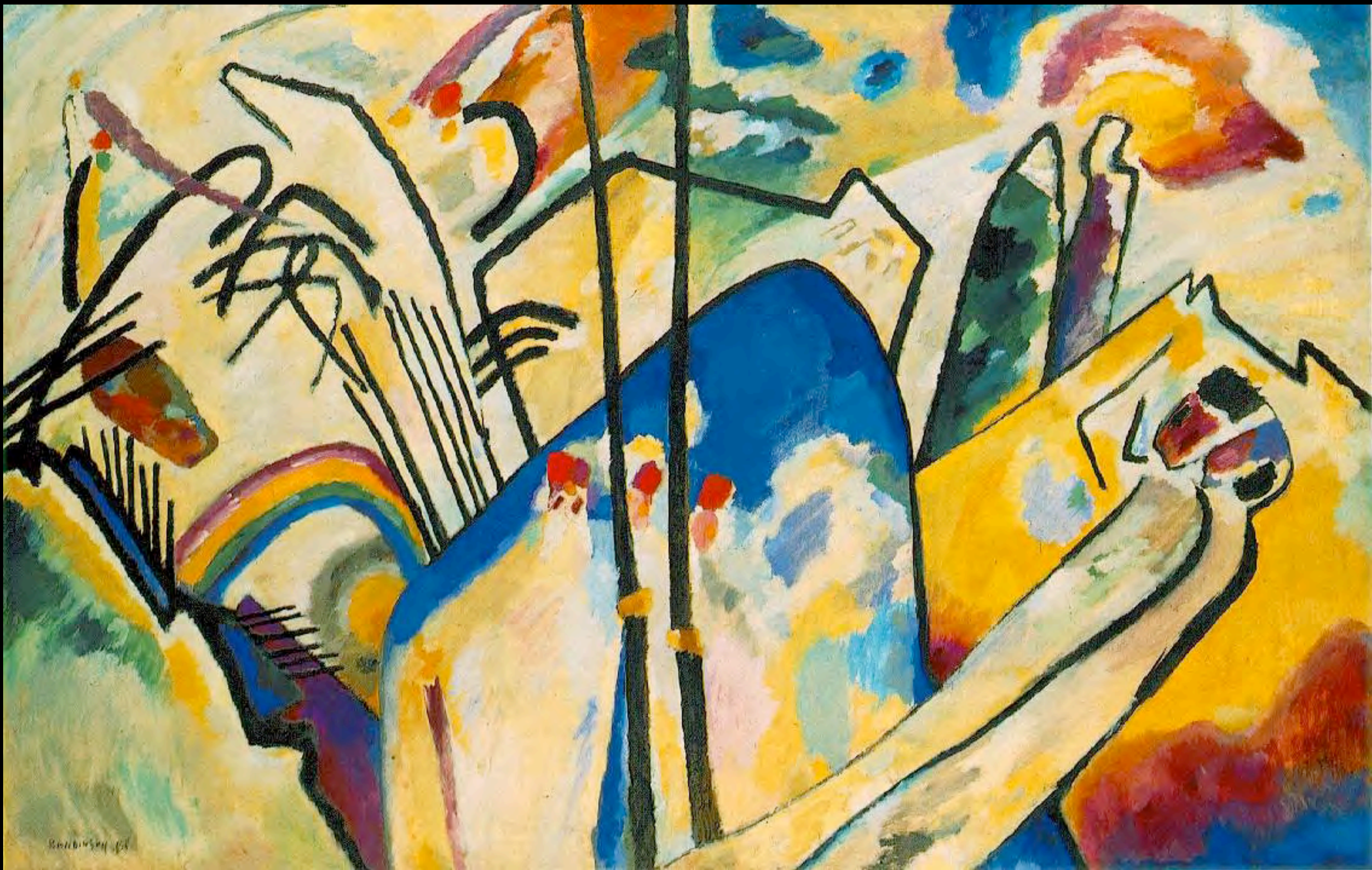
Expressionist Self-Portrait

What would students need to understand and be able to do in order to make an expressionist self-portrait?

Find Your Mark!

(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009



Wassily Kandinsky
Composition IV 1911



Franz Kline
 Untitled 1952



MOVE THE PAINT!

Rapidly take responsibility for the entire surface.

Some of required activities in the painting exercises:

- Paint with the brush in your non-dominant hand.

- Paint standing as far away as possible from the easel .

- Paint as if you have no joints in your arm.

- Paint with your brush in a fist that is placed under your chin.



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Abstract Expressionism

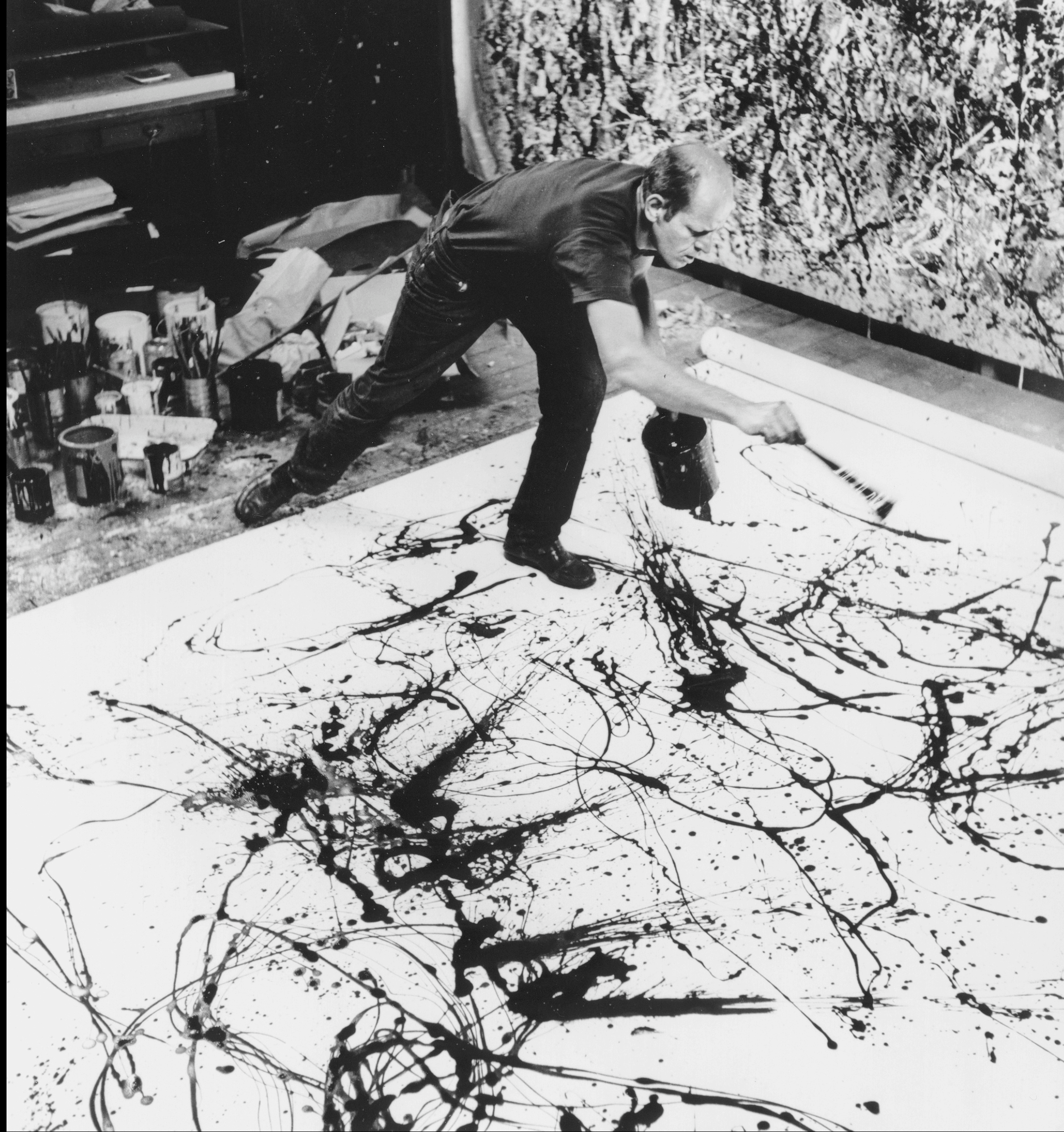
(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009

At a certain moment the canvas began to appear to one American painter after another as an **arena in which to act**.

What was to go on the canvas was not a picture, but an **event**.

Harold Rosenberg, art critic



Jackson Pollock





Lee Krasner
Noon 1947



Joan Mitchell
Untitled 1956



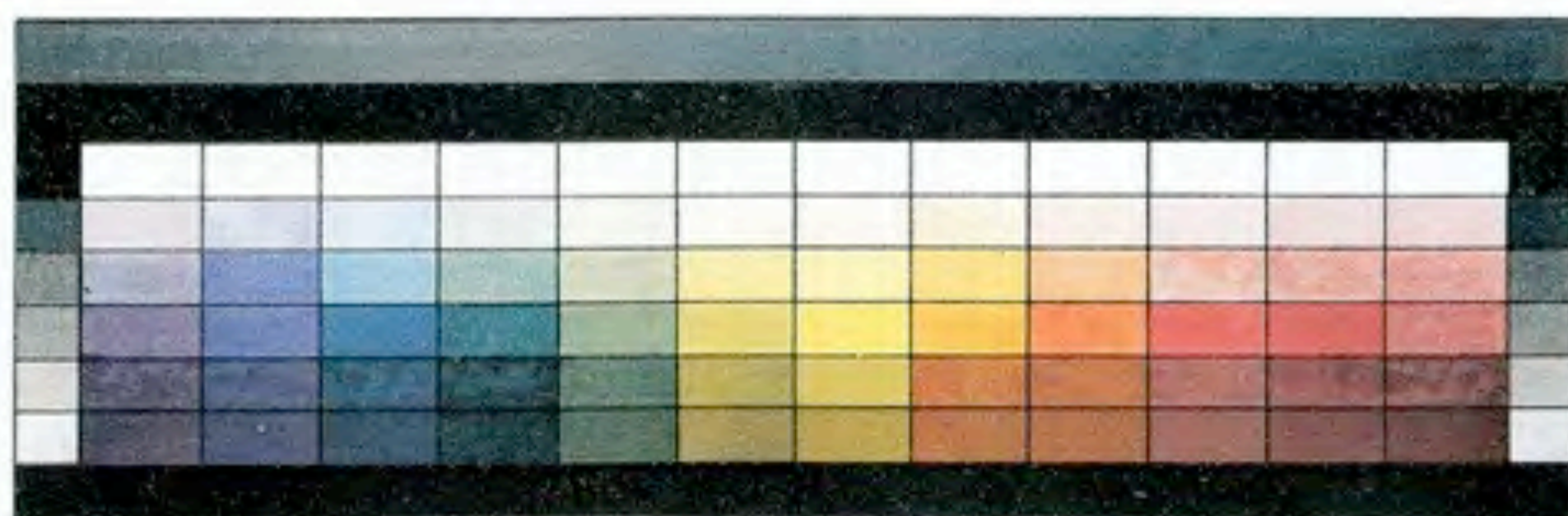
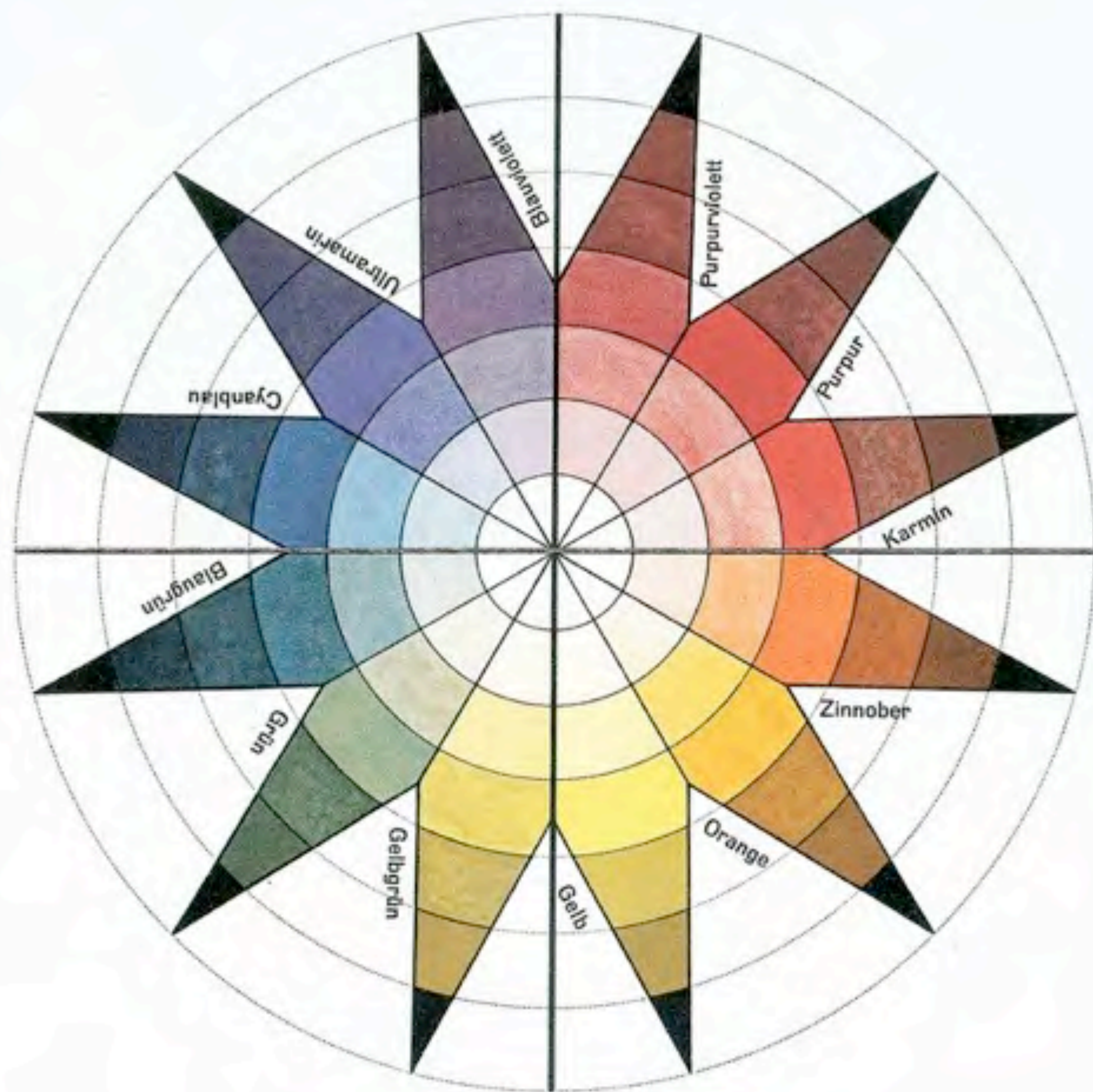




Free Form Color Investigation

(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009



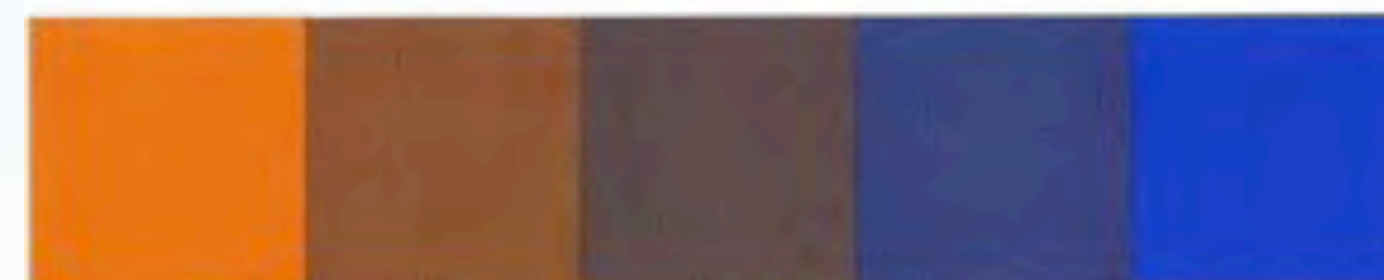
Farbenkugel



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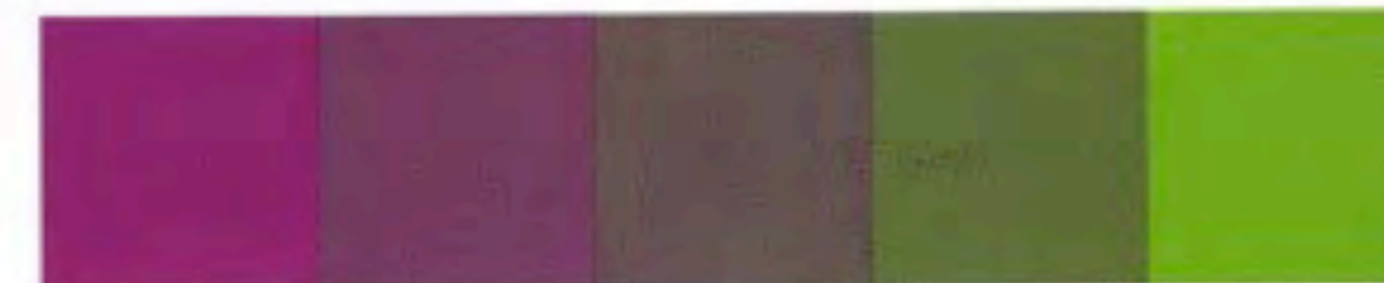
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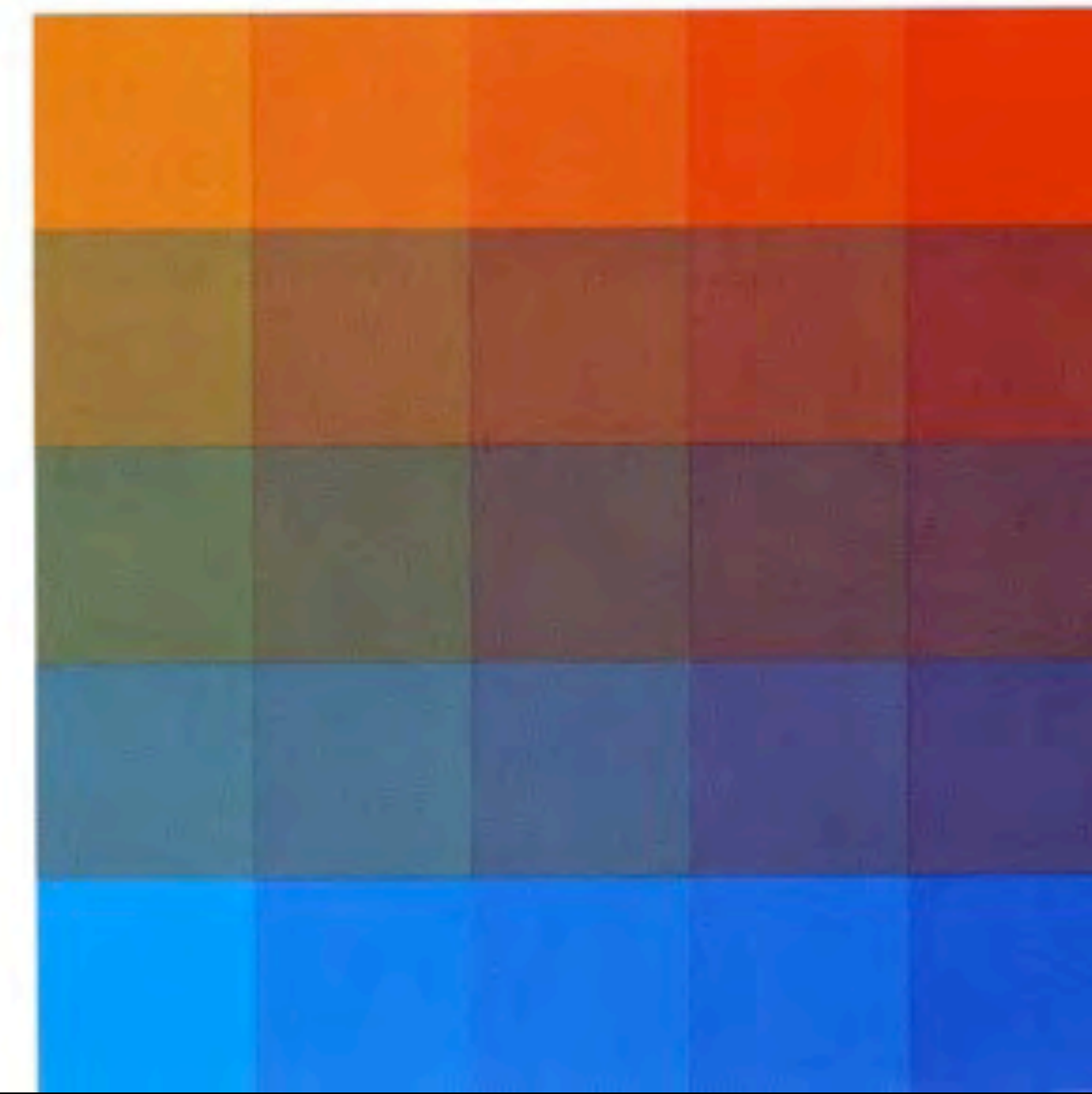
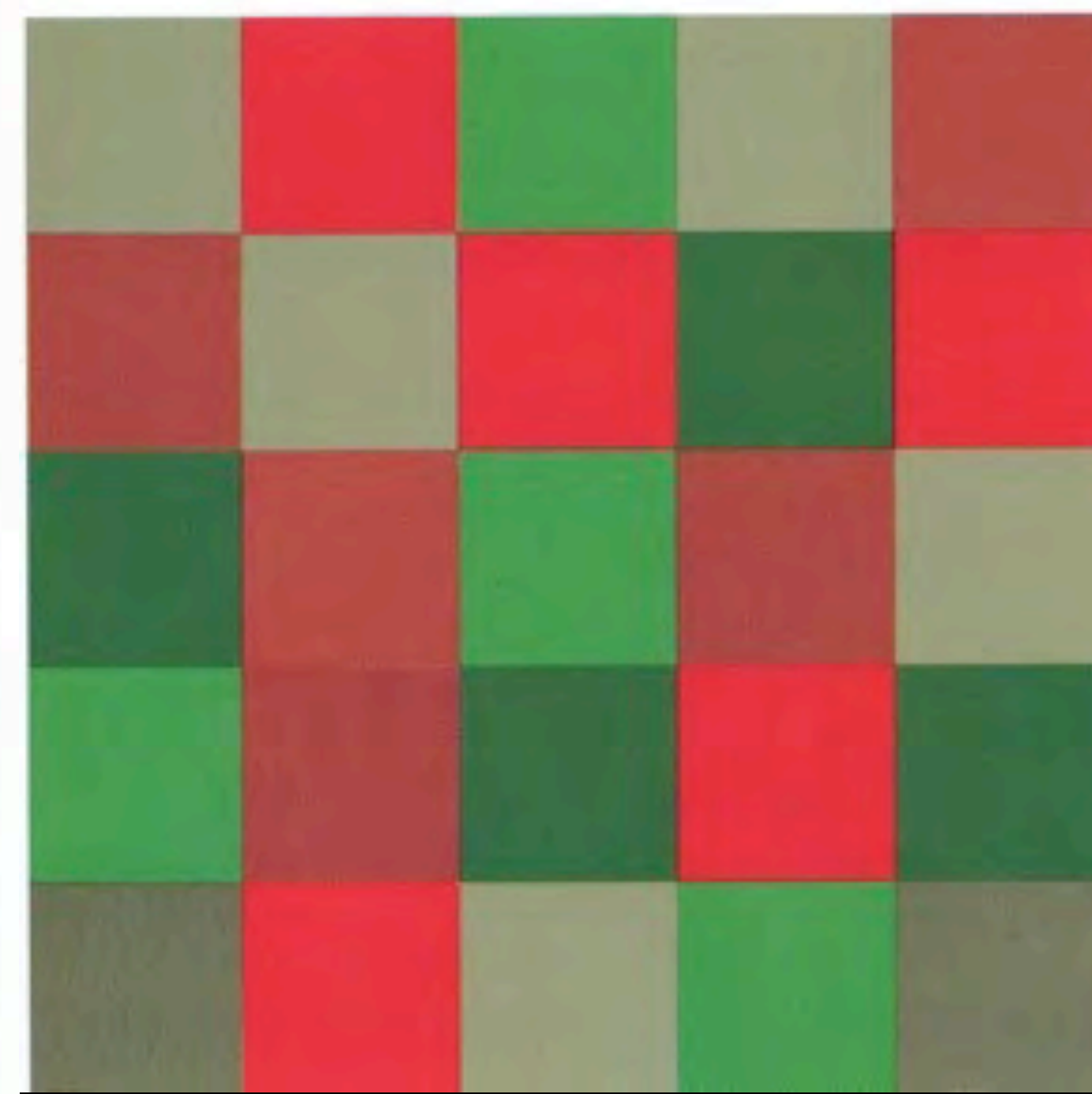
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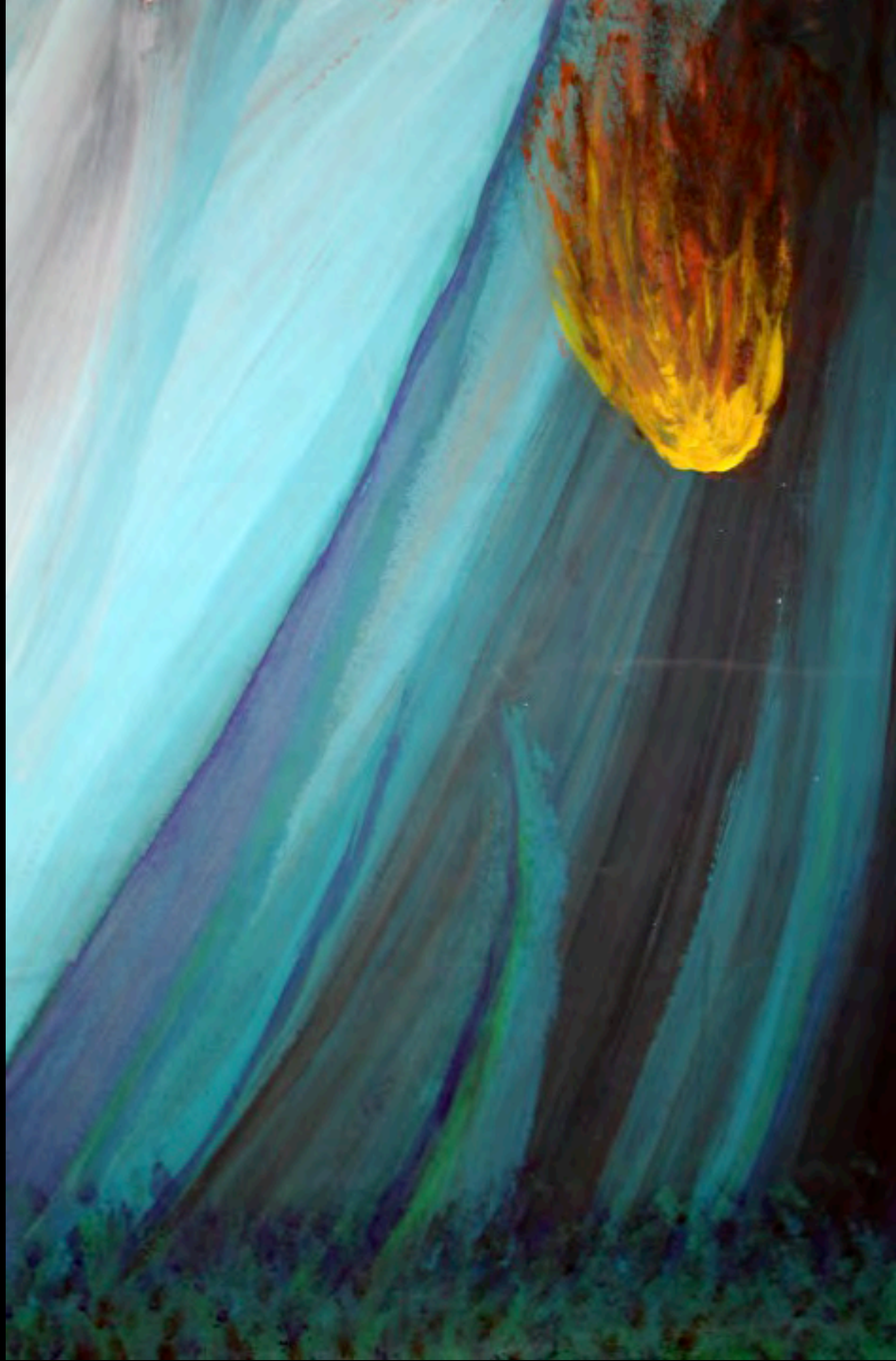
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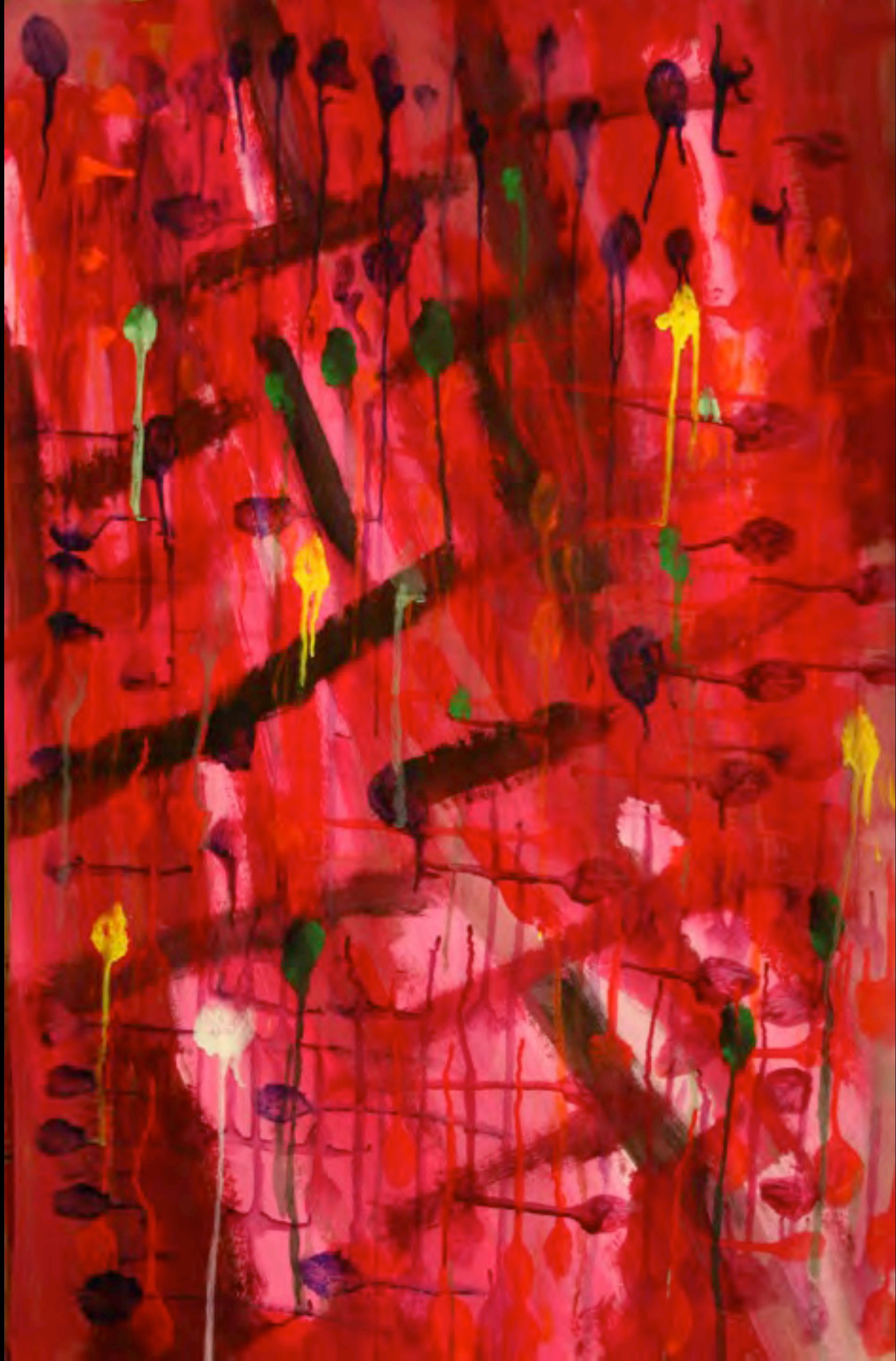
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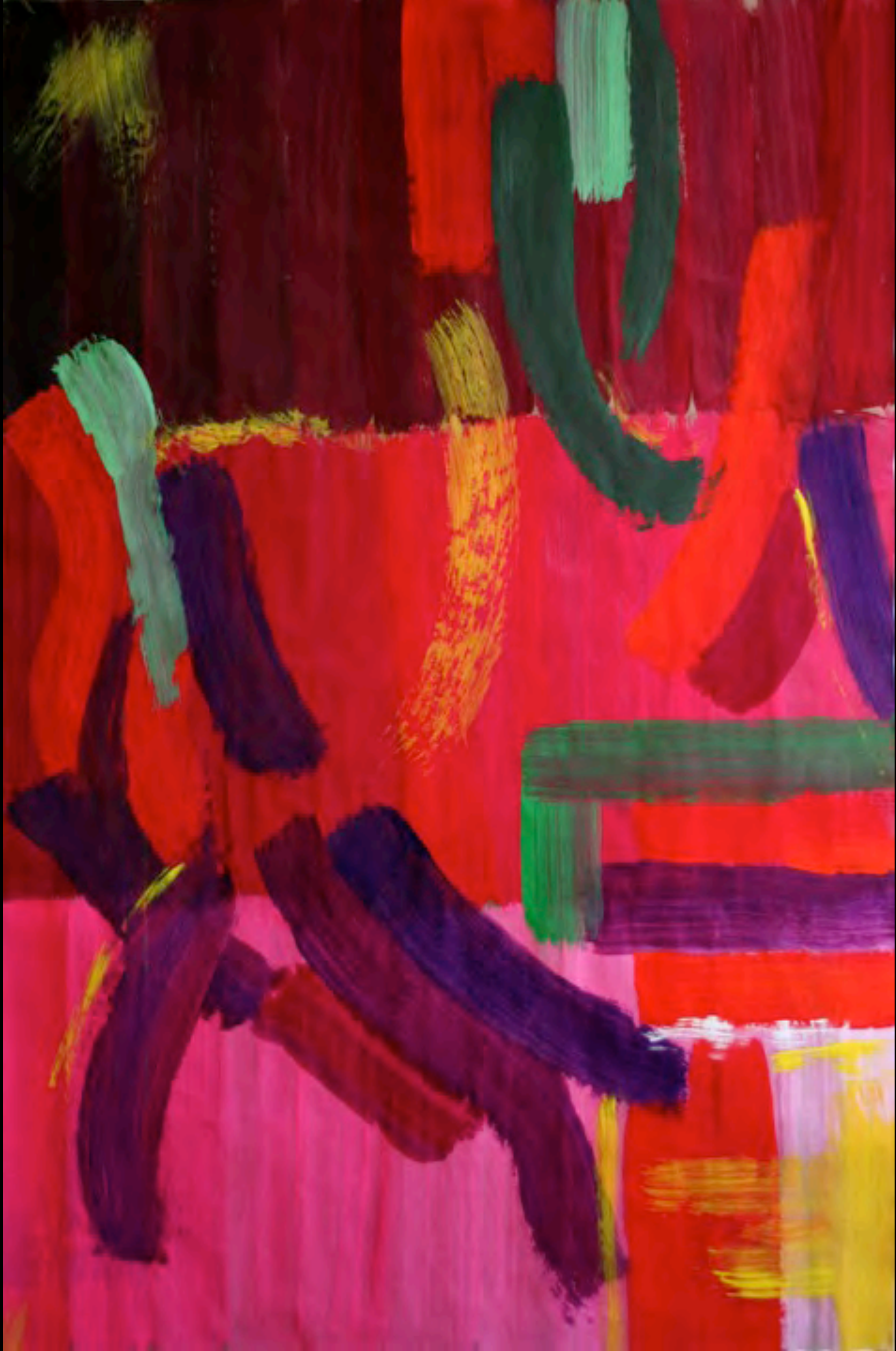


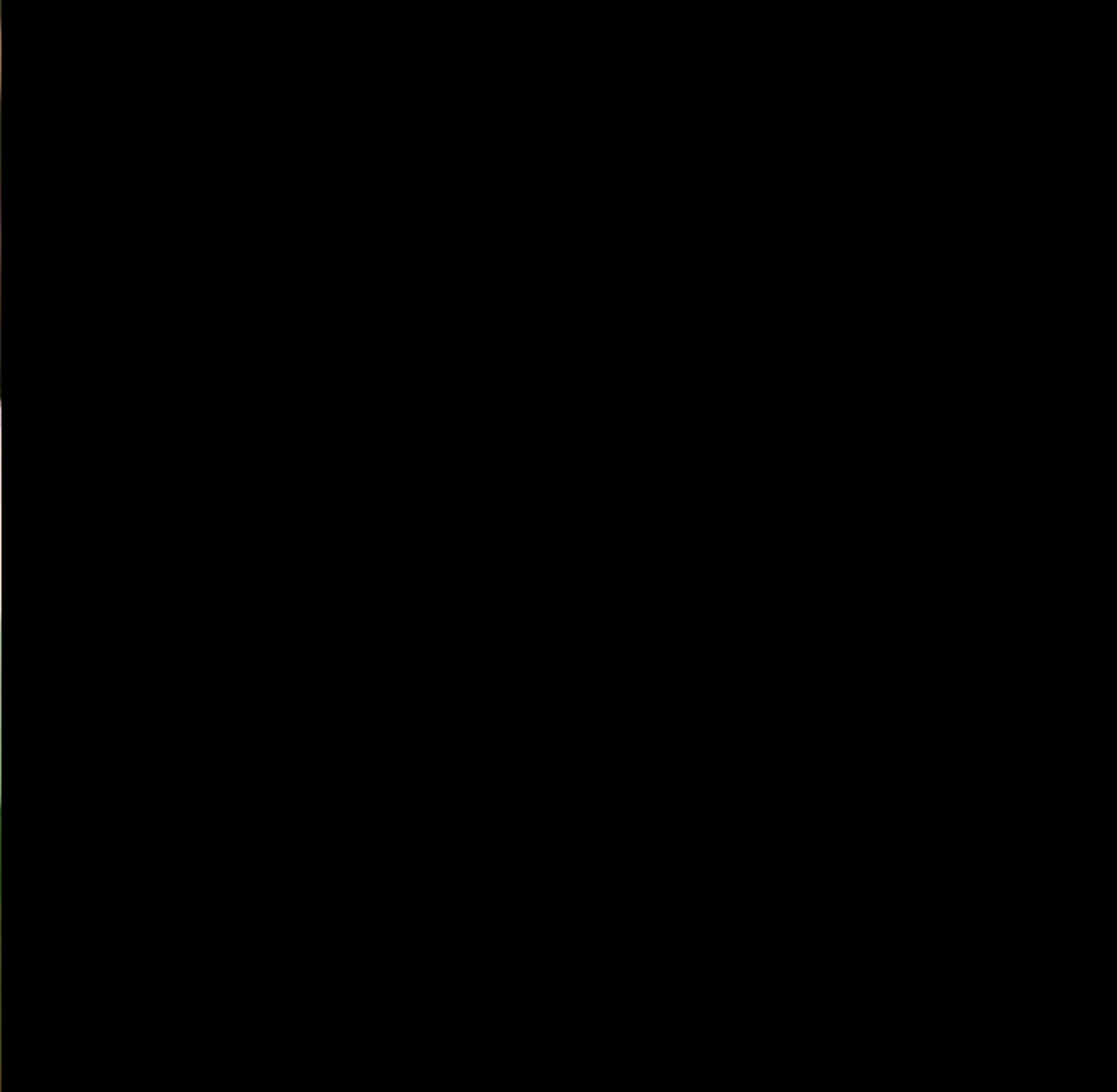
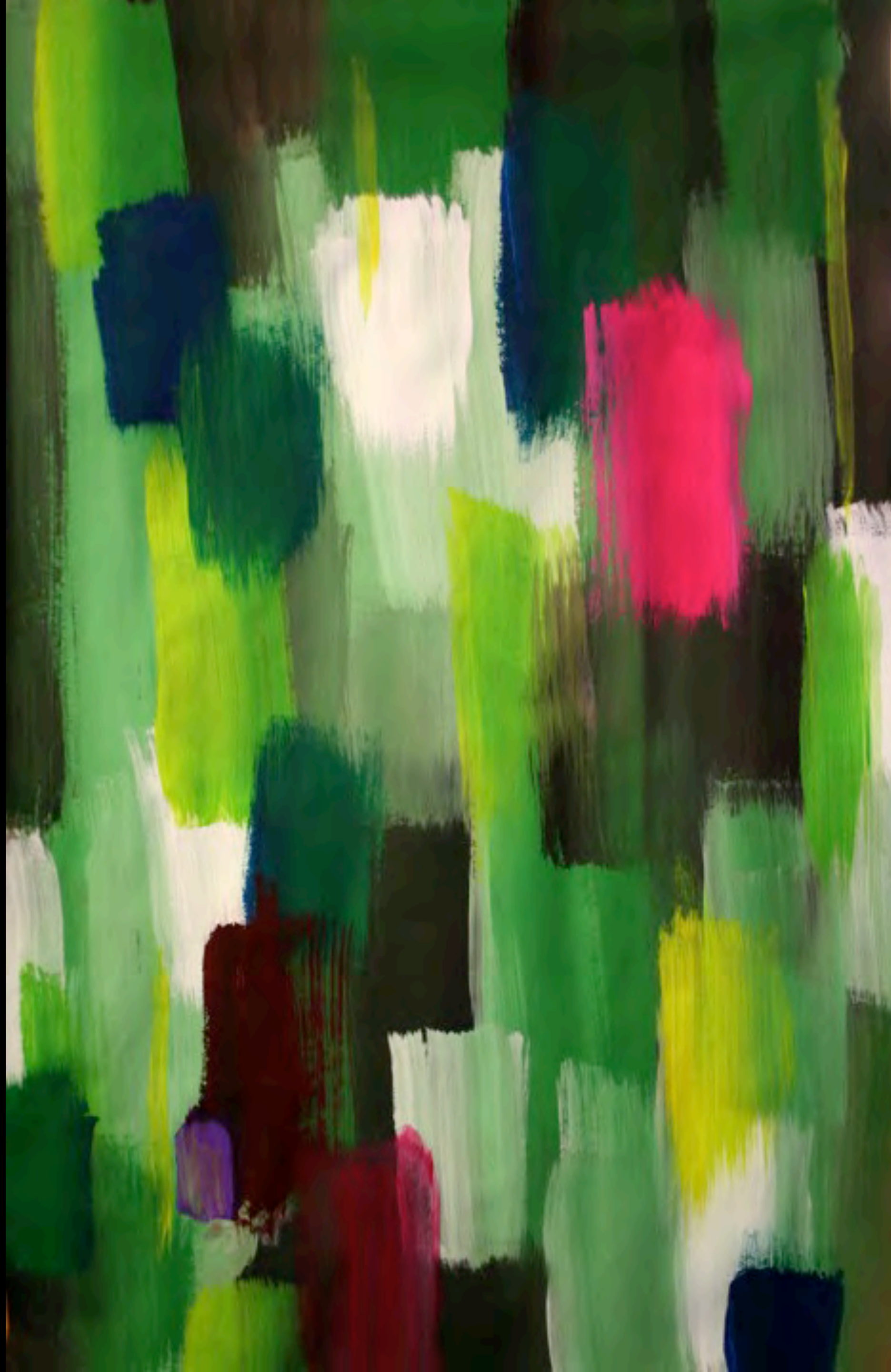












Degenerating Vegetable Matter
(De)Generate Painting
Spiral Workshop 2009





Max Beckman
Still Life with Helmet and Red Feather 1944



Gabrielle Muntér
Madonna with Poinsettias 1911



Denice Rinks
Pears 1990

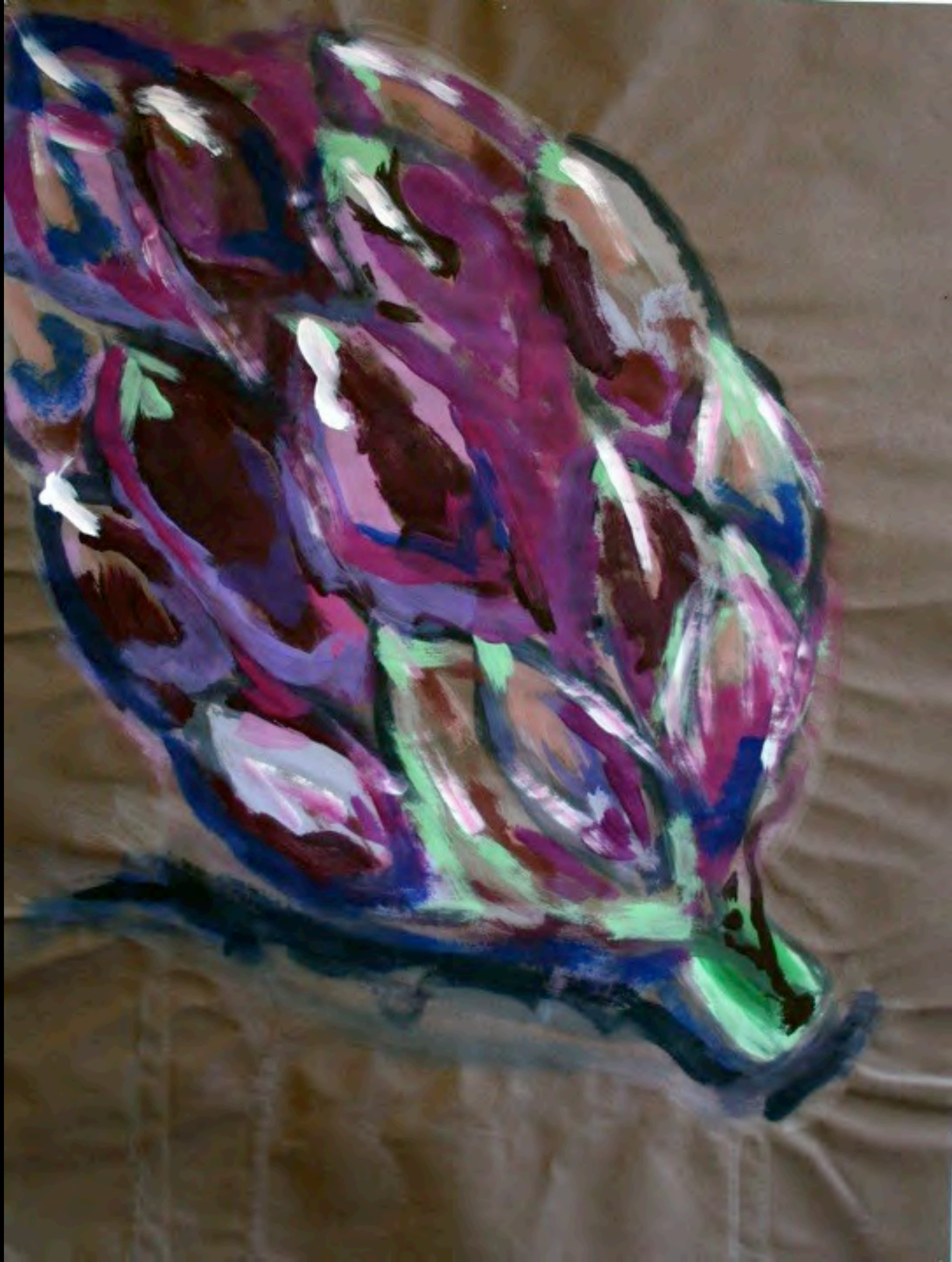


Giorgio de Chirico
The Uncertainty of the Poet 1913



Giorgio de Chirico













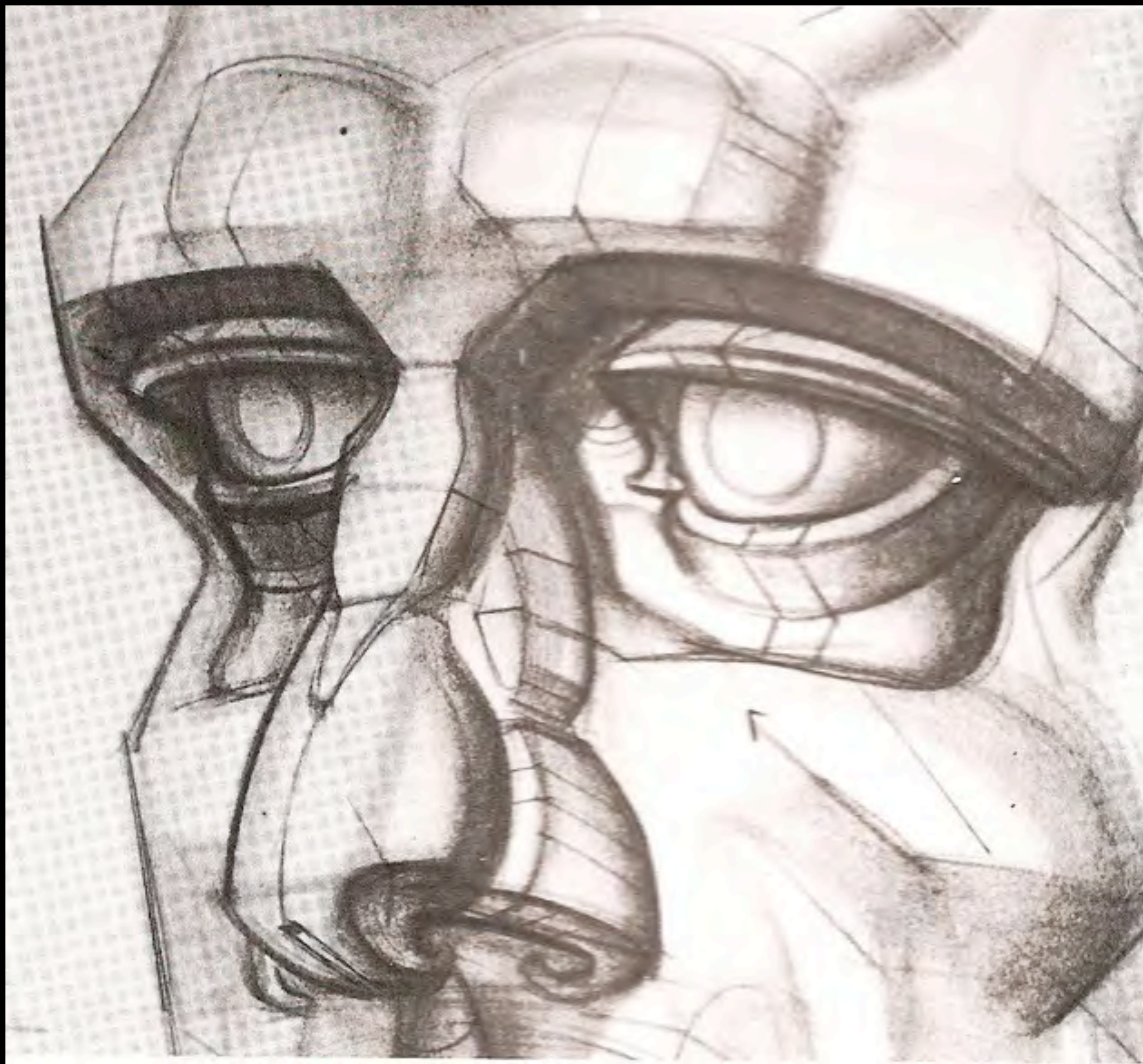




Facial Anatomy Lesson

(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009





Expressive Faces Lesson

(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009



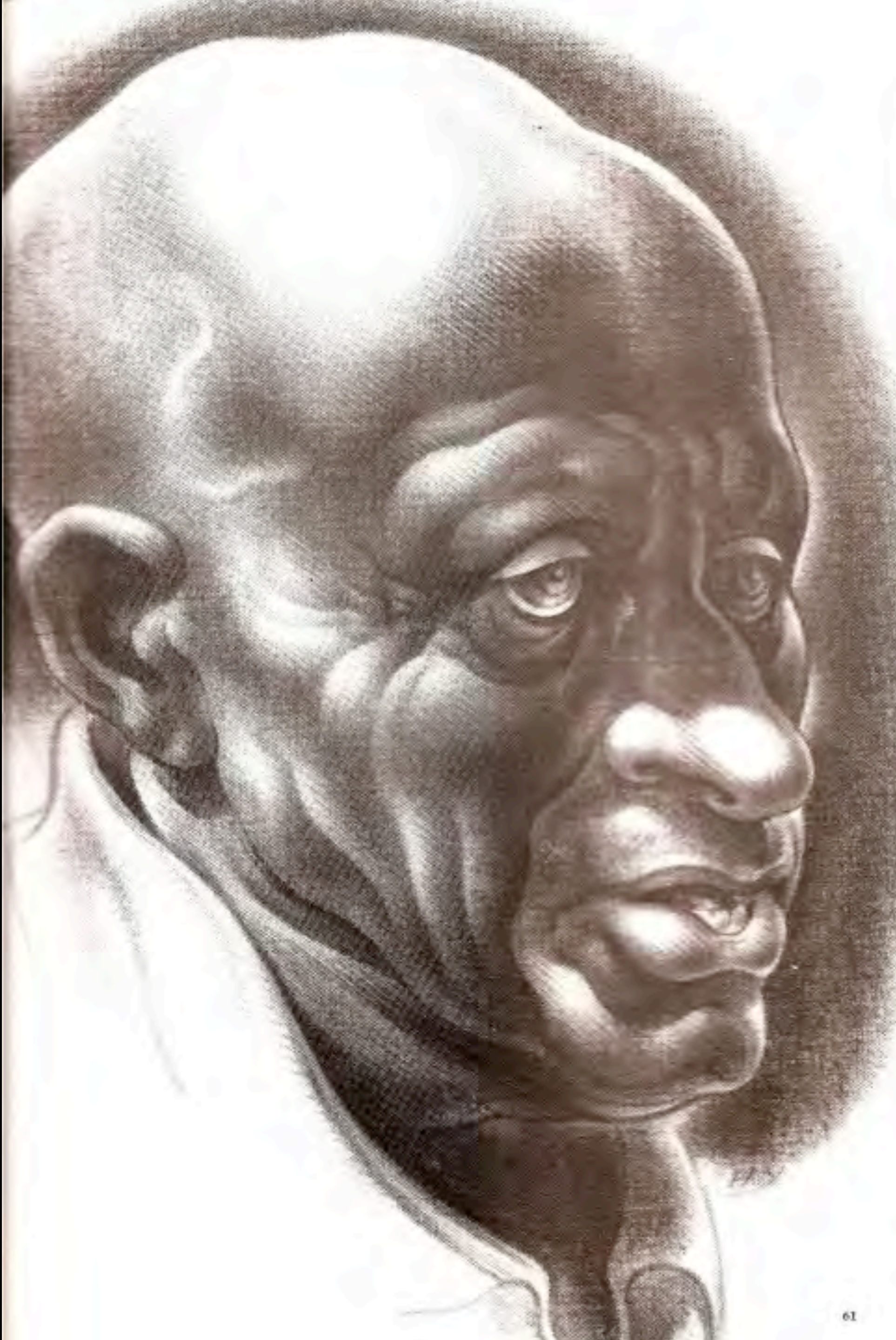




Chiaroscuro Portraits from Life

(De)Generate Painting

Spiral Workshop 2009



Chiaroscuro—strong darks and lights create form



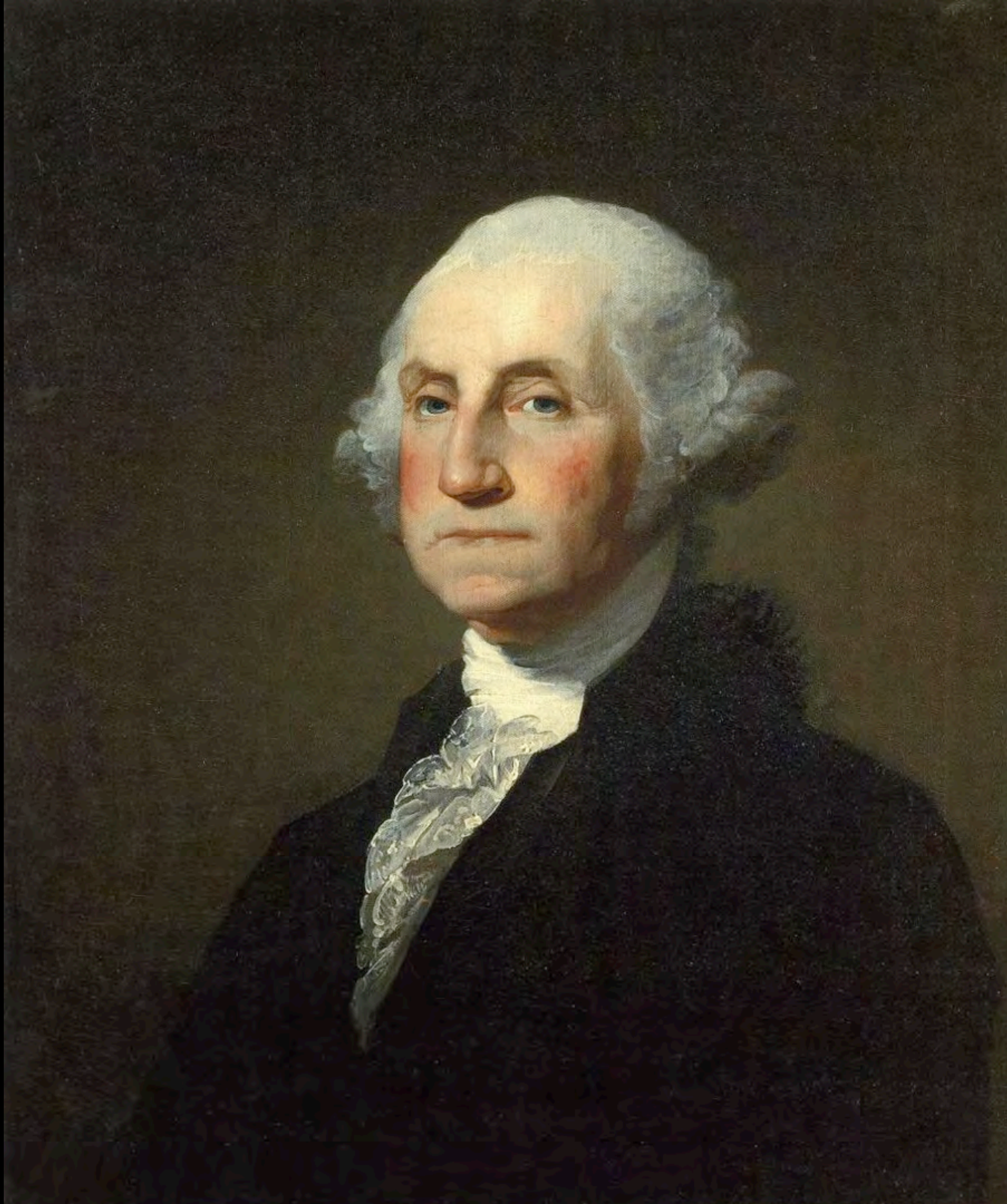




Expressionist Self-Portrait

(De)Generate Painting

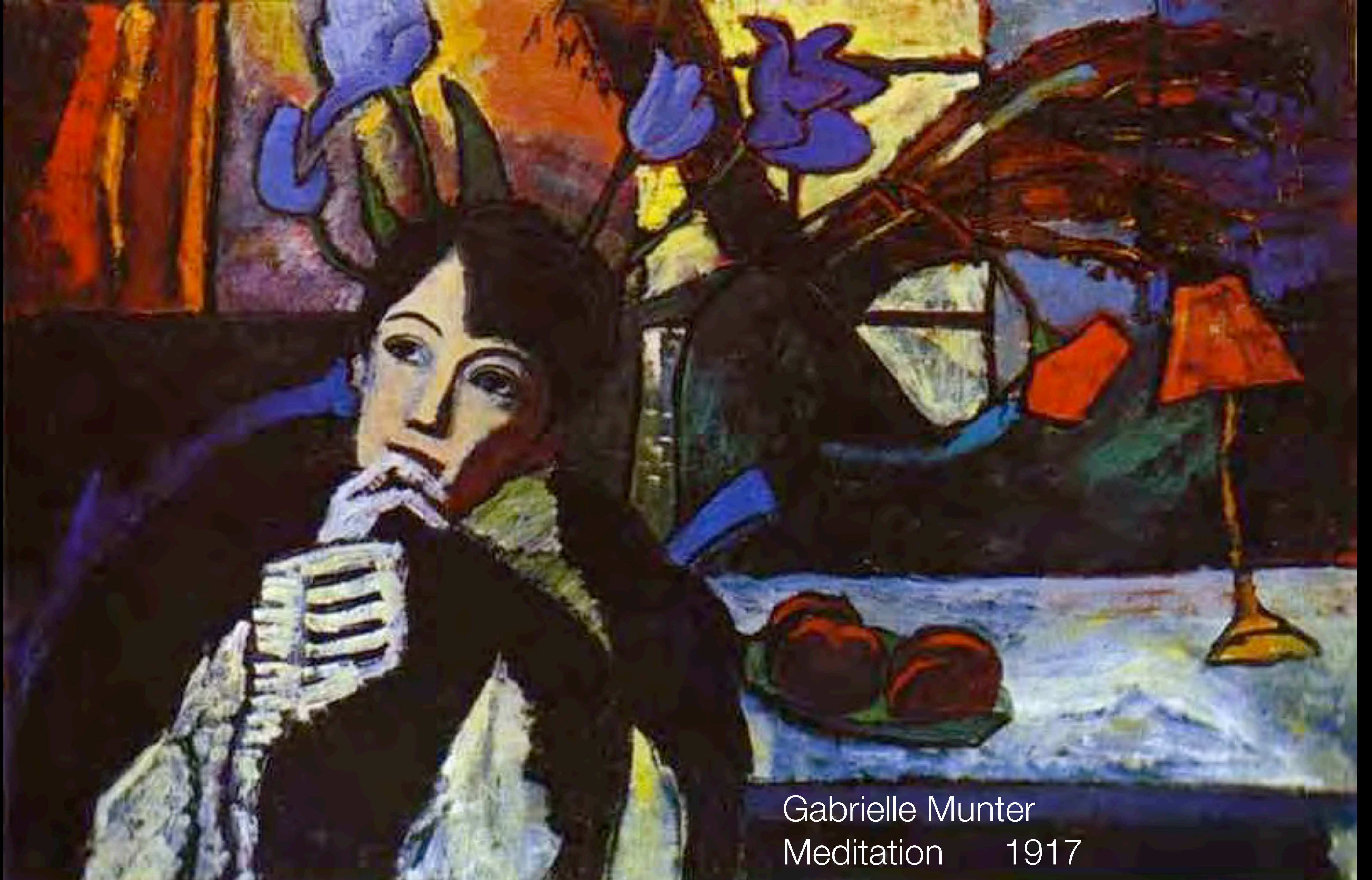
Spiral Workshop 2009



Gilbert Stuart
Portrait of George Washington



Egon Schiele
Self Portrait 1912



Gabrielle Muntz
Meditation 1917



Victor Brauner
Self Portrait with Plucked Eye 1931



Max Beckman



Emil Nolde



Lucian Freud
Francis Bacon 1952



Frank Auerbach
Portrait of Juliet Yardley Mills II 1984



Francis Bacon
Self-Portrait 1971



Jean Michel Basquiat
Untitled 1981



Chris Mars
A Soother for Trudy 2007



Jenny Saville
Rosetta 2006



Expressionist Self-Portrait
(De)Generate Painting











It often works best to introduce aesthetic practices through sequences of projects that develop sensibilities, build skills, situate within historical contexts and draw out cultural implications.

Projects have intrinsic value

An individual or collaborative enterprise planned and designed to achieve an aim.

Bricolage *Curriculum*

post-studio

post-media

post-elements & principles

Olivia Gude 2013

part 2 in next file

High School Studio Lesson

THE BRICOLAGE CONCEPT

Top: Recognizing that contemporary artists often use images of their bodies as a tool for art-making, students created portraits with extreme ranges of emotion.

Left: This student, chewing on a piece of paper, is reenacting a classic Fluxus score—directions involving everyday actions and objects. Score by Larry Miller.

Olivia Gude

A central dilemma encountered by today's art teacher is how to establish a framework for selecting a sequence of projects that adequately represents the art-making practices of multicultural, globally aware, and aesthetically diverse postmodern culture. Good art projects are invitations for students to enter into other ways of seeing, making, and thinking.

While it makes sense to provide a range of media experiences or vocabulary relating to the elements of art and principles of design when planning art lessons, neither are enough to provide a convincing structure for representing the complexity of cultural life in the twenty-first century.

schoolartsonline.com 19

Clockwise from top: After studying artist Mark Bradford, students created a collage, not just by adding to the surface, but also by scratching, tearing, covering, revealing, and re-attaching. Careful preparation to protect the classroom from splatters created an environment where students could "let loose" and paint with energized movements of the whole body. Students discovered how to create the illusion of transparency, painting directly from life without preliminary drawings.

The Problem of Oversimplification
Using the above questions, it becomes apparent that thinking only in terms of skill-building and formalist vocabulary tends to constrain curriculum planning because it assumes that choice-making about a complex endeavor can be fit into a standardized framework. An example of this is the idea that a beginning high-school art curriculum

Dual Perspectives
Consider planning a twenty-first-century art curriculum from two different, yet intertwined perspectives:
1. Does this curriculum adequately represent a range of the aesthetic practices and artistic ideas in society at this time? Is this curriculum faithful to the complexity of the discipline?
2. Does this curriculum give students access to a wide range of methods for making personally satisfying, meaningful, and engaging works of art, craft, and design? Is this curriculum faithful to the needs of students?

could be adequately designed by creating a project for each element of design or a series of simple projects defined as "media experiences."
The problem of overly simplified frameworks can also arise when media-specific classes are taught as though there is a single, foundational path to understanding the mastery of a particular media, when there are many different traditions for approaching painting, photography, or ceramics. Teaching that there is a clearly defined linear path to making and interpreting art is actively mis-teaching the complexities of the culture of art.

Bricolage Concept
Consider using the metaphoric structure of the bricolage concept for choosing the range of works to include in a curriculum. Bricolage is a French word used to describe "a construction (of a sculpture or idea) achieved by using whatever comes to hand." For example, bricolage could be used to designate a folk-art installation constructed of bits of wood, tile, bottles, wire, and various found objects.

The emphasis of the bricolage concept is on deliberately contrasting various ways to experience, create, and think about an art form.

Joe L. Kincheloe, a Canadian professor of education, uses the term bricolage to describe divergent, multi-perspectival approaches to research and curriculum. Given the roots of the term bricolage in the actual making of things, it's a good choice for describing the art teacher's task of surveying a wide range of art-making practices. Teachers can choose from a disparate array of these aesthetic methodologies to create a curriculum that encourages students to experience and understand art (and the world) from various, and sometimes contradictory, perspectives.

A good standard for deciding to include a particular lesson in a curriculum is to assess whether or not, through this project, students will be introduced to a method by which artists engage in their work. In a ceramics course, this could mean the

contemplation of and attempt to grasp the subtle aesthetics of Japanese pottery, or getting familiar with the spirit of the times and methods of making California Funk ceramics. Students should understand what these artists were rejecting and what they were encouraging, rather than limiting themselves to a single method of making and appreciating "good" ceramics.

The emphasis of the bricolage concept is on deliberately contrasting various ways to experience, create, and think about an art form. Students need to see the study of art as an engagement with "living" aesthetic practices—methodologies that real artists use to make fresh meaning—not as historical reenactments that create facsimile art. By learning about diverse art-making strategies, students can employ aspects of ways of making that they find interesting, appealing, and useful.

Note: All images accompanying this article were created by teen artists in the Spiral Workshop at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Olivia Gude is coordinator of art education and a professor in the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois at Chicago. ogude@uic.edu

WEB LINK
www.uic.edu/classes/ind/ind382/sites/oliviaOGC_01.html

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Thanks

to the teen artist participants of Spiral Workshop.

Their intelligence, openness and spirit of generosity inspire our work.

Thanks

to the faculty of Spiral Workshop, emerging teachers who are art education students at the University of Illinois Chicago.

Their knowledge of contemporary art, hard work and desire to become teachers who make a difference in the lives of youth contribute to imagining a renewed practice of art education.

A version of this presentation will be posted online.

Google:

Olivia Gude NAEA ePortfolio

Many projects shown in this presentation are online.

Google:

Olivia Gude NAEA ePortfolio

Spiral Workshop NAEA ePortfolio

Bricolage *Curriculum*

post-studio

post-media

post-elements & principles

Olivia Gude 2013

part 2 in next file



Bricolage Curriculum by Olivia Gude 2013