
Value and Balance (Self Portrait)

OBJECTIVE Balance requires an understanding of how to distribute visual weight and values. By creating a self portrait you will learn to use a wide range of values to create an image. By adding other elements to your portrait you will learn to use visual weight to create an image that covers the surface with varying amounts of visual interest.

MATERIALS

- 9" x 12" Bristol or watercolor paper
- painting supplies
- pencil
- tracing paper
- X-Acto knife
- ruler
- artist or painter's tape

GRADING 10 points for 5 completed thumbnail sketches
20 points (5 points for creative effort + 5 points for accurate use of values
+ 5 points for balanced use of additional elements + 5 points for execution)

INSTRUCTIONS 1) Create at least 5 thumbnail sketches of designs that add elements to your portrait. Think of how these visual elements reflect your personality and/or interests. These elements may have a similar amount of visual weight or less visual weight than your portrait (see examples below).

2) After discussing your sketches with the instructor proceed to trace your design onto the paper prior to painting.

3) Paint the final version of your self portrait. Use your best craftsmanship.

DUE



A



B



C

Each of these portraits exhibit balance in different ways. Notice how example A illustrates an even yet non-uniform distribution of visual interest in the form of the thick curving lines to balance the details in the portrait and surrounding faces. Example B shows how light values on a darker background create visual interest that do not detract from the face, which is centered symmetrically. Example C is a good example of dividing visual weight between various elements. The portrait and the flowers both occupy similar amounts of space and contain similar amounts of detail creating balance. The contrasting values in the face add a little more emphasis to the portrait, which is desirable.