

Bao Ngoc Hoang Artist Statement

My vision for this exhibition is to present to the viewers both the struggles and beauty of being Vietnamese. Particular motifs that are prevalent in this body of works would be the Vietnamese ao dais, the female subjects, and the color palette. Although some works reflect slightly different ideas, they all connect to the theme of being a Vietnamese living in America. Through my exhibition, I want to be able to connect to my audience, especially those who grew up in two different cultures. I hope to share my story as a Vietnamese living in America and both the struggles and happiness that I have experienced from it.

I have explored different ideas under the theme such as identity-crisis from two cultures, cultural beliefs, and discrimination in America as a Vietnamese. Throughout all these different ideas, I have been greatly inspired by Asian artists and artists that appreciate the Asian culture and incorporates it into their artworks. My research in these artists has let me stumble upon To Ngoc Van, a classic Vietnamese artist who heavily influenced many of my works. His inspiration has led me to a stabilized relationship with acrylic paint, as most of my pieces are done by acrylic paint.

My works incorporate many oriental elements that are adapted through various media from drypoint to gouache paint. But the most experimental media that I have used in the collection would be that of paint. Before IB Art I was never a painter, as I was scared to put color onto my works. I became proficient at the media through my previous Sophomore Art class that made us recreate classic paintings with acrylic paints, and my desire to convey what I truly want through the medium. The medium helped me make the paintings more aesthetically pleasing and creates a connection to my theme of Vietnam.

Many of my personal experiences influence my works, along with common issues in my theme of being Vietnamese in America. Such as “Untitled” exploring the common issues of toxic patriarchy in Vietnamese culture and racial discrimination in the “American Dream.” My works can be viewed and treated from a social and political standpoint.

Due to the pandemic, I do not have access to an open blank space hence I will be creating a virtual gallery tab on my public Weebly art site. I aimed to tell a story and from my 10 body of arts. I planned to have all my artworks related to the struggle of being a Vietnamese in America the first pieces that the audiences will see. While the last few slides will be of the pieces of art that express the beauty of Vietnam and its culture, to make the viewers empathize with the struggles that are being experienced by Asian minorities, before telling them that even if many struggles are experienced there are still many good things in being Vietnamese. The way I have arranged my work supports the emotions and experiences of Asian-americans by immersing the viewer and making them aware of systematic issues that are not commonly talked about.

This exhibition has allowed me to express my story and share my struggles with many as I incorporated them into my works so that I can create both meaningful and aesthetic pieces of works.

