Impressionistic Renaissance

Elinor K. Krieger-Coble

University of Iowa

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IMPRESSIONISTIC RENAISSANCE

by

Elinor K. Krieger-Coble

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in the Art, Studio

John Dilg
Thesis Mentor

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Kee Ho Yuen
Art, Studio Honors Advisor

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The purpose of this project was to move from the renaissance drawing and painting style that I formerly used and begin to understand and display an understanding of the Impressionist hand, as well as mindset in my art. During the last year, I have become obsessed with the Impressionists and how they portrayed the world. Thus, I have begun working more directly on my paintings, relying less on my renaissance under-painting as I am relying on my eye, emotions, and what I have been learning about these artists.

In paintings, the touch and brush strokes of the artist are incredibly important when considering what one wishes to bring across. Due to the more direct application, painting is one of the most emotionally connective forms of art, creating a relationship between the viewer and the artist. To create an emotional connection, I enjoy making accessible scenes, or I create a situation or emotion that is relatable to the viewer. I believe using an Impressionist mindset is helpful because of the nature of Impressionist work as well as the way they lived. To understand more readily how they believed and thought, I have been reading books based on the Impressionists. One of the books, *Impressionists in the Louvre* by Germain Bazin, is a text in which the lifestyles of Impressionists are discussed as well as how they were treated in the community, in galleries, and in the community of painters. Another book I have been referencing is *The Impressionist Brush* written by John Rewald. This work discusses the way the artists handled their brushes as well as the paint on the canvas spanning from the dabs and pads of Pissarro to the swaths and fearlessness of Cezanne. To truly understand and view the strokes in these paintings and drawings, I have made two visits to the Chicago Art Institute to sketch and work from those artists that I have been studying. While most Impressionist painters used oil paints, they would also do sketches and work with charcoal, oil pastels, regular pastels, and graphite. The materials I have been using are oil paints for paintings, and charcoal for the preparation drawings. For my oil paintings, I stretch my own canvases and do preparation sketches for my pieces to help myself understand the composition and study images using graphite and charcoal.

By working and creating somewhat of an understanding in a more Impressionistic way, I was able to not only tap into a new eye for creating a piece of art, but also understand better how to use emotions in my art that I did not know how to express beforehand. I also believe I developed a stronger understanding of the world around me, and how to relate and be more honest in this world, as well as to the artists and people that inhabit it. This project affected me deeply. I felt as if I was going back in time. After reading and learning about these artist’s lives, I felt as if I was able to turn to them for guidance at every crossroad in the project. I consulted Cezanne on structure, Monet for colors and how to make greys, Degas for composition, Pissarro for sentiment and times of grief. This project, I believe, has brought me closer to art. I never fully understood when one of my professors told me, “These artists will be your family.” They are my family now.