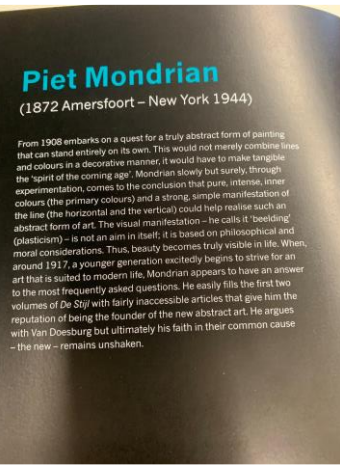# Process Portfolio

Arts SL

# The Art of Rain

- Weather has been the most controversial yet unpredictable source of mother nature since we can remember. Its unpredictability makes it nearly impossible to capture on canvas, unless painting from a photograph, something that was not possible in the early stages of art movements. Yet weather aspects, and specifically sunlight and clouds, have intrigued artists throughout the centuries. Partially to show off their skill, since it was a very hard thing to properly portray, but also since weather is an easy source of inspiration. We see it everyday, and it might be something that has become so common that we do not stop and realize the beauty of it anymore.

- Besides the weather, art is also a controversial topic. Some might like art, some might not. Some might like certain art, some might like all art. As these two controversial topics combine very well, I decided to explore that in my IB arts exhibition and figure out the best way to express my ideas and inspirations the same way artistic masters have over the past centuries.

- I believe that art not only serves the audience but also the artist. The more personal connection the artist feels to their work the better it will be observed by the viewer. Artists can use personal issues or world pressing issues in their art to make the audience aware about certain topics that are dear to them. A good example of this would be climate change. Many artists have been exposed to new worlds and scenery through the process of climate change and global warming. An issue that needs more attention but also provides new art inspiration is a perfect combination for an artist to use as a steppingstone to popularity.

- I have always been intrigued by weather conditions, in particular rain and clouds. They contain so much mystery but at the same time so much logic that I can get completely lost in the idea of phenomena such as these. While some might see rain as sad or stressful with me it brings up a sense of calmness that I do not experience with any other type of weather. To be able to express that through art was a fun experience but also a confronting experience.

- The aim of this exhibition was to show my connection to rain and see if others could experience a little bit of the magic that I feel every time I see rain or clouds.

- I have tried to show rain and clouds in different manners by using different techniques, art styles, and tools. I ended up creating 6 art works that all connect to rain and clouds in their own way, some more obvious than others. This process portfolio takes you on a journey through my eyes as I made these artworks over a span of 2 years.

# Finding ideas and inspiration

- When searching for a topic to bases my exhibition I faced some struggles. I believe that at the start I was thinking to hard about what would work out to make nice artworks. However, I realized that the artworks would only look good if the meaning behind it made sense. That is when I started to think about things that mean a lot to me in life, instead of thinking of topics that would look nice. I still ended up with a theme that is quite common in the artistic world, but the artworks would not have looked the way they do now if I didn't feel a connection to rain and clouds. They mean a lot to me, they can change my entire mood and sometimes even bring me inspiration, such as right now in my exhibition.

- Once I figured out my topic I started looking at where to get the inspiration from, since I personally did not have a clue where to start. I struggled whether I should look at some of my favorite artists and see if they had created some works that match with my topic, or to look at artists that were famous for their weather works and see if they had certain paintings or sculptures that I liked. I ended up doing a combination of both. I looked at some of my favorite artists and I looked at some famous rain and cloud art pieces.

- To start at my favorite artist, Piet Mondrian. He was born on March 7, 1872 and passed on on February 1, 1944. While Mondrian was mainly known for his abstract works and theoretical work, something that one would not relate closely to rain or weather at all, his early works most definitely involved fewer abstract works and more subtle colors (picture top left). This expanded my interest and forced me to look beyond the obvious, and perhaps consider the crazier or less famous approaches to art creation.

- Two artists that inspired me mainly due to their works famous for rain fall or bad weather conditions are Friedensreich Hundertwasser and René Magritte. A work by Hundertwasser called 'The rain falls far from us" (middle picture on the bottom right). My artwork called "perspective" is closely related to this painting. A second work that inspired me greatly was the cloud head by Magritte (bottom left). My entire work of "head on the clouds" is based on this sculpture.

- Other than that, I took inspiration from my own personal thoughts and feelings that I got from thinking about the rain, or sometimes even working in the rain.
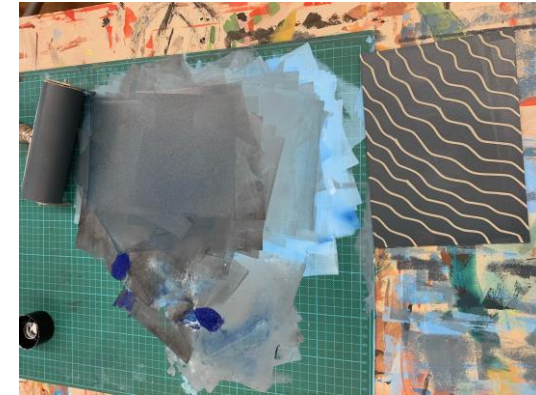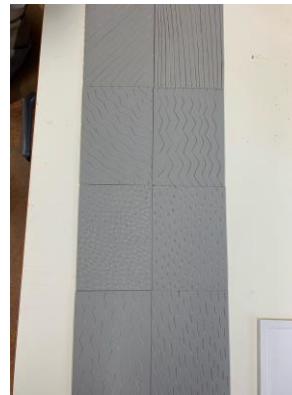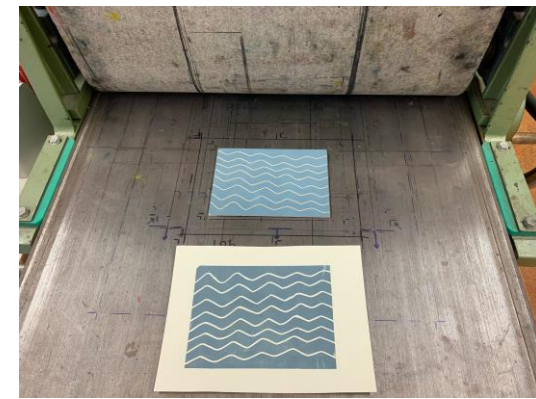
57cm x 123.8cm

# "Toile de Réalité"

**Inspiration:**

- My first artwork was the artwork that took most time out of all, and not only required different techniques but also a lot of thinking and reconsidering of ideas.

- For this one I really aspired to show clear connections to rain, without literally drawing or creating a work that screams "rain". I ended up choosing to do a print series. The initial idea was to take these rain prints and present them as they are. However, I later decided to take it a step further and combine all the prints to create a larger work that would end up being a mash up of all the works combined.

- Since the initial idea was to just use the prints I had, I needed way more for the new idea. Instead of 2 templates I created 6 templates, each with their individual pattern. I used all 6 then to print out the shapes on paper, using different shades of blue. The color was easy for me to decide on, since I relate blue mainly with rain and water.

- When looking at the end result, I can see so many different things in the creation, and yet still somehow end up at the idea of rain. This could be because I know the intention behind it, but possibly also because the color scheme combined with the pattern easily triggers a familiar look, namely rain.

- I am very satisfied with the way this artwork turned out. It depicts exactly what I wanted it to and the process of making it challenged me in ways I didn't know I could be challenged in art. The name translates to "Web of Reality" which is exactly how I felt looking at this piece of art.
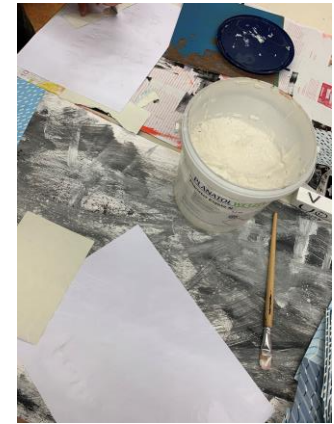


Pictures made during the process of creating "toile de Réalité"

57cm x 123.8cm

# "Toile de Réalité (2)"

**Process of creation:**

- The first step in creating Toile de Réalité was to think of a technique that would best show what I wanted to portray to the viewer. After close consideration I decided to go with the **printmaking technique**. This is a technique that focusses on the creation of art through printing. It is useful because the process can create multiple versions of the same piece. These versions are called **impressions**, not copies.

- The printmaking was done by creating a sketch onto a **linoleum plate**. This was then cut out by a technique referred to as **etching**. Etching uses tools such as a **pointy etching needle** and **wooden sticks.** The process of etching into a linoleum plate is called **linocuts**. After doing that I applied a layer of ink onto the linoleum plate, placed the plate onto a printmaking press, put a piece of white A4 paper right on top in the center, covered the entire piece by a thin fiber and then rolled **the press** over the work. This results in a transferred print onto the white paper. I then repeated this process multiple times until I was satisfied with the quality and quantity.

- I let the papers dry and then redid all of them, but this time printing over them with a new pattern and a new color scheme. This process forms an **edition**. By doing this you create a more intriguing look and more in-depth precision. After that I let all the papers dry one more time.

- The next step was to apply the prints onto a **large cardboard**. Initially the plan was to create a series and simply add the prints in order next to each other. I had a large cardboard of 57cm x 123.8cm onto which I wanted to apply the prints using a special type of glue called **planatol bookbinders' glue**. When spreading out the prints I came to the conclusion that this actually looked quite boring, and I needed to find a different way to make it work. That is when I decided to rip the prints into random shapes and mix up the colors and patterns.

- I started by taking a random print and ripping of a small piece. I applied this using that same planatol bookbinders' glue onto the top right corner of the cardboard. I repeated this process until I had used up all my prints and filled the cardboard to my liking.

- I ran out of prints but still had a small area of cardboard to cover. I initially wanted to create more prints but then came to the conclusion that the color of the cardboard blended in quite well with the rest, and the little empty spot would add a little mystery to the work. I therefore decided to leave it in and finish the work there.

21cm x 29.7cm



# "Reversed views"

**Inspiration:**
- This photography series of a raindrop did not require a lot of inspiration from artists or previous works. This one came right from the top of my head when I thought about a photography-based artwork. I knew that when I would decide to include photography in my exhibition it would have to look exactly like this. A simple zoom in of a raindrop, through which you can see the world upside down. Simple beauty remains the most special kind of beauty to me

- The name of the artwork, "reversed views", comes from the fact that we see the entire scenery through the droplet, but upside down. It creates a reversed view. I loved the way this reminded me of so many things at once.

**Process of creation:**
- The creation process of this photography series was not very challenging. On a normal Wednesday during art class it was raining outside, and I decided to walk up to the window to take a closer look. When seeing the little water droplets on the window I decided to zoom in as far as possible on my **phone** and see if I could take a **picture** of the raindrop. My initial intention was to take a picture of the droplet itself, and not of what one might be able to see through the picture. When finetuning the picture I realized that I could see the line of trees that lies next to our school building through the raindrop but upside down. I used a **magnification** of 2.5x and the 6 **filters**; **Chrome**, **Clarendon**, **Lark**, **Juno**, **Amaro** and **Willow**.

- The picture on its own was pretty but a little boring. I decided to take the same picture and edit in in 6 different ways, with different **gradients**, **shadows** and **brightness**. After applying these changes, I collected them and put them into a portrait creator that then created a full picture of the 6 separate pictures. I then put them on a **white background** to see if this would enhance the vivid colors of the picture. It did, so I left a little white line between all 6 images and a larger one around the outside.

- I am truly happy with the way this artwork turned out. It fits into the subject of photography series very well, and in my opinion looks very professional when considering it was taken with a normal cellphone. The colors fit well into the scheme of all other works I created.
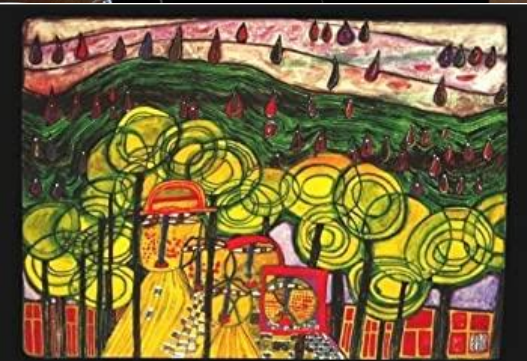
58cm x 50cm

# "Perspective"

**Inspiration:**
- I got my main inspiration for this piece from Friedensreich Hundertwasser. When searching in books and online for rain related art, Hundertwasser was one of the first artists I stumbled upon. His dedication to weather works and his obsession with rain resulted in many artworks that are now classified as steppingstones for new artists that seek to express their interest in rain through surrealism.

- The work that inspired me most was called " The rain falls far from us" (bottom left). There is so much to see in this painting and yet the most obvious things jump out straight away. The vivid, yet dark colors. The thick and heavy raindrops falling from the sky. The tree line on the foreground. The busy straight hiding behind the trees. And the colorful landscape right behind it. All those combined lead me to my own creation, perspective.



**Process of creation:**
- The first thing I did was create 3 **sketches** (top left). I did this for multiple reasons. First and foremost, I needed to find my way with the **watercolor paint**. I had never used it before, and it requires a technique that cannot be compared to that needed to paint with acrylic paint. You need to use a lot of water and apply thick lines, that then need to dry. Once they are dried you go over them again, and the more often that process is repeated, the more layers there are in your painting. The sketches were also intended to find a **pattern**. A random creation that would have some of its own features and some of those presented in "The rain falls far from us".

- After finishing the sketches, I started with my main artwork. I took a large **A3 format paper** and worked from top to bottom. I applied the first layer and let it completely dry before adding the second, third and fourth layer. Once this was done, I added a row beneath that, and so on until I had all the rows I needed.

- Once that was done, I created thicker lines using more water, and held the painting vertically to create a **dripping effect**. This effect better represented my intentions of rainfall and added another technique to the painting.

- To top it off I added large water drops to the center of the work to create a new **dimension**, just like the one that can be seen between the tree line and the busy street in the work from Hundertwasser. I love how this work turned out because of its abstract nature, but also because of the fun I had creating it in class.

49.6cm x 69.6cm

# "Where earth meets sky"



**Inspiration:**
- When I created a plan for my exhibition, this work was one of the first ones that I wrote down on paper. Not because I had seen it somewhere, or because a famous artist made something similar, but purely because the beauty of simplicity in this work once again inspired me. I knew that when I created an exhibition about weather, I needed to have a good balance between realistic and unrealistic. This work fits right into the realistic part of the exhibition. It is a simple blue, cloudy sky with a horizon and ocean.

- This work gives me a lot of calmness, and really gives me a feeling of happiness and comfort, the same way I feel when seeing a real blue cloudy sky. The clouds themselves can represent a variety of things, depending on what the viewer sees in it. It creates that feeling of lying on the beach and looking up at the sky and seeing different animals or objects in the cloudy sky.

- I am truly satisfied with the way this work ended up looking. It has that simple look to it but took a lot of effort to create and fits right into my exhibition.



**Process of creation:**
- While the work itself might look simplistic, the creation of it was no such thing. It required a lot of eye for detail and several techniques to complete.

- I took a **white canvas** measuring 49.6cm x 69.6cm and completely **spray painted** it with a **dark blue**. After that I took **a lighter shade of blue** and began spraying some areas with this color to create a second dimension. Once I had done this, I used a **white spray can bottle** and a cut out **paper** in the shape of a cloud to create the cloudy layer on the higher end of the canvas. I started wide and slowly moved towards the center to create a depth to the painting. I stopped at a line around the middle of the canvas to create the **horizon**. Below that I used a **thin brush** and **white acrylic paint** to create the reflection of the clouds in the water. Then using another thing brush I used **blue acrylic paint** to make some brushes over the reflection of the clouds to make the differentiation between the sky and ocean. An extra line of white was added at the point of horizon to create a clear separation. I then took a paper and cut it out in the same shape as the paper used to create the clouds and now used a blue spray paint bottle to go over some of the cloudy areas to create a depth that support the depth created by the narrowing of the clouds towards the horizon. I then let it all dry and finished off the work.

15.8cm x 31cm x 22cm

# "Head in the Clouds"

**Inspiration:**

- This artwork was the last one I created and was initially not on my exhibition plan. I wanted another special artwork that fit into my less realistic part of the exhibition and started exploring artists and art movements that could provide me with this inspiration. I had no plan in mind, but purely searched for something I liked.

- I was provided with an exhibition guide from René Magritte. He was a Belgian surrealist artist that focused on curtains, men with suit and hats and different random objects and most of the times tried to combine these. I landed on an artwork that included a blue head sculpture, covered in clouds. It really intrigued me because not only did it fit right into my exhibition, but it also looked like a work that I could add a lot of personal touch to. I therefore added this to my plan as final artwork.

**Process of creation:**

- The creation of this work took me the shortest amount of time out of all artworks, however the building of the scenery and representing it in the proper way took very long, and a lot of effort. Before I started with the creation, I needed to order a **Styrofoam** head, since creating my own sculpture would have exceeded the time I had to finish it.

- I used a **blue colored spray paint** bottle, the same as was used to create the background of "where earth meets sky", to completely cover the foam head. Then with the use of a **thin brush** and **white acrylic paint** I started painting clouds around the outside of the head. I used thicker and thinner strokes to create a depth when looking from a distance. The neck and head were then covered in clouds, but I decided to leave the face blank.

- While painting and spray painting, I ran into a problem. Styrofoam can not get wet, or else it will destruct and turn into small holes. The spray paint was a little too wet for the Styrofoam, creating those small bumps and holes as seen in the close-up pictures of the head. I tried to restore the head by adding some paint over the holes to fill up the gaps, but this doesn't help. I decided to leave the head as it was, since ordering a new one would have taken too long. From this I also learned that mistakes could happen, but they do not always need to be seen as mistakes, since they are all a part of the process of creation. Some mistakes might even add something special to a work that it did not have before.

172cm x 85cm x 85cm

# "Head in the Clouds" (2)



- When the head was finished, I decided to combine it with another element frequently used by Magritte; curtains. We still had some left-over **red fiber**, used by one of the other students for an artwork, and I used this to create a background for the head that looked like a curtain.

- To take the perfect picture, the rest of the surrounding needed to be black, so there would not be any distraction from the art. I used a large **black fiber** and hung it on the wall, and then spread it over a **table**. On top of this table, I placed the head and the read fiber. Using **strings** and a **wooden construction** I was able to hang the red fiber in a way that created a room for the head to stand in.

- A golden **frame** that was left in storage, measuring 72cm x 55cm, was used to place in front of the head to make it look as if the head was in the frame with a red, curtain like background.

- To finish it off, I took some **painted bottles** from the classroom and placed them in front of the frame, on an angle so that they would not block the Styrofoam head, but still were in the picture.

- I large **photography light** was placed facing the scene, so that there would be perfect lighting for the picture.

- We hung up **large white sheets** behind the table and on the floor so that the background would be white instead of the school walls.

- I then took several pictures of the head in different angles, before choosing the best ones to show in my exhibition.

# A work that did not turn out the way I intended it to

This is a work that I intended to call "instruments of the sky". I got my inspiration for this from the abstract way of showing clouds, the way Andy Warhol did in his cloud exhibition. I created cloud shapes, by taking small **Styrofoam cylinders** that are usually found in boxes with fragile shipment and making them wet with water. The chemical reaction that happens when water and these cylinders combine, result in a type of sticky glue that you can form into any shape. When you let them dry, they turn rock hard. I created 16 clouds, varying in shape and size, and intended to hang them up on strings in front of a background. I struggled however, with finding an appropriate background for the clouds. Besides that, I was also not completely satisfied with the way the clouds turned out, since they were no longer white but more of a yellow tint and painting them white did not work since they would become soft again and lose their shape. I then took these 16 clouds and combined them into 4 larger clouds. I intended to hang these up as well but create a different setting. I took **copper wire** and pinched a few of the Styrofoam cylinders on there, in a row. I then spray painted them blue which gave the impression of abstract rain. I intended to stick the copper wire with blue cylinders into the bottom of the clouds, making it look as if the rain was falling from the clouds down to earth. This looked better than the first idea, but it still lacked a background. The Styrofoam cylinders became wet and lost their shape due to the blue spray paint which made it harder to work with them. Eventually I decided that instead of creating a fitting background for this work, I would focus on my other works, and perhaps, if I had time at the end, return to it to see if there was anything I could still do to create a solid artwork. I lacked time at the end to do so, and due to the pandemic, hours in the classroom were limited. I struggled to find an exciting way to show this in my exhibition and therefore chose to let them out. I learned from this, that it is very important to think about my plan before starting to work. With this being one of the first works I did, I made the mistake of diving right in and not knowing where it would take me. With a good plan from the start and a step-by-step route of how to make this a good work, I am convinced I would have done better in the end. After this artwork I made a plan for each one, and definitely benefitted from that a lot. I left the supplies that I used, and the process that I made behind in the classroom, in the hope that a future student might be able to use it to their advantage and give it the right portrait it deserves. Another thing I learned is that when creating an exhibition, it is very important to also have certain ideas or works that you leave out. This forces you to be critical, and to always think about what you are doing. If something is not worth showing in your opinion, then it is always better to leave it out, than to show it in the exhibition and doubt whether it gives the right impression to the viewer. Works that do not turn out the way you intend them to often teach you way more than the ones that work out perfectly, just like we all learn from our own mistakes in everyday life.

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