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Time: Laetitia Badaut Hausmann

Interlude B

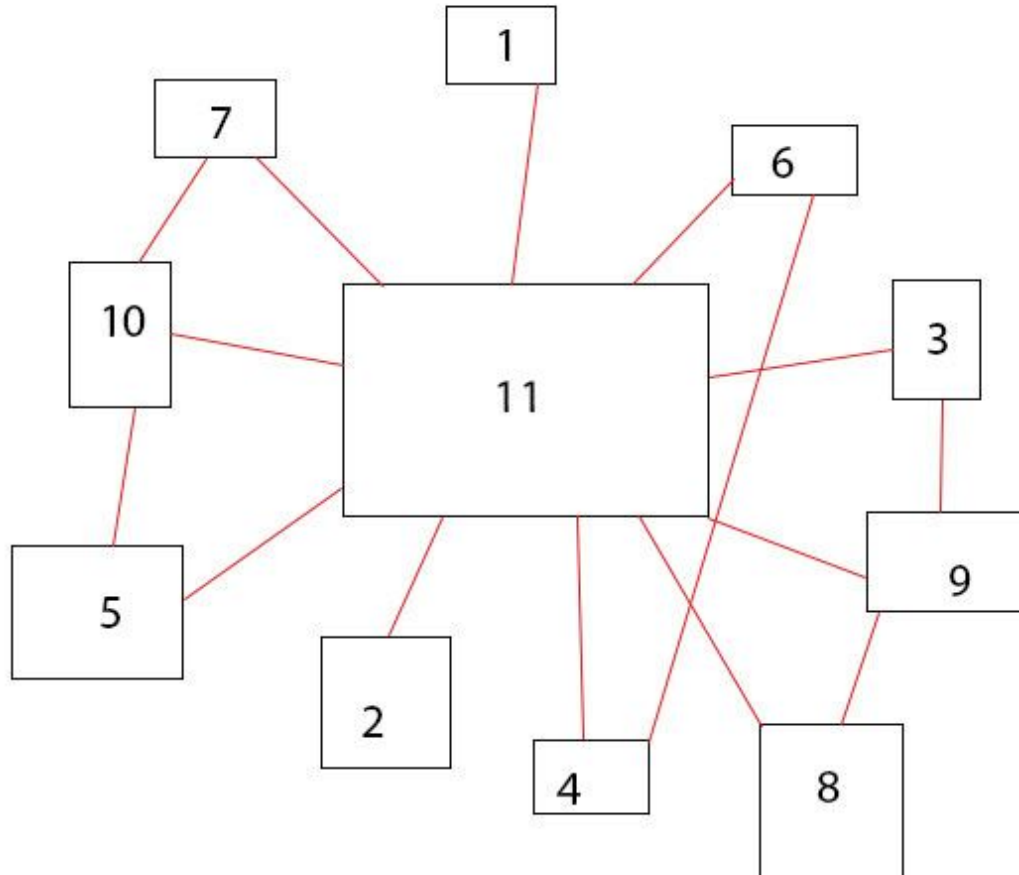
Project Statement

With the purpose of reviewing the theme of personal relationships and true love in historical, social, and philosophical context 11 reference works, with corresponding textual accompagnements will be exemplified in an exhibition style using an interactive presentation structure. All bodies of work serve to demonstrate appropriation of the Project 1 theme.

As humans we crave this affection, this discovery of who we are, which is defined by that, whether it is acceptance from our colleagues, approval from our parents, or a marriage. All we want is to love and be loved. Perhaps by portraying a subject matter so universal to humanity, so wide-stretching in theme, matters of love and happiness, I do so in my own futile search for the nirvana every conscious man looks for. However, I am not the first and I am not the last, but among many artists who conduct their work with such a purpose.

Proposed Setup

The Red Thread Exhibition



Each piece is displayed on the wall with red yarn interconnecting them. Each work will be explained thoroughly with their relevant descriptions to the audience. Each interconnecting red thread branching will also be open to publicly analysis. The number corresponds with the work, and at the center of it all rests the painting- which is not considered a new work for this project, but a visual representation of a concept behind the appropriate subject matter (see 11).

This display and presentation of collection of ideas and compilation of works will be more interesting and interactive, and reassuredly informative and efficace in articulating contextual background.

References



1. Walt Disney is My Daddy

It all started at a young age, when as a little girl I was being constantly fed these notions of true love and romance through the media I was exposed to. Through Disney fairytale after fairytale I learned about heroism, honesty, work ethic. However, subconsciously Walt Disney was propagandizing a slightly aged ideal in the minds of young girls like me; that every princess needs a prince charming. Beyond the overrated cliché values so parallel to the nuclear family society in context at that time, I became fascinated with finding my own prince charming, believing full heartedly in the existence of true love as fiercely as Disney believed in his own Congregationalist Christian ideals.



2. *The Kiss*

This renowned work by Gustav Klimt depicts a couple tightly embracing on the edge of a field. There is a notable tenderness in the piece, looking beyond just the intimacy of the woman and the man, Klimt uses precious materials with descendancy of depicting religious matters to construct an effective image showcasing the sacredness of their bond. This theme bordering sensuality, sexuality, and love is derivative from the Art Nouveau movement.



3. *WWII V-J Day Kiss Photo*

Taken on April 14th, 1945, on a day that would go down in history with this image beside it, Life photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt captured a moment representative of pure bliss with the closure of World War II. The subjects in the photo are sailor George Mendonsa and nurse Greta Zimmer Friedman. When news surfaced that the war was over in Times Square, Mendonsa whipped around and kissed Friedman in utter spontaneity. Eisenstaedt was lucky enough to catch such a moment of celebration, enlivening the essence of photography, “At its best, photography captures fleeting snippets that crystallize the hope, anguish, wonder and joy of life” (Time.com). While some choose to see controversy in the image, I prefer to see the hope and celebration in the intent of its original American audience, along with the embodiment of spontaneity, grand gesture romance, and celebrating life with someone by your side.



4. Love in Leonardo's Eyes/ *Romeo and Juliet*

Whether you choose to look at his performance in *Titanic* or *The Great Gatsby* or *Romeo and Juliet*, Leonardo DiCaprio is no stranger to being the man who will do anything, even die, in the name of love. Here, for historical importance and societal weight, I'm choosing to commentate on the importance of the infamous writing of William Shakespeare, which inspired Baz Luhrman's film, featuring DiCaprio as an encapturing Romeo. Therefore, it is equally important to note that Shakespeare has some inspiration of his own, looking into the 15th century, when Italian author Masuccio Salernitano published a story about two lovers from feuding families who participated in a plot line all too similar to that which Shakespeare later produced in the end of the 16th century. Salernitano posed two lovers, Giannozza and Mariotto, in which Mariotto kills a nobleman and has to flee, and Giannozza poisons herself to be with Mariotto. Whether it's Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet or Giannozza and Mariotto, or Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes, we see this portrayal of a love story which has become so universal, depicting love not only as romantic but as a force of power, means to defy and rebel, methods of physical and emotional satisfaction, the difference between life and death.



5. *The Swing*

This oil painting completed in correspondence with the Rococo art style popular to France in the 18th century, evokes thoughts of romance throughout. In *The Swing*, Fragonard depicts two lovers, one a man hiding in the bushes mischievously peering up the skirt of the other, while she has another man push her on the swing. The bushes are overgrown, lushly layered with flowers, and we see two different juxtaposed sculptures in the background. The sculptures on the right, cuddling intimately, atop a beehive structure, possible suggestive of the stings of love. The sculpture on the left is making a shushing gesture, as if to be a part of the conniving plot the two lovers are enacting. Then in the bottom right corner there is also a dog, barking. Dogs being representative of fidelity, Fragonard may be attempting to show some non-condolence on the actions of the lovers. The light plays across the piece to focus on the woman swinging, her rosy pink dress billowing in motion. Everything about the painting comes off with a softness, a suppleness of skin, the throw of that one pink heel so suggestive. In this painting Fragonard achieves in depicting all things romantic within an image of French aristocracy, capturing this dream-like garden full of hidden kisses and naive love.



6. Love is Love

I remember watching on the news about a lot of legislation revelations in the bounds of same-sex marriage. Now it would be legal in this state, then in this state, and the whole time I could not comprehend the need for such a process. This was the 21st century, and I did not see why people could not just marry who they wanted. Then I recall hearing about a specific case, one that would become very prominent in the time to come, in which Kentucky Clerk Kim Davis was denying same-sex marriage licenses to couples seeking them. She was claiming she was acting under God's authority, a claim I could not connect to, seeing as I was taught God's love had not limits. Suddenly though, it was like there was so many sides to it and the legal loopholes, the conflict of interests, all the technicalities to a subject which should be simple,

became much more problematic. Among the supreme court, it was a 5-4 ruling to conclude that same-sex couples could marry nationwide, even the numbers representing the divide still pertinent in a modern nation. Davis saw it as her religious right to deny the licenses, while same-sex couples saw it as their human rights to seek official marriage. In all of it, love is love, and it is necessary as we are becoming more divided as a country, as a world, as a race. At the end of the day, love is all we have.



7. High School Sweethearts

In order to understand my intrigue with true love, it is important to know this tidbit of my personal background. My parents, Allison and Allen Bickhardt, were high school sweethearts. High school sweethearts, flashback to the 80s, think Breakfast Club, Pretty in Pink, 16 Candles- and my mom is the Meg Ryan protagonist is I've ever known one. She had long blonde locks, wore those frumpy sweaters, and was active in the drama department. My dad had a full head of dark hair, a bigger build, star of the soccer and baseball team. Both of them got along with pretty much everyone, yet unlikely would their coupling be, even more unlikely that they would survive the years they did long distance through college, and I bet they never would have guessed they would someday successfully raise a mixed nationality family. The odds were against my parents I think, but they stuck together through thick and thin, out of the love they had for each other.



8. The City of Love

Paris, the city of lights. Here, the Eiffel Tower lights up in sparkling luminescence at night like a star you could wish upon, the reminiscence of the love padlocks at Pont Des Arts echo remnants of cherished promises, and Mur des Je t'aime rests on the hill of Montmartre, where you can see "I love you" written in 311 different languages. Like any city, there is plenty of people to meet, but throw in the good food and wine of the French, the back-alley cobblestone streets full of discoveries to be made, and the music of street violin players, and you have one of the most romantic places in the world. Couples are common, along with physical affection on the metro, and finding true love in action is a little less challenging in the streets of Paris, in the city of love.



9. *The Kiss By The Hotel De Ville*

Daily Paris is exemplified as the backdrop for romance in this photograph of Robert Doisneau's. Similar to Eisenstaedt's sailor kiss, we see a man lovingly embracing a woman, kissing her rather passionately. However, in contrast, Doisneau staged actress Françoise Bernet and her boyfriend Jacques Cartaud to capture the image. This photo was also taken for Life magazine around the 1950s, but it was not notably published until significant time later. What makes the image is the contrast present between that of the daily routine, and the passion of the young couple. We see two people together and although they are among all of society, for this moment, it is like they are the only people in the world to each other.



10. *Springtime*

In this famous oil painting, created by the french artist Pierre-Auguste Cot, a young couple sit together on a swing in the woods. The girl is wearing translucent drapery and a coy smile, inferencing her intentions. The boy is dressed in rather classical garb and looks intently down at the girl. Both have their feet positioned playfully. There are new flowers blooming and baby butterflies flitting in the air above them. This painting is highly reminiscent of Fragonard's *The Swing*. The significance of the season reflects the youthfulness of its subjects and their budding romance.



11. Personal Identity

Our personal relationships define who we are. You can tell a lot about a person by what they tell you about themselves, but if an honest account is what you're searching for you should ask the people they care about. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* notes, "Your current stage is also a part of a being whose temporal boundaries are determined by relations of psychological *connectedness*." In layman's terms our own identity is dependent on our social interactions and relationships. To create this painting, I posed my a young french couple, with the intention of creating a piece representative of this dependency. I asked them separately what colors they related to personal relationships they had. The boy was adamant about orange describing his closest friendship, and the girl decided purple was evocative of her best friend. They decided mutually that crimson was accurate to their relationship between them, making it the backbone to the background grey. Without these colors, however contrasting they are, there would be less harmony in the canvas' visual construction, reflecting that without each relationship our identities become lesser.

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