

SUMMER JOURNAL(RWB) ASSIGNMENTS FOR IB ART- DISTEFANO

"The object isn't to make art, it's to be in that wonderful state which makes art inevitable."

"Don't worry about your originality. You couldn't get rid of it even if you wanted to. It will stick with you and show up for better or worse in spite of all you or anyone else can do."

"There is no art without contemplation."

The above quotes are all from *The Art Spirit* by Robert Henri – it was difficult to select just three! I am really hoping that this summer is productive for you guys – but productive in a wholly organic and natural sense, that artwork (and research!) flows out of what you are doing and experiencing every day. Take the time to get out of your comfort zone this summer – open yourself to experience and contemplation so that you might enter that state that Henri describes.

Here are suggestions for some RWB pages this summer – remember that art can grow right out of the RWB, like a journal entry that leads to a great novel. All of these assignments should take at least 2-3 pages each- your goal this summer is to fill at least twenty pages. Remember that your writing should be personal – always related back to your own interests and concerns.

1. **ARTIST RESEARCH (required)** – we are not making the most of this. Really push your research further. Pick an artist that is part of the established canon of art history(in other words, no deviantart or anything like that – the web can be a great resource, but we need to also be looking at artists that are established “masters”). Pick an artist that you really like and relate to and discuss how they influence you personally. Research not only this artist, but the artist’s that influenced their work, and how they influenced the art that came after. Look at the historical context of the work and how it influenced the work – art is always a reflection of the spirit of the time (**zeitgeist**) it was made. USE THE LIBRARY!!! If you must start with Wikipedia, look through the sources they site at the end of the article, and read those!
Make some sketches of areas of the work that appeal to you.
Finally – select the works that appeal to you the most and analyze them – look at the elements and principles they are using (repetition, negative space, color, texture, etc.) and discuss how they help further the concept of the piece. Look at the movement, composition, focal point, etc.
2. **PROCESS RESEARCH (required)** – pick an artist you like that uses a particular process (for example Andy Warhol - silkscreening or Kara Walker – cut paper) and research that process. If it is something you can realistically experiment with yourself, do so. Either way, explain the process and look at its history – how has it changed over time, what are some other key artists related to that process and how did they use it, etc. It could be something as simple as crosshatching.
3. **MOVIE REVIEW (required)** - Pick a favorite movie and write a review – look at a review by a famous critic (Pauline Kael, for example) for some inspiration. Discuss how the filmmaker used

specific elements (color, costume, sets, camera movement, etc.) to help create mood or tell the story.

4. **“Drawings” from life (required)** - You can interpret drawing however you wish here – maybe you make collages or take ARTISTIC photographs. The important thing is to select objects, places, people from right around you and record them in words and **VISUALS**. Pretend you are a documentary filmmaker or journalist trying to capture the essence of your summer. Even if your summer is “boring” - what are you reading, watching, etc. If you have a summer job or you are hanging out with family – talk about that. Interview these people, describe these places, find their history, make them come alive for you. “Boredom” and loneliness can often be great fuel for the imagination.
5. **Summer reading (required)**- It would be great if this is something other than assigned reading – hopefully you are reading something else, too! Even if it’s a graphic novel or book of poems. Create some illustrations for what you are reading.
6. **Current event (required)** - Discuss at least one current event that impacted you in some way (made you feel or think something if it was not a direct impact). Make a list of ways that you might illustrate that feeling. Pick one from the list and execute it.

Beyond these requirements – really push yourself to make this RWB a tool to help you make something meaningful and unique out of these three months of freedom. Complete at least three new pieces.

Try to do things that will help get the creativity going – listen to music that you’ve never listened to before (instrumental music can be especially useful for getting into the creative zone – check out some jazz, French pop, klezmer or some classical). Watch an old silent film or a foreign film (look at some Kurosawa or Fellini!). Google some old Fleischer Brother cartoons or Buster Keaton shorts. The internet is a wonderful resource that most of you have access to – rather than look at the culture that is always handed to you, explore alternatives!