

Artist's Statement

I am a Waldorf child. I have been for as long as I can remember. When I was young, I thought that every child grew up baking bread in the morning, and painting with watercolors in the afternoon. For a long time I didn't understand that my education was "alternative", and I didn't understand how lucky I was.

Using the principles of Rudolf Steiner, I learned through not only my head, but my heart and hands as well. Throughout my childhood, I used my hands to occupy myself. I was taught to sew, knit, and crochet at a young age and would always have a small project that I carried with me. I didn't think highly of my handwork until I reached high school, because I assumed that every child learned the same things that I did in school. Once I realized that what I had learned could – combined with my natural ability to create – set me apart, I started to give a higher personal value to what I had been thoughtlessly making for years.

This redundancy that I craved as a child has led me to an exploration in patterns and their role in a social structure. Each human lives a somewhat redundant life, completing the same actions each day. I believe that though we can easily choose to do what is comfortable for us, we have the ability to step outside ourselves and evoke emotion that takes us from our own pattern. What makes us unique as individuals is our ability to choose how we want to live our lives and to not always do what is expected of us. While considering this idea, I have started to train myself to be hyper aware of the people around me that choose to break the pattern that society sets us in. I find myself drawn to individuals who stand out; people like the quiet yet rebellious religion teacher I had this semester, and my best friend who never seems to stray from his imaginative ideals. These human beings have chosen to listen to themselves and step away from the repetition they could so easily fall into.

This idea, this attention to pattern, also carries into my work as an artist. The pieces in my portfolio are a cultivation of the different emotions that human beings can choose to succumb to, emotions that alter our personal pattern and make us more than lifeless creatures. Recently I have been experimenting with the ability to reveal something about a space, making it a part of the background that is blatantly the subject of the foreground. Pattern, particularly wallpapers, allow me to do this and help me show an experience or perception that I had in a space without presenting it in an overwhelming way.

I constantly find myself drawn to repetitive shapes and patterns that reflect the cluster of the lives that human beings live now, and I try to present them visually through my art. Even when I dance, I see the choreography as a pattern that I need to tackle. I use my body to portray the movements that are redundant yet new every time I do them. I have been able to transfer my obsession with pattern into my creative being so that I am connected in every sense of my life.

My attraction to pattern comes from the redundancy of the knitting and sewing that I learned at a young age. I continue to find inspiration from what I learned as a Waldorf child, and will always use the gifts that I have developed over the years to find my way as a human being, void from the restrictions that society may place on me.

Isabella L. Poulos

Pius XI High School 2014

Tamarack Waldorf School 2010