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Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Creative Arts and Culture and Bachelor of Education (Honours) (Visual Arts) Co-terminal Double Degree Programme

ART4216 Honours Project II

[Capstone Project]

VISUAL DIARY: SENSE & SENSIBILITY-CONCRETE ART & ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

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DECLARATION

I, Wong Sum Yi, declare that this research report "Visual Diary: Sense & Sensibility- Concrete Art & Abstract Expressionism" represents my own work under the supervision of Professor Laurence James Wood and that it has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

Wong Sum Yi (April 18 2022)

ABSTRACT

Abstract art is an art type in which artists do not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of visual reality, but use shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks instead to achieve the effect of the depiction. The researcher explored different areas of abstract art- Concrete Art, which is simplify about aesthetic, and Abstract Expressionism, which is emotional, and then look into people understanding and perception of artworks without figurative depiction to find the distinct between artist's intention and audience' interpretation in this study, through Qualitative research(Interviews) and quantitative research(Questionnaires) methods.

Keywords: Abstract art, Expressionism, Concrete art, Art and Audience

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

WHAT IS ABSTRACT ART?

Abstract art is an art type in which artists do not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of visual reality, but use shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks instead to achieve the effect of the depiction. Abstract art can base on a simplified or schematic object, figure or landscape. It can also apply to art that uses forms, such as geometric shapes or gestural marks, which have no source in the external visual reality. (Tate Modern. "Abstract Art".)

ARTIST-ORIENTED OR AUDIENCE-ORIENTED?

Abstract sounds like an art form that anything can claim to be. However, how to study abstract art pieces- or is it necessary to understand abstract art pieces? In the "Art and Audience" Article (N. Zangwill, 1999), Zangwill argued that art has nothing essential to do with an audience, supported by counterexamples of art that bore no actual or intended relation to an audience. However, some famous philosophers or aestheticians, like *Monroe Beardsley* (1915–1985), Henry *Nelson Goodman* (1906–1998) and George Dickie (1926 – 2020), proposed that a work of art is intentionally endowed with a disposition to produce aesthetic experiences for an audience, where the audience might be the one to decide how they perceive and understand. So, is abstract art not understandable? Does one make art pieces for oneself or others? Is it necessary to understand abstract art pieces? - The researcher began this research with the above questions in her mind.

WHY ABSTRACT ART?

Throughout researcher's 17 years of education, abstract art is not a popular topic in schools as observed. Other than pastiche that imitated Mondrian's art piece composition, the researcher herself has never been taught to construct another type of abstract art. Yet, being fascinated by abstract arts and the geometrical graphics that the researcher observed (Picture 1-1) and those graphics that the researcher "sees" when she closes her eyes (Picture 1-2), she would like to explore different areas of abstract art- Concrete Art, which is simplify about

aesthetic, and Abstract Expressionism, which is emotional, and then look into people understanding and perception of artworks without figurative depiction to find the distinct between artist's intention and audience' interpretation.









(Picture 1-1 Geometrical shapes of light)

(Picture 1-2 Sketchbook)

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of this capstone project:

- 1. To explore the circumstances of abstract arts in contemporary Hong Kong
- 2. To present the contrast between concrete art and abstract expressionism
- 3. To understand audience's perception of artworks without figurative depiction
- 4. To investigate the distinct or relationship between general interpretation and individual expression on concrete art and abstract expressionist artworks
- 5. To present self-expression and conduct self-reflection through abstract narrative

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This capstone project is conducted on the basis of the research questions below:

- 1. Why and how do artists do abstract art?
- 2. What are the differences of visual presentation between concrete art and abstract expressionism?
- 3. How do the audience perceive artworks without figurative depiction?
- 4. What are the differences between artist(researcher)'s intention and the audience' interpretation on concrete art and abstract expressionist artworks?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

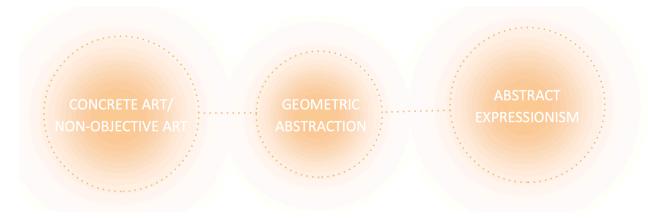
CONCRETE ART VS ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST PAINTINGS

The researcher would like to showcase the contrast of concrete arts and abstract expressionist paintings from researcher's perspective

SELF-EXPRESSION & GENERAL INTERPRETATION

This study will identify and present researcher's visual language in presenting various emotions or personal aesthetics and compare and analysis researcher's own intention and general interpretation through systematic data collection.

1.5 TERMS DEFINITION



(Fig. 1 Relationship between Terms of Abstract Art)

CONCRETE ART & NON-OBJECTIVE ART

· Non-objective art visualizes the spiritual and moral, and it stands for virtues like purity and simplicity (Tate Modern. "Non-objective Art".) Concrete Art is more or less the same as non-objective art. It is originated from Dutch artist Theo Van Doesburg (1883-1931). This form of art has strong emphasis on geometrical abstraction and no symbolic meaning and is based entirely on observable reality. (Tate Modern. "Concrete Art".)

GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION

· Geometric shapes can be defined as figures and areas enclosed by boundaries formed by curves, points, and lines. Geometric could be found in both concrete art and abstract expressionism.

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

·Abstract expressionism focuses on emotion, sentiment, and derivatives of abstraction. Shapes, colours and overall composition are typically associated with natural world elements. Representative abstract expressionist artists are Jackson Pollock (1912 – 1956) and *Willem de Kooning* (1904 - 1997).

SENSE

·Sense refers to the way the body perceives external stimuli, such as sight, smell, hearing, taste, or touch. (Oxford Languages) It is an ability to understand, recognize, value or react to something, especially any of the 5 physical abilities. (Cambridge Dictionary)

SENSIBILITY

·According to the Cambridge Dictionary, sensibility is the ability to feel and react to something while Oxford Languages defines it as the ability to appreciate and respond to complex emotional or aesthetic influences.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CONRETE/NON-OBJECTIVE ABSTRACT ART

Abstract art has its origins in the 19th century. Many painters of this period adopted different ways of expressing themselves freely and taking on new responsibilities as these attitudes coalesced. They use abstract art to visualise the spiritual and moral dimension that represents virtues like purity and simplicity. (Tate Modern. "Non-objective Art".) From Picture 2-1 and Picture 2-2 below, Wassily Kandinsky and Hilma af Klint painted their works with their sense and own perspectives towards the world or objects.



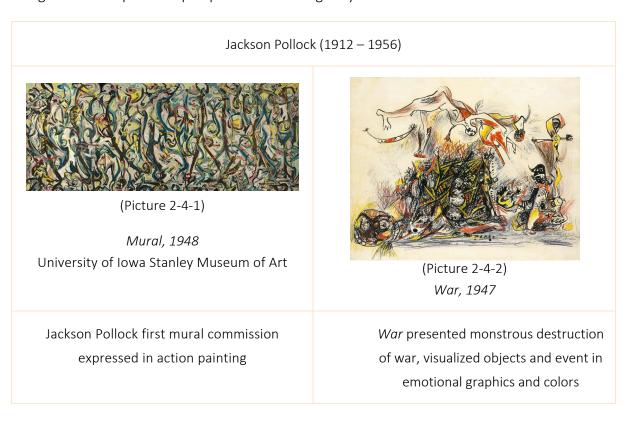
Theo van Doesburg (1883-1931), the father of Concrete Art, claimed that concrete art is to create 'in a visible and tangible form thing which did not previously exist — to represent abstract thoughts in a sensuous and tangible form'.



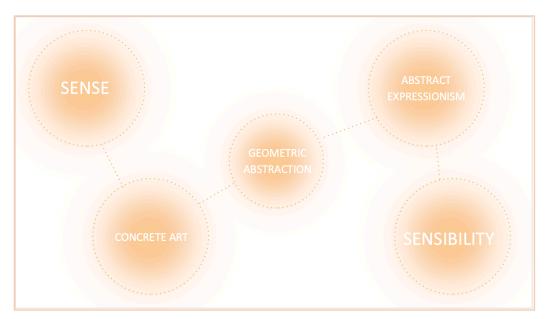
2.2 ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

Abstract expressionists applied strong emotional brushstrokes to express a feeling or record a thing or event in personal perspective with imaginary.

Theo van Doesburg visualized the object forms in geometrics



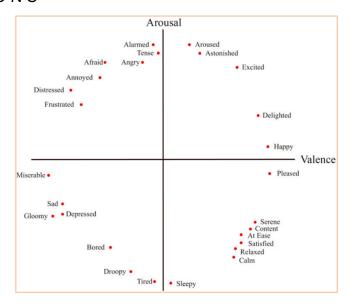
2.3 SENSE & SENSIBILITY, CONCRETE ART & ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM



(Figure 2-1 Interrelationships between Sense and Sensibility, Concrete Art and Abstract Expressionism)

To conclude, Concrete Art is more related to sense while Abstract Expressionism is about sensibility. Yet, geometrical abstract depictions could be applied to both aspects.

2.4 EMOTIONS



(Figure 2-2 Russell, J. A. (1980) A circumplex model of affect.)

Russell (1980) divided positive and negative emotions according to their intensity, while Happy, Relax, Annoyed, and Fear are the four typical emotions for the four areas respectively. Psychologically, some scholars claimed that very basic context-free geometric shapes reflect

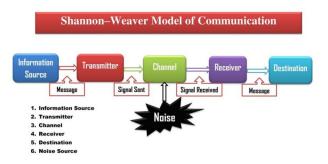


signal emotions (Larson, C. & Aronoff, J. & Steuer, E.,2011), and certain colours cause systematic physiological manifest reactions in emotional experience and cognitive orientation. (Elliot, A., 2015)

In this study, the researcher would experiment if emotions can be detached from art and see if there will be unexcepted coincident audience's interpretation of aesthetic compositions even if the researcher has no emotional purposes to do with the creation process. The mentioned model would be applied to abstract expressionist art creation.

2.5 ART & AUDIENCE

Abstract artists and audiences are always separated into two parties. To describe a usual exhibition with the model of communication, it is like a linear model of communication- artists deliver depictions and messages while the audience receives and interprets them.



(Picture 2-5 Shannon-weaver Model of Communication, a kind of linear model of communication, developed in 1949 by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver)

In this study, the researcher would like to collect and analyse data from the audience to understand the audience's perception and evaluate the potential of resonance between the creation intention and perception of abstract arts without representational images.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTERVIEWS

The researcher interviews 2 abstract artists with exhibiting experience in Hong Kong for indepth discussion on the artist's intentions and inspirations to create abstract arts. The focus interview questions are as follows:

- 1. What type of abstract arts do you usually do? (Abstract Expressionism/ Concrete art)
- 2. What inspired you to create an abstract art piece?
- 3. What are the common feedbacks that you received from audience?
- 4. How much do you weigh the feedback from audience? Will the feedback affect your next abstract art creation?

3.2 ART CREATION- VISUAL DIARY (MIXED MEDIA)

The table shows the summary of direction to create 9 paintings, which presents the contrast between concrete art and abstract expressionism:

	ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM	CONCRETE ART	
Products	5 Paintings	4 Paintings	
Content	5 separated emotional themes based on the A circumplex model of affect (Russell, 1980) 1. Angry 2. Depressed/sad 3. Annoyed/afraid/fear 4. Calm/ Relax 5. Delighted/ Happy	5. Presents own aestheticsSymmetricalGeometricalPatterns	
Initial Visualization Samples	(Picture 2-4-2)	(Picture 2-3-1)	

(Table 3-1 Summary and Visualization samples of Art Creation Direction)

3.3 ONLINE EXHIBITION & QUESTIONNAIRES

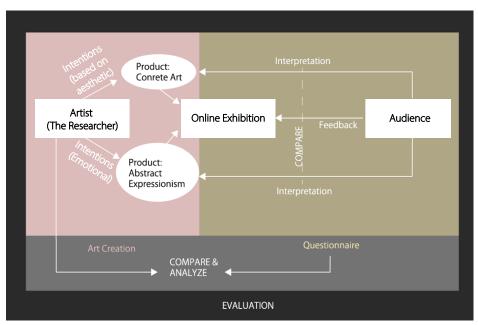
After creating paintings in the styles of concrete art and abstract expressionism respectively, the researcher exhibits artworks through Google Form and collects the audience's interpretation of each of the works regarding their feelings towards the art pieces, keywords that they can relate to the graphics, and the most significant elements that affected their interpretation on the art pieces. Questionnaire samples as below:



(Table 3-2 Questionnaire Samples)

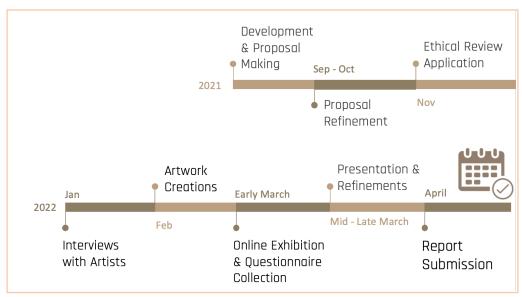
3.4 SYNTHESIS

After collecting the data, the researcher reviews the research outcomes and compares her own intentions to the audience's interpretation and the researcher's initiatives. Thus, evaluates the necessity and level of understanding of an abstract art piece and establishes reports.



(Figure 3-1 The Flow of Research)

3.5 RESEARCH SCHEDULE



(Figure 3-2 Research Schedule)

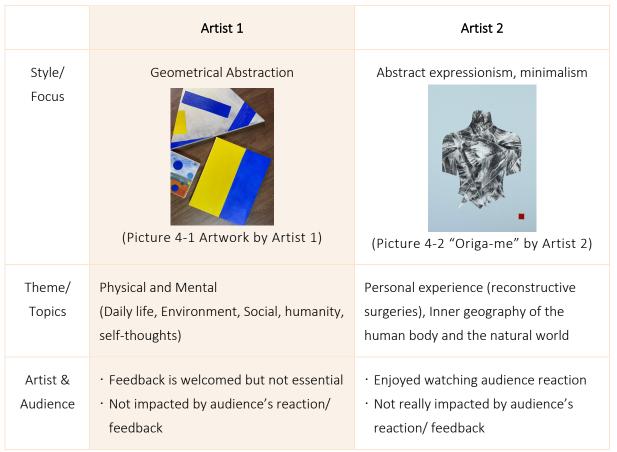
3.6 LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations to this research. For the interview part, only two abstract artists accepted the interview invitation, therefore, the opinions and perspectives of the interviewees cannot represent all abstract artists. For the art creation, the research outcomes are reflected based on the researcher's styles that cannot represent all abstract artists or styles. Only small-scale paintings can be produced due to the limitation of space, materials, and tools, regarding the fact that the researcher is in quarantine during the pandemic period. Diverse scales and mediums of art pieces might influence the viewers' perception in distinct results. Only an online exhibition is available due to the pandemic period, so the audience cannot view and evaluate artworks with physical elements, such as texture and lighting, which might also affect their perception.

CHAPTER 4 - RESEARCH PROCESS & ANALYSIS

4.1 INTERVIEWS

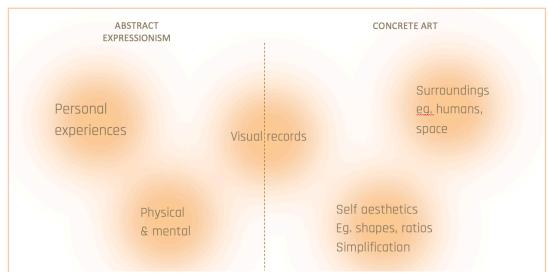
The researcher summarized from the interviews that the common topics shared by the two abstract artists are related to physical, mental, and personal experiences. The two interviewees emphasised their intention rather than audience perception, which will be compared with the audience in Chapter 5. The table below shows the summary of the interviews:



(Table 4-1 Summary of Interview)

4.2 ART CREATION

From interviews and literature reviews, five common topics and inspirations for abstract artists are personal experiences, physical and mental conditions or issues, daily visual records, selfaesthetics in the presentation of shapes and simplifications and the surroundings like humans and space, which are shown on the figure on the next page, distinguished into aspects of abstract expressionism and concrete art.



(Figure 4-1 Common Topics and Inspirations for Abstract Artists)

4.2.1 ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

After identifying the topics for creation, the researcher created five abstract expressionist pieces and classified them into four categories, regarding the emotional types in Circumplex Model of Affect (Russell, 1980) (Figure 2-2). Each blue label on the figure below shows the topics or inspirations for that art piece next to it. Followed by the figure are the concepts behind each piece of work.



(Figure 4-2 Topic Classification of Researcher's Abstract Expressionist Creation)

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - HAPPINESS (PLEASANT & ENERGETIC)



(Picture 4-1-1 Bloom, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

For the researcher, happiness is not an emotion that lasts for long, but can be recalled from the memory. *Bloom* is a visualization of the moment after a one-second happiness and the geometric form of happiness in the memory.

Symbolization of Circle

Shape is the means by which past actions are stored (Leyton, M., 2006). From own previous study on circles (Picture 4-2), researcher used circle to represents a container of the beginning and ending of movement. While on *Bloom*, the little yellow circle implies the happiness was saved as part of the memory.



(Picture 4-1-2 Previous Study on Circles with video link: https://youtu.be/lnRHm5RCRkU)

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - RELAX (PLEASANT & LETHARGIC)



(Picture 4-2-1 Relaxing, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

The themes of *Relaxing* are relaxed, comfortable and balanced. Objects that cultivate comfortable conditions and relax emotions surrounding the researcher are mainly blue and white, with fluffy and smooth textures. *Relaxing* creates a combination of water, cotton and denim, while the squares at the corners show a balance and calm mind.



(Picture 4-2-2 Photo Stack of Objects for Visual Inspiration)

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - SADNESS, DEPRESSED (UNPLEASANT & LETHARGIC)



(Picture 4-3-1 Eczema, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

Could you ever imagine one waking up every day and seeing blood on bedsheets- *Eczema* is a piece inspired by the researcher's inflammatory skin condition of hands and limbs. The depiction is a combination of wounds and a cross-section of eczema skin. It is also an abstract form of researcher's previous works on eczema with more emotional-oriented colours. The scratchy lines imply the uncontrollable movement of scratching on the skin.



(Picture 4-3-2 Progress Photos of Painting with Fingers with Eczema)



Left: (Picture 4-3-3 Photo of Researcher's Hand with Eczema)
Right: (Picture 4-3-4 *Eczema*, 2020- Painting of Cross-section of Skin with Eczema)

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - ANNOYED/ANGER (UNPLEASANT & ENERGETIC)



(Picture 4-4-1 Grr, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)



Grr shows a wave of anger under control- a tendency of angry emotional reaction. The researcher developed graphics based on the structure of an eyeball and disarranged lines, which imply nerves and unstable emotions, with a sharp red background colour that leads to the arousal of anger.

(Picture 4-4-2 Visual Record of Hand Vibration)

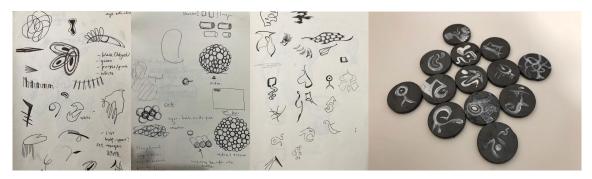


ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - CONFUSION/FEAR (UNPLEASANT & ENERGETIC)



(Picture 4-5-1 When I Closed My Eyes, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

This piece is composed of symbols and graphics that keep squishing into the researcher's mind, which was recorded in sketchbooks and previous works. The researcher felt so confused to "see" those images and sometimes scared by the uncanny ones. The big eye shape with dots in the middle, accompanied by the black symbols that make one focus and feel eroded.



(Picture 4-5-2 Inspiration: Researcher's Sketchbook and Previous Work)



(Picture 4-5-3 Inspiration: Photo of the Window Edge of Bus)



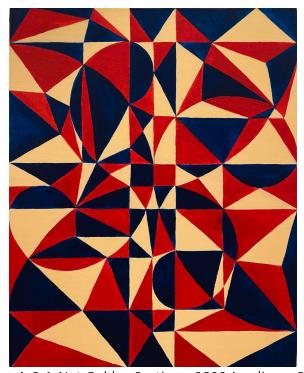
4.2.2 CONCRETE ART

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and Figure 4-1, the topics of concrete art or non-objective art are usually related to the surroundings, self-aesthetics, and visual records. The figure below shows the inspirations for that art pieces.



(Figure 4-3 Inspiration of Researcher's Concrete Art Creation)

CONCRETE ART - GEOMETRICAL NON-PERFECTION

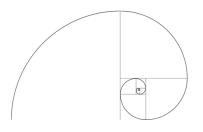


(Picture 4-6-1 Not Golden Sections, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

The golden section is a proportional ratio of 1:1.618 that occurs in many natural objects and a ratio that artists always apply to paintings. In *Not Golden Sections*, the researcher muddled the four golden-section-like spirals into triangles that were drawn with freehand and used colours that are not exactly the three primary colours to create interesting visual effects.







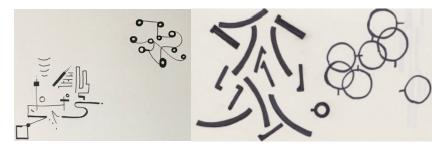
(Picture 4-6-3 A Golden Section)

CONCRETE ART - FREQUENCY & ORDER



(Picture 4-7-1 Patterns, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

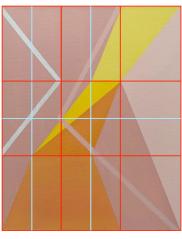
Structured by patterns and geometries that researcher unintentionally doodled with unknown order and frequency on sketchbooks, *Patterns* is a visualization of researchers' subconscious.



(Picture 4-7-2 Doodles on Researcher's Sketchbook)

CONCRETE ART - STRUCTURE AND SIMPLIFICATION





(Picture 4-8-2 Composition of *Mobius, 2022*)

(Picture 4-8-1 Mobius, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

Mobius shows a simplification of a Mobius strip, an aesthetic structure the researcher had created a series of it with emotional intention before (Picture 4-9-2). However, *Mobius* purely reflects the abstract depiction of the twisting part of a Mobius strip in neutral colours. The composition of *Mobius* can be fractionated into nine rectangles where the components touch the corners of the rectangles.



(Picture 4-8-3 A Mobius Strip)



(Picture 4-8-4 *Loop, 2017-*Sculpture of the Series Mobius Band)

CONCRETE ART - GEOMETRICAL FIGURE

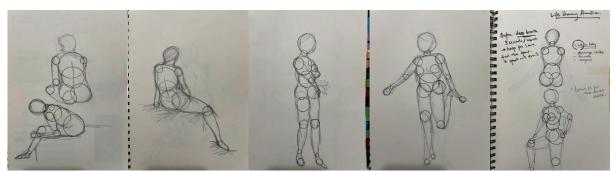


(Picture 4-9-1 Models, 2022 Acrylic on Canvas)

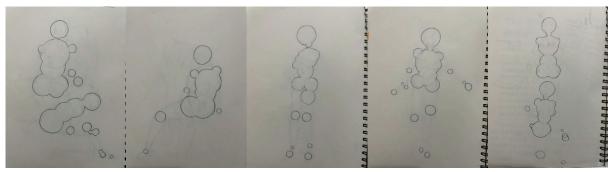
The idea of *Models* came from a life sketching practice experience a few years ago- the researcher made heavy pencil strokes on thin sketchbook paper that made the shape looks so visible on the back, and decided to trace the outline with circles. *Models* is a simplification, separation and complexation of human figures. Viewers can find four heads of figures in pale yellow colour at the four corners and one figure in the middle.

Process

- 1. Quick figure sketching in 10s
- 2. Uses circles to outline the figures
- 3. Traces the circles at the back of the pages



(Picture 4-9-2 Figure Sketching)

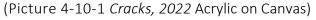


(Picture 4-9-3 Traced Figures with Circles at the Back of Paper)

EXTRA PIECES -

1. TEXTURE: CRACKS







(Picture 4-10-2 *Cracks* before the Paints Dried)

The researcher stuck sticky black acrylic paints on an undried black background while aesthetic cracks appeared unintentionally. Texture and visual effects varied after the paint dried.

2. VISUAL RECORD OF THE ART CREATIONS PROCESS



(Picture 4-11-1 *Process, 2022* Acrylic on Canvas)

The researcher abandoned a canvas during the art creation process as the outcome was not satisfactory. There were also quite a lots of paint left after finishing each piece. Therefore, the researcher decided to scratch the leftover paint on the useless canvas. *Process* is a visual record of art creation, a period and a process.

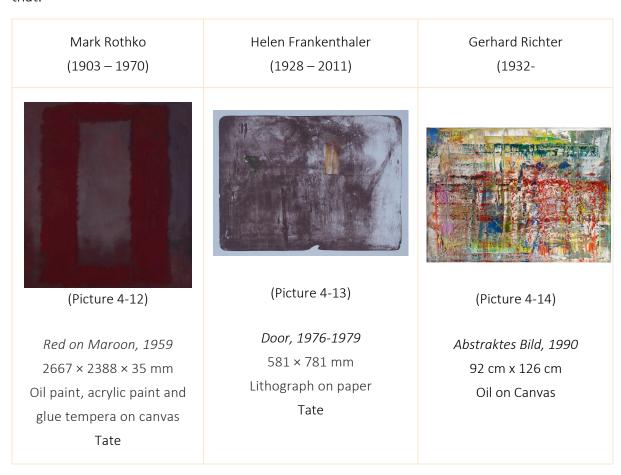


(Figure 4-4 Process of *Process*, 2022)

However, the researcher could not classify *Cracks* and *Process* into abstract expressionism or concrete art as they are neither emotional nor geometrical. Later, the researcher realized it could be identified as contemporary abstract art.

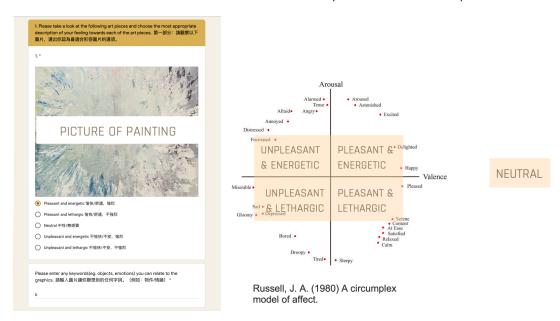
CONTEMPORARY- REDEFINING ABTRACT ART

Color Field Painting is an art type that differed from abstract expressionism. Artists eliminated the emotional, mythic or religious content, and the personal application associated. Mark Rothko and Helen Frankenthaler are significant Color Field Painting Artists. Gerhard Richter the contemporary artist's piece Abstraktes Bild is in the same style as the researcher's piece of "Process". Brushstrokes look expressive and emotional but artists created those pieces without expressive intention. Researcher's "Cracks" and "Process" have similar concepts with that.



4.3 QUESTIONNAIRE COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

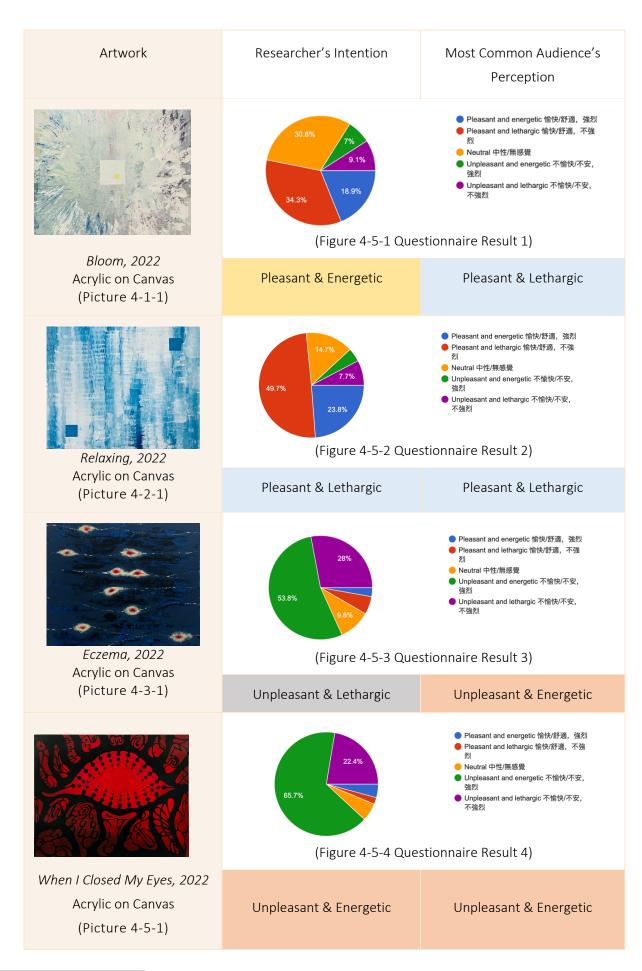
As of 13 March 2022, a total of 143 responses were collected through Google Form. The questions about the audience's perception of paintings are in random order. Regarding the questions for each art piece, respondents could choose among five choices of emotions or neutral and enter keywords that they can relate to the graphics. The five choices of emotions come from the classification of emotions by Russell's Circumplex Model of Affect.

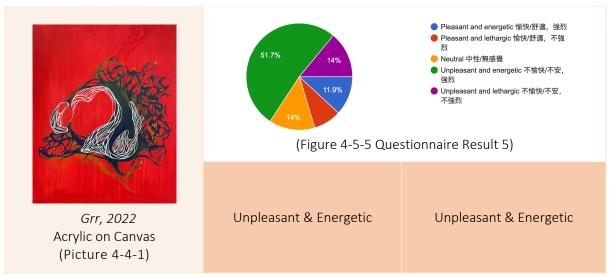


(Picture 4-15 Sample Questionnaires regarding the Audience's Perception of Art Pieces)

4.3.1 SYNCHRONIZATION IN AUDIENCE'S PERCEPTION & THE RESEARCHER'S INTENTION

Analysis on the abstract expressionist artworks will be the focus of this study. The results of the audience's perception of the abstract expressionist paintings are shown in the table 4-2 on the next pages, highlighting the most common perception from the audience. From the results, the researcher found that most respondents could distinguish the emotions expressed in abstract expressionist works in positive and negative (pleasant and unpleasant). Yet, the intensity of emotions they perceived might not be exactly the same as the researcher's intention. The followings are analyses of the interrelationships of emotions and other components.





(Table 4-2 Questionnaire Results)

4.3.2 EMOTIONS & INTIMACY OF RESPONDENTS & THE RESEARCHER



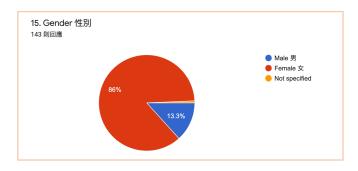
(Figure 4-5-6 Questionnaire Result Q14)

Question 14 aimed to examine if the level of intimacy or respondents' understanding of the researcher affects their interpretation of the abstract expressionist art pieces. The chart above reflects the number of respondents in different levels of relationship with the researcher, while the following table shows the synchronization of their perception and the researcher's intention in doing the five abstract expressionist art pieces. From the result, the researcher can conclude that higher intimacy between researcher and respondents might result in a higher chance of synchronization of respondents' perception of abstract expressionist paintings and the researcher's intention.

No. of responses of perceptions in sync with the researcher's intention (Abstract Expressionist Works)	4-5	3	0
Total no. of respondents in sync among the 143	17	33	9
No. of friends in sync (Percentage)	4 (23.53%)	5 (15.15%)	1 (11.11%)
Percentage to the total no. of friends (36) participated in the questionnaire	11.11%	13.88%	2.78%
No. of acquaintances in sync (Percentage)	9 (52.94%)	9 (27.27%)	3 (33.33%)
Percentage to the total no. of acquaintances (43) participated in the questionnaire	20.93%	20.93%	6.98%
No. of Strangers in sync (Percentage)	4 (23.53%)	19 (57.58%)	5 (55.55%)
Percentage to the total no. of strangers (64) participated in the questionnaire	6.25%	29.6%	7.81%

(Table 4-3 Data Collected for Q14)

4.3.3 EMOTIONS & GENDERS

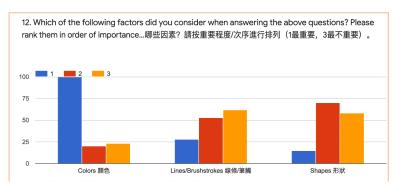


(Figure 4-5-7 Questionnaire Result Q15)

Question 15 is purposed to find out if gender would be a factor affecting one's perception of abstract arts. However, the sampling size of male respondents is too small (19 over 143 respondents), therefore, the researcher could not make a conclusion based on the result.



4.3.4 EMOTIONS & COLOURS



(Figure 4-5-8 Questionnaire Result Q12)

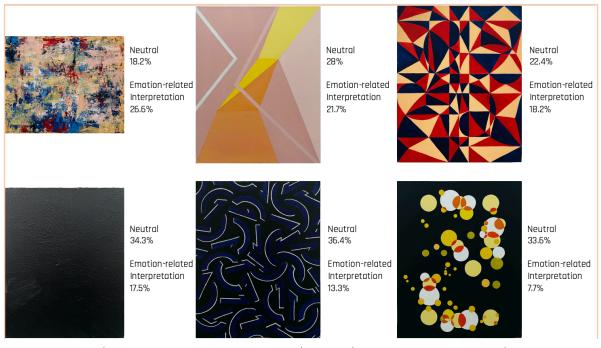
The researcher aimed to find out the most important elements that affected the audience's understanding of an art piece through Question 12. The result above reflects that despite the level of resonance of respondents' perception and the artist's intentions, the colours of the paintings are the main factor that affects the respondents' perception of the graphics. And the data in the table below shows that colours might be a significant factor that leads to a higher probability of synchronization in the audience's perception and artist's intentions.

No. of responses of perceptions in sync with the researcher's intention (Abstract Expressionist Works)	4-5	3	0
No. of respondents in sync	17	33	9
No. of respondents chose colours as the most important factor among the respondents in sync	15 (88.00%)	23 (69.70%)	4 (44.44%)

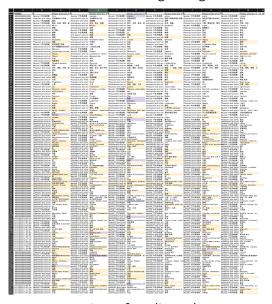
(Table 4-4 Data Collected for Q12)

4.3.5 CONCRETE ART, "PROCESS", "CRACKS" & EMOTIONS

The researcher reviewed all the keywords that the respondents entered in the questionnaires for their interpretation of the six concrete art pieces. The 4 Concrete art pieces, the art pieces "Process" and "Cracks" were nothing to do with emotions. It was expected that the typical feelings towards the paintings would be neutral. However, the researcher realized that the respondents shared similar interpretations of art pieces with richer colours and less organized. Picture 4-13 is an overview of the audience's interpretation of the six pieces while highlighting emotional interpretations in yellow.



(Figure 4-6 Questionnaire Result regarding Concrete Art Pieces)



(Picture 4-16 Overview of Audience's Interpretations)

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION & REFLECTION

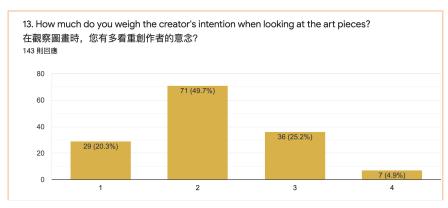
5.1 CONCLUSION

To conclude, the researcher can summarize that there was resonance between the artist's intention and the audience's perception in this study. Most respondents could perceive the positive and negative emotions through abstract expressionist works as the artist intended, yet, the intensity of perceived emotions varies and depends. Some audiences were moved by both abstract expressionist arts and concrete arts, while many of them related graphics to real-life social or political events, such as wars. Besides abstract expressionist works and concrete art, there are abstract types that do not belong to the two aspects, and this research found that the audience had greater emotional responses toward these less organized pieces. In addition, the audience's perceptions were mainly determined by the colours of the depictions. To sum up, the research would propose that abstract art is understandable to a certain extent.

5.2 REFLECTION

As mentioned in Chapter 3.6, one of the limitations of this research is the scale of art creations. People perceive scale according to their own size (DeWitte, Larmann, R. M., & Shields, 2012). A small-scale work might imply intimacy while large-scale works can submerge one or a group of viewers and transmit messages and ideas directly to them. There are still many potential developments on the topics with various scales and art forms. Other than 2D paintings, 3D sculptures might bring different aesthetic experiences to the audience. The researcher will further explore the possibility and relationships between the usage of colours, art forms and scale and the audience's perception.

In this research, the researcher explored and experimented with the artists' intentions and the audience's interpretation. It was her first time collecting the audience's perception in a relatively systematic way, which was interesting to know that many respondents were afraid of getting "wrong answers", claiming that they knew nothing about art. But the research outcome showed that many of them could actually perceive the researcher's intention, especially for the abstract expressionist works, and some of them even guessed the exact title or objects that the graphics referred to.



(Figure 4-5-9 Questionnaire Result Q13)

In Chapter 4.1 Interviews and the 4.2 Art Creations, interviewees and the researcher produced artworks that emphasised on artist's intention and did not consider how the audience perceives. On the other hand, around 70% of the audience related to the artist's concepts when they appreciated artworks. For those audiences, their perception was an intersectional outcome of their attempt of understanding the depiction and other conditional factors, i.e. personal experience, the display platforms and the scale of artworks.

"My concern is never art, but always what art can be used for.", Gerhard Richter stated in his "The Daily Practice of Painting, Writings (1962-1993)". We all learn, perceive, think, express, and communicate, while the researcher would say art is a particular way for artists to do so. Collecting and analysing the audience's feedback while exhibiting artworks is no longer just linear communication. The intercourse with the audience in this study creates infinite possibilities and developments from the original depictions. It was astonishing that the audience gave consonant interpretations to art pieces that the researcher created unintentionally without figurative depictions. Those pieces became meaningful after exhibiting and interacting with the audience - and that's the intrigue of abstract art.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I - INTERVIEW SCRIPT WITH ARTIST 1

Background: A Local Abstract Artist (Interview in Chinese with translation)

Q1	您最常做哪一種類的抽象藝術作品? What type of abstract arts do you usually do?
A1	我常用幾何圖案、線條和色彩創作。 I usually use geometric, lines and colors to create.
Q2	您的創作意念源自於? What inspired you to create an abstract art piece?
A2	生活等於藝術。創作意念源自對日常和周圍環境的看法。社會,人物相互關連,息息相關。我探索用藝術手法,層出不窮的去表現自己的想法······ Life is art. My creative ideas come from perceptions of everyday life and the surrounding environment. Society and human are interrelated. I explore the techniques to express my ideas without boundary
Q3	請您介紹一份最能代表自己的抽象藝術作品。 Could you introduce an abstract art piece that can represent yourself the most?
АЗ	探索一個物理與心理上嘅藝術空間。 An exploration on physical and psychological art space. (Pic 4-1)
Q4	請您分享以往在公眾場合展出抽象藝術作品的經驗。 Could you share your experience of exhibiting abstract art in public?
A4	每次展覽都嘗試在展覽中表達自已的意念和研究有關的表現手法。透過探討多種多樣嘅藝術形式以繪畫、雕塑、色彩、陶瓷等不同嘅媒體去表達共存的真實和空間。過程有時會很辛苦去找資料和思考探究。 I try to express my concepts and research in expression in every exhibition. By exploring a variety of art forms, painting, sculpture, color, ceramics and other media are used to express the coexistence of the reality and space. Sometimes it is very tough to find information, think and explore.
Q5	觀眾在參觀展覽時通常會給予什麼評價/回饋? What are the common feedbacks that you received from audience?
A5	一般觀眾通常只係來睇作品,很少給予意見。但我認為觀眾嘅到來參觀,己是支持和認可你的作品。或許領略你創作過程中的情感。有時佢哋會留言:「做藝術家好難嚟!」 The general audience usually only comes to see the works and seldom gives any comments. But I think it is a recognition and support to my work when audience

	comes to visit, and maybe perceive your emotions in during creative process. Sometimes they leave messages like "It's hard to be an artist!"
Q6	您有多看重觀眾對作品的評價?會影響你以後的創作嗎? How much do you weigh the feedback from audience? Will the feedback affect your next abstract art creation?
A6	我認為觀眾對我嘅作品有評價和沒有評價都可以的。這是他們的選擇。但這不可能影響我創作的自主和方向。 I think it's fine whether the audiences comment on my work or not. It's their choice. But their comment would not affect the autonomy and direction of my creation.
Q7	你認為抽象藝術是最適合/最舒適地表達自己/與其他人溝通的藝術形式嗎?為什麼? Do you think abstract art is the most suitable art form and comfortable way for you to communicate/ express yourself? Why?
A7	創作是以真實事物去探索藝術表演,以抽象簡單直接嘅表現藝術效果為目的,運用不同嘅藝術手法,例如用繪畫、雕塑、色彩展示演繹去探討周圍事物。簡單的的圖案和顏色容易吸引人嘅注意,讓觀眾感覺良好和親近,尤其用暖色。這也是我喜歡運用的自主的創作風格。我喜歡以獨特自我的方式探討藝術和人性。藝術對社會、文化歷史的相互關係和影響。喜歡抽象藝術,並聚焦當下歷史時刻,以自由課題探討人性的耀眼靈光,並認為抽象簡單的作品較適合。Art creation is to explore artistic performances with real things, with the purpose of expressing artistic effects in an abstract, simple and direct way, by using various techniques, such as painting, sculpture, colour, to display interpretation of exploring the surroundings. Simple patterns and colours attract attention and make the audience feel good and intimate, especially warm colours. This is also an independent style that I like to use. I like to explore art and human nature in my own way. Like the interrelationship and influence of art on society, culture and history. I like abstract art, and focus on the current historical moment, discuss the shining moment of human nature with free topics, which is more suitable to present in abstract forms.

APPENDIX II - INTERVIEW SCRIPT WITH ARTIST 2

Background: An Indian Abstract Artist Based in Hong Kong

Q1	What type of abstract arts do you usually do?
A1	It's a bit difficult to define exactly but I guess it's probably closest to Abstract landscape, abstract minimalism, and abstract expressionism.
Q2	What inspired you to create an abstract art piece?

A2	I love abstract because it can make you feel something even though there are no
	representative objects.
Q3	Could you introduce an abstract art piece that can represent yourself the most?
А3	"Origa-me" is that piece for me. It represents my journey through cancer. The idea for "Origa-me" came to me as a result of my experience with multiple reconstructive surgeries. Though deeply personal, I love this piece because it plays on the similarities between the inner geography of the human body and the outer natural world.
Q4	Could you share your experience of exhibiting abstract art in public?
A4	My experience is that people are drawn to abstract art because it creates some emotions in them. Abstract is also not always easy to understand so people spend more time to think about the art. It has great impact and creates awareness within us.
Q5	What are the common feedbacks that you received from audience?
A 5	People are usually quite interested in knowing my techniques and medium. Some people are moved emotionally by my larger works in ink. Those carry a lot of emotion in them.
Q6	How much do you weigh the feedback from audience? Will the feedback affect your next abstract art creation?
A6	I always enjoy watching and hearing people's reaction to my work! It's very interesting to see my work through their eyes. I'm not really impacted by people's reaction because my art is a representation of who I am. I don't believe there is any right or wrong way to express our inner selves.
Q7	Do you think abstract art is the most suitable art form and comfortable way for you to communicate/ express yourself? Why?
А7	Yes definitely. I'm a non-conformist so anything with too many rules doesn't suit me! I love abstract because it allows me to be free and express something from deep inside which I could not do if there are too many boundaries and rules. I love to see other artists work and admire all kinds of art, but personally I get bored when I try to create anything other than abstract. To me, art is emotion and that emotion needs to be expressed with total freedom.

APPENDIX III - QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

Questionnaire Link: https://forms.gle/EVC7UzJVctmd2L2F7

SENSE & SENSIBILITY- CONCRETE ART & ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

You are invited to participate in a project supervised by Professor Laurence James Wood and conducted by Wong Sum Yi, who are staff / students of the Department of Creative Arts and Culture in The Education University of Hong Kong.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- 1. To explore the circumstances of abstract arts in contemporary Hong Kong
- 2. To present the contrast between concrete art and abstract expressionism
- 3. To present self-expression and conduct self-reflection through graphical narrative
- 4. To investigate the distinct between general interpretation and individual expression on concrete art and abstract expressionist artworks

METHODOLOGY

- 1. Interview
- 2. Exhibition with Questionnaires

PROCEDURES

You are invited to complete a review containing 16 questions (1 optional), regarding your interpretation and feelings towards 11 art pieces. It takes around 10 mins to complete.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Your participation will contribute to the study on concrete art and abstract expressionism, and analysis based on data collected might be used for future art educational purpose.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

The study involves no potential risk. Your participation in the project is voluntary. You have every right to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information obtained in the study will be used for research purposes only. Only gender and age information will be collected for analysis use. All information related to you will remain confidential, and will be identifiable by codes known only to the researcher. Research outcomes and data collected will be published in forms of thesis, online web based report, oral presentation and might be used for future art educational purpose.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you would like to obtain more information about this study, please contact Wong Sum Yi by email s1125264@s.eduhk.hk or her supervisor Professor Laurence James Wood by liwood@eduhk.hk

conducted by Wong Sum X, who are staff / students of the bapartment of Cultural and Creative Arts in The Education University of Hong Mong, I understand that information obtained from this research may be used in future research and may be published. However, my right to privacy will be retained, i.e., my personal details will not be revealed. The procedure as set out in the attached information sheet has been fully explained at understand the benefits and risks involved. My participation in the project is voluntary, I acknowledge that I consequences, question any part of the procedure and earn withdraw at any time without negative consequences.

By continuing to the next page and submitting the questionnaire, I understand the procedures described above and agree to participate in this study.

跳到第1題。

1. Please take a look at the following art pieces and choose the most appropriate description of your feeling towards each of the art pieces. 第一部分:請觀察以下 圖片,選出你認為最適合形容圖片的選項。

跳到第1題。

1. Please take a look at the following art pieces and choose the most appropriate description of your feeling towards each of the art pieces. 第一部分:請觀察以下圖片,選出你認為最適合形容圖片的選項。

1 . 1 *



單選。

- Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
- Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
- Neutral 中性/無感覺
- Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈
 - Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈
- 2。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

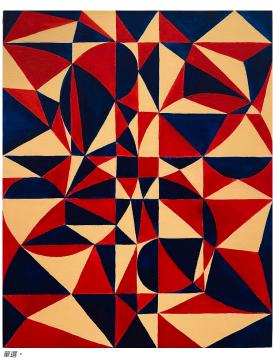
3 ° 2. *



單選。

- Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
- Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
- Neutral 中性/無感覺
- Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈
- Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈
- 4。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

5 • 3.*



- Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
- Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
- 6。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

7。 4.*



- Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
- Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
- Neutral 中性/無感覺
- Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈
- Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈

8。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒) *

9 ∘ 5.*****



- Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
- Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
- Neutral 中性/無感覺
- Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈
- Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈
- 10。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

11 • 6. *



Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈 Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈

Neutral 中性/無感覺 Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈 Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈

Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)

13。 7. *



Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈 Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈 Neutral 中性/無威覺

14 • Please enter any keywords(eq. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)

15 • 8.*



Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈

Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈

Neutral 中性/無感覺

Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈 Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈

16。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

17。 9. *



Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈

○ Neutral 中性/無威覺

Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈 Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈

18。 Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈 ◯ Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈 19。 10.*



20 °	Please enter any keywords(eg. objects, emotions) you can relate to the graphics. 請輸入圖片讓你聯想到的任何字詞。(例如:物件/情緒)*

21 ∘ 11.



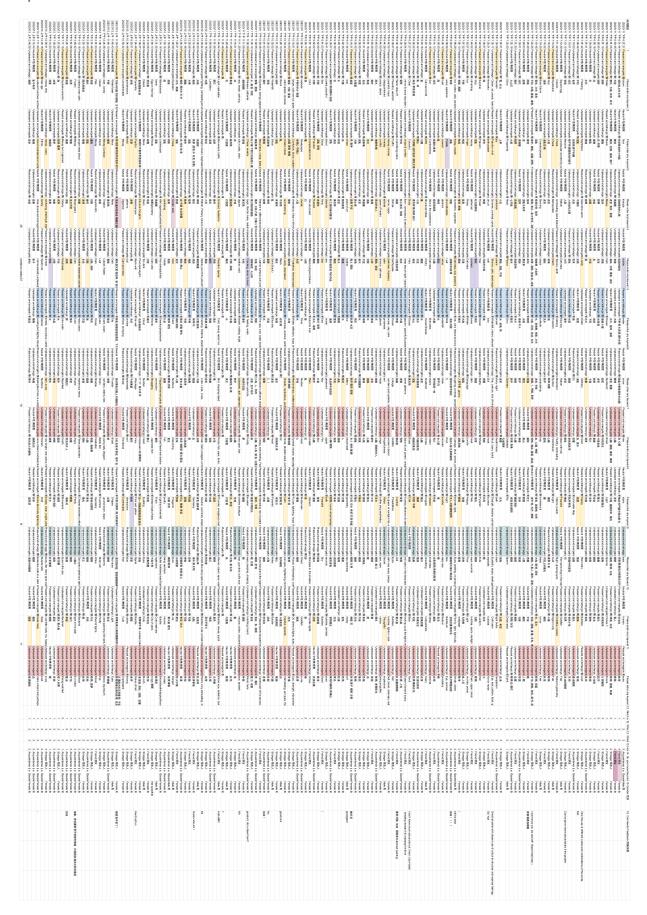
00000
491
單選。
Pleasant and energetic 愉快/舒適,強烈
Pleasant and lethargic 愉快/舒適,不強烈
Neutral 中性/無威覺
Unpleasant and energetic 不愉快/不安,強烈
Unpleasant and lethargic 不愉快/不安,不強烈

	ease choose the most appropi 適當的答案。	riate ans	wer for e	ach question. 第二部	3分:請請
	12. Which of the following fac questions? Please rank them least important). 您在觀察圖》 重要程度/次序進行排列(1最經	in order 片及回答	of impor 以上問題	tance (1 -most impo 诗,考慮了下列哪些	rtant, 3
	(可複選)				
		1	2	3	
	Colors 顏色				
	Lines/Brushstrokes 線條/筆觸				
	Shapes 形狀				
	單選。 1 Very Important 很重要	2 :	3 4	Least Important 不重	要
0	1 Very Important 很重要 14. Do you know the principa 本人?* <i>單選。</i> Stranger 陌生人	l investiç	gator of the	nis research? 您是否	認識研多
	1 Very Important 很重要 14. Do you know the principa 本人?* 單選。 Stranger 陌生人 Acquaintance (i.e. Classm Friend 朋友	l investiç	gator of the	nis research? 您是否	認識研多
	1 Very Important 很重要 14. Do you know the principa 本人? * 單選 * Stranger 陌生人 Acquaintance (i.e. Classm Friend 朋友	l investiç	gator of the	nis research? 您是否	認識研多
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	1 Very Important 很重要 14. Do you know the principa 本人?* 單選。 Stranger 陌生人 Acquaintance (i.e. Classm Friend 朋友 15. Gender 性別* 單選。 Male 男 Female 女 其他:	Il investig	gator of the	nis research? 您是否	認識研多

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Google 表單

Responses:



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The End

