CONCENTRATION THEME

Spend a good amount of time developing your Concentration theme. You will be working on it for a while and will create 15 works of art.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONCENTRATION

1. It is not enough to focus on a subject (trees) or a medium (charcoal). If trees, why trees? Is it about growth? Negative space in nature? Protective canopies? Strength and endurance? Branch and leaf structures? The “design” of a forest in compositional relationships? Look at Mondrian, van Ruisdael, Courbet, van Gogh and Fairfield Porter.
2. Your exploration should go deeper than merely taking a subject and executing it in a variety of media or styles. Example: Apples rendered in watercolor, stippling, crosshatching, cubism, fauvism and surrealism.
3. Ideally you should develop a visual language that fits your idea, a style and medium and format appropriate to the theme you are investigating.
4. A concentration can be a series of works that are very consistent in theme and approach OR it may evolve and develop as the visual idea is explored, ending in a different place than where it began. In either case it is best to start out with a clear plan of attack; if the idea changes, the change will usually be the natural result of discoveries made in the process of exploration.
5. Do not choose to work in a medium in which you have absolutely no experience. This is not the time to try something completely new. The point of the concentration is to work in depth. This can usually be best achieved in a medium in which you are already familiar. You are developing concept, not technique.
6. Research artists who have worked in styles similar to your own direction or with similar subject matter. Do not rely totally on yourself for inspiration. Look at historical masters, contemporary artists, the world around you and your peers to cross-pollinate your own ideas.
7. If you choose to work in an area rich in cliché or teenage stereotypes your work must be very original. It is strongly recommended that you avoid topics such as blood dripping, skulls, large eyes, hearts, fairies, vampires, emotion through eyes, your girlfriend/boyfriend, sunsets, rainbows & clouds, or sad clowns.
8. ALL images must adhere to copyright laws. By using original imagery or drawing from life you will avoid any issues.
9. Themes such as “my feelings and emotions”, “nature” or “flowers” are much too broad for a concentration. Even the more common concentration themes such as portraits or still life need a specific focus. Still lifes that tell a story or emphasize a certain interest in composition or design will be more successful. If the concentration is “portraits”, you should consider things like format, intent, point of view, lighting, style and expressiveness.
10. Visit the College Board Website. READ the Concentration Statements and then look at the artwork. Really LOOK at how the artwork is connected and the artist developed the idea.
Once you have chosen your Concentration topic, it is time to start planning and working.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. You will need to create 15 cohesive pieces.
2. A theme does not mean that they all look the same.
3. Show a full range of contrast.
4. Point of View – An interesting point of view can have a powerful impact.
5. Have unique compositions:
   a) Asymmetry is better than Symmetry.
   b) Create movement that leads to your area of emphasis/interest
   c) The eye likes thirds
   d) Diagonals are more exciting than horizontal or vertical lines
   e) Avoid a central composition – A bull’s eye does not move the viewer’s eye
   f) Consider both positive and negative space as well as background

6. Work
   a) Best – Observation from life
   b) 2nd Best – Combine 3 photographs to create a unique composition OR use an image from a shot that you set up.
   c) 3rd Best – Enlarge a small section from a photograph
   d) NEVER – Copy an existing photograph that you did not take.

The work should be no larger than 18”x24”. If it is larger than those dimensions, it may not be sent in as a Quality work.

- Repeat Serial Forms
- Scale in Landscape – Extreme Depth
- Light Sources
- Organic Repeated Form
- Layers & Meaning – Hung Liu
- Found Object Incorporation – Rauschenberg
- Surface Pattern Textile Design
- Symbolic Narratives
- Landscapes – Macro
- Figures in Space
- Birds
- Holidays
- Furniture as Art
- Movement & Light
- Light Source & Color – Monet
- Point of View
- Children in Motion
- Color in the City – Abstraction
- Quiet Landscapes
- City through the senses
- Self-Portraits
- Reflection of Light on People/Things
- Abstracting Symbolism
- Addressing time effects on an Object
- Develop recurring motif
- Motion effects of Wind – Make it Visible
- Sent Messages
- Nests
- Buckles & Clasps
- Contents of Purses/ Backpacks
- Abstracting Landscapes – Diebenkorn
- Construction Machinery
- Parks & Playgrounds
- Personal Spaces
- Closets
- Shoes
- After Dinner
- Refuge
- Out
- Power Over
- Quiet
- Multiples
- Grocery Store
- Restaurant
- Cooking
- Dishes
- Manifest Destiny
- Transition
- Recession
- Climbing Out
- Waiting
- Pathways
- Travel
- Instruments in Life
- Jazz – Bearden, Picasso, Saunders
- Effect of Light & Motion in Urban Settings
- Urban Decay
- Macro vs. Micro
- Color/Texture Triptychs
- Sign Posts
- Shorelines
- Fault Lines
- Farmer’s Market
- Reflections in Water or Metal
- Lamps as Family Groupings
- Book Cover Designs
- Effects of Placement of horizon line on ordinary objects
- Side view Landscapes
- Abstracted shape with detail
- Silhouettes
- Object as Chair
- Costume Design
- Set Design
- Vertical Spatial Composition
- Figure/Ground Relationships
- Make a Zine
- Graphic Novel – Maus, The Visitor
- Resting Places
- Childhood Fears
- Exaggerated Portraits
- Working with Hands
- Nature in Urban Landscape
- Fly Fishing
- Kayaking
- Swimming
- Family Traditions
- Color Theory Exploration
- Figures in Costume – Narrative
- Dramatic Weather Landscapes
- Environmental Impact
- Modern Portraits as Ukiyo-e
- Musical Instruments
- Bicycles
- Life of a Raindrop
- Glory of Food
- Stuff that Happens to Me
- Chrome, Reflection
- Busy Bodies – Stretch & Motion
- Animals
- Bananas or Fruit
- Seasons
- Contours
- Mirrors
- Openings
- Peeling
- Inside my Shoes
- Watches
- Rusty Machinery
- Tricycles
- Hats
- Storms
- Wings
- Barriers
- Crustaceans
- Restrictions
- Staplers
- Typewriters
- Eggs
- Boxes
- Fences
- Containers
- Package/Industrial Design
- Gum
- Kites
- Wheat Fields
- Windows
- Coverings
- Power Tools
- Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner
- Comfort Food
- Vegetables
- Mosquitos
- Nets
- Corners
- Fishing Lures
- Things that Unravel
- Ribbons
- Glasses
- Horses
- Cowboys
- Currency Design
- Kitchen
- Stove
- Fusion
- Marbles
- Boats
- Within the Jar
- Woven
- Zippers
- Buttons
- Work
- Turtles
- Teeth
- Nuts & Bolts
- Roots
- Bridges
- Ripples & Waves
- Cocoons & Life Cycle
- Shattered
- Out of Focus/ In Focus
- Pockets
- Inside of Fruit/Nuts/Vegetables
- Ropes
- By the Waterfront
- Soda Can
- Wrapped Food
- Geography/Topography
- Dark Alleys/Hallways
- Fish
- Underwater
- Sounds
- Luggage
- Tea/Coffee
- Divers
- Feathers
- Drop
- Easels
- Ladders
- Piles
- Forgotten Things
- Combinations
- Feet
- Holes
- Morning
- Endangered Species
- Garbage
- Oxymorons
- Maps
- Weights
- Snakes
- Tunnels
- Numbers
- Cracks
- Hairdryers
- Races/Jumps
- Pieces
- Things in my Car
- Things in my Refrigerator
- Balloons
- Rocks
- Crumpling
- Screw on Lids
- Tupperware
- Inside Out
- Altered Book
- Closure
- Gloves
- Wheels
- Sit
- Interior Spaces
- Exterior Spaces
- Illness & Injury
- Interior as Contour Line
- Roller Coaster
- Skateboards
- Fortune Cookies
- Program & Poster Design
- Image & Text Incorporated
- Illustrate a Poem
- Groups of People
- Cancer/Disease
- Abandonment
- Chores around the House
- Tea Party or Dinner Party
- Daily Rituals
- My Life in Small Moments
- Tree Forms, Structure
- Abstracted Figure
- Chairs as Portraits
- Personal Totems
- Dreams Personified
- Uncommon/Unusual
- The Mannequin
- Close-ups of Old Cars
- Enlarge to Abstraction
- Unrelated Imagery – Rosenquist
- Butterflies
- Insects
- Inside Looking Out
- Design in Nature
- Triptych Devotional Paintings
- Architectural Renderings showing (exploring) the interior and exterior space with a strong focus on light, perspective and structure
- Exploration using realistic and non-objective animals (stipple technique....a series of black and white ink drawings moving into color)
- Process piece showing the making and baking of a cake
- “The Wedding” from the engagement ring to the sealing kiss
“The Attic” the childhood experiences
An exploration of design textures related to nature – Art Nouveau
Landscapes based on childhood experiences
Portraits and the human form
Pistolaro Poses (gun fighters)
Toilets and water closets
Monkeys or Primates
Junk yard still life
Tomato's from seed to fruit
Tennis shoes, boots
Figures with striped clothing
Fantasy characters – gargoyles, fairies, dragons, etc. – convincingly rendered
Low riders
Circus life
My ancestry
Crime and punishment
Things that come in pairs
The movie experience
Foreshortened figures and objects
Portraits
Subject showing progression through historical references from a variety of artists
Women in feminine roles
“Exhaustion”
“Seven Deadly Sins”
“Things That Make Me Smile”
Cartoon character through animation cells
Architectural viewpoints that are unusual. Architectural forms that are unusual.
Historical events
Reflections of images wherein the reflections are an emotional exploration (of literal reflections)
Instruments that make music
Generations of my family
Icons within our society
Strength of Women
Dreams and Dream Images – Chagall
Dance Images – Degas
The Infinite – M.C. Escher
Emerging Images of Tiger in my Culture – Melissa Miller, Hokusai
Struggle to Find One’s Self – Dali, Picasso
Home
Figure Studies in Strong Lights/Darks
Car Interiors
Abstract Portraits
Unconventional Angels
Architectural Drawings from a Different Point of View
An Object or Product Drawn in a Succession of Locations and/or Styles
Illustrate a Classical Character or Story in a New or Modern Way
Childhood Memories
Toys/Games
Visions of the Future
Evolution of an item as it Deteriorates or Decomposes
Time Lapse of a Person, Place or Thing
Deconstruction of Still life, Subject or Portrait
Families/Couples – Alice Neal
Transformations – Dali, Magritte
Bizarre Interior Spaces/Perspectives
Appliances – Warhol, Oldenberg
Tools or Utensils – Dine, Warhol
Furniture
Portrait/Figure Distortions in Color/Shapes – Ed Paschke
Family Celebrations – Carmen Lomas Garza
Figures in Motion or at Rest from Extreme Perspective – Bird’s or Ant’s View
Common Objects that Investigate Social Issues
Architectural Landscapes w/ Morphing Shadows – deChirico
Figure Drawing – Contour, Gesture, Portrait
Architecture from Unusual Viewpoints – Cropped Closely, Bird’s or Ant’s View
Abstracted Objects
Mechanical Elements
Organic Objects Drawn w/ Mechanical Analysis
Personal or Social Issues
Object Emerging from a Bag – Escape/Cultural Bags/Social Commentary
Illustrate a Descriptive Work – Livid, Scrumptious – Munch, Bacon
People Morphing into Objects Integral to their Lives – Ken Veith, Steve Desteve
People Morphing into Objects that have become Obsolete
Illustrate Folklore Landscapes or Real Areas
Abstraction Dealing with Light & Liquid – Pfaff, Baldessare
Minimalist Images of Architecture Focusing on Light & Shadow
Influential Women – Alice Neel, Lucien Freud
Same Thing Over Time w/ Different Light - Monet
• Tactile Textures
• Aerial Space
• My Space/Perspective
• Amplified Perspective
• Emphasized Foreground
• Memorializing
• Designing Memorials
• Ofrendas & Altars
• What is Enemy?
• What is Empowerment?
• Representing War
• Representing Community
• Representing Family
• Psychological Color
• Timeline as Design
• Skin and Structure
• Contradicting a Form
• Activated Surroundings
• Light as Medium
• White on White
• Growth/Decay
• Arbitrary/Symbolic Color
• Framing Audience
• Foreshortening as Metaphor
• Place as Metaphor
• Erasing
• Advertising Campaign

• Power of the Word
• Personal Relationships
• Making an Object Speak
• Trees – Growth/Fertility/Structure – Mondrian
• Figure Distortion – Schiele □ Boxes
• Portraits with Text
• Anatomy
• Botanical Studies
• Transportation
• Artist’s Book
• Water in Vessels
• The Artist at Work
• Tape
• Bowling
• Golf
• Pens & Pencils
• Tall Stacks of Objects
• Electronic Interiors
• The Artist’s Tools
• Compositional Studies
• File Cabinet Abstractions
• Shape vs. Form
• Abstraction

Unsuccessful concentrations ideas used in AP Studio Art

* portraits of emotions
* nature in general
* memories in general
* shocking viewers with the bizarre
* surrealism
* faces
* flowers
* eyes
* family and friends
* reflective surfaces
* illustration of inner thoughts
* moments I was happy
* self portraits
* music
* everyday life objects
* goddess/myth
* "different cultures"
* reflections
* "ideas of beauty"
* dance