

**"Conveying through Color"**

**An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)**

**by**

**Zachary Bretz**

**Thesis Advisor**

**Sam Minor**

**Ball State University,  
Muncie, Indiana**

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## Abstract

Invoking a response to a piece of artwork, whether the piece is written or visual, should be taken into consideration during the creative process. This book is comprised of eighteen poems written by two different artists. Each poem is accompanied by a visual piece that was created to capture the essence of each poem. Each piece was created with only colors and no direct references to the poem because this work is an experiment in how just color can portray emotion and present a certain mood before the viewer even reads the poem.

## Project Rationale

The process for creating this group of works was very much based on my initial reaction to the poem. This process was solely based in abstraction in a very rudimentary way. The poems were stripped to their essence and that was the intention of this project. The project was a great tool for expanding my abilities. I learned new techniques that I will be able to apply in later work. It also taught me how to think critically about how to portray concepts indirectly.

## Acknowledgements

I would like Sam Minor for advising me through this project and for the past three years. He has led me through tremendous growth as a student and designer.

I would like to thank Hillary Chang and Nicole Conflenti for allowing me to use their poems as inspiration in this project.

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The poems and their corresponding piece are grouped into two sections; each section being written by two different writers, Hillary Chang and Nicole Conflenti. The pieces are hung like paintings so that one can approach and view each piece from a distance to take in the each piece. Each piece portrays the feeling(s) one might get from reading each poem. When approaching each piece individually you will be viewing the artwork work before reading the poems. Each poster engulfs the viewer in an atmospheric, sometimes euphoric, sometimes jarring, setting. This allows the reader to really experience the poem, especially if they experience things better visually than through written word. Each piece connects to the poem because when someone experiences the emotions that each poem relates to, they associate it with color. Whether it be anger (red), sadness (dark blue), and so on, there will always be that correlation. Along with the colors one may associate with each emotion there is also the duration of the emotion. With the poems that are soft and flowing, the emotions are felt in an engulfing

and extended period of time. This correlates to the soft blended feel of their accompanying poster. Whereas the poems that have abrupt and sometimes brutal emotions, they are accompanied by harsh lines and color to portray the suddenness and brutality of the emotions that are experienced. This set of work's goal is to make the viewer feel like they experienced the poems in a fuller way. Each poster can stand alone in a visual way but once paired with each poem they produce a larger and more meaningful impact on the viewer.

I think the saddest part about life,  
Is watching the person you love  
Love somebody else.

- Hillary Chang

This poem really exemplifies the feeling of losing something you can't let go of. You will always have that connection to them that will never break. The artwork that accompanies this poem is a soft pink gently fading into a soft blue. The soft pink represents the love you have for that other person, it may not be vibrant like it once was, but it will still be there. Fading from the pink to the blue is to show the transition and combination of the love and sadness you feel towards the other person. You are sad that they are with someone else yet still love that they are happy. The mix of emotions matches the mix of colors in the piece.

Thoughts are most vicious at night.

- Hillary Chang

This poem is abrupt and straight-forward. So many people experience intrusive or self-doubting thoughts at night because that is when a person is alone, they have no distractions from what is on their mind. The colors, such as purple, are dark but still somewhat vibrant to portray the sting

that these thoughts might inflict. The abrupt and sharp lines represent that harshness of such thoughts. As the colors build up towards the center they become more vibrant representing the pain that the thoughts can cause when they “work” together.

Love

Once believed, now I’m burnt out.

-Hillary Chang

This poem talks about the dying ember of a love that is no longer there. The artwork displays the darkness that engulfs a love that is no longer there. The lasting embers, or the dark red glow, represent that last bit of emotion that is there, however it is not going to survive.

Natural Disaster

You are everything

Beautiful and terrible

All at once.

A hurricane

Tearing through all that I know,

Oh, but how I have always

Loved the ocean.

-Nicole Conflenti

This poem is about the love for someone is destructive yet amazing at the same time. The last line “Oh, but how I have always loved the ocean,” depicts the struggle of loving something or someone that is harmful to you. In the accompanying artwork there is a grainy blue that fades into darkness. This is meant to represent a sense of drowning because a relationship that is like

the one describe often leads to bad endings, such as drowning. You don't recognize the danger until it is too late.

My love was a river  
And I begged you  
To drink.  
What a shame  
It took the draining  
Of so naïve  
A thing  
For you to realize  
It was not water  
You were thirsty for.

-Nicole Conflenti

This poem represents the thirst for love or some form of affection. The piece representing this poem is dry and coarse as though it was deprived of something. Its warm quality represents something barren or missing, just like the subject of the poem. The purple represents the attempt to bring that substance that could quench the thirst but the problem is that the subject does not know it needs what is presented to them.

Kamikaze  
Our love was suicidal.  
I saw its death in your  
Kamikaze eyes  
That night  
When our tears caused

So much fog  
But I still begged  
For you to see.  
As you choked out missile  
After missile  
I couldn't help feeling  
This wasn't your decision.  
Rubble.  
When the smoke clears,  
I assess the damage.  
A pile of what I used to be,  
I cling to  
The tattered parts of you  
I can find in the destruction.  
The parts of you  
I can still call mine.  
I want you to know,  
I know that you did  
What you needed to do  
I know you didn't *want*  
To go out in flames.  
This time, when I rebuild the city  
I put landing pads  
On every rooftop.  
Each night,  
I turn my head to the sky  
And listen  
For the shifting of the wind.

Even  
After all this time  
I stand,  
In this weathered war zone  
Silent, smoking...  
Waiting  
For you  
To come home.

-Nicole Conflenti

This poem depicts a self-destructing relationship that one person is sabotaging, intentional or unintentional. The piece is disorienting because a relationship like the one described in the poem can often cause the people involved, to feel helpless. The red and black represent pure violence along with the jagged lines that represent the severity of the situation. The fading of the red to a gray in the background is representative of the subject seeing what is left of the relationship.

Works Cited

Conflenti, Nicole. *Collection of Poems*. N.d. TS.

Chang, Hillary. *Collection of Poems*. 2015. TS.