

## Research Week 2023

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### 2D Category Proposal

- **Research problem statement**

The intention with this triptych was to portray the feeling of loneliness which can come from a queer person interacting with the Church while staying within the confines of the Bible. The problem question addressed in this project is the way the church interacts with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) community. Summer of 2022 I traveled to London, England to study art at a multitude of museums in the heart of London. My original thesis was to explore the hidden messages of LGBTQ people throughout art history, in which I discovered they interacted with each other with a “if you know, you know” mentality. This is demonstrated in *Matrosen Och Pantrar* by GAN, Yukio Mishima's depiction of St. Sebastian, or Jacques-Émile Blanche's Portrait of Aubrey Beardsley. None of these pieces are outwardly queer, but they have specific elements associated with the LGBTQ community, and the people who recognize the specific feature are the target audience. This leads me to my second problem: I had to create a piece in which only the intended demographic would understand while simultaneously fulfilling my original objective.

- **Communication objective**

My communication objective was relatively difficult to say the least. My end goal was to utilize the information I researched and learned in London of the Rainbow Railroad and accurately represent that in my paintings about something else entirely. I resulted in

portraying each piece as a Bible verse and pairing that with a flag from the LGBTQ community as the color palette. The intended audience for these paintings are Christians who are either in the LGBTQ community or are familiar with it, and therefore the intention was to stir some type of emotion from said viewer, who should already be familiar with the colors and the title of each piece. The difficult aspect of these pieces, however, was the fact that the whole point is to not be easily readable to the ignorant eye. My pieces were not for the straight atheist, agnostic, Christian, Muslim, or any other religion—or lack thereof, but the queer Christians who would understand.

- **Visual solution**

In order to accurately portray my distinct intended audience, I needed to figure out what exactly would be the most effective strategy. I considered multiple options within the limits of vague ideas of classic Christian themes (such as the ichthys symbol or the cross). Through this, I landed on my three themes: light, sheep, and fish. Afterwards, I researched the different types of pride flags as of 2022, wanting to keep a wide variety between them, and after testing out different options, I decided upon the nonbinary, genderfluid, and men's gay flag. The final piece(s) resulted in:

- John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
  - Nonbinary flag palette, depiction of a figure facing a crowd only shown through shadows with the light source coming from behind the initial figure paired with a singular shadow, indicating Christ
- Matthew 8:12, "If a man has 100 sheep, but 1 of the sheep gets lost, he will leave the other 99 sheep on the hill. He will go to look for the lost sheep."

- Genderfluid flag palette, a singular sheep looking into a building overflowing with light

- Matthew 4:19, “Jesus said, “Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

- Men’s gay flag palette, a vast ocean of blue with a figure jumping into it

Each piece flows into the other in a way where they could be stand-alone, but when hung together, they feel complete.

- **How it was produced**

As with most works, it began with a sketch—rough, of course, in a sketchbook, with no true direction, rhyme, or reason—which eventually became my designs. Utilizing Procreate in order to get the specific colors per flag, I took each piece and created a final draft, which I then moved to three 24”x24” canvases. Due to the way I created my Procreate drafts, I intended on using paint brushes to apply oil paints for the illusion of softness they offer, however after completing John 8:12 with this technique, I found it lacking and went back over the piece with palette knives. I did this with the next two as well: complete the base layer with brushes, taking advantage of the easily blendable paints, and went over a second time with an abundance of paint and various palette knives. I finished each piece by painting the sides to match the faces.