

Sample EWRT 30 Intro to Creative Writing student responses to artwork in the Euphrat Museum of Art's 2020-2021 online exhibition, *Sources of Solace*. They also incorporated the artwork into flash fiction pieces.

The farm worker portrait was made with the use of cardboard boxes. With beautiful colors that represent the all the farm workers who work very hard to bring food to our tables. What I do know is that they work with what they can and under intense circumstances and make do with what they can just to live day to day. Usually making sacrifices of all sorts again to just to make sure they live. The reason that it connected me is that I have always been taught to respects them and to always treat them with dignity as they bring the food to our tables. My Grandfather did much the same thing however he had pick cotton. Both he and my grandmother work very hard to raise eight children while moving from state to state looking for work each season to provide for the family. I truly admire the piece and the representation of the imagery the captures the essence of what it means to be a migrant worker with all the comes with it.

- Elena Saldivar

I think this picture is a representation of identity. Both individuals in this picture are posing, they are in their work attire and are surrounded by fruit and vegetables. They're farmers, that's their job, it's part of their identity. In the back behind the individuals, there are cardboard boxes which are where the fruit/vegetables are placed. Farmers work long hours, under the sun to provide you with the fruit/vegetable you buy at the store and eat. This picture reminds me to be thankful.”

- Beatriz Vazquez-Mendoza

The first piece I saw caught my attention and made me think about it. Vibrant colors, with a quote that would make anyone think about who makes the world better with them in it. At first glance, I would think that the girl in the piece was someone the artist knew that made their world better, maybe a friend, mom, or girlfriend. Or it could be that the art piece is telling you that you make the world a better place. The designs or little patterns go well with the vibrant colors.

When I read the words, I'm instantly thinking about who makes my world better. It's not just one person that makes this world better for me, but a couple of people actually. I think that's what makes this piece so good, when someone sees it, it prompts a thought. And I feel like that's when the art piece stays with someone.

- Ashley Dirige

In this photograph I see a man in New York City with six dogs on a leash. He has a broad smile on his face, and the dogs appear to be smiling back at him. This photograph feels

uplifting particularly in times of COVID because it evokes a sense of togetherness without sparking any fear about spreading COVID.

This artwork features bears on small boats amidst a vast sea. Despite the vast ocean which surrounds them on all sides, the bears appear serene. This feels like a reflection of the current moment. Many of us feel overwhelmed with the world, as though we are adrift in a sea of uncertainty about the future. Perhaps we cannot see the shore just yet, but we can still find peace as we ride out the waves.

- Paige Walker

“When I look at the man with the guitar i see his soul coming out in his music. I think the represents soul music. There's so much that goes into it like his sadness which is shown with the rain. He has angel wings because his soul is being lifted and portrayed through the music that flows out of him. His heart is on fire, maybe from the girl that's on the left of his chest. Maybe a breakup happened because he's crying as music comes out. I also see the dice and maybe that's because he gambled on his music which ultimately laid ruin to his relationship. There's a lot going on but it's not overwhelming. I really love this piece.”

- Matthew W.

This is a picture of a dog walker with his group out and about. They all look so happy! The dogs, mixed breeds and all sizes, are all sitting attentively in front of the walker, who seems to be telling them a funny story. Or maybe he's telling them that they are such good boys and girls and they deserve a treat! It makes me happy to see them. Pets bring so much joy and love and comfort into our lives. I lurk on a couple of online message boards where people post pictures of their pets and other varied occasions of animal cuteness, and each image brings a smile to my face. Solace indeed!

- Bala Subramanian

When I saw this painting, I found that there were many things to look at. I thought it was telling some kind of lore of a man that became a deity of some sort. The woman on his chest might be his dead lover as it reminds me of tattoos of those who are lost. The dice on his other chest I thought could represent a gambling addiction that the man couldn't stop before it was too late. His tears coming out of a spotlight from his eyes highlights his grief. The blue skin and wings on his shoulders I thought represented that the man is dead. His guitar and the song coming out his mouth is like a symbol of beauty and peace or happiness. However, since he is crying, It could mean that he is not allowed to sing about his grief therefore he has to hold all of it inside of him thus burning his heart and or turning him blue. The eye I thought could represent either a deity watching and making sure he isn't singing about his sorrow or it could represent truth. The eye of truth is what

is allowing us to see the man's tears, skin, wings, heart, etc. even though he is singing a happy song. There is a halo of some sort above his head so that in addition to the wings could represent that he is an angel or benevolent.”

- Phuong Anh Phan

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This image makes me smile. The dogs and their man are clearly so happy. It's a beautiful day. I'm happy because the dogs love their walker. I'm happy because they love being outside and being together. I have been worried about the news. But, this photograph comforts me because it reminds me that there are still good things happening in our world. There is still joy in simple, everyday activities. There is beauty in dogs and people and the natural world in the park and the pink building and a man's red shirt. Thank you for this lovely piece of solace.

- Karen Allen

We all feel different emotions and especially during quarantine, all of those emotions could be pent up. Music is a form of art that allows one to express those emotions. In the piece, we could see the singer seeming to speaking out about peace or hope as signified by the dove and olive branches. However, we also see the emotions that the singer may be feeling inside. I think the tears either signify that happiness or sadness. Happiness because they are finally able to let go of all of the emotions they are feeling inside and are able to be "free". Sadness because maybe they are trying to put up a front that everything is okay, but in reality, it is not.

To me this picture seems to show joy in all forms. The man looks really happy watching over the dogs, and all the dogs in the image seem to be looking at him and looking happy themselves. For me, it shows how even the smallest things can bring joy and happiness.

- Natalie Ramos

I love this painting for many reasons. It's alive with color, bright blues, reds, oranges, purple and green. The painting is of a man holding his guitar and singing. Tears fall from his eyes, a bird flies out of his mouth and the sun and moon hang behind him. He has a heart of fire. I love the angel wings he is wearing and most of all I love the emotion the piece conveys. I love this photo because it speaks to me. It speaks about expressing oneself through music. The man sings from his heart. His emotions are flowing from without him. I sing and write songs and sometimes the most raw emotions, the things closest to our hearts can be expressed through music. That is what this piece shows. This man's heart.

- Hannah Kaikkonen,

I instantly liked this piece, love how the waves were drawn as this stressful, cluttered and angular expanse that occupied most of the work. What stops this ocean from drowning the bear is the boat. The title to me is connecting this boat to creativity, the idea of a bear in a boat is already quite creative. The boat is almost scrap booked in, it's simple and colorful and the flag reminds me of something I drew when I was young. Although I don't think I can draw as well as this I also have been drawing quite a bit in the pandemic, and it's those simple things that keep me from falling in. I like how the two pictures tell a story when they're side by side. A lot of my interaction with other people these days is over the sharing of some "product". Either some written or drawn thing, something creative. Without those things it's very easy to feel alone on a rock in the middle of the sea. I just now noticed the ghosts in the sea and I love them. I think it makes the bear looking into the sea even sadder. I'm not really an art critic but I think this whole thing is very cool. The style on it and the other pieces also by the same artist is beautiful.

- Evan Connor

You're never alone, your ancestors are always with you. This was the message from the last art form shared. This message speaks to me greatly, mainly because this is how I feel when I write, when I go outside into the world. I am the embodiment of the people who came before me. I take the lessons they learned and improve and excel past their walls and ceilings so that one day my children can go past my limitations.

I am proud of my native Mexican Indian blood, and disregard any Spanish or French ancestry. The string that ties me to my oppressors have been cut. a proud Chicano. I have pride in who we are as the first people of the Americas, and our brothers and sisters are Native to the US and Canada. The terms Hispanic and Latino are deny us our great Native Mexican heritage. When I saw this art it reminded me we must not let others define our culture or race. No soy de aqui ni soy de alla (I am not from here, and I am not from there). I try everyday to bring pride to my indigenous ancestors, may they never be forgotten.

- Pedro Buenrostro