

This series of sculptures and paintings manifests my procrastination in a visual language. While crafting this collection, I became interested in finding reasons as to why I procrastinate and why I am constantly looking for instant gratification.

These works are abstractions of activities I turn to and places I spend time at while I'm procrastinating on my work. The sculptures depict my tendencies for distracting myself with social activities, and were a chance for me to develop ideas for finding balance between work and play.

Through this series of paintings and sculptures I hope to show the importance of finding equilibrium between persistence and instant gratification.

Clarence

Procrastination is a part of life. Everybody does it. People delay doing homework, repeatedly stating they'll start working tomorrow. Yet sometimes people control their procrastination by setting deadlines. Why do people choose to procrastinate and what are the consequences of procrastination?

The alarm clock had just went off on my phone. I opened my eyes to look outside my window and noticed that it was very gloomy today. Getting out of bed was a burden since I had stayed up until 2:00am thinking of ideas for my final project at oxbow. I thought to myself that today was going to be a regular day. I shuffled out of bed and reached for my phone and turned my alarm clock off. I looked to the other side of my room to see if my roommate was still asleep only to find out that he had already left for breakfast. Quickly, I jumped up and got into the shower to wake myself up with some freezing cold water. Afterwards, I got dressed and hurried to the dining hall, as I only had one minute to get to get breakfast before the school started their morning announcements. I didn't eat any food since I was not really hungry; I felt kind of sick and gross. I didn't feel like talking to anyone at breakfast either. I was stressed out of my mind because I was procrastinating about math homework and my final project. I hadn't started the math homework and I still didn't have an idea about my art component for final project. Stephen Thomas, head of the school, had began to read a poem from a book, but all I could focus on was math and this final project that was due in the next three weeks. He finished reading the poem and I immediately ran back to my room. I started talking to people in my dorm about final project and what they were doing for theirs. They all seemed to have an idea of what they wanted to research about and what they wanted to make for the art portion of the project. I, on the other hand, had a small idea of what I wanted to do for this project. It had to do with consequentialism and how our actions affect our future. I was interested in this topic because I always try to base my actions off of the possible outcomes of that action. I looked at my phone to see what time it was because every day we had to sign in at around nine o'clock in the morning.

I walked out of my dorm to sign in at the painting studio, and then walked across into the new media studio to work on the research portion of the project. As I was doing this one of the teachers, Alex, came up to me and asked me about my project. He asked if I my project was going well. I told him about how I was researching consequentialism and deontology and how every action we make causes a consequence whether this consequence be good or bad. He told me that I should continue to go more in depth and figure out a way to translate this into a personal and essential question. He gave me some good advice and left. I was going to write what he had told me, but then I realized that I had left my note book in my room. I walked back to my dorm and wrote what I had learned from the Alex. Then I continued to do research in my room.

About thirty minutes later My roommate got a text from our advisor requesting that him and I report to the office. We thought we were in trouble and slowly started our way to the office. On the way there, we asked each other about why we thought we were summoned there and thought if we had done something wrong recently. As I walked by, I saw two other teachers in the office, one of them being my math teacher. We sat down and the three teachers brought out two math tests. They quickly stated that one of us copied off of another for the written part of the test. At first we didn't really remember who copied off of who. Then I remembered that we were working together and I got some of the answers from my tests from him. The teachers said that we would both be put on academic probation and if anything like this happened again we would be expelled. I stated that I should be taken off of a field trip to point Reyes state park because not only did I copy a portion of a test, but because I felt that I haven't done enough work this week

for my final project. The teachers agreed with my statement. I felt bad because I knew that what happened was because of my lack of trying to get through this test as easy as I possibly could in the past. As I was walking back to my room with my dorm mate, I realized something. I noticed how what had just happened was a consequence of an action that I made in the past, and how it just affected me in a bad way. This in turn made me realize how I had made the wrong decision and the outcome wasn't the best out of the possible outcomes that could have happened. I found it very ironic in a way, which made me ask myself why did I procrastinate so much when I was taking this test. Then I started thinking about consequentialism and procrastination. I thought why do I procrastinate so much when I know the consequences of that action are not good.

In Tim Urban's TED talk, he explains how people who procrastinate usually look for instant gratification rather than delayed gratification. Instant gratification is the desire to experience pleasure or a reward without delay. The bad thing about instant gratification is that everything is only about the present. Ignoring important things in the past and disregarding the future altogether, and only concerns about emphasis on the present moment. Basically, its when you want something, and you want that thing now. By itself, not all of the instant gratification is bad. There isn't anything wrong with wanting the brand new iPhone right when it releases. The problem is when it comes to doing work. When getting assigned something to do, people that procrastinate tend to put that assignment off until the last minute. The consequence of putting this work off could be that one forgets the homework altogether and would have to turn in that assignment late. Delayed gratification is the ability to control one's desire for an immediate reward and wait for a later reward. Urban explains that in this way delayed gratification maximizes the reward, combining the anticipation with the pleasure of the reward. Usually procrastinators tend to want instant gratification over delayed gratification. People tend to want to be happy now rather than in the long run. An example of delayed gratification versus instant gratification would be the "marshmallow test" which was conducted by psychologist Walter Mischel at Columbia University. Mischel and his colleagues presented children with a treat such as a marshmallow. The child was then told that the researcher had to leave the room for a few minutes. Before the researcher left the room the child was given the choice to either eat the marshmallow now, or wait until the researcher came back and be rewarded with another marshmallow for a total of two marshmallows. Most of the children ate the marshmallow once the researcher left the room. Only a few resisted the urge to eat the marshmallow long enough to receive a second one. Another example of instant gratification versus delayed gratification is when you are assigned an essay that is due in a week. You have the choice to either procrastinate until the day it is due or you can work on the essay the day it is assigned.

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *consequentialism* is the idea that an action can only be right if the consequences of that action have good results or are better than that of a different action. Therefore, one can conclude that consequentialism is the validation of actions is found through the consequences. Many people sees actions as temporary, and are soon forgotten from all time, which could lead one to reason that in the long term just the results remains. Whether your behavior is conscious or unconscious, you will eventually have to deal with the effects. It's only natural to procrastinate at times but, the way you deal with your procrastination patterns will determine what effects procrastination has on your life. One way that procrastination has affected me is that I feel that I fail to reap the rewards that would come from taking action. In my sophomore year in high school I would put homework's assignments off until the day before they were due. The result of my procrastination was that I didn't complete most my homework on time and turning the assignment in late, which lead to my

grades suffering because of points taken off of my work. Even in the best-case scenario, the work that I had turned in on time was usually done poorly because I tried to finish the assignment as fast as I could with little thought put into it. Although procrastination can affect ones work, it can also negatively affect a person's home life. In my dorm at boarding school we usually procrastinate about cleaning our dorm. Every monday we have a room check with one of the advisors at the school and they inspect the room to see if we are clean. Rather than keep a neat dorm through out the week we usually tend to not clean up after ourselves and worry about cleanliness the day of room check. I thought that it was ok to procrastinate about cleaning our dorm because it doesn't affect me or my suite mate's in a bad way if our dorm is dirty. One day someone in our suite clogged the toilet and didn't fix it after they were done. All of us attempted to unclog the toilet, but we failed. After a while we decided to not use that bathroom. We procrastinated about fixing the toilet for a couple of weeks. After a while the room started to smell really bad, which was the consequence of procrastinating. We ended up not using that bathroom for four weeks. This was very unsanitary which could result in possible sickness due the bathroom being soiled.

I decided to make a list that will help me procrastinate less:

*1) Make a list of everything I have to do.*

*2) Set realistic goals.*

*3) Break it down to specific tasks.*

*4) Make my tasks meaningful.*

*5) Promise myself a reward.*

*6) Get rid of activities I don't have time for.*

*7) Estimate the amount of time it will take to complete a task.*

When I procrastinate I fail to take action on the very things I know will bring me the rewards that I desire. Although I know what I want and even what I need to do to get it, I still have to take action and it's usually at this point where procrastination sets in. Although the short term effects of procrastination might seem as "positive" the long term effects are almost always negative. Failing to reap the rewards of taking action can have many knock on effects. Taking action on your ideas and desires is one of your most empowering gifts. It is the process by which you can make the intangible tangible. Through your actions and your behavior you create or manage your life. It's not only the direct results of your actions that create the outcomes, but often the very fact that you are actually consciously affecting the conditions of your life. It not just your actions, but rather your failure to take action that will have a greater effect on the rewards you reap from life. From this point of view the effects of procrastination is not just a direct but also an indirect loss of rewards. Every action is a cause set in motion that affects and builds on past and future events to the point, where we can never really determine the actual effect of one specific action. More than anything else, action opens you up to opportunity.

Opportunity is rarely the result of you waiting for it. When you put yourself in line with what you want most through your conscious action you expose yourself to opportunity. It's never a case of whether you have opportunities but rather are you noticing the opportunities? But even more importantly, are you using the opportunities or are you procrastinating? One thing is for certain and that is when procrastination becomes a habit you won't even notice all the opportunities on your doorstep. You will live your life in distraction, constantly looking for instant gratification, which isn't necessarily bad, avoiding challenges that will cause you delayed gratification for an even greater reward.

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