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Reflections

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REFLECTIONS

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My presentation will be in the form of a 12-minute artist talk about the work in my first solo exhibition. Being a student at NEIU, I have spent hours commuting to and from school over the years. As I took later classes and the winter set in, I found myself driving in the dark a lot of the time. Living in Chicago, it often rains or snows, so I spent a lot of time looking at slick, wet roads at nighttime. I started to take pictures of the way the lights reflected off of the wet pavement, and how those reflections, along with the streetlights of different colors and droplets of water on the windshield created almost a galaxy effect. I use my photos as a jumping off point for my paintings. As a commuter I would use my time driving to reflect on my day, while moving through the lights and reflections of the city. This time would be spent alone, and I convey that feeling of serenity and loneliness with the way I choose to alter the images I take and with the colors I use. My choice to use oil paints on large square or rectangular canvases enhances my paintings because I am able to create scenes that look wet, and make you feel like you are looking out a car window. I prefer oil paint because I can blend colors easily and create a glowing effect with bright lights against dark backgrounds. My process includes choosing an image and working through the painting in layers. I start with a dark layer over the canvas and begin to blend in spots of different colors where the lights will be, adding the brightest spots later when it is dry, and ending with the smallest details, such as rain drops or bright reflections. My process represents the slow and gradual, peaceful feeling of coming home after a long day, just as I felt when I took the pictures in the first place.