2015

A Painted Smile

Mara M. Araujo
Bridgewater State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://vc.bridgew.edu/undergrad_rev

A Painted Smile
Mara Araujo

"A Painted Smile" is the final image of a video I created in the course Multimedia Storytelling. The assignment was to explore multimedia "apps" and consider how they can contribute to how we tell stories digitally. We each took photos, created a slideshow, and set it to music. The results show how technology is allowing storytellers to explore, document, and showcase their work in new and intriguing ways.

Since I find myself drawn to the creative process, I wanted to explore in my piece the childlike wonder we might feel when observing artwork being created in front of us. It is not uncommon for someone to observe a finished work of art and wonder how the artist conceptualized the project and went about creating it. That curiosity and admiration for how artists create their work inspired me to create a multimedia video that captures each stage of the process.

Both the title and the image of my video allude to Leonardo da Vinci's "Leda." To replicate a step-by-step process by which da Vinci's painting might have been created, my video incorporates both digital photographs and a digitally painted portrait into an iPad application called ArtRage. I began by hand drawing the portrait and photographing each stage of the process, including details such as the initial opening of the sketchbook. The last photograph documenting the process represents the completed drawing. The photographs were then uploaded into ArtRage, which automatically processed the still images into a short stop-motion video. I imported the photographs and painting stills into Apple iMovie and added some complementary audio, turning it into a multimedia presentation. The music served to enhance the concept of transforming the white canvas into a colorful portrait.

Similar to impressionist paintings that invite viewers to complete the image by visually merging the broken paint strokes into a cohesive work, "A Painted Smile" encourages the viewer to observe and question as the work takes shape. While watching how the painting was made, the viewer can learn or gain insight into how artwork is created.

Because the artwork was created digitally, I also hope that those who view the process might gain a better understanding of the complexities involved when producing digital paintings. At a time when digital tools such as Adobe's Photoshop are common, it is easy to dismiss digital artwork as artificial or inauthentic. However, with an app such as ArtRage, or any other digital painting application, artists are still creators; it is only the tools that have changed. **DIGITAL ART**