

The background of the entire page is a vibrant yellow with intricate, wavy, marbled patterns in various shades of yellow and white, creating a fluid, organic texture.

# *Reflective Journal*

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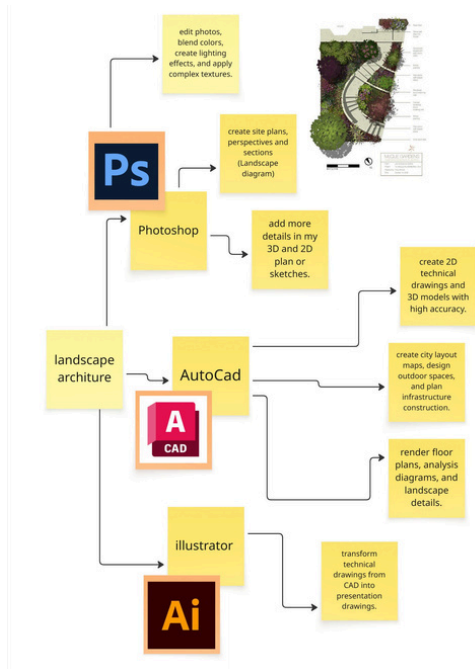
Week 7



# Week 1

This week has mostly been dedicated to introducing the different modules. I had hoped to make many new classmates, especially those from Vietnam, but there was nobody. I understood that because most Vietnamese students do not choose major arts programs when they go abroad for studies.

I have started anticipating a huge workload for the coming weeks of school. I hope I can manage my time better and get through this.



I was quite excited to be able to choose which software I could learn in the digital workshop during the first week. This would help me develop better skills for my major. I chose AutoCAD, Photoshop, and Illustrator as my priorities. But this semester, I want to learn Photoshop and Illustrator first.



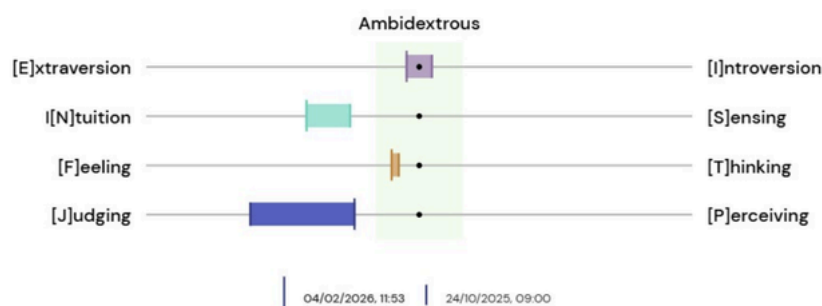
One of the challenges for international students is balancing academics and household chores. I had to cook for an entire week on weekends because I figured I would not have time for it once the workload increased. I started to enjoy cooking. It helped me relieve stress quite well, but cleaning up afterward was incredibly annoying.

I have a small presentation to give at the beginning of the week, and it was making me quite nervous. I could not stay calm during presentations. This is a weakness I need to overcome because I have a lot of presentations to do at the end of the semester, and I do not want this to become a fatal flaw.



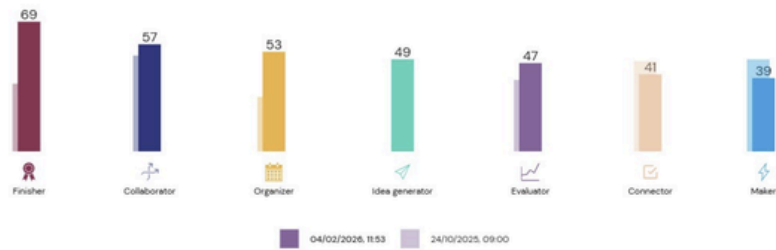
The ENFJ is an enthusiastic, personable and responsive individual with a strong focus on relationships and interaction. Striving to find harmony they strongly believe in people, sometimes to a fault. The ENFJ is warm and altruistic, full of charisma and can get people to follow their lead. They are natural, easy communicators who will stand up for what they believe in. Reliable and organized they have a desire to deliver, but without losing sight of the needs of others.

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Artisans</b>     | <b>Guardians</b> |
| ISFP - Artist       | ESTJ - Guardian  |
| ESTP - Doer         | ISTJ - Inspector |
| ESFP - Performer    | ESFJ - Provider  |
| ISTP - Mechanic     | ISFJ - Nurturer  |
| <b>Idealists</b>    | <b>Rationals</b> |
| <b>ENFJ - Giver</b> | ENTJ - Executive |
| INFJ - Protector    | INTJ - Scientist |
| ENFP - Inspirer     | ENTP - Visionary |
| INFP - Idealist     | INTP - Thinker   |



I did an MBTI test, and I really like doing these tests because they help me understand myself better. I was not surprised that the test showed I am an ENFJ because I am quite sure I am an INFJ, but because I am a sociable introvert, the tests often confuse my personality with that of an extrovert. Based on the test, I am an ENFJ (Giving Person) personality type, always enthusiastic, sincere, and possessing a strong ability to connect with those around me. I see myself as a methodical worker, always prioritizing work ethics and organization in all tasks.

I also reassessed myself based on this test and my tutor's feedback from the previous semester. Both said I am a perfectionist, and I agree with that. I am quite demanding of myself in my studies and I generally do not accept mistakes.



**Finisher – First preference**

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The Finisher pays a high level of attention to detail. While a focus on small items might be irritating at the start of a project, the orderly approach to work that you bring as a Finisher becomes increasingly important as the work progresses. As a Finisher:

- You are able to accomplish tasks well and on time
- Communicate the importance of meeting deadlines
- Identify even the smallest of mistakes as the team strives to meet high standards.

The Finisher spreads discipline, conscientiousness and persistence to other members in their quest for perfection. If you take on the role of the Finisher, be aware not to get lost in the detail. In a team, this could lower morale if you are as perceived as being overly critical of the quality of other members' contribution or efforts.

**Collaborator – Second preference**

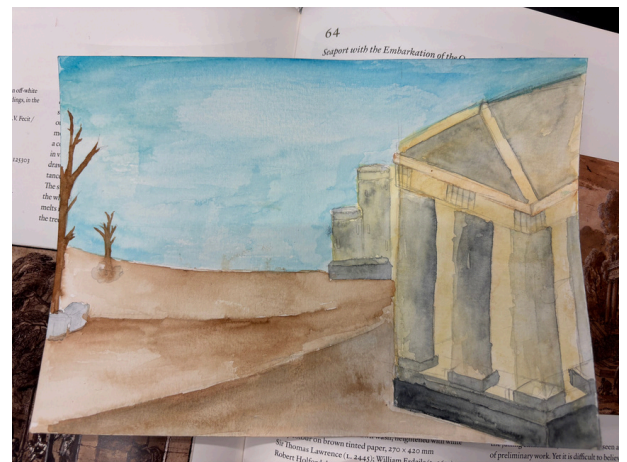
Organizers have the ability to foresee and map how ideas and plans will work out in practice.

Organizers have the ability to foresee and map how ideas and plans will work out in practice. As an Organizer you take pride in:

- Designing rules, plans and procedures for implementation
- Organizing people to work effectively together
- Focusing on developing a thorough and systematic approach to help the team achieve tangible goals

You are grounded and can influence others to be pragmatic and focused. If you take on an organizing role in your team, be mindful to make sure you also see the bigger picture so you do not become too inflexible and bound by rules.

My work style is my role as a Finisher, which makes me extremely attentive to small details, ensuring everything meets the highest standards and is always completed on time. However, I am also aware of areas for improvement to develop more comprehensively. In stressful situations, I tend to become overly perfectionistic, nitpicking, or sometimes overly concerned with getting approval from others.



This week I started doing artist responses for artist Claude Lorrain, which took me two days of experimentation and responses. While the results were not perfect, it helped me gain more experience using acrylics and watercolors. I volunteered to be the first to present for my artist research project, but I was still quite nervous and my voice was not clear. There were many parts I could not explain even though I understood what I was doing. I hope to improve this semester.

I have a new classmate from Hong Kong. She arrived last week, but we did not talk much until this week. However, we have started to become closer this week because our countries are quite close and we share many cultural similarities. She and I both enjoy listening to K-pop.



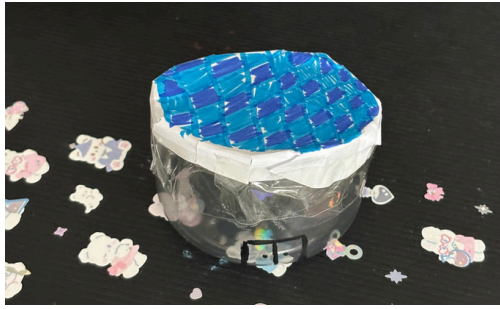
I do not know why I was the only one in this week's ILS1ART class. Maybe everyone else is starting to get sick because of the unpredictable weather in the UK.

I started carrying a suitcase to classes because art students have so much to carry. Plus, my shoulders hurt a lot after carrying all that stuff for the first two weeks.

I started talking about being stressed because the workload was quite large. It got bigger when I started working on it. I tried to do everything, but it just kept multiplying as I worked.

Bhavik, my classmates and I had an interesting conversation about each other's backgrounds before studying art. For me, I had absolutely no artistic background. I was the only one in my family who studied art. I found it quite challenging, but I also enjoyed it, like becoming completely independent. If I had not had the opportunity to study abroad and pursue my passion, I would have studied something I thought would be lucrative in Vietnam. While waiting for my visa, I applied to the Vietnam Aviation Academy to study Logistics because Vietnam is a strong importer and exporter of goods. After a week of studying, I received my visa and had the opportunity to study art as I wished. Furthermore, studying art in Vietnam is quite difficult because architecture universities require professional drawing skills and passing a drawing test. This is quite challenging for Vietnamese students because drawing is not taught in the high school curriculum and has to be learned outside of school, resulting in a large amount of knowledge and insufficient time. Yizhen, a student from Hong Kong, had a similar experience to mine when she studied art in Hong Kong.

Week 3

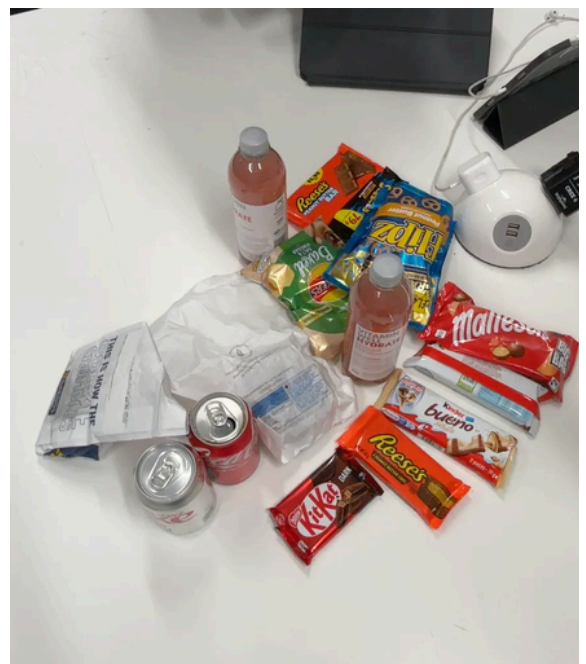


I was practicing making models with paper and plastic. I did not really like using plastic because it's difficult to control the shape of the cut parts, and other colors do not stick completely to it.

I and my classmates had a 20-minute group project on making paper models based on a theme. We randomly chose travel. Speaking of themes, I'm still undecided about what my own theme will be. I'm considering landscape/environment, recovering, and parks or tourist areas.

This week I have been having trouble choosing my theme. I have so many options, and initially I thought I should go with a recovering and traumatic theme, but it is proving more difficult than I expected. Since I have already planned for a public park as the final outcome, developing that theme is proving quite challenging.

Janice, Yizhen, and I studied together in the library. We bought and brought lots of snacks and sweets. I felt like I ate a lot of sugar whenever I was stressed. I know this is not good for my health, but it was hard to deny it. We studied together, but sometimes we would stop studying and chat quite a bit. Yizhen is very talkative and easily distracted by topics she likes. Most of the conversations were fun, but I felt less productive because I worked slower than expected.

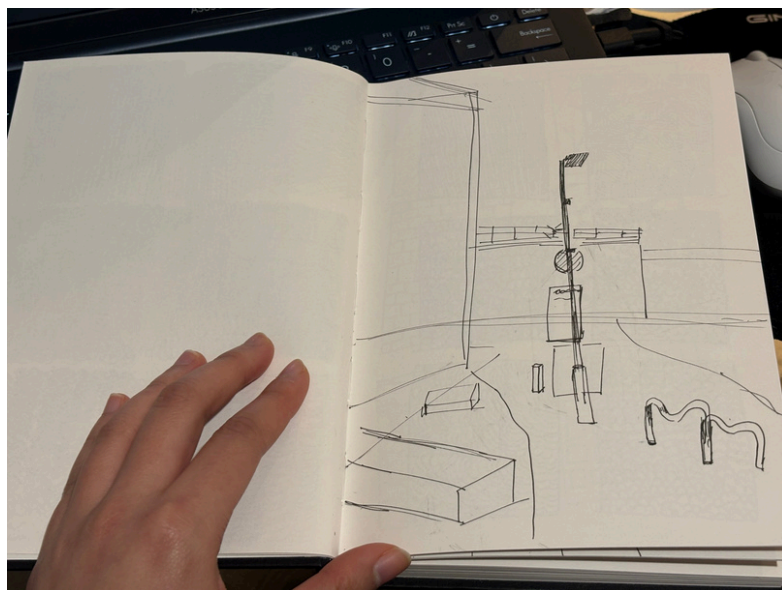
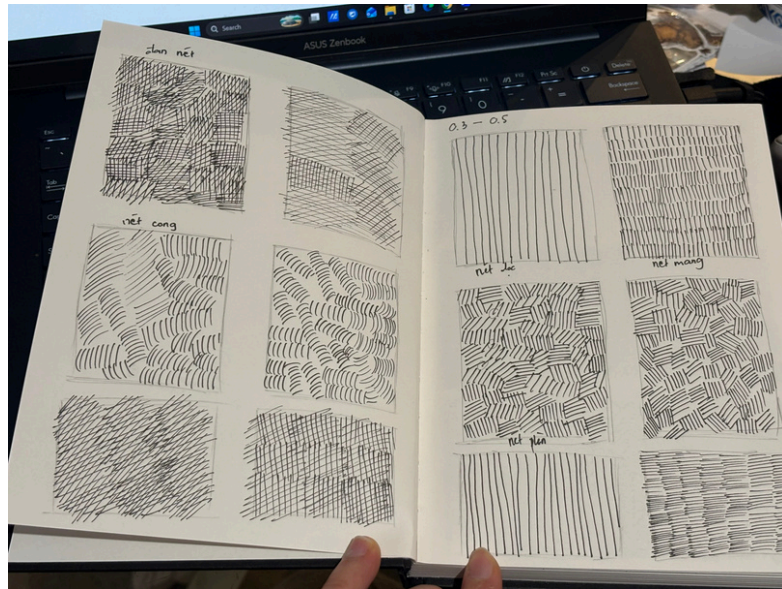
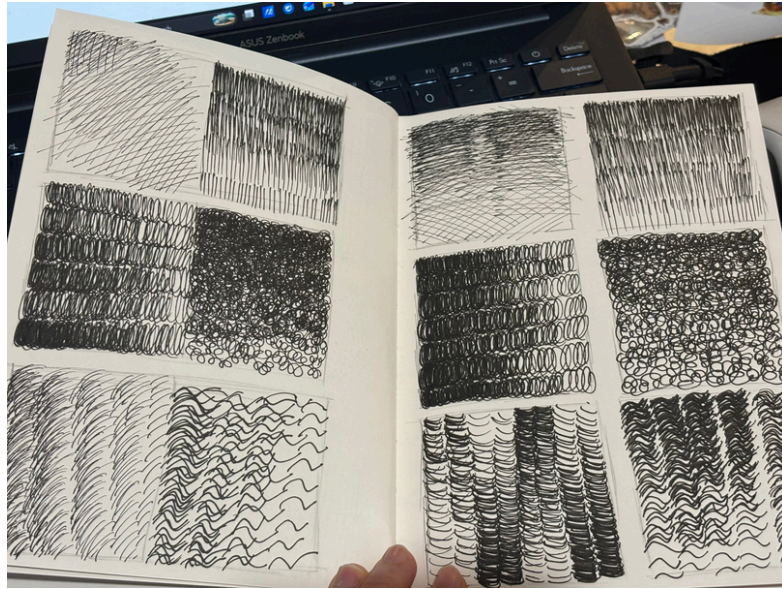


This week I also started working on action plans for personal development.

I've been practicing stroke exercises based on the book I've been using this week, and it's not as good as I thought it would be. Practicing strokes helps my hand get used to it when I start sketching, and this helps me sketch faster and generate ideas more quickly.

Since I am just starting out, my strokes were not perfect yet, but with more practice, I will become more proficient at quick sketching.

I plan to create a park, but I don't know where to start. I think I should choose a location first and then develop the overall concept, because landscape architecture also depends on geographical, human, and natural factors.



Week 4

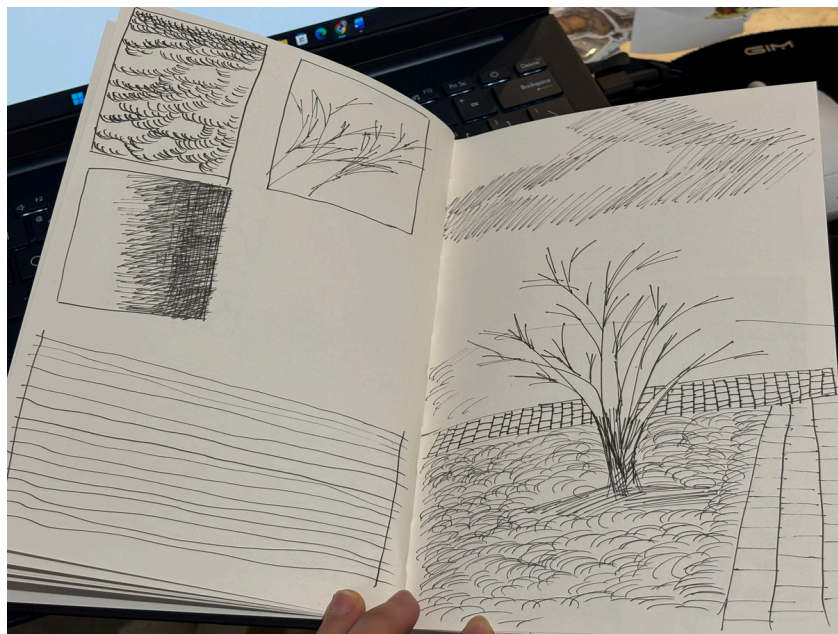
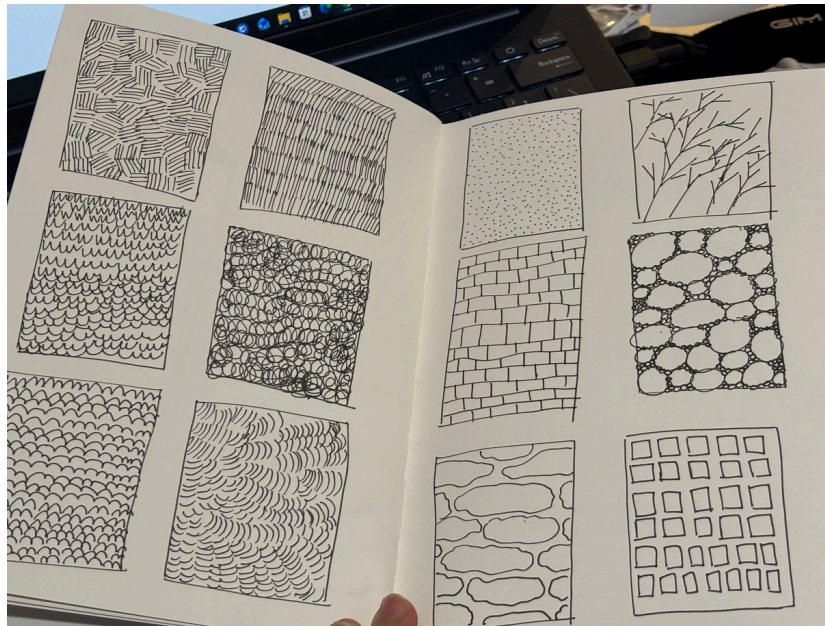


I also learned to use Photoshop for my class assignments. Here, I created a digital collage for the cafe outside the parkside building. It was a small project that Ezel and I worked on together in the Art Workshop. I can use Pattern Overlay or Clipping Mask to embed real texture images into architectural forms. Instead of just using solid colour blocks, applying materials gives elevation or perspective drawings more depth and emotion. Although it was not perfect, it has improved my skills in using Photoshop tools.

This week I celebrated Lunar New Year with Janice Yizhen and Ezel at Yizhen's house. Yizhen's house feels like a convenience store; she has so much. On the other hand, this week I have felt my workload increasing. I have stayed up several nights but still could not finish everything. I am still practicing my drawing and Photoshop skills, and each practice session takes up a lot of my time. This is causing me to postpone other things.



I continued practicing my quick sketching skills, this time drawing more different textures than before. Keeping doing these drawing exercises to train my strokes has been quite effective for me; although there has not been a dramatic improvement, I feel more familiar with this style. This drawing practice is also a good stress reliever because the mid-semester workload is extremely heavy, and I feel stressed for days.



I've received quite a lot of feedback this week and last week, mostly positive. I need to improve a lot of things, especially critical analysis. Some things have become more demanding after the feedback. I feel like I'm losing energy and motivation to work.

I worked incredibly hard during weeks 4 and 5, so on the weekend of week 5 I rewarded myself with a long sleep. I think I slept about 20 hours a day. I wish I had more time to sleep. Sometimes I feel like lack of sleep makes my communication skills messy, I cannot explain what I want as I can do normally.

Week 5

# Week 6

I booked a meeting with Bhavik about what I could do to improve my work-life balance, as I felt I was maintaining an unhealthy lifestyle. After that meeting, I started using Google Calendar again to plan what I needed to do and allocate time for rest. It was quite helpful because I could see what I had accomplished and what I had not. It made me feel less stressed when everything was planned out.

This week, I arranged to visit Yizhen's house with Ezel and Janice to work on a project together. We had a long conversation, sharing our study experiences. In particular, we gave Yizhen some helpful advice, as this was her first semester at this college. On the way to Yizhen's house, I took pictures of some parks in Birmingham that I could use as design inspiration for my final outcome. It was a beautiful day, sunny and warm.



I plan to take a trip to London to photograph various parks for reference, and at the same time, to pick up my flatmate when she returns to the UK.