

Response To Blending the Liberal Arts and Nursing: Creating a Portrait for the 21st Century,
Inaugural Presentation

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When I was first asked to create a poster for the Utermohlen exhibit, I initially thought it would be a good opportunity to further my design skills outside of the classroom. I received an email from Dick Folse asking if I wanted to design an event poster for this exhibit that I could later use in my portfolio. I had been referred to him by Kevin Strandberg, the head of the art department. I had never heard of artist William Utermohlen before. After agreeing to design posters, I received more information about Utermohlen, as well as an image on his work to include in my design. I was drawn to the bright, bold colors brushstrokes he uses, and wanted to incorporate those colors into the text of the poster, since this design would be text heavy--meaning, when you're working with a significant amount of text, you have to consider the balance of text and imagery in the overall design. Ultimately, the team of faculty I was working with and myself wanted to create a design that would live cohesively and effectively display his work for people to see on campus.

What was nice about working with the nursing faculty was that before hand, I never gave a lot of thought to the wellbeing of artists, I just looked at and studied their work. I never thought of an artist's health as a significant factor. In my own work, I focus in mixed media, so I appreciate the crossover of different materials and ideas. This crossover of the arts and nursing was eye opening in that I now consider an artist's cognitive state when observing their work, I wonder what they were thinking about, or what was going through their head at the time. What I like about Utermohlen's work is that as it is very open, you can see the wheels turning and the slow but steady progression of his disease. The rawness of his mental deterioration is apparent in his work and is enticing, and I aim to be more open in my own work now too. It was a pleasure working with Dr. Kookan and Dr. Kerr and I am thankful for the opportunity.