

I have been a student of Kwantlen Polytechnic University for three years, but before this I had spent years working in a Montessori school with an Early Childhood Education certificate. Although my position was secure, I didn't feel fulfilled because of the institutionalized obstacles I encountered, and my aspirations were contained to after-hours artistic experiments. Still, I was consistently engaged with teaching and learning and this motivated me to move towards my true passion, which was Fine Arts.

My first experience with truthfully passionate education was within fine arts. I had spent years educating myself after school in front of the T.V., always a black BIC pen in hand scrawling over page after page, an only child of endless solitude in which to dream and make. My experiences blossomed when I was offered the extra-curricular opportunity to work with a pink-haired woman named Agatha. I met with Agatha every Friday for years, learning about perspective and colour, a slow leak of knowledge that pooled into my sketches and allowed me to create richer worlds with each weekly lesson. When I was uprooted and hauled to live 3,000 miles away, my lessons stayed with me. I persevered through the knowledge that I had to create, a positive educational experience igniting me to flourish in a social environment that undermined me.

I chose Kwantlen because it was the most acceptable choice at the time, being inexpensive and easy to access. I had no real understanding of the program and entered blindly, but I quickly began to immerse myself in the experience of the polytechnic university. I learned to speak a new language through the multifaceted nature of the school, interacting regularly with people who studied linguistics and biology while nestling myself in the painting and drawing studios. I found niches among like-minded people, faculty like Robert, who lured out my attention to detail, or Sibeal, who encouraged me to feel something through my work. As an amalgamation, my professors were each vital reflections of those positive encounters I'd had when I was younger. I was motivated to join multiple fine arts collectives, throwing shows, and even applying myself to the outside world with ventures in curating and bit parts in downtown shows.

My work is highly influenced by the day-to-day experiences that I've had through my educational development at Kwantlen. All the people I've met, the access to different fields, and all those different forms of knowledge have complicated but enriched my approach. The lamp, its light a focal piece within the work, was one which the students often use when we paint our first still life. The painting itself, its unwieldy size, and its references were all thanks to a school which allowed me the freedom in which to work in any way I was encouraged to explore. I hope that the school continues to afford the same positive experiences to new students as I have been given.