

The honors component of the project consisted of the Watercolor Blog and the Virtual Museum. In creating the honors components, I wanted to build something that was creative and interactive where users and I could take a more physical role in doing scholarly research on Markino. I was inspired by the quilt website that we looked at together as a class, and how making a quilt led to so much thinking about what a quilt represents, what it can do, and what it can do in the realm of the internet. Additionally, I think the site exemplifies the idea of passing knowledge. The quilt itself is often seen as a skill passed from generation to generation but the creator also developed this project with the help of her mom and quite literally stitched in memories by way of the QR code. The QR code is intriguing because then the divide between the material, the symbolic, and the internet all coalesce together to create something that is quite literally beyond what people see. This intersection is what interests me and I was excited to explore the relationship between the material, the symbolic, and the technological within this project. The idea of the “maker” also fascinated me, and I wanted to make something rather than passively gathering works of the author and doing historical research on him. I wanted to show, in a physical way, that we can learn from these people. Looking at his painting seemed the most natural way to do this, so I started my project on how to “master the mists of Yoshio Markino.”

Painting, especially watercolor painting, takes a lot of patience and, often, the ability to keep going after making a mistake. Working with water can get really finicky and using too much might result in a lot of unwanted blurred lines and color meshing, especially if you are towards the end of completing the painting. I think that this frustration and learning how to work around these problems is a great byproduct of this type of scholarship. Markino would have had to face these issues too, but you cannot solve them by reading more about how he painted. It is not something so easily learned through words and through other people. You have to figure it

out yourself and find, to a degree, your own solutions and way of doing so. Perhaps, it is not just his techniques and physical paintings that Markino has left behind, but also the inspiration for others to paint and through that painting to have an experience like this.

I had painted before in high school, but I hadn't done it in years, so it took me a while to get back into the rhythm. You can especially tell that my first one *Mists in Monochrome* was not the greatest since I was easing myself back in. I chose to do a monochrome painting of Markino for the first one: one, because it was simpler with not as many variables (good for starting out) and two, because then I could focus more on the form rather than also trying to navigate color. Markino was famous for his ability to create a misty effect and I wanted myself and anyone who ever came across the blog to first focus on that, rather than also trying to tackle the complications of color and lighting which I explore later on in the blog in *Rain* and *Blue*.

At the end of this blog, I found that I had recovered a lot of my skills from high school, and also learned how to paint and think about painting in a new way. I had never painted fog before, although I had painted a London scene just not entrenched in mist. Painting mist is very freeing when you start, using a lot more water than I am used to and adding layer after layer of color that you let run on its own a little instead of exerting a great amount of control. I was going to do another painting where I utilized the techniques that I had learned through this blog to paint a scene of Lincoln, an original work of my own rather than a mimic of Markino's, but unfortunately I did not find the time. It is, however, important to mention it here because I think it exemplifies what I was trying to convey in the project: that Markino's life can be used in very real ways to create very real material and art and that study can result in action as well as discussion.

The second component was the Virtual Museum and here is where I took an interest in the concept of space and agency within scholarship and the virtual realm. Space in the virtual realm means something very different than space within the real world. In the real world space equals distance, but on the internet physical space means nothing. People in Canada can communicate with people in India in an instant. The internet converges every single place with access to the internet into one. This is an amazing feat, but with the loss of space we do miss out on the journey of going somewhere and in certain contexts the ability to make decisions on where to look. I'm going to look at this explicitly within the context of a virtual gallery. An online gallery usually has all of the images lined up so that you can see multiple images at a time (straight on) and takes a simple scroll, a shift over your finger, to traverse a plethora of art without having to look at the image individually, giving the user less of an opportunity to think on or mull over a piece. But in a gallery like the one I constructed, the user must look at them one at a time (although they can use the index to see the names and descriptions all at once), but more than that they have to make spatial choices to get to the painting, making the experience seem, perhaps, more real. While humans have definitely incorporated themselves into many virtual technologies, there is no question that we are creatures that live in a real world that exists spatially and due to this we navigate and process information in spatial ways. For example, we often draw maps and diagrams, complete with arrows, to demonstrate and to comprehend ideas. Without the spatial, the brain is interacting less with the information and is not as connected. Using this type of thinking and potentially creating artificial space may help scholarship to be developed in more comprehensive and engaging ways.

The honors component as a whole has helped to develop and to define my ideas about how the virtual interacts with reality and even how the past interacts with the present, how they

all come together really. Going forward, this type of analysis will help me to critically assess the efficacy of my own scholarship and interactions with the virtual realm as well as that of other people's, hopefully helping me to better understand how to further my own scholarship in constructive ways.