



Morgan May

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“Finale”
Oil
18 x 24 in.
2019



“Yellowstone, Four Masters”

Oil
9 x 12 in.
2019



“Driftwood”
Oil
18 x 24 in.
2018



“Now the Day is Over”

Oil

11 x 14 in.

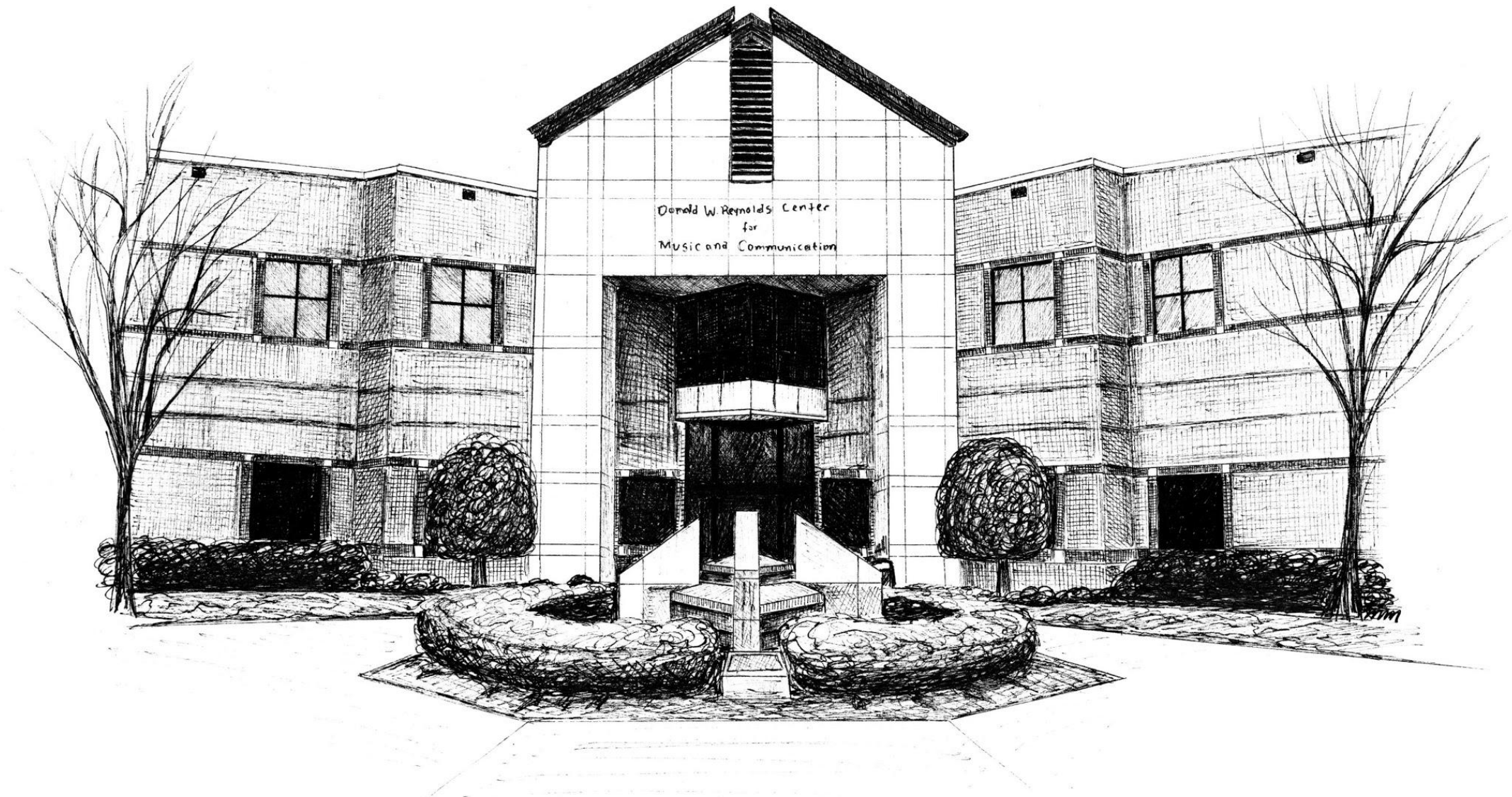
2019



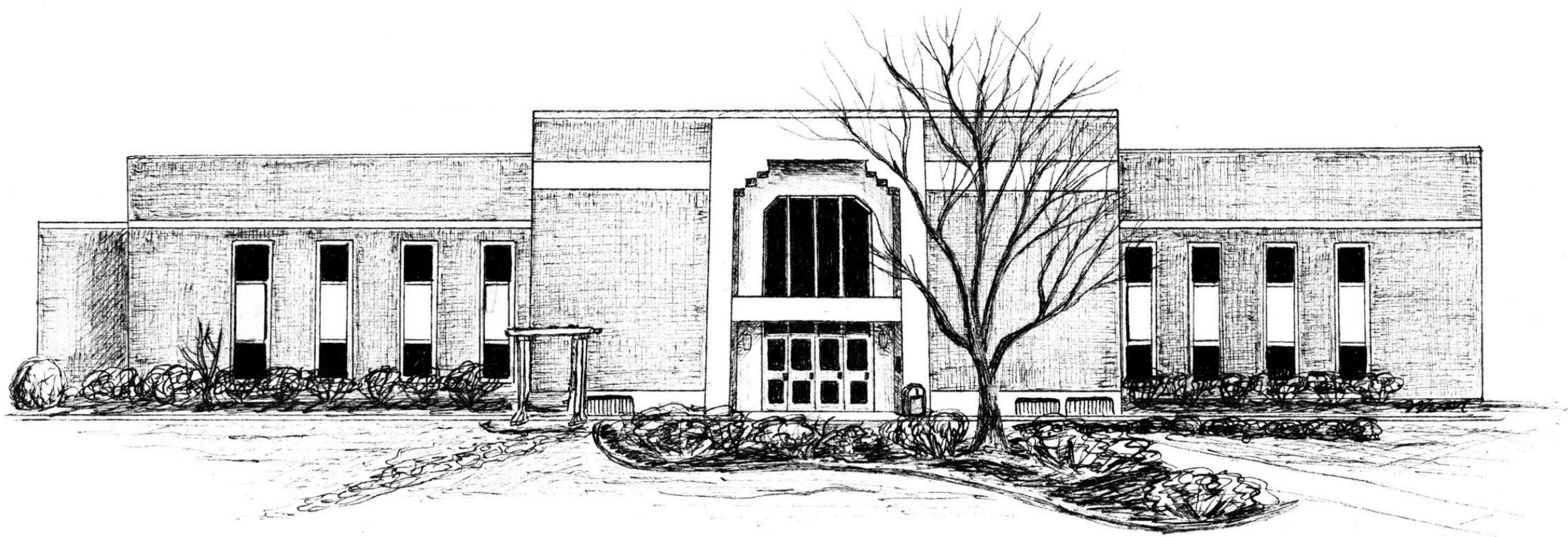
“Nostalgia”
Pen and Ink
9 x 12 in.
2017



“Vitality”
Pen and Ink
6 x 8 in.
2019



“Harmony”
Pen and Ink
6 x 8 in.
2019



“Knowledge”
Pen and Ink
5 x 9 in.
2019



“Antique Treasure”

Oil
24 x 36 in.
2018



“Self Portrait”

Yarn, wood

17 x 30 in.

2019



“Possibility”

Acrylic
12 x 16 in.
2019



“Copy of a Master, Van Gogh”

Oil
30 x 40 in.
2018

backstories

- A. “Finale” – One of my favorite subjects to paint is the sky, and this composition is one of my favorite pieces of that subject. During the summer of 2018, I had the opportunity to go abroad with Harding University on the first Art and Design International trip, titled the Architecture of Worship. Needless to say, this trip has been in my thoughts every day since, and this painting was inspired by our last night of the trip. We ended our time together in Cancun, Mexico, and that night we were treated to a magnificent sunset. We all sat, captivated, watching this sunset unfold in the sky. To me, this sunset was the perfect “finale” to an amazing trip, and I feel that God put that sunset in the sky that night to remind us of his beauty and presence in that moment. This work is also a fresco that I painted in Beverly Austin’s advanced painting class. Ms. Austin’s stories, tips, and general presence in that class made it one of my favorite classes I’ve taken at Harding, and I will always look back on it with fondness, just like the ADI trip.
- B. “Yellowstone, Four Masters” – This series of paintings was done in my Advanced Painting class my junior year, and our task was to paint one picture in the style of four different masters. Going clockwise, I chose to copy the styles of Nicolas de Stael, Vincent van Gogh, Wayne Thiebaud, and Edward Hopper. The scene I painted was a picture I took at Yellowstone National Park, on a family road trip the summer before I started at Harding. I remember not feeling too excited about going to Yellowstone, but once my family and I got there and saw all the beauty it held, I was left with so many pictures I wanted to paint and draw. This assignment gave me that opportunity, and I luckily wasn’t sick of painting landscapes after this!
- C. “Driftwood” – This painting, titled driftwood because of the piece of wood in the foreground, was my first “big” assignment in my painting I class. Before this class I had never worked with oil paint, since it had intimidated me. But after completing this painting I couldn’t imagine using anything other than oil paint! One of the things I love (and simultaneously don’t love) about painting is the challenge it brings to you. Painting what you see can sometimes be a challenge, but once you get in the groove and can distinguish what to put on the canvas, it becomes thrilling to see real life translate into the painting. I discovered more of that thrill through this painting, and even though it was a challenge, the final product makes it all worth it.
- D. “Now the Day is Over” – I always seem to come back to landscapes when I paint. There’s something mysterious, yet captivating about them to me. This painting came to life my junior year, when I was asked to participate in a spring life and arts festival that was being held at Midnight Oil, a local coffee shop. The organizer was looking for artists to paint live, and I agreed to participate. I painted this sunset landscape *plein air*, as friends and strangers walked past and curiously eyed what I was doing. It was a neat experience having people become interested in the painting process, and get up close to see what I was doing. This memory is one I treasure now that I look back on my time in college, and makes the heartbreak of the coronavirus more tolerable.

backstories

- E. “Nostalgia” – This is yet another scene from Yellowstone from the summer of 2016, hence the name “Nostalgia”. This was the summer filled with limitless possibilities and Anne of Green Gables (a great combination if you ask me). I was easing into my second semester of freshman year when I created this piece with pen and ink wash in my mixed media class taught by Professor Austin. I had never really made anything in this media before, and it was new and exciting. I can remember sitting at my desk in Cathcart putting the finishing touches on this piece, and falling more and more in love with it the more I looked at it. The limitless possibilities I felt at that time mirrored the feelings I felt a few months before in Yellowstone. Harding still had an exciting yet terrifying hold on me, and if I only knew then how much more Harding would come to mean to me, I think I would burst. The more time that passes, the more nostalgic I find myself getting, about Harding, and life in general.
- F. “Vitality” – This artwork came to be through the 2019 Petit Jean yearbook. During the fall of 2018, all of the students from the ADI trip displayed our sketchbooks in a gallery show documenting our travels. On the ADI trip, I had done many realistic sketches of different landmarks and monuments that I saw during our travels, and they caught the eye of the editor at the time, Megan Stroud. Megan contacted me shortly after she saw my sketchbooks, and wanted to include hand drawn buildings and other illustrations in that edition of the yearbook. I was immediately excited and terrified of taking on such a huge task, but I knew if I said no I would regret it. So from October of 2018 to February of 2019, I made 9 illustrations for the yearbook. The drawing of the Student Center (or the Stu) is the first drawing I did for the yearbook drawings, and happens to be one of my favorites. Working with the yearbook staff was something I never thought I’d do at Harding, but it was truly an experience I’ll never forget.
- G. “Harmony” – This was another illustration I completed for the 2018–2019 edition of the Petit Jean. This drawing highlights the Reynolds Building on campus, which is the home base for the Student Publications offices. This building also holds a special place in my heart, as it is the building where I had the privilege of being a member of the Harding University Concert Choir and the Harding Chorus. Aside from art, music and singing also plays a huge role in who I am and where I find a huge source of creativity. There’s something so breathtaking about 60+ voices all coming together and singing so beautifully, your heart aches. The walk to the Reynolds building is something I will miss more now than I previously realized, but I am thankful for all the walks I got to make to that beloved building. That building might be my favorite on campus (besides the art building, of course!)
- H. “Knowledge” – This is the last of the illustrations I decided to feature in my portfolio from the Petit Jean illustrations. This is a drawing of the Brackett Library on the Harding campus, and I came to love this place a lot more as my time at Harding went on. Specifically the single person study rooms, those were a game changer. But seriously, this building was the source of some of my favorite memories at Harding, and I don’t know what I’ll do now without Miss Jennifer and the Java City cappuccinos.

backstories

- I. “Antique Treasure” - This is another painting I did in my Painting I class, and was another challenge I was ready to tackle. Each painting we were assigned in the class was increasingly more challenging, and this one was no different. We were tasked with painting this with “direct color” - meaning the color went straight onto the canvas without the use of glazing or another method. This was exciting to me, and I couldn’t wait to start. My roommate and I found items to set up our still life, and in the end we thought that this display had sort of a “grandmotherly-antique” feeling to it. Whenever I think back to this time in my college career, I look back on it with a special fondness that is unique to this time in my life.
- J. “Self Portrait” - During the summer between my junior and senior year, I decided I wanted to teach myself how to weave tapestries. They were very “trendy” at the time, and they are still fairly popular now. When I had the idea to make this tapestry, I wanted to incorporate colors that I knew I would like, and some colors that are bold and interesting. I love how relaxed you can be with the designs in a tapestry, and just let your creativity take control and guide your actions. This is a self portrait in a way, because I like to think I am a gentle, go with the flow kind of person, and that is what comes to my mind when I think of tapestries. There’s layers and hidden elements that make it special, and I think the same can be said for personalities everywhere. We are all works of art, created with layers and details that make us one of a kind.
- K. “Possibility” - One of the career paths I explored during my time at Harding was Art Therapy. It’s still not completely off of my radar, but there are other things I want to see/explore before I commit to anything like grad school. The relationship with emotions and color is so fascinating, and the role color plays in the lives of others is also something to note. Through my psychology minor, I took a class on counseling, and ended up going to a therapist as a client - something I had never experienced before. I wanted to have this experience under my belt, and look at in a way that was open and free of any negative stigma that can be associated with seeing a therapist. Mental health professionals are often encouraged to use personal therapy to further grow and be able to help others heal. This experience was new, exciting, scary, and unsettling all at once, but it opened up my eyes to a whole new way of thinking and experiencing the world around me. I told my therapist I wanted to experience some sort of art therapy element over the course of our meetings, and during my last session I created this painting. Through this expressive, emotive painting, I listened to what I was feeling and did my best to translate it onto canvas. This painting might not be the most exciting, detailed piece that I’ve created, but the emotions and thoughts I have when I look at it make it so much more special to me.
- L. “Copy of a Master, Van Gogh” - This work was the last assignment we were given in my Painting I class, and I had been looking forward to it the whole semester. Vincent van Gogh is one of my favorite artists, and when I was researching paintings to copy, this one stood out to me from all the rest. I knew I had to copy it, and the final result exceeded even my own expectations. While it was the most challenging, complex painting I had done up to that point, it was the most rewarding. Having the chance to copy van Gogh’s work and really dissect his brushstrokes and color placement was fascinating, and this painting remains one of my favorite works to date.

Artist's Statement



Throughout her life, art has always been present in Morgan May's life. Her paternal grandmother, who was an artist, has always been a personal connection to the art world. Beyond that, Morgan has always felt drawn to the art world, and keenly remembers art always being her escape from the mundane, and a way to bring joy to other people's lives. When it came to deciding what to major in at college, choosing art was an obvious choice. Harding has greatly enriched Morgan's life with opportunities and experiences she never thought possible, and these have significantly shaped her art works. Morgan's style of art draws on realism, impressionism, and ultimately painting or drawing what she sees. Capturing meaningful places and moments that have had an impact in her life are what drive her to create what she creates. To Morgan, the greatest artist in the universe is our creator God, and she strives to capture His creation through her eyes.

Extended Artist's Statement

Throughout her life, art has always been present in Morgan May's life. Her paternal grandmother, who was an artist, has always been a personal connection to the art world. As a young girl, Morgan remembers visiting her Grandma's home in southern California, and being captivated with the art room in their cozy little house. Her Grandma, Betty, was a painter, which also happens to be Morgan's medium of choice. She can remember looking up at all the paints on display, and rummaging around the drawers that could be accessed easier. The drawers had so many interesting things that Morgan loved exploring and creating new uses for. That art room was fascinating to Morgan at a young age, as it was a space to be creative and unwind. Seeing all of her paintings and projects on display in their house always brought a sense of fascination and awe to Morgan, and she knew she wanted to have that for herself one day. Her Grandma, who has now been gone for many years, has always held a special place in Morgan's heart, as she bears resemblance to her physically and spiritually. Even to the point that her dad calls Morgan "little Betty", which at times can be embarrassing but also endearing. The art room in young Morgan's mind holds all the fond memories of her and her Grandma from that precious time, and continues to do so to this day. When Morgan thinks of her art and artistic journey, she can't help but think of her Grandma and all the art they could have made together.

Growing up in Austin, Texas, Morgan had constant exposure and encouragement to explore her artistic passions. Elementary school art was a formative time in her artistic journey, where her teachers and friends noticed and encouraged her to pursue her artistic ventures. Her parents, who funded and encouraged her talents, are also a major driving force, contributing to where she is today. During her adolescence, Morgan experimented with acrylic paint, watercolor, and even spent a few years practicing intricate nail art on her and her friends. Art has always been present in Morgan May's life, and that isn't changing anytime soon.

When it came to choosing a college to spend the next four years at, the choice was clear to Morgan: attend Harding University and pursue an art degree. Her parents were encouraging through the whole process, constantly telling Morgan that she would excel at whatever she set her mind to. Harding University brought many unexpected blessings and challenges to Morgan's academic, artistic, and personal development. She learned that when something doesn't go the way you expected it to, that door was closed for a reason so another door could be opened. That lesson, along with other experiences and opportunities, helped her grow and become more confident in her abilities, and who she is as a person.

A huge influence in Morgan's life came about in the fall of 2016. Daniel Adams, the Dean of the Art Department at the time, came into Morgan's freshman drawing class and told all the students about this brand new study abroad trip that the art department was planning. They were calling it "The Architecture of Worship", and mentioned that they were going all around the world. At this time, Morgan had never been out of the country, and she knew she had to go on this trip. After making a list of a hundred and one reasons as to why she should go on this trip and presenting it to her parents, they helped her make this dream a reality. So in May of 2018, Morgan and about 40 fellow travellers started their adventure in Atlanta, Georgia, and travelled to England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Israel, India, Thailand, Cambodia, Japan, and Mexico. This trip changed Morgan's way of thinking of the world, about herself, her faith, and her art. Much of her art after that trip was influenced by the places she's been and her travels, and even led her to new artistic ventures, like the drawings featured in the 2019 Petit Jean Yearbook. The sketchbooks she kept on the trip got the attention of the yearbook editor at the time, and her drawings were published in thousands of yearbooks.

Constantly inspired by nature and her travels, Morgan's body of work strongly reflects that. Her landscape paintings, drawings of buildings, and other natural objects attempts to pay homage to the places that have shaped and inspired her. Capturing meaningful places and moments that have had an impact in her life are what drive her to create what she creates. When she has a vision of something in her head, the drive to finish that project and see it to completion is what motivates her.

Morgan's style of art is draws from realism, impressionism, and ultimately painting or drawing what she sees. Artists like Edward Hopper, William Merrit Chase, Claude Monet, Mary Cassatt, and Vincent van Gogh have all influenced her style, as well as Morgan developing her own methods. While painting is her favorite medium, Morgan also enjoys working with textile arts, pen and ink, ceramics, and sculpting in various materials.

When Morgan is not creating art or thinking of her next project, she enjoys singing, baking treats in the kitchen, reading, as well as traveling and meeting new people. As for the future, Morgan is not sure what the future holds, but as long as it has art and adds value to the world, she is excited for whatever may be coming next.



Morgan May

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Education

Harding University – Searcy, AR

2016 – 2020

Bachelor of Arts, Major: Art | minors in Childrens and Family Ministry and Psychology

Work Experience

Childcare Attendant

(2018 – present)

Worked as a summer sports camp counselor at Hill Country Indoor Sports and Fitness center in Austin, TX. Worked with children ages 5–12. Experience in guiding large groups of children and making quick decisions. Learned valuable leadership skills, as well as how to take the initiative and work better with people. Led sport activities, crafts, and team building exercises among the campers.

Personal Art Teacher

(2019 – present)

Provides one on one art lessons to students. Helps the student become more familiar with mediums like painting, drawing, and teaches design concepts.

Harding University Computer Lab Attendant

(2018 – present)

Kept the lab clean and the computers in working order. Helped minor troubleshooting and provided customer service.

Michael's Sales Associate

(2017)

Helped customers find art materials, kept the storefront clean, as well as working the cash register. Also taught art classes and made craft examples for the store.

Additional Information

Studied abroad the Summer of 2018 on the Art and Design International trip
Mission work in Hungary and the Czech Republic for 2.5 weeks

Technical Skills

Basic Photoshop
Basic Illustrator
Basic InDesign
Hand drawing skills
Calligraphy
Painting

Memberships

American Studies Institute
Psi Chi
Iota Chi social club
Harding University Chorus
Peer Assisted Leadership Skills (PALs)

Honors

President of social club Iota Chi
Vice President of Iota Chi

Post Graduation Plans

After graduation, I will still be in Austin, TX, working and saving money. Then, Lord willing, I will be moving to Florence, Italy in January 2021 to begin a two year missions internship with Avanti Italia. I am looking forward to spreading the gospel to the people in Florence, as well as forming relationships with the other workers and the members at the Florence Church of Christ. Europe has such a special place in my heart, as do foreign missions, and dedicating two years to the Lord's work in Italy just felt so right. I never thought I'd be going down this path, but I've learned through my time at Harding that sometimes the best things you experience come up in the most unexpected ways. I am depending on God to lead me where I am needed, and am continuing to trust Him in all things. Not having my senior year end the way I thought it would has had its challenges, but I am putting my trust in God that He has a purpose for all of this heartbreak. Even in the midst of all of this disappointment and sadness, I am hopeful that the future will be bright and full of God's blessings. No doubt there will be challenges, but I know that by having God on my side, nothing is impossible.