

Personal Statement Essay

To have complete control is to feel completely free – a paradox. Such a contradiction can be applied to the blank canvas sitting in front of me, except not at the moment. I've been in this same position plenty of times before: subject selected, paint mixed, canvas primed for greatness. Yet I still can't seem to decide how to start my beautiful, show-stopping masterpiece that I've set out to create. The more I stare at it, the more confined I feel, and the more my idea blurs into a muddy brown mess. In an effort to organize my thinking, I recall my other canvases.

Almost a decade of practicing discipline and dedication through figure skating has demonstrated to me that there is infinite potential for expression within a finite sheet of ice. The absence of friction allows me to connect my every movement, transforming a simple extension of my leg into a grand display of grace as I traverse the ice. I can interrupt these moments of gradual, continuous motion with swift leaps off of the surface altogether, adding another dimension of space and sophistication to my movement.

Though I have learned to utilize the physics of the rink, it hasn't been without effort. Through perseverance and meticulous practice, every change of edge, acceleration, and direction that I make when I skate have become deliberate; the products of every muscle in my entire body operating in harmony to maintain my balance as I move. My years of experience allow me to contrast these elements in any way I choose. I am in command of the story I develop as I move from one side of the ice to the other. Having complete control over my body allows me to broaden my color palette, giving me the freedom to engineer any story I choose.

While this freedom remains within the confines of the ice rink, my desire to engineer transcends it. Creating with the goal of functionality is a journey in which I begin at the crossroads of creativity and knowledge. A white board is a canvas on which I can bring my ideas

to life, one I frequently employ in my engineering classroom. With a few strokes of my marker, I can begin a complex project that serves a purpose; a drawing of an airfoil develops into a piece of a functioning model plane.

My curiosity about the intricacies of the world remains unwavering, beckoning me to continuously seek new problems for which I yearn to find solutions. To engineer is to utilize my understanding in order to achieve this – to find control in order to freely create. My favorite step of the engineering design process is revision, surrounding myself with ideas and optimizing those that are tangible. With a blueprint in mind, I can broaden my possibilities by thinking creatively; these same principles guide my paintbrush as I construct each piece of a painting.

My thoughts bring me back to the canvas that lies in front of me, on which I finally realize that I don't need to feel confined to one single idea, for I am free to manipulate my paint into anything I desire. I am in command of the waves of color within a sea of ideas and I have space to explore them. The possibilities of what I can create excite me, as I finally put paint to the canvas. In finding complete control over my ideas and materials, I discover the complete freedom in being able to express my own interpretation of an idea in any way I see fit.

Through years of building towards mastery in these areas, I can immerse myself in the possibility of creation. Now, I wonder what my next canvas will be. Looking towards the sky, I envision the possibilities in hope of creating freely, expressively, and functionally in ways that will change the world for the better.