

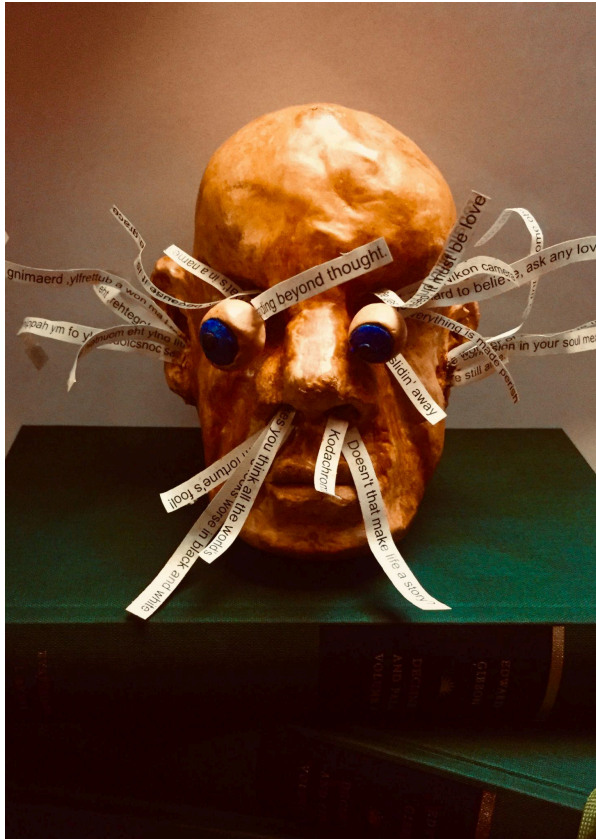
Artist's Statement:

This sculpture depicts a subject's head. Paper text strips from various stories force his eyes out of their sockets. These stories, bursting from behind the eyes, are the products of perceiving reality. No two paper strips are identical, and their ideas often clash; their inconsistency alludes to the distortion of reality after its perception in Paul Simon's "Kodachrome". Further, their explosion from the subject's imagination into reality communicates that life can blur the lines between stories and reality, harkening to Of Mice and Men when Lennie's dreams became so entangled with reality that his real death was preferable to the death of his dreams. Paradoxically, despite the subject's inability to distinguish story and reality, his eyes remain vividly blue--alive and true to his desire to attain universal clarity and meaning in life. The subject's persistent search for meaning despite his ignorance toward what is real and what is imaginary is a nod to Pi's search for a universal God within a made-up narrative of his ordeal (from Life of Pi). This paradoxical pursuit of meaning also harkens to Tinkers wherein George must find meaning in his unreliable memories. These stories and this sculpture, facing the paradoxical nature of the pursuit of life's meaning, ask: why should characters care if their world is really, like Chou from "The Dream of the Butterfly" feared, a dream? Stories concerning consciousness convey that if the world is an illusion, then the consciousness that exists within it is also an illusion. And so a character's consciousness is always of the same nature as reality. The sculpture hints at this concept through the subject's maimed eyes--which are the bridges between reality and perception. The destruction of such a bridge conveys that there need not be a distinction between perception and reality, also referring to Li Bai's "Zazen on Ching T'ing Mountain", which claims that the strongest harmony man may achieve with the world is the elimination of the distinction between man and nature. But in stories about consciousness, what implications do these ideas have on the meaning of life? For starters, it means that the ultimate question of life's meaning is not existential. Instead, stories advocate that readers allow meaning to come from their consciousness alone. Thus, that meaning is deeply idiosyncratic, complex, and subjective. And that's the beauty of it, isn't it? That the stories people choose to live by--the reality they choose to perceive--is an inherent human freedom? That every life has its own meaning?

Lobotomized

By Aaron Yu

Artist's statement is on previous page



CAPSTONE NOTECARD

My name is #####	
What EQ did you use for your Capstone Project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do stories about consciousness use paradox to comment on the meaning of life?
What is your Capstone EQ answer [in 1-2 concise, academic sentences]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories use the paradox that characters seek universal clarity of life's meaning in their personal, idiosyncratic life to comment on the meaning of life.
If you had to give your Capstone Project/visual a richly symbolic or metaphorical title (place the title in "Quotation Marks"), what would it be and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title: "Lobotomized" • Why?: Stories burst from my sculpture's head as if a lobotomy has severed those stories from the rest of the sculpture's brain. The stories then go on to mingle with the external world, preventing the sculpture from distinguishing what is reality and what is a made up story. The search for meaning within such an environment is a core concept to my EQ answer.
How did you come up with your visual idea?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have always enjoyed sculpting, so I knew from the get-go that clay would be my medium. I came up with strips of text to demonstrate stories because they quite literally resemble small excerpts from actual books/pages.
How does this visual express the central answer to your EQ—as based on 5-6 texts? [1-2 sentences]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of stories in the void behind the sculpture's eyes shows that when the world is perceived through people's eyes, they are telling themselves artificial stories about the world. The marriage between these internal stories and the external world prevents people from distinguishing story and reality, conveying that the search for life's meaning is to be done without knowing what is real and what is not.
Accurately self-assess [<i>refer to the rubric on page 2</i>]: How do you feel like your visual turned out? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of sources: I used 6 sources from 4 different types of sources (short story, song, novel, and poem), so I believe I deserve an EX. • Content: I clearly identified my question and answered it in a way that was insightful and made sense to me. I feel that my organization and structure helps the elements of my concept complement each other. I also referenced all 6 sources in my artist's statement, so I believe I earned a content EX. • Product: I am happy with how the sculpture turned out. I believe the artist's statement complements the work nicely, and I am pleased with how text and visuals come together into one polished product. I used all available elements of sculpture in a strategic way to convey my main idea, so I believe I earned an EX on the product.