This comparative study examines links between three artworks from three different cultures and time periods: Myriam Dion’s “The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday, August 10-11, 2013”, JinYoung Yu’s “A family in disguise (Adult and child)”, and Eva Hesse’s “Not Yet”. The main theme explored is the fragility of human nature.

By Alex Yang
Applying McFee King’s conceptual framework to Myriam Dion

Artist
- Myriam Dion buys newspapers everyday and after reading it through, she uses it as the medium for her work. She is also the first one to admit that the newspapers she read is based on the pictures presented on it.
- Dion cuts out the broadsheets within different patterns, but obscures the original picture.
- Her works are made by freehand using a scalpel to create a combination of both Arabic latticework and stained-glass windows, which aims explores the intersection between folk traditions and popular culture.
- She suggests that her work is "to find a new use for print media in the process of its disappearance”.
- She also told The Huffington Post “ By cutting the newspaper, I’m putting off the text and the information, the object loses his utility and the viewer is therefore pushed to see it in another way.”

Artist’s World
- Myriam Dion is a French-Canadian artist who is currently taking her Masters Degree in Visual and Media Arts at the University of Quebec.
- She created this artwork in 2013 in a Canadian exhibition, a period in history where printed news faces extinction.

Audience
- The targeted audiences of this artwork are mainly people in the 21st century. In particular, audiences from Canada would be more related to her artworks as the newspapers she uses are mainly based on Canadian news articles.
- She also targeted audiences who used to read off news from a paper-type newspaper but are more influenced by online streaming, including video news and audio news, that are more visualised through images.
- This excludes the old traditional method of using written words to convey meanings, which shows a decay of this type of newspaper in the modern society.

Audiences World
This artwork was created in 2013, a period in history where printed news faces extinction. Since this artwork presents a cut newspaper, the audience might relate to the disappearance of paper newspapers in the modern society where online streaming is more advanced.

Artwork name: The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday.
Analysis of “The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday” by Myriam Dion

**Material used:** In all of Myriam Dion’s artworks, she only uses a X-Acto Knife to cut out newspapers she buys everyday. She would buy around 20 copies a day and by experimenting through, she aims to create a mosaic of chopped-up texts and patterns centred on a photograph of the day she finds interesting.

In this artwork, Dion conveyed the fading of paper-type newspapers by presenting the fragility of newspapers. She has done this through carving out the newspaper into gorgeous patterns.

Dion loved using a variety of patterns. This is evident by the mixture of different types of shapes she carved out. In fact, this whole artwork was created using repetitive, but intricate patterns. Dion’s use of wavy textures and a combination of patterns not only adds to the presentation, but also aids her purpose that allows people to think more deeply about the news that we consume too easily. By cutting out all the contexts and making them into fragile patterns, she presented the newspaper in a form that would be accepted by the modern society, which reveals the fragility of the human nature in terms of how people no longer pay attention to the details.

When Dion was carving the heading of the newspaper, she not only took out the spaces within all the letter O’s in the title to keep it readable, but also remains the general flow of the patterns around the title. She did this to emphasis the fade of paper-type newspapers in modern society by conveying a contrast between the title to the ‘fragile’ body of the newspaper. Furthermore, she also maintained the heading by deliberately carving out smaller wholes to the rest of the patterns in the newspaper.

When Dion cuts these meticulous patterns and textured shapes into the newspaper, she takes into account the photographs that exist within each page. She kept the general structure of the houses and the horse but cut out the written words in the newspaper to further convey people’s lack of attention to context in the modern society. A society where news are more commonly presented digitally through computers and televisions.
This artwork is created in the modern society, where people use the internet to check out news more than they reading the actual printed newspaper. Therefore, as said by Dion herself: “My intention is to slow down the look of the viewer. I worry that we are absent-mindedly skimming the surface of the things, and that we are getting lost in the rush.” Her main motif of the artwork reflects the general trend of the new society, which conveys the fade of people’s attention to the actual message being presented by the articles in the newspaper.

The paper cutting effect brings up the elegance of the artwork to present the fragility of the newspaper. Dion did this not only to physically represent how fragile the article has now become, but also mentally conveying the theme of human’s fragility. People tend to pay fragile things with extra care and attention. She wanted the audience to spend time with the article carefully, hence revealing the underlying theme of the fragility in the human nature. In a society that information flows closely in our surroundings, people pay more attention to the visual images than the actual messages being presented, this conveys the fragile of human nature as we are driven by the society we live in, that we are strongly impacted by the material people uses, hence also implying a message that we often cannot change our surroundings, which emphasises the theme of how insignificance we are compared to the society.

Worthy of knowing, the cutting techniques Dion used are based on ancient Chinese traditional paper cutting. She said that: “My studio is full of images of units from manual works, mostly lace, embroidery and weaving,” Dion said. The elegantly cut out patterns attracted people’s close attention. She did this in aims to draw people’s attention to the old fashion printed newspapers, which conveyed a message that she is able to make people revisit what is said to be outdated in the modern society.
Applying McFee King's conceptual framework to Eva Hesse

**Audiences World**
- This artwork “Not Yet” was created in 1966, a time period when chaos were still all around the world. Everyone was vulnerable to the changes of the society, and was closely driven by the political events that influenced everyone’s lives.

**Artist’s world**
- Born in Hamburg in 1936 to a German-Jewish family, Eva Hesse had a dramatic life and she experienced many social challenges.
- Eva and her older sister escaped from her extended family and were sent on one of the last Kinder-transports (trains that carried Jewish children to safety). She eventually met her parents in Holland.
- When she was around 9 years old, her mom committed suicide. Depression and anxiety racked throughout her life, which had a strong impact on the psychological ethics of her work.
- Her pursue of art kept her motivated. She first went to the School of Industrial Art, then in 1952, she attended the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and Cooper Union from 1954 to 1957.
- Hesse’s perseverance in art did not end there. In 1957, she went to the School of Art and Architecture at Yale University.
- From an expressionist painter, she access to experiment everyday, industrial daily materials allowed her to become an expert in the study of Minimalism.
- Hesse explored the use of simplest daily materials and how that conveys the idea of: “organic associations, psychological moods, and proto-feminist.”

**Audiences**
- People’s mind sets are vulnerable and were easily manipulated by political events.
- The audiences would associate with the simplistic representation of the organic vulnerability of their-selves when they look at Hesse’s artwork.

**Artist**
- Eva Hesse once lived in the central of chaos, Hamburg, a place where she was treated poorly because she had a Jewish family.
- Suffered from post WW2, Hesse’s artworks were strongly influenced by the psychological impacts she experienced during her days as a refugee.
Analysis of “Not Yet” by Eva Hesse

Materials used: In Eva Hesse’s artworks, she used daily, industrial materials to visualise the theme of minimalism. In Not Yet, she used net bags, clear polyethylene sheeting, paper, metal weights, and strings. These are daily materials that presents the fragility of this artwork, which reveals the fragility of the human nature.

Eva Hesse repeated the shape multiple times to create “the most ridiculous structure” that achieves the “kind of depth or soul or absurdity or life or meaning or feeling or intellect that I want to get.” The absurd structure to an extent revealed her intricate childhood which impacted her to become who she is now. She was born in a Nazi camp, therefore, she was traumatised for a large part of her life and further impacted her perspectives of the world. Her awareness of her trauma caused has her to realise the fragility of the human spirit and how exposed the human mind is to foreign influence.

Eva Hesse chose her materials carefully. She used net bags to wrap up the balls inside, these nets are thin and fragile. The heavy balls inside are stretching the nets as if the balls would pop out anytime due to the gravity. The contrast between the heavy ball and the thin nets revealed the fragility of this installation.

Eva Hesse presented her artwork with a choice of gloomy colour scheme. Brown is the central colour used in this artwork. She used this to convey the dirty, negative sides of the human nature. Perhaps the choice of colours was influenced by her devastative childhood, she revealed the fragility of human nature through the presentation of the negative connotations people arose with brown, dirty colours.

The ball like structure also metaphorically represented male testicles which also conveyed Eva Hesse’s fragile human spirits. Moreover, just as human testicles are fragile and vulnerable, she used this parallelism to further convey the fragility of the human nature as all of the balls are being hanged with thin net bags as if the ball inside could break through the net anytime.
Eva Hesse, throughout her career, produced artworks by using simplistic, industrial, daily materials to compose most of her sculptures. She explored the intricate emotions through the presentation of minimalism. Just as the material used and the techniques used in this artwork “Not Yet” is simple, she minimised the physical appearance of the artwork to emphasise the emotional impacts it presents to the audience.

Before, in 1962, Eva Hesse enjoyed drawing, but she found that it is hard to convey the idea of absurdity only in the use of paintings. Therefore, she began to explore presentations in a three dimensional form. This artwork, “Not Yet”, was one of the first sculpture artworks she experimented with since the start of 1965, where she created “Ring Around Arose (1965)”, a projection created also through the use of industrial materials including: paper mache, cloth, and wire on a masonite panel.

In almost all of her artworks during the beginning few years of experimentation of sculptures, she alluded the sexual nature of much of her early relief works. “Not Yet” is another example that represents this type of connotations, the ball like structure Eva Hesse made metaphorically symbolises male testicles. Eva Hesse intentionally contradicts with the conventions, where she used non-traditional materials such as net bags, metal weights and strings. She said: “My idea now is to counteract everything I've ever learnt or been taught about those things—to find something inevitable that is my life, my thought, my feelings.” The theme of fragility of human nature is conveyed through her exploration of absurdity of life. She used contradicting materials and alluded the sexual nature to present her realisation of the fragility of the human spirit.
Applying McFee King’s conceptual framework to JinYoung Yu

**Audience**

- The targeted audiences of this exhibition are people in the 21st century. In particular, audiences who felt left out from society that are trying to blend in.
- JinYoungYu also targeted audiences who are not familiar with the overheating online communicating system, where people only communicate through their electrons and slowly ignores the importance of communication in real life.
- She targeted these people because they feel left out and it tends to be hard to join in a community within a short time period.

**Artist**

- JinYoungYu is a Korean born artist that works in Seoul. Her works are about the “Invisible people.”
- She wanted to talk about the stories of the people who said: “I worked with you for over a year.” But JinYoungYu viewed them as transparent people who he cannot recall the names.
- Her works are about people who, instead of getting along with others, choose to keep a distance from them, and be invisible or be left alone unconcerned.
- This theme also describes the artist’s internal feelings as well. Therefore, within her artwork, she simultaneously presents the transparency of the people and the eager of them trying to blend in.
- Her presentation of the human expressions conveyed the theme of people trying to blend in. They hold their tears back and swallow them. She used this exhibition to further reveal her feelings about the society, which conveys her fragile spirit, thus relating to the theme of the fragility of human nature.

**Audience’s world**

- The artwork was created in 2011, a period in history where people felt left out due to the overheating online communicating system.
- A time period where people tend to spend more time with friends on phone than with their parents in reality even when they are at home,

**Artist's world**

- JinYoungYu’s “Myself/Them” exhibition was during a contemporary time period. It is in an era where technology is advanced and people are have the rights to give free speeches.
- She felt left out sometimes as she feels uncomfortable in a group with small talk and rooms full of people. Therefore, she tried to express her loneliness and her eagerness to blend in.
Materials used: Jin Young Yu’s work are about the presentation of the “invisible person”. Therefore, to make her sculptures perfectly transparent, she chose PVC as the material for the main body.

When Jin Young Yu was creating this artwork, she used PVC to present the theme of invisibility. Although the main body is transparent, she left out the face, hands, feet and the pet dog visible. She created the body to be transparent to convey the eagerness of these characters trying to blend in with their surroundings, that they believe that they are finally being accepted by the society.

This further conveyed the theme of the fragility of the human nature as people are frightened by the continuous pressure given by the society. These characters she made symbolises the isolated people who believed that they have been abandoned by the society, and that they still tried to blend in with their surroundings by becoming “invisible”.

Jin Young Yu chose her facial expressions of the invisible people carefully. She used faces that express an almost crying emotion, which conveyed a melancholy mood. She made water drips on the eye to attract sympathy from the audiences when they see the people. The audiences can further relate to the fragility of their inner spirits of her sculptures when an injured facial expression is presented.

Jin Young Yu also used colours in her sculpture to convey the fragility of the people. The colour scheme of the artwork is based on dark, pale, opaque colours, which created a lonely, almost depressing atmosphere. She used pale white for the faces of the invisible people to present a bleak character, which expressed the loneliness of the invisible people. She also used dark red and grey in her artwork. These are opaque, single colours that can be related to blood and conflict, which expressed negative emotions to the audiences.

She also created a dog in this artwork. The affect of this is to create sympathy from the audience. The dog also emphasised the loneliness of the invisible people as it presents an idea that they talk to dogs more often than real people.

Jin Young Yu used PVC as the material to create the main body of the invisible people. This type of material is transparent and fragile like glasses. She used this material to convey idea that they are separated from the society, which shows the loneliness of these characters, hence conveyed the theme of the fragility of the human nature.
Significance of “Myself/Them” by Jin Young Yu

“Myself /Then” is Jin Young Yu’s first solo exhibition in the United States. As a Korean artist, she created over twenty doll-like sculptures, including her recent series, “Me & Myself” and her latest series “Me & Them. The exhibition took place in October 17, 2015 at Art Merge Lab’s popup gallery.

Through her sculptures, she not only revealed stories of people in the society that she viewed as transparent people, who she cannot recall the names of. But more importantly, she also expressed her personal emotions in the society. As she said that sometimes she feels uncomfortable in a group with small talk and rooms full of people, she tried to express her loneliness and her eagerness to blend in. In addition, from the series “Me & Myself,” inspired by her own life, she explores individuals who wish to be invisible but are trapped in a society that demands constant public sharing, to the series “Me & Them,” where she explores an individual’s inner struggle with voices from her past.

Jin Young Yu chose clear PVC as the material to make her sculptures nearly disappear. The transparent bodies fulfil the wish of these characters to either vanish, or else, to finally find the way to fit into their surroundings. In all of her sculptures, she used a labor intensive process, where she makes her artworks entirely by hand. The transparent bodies are produced in halves divided vertically, and attached to one another by stitches, a process that reinforces the hand-made quality of the work and testify to the artist’s mastery.

From the previous series she has created, such as “A Family in Disguise,” she created life-sized installations that incorporate smaller two-dimensional acrylic works. It is said that “The acrylic works were made specifically for this exhibition and have never been shown before.” Jin Young Yu used the combination of all her artworks in her exhibition to make full use of the raw and expansive popup gallery space.

- Use of transparent PVC
- Use of masks to express emotions
- Use of human figures
- Life-sized figures
- Use of pets to help convey ideas
- Fragility of the human nature
- Entirely handmade artworks
- Focuses on intricate details
- Use of masks to express emotions
- Use of human figures
- Blaek colours for the mask
- Dull grey colours
- This artwork can only be looked as a whole because the emphasis is on the overall form
- Presentation of patterns and shapes
- Use of industrial materials, daily materials
- Left out the main images in the newspaper
- Use of paper in the artwork
- Repetition of a same figure
- Installation
- Abstract representation of the theme
- To an extent sexual symbolisms to convey emotions
- Gloomy, brown colour scheme
“Not Yet” and “Myself/Them”

One of the similarities between “Not Yet” and “Myself/Them” is the use of gloomy colour scheme. In both of the artworks, the artists adopted off-putting colours such as dark brown and grey. The use of a monotone, plain colour scheme evoked a sense of bleakness to the audiences, which further conveyed the fragility within the human nature as it is not a lively colour.

Another similarity is the use of installation as the presentation of the artworks. Applying the artwork in a three-dimensional form allows the audiences to better use their senses to feel the themes that are being conveyed. In the artwork “Myself/Them”, Jin Young Yu created life-size sculptures of isolated people trying to blend in to the society. The use of life-size installation would allow the audiences to be more related to the artwork. Similarly, Eva Hesse also used an installation in her artwork series “Not Yet”.

“The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday” and “Myself/Them”

Compared to Eva Hesse’s “Not Yet”, Jin Young Yu and Dion both focused on intricate details in their artworks. They both used a labor intensive method to to create their artwork. Dion used a paper knife and carved by hand all the patterns within the newspaper. Jin Young Yu burnt and moulded the PVC to create her sculptures. She also painted and drew every details of the mask to further convey the fragility of the people in her artworks.

“Not Yet” and “The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday”

Both artists used daily materials in their creation of their artwork. Eva Hesse used net bags, clear polyethylene sheeting, paper, metal weights, and strings. These are fragile, daily materials that presents the fragility of this artwork, which reveals the fragility of the human nature. Similarly, Dion used daily newspapers, which is fragile as it is easily mendable. Through carving patterns, Dion makes the newspaper more fragile, which also conveys the fragility of the human nature through daily materials.

“Not Yet” compared to the other two artworks.

One difference between Eva Hesse’s “Not Yet” with the other two artworks is that she used an abstractive form to create her artwork. She did not create human figures like Jin Young Yu nor visually impressive and beautiful patterns in newspapers like Dion. Rather, she created multiple ball like structures and hung them on a wall. The object is abstractive as it does not represent any real life objects. However, these “balls” to an extent symbolises male testicles. Hesse applied an abstractive method in her artwork to further convey how she does not want to be reminded of her depressing memories.

“The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday” and “Myself/Them”

The theme of fragility is conveyed by Dion in her artwork visually through the presentation of fragile, shattered newspapers. Whereas Jin Young Yu emotionally conveyed the theme of fragility. She expressed the fragile inner-spirit of the sculptures through the use of transparent PVC and pale, bleak masks with depressive facial expressions.

Another difference is that Jin Young Yu emphasised more in the use of colours to express emotions than Dion did. She chose a transparent material to convey the sense of isolation and loneliness. She also used pale white as the mask colour of her sculptures to further convey the idea of bleakness. Dion, on the other hand, emphasised the use of intricate patterns to express her ideas.

“Not Yet” and “The Wall Street Journal, Saturday and Sunday”

Eva Hesse’s “Not Yet” explored the theme minimalism through the use of industrial materials. She simplistically created one ball like object and repeated that object multiple times. The process is simple and lack of any intricate details. Nevertheless, Dion is an artist that focuses on details. She hand carved all the patterns in the newspaper. She also carefully missed out all the titles and images in the newspaper by carving smaller patterns besides it. Eva Hesse’s artworks emphasised the overall presentation, whereas Dion’s artworks emphasised on the details.