

FRAGMENTED FIELDS: PAINTING THROUGH PATTERN

To be delivered after visiting the [Esker Foundation](#), either in person or digitally. The Esker Foundation is in Calgary, Alberta.

INQUIRY STATEMENT

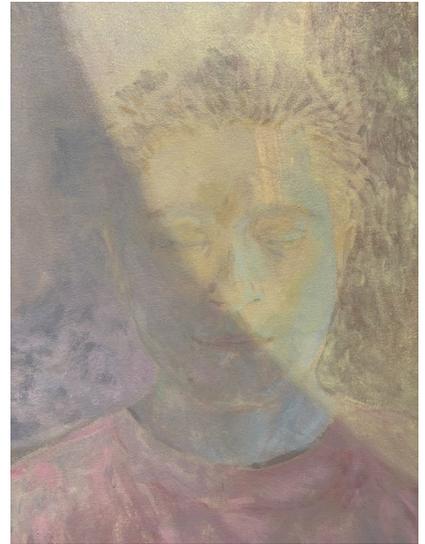
How can formal structure and repetition shape the way we interpret everyday subject matter?

STAGE 1 – STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS (20%)

Examining *Bedroom (Day Off)*, 2025 by Alexander Pépin reveals its elements and helps us understand its structure and why it evokes a particular sense of visual tension. After looking closely at the whole image and the detail images provided, follow the 4 steps to analyze Pépin's work:



Alexander Pépin, *Bedroom (Day Off)*, 2025, Oil and Acrylic on Canvas
(Photograph taken by Ms. Pie when attending the exhibition in person)



Alexander Pépin, Detail, *Bedroom (Day Off)*, 2025, Oil and Acrylic on Canvas
(Photograph taken by Ms. Pie when attending the exhibition in person)

A) HALF-PAGE VISUAL ANALYSIS (BULLET POINTS ONLY)

Write half a page of bullet points answering a variety of questions listed. You must select at least 1 question from each of the five categories below:

Minimum expectation: 10 strong bullet points.

1. Grid structure

- How is the painting divided?
- Does it look like panels, blocks, or sections (like quilt squares)?
- Are the sections equal, or are some larger than others?

2. Repetition

- What repeats? (shapes, objects, colours, patterns, marks)
- Where do you see the same thing appear again?

3. Variation

- Where does the repetition change?
- What is different in some sections? (colour, scale change, detail, distortion)

4. Focal tension (where the “pull” is)

- Where does your eye go first?
- What area feels most intense, sharp, bright, strange, or important?

5. Colour hierarchy

- What colour dominates overall?
- What colour supports the dominant colour?
- What colour acts as an accent (small but powerful)?

B) STRUCTURAL GRID DIAGRAM (DRAW THE PAINTING'S "MAP")

On the next page in your sketchbook, draw a simplified "map" of the painting.

You are NOT copying details.

You are mapping the division of space.

1. Lightly sketch a rectangle for the painting format.
2. Draw the major vertical divisions (main up-and-down breaks).
3. Draw the major horizontal divisions (main side-to-side breaks).
4. Draw in the diagonal intersections
5. Label the largest sections A, B, C...

THIS SHOULD LOOK LIKE A SIMPLIFIED QUILT LAYOUT OR PANEL STRUCTURE.

C) FOCAL POINT & EMPHASIS MAPPING

On your diagram:

1. Circle the primary focal areas on your diagram.
2. Mark the main focal point with a star ★.
3. Label two secondary emphasis areas (S1 and S2).

Then identify WHY they function as focal areas. Consider:

- Is there a colour contrast?
- Is the value of the area in the painting different from other areas?
- Is the scale of an object larger or smaller?
- Is the detail rendered with different mark-making?
- Is there a break in the repetition?

D) WRITTEN EXPLANATION (3-4 SENTENCES)

Answer:

- How does colour and emphasis guide the viewer through the composition? (How does the eye travel?)
- Does repetition strengthen the focal area or compete with it?

BE SPECIFIC. REFER TO AREAS OF THE PAINTING.

STAGE 2 – COMPOSITIONAL PLANNING (25%)

IMAGE PROMPT:

Create a painting based on a small, comforting, everyday memory.
Focus on a mundane but meaningful moment, something ordinary but yet happy to you.

EXAMPLES:

- Sitting in a car during the rain
- A kitchen table in morning light
- A pet sleeping nearby
- Watching a show under a blanket
- After-practice exhaustion with friends
- A hallway at night or another liminal space
- Making tea, or eating food with family
- A sibling/ friend laughing
- Scrolling on TikTok or an app with friends

NOTHING DRAMATIC.

COMPOSITIONAL PLANNING

- **Your Minimum** is to create 3 thumbnail planning drawings
 - Each should be a 3 x 3 grid (9 blocks minimum), you can always do more!
 - Some must be diagonally constructed.
- At least one section must be a different size.
- Identify one intersection where lines in your grid cross and place focal emphasis near it.
- Choose a triadic to tetradic colour composition to control unity in your composition:

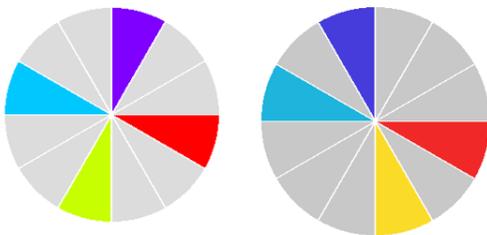
TRIADIC

Uses three colours evenly spaced on the colour wheel and balanced and vibrant.



TETRADIC

Uses two complementary pairs. Rich and dynamic, but requires balance to avoid the composition feeling chaotic.



- Looking through the stencil box, select patterns you will use in your painting.
- In your sketchbook, make rubbings of the patterns you have selected and mark in your plan where they will go
- Your composition must show development across the grid (shift in pattern and colour to create emphasis).

Write a 5–7 sentence planning summary explaining:

- Which memory did you select?
- Why does it feel comforting to you
- How your grid structure enhances that memory
- How does your colour scheme support the mood or memory you are recreating
- How does repetition and variation reinforce meaning in your image
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STAGE 3 – CREATION (35%)

Your final work must translate your compositional plan into a resolved painting where structure, repetition, and focal emphasis are clearly intentional.

YOUR FINAL PROJECT WILL:

- Be completed on a 16 x 20-inch Canvas.
- Minimum 9 visible structural divisions.
- At least one diagonal line is used
- Painted using acrylic paint.
- Visible block boundaries to make it feel “quilted”.
- One dominant block and one clearly defined focal intersection (not centred).
- Minimum 5 repeated patterns and 3 variations.
- Clean edge control and consistent paint handling.

STAGE 4 – REFLECTION (20%)

MAXIMUM 300 WORDS. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How did the grid influence decision-making?
- Did compositional placement strengthen the focal point?
- Where does repetition create unity?
- Where does variation create interest?
- What is one thing you would change?

RUBRICS

STAGE 1 – STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS (20%)

Criteria	Excellent (18–20)	Proficient (15–17)	Satisfactory (12–14)	Limited (<12)
Visual Analysis (10 bullet points minimum)	10+ specific, evidence-based bullet points; at least 1 from each required category; uses accurate compositional terminology	10 bullet points; most categories addressed; terminology mostly accurate	Fewer than 10 strong points OR uneven category coverage; language general	Minimal bullet points; categories missing; vague observations
Structural Grid Diagram	Major vertical, horizontal, and diagonal divisions accurately mapped; sections clearly labelled.	Major divisions present with minor inaccuracies	The diagram is incomplete or missing key structural elements	The diagram is inaccurate, unclear, or incomplete

Focal & Emphasis Mapping	Primary focal area clearly identified; secondary areas labelled; justification references value, colour, scale, or repetition.	Focal areas identified; explanation mostly clear	Focal areas identified but weakly justified	Focal areas unclear or unsupported
Written Explanation (3–4 sentences)	Clearly explains colour hierarchy and visual guidance using precise vocabulary.	Explains colour and emphasis with moderate clarity	Response is descriptive but lacks specificity	Response vague or incomplete

STAGE 2 – PLANNING (25%)

Criteria	Excellent (23–25)	Proficient (19–22)	Satisfactory (16–18)	Limited (<16)
Grid Structure (3×3 minimum)	9+ blocks; clear proportional variation; diagonal divisions integrated intentionally	9 blocks present; some proportional variation	9 blocks present, but minimal variation	Fewer than 9 blocks or unclear structure
Focal Planning	Off-centre focal intersection clearly marked and supported by hierarchy	Focal area identified, but hierarchy could be stronger	Focal area present but unclear or drifting toward the centre	No clear focal planning
Colour Scheme (Triadic–Tetradic)	The colour scheme is clearly planned, labelled, and supports the mood	Colour scheme selected and mostly coherent	Colour plan loosely defined	Colour plan absent or random
Pattern Testing	Stencil patterns selected and tested through rubbings; intentional placement planned	Pattern tests present, but limited exploration	Minimal pattern testing	No evidence of testing
Planning Summary (5–7 sentences)	Clearly connects memory, structure, colour hierarchy, repetition, and emphasis.	Addresses most components with clarity	Descriptive but limited structural connection	Incomplete or lacks conceptual clarity

STAGE 3 – CREATION (35%)

Criteria	Excellent (32–35)	Proficient (27–31)	Satisfactory (21–26)	Limited (<21)
Format & Structure	16×20 canvas; 9+ visible structural divisions clearly maintained	All requirements met with minor inconsistencies	Most structural requirements are met, but inconsistently maintained	Requirements not met (size/divisions incomplete)
Focal Hierarchy	One dominant block and clearly defined off-centre focal intersection: strong visual hierarchy	Dominant block and focal area present, but could be stronger	Focal point weak or competing	No clear dominant block or focal intersection
Repetition & Variation	5+ repeated patterns and 3+ clear variations integrated intentionally	Requirements met, but integration is inconsistent	Repetition is present, but limited variation	Requirements not met
Proportional System	At least one division reflects a root rectangle and supports composition	Root rectangle present but subtle	Root rectangle unclear or inaccurately applied	No root rectangle evident
Technical Control (Acrylic Only)	Clean edge control; visible block boundaries; consistent paint handling;	Minor technical inconsistencies	Inconsistent edges or blending disrupt the structure	Poor control: boundaries unclear; unfinished surfaces

	surfaces resolved			
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STAGE 4 – REFLECTION (20%)

Criteria	Excellent (18–20)	Proficient (15–17)	Satisfactory (12–14)	Limited (<12)
Understanding of Grid Influence	Clearly explains how grid-informed compositional decisions	Explains influence with moderate clarity	Mentions grid but lacks depth	Minimal understanding demonstrated
Focal & Harmonic Evaluation	Accurately evaluates focal tension and harmonic placement	Addresses focal tension with some analysis	Descriptive rather than analytical	Incomplete or unclear
Repetition & Unity	Clearly identifies where repetition creates unity and variation prevents monotony.	Addresses repetition and variation with some clarity	Limited explanation of structural effect	Minimal or inaccurate explanation
Structural Weakness & Refinement	Identifies a specific weakness and proposes a concrete refinement	Identifies weakness but refinement general	Weakness vague; no clear improvement strategy	No meaningful evaluation

FINAL MARK CONVERSION TABLE

Stage	Weight	Student Score	Weighted Score
Stage 1 – Structural Analysis	20%	___ / 20	___
Stage 2 – Planning	25%	___ / 25	___
Stage 3 – Creation	35%	___ / 35	___
Stage 4 – Reflection	20%	___ / 20	___
Total	100%		___ %