

My passion for art began with my great-uncle, whose detailed copies of famous works sparked my interest in visual storytelling and inspired me to paint. Over time, this connection grew into a deep love for art, which I found nurtured in museums, where I could immerse myself in creative expression and escape into new worlds.

During my internship at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest, where I assist the museum educator and curating teams, I seek quiet moments to revisit my favourite artworks. One piece that captivates me is Arnulf Rainer's *Death Masks* (1978), a work that confronts the traditional, serene portrayal of death by layering aggressive overpainting onto historical death masks. This deconstructive technique aligns with the artistic philosophies in *Die Wiener Schule des phantastischen Realismus*, where artists like Ernst Fuchs explored fantastical themes through meticulous, classical techniques. However, while the *Phantastische Realisten* aimed for precision and dream-like realism, Rainer's raw, chaotic approach pushed the boundaries of form and expression. His violent overpainting doesn't just alter the mask; it reanimates it, transforming the static into something unnervingly alive. This stark contrast between preservation and destruction deepens my understanding of art's role in confronting mortality.

My other favourite is David Hockney's *Contre-jour in the French Style* (1974), featured in the *Time Machine* exhibition. Hockney synthesises various artistic influences, weaving together elements from the Renaissance, Pointillism, and Impressionism. His technical mastery pays homage to these art historical traditions and reinterprets them through his unique contemporary lens. His exploration of light and atmosphere, particularly through contrasting techniques, fosters a rich dialogue between past and present, transforming the work into a vibrant 'time machine.' This concept resonates with Hockney's arguments in *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters*, where he reveals how understanding their techniques enhances contemporary practices. For me, this work transcends mere visual beauty; it encapsulates the continuous conversation across generations and cultures, deepening my appreciation for the role of art in shaping cultural history.

My involvement with the Budapest Culture Society and the U.S. Embassy Youth Council, where I assisted Ambassador David Pressman, allowed me to explore art's role in diplomacy. This experience highlighted art's ability to bridge cultural divides and foster understanding, reinforcing its significance as both a personal refuge and a diplomatic tool. Fluent in Hungarian, German and English, I've seen how interpreting art across languages can deepen cultural connections and broaden our understanding of identity. My engagement with art also extends into sustainability. As a recipient of the National Girl Innovator Award, a distinction from the National Science and Innovation Olympiad for my research into sustainable practices, and a winner of international and national innovation competitions on biogas production using human waste, I have explored the intersection of scientific innovation and ecological responsibility. Speaking at a

sustainability panel, I emphasized the need for interdisciplinary approaches in driving both scientific and artistic innovation. Art, as Andrew Brown explores in *Art & Ecology Now*, plays a crucial role in shaping public awareness about environmental issues. Through its ability to engage both emotions and intellect, art can inspire meaningful actions toward sustainability and the green transition.

Through my diverse experiences in art, diplomacy, and sustainability, I've become increasingly aware of art's transformative power. I aim to study art history to explore its role in shaping cultural narratives and tackling global issues like sustainability.