

"The Plan" (February 2012) and "The Pain" (April 2012) – Andrea Pedro

These drawings were created around the time when I discovered my desire to study music, which was one of the hardest years of my life.

"The Plan" began as a curious, melancholy, and beautiful exploration of possibilities, but like all my previous drawings, was detached and mechanical. As the drawing progressed, I realized I was drawing my mental state with its questions and silent frustration.

Generic musical references juxtapose with a road leading nowhere. I am conflicted about whether I should pursue music. Taking a university path would mean growth, hence the tree, but where would it lead? I am the brooding girl with liquid eyes. There are no answers and I feel the passage of time ripping me into insanity. Inside, I am screaming, outwardly I am robotic. My footsteps smudge the music I write. Am I the one destroying my future? But what am I writing? My pencil hovers.

I received a personal recommendation from a KPU instructor to study music. I was so happy for a few days, but my father did not want me to go and I respected his wishes. While making "The Pain," I listened to Prokofiev's Second Piano Concerto over and over. This drawing has a less-refined technique than "The Plan," and is my most blunt and disturbing work.

I and my mask are in a box, separate from other people. If I leave the box, I find myself in a cage, facing away from an endless chess board, my every motion controlled. I observe myself. I have no mouth, no choice, no say. Silent. I am expected to be an engineer, accountant, pharmacist because I am smart. I watch. My brain hinders my dreams because someone has prescribed its path. And because it is afraid to make a different path.

In 2013, a year after my conversation with the KPU instructor, I enrolled in KPU's Bachelor of Music, still against my father's wishes. My first year was wonderful; being in an intellectual environment

where I could study music all day every day was like being a small child who is fascinated by everything. In my first semester, I already planned to take a masters degree because I knew four years would not be enough to learn music deeply. My third year brought musical and personal challenges, and although it was even more difficult than 2012, I never regretted my decision to study music. I will graduate in 2017 and continue with a Masters of Piano Performance at University of Alberta or Brandon.

Studying at university is the best thing I have done with my life because it has taught me much about music and myself. It has given me experience, opportunities, knowledge, confidence, and challenges that I would not otherwise have. It has helped me discover my affinity for contemporary music and fascination for chamber music, which are the areas I will explore and develop in my ensuing studies and career.