

A strange sensation came back to me when I was groping around in the drawer, looking for a candle to light in the blackout. The sensation in water colour tubes that seemed to have been lying dormant in me for years was now roused. Those tubes awoke my memories to my sixth grade, the very first days I learnt to draw with brush...

In living memory, I recalled how my pride of being frequently applauded for my dexterity by my primary school teachers, on my first art lesson at middle school, failed me when I did not manage to hold the paint brush firmly, let alone mix water colours. My passion for art gradually vanished, giving way to my apprehension in every art class. The amiability of Mickey or Pooh, however, still occupied my mind and instilled a pure love of drawing in me. Disappointed whenever my father tuned in a Vietnamese cartoon programme or those monotonous commercial clips, I cherished my dream of a novelty for them. Whenever I was to give in, in myself reverberated a voice : “Do not lose sight of your ability and enthusiasm for art. Keep your dream alive ” and I just carried on.

I tried to put the trouble with those brushes behind and stretched my imagination on the papers. Everything that occurred to me streamed from my brush and kept me painting, which took my mind off how problematic it was to use the brush. The difficulties of mingling colors by the same token slipped my mind. In the course of time, all my endeavours did not betray me and I was able to acclimatize myself to the paint brush as well as water colours. Eventually, the first 9-mark drawing gave me a genuine sense of pleasure, somewhat because the criticism was no longer “Take notice of the smearing paint” but for the most part, my teacher’s remark “Creative” really brought me an authentic satisfaction, a

far cry from the childish contentment I had experienced in my junior school. The reason was that my teacher could see through what I had been trying to play up - the underlying motive for my drawing. I took to painting with a view to capturing my emotions and laying the figments of my imagination in colours and images. I live and breathe art for every painting, like a mirror of thoughts and feelings, has an invisible power to reflect my sensitive soul. Most importantly, I wish to blow a soft and fresh breeze of creativity into the mediocrity of my homeland's image.

... Lighting a candle, I began to sink into deep thoughts. The excursion into art and design is bound to be filled with challenges, just like the dark I was sitting in. Therefore, I myself had to light a candle and look for my own way to tread on. Holding my belief in Carleton College, I think I have chosen the right track. It is the place where I can meet new people and intermingle with diverse cultures, where ideas are pooled and pushed forward. Approaching new knowledge and experience would stimulate my originality and extend my boundary of imagination, which would help me apply them in making Vietnam a dynamic and innovative country, dispelling its dull image in many people's thoughts. First and foremost, I desire to witness a very near day when my dreaming "Vietnamese Pooh" comes into being...