

# From Object to Image: Creative Practice Through the Lens of Baudrillard

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## Stage 1: The Object

- **Materiality:** The foundation consists of discarded sinamay scraps, unified through free-machine stitching to create a new, recycled textile surface.
- **Technique:** The material is blocked, stiffened, and wired into a shape then finished with feather trims and petersham edging.
- **Deliberate Design:** Silhouette, scale, and finish is all intentional, designed specifically to how the object will eventually be "read" and consumed.



# Simulacra and Millinery

- Hats function primarily as signals of identity, class, and aspiration rather than material necessity.
- In luxury fashion, we consume through the status and lifestyle fashion can embody rather than the physical fabric.
- Most hats are experienced as 2d forms reflections in mirrors, photographs, or social media post, reducing the 3D object to a simulation.
- The meaning of a hat shifts from its physical presence to its visibility and circulation as a digital image.
- Designers such as Schiaparelli or Westwood prove that hats don't just express who we are; they actively produce a hyperreal version of the self.



# Millinery and Creative Practice

- Millinery practice is not just craft; it is embodied with identity, symbolism, and cultural meaning.
- Every design choice is a deliberate act to control how the hat is visually understood.
- Millinery is inseparable from Baudrillard's theory; each piece serves as a visual statement about status and hyperreality.
- The hat is not a passive accessory; it is active in producing identity rather than just reflecting it.

## Stage 2: The Painting

- The hat has form
- The hat has colour
- Using the forms in the hat I reinterpret the forms as shapes, lines using a mixture of charcoal crayon and acrylic. I adopt a physical style the canvas on the floor my hands and arms fingers making marks some finger delicate some long armed sweeps.
- I utilise a Frankenthalerish 'soaking the canvas' technique by applying a watercoloury acrylic wash. In transition I apply some actual watercolour.
- I use a David Blackburn oil crayon block effect which becomes immersed in larger field of colour.
- I revisit the shapes and add some more detailed lines



# Simulacra and Painting

- If creativity is connecting things ( Steve Jobs) and my creative practice is painting, then my interpretation of the hat contains connections through my interest in chaotic layered surfaces.
- Colours which bleed into each other create ambiguous spaces and dissolve boundaries. Of course, the chaos is amplified by the juxtaposing of raw charcoal oil crayon and watery acrylic side by side. Where thick waxy oil crayon strokes clash with smooth flat acrylic areas. This layering creates different copies blurring the line between the original and reproduction.





# Stage 3: Simulacra & Photography

- Simulacrum Saeculorum
- The project is framed by Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulacra.
- Photography is not only representational but a system that reorganises reality through images. A system of mediation.
- Digital photography intensifies simulation:
  - excess of information
  - manipulation, reconstruction, invention
- Visibility replaces perception.

Key idea: Photography contributes to the production of simulacra .



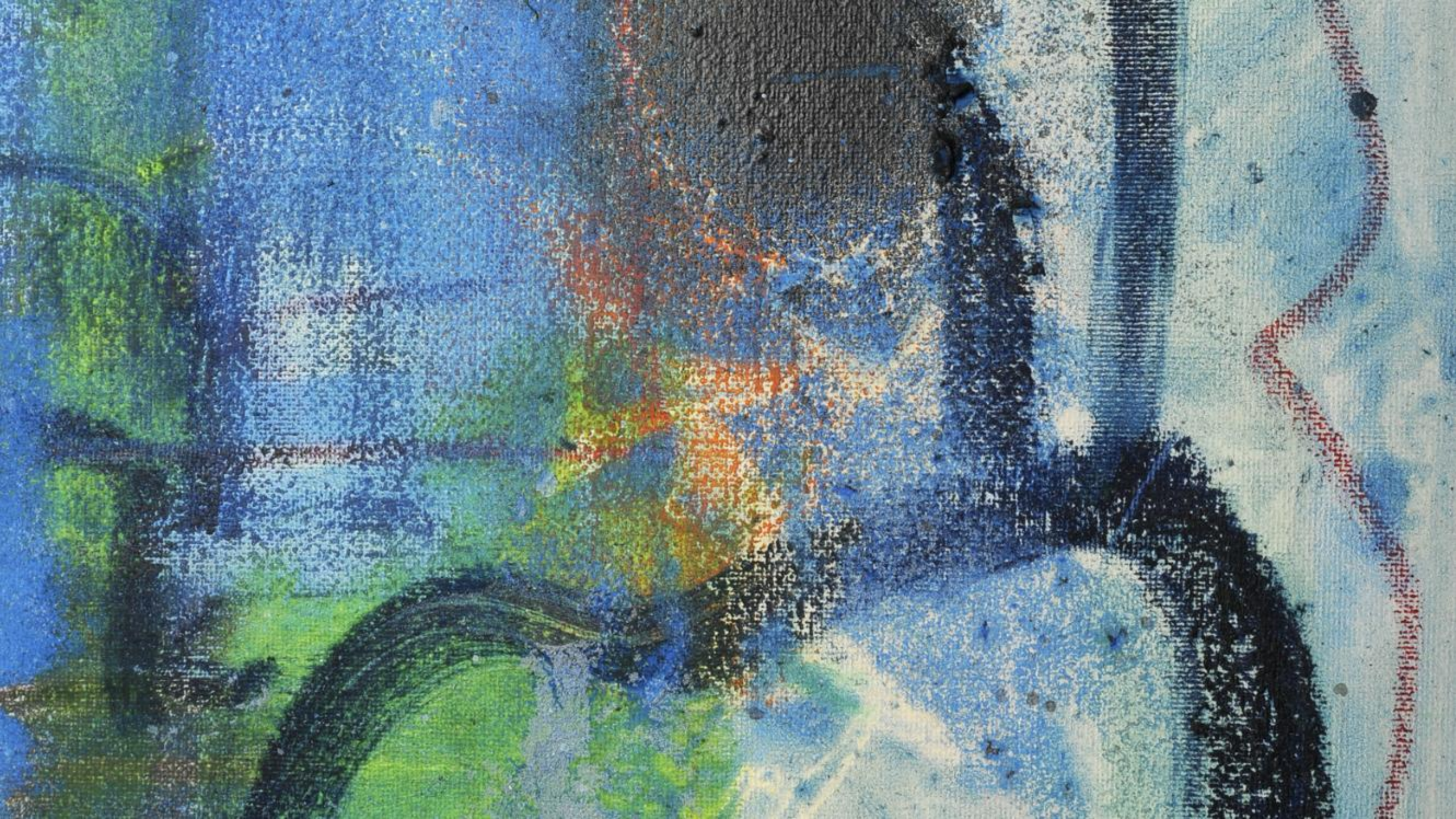
# From Representation to Hyperreality

- Studio setting and decontextualisation detach the image from its original reference.
- Macro lenses isolate and magnify fragments, creating a new visual territory — a new map.
- Second stage of simulacrum:
  - representation still linked to a referent
- Third stage:
  - hyperreality
  - the image becomes autonomous
  - reference becomes unstable or disappears

Key idea: The photograph no longer refers back to the object but generates its own reality.











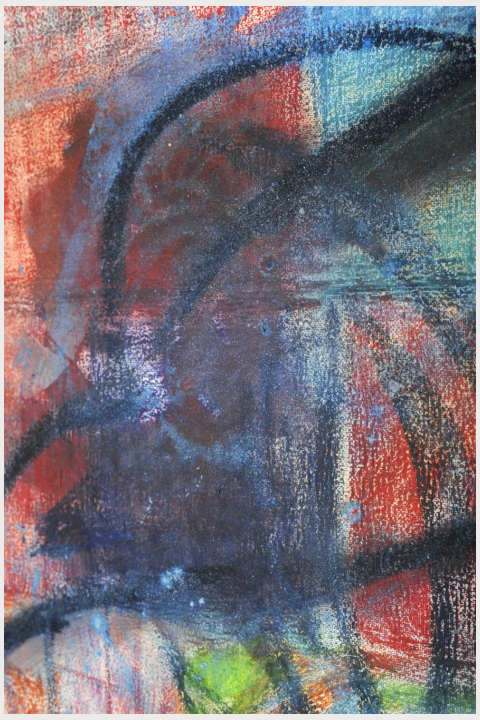




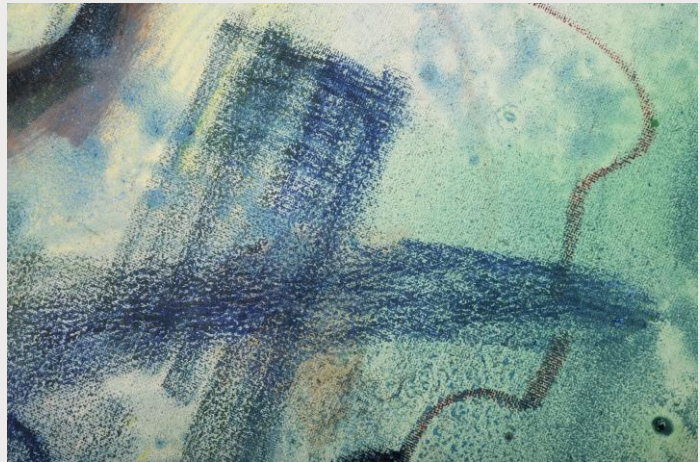


# Perception as Filtration

- My practice is grounded in perception through sight and touch.
- Drawing on Merleau-Ponty and David Le Breton:  
*The senses are not windows, they are filters*
- Perception is embodied, cultural, and situated.
- Filtration is not a stage — it is embedded in every act of creation and simulation.
- Following Lucrecia Martel:
  - perception operates as a continuum
  - there is no pure reference, only filtered sensing
- There are no senses without a specific way of sensing; perception and filtration are inseparable.



Stage 4



I need you to create an image of a hat with no background using the information and images that I'm going to give you.

The information is about a hat, a painting that is linked to the hat, and some images that you will have to use as reference for the new hat image that you are creating.

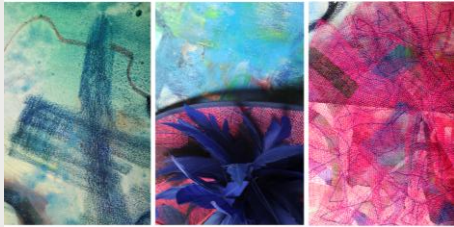
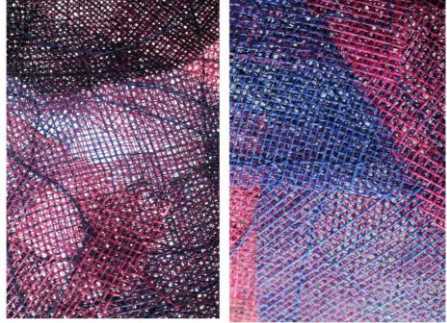
The hat can provide ideas.... shapes colours...form. Ideas around how to create interesting connections between shapes are a matter of importance for me.

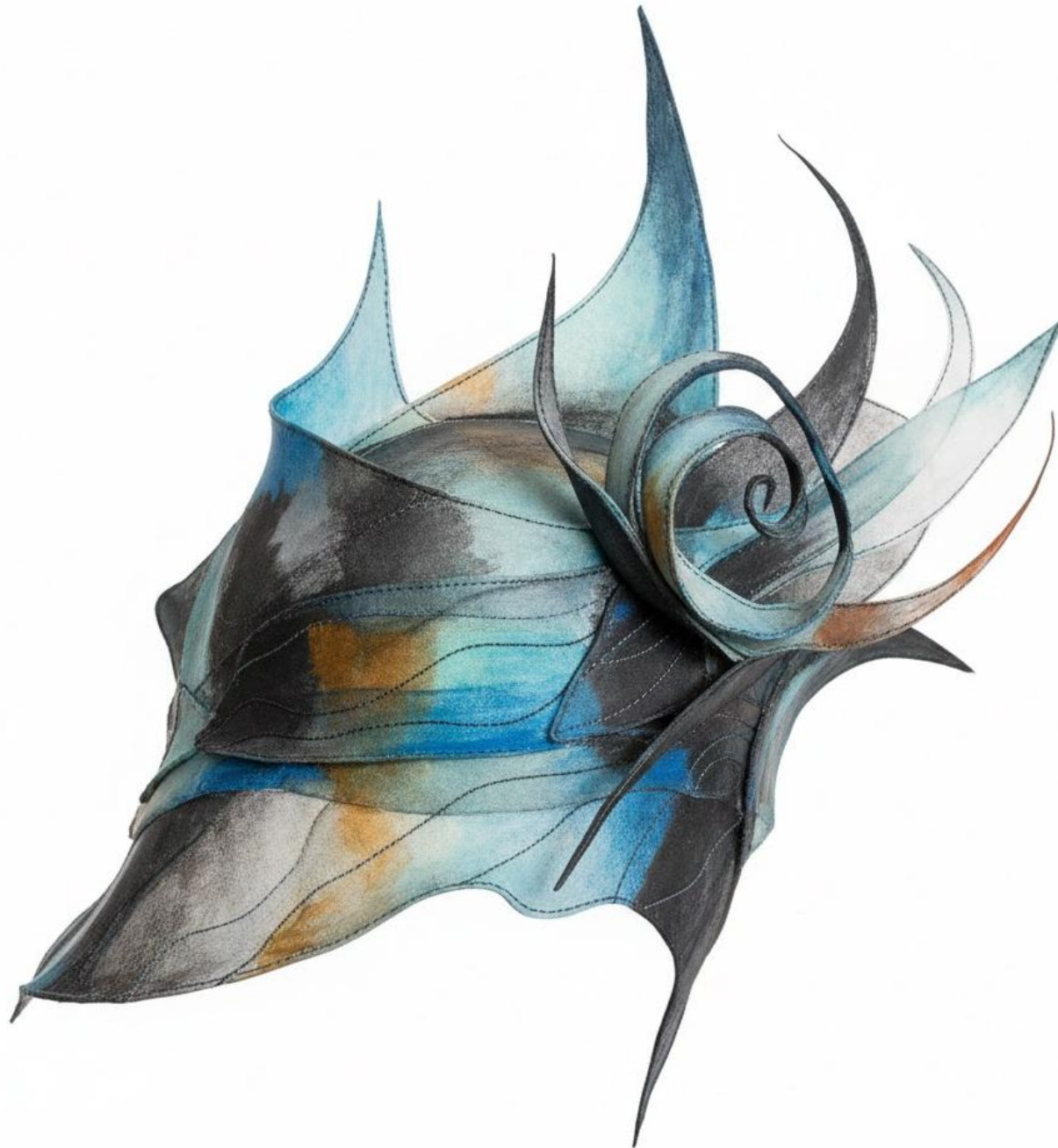
Materials part: Scraps of sinamay fabric free machine stitched together. This machine stitched fabrics had then been stiffened and blocked using millinery techniques with feather trims. The hat functions as a signal of identity, class, aspiration, and social positioning, whether that identity corresponds to reality. Silhouette, material, scale, finish is deliberate, shaping how the hat will be read, worn, photographed, and consumed visually.

Painting part: The subject of an illustration but as a starting point for a painting. The painting is using forms in the hat with reinterpreted forms as shapes and lines using a mixture of charcoal crayon and acrylic. The painting was created using a physical style on the canvas on the floor with hands and arms fingers making marks some finger delicate some long armed sweeps. Utilising a Frankenthalerish 'soaking the canvas' technique by applying a watercoloury acrylic wash and in transition some actual watercolour. David Blackburn's oil crayon block effect which becomes immersed in larger field of colour.

The images are taken in a Studio setting and decontextualisation detach the image from its original reference. Macro lenses were used to isolate and magnify fragments, creating a new visual territory — a new map.

You don't need to use the same colours right to create something FREE, not a copy of, incorporating all these references I'm giving you and the images I'm attaching.






# The 4<sup>th</sup> Simulacrum

Gemini AI Generated Image



# Questions that arose from the Group project:

- The boundaries between stages are hard to trace.
- When does one move from one stage to another? Blur stages
- When does the reference disappear — if it ever fully does?
- Was that reference ever stable or real?
- What did my perception extract from reality?
- What did it filter out?
- How do I sense, and how is that sensing shaped?

An abstract painting with a textured surface, featuring a mix of red, blue, and black colors. The colors are layered and blended, creating a complex, multi-dimensional visual effect. The texture appears to be that of a canvas or a similar material, with visible brushstrokes and some areas of discoloration or wear.

# What is Creative Practice through the lens of Baudrillard?

**“Creative practice is a process of reinterpretation that creates meaning through layers of representation, rather a single reality.”**

Through collaboration, each team member was able to contribute their own individual practice into the project to create a shared exploration of how meaning can shift.

Creative Practice is:

- Conceptual rather than purely technical
- Collaborative rather than individual
- Process-based rather than object-based

Baudrillard’s ideas of **simulacra and hyperreality**, have allowed us to demonstrate how creative practice operates in the world of images and reproductions