

Blake Johnson  
Final - Mapping a Song  
Drawing 2 - Rydz

## Mapping the Brink

This was a very personal project. But it was one that's been a year and a half in the making, the experiences involved in its making percolating in my head for that entire time, and it was finally time for it to come out.

I lived in Vancouver for what ended up being a serious detour in my emotional and mental growth, and it's taken this long to put that into any form of coherent expression. But this song does it justice, and this piece does it well. The whole thing is about moving on, about getting through things and fighting back against the struggles of life, and soldiering on when there really is no other option.

I started with the song "On the Brink" by Coheed & Cambria. The song deals with the themes mentioned above and has a very varied musical structure about it, shifting from mesmerizing Pink Floyd-esque tones to heavier beats and softer rhythms. After a while of listening to it, I couldn't help but picture the images in my head that would become parts of the final piece, so it seemed an appropriate starting place.

Using the song's waveform as the bed for the rest of the piece, I first somewhat replicated that waveform in a more expressive way, using swirling and squiggling lines to denote my emotional reactions to parts of the song. Then I added traced silhouettes of moments, memories, people and places that the lyrics of the song reminded me of, conveying their roles in my life over the past few years. After the lyrics end, there is a substantial amount of music left, so I let the icons spill over into that area, and filled it in with a few more notable moments from my last 3-4 years, balancing out the composition and leading the emotional content of those images to a more optimistic conclusion.

I did the whole thing digitally because it's a medium I worked with exclusively through high school and after, and was my reason for being in Vancouver in the first place. I feel it's the most appropriate farewell to those memories I've struggled to express, a way of saying goodbye on their terms, in the language that wrapped them and myself together.

The whole project is very personal, and mostly will only be understood by me, especially the lyric/icon correlation, and the specific places portrayed throughout the piece. But I don't care. It was time for it to come out, and time for me to move on. This piece gets presented as is because it is for me, and I am done. I am finished. Now it's over.