

SACE ID: 930986R

'Faux Perfection'

Ready made and Liquitex skins

I began this practical by examining the relationship between poetry and art. Through investigation I began to realise that each poem would depict something beautiful with an undertone of tragedy. I have come to realise that I'm obsessed with elevating dark themes to poetic and beautiful heights through art. I decided to look towards themes that are affecting our society currently, as I wanted this practical to make a point about the issues it is exploring. I was inspired by the poem 'Phenomenal Woman' by Maya Angelou, because the poem is told from the perspective of a woman who is proud of her feminine qualities. It got me thinking about the pressures that men and women in our contemporary society are faced with on a daily basis.

Faux Perfection focuses on the influences of cosmetic surgery through the artistic form of the "readymade." In a similar way as renowned artist Fiona Hall uses her readymades to remind us of the fragile diversity of the natural world, I use nature to remind us of the fragility of humans. Hall's use of the skull as a recurring motif is an emblem for our fleeting existence, and to critique human abuse of nature and warn of its implications. In turn, I use these fractured bouquets of flowers to critique our abuse of our own bodies and minds through the use of things such as botox shots and plastic surgery in our endless pursuit of perfection.

By using multi-coloured skins that I created out of Liquitex Pouring Medium to form the flowers, I am conveying the message that women, who are symbolised through the flowers, are making themselves into plastic. They are unnatural - although they can still be very beautiful. I created these flowers by cutting or tearing the Liquitex skins into shards and then attaching them to a syringe, which acts as the stem. I decided to keep the rigid edges that were achieved by tearing the skins apart so that the flowers almost look sharp... dangerous even. I have placed the flowers within bright yellow plastic sharps collectors and have tied them together with filtering apparatus, to create a sterile and clinical environment.

The two main bouquet's are surrounded by smaller elements which make up a large instillation. Needles spilling out of a beaker are positioned in the middle of the bouquet's to symbolically represent the dangers of cosmetic surgery, A smaller bouquet of flowers, with stems made of needles placed in a beaker, represents female youth, and the ways in which society pressures

younger groups of women to appeal to an unattainable beauty standard. Roses and carnations made from Model Magic are placed in clusters around the instillation. These flowers are not coloured to represent spots of the natural world slicing into a landscape full of plastic and fakery. I have chosen to dirty a few of these colourless flowers with drops of Iodine, an antiseptic solution used to clear areas of skin from bacteria during surgery, in order to represent the ways in which the 'natural world' is being dirtied by cosmetic surgery. Tying all these elements together are white bandages weaved through the instillation, seemingly defaced with quotations from Angelou's poem, creating a contrast between her empowering message and the frightening world of modern beauty I have created. These white bandages have been written on with No More Gaps, a synthetic, multi-purpose gap filler used in construction, as an added bit of commentary on the use of synthetic materials placed into peoples bodies (e.g breast implants, botox etc.). Through this practical, I believe I have elevated these dark themes to poetic and beautiful heights, striking a clear message about the state of our current beauty ideals. ...Why ruin something that is already perfect? `