

## Practitioner's Statement

### ***Tumult of Thoughts***

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Anxiety is a mental illness that affects emotions, perceptions, thinking and behavior. The aim of my artwork is to communicate this inner apprehensive state on the outward appearance of the individual. I feel as though people know of mental illness, but lack understanding of the emotional toll it has on those who struggle with it, hence why I wanted to accurately depict the emotive distress that comes with anxiety. After exploring Frida Kahlo's emotive state and how she reflected this in her self-portraits for the previous folio, I decided to delve into mental illness as a topic.

James Koskinas's artwork showed me the effectiveness of communicating mental illness through the use of shallow colours and scale distortion. Similarly, research into artists Antoine Stevens and Shin Kwangho showed me the benefits of working in larger scale, as well as the emotion that can be conveyed by working a multitude of colours with chaotic brushstrokes to create bold contrasts. The hectic brush and textural paintwork by Kwangho evident in figure 9 of the folio, along with the fact that I struggle with anxiety, focused me on the specific illness. Shuffling through Clara Lieu's portraits helped me determine a suitable facial expression to represent struggle with anxiety. A scream facial expression was chosen because it recognises as angst more so than any other face. Additionally, I found that her personal connection with depression made her perception more accurate and consequently her art better representative of the mental illness.

I chose self-portraiture because it allowed me to display anguish that the individual is experiencing as a response to the anxiety in a personal manner. It also comments on my identity and presence. The canvases are arranged with gaps in-between each other so that they give a detached personality to the trio of paintings, as though the individual is feeling distorted by the accumulation of thoughts disrupting her perception of the reality around her. Pastels used in the upper right canvas are slightly faded, suggesting the figure is weary from emotional exhaustion. Modelling compound and acrylic paint was used in the upper left canvas to accomplish bold contrasts and breakages with the paint and a palette knife. This creates a 3D effect and generates nearness between the viewer and the piece.

A range of loud colours are consistent with each canvas to generate energy and compliment the blaring facial features, so that the viewer can hear screaming through the colours. The craze of colours also represent fluctuating emotions and enhanced senses that come with anxiety. Downward black stripes evident in each artwork creates movement and connects each of the canvases.

This practical helped me to become aware of the many perceptions people, as well as artists themselves, have of anxiety. I thoroughly enjoyed working with oil paints and would like to further develop this technique in the future. The media I have practiced and my investigation into artists that express inner emotive states in exteriors has contributed to my visual arts learning and led me to understand the tumult of thoughts that lay obscured beneath our skin, essentially shaping our identities.