

Visual Arts

Practitioner's statement;

Death in Hand

This final piece was based around the cover works found in the books when purchasing the hard-copies of Yana Toboso's work of Black Butler and also the poster work for the 'Book of Atlantic' film. I focused around the themes of death and how they were portrayed, through Grim Reapers. So I had the colours symbolised these aspects. I wanted them to reflect on the stories I had written. I wanted to present my characters as I had always pictured them in my head and stories. It shows four characters, only one is awake and all are floating and carried by a veil and skeleton hands behind a black background.

The artist most influenced was pen-name and artist Yana Toboso throughout the course of the folio. While still retaining to my stylized style, I analysed her work to see what made her pieces interesting. I was entranced of how she incorporated the colours to highlight each of her characters' personality and emotions. Of how she was able to capture the viewer's attention with little colour, the little colour used in the covers were to catch the eye and contrasted with the monochrome palette. It made her work wrapped in the aura of mystery, 'Ciel' was given the most attention with his white skin when compared to the rest of the cast with him whose skin was the same as the background's colour. Although I looked into the works of Suzunosuke and Ichika when in the design process for the clothing of the characters, I mostly used black as Toboso did the same.

Colour was hugely important in this piece at least in version two with the black, white and red drawing. The crimson red found on 'Ren' quickly captures the viewer's attention and could be easily seen how different he was from the rest of the characters. As he was the one wearing the most white compared to black clad characters who was almost blended into the black background. Texture was another aspect that was important as it helped to show how the characters were floating as if they were underwater through the ripples of their clothes.

I used a digital media through Photoshop, I first developed a concept sketch before creating the line-art and then colouring in the whole piece. I used a pattern tool for a small part of the girl's dress. I had to remove extra details I wanted to add at first, such as the spider lilies which symbolised death. However near the end of the process after I finished the main parts and added in the skeleton hands, it felt that it would make the drawing chaotic than the calming and graceful aura as seen through the ripples of the clothes. It still retained its theme with the skeleton hands nevertheless, although it left the male character on the left with red pants which was a unique colour for school pants. Another problem faced was the positioning of the characters, as there was more attention on the left side than the right as almost all of the characters faced left. To combat this, I had to change the posing of 'Noct' so he could fill the top-right corner so the entire piece can be balanced.

I felt that I was successful in communicating the themes of death and how it lingers on with our lives through this piece. As the black-clad Grim Reapers are death themselves and surrounds around Ren, the only human character with his inevitable fate of morality.

WORDS: 585