

## *“Eye of the Beholder”*

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*“Mountains are only a problem when they are bigger than you. You should develop yourself so much that you become bigger than the mountain you face”- Idowu Koyenikan*

For many years now I have been obsessed by mountains, both by the beauty and the symbolism of them. The mountain can symbolize hardship due to its challenging terrain; stability due to its strength and placement in earth; and beauty due to their overwhelming size and their importance in nature. Here I wanted to convey these concepts through the composition, colours and brush strokes. The main idea of “Eye of the Beholder” is to recognize the importance of Mental health, and how it effects a person’s outlook on life. My personal mental health issues have at times stopped me from partaking in activities that I would have found easy when I was younger. J. M. W. Turner inspired me with the composition of the painting and referring to his ability to create such powerful landscapes through his limited colour palette and fast strokes. Imants Tillers provided another source of inspiration in how he uses uneven grids in his paintings and changes saturation of the colours, and the alignment of forms between the grids. Lastly, I was inspired by Neil Frazer and his textured paint application in rocky landscapes. This is a personal piece conveying how poor mental health can affect our view of the world and the mountain represents this

Each square in the painting either represents a change in weather or time of day through different colour ranges and saturation levels. Weather conditions and alternating warm and cool colours represent how the mind can change so quickly. Some squares depict bright colours could represent sun rise and the beginning of a new journey, with most of these centralized. This placement draws the viewer immediately up to the mountain and then down to the foreground. The mountain peak is painted in bright colours to convey the idea of the light at the end of the tunnel or in this case the journey to the peak. The peak represents the importance of self-belief to overcome your anxiety or depression and the reward with a clear, beautiful view beyond. The dark squares balance the composition and represent the dark times of anxiety or depression; the sense of not belonging, or fear of isolation and poor mental health.

Acrylic paint was the chosen medium as I wanted each layer to dry quickly with layering to form texture. The brush strokes change throughout with some moving in alternate directions. These variations create the idea of texture and the rough terrain of the journey with mental health. Bolder strokes allowed me to include subtle indications of distorted human faces in the foreground and cliff faces, symbolizing societies effect on self esteem and mental health. The scale of the canvas is extremely large measuring over 2 metres in length and height and this emphasizes the importance and power of mental health in relation to the mountain.

“Eye of the beholder” conveys the way a person with anxiety and depression views the world and how positive and negative thoughts can be so powerful.

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