

Home

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This project began as a means of exploring the relationship between memory and mental health, an idea of personal importance to me. I wanted to express these ideas conceptually, in an Avant-garde way that would accurately express the confounding nature of these mental connections. Elements of the artworks are interwoven and overlapped, showing how our experiences and well-being are shaped by the way that we remember. The artworks are a way of catharsis for myself and those involved in the art-making process, expressing emotions surrounding the taboo subject of mental health.

'Home' is a large-scale artwork depicting a disrupted vision of myself. The artwork is heavily textured, layering acrylic paint, oil paint, paint thickener, oil pastel, watercolour, tissue paper, and wooden popsticks. It is an intuitively layered artwork that authentically represents materials that are stressed and dismayed. I was inspired by Tracey Emin's confessional artworks, where she represents her struggle with mental health in a spontaneous, brutally honest manner, with a greater focus on emotional impact than conventionally 'pretty' aesthetics.

The portrait was derived from a selfie taken after a mental breakdown, which was proportionally distorted on Photoshop to reflect my perception of self on that day. This idea of distortion was taken from George Condo, who draws warped 'abstractions' that aim to represent the essence of the subject rather than its realistic appearance. The artwork was largely surreal, with small unsettling patches of realism, to create the sense of existential uneasiness, discomfort and disgust I feel at myself during mental breaks. The realistic bits guide the audience's eye across the canvas, allowing them to absorb the finer details and question the meaning of its elements. The only eye present is misplaced and uncomfortably realistic, disrupting the harmony of the 686801H-2VAA20-AT2-practitioner's statement artwork.

The eye is a symbolism of surveillance, exploring notions of paranoia that manifest within an anxious mind. Meanwhile, the other expected location of the eye is obscured, hiding the 'window to the soul' and dehumanizing the portrait, thus presenting the dismissal and demonization of those with psychological illness. This is further represented through the mouth, covered with a textured mess of tissue paper and painful gashes of thickened acrylic paint, presenting the pain of verbalizing mental health struggles to others. The repeated memo of popsticks is reminiscent of childhood; craft projects from primary school, and wooden treehouses, memories sullied with revelations of what's to come, seen in the surrounding artwork.

The discoloured, irritated skin and frayed hair outwardly showcase internal damage and hurt, and serve as physical indicators of my own episodes. 'Home' is raw, full of my dark confessions and emotions, unable to be ignored as it demands attention with its large scale, confronting the viewer with its uncomfortable representation of mental health struggle.