

Butterfly Dust

Anna Blatchford

The artistic values that I uphold are beauty combined with vibrancy. I want to express colourful, peaceful and dynamic artwork that envisions life and positivity. The artwork *Butterfly Dust* is inspired by many different artists; however, I fell in love with the nature of Hwajeopdo and Nam Gye Woo's style. The fluttering and detailed butterflies that he paints have such a deep connection to the surrounding world around him. That the style Gye Woo creates is highly resonant of the Minhwa art. Minhwa is folk paintings that are made for decoration and heavily represent themes of love, peace, blessings, hope and health for family and friends. I love to express themes of peace and hope in my artwork, and the butterflies that Minhwa artists paint were highly expressive of light and safety. Butterflies symbolise transformation, hope and the short span of life. The 45 butterflies in the painting are mimes of humanity. The circle of hope and the recognizable potential for beauty each one of us have.

The style that I have displayed throughout my piece is abstract but realistic. It is interpretative of real butterflies. I embellish the colours and the styles of the butterflies. I wanted to showcase the best parts of them. I wanted to utilise the Minhwa and Hwajeopdo style and paint on the special paper that was used in the Joseon dynasty. However, the closest I came was tissue paper. This was too thin for my liking, so tracing paper was the alternate version to succeed this piece. I found that the tracing paper held the water well and the colours would be layered easily. The only problem had was that the tracing paper shrinks when water is applied. This caused little ripple effects between the butterflies however, this benefitted the overall theme of the fluttering of life. The ripples of crinkled paper between the beautiful butterflies included the so-called *dust*, these are the petals. The ripples are filled with the petals from the dust kicked up by the horses running along the ground. With the butterflies flying up and away from the danger.

This piece is representative of life in the way that we are all butterflies, showing our best qualities when we can. We are always looking for beautiful things (flowers) and trying to improve. But sometimes we all get caught up, and the winds of the horses fly past. We have no option but to fly away. But in the rush, if we allow ourselves, we can snapshot the beauty of the petals surrounding us. Reminding us that not everything is as inevitable as it may seem. That is the image I want to exude. That life is not horrible, WE are the ones to decide, only we can paint the picture of life. It is up to us to decide. I only created my own version of what life is like when I look back at it. It is short, so we need to make it as beautiful as we can.