

Metanoia's Bloom

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The body of work I titled "Metanoia's Bloom" is fundamentally a love letter to my past. Metanoia is derived from the Greek word that describes, the journey and the change of ones mind, heart and life. Bloom, describes a flower at its final form, or the farthest reaches of growth. This makes perfect blend of words that capture the very essence of what I am trying to convey.

Within my works it was my intention to address my personal experience with grief and how it affected me both past and present. When I was seven I had lost my dad. At the time, being of quite a young age it was difficult to comprehend the convoluted complexities of grief. Therefore grief wasn't something I knew how to express, which ultimately entailed that at the time my inability to convey the necessary emotion prevented me from allowing myself to heal and gain closure. This eventually caused me to subconsciously bury myself under the neglect and innocence of my mind at the time, thinking that the wave of hollowness and emotionally suffocating feeling was over. But in reality, it never really left but simply just waited for a time in which it could be understood. I know that this issue is more prominent and pressing to me now, considering the pressures of adulthood and year 12, as well as the pandemic. So, I wanted to take this opportunity to allow myself to visually express my mind and feelings, in hopes of gaining comfort and closure through my art.

In the development of my brain storm I reflected upon some ideation components from my previous works. Something that I always seemed to be fascinated by is the idea of a blend between a human figure and nature-like elements, interweaving together. It alludes to some type of abnormal yet beautifully intriguing idea of metamorphosis, an aspect that I considered could be extremely beneficial in symbolically communicating my personal message of the complexities of facing grief and growing through it. Another idea I had always enjoyed to implement within my works was the idea of distortion. I took inspiration from things like double exposure in photography, in which I enjoyed translating into Surrealist concepts in both drawings and paintings.

My water based oil painting attempts to face and confront the painful parts of the past - walking myself through the events of my dad's passing. In doing so, I decided to communicate the story through displaying four different roses: each representing a different meaning. The roses hold a significant meaning, as I remember as a kid, roses were his favourite flowers. The roses essentially visualise and conceptualise the events in chronological order, flowing in a downwards motion while being attached to the distorted arms, tangled and going through one another. They reflect the confusion I had been experiencing during that time.

The first purely white rose placed on the shoulder of the figure, accompanied by my distorted side profile that smiles lovingly at the rose, symbolises how close we were and how happy I was. The second white rose is slightly tinted in a much more yellow like hue, and is attached to another hand sitting only slightly away from the placement of the previous rose. This symbolises how something had changed, slowly pulled him down, yet at the time I didn't know what it was. The third rose is the blood splatter rose, which is positioned on a drastically lower angle that further expresses the a down-wards movement. The dynamic form of the hand with fingers extended, also communicates the movement of letting go.

The red blood splatters clearly symbolises the fact that he became sick and it became evident to me that it was affecting and tainting him; pulling him further down.

The next and final rose, has completely changed into a blood red rose. Accompanying this final rose was the fallen petals, symbolising his decay, that he was slowly fading away. Another aspect was the vibrant red scissors, angled to appear as if they are set in motion, with the intent of cutting the rose away. This is a significant aspect of symbolism, ultimately communicating the death. His death.

The second piece of the sculpture is the connective piece that sits above the narrow canvas of the painting. The key elements that connect both pieces together is the gold streaks of light, which is distinctively inspired by the great works of Bernini, "The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa". Although, I interpreted the concept with slight alterations in mind.

The paper Mache and impasto layered sculpture of the multiple heads, expresses an element of distortion through a three-dimensional lens. Covered in the same red of both the blood red rose and red scissors, it represents the growth I went through in order to move forward, bearing the pain of finally accepting the grief. The gold streaks, however, makes a blend from the two dimensional to the three dimensional, into the blooming of the flowers that grow by the side of the head. The streaks symbolise my current view of the past; of how it has changed, and how I now see it in a different light. It's a more positive and mature insight. The process of creating the work has changed me, allowing me to be where I am today and be who I am today - something I choose to now appreciate and cherish.

Intrinsically, expressing and communicating this subject was not easy, it was emotionally and mentally straining to conceptualise and articulate. Coming up with how to deliver what I needed to convey and portray visually, was a struggle. Elements of flow and focal points had to be identified and carefully spoken through both pieces, which I believe was successfully conveyed in the outcome. I have experienced the journey of successfully creating this work over the year, learning many new art skills and much about myself along the way.