

Fragments

Lily Newby

Fragments: a mixed media piece in gouache, watercolour, acrylic paint and coloured pencils combined with lino prints and etched Perspex. My intended message was to convey how my anxious thoughts keep me up at night. These thoughts usually make me feel like I am being pulled in many different directions, leaving me feeling shattered or fragmented. The subject is a portrait that could resemble myself, with shard-shaped sections (black and white lino printing and etched Perspex) overlaying the original portrait and creating the illusion of one being fragmented.

In the creation of Fragments, I was inspired by the illustrations of Heikala, Marija Tiurina and Rovina Cai. I was inspired by Rovina Cai's technique when combining watercolour and gouache with coloured pencils to add line, detail, and texture. I practiced and applied this technique to add more depth to my piece, specifically in the hair. Heikala uses a similar technique, however I was inspired by her 'cartoony' art style of which is anime inspired. Similarly, Marija Tiurina's intricate, surrealist illustrations inspired the surrealistic nature of my piece with the way the face is shattering, as her artworks often feature faces which are broken such as in her piece titled, 'The Lockdown Project.' My intention of the piece was to convey my feelings of anxiety, stress and confusion. Anxious thoughts often make me feel, torn, broken and shattered.

This inspired me to paint a portrait of someone who is being shattered into many different fragments. Each fragment represents a different bad thought being experienced by the character, which is why they vary in size, detail and opacity, as thoughts are not linear. Furthermore, I used five different mediums within my piece to create a contrast between the fragments and the portrait. The fragments were created by lino prints stuck to black foam and etched Perspex, elevated with stints, to add a variety of dimensions. The main body of the piece (being the flat) was painted in watercolour, gouache and overlayed with coloured pencil. The different layers and mediums have very different aesthetics, and I successfully combined them to portray my message. Gouache is a very opaque but soluble water-based medium which allows for smooth blending and often has vibrant colours, whereas lino printing can be monochromatic, bold and consist of strong elements of line, meaning the two contrast well. The background of the piece is a deep violet with simple stars, representing the night sky, as night is often when I feel most anxious.

Throughout the creation of this piece, I was able to improve my skills in gouache painting, coloured pencils and especially lino printing. Before the creation of Fragments, I had very little experience with lino printing, and decided to challenge myself to learn it better, by featuring it in Fragments. Because of this, I have improved my confidence and skills in lino printing, and I look forward to experimenting with it in the future. Similarly, I improved my ability to paint with gouache, as I had never painted a gouache piece of this size before and I am very proud of the outcome.