

## *Fragile*

### **Fynn Darby**

The primary intention for my body of work was to experiment with screen printing and emulsion transfer and to see these unconventional techniques form a place within the modern artworld. Whilst screen printing was the main focus, the pieces had major influence from my love of philosophical studies, mostly surrounding innate human experiences, ranging from romance, to vulnerability, to the taboo of death. I feel that the amalgamation of these emotions were pivotal in driving my choice of imagery and emphasised Romanticism as a key inspiration. Along with the philosophical themes, black and white halftone patterns from photoshop and negative space were staples within my work, inspired by the works of Gerald Laing and SherrieLeigh Jones, not only connecting the work aesthetically but setting the emotive tone of the messages within the artworks.

My first Major Practical 'Fragile', supported by my First and Second Minors, was an attempt to replicate still frames in film, presenting the viewer with an open-ended storyline using two images, inspired by Paolo Gioli's 'Quando l'occhio trema (When the eye trembles)'. The first screen print on the left side of the canvas depicts a women's eyes in the reflection of her rearview mirror, staring off into the distance. The facial expression was inspired by Ilya Repin's 'Ivan the Terrible and His Son Ivan' which successfully displays a balance of grief and guilt, paralysed by shock. The second print depicts a body in the middle of the road, sharing the themes of a fatal accident seen in my First Minor 'A Benevolent Demise'. The blurry imagery of this print was a stylistic choice, representing wavering consciousness, like a mind fading in and out, with the repeated print in the corner not only supporting this idea but creating a clear path for the viewer, from the rear-view mirror down to the corner of the canvas. The two prints coupled together creates a scene in the viewers head that there had just been an accident.

The guilty and shocked expression in the eyes of the women in the rear-view mirror are made apparent with the next scene of a body lying in the middle of the road. Both prints also juxtaposed against each other in tone, with the mirror print relying on darker tones, while the road relies on lighter tones, contrasting both literally and conceptually. An unintentional error of the first print which can be seen on the right side of the mirror is a cracked slice of the print, seemingly broken off sliding down, which I think adds to the imagery, possibly representing a broken or fractured mental state. My intention was to give the first print more emotive power than the second, while trying to get the viewer to consider the idea that the people who are alive feel more pain than those who have passed, and that death shouldn't be a primary fear in someone's life. The guilt displayed on her face is also a representation of how much we let the concept of death and guilt weigh on our minds, taking its toll more so on the living rather than the dead.

My Second Practical 'Dissociative Displacement' took aesthetic inspiration from mug shots and documentative design features, notably Michael Haddad's funhouse poster designs, depicting front and side portraits, which I did with two of my peers. The key idea behind this piece was to dabble with the concept of perception, embracing minor abstractions and unwarranted changes that can be used to create an unsettling appeal to the work.

The piece features the portraits in the top left corner of the canvas, going in a seemingly normal order of front portrait and side portrait, but abruptly ends when the viewer reaches the side portrait of my second peer, which had been moved out of its common place next to its front facing counterpart, and printed in the bottom right corner. This key detail indicates a sense of breaking structure or a social norm whilst still retaining the primary qualities of its destined purpose. Due to the concepts of breaking structure, I did need to take precautions with my artwork so that I retained some boundaries, such as using the natural shape of the image in contrast with the negative space to define the image as a focal point and form borders, which I explored in its supporting pieces of Minor Three and Four.

The three portraits featured in the top left corner had each printed with an unwarranted change, with my favourite being the second front facing portrait with a black streak encompassing the full width of the print, aligning perfectly with the subject's mouth, making him appear gagged or bound. The first side profile also had an obvious mishap, with a stark tonal change from light to dark happens halfway through the print. I am quite happy with these random occurrences in my prints, as they force me to embrace the concept of chance, and their presence also aligns with the grunge aesthetics I had been inspired by.

There is also a major contrast between the grouped portraits and the displaced side profile, with the group having bold imperfections, and the bottom print being a clear and perfect image. Overall, I am satisfied with my work, not only in seeing my skills develop throughout the journey from minors to majors, but through the array of philosophical meaning I was able to depict. The imperfections that appeared in my prints only made me love my work further, adding aesthetic character to the artwork that I would not have consciously considered. It is pleasing to see the influences of my art culminate to inspire my body of work, melding now deceased artists such as Gerald Laing and Ilya Repin, with more contemporary styles such as Sherrie-Leigh Jones and Michael Haddad.

I adore the contrast between the chaotic and grungy textures and the structured and clean layouts, assuring the viewer doesn't become overwhelmed and miss the intention of my screen prints.