

## *The Controversy of Life*

### **Jemha Dimas**

My composite final artwork is titled 'The Controversy of Life' and has been painted on three panels of wood – each with differing dimensions. I chose this theme because I wanted to express how I believe that in life there is an equilibrium of good and bad and this is what makes individuals learn from their mistakes. This subject matter is significant to me because my personal childhood experiences have an ongoing influence. I know that it is one of the most significant factors that has contributed to allowing me to grow into the person I am today.

My childhood experiences and perception of life is what had interested me to use a base to evolve my desired idea. While researching the specific style of art that would capture my attention, I discovered Neo Expressionism, Abstract Art and Outsider Art. I knew that I was eager to learn these styles and combine my own aesthetic into a final piece. I came across artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Genesis Tramaine whose artworks implicate frenetic yet also very direct energy of brushstrokes, while encompassing an extensive range of bold and vivid colours. Within their resulting works, they appear to be raw and unfocussed however, behind the multidirectional brushstrokes, the meaning showed an opposing depth what it seemed to be. These elements are what was concentrated within my creation and is evident across each of three panels of wood through brushstrokes in a rough and violently emotionally way, intense use of colours and a dramatic inclusion of figurative forms.

My first panel includes words of "Life is a Fantasy", "My Life, Not Yours" and "Life is All" followed along with a rainbow, a unicorn and a ballet dancer. Each of these elements within this piece all correlate with the theme of "Life is Fantasy". The inclusion of the unicorn is a representation of how they are perceived as majestic and royal, though it contrasts with the idiom 'life isn't all rainbows and unicorns. Where life involves hardship, struggle, grief, and loss – just to name a few. The rainbow is a symbol of hope and is a promise for better times to come, but contrastingly represents chasing unrealistic goals in life. Followed by the perception of a rainbow, the thought of a pot of gold comes to mind for the viewer, and this furthers the inability to achieve the impossible. To better this idea, I should have included the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow followed with some clouds in order for my intention to be reinforced. Additionally, the inclusion of the ballet dancer symbolises the elegance of how life can be fantasised but through pessimistic factors of life, it has been contrasted through the dancer's arms going all over the place and the inclusion of the dark deep red.

The dress of the ballet dancer is white which further symbolises innocence and purity, which opposes the true reality of life. On my second panel, my intended theme was love and hate. This is apparent through contrasting the skull and the heart shaped figure. Where the skull contains harsher brushstrokes, less solid shapes, asymmetric aspects and conflicting colours, it is evident that the heart is completely opposite being more subtle with shapes, colour and symmetry. In the top left corner appears half a face, which is peeping within the panel – an intruder. The face is representative of questioning the consideration of life and leans towards understanding. As it is half a face, it symbolises that I have not yet entered the real world, just graduating high school and now ready to take on a new chapter in life.

It additionally represents the idea of youth with constantly having questions being asked due to curiosity and preparation in transitioning into adulthood. Furthermore, on the right-hand side, three quarters of a figure is able to be seen. Similar to the peeping head in the top left corner, it again represents an intruder questioning the aspects of love and hate and life and death. I correlated these figures with the words "forever hateful", "good riddance", "love", "triggered" and "I see you" because these are emotions and feelings that overflow my thoughts as it related to my childhood experience and adolescence in general.

On my final panel, a figure with devil horns and a devil tail is positioned on the left side of the figure with two halo rings – a devil and an angel. They are situated linking arms contrasting the good and bad in life. Even though they are opposing figures, at some point in time, they each embrace each other. Where a devil is known for its harsh immorality and an angel for its purity. Above the devil, I wrote "truth be told" and on top of the mouth of the angel, I wrote "lies". I did this in order to provide another combination of contrasts while also expressing this complex idea in a visual way, making this idea easier to understand.

Below the angel, I wrote "married to the sky" which is a poetic way of referring to the mythological landscape of where these celestial beings reside. Through the creation of my final art piece, I was challenged with time constraints and being put under pressure, as I did not prioritise my time efficiently. However, I believe that if I was not put under pressure, I would not have been able to create a piece so successfully in a way I am very pleased. Another challenge was deciding upon how my panels should be organised. I overcame this through trial and error and being persistent.

Overall, I feel I have succeeded in completing a practical piece of artistic merit where I have been able to explore and capture contrasting issues in life.