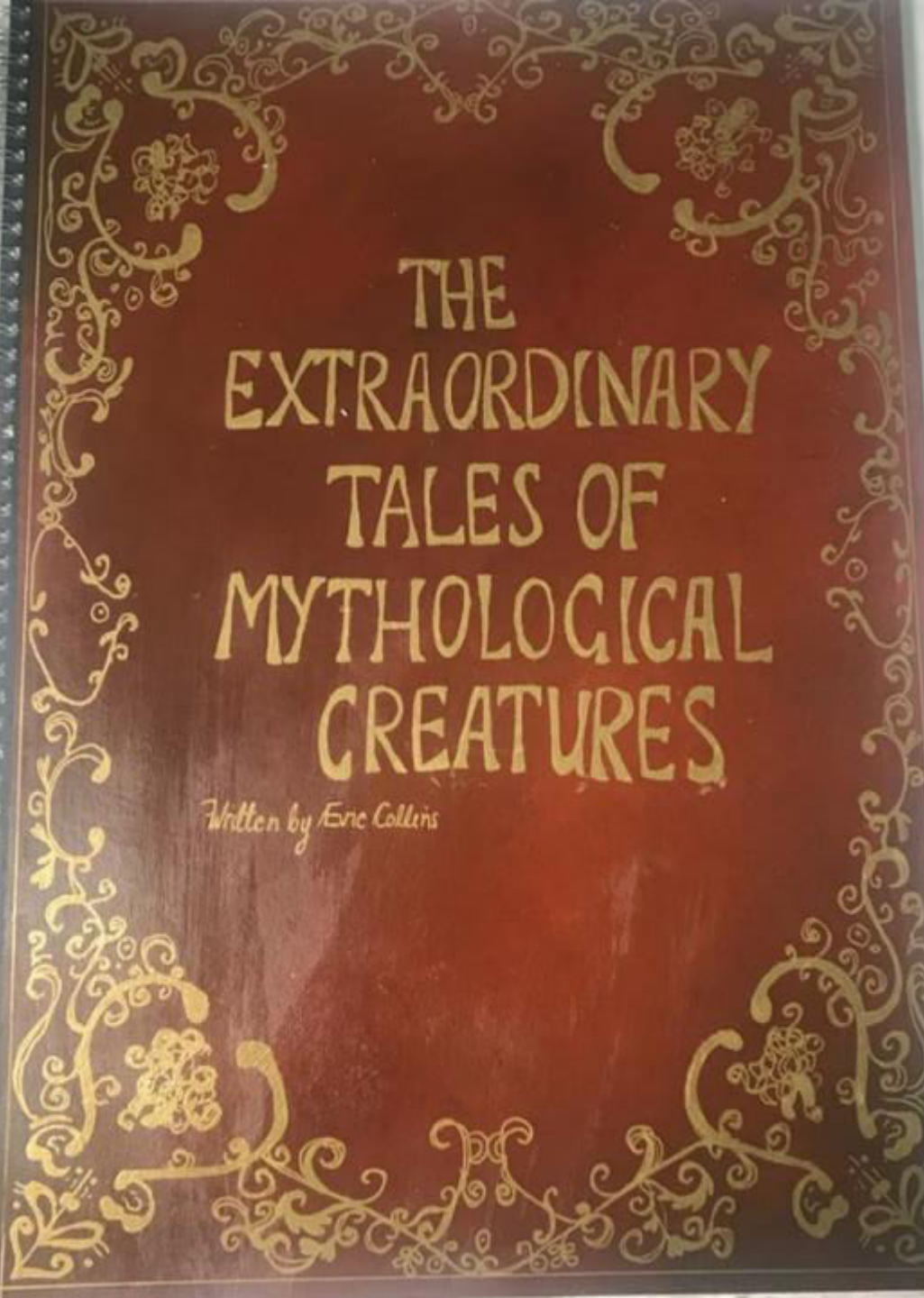


Winchmore School
Class of 2021
A Level Art & Design
EC



THE
EXTRAORDINARY
TALES OF
MYTHOLOGICAL
CREATURES

Written by Eric Collins

THE EXTRAORDINARY TALES OF MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES...

CHAPTER ONE: THE THREE HEADED DOG

CHAPTER TWO: AUBREY BEARDLEY

CHAPTER THREE: NES NAMEN

CHAPTER FOUR: "SQUEEZE, SQUEEZE, POP!"

CHAPTER FIVE: POT

CHAPTER SIX: PRISONER TO THE OCEAN

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE EGYPTIAN GODDESS BASTET

CHAPTER EIGHT: "SQUEEZE, SQUEEZE, POP!"
DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER NINE: 'A MONSTER OF A MIND'

CHAPTER TEN: THE TALE OF A MODERN MEDUSA.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE END.

MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES: STATEMENT OF INTENT

I have long been fascinated by greek mythology. From a young age, my favourite film being Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief. To me the strong links with Scandinavian is beautiful, yet haunting.

Each mythological creature is accompanied by its own tale, most commonly portrayed in a negative light or as a villain. The dash and eerie aura they seem to convey captivates me and will be transferring these strong feelings and emotions experienced into my own artwork. However, there will be a twist, many times hybrids, made up of different animals so I will be incorporating my own ideas on this.

Subjects and figures are a passion of mine. How can I intertwine these two subjects? Artists such as Masao Kinschita, Ivan Belikov, Michelle Volpocelli and Aubrey Beardsley will be important starting points for me.

Beardsley, an illustrator, working in ink and gouache, focuses on creatures such as Medusa, Fauns, witches and mermaids. The delicate area of his work I will investigate & his use of line, making to create exquisite, detailed and intricate studies. Will this become part of my style?

Young adults can go through dark times, we are seeing a move towards the importance of mental health and wellbeing. Through mythological creatures I will highlight how the mind can keep us hostage and make us feel trapped by our own thoughts. Maybe physical appearance of the creatures will support this idea? To maintain this captivation I will be incorporating the use of traditional techniques of drawing and printing with digital media.

My intention is to use my childhood passion to support the mood, emotions and atmospheres young adults experience in their everyday lives, to portray the severity of mental health and its effect on a person.

...and The Argonauts
Medea
The Spartans
The Golden Compass
The Little Mermaid
Clash of the Titans
Lord of the Rings
Hobbit
The King of Hearts
The Princess Bride
The Sandlot
The Sandlot
The Sandlot

Inspired Films and TV Shows

Japanese Folklore

Shikigami - spirit helpers
Karakorum - miniature people
Yokai - spirit-like demons
Tengu - fox like
Tanuki - raccoon dog

Mythological

CREATURES

Fairy Tales
Cobolins
Gnomes
Goblins
Hobbits
Dwarves
Ogres
Ghosts
Mermaids
Gnomes
Ghosts
Mermaids
Gnomes

Egyptian Mythology

Ankh - symbol of life
Scarab - beetle
Sphinx - guardian of the entrance
Anubis - god of the dead
Horus - god of the sky
Osiris - god of the dead
Isis - goddess of magic
Nephthys - goddess of magic
Sistrum - sacred instrument

Horses/Goats/Bulls
Nemean lion
Cerberus
Chimera
Pegasus
Medusa
Centaur

Human-like

Minotaur
Sphinx
Cyclops
Gorgon
Hippocampus
Pegasus
Nymphs
Dryads
Sylphs
Sprites
Sprites
Sprites

Wings

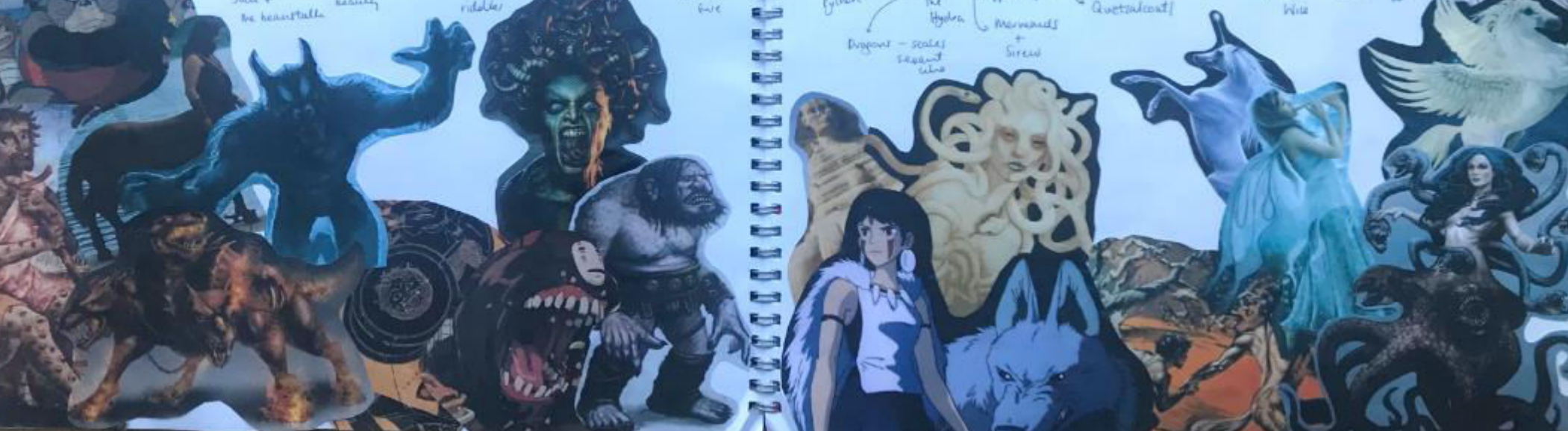
Wings
Cerberus
Sphinx
Pegasus
Hippocampus
Gorgon
Griffin
Chimera
Hydra
Basilisk
Manticore

Greek Mythology

Sea Creatures and Serpents
Kraken
Hydra
Manticore
Siren
Cerberus
Pegasus
Chimera
Minotaur
Sphinx
Basilisk
Manticore
Pegasus
Chimera
Minotaur
Sphinx
Basilisk
Manticore

Demons and Spirits

Demons and Spirits
Ghosts
Demons
Wraiths
Vampires
Werewolves
Ghosts
Demons
Wraiths
Vampires
Werewolves



Cerberus The Three Headed Dog

...The Bible...
 Cerberus the 3 headed dog
 lay off guard to Tartarus and
 Eridanus, guards the
 underworld. One of the
 10 Titans meant Hercules
 had to Cerberus upon the
 land of the living.
 Had to attack him -
 Hercules captured the
 beast using no weapons

3 heads - 3 eyes
 3 necks
 3 tails
 3 heads - 3 eyes
 3 necks
 3 tails
 CERBERUS
 Dog - cute + friendly
 Cerberus confronts Odis

DIFFE



Before & above, I also ma



REFERENCE IMAGE (SCULPTURE) ABOVE



clearer understanding of the keep
 and what it represents. On the
 left I have referred to the
 sculpture image to create my
 own painting. I started off
 layering water colours which
 gave a monochromatic colour
 scheme. I didn't like how the
 colours were faint and not very
 opaque so decided to add a
 layer of acrylic paints after to



After researching Cerberus and creating my own
 artwork inspired by others, I noticed he is always
 depicted as an evil keep. Two persona is supposed
 to watch his job title of guard of the underworld.
 However I thought it'd be interesting to do som
 art that contrasts his appearance. I took a
 photo of my neighbour's cute and fluffy dog
 and proceeded to draw him using watercolours
 and a white pen (for highlights). I found it

THE

Sweet Security.



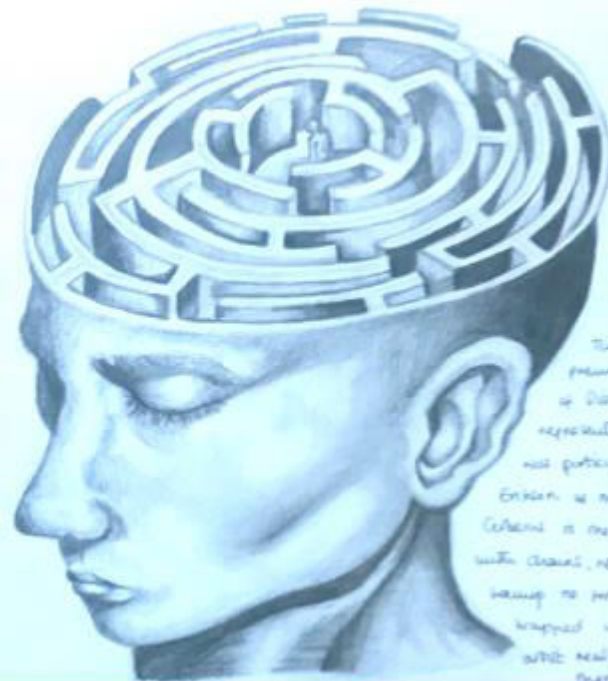
ANIMALS MENTAL HEALTH



ABUSING YOUR PET IS NEVER OKAY



ABUSED

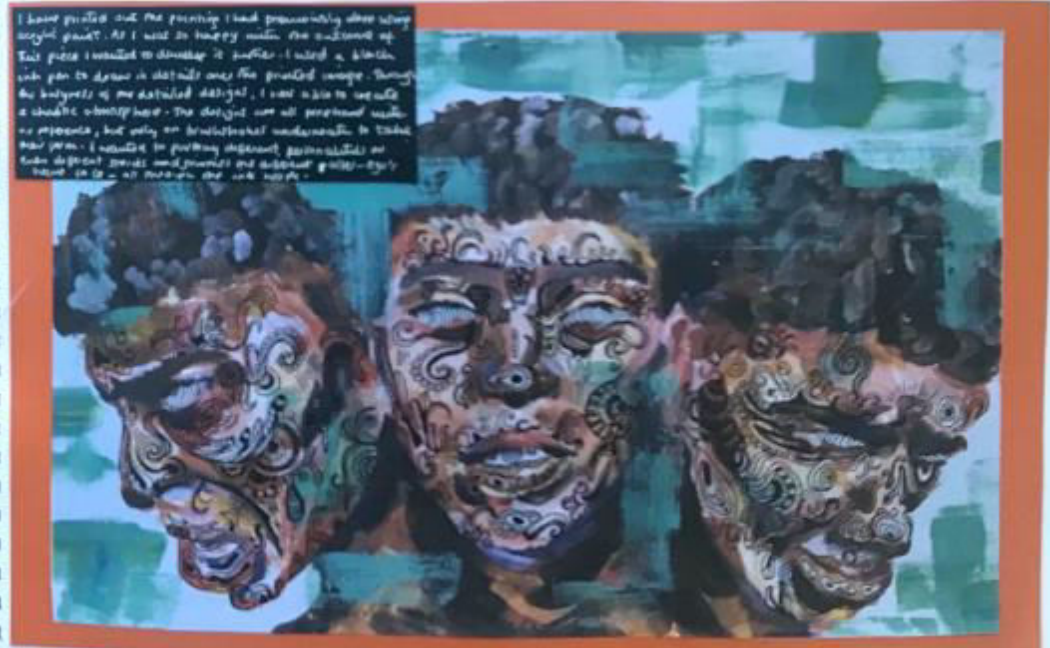


SEBASTIAN

using graphite pencils

This piece on the left is inspired by my personal which I wanted to continue the idea of Dissociative Identity Disorder and mainly the visual representation of being trapped in your own head. I was particularly drawn to this piece by Sebastian Erikson as the imagery is so powerful and portrays meaning. Erikson is the guardian of the underworld, usually portrayed with chains, representing ideas of being tied down and wanting to freedom. This piece conveys a sense, the person trapped unable to escape. Therefore I believe this work really captures the emotions I want to show through Erikson.

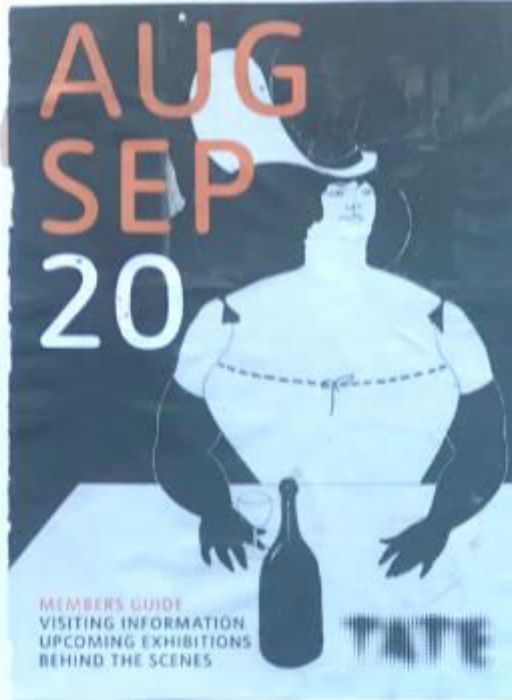
I have pulled out the picture I had previously done when I was in my art class. As I was so happy with the outcome of this piece I wanted to do more. I used a black ink pen to draw in details over the printed image. Through the help of my detailed design, I was able to create a vibrant atmosphere. The design was all personal with no reference, but only on traditional understandings. It took time from I wanted to portray different personalities or how different people and how they feel about things. It's hard to do all that in one work.



INK ON PRINTED IMAGE OF PIECE ON THE LEFT.



AUBREY BEARDSLEY



PERSEUS/MEDUSA



MEDUSA STYLE ARTWORK COPIED FROM BEARDSLEY'S 'PERSEUS' SERIES.



PERSEUS, 1891
Ink, wash and gouache on paper.

This is one of the artist's examples of Beardsley's use of the shape of the Japanese kakemono, or vertical hanging scroll.



In his Perseus series (1891-92), he also depicts the Greek hero Perseus (after he was decapitated Medusa, whose gaze turned all who looked at her to stone). Beardsley's early work references a lot of Greek mythology such as the tale of Perseus and Medusa. To create his distinct style, Beardsley used mainly ink, wash, and gouache. These other pieces show his use of experimental color (pink, green, and violet wash).



FAWNS AND WITCHES



AUBREY BEARDSLEY

EXHIBITION
20th September 2020
12.00pm - 5.00pm
Free for Members and Partners, booking required

Aubrey Beardsley produced and designed the exhibition poster with the same bold and stark imagery. He captured the artist and his subject, the feminine and the grotesque, leaving visitors a sense of the artist with his distinctive style. Beardsley's work was a celebration of the artist's life and work, and a celebration of the artist's life and work. Beardsley's work was a celebration of the artist's life and work. Beardsley's work was a celebration of the artist's life and work.

Organised by Tate Britain in collaboration with the Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Sponsored by The Aubrey Beardsley Exhibition Supporters' Club, The American Foundation and Tate Members.



MERMAIDS

When I first saw the image, I instantly thought of modern Japanese paper. The image is made up of many elements from the exhibition. When I first laid eyes upon it, I was struck by the vibrant detail. The image is made up of many elements from the exhibition. When I first laid eyes upon it, I was struck by the vibrant detail. The image is made up of many elements from the exhibition. When I first laid eyes upon it, I was struck by the vibrant detail.

MY EXPERIENCE / VIEW OF BEARDSLEY

When I walked into the first room of the exhibition I was amazed, not only by the skill of the artist but the vast amount of work Beardsley was diagnosed with. Tuberculosis at the young age of seven and missing a decade at only 25-year-old. I believe that this did not take a dark toll on Beardsley, but he embraced his short life by creating a world of fantastical figures. He was a pioneer in his time, creating a new style of illustration and making a name for himself. He was a pioneer in his time, creating a new style of illustration and making a name for himself. He was a pioneer in his time, creating a new style of illustration and making a name for himself.



When I first saw the image, I instantly

thought of modern Japanese paper. The image is made up of many elements from the exhibition. When I first laid eyes upon it, I was struck by the vibrant detail. The image is made up of many elements from the exhibition. When I first laid eyes upon it, I was struck by the vibrant detail.

I want to incorporate this idea into a piece of work.

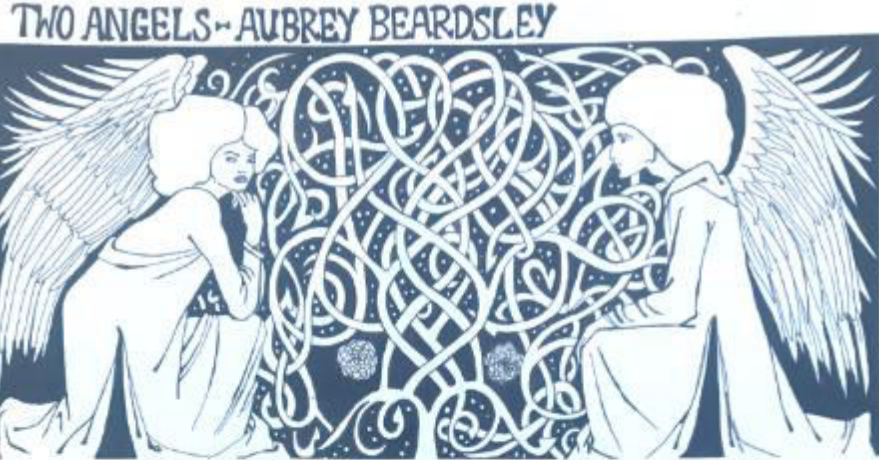
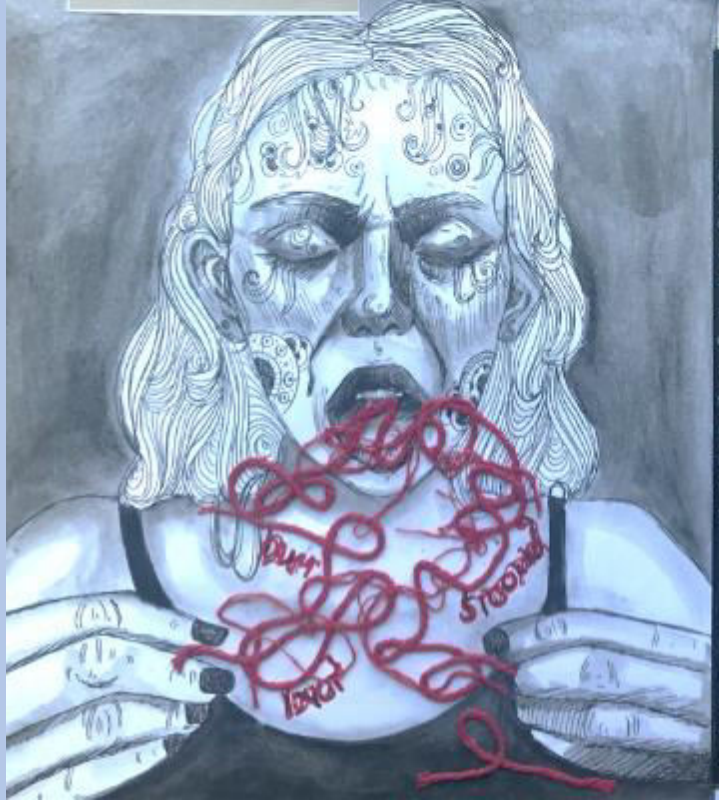


Image taken of Tom Burton Gallery of Beardsley's 'Two Angels' [↑]
I have now put it in my sketch book and it is now in my sketchbook



Photos I have recreated one of Beardsley's illustrations 'Two Angels'. I chose this piece because it's a very common picture of mythological creatures. Although I was particularly drawn to the beautiful intricate patterns. Words that came into my head were "dullard", "confused", "tangled". I thought it would be interesting to create my own idea inspired by this map/maze like artwork. I want to copy the atmosphere of the adjectives that originally popped into my head.



DYSLEXIA IT'S ON THE TIP OF MY TONGUE

When asking my dyslexia sister how she describes having this mental disability, she said it can be confusing. She told me when thinking of a word she struggled to find the right one. Almost like a big mass in her mind. I thought this would fit in perfectly with Beardsley's 'Two Angels'. The white swirls in his work reminded me of a big tangled ball of ~~hair~~. I thought it would be interesting to recreate this strip with my sister's dyslexia used words that are often used to describe people with dyslexia. I thought it was important to inform people how people with dyslexia feel. But but still receive negative backlash. I used a fine line and watercolour to transfer Beardsley's style.

I knew I wanted this piece to be based on my sister as she is someone I personally know with this mental disability. I took multiple photos, experimenting with lighting and poses until I was happy with this one. I photographed the strip into it for composition purposes.

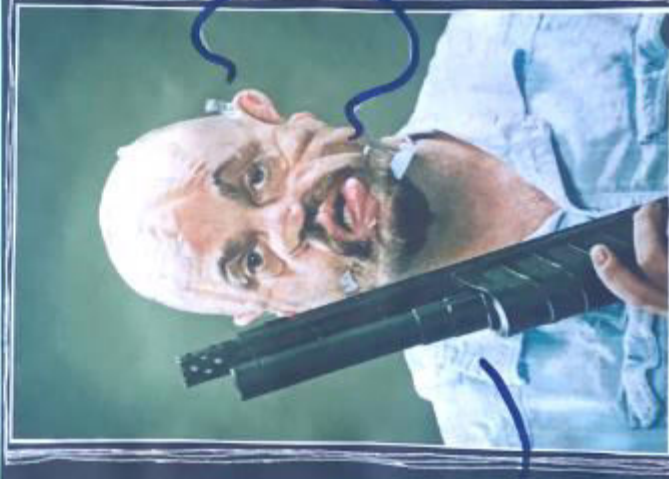


WES NAMAN

Here I have learned some observations sketches of Naman's work. I wanted to do some loose sketches, using an ink pen, with no pencil base. Jumping straight in with pen allowed me to use my eye and capture the emotion and feeling of the piece. I noticed Naman's photos have a very linguistic monochromatic background, usually green or blue. Therefore I decided to do a wash of water-colour behind the sketches.



In a few of his pieces the subjects have props. I feel this is a really interesting way of conveying different meanings but with the same technique. In this piece on the right, I believe the gun represents how these weapons can destroy you - mentally and physically. The distorted face warns how one may feel after using such a powerful weapon. However I like how his piece made you think-up to interpretation.



Naman uses monochromatic backgrounds which makes the viewer's eye focus on the subject of the piece.

Naman uses a range of materials like tape and elastic bands to distort people's faces. I like how the subject's eyes stare into your soul (in this piece). His face is moulded and shaped in an interesting way but his eyes are fixed as if his soul and body are two separate entities.



-WES NAMAN-

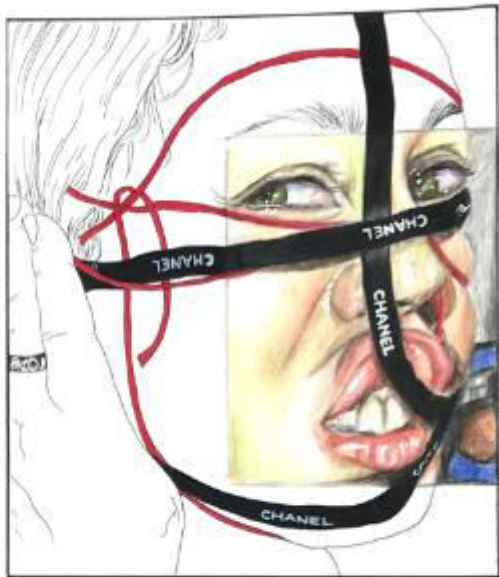
One year ago, a New Mexico-based photographer Wes Naman was wrapping Christmas gifts with his assistant and started goofing around with the Scotch tape. The artist immediately had a creative idea that after a year developed into the 'Scotch Tape' photo series, where volunteers put the tape around their faces to create writhing facial expressions (as shown above). I like the strange compositions he creates and the idea of being physically tied up. I thought it would be interesting to incorporate this idea into my own work, metaphorical + physically.

SQUEEZE, SQUEEZE, PØP!

These pins show how if you keep squeezing and squeezing someone, eventually they will pop. The struggle of combating mental health is hard and some don't make it at all.

BEAUTY STANDARDS

On the night I have decided to draw one of the previous photos I had taken. I wanted to imply how beauty standards are very confusing - especially for older women (because I used my mum as a model, and had "Chanel" ribbon round her face, particularly pinning her lips to give the impression of lip filler). I wanted to show how societal norms can make one feel trapped and unable to express who they really are.



SCHOOL PRESSURE

I have used the same mixed media approach as the previous page because I was very happy with the outcome. With this image inspired by my friend, I wanted to indicate school pressure and how it can make students feel trapped. My friend suffers from low level dyslexia + ADHD, so I wanted to convey how school can be overwhelming through colours, context + humour. It can feel suffocating. I represented this by wrapping his head up in multiple blue layers.

After experimenting with different materials that represent different things, I decided I wanted to portray someone that doesn't actually know what the problem is. As humans we are often asked "what's wrong?" and we might not always know the answer. Some people may experience an empty feeling; that's what I've portrayed on the next page where I've photoshopped the background out of the image.

"WHAT'S WRONG?" "I DON'T KNOW"



When working on this second project I realised I was focusing alot on illustrating mental health, and not alot on the cause of mental health. On the previous page I'd wrapped my friend in blue layers and to show the stress of school. This led me to take photos of my English teacher, and digitally draw on blue horns. I wanted to indicate how teachers can be seen as monsters (by students) due to school pressure. I took the mythical creature of a Faun as inspiration. This is a creature representation of Fauns were part of human some recent depictions are "The symbol of Satan". Through I wanted to convey how teachers enter the job with a positive outlook, but are gradually seen negatively. This is further implied with the small representation of horns on the forehead. The black and white indicates the negative side contrasting with the Faun's face the original color.

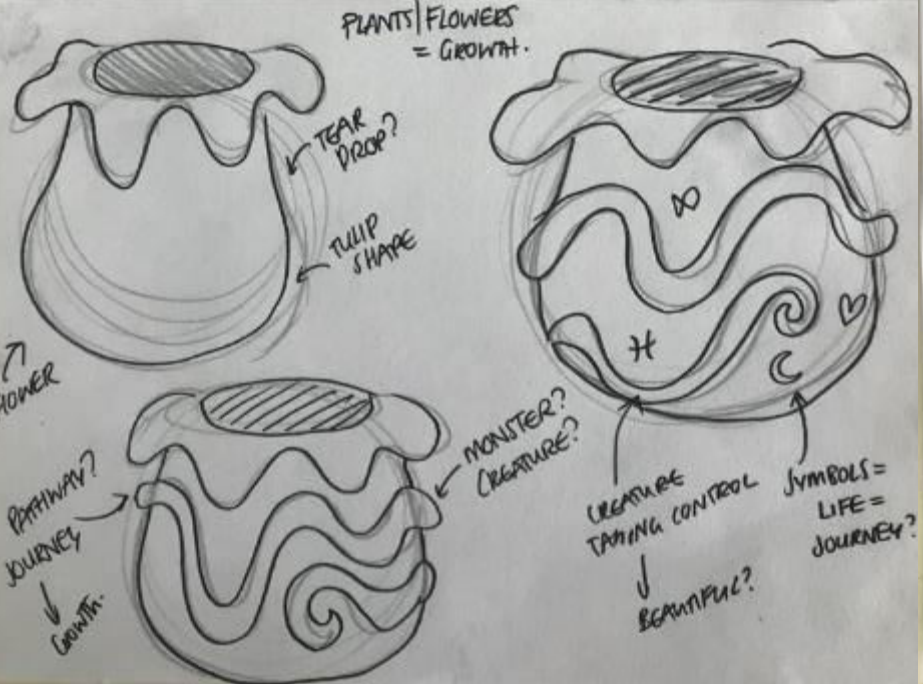
CLAY POT WORKSHOP



The white like shape represents the uncontrollable creature that is trying to intrude into one's mind. This creature tries to make us sad or angry e.c. However it also represents a pathway / journey. And with time we are able to defeat this creature through love, friendship, interests e.c.

The symbols represent the things happening along the way of the journey

Overall, the flower shape represents growth. We all start off as a seed and sometimes we might need watering but in the end we flourish into a flower.



Flower-creatures = metaphorical abstract heart. Blue-red heart includes one: the white represents a good memory that gradually disappears gradually from the heart.

Black-creatures = on the side of 'beauty'? Black was represented for darkness in science - for wonder. The white part is the journey - for the light of the end of the journey.



Uncontrollable creature = bridge or the element of fear? (white) = leads to the heart. The division.

Black-creatures = fear? (white) = leads to the heart. The division. (white) = leads to the heart. The division.



Coiling a pot



Layering to create the base of the pot



Adding vine-like shapes onto on the pot

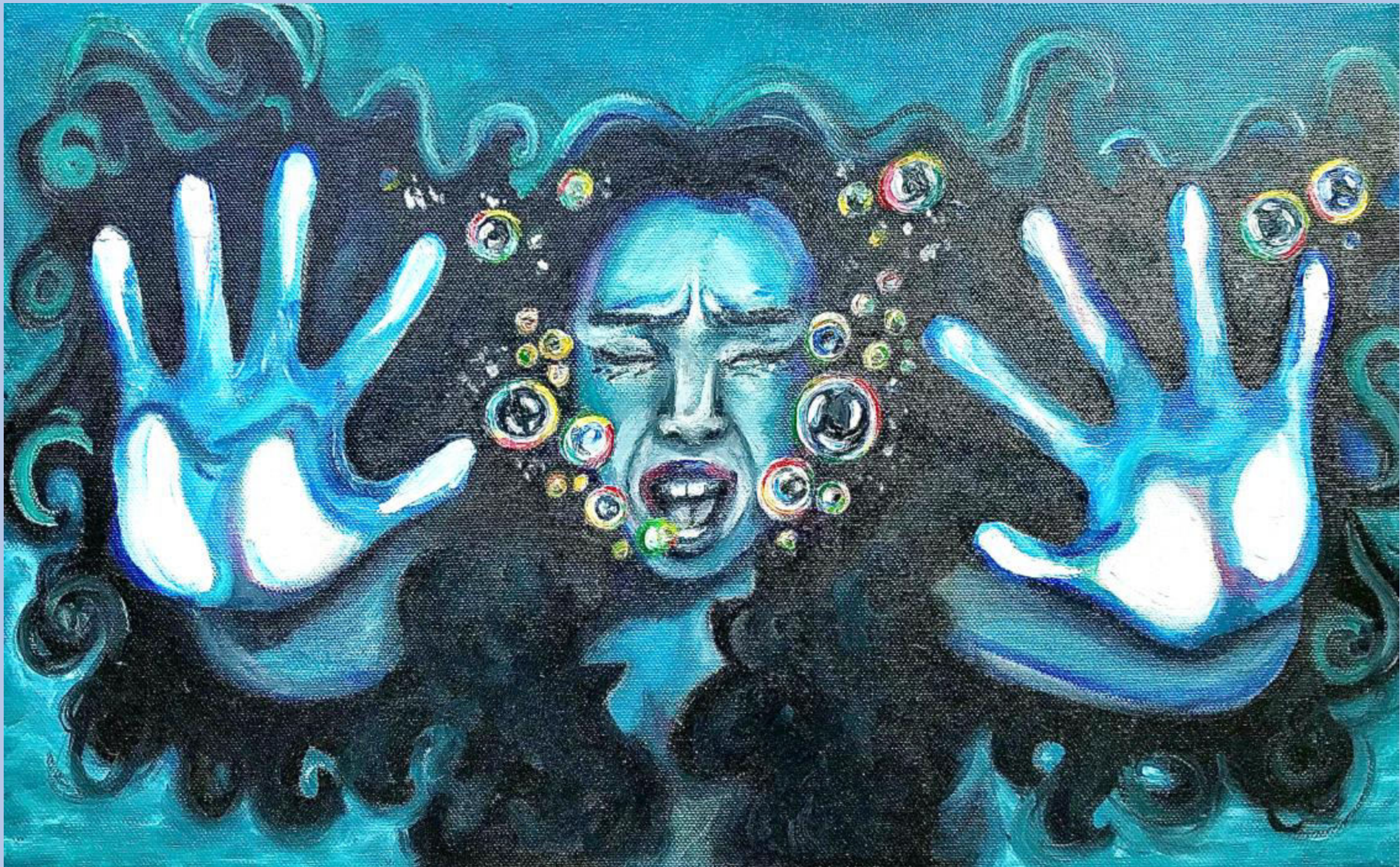


Moulding the top of the pot to produce interesting shapes



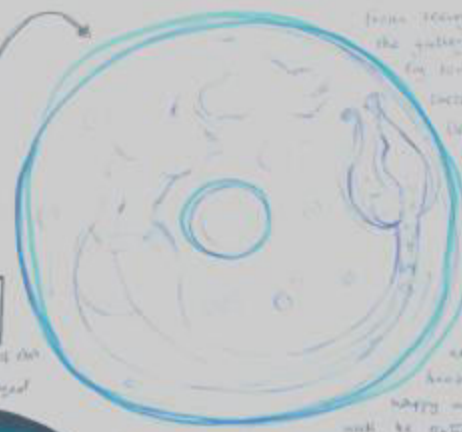
Painted final result



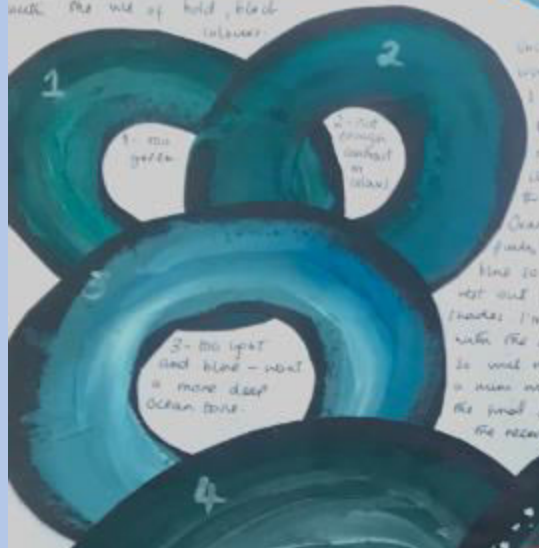




Although considered as the Royal Academy of Art painting on CD is a top street scene, enhanced with the use of bold black colour.



From seeing this piece at the gallery I was excited to be something similar. I decided and an idea (left) of a mermaid in a record I want to try and getting beauty and how someone experiences it may feel their thoughts going round and round - like a broken record. I'm happy with the design and with the starting colour scheme.

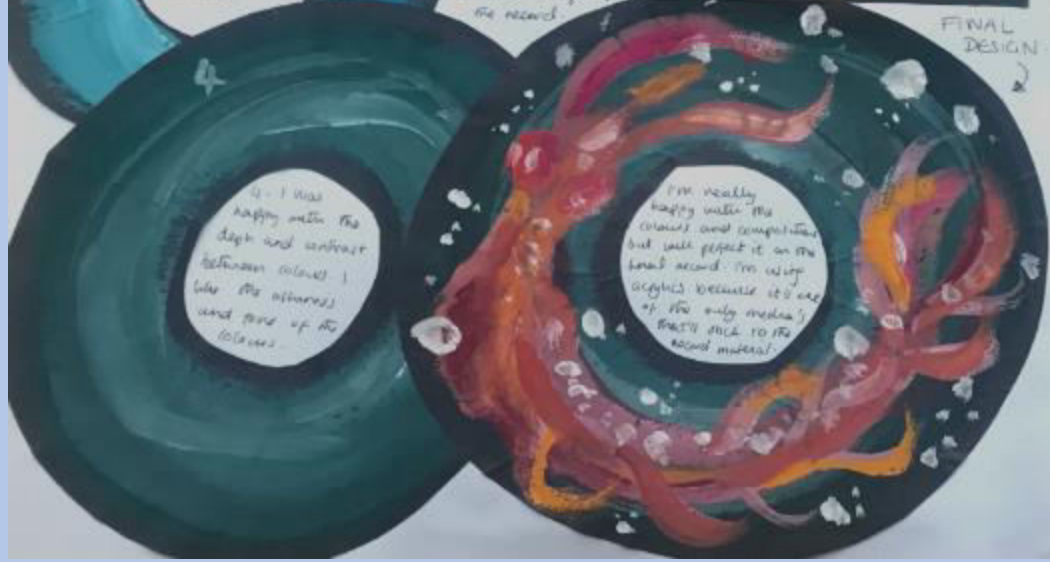


1 - the yellow
2 - the orange contrast to blue!
3 - the light and blue - want a more deep ocean tone.

Once I decided what tone I wanted for the sea, I needed to choose a colour for the mermaid. Orange and pink complement blue so began to test out some warm shades. I'm happy with the colour scheme so what need to do a more mix-up of the final design for the record.



FINAL DESIGN



4 - I was happy with the depth and contrast between colours. Like the others and one of the colours.

I'm really happy with the colours and composition but still perfect it on the final record. I'm using acrylics because it's one of the only media's that's stick to the record material.



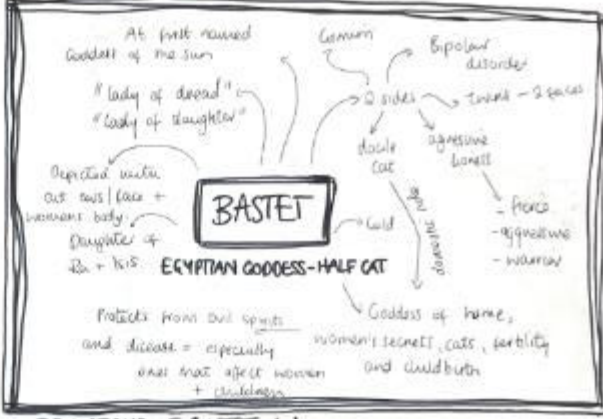
When researching, I noticed mermaids and some are very similar - both sharing the appearance of half human half fish. However they are both portrayed in different light, mermaids seen as the positive beauty tempt, whereas some are negative. The way they are the same but so different inspired me the way the juxtaposed features around me is bipolar disorder. But it is a mental illness where someone's emotions are heightened, they can feel sad, high or super low which can result in reckless risky behaviour. Therefore I use one sketch as an idea - the same girl in 2 different faces, one representing a mood the other is even illustrated at the eye, surrounding one of a tip of nose, a nose between the 2 emotions like people who look from bipolar.



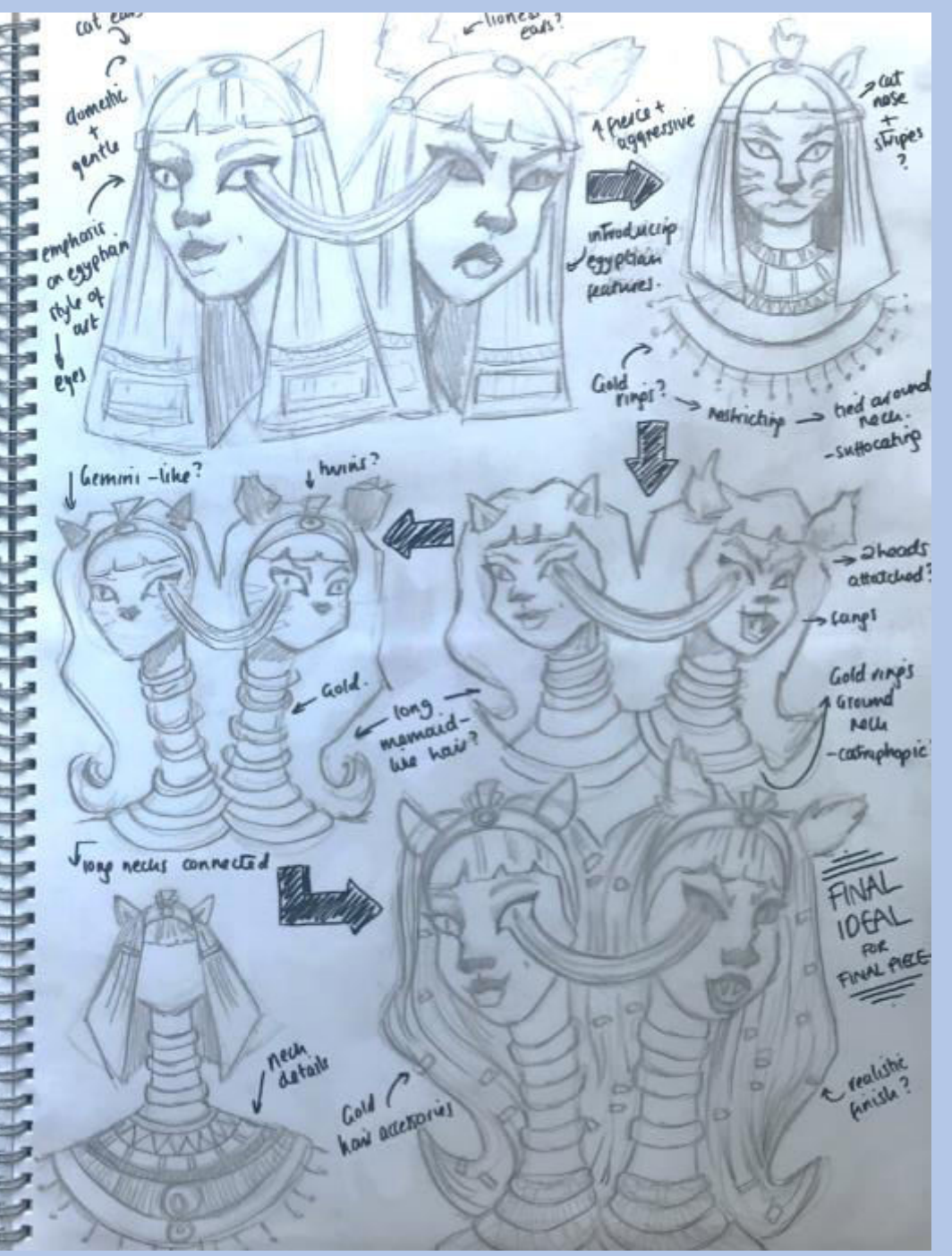
From my sketch I wanted to develop the idea into a solid design. I started by taking photos of my friend that resemble me of a mermaid as she has long, wavy hair. I got her to pose, portraying 2 different facial expressions, one happy one quite angry. I really wanted to exaggerate the tip of nose between the eyes to emphasize how they are the same person they see me same thing, however feel different emotions. I tried 2 different ways to experiment with this; I decided I liked the first image. So continued to develop this idea adding darker eyes and lips. I used the 'Liquify' tool on Photoshop to create this distorted appearance - was really happy with the outcome and went to develop it further.



The Egyptian Goddess Bastet



DEPICTIONS OF BASTET





From this design above, I really began to look at the message behind it and how I could develop this idea. This design looks at the mental illness of Bipolar and how I could portray the 'two extremes' of someone suffering from this illness. When someone from Bipolar it is common to have aggressive mood swings, conveying a rapid switch between high and low emotion. When looking at these two extremes I decided to look at other abstract contrasts to spark inspiration:

Yes/No
Up/down
Black/white
Day/night

I was specifically drawn to the idea of Black and white as I instantly thought of Beardsley's monochromatic illustrations. I'm excited to see how I can incorporate his style and ideas into my own work. I want to study his work further to see what features I can use as inspiration.

↳ someone experiencing a mental illness like bipolar may get frustrated at themselves.
 chaotic
 details - intricate line work fine detail

frustration portrayed through line work.



ropes - handcuff like
 trapped / tied down

leaves - jungle mess up in? claustrophobia trapped? - no where to run ↳ such

Aubrey Beardsley

- analyzing his artwork
 - seeing what I can take from his work.

unusual hair shapes.
 - mythical
 - creature
 - a life of its own.



medusa style hair - snake like

2 juxtaposed hairstyles - resonates with Bipolar



interesting shapes and line work.

What I like to take from his work:
 - intricate fine lines
 - unusual hair
 - leaves
 - rope.

When developing my idea, I really wanted to stay true to Swastika's style. This meant taking away elements of my original design and incorporating more of Swastika's characteristics. The 2-headed composition I still portrayed with a mix of Swastika's mythical snakes (especially on the head). I was really happy with the outcome of this illustration as I found it very interesting and fun to work on. I was really happy with the outcome of this illustration as I found it very interesting and fun to work on. I was really happy with the outcome of this illustration as I found it very interesting and fun to work on.



As I was really pleased with the outcome of this illustration, I wanted to explore different mediums using this design - especially print making. I began to look out online printing and was really happy with the cost. The hair of the figure on the left came out slightly, almost like a night's sky in space. I liked the dreamy, mythical aura it added. However, I noticed the abundance of blank space at the bottom of the design, so decided to add more detail to increase the visual impact on the figures - like an overload of emotion.



LINO
CUT
PRINT

To continue the theme of print making I decided to do a lino cut. At first I found it hard as it was my first attempt, but as I progressed I began to get the hang of it. I used lino cutters to delicately carve away the space I didn't want to show up. I was impressed by the outcome but found the little bits and details difficult to carve so changed the design slightly. To practice I rolled out white printing ink on a black surface. At first I put the print onto the paper but realised it was more effective placing the paper on top and grabbing a dry roller on top to give a more smooth appearance. On the right are my print attempts.



TEST PRINTS

MESS-UP PRINTS

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



• ORIGINAL PRINTS •

8



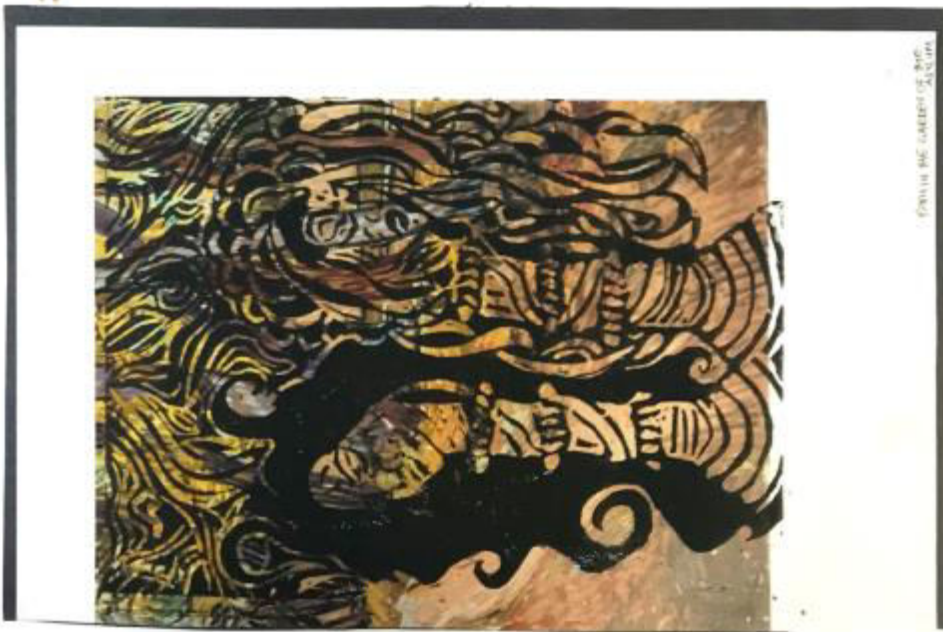
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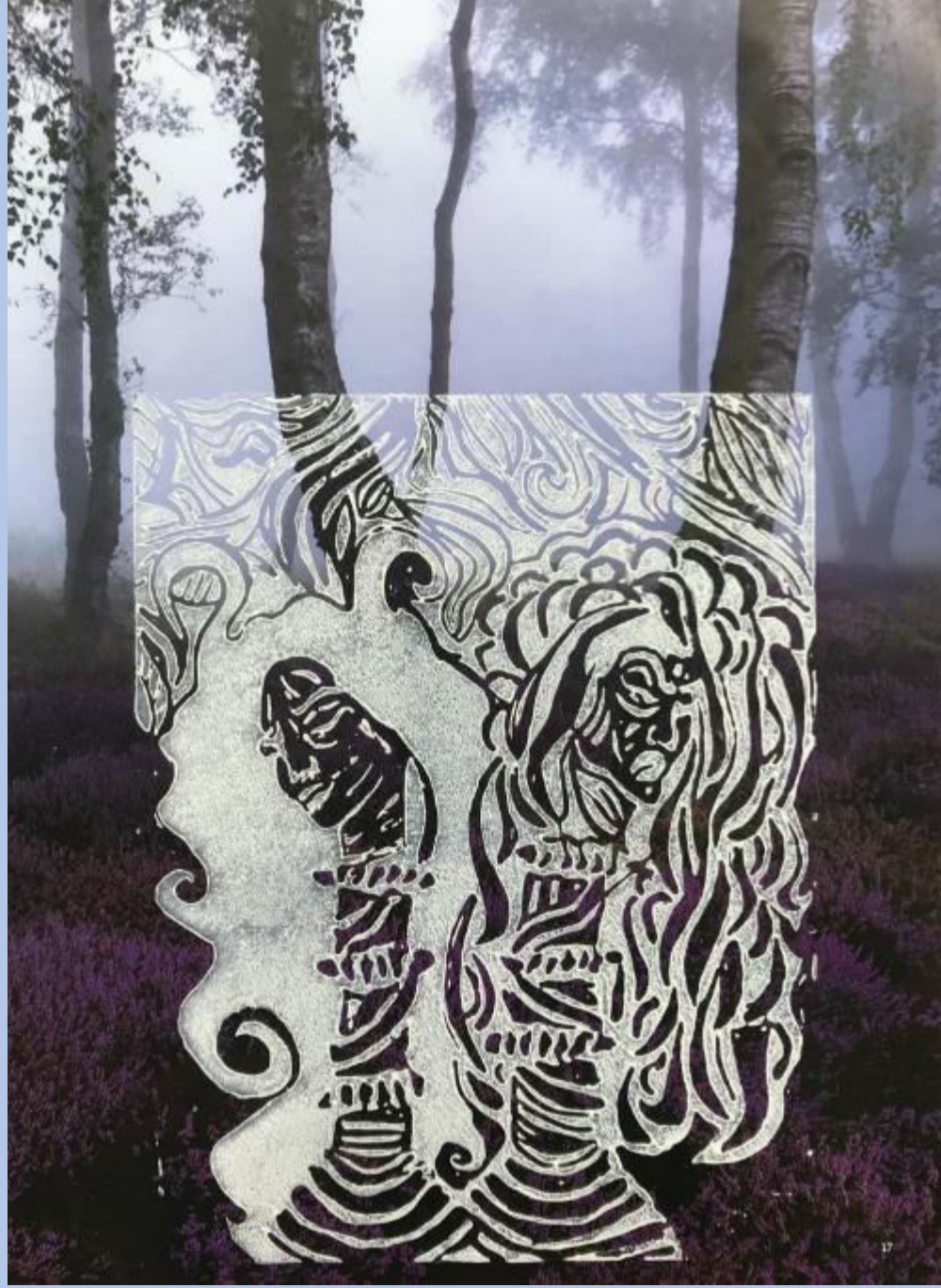


10



11





- 1 These were my first attempts at the prints where I used images from a magazine. The prints turned out well - clear and bold - but when I transferred them home the printing ink had fully dried. This meant the print stuck together due to the texture/sticky surface of the magazine paper. Although I was upset that the print got ruined I was able to learn for next time, although future prints to dry fully.
- 2,3 Instead of using magazine pages, I wanted to experiment with colour inklines and encaustic. I laid a watercolour base of blue and yellow, creating a gradient with both. Then printed my design on top using complementary colors of black and red. These colours convey two extremes of the creature - the obvious and the and happy yellow.
- 4 The magazine clipping of a carpenter's room but it reminded me of a desert, which I thought linked perfectly with my original research of Tattler. Almost, as if the background is the creature's habitat - a modern day Egyptian tale?
- 5 As Randsley was the main inspiration of this design I wanted to relate this piece back to him. With his later works, he collected with Otis Wilds on illustrations books. To bring this idea back in, I started looking at newspapers. Out of luck I found an article titled "What happens when you mix supernatural horror and feminism". I was so happy to find this article, might never as I thought it matched the piece so perfectly.
- 6 To continue this idea of typography and books, I decided to print on a tale written about Babel.
- 7 Again, I found this piece in a magazine, it reminded me of the crack in a stone sculpture of Pyramid...
ORIGINAL PRINTS.
- 8 I found this background in a magazine and loved its interesting composition. I'd name it "clipping on hot slippings". As the symmetrical typography in the background resonates with Babel and how it had not to have episodes - the is slipping. The red contrasts the dark background beautifully.

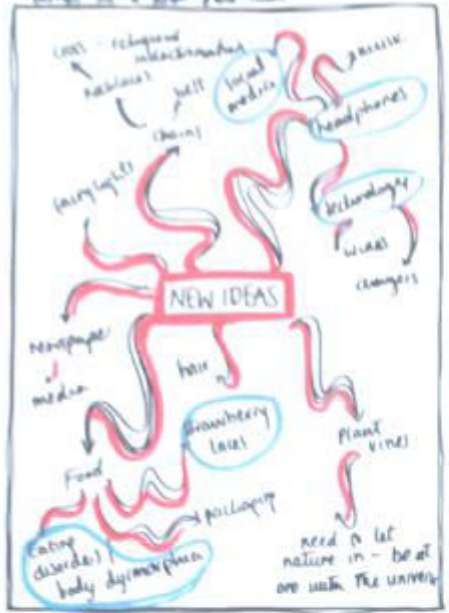
- 9 I was drawn to this magazine page as it makes the viewer have to look close at the image. Behind my print is a woman's face, but doubled with her own reflection. The '3-hands' metaphor linked strongly with my design. I printed in white to link back to Randsley's monochrome work.
- 10 This beautiful artwork found in a TATE magazine by Eilat Hodgkin, stood out because of the bright earthy greens. A red ~~background~~ green on the colour wheel I thought it would be interesting to look at the contrast in colour - and the interpretation of the 10 contrasts.
- 11 Another piece found in a TATE magazine is this expressionist painting by Van Gogh, he titled "Park in the Garden of The Holy Spirit". I loved the title and the artwork. The brushstrokes chaotic as my phone making the sketching bit. Obviously, there was a key link between Eilat's, a mental illness, and 'My Gloom'. I used black to print my design, making the chaotic atmosphere more prominent and so the viewer had to look close to appreciate between the print and the artwork by Gogh.
- 12 My favourite piece of this print series is the mystical forest. I was drawn to this magazine page because of the saturated unusual colours and magical atmosphere. The print seemed like something you'd find in a fairy tale, a perfect place for my mystical creature to live. The white perfectly contrast the purple - simplistic but effective.

Overall, this print ~~was~~ my favourite part of my sketchbook so far. I was inspired how much I enjoyed it as I had never experimented with two-cut before - but definitely want to grow in the future. My main focus was to experiment with the contrast in colour in printing the two contrasts of Eilat's "My Gloom".

DEVELOPMENT



I really liked this page in my portfolio. It's creativity + originality. It was hard to think of but it was a great piece of art.



IDEA 1 - E.D

EATING DISORDERS + BODY DYSMORPHIA



Good eye contact - emotion conveyed - I like the placement of hands + laces.



The subject feels disengaged - not feeling the atmosphere (almost disgusted?)



Quite liked this angle - subject disengaged - not enough emotion.



Nice use of eye contact.



Really like the exaggerated expression - not the atmosphere I want to convey.



Like the eye contact / expression + feeling straight on angle - photo too overexposed.

IDEA 1

EATING DISORDERS / BODY DYSMORPHIA THROUGH STRAWBERRY LACES.

Body image. We are constantly told by society how we should look whatever that be limited in magazines, the media or even the fact that body shapes and puts go in and out of fashion. In such a superficial world it is common for one to feel insecure with their bodies. No matter how much or how little someone eats, they may see a completely different figure in the mirror than how they actually look. Through this idea I wanted to show how someone battling E.D or body dysmorphia may see food as an enemy.

IDEA 2

TECHNOLOGY / SOCIAL MEDIA STRESS THROUGH HEADPHONES.

With technology advancing everyday, new accessories are being flaunted to the public. The rise of social media has everyone glued to their phones, able to almost touch other lips. Social media has introduced the new way of living where people want to show off a fake reality. This toxic facade can make people feel ashamed of their own lives. With this idea, the headphones represent this technology and how we are slaves to it - it conveys how it has us down to fake ideals.

CHOSEN PHOTO



Close-up of EYES.

When photographing this idea I chose my friend with red hair to complement the colour of the strawberry laces. I wanted to capture how an eating disorder can take over one's life. After taking multiple photos, I realized the most intriguing / captivating is the image on the left. I love how her eyes are staring straight at the viewer of the piece, almost as if it's a cry for help. The blank expression is simple but very meaningful. There is an aura of emptiness + isolation.

IDEA 2 - MEDIA

TECHNOLOGY + SOCIAL MEDIA



Photo too close-up
↳ not very flattering or compelling.



Really like the angle and composition of the headphones.

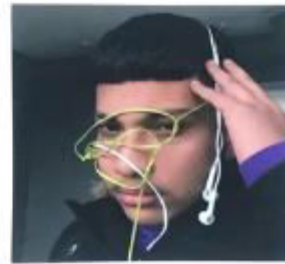


Too close-up - looks angry - not conveying the right atmosphere.



Eyes shut - no emotion.
- wires in a funny position

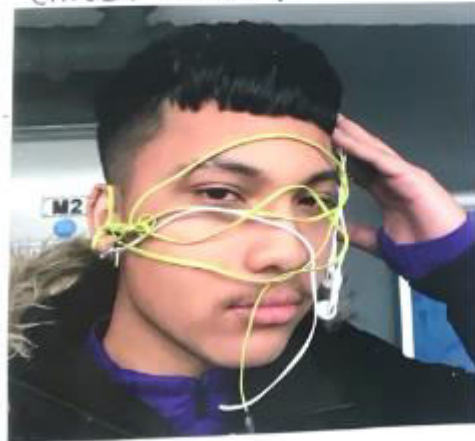
CHOSEN PHOTO ↓



Don't like the positioning of the wires - looks sparse. Hand looks weird.



Like the composition and eye contact - wires in an interesting configuration.



When using the headphones I reacted to use a different color to add a bold appearance (like the others). The white and green complement my friend's tanned skin tone. I chose this photo on the left as the composition of the wires caught my eye - may one an art piece by street artists. I like the tangled cluster of wires near his ear, as shown above. The ear is very important as it is where headphones belong but also gives me compassion so it is blocking out people's voices with the headphones.

ARTISTS



Of course Aubrey Beardsley's 'The Angels' inspired this whole idea, but I wanted to look at other artists with similarities. The chaos and entanglement of the headphones and tangle of wires lead me to Vince Low. The ink technique reminds me of Beardsley, however Low incorporates this scribble technique.

VINCE LOW



distorted
illusion of reality
jumbled
writic
chaotic
disrupted
disorganised
messy

Contrast of beautiful art to the baldest action of a scribble.

Organised mess

Scribble not precise but it in this instance leads to mental health mental disabilities
use of words
ironic + wise
- word hidden in the scribbles

MICHAEL VOLPECELLI



A high resolution for the viewer
layering up of words to create darker areas - algorithm technique
harder meaning
have to look close

USE OF WORDS

words relate to the portrait
the power of words

So much to look at - viewer's eyes are everywhere

struggling to focus on one bigger picture

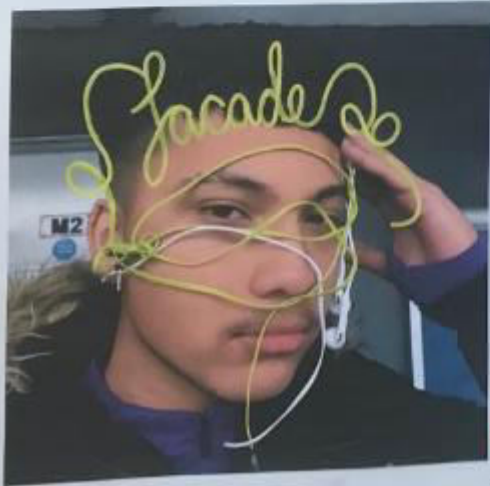
MATERIALS / MEDIA



INCORPORATING VINCE LOW (scribble)
+ MICHAEL VOLPECELLI (words)

I really like the outcome of this piece. The messy/scribbled technique gives the atmosphere a sense of disorder and a very chaotic - just how someone's mind would be when tackling a mental illness. However, I feel like this technique doesn't show case my skills as well as other styles might. Although I do really like the words and lookers in this piece - I feel the cut one is too obvious so I will change that however the concept of words hidden in the gives the viewer more to look at and question - so I decided to look at this one...

I decided to draw on words/phrases to the original piece - these words have relevance to the context of this piece - they might not make sense at first glance but that's why I think it's interesting. It gets the viewer thinking + questioning the work.



'Who is that?' - I didn't like the first piece I did 'eat me' as I feel it's obvious it relates to food. I wanted to show the impact of the cause of this girl's mental illness. 'Who is that?' suggests the girl is losing herself and can't recognise herself. She sees something completely different in the world to what she looks like in reality. (Common form of BPD)

'Facade' - This shows the idea that social media is a fantasy, it's a place where people can alter their reality to make it look more perfect. I wanted to convey the loneliness



PHOTOGRAPH



© MICHAEL VOLPECELLI



© VINCE LOW



© MICHAEL VOLPECELLI



© MICHAEL VOLPECELLI



© MICHAEL VOLPECELLI

When working on materials, I wanted to portray different techniques rather than direct comparison. I started off with a pencil sketch of my subject's head to capture a realistic look. I decided to start with white paper as it is a neutral, less distracting color. I believe the choice of a white background for the first one because it is easy to see the eye and mouth against the grey complexion.

I moved on to ink - I really liked the look with the red piece - the intricate lines create a more atmospheric. One step I took and white thread piece, I decided to try an abstract look as it is easy to see the eye and mouth.

I really enjoyed myself with the oil painting. Two pieces are of similar in nature. I love the use of colors and intricate brush strokes. Although this technique does not do much, but I want the first piece to be about mental health to study how mental health is a real one.

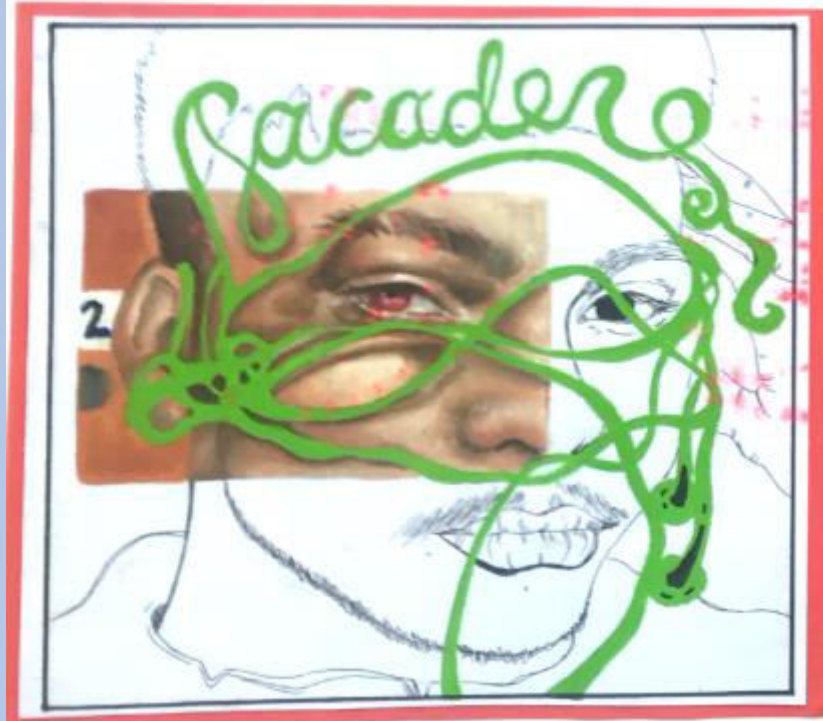
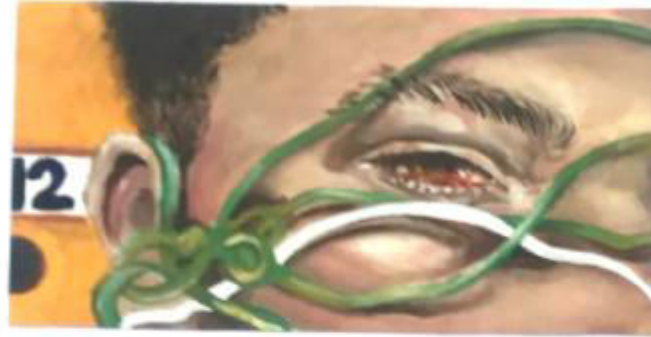
Some to begin, the subject's detail putting a delicate touch.

I love mixing with gouache but found the outcome to be unrealistic - but I like the use of water.

FINDING THE RIGHT MEDIA

CHECKLIST

What is the subject?
 What is the mood?
 What is the style?
 What is the message?
 What is the audience?
 What is the context?
 What is the location?
 What is the time?
 What is the weather?
 What is the background?
 What is the foreground?
 What is the middle ground?
 What is the depth?
 What is the focus?
 What is the lighting?
 What is the color?
 What is the texture?
 What is the value?
 What is the contrast?
 What is the composition?
 What is the balance?
 What is the rhythm?
 What is the unity?
 What is the variety?
 What is the emphasis?
 What is the hierarchy?
 What is the flow?
 What is the direction?
 What is the movement?
 What is the energy?
 What is the tension?
 What is the release?
 What is the resolution?
 What is the conclusion?
 What is the overall effect?



wanted to put my work
 out into the world and decided
 on try and my portfolio
 in a smaller scale. During
 into a section of my
 primary focus, I began
 to use oil paints. I realized
 I didn't like the look of
 green I used as it wasn't
 just enough. However I
 used the super realistic
 approach to decide to try
 it as a combination of
 both. I showed on the
 left while using through
 the painting I added red
 to the subject's eye, as I
 wanted to portray a sense
 of energy and intensity. I was
 very happy with the final
 result. Although I used
 the entire piece doesn't really
 work as the painting is
 larger so when I originally
 did it the composition was
 things when I used try
 for I used oil.
 Change the oil section
 and use acrylic and maybe
 to highlight the
 change use a different
 material try cardboard.

→ OIL PAINTS
 ACRYLIC PAINTS
 FINE LINER / INK

TESTING
 THIS
 OUT



FINDING THE RIGHT CANVAS



Trying both
 black +
 white ink
 white pps
 on the brown
 - all contrast

seeing how different mediums
 show up on the card.

LINE WORK



exposed cardboard
 lines the
 impression
 of some
 of things
 been flipped
 ↓
 messy rough



TESTING WHITE + BACK LINE WORK

CARD BOARD

The whole idea behind the surrounding
 two work is the concept of contrast. When
 someone is struggling with a mental illness they
 may feel isolated (alone). The line work introduces
 a lot of emotion, care around the subject.

When practicing with a mock up on
 the previous page I realized this empty space
 looked quite bland to the eye. I didn't
 want to get rid of it as the concept fits
 well with the piece. To tackle this issue
 I tried using cardboard. The colour of the
 card makes the eye into thinking there is
 more going on.

FINAL PIECE MINI MOCK UP

↳ ripped card highlights theme of decay

↳ words on lanyard portray meaning + make the viewer look closer.

↳ Acrylic paint on card to make it stand out.

↳ Decided to use coloured pencil as I like the use of bold colours - Did it on paper first to make the colours more vibrant.



↳ I really like the contrast between the card + the white ink.

↳ carries on the illusion of emptiness.

↳ Difference in line width - portraying thickness of lines.

↳ Different layers / tiers - different emotions / feelings

↳ levels
↳ sad to angry?
↳ progression of emotion.

↳ physical abuse to the cardboard - could represent self harm.
↳ Guard knife

↳ claw / scratcher marks
↳ distress

↳ ridges in cardboard - empty space
↳ hard / rough texture - links to someone pushing people away

↳ Don't want them to get too close.



RECYCLING

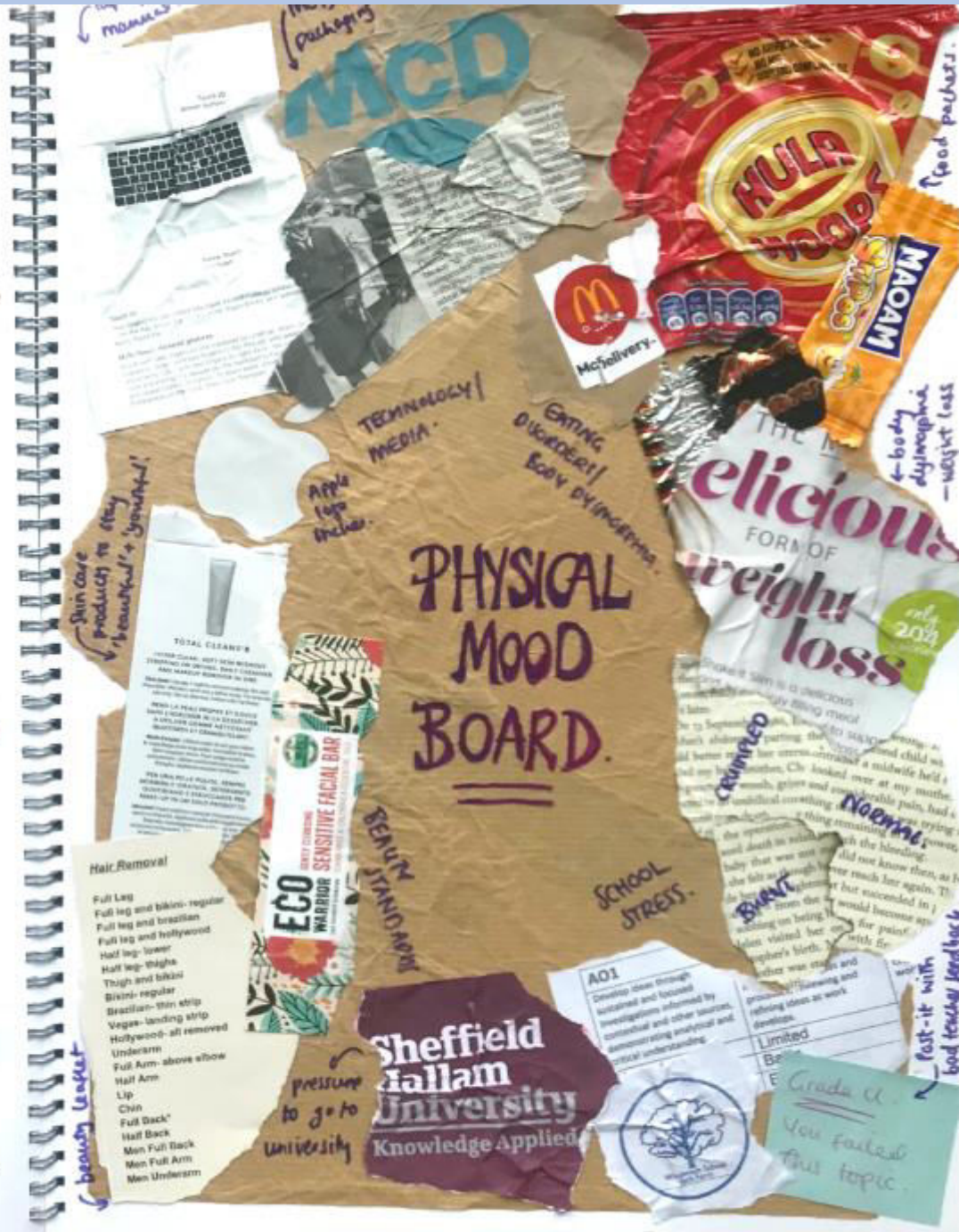
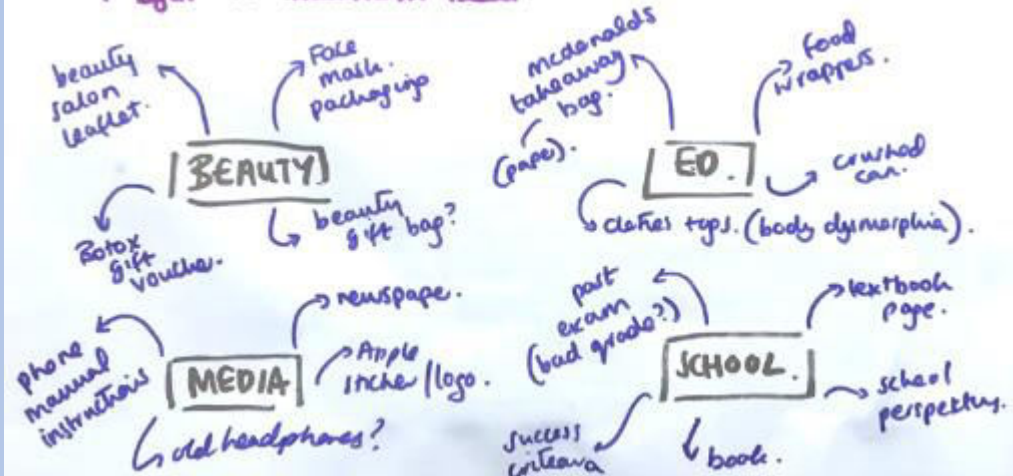


↳ Using cardboard, a recyclable material, reflects the idea that as people use emotions are part of a cycle.
 ↳ Thoughts are recycled between us, everyone reusing same feelings and once finished moves onto the next person.

DEVELOPING THIS IDEA...

I then wanted to look at other materials I could use as well as cardboard to indicate this theme of recycling. I came across some coloured cellophane (plastic) and thought it was perfect. I began to play around with it gluing and hotting it onto the cardboard. I like the message behind the melting as it illustrates people feeling stressed, 'under the heat'. As well as the colours and abstract shapes it they give a chaotic atmosphere.

The melted plastic encouraged me to look at what other 'rubbish' I could stick on. Each piece of clutter representing a disrupted past event that affected the subject of the piece's mental health. It would be interesting to look at different materials that relate to the subject's reason for not feeling great. Below I began to brainstorm ideas.



2D/DIGITAL EXPERIMENT

⇒ Growing old is a beautiful journey in itself. Every wrinkle highlights a moment or a time you were happy. There is such pressure from society to look young forever.

⇒ Skin products that claim to give older women a more youthful appearance.

BEAUTY STANDARDS (ESPECIALLY FOR OLDER WOMEN)



→ makeup
There are many facial procedures and skin care to make one feel "beautiful".

→ Eco-friendly/reusable items to reinforce my idea of "recycling feelings".

→ make-up companies imply you will only be attractive if you use their products.

→ It is common for women to feel embarrassed of their grey hair as they get older. There are thousands of hair dye brands - it's easy to feel pressure to change your hair colour.

→ Pressure to look sexy - when you get older you may be perceived as less attractive/less sexy.

SCHOOL STRESS (ESPECIALLY FOR A-LEVEL/COLLEGE KIDS)



→ "Absent from lesson"
When in 11th form/college, there's more freedom with attendance - more likely for someone suffering to just not come in.

→ scrunched up post-it note if grade shows frustration with grade.

→ Pays from books that may feel impossible to finish reading before the "deadline" fear of punishment.

→ This can be an obvious sign of mental stress but some teachers may just see it as laziness.

→ pressure to go to university (A-level + college) and may get overwhelmed with stress as well as guilt - won't want to disappoint family.
→ plummeting grades - too much work to handle.

→ The stress/pressure from school may mean some kids won't want to come into school. How attendance + punctuality punishment.

→ Dieting drink - meal replacement.
 Not a healthy way of taking an eating disorder - a quick way out
 that is not good for recovery.

EATING DISORDERS / BODY DYSPHORNIA.



→ McDonald's
 A quick way of obtaining comfort as it is such easy access but detrimental to health. stops motivation not leaving home.

→ part of red.

→ Frame of red - hoodlumps connecting the them of eating disorder. But the hoodlumps portray the cycle of these feelings.

→ Clothes label stating size small - one of the smallest sizes you can get. However, the subject has crossed it out and written 'fat'. It shows how with body dysmorphia you can be thin but still feel like the largest person. The red matches the Franky lace.

Newspapers/other news outlets - telling us how we should & shouldn't be. Articles that don't label. As well as indoctrinating us to believe certain stories and not others - harmful.

MEDIA / TECHNOLOGY / SOCIAL MEDIA



→ Apple Mac instructions

→ Images of phones constantly being sold in newspapers and media outlets. We are lulled by technology and the representation of it.

→ new technology

→ Apple logo - the uprising of apple and how they keep supplying us with technology that is harmful.

→ Advertising data which contributes to the use of social media. Data allows us to use social media without WiFi so it is always accessible + harmful on mental health.

- FINAL PRODUCT -



DEVELOPMENT: CARD BOARD BOX

BATTERED
 WRAPPED WITH TAPE
 ↓ LINKS WITH STYLE OF PREVIOUS WORK.



BOX FOUND IN ART CLASSROOM USED FOR STORAGE -
 COULD BE INTERESTING TO USE?

OPENING - LIKE DOORS?
 ↓ COULD BE AN INTERACTIVE PIECE
 → HIDEY HOLE / GETAWAY.

-TIGHT SPACE
 -DARK
 -ENCLOSED
 -CHROMATIC
 -STUFFY
 -WALLS CLOSING IN.



PEEP HOLE
 → LOOK INSIDE
 → HOLE TO BREATHE?



ALL THIS RUBBISH HAD BEEN OWNED BY STUDENTS.

CLUTTER
 - COULD REFLECT SOMETHING INSIDE)
 ↓
 "KOTON HEART / SOUL"?

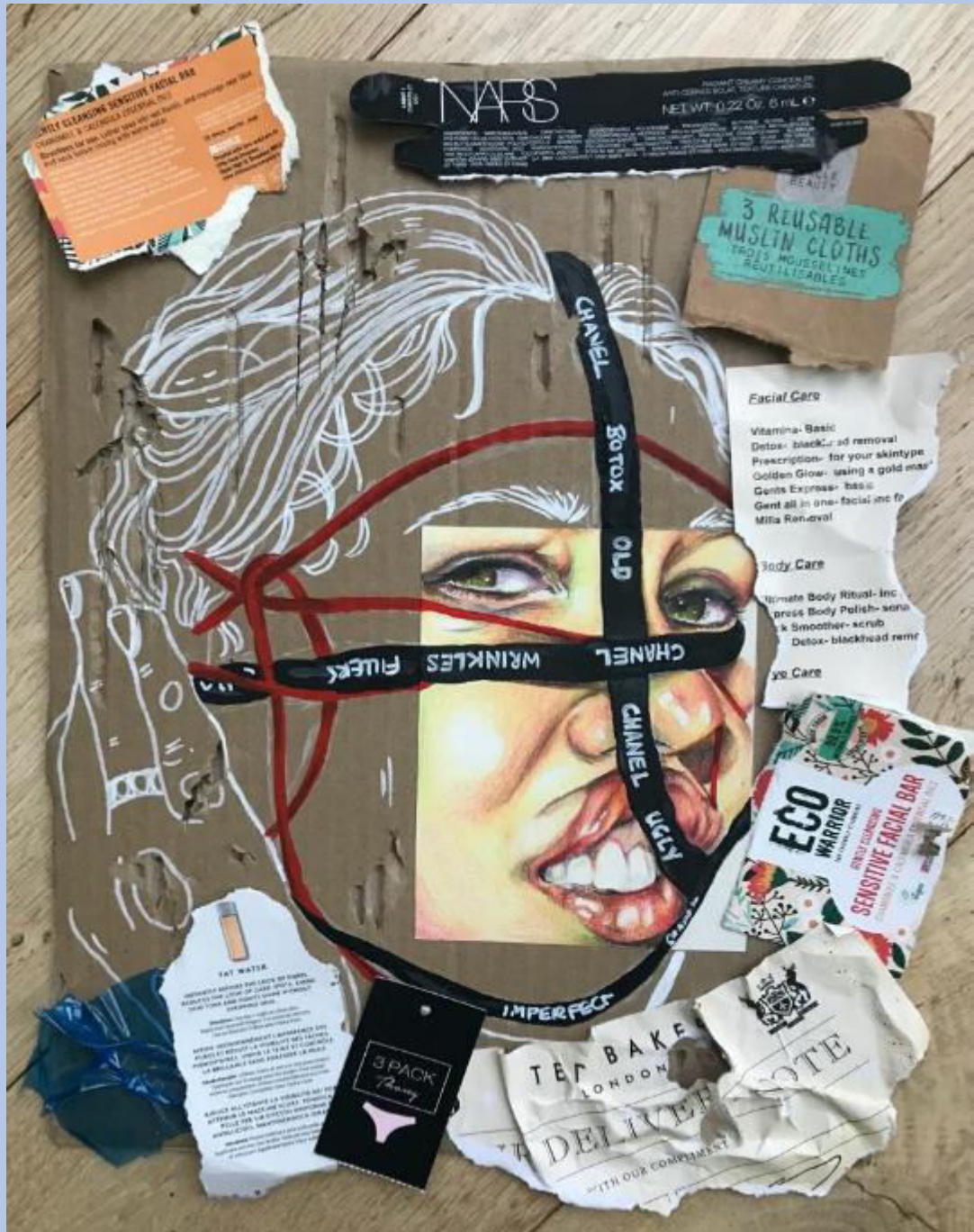


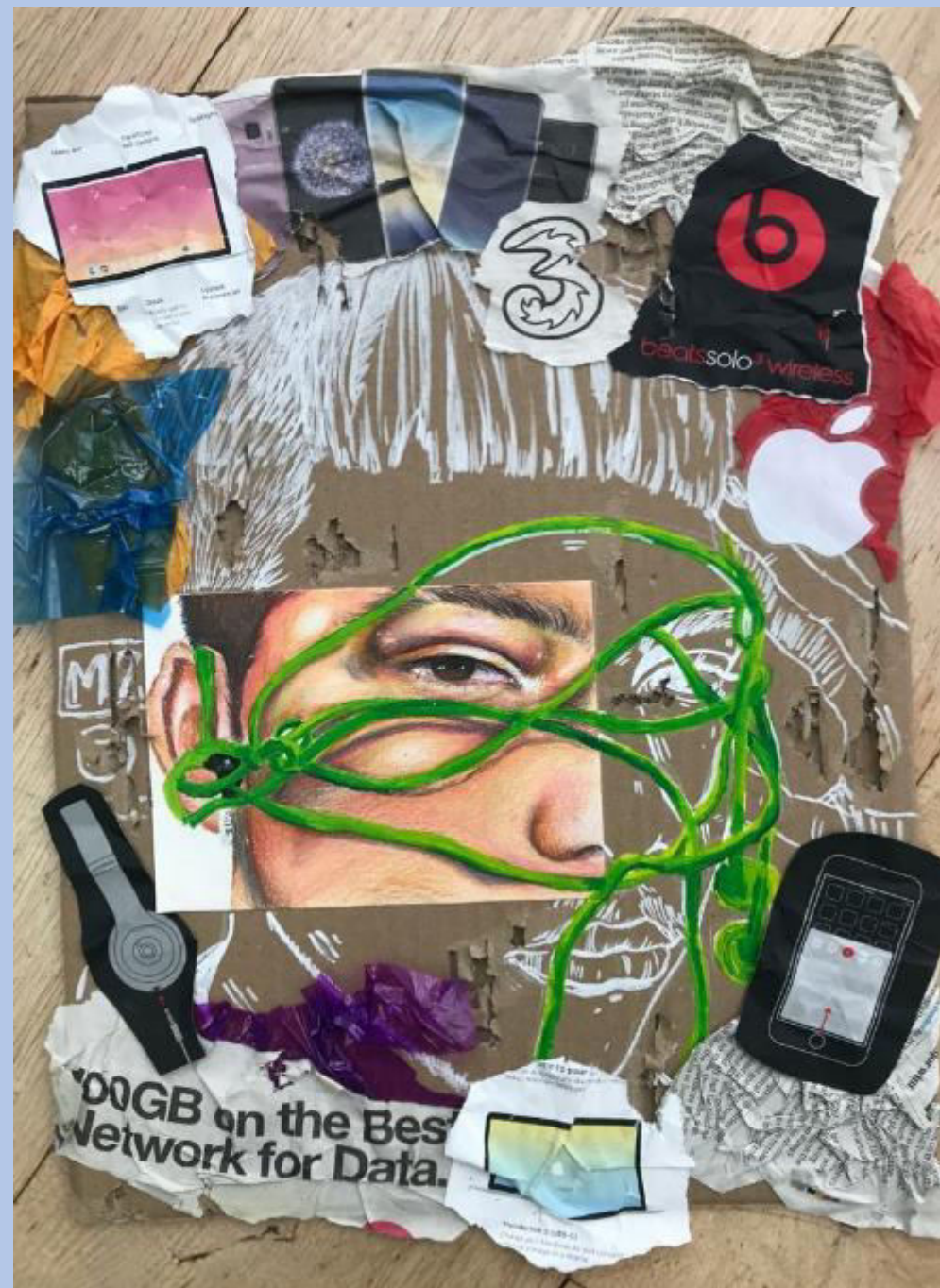
I LOOKED AT ARRANGING MY PREVIOUS PIECES OF WORK ON THE BOX TO DISPLAY THEM.

↓ WASN'T HAPPY WITH OUTCOME.

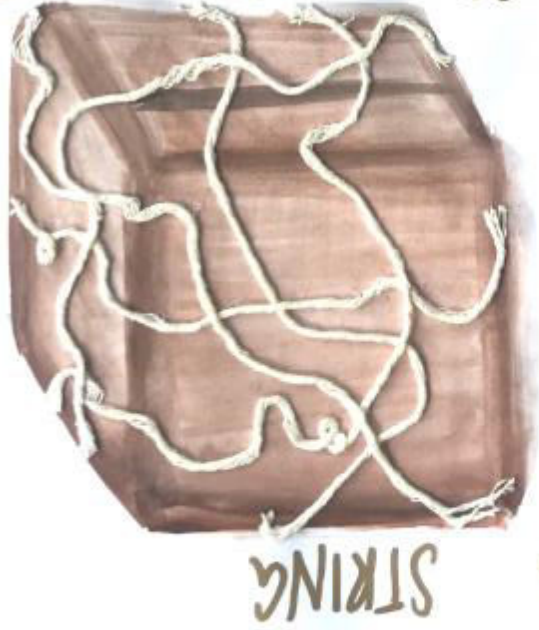
WANT TO LOOK AT PRESENTING A VERSION OF MY PREVIOUS IDEAS ON THE SIDE OF THE BOX - MAYBE BIGGER?







I really like this idea but it's not very practical as it would cover up my main piece of work. I want to look at ways of manipulating this idea in a more suitable way.



CELL-TAPE



WES NEMAN

As Wes Neman is my main artist study, I wanted to look at ways I could incorporate his work further. I tested out wrapping string and cellotape/masking paper around the box. I really like how this looks but it would cover my drawing.



I still wanted to incorporate Neman's artwork further and thought about envisioning the box as a human. The inside represents what's going on inside someone's head - the outside looking 'pretty and colourful'. The string shows how tangled and twist the mind can really be, like a MONSTER or CREATURE.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Instead of moving forward with the string and cellotape, I think it would be interesting to look at containing the ribbon around the whole box. However, wrapping string words on the hidden ribbon rather than 'panels'. It represents how these emotions are hidden away from viewers and how as humans are attention is on what is attractive + pretty. (the colourful chord image).



CREATION PROCESS



A2 SIZED PAPER.

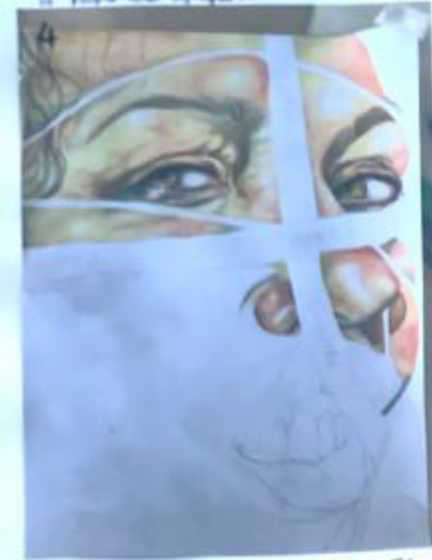
From the rough sketch of my subject, I began to use coloured pencils to slowly layer up colour and create shadow and highlight. I didn't want a flat piece of over-saturated colour so profusing a bold, realistic colour scheme.



The main colour I used for the nose was a pinky shade to give a fleshy appearance. I made sure the colours were lighter to stand away from a lifeless look.



Moving onto the other eye, I struggled with the eyebrow as drawing hair on such a large scale was difficult but I'm happy with the outcome. I like how the undertone came out gold-blonde with the use of purple and brown.



I struggled with the flat skin texture of the face on such a large scale. But I was able to use my imagination and smudge between colours to give this skin a more realistic touch.



My favourite part of this drawing was the lips. I enjoyed colouring an array of reds, pinks and oranges to produce the vibrant lip shade. I wanted a striped effect to give the appearance of wrinkles in the lip.



Just like the forehead I struggled with cheek as it was such a large piece of flat skin. However, I used a circle technique and ended up happy with the outcome.



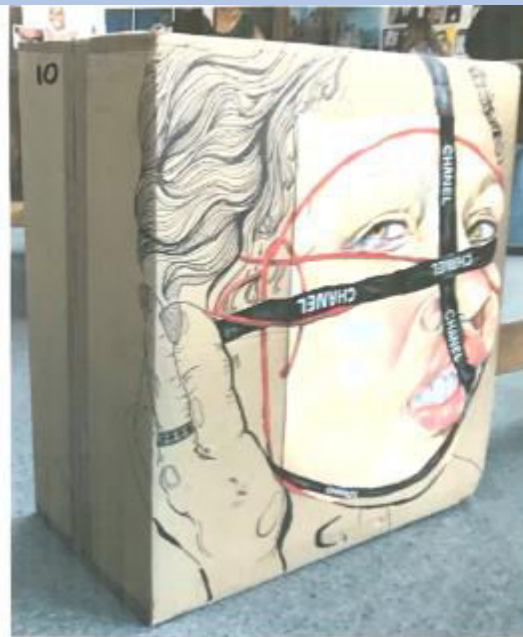
I used blues, greys and browns on the teeth but realised the colour looked quite flat so later went on to fix it by adding more shadow.



I used red and black pencil on the ribbon. To add a more realistic finish to the black ribbon I used my rubber to create spots to create highlights. Then went over it with a grey pencil to blend.



I finished the ribbon and used a white acrylic paint pen to do the typography "CHANEL".



One which I glued the pencil piece onto the box, aligning it in the position I'd planned. I then began to flesh out the surrounding line work using a white pencil to allow for errors. I used a thick white board marker (black) to produce the bold line work. Varying between thin and thicker lines to create a more interesting design. As this was a larger canvas (and spots weren't hand by the hand, so I decided to add some spirit shapes to make the piece flow. I really liked how the hand came out and of that a funky cartoon. I also used acrylic paint to enhance the ribbon, using different tones to portray shadows and highlights.



I then moved onto the surrounding ribbon around the whole box, again just sketching in white and then adding colour. I dabbed shades of grey on the highlights of the ribbon so the viewer can tell which ribbon is on top and which is underneath.

I positioned the words "not okay" in this specific place to make the viewer look closer. When the door is shut the viewer will only be able to read "okay" and the "not" is hidden on the other side - the "is" hidden near negative thoughts.



Again I have positioned these words upside down to make the viewer look closer. The words read "poor, old, ugly".

The words written on the ribbon are hidden on the opposite side of the pencil image, those words are brutal and harsh which contrast the pretty pencil with the image represented how she feels or what she has been called before.



18



When beginning to glue the string inside the box, I went in with the plan of them being straight. I put my headphones in to listen to music and was inspired by the knots and tangles. Therefore, I tied knots the string to add to the atmosphere and meaning of the piece. I used a glue gun to stick the string to different sides of the box, working my way from back to front.

19



I wanted the design to look web-like and was very inspired with the outcome. Some of the glue had fallen/dripped so the string creating a web-like appearance which I was pleased with.

22

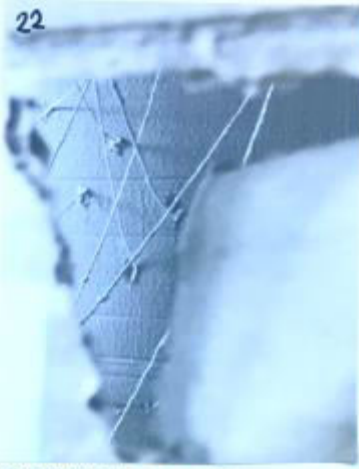


PHOTO TAKEN BY ME AT THE GALLERY OF ANTHONY GREEN'S WORK

GREEN USES STRANGE PERSPECTIVES - THIS IS A HOLE IN THE CANVAS + THERE IS ANOTHER CANVAS BEHIND.

The hole in the box shown in images 22 + 25 reminded me of Anthony Green's work, especially the piece above. I like how the hole is something so unnoticeable but such an interesting part of my piece. Through the hole the viewer is able to peek inside the mind of the box to see a cluttered mess. I also like how that small hole represents a beacon of hope - like the light at the end of the tunnel.



LOOK-UP.

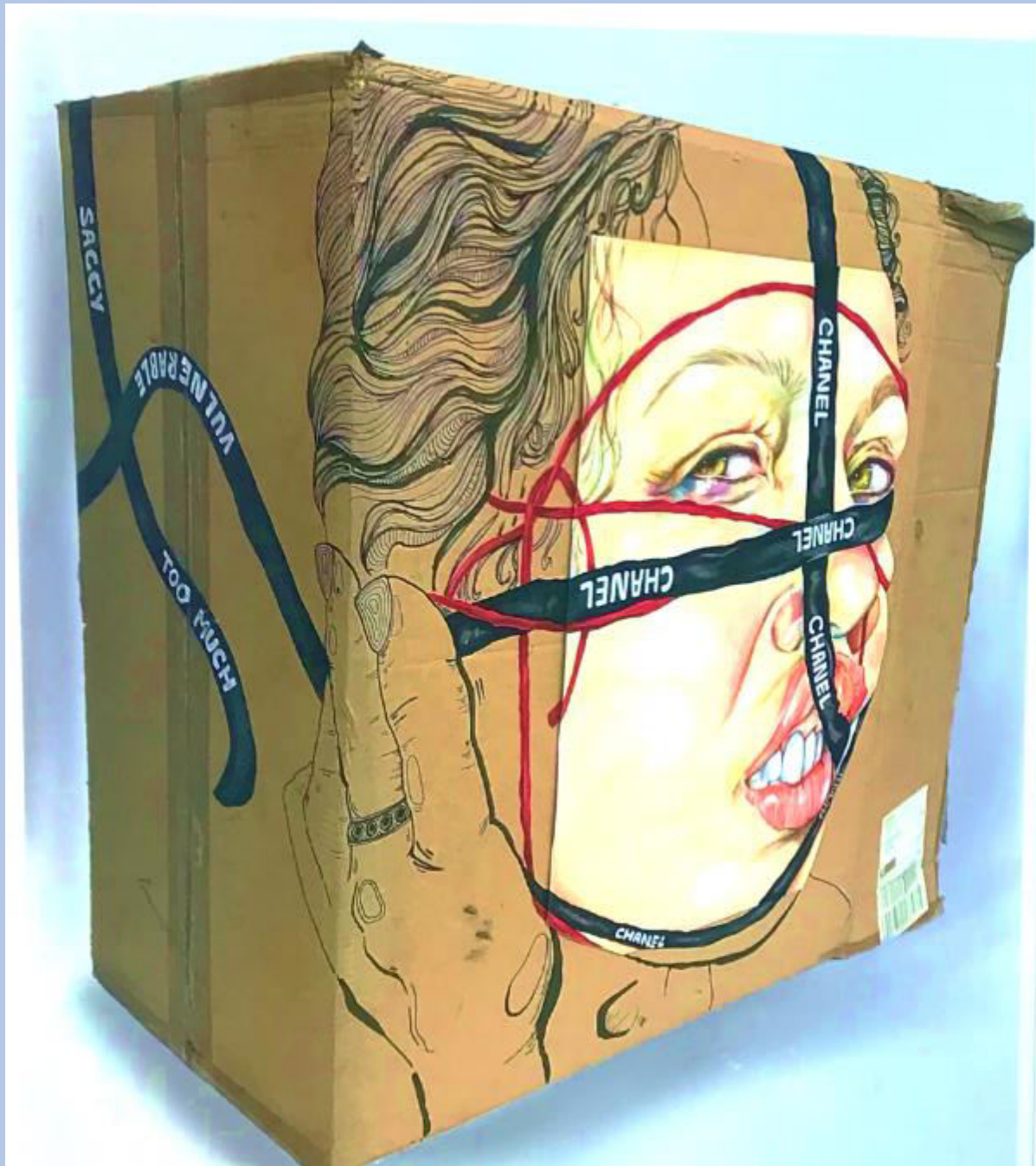
23



24









This piece started off as a stepping stone in my sketchbook, but with a lot of development it has become a final piece. Over the course of 16 hours, I was able to create a mix media, interesting piece. On the front of the box (74cmH x 64cmW x 41cmD) is a pencil drawing done on an A2 sheet of paper first. Surrounding it is a line work, using a variety of line sizes to create depth. ~~Inside the box~~ Inside the box is a web of string, hot glued individually. Overall, the box represents the human, in this instance it is my mum. The head drawing on the outside ~~portraying~~ portraying what the naked eye sees and what the subject wants to show whereas the inside of the box indicates the mind/hidden feelings. When looking at my final piece viewers are drawn to the coloured pencil drawing - it's bright, colourful and eye catching. This corresponds with society and how humans are nurtured into believing 'pretty' things/people are superior and deserve more privileges. However, the tied 'chanel' ribbon suffocating my mum's face implies the darker side to this issue and the way beauty standards are forced upon us - there is no escape. Especially for the elder generation, like my mum, there is a pressure to stay looking young and beautiful forever; whether that be through botox, fillers or even just makeup. The ~~string~~ ribbon tied around her lips, giving them a fuller appearance, reinforces this idea. The black line work surrounding the face is done in a cartoonish style, the hand disproportionate and the hair unrealistic. Through line work, which I was inspired by Aubrey Beardsley with, I was able to ^{indicate} ~~show~~ the idea that this topic of beauty is not always looked at, the cartoon style suggests it's a joke/longing matter. The line work also creates a sparse look, implying the loneliness of the subject. She feels she is the only one experiencing this feeling of suffocation and has no one around her to turn to. Furthermore, the ribbon inspired by ~~an~~ photographer Wes Norman, continues around the whole box giving the sense of entrapment even more. Although, unlike the ribbon on the

front spelling out 'chanel', as you move around the box you realise the words change. These words include: 'vulnerable, soggy, imperfect, ugly, too much, ugly, alone, broken, wrinkles, poor, old, hop, fillers, botox and not okay'. Referencing back to the idea that people are drawn to the colourful front, I wanted to play on this. As humans we often disregard feelings that aren't directly in front of us; it doesn't take long to realise the words on the other side of the box are negative but you have to take action/movement to see them. Some of the words make the viewer have to look closer, for example "not okay". The "okay" is the only word positioned on the right door giving the impression she is stable but adjacent on the other side is "not". Sometimes as a community we miss that there is a sign of negative feelings. I wanted to make this piece interactive to show where society lacks and to change it - we need to communicate more to understand others. So the inside of the box represents the mind and the darkness that really goes on. As a viewer you can interact with the piece, opening the door to the box and peering through holes to peer ~~into~~ inside the subject. The text on the side reminded me of Anthony Green's work where he uses various/strange perspectives which intrigued me. ~~When opening the box~~ When opening the box you see a tangle of strings, some knotted. I used string, as I previously ~~used~~ experimented with it in my sketchbook and enjoyed it. This part of the piece links the most to my typical mythical creatures as it proves how we can be our own worst nightmares and there's a monster living inside everyone's mind. The string reminds me of a web - this is where the negative creature lies, cluttering and tampering with our heads. It makes us think dark thoughts. But ~~the~~ by opening the door of the box the viewer is letting in a gush of light - they are the light at the end of the tunnel. This ~~monster~~ creature lurks in the darkness but can be killed by anyone willing to care.

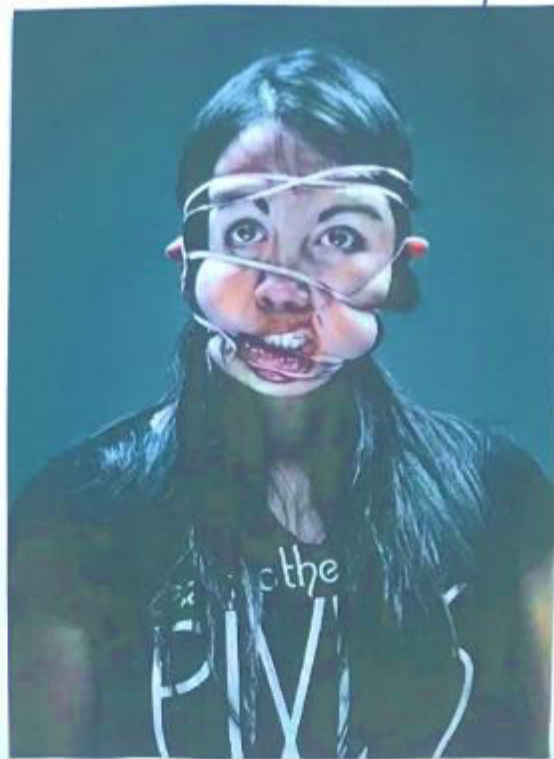
FINAL PIECE COMPARISON TO WES NAMEN ART

However, I noticed there are differences.
For example, my piece experiments with typography and words.



My piece uses exaggerated use of colour unlike Namen's ~~is~~ dull, grey toned photography. Although both pieces portray similar feelings and emotions of pressure.

Namen uses monotone backdrops, usually a dull green/blue shade. This is similar to my piece's cardboard canvas. Both are flat and plain so the subject stands out - emitting atmospheres of confinement + isolation.



Both pieces use some sort of material that distort facial features. Mine = string/ribbon Namen = tape/elastic bands. Through this idea we collectively portray atmospheres of suffocation and being tied down/trapped. Although with my piece I begin to use this material in a different manner on the inside of the box whereas Namen strictly focused on the face.

Following this idea... I wanted to continue the theme of suffocation and instantly transport of coronavirus and how everyone has to wear a mask - a physical suffocation. I thought it would be interesting to look at how lockdown has had an impact and fear of the virus itself. I want to tie both those factors in with my overall topic (mythological creatures).

[IMAGE OF DAD WEARING MASK]



lockdown has turned people crazy
 brought the worse out of some, showing a more impatient, domineering, monstrous side?

The mask is suffocating just like the topic of corona - you can't escape the reality.

MY PLAN IS TO TAMPER WITH THE IMAGE INTRODUCING THEMES FROM MYTHICAL BEINGS.

The belief of corona - people joking about turning into a creature if you have it

Rumours of gaining an extra arm if you catch it?

I think it's important that I am using my dad as the subject of this piece as this was something that affected everyone - even the people closest to us. Also, older people are more vulnerable to the virus.

= GORGONS =

In early Greek literature, the term Gorgon refers to three sisters who are required to have hair made of living venomous snakes that kill those that behold them into stone. The most common sister being Medusa - who I have studied in this notebook.



When researching images of both new and ancient depictions of the sisters (artificial masks were sculpture).



EYES

I noticed most of the artworks had this lifeless gaze [very little detail] in the iris.

During lockdown, this seemed like less with all the restrictions | self-isolation - people turned into hermits / unsocial creatures.

STONE

→ relates to lockdown, life was put on hold / frozen - time was still + stationary like stone.

①



SKETCHES USING A BLACK BIRRO PEN AND A HB PENCIL - TO CREATE SHADOWS + DEPTH.

②



I was fascinated by the stone Gorgons and began to draw out design - figuring out how I could transform the photo of my dad into a modern / current day Gorgon. In the first drawing I experimented with more realistic features but didn't like the outcome as the original Gorgons are depicted mainly not having eyebrows. With the second drawing I composed more bold shapes and followed ideas from the images I researched.

When looking at my "modern gorgon", I feel like it is not pleasing because the face mask looks very flat. I wanted to play on this idea of the mask but intensify its meaning, giving a heavier atmosphere. Therefore, I'm going to look at replacing the mask with a gas mask.

GAS MASK REFERENCE



EXPLORING / RESEARCHING DIFFERENT STYLES OF MASKS.

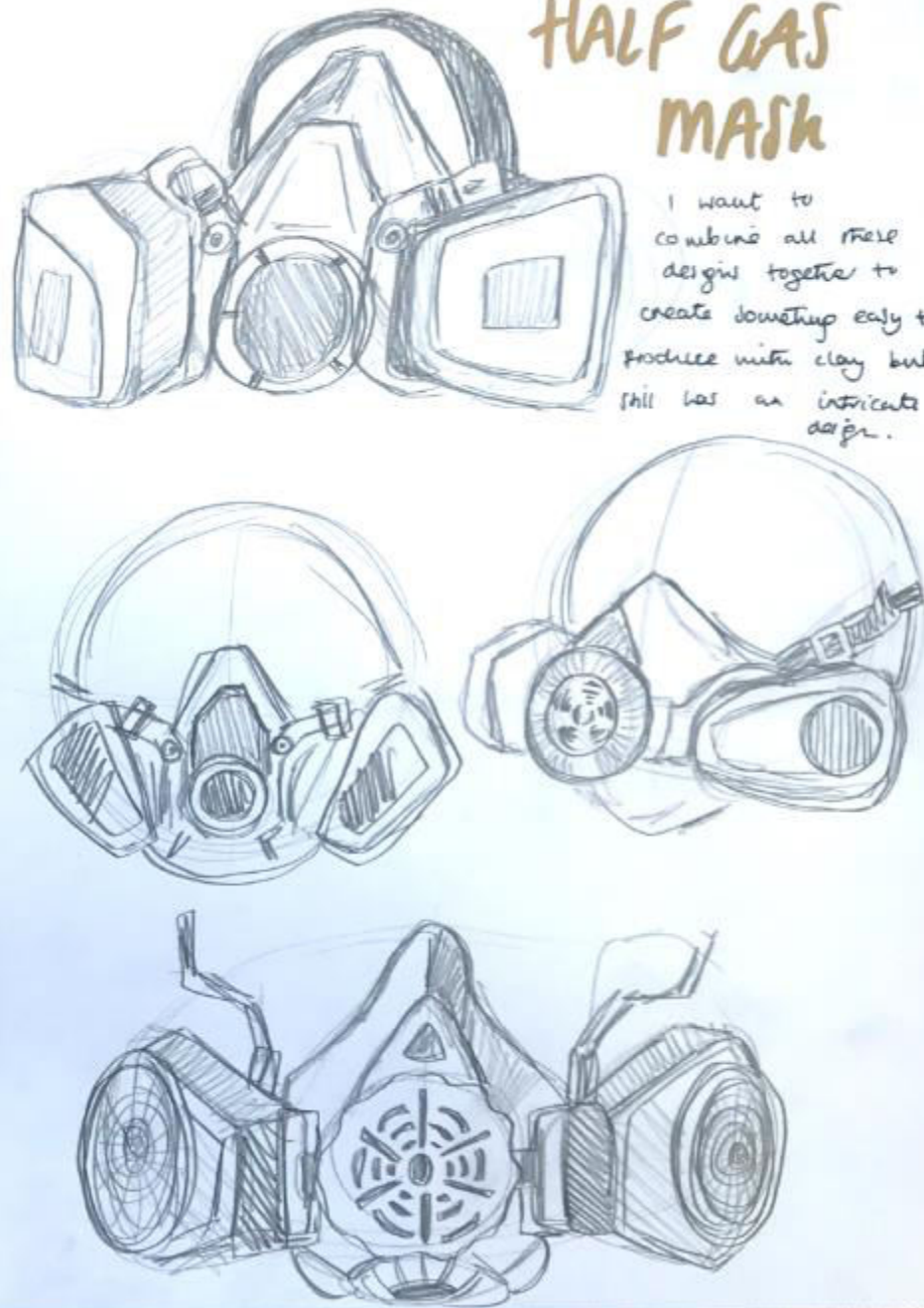
FULL GAS MASK.

I looked at typical gas mask styles - full face. I experimented with different styles but don't like how they cover the whole face. I want to look at half face ones.

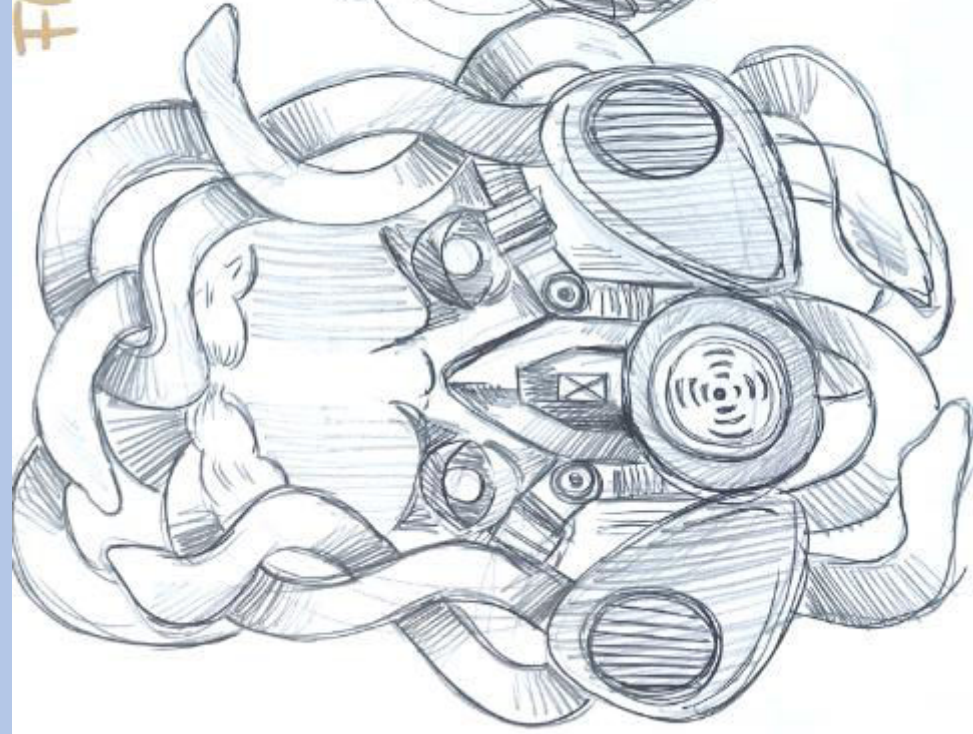


HALF GAS MASK

I want to combine all these designs together to create something easy to produce with clay but still has an intricate design.



FINAL MASK IDEA.



Although I was happy with the design of my mythical being/ 'modern medicine' I want to see how else I can incorporate other mythical creatures into the design to link to my theme - when researching creatures I was particularly intrigued by the Cyclops and Argus. As my design covers most of the face, the only main feature showing is the eyes.

CYCLOPS - I like the central positioning of the eye.

ARGUS - I like the vast amount of eyes!
 ↳ each eye represents something?

↳ Community? Those effected by COVID?

↳ I was particularly drawn to this image here - I feel this pairing of a third eye on the forehead would fit in nicely with my design. All three eyes could represent 'me', 'you' and 'they' - implying coronavirus is something that has effected EVERYONE.



I sketched out a rough design and feel this eye is perfect. Aesthetically, it feels like empty gap, making the piece more whole and exciting.





[FACE TEMPLATE/MOLD]

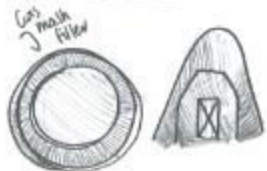


With my first attempt at using the template, when I removed the clay from the face it was a struggle. However, I then realized putting clay-film on before would help with easily moving the clay. I also decided to leave the clay on the face, as shown here, to make the creation process easier.



 Iris shape
Sketch above and below iris to recreate eyeball shape.
→ Began to focus on adding facial features.



 Mesh filter
Slowly I started adding in the fundamentals of the gas mask, starting off with those shapes above. Continuing by adding sharp like features to make the design more intricate.

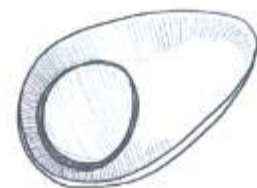
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CLOSE-UP



On the side I rolled out to produce those avocado shaped pieces to add on the side of the face. I was worried about attaching them as they are heavy, but made sure to really scratch the clay when applying.



 Adding further detail to features to portray a more menacing appearance



I rolled out sausage shaped to achieve the appearance of straps.

FINAL PIECE



FRONT



SIDE



BOTTOM



3/4 VIEW.

I also used how the piece was this aspect of modern life by using the image of my dad and Medusa. Medusa is slowly being more and more accepted with people coming out as transgender and non-binary. I feel this piece coincides with modern society in this way.

MATERIALS I USED: + EQUIPMENT.

- CLAY
- CLOTH
- ROLLING PIN
- STICKS
- KNIFE
- TOOLS FOR DETAILS
- KIDNEY.



Overall, I want to mix original ancient art techniques with contemporary modern contextual factors. By linking my theme of 'Mythological Creatures' with the horror of 2021 and Coronavirus I was able to produce this clay head. The piece represents how we are suffocated by COVID. Whether that be physically by masks, or the news/updates or even lockdown - we cannot escape from this 'horror'. It links to 'Mythical Creatures' not only with the concept of Medusa but the concept of COVID being a monster in itself. The contemporary monster parts in to everyone's walls than monster. Medusa represents how time is.

PAINTING...

At first I was not going to paint the head to have the stone-like appearance. But once it had dried I did not like the colour.

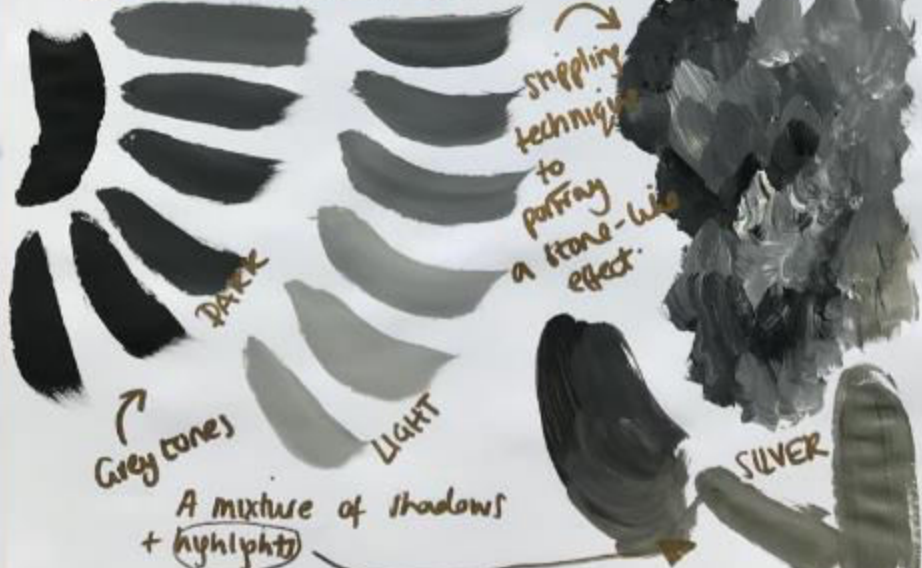


To bring back the stone element I started off painting an even coat of grey. Adding different shades using a stippling effect to give a more interesting appearance.

I then went over the piece, once it had dried, with a silver paint. This emphasized highlighted areas and gave it a metallic look - a metal on medusa? Gbet tuho on medusa?



COLOR SCHEME...



The snakes on my medusa head resemble the elastic bands in Namen's photography. They wrap the subjects in a suffocating manner. Unlike Namen's piece, the snakes are a part of the head rather than an 'accessory'. This conveys how my medusa head is a monster whereas Namen's subject is being suffocated by an exterior monster.



The idea of being trapped is represented in both pieces, through the elastic bands and the gas mask.

Both pieces resonate with the theme of isolation and loneliness as they are both surrounded by emptiness. My piece is a stand-alone head, there is no other elements to the overall composition, just like Namen's pieces

Evaluation

I started my sketchbook focusing on the theme "Mythological Creatures". I wasn't quite sure where I was going to take it, so started off by researching different creatures and tales. However, there was not much meaning behind why I was drawing these creatures but as I looked at specific features and their stories ideas began to take place. At first these ideas were surface level thoughts, not really diving into deeper ideas. Although, as my project went on, I dug deeper into conceptual issues happening in society today and linked them to these creatures. I saw a connection between the horrors of these "monsters" and the horrors of the mind and how it could have been perceived as a "monster". By studying different mental illnesses, I was able to give each piece a more interesting, in-depth concept. I delved into meanings and the impact of colour schemes, line work (Aubrey Beardsley) composition (Wes Namen) and perspective (Anthony Green). Each artist and technique taught me something new and gave me a different outlook on **myself** as an artist. What did I want to achieve with every piece? What themes and atmospheres were I trying to portray? What reaction did I want from the viewer? All the answers to these questions became clearer when developing my final piece. I was thinking outside of the box or in this case, inside the box...

I looked at every aspect of my piece "Monster of A Mind" and focussed on giving meaning to each element to make it interesting, not only visually but conceptually. I was particularly pleased with the interactive aspect of my piece as it made me realise the purpose of the piece. As mental health was an idea I focussed on throughout my study, the way society tackles mental health became apparent to me. Something needed to change. Whether this be by asking if someone okay, spending more time with a friend who seems distance or even just communicating. That's why I really wanted to reinforce an interactive element to my piece to highlight these issues. However, if I had more time to do this piece, I would have wanted to create a series of boxes. All varying in size and meaning. Each box representing someone in a community struggling. I could see it at an exhibition at the Royal Academy in London; some boxes hanging from the ceiling or some even big enough to crawl inside- acting as a positive space for people to feel safe. At the doorway of the room there is a help box, where people can anonymously write down something that been on their mind but don't feel comfortable enough to ask someone.

This project started off as something my heart wasn't in, producing work I didn't really know why I was doing it. But I began to realise why researching, developing and experimenting was such an important part of art. It opened my mind to so many other possibilities which led me to my final piece. My intention was to link dark mental health issues to mythical creatures, and I believe I achieved this goal. Although, I wish I had created more larger pieces as I really enjoyed the feeling of spending a long time on an eye-catching idea.

A Monster of A Mind



Introduction

The mind is the most powerful force in the world. A mental process which can allow us to excel and flourish. It is believed to have three functioning parts: thoughts, feelings and desires ¹(Linda Elder and Richard Paul 2019) and once understood, can allow us to reach unthinkable achievements. As an artist, work is often produced based off these three functioning parts to express, inform or even educate. However, there is a much darker side to the mind. It is as if there is a creature living in our own body's tampering with thoughts and is inescapable. In a world where a total of 792 million people are affected by mental health issues ²(MHE 2020), it is important to address this monster of the mind by using the power of creativity.

1 in 4 people will experience a mental health issue weekly (MHE 2020) and combating issues such as Depression, Anxiety, Schizophrenia and Dissociative Identity Disorder can feel like being in constant conflict with yourself. Not only is it mentally draining, but the physical effects can be just as worse. For example, when looking at Anxiety, some sufferers have said to have no trust in their biological bodies whilst experiencing a panic attack. They feel the overwhelming sensation of drowning as they struggle to breathe and genuinely think death is near ³(Kashmira Gander 2017). When discussing this with a friend we realised how powerful the mind can be and the tragic influence it can have on someone's physical health.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. I think there is not enough focus on mental health and how it is a silent killer. We are allowing monsters to comfortably live in our heads, destroying our minds and making us act unlike our normal selves. However, because we are unable to see the destruction with the naked eye it is deemed as being not as big of a problem. Sebastian Erikson, a creator of dark and mysterious artwork once said, "I am Sebastian Erikson and I want to capture odd things a camera cannot" (Tina Meamar 2017). This astonishing quote elevates the idea of how mental illness is an

¹ Linda Elder and Richard Paul (2019). The Thinkers Guide to the Human Mind: Thinking, Feeling, Writing and the Problem of Instability.

² Mental Health England (2020) Mental Health Statistics (online) Available from: <https://mhfeengland.org/mhe-centre/research-and-evaluation/mental-health-statistics/>

³ Kashmira Gander (2017) 'I'd be freezing water' People describe exactly what their mental illness feels like. The Independent (online) Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/health/mental-health/feel-like-freezing-water-what-do-you-feel-when-your-mental-health-is-on-a-7545111.html>

⁴ Tina Meamar (2017) Mysterious Sebastian Erikson Art. Art People (online) Available from: <https://www.artpeople.com/vip/when-sebastian-erikson-art>

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internal issue. It can't be seen or touched. As humans I believe we don't always have the best intentions and can resort to calling someone a liar or dismissing issues rather than helping and comforting. This can make it hard for someone with a mental health issue to come forward about their struggles. The most beautiful aspect of art is how someone can portray thoughts and emotions through exciting visual work. These feelings might not

always be easy to talk about to peers; art has the ability to express ourselves without using words, achieved through shapes, line work or even brushstrokes.

Throughout my studies I have focused on mythological creatures as the eerie tales surrounding them entice and excite me. I have begun to realise how these imaginary beings link so well to mental disorders. Most of the stories surrounding these creatures often convey them in a negative light, almost as monsters.

I thought it would be interesting to analyse these stories and the strange appearances of these 'monsters' to convey conceptual similarities with mental health.

Main Text

One of the first artists I looked at was Aubrey Beardsley. I attended his exhibition in the summer, not very familiar with his work. When I entered the gallery, I was stunned by dozens of detailed illustrations decorating the walls. His earlier works exhibited around the room, presenting imagery inspired by the decapitation of Medusa. I loved it. I've always been intrigued by beautiful but dark and mysterious artwork.

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Aubrey Beardsley, Perseus (1891) ink wash and gouache (phototaken by me)

A vertical hanging scroll inspired by Japanese kakemono depicting a Greek hero, caught my eye.

Perseus is presented naked in the middle of the composition, holding Medusa's head in his left hand. Having the subject of the piece centrally placed, with the only other surroundings being branches and a part of a dead body, radiates a lonely atmosphere. He is vulnerable wearing nothing but the skin he was born with, he has nowhere to hide and nothing to hide. Perseus' expression is blank, and his head is tilted to the side, with an empty glare. I believe this is quite ironic as it's Medusa's stone stare that got her killed.

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Perseus' expression contrasts with the celebratory ribbon at the bottom of the piece; shouldn't he be happy with this victory?



The ribbon is entangled in snakes, suggesting maybe this is not the last of Medusa. At the top of the piece there's a strip containing three subjects. Two people placed on either side of possibly Medusa, look petrified of what she might do. They look frail and as if they're crawling away from her out of fear.



Overall, I was instantly drawn to the juxtaposition between how Perseus should feel, compared to how he appears to feel. It proves you can be worshipped, victorious, brave and still feel isolated. I believe this coincides with many mental health issues, especially depression, as you could have the world and still feel alone.

As well as the contextual aspect of this piece, the art style itself and distinctive line work reflects the topics of mental health/disability. The black and white ink work is a simplistic technique, however, is complexly used through refined detail which is prominent in lots of his other artworks like 'Two Angels'. The complicated composition of tangled lines between the Two Angels inspired me to create my own work.

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Aubrey Beardsley, Two Angels, ink

When talking to my dyslexic sister about her mental disability, she phrased it as "not being able to think of the right words and it feels like it's all jumbled in my brain". Knowing this, I felt this illustration complemented dyslexia. The crisp white against the black ink perfectly contrast each other, such a simple combination. The simplicity reflects how easy reading and writing can be for some, but the tangled pathways convey how difficult it is for those with dyslexia. I imagined the lines being different thought processes to get to a specific word, the journey is not easy and might not always end. From this, I created a piece of art inspired by my sister's struggles, mimicking Beardsley's style with the use of ink and wash.



Student work, "It's on the Tip of my Tongue" (2020), mixed-media

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'Two Angels' reminded me of a ball of string, tangled and knotted, so I wanted to take inspiration from this and include it in my own piece. It is evident just by looking at my piece that there is a clear connection with 'Two Angels' however they both have very different meanings. 'It's on the tip of my tongue' represents the conflict between a dyslexic person and their mind. The words spelt wrong clearly indicate the struggles one with dyslexia might have with spelling, although the definition of these words have a deeper connotation.

Dyslexia is often dismissed and not understood, in a result labelling those as lazy or even just 'stupid'. Instead of helping those that struggle with Dyslexia, ignorant people often feed this monster of the mind with negative comments like this. The red string symbolises urgency as the subject of this piece is desperate for help, but no-one is willing to give her support.

I personally wanted to focus on Dyslexia as it is something I have seen cause chaos for those closest to me. The frustration and backlash this mental disability causes means that I deem Dyslexia a monster of the mind.

When continuing the theme of string I was struck by Naman's disturbing photography. Volunteers who have been distorted by tape and elastic bands were placed centrally in front of a monochromatic back drop.



Invisible Tape and Rubber Band Project, Wes Naman

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The subjects are vulnerable with nowhere to hide as all that surrounds them is emptiness. This relates to Beardsley's 'Perseus' illustration as both pieces of art convey a sense of loneliness. However, unlike 'Perseus', Naman's photography indicates a tone of humour. Put perfectly with Micheal Stewart's report "exaggerated facial characteristics were used to suggest humour; embellished smiles, inflated cheeks and amplified eyes all contributed to the upturned lines found in the comedic mask." Stewart's article made me realise how at a first glance I found these photos comedic but began to think about how uncomfortable these participants may feel being tied up and how the volunteers are forced into unnatural expressions. Are the distorted faces deemed the monsters or is the person behind the camera forcing them to pose a monster? It made me question the concept of mental health and how there is normally two parties/monsters involved.

The image above on the left particularly intrigues me, as the volunteer appears to be dressed up as a princess where her lipstick is smudged, and her gloves are ripped. Perhaps this is the outcome of someone who is frustrated with their appearance? 'Consequently, the series provides us with a critical commentary on our media dominated culture, where surgical enhancement is ubiquitous. It may be something of a cliché but beauty – and our pursuit of it – is only skin deep; the flesh may be malleable but the core person beneath remains the same. More worryingly, while we understand this intellectually, our basic fear of what we perceive as abnormality remains; it is innate and Naman's images force us to confront these basic prejudices.' (Michael Stewart)

From this interpretation, I was able to explore how beauty standards can have a huge effect on our mental health and introduced this idea through studying Naman's work.

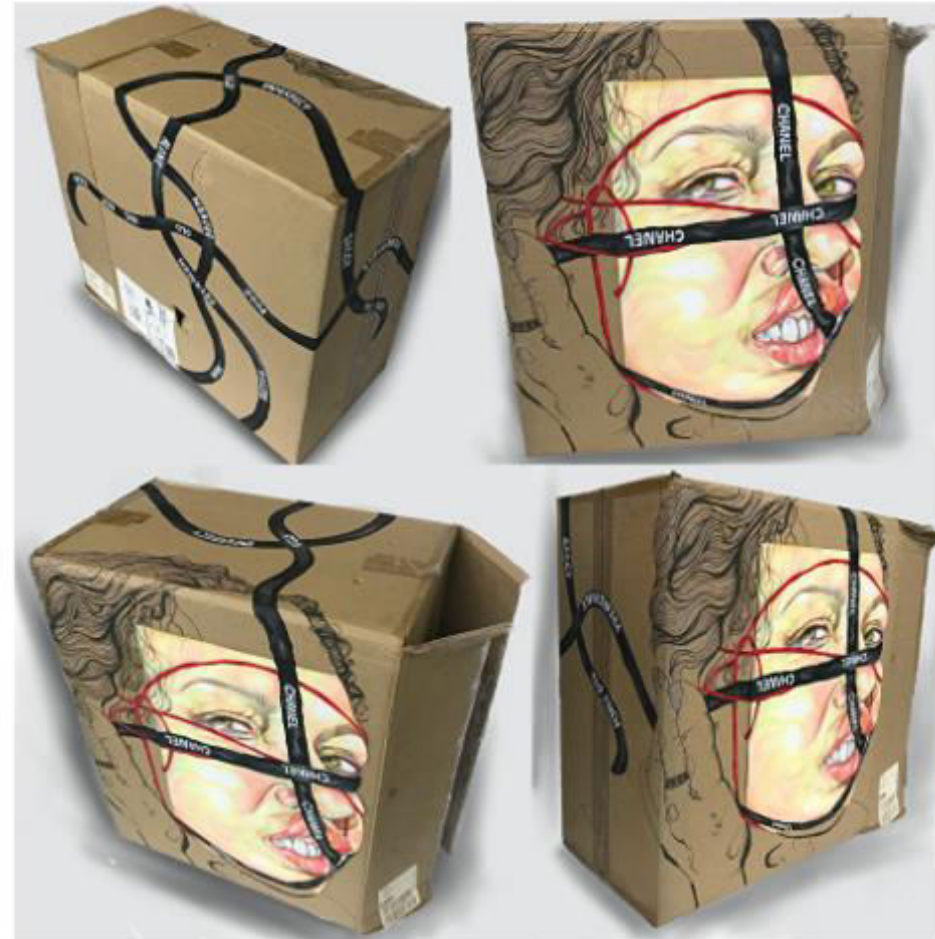


Student work, Squeeze, Squeeze, Pop! (2021), mixed-media

I captured distorted photography of my mum, suggesting the element of plastic surgery and the possibility of lip injections, further influencing pressure of beauty standards and body dysmorphia.

'If you have body dysmorphic disorder, you may feel like there's an uncrossable divide between your perception of your body and what your family and friends tell you. Even though you view certain aspects of your appearance as abnormal or ugly, the reality is, others don't see you the same way. While you know, objectively, that your loved ones are correct, you can't escape the stress and anxiety your body image causes you.' (Anne Artley and Melinda Smith, MA, 2020). Summarising how this disorder can make someone struggle differentiating between reality and fantasy. They may believe they are repulsively unattractive when looking in the mirror, like some sort of mythical creature. The suffocation of beauty standards and the toll it can take on the mind, is something I was really intrigued by. From developing stylistic characteristics from Namen and Beardsley as well as themes of isolation, I was able to achieve a final piece.

Conclusion



Student work, A Monster of A Mind (2021), mixed-media

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Over 16 hours, I was able to create this interesting piece demonstrating societies toxic traits and the effect this can have on the mind. Through a cardboard box (74cmH x 64 cm W x 41 cm D) I was able to portray a person like object, the outside indicating what the naked eye sees and what the subject wants to show, whereas the inside of the box indicates the mind/hidden feelings. A pencil drawing done on an A2 sheet of paper is displayed on the front, its colourful and bold style catching the attention of the viewer's eye. Proving how today's society has been indoctrinated into believing beautiful things/people deserve more privileges. However, the 'Chanel' ribbon suffocating my mum's face, implies a darker side to the issues surrounding beauty standards and how there is no escape from it. Especially for the elder generation, like my mum, there can be pressure to stay looking young and beautiful forever, whether this be through the push of plastic surgery or even makeup. This is proven by statistics that state "The number of cosmetic surgeries increased by almost five-fold between 2003 and 2015." (Conor Stewart 2021).

The black line-work that continues off the face onto the box is inspired by Beardley's style. It is full of detail but still reinforces the idea of loneliness. The line work is sparse and gives the same impression of isolation which is prominent in Beardley's Perseus piece and Namen's invisible tape project. The subject feels she is the only one experiencing negative thoughts and the sparseness suggests there is no one around to comfort her. In addition, the hand and hair is unproportionate and cartoony, suggesting beauty standards is an issue which can be dismissed as a joke. This correlates to Namen's work where he gets his subjects to put on silly expressions; both pieces suggest a hint of humour with a darker context.

Furthermore, the ribbon inspired by Namen, is not only suffocating her face but continues to wrap itself around the whole box. Unlike Namen's project, I experimented with typography through the 'Chanel' lettering changing into negative vocabulary. This conveys how the subject's dark thoughts are hidden away and the pretty colours are displayed on the front. Suggesting we often disregard other's feelings that aren't directly in front of us. It does n't take long to realise the negative words on the other sides of the box, but action has to be taken by the viewer to see them. For example, "okay" is written on the door of the box giving off a positive impression, however adjacent is the word "not". I specifically did this so the viewer pays closer attention and to oppose the culture of ignoring signs of depressive thoughts. The piece is interactive to show how society lacks with communication and by interacting we are able to improve on understanding people's feelings.

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The inside of the piece is a web of string, that I was able to construct using a hot glue gun. String was my main material as both Beardley and Namen inspired me to experiment with it previously.



The inside, shown above, represents the mind and the darkness of it- physically and metaphorically. As a viewer you can interact with the piece, peering inside by opening the door or through holes. The tear on the side reminded me of of Anthony Green's artwork where he uses strange and unique perspectives which intrigued me. "The pictures in Green's mind have no edges, so his paintings are not contained within a traditional shape. They have irregularly shaped supports, reflecting the unpredictable range of situations and emotions that characterise family life." (Martin Bailey 2017).

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Anthony Green, MARY AND HER, Oil paint (photo taken by student)

His work focusses on using different perspectives and allowing the viewer to analyse scenes from his life/mind. This concept resonated with my piece as it fits with the idea 'take a walk in someone else's shoes'. By seeing a perspective of someone else's thought process we are able to understand them and help.

The tangled and knotted strings exaggerate the atmosphere of clutter seen with Beardley's profound ink work. The intense detail of ink portrays the same feelings my string work does- a mass of cluttered emotion caving in. On the other hand, this part contrasts with Namen's simplistic, empty backgrounds but visually matches his style. Although, I believe this part of the piece links the most to my theme "Mythological Creatures" as it proves how our minds can be our worst nightmares and it can seem like there is a monster living there. The string reminds me of a web, almost as if it's a habitat for the mythical creature, where it tapers and feeds off dark thoughts. But, by opening the door of the box the viewer physically lets in a gush of light suggesting *they* are the light at the end of the tunnel.

Overall, my final piece is a combination of styles and techniques I have taken from Aubrey Beardley and Wes Namen clearly presented through distinct visual similarities. But the concept behind my piece also is inspired by observations of themes like isolation, humour and darkness all in one. By taking Namen's distorted physical appearance I was able to highlight the distortion of the mind and the monster that lives there.

This mythical creature cannot be seen with the naked-eye and lurks in the darkness of our minds *but* will be killed by anyone willing interact/care.

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