

Practitioner's Statement

Wander to Wonder

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Whilst establishing the foundations of my major, I began to research a wide variety of dissimilar styles and media. During the early stages of the year, the discovery of a unique piece within an art catalogue titled "Where's Wally", which fuelled my early development. The piece illustrated "an exploration of the subconscious mind", creating a story through the culmination of multiple images, much like a collage. At that point I began to focus upon the external factors that have moulded me into the person I am today, which led to the theme of 'Self-Image' and 'Identity'. Additionally, within the initial stages of my development, I decided to utilise coloured inks as I enjoy using this media. Therefore, majority of my development was devoted to idea generation, rather than investigating an exploration of various medias.

In order to portray the concept of Identity, I focused upon the 'Three Sectors of my Identity', which can be categorised as 'Family, Self-Image and Education'. Whilst developing the Family sector of the piece, I focused upon 'heritage' and isolated the similarities/differences that each side of my family possessed. Beginning with my maternal grandparents, my grandfather was utilised to symbolise my Italian culture. I researched items that are typically affiliated with Italy, which sparked a fascination with ancient Roman artefacts such as coins and vases. Therefore, whilst experimenting, I sketched my grandfather's profile upon a Roman coin, incorporating his name and the title of his home town along the edge, reading "ANTONIO CARACCIO, SAN GIORGIO LA MOLARA". This is the town that my grandfather migrated from within Italy and additionally, was how my Italian heritage was represented within my piece. I then focused upon my mother, and specifically upon the characteristics of 'Beauty'. As my mother does not regard herself as beautiful, I position her within a rose bush in order to express her perception of hidden beauty and provide contrast. The bright red and pink tones provide a strong contrast within the piece.

Transitioning from my maternal side of the family to my fraternal side, I utilised the face of my Irish grandfather in images to contrast the two dissimilar cultures portrayed within the frame. As shown within my major, I have chosen to utilise the Irish mythology of the Leprechaun, partnered with the face of my grandfather. In order to connect both side of my heritage, the Leprechaun is flipping the Roman coin, supporting the Irish folklore that states that Leprechauns "have a hidden pot of gold at the end of the rainbow". This transitioned into the development of my father within the piece, and as he is a poet, I planned to include a line from one of his poem. The line was, "I wander to wonder", emphasising one's desire to feel or "amazement and admiration, caused by something beautiful, remarkable, or unfamiliar". Initially, I experimented with calligraphy but this style of text was not compatible with the piece, due to the strong contrast portrayed. Thus, I utilised flora and fauna to create letters. The text had to be shortened to "WONDER", as the full line did not fit comfortably within the bottom portion of the frame. Firstly, a submerged tree was moulded to create the letter 'W', parallel to an expanse of river reeds, that are parted to depict an 'O'. In order to create the 'N', a bird is presented in front of a submerged tree branch and lily pads/reeds have been used to create the letter 'D'.

The 'E' has been shaped via the ripples within the water, and the 'R' is created through the combination of a submerged branch and river reed.

My education has been given a small mention via the implementation of the pile of books, which also fills vacant space within the left portion of the frame. At first glance, the piece looks like an illustration that would commonly be found within children's literature, but this is not the intended atmosphere of the piece. Thus, the pieces allow me to grasp the internal and external sources that have shaped my diverse characteristics, and simultaneously reinforce my understanding of identity.