

Untitled (Portraits of Youth 1), Untitled (Portraits of Youth 2)

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My diptych of drawings explores ideas of teenage identity and experience, filtered through my passion for art history. I am particularly interested in how historical references including neoclassicism and the tradition of portraiture can be reimagined within a contemporary context. Throughout the creation of my work, I was inspired by artist Anne Ferran's depictions of teenage girls and young women draped in fabric echoing classical sculptural works, and the sense of ennui conveyed by their gestural posing and distant gazes. Ferran draws inspiration from historical events, archives, and objects; references which embed her photographs with layers of meaning. Ferran's interest in the human condition, and in conveying a sense of vulnerability and emotion through her subjects also influenced the development of my work. In my drawings, I channelled her rendering of the folds of the fabric in a contemporary setting, focusing on the movement and flow that it creates as it creases over a body. Another focus was the positioning of the limbs, which were intentionally slumping and loose, conveying a. Also drawing from stylistic features from Marlene Dumas whose artworks are distinguished by her ability to capture the complexity of human emotion and vulnerability. I aimed to capture the raw and unfiltered essence of these emotions and wanted to convey the complexity of human emotions through brushwork.

My work predominantly focuses on teenage girls' emotions and expressions, characterised by ennui and a sense of boredom, capturing their movements through draped fabric gestures and gestural posing. These became essential components of my artistic process, focusing on rendering the flow of the fabric and the positioning of limbs. Using Ink on Arches Paper which allowed me to engage in graphic mark-making. Choosing to use ink in a monochrome palette was influenced by Anne Ferran's work, whose artwork displays monochrome photography to convey depth and emotion. I combined Ferran's gestural elements with the stylistic influence of Marlene Dumas, creating a high contrast and immediate visual impact through the ink. Throughout this creative journey, I continually referenced the work of these artists, extracting inspiration from their distinct approaches and techniques, including the exploitation of negative space and high contrast monochrome.

In summary, my work explores the intricate facets of teenage identity, drawing inspiration from neoclassical portraiture and artists like Anne Ferran and Marlene Dumas. I chose ink as a drawing medium for its immediacy, reflecting the teenage experience characterised by instant gratification in the digital age. The subjects themselves created an ambiguous yet emotionally charged narrative, focusing on the draping of the fabric and the positioning of limbs to convey a universal essence of teenage ennui. The combination of influence, medium, and techniques allowed me to encapsulate the immediate and evolving nature of teenage experience, bridging the gap between historical ideas and contemporary interpretation.