

Snapshots of Existence

Saffron Noah

In my body of work titled '*Colour as Expression*', my aim was to create expressive portraits that convey emotion and other abstract themes with a particular focus on an animated use of colour. I achieved this through drawing inspiration from my studied artists: Holly Warburton, Kelsey Howard, Henri Matisse, Agnes Grochulska and Inès Longevial to produce the series of paintings presented in my body of work which explored my initial aim and a wide range of colours. These artists' unique methods of using different media, symbolic and abstract colour, expression, and dramatic tonal shifts all informed different aspects of my work, from which I developed my own exclusive way of portraying the theme. The nature of a body of work also gave me the opportunity to explore a variety of scales and media such as acrylic paint on paper, thick impasto paint application on canvas and oil paint on canvas.

Series #1, titled '*Auras of Self*', is a series of three, all of which are self-portraits made with acrylic paint on cartridge paper and presented in frames. Each instalment has its own unique colour used for the shading and floral subject in the background, as well as the direction that the subject is looking. However, I kept the works intertwined by using the same colour scheme for the light part of the face and the background. I decided to work in a more experimental and spontaneous way. As such, I painted directly on the surface without pre-drawing and wanted to work in a responsive manner to capture a naive style and use of symbolic colour reflective of my mood or feelings derived from each aspect of self. This was challenging and different, as I am used to structuring my work and painting from a sketch, so many attempts were discounted as I didn't believe that they captured the fluid aesthetic I was striving for or the proportions and facial shape I desired. Successful outcomes were achieved through a loose build-up of colour and tone.

Series #2, titled '*A Lens on Sentiment*', was created with impasto paint on a 36" x 36" canvas. This work was inspired by Agnes Grochulska and Inès Longevial's work, both of whom work with structured slabs of colour to achieve facial planes and forms with expressive colour and emphasised tones. I aimed to create a contemporary piece which explored expressive colours that reminded me of someone I love. To achieve a contemporary ambiance, I chose to display only a section of the subject matter's face. Experimenting with dramatic scale and proportion has a big impact on the audience interaction with this work. The idea of placing a 'microscope on,' or zooming in allows for an exaggerated emphasis on the colours found in skin tones and personality, suggesting a coloured lens on my subject. I worked with vibrant and symbolic colours including yellow to symbolise happiness, red and pink to symbolise passion and love, orange to symbolise warmth, purple to symbolise the subject matter's favourite colour and green to symbolise a colour that suits the subject matter. The use of these vivacious colours creates a personal and resonating as well as an overall captivating piece.

Series #3, titled '*Snapshots of Existence*', was created to further examine the contemporary perspective of the subject matter that is displayed in series #2. The work comprises of three instalments which were all created with oil paint on 6" x 6" canvases. As well as drawing heavy

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inspiration from series #2, this piece was also inspired by some of the close-up images I included in my folio of series #1, as I was really drawn to paintings that show only a portion of the face. This creates a sense of mystery but also develops the idea of a slow reveal as we gain more knowledge about someone as relationships are formed and developed. Each instalment shares the use of vibrant yellows and pinks, but are made unique due to the purples, blues, and greens used for the shading. Much like the previous work of series #2, the close up of the face allowed me to explore tone more closely which inspired the use of a wide variety of colours, angles of the face, and smaller scale.

When evaluating the success of my body of work '*Colours of Expression*', the three series convey the theme I have explored and the expressive context that I was aiming for in each piece. Series #1, '*Auras of Self*', was expressive in its spontaneous colour use, dramatic tonal shifts and its loose nature. Thanks to the advice I received from Daniel Connell, I was able to complete this piece to a professional standard. Series #2, '*A Lens on Sentiment*', successfully explored symbolic colours from a contemporary perspective to create a personal and resonating piece about someone I love. Series #3, '*Snapshots of Existence*', was a lead on from my second piece which explored the idea of a slow reveal as we gain more knowledge about someone and allowed me to experiment with a range of different angles and a smaller scale. When viewed holistically, I believe the series within my body of work successfully intertwine to convey the idea that expressive colour in portraiture is vital to symbolise many themes that are relevant to the human experience.