

Quit your Job

Hudson Merchant

The folio process developed my art analysis skills through the exploration of varying movements. Prior to embarking on the folio journey, my social media feeds consisted of neo-expressionism paintings. Naturally, this inspired my personal aesthetic and artist surveys as a result. In continuation from my Year 11 folio, I wanted to further expand my practical skills in relation to depth, utilising a combination of mediums, and capturing my stream of consciousness. These aspects were important as I assumed these would benefit the overall aesthetic of my final, by producing a unique and detailed painting. Neo-expressionism was the most significant influence for my artwork, as it encouraged raw, personal, and symbolic meaning that further promoted anti-consumerism, another aspect of society I was keen to explore.

Furthermore, the intended message behind the artwork is explicitly foreshadowed by the statement text "QUIT YOUR JOB, START A FIRE, PROVE YOU'RE ALIVE". The provocative phrases entice the viewer into taking action against authority, in the name of pursuing what the viewers' mind is desiring, connecting with the anti-consumerism artwork studied. The busyness of the art symbolises the chaos the mind feels upon being trapped with laws, social expectations, and other mediums of restrictions. I believe art should express an unrestricted mind, and the purpose of this mixed medium encourages and reflects this.

The folio process allowed for an investigation into two artists of varying movements. As I wanted to explore the possible routes for combining neo-expressionism with an older movement, I additionally decided to study fauvism, due to its focus on painting an experience or feeling rather than a traditional subject. In my opinion, neo-expressionism and fauvism blend well, as they both emphasise the mind's feelings, better capturing the artists' stream of consciousness. The two studied artists were Dan Pagano, and Guy Buffet, as they both promoted different techniques that I could learn from. From studying their work individually, my final demonstrated my ability to utilise both movements and their respective techniques that allow them to express a meaningful message. Fauvism was used as a base painting, attempting to replicate an older piece of artwork, whereas the contemporary neo-expressionism graffiti overlaid produced commentary about the comparison between old and new artworks.

As previously mentioned, I believe that art should entail the innermost personal thoughts of an artist, in relatively unique methods. This is why the focus on blending neo-expressionism with fauvism was key, as the graffiti and collage overlay generated a unique feel. I valued that the art provoked the viewer and attempted to set them free of the restrictions placed on them by society. Additionally, the idea of capturing my stream of consciousness opened up an authenticity between artist and audience, which is not something I perfected throughout this folio, but improved upon. Other such areas include layering/depth or experimenting with new mediums. I recognise this journey is a long process, so improving in different fields of art is important to continue artistic growth.