

Practitioners Statement

"Mis-anthropocene"

During the initial moments of brainstorming and theoretical conceptualisation, a topic of representing the destruction of the Earth due to human forces through the medium of fashion, continuously appeared until it seemed to be the only possible outcome. Prior to this, I had an inherent desire to pursue fashion or garment creation as my final practical work, yet being able to combine those passions with such universal considerations of sustainability, unnecessary waste, and the harm we do to the planet, was perfect.

Rather than sewing and creating a garment designed to be worn, I had the intention to instead create a sculpture which embodied femininity, drawing a relationship between that and the influence of Mother Earth. I also wanted to show the unmistakable femininity further by creating a silhouette reminiscent of Victorian fashions and the girls depicted in *Las Meninas*, a seventeenth century portrait by Diego Velázquez, which shows a strong silhouette with a defined, small waist creating a phenomenon of what a female silhouette should look like. This research was greatly influential as it deepened the embodiment of my sculpture as feminine.

For the creation of this sculpture, I used two different types of metallic mesh. For the upper torso and bust I used a stronger wire mesh with small holes. For the lower part of this sculpture, I used a comparatively weaker chicken wire with larger holes. Using mesh as a medium was extremely helpful as it is both stylistic in regards to my concept and also malleable in nature. However, as the mesh is malleable, the sculpture's integrity was consequently lowered, resulting in the need to build a supporting system hidden within the inside of the sculpture. To stick with the theme of repurposing and reinvigorating, I was able to use an old wooden stool and basketball provided by my school's groundskeeper.

As aforementioned, my work represents the damage that has been done to the Earth due to our influence. Consequently, geologists have unofficially named the geological era we are living in the "Anthropocene". Some of the materials that might make up the sediment of the Anthropocene include plastics, aluminium and concrete along with fossils of extinct creatures. Most of the material placed on the wire mesh form were recycled, including packaging materials, drink containers, bottle tops and various other bits of paraphernalia.

The sculpture is spray painted white to show not only a distinct lack of life but also the effects of sun-bleaching on primarily plastics as it lays to waste and becomes more discoloured with time. This investigation into the use of solid white colouring in art, led me to become greatly inspired by many works that were displayed in the Waterhouse Natural Science Art exhibitions. A primary influence of which, comes from the work of Deb McKay, focuses on fragility and how things change over time. In the practical application of the aforementioned white colouring, I used three different shades of white, ranging from a harsh chalk to that of a boney cream. These combine to further differentiate varying elements of the garment.

My understanding of garment construction has greatly expanded with the development of this

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practical assignment, as well as my ability to conceptualise and design wearable art. In the future I will continue to apply this practicality and pragmatism that is required with more constructional pieces as I work further into fashion and wearable art.

My goal when creating this sculpture was to communicate the extremities of our plastic pollution as it diseases the Earth. There is an unnatural abundance of waste and to convey it as if it were clothing illustrates how we as humanity act.

In this regard, I feel that I was successful in representing the parasitic and cannibalistic nature of the Anthropocene.

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