

The Mind

Anya Zaborovska

My painting 'The Mind' is made on a 76 by 56 cm Canson, Molin de Roy cold press watercolour paper. The artwork portrays a woman in her mind and her surrounding emotions and thoughts. Her dress was inspired by an Art Nouveau Artist- Alfonse Mucha and the realism aspect was taken from an artist- Michelangelo. Alfonse Mucha is my favourite artist mainly because of his use of fine details as well as the flow of patterns, hair and rhythm in his work. I wanted to recreate the same feel in my painting but in my style.

For all the characters, fish and patterns I used Shinhan, Rosa and Van Gogh watercolours. For priming with base colour, I used a Royal & Langnickel brush size 10, but I mostly used Mont Marte liner 5/0 and detailer size 1, because this painting mostly consists of fine details. In watercolour it is hard to lighten areas if you make a mistake, so I was especially careful with priming and made sure I mix the right shade from the start, certain areas I had to fix using white watercolour because it is the only colour that is not transparent.

My goal was to have a dark blue background, with my knowledge of watercolour and its properties I knew that if I make the background using watercolour it won't turn as consistent and as dark as I want it to (because of the transparency of the paints, and the fact that they must be mixed with water means it's harder to get a bold finish). Considering this, I used acrylic paints for the background. I wasn't sure if they would go well together so I made a small copy on the same paper with similar colours to test out acrylic paints. The texture of acrylic paint is glossy while watercolours are matt, however since the texture of the paper is rough the dark blue acrylics did not look glossy and looked harmonious with the bright watercolours.

The purpose of my folio was to learn to draw facial expression since I noticed my previous portraits had the same expressions. For my final I got an idea to put multiple face expressions in one painting by creating my own interpretation of the mind. The variations of the woman around her are her emotions, they look like her but they're not identical. I also used colour to symbolise the emotions, blue tear is sadness, green is jealousy, red is anger, light blue is confusion, yellow star is excitement and yellow circle is happiness. The fish represents thoughts that flow in the mind, they each have a small note with writing. I was inspired by Mucha's costume designs in his painting, the top gem accessories on the dress were influenced by his work. I liked how Michelangelo paints the folds and the colour of the cloth, he uses contrast of round and hard edges on the fabric to create realistic looking clothing. He also uses many different shades when painting skin, which I also incorporated into my work.

I am very happy with the outcome, this my biggest and most advance piece yet. I spent an average of 120 hours painting in the span of 4 months. It doesn't look exactly like the concept sheet I made; however, I think it better portrays my thoughts and ideas throughout the process. I am not fully pleased with the anatomy of the faces; I got better at drawing expressions for sure, but I still need more practice to be on the level I want to be.