

The Panes of Life

Hermione Dew

I aimed to create a piece that has some sort of personal meaning to it, whilst being able to dedicate it to the important moments and people in my life. I settled on my stained-glass style, which is something I came up with months before the practical started, and a style that began to become associated with my image. That then led to the idea of creating a window with different panels, each panel dedicated to a moment or a person in my life that has played a significant role.

My own work aimed to portray the feeling of stained-glass windows you find in churches or really old buildings. There's a story to tell behind them all, and I aimed to do that with my own work. There's also a high amount of contrast with stained-glass windows, which I aimed to replicate by using mainly cool colours for the panels, and then warm colours for the middle bit, as to make everything pop.

Black (represented by purple) is a strong colour used in the piece, as well as more cool-toned colours in the panels. This was done intentionally, as they're both colours that are highly associated with me. Black is usually a colour seen as evil, or depressing, but in my life I've never seen it that way. I've always seen black as a colour to use to make everything else around it brighter, to uplift other colours and make their best qualities shine. That is something I've always been told I do with the people around me, and a value I hold myself to, so I wanted to put it in my piece in some way.

I aimed to have the harsher parts of my life portrayed down the bottom and the more positive ones portrayed up the top. Every theme in panel is extremely impactful in my, both a positive way and a negative way, and I wanted to sort of tell a story with that. However, not all the panels down the bottom are bad things that have happened to me. The Glass Animals album covers for example, are there because they helped me through the worst times of my life. Anakin and Ahsoka are there because the Clone Wars series also helped me through tough times.

For the first time in one of my works I have added a severe amount of colour. Usually they're either darker, or mysterious, or depressing in style, and this time I wanted to do something different. Whilst of course there are darker undertones in some of the panels, the bright colours help to uplift the energy, and help the viewer not get as caught up in some of the depressing elements.

The 15,000 brush strokes used was the most challenging part. It was painful to keep going, because whilst I love art, doing the same thing for seven hours is a nightmare. Another challenge was trying to keep tonal differences in the colouring spaces. Each element, say a shirt, is made up of at the least three different tones, and it's hard to keep them clearly separate without going too dark.

Overall, I feel like my artwork turned out almost exactly as I wanted. Unfortunately, I feel meaning would be lost by people who don't know who I am, but this work wasn't for them, it was dedicated to the people who matter most to me, and myself as a person. I love the level of complexity and detail I've included, as that's something I greatly struggle with when putting work together.

Finally, I adore how colourful it is, and how bright it feels to look at. It really communicates just how far I've come as an artist compared to my other works. This piece was all about my personal journey through life, and I feel like that's portrayed really well.