

Practitioner's Statement

Emotive Collective

Jack McBride

Mike Parr inspired me as he forces himself to create works in his series 'Self-Imposed Self-Portraits', using a different process each time. He was a performance artist before he became a drawer. His portraits, however, are based on a repetitious process of creating the artworks. There's an obvious difference in each one of his portraits as he uses a different process, such as drawing upside down, drawing using the opposite hand. This creates a huge diversity in the work, some works are large, some small, and some crisp and others distorted. The end result of this process links into my own work, as each subject is treated in a different manner.

Parr influenced my concept and how I could later present my final work. The idea of layering faces expressing the same emotions. Parr displays his works en masse, influencing me to present my work on a large scale, allowing the audience to appreciate the overall image as well as the detail that would have been missed if presented at a smaller scale.

The source images that I used were collected through a process of filming peers while they watched a short clip I created, through taking short snippets from films and TV shows. The intended goal of collecting these images was to capture responses, however as the subjects knew that they were being filmed, some changed their responses. I solved this problem by collecting further more genuine images using a discreet camera.

With these images, I created a series of line drawings on plastic sheeting using a range of processes, materials and techniques. I used different thicknesses of lines when hatching, crosshatching, using directional lines, outlines, quick gestural lines, stippling, contour lines and patterning. Each drawing was treated individually and was drawn based on the personal connection I felt to the subject. I experimented overlaying the images. Being transparent allowed me to move them around and establish composition. I put the most successful combinations through a scanner and further manipulated them using Photoshop.

I decided to display the final prints en masse. The small pieces when pieced together created a much larger work. The work displays different techniques and processes and the different faces expressing emotion resulting from the same stimuli, a part of the Yung collective unconscious. An issue I faced with the piece was creating an equally weighed composition, without one obvious focal point, an overall composition. I feel this piece is effective as it clearly demonstrates my initial concept of collective and shared emotions expressed by humans when exposed to a stimulus.

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Untitled

Jack McBride

In René Magritte's "the lovers II" two subjects are engaged in a kiss whilst being shrouded by a white sheets. When an audience views a portrait they look into the eyes of the subject. With Magritte's work the subjects are completely covered, it is not possible for the audience to identify whether or not the actions of the subjects are consensual making the audience uncomfortable. It also relates to masking one's identity, like children who wear white sheets as a simple ghost costume. In both of my own works the audience loses any sense of the subject's identity.

I played on the idea of covering the subject but giving the subject a new emotion. Using gutta, special silk paints, I painted faces previously collected in filming experiments, onto sheets of silk. I placed the sheets over subjects and capturing these images with a camera. Later editing them is using Photoshop, to create a dramatic and sinister environment. These images portray the idea of giving a subject a new identity. It was interesting as the sheet created distortion when placed on the 3D form and the material being semi-transparent allowed distinct facial features such as glasses or brightly coloured hair underneath to show through. Linking into my previous piece with the layering of the faces and as well as the overall theme of my work of the collective unconscious.

I found that when working with silk, watered down gutta made it difficult to create detail in the face as it bleeds. However, I overcame this on a second attempt by using a dry brush technique, that allowed me control.

I have explored the collective unconscious and human emotions, I believe that I have achieved success in the capturing shared emotions as both artworks replace, remove and distort the identities of the subject, making them into pieces of a collective.