

Human nature, a review on my artist research inspiration and how it influenced my project.



In this review, I am diving into the theme of nature and the artists who helped inspire my project from the gritty works of Freda Kahlo to the explorational flowing makeup pieces created by Evelyn Affleck. I will be exploring the artist's background and creative process while explaining how I developed on their ideas in my own, critiquing alongside my own experiences, overall I've had a very positive experience learning about and from these artists and my project. This being that my project end was a 6 part video expressing my feeling throughout the day via expressive face painting.

At the beginning of our research stage, our lecture showed us a huge variety of videos and experiences from which we could draw inspiration from. I found these pieces profound and beautiful to watch and listen to, however, I did not connect with them in a way in which they inspired me to create my own similar art but to look at the deeper meaning behind the pieces and what ideas and options arose from them. I had chosen two as my focus from the beginning stage of my research as I feel they represented a deeper meaning like I was looking for. For example in Greta Alfaro's I film my brain began to wander sparking ideas for metaphors surrounding the vultures place in nature and how this reflects on to our society and human nature, comparing this to Ori Gersht's flowers again triggered my thought process into our role and connection with nature.

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This then inspired me to continue my research into human nature and our relationship with ourselves, beginning to investigate symbolism and expressing emotion.

Once I had decided on my concept I began to conduct my research in which I found myself orbiting towards artist Frida Kahlo, in particular, "The diary of Frida Kahlo: an intimate self-portrait". Though the process of painting was cleansing for her, the diary was a way for Kahlo to establish a relationship with herself and unlike her paintings, her diary presented an unplanned release of drawings and writing in which she confined her afflictions, intimacies and deepest emotions. Some of these included her discomfort surrounding her leg affected by polio in her childhood and her love for fellow artist Diego Rivera in which they had a passionate and heated relationship. Frida Kahlo expressed her life in her work and looking at this chronologically really helps to give us an understanding into the events that shaped her, I brought this element into my work in an attempt to achieve this level of understanding to my own viewers.

A critique of Frida Kahlo's relevance in this project could be substantial as my project formed. However, I would find ways to disagree with this statement as Frida Kahlo uses lots of references to nature in her work, for example, one of her most famous pieces "Self-portrait with thorn necklace and hummingbirds" had bounds of nature which importantly symbolised hope and good luck in Mexican culture. Another interesting element of symbolism she expressed in this diary is that the colours revealed deeper meanings. Blue, for example, was "electricity and purity," while yellow represented "madness, illness, fear, part of the sun, and happiness." Reading this I began to focus more on the colour, shape and how they convey emotion and deeper meaning in my own work. Studying this work had a positive influence on my creative process as I began to look at symbolism both for figures and colour.

I then began to investigate my choice of material and makeup artists I felt conveyed emotion. One makeup artist whose work really inspired me is Evelyn Affleck. Evelyn Affleck lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia. Graduating from Blanche Macdonald in 2015 from the Global Makeup Course, Evelyn now works as a Freelance Makeup Artist, working in TV, Commercial, and Bridal Makeup. However, what drew me to her work was her more passionate abstract makeup which she shares via her ever-growing social media platform in which I discovered her creative editorials. On her website Evelyn claims she is from an artistic family from which she gained her natural exploration and combination of the arts, this is why. An issue I faced studying Evelyn Affleck is that unlike Frida Kahlo I struggled to find symbolism and meaning, though her work was beautiful and heavily influenced my work I felt it lacked character. This is why to improve on my face painting I created a narrative and deeper meaning to the colours and shapes used which I felt if also used, Affleck's work could become considerably more elevated in an emotional and storytelling way.

To summarise I have been able to use aspects of lots of well established and talented artists, specifically the honest spontaneity of Frida Kahlo's diaries and the free-flowing spirit and creativity of Evelyn Affleck. Together the research helped me create expressive face painting which has a deeper meaning and colour symbolism became a narrative in which I could express my emotions. Comparing my researched artists is difficult due to the variation in the physical nature of the work.

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