

Genres

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My painting, 'Genres', is a mixed media piece on canvas (35cm x 45cm), featuring various self-portraits amongst the three canvases. The goal for my final was to accurately achieve the depiction of how different music genres make me feel, using expressionism and colour symbolism. Red reflecting upon the themes of aggression and passion, symbolising rock/metal. Yellow promoting confidence and positive energy, symbolising R&B. Green resonating with tranquility and optimism, symbolising alternative indie.

A particular artist that influenced my style before beginning my piece was Danielle Cohen, as her liberal strokes and portrayal of unnatural coloured lights, allowed me to truly visualise the outcome of my final.

Whilst creating my reference, I listened to songs via each music genre, setting a relevant mood to symbolise the categories throughout the expressions created. Starting my painting, I utilised a large sponge with a mixture of 2/3 acrylic paint and 1/3 water to create an even coat of underpainting for each canvas. Inspired by Caren Ginsberg, I utilised charcoal to sketch my paintings, using short, rough strokes whilst tracing, and defining values through blending heavy contents of charcoal; not worrying too much about the realistic components. I initially intended to fully define the values with acrylic paint, however I found that the process was unnecessary for my piece and was easier to use a round brush to blend midtones with oil paint as the base instead, much like Andrew Cadima.

I have learnt from my folio to lean out of my comfort zone, so I decided to stop following the reference whilst employing a flat brush to add depth to my piece, relying purely on the soul of the music to guide each stroke. I found this to be very effective, as the unorganised placement of colours and the texture of the paint drew emphasis to the face, juxtaposing with the hair and shirt.

Whilst creating the background of my final, I found inspiration from Wassily Kandinsky, as his abstract pieces captured the essence of music. Using small and large round and flat brushes, I fully immersed in the music and created movement through the pitch and pace of the songs, whilst keeping in mind about creating unity with the portrait.

Using oil pastels and charcoal to add final details to my piece, further added abstract themes. I made sure to apply the pastels purely to the sound of music, whereas I used charcoal to define dark shadows, both in the portrait and background. The blocky underpainting with the combination of liberal strokes through each medium, truly created harmony between the realistic and abstract components as I intended.

One final detail I felt was important to add was a white line travelling through each earphone, symbolising that even though everyone has their own musical taste, it brings us together and creates a sense of community.

Overall, I feel that I have showcased my personal experience with varying music genres, reflecting upon how music remains an important part of my identity.