

Peepholes into Obsoleted Perspectives

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As time inevitably progresses and life's ubiquitous pressures accumulate, the presence of my childhood self becomes submerged beneath the obsession with maturing. My body of work, *Peepholes into Obsoleted Perspectives*, externalizes the simplistic philosophies embraced by the child gaze and its subsequent, gradual deterioration as adulthood eclipses youth. I am confronted with the irreversible absence of my childhood self, forced to acknowledge what will replace my very own carcass. My artworks mirror the internal conflict provoked by my extinguishing appreciation for life's beauty. In the death of an old identity, my current failure to stabilize my rebirth and renew light-hearted passions, consequentially entraps me in a perpetual identity crisis. As my childhood counterpart fades, I struggle to absorb the intricacies of nature and become less immersed within the world, instead oppressed by a cage of a self-enforced burdens. The physical piano reflection symbolizes my childhood equivalent to my now-suffocated identity. Formerly pressured by simple expectations to prodigiously play the piano, this past pressure evolves into an unfulfillable obsession with perfection.

Fascinated by Uwe Wittwer's ambiguous, mystical collages, I began to contemplate the flexible possibilities achievable through collating unrelated elements. Wittwer's seamless integration of mixed media unifies watercolour, ink, oil, and acrylic paint to present the complex landscapes of life. Subsequently, I was inspired to extend my exploration to further comprehend the unique textures and techniques specific to each varying media. I layered oil pastels, felt tip markers, and Prisma colours, employing watercolour paint beneath, creating a raw, murky undertone. Engaging in practical exploration with the unfamiliar medium of photography, experimentally capturing naturally occurring forms with the intent of incorporating these patterns and textures into my collages. Antithetical to nature, I visited several rundown factories to photograph aged, corroding metal and machinery, intrigued by the intricacies time enforces upon once lively structures. These photographs embraced the slanted tin roofs, jagged wire fences, and geometric forms.

Through collaging, I reflected upon how the nature in my backyard's inherent beauty can coexist with deteriorating, manmade imperfections, encapsulating the coexistence of my identities and their contrasting attributes. Wittwer's initially indecipherable, yet vibrant, bold collages are purposefully obscure, proving that collages hold depth and meaning beyond the chaos of warped harmony. This aligned with my objective to represent the complexities of life's cacophony and the varying interpretations dependent on perspective. Within in my artwork, I aimed to overwhelm the viewer with the cluster of collaged elements, while simultaneously conveying the liberating beauty behind disorganisation. Exploring Wittwer's collages exposed what I could achieve through collating forms, nature, and structures, projecting the layers of life. I learnt that collages aren't just a cluster of random elements, but instead an interwoven network.

Undoubtedly motivated to pursue collage as a focal technique, I was attracted to Max Ernst's nontraditional approach to collating elements. Through Ernst's surreal works, the portrayal of coupled realities is articulated through fantastical, humanoid creatures,

existing amongst enchanted natural landscapes. Shifting my initial perspective on collaging, I now recognised this technique's ability to interweave dreamscapes, nature, alternate dimensions, and imagination. Ernst enabled me to reflect upon how reality and a child's wild imagination are initially tethered, inhabiting a singular realm, before inevitably segregating. I collated portraiture with impressionist nature, surrealism, and intricate patterned orbs, achieved through applying diverse media. My collage exploration influenced by Ernst not only contrasted in use of media, but stylization, with sharp pointillism, gentle watercolour, soft pencil, and bold biro. I conjured my own hybrid creatures with biro, coloured pencils, gouache, and watercolour, collaging them within fantastical landscapes and extraterrestrial fauna. Ernst's collated, organic textures, disproportionate scale of objects, and consistent portrayal of decaying life, harmonically reinforce a surreal landscape of a dimension defying reality. I was inspired to reciprocate this surrealist collaging, to enable me to externalize the internally fluctuating connection between imagination and real life.

To develop my ability to create collages embracing surrealism, I explored the techniques of Gosia Lapsa-Malwaska, recreating her haunting, fluid portrayals of nature. I was inspired by her ability to manipulate ink to illustrate decaying, yet ornate silhouettes of trees. Applying ink diluted with water allowed me to practice replicating the imperfections of nature. Conversely, Jerome Outdot Trez's integration of three-dimensional, geometric forms and disfigured human figures motivated me to consider implementing unnatural arches and mechanical shapes. Through exploring both artists' distinct styles, I decided to combine both fluid, intricate nature like otherworldly trees, and blunt, inorganic shapes like the piano, further installing my artworks juxtaposed perspectives.

My four small paintings reveal glimmers into a child's mind and vivid, dream-like perception of life, still bound within simplicity and tranquillity. In my first painting, I envy the blissful ignorance of my childhood self. My former identity is depicted resting peacefully, undisturbed and seamlessly immersed in the cycles of day and night. During slumber, the day unfolds harmoniously, processed, dreamt about, and effortlessly forgotten. The privilege of rejuvenation, detachment from yesterday's wounds, a new curiosity to become transfixed by before the cycle restarts.

In my second painting, I portray the trivial tantrums of a child, encapsulating the simplistic mindset absent of overthinking. It reflects upon the loss of necessary, purehearted immaturity, as the stresses of life become overbearing, and no longer uncomplicated as losing a soft toy in limbo.

In my third painting, I introspectively contemplate how my child self unknowingly wielded the magical power to form the matter, meanings, and importance of my life. The unforgettable core memories, the emotions accompanying indescribable experiences. You plant the seeds to begin a journey, impacted and immersed within memorable encounters eternally precious to your soul.

The whimsical structure of a child's mind morphs the mundanities of life into magical fantasy, depicted in my fourth painting. The entertainment and joy harvested from disregarding reality's boundaries. Optimism is omnipresent, regardless of a lacking organization, chaos is light-hearted and creative, imagination is boundless.

In the central painting, the mind's ability to conjure this magic becomes faded and entrapped with structure, depicted in the oppressive piano reflection. The melancholic

palette of blue shades adjacently juxtaposes the decaying corpse of my child self, dispersing into an abundance of nature. As I progress into my final year of high school, I notice how stressed I have become, over miniscule nuisances, how I struggle to witness moments as they come and go. How time is dictated by deadlines instead of building priceless memories. I forget to interact with nature, to breathe in fresh air, or frolic around like a child. This is revealed in the trees- a glimpse into my past connection with nature-, slowly becoming engulfed by the piano.

I was challenged by abandoning my comfort for smaller artworks, instead confronted by a blank wooden board. This encouraged me to evade my fear of growth, coinciding with the themes I intended to illustrate. Though initially intimidated, I developed my ability to paint more flexibly, aiming to restrain my perfectionism and focus on fulfilling the empty spaces.

My body of work engrains motifs of forests, illuminated orbs, and distorted entities of light to symbolize the fabric composing time, reality, life, and rebirth. These elements uncontrollably surround us like a collage, as we grow and blossom, sprouting from the roots of our child self. Submerged in the ground, she simply serves as fertilizer for a new cycle, a new sprout, a new me. Surrounded by floating ghosts of past children in utopia, who now progress into adolescence, I too, must learn to let her go, to rekindle my lost appreciation for simplicity alone. The audience is provoked to reconnect with their floating ghosts, appreciate their death and sequential renewal. Only after I rebuild my appreciation for life's intricacies, can my child self vicariously live through me.