

ISABELLA MCWILLIAMS (2104371)

Changemakers: Creativity and Value Creation (ADAA5000)

Paul Duerinckx and Alex Duncan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Artist CV

Artist Statement

Social Media Evaluation

Bibliography

Isabella McWilliams

Fine Art - Drawing, painting, collage

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SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS

Senior Showcase, California School of the Arts - Artist and Organizer

June 2019

Multiple paintings featured

Helped with organization and set up of the show

First Year Exhibition, UWTSD — Artist and Curator

July 2022

Featured works included: hand-edited photographs, paintings, and mixed media

Worked with other artists and lecturers to set up the space and curate the show

Commissions - Artist

2019 - present

Mixed media with a heavy focus on paintings

EDUCATION

University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Wales — Fine Art

2021 - 2024

Art Center, Pasadena, CA

July 2019 - Summer Course

Life Drawing summer intensive

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Isabella was born in Pasadena, CA and has lived in Pasadena, Chicago, and Swansea, Wales. She attended an art-focused high school and now studies fine art at UWTSD. Her main focuses are drawing and painting with heavy influences from street art, cartoonists, pop art, and classical art. She hopes to lean more into the digital aspects of art as she works on her degree.

SKILLS

Painting: Uses both acrylic and oil as well as spray paint. Most paintings lean towards realistic. Subjects are people and anatomy.

Drawing: Ink and paint markers. Cartoon abstract style.

Life Drawing: Charcoal and graphite. Started taking classes at 17. Influenced by traditional methods.

Collage: Physical photo manipulation. Usually accompanied by stylistic drawings.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Isabella McWilliams is an artist in Swansea, Wales and is currently attending UWTSD for her Fine Art degree. She was born and raised in Pasadena, CA and later moved to Chicago, IL before coming to Wales to study art. Growing up in cultural centers for graffiti art as well as having access to renowned art museums such as the LACMA and the Art Institute of Chicago, much of her practice is influenced by street art and pop art. In the past her focus was on traditional drawing and painting- having taken multiple life drawing courses and coming from a classically trained background, most of her work started with a heavy focus on realism. As she expanded her practice, her work became more abstract and exaggerated. She enjoys the combination of realistic with hyper-cartoon, drawing from the influences of animator Felix Colgrave, *MAD Magazine's* Mort Drucker, and the anonymous graffiti artists of Los Angeles.

Although her work varies greatly in style, the subjects remain relatively the same. Most, if not all of her pieces are focused around people and anatomy. While her realistic work will depict studies of faces, hands, or bodies, her more stylized pieces play with the warping of these features. She chooses these subjects because no matter how much they are twisted about they are still easily recognizable as eyes, noses, ears, and mouths. This allows for endless possibilities with no two pieces being the same or repeating.

Isabella has recently begun to expand her practice- having focused on traditional drawing and painting most of her life, she has started to experiment with different media and materials. The latest experimentation has been with spray paint, leaning into larger scale works to help her break away from hyperfocusing on details or realism. This medium also allows her to project her stylized characters onto a much larger canvas, again drawing from the street art influence. She has also started an interest in collage and enjoys the physical manipulation of photographs. This goes along with her enjoyment of warping realistic images to garner a surrealistic result. As Isabella continues her practice at UWTSD she hopes to delve into the digital side of art- allowing access to an entirely new set of tools to push her work to the next level.

SOCIAL MEDIA EVALUATION

At its core, social media is visually based- from holiday photos to brand advertisements, social media has developed from a quick online interaction between friends into what is essentially a billboard in your pocket. It only makes sense that, since its conception, artists have been utilizing this tool to help expand their reach and grow in their professional careers. It's almost as if *Instagram* accounts were designed for visual artists- the hashtags, explore page, and direct messaging service all lend a hand in networking with potential clients, employers, and even other artists. These online interactions create a community where people can collaborate together and share ideas all while simultaneously reaching a massive audience, one that would have been nearly impossible in the time before the internet.

In terms of specific social media sites, *Instagram* is the most common first stepping stone for artists. Whether they're already established, trying to grow professionally, looking for feedback, or even just posting work for fun, *Instagram* has become a mecca for artists. It's easy and free to create an account and most people are already used to its interface (while everchanging, it has been around since 2010, giving internet users over a decade to become accustomed). Hashtags provide a streamlined way to organize and advertise your work, grouping you in with the rest of the creators interested in or providing similar work. The explore page allows for all this work to be published and pushed to the public. As of right now, *Instagram* has over 2 billion active users- it is one of the largest social media platforms at the moment. This is the audience and reach artists now have access to in the modern day all from a free account.

Although *Instagram* has been established over the years and provides fantastic tools for networking as well as an excellent space for a public digital portfolio, *TikTok* is one of the fastest growing social media platforms while *Instagram* is experiencing a decline. While *TikTok* provides users with a different and somewhat more niche demographic than *Instagram*, it is much easier to gain followers and traction on *TikTok* than the *Facebook*-owned older app. If you're looking to go viral or take part in trends, then *TikTok* is the better option. On the other hand, *Instagram* has a much more streamlined and refined process of establishing your brand professionally.

Personally, I am in need of improvement when it comes to online presence. I have never been very invested in growing my accounts, even my personal ones. As of now I have very recently created an *Instagram* account solely dedicated to art and that is about it in terms of professional account (spanning all social media). In the future, I plan to remedy this issue- while before I neglected my socials out of forgetfulness or annoyance, I am going to begin to take the art dedicated account more seriously, considering it is technically career oriented. If not to gain followers, then to document my progress and work as an artist. Having a visual diary of this will help me to stay focused and on the right path. I do intend to also use the networking features to their full extent as they are there for a reason. Social media is designed for you to succeed- its whole draw is "anyone can be famous," and while social media fame can differ greatly from real-life success, it is still an important tool meant to be utilized.

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