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Student Number: 2100035

ADAA5000 Changemakers: Creativity and Value

E-Portfolio

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Word Count: 2371

(Excluding Headings, Question and References/Bibliography)

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Social Media Evaluation

As we have progressed into the 21st century, we have seen the rise of social media as an intrinsic part of modern day life. Most professions require or incorporate social media and this includes artists. The online space has made working as an artist more accessible for networking, promoting and finding inspiration.

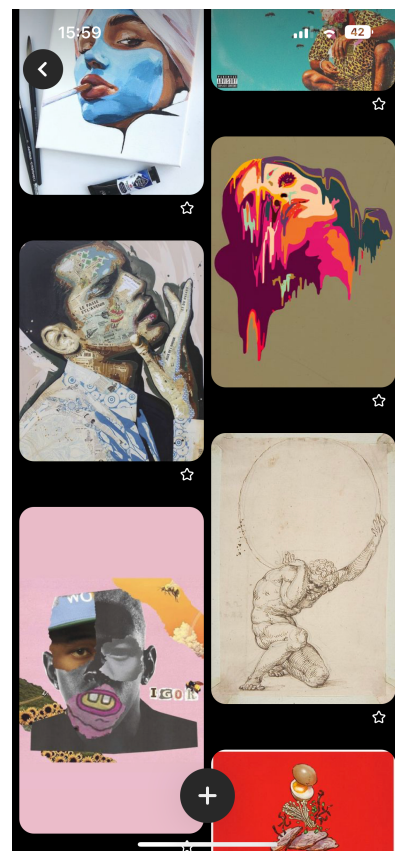
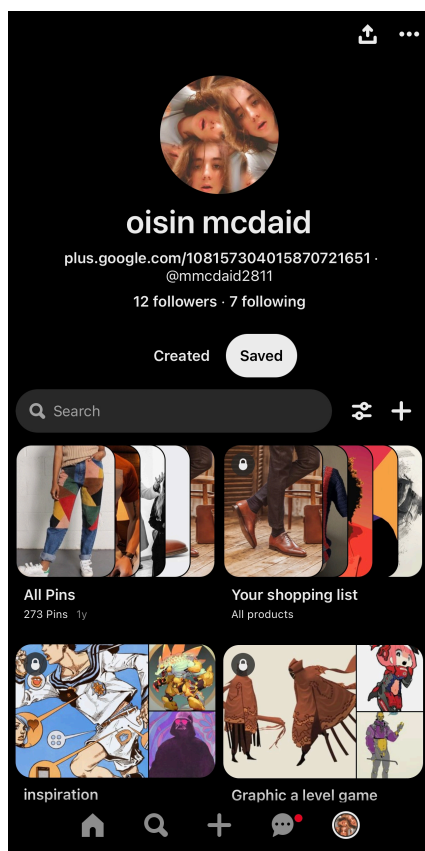
In the past, being recognised as an artist took the more traditional route of gallery presence and 'breaking' into the art world. The accessibility of social media has challenged the hierarchy of art allowing more individuals to express their work and themselves and earn recognition that previously could only be earned through the 'traditional' path.

As we have developed into the digital age, the amount of 'sites' we have access to has increased alongside the scope and function of those sites from communication, entertainment and educational, to recruitment, social justice and shopping.

Sites like *Instagram* have become the creative default for networking and posting one's own work. Whereas sites like *Etsy*, *Folksy*, *Shopify* and *Amazon* are the most commonly used sites for sales and purchasing. *TicTok* and *YouTube* promote the use of videos in promotion and education. *Facebook*, the original site when people think of 'social media' is now used primarily to 'link' together these other sites, like a tree and its branches, so that individuals can browse between them. It has become more of an advertisement platform for other sites, especially for the younger generations who have access to an even larger variety of apps and sites.

Personally in the development of my artistic practices I find that *Instagram* and *Pinterest* are the sites that I predominantly use. *Pinterest* is, and has been, where I find a lot of inspiration for my work.

Pinterest works by presenting you with a feed of content that is formed through what you search, interact with and save; which is called a ‘pin’ or ‘pinning’. As such when researching for a project this is an invaluable tool as it will always present you with similar content. The other attraction of the site, which is my personal reason for using it as much as I do, is the ‘pinboard’ or ‘board’ feature. This feature creates a moodboard of the posts you save and you are able to create many and save to them as you wish. The ability to create a ‘mood-board’ of inspiration at the start of the project makes it invaluable.

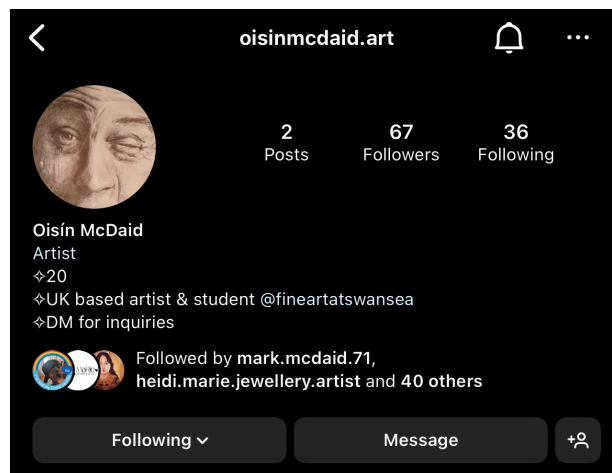


McDaid Oisin (2016) Accessed: 10th January 2023

However, *Pinterest* lacks the ability to, at least in my opinion, post one's own work confidently. Unlike the other popular app *Instagram* posts uploaded to *Pinterest* can easily lose

their origin. Unless uploaded or reposted with a link the post can lose its source making it in cases unreliable for research.

Instagram's ease of use to post pictures of your work or create reels of your processes mean that it is the platform that I use most to make a record of my work to show others. *Instagram* remains the best site and is relevant to nearly every creative who currently advertises or sells; or some who just post works of others to promote old and new artists. 'Art Theft' is an issue that has become far more prominent as we are in an age where work can simply be stolen by uploading another artist work without crediting.



McDaid Oisín (2020) Accessed: 10th January 2023

A Canadian artist I follow, Brad Phillips, has found Instagram to be a “double-edged sword” (2016). He has had enormous success through his Instagram account from sales to solo shows and even a book of his works. Apparently despite the success that he attained through the site he still didn't feel that he earned the recognition or prestige that comes from stereotypical gallery success.

I personally use social media to find a lot of my inspiration for projects. My most recent project came as a result of the knowledge I had discovered on A.I. art through sites like 'YouTube' and 'Twitter', and the previously mentioned sites. Without social media's ability to share art and

concepts I would never have been able to find the inspiration that I have used for my projects since I was my GCSE year.

Not only has social media inspired my work through allowing to view works of art but also it has given me insight in to cultures and design philosophy I would have never experienced otherwise. As we have moved into the modern day era the usefulness of social media as a multi purpose tool cannot be disputed; and a personally helped me and countless other artists.

Artist Statement

Oisin McDaid is a 20 year old Fine art student studying at The University of Wales Trinity St.David. Oisin's current body of work explores the use of incorporating A.I. software into his process of self portrait creation.

Due to his artistic journey being relatively early in development, he is exploring and developing his style. His previous catalogue of work is rather broad in scope and subject but has a recurring theme of portraiture.

Oisin's inspiration for being an artist originates with Van Gogh and the impact that this artist's work had upon him as a young child. He has found particular inspiration in Van Gogh's series of self portraits when starting his current body of work.

Oisin's plans for his work, his intentions, are to explore the wider sense of self and self-perception through a collection of '*A.I. Self Portraits*' that are currently under development. The decision to explore '*self*' portraiture comes from a series of discussions through tutorials about making his work feel more personable. The twist of including A.I. came from Oisin's awareness and browsing of the online art space and researching the craze that surrounds this current contemporary art form.

Having struggled through a period of time when he was unable to visualise his work, alongside grappling with the concept of self identity, it is through these paintings he intends to find a better understanding of his own self image and explore the theme of acceptance. This body of work is furthering his artistic expression by allowing him to develop both his painting skills in response to the A.I, and his sense of self, through being confronted with '*copies*' of himself.

He currently works in acrylic, which is a branch out from his traditional medium of pencil and charcoal. He feels that there is definitely an overlap between the charcoal in technique, and the process and application with the acrylic paint.

Oisin's style is traditional portraiture in terms of appearance, whilst experimenting with the origin of the face by the inclusion of accessories or features that wouldn't be present on a normal model. As a kid he liked adding crowns onto his doodles and styling in elaborate fashion. He approaches technique through the lens of tone- building up shape through dark and light areas and then working line work into it. He shows his evolution through learning and trying different techniques, styles and mediums.

With the concept of self and identity being such a huge talking point in current 21st century society, the intention of these pieces is to show how even though we may have similarities to others, it is impossible to compare ourselves to others. Similarity should have no impact on how we view our '*self*', as even though the attributes of each portrait fits set criteria to the original photo each one shows low resemblance.

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PROFILE

From an early age I have had a fascination with portraits. One of these works, at the age of eight, was a pro-marker drawing of Henry VIII using my father as the subject matter. Throughout my secondary education, as my technique developed, I've continued exploring portrait choosing media like pen, pencil and charcoal. Towards the end of my A-levels I explored monochromatic coloured portraits and now in my second year of university I am experimenting with painting A.I. composed self portraits using heavy acrylics.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Gallery Assistant, 7Q Gallery, Chepstow — 2021-2022

As a Gallery Assistant I was in charge and assisted with a variety of tasks. I would sit in the gallery minding over the exhibitions and communicate with the viewers about work on show. I would also assist in sales and the packaging of sold pieces. Alongside these tasks I also assisted in maintenance, cleaning and the installation and de-installation of exhibitions.

EXHIBITIONS

UWTSD End of First Year Show, Swansea — Summer 2022

For the end of my first year I stepped out of my comfort zone as I displayed a piece of 3D work, a medium I had not previously experienced or displayed, and learnt how to curate a space for a sculpture work.

A-Level End of Year Show, Wyedean Sixth Form — Summer 2021

My end of A-Level show came at the end of the lockdown period and the work made during my A-level is some of the concepts and work I am most proud of. For this show I was not able to install my piece as I intended so this exhibition caused me to develop and improvise my curation skills.

GCSE End of Year Show, Chepstow Comprehensive — Summer 2019

This show was my first show in my study of art. It featured the two outcomes that were made during my GCSE years alongside my course mates own outcomes. The show was introduction to the concept of group shows and shaped my views going forward.

EDUCATION

University of Wales Trinity St.David (UWTSD) — Fine Art, 2021-Present

Wyedean Sixth Form — Art A-Level (A*), 2019-2021

Wyedean Sixth Form — Graphic Communication A-Level (A), 2019-2021

Chepstow Comprehensive School — Art GCSE (A*), 2017-2019

SKILLS

Through my education and journey I have learnt and developed a wide variety of skills that are useful for own personal practice, as well as working in the 'Art' field.

These skills include:

- Ceramics - Experience with plaster casting and use of the pottery wheel through University workshops
- Woodwork - Building tools and canvas frames to be used for my own practice
- Stretching Canvases - Stretching material over a frame to create the finished canvas that I use in my own work
- Observational and Compositional Skills - Having studied art for the past 10 years, and partaken in many life drawing classes, has giving a good eye for observing and composing.
- Planning and Time Management - Having been a young carer for most of my young adult life, I have learnt to manage my time well and plan out ideas and concepts effectively
- Research - For my degree, I have had to research a variety of concepts, theories and definitions. These research abilities allow me to gain insight and information that is valuable for my work as an artist
- Curation Skills - During my time as a Gallery Assistant, I learnt not only how to curate a space both in terms of conceptual composition, but also physical installation and removal.

Additional Skills

To work in the creative industries, there are a series of skills that are required, and that skillset is evolving as we progress further and further into the digital age. Despite my awareness and basic knowledge on the use of Adobe software, I would personally like to further improve my use of the digital space moving forward. I would like to become more familiar with creative softwares and learn the best ways to use them both creatively and practically.

I would also like to learn the skillset required to set and up and maintain a website. I feel that a website that links one's social media and business aspect of a practice is mandatory in the current creative landscape. However, it is not just the basics that I would like to develop but the knowledge and 'mindset' that goes into these sites. Arguably the best performing creatives and most well known in this new online space have an aspect not only to their work but to its presentation and promotion.

To accompany the previously two mentioned skills I would also like to learn and develop the business side of my art practice. I believe that the ability to monetise a passion is key in making a living at what you enjoy. Arguably this is what sets apart a hobby from a business but alongside the previously mentioned skills this is what I would aim to do.

These skills are not only beneficial for myself, but I would argue for all creatives aiming to make a profit and promote themselves in the 21st century.

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