



Fragmented Self-Portrait

Overview

For this project, we are going to be making a fragmented self portrait! We will paint separate portraits, one that represents our internal selves and one that represents our external selves. Afterwards, they will be collaged together to create a high-contrast portrait that represents all the different aspects of our personality!

Currently at the Visual Arts Centre we have Erika DeFreitas' exhibition, *an object, a gesture and a scene (II)*. In multiple works, key parts are removed, hidden or contrasted against another image. As a result, we fill in the blanks and create meaning using our own ideas and experiences, which leads to making a super-personalized understanding of the message. These methods are also similar to how we use our internal and external personalities to create our individuality!

Materials

For this project, you can use paints, markers, or pencil crayons. You will need 2 pieces of white paper, 1 piece of construction paper, scissors, masking tape, a pencil and glue.

Instructions

1. Start by lightly sketching two portraits of yourself in pencil. Focus on scale and proportion instead of small details so that you can make the two portraits look as similar as possible.
Refer to our "How to Draw a Self-Portrait" PDF for help with the scale and layout of a face!

2. The first portrait will be a black and white image representing our 'external self.' This is the 'put on' or 'masked' version of yourself that the public sees. You can represent this literally, by adding a mask to your self portrait to reflect real-life, or you can represent this metaphorically by artistically covering certain features and expressions.
Tip If you are using paints, it is helpful to mix some different grey tones beforehand. Get two dollops of white paint. Mix a small amount of black into one and a medium amount of black into the other, now you have two shades of grey, black and white to work with.
3. The second portrait will be in colour and represent our internal self. This is our most authentic self and is who we are when we are alone or around our family and friends. This portrait will be bright, expressive and lively in order to showcase your unique personality!
4. Once both of your portraits are completed, place one on top of the other so they line up perfectly. Put a small bit of masking tape or painters tape on each side to ensure they stay lined up. Next, you can start cutting your portraits into fragmented pieces. Try to fragment your portraits so that each piece has a defining feature like part of your eye, nose, mouth etc. This will not only make it more dynamic but also help you in the next step! You can also use a ruler and lightly draw the lines across your portrait beforehand so you can get an idea of how it will look and will know where to cut.
5. Now, reassemble your artwork by mixing the pieces of each portrait together to make a new one! You can have the pieces fit tightly together or leave a bit of space between each one. Experiment with different layouts and affects! Glue them down to a piece of construction paper. You can also use any leftover pieces to make a second fragmented portrait.

Your Fragmented Self-Portrait is now complete! What are some similarities and differences between your internal and external self and how does the use of colour and line affect those messages in each portrait? Can you think of any other ways to use contrast within an art piece?

We'd love to see all of your portraits! You can tag us on Instagram at @visualartscentre or use the hashtag #CreativeClarington. If you want to learn more about Erika DeFreitas' exhibition *an object, a gesture and a scene (II)* you can visit the Exhibition page on our website or come visit us 10:00 am-4:00 pm Tuesday to Sunday!