

Relational Mirroring: Navigation of Self

Katherine Tolleson

4160/Spring 2020

Thesis statement

Relational Mirroring: Navigation of Self is an ephemeral drawing installation, meant to communicate the fickle nature of relationships, and how we change and reflect on who we are in the presence of others.

Thesis Proposal

The installation will present several anonymous portraits, as well as portraits of myself. The wall drawings will line up in a way that the drawings of myself will communicate with the drawings on the wall opposite.

Artist Biography

Katherine Tolleson was born and raised in Adams, TN. She is set to graduate with a BFA degree in May 2020.

Artist Statement

Relational Mirroring: Navigation of Self is an exploration of self within the context of my relationships. The mirroring that happens within my relationships allows me to experience a sense of satisfaction with who I am, versus when I am alone with myself, which reflects the back and forth nature of overthinking and insecurity while I struggle to embrace my individuality. I am attempting to identify myself within the important relationships in my life, as well as myself as an individual.

The figures in this show reveal the nature of personhood – that we can never truly know one another. The complete story of a person's life cannot be revealed in totality, which is the boundary at which individuality stops reflecting in relationships. Though I think of this work as confessional, I cannot reveal all of myself. This work is a meditation of how I see myself within relationships, versus how I see myself when I am alone and no longer mirrored through someone else.

The choice to present this show as an installation was modeled around the emotionally taxing process of forming an identity. To present these figures and myself at such a large scale is meant to cause a feeling of being overwhelmed, reflecting the nature of relationships and individuality. I chose to utilize both size and material to communicate that sense, and to represent how challenging this navigation has been for me.

Artist CV

Tolleson

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Katherine Tolleson

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Education

2016-present BFA, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN.
2016 Jo Byrns High School, Cedar Hill, TN.

Solo Exhibition

2019 *New Work: Katherine Tolleson*, The Framemaker, Clarksville, TN.

Group & Juried Exhibitions

2019 *Reciprocity*, curated by Susan Bryant, Department of Art + Design at Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN.
2019 *51st Annual Student Juried Exhibition*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2019 *Annual Cummins Station Exhibition of College Student Work*, Cummins Station, Nashville, TN.
2018 *50th Annual Student Juried Exhibition*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2018 *Annual Cummins Station Exhibition of College Student Work*, Cummins Station, Nashville, TN.

Work experience

2019 Internship at The Framemaker, Clarksville, TN.
2018-present Gallery Assistant, The New Gallery. Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN.
2017-present Part-time Desk Job, Living Hope Baptist Church, Clarksville, TN.
2017-present Student worker/research assistant for professor, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN.

Gallery Assistant Experience

2019 *Do It Exhibition*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2019 Susan Bryant: *Humanature*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2019 *51st Annual Student Juried Exhibition*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2019 Gamaliel Rodriguez: *Memorias Manipuladas*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2019 Patrick Vincent: *Vanishing Islands*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2018 Valery Jung Estabrook: *Three American Bodies*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2018 Wendy Red Star: *Apsáalooke Feminist, White Squaw, Four Seasons*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2018 McLean Fahnestock: *Undiscovered Country*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2018 John Douglas Powers: *The Four Winds*, The New Gallery, Clarksville, TN.

Residencies

2018 Living Gallery, Clarksville, TN.
2017 Living Gallery, Clarksville, TN.

Honors/Awards

2019 The Framemaker Award
2019 Summer Research Grant
2019 Evans & Peg Harvill Scholarship
2018 CECA Purchase Award
2018-present Center for Creative Arts Work Scholarship
2018-present Tommy Malone Memorial Art Scholarship

4150 Presentations

Katherine Tolleson: Senior Thesis Proposal

1

Statement of need/intent

- Self-discovery
 - Exploration into self.
 - Deconstructing how I experience the world.
 - Reconstructing in the space.
- Learning how to see from an objective perspective.
 - Self-analyzation.

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Abstract Proposal

The goal of my show is to explore the intensity of my emotions, specifically within my relationships to people in the world, both intimate and distant. This will be accomplished through analyzation of memory, thought processes, and obsessive tendencies, by creating large to small scale portrait drawings, also using photography and text to inform my work.

2

Methodology

- Wall drawings, scale to represent separation.
- Charcoal, focusing on texture.
- Water-based media, focusing on what isn't in my control.
- Found objects, obsession and collection.
- Photography/Installation, accessing people outside my space.
- Text, to hide things from and reveal things to the viewer.

4

4150 Presentations

Jim Dine

Wall drawing and writing.



5

Sol Lewitt

Activating the space.



7

Diego Rivera

Preparation drawings.



6

Henri Matisse and Mark Rothko

Sacred Space, charging the space emotionally.



8

4150 Presentations

Cy Twombly

Use of text and mark-making



9



11



10



12

4150 Presentations

Timeline



4150 Presentations

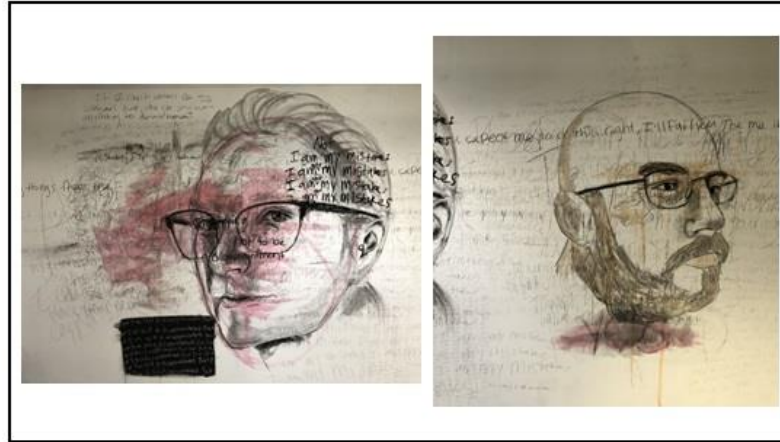
Katherine Tolleson: Senior Thesis Progress Presentation

1

Proposal

The goal of my senior thesis project is to create a show that communicates and explains my self-inflicted anxieties to the audience, specifically how these emotions affect my relationships. This will be communicated through the creation of a drawn psychological environment: a space filled with anonymous figures, and stream of consciousness text to communicate a sense of separation between myself and these people. This site-specific drawing will be executed in the gallery with a variety of media, specifically charcoal and water-based paints/inks.

2

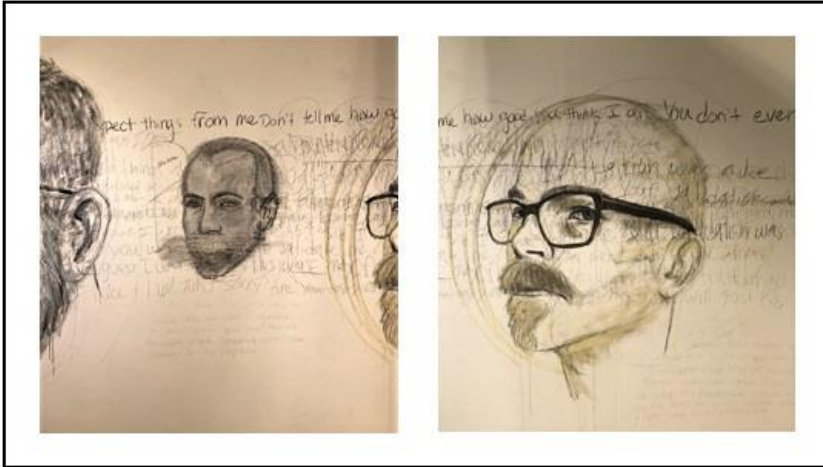


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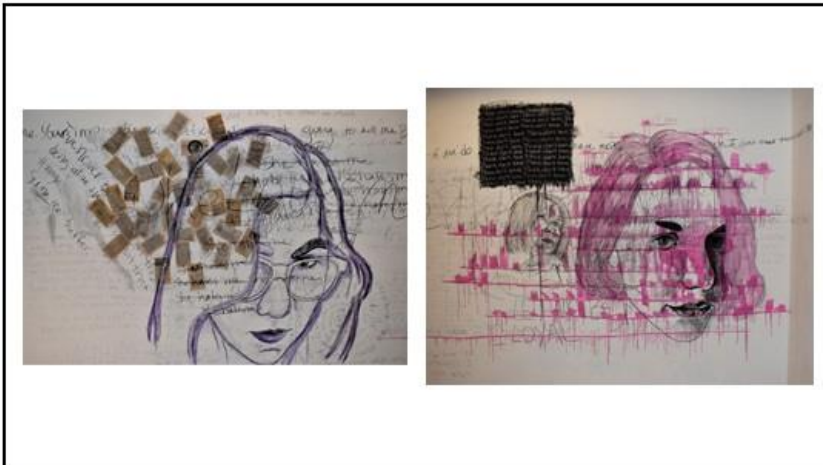
4150 Presentations



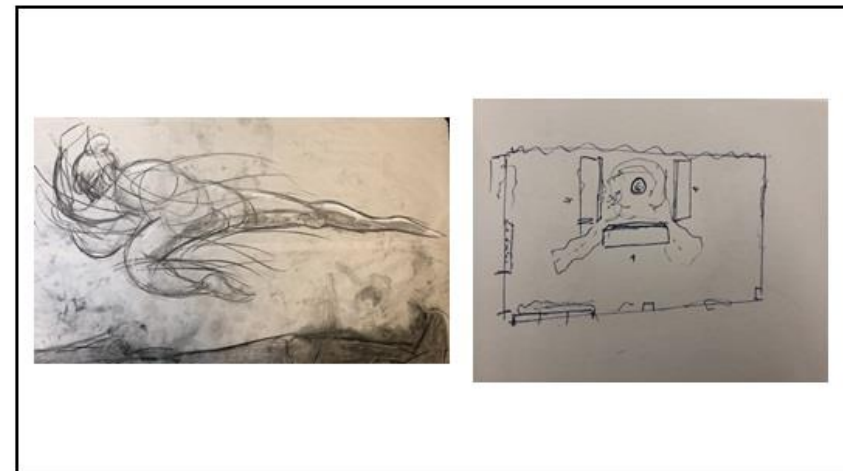
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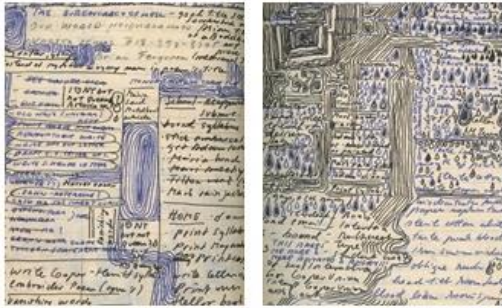


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4150 Presentations

Andrea Dezsö

Organization and text. What is legible and what isn't.



9

Robert Wilson

Writing.



11

William Kentridge

Color burst and anonymity/repetition.



10

The Plan

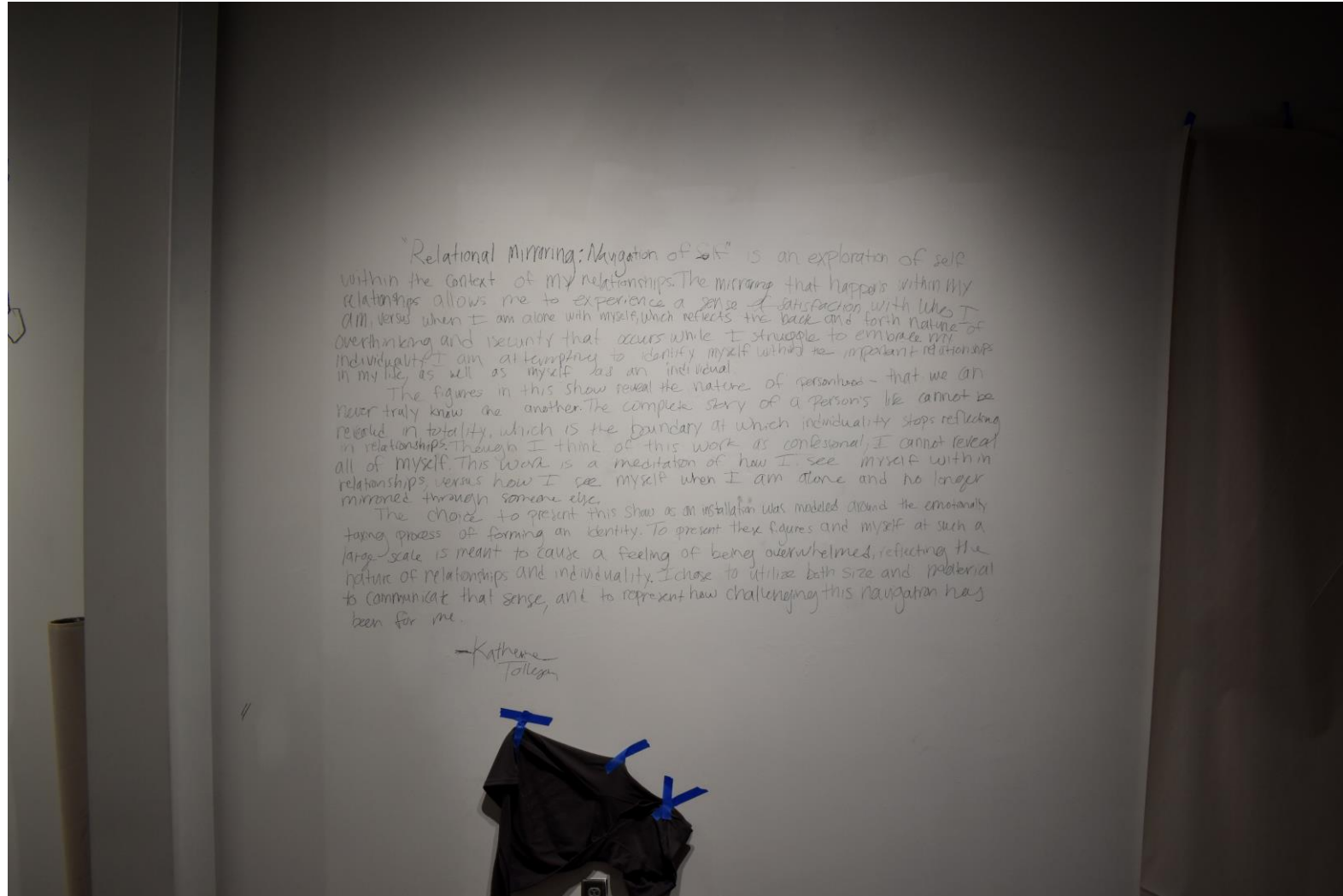
- I'm going to make figure drawings and portraits to fill the gallery- roughly 5 distinct figures and faces.
- These will be sketched out first, and then done at a larger scale. These will be projected onto the wall at a larger scale and traced.
- Drawings and writings on newsprint rolls of paper, to cover the floor.
- Prepared text to wrap the walls in.
- Sculptural element.

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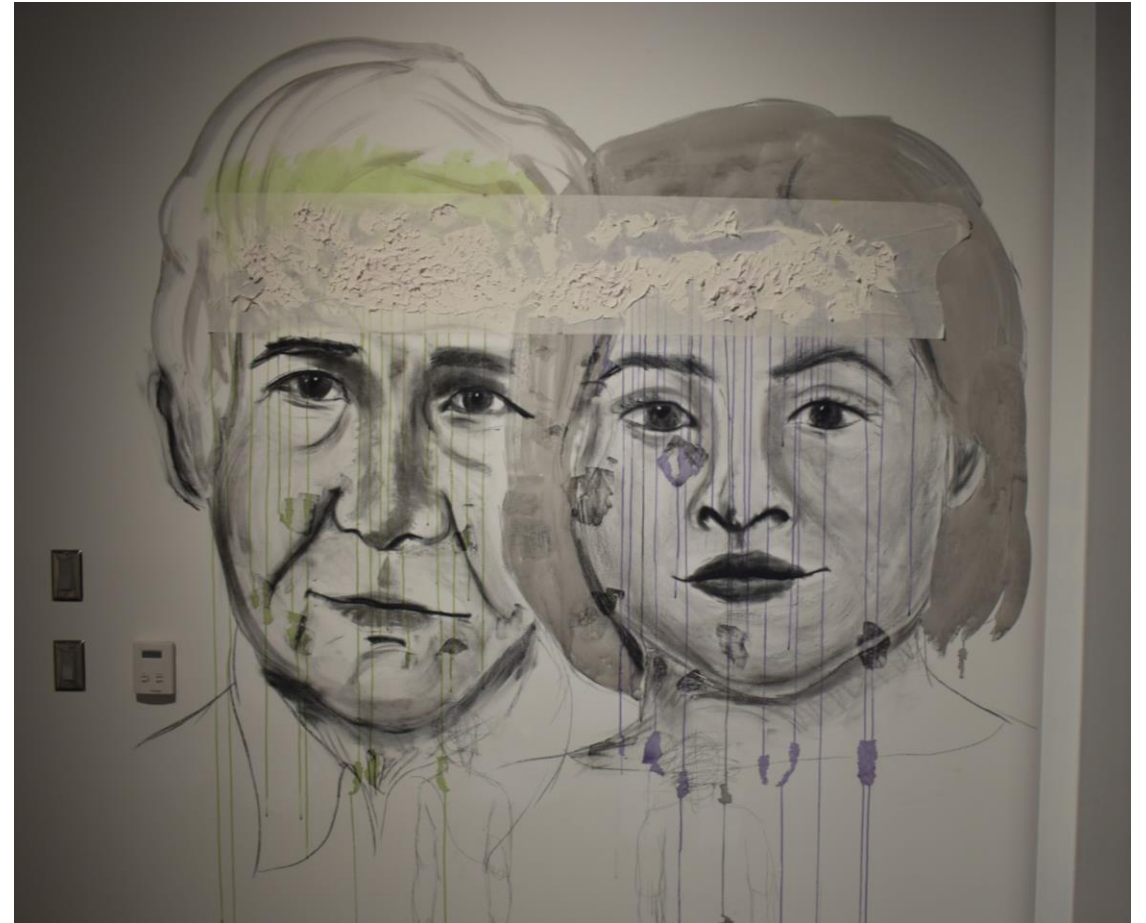
Website

<http://www.ktolleson.com/>

Show Documentation



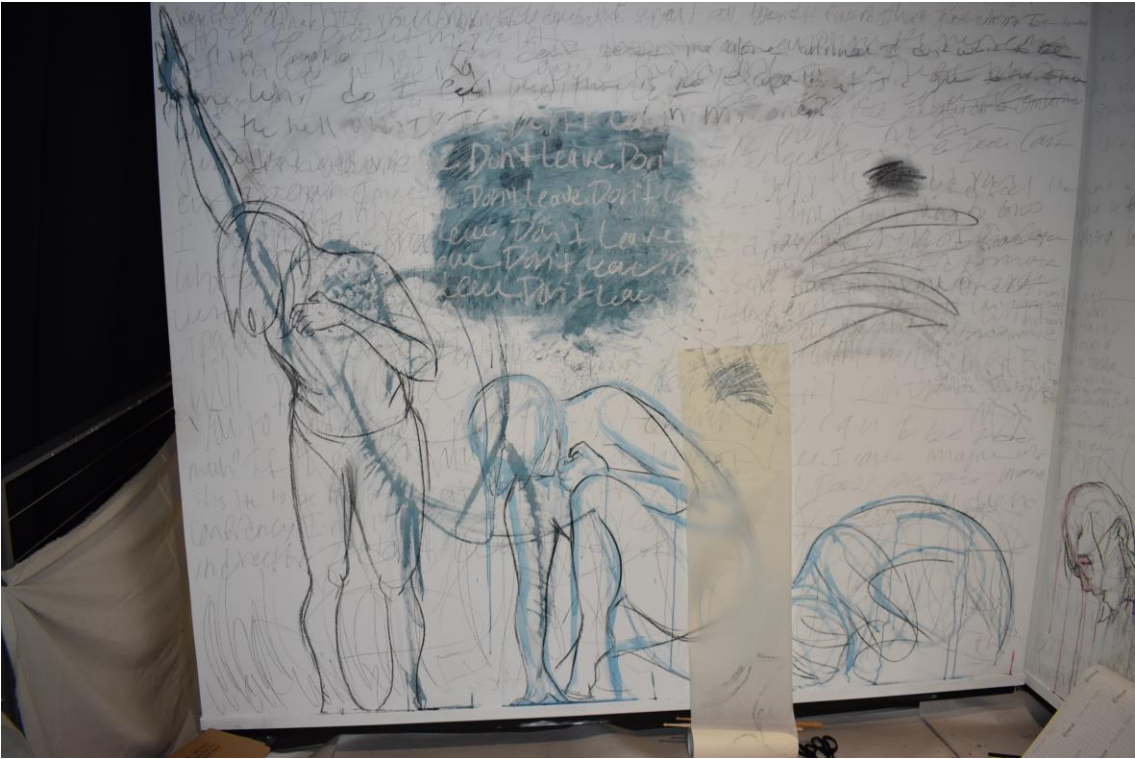
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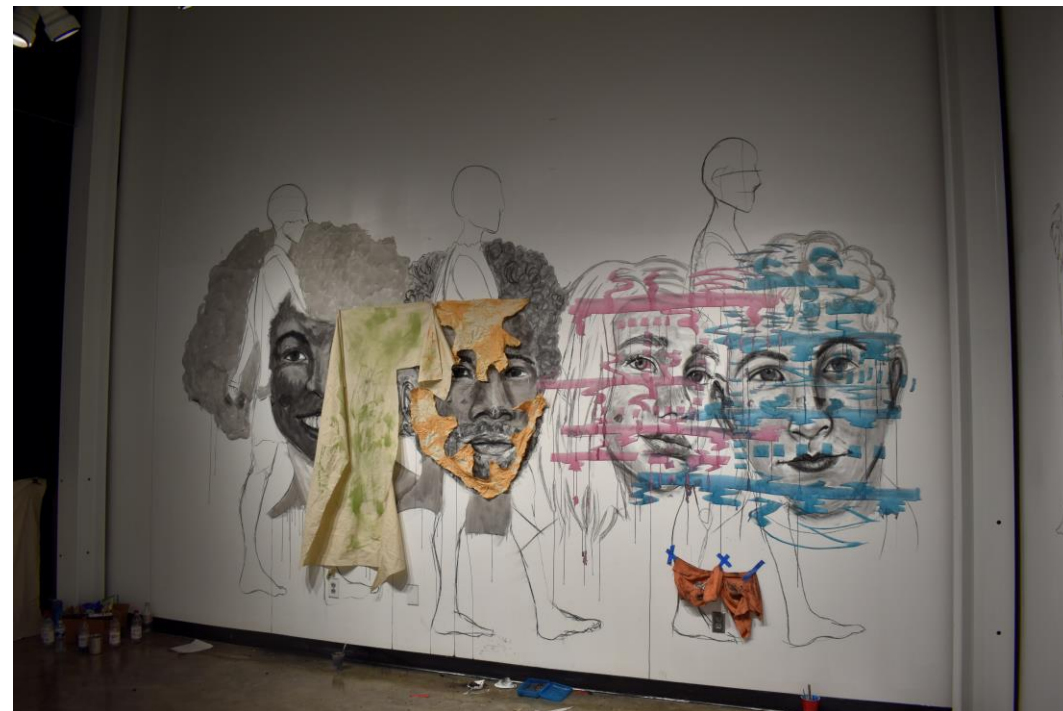
Show Documentation



Show Documentation



Show Documentation



Show Documentation



Self critique

Looking back on the show, I can't say I'm completely satisfied with what I did. If I could go back and change anything, I would probably try to prepare more. I don't know if that would've helped, but I wonder. I had plenty of time to do what I needed, but I don't think I was able to say what I wanted to say- because I wasn't sure what I wanted to say. I overworked my ideas to the point that I wasn't sure what was going on (an awful flaw of mine). I have a lot of issues with clarity of my ideas, so I would often create my work relative to what I was feeling, and not truly understand what those feelings were.

The show was okay, but I don't think it was up to my standard of completion. I wish I had more motivation and more time, but I was kind of mentally stuck while I was in that space. The drawings were okay, but I wanted to devote more time to them. I think that the hidden space turned out okay, and that my self portraits were the strongest parts of the show.

A lot of people that I asked for advice on the artifacts of the show were on either side. No one was completely on board or not. For me, I like to leave behind artifacts because they say more about me than I realize. I'm not interested in a clean look, but I also understand how confusing it can be to see trash on the floor and not understand why it's there. I'm not sure if this is a route I should continue to pursue.

Overall, the show was passable. But personally, I wasn't satisfied.