

# Storytelling Without Words - Review

Write a brief review of this task and consider the following:

- How did you go at it,
- Did it help you to improve your art,
- Were you happy with the resulting art,
- What did you like/ not like.
- If you were the teacher how would you set this differently

The task was fun to do; it was something unique that I usually do not draw. I believe that the resulting artwork was good, although it took me much longer than I'd originally intended and I left it till around last minute to finish. I'm overall satisfied with my use of coloured pencil and copic markers; I believe with this artwork, the two compliment each other well. Something I'd like to improve on is getting cleaner/sharper edges with my coloured pencils; on certain things like the branches and leaves, the edges aren't clean and take away from the contrast I wanted to create between the copic background and the other elements inside the boxes. However, this project was the first time I'd done detailed butterfly illustrations and I'm happy with how the butterflies in the certain panels look. This practise artwork definitely helped me with the process of my final artwork; it gave me the confidence to use coloured pencils and allowed me to understand how to blend with the prismacolors well. If I were the teacher, I wouldn't do anything differently. I enjoyed doing this artwork.

# Major Art Project - Theory and Prep

This work is marked as part of your VAPD (25% due week 9) - Your artwork produced in response to the task is marked as your making task (25% due week 8)

Frida Kahlo was an artist from Mexico who through her paintings told the story of her life. In this task we'll explore her use of symbolism to express herself. Kahlo's work is often associated with Surrealism by key artists from this movement, though in life she said she didn't consider herself a Surrealist artist. We will look at Kahlo's work in relation to Surrealism and put forward a view why they are related but why you do or don't think she was part of this movement.





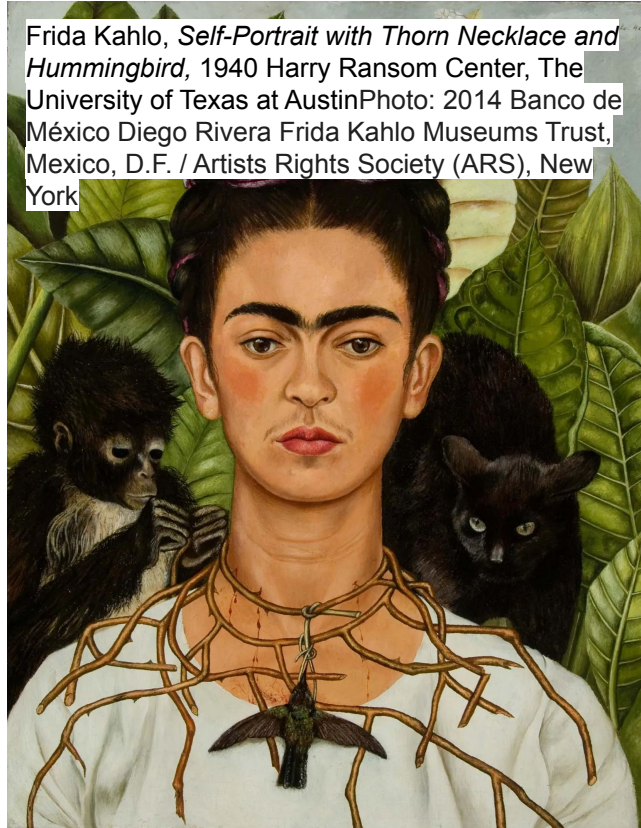
# Frida Kahlo - Mood Board

On this slide post a range of artwork by Kahlo that you like - cite the work provide its title

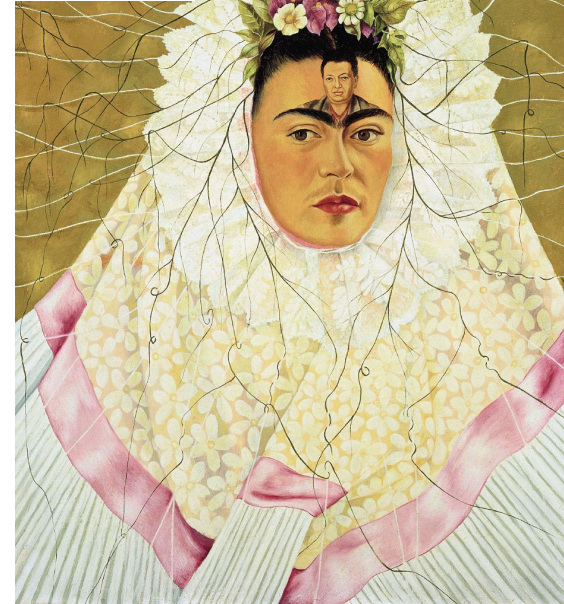
Frida Kahlo, *Me and My Parrots* (1941). ©2019 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



Frida Kahlo, *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*, 1940 Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin Photo: 2014 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Frida Kahlo (Mexican, 1907-1954), *Diego on my Mind*, 1943, oil on masonite, courtesy of the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection. / Frida Kahlo (Mexicana, 1907-1954), *Diego en mi mente*, 1943, óleo sobre masonita, cortesía de la Colección de Jacques y Natasha Gelman.



# Frida Kahlo - Inspired work

You are to produce an artwork inspired by Kahlo's work. It is to be biographical, you could choose this to be about you (autobiographical) or someone else. Use symbolism to tell the story of your chosen person.

As a major art project for the term it is expected to be a substantial effort that represents 4 weeks of work. Due by end of lesson in week 8.

Submission: artwork A3 size or larger or as negotiated. Medium is free choice through negotiation with your teacher. Whilst a digital copy is to be included in this VAPD you are to submit the physical work in week 8. Take a photo of your work before submitting! Include a print of your artist statement on the back, with your name, year level and confirm T or A

The resulting artwork is to be inspired by Kahlo but not a copy. On this slide list some aspects of her work that you like and will try to include in your own art. You are expected to include symbolism, list some other features...

- Symbolism
- Self-portrait/surrealism (?)
- Animals
- Flowers/floral
- <https://skullbliss.com/blogs/news/animal-symbolism>

# Frida Kahlo - Inspired work

On this slide list who you could make your artwork about and what things would you include to tell about them. You are to produce an artwork inspired by Kahlo's work. It is to be biographical, you could choose this to be about you are someone else. Use symbolism to tell the story of your chosen person. This could be an ideas map or list whatever works for you

## Who?

- Myself
- Change; the urge to change myself to my 'ideal self' that I have envisioned
- Some form of identity crisis; previously trying to change who I am deep down as a person in order to reach my own idea of perfection.
- Feeling disconnected from myself and my own body, wishing that I were different and could change and grow who I am so I can reach my own ideal 'perfect' self.



## What?

- Flowers (to represent growth)
- Butterflies (a process of change)
- Hands & eyes coming out of my head (feeling disconnected from myself)
- Bird/s? (striving for a sense of freedom from my own thoughts and disconnect from myself)
- More flowers/floral elements (to represent a feeling of decay being stuck trying to reach the idea of perfection)
- Skeleton on the other half of me (representing a disconnect from my own body and an urge to change who I am at my core, identity crisis???)

# Frida Kahlo - Thumbnails

On this slide draw some rough sketches of what you want to do, include details of the symbolism

## A. Birds

Represents freedom; an urge to be released from who I am and to be able to change.

## B. Hands/Eyes coming from head

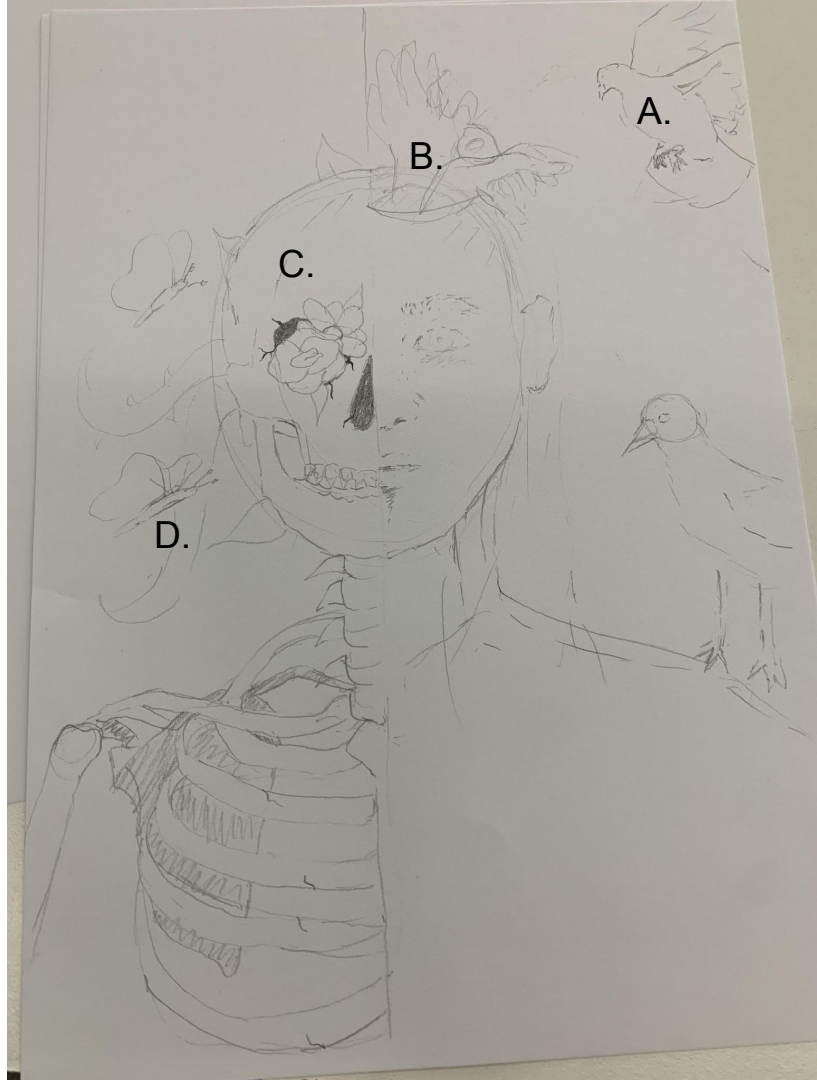
A disconnect from the body and mind

## C. Skull/bones on opposite side of face

A disconnect from oneself; wanting to be able to change who I am at the core.

## D. Floral elements (flowers, vines, butterflies)

Growth, change, freedom.





# Frida Kahlo - Thumbnails

On this slide draw some rough sketches of what you want to do, include details of the symbolism

- **Frontwards facing self portrait**

Represents myself; eyes will be white, no pupils, no expression.

- **Skull facing the left**

Similar to the previous concept, represents wanting to change myself at the core of who I am as an individual; represents a disconnect.

- **Right facing self portrait**

Represents the person I am now, somewhat of a representation of the divide that I feel; wanting to change but wanting to stay the same.

- **Elements Spewing out of Head**

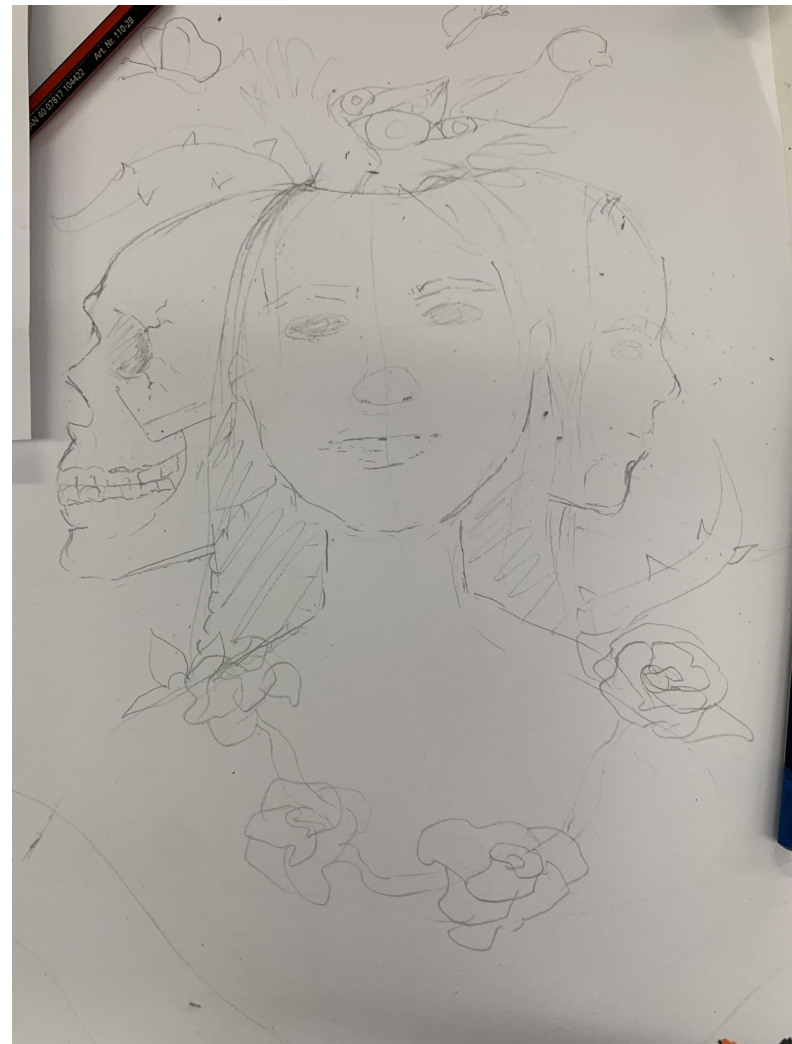
The elements coming out from the frontwards facing self portrait are hands, eyes and a mouth. This is again, to represent the disconnect I feel with my mind and body.

- **Floral elements + Butterflies**

Growth, change and freedom.

Overall:

Considering doing this highly, though it somewhat reminds me of a corny movie poster which is making me hesitant to pick this.



# Frida Kahlo - Media Exploration

On this slide document media exploration trying things out before settling on your final approach. This might include different mediums and/or techniques. Make comments about what is working / or not...

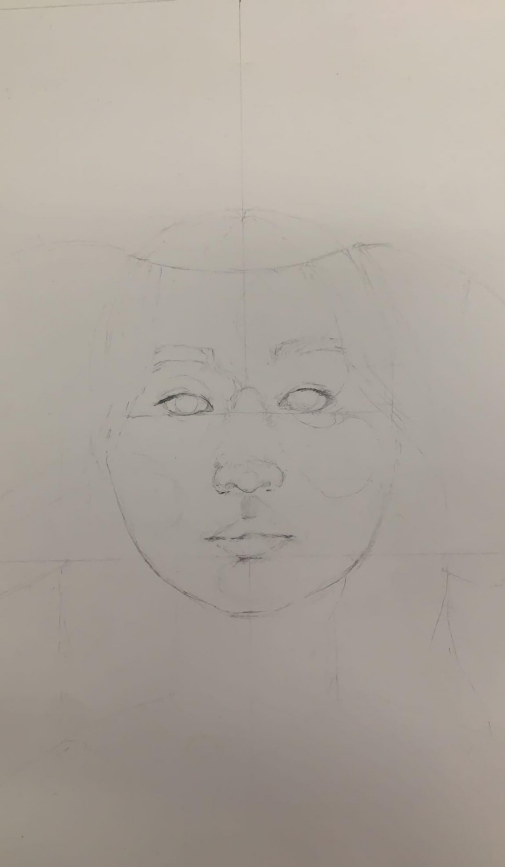
## Mediums to be used/considered

- Copics
- Coloured pencils
- **Lead pencils\*\*** (To be used to illustration of both self portraits and skull; to be semi-realistic through incorporating different tones of lead pencil)
- Possibly paints/watercolour?? (Unsure as paints are not a strong suit)
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# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

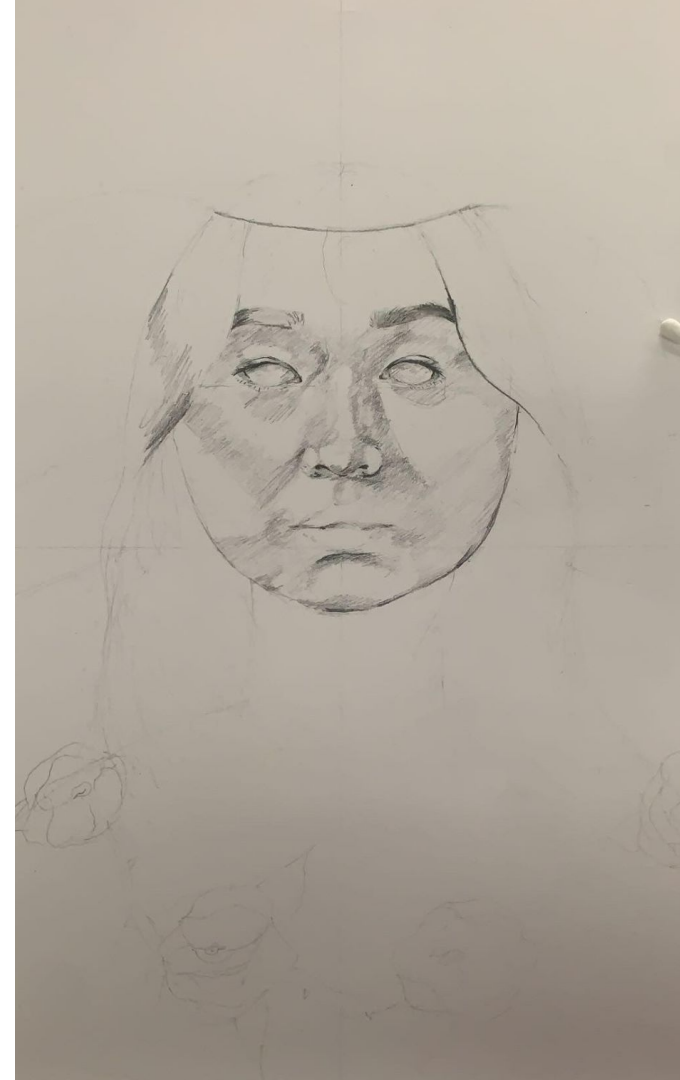
On this slide document the development of your work. Make more slides as needed. Aim to show the creative journey producing this artwork. Include progress shoots, before and after images of major moments, mistakes and fixes etc. Comment on work in progress and explain what you were up to



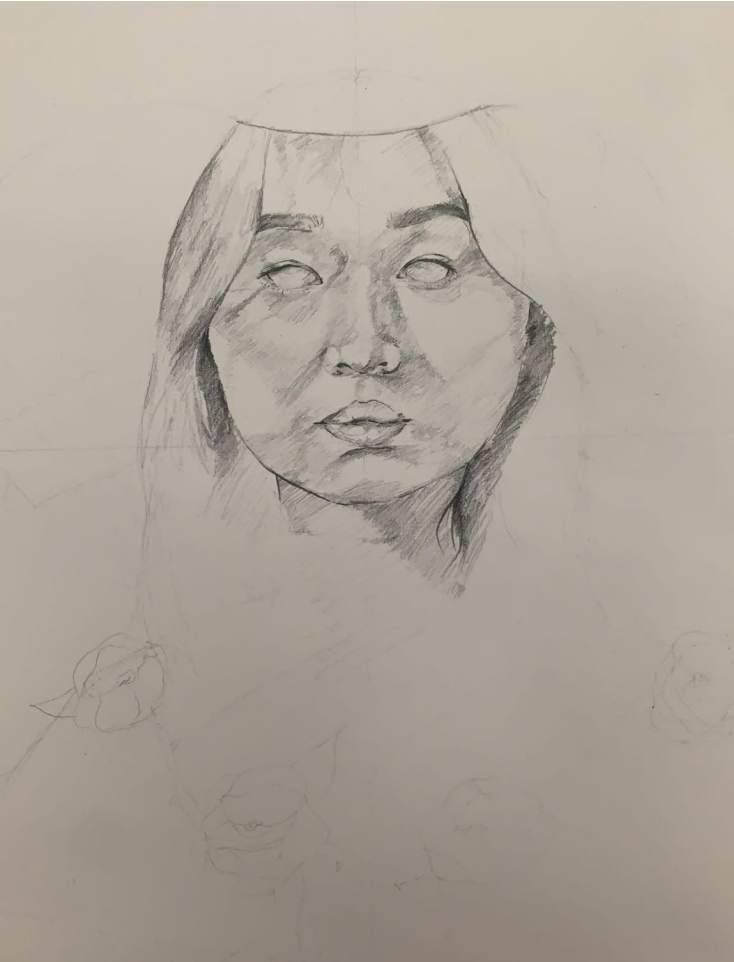
This stage of the artwork was refining the sketch on A3 paper and blocking/sketching out the portrait and where I wanted everything to go as well as how I wanted everything to look. This sketching process was essential in making sure that the portrait was as accurate as I could make it before going in with shading. I made sure to also attempt to block in where shadows would be on the portrait through using shapes and outline certain areas of the face for reference. I also used lines as reference to assist in facial anatomy to figure out where to place the eyes, mouth and eyebrows as accurately to the photo as I could. At this stage, I focus on not over sketching/overdoing certain features or using any harsh lines as this takes away from the realistic aspect; rather, I focus on emphasising features later on through shading.

# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

At this point, I was relatively happy with the refined sketch so I moved on to blocking out shadows on the face and emphasising features with shading. I did this through using a HB led pencil and a 2B pencil. The HB pencil was used for light shadows/areas which had large areas of shadow, whereas the 2B was used to darken certain areas that had stronger shadow to create contrast. Areas like this included the eyebrows, below the chin and the nose. When blocking in areas of shadow, I do my best to ensure the direction of the pencil/led is always going the same way to make sure the piece doesn't look messy, overwhelming or cluttered; through doing this, it creates a sense of cohesion within the piece and ties the artwork together.



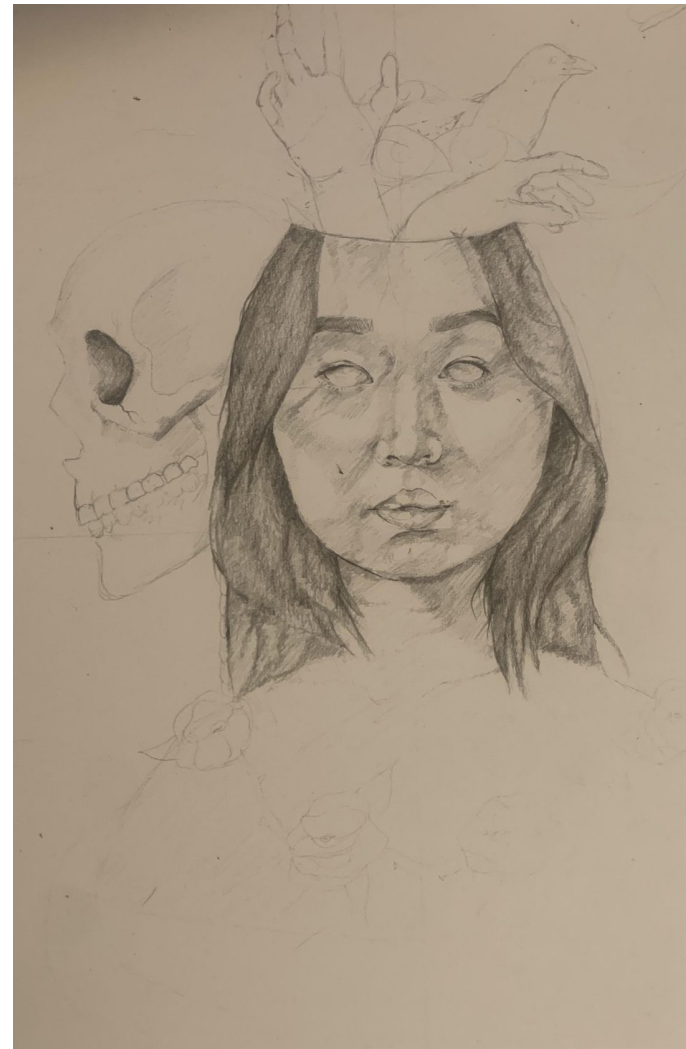
# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress



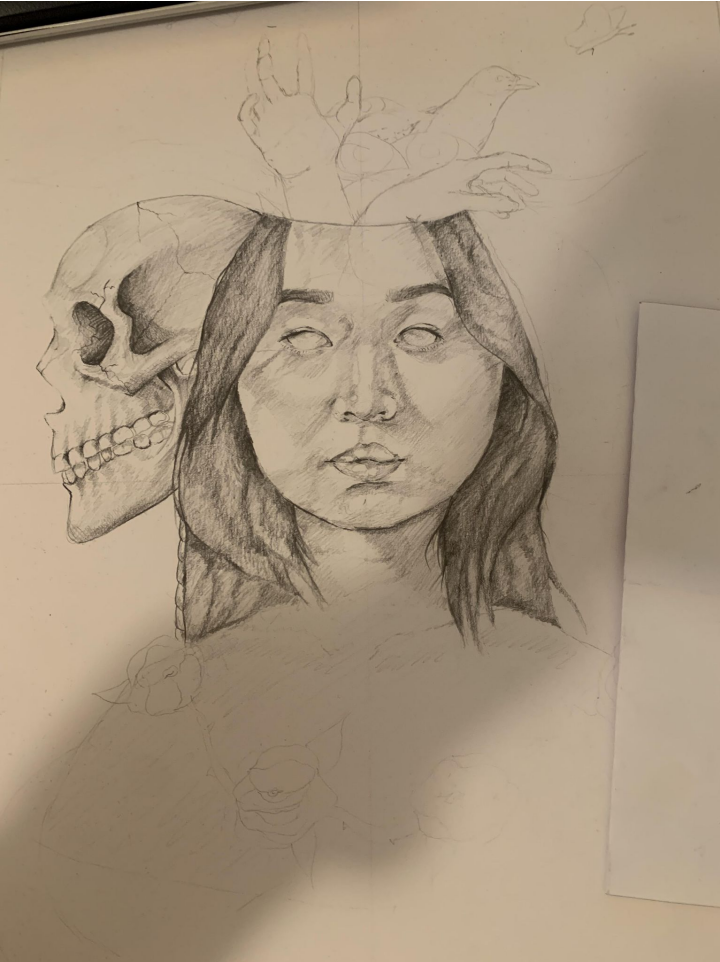
Further along in the process of refining features and blocking out shadows. I continue to ensure the direction of the lead goes the same way and still use a HB and 2B pencil for shadows. This stage was when I faced a challenge with contrast; I wanted the hair to clearly stand out from the face and not blend in with the face, but I was struggling to create contrast between the face and hair without going too dark for the hair as I wanted to still show lighting. Additionally, I realised the face wasn't as accurate as I could have made it, though I decided to keep going due to the timeframe I had to finish the piece.

# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

I finished the hair and managed to find a way to create contrast between the hair and face that I was happy with. I additionally finished most of the face (though may go back and add more shadows). I went back and refined more elements of the sketch such as the hands, crow, eyes and mouth that are coming out of the head and additionally began working on the skull. I found that the skull was hard to get right; I struggled with drawing a skull to scale on A3 paper while also maintaining somewhat accurate anatomy. The teeth was where I struggled the most. While it's not perfect, I decided the skull was good enough to begin laying down shadows and textures such as cracking.



# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

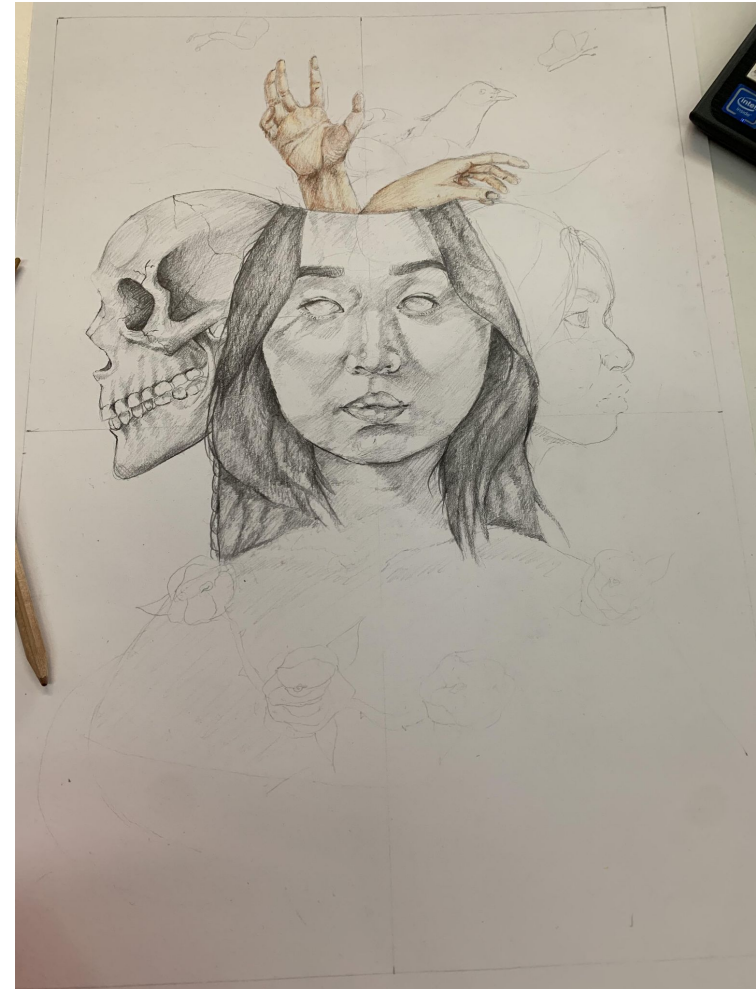


I had finished shading the skull and am relatively proud with the amount of contrast and depth I've been able to achieve with just a HB pencil mainly. The skull was a fun process to shade as the artwork can be seen coming together with the addition of the skull being relatively complete. The next step would be to start the side portrait on the right; this may pose a challenge to me however as I've never drawn a side portrait before.

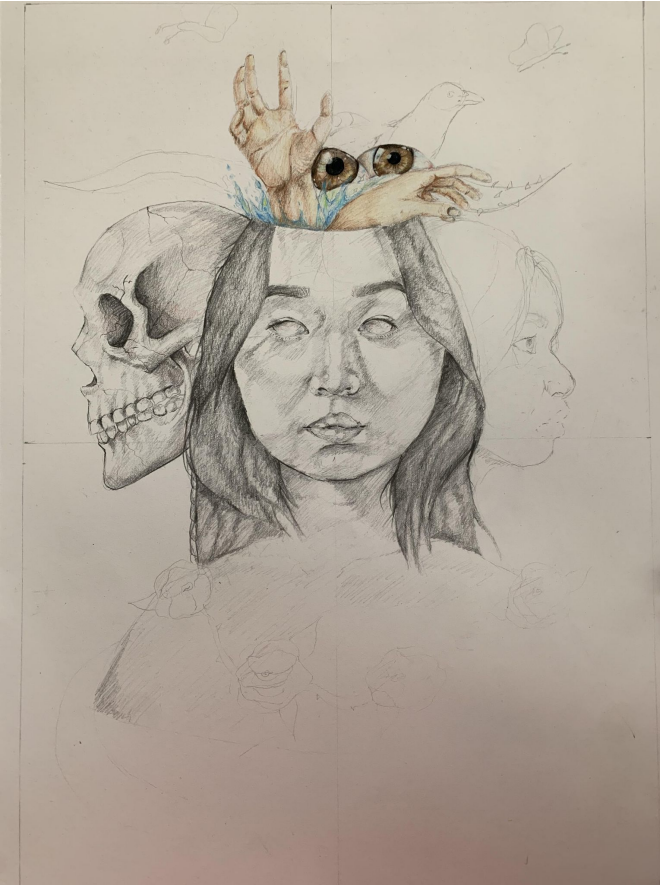


# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

At this stage, I began working on elements within the artwork besides the portraits. The first element I chose to work on were the hands coming out of the head. I chose to use coloured pencils to get as much detail as possible; I wanted the hands, along with the other elements, to be relatively realistic to create somewhat of an unsettling feeling. The process of the hands wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be; I used reference photos of real hands to ensure I had an idea of lighting and where there would be darker shadows and from there, used various skin tone pencils.



# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress



I then started working on the eyes and refining the side profile sketch. I additionally added water coming out of the head as suggested, and found that this certainly added towards the artwork as it was an additional element that stood out against the lead portraits.

With the eyes, I struggled quite a bit. It was the first time I'd attempted to draw a semi-realistic eye with coloured pencils; I found it was difficult to get the the right depth with the eyes while also ensuring there was still lighting visible to show reflections within the pupils. I ended up not being able to get the eyes to be as realistic as I'd hoped, though the process taught me quite a bit for future.

I also began refining the side profile sketch of myself. I was nervous for this stage as I'd never drawn a side portrait before, though through taking multiple reference shots of myself in different lighting, I found that the side profile was generally quite easy to refine; I found that the side profile ended up being relatively accurate to my own face. My friends also could tell relatively quickly that the sketch by itself was me.

# Frida Kahlo - Work in Progress

While a bit further along in the process, this was when I had already gone ahead and added the vines and roses. When it came to these elements, I was a bit conflicted on the material I wanted to use. I played around with both copics and coloured pencils, but settled on the use of copics for the larger areas (roses and vines) and coloured pencils for the more smaller details (ie. spikes on the vines, leaves coming from roses).



# Frida Kahlo - Final Work

Final work copy in here as a record - this work is marked as your major art project practical task for this term



# Artist statement

The artist statement is similar to the brief, but for different purposes. Besides your art may have changed since you wrote the brief. Also attach this artist statement with your art when you submit it. *This is included as a digital record in your VAPD through marked as part of the practical task submission.*

## Artist Statement

“Detached.”

This artwork is a portrait about myself and feelings of detachment from who I am as an individual and the feelings of being unhappy with who I was. It's about wanting to step outside of my comfort zone and grow and change, to not let the person who I was born as restrict me from growing and trying new things. I was inspired by Kahlo's self-portraits and her use of animals to portray her own story. To portray my own story/feelings, I used elements such as hands reaching out and flowers to represent growth and change. I used elements such as eyes and a mouth coming out of the frontwards facing portrait of myself to show the detachment I feel from who I am and a crow to symbolise transformation.

Isabelle Ha

Tertiary  
Year 12





# Close up photos of your work showing details of significance

Explain what detail you have photographed and why it is important

## 1) Elements

I photographed the elements coming out of the head as they make the artwork stand out from just realism, rather, these elements make the artwork fit the category of surrealism as they are unusually placed, make absolutely no sense when looking at the illustration at first, though portray hopes and dreams in a unique manner. This is similar to Frida Kahlo's artworks and how she portrayed her reality.



## 2) Portraits

The main focus of this artwork is the portraits. I photographed this as this is what Frida Kahlo's artworks were, self portraits of herself alongside additional elements that made it more than just illustrations of herself, rather, it became a story about one's realities, hopes and dreams. The portraits in this artwork is where the most detail is; in order to create surrealism, aspects of the artwork have to be realistic. I pushed my own abilities to make all three portraits relatively realistic.



# Review of Making Task 2

- How did you go, what was good or bad about the resulting artwork (in general and with respect to the task requirements)?
- When discussing what was good and/or bad consider artistic and technical merit. Use art vocabulary to explain your work.
- What new things did you learn?
- What would you do differently if you had the chance to redo this assignment/task?
- If you were the teacher setting this assignment/task would you keep it the same or change it. What did you like and/or didn't like about this assignment/task?

Overall, I'm relatively happy with the resulting artwork, even if it wasn't completely finished. The artwork is similar to Kahlo's artworks; it incorporates self portraits but also has other elements that make it surrealist. I'm happy with my use of lead pencils and the amount of depth I managed to create this time around; I was confident with making certain areas much darker than others to create contrast and overall, believe that both portraits of myself somewhat resemble me. The resulting artwork was what I aimed for; a semi-realistic illustration that has a lot of depth, detail and texture. However, things to improve on next time would be further anatomy practise to get a truly accurate representation with my realistic illustrations, additionally improving my colouring technique when it comes to realism; while the hands ended up looking good and relatively realistic in a sense, the eyes ended up not being as realistic as I had intended. As a result, it took away from the eerie vibe I wanted to create with the eyes coming out of the head. Furthermore, I feel as if copics weren't the best choice to use with this artwork with elements such as the roses and vines; the copics are very strong and contrasting against the led/coloured pencils. Perhaps broadening the type of material I use next time to get different textures and looks within the artwork will benefit. I learnt quite a bit with this artwork; I learnt how to use lines as a layout to help figure out where everything goes on a face and also learnt how to use reference photos as a base to creating artwork, but further enhancing that base through adding my own details/shadows to the portrait that perhaps don't appear in photos. I also learnt how to draw water with coloured pencils, something that had been a challenge for me for a long time. I also further learnt hand and facial anatomy, as well as how to draw side portraits. If I was to redo this assignment, I'd make sure that I started it earlier. In the beginning, I was relatively slow with coming up with an idea and being happy with it, so I left it until last minute to begin my good artwork. As a result, this meant that I couldn't finish it to the degree that I wanted to. I wanted to add more elements to the artwork such as butterflies and more flowers. Additionally, I wanted to do something with the background so it wasn't left just pure white, but unfortunately I didn't leave enough time for myself to come up with something. I'd probably also try to use different materials to copics; I had thought of attempting to use watercolours, specifically for the roses, vines and perhaps the background, but again, I hadn't left myself enough time to play around with watercolours and get use to them. Overall, I enjoyed this task. It really pushed my abilities and makes people attempt portraits, something I think everybody should try once in a while. I wouldn't change anything about the task.

