

Through The Abberation

My artwork explores the portrayal of women in media by transcribing the artwork 'Nana' by Edouard Manet in a futuristic and almost distorted style. Women are oftentimes demonised in media, but Nana breaks through that perception as a seemingly ordinary portrayal of a young lady, however it was a controversial image at the time with the female subject being the focus of the artwork rather than the man gazing at her. She is demonised for demanding the spotlight in the image, and my artwork highlights this with the halo that adorns her and her angel wings. Her presence in the image is a double edged sword, and despite the holy connotations of a halo, they are "tainted" when seen on a woman. Her reflections in the mirrors are inconsistent in the background, and the distortions in the background resemble chromatic aberration typical of older films and media.

My artwork was made during a 2 week intensive HSC program at the National Art School where our assignment was to transcribe images from pre 20th century artists into new artworks where we explore collective and individual ideas. I was inspired by digital paintings by Yuming Li and how the artist utilised unconventional colour schemes in order to create moody and atmospheric images, as well as how they portrayed angels in their artworks. When I first saw the painting 'Nana', I was immediately struck by how ordinary the woman being portrayed was. She was simply doing her makeup in the mirror, and experience that many women such as myself could relate to and engage with. After further researching the context of the artwork, specifically the way the painting was treated simply because of its portrayal of women, and I immediately knew that it was the artwork that I wanted to explore and transcribe.

Due to the fact that we only had a week to complete the artworks, planning was very rough and any plans we made had to be extremely flexible to change. Because of this, most planning was done on the wood as a rough draft, rather than completed sketches in a sketchbook. Preparing the wood on its own was time consuming, leaving around 3 days to complete the full artwork when taking the exhibition date into account. The process was based around having flexible and solid ideas and being able to visualise them in a short amount of time in a way that was suitable for an exhibition.



