

*Oneiric*, Nicola DeFazio

2024 Year 12

Acrylic on craft paper, plaster moulds, wire, styrofoam

Installation – Craft paper (297 x 420mm, A3), Variable size (wall)

I chose to explore the idea of how artists generate artworks and meaning through the subconscious mind and the thought of an abstract, dream-like world that our subconscious minds can place us in interests me. We often don't remember our dreams, but when we do, they can stick with us. Often, even if they appear realistic in the dream, our minds put us in a trans of make-believe, and we realise there are not many realistic aspects about them. Using various methods and materials, I wanted to challenge and explore the mind through art. I aimed to create a meaningful and intriguing piece inspired by the subconscious. I was intrigued by how our minds operate subconsciously concerning our dreams and memories. What does our unconscious mind remember when our conscious mind is inactive? This installation represents a dream-like world. Different forms and materials such as round Styrofoam balls, unique moulds, clay, and abstract paintings relay a world of night-time, planets, sleep and overall, a non-literal dream-like environment.

I created plaster blocks and drilled wires into them inspired by the firework night lamps we used as children. The nostalgic, child-like bedroom feel I gain from these lamps inspired me to incorporate it as another element relating to the concept of that dream-like world.

I chose to use the same colour palette, including red and white acrylic paint on brown craft paper across both works, however focusing on the red more in one painting, creating more depth and contrast to the white: then, in the second painting, focusing on the white over the red. This contrasted the works whilst continuing the same idea and making them an interesting diptych. The use of the colour red is our activated thoughts and memories in the paintings. Representing the mind, thoughts, and feelings alongside our current subconscious state - freeing and surreal. The white on the outside, displayed through the moulds on the walls, symbolises the thoughts yet to come in life, our conscious mind, and the control it has over our decisions and thoughts. With the Styrofoam balls, the white is the dreams we do not remember - hence why there are a lot more because we often forget most dreams, the red balls signify the dreams we remember - which there are less of, and the half balls symbolise those broken memories, dreams fading out of our remembrance. The idea of the moulds and clay falling down the stands depicts the forgotten dreams. The moulds hanging from the top of the wall are my hand squeezing clay; however, they depict bones - our bodies - communicating the desperation one has to grip and control their subconscious mind and the fluidity about it

These paintings are quite serendipitous as I would create a line I wasn't happy with or spill paint. However, I created more shapes through those mistakes, making the work even more interesting. I wanted to incorporate different lines and forms to create something interesting and allow audiences to perceive their own meaning behind it. I tried adding generic objects into the work, which seems odd. However, whilst I chose to add these objects into the work, they are quite hidden and surrounded by many different details, which I find exciting and more captivating to look at- the more you look, the more you see.

