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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Scholarship Visual Arts 2024

93308 Sculpture

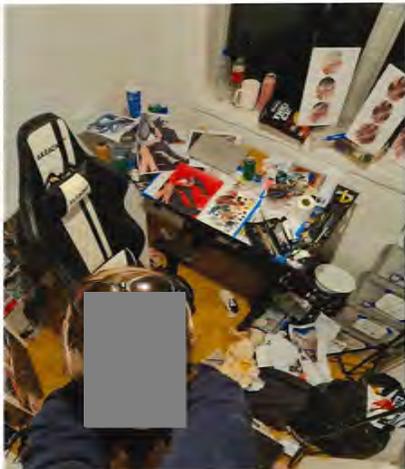
SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR





My work explores the **identity of 'the artist'** and the recurring **experience of imposter syndrome** that many creatives face. I intended to focus on my passion for different mediums and the individual experiences I've had while working within them. **Art is my past, present, and future. I am Art.** This body of work will serve as a testament to myself as an artist. It is **a love letter to self-expression.**

Throughout my sculptural investigation of artistic identity I hope to discover more about myself, both as an artist and a person. In challenging moments, I want this work to remind me of why I love creating. **The subject is me** and my choice of medium. I find the exploration of various techniques thrilling, and I cherish the time spent with skilled individuals who are willing to share their knowledge with me. My deep respect for artists often surpasses my own self-respect, and this is reflected in my work, something I expect will continue as my work matures. I will forever see creativity and creation as an endless pursuit of my personal artistic identity.



Pursuit - Pursuit refers to the act of working towards a goal or engaging in an activity with determination and effort.

Identity - Identity refers to the characteristics, beliefs, and experiences that define who a person is, both personally and socially. It encompasses how individuals perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others, shaped by factors like culture, values, and relationships.

Creation - Creation is the act of bringing something new into existence, whether it's art, ideas, or physical objects. It involves imagination, effort, and transforming potential into reality.

Artist - Being an artist is indescribable to many. To me it means expressing a unique perspective and emotion through creative mediums, it helps complex things seem simple through visual exploration allowing for personal reflection. Being an artist involves a commitment to continual growth, embracing vulnerability, and courageously sharing your vision with the world.

Originality - Originality is the quality of being unique and innovative, characterized by the creation of new ideas, expressions, or concepts that are not imitations of existing works. It reflects authenticity and independent thought, often challenging established norms and showcasing individual perspectives.

Imposter - An imposter is someone who pretends to be someone else, often with the aim of deceiving others or gaining some advantage. This deceit is typically intended to mislead others into trusting or believing them, often for personal gain or to manipulate situations.

40

“Drawing things makes them seem more real and makes me feel more alive” David Gentleman

There have been many times in my life when I've struggled or even been unable to experience the normalcy and comfort I get from putting on my makeup in the morning or doodling in my notebooks. It makes me anxious, and I'm not sure if that's entirely healthy, but for me, it's more than just a care free activity, it's who I am. In moments when I've struggled to connect with others, I've been able to start conversations through paper and colored pencils, makeup brushes, and the paint smudges on my once pristine school uniform.

**The question I strive to answer through my work is...
“Is my pursuit of creation self centered?”**

Hello my name is

ARTIST TRAPPED IN STUDENTS BODY



Originality can often feel unattainable for individuals in creative fields due to the overwhelming influence of existing works and the pervasive nature of inspiration that blurs the lines between originality and imitation. Many creators grapple with the fear that their ideas have already been explored, leading to a sense of imposter syndrome and the belief that true originality is an elusive goal rather than a practical reality.

Why sculpture?

No one in my family really understands why I'd want to pursue art as a career, let alone appreciates its value. They all work in construction, following stable 9-to-5 jobs with fixed contracts, and they seem to find a deep sense of security and purpose in that lifestyle. **Sometimes, I can't help but feel a bit envious, how straightforward and reliable it must be to know that hard work will always result in a steady paycheck. It's not that I don't love art, but the uncertainty of "making it" as an artist is a constant weight on my mind.** With the unemployment rate so high for people with art degrees, I often question if I'm making the right choice. There have been moments where I seriously considered abandoning my artistic path and choosing something more traditional, a route that might guarantee stability, even if it wouldn't fulfill me creatively.

Sculpture is my outlet to express these conflicting emotions because of its incredible versatility and its ability to represent complex symbolism in three-dimensional form. The way sculpture allows me to manipulate space, shape, and texture gives me the freedom to make **abstract concepts like identity and imposter syndrome physically real.** The variety of mediums I can use, from clay to face paint to scrap fabric to blocks of wood, has transformed this journey into a rich exploration of creation itself, making each piece a unique and personal experience. In my final year of school, this project feels like a rare and precious opportunity to fully immerse myself in the creative process, free from the financial pressures that may come later in professional life. It's a space where I can take risks, learn, and enjoy the freedom to explore who I am as an artist, without worrying about the practicality of my choices just yet. **I just want to be me.**



Me being the "artist friend":



As an art student (**an artist forced into a student's body...**) focused on photography, sculpture, and painting, I'm always striving to broaden my skills and deepen my understanding of various mediums. Beyond school, I'm a professional makeup artist and face painter with my own business, and I also teach art to kids at the YMCA holiday program—a role that lets me pass on my passion for creativity to the next generation.

Art isn't just part of my life; it's my entire world. Last year, I took on four jobs to save for a school art trip across Europe. Visiting places like the Tate Gallery, the Venice Biennale, and the National Portrait Gallery was an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime experience, leaving me deeply inspired and ready to bring new insights into my future studies at Whitecliffe.

I'm deeply interested in the creative possibilities that comes along with three-dimensional art. As I prepare for university next year, I'm committed to strengthening my technical skills, exploring new methods, and experimenting with materials that will allow me to express ideas with more precision and depth.



Do I have what it takes?

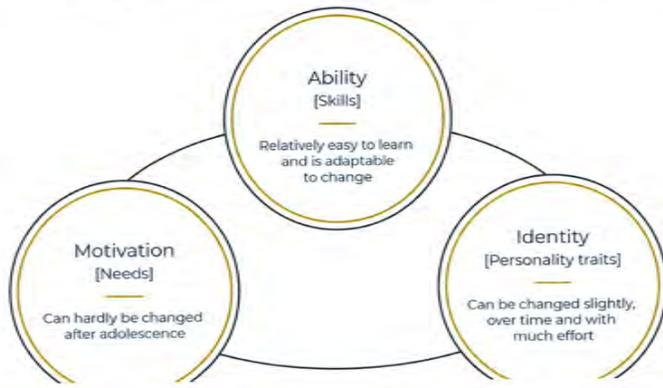
I often find myself questioning my abilities, especially when I compare myself to others. While I try to shrug off my doubts with the belief that my hard work and determination will see me through, there's always that lingering fear: What if one day I'm too tired to keep going? Will everything I've worked for become meaningless?

My Future:

Artists are often seen as hobbyists, not professionals with "real jobs." The rise of AI has only made this perception worse, creating even more uncertainty around the future of creative careers. This instability has pushed my parents, and I'm sure many others, to discourage me from pursuing art. They see it as a risky, unpredictable life choice, and sometimes I can't help but feel the weight of that pressure.

My Motive:

Earlier this year, I started writing down all my doubts and insecurities on paper, but I stopped abruptly when I caught myself writing, "Do I make art because I truly want to, or because others like what I create?" That question hit me harder than I expected and made me pause to reconsider my motivations as an artist.



Rembrandt

Rembrandt van Rijn is one of history's most prolific artists. He painted this self-portrait shortly after declaring bankruptcy. His eyes are weary, his brow furrowed with the weight of stress, and his posture heavy with worry. Gazing directly at the viewer, he allows a soft light to reveal his vulnerability. Known for his ability to capture the essence of his subjects, Rembrandt bares his own truth in this portrait: behind his outward composure lies a deep fear of failure.



Vincent van Gogh

Vincent van Gogh is the embodiment of self-doubt. The tortured artist spent considerable time in mental institutions and was thought to be a joke until his work became considerably more notable after his death. His work is drenched in anguish, uncertainty, and a desperate need for validation. This particular portrait, one of his last, was painted during a difficult period at the asylum in Saint-Rémy. In it, van Gogh seems to look at us, silently asking: "Am I good enough?" in life he was undervalued, a genius ahead of his time.



Me

In my own work, I've used self-portraiture to capture the deep sense of self-doubt that I see in both Rembrandt and van Gogh's self-portraits, where their eyes reflect a constant questioning of their worth. Like them and many other artists, I often wrestle with insecurities, wondering if my work truly matters or if I'm good enough as an artist. This theme of vulnerability has become central to my art, allowing me to express my own fears while connecting to the struggles of artists throughout history. Through this process, I explore not only my identity but also the universal experience of seeking validation and battling self-doubt.



A key element of my work is the personal connection. This series of work reflects my biological identity, DNA, and creation. I used my hair, molded my thumb, and left exaggerated fingerprints in the clay, highlighted with dry brushing.



My real hair.



The hands of a maker:

I started a series that never came to fruition of hand based sculptures referring to a "makers" hands and the controlling nature of a medium transforming the artists hands while a sculpture is being made .

"Hello, my name is" stickers are typically used for introductions in various settings. I like the duality of both the practical aspects and the deeper meaning and purpose of the "hello" stickers. Not only does it communicate my identity, they are also used in business and professional settings reflecting my desire to be seen as a serious competitor in the art world.



Hello
my name is
THE
COMPETITION!

Susan Grabel

I'm inspired by Susan Grabel's work with figurative sculptures in handmade cast paper, clay, and mixed media, as well as her prints, which delve into the human dimensions of social issues. Her ability to bring attention to subjects like consumerism, homelessness, alienation, and the aging of women's bodies speaks to the powerful role art can play in illuminating social realities.

I used the human body and flesh to depict exaggerated layering, symbolizing the complex role of an artist within a world saturated with artistic identities. This layered approach reflects how artists constantly build upon influences and experiences to find their place in a vibrant, crowded creative world.



Naum Gabo



Naum Gabo's work captivates me, especially in his exploration of form, figure, and the interplay of layered spaces. His sculptures and constructions push beyond traditional boundaries, challenging the perception of solid form by emphasizing transparency and layering. Gabo's work isn't simply about the exterior shape; it delves into the internal essence, using materials like glass, plastic, and metal to create semi-transparent layers that invite viewers to look into and through his pieces. This approach brings out a tension between what is visible and hidden, revealing and concealing aspects of the human figure and abstract forms alike.



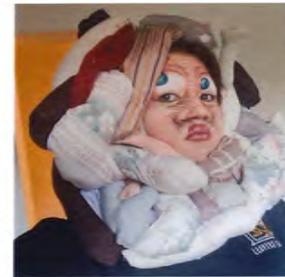
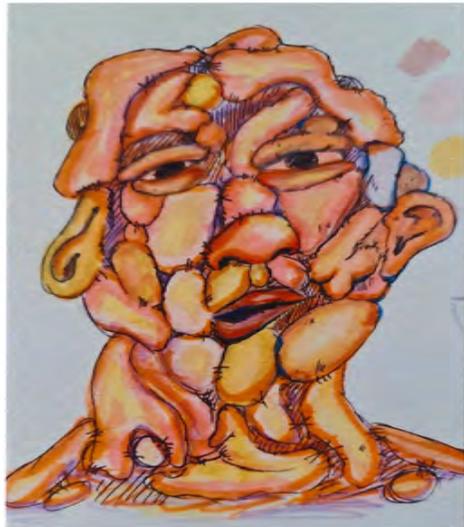
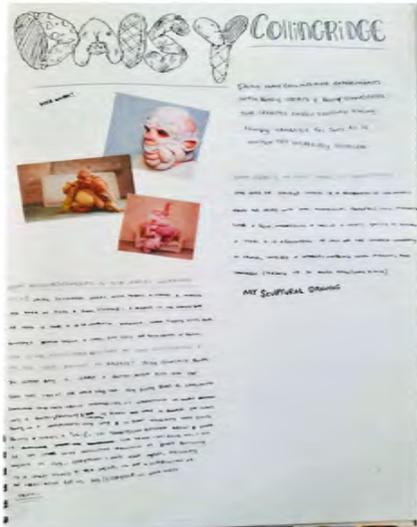
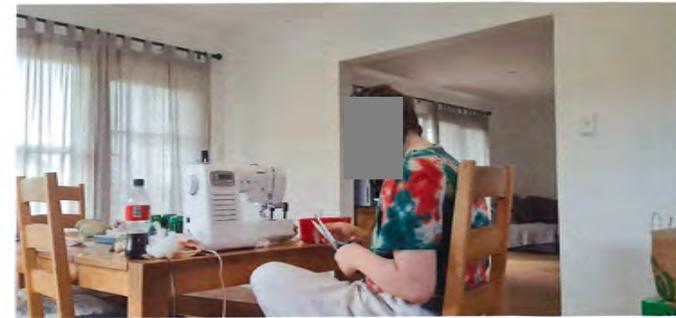
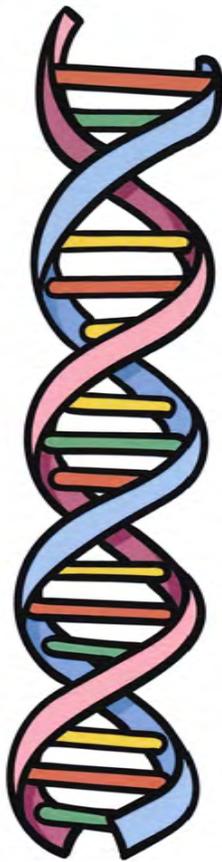
I want to incorporate this theme of layered complexity into my own work because, like Gabo, I see it as a powerful reflection of the multifaceted nature of identity and human experience. Each layer adds depth, suggesting how our identities are built from countless influences, memories, and emotions that overlap and intersect. By layering materials, forms, or textures, I hope to convey the complexity of these internal turmoils artists go through.

Anthony Gober



The artist's innovative use of mixed media, combined with the incorporation of natural hair as a personal, organic element, deeply influenced my approach to my own sculptures. By including strands of my own hair—my DNA—I aim to infuse my work with a raw, intimate connection to my own identity and experiences. This choice bridges the gap between the physical and the emotional, adding a layer of vulnerability and authenticity. I'm particularly captivated by the subtle sense of unease this personal material brings to the pieces, creating a tension that invites viewers to confront both the familiar and the unsettling aspects of identity.

Alongside this I've used the studio photography style he uses to show his work in its purest state. The setting will be stark, empty vacuum of white space. This backdrop symbolizes the duality of how art is perceived without outside influence. I want to highlight how my work can stand on its own, even after being created in a space designed for creativity.



In response to Daisy Collingridge's work, I immersed myself in her style throughout my projects this year, drawing inspiration from her approach to form, texture, and layering. I explored layering techniques to represent flesh, which allowed me to convey the multi-dimensional aspects of identity and human experience. Utilizing soft sculpture as a medium evoked the organic, malleable quality of the human body, adding a tactile and vulnerable element to my pieces. Additionally, I incorporated themes of DNA, skin, and cells to symbolize our individuality and shared humanity. By combining clay with fabric, I reflected the tension between permanence and transience, while playing with scale to emphasize vulnerability and strength. Inspired by Collingridge's wearable sculptures, I introduced wearable elements into my work, creating a bridge between art and the human form that heightens the viewer's awareness of their physical presence in relation to the art.

Daisy Collingridge is a British artist known for her unique and playful approach to exploring the human body, identity, and flesh through wearable sculptures. Her work blurs the line between art and performance, as she creates soft, layered bodysuits crafted from fabric and padding that mimic the look and texture of human flesh. These suits, which she affectionately names, allow Collingridge to sculpt exaggerated, almost surreal representations of the human form, inviting viewers to question conventional ideas about bodies, beauty, and physicality.

Her use of fabric and hand-stitching brings a tactile, organic quality to each piece, transforming the human body into something both strange and endearing. Collingridge work is inspired by the concept of flesh as a material that can be molded, stretched, and reshaped—she celebrates the diversity of human bodies while playfully challenging our perceptions of normalcy and form. Her art invites us to engage with the humorous and absurd sides of human physicality, opening up a conversation about identity and the relationship we have with our own bodies.

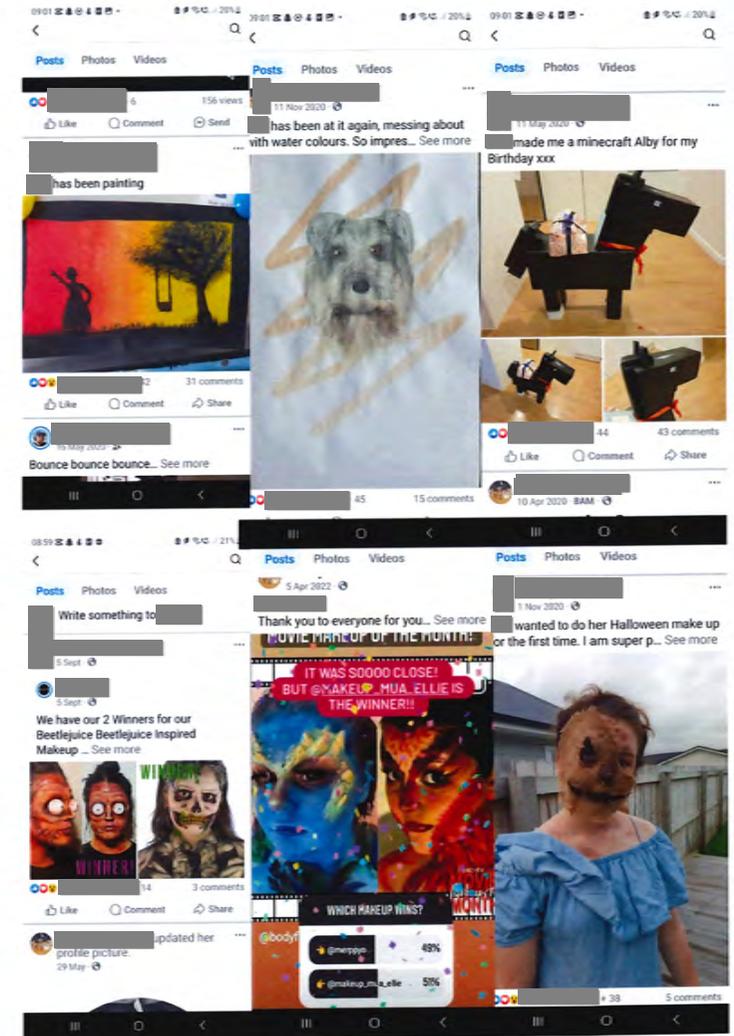
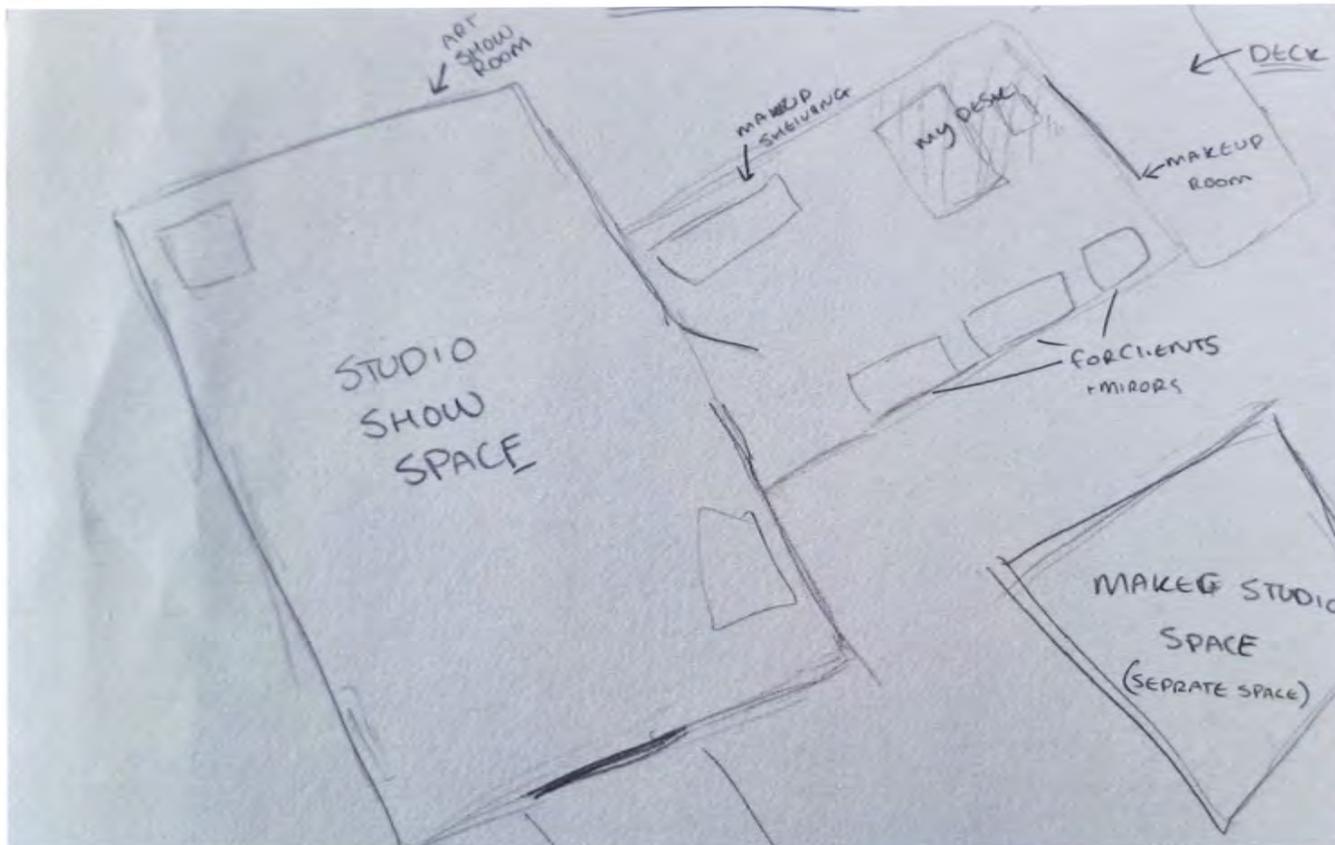




If I had all the money and time in the world this is what I'd want my studio space to look like:

For my next sculpture, I'd like to create a piece that pushes the boundaries of my previous work, focusing on complex layering techniques and deeper themes of identity and human fragility. This time, I might incorporate materials I haven't yet explored, like resin or mixed metals, to bring a new dimension to the work. I envision showing this piece in a gallery space, where it can be displayed alongside related works, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in the concept and interact with it on a personal level.

If I had more time, I'd love to explore digital mediums like augmented reality, which could allow viewers to see my work layered in new ways. This would open up possibilities for viewers to experience the sculpture virtually, creating a multidimensional interaction. By focusing on refining my technique and developing even more profound ideas, I aim to reach a level of depth and craftsmanship that resonates universally.



In the future, I aim to move beyond my mom's Facebook feed and showcase my work on respected art platforms. My goal is to establish myself as a recognized, professional artist with a strong presence in the art world.

Just because the board is done, doesn't mean I am...

Scholarship

Subject: Visual Arts – Sculpture

Standard: 93308

Total Score: 21

Marker commentary

This submission presents an investigation into the identity of “the artist” and the candidate’s recurring experience of imposter syndrome. After initial research questions, the candidate asserts that many creatives face this issue, and that this is something that they would like to address in their sculptural investigation. The candidate logically uses their own body and augmented face as the central device in which to communicate ideas of construction of self and persona. They deploy a wide range of sculptural modes of practice strategically and recognise successful modes to present ideas of aspiration to becoming an artist and the anxiety that comes with that assertion. The body of work is a mechanism to affirming the belief that they are an artist.

At the beginning of the workbook, the candidate describes the work as a “love letter to self-expression”. It is, in a way, a sculptural investigation of what it means to be an artist. The candidate has presented an honest, self-reflective commentary that underpins the sculptural work “I want this work to remind me of why I love creating”. The initial defining of the submission’s proposition is further clarified when the candidate confronts their own deferral of self-respect to those artists they admire. In this sense, the work is also a self-affirmation of creative worth.

The submission then logically starts with drawings of the artist’s face as distorted caricatures that initiate the construction of the artist’s identity or persona. These drawings successfully show disproportionate features with exaggerated expressions that allude to self-doubt and a distorted sense of self. These self-portraits test out methodologies in small, efficient drawing methods including colour pencil, collage, clay construction, and a small sculptural face that is made from the hair of the candidate. The hair self-portrait is a great example of material as metaphor, referencing artists like Marc Quinn and Robert Gober. Gober also influences the candidate in the way in which they choose to photo-document their work. These initial works are photographed in a way that is cognisant of the role that documentation plays in the reading of sculptural work.

These simple drawing methods also allow the candidate to move quickly through ideas, so they can define their next steps with clarity and ambition. Astutely, the candidate recognises the potential of repurposing introduction labels commonly used at formal group gatherings (e.g. conferences), allowing people to introduce themselves in written form and so avoid the potentially awkward question, “What is your name?” The candidate exploits these labels, using the phrase “Hello my name is” to create multiple personas or layers of the same persona through text and performance. An introduction label is used at the start of each page of the workbook starts with an introduction label, identifying different aspects of the candidates practice as an artist, e.g. “Hello, my name is... Artist trapped in a student body.” They use this device to examine the established sculptural practice that has influenced them, introducing that page with “Hello my name is... the competition”. Logically, the final page of the workbook declares “Hello my name is... I am an Artist.”

The candidate also references their sense of self doubt in the history of self-portraiture in the workbook. They examine two famous self-portraits, suggesting the portraits show huge self-doubt. First, they analyse Rembrandt’s 1659 Self-Portrait, with a suggestion that his emotional state is clear in the facial expression of the work when considering he painted this work just after declaring bankruptcy. This analysis adds to the concern the candidate has

about the financial and emotional viability of choosing to be an artist. This phase of idiosyncratic, small scale works then shifts towards larger scale performance, using both make-up and sculptural objects that augment the artist's body in performance.

The candidate successfully uses both the introduction labels in installation and as part of a suit that shows the artist wearing their anxiety on their body. This then culminates into a fantastic synthesis of faux body parts; facial make up and an anxiety label suit where the artist presents themselves as an artist with their self-doubt and distorted sense of self on full display.