



Pearson

GCE A Level Advanced Art and Design

**Fine Art
Component 2**

SING

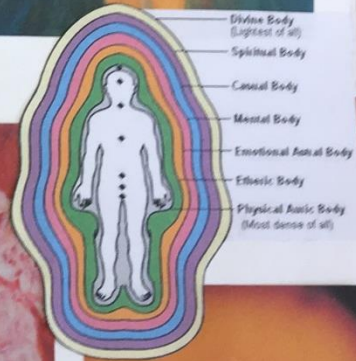
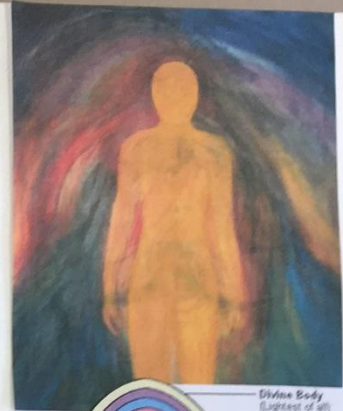
Total Mark 62

	A01 Develop	A02 Explore and Select	A03 Record	A04 Realise
Mark	15	15	16	16
Performance Level	5	5	6	6
			Total out of 72	62

EXAM TITLE ...

'ENVIRONMENT'

In my last project I focused on the female gaze, considering the unrealistic and damaging way that society presents the 'ideal' image of female beauty, and the effect this has upon women who as a result feel inadequate and 'flawed'. As I explored these ideas I watched my own news on beauty change, I no longer incessantly studied my image or the appearance of those around me. Instead I began to see people for their personality, finding beauty in the energy they put out rather than their physical appearance. This is what I want to work on in this new project - depicting the environment that people create and how I feel in their presence. I believe that the spiritual or emotional presence that a person has is the true essence of beauty and want to challenge the conventional beauty ideals seen in classical art and modern media, which value women purely on appearance. To do this I want to explore the idea of the 'aura', studying artists who have attempted to depict aura energy visually to give subjects an essence beyond just physical image. I also want to explore the use of colour to portray mood.



SPIRITUAL PRESENCE
AND REDEFINING FEMALE
BEAUTY



PICASSO - Blue/Rose periods
+ abstract/expressive
interpretations
of people

KLIMT
- use of gold
and symbolic
imagery to
glorify/celebrate
women



RITA
ACKERMANN

CATHY
WILKES



PIERRE
BONNARD - depicting beauty +
spiritual dimensions of
ordinary
moments
in every
day life

MUNCH - exploration
of 'auras' + super-
natural emanation
to depict spiritual/
emotional presence

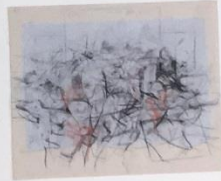
CECILY
BROWN



HARMONI
KORINE



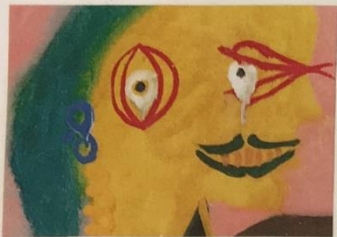
JENNY SAVILLE



PABLO PICASSO

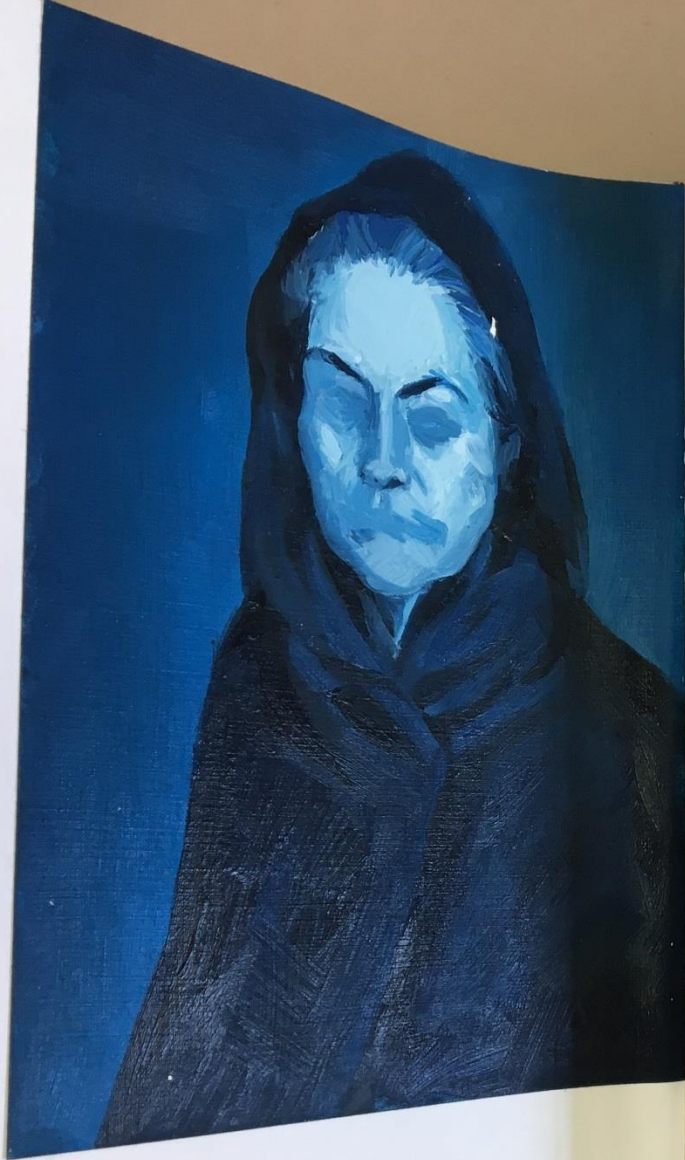
Picasso is a Spanish painter, regarded as one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century having co-founded the Cubist movement.

Women dominated much of Picasso's work, in which he explored the representation of the many facets of their differing personalities. His portraits transcended the traditional approach to painting, ~~to imitate physical appearance~~ instead of depicting the physical appearance of his subjects he expresses their emotions and personalities, translating the relationship he has with the subject and the mood of the moment. Marie Thérèse was his lover and muse for a long period. Despite being captivated by her he fought against classical representation of beauty, focusing more on capturing the essence of her being - her grace and sensuousness. He perfectly records her faraway expression and powerfully depicts his tenderness for her through soft lines. You sense his desire to penetrate her thoughts at that moment, but his recognition of the inaccessibility of her inner world.



MARIE THÉRÈSE, FULL FACE & PROFILE — in this monochrome painting
Picasso creates ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~wordly~~ ^{wordly}, mythological imagery to depict her. With its
gleaming yellow center and foggy, near-black periphery, the painting evokes a
moonlit night, the gradual turn of her head from pure profile to full
face suggesting the phases of the moon across the night sky. Her pale breast,
shaped like a half moon, amplified the lunar metaphor, and the sweeping contours
sharpening her body strengthen the theme of planetary revolution.





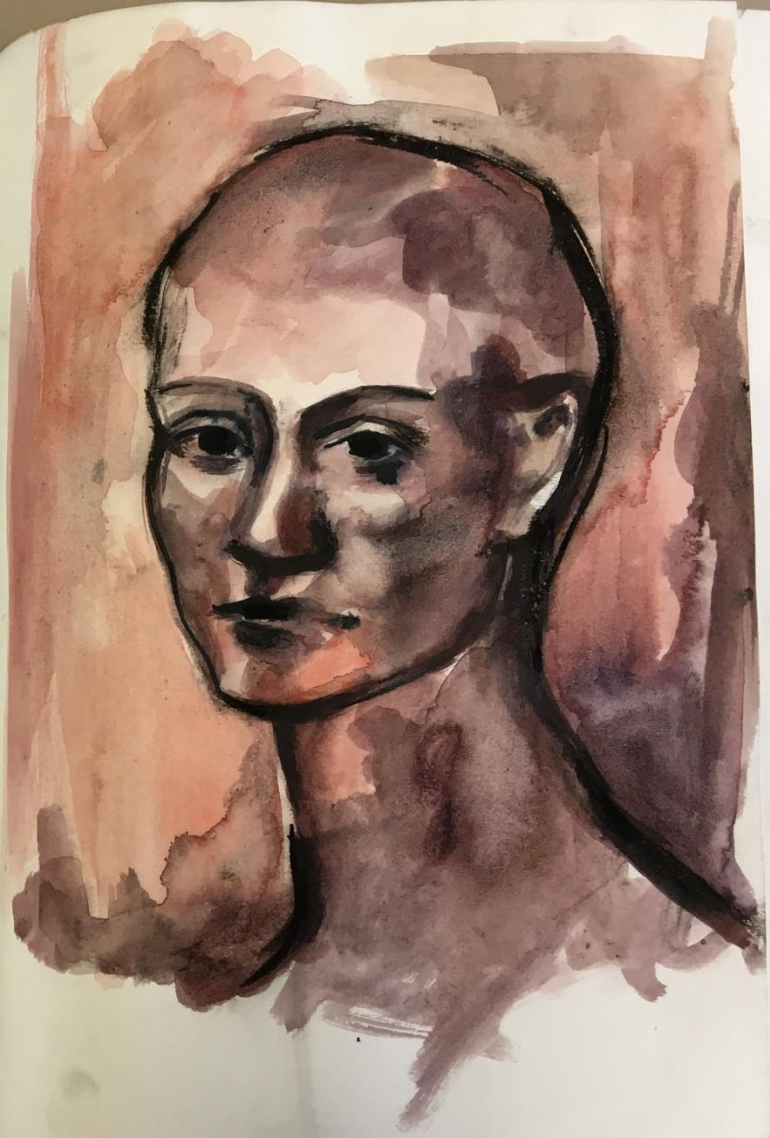
BLUE PERIOD

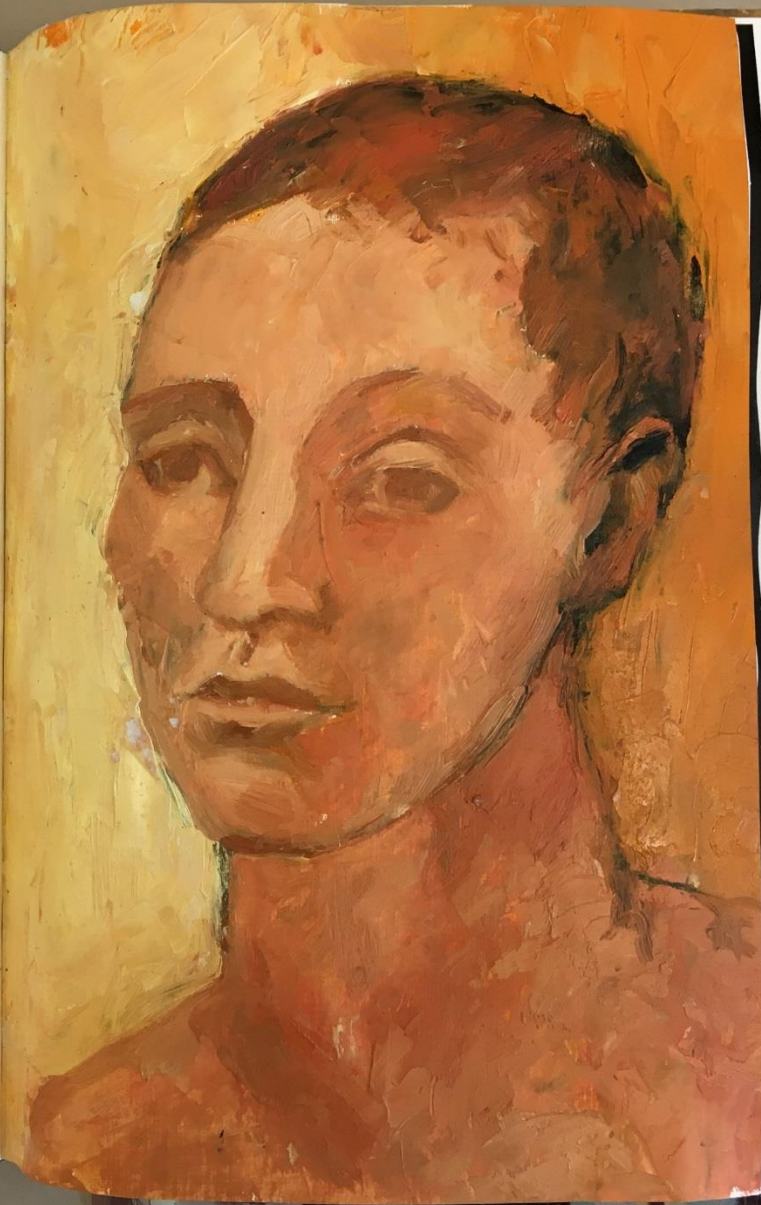
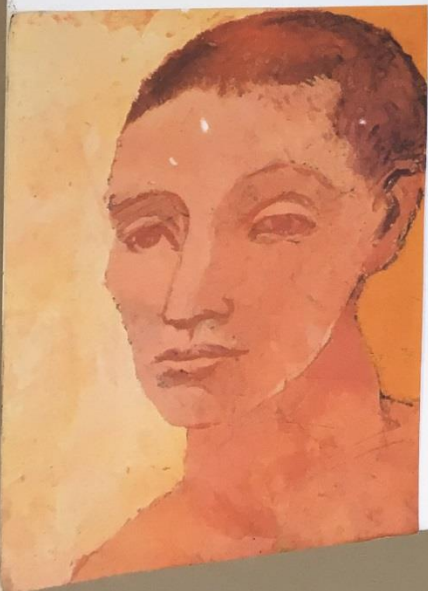
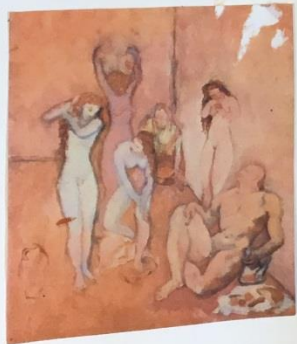
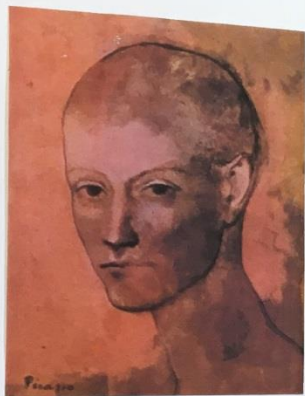
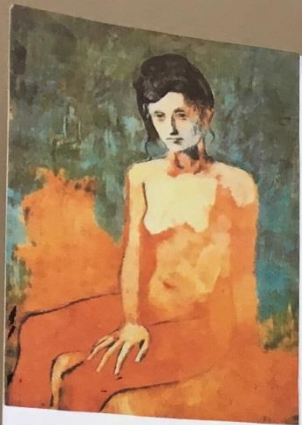
The 'Blue Period' refers to the works produced by Picasso between 1901 and 1904 when he essentially painted monochromatic paintings in shades of blue and green, reflecting his depression at the time. Solitary figures dominate the Blue Period works, exploring themes of loneliness, poverty and despair.



ROSE PERIOD

Picasso's Blue Period was followed by his Rose Period. As his bout of depression gradually ended and psychological state improved, he moved towards more joyful, vibrant works, ~~emphasizing~~ with emphasized use of pinks and other warm hues.





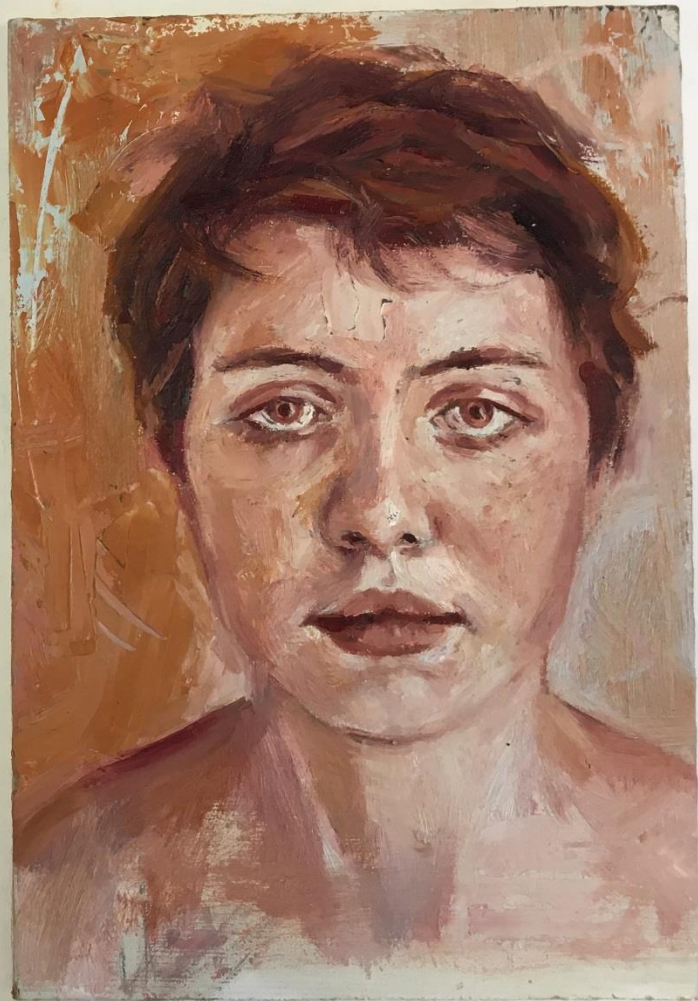
RESPONSE

In response to my research into Picasso's colour periods I took a photoshoot of basic profile shots. I tried to capture the subject looking content as I intend to explore Picasso's rose period style, in which he depicts his subjects more warmly & positively.



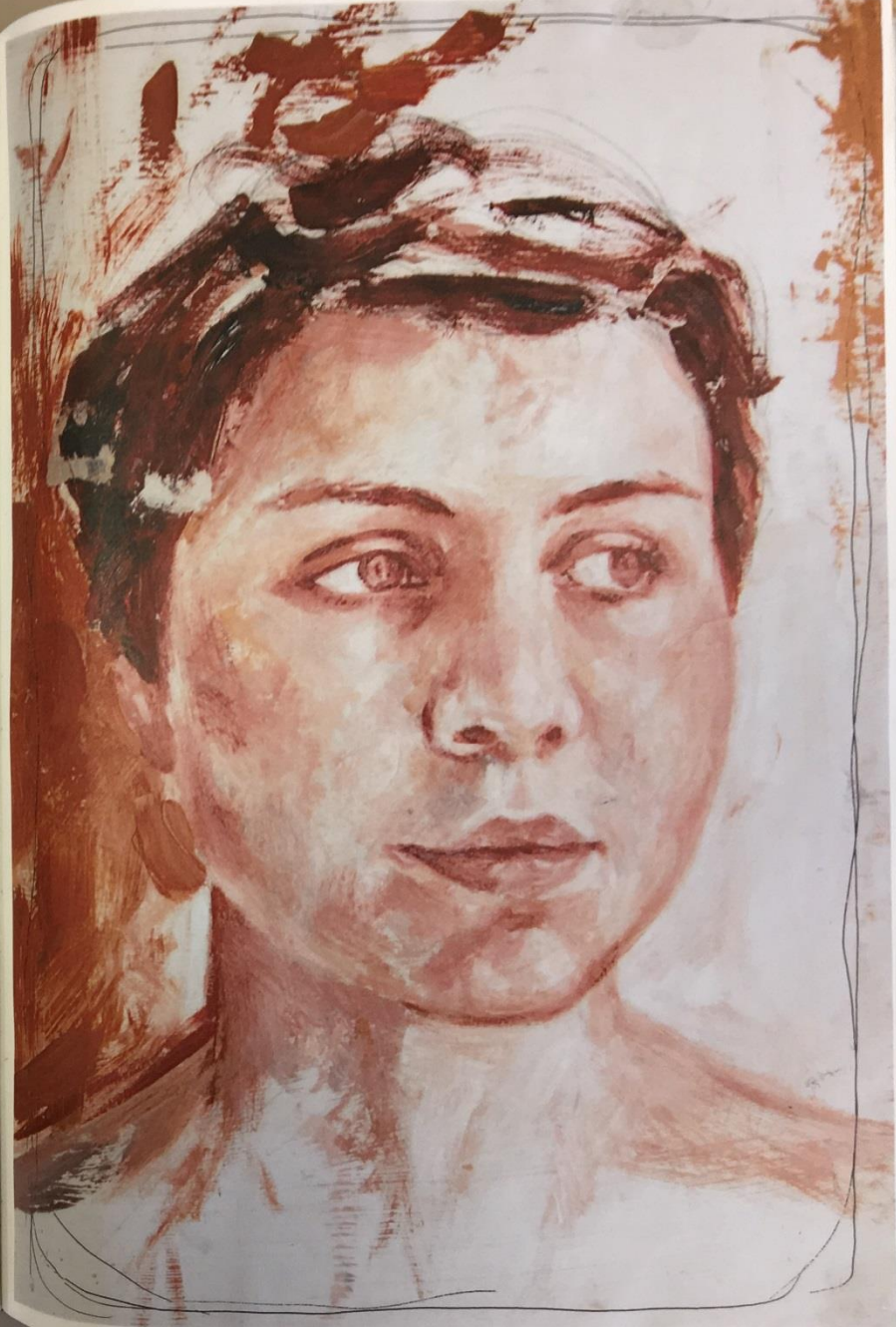


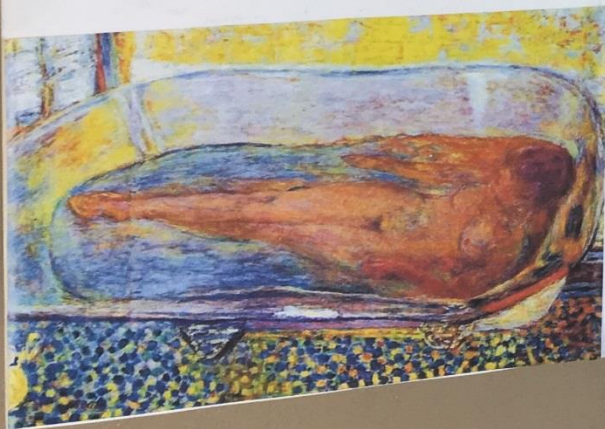
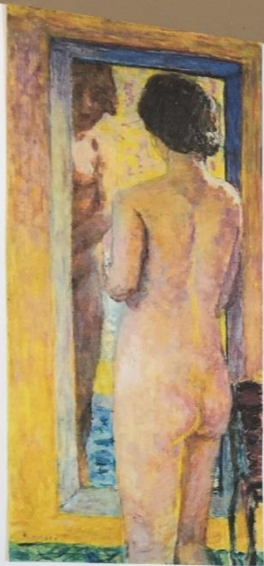
Pencil + watercolor



OIL PAINTING RESPONSE

In this response I used oil paint in warm pink and orange hues to mimic Picasso's rose period. I painted a base of orange tones first and then painted over in pinks and reds. I adopted Picasso's somewhat expressive style of painting, capturing the essence of the subject in detail in their facial features and expression and then laying down just a few brushstrokes for the hair and neck. I like the mood created using these colours and brushstrokes, which seem to capture a moment of fondness and warmth between the subject and painter. I don't want to stick to using only the same few hues in all of my subsequent paintings but I do think the use of colour to portray mood as demonstrated here is an effective technique.





PIERRE BONNARD

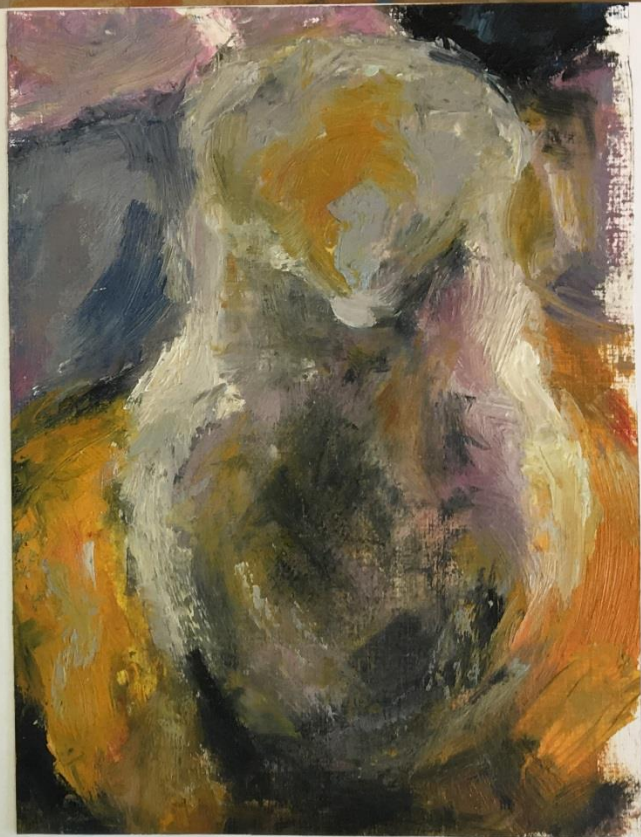
Pierre Bonnard was a French painter who was active during the late 19th and early 20th century. Bonnard was a leading figure in the Les Nabis art movement, which took inspiration from Japanese prints, art nouveau and post impressionist painters such as Gauguin and Lautrec.

Bonnard painted many of his scenes from memory, capturing the spirit of the moment rather than the exact person or place. He did not paint from life but rather drew his subject and made notes on colour. Bonnard's use of colour is the defining element of each of his works, ~~and~~ acting as a means of expressing his experience of the world. ~~His use of~~ By laying colours and using luminous tones he produces a sensuous effect, where the inanimate scenes seem to shimmer and glow like a nostalgic recollection of the moment. This is a characteristic of Les Nabis art, which aimed to depict the beauty and

~~from~~ (continued) mystical spiritual dimensions of ordinary moments in everyday life. Bonnard was particularly interested in intimate moments in which people are immersed in a domestic setting, un-~~consciously~~ self-consciously immersed in their everyday world. This aspect of his work was described as 'intimism'.

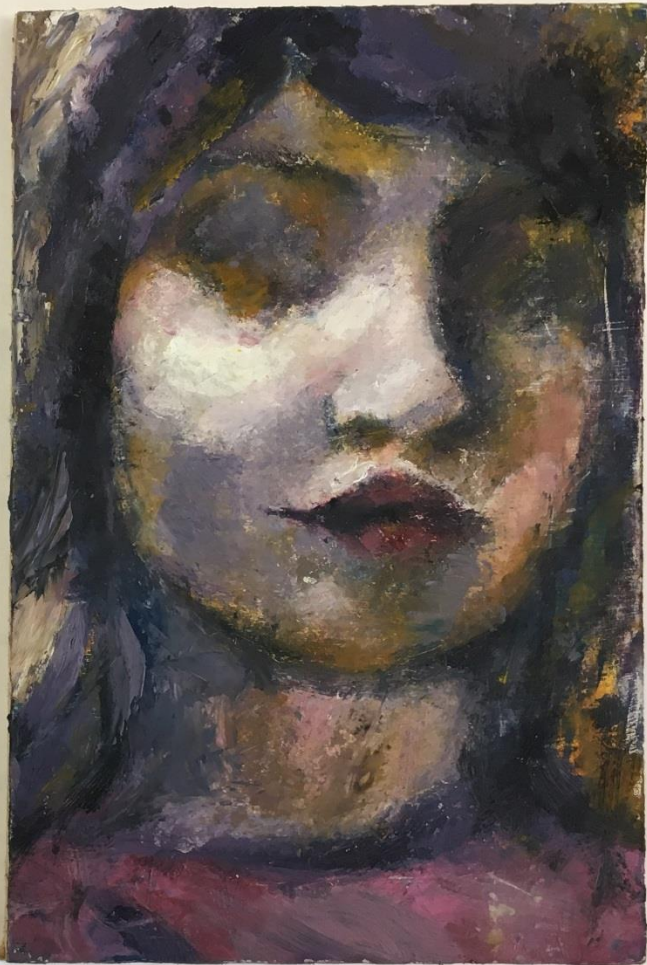
Bonnard is often ~~as~~ credited with the introduction of the 'modern nude' - unlike the idealised goddess nudes of Titian or Rubens, Bonnard's subjects are captured in natural poses lacking inhibition. Subjects are 'at one with their surroundings', with Bonnard's techniques of sampling skin tones from the surroundings and the Les Nabis doctrine of abandoning three dimensional modelling in favour of flat colour areas allowing the figure to almost become a part of their environment.

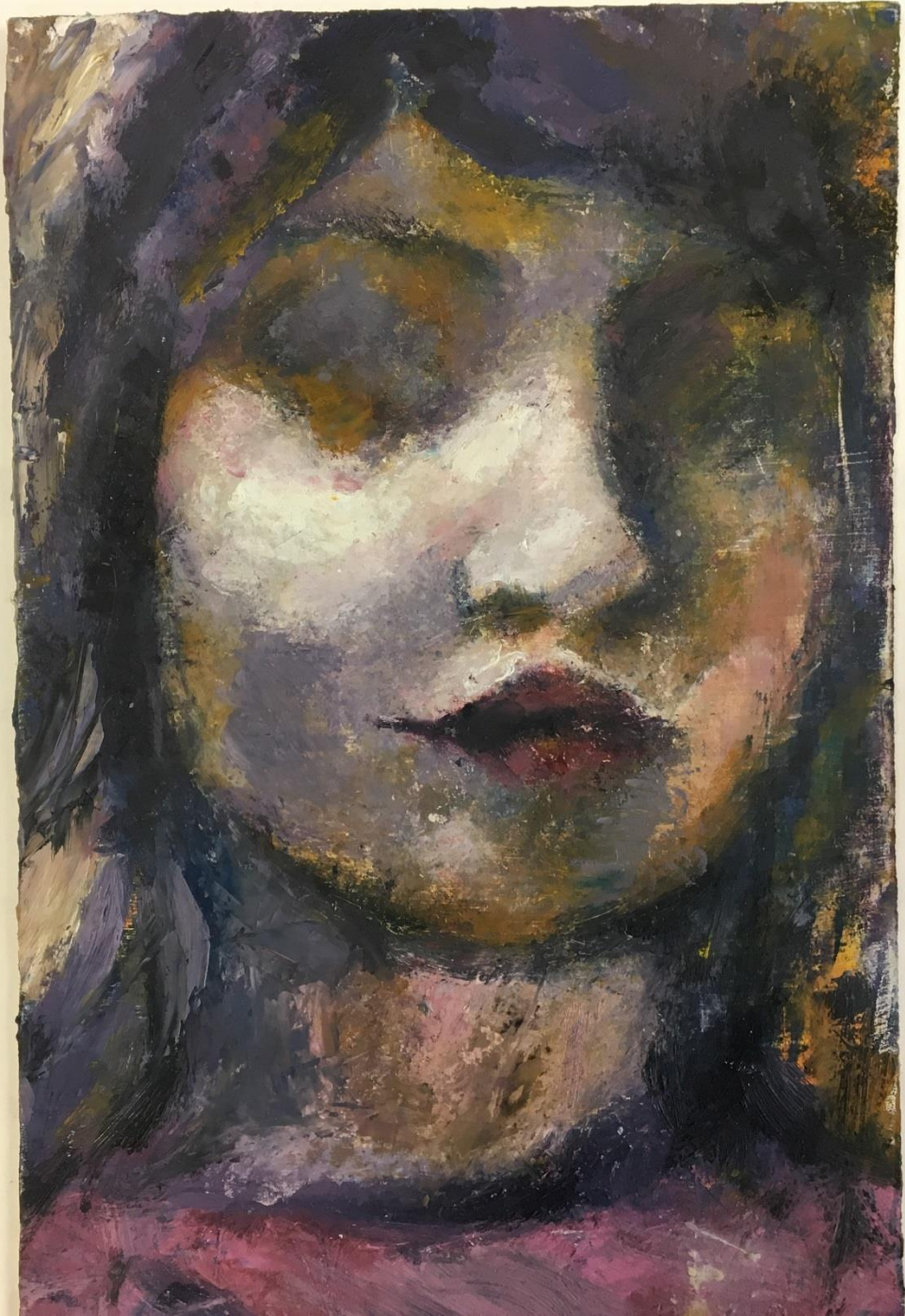
Using an alla prima style technique Bonnard would ~~build~~ build up colour by applying layers, scraping or lifting them off, then laying another colour over the top and repeating the process. The result is that the base colour can be seen through the layers, creating a hazy glow effect. In other areas he also uses impasto.



'THE BOWL OF MILK' 1919

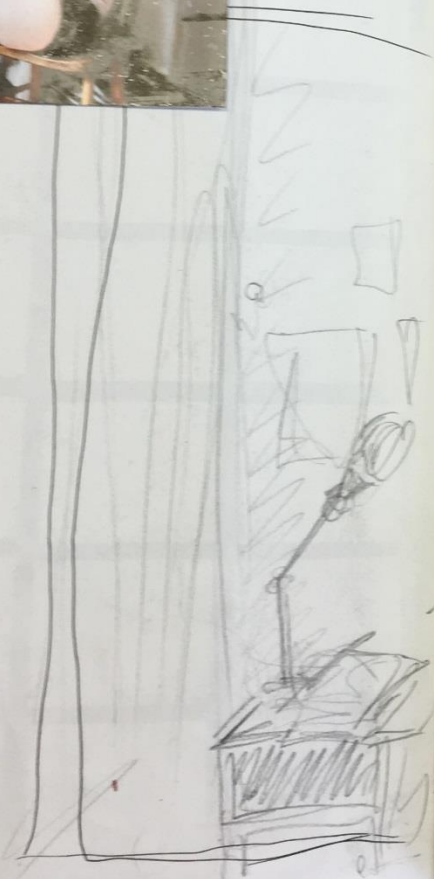
The Bowl of Milk is an oil on canvas by Bonnard. It depicts a girl in a dramatically lit room. Characteristically, Bonnard uses bright, contrasting colour, with luminous yellow under tones throughout, which gives it a mysterious dreamlike quality. This is achieved through the layering and lifting of colours. I practiced this technique using oil on the present and facing page.





RESPONSE - In this photoshoot I tried to respond to Bonnard's work in a more modern context. Like Bonnard I took an intimate approach, capturing the subject in everyday settings where they feel comfortable and at one with their surroundings. The settings I used for this were the bathroom and bedroom, in areas of strong sunlight, another feature of Bonnard's paintings which contributed to their sensuous, mystical quality.





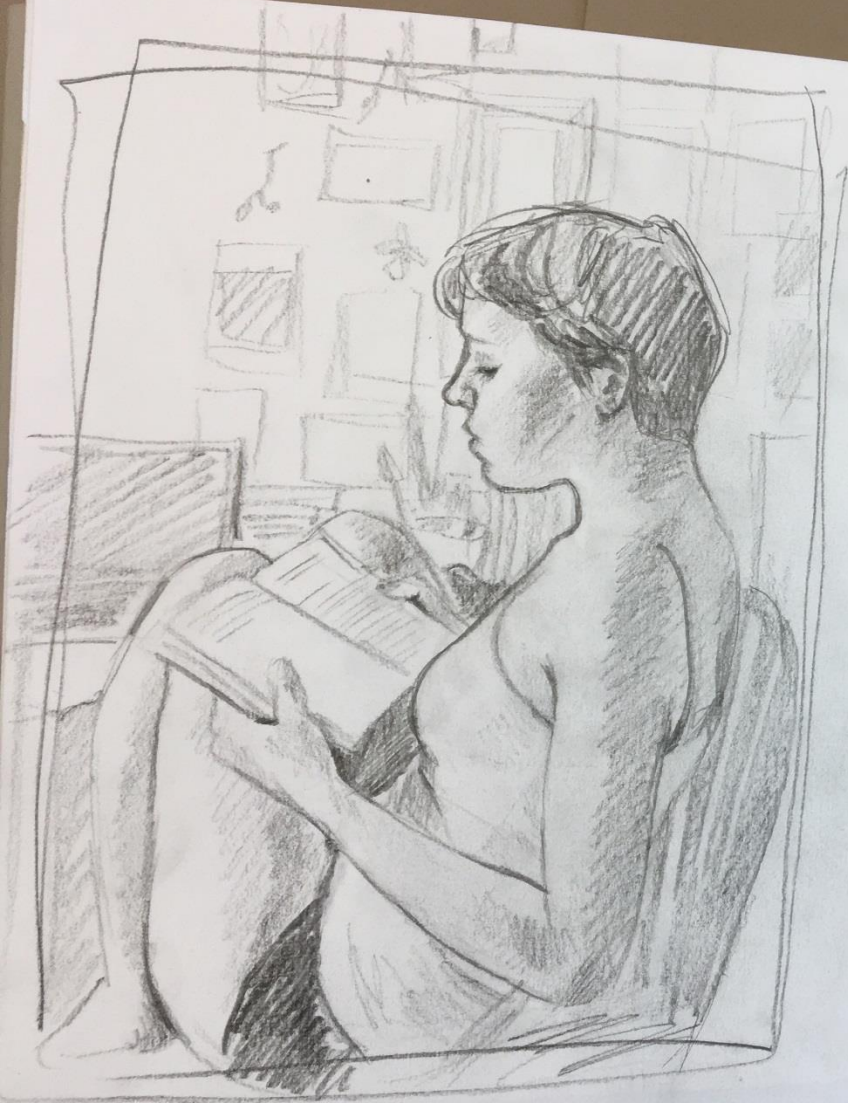
pencil drawing (45)



Watercolor + pastel



Oil paint



Pencil drawing (2B)

Oil Paintings

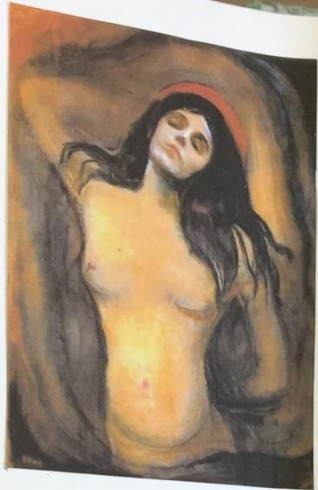
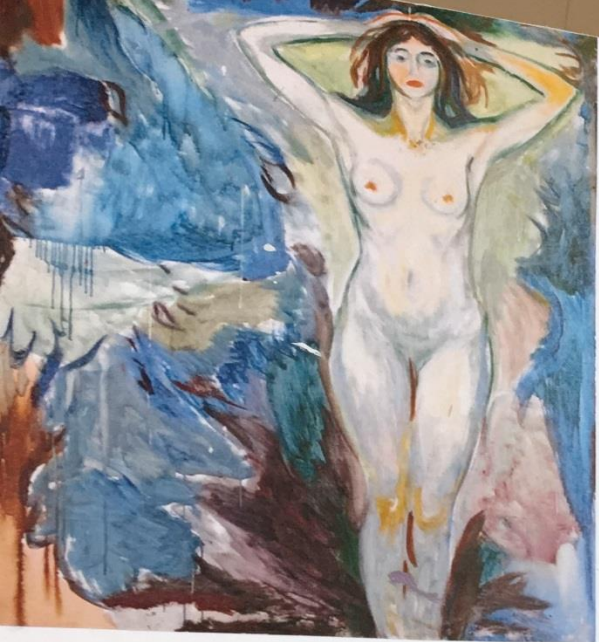
In these responses I again used oil paint to replicate Bonnard's technique. Unlike the painting on the previous page (on oil paper) I painted on board. This made the lifting/scraping technique harder as there was not as much surface texture. I had to adapt my way of building up layers of colour to achieve the same effect by simply laying down multiple colours rather than scraping them back etc.

In these paintings I used bright colours such as orange, pink and yellow in areas of shadow on the body and then strong white impasto in areas highlighted by sunlight. Whilst the result was more 3 dimensional than the classic Les Nabis approach, I think I managed to imitate Bonnard's ~~own~~ style well, capturing the hazy, dreamlike quality that gives his work a mystical or spiritual essence. In the background I incorporated colours used on the body, creating the sense that

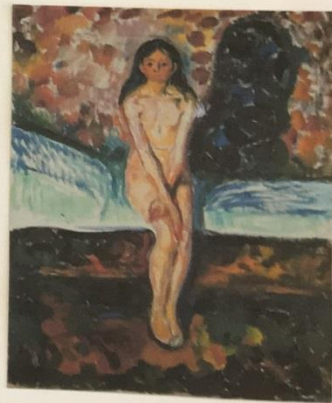


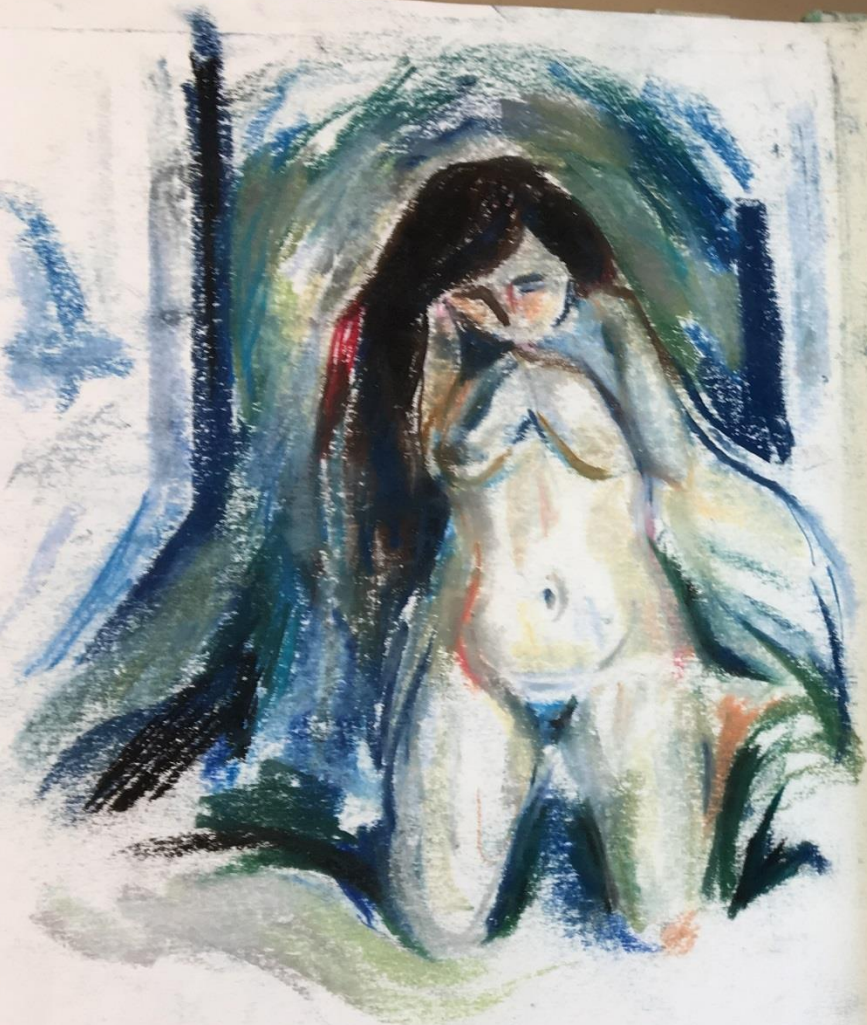
the subject is at one with their surroundings. The scene that this creates is serene and glowing, with the vibrant, luminous colour capturing a moment of beauty through the artist's eyes in an otherwise ordinary, everyday setting. Despite the fact that the subject is surrounded by materialistic things such as the laptop, lamp and books, there is a sense of a spiritual dimension in the painting; the subject is not just a female figure but a being emanating an aura of serenity and ethereal beauty in an ordinary moment. I really like this painting as I feel it successfully depicts beauty in way that we don't tend to see in classic art & modern media.





MUNCH + AVRAS



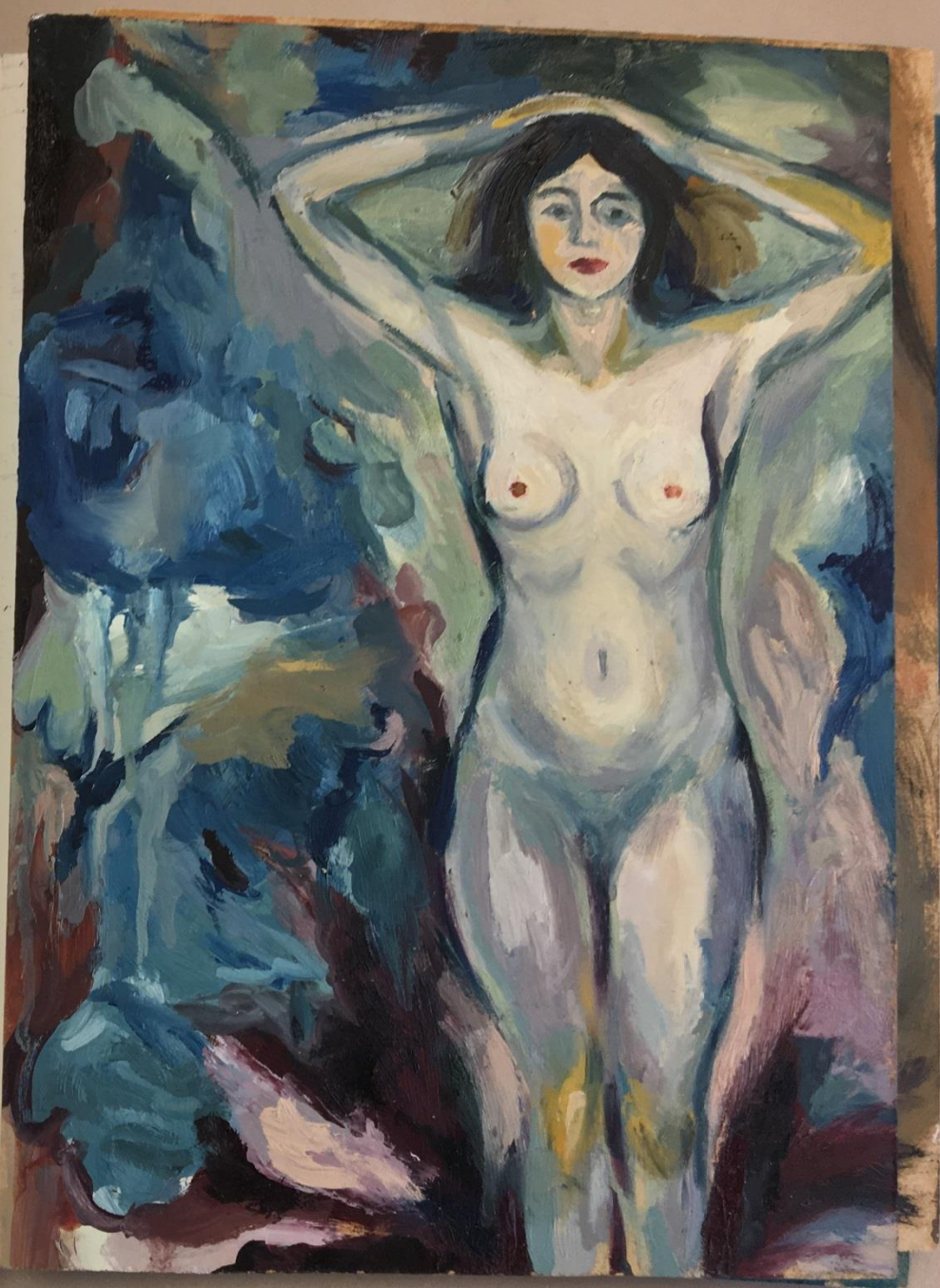


EDVARD MUNCH

Edvard Munch was a Norwegian painter and printmaker of the late 19th and early 20th century. In his time he was one of the most controversial and renowned artists of the expressionist and symbolist movements. Through his work he translated emotions and events not often experienced in his own life, using vivid colors and abstracted forms to create spiritually and psychologically intense scenes. His focus is on spiritual or emotional, rather than simply physical, presence, and through his portraits he explores not just the subject as observed in the world around him, but his own deeper perception.

MUNCH + AURAS

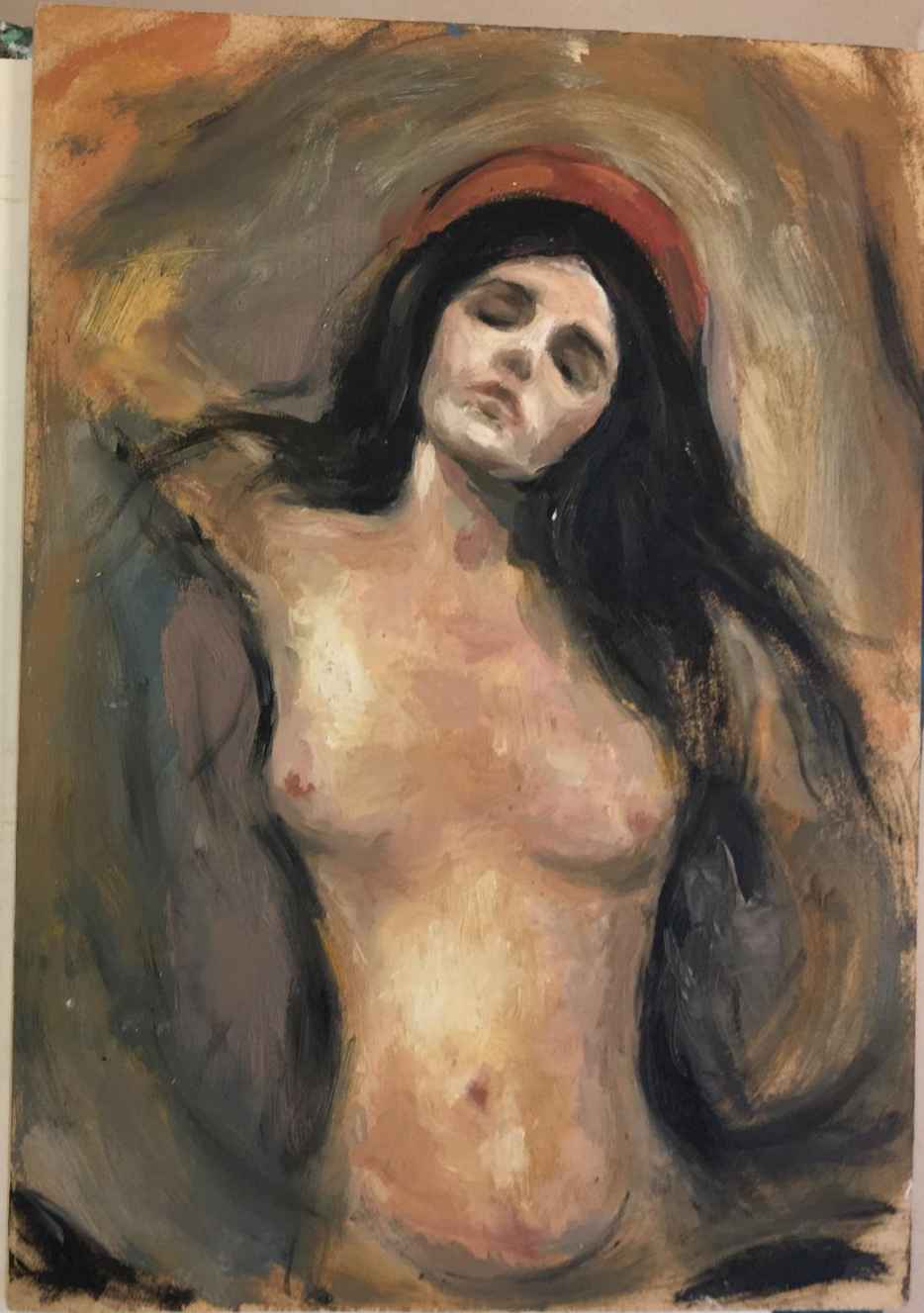
Munch's work shows influence from spiritualist ideologies, with paint used expressively to depict the atmosphere around his subjects, capturing the spiritual or emotional presence of the person. ~~Like~~ Like many avant garde artists of the period Munch was fascinated by the presence of auras, invisible coronas surrounding all living beings. Auras are the result of emotional, mental and spiritual energies which form an energy field around an individual which can be detected by others. Auras have been depicted in many different forms throughout art history, most recognizably as the golden halos surrounding religious figures. These were used to draw the subject to the centre of a radiant



Munch's work shows influence from spiritualist ideologies, with paint used expressively to depict the atmosphere around his subjects, capturing the spiritual or emotional presence of the person. ~~It~~ Like many avant garde artists of the period Munch was fascinated by the presence of auras, invisible coronas surrounding all living beings. Auras are the result of emotional, mental and spiritual energies which form an energy field around an individual which can be detected by others. Auras have been

~~energy~~ (continued) field of energy,
expressing ~~the~~ their divine
nature and increasing impact.

Munch developed his own interpretation
of the aura, adding shadows and
waves of color around subjects to
add to the intensity of their
emotions. He has been quoted
saying, "No longer should interiors
be painted, people reading and
women knitting; there would be
living people, breathing and feeling,
suffering and loving." A good example
of this is MADONNA, ~~which~~ which
deviates from traditional depictions of
women as almost inanimate objects,
depicting a strong and ~~powerful~~
sexual woman radiating waves of
emotion.



RESPONSE

In response to Munch's work I produced a photoshoot very much inspired by paintings such as the Madonna or Kneeling Nude. Like the women in these paintings my subject stretches, appearing comfortable and strong in her own body. There is no sense of insecurity or awareness of her appearance, she is simply being. To me, this is where a person becomes most beautiful, where thoughts on physical appearance are pushed aside and you can view someone's personality, their emotional or spiritual presence, instead. The mainly neutral and pale colours and strong white highlights suggest purity and create a sense of openness and transparency - there is no kind of emotional barrier between the subject and viewer. In addition to this the subject seems to almost glow, which emphasises both their confidence/comfort, and a sense of affection between them and myself, the photographer.





IMG_3648



IMG_3649



IMG_3650



IMG_3651



IMG_3652



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IMG_3659

Favorite photos.



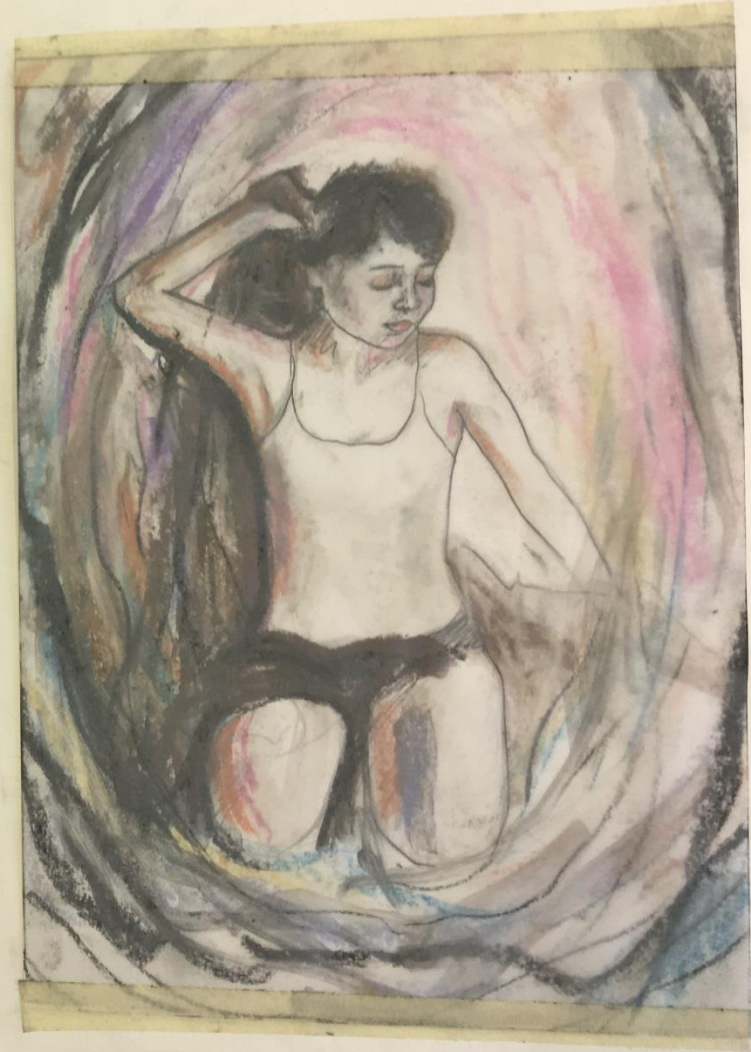
I particularly liked the photos to the left - the red blanket lifted up creates a great composition, framing the subject well.



EXPLORING THE AURA

began to explore ways of depicting the aura
the subject using line and color, in a
style inspired by Munch.

Pencil + pastel

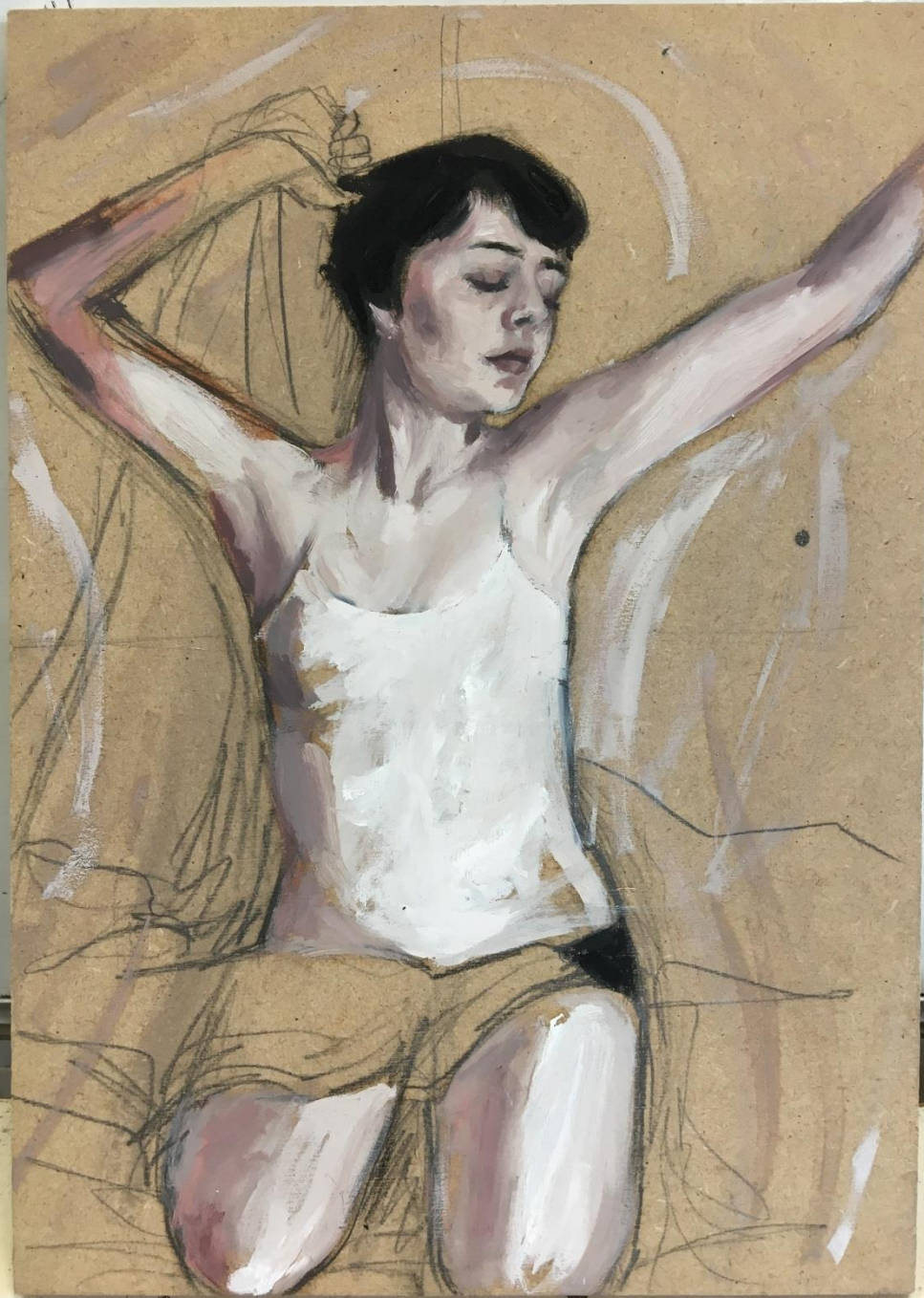


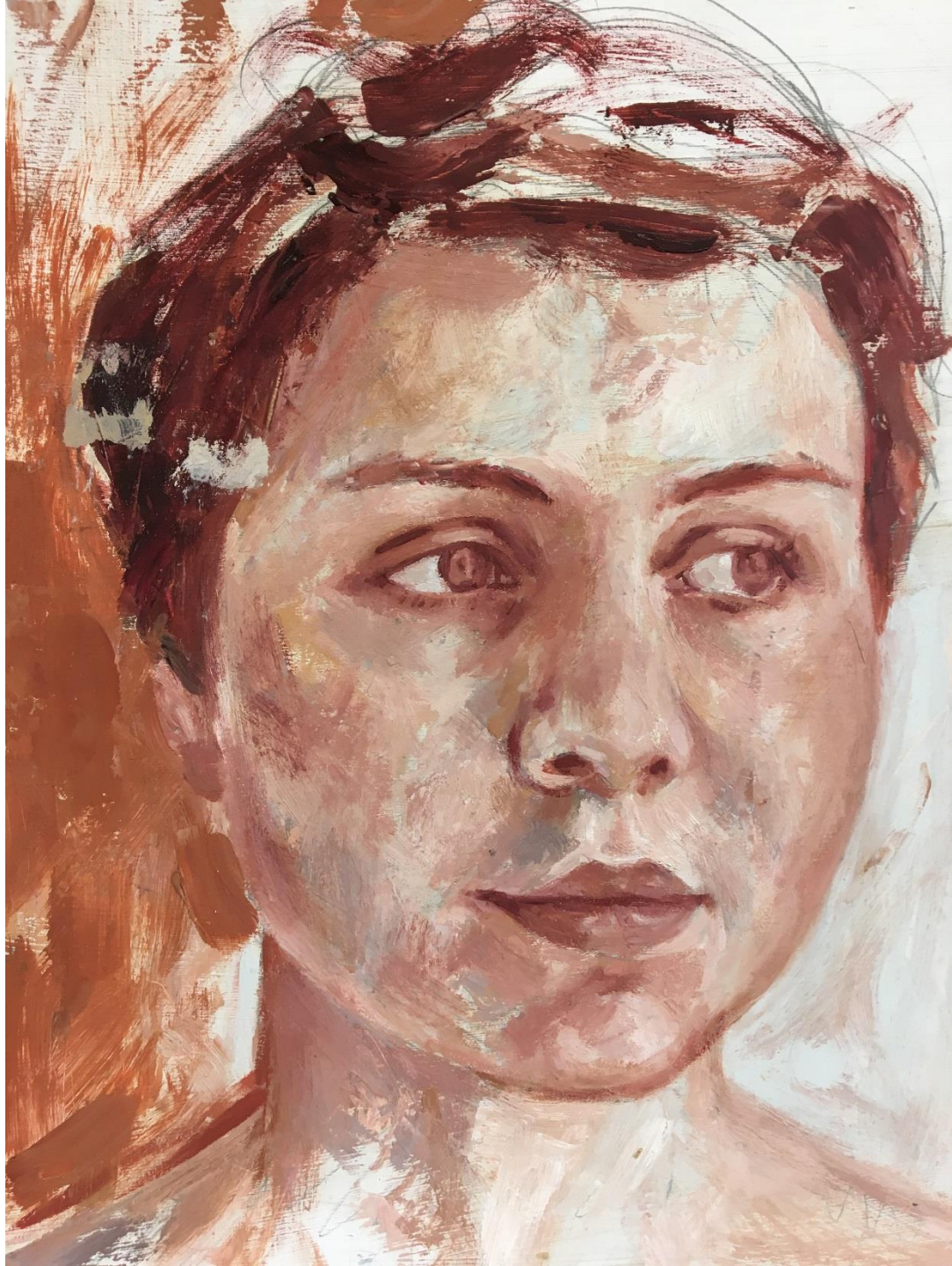


pen + watercolor

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Here I attempted to introduce the aura
to the portrait using oil paint. I
used colors that could be swatched
from the subject, resulting in a
palette of muted, neutral colors. I
don't really like the outcome as
it just seems too dull, which
doesn't reflect the mood I wanted
to capture. In my next response
I want to incorporate the brighter
use of color that I had seen
exploring in my responses to Bonnard.



In this response I made an effort to use brighter and more varied colours, such as the bright coral pink and the blue tones. I think this worked a lot better than the previous painting, as it creates a more vibrant, energetic mood. I also began to focus on texture, first laying down colour in washes or very thinly with a dry brush, then adding layers of impasto style paint (especially with white) to add some dimension. This I also think worked well. Another aspect of this painting that I like is the base - I painted directly onto MDF which ~~had~~ had not been painted first with white enamel. I found it much easier to paint on the brown base and I really like the aesthetic it produces.

AURA PHOTOGRAPHY

In recent years photographers have developed camera technology which can supposedly capture the auras that people emit, translating them into waves of colour. One project, Radiant Human, produces polaroid style photos of people which are overlaid with these glowing emanations. Their goal is not just to produce aesthetically pleasing images, but to reveal the beauty that surrounds us all, providing an opportunity for people to know themselves in a whole new way. The experience, somewhere between a psychic reading and a portrait sitting, allows you to examine yourself as 'not just a tired person with a bad hair day, but a truly radiant human'. It pushes away self critique and societal beauty ideals, exposing the beauty radiating from all of us in our spiritual and emotional presence. The beautiful glowing aura surrounding each subject is a visual representation of the feeling of beauty you experience when you see someone for who they really are, for their energy and personality, rather than just their physical appearance.





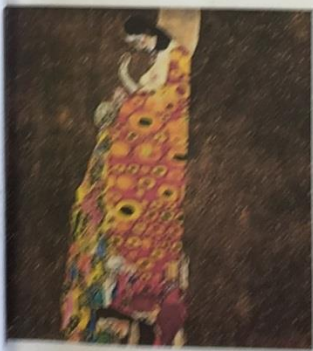
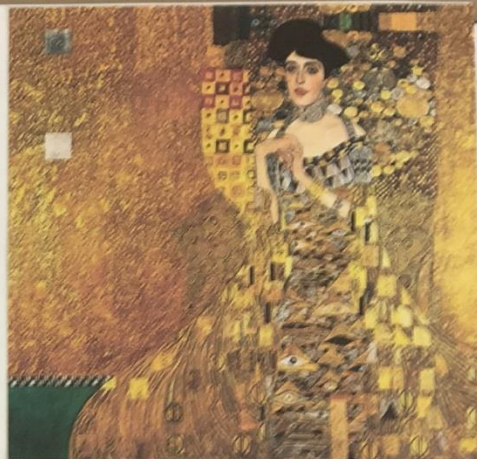
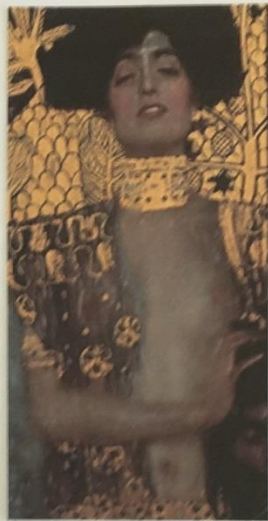
CATHY WILKES

Cathy Wilkes is an installation artist who trained at Glasgow School of Art, ~~and~~ part of a generation of artists who fuelled the city's art scene in the mid 90s. Wilkes' installations, which include ~~sculpture~~ sculpture and paintings, have 'a distinctive, personal vocabulary that explores the relationship between inner reality and the experience of the physical world. Wilkes' paintings are particularly striking, adopting an abstract, expressive style through which she translates her emotions and experience of ~~or~~ certain moods. In some installations she uses canvases hung as masks on mannequins, ~~suggesting~~ replacing their purely physical existence with somewhat an emotional presence. Through her minimal approach to form, expressive brushwork and emotional use of colour Wilkes creates and evokes more emotion in her paintings than the faces of the mannequins, transcending the material and physical world into more spiritual dimensions. I want to somehow incorporate this into my work - perhaps as a development of the background, or just in my brushwork - to advance into a more expressive style of painting, to better represent aura rather than form.



GUSTAV KLIMT

Gustav Klimt is one of the most renowned artists of the 1900s, famous for his elaborate and decorative portraits, mostly of beautiful, languid women. Klimt's paintings are known for their excessive use of gold leaf, which is applied with extreme precision and delicacy in intricate mosaic ~~patterns~~ patterns surrounding and engulfing his subjects. The result is beautiful and ~~often~~ celebrates women, however it also objectifies them in a way, making them into valuable pieces that are there to be seen and enjoyed for decorative, aesthetic purposes.



Adèle Bloch-Bauer



GOLD LEAF

The element of Klimt's work that I am drawn to is his use of gold leaf. Klimt's subjects are often surrounded by an atmosphere of intricate golden mosaic. While my work has a very different concept to Klimt's, I do really like this element. Another artist whose use of gold leaf has inspired me is Elly Smallwood. She uses gold leaf more expressively than Klimt, applying it roughly in holes or as a form, in what appears to be a modern response to classical paintings in which religious



were glorified and celebrated with a golden leaf.
This is something I wanted to incorporate into my
own work as I think it emphasizes the idea of
the female being celebrated. Gold is regarded as
a material of ~~beauty~~ beauty and value - by using
it in my painting I make the statement that a
woman can be beautiful and celebrated in her
natural form and for her spirit, not just some
idealized image of female beauty.



In this painting sample
I began to ~~combine~~ gold
incorporate gold into the
style I had established in
my Munich responses by
working the gold into the
aura in streaks. For this
I used 'liquid leaf'
which has a paint like
consistency and imitates
golden leaf.

MI
MA

In this piece I choose a landscape image, which provided more space to show the aura. Comparing this to my earlier Munch paintings though, I think a portrait orientation works better because it seems more intimate, creating a closer relationship with the subject. Other than this, I think that this painting turned out very well. I think the gold works well with the colour palette I chose for the aura, and I like the way it is woven discretely within the waves of colour. In this painting I also used actual gold leaf. I applied this in small flakes around the subject to give the aura a subtle glow, reinforcing the idea that beauty is found in the energy someone emits and celebrating women in this aspect, not just for their appearance. I also expressed this through the style of painting, taking inspiration from Cathy Wilkes I used more expressive brushwork and minimal approach to form, capturing the general essence of the subject and their surroundings rather than an accurate depiction of the scene.



REFINING FEMALE BEAUTY

Throughout history the art world has been heavily dominated by men, with female artists only recently beginning to gain recognition. This highly patriarchal constitution has resulted in centuries of artwork that reflects male perspective, especially when it comes to attitudes towards women. Women were painted by men, for men. As a result their portrayal reflects the male fantasy of how women 'should' look; hairless, smooth skin and slim yet well endowed figures. This image of the female body is classically presented with the 'reclining nude', a position taken up by muses in ~~story~~ which the woman's body is displayed like an object for (male) viewers to enjoy. Objectification of women in this form is common throughout art history, seen in paintings such as Venus of Urbino by Titian, in which Venus lays in the foreground of the painting, her body tilted suggestively to reveal her nude form to the viewer. In this position the primary role of women is to be looked at and desired by men. This effectively reduces them to no more than an object, something to be looked at and possessed. Women are not portrayed as subjects but as objects, and judged entirely on their ~~beauty~~ beauty in relation to society's standards. There is no celebration of personality, no indication of mental, emotional or spiritual presence.



FINAL PHASE

In the final phase of my project I conducted a fourth photoshoot. I created a similar aesthetic to my Bernard + Munch photoshoots in terms of colour and composition. I also drew inspiration from the classical depictions of the female on the previous page, placing the subject in ~~roughly~~ similar poses, but allowing her to relax and adjust the position to become more comfortable and natural. I also involved props, such as a phone and a book, for a more realistic depiction of the 'modern woman' - a woman who doesn't just lie around doing nothing, who isn't there simply to be looked at and objectified like the depictions of women in classic art.





IMG_0062



IMG_0068



IMG_0069



IMG_0071



IMG_0072



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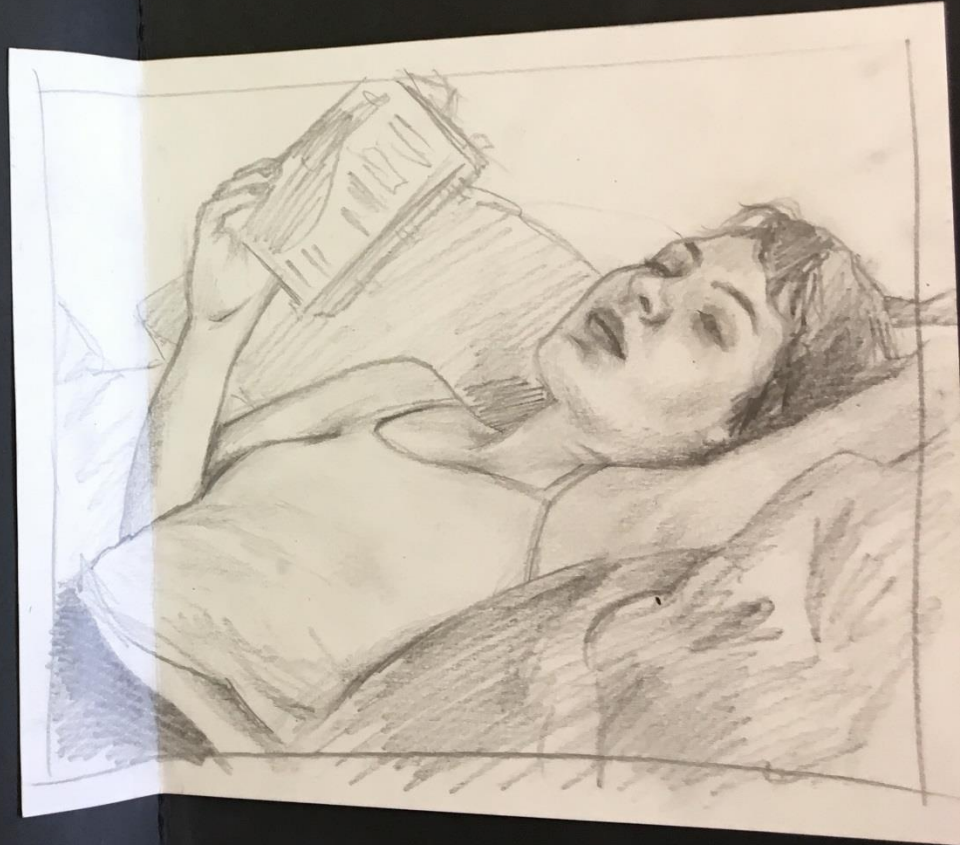
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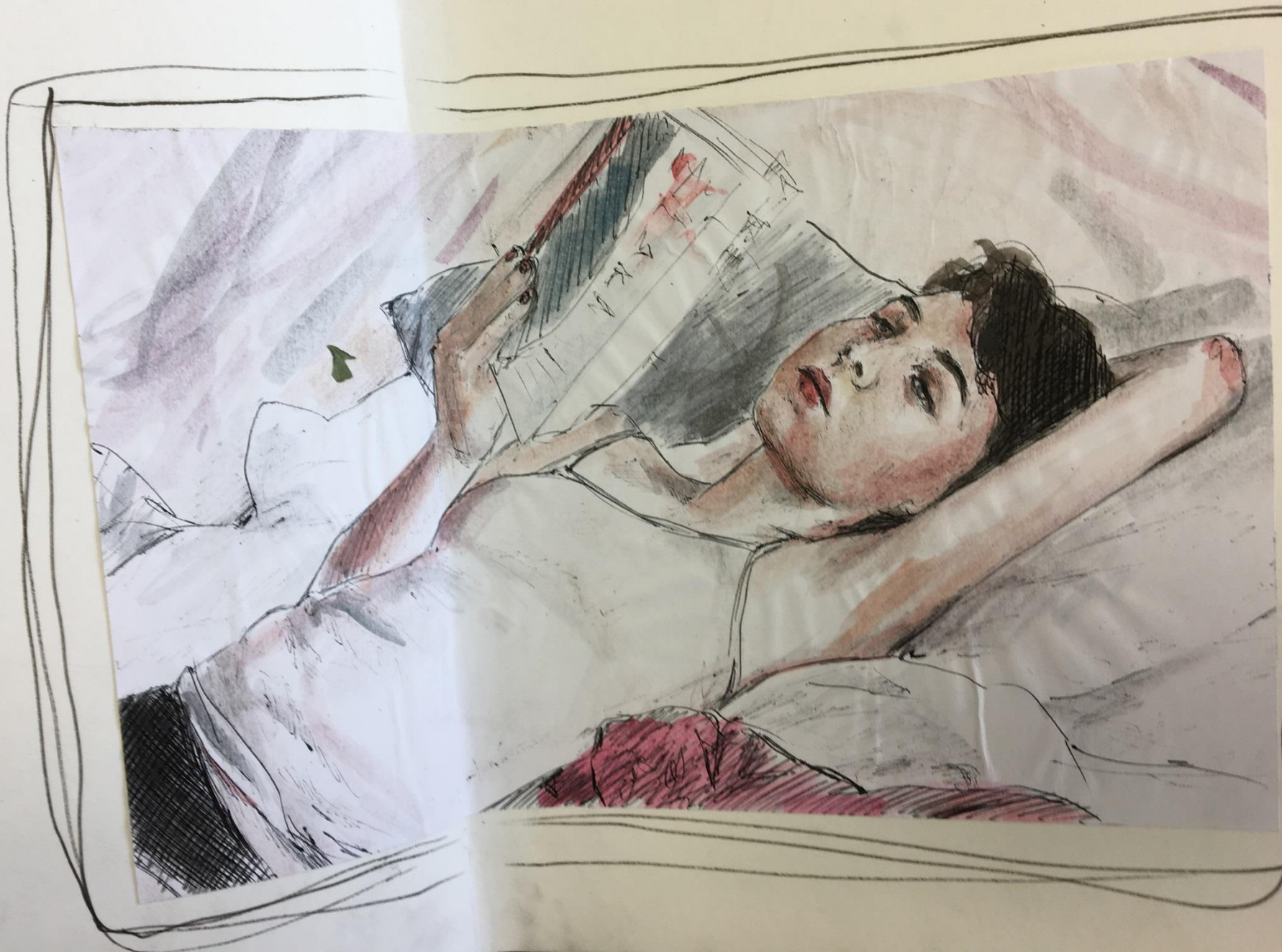
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MA

I particularly like this image. The subject poses in a ~~traditional~~ pose of the classic 'reclining nude', yet appears comfortable and relaxed, at one with themselves and their surroundings and unconcerned with appearance rather than posing to be viewed by others. The proximity adds to this, creating a sense of intimacy and presenting the subject as a person rather than just a figure.





This was another image I liked as it seemed like more of a direct comparison to the classic female nude poses (such as Venus of Urbino, etc). However, I think the previous image relates better to the themes I've been exploring.



FINAL PIECE

In my final painting I drew together all the aspects of my project, using colour, texture and gold leaf to depict the aura and celebrate female beauty in terms of the energy and connection between the artist and subject.



EVALUATION

In this project I have explored the depiction of female beauty in terms of spiritual rather than physical presence. Through my study of Picasso I considered how a person can be depicted beyond just their physical appearance, which has led me to adopt a more expressive approach to painting. I also took inspiration from Picasso's blue and rose periods, in terms of how colour can create mood and capture the energy of the subject. As a result I have opted for warmer colours such as yellow and pinks, as well as some pale blues and purples in places which I think has been a good colour palette as I feel like it captures both the radiance and warm energy of the subject, and the calm and comfortable relationship between subject and painter, which is something I really wanted to depict. In my final painting I also used a strong, deep red. This was done to reference the classical paintings I was challenging in this piece, as the majority of the classic female nudes feature this deep red. In classical paintings this colour is used as a symbol of wealth and sexual desire however I don't believe it has the same connotations in my painting. I feel like the use of red in my painting creates a sense of strength, which is something I noted in my research into aura photography, that red can represent a strong personality. This contrasts with the image of women presented in classic female nudes, where the woman is portrayed as little more than an object. The one criticism I have of my use of this colour in my final piece is that I think I made the lips too red; if I were to improve I would paint the lips a more natural colour as I feel like the strong red lips put too much emphasis on the physical appearance of the face, which I didn't want.

Another way I explored colour was through the use of layering, which I learnt through my study of Bonnard. Bonnard's sensuous and vibrant paintings capture the 'modern woman' - a woman at one with her surroundings and depicted as the presence she has in her environment rather than an accurate depiction of form. Bonnard's use of layering with luminous undertones of colour creates a hazy, dream-like quality that gives the mundane, simple, everyday moments he paints an ethereal beauty. Through this Bonnard celebrates women in their natural, comfortable, relaxed and candid essence, and creates a more spiritual realm of beauty, beyond just physical form. This very much inspired my work; I was particularly pleased with my larger Bonnard response, in which I think my choice and layering of colour was very effective. This was something I tried to implement in my final piece although I don't think it worked as well, as I hadn't anticipated that the colours wouldn't come out as vibrantly on a brown base. I also think it would have worked better on a canvas rather than board as it would have been easier to scrape back and build up layers of colour. This said, I am still happy with how the painting turned out - I like the way that the brighter colours form a base and are visible beneath the neutral skin tones in places, giving the subject radiance.

The next artist who has been a large influence in my project is Edvard Munch. Through my study of Munch I explored ways of depicting the aura. Referring back to my consideration of colour earlier in the project, I painted waves of colour emanating from the subject, creating a visual representation of the energies surrounding the individual. The aura gives the subject of the painting a sense of energy and radiance, acting as the equivalent of a halo in classical religious art which was used to celebrate individuals for their good spirit. Within the aura on my final painting I have applied liquid leaf and gold leaf, giving it a subtle gold glow. Unlike Klimt, who is famous for his use of gold leaf in portraiture, I used the medium more expressively, taking inspiration from Elly Smallwood who uses it in a looser, more contemporary manner. I think the use of gold is effective in my work as it is symbolic of beauty, so the fact that it is found within the aura of the subject suggests that true beauty is found in the energy someone emits rather than their appearance. The gold also emphasises the radiance and warmth of the individual which I really like. Overall I think the way I have depicted the aura in my final piece worked really well, however if I were to improve I think I would have experimented more with Cathy Wilkes' style of painting, adding more texture to my work and perhaps responding in different ways to the depiction of the aura other than just waves surrounding the subject.



