

Rosa Mukandama

2020

### *Serenity*

*Serenity* was the I worked through 2-D class and it was one of our last assignments. After having learned many techniques of 2-D design works through collage, painting, and typography (etc.), we gathered all that we learned to create a work that spoke a narrative. The idea of this portrait was generated through subjects that I favored in art which are faces, animals and nature. The main concept was to incorporate realistic and collage elements to create a dreamscape self-portrait. I decided to draw myself on the more realistic side while the fish to have a more textured gesture and the two to overlap in rectangular shapes to create a calm, serene piece.

What works for this piece is the movement; this is mostly seen through the black and red lines in the background as well the fish encircling the subject. The organic red and black lines allow viewers to move along each rectangular piece and the fish emphasize the subject as the focal point. Another strength includes the contrast between the graphite, pen and gouache colors. It puts more intensity on the overlapping qualities of the piece and allows for a sense of variety between the focal point and the surrounding perimeters. While there is that contrast between the graphite and the colored areas, I do wish I went darker on the hair of the figure that way the values between the skin and hair do not become too muddled and the figure would have been more grounded. Another thing that could have been changed is the white seen in the two black organic shapes at the top of the piece. Including that white line in at least one of the other black organic shapes at the bottom the piece would've have made the piece more cohesive and created three-odd-points of movement.

This piece is one that I favor a lot in terms of putting what inspires me into fruition. I have always been keen to nature and humanity as art forms, and in this particular piece I tried portraying something that was more calming and warm. I wanted to create something that portrayed a harmony between humanity and nature, as well as form something that you would see in a dream of fish forming around a person in the air. This idea of animals or nature being incorporated into portraiture holds so much symbolism and that is what drove my passion for this piece. Artists who have worked similarly are Jean Leon Gerome's "*Woman's head with Ram Horns*", in which he symbolizes the strength of the woman, who is seemingly delicate. A contemporary artist in which inspires me as well is Paulina X. Miranda, whose works are more so decorative, however, includes patterns of flowers in the clothing and background of her pieces.

A-S 102 2D

Fuko Ito