

Full Name: Joshua Zhang

Age: 16

Artist Statement

What are the confines of mental illness? Today, many who struggle with mental illness are stigmatized despite all the awareness being put out by the media. As an artist, my work is meant to depict the everyday struggles someone with mental health may have to deal with and with the goal of furthering the public understanding of mental illness. The main subject is a realistic black and white sketch of a person shrouded in darkness to represent one's true mental disorders that affect mood, thinking, and behaviour. The person's face is half covered with an abstract and colourful mask to display the concept of putting up a "fake" display to feign normality in everyday life.

Many struggle in silence as there is a strange relief in the loneliness. My piece is an examination of one's mental disorder that depletes one from the inside as it is shielded from the outside by a fake mask. Personally, I have dealt with this dilemma and I wanted to express the same feeling through this piece to show that there is no shame in mental illness, as there is no need to overcome alone.