

To have produced my two final pieces I have made a detailed study of African Art and Modern Gothic subculture; two very contrasting artistic and cultural movements.

My work on African Art included: a Still life, observation drawings, two visits to the British museum and many conversations with people from Africa. My study of mixed culture artist Yinka Shonibare has inspired me to make pieces in his style and using his preferred media.

I found it more difficult to capture a modern subculture. It was difficult to avoid banalities (e.g. drawings of imaginary demons). I travelled into the central meeting point of London Goths (Camden Town) to draw representatives and clothing items. I have also spent a day in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, to find example of dresses of the Victorian era, as many Goths take inspiration from the fashion of that particular period.

The combination of what I considered my best studies resulted in my two final pieces.

It was important to me to produce something useful. As at the time I noticed that I lacked a place to put my accessories in; both of them are meant to be symbolic, secretive and feminine containers/holders for Jewellery.

My book box is a message about stereotypes. People judge to often by appearances!

I made a Gothic styled outside by covering it all with black and drawing my own front cover to a famous Gothic tale, "The fall of the House of Usher" (which is in fact quite humorous as the story is quite short to be such a large book). To make it look more authentic, I put a transparent layer, that people normally put on their books to protect them from getting battered, over all of the cover. It was difficult to evenly place this layer with ought forming unappealing bubbles. As on the inside I intended to use gold, I chose silver for the page sides to mask the dried PVA I used to stick them together.

The most tiring part of making this box was cutting out the pages. I began with using a knife, however it proved less efficient than scissors, so I changed to that method.

To make the inside of the box more even I placed cardboard shaped like the inside of the box into the bit I cut out. That also helped me with attaching and sowing decorations on later.

The flowers on the inside are my answer to Yinka Shonibare's piece "Flower time". They are made from the same material as the Victorian styled Jewellery holder and various other bits I got at a crafts fair in Exeter. They are partially held by super glue and sewed string. The drawings of masks are copies from an observation drawing from my London Sketch book. I chose gold to hint the idea of treasure.

The inside cover is a bit I am not happy about. In my opinion it doesn't fit and lacks in originality. I photocopied another African piece of material and the photocopy didn't reproduce the genuine colours and real feel.

My second piece is a figurative Jewellery holder. It is highly inspired by Yinka Shonibare; who's signature pieces are Victorian dresses made out of African textiles and the absence of heads on his figure, symbolizing the unimportance of an actual individual in the message that he is trying to transmit. I sewed a modified version of a Victorian dress onto a French jewel doll which was conveniently already black and headless. The material I found was bright and had a nice regular pattern which enabled me to make a neat looking dress (e.g.; the edges of the skirt have lines which also proved useful in the top part). As I didn't have a sewing machine, the lines were my guidelines.

Not all of the elements are authentic and Victorian styled; I added the mustard coloured sash because with ought it, the dress seemed incomplete, and the button in the front bit, to hide my initial mistake of making a wrong type of corset.

I enjoyed everything in the process of making these pieces. Although sewing left the most profound impression on me because, it enabled me to make precisely what I wanted. It's similar to photography; you can vividly foresee the design you are going to get whereas in drawings you never get quite what you want.

In my opinion my work is quite balanced; I have various 2 dimensional pieces and two 3 dimensional ones. They all explore different aspects of the same subject. It proves that I have tried out new techniques on research outcomes and that I have answered in depth the theme that was given to our class (Cultural identity- mixed identity).

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