

2021 SENIOR ART & DESIGN EXHIBITIONS

Graceland University

Jared Connell
Madison Fears
Kait James
Joachim Kikuni
Emmanuel McCarter
Emily McKinney
Kaylee Montgomery

SENIOR EXHIBITIONS 2021



Jared Connell



Madison Fears



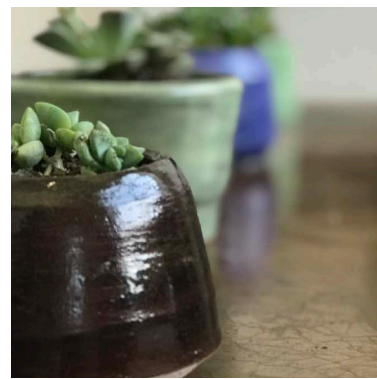
Kait James



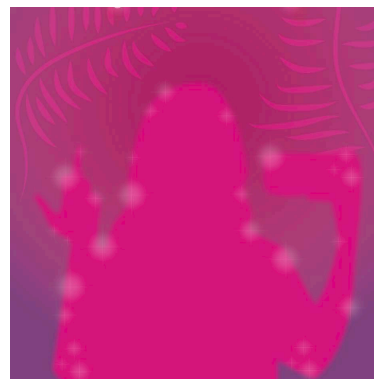
Joachim Kikuni



Emmanuel McCarter



Emily McKinney



Kaylee Montgomery

FORWARD

The Art and Design program at Graceland University is pleased to present this exhibition catalog of Bachelor of Arts Senior Thesis Exhibitions. Four years ago, the seven artists in this incredible BA class – Jared Connell, Madison Fears, Kait James, Joachim Kikuni, Emmanuel McCarter, Emily McKinney, and Kaylee Montgomery – began a challenging process, the result of which is presented here. These works are a representation of thousands of hours of experimentation, research, problem solving, exploration, risk taking, and dedication.

These works engage us in meaningful conversations and challenge how we see the world. These artists are now part of a growing community of graduates that will shape the future. We thank them for sharing their journey with us and look forward to seeing how they will impact this ever-changing landscape of visual communication.

We are so proud of the class of 2021!

Sincerely,

Karen Gergely
Associate Professor Art

Bilawal Khoso
Assistant Professor of Art

Kim Karlsrud
2020-2021 Visiting Artist



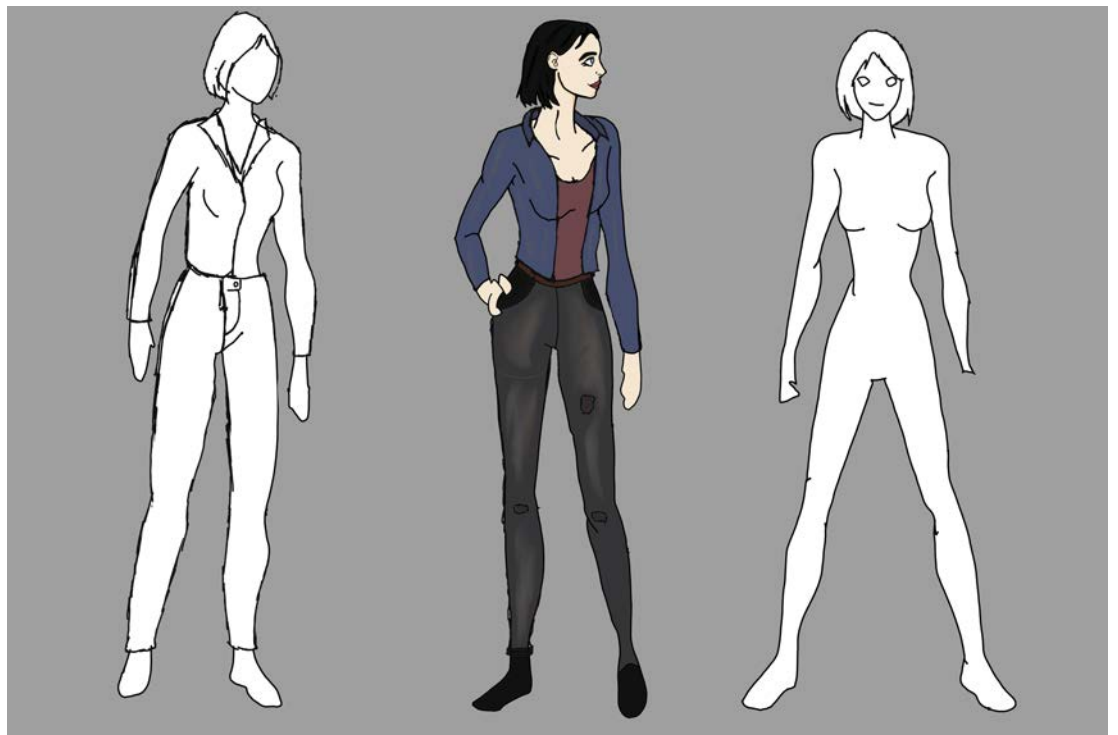
Jared Connell

Concepts of The Veil

Concepts from The Veil (2021) is a body of works created in direct relation to the, as of now, unreleased novel “The Raven’s Veil”. The works attempt to show the viewer the concept progression of characters, creatures, and locations from the yet unreleased novel. This work both novel and art work have been ideas in my head for quite some time now, and while the novelisation has received quite the head start, the concepts are my attempt to bring others into the world I have created. As a result of this, the work is spread into sections by design. First is the bio and description going over what exactly the viewer is looking at, after this is the initial sketch, after is the entail computer rendering of the sketch, and finally the finished product. Apart from some definite risks taken on my end, even I could not have suspected the turns taken while creating this work as even though it was planned out, once on paper, some designs became alive in their own rights.

Inspired in part by the late Adam Adamowicz who truly knew how to draw a world and story through just one image, I created the pieces with the core values of the work in mind. The novel, while dealing in fantasy, carries a tone of a real world. The novel carries the tone of a world that is grey through and through. There is light in dark and dark in light, nothing is truly ever the best decision. Because of this tone, the works created from it’s pages were created to reflect this tone and idea. Some creatures are brutal and there is not always a clear villain. The world, despite being colorful in places, is cloaked in a grey that never goes away. Some are merely concepts of characters and their initial concepts, while others are full fledged senses from the book. Despite the differences that this world's feeling has from the traditional notions of a fantasy, I invite the viewer to truly step in and take a look at what this world is. While it has fantastic creatures and powers that to us would be life changing, it is still a world, as different and dark and strange as our own.







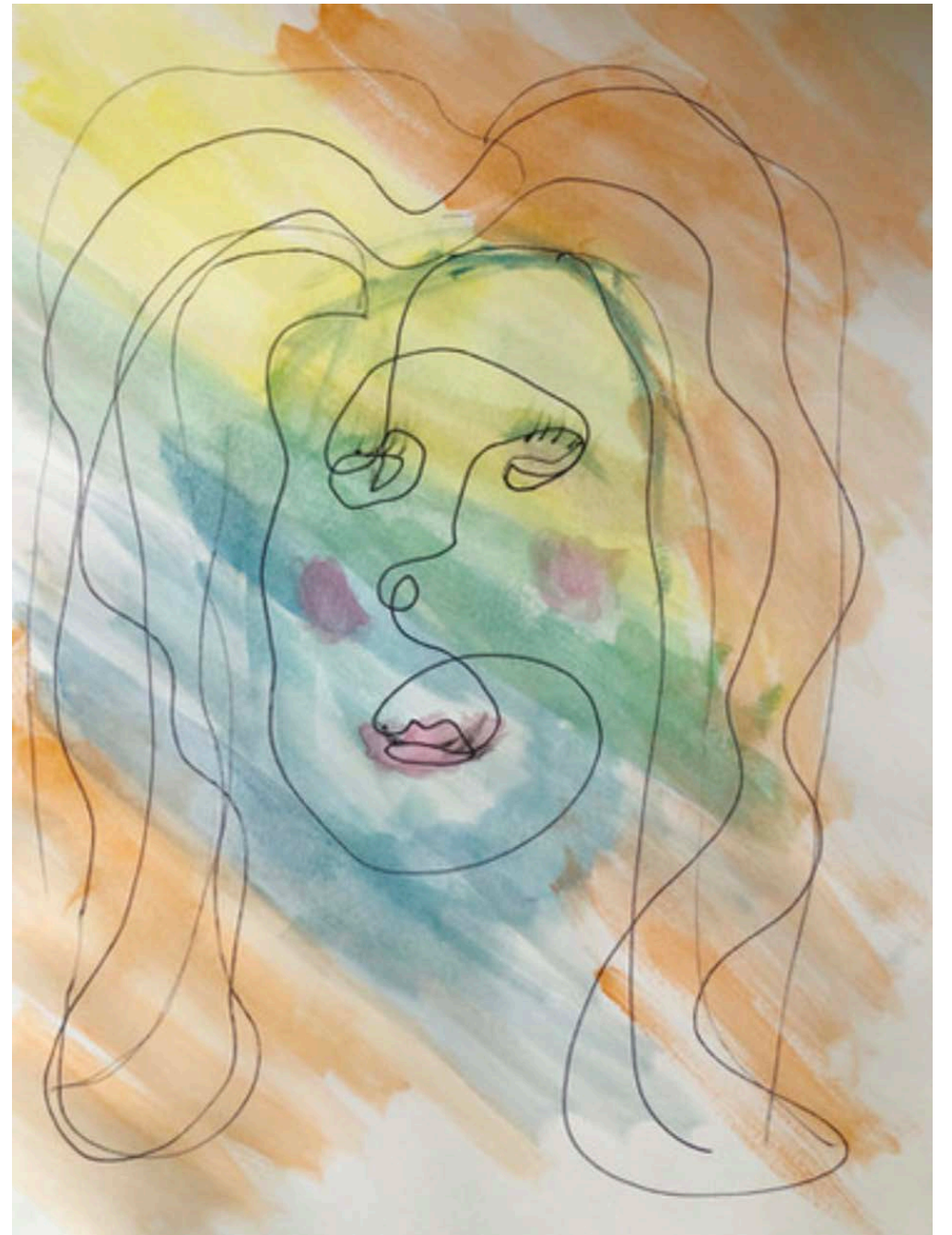
MADISON FEARS

PAINT TO THE MUSIC: AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION

In this interactive show, students, faculty, and community members came together to make art that visually responded to 3 different types of music. As an education major, I wanted to communicate the importance of music and how it influences creating in the classroom.









Kait James

Portals to the Anywhere

Want to escape? These spirals take you down into another world that is outside of your own. This is for when you feel like leaving, with wonder of where you will go. When you don't care where you go; portals take you where you want to be, even if you don't know where that is.







K80SCREATIONS



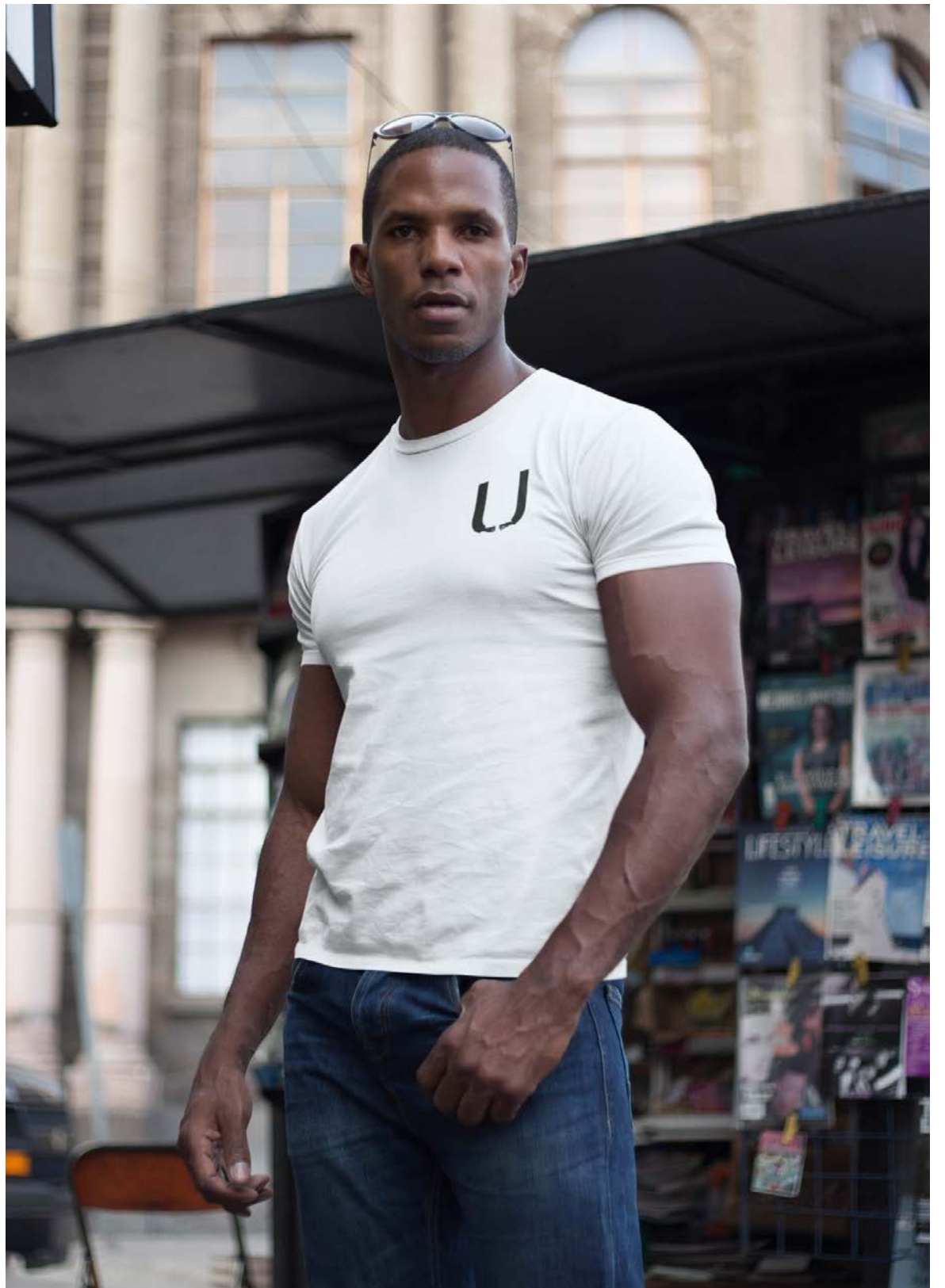
Joachim Kikuni

Unirace

In this work, I am taking action to raise awareness about racism in the United states through a clothing brand. A few years ago, I didn't think racism was real. I grew up in a place where everyone was pretty much from the same village, so it was difficult to see any kinds of racial discrimination. But, when I came to the United states, I experienced racism, and it was a terrible feeling.

With this work, I am hoping to teach those who are not aware that racism does exist (in case they ignore the fact that it does). I am also welcoming those with stories about experiences with racism to come and share them with me or other people. My goal is to get as many people as I can to come together and take action against racism.

Unirace is a clothing brand that is meant to raise awareness about racism in many ways. The goal of the brand is to get people together and have them share their stories on racism and what they think is the problem, as well as what they think can be the solution. It is hard to believe, but there are people who haven't experienced racism, and don't believe that it does exist. So, the goal here is to teach them too that it does exist. The reason why shirts are being used is because when you wear them, you will have people ask you about what you are wearing. And that's when the conversations start.





Emmanuel McCarter

Da Art of StoryTellin' 2021

Painting, poems, and letters

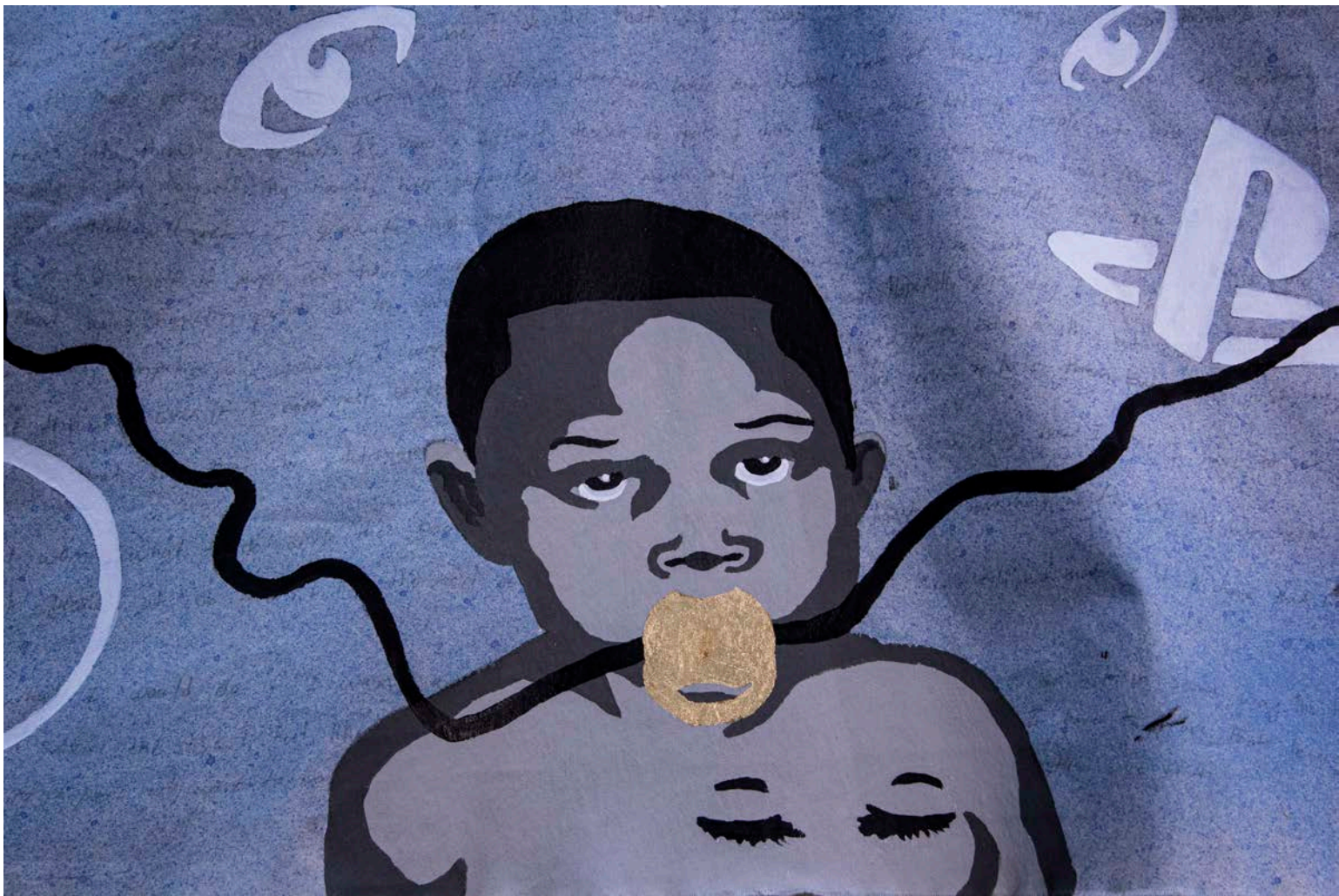
Making this work wasn't easy at first, because I spent a lot of time thinking about how people view me as a person. Then at the first stages of making the work I had some anxiety because the work brought up a lot of memories, feelings of guilt, and fear. It reminded me why I've done my best to make sure I don't have too much time by myself. I was doing a great job at it until the pandemic, and like many people, during the pandemic, I had to spend time alone. Being in a room alone for me leads to 1 of 2 things, either the most incredible brainstorming or thought of depression and anxiety. These works are me using the *Da Art of Storytellin'* to share all this with an audience.

Da Art of Storytellin' is a series of a painting, poems, and letters that each tell a different story. These are stories of trauma, love, relationships, and bottled-up emotions. *Da Art of Storytellin'* allows me to share these stories in a way that I'm comfortable with. The painting, video, and poems will reveal and disguise at the same time. The written word is layered with paint, watercolor, and gold leaf. The viewer will have these stories right in front of them, but they won't be able to fully see them.

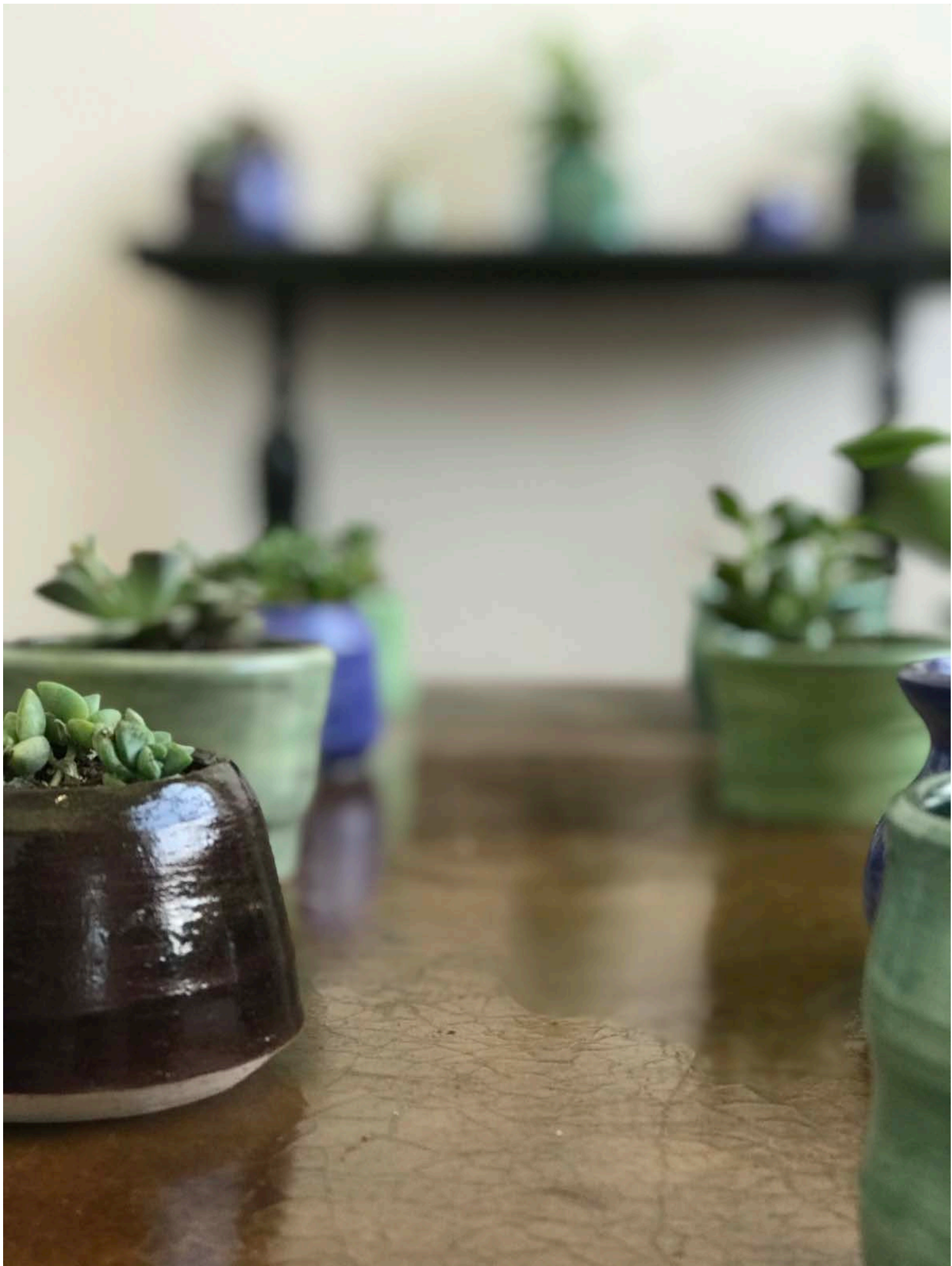
The title is named after one of my favorite songs by Outkast. Outkast has the ability to craft a song that is so catchy that people don't even know that there is a deeper message or story hidden behind beats, wordplay, and rhythmic flow. The way I make work is sometimes very similar to how Andre 3000 makes music, very meditative. Most of my inspiration comes from the music I listen to. In the exhibition, I'm making my own "music".

The work will be a representation of myself, and the viewer will have an inside look at the conversations I have with myself. I'm hoping that similarly to songs that are catchy but have a deeper meaning, that a few people will dissect and question my decision-making, and the majority just "enjoy the song".

<https://neverfailem.wixsite.com/emmanuelmccarter>







Emily McKinney

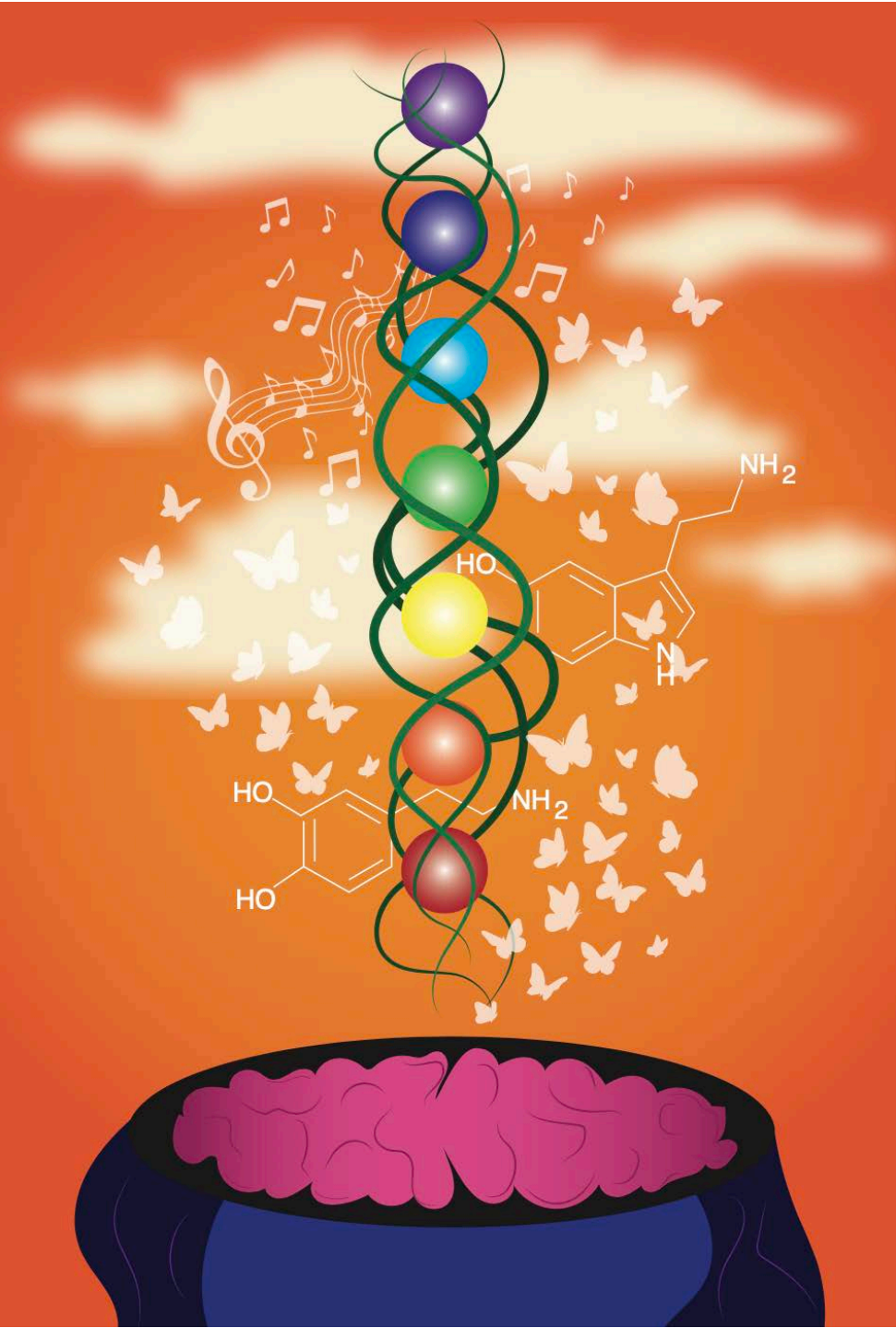
Living Room

I was first introduced to Ceramics in high school. I had an immediate fascination with wheel-throwing and working with clay. To me, clay is very easy to work with. I like that it is sustainable, being able to reuse the clay over and over again before it is fired in the kiln. I love being able to make things with my hands, and clay allows me to do that. I noticed that wheel-throwing seemed to help with my anxiety by being able to focus on the pottery and nothing else. Wheel-throwing was a talent that I did not know I had; it came very natural to me.

It's been a long time since I got my hands back on the wheel. Making pottery helps me feel relaxed and in the moment. I wanted to create a space where everyone can feel at ease and safe, like I do when I'm at my grandparents' house. They have a ton of pots and plants all around their house. I wanted to create that environment to make me feel closer to home in Jersey. These pots are inspired by the plants in my grandparents living room. Creating these pots, I let my hands guide me in my decision-making process. These pots are whatever my hands wanted to make in the moment. But the plants are directly from my grandparents and what they have in their house.







Kaylee Montgomery

A Series of Emotions through Color, 2021

“The more you seek the uncomfortable, the more you will become comfortable.” -Connor McGregor

As an artist, I tend to explore and express myself intimately through my work while also challenging my technical skills. In life, being uncomfortable can happen 24/7 especially if you're living with depression and anxiety. Using color theory and poster illustrations, I explore how use of color affects the connected emotions provoked from each piece individually. My work presents intimate experiences of working through mental health issues, which expose information that invites a new understanding between the viewer and myself. I hope that my work promotes more conversations about mental health and how we express our emotions - because talking isn't always the easiest option.

A Series of Emotions through Color (2021) is a group of poster installations that are inspired by how color provokes or represents certain emotions or feelings. The works in this series present intimate interpretations of my personal experiences and thoughts/feelings through years of depression, anxiety, and self-growth. Each illustration presents its own color theme and emotion(s), exposing real-life situations that aren't always easy to talk about. From a distance the viewer can see that the pieces together are a rainbow, and the perception of a rainbow might change as the viewer gets closer to the pieces. Some messages are clear and relatable, and some are directly from my life. Overall, this series invites the audience into my life personally but also into a safe space where they can experience each piece one-on-one and reflect on their own emotions or thoughts.



