

ABSTRACT

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Title: AN ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE REALITIES OF MENTAL HEALTH

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Year: 2018

My work is both an analysis of mental health disorders and a personal exploration of the disorders that are representative of myself and my family. I currently have diagnoses of ADD and Anxiety which are both represented in this show. However, of the nine disorders present, family members of mine suffer with eight of them. I have grown up around different extremes of these disorders and have had varying understandings of all of them. I am sure that my personal fascination with mental health disorders comes from a deeper desire to understand those closest to me, including myself.

My show has been influenced by artist like Yayoi Kusama, Mark Rothko, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. All of these artists, like many others, have struggled with one or more mental health disorders. Kusama has been creating works from a mental institution in Japan since 1977 and has been quoted many times explaining that if it weren't for art she would have killed herself. Rothko committed suicide in 1970 after struggling with alcohol and prescription drug addiction. Basquiat died of a heroin overdose at the early age of 27. All of these artist chose art to produce an abstracted view of their surroundings, helping those around them better understand their view of the world.

An Artistic Representation of the Realities of Mental Health uses a combination of both paintings and prints to bring more awareness to a topic that until recent years was considered taboo. Many people struggle with their perception of mental health and how it affects the individual. Filling an entire space with mental health information makes viewer unable to shy away from the discomfort people often feel towards the topic. The use of primary colors is an intentional nod to the belief that mental health disorders are an unavoidable part of life. Abstracted form is used to disguise serious information as a pleasurable viewing experience, therefore coercing the viewer in to interact with the works further.