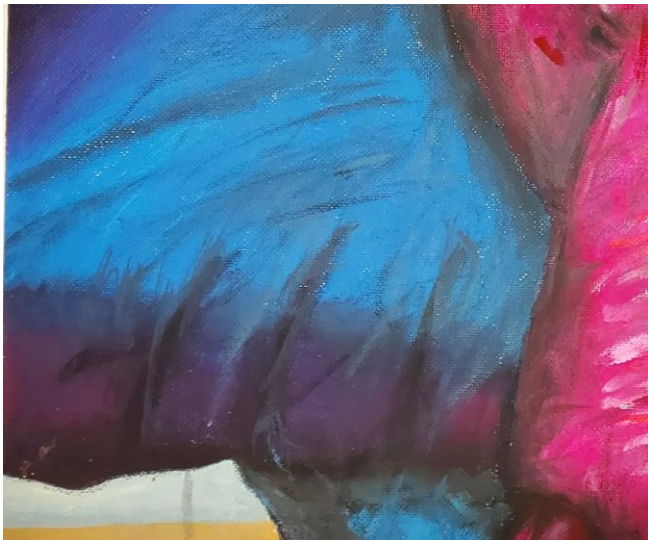# Process Portfolio

Symbolism of elephants expressed through art

Elephants have always been used as centre pieces within art and are still being used to symbolise importance within our world. They symbolise a multitude of different characteristics and bring across immense meaning, which artists incorporate in their works.

They hold significant importance in many cultures, standing as symbols in religion and mythology over centuries. Buddhism respects elephants as a holy symbol of their religion, symbolising strength, honour, peacefulness, wisdom, and patience. Hinduism is another religion in which elephants are worshipped and seen as perfectly disciplined. These artworks depicting elephants as gods commonly use a majority of colours, that are seen as holy and blessed, such as blue, white, red, yellow and green. This creates mesmerising artworks to look at, and paint the elephant gods in a sacred and divine fashion.

The first mention of elephants, however, comes from cave paintings depicting woolly Mammoths ranging back to earliest made approximately 35,000 years ago. It is not clear as to the reason of these paintings, but experts believe that they may not have only been for decorative reasons. Instead they may have also been used for communication, ceremonial, religious reasons. Others also theorise they may have been made for practical use to show hunting techniques. All of these theories point towards the fact that these artworks of woolly mammoths are not only intended to look good. This is also the case in the religious artworks, they are created for their specific religious purposes, and not only as art.

These different areas in which elephants are incorporated into art, show that elephants indicate more than just a animal. What they symbolise in depends on the authors message and intent through the artwork. The involvement usually symbolises the main ideas of elephants which include; power and strength, which refers to their physical body, immensely strong making their power admirable since they decide to lead a calm presence; wisdom and loyalty, because of their great age and nature to live in herds which include elders and calves; patience coming from their generally calm demeanour, showing their ability to stay calm and stable. There are many smaller symbolism of elephants that include; sensitivity, wisdom, loyalty, reliability, intelligence and many more, which can all be perceived through the use of elephants in artworks.

One of the main overall inspirations that pushed me to create artworks based on the theme of elephants, was the sketch made through charcoal and black chalk by Rembrandt van Rijn. The sketch is of a female elephant named Hansken. What is so special about this artwork is the way Rembrandt was able to create the rough, wrinkled skin and the shadows of the ears and neck through his attention to detail, while the outline is relative broad making the artwork almost abstract.

The goal I wanted to pursue through creating these artworks, was to show the beautiful nature of these creatures and display their characteristics through different mediums and different ideas.
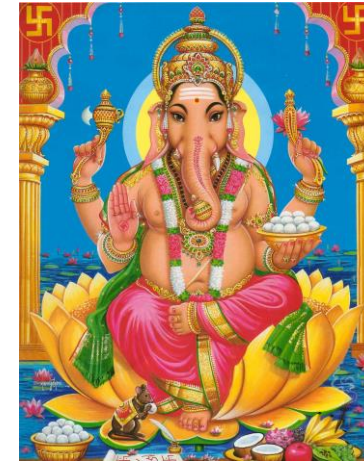

"Lord Ganesha"
Anonymous artist/art style/size

Cave painting
Unknown title/artist/size

"An Elephant"
Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669)
Black chalk and charcoal
25.6 × 17.9 cm

Brainstorming a theme and artwork ideas

- I started with brainstorming possible themes to create my artworks around. First starting with a general topic of playing with colours and nature.
- I find colours and how they are picked together to create art very intriguing. Artworks like "Prince Carlos Baltasar on Horseback" by Diego Velázquez and "Rain's Rustle" by Leonid Afremov, are interesting to study and see how the artist chose the colours to go with their works. This made me want to spend a lot of the time I had towards carefully planning and picking out my colour palettes.
- The general idea I had started with Nature, a very broad topic, which I needed to focus down on something. One of the most fascinating sciences for me is biology, so I closed it down to nature and biology. This gave me an array of Ideas which I studied and thought about for some time. I found some topics interesting, such as cell biology, however, I found it hard to create creative art ideas. Some other ideas included; landscape, animals, woods, shadows, which were all still too broad. A further inspection of all the topics I was interested in led me to choose the topic of nature.
- I chose the topic of nature, since it involved most of the other topics and especially my original topic of biology. I ended up choosing a very bizarre theme, that of elephants. This came to me, as I had visited Tanzania a couple of months prior, where I went on a Safari. Seeing elephants was one of the most extraordinary events of my life. The sheer size of the animals and listening to their silent footsteps and how they ate, piqued my interest. This caused me to go down the route of choosing elephants as my general them in my artworks
- After finding my topic of elephants, I got into exploring some art ideas. With inspiration from various artists, art styles and artworks I found some that suited my style and the theme I was going for. This art ideas include; sculptures, outlines, shadows, silhouette, to name a few.
- My main goal in portraying these creatures was to show their beauty. Especially with the massive issue of poaching that is going on in many African countries, causing elephant populations to decrease.
- Throughout my different artworks, the detail of the elephant is minimal, with mostly the body and structure to be seen. Ending with a full frame of a detail intensive artwork.
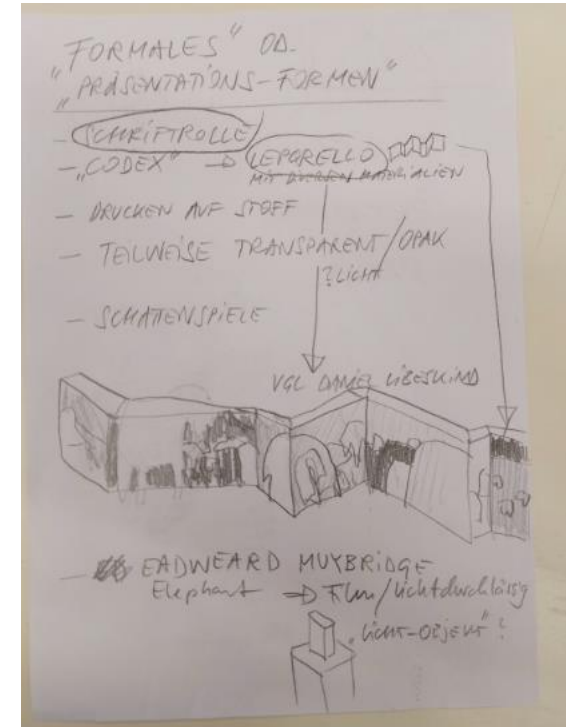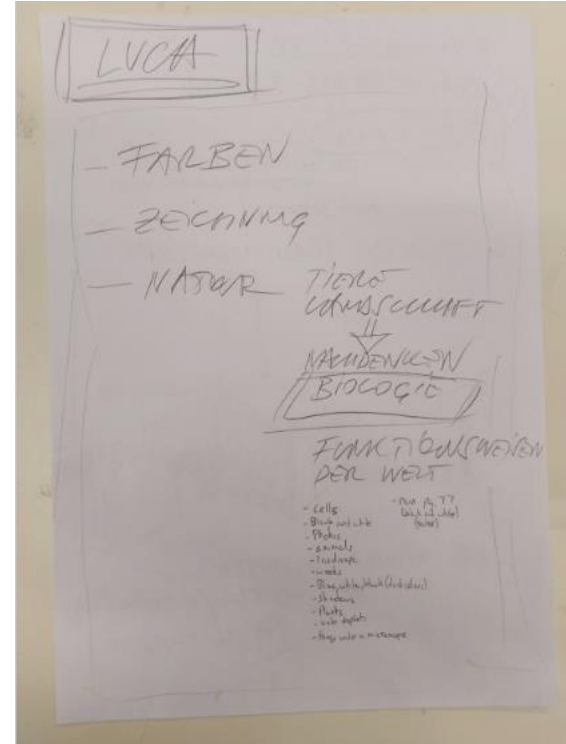
Art Ideas
- Sculpture, with light casting a shadow
- Outline of an animal, printed pieces and coloured in different contrasts
- Animal photo edited and made into layers, 3D sculpture
- 3D art bringing the photos to life
- Head of an elephant sculpture
- Movement picture

- Silhouette
- Shadows
- Basic outline
- Blank shape
- Black and White
- No emotions

Savannah of Elephants

- Inspiration

The first artwork was the hardest one to start, since I needed to get an overall idea of how what I wanted to create in the theme of elephants. What my mind went to first when I found thought about elephants, were the largest elephants to live. Woolly Mammoths, which are often represented through cave paintings all over Europe. When I was younger I was always extremely interested in dinosaurs and the ice age, loving movies like "Ice Age" and being attached to Manny, the Woolly Mammoth. This was one of the first things I thought about after choosing the theme of elephants.

So I did some research about cave paintings of Woolly Mammoths. Cave paintings were mostly created using black pigments, that were made through charcoal and manganese dioxide, or red pigments, that were created by iron oxides or hematite. Other ways of creating these colours, and the use of other colours were also applied, however, they were not as common. What they then did with the colour was, using their fingers on soft surfaces, and flint tools on hard surfaces was engrave the colour onto the walls of caves. Learning more about how and why cave paintings had been created, I got more invested and interested in creating my own inspired cave painting like artwork. My main inspiration was a cave painting created in Lascaux, which is a cave in France, containing over 600 wall paintings, estimated to be around 17,000 years old.

The cave painting that I used as inspiration is located in the Hall of Bulls. What I found so amazing about this artwork is the use of different shades of colour, which is something that I decided to also convey on my artwork, in a bit stronger fashion. Although there is no elephant visible, the use of a large quantity of animals in the small space was another piece that I craved to use. The area in which this painting was found "Hall of Bulls", inspired me so much, that I used this to name my artwork, with a little twist.

Another huge inspiration was Henri Matisse (1869-1954), who created cut-outs towards the end of his career, after undergoing a surgery which left him chair and bedbound. He then continued with his artworks, however, in a different fashion. He would cut pieces of paper, that were painting using gouache, into varying shapes and size, and then pointing out the spot he wanted them to be placed creating cut paper collages. After exploring and researching this style of creating art, an idea clicked in my head to join the cave painting style together with the paper collages. I loved Matisse's use of colour and shape, how he was able to create these majestic artworks while at the same time being bedbound. Matisse's whole story was inspiring to, with his "La Piscine" or "The Swimming Pool", being my main artwork of his that I found inspiration from. The use of papers, being placed on top of each other creating a texture that is even visible when using the same colour of paper.

During a safari that I was fortunate enough to undertake, I created uncountable numbers of photos, especially of elephants. Looking over the photographs after I had chosen to follow the elephant themed artworks, I stumbled upon this photo. It's a very simple photo of a herd of elephants all captured in one image, but it something that it did, was open up my mind to creating a mass of elephants. These three ideas clicked together to making the artwork I wanted to create clear as day.

Cave painting
Unknown title/artist/size

"Der Tanz"
Henri Matisse (1869-1954)
Gouache paper cut-out
80 × 65 cm
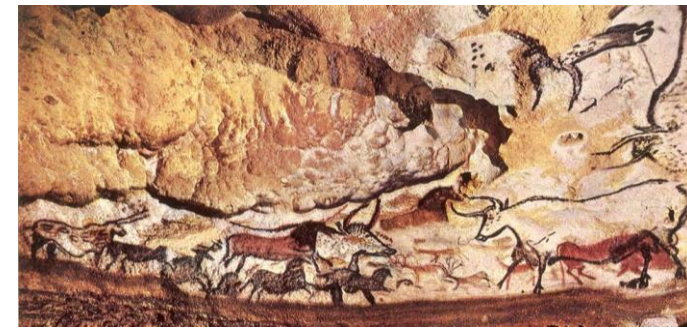

- Experimentation and resolved artwork

After I had found all the inspiration to needed to create my first artwork was create a sketch of how the version would look without colour. I did this by sketching on my laptop touchscreen. What I found is that the colourlessness of the art made it bland to look at. What I wanted was a fun colourful artwork. What I also noticed, was that I would need to incorporate much more elephants than I did in the sketch I did, since it made the work look too simple for my linking.

My final artwork was a cut-out paper collage with the dimensions, 71.5×103cm. The canvas I used was an old painting board since it was covered in paint, so I was able to put it to use again. What this artwork represents is the history of elephants in art, paying respect to the oldest type of art. I did this in a relatively modern way, through paper cut-outs onto a canvas, inspired by Henri Matisse, with a strong use of colours following the typical cave art colour scheme, while adding a chaotic aspect inspired through a photograph I made.

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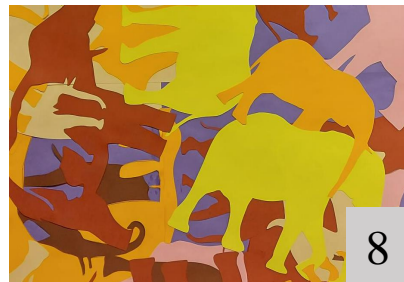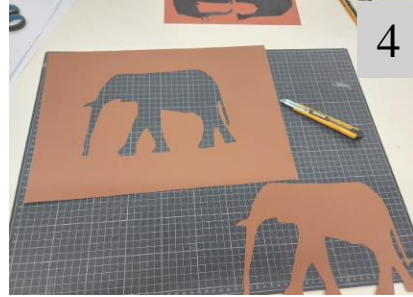
Work process:

- My process started by looking through and finding outlines of elephants that would fit to my idea and the image I wanted to portray of large powerful creatures. This took a while to find a good number of outlines, and creating them into black and white figures, without background, to make the following steps easier.

- After finding the outlines, I printed them out to get an initial feel for their size and shape. They were relatively big (1), covering almost a full A4 page, which I found this was a good size for my purpose.

- Now I needed to find a colour pattern which I would use throughout the collage. This step was very difficult to find the perfect set of colours. I mixed the papers around taking pictures and comparing the schemes to each other. I also tried different colour combinations, matching cool colours together, warm colours. I ended up deciding on a range of warmer colours mixed with some darker toned colours to contrast the intensity (2), which I was inspired by from some of the cave paintings I have seen.

- After the colours were decided on, I cut out the elephant prints. Using the cut outs, I traced around them onto the coloured papers to create the forms onto the paper (3). After tracing them onto the coloured paper, I used a knife cutter and cut out the outline (4). After I had cut out numerous shapes, I found a large canvas to complement the size of the sketches (5).

- The next step was by far the most difficult and time consuming portion of creating the artwork. This was finding out where to stick which figures. After matching different outlines with different colours and not being able to find what I was looking for, I thought about trying something else. What I did to make my job a little easier was glue three plain pieces of paper onto the canvas in different spots. This helped create a backdrop with enough area of the canvas being covered so that I could add my layers of elephants, without having the original background look through.

- I then went back to my plan, with three coloured papers already set in place, and started the formation of the figures (6). Starting on the edges where I placed the blank papers, I was able to find what I was looking for. The procedure was still very time consuming since my prior solution did not solve my entire problem, however, it did make my job easier.

- Through the process of matching, I decided on not incorporating the grey coloured paper into the work, since it created a solid monotone section wherever it was placed. I found the overall colour scheme worked together better leaving the grey out of it.

- What I did incorporate was the outlines of my figures (8), since I still had them nothing to do with them, and did not want to throw them away. This gave my artwork the flare it needed to create a diverse, more detailed look. I also decided to print more copies of the same elephants, but in smaller sizes, which also added to the variety and allowed me to create shapes, that I was not planning on creating.

- Using the larger and smaller shapes, I also mixed them to essentially create a pregnant elephant, which is one of the more centred and dominant shapes in the artwork.

- Looking through the different outlines I ended up deciding to use the largest sizes I had printed out. I chose this since elephants are extremely large animals, which is something I wanted to incorporate in my first work (8).

Scintillating Stampede

- Inspiration

Finding something to inspire my second inspiration I was looking through some art books. I found a lot of amazing artworks and interesting ways of creating art, however, only one piece stood out to me which I found wonderful. I found this artwork in the book "Nun" which is filled with artworks created by Annette Schröter. The work is called "Im Morgengrauen", made in 2010, which is a was created by using spray paint on a black paper, with the dimensions 92×72cm. I found the black and white contrast, as shadows extraordinary and immediately wanted to create an artwork based on this style of art. One of the themes I was debating on following was shadows, which fit to this artwork and made me want to somehow incorporate this style in my theme of elephants. I ended up losing some of the black and white aspects of the artwork because of some other inspirations that I got during the process. However, the original elephant shapes that I used came from this artwork.

Now having an art style that I wanted to follow, I searched further for more inspiration on how I could incorporate this use of colour into an artwork, since I did not want to make a plain black and white image. My main inspiration came researching for a 3-dimensional artwork that I could create. The piece I was most fond of was the art style of creating a leporello, that brought in an artistic style of my liking. A leporello is essentially a material that is folded into an accordion-pleat styled artwork, meant as a souvenir depicting scenes of beauty. The leporello that inspired me was create by Monique Romeijn, called "Noorwegen" created in 2016 spanning the length of 648cm. The artwork depicts different scenes, that are created through painting over 40 canvases of the leporello.

Again like the previous artwork, I found inspiration through one of my photographs. This time it depicts a rushing herd of Wilder beasts that had just crossed a river. The chaotic view of the herd coming from their huge numbers created a cloud of dirt in the air, that had been trampled. I found the it stunning to look into the background just be able to see the faint shape of a tree. This inspired me to create a chaotic feel to the work, and also gave me the perfect name for the work

While I was creating my artwork, I stumbled across a book written by Petra Kathke called "Sinn und Eigensinn des Materials". In this book she includes artworks that incorporate an array of different materials. This came at the perfect time, since I wanted to include of bit more texture to the artwork. Looking through the works in the book I was inclined to create another artwork and ripping it apart to also add to the chaos that I wanted to bring across.

When I finished my panels for the leprollo and connected them, I was not fully invested with the work. This was not a major issue, as it would have still made a good artwork. However, I did not want to settle for good, but instead something amazing that would also bring my message across clearly. I found a book called "Calder", which includes a huge amount of Alexander Calder's works. From this book, I found the inspiration to still be able to use the panels I had made. This style of art is called Kinetic art. Kinetic art is related to motion, that exploits the movement of air. So I changed the layout of my panels and instead decided on creating a Kinetic artwork, instead of a leporello. However, my kinetic art is more stationary than moving.

"Four Leaves and Three Petals"
Alexander Calder (1898-1976)
Sheet metal, wire, and paint
204.9 × 174 × 135.9 cm

"Im Morgengrauen"
Annnette Schröter (1956-Present)
Black paper, spray paint
92 × 72 cm

"Noorwegen"
Monique Romeijn (1966-Present)
Leporello
40 × 648 cm

- Experimentation and resolved artwork

The original sketch I created included colouring the different panels and creating the elephants in a full black colour. After more inspiration of the book by Petra Kathke, I changed this to a cardboard background with different materials being used, however, all in a darker colour scheme than sketched. The other thing I changed was the chaotic nature of the elephants. I originally did not plan on creating a stampede, which only came after my photograph. These inspirations I got after creating this sketch changed my art and the entire meaning that is conveyed. What I also changed dramatically, was the entire layout, changing it from a leporello styled work, to a kinetic work, which added to the chaos.

The final work that I created was a Kinetic artwork, made of carboard canvases to give the background texture, similar to the background of the wilder beast photograph, with 8 panels each with the dimensions of 29.7×20.8cm. The dimension so the entire artwork is 57 × 62 × 46 cm. The meaning that this kinetic art conveys, is that like the title says, a stampede that is fascinating to look at. The elephants are glued onto the panels in a random way, facing whatever direction, with different materials that have been incorporated to create the texture and grain that would occur through a rushing rampage of elephants.

Work process

- The idea behind this artwork was to create a leporello with elephants covering it. I started this artwork by looking at what material I could be able to use and create an arrangement. I went through different materials and ended up deciding on cardboard, since the other materials, like plain paper were either not strong enough or didn't have the rough texture I was looking for. The light brown tint of the cardboard and its rough texture fit the colour scheme and purpose that I wanted to use it for.

- Then I looked at finding the right sized cardboard canvases and the number of canvases I wanted to use. Through setting up different sized canvases and seeing how they would work, I decided on the sizes 29.7×20.8cm. I decided on using 8 canvases, because of its even number giving the work a sort of calmness, which it needed to contrast my idea of the actual art on the leporello.

- When coming up with the idea, I originally wanted to use photographs I had taken of elephants, and use them to fill the leporello, as a colourful mash of images. However, looking at examples of leporello's, I didn't find it would fit the style. So I decided to re-use the materials from my previous artwork "Savanah of elephants", by taking the print outs I had made, for the purpose of creating the outlines (1). These outlines were white on one side and black on the other, which gave me my grey-scale colour. I cut these print outs and glued them onto the leporello with some other pieces of art.

- On top of the elephant print outs, I also wanted some other textures and mixes of colours. Since I was going after a grey-scale leporello, I got a large black paper experimented by throwing white paint on it to attain a sort of camouflage that would fit with the colours of the elephants (2). At some areas I almost covered the black paper with paint, and on other I used minimal amounts.

- Experimenting with these two pieces created a relatively boring to look at and forgetful piece. So I decided to add a bit more brown that would complement the background, and bring a bit more texture to it. I mixed the colours white, brown, and a tan brown onto a black pressed paper. By using the printing press, I created a range of mixed colours, shapes and depths of colours (3). I then used this to and ripped pieces apart to add them to the leporello. This also added to the chaotic nature of the artwork, the brown symbolising dirt that has been thrown into the air.

- Using the elephant outlines, the white splash painting, and the brown printing press work, I glued them onto the canvases (4), by randomly orientating them and observing what would fit best. I went through this process with the previous artwork too, so it was easier to do this time. What I also ended up doing, what I had not thought of in my original design idea, was to glue the pieces over the sides, making them visible on the other side as well (5).

- Gluing both sides of the print outs, and ripping pieces of the white splatter work, I was able to get the white and black contrast giving the grey scale effect I wanted (6). But also included the printing press work with added a bit more colour to the background to give the leporello a bit more life. The end effect I wanted was to create a grey-scaled, monotone and camouflaged effect.

- I repeated the steps of gluing the pieces onto the leporello seven more times, creating a total of 8 independent canvases, which all had the same style of art, in random positioning. For the final artwork I wanted them to be set into a leporello style, so after all the canvases were completed, I rearranged them and set them up to create one large leporello (7).

- After creating one leporello, I did not find it fit the theme of chaos and a stampede, so I rethought how I would set up the 8 panels. I ended up finding inspiration through Alexander Calder's work on Kinetic art. I tried out different methods of creating this. I cut gaps in the panels, joining them together and ended up with a sculpture that provides the audience with hectic nature. I then took this sculpture, and hung it on a rope, 20cm cm above the above the floor creatin my own Kinetic art (8).
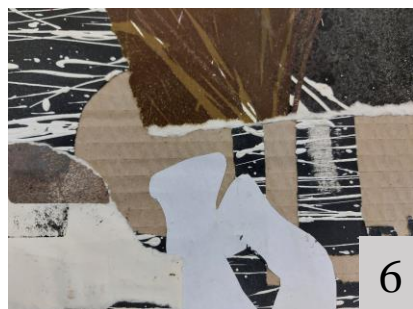
Wandering Wildlife

- Inspiration

After finishing the leporello, I wanted to follow it up with another 3-dimensional artwork. This time, however, showing the strength and durability of an elephant.

While creating my comparative study, I came across a statue which fit the theme. This artwork was "The Angel of the City" created by Marino Marini which is a bronze sculpture with the dimensions of 175×276×106 cm. While researching this sculpture and Marini, I found that it would be a great idea to create such a sculpture, however, the materials needed and the method he used, were way too intricate. So, I looked at different sculptures and came across wire sculptures.

While researching kinetic artworks in the book from Alexander Calder I also came across wire sculptures he made, I was struck by the simplicity of some, and the intricacy of others, while all still managing to perfectly illustrate the figure they were trying to convey. One sculpture that I was especially fond of, was that of a wire horse, which Alexander Calder created in 2013. This sculpture depicted a very simplistic style, using minimal amount of wire to create a galloping horse. What I found astonishing while inspecting the sculpture, was the detail Calder was able to give the horse, while at the same time using barely any wire. This also gave the horse a lightweight majestic feel, which is further strengthened through the shape of the feet and the ability to make it stand on only two feet, while the other two are in the air. What Calder also did a brilliant job at, was shape the horse's tail and mane to seemingly have them sailing through the wind as the horse gallops.

These are aspects that I wanted to take into account when creating my own wire sculpture. Through inspiration of another photograph I took, which depicts a massive bull elephant walking over the road, I was able to get an idea of the shape and structure I needed to create.
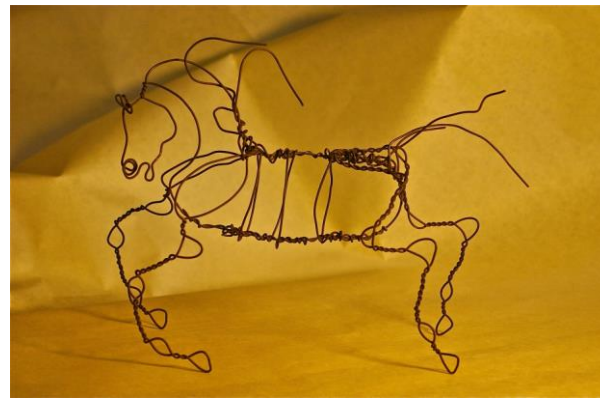
"Horse on the move"
Alexander Calder (1898-1976)
Wire sculpture
Unknown size
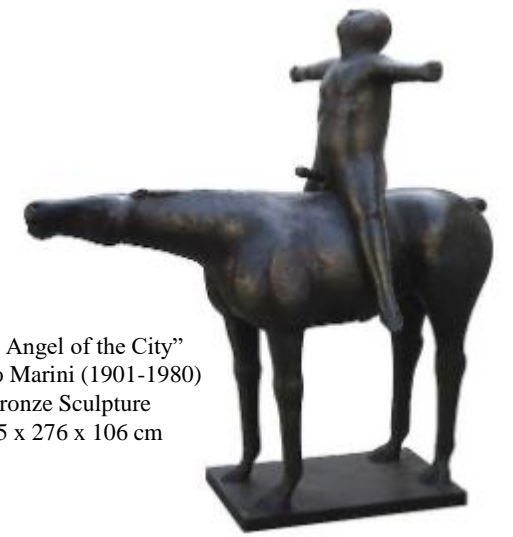
"The Angel of the City"
Marino Marini (1901-1980)
Bronze Sculpture
175 x 276 x 106 cm
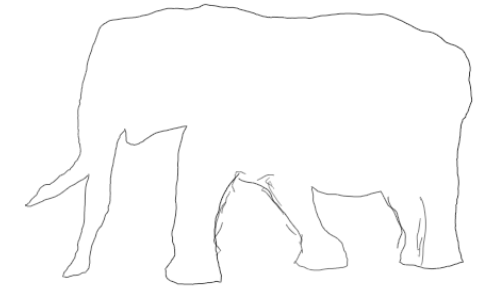
- Experimentation and resolved artwork

The idea of this artwork was very straightforward, which I did not need a lot of inspiration for. What I did was use the image of the bull elephant and just made a very simple sketch of the image. This sketch then allowed me to measure the size of the of the entire elephant to create the proper proportions needed. Using these proportions, I was able to drill the holes for where the feet were going to be planted. I ended up separating the hind feet, to creating a more walking position, as I wanted the elephant to be in stride.

The finished wire sculpture has the dimensions 17.5 × 14 × 12 cm and is set on a wooden base. The message that I wanted to convey is the strength and durability of elephants. The sculpture uses, unlike Calder's a large amount of wire, which creates a tougher, more robust visual look. The feet are also planted in the wooden base, symbolising the heavy structure, again opposite to the lightweight horse that Calder created.

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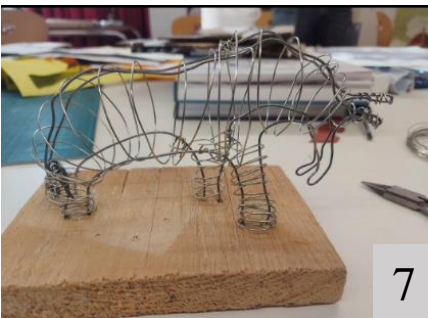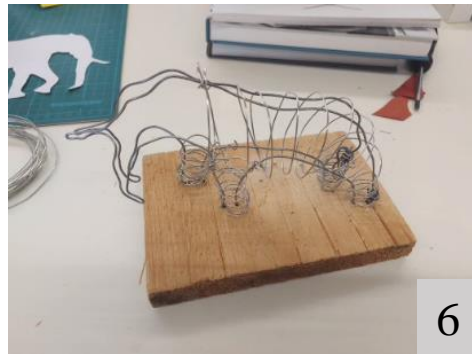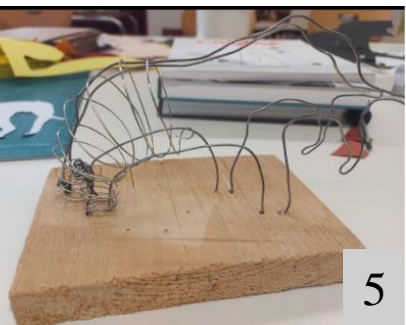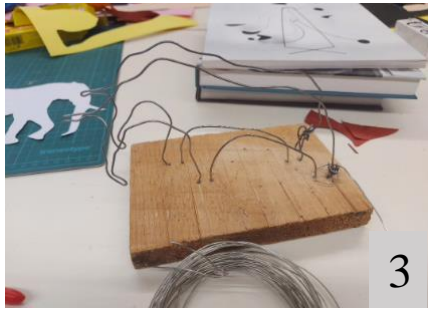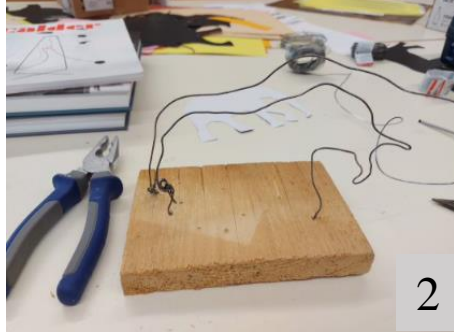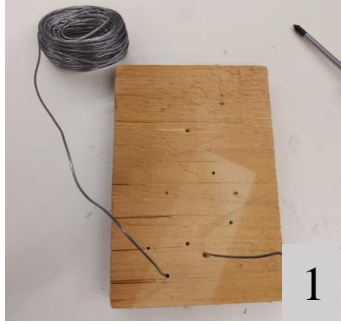
Work Process

- What I really wanted to include in my collection of elephant artworks, was a sculpture. I thought about different techniques I could accomplish this through, such as a wooden sculpture, a large origami figure. Looking through different types of sculptures, I got inspired from work done by Alexander Calder. A wire sculpture was the optimal type of figure to create, since I had tried making one before starting this and found it fitting to the message that I wanted to convey through it.

- I started off by finding a base for the sculpture, since I wanted it to be one set piece, instead of just a sculpture. Looking through different types of bases I found one that was unlike the other pieces of wood, this one was messy, and had some texture to it (1). Since I wanted to make a more unorganised sculpture this fit perfectly. I then cut it with a circular saw to cut it to the dimensions that I wanted, and made sure to get a relatively even rectangle. The wood was also very soft, making it easy to drill holes through it for the wires to fit through.

- My next step was choosing where to place the legs of the elephant. I made the leg positioning fit a elephant that is in stride, with all four feat touching the ground. I then drilled holes through the wood at these positions, which was very simple because of the soft wood I chose to use.

- I then to started on creating the outline of the elephant (2). Using tweezers I bent the wire into the shape of an elephant, going from the back of the back legs to the front of the front legs with one wire. I did this two times for both the underbelly, and the back together with the face of the elephant to create a more 3D effect (3).

- Pulling the wire through the floor of the base and to the other side, I realised that the base was not standing properly. This was because of the wire that was peaking out the bottom part of the base. To counter this, I created small crevices in the wood, using a pair of small pliers, on the bottom side. Using the crevices, I bent the wire to a 90 degree angle and pressed them into the crevices, keeping the wire inside the wood (4), so they would not interfere with the base. This allowed the base to sit normally on the table, and allowed me to adjust the wire length afterwards, in case I messed up with the measurement. The crevices were always made by pushing the pliers into the wood, going in the direction of the lines in the wood. This is because going against the direction could've torn the wood apart, and made it a lot easier.

- After finishing the outlines I changed to using a much softer, thinner wire which was much easier to bend into the shape I wanted (5). I began on the hind left leg, twisting the it around in circles. After a few motions around the leg, I needed to connect the top with the leg, to make it sit properly and keep it knotted. I then continued this further up to the top of the legs, where I advanced to covering the entire body up to the front legs, which I skipped over (6). Continuing up the neck and to the face. This are was the most difficult , since the wire kept sliding down from the top to the bottom of the face. To counter this I needed to carefully change the shape of the wire, making more oval shaped to keep it tight around the neck. Moving down the face I skipped the tusks and went down the trunk (7).

- After the main body was set, I needed to still surround the right hind leg, the two front legs, and the two tusks with wire. I found it easiest to leave them out when creating the body at first, since I could follow the overall structure and then add the pieces on afterwards. Just like how I started the first leg, I completed the other three. Starting at the bottom, making circular shapes to the top, and then connected them to the body by wrapping and tying them to the wire of the frame. The tusks were the same, except they were made a lot tighter, to create the appearance of bone.

- After completing the sculpture I inspected it and after long discussion found that it was too thin. To remove this appearance, I went over the entire body a second time, filling in the gaps were the form looked to be missing something. This solved my problem, since now the sculpture essentially had twice the amount of wire covering the body, giving it a proper elephant appearance and form.

- The last thing to add, were the ears. I started the ears by taking the strong wire and forming into the shape of an ear. I then went back to the thinner wire, and went from one side of the ear to the other, wrapping the wire around twice to get it stuck to the outline, filling up the free space. I continued this until the entire ear was covered and repeated this for the other ear. I also bent the ear back, to fit the side it was on, to enhance the nature of the sculpture and finally attaching it to the wire sculpture (8).

Mistieke Ruimte

- Inspiration

After completing two 3-dimensional artworks and one paper-cut, I wanted to go back to the more traditional styles of art, that being paintings. To find inspiration on what I could turn into a painting, I went through my photographs once again and became extremely attracted to their faces. Their shape of their face, rolling back into their ears, while having this fascinating trunk got me interested and served as inspiration as to what I wanted to create.

Having the general idea of what I wanted to create, a painting of the face of an elephant, I wanted to also provide a message through the work. Looking back at what elephants symbolise, one aspect that caught my attention was wisdom and mysticalness. One of the other themes I was contemplating on following, was space, the universe, and the beauty of the colours that follow. I wanted to join this theme into my theme through these symbolisms of elephants. So what I did was research colours of the universe, through which I came across the visually stunning artworks of Marina Petro.

Her artworks mostly follow the contemporary style through that different aspects, from horses to the universe. "Spaced out" specifically caught my attention through its use of colours on the oil painting and her ability to incorporate so many varying colour patterns in one artwork, but still being able to create such a wonderful piece. This oil painting inspired me to create a piece of art that follows a mystical type of colour scheme, including purple, pink, blue, orange, similarly to Petro's work.

Now knowing exactly what I wanted to create, I looked through my photographs to find a clear structure and texture of an elephants head. This picture was almost perfect, except that the right side of the head is fairly obstructed, so when I was creating the sketch of a head, I used the left side as inspiration for both sides, changing the form to a degree.

When creating the painting I kept going back and forth, changing the colours to find what exactly would suit best. I also came to a stand-still with the background, since I did not plan the background beforehand. I thought it would allow the face to be the dominant colour, however once I was finish, I felt like something was missing, the overall painting was too simple. So I decided to add a background, which would not pull the attention away, but at the same time add that flare it was missing.

Another photograph I had taken was just of the landscape, however it had two relatively thin trees on it. From these I got the inspiration for what I could put in the background. I did however, want to add a twist onto the painting. That being the mysticalness of elephants, while at the same time how they are being treated. I accomplished this through the way I created the background and same minute details I added to the elephant later, for example grey lines that represent scar across his face.

"Spaced Out"
Marina Petro (1943-Present)
Oil painting on archival canvas panel
17.78 × 12.7 cm

- Experimentation and resolved artwork

I created a sketch of what I wanted the face to look like. Looking at the face, the trunk seemed to take a lot of space, if I were to include the entirety. So I experimented using a piece of cardboard to find how much I wanted to cut off the trunk to find that appropriate look. After finding that the top was too open, I also added one to the top and finally came to a point at which I was satisfied with how the face would look in the artwork.

The painting was named "Mistieke ruimte", which is Afrikaans for "Mystical Space". The canvas has the size 70×50cm, created using acrylic paint. The colourful scheme represents the wisdom and mysticality of elephants, while the background expresses how they are being treated, in terms of hunting and captured. The different perspective of the elephant and the background creates an essence of emotion, of how such beautiful creatures can be treated that poorly.
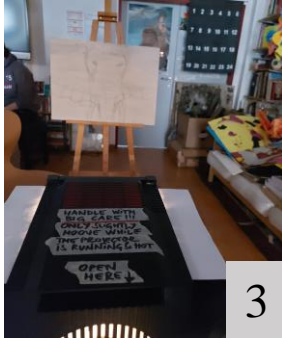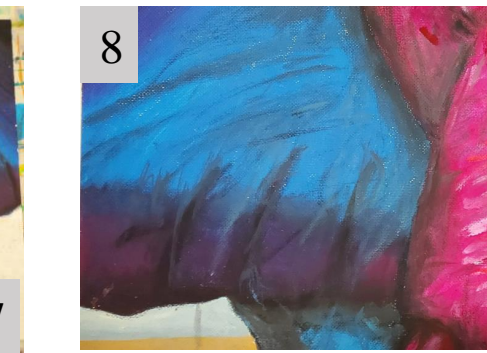
Work process:
- I first experimented how much of the elephant I wanted on the canvas. I decided on having a large portion of the artwork focused on the face, and not so much on the ears. I then chose a Canvas that with the right size, that also suited the rough skin of an elephant. The one that I found was a tone of brown, so I used acrylic paint adding a layer of white colour. After laying one foundation and inspecting it, I found that the brown from the canvas was still visible. However, this kept the roughness of the skin and added the white colour I needed, which gave me the best of both, so I decided against adding another layer.
- The first step after having the canvas fit to paint on (1), was to sketch the head of an elephant. Using my photograph, I created measurements which would help me scale the face to the correct dimensions. By using the measurements, I started sketching the face onto the canvas. I outlined the framework of the head. I encountered an issue with the scaling, which came form not the entire face of the elephant being on the artwork (2). To resolve this concern, I used a projector and put the sketch I made in the projector. By projecting my original sketch onto the canvas I created a new outline which created a much more accurate representation of the scale (3).
- Once I had the outline I wanted, I started with the painting. I found the colours that I wanted and used a palette to mix to get different shades. I started with the face, as it is the most prominent aspect. Using acrylic paint and water I painted the face. To get the correct appearance I made wave patterns, bringing out the 3 dimensional effect of the trunk (4). I added darker lines with the same curves to create the wrinkled features that are so prominent on African elephants. Inspecting the face, I did not like the translucent looking acrylic paint, so I did not add water anymore.
- I then started with the ears, continuing with a blue tone. However, this time creating a stronger and smoother look. I slowly shaded in from the corners of the ears and the bottom of the ear lobes with a darker purple shade. I managed this by adding black onto the darkest areas, mixing the paint on the canvas slowly moving away from the darker areas and adding more blue and purple coloured tones to create lighter areas (5). This allowed me to create a smooth bond between the dark and light area. Adding dark streaks that come up from the bottom of the ears. More streaks of darker lines were added throughout the ears to add the wrinkled effect.
- Once the ears were done I went back to the face and over painted it with a pink tone (6). I did this as I did not like he difference between rough and smooth of the face and the ears, and wanted the face to be more eye-catching and noticeable. Again uses the same technique. This time I used extremely strong lines for the wrinkles, as they were not noticeable enough from a distance.
- Finishing the face I moved onto the tusks which I played around a lot with the colours. I finally decided on red as it too stands out of in front of the body behind that I was going to create in a blue scale. The tusks followed the same style of painting in the same direction down towards the canvas and off, to give them the pointiness they needed. Creating the body was difficult, as I originally was not planning on one.
- However, after finished the planned parts, I felt like there was something missing, so I again searched for inspiration on the scaling of the body. Once I sketched the body I first filled it in and then created the pattern of the legs by creating a darker line next to the outside line, as to represent the front and then the back legs (7).
- Going back to the face adjusted the wrinkle lines as they were too strong. I left the eyes for last, since they were the most complex area. I looked at a number of different photographs of elephant faces to create realistic looking eyes. Incorporating the eyes after finishing the rest of face was difficult, since I need to get the same pink tone as I had originally. The photograph that I used as my main inspiration had the eyes very petite and dark, which looked easier to translate on the painting than it was. The eyes needed the right size and the right amount of darkness surrounding them which I managed by adding black paint onto the artwork and mixing it on the eye to create a random feel of the surrounding area (8).

Wilderness of Rhythm

- Inspiration

For my final artwork I knew I wanted to create another 2-dimensional artwork. From the previous artwork "Mistieke Ruimente", in which I had to experiment a lot with the texture of the elephants face, I got the idea of creating an entire artwork focused on their skin.

To find inspiration, I went back to looking through books, in one I found Eadweard Muybridge's "plate 734/735 Elephants; two, walking". The two 6×2 plates made of pictures taken by elephants walking gave me the idea of many canvases' filled with the visual appearance of elephant skin. This idea was reinforced with the fact that elephants in the wild live and move in herds, which would add to the aspect of realism.

This collage of photographs reminded me of the amazing piece of art I had seen created by Andy Warhol, a collage of colourful Marilyn Monroe's, created in 1967. Researching about this and obtaining inspiration made me sure that I needed to make a collage of elephant skin textures, in a colourful and eye-catching manner.

The grey scale of the pictures of the elephants from Eadweard Muybridge also reminded me of one of the previous artworks I got inspired by "Im Morgengrauen". This connection made me contemplate, whether I should create a black and white, or like Andy Warhol's artwork, an extremely dense and colourful creation. During the process of creating artwork, I found that my original idea of a colour scheme would be a lot better and create more life into the work.

Now I had exactly what I wanted to do, but was missing how to do it. I did not want to create a series of screen print portfolios, but instead went back to researching on different ways to create my idea perfectly.

After looking for a while I found a work by Horace Brodzky, which he made as an advertisement for a restaurant. This artwork he created was a linoleum print. This opened the door for me to find more inspiration from other linoleum prints and see if my idea was possible to create through this style of art.

This style of art works by using a cutting indentations into a lino plate into the form you wanted to have. The area which is removed, is the area that stays the original colour of the paper or other material you will use later on. Then this lino plate need to be coloured whatever colour is wanted, usually using linoleum colours. Once the lino plate is covered in colour, it is placed into a printing press and a canvas is placed on top. The colour is then essentially printed onto the canvas, creating the linoleum print. This style of art, I found was very fascinating and I found it interesting how it works, so I decided to give it a try.

After finding that I had no idea how to create an elephants texture of its skin, I once again went back to my photographs and found an image that I could use to find inspiration in creating the pattern I wanted. The pattern I ended up with is very different compared to the elephants pattern, however, this created a feel of different animals being incorporated into the artwork.
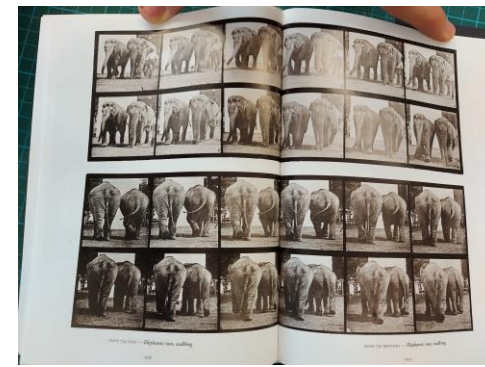
"Elephants; two, walking
Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904)
Animal Locomotion
59.69 × 45.72 cm

"Advertisement for
Restaurant
Horace Brodzky (1885-1969)
Linocut
12.3 × 16 cm

"Marilyn Monroe"
Andy Warhol (1928-1987)
Portfolio of screen-prints
91.5 × 91.5 cm (each sheet)

- Experimentation and resolved artwork

The experimentation I did was very simple sketches of the shape textures I wanted to have on my lino plates. Looking at the sketches I made, I had no idea how to create an elephant pattern and went back to my photograph. Using one of the photographs, that gave me a proper understanding of how to create the pattern I sketched a pattern onto the plate.

I created a total of twelve of these linoleum prints for my artwork, which was different to both my inspirations, however, I found it more visually accepting with what I created. Each plate is 20×20cm big, with the total dimensions becoming 80×60cm once set together in a 4 by 3 manner. The colour of lighter and darker colours mixing represents the entire African wilderness working as one, which is also were the inspiration for the name came from.
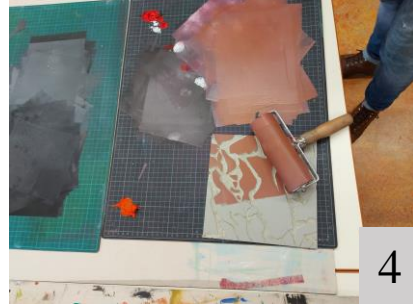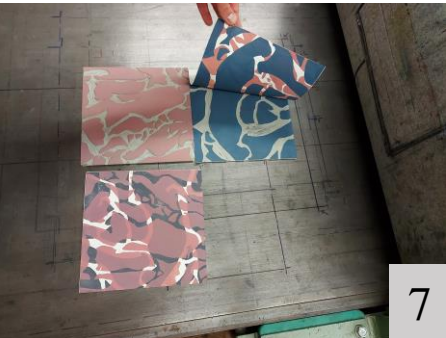
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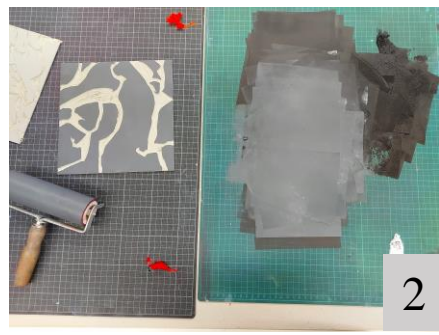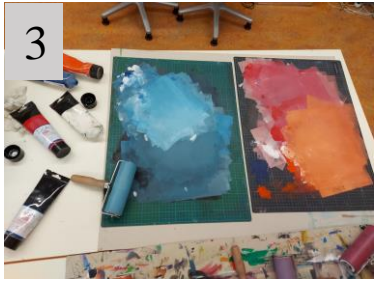
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Work process:

- My main goal in this last artwork I created was to display the skin and texture of an elephants skin, which is key to an elephants physique. I went through trying to figure out what would best show the designs through art, and ended up being inspired by one of Horace Bordzky Linocuts. This inspired me to try my idea through a lino print.

- I first had to brainstorm ideas of shapes or forms of what exactly I wanted to have for the art. Being inspired by Andy Warhol's screen-print portfolio's of Marilynn Monroe, I decided to create multiple different shapes with different use of colours. Then I needed to find the shapes I wanted to have. I found inspiration from a vector created, and used this as inspiration for creating my lines and shapes

- I started by cutting two pieces of lino plates to the dimensions 20x20cm to create a perfectly square print. After I had the correct size, I made a sketches, with a pencil, on the lino plates of the shapes I wanted to have. Following the elephant that I had to magnify in on, I was able to create two sketches on the lino plates by hand, creating a relatively original pattern.

- Having the sketch completed I started the carving stage. By using a carving knife, I curved indentations into the lino plate at the positions that I wanted to be kept achromatic (1). This method is called "high print", that works through the use of lino colour, that is rolled onto the lino. The lino plate, with a canvas, in my case paper, is then pressed through a printing press. This prints the area of the lino plate that is not carved, onto the paper canvas.

- After creating the lino plates with their indentations, I began with the printing phase (2). I used lino colours, mixing them to create a unique colour that I wanted to use (3). Once they were mixed together, I used a paint roller, and rolled it through the mixed colour to cover it. After having the colour on the paint roller, I rolled it onto the lino plate, making sure to keep the entire plate even in colour density. Then I repeated this in a lighter colour scheme for the other lino plate (4).

- After both lino plates were painted. I got two pieces of thick paper and placed them carefully on top of the lino plates (5). Then covering both plates with the printing press carpet to keep them safe from damage. Once the plates were set up, I moved them through a printing press. They then came out covered in colour in the pattern I wanted.

- After my first two prints were done, I chose another colour in the same colour region to complement the previous one. Repeating this progress of mixing colours I continued until I had the colour I wanted. I mixed darker shades of colour together for the similar pattern, and the more complex pattern had a lighter, red mixed with black coloured tint.

- This process was repeated for a total of 12 prints on paper, 6 darker shades of colour, and 6 lighter shades (6). After all prints had 1 layer of colour, I added a second layer, by repeating the same steps. I then used the same canvases that already had a pattern and placed them on top of the lino plate. This time I mostly mixed the original layers colour scheme with the opposite shade. Light with dark, and dark with light (7). However, for a few I kept the same shade to bring some diversity of colour into the work. Some of the canvases I printed a third layer of pattern on, creating an even more dense and intricate work (8).

- Finally after printing all the patterns onto the canvases, I organised them in a 4 by 3 pattern, giving the overall artwork an arbitrary, yet even appearance.

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