

2024 HSC Visual Arts MAJOR WORK

Artist Statement

Name

Araminta
Gardner

Title

Layers of Mortality

Expressive Form

Drawing

My understanding of human existence and the process of deterioration is reinforced by the interpersonal relationships interwoven within my Body of Work (BOW). I consciously chose to emphasize the mental and emotional dimensions of deterioration and human connections.

Using my father's hands, my grandmother's eyes, and an abstract interpretation of a retirement chair, I have attempted to depict three distinct phases of life in my three pieces of art. During the creation of my BOW, my father received an aggressive cancer diagnosis. As a result, my decision to paint his hands took on a whole new meaning for me. Initially, I wanted to capture how I know my father: strong, busy, and full of energy, guiding and providing me with security. His hands were the first thing I reached for as I walked through childhood.

In contrast, I now depict them in my BOW as tightly bound together. The clasp of his fingers reflects a time of introspection and a desire to protect himself from an uncertain future. The closed hands symbolize his need to focus on himself and the perseverance required to face what lies ahead.

It is time for me to try walking on my own, but I will always walk beside him.

Through authentic and delicate brushstrokes, my grandmother's eye conveys a poignant reminder of the beauty and wisdom that come with the passage of time, even as the physical form begins to fade. The artwork captures the inevitability of aging, portraying it as a gradual process that unfolds with each passing day.

Lastly, the notion that "we all end up in a chair" offers a sense of comfort as it is a shared experience. The layered texture emphasizes the impact of aging on us and the collective experience of dependency we all have on chairs in the final chapters of our lives. The torn-up retirement chair, with its frayed fabric and thread, examines the aspects of human decay and a sense of belonging. This intimate approach seeks to connect with the audience by highlighting how age and dependence are universal.