

I find the most beauty, growth, and gratification in the process of getting more familiar with both myself and others. Through my research and creative process I explored themes of similarity, difference, self, other, empathy, connection, vulnerability, an ultimate unknowability, the intrinsic limitations of sight and appearance, how we limit ourselves, how we fabricate our own meaning, and how we compose our perceptions of beauty. Before starting my project I expected my art process to center itself around revision; challenging and reshaping first impressions and assumptions. I now realize it is more about using those assumptions as a canvas on which to paint whatever else is learned. Rather than creating multiple renditions of my perceptions of these people, building slowly upon each one felt more true to my process of reaching some sort of understanding with them.

In Maria's portrait, I reflected her honesty, thoughtfulness, emphasis on meticulous detail, aesthetic consistency, patterns, internally-oriented leanings, valuing quality over quantity in personal relationships and work, and taking time to honor people who may not otherwise experience much attention. I did this by placing her within the context of a free, expanding landscape while keeping most of the detail on her face, slightly enlarging her hair to stress her boldness and making some of her hair fall slightly over her face. In Ted's portrait, I incorporated his values of wilderness, self-sacrifice, philanthropy, and growth through placing him in the center of his favorite place, making his entire form surrounded by it, and keeping his outline whilst filling every inch of it with an expanding tree. In Jordan's portrait, I reflected her values of connection, nature, vibrancy, being social, and patterns through using colored paper cut in various patterns that resembled plants around her, making her face in cyanotype colors, and making her both be front and center yet feel warm and inviting.

Having a lack of personal anonymity in my life has been something I've consistently sought out. I am interested in using conversation to foster understanding. I find there is a mutual exchange of experience and truth and, through conversation, connections are made.

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