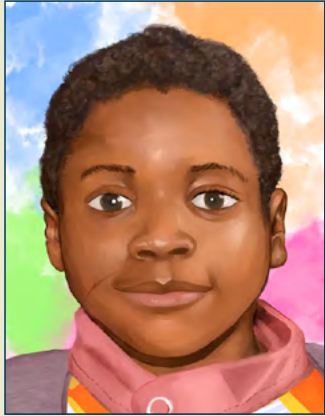




Community Outreach

Memory Project: Student Point of View — Mia Pierce



Roy from the Cameroons as rendered by Mia Pierce

CWA Community Outreach has sponsored a group of Clayton Valley Charter High School students in the Memory Project. The Clayton Valley art teacher, Evan Hughes, says of his students, "I have awesome students... many of my senior AP students have spent three or four years as my students, so I've been lucky to work with them before the COVID pandemic." In the following interview one student, Mia Pierce, tells her story of participating in the Memory Project.

Website at www.memoryproject.org.



Student and artist, Mia Pierce

1. What sparked your interest in the Memory Project? ie painting a portrait of a student from the Cameroons.

"I wanted to expand my skills with rendering a portrait, and also help Roy (the child I had the privilege of drawing) get a neat little picture of himself."

2. How would you describe the best part of this project to a friend?

"I think being able to appreciate how different everyone is while you're working on your piece is soothing, to be honest."

3. What did you learn from doing it?

"Rendering the image, I felt like I took a step into a new means to process colors. It was like working with a new material, even though I was using the same things."

4. How do you feel acquainted with the student you painted?

"In the most concise way possible (since I don't know what words can quite describe my current feelings), the image I saw of Roy had a very gentle feeling coming off of it. I really wish I could do more than just draw for the kid, but I hope it makes him happy."

5. How did this art project differ from others you have done?

"I don't often draw portraits of other people, let alone get the opportunity to render in the way that I did, so I appreciate this step out of my comfort zone."

6. What have you learned about the people of the Cameroons having done this portrait?

"We were only given the image and not much else on the people of the Cameroons, I can only really say that their clothing is bright, expressive, and is probably homemade to represent their local identity."

7. What have you learned about yourself from this project?

"I think I realized that I'd like to learn more about other cultures and REALLY get to know them so if I am to draw them I can interpret them in a more genuine manner. It wouldn't sit right with me if I was creating art that misconstrued the actual sentiments of the culture."

8. How would you describe the best part of this project to a friend?

"Seeing everything come together when you're starting to have doubts is arguably the best feeling when drawing a portrait. When everything is laid down and put into place, it clicks, and you can recognize a person and feel a similar energy emanating from it like the reference."

9. What was the easiest and most difficult part of making these portraits?

"Personally, sketching is very easy. Laying down shapes and getting the basic forms down is something I am very familiar with. On the contrary, I suppose tweaking adjustments (such as the placement of eyes or the mouth) in the middle of the whole rendering process is something I dread."

10. What did you learn from the experience?

"In retrospect, I believe that this experience has not only allowed me to take a step out into different forms of art, but also revealed a sort of feeling that I can do so much more with my art. A part of me believes that this portrait isn't enough...but it's a starting point. I hope that eventually many other children can get the support they need in whatever situation they're in and I can do more than just draw pictures to accomplish that."

Sheila Cain

Broaden U.S. students' view of the world through art and the Memory Project.

Share your connections to high school art teachers or students.

Contact Georganne Zaro-Eddy at (925) 980-7722 or Sheila Cain at (510) 845-0863.