

## Self Portrait Reflection: Makayla Valdez

When starting my reflection, I found that I struggled with how I wanted to present myself. I was unsure if I was creating an art piece of how I saw myself or as how I thought others perceived me. After jotting down ideas, I came to the conclusion to illustrate a reflection of an environment of what I felt safe in. I am not a great artist, and was not focused on creating the perfect image of myself. Instead, I decided to paint what I reconciled myself with for my self-portrait. The theme that inspired me was the theme of emotional, spiritual, and bodily awareness. Due to this COVID-19 pandemic my mental health has declined, as I and everybody else in Ontario has been restricted from seeing their loved ones, being forced to social distance with everyone, and limit all human interaction and contact. Being isolated in an apartment has affected my emotional and spiritual self. Additionally, this theme spoke out to me because I associate who I am today with my spirituality. My catholic faith has influenced my morals and values of how I choose to live my life and how I choose to view why things are the way they are. My faith has motivated me to practice the virtues on a daily basis to push myself to be the best version I can be. By being connected with my spirituality and emotions, it allows me to often self-reflect about where I am in this time of my life. Further, in my portrait I created a landscape and incorporated my face into it. The scenery represents a nearby river where I would often take long walks by. The inclusion of the water, trees, and sky bring me to a positive place that I could sometimes use as an escape from this current reality. Nature is where I can feel comfortable and connected to the world. By being out in God's creation, I feel as though that is another way that I can strengthen my relationship with my spiritual and emotional self. Also, I decided to outline my face onto the canvas to showcase how I feel as one with nature. This is used to demonstrate that I am not simply enjoying walking by the river, but to symbolize that my mind, body, and spirit are interconnected with nature itself. An example could be to represent how being physically in nature of feeling the cold breeze and breathing in the fresh air is a form I often use for self-care. As a small detail, I have also incorporated my face freckles to make this portrait as accurate as my limited art abilities can make it. Next, I used the main colors of pink and purple. I often find that I associate those combinations of colors with calmness and tranquility; which in turn improves my emotional well-being. In fact, the theme of my room was pink and purple which just currently gives me a reminder of simpler times. Overall, the theme of spiritual, emotional, and bodily awareness is the theme that spoke most to me when I was completing my self-portrait.