

Abstract for project

My project took the form of a virtual exhibition, titled *Missing Art Pieces*. This was created in the format of an Instagram page as I felt that the format would better show works of a visual nature. I had encouraged anyone from the general public, regardless of artistic background to submit a work that they felt the art world was missing or needed more of. This commentary of the art world was to be the general theme of the exhibition. I had invited people to send in work through Facebook or email with a couple of accompanying sentences that justified why they felt this work would fit with the general theme.

Although this project was relatively straight forward, there was a process involved in getting it known for the general public. For instance, I initially wanted to include artists for the page but later on changed this to a wider audience in order to get a greater variety of responses. Furthermore, being a site that most people have access to, it made sense to make this an inclusive project: Anyone could have a voice in commenting on the art world. Instagram especially has become a site that allows anyone who owns a smartphone to participate in the art world and become artists themselves.

I had to change the wording of my invitation quite a few times to make the project sound more inviting and enjoyable rather than a chore. I also had to not only share this invitation on a number of Facebook groups but also through Facebook messages in simpler terms. This was necessary in order to draw in more participants, which was crucial for the heavily collaborative exercise of this project. Without submissions, this exhibition would not exist. That said, I did contribute a statement (with a related image) that summed up the main themes of the exhibition after the deadline had finished. Here is a segment:

This exhibition shows that art is ever expansive: like the sky, ideas are limitless. With branches of connections, any idea, whether an object of the everyday to a controversial topic we need to address more can finally be discovered...

As a result, I had received a number of different responses. The recurring themes that seemed to show however included more art that could show what was real, and the need to look at the everyday as a source of artistic inspiration. However, even though there was the need for more art that demonstrated reality, rather than romanticised it, most submissions took care in the aesthetic quality of the image. It was rare that a purely conceptual work had shown up.

Essay for Project Studies

What is missing from the art world? This was the question that had prompted the birth of my project: The *Missing Art Pieces* exhibition. Key themes through this project included networks, dialogue and the fact that anyone, even a viewer could become an artist. Whilst addressing these themes, this essay will delve through the aims, objectives and background that had inspired this virtual gallery. There will also be a discussion on the process itself as well as the outcomes and how this question was finally answered by the participants of this project.

With this project, I wanted to create a space that showcased artwork that was easily accessible and that most people could participate in. Initially I had mostly wanted to use artists as my target audience, but early on decided to include the general public since Instagram is an application that most people use. Like a gallery space, Instagram is set out in a way that looks like works hanging on a wall. There is also space to add in text, so I have used this to put in the artist's name, title, date and medium of the work (like a wall text). Whilst the virtual wall text idea had been there from the very beginning, I had later formalised this idea by getting participants to add in a brief statement on why they think the work they have chosen should be included in the art world. At first, I wanted to ask the audience and potential participants: "What do you consider to be art?", but decided this was too vague. I ended up changing the question slightly to "What do you think the art world is missing/needs more of?" as this invites more direct action from a participant to commentate on areas for improvement. Commentating and discussion, in a sense had become one of the key aspects in this project's execution.

In terms of related theories, I have been looking at articles to do with social media for curating and for artists. Due to Instagram being a fairly new application, it was difficult to find much scholarship about it. As a result, I had to look more generally at how art intersects with social media. With more social media networks being created, visual culture to some scholars has become more participatory, rather than a solely individual activity.¹ The stereotype of the lone, isolated artist working in their studio is well and truly out of date. In addition, viewing art in a gallery is no longer a solitary activity either. By having sites like

¹ Aaron D. Knochel, "Assembling Visuality: Social Media, Everyday Imaging, and Critical Thinking," *Visual Arts Research* 39, no. 1(2013): 13, 14.

Instagram, which allow anyone, no matter what sort of photography skills they have to take photos, anyone can be an artist. Furthermore, with Instagram being an application that anyone can easily install on their phone, the general public are also included as viewers to whatever is posted. As a result, looking at art is “facilitated” and “extended” through the use of Instagram.² This is due to art being easier to find through Instagram, as well as the audience being more likely to engage as there is no cost or much time required to view the work.

In regards to audience, I had mostly wanted to target people who were particularly interested in art. At first, I wanted to focus on artists, or those who create art for a hobby, but then decided to expand this to the general public as anyone would have an opinion on art, whether from the art world or not. Furthermore, engaging the general public would better enable them to answer the question on what is missing from the art world. This all the more fitted better with the scenario that had partially inspired me: individuals who were disgruntled by what they couldn’t “find” in the gallery. To me, it was not the quality of the work that mattered, but the general public’s opinions on what the art world lacked.

I was also very much inspired by the idea of an online gallery. Google Arts & Culture, LERMA and The Widget Art Gallery had interested me.³ Google Arts & Culture in particular contained such a wealth of information and images like an enormous gallery that did not require leaving the room to look at it. It is also social media that helps convey what we experience in our own lives to others, and thus is a very useful tool for artists. Artists have used social media to showcase their work, especially as exhibiting work in a gallery can be difficult and stressful. Placing work online through social media or a blog thus cuts down time and pressure to get into institutions with quicker responses and a more ready audience. All these things demonstrate the importance of networking: *Missing Art Pieces*, unlike a physical gallery could be experienced by anyone with a smartphone. Furthermore, by sharing this with people on a site like Facebook, friends, family members and class mates would all have access to this site and can participate if they so desire.

As stated before, Instagram enables anyone with a smart phone to become an artist (or photographer) at their own will. People are no longer held up to a standard of skill or talent to have a chance to exhibit their work to the public. As Steve Crist said, with the accessibility of

² Adam Suess, “Instagram and Art Gallery Visitors: Aesthetic experience, space, sharing and implications for educators.” *Australian Art Education* 39, no. 1 (2018): 109.

³ Nora O Murchu, “Chapter 2: A Designerly Way of Curating: Reflecting on Interaction Design Methods for Curatorial Practice.” In *Curating the Digital: Space for Art and Interaction*, edited by David England, Theela Schiphorst and Nick Bryan-Kinns (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 10.

publishing photographs on Instagram, technical skill is no longer necessary.⁴ Rather, it is more about getting artwork instantly shared online through large audiences.⁵ This project therefore takes the idea of the public getting more actively involved in the art world. Due to how much public participation was involved, collaboration was very much a significant aspect to this project. Without the content of viewers, this exhibition would cease to exist, let alone generate a platform of various voices on what was missing from the art world.

Unlike the online galleries mentioned earlier, Instagram was particularly useful for creating more interaction. As stated by scholars, a “one-way” and “one to many” communication is replaced by a “two-way” and “many to many” communication.⁶ Thanks to options of being able to press the like button and a comments box, feedback was much easier to obtain.

Viewers were no longer just passive onlookers, but active participants in creating feedback as well as content in this project. As well as being free to be artists, viewers were in a sense free to be critics as well. It thus makes sense that such scholars believe that social media platforms like Instagram break away institutional structures: Anyone could be a professional. As Instagram allows people to be artists or photographers themselves, I found this to be an effective medium to widen the definition of an artist (and consequently, the definition of art).

However, through all the weeks of working with *Missing Art Pieces*, I have learnt quite a number of things about how people perceive exhibitions and showing work online. Although there were plenty of people who were happy to participate, quite a few changed their minds after realising that their work would go public. Despite also encouraging people from the general public with no art background to participate, some did not think that their work was “good enough” to put in an exhibition. I had found myself needing to alter and reword the exhibition invitation so to make the project sound far less daunting and more like a “fun” task, rather than an assignment. Before I did this project, it did not even cross my mind as to how much marketing was required. Nevertheless, the word “exhibition”, despite my efforts to collapse institutional barriers still gave the impression that a formalised, finished work had to be submitted. Contrary to what the participants and viewers thought, I was mostly interested in the written responses.

⁴ Steve Crist, *The Instagram Book: Inside the online photography revolution* (California: Ammo Books, 2014), 2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Kirsten Drotner and Kim Christian Schroder, “Introduction: Museum Communication and Social Media: The Connected Museum.” In *Museum Communication and Social Media*, edited by Kirsten Drotner and Kim Christian Schroder (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2.

In regards to the question I had initially posed to the general public “What work do you think the art world needs more of?”, there were two main themes: More art that could show what was real, and the need to look at the everyday as a source of artistic inspiration. Thus, from what I can gather the general public seems to prefer art that is more representative of life itself, no matter how unappealing or controversial it may be, rather than art that romanticised life. Aspects of nature featured rather heavily in the submitted works, whether the natural world or animals. While these works did have a lot of effort put into aesthetic appearance, the look of the work was not the main purpose. Rather, these linked to the motivations and independent visions each artist had in regards to the art world and how they saw themselves within that. Each participant had a different interpretation on what they saw was “missing” from the art world. Some even challenged this by stating that there was no need for there to be more art like what they had created, but had justified the reason of the work being chosen for exhibiting anyway.

Although there has been a trend (particularly in conceptual art) towards favouring the idea over the appearance of a work, members of the general public still valued the appearance of a work that was to be submitted. This might have been due to how we are still viewing galleries as institutional barriers that have to display work that is strictly aesthetically “good” enough to view. Whilst this project has allowed more ideas to be shown, perhaps there is still a long way to go in terms of completely breaking down institutional barriers. Although I have written this essay to discuss my findings from these submissions, it would be interesting to continue this project well into the future to see what sort of changes occur in the art world. Given how many networks can be made from these platforms, there are still many more missing art pieces waiting to be found.

Bibliography

Crist, Steve. *The Instagram Book: Inside the online photography revolution*. California: Ammo Books, 2014.

Drotner, Kirsten and Schroder, Kim Christian. "Introduction: Museum Communication and Social Media: The Connected Museum." In *Museum Communication and Social Media*, edited by Kirsten Drotner and Kim Christian Schroder, 1-14. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Knochel, Aaron D. "Assembling Visuality: Social Media, Everyday Imaging, and Critical Thinking." *Visual Arts Research* 39, no. 1 (2013): 13-27.

Murchu, Nora O. "Chapter 2: A Designerly Way of Curating: Reflecting on Interaction Design Methods for Curatorial Practice." In *Curating the Digital: Space for Art and Interaction*, edited by David England, Theela Schiphorst and Nick Bryan-Kinns, 9-19. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016.

Suess, Adam. "Instagram and Art Gallery Visitors: Aesthetic experience, space, sharing and implications for educators." *Australian Art Education* 39, no. 1 (2018): 107-122.

Documentation of Missing Art Pieces

Below are a selection of screenshots I have made from different parts of the project. This includes the invitation/artist call out, which took quite a bit of thought to reword and modify so to attract more participants. Screenshots of submissions, as well as a screenshot of the Instagram page so far are also included (please see link of Missing Art Pieces here:

<https://www.instagram.com/missingartpieces/>)

I had to post the invitation on quite a number of Facebook art groups so to get the word out. I also later used this as an email that was sent to the MADA Fine Art Students. Unfortunately the method through email generated far fewer results than the invitation through Facebook. This perhaps demonstrates how integrated social media has become in people's lives as a Facebook post generated a far quicker response, than an email that could be easily buried under new emails.

When writing this invitation, I quickly learnt that marketing was an extremely crucial element to getting participants. I had to present the project in a way that was more "fun" rather than a task like an assignment. Even the icon that was used for the site had to be slightly modified (at least in terms of hue) so to catch the eye of viewers better. While it was important to outline all the things that were expected of the participant, I had to strike a balance between giving enough detail, but keeping the text concise and simple. Attention could easily stray when reading a large block of text, and I even found myself summarising this project in its most basic terms through Facebook messenger to any friends who seemed like potential participants.

As for the Instagram page itself, I had the challenge of needing to be even more concise in the project requirements due to the character limit. Although I have been getting plenty of followers, it would have been even better if I had just as many, if not more participants. Given that I had presented this project as a virtual exhibition though, this had intimidated some from submitting their work.

Each response towards the deadline for submissions (Friday 21st of September) are included in this documentation for the purposes of this project. I have also added in a summary post at the very end that discusses the ideas and main themes of the project (last image depicted. See it through link here: <https://www.instagram.com/p/BoGEhkjhe-N/?taken-by=missingartpieces>). As I am interested to continue this exhibition well after this course, hopefully these submissions will just be the start of something bigger.



Fiona McIntosh shared a link.



Admin · 8 August

INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO ONLINE EXHIBITION:

Tired of experiencing the same kind of art? Think that the art world is missing something?

You're invited to contribute your ideas about what you think is missing from the art world for the online exhibition 'Missing Art Pieces'.

To get involved, submit an image of an artwork and describe why (1-2 sentences) the art world could do with some more of this kind of art! Collected contributions will form part of an online exhibition at the dedicated Instagram gallery "Missing Art Pieces":

<https://www.instagram.com/missingartpieces/>

In responding to this invitation you can present an image of any kind of art medium of your choice (e.g. drawing, photography, video, etc). You decide. You don't need to be an experienced artist or art aficionado to contribute! And you can invite others to contribute their ideas too.

When submitting your artwork, please let know whether you would like your name/pseudonym to be made public (can be anonymous if you choose), as well as any title, date and medium for the suggested artwork. You're welcome to send in your responses through Facebook messenger or via email at missingartpieces@gmail.com Your suggested artwork will become public via Instagram, where you can also view the progress of the exhibition to see what others have suggested we need more of in the art world!

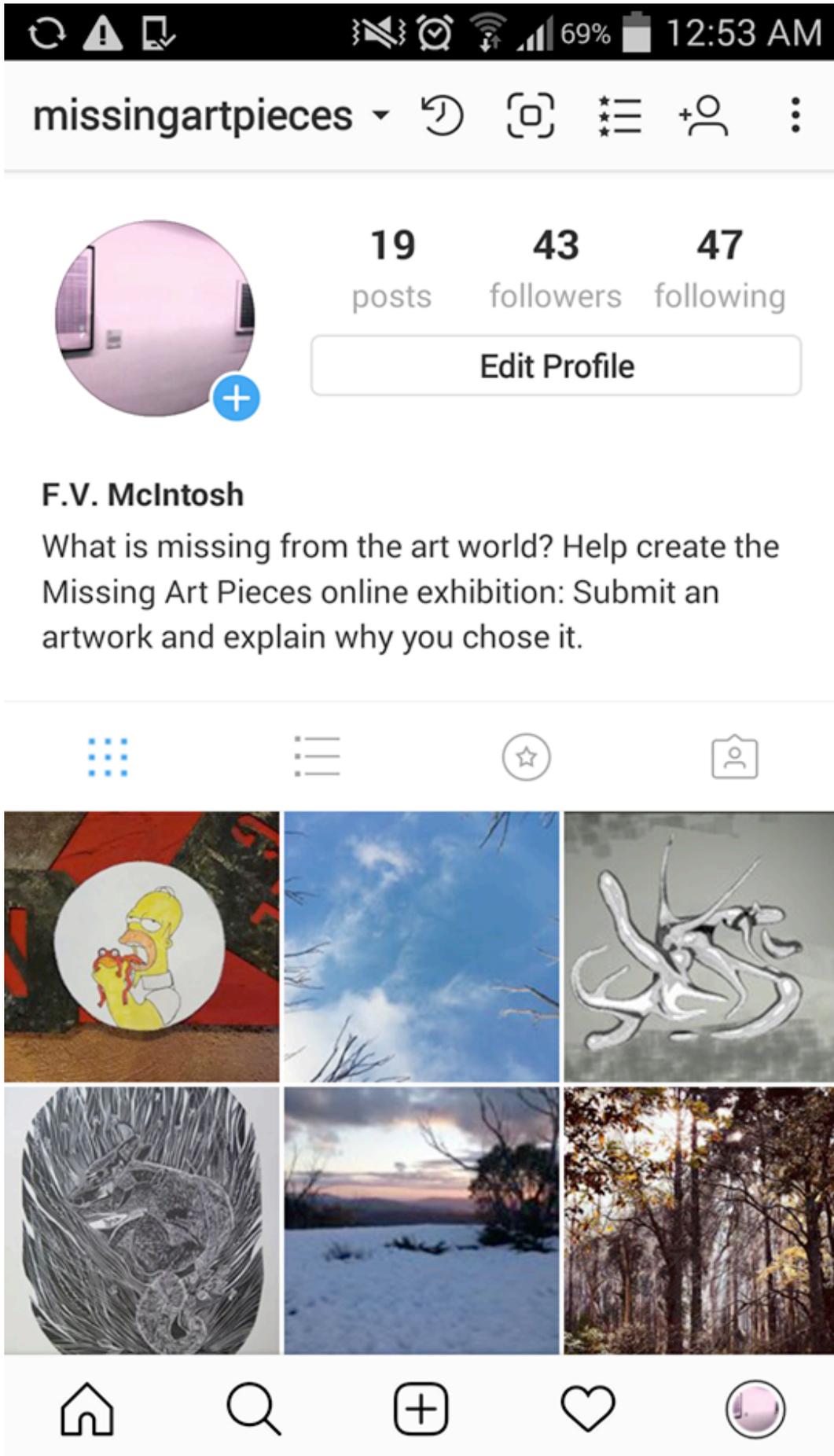
Look forward to your suggestions and participation in the "Missing Art Pieces" online exhibition!

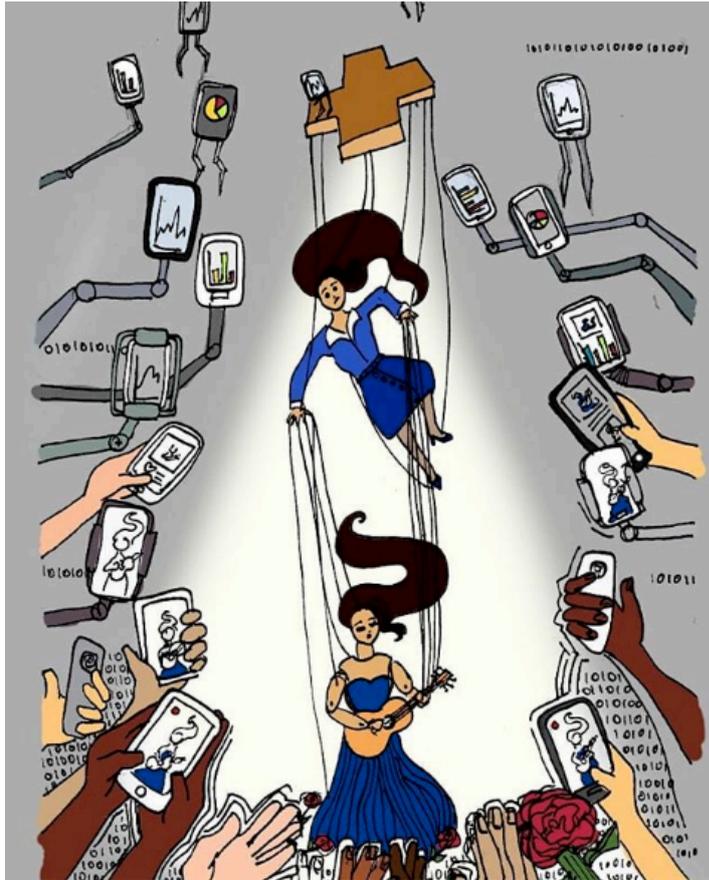
Final date for submissions: Friday 21st September.



INSTAGRAM

F.V. McIntosh (@missingartpieces) • Instagram photos and videos





 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces I think we need more art that reflects the harsh truths of society. For example, the panopticon of social media makes marionettes of so many people, especially creatives, who feel pressured to act a certain way.

Artist: Rebecca
Title: Marionette
Date: 2018
Medium: Ink on paper with digital colouring



1 like

AUGUST 11

Add a comment...



 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces The art world needs more works that tell a story. Narratives and exciting characters should not only exist within the field of illustration.

Artist: Anonymous
Title: In Flight/Fright
Date: 2018
Medium: Ball point pen on paper



4 likes

AUGUST 11

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces It needs more meaningful art that tells it like it is. "The Cross" was a response to the mass shootings which just irks me to no end for the love of automatic weapons. I know because I was a machinegun ammo bearer in Viet-Nam. I had an excuse!! These people don't!!! Artist: Rudy Ramirez

The Cross
Date: Unknown
Title: Medium: Found objects



3 likes

AUGUST 12

Add a comment...



missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces My work involves our environment and the likely future of it if so many of us continue to remain apathetic. We have much to lose so more art is needed which provokes thought and concern then action to benefit our planet.

Artist: Kate Carey Peters
Title: Dead Bird/Found object
Date: 2017
Medium: Fine Art Photography



5 likes

AUGUST 17

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces The art world needs more of this kind of work because it provides a message and aims push the envelope in ways that other genres of art do not. Horror can provide a discussion of various issues quite easily.

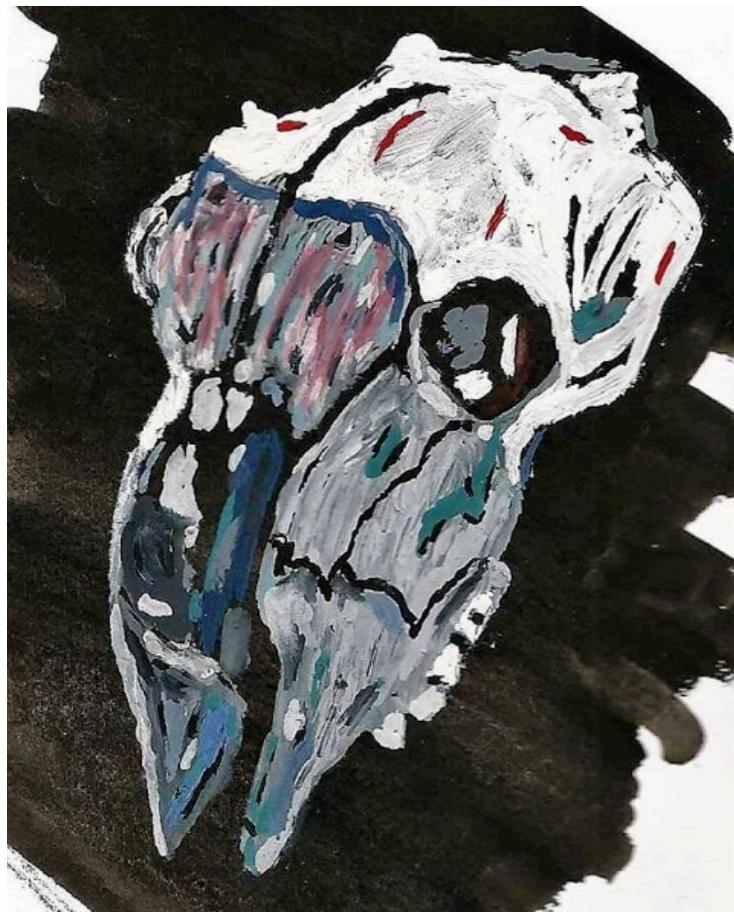
Artist: Stuart Mander
Title: The Howling
Date: June 2017
Medium: Acrylic



2 likes

AUGUST 17

Add a comment...



missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces The world doesn't really need more of this sort of art. I did enjoy painting it though, and think that if everyone was able to gain enjoyment from the simple act of creation, the world might be a rather different - and certainly happier - place

Artist: Darcy Hay
Title: Sheep Skull
Date: 6 July 2018
Medium: Watercolours on paper



5 likes

AUGUST 28

Add a comment...





 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces More Australian LIFE ART, more of what is and was real.
Artist: Nevest
Title: Roo
Date: 2016
Medium: Video Art



24 views

AUGUST 29

Add a comment...



 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces It's quite amazing how something you don't expect to turn out beautifully, does. I wish more artists were proud of their hard work, took a step back and realised that a lot of their work is beautiful.

Artist: Anonymous
Title: Autumn Ablaze
Date: April 2017
Medium: Watercolours



5 likes

SEPTEMBER 1

Add a comment...





 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces There is beauty in the everyday if you just take a moment to look at what is there for you to see.

Artist: Giant_Evertonian
Title: Streets of Adelaide
Date: August 2018
Medium: Photography



4 likes

SEPTEMBER 1

Add a comment...



 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces When I attend an art show I am immediately drawn to animals and soft watercolour pieces. I am attracted by the technique and the skill level involved in creating these works. I wish myself to one day be as good as some of the photo realistic work I have viewed in local galleries. To me I don't feel there is enough of this sort of work in general exhibitions.

Artist: Sheree Kennington
Title: Into the Hen House
Date: 2018
Medium: Pencil and watercolour

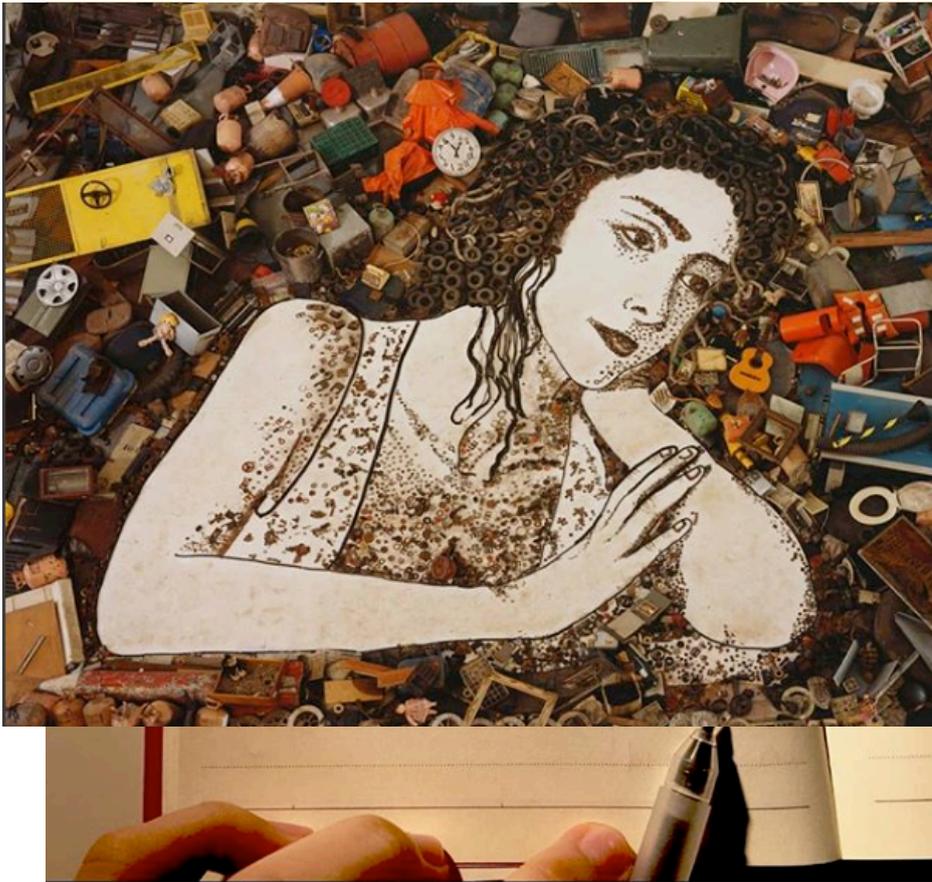


6 likes

SEPTEMBER 13

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces As we know, we're living in a very polluted world and this is awful not only for nature, animals that are slowly disappearing but also for ourselves. So it would be nice if humanity could waste less and create more with recycled trash. ^^ It's a wonderful way to give a new function to something as the same time we're helping to save the planet. :) And it doesn't need to be something too big and extraordinary like the art created by the Brazilian Vik Muniz (the owner of art above) It can be little things that we can use daily. Pinterest is full of awesome ideas about that. :D Here's a documentary about this artist if you're interested.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L35R-GQOL9E>

Artist: Amy
Title: Unknown
Medium: Found image/found video
Date: 2018

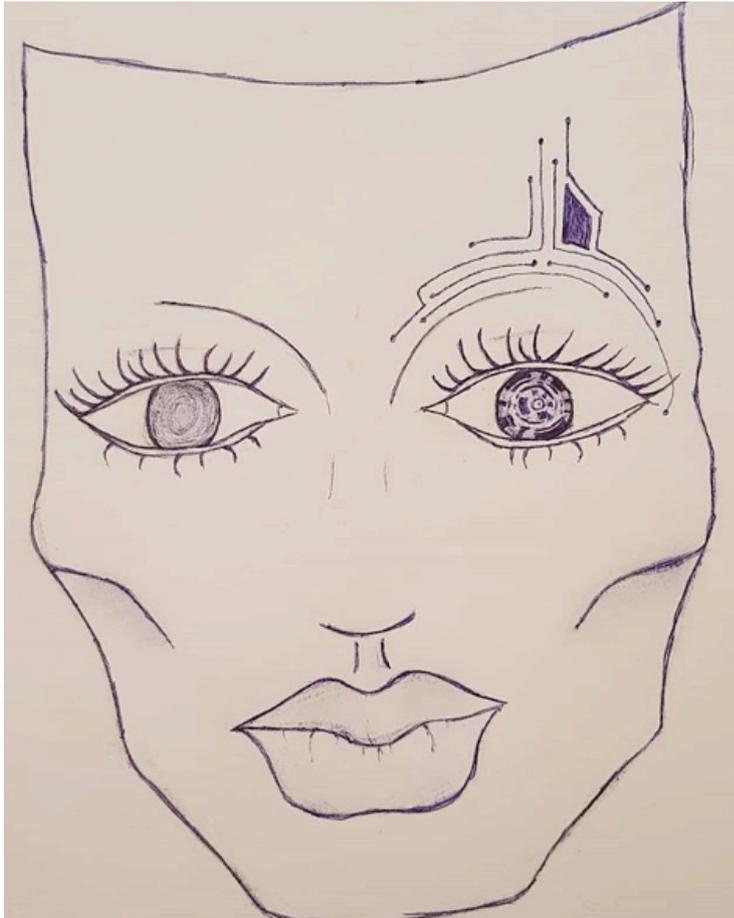


6 likes

SEPTEMBER 19

Add a comment...





 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces My work is supposed to be a meld between a human face and a mask: somewhat unnerving but beautiful. I want more art pieces that make you think, feel and really do take a while to put together rather than just paint splotches thrown on a canvas which is called "art" because someone wants to con people into buying it.

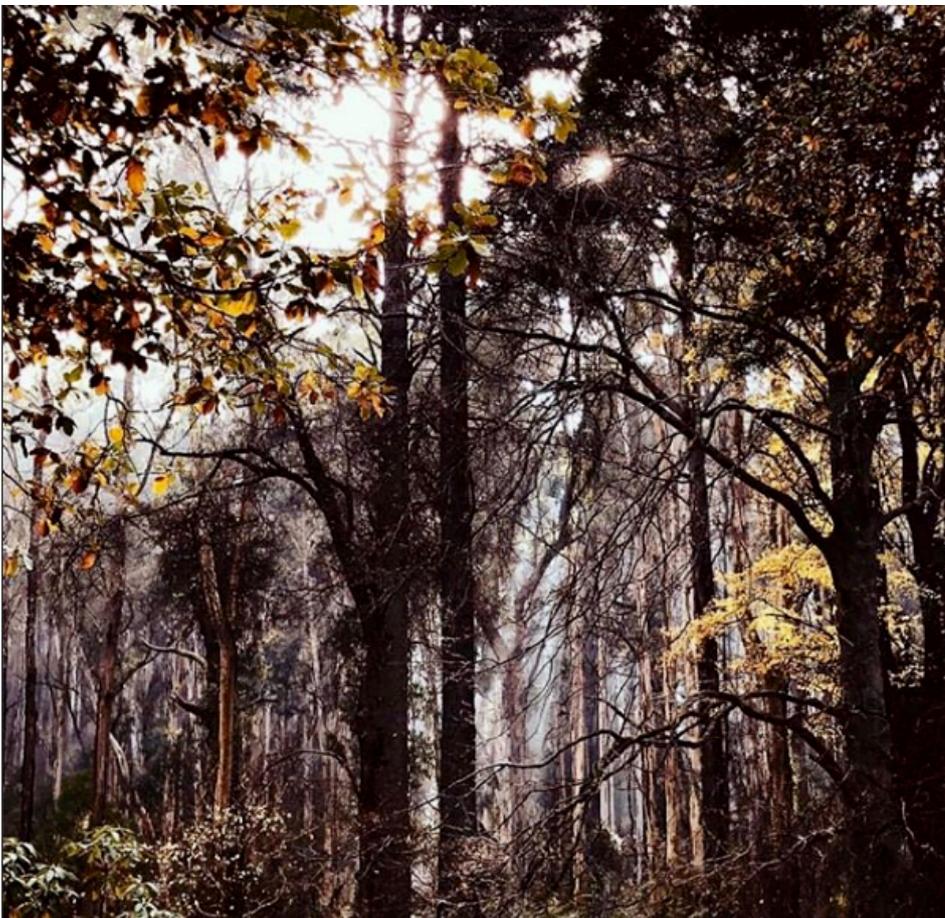
Artist: Eilish
Title: Man or Mask
Date: 18 September 2018
Medium: Greylead and pen



4 likes

SEPTEMBER 19

Add a comment...



 missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces Since childhood, I always loved going on magical adventures through nature by myself. Being Christian, seeing the beautiful winter sun rays seep through the trees had a calming presence as if god was saying I am here and everything is fine. Art is really good therapy for dealing with depression and anxiety- nature art should come into it more.

Artist: Anonymous
Title: The light of hope
Date: 2018
Medium: Photography



6 likes

SEPTEMBER 19

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces Art is in the eye of the beholder. Nature can be interpreted as beautiful and ugly. In this case Lake Mountain, a place that was devastated by the full fury of the Black Saturday bushfires, is captured at the moment between light and dark, showing the rebirth of the mountain top.

Artist: Andrew Newton
Title: Dusk from the Summit of Lake Mountain – Victoria
Date: 2018
Medium: Photography

thibault.dochy Nice! 🍷!



4 likes

SEPTEMBER 21

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces I don't know why the world needs more art like this, maybe it doesn't. I made it because it felt right to me, like something I needed to do. I find the creation of a piece cathartic. I do it for me.

Artist: Lisa Ann Newton

Title: Foxeys hangout

Date: 2015

Medium: Linocut

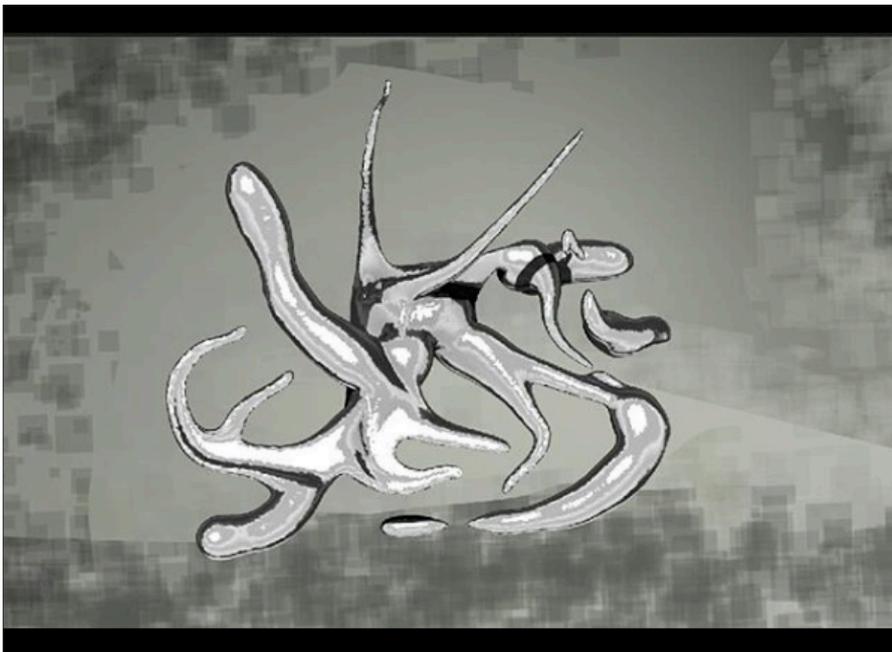
susanglindsaymyart Beautiful



7 likes

SEPTEMBER 23

Add a comment...



missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces More digital art should be included as it can provide very powerful tools for creative drive and innovation.

Artist: Poidathehoita.

Title: Untitled

Date: 2 April 2018

Medium: Digital art



4 likes

SEPTEMBER 24

Add a comment...





missingartpieces • Following

missingartpieces This exhibition shows that art is ever expansive: like the sky, ideas are limitless. With branches of connections, any idea, whether an object of the everyday to a controversial topic we need to address more can finally be discovered. Due to so many networks, missing art pieces will get the chance to join the wide expanse that is the art world.

Artist: F.V. McIntosh
Title: Wide Expanse
Date: 2018
Medium: Photography



6 likes

SEPTEMBER 24

Add a comment...

