

Artist's Statement, Alina Schwartz

My vision for this body of work is to present the way in which I have grown over the past two years as an artist, through my technique as well as the depth in which I go into my topics of exploration. The overarching theme for my work is the experiences of adolescence and the ways in which one's relationships and surroundings impact their outlook on life and the development of their identity. This can be specifically applied to topics such as young love, feminism, and the impact pop culture has on today's youth. One theme that has been especially attractive to me both my junior and senior year of high school has been the idea of self acceptance, and the obstacles that present themselves along that journey. Throughout this process of completing my oeuvre, I have drawn inspiration from an array of artists, mainly those who use images of women to enhance the



meaning of their work. As a young woman, I believe that it is incredibly empowering to use the idea of the woman, and her body, as an artistic tool for my own work. This is then comparable to male artists who have used women as their muses, though often in an objectifying manner. My pieces work directly against the idea of objectification, and when this coincides with my aforementioned themes, it creates something very powerful. This multitude of inspirations also contributed to my experimentation across different mediums; until my junior year of high school, I had never before made a print, and now block printing is one of my favorite mediums to work with. Progression with my technique is clear between the block prints I created my first year in the IB DP Art Program and my second; these clear visual improvements have influenced the way in which I have chosen to arrange my artworks. Since my main theme surrounds the development of identity throughout adolescence, I wanted my work to be organized in a manner that reflects my personal growth, both within myself and within my work. When one looks at the exhibition of my work, their eyes are able to move along chronologically and see how I have matured as a person and as an artist. In addition to organizing my work in a chronological manner, I also made sure to have my arrangement incorporate the contrast seen between my works in color, as well as in black and white, because it adds to the visual impact of complexity within experiences as a young woman. In the end, I wanted the purpose of my body of work to be thought provoking for a viewer, especially other young women, and I did this by providing upfront visual depictions of the way in which society and feminist values intersect with a lack of self confidence and internalized pressures within a young woman. I want people to look at my work, and feel empathy for the things I have gone through, as well as gain a better understanding as to how their experiences have influenced them. The creation of this body of work has allowed me to realize how much the beliefs of others- especially concerning what a woman should and should not be- have largely impacted the person I am today; creating each of these pieces was not only a message to others, but a way for me to self heal and to develop

my own personal identity on my own terms. My hope is that any other young woman, or person in general, is able to use my work as a spark for their own self discovery.