

**Rane Love** [Winner: Innovation Category]

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ENGL 220

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Creative Intervention: Mosaic Myth



In February, I began thinking about our creative intervention project and the statement I wanted to make, given the many cultural topics we covered. I am an abstract oil painter and enjoy the time that goes into the process of creating a painting. I knew I would not have the time to create an oil painting for this project, however, so I chose mixed media as a way to present my engagement with the literary texts that we read in class. I have titled this piece *Mosaic Myth*. Canada prides itself on being a cultural mosaic, based on the belief that the country as whole becomes stronger by having different cultures represented within society. While Canada's intentions are good, the six books discussed in class and the secondary readings that complemented those books, revealed the extent to which Canada still suffers from many systemic, patriarchal biases that keep out people who do not have the benefits of white privilege.

I will explain *Mosaic Myth* by breaking it down into three parts: the background, middle ground, and foreground. The background was done using spray paint. The metallic silver, gold, and bronze colours symbolize different stages of success and opportunity, while the white rays that were done with a cream spray paint represent the Creator and the healing light and presence that is forever shining, regardless of how dark the situation. In the middle ground, I used brown crayon wax melted with a blow dryer along the border to symbolize the dark colonial roots that continue to spread through Canadian society - roots that are so hard to remove. In the centre of the piece is a printed image of one face with ten different ethnicities. I felt it was crucial to capture the many different cultures that reside in Canada, including the ones we discussed in class. The foreground goes into detail about conflicts that ethnic communities in Canada face; however, for this piece, most of the emphasis is placed on the Indigenous community. My intention for placing rope in the bottom left corner is to underscore both positive and negative social conditions. Positively, it represents the safety net that being connected to one's

community, culture and identity can bring. For the Indigenous community, the leather braid symbolizes the spiritual importance and strength of one's hair, along with the weave that connects all living beings together. Negatively, the rope represents the feeling of being trapped and bound to a system that fights against everything one knows one's culture to be. The ripped watercolour paper symbolizes a torn culture, torn families, torn identities, and torn memories. The brown painted tissue paper represents the sludge and dirty feelings that come with being abused and living in poverty. The shards of mirror speak to the fractured understanding of one's self and the warped image that is reflected back by those in power; sometimes, however, light is reflected back, which brings a sense of hope. The seven feathers arranged on the canvas, representing loss and death, whether by suicide or murder, allude to *Seven Fallen Feathers* by Tanya Talaga. The black glass is there to symbolize powerlessness. The white, grey, and red sand speak about the land and how it is at the foundation of Indigenous knowledge and culture. The branch represents Indigenous people, and the coloured thread symbolizes the fight Indigenous people must engage with in order to have their teachings and beliefs recognized. The incompleteness of the thread as it weaves up the branch shows that Indigenous people are still fighting for truth, reconciliation, and resurgence. The final additions to the foreground are the passages that I photocopied directly from the books we read in class. Quotations from *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline, *Brother* by David Chariandy, *Injun* by Jordan Abel, *This One Summer* by Mariko and Jillian Tamaki, *The Break* by Katherena Vermette, and *All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward* by Tanya Talaga all spoke to the different themes that we discussed in English 220: belonging, identity, culture, colonialism, law, uncertainty, abuse, fear, shame, hopelessness, hope, time, optimism, love, and community.