



Self Portrait Relief Print: Patterns of our Existence and Beyond

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Patterns of our Existence and Beyond was inspired by Dia de los Muertos, a Mexican holiday that came from an Aztec tradition, which takes place on November 1st. This holiday, the Day of the Dead, focuses on the celebration of life as well as remembering and rejoicing the lives of the ones we have lost. For this project, students thought about why and how certain people leave an impression on our lives. We also brainstormed characteristics, attributes, and achievements we would like to be remembered for, and known for now and in the future. Each student then created a symbolic self-portrait by taking a picture of themselves and compiling found images of the characteristics they brainstormed using Adobe Photoshop. We transferred this design to a foam block, carved it out, and printed it on heavyweight paper. The final products were amazing relief prints that symbolically represented our own Patterns of Existence and Beyond.

Student Reflection

What I want to be known for and remembered by is my love for my family, my music and talent, and my happiness. I want to be known for and remembered as a person who tried to achieve and succeed, someone who loved people, and as a person who left their mark on our world. The imagery I included in my print represents these attributes. The message that I wanted to communicate to my audience was that no one is the same. Everyone has their own circles of life. Why circles? Circles are whole, and never ending. This represents my pride in myself, and everyone around me. The circle of my life represents everything important to me. My Circles of Life represent me, myself, and I.

There are lots of things that I enjoyed about this process including the hands on work and learning about symbolism. I would love to have the opportunity to do it again! I liked how our class worked together to help each other with the print and carving process and the feel of being in Art class, in general, was memorable.

--Alexa Gil, 7th grade

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