

Imperfect Works Catalog Essay

By Sarah Lane Daymude

Everyone has flaws. But it is how we take those flaws and turn them into beauty that gives us our humanity. MiraCosta's Art 295 exhibition *Imperfect Works* explores the idea of morality through different mediums, each piece with a personalized interpretation of what it means to be alive. Among others, the works of Neda Towfiq, Stephanie Alacon, and Benjamin Poarch explore these ideas in great detail.

Neda Towfiq grew up in Iran surrounded by a creative family, and her art attempts to capture all forms of life through painting. She states that her art is meant to “convey stories of love, pain, suffering, and the interdependence of humanity while capturing the beauty of diversity.” All of these aspects explore both life's perfections and imperfections. Towfiq's focus on portraiture and her extraordinarily unique use of color and contrast contribute to her ideas about identity and individuality. Each subject possesses physical flaws, and Towfiq makes an effort not to hide them, but to celebrate their diversity through color.

Stephanie Alacon utilizes art as a vehicle for change, addressing ideas of mental illness in society through her ceramics and glass art. She hopes to use art as a means of destroying the stigmas that exist within society around mental illness and normalize the issue among all people. In this way, Alacon uses her art as power to emphasize human imperfections as a means for celebration rather than shame. Her works draw from her own struggles with mental illness, but she uses those struggles and turns them into beautiful works.

Benjamin Poarch explores the ideas of natural imperfections more so in his photography process than his choice of subject. Poarch's series in this exhibition, entitled *Infectious Development*, focuses on the immense scale of nature compared to the small impact of humankind. He utilizes a lith developing process that poses many risks if not performed correctly. Poarch's experience allows him to perfect this craft, but he also embraces the chance at imperfection, attempting to parallel the imperfection and uncertainty that exists within nature.

Each of the artists of *Imperfect Works* explore a different medium but share the same curiosity for explaining our natural world and the human place within it.