

why
i
am
a
graphic
designer

1998

Manvi Tandon
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My mom taught me how to paint and draw. We spent endless hours together making arts. She never denied me my creativity, and thanks to her I grew up loving art. I am forever grateful to her for helping me find my passion. My mom will always be my greatest influence and inspiration as her art is beyond my talents. My Indian American identity also influences my art and design. Through my illustrations, drawings and paintings I strive to share a part of my identity and inspirations. This book is a collection of 12 items that inspire me and led me to becoming a graphic designer.

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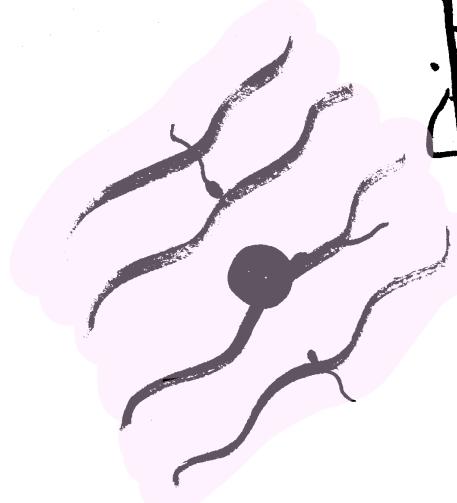
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THE END



a manifesto on materialism



THE BEGINNING

THE CYCLE

But eventually
one day we
go back to
being nothing.

and one day
maybe even
make another being

We might
even join
forces and
bind
together

This is where
we start with
little to
nothing

we
grow

and
learn

and
shape

then we
acquire
things

and
together we
attract and
acquire more
things

we might
even attract
others

they might
help us grow
and attract
more things

these things
may belong
to us

We come from nothing and leave with nothing.

To me the true meaning of life is non-materialistic.

Why tire away at gaining meaningless material goods?

What's actually left behind is the impact you made.

You want to be remembered for who you are not what you owned.

Cartoon Network

Starting at a young age my older brother Mudit and I loved to sit down together and watch cartoons. I remember when my brother and I were very young we started to draw our favorite cartoon characters. Mudit liked to draw Spongebob. I loved Blossom, Buttercup, and Bubbles from the Powerpuff Girls which aired on Cartoon Network. Not only were they three female superheroes but the show was not 'girly'.

Even my older brother would watch this show with me which made it so much better. As many younger siblings know the validation from an older sibling means everything. One of my favorite characters from this cartoon show was Buttercup. The irony in her name and personality is huge, she is not sweet like her name implies. Instead Buttercup is quite moody and stubborn.

With a bowl of cereal and our eyes heavy from just waking up Mudit and I would plop ourselves in front of the television and turn on Cartoon Network. It was always so exciting for me when The Powerpuff Girls came on. The artistic style of the cartoon was fun and playful but still detailed.

This has greatly inspired my art style today. I love the bright pink, blue, and green that are truly iconic to this show. Accidentally created in a lab by Professor Utonium, superpowered sisters Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup regularly save Townsville from evildoers such as Mojo Jojo, Gargreen Gang and Him. Blossom is the self-proclaimed leader of the trio; Bubbles is the cute one and Buttercup is the toughest one.





Avatar

THE LAST AIRBENDER



Avatar is probably my favorite show to this day. I have watched the whole series through three times throughout my life. The storyline is superb but so is the art. My style of art was very much influenced by watching this show.

In Avatar the world is divided into four nations -- the Water Tribe, the Earth Kingdom, the Fire Nation and the Air Nomads -- each represented by a natural element for which the nation is named. Benders have the ability to control and manipulate the element from their nation. Only the Avatar is the master of all four elements. The ruthless Fire Nation wants to conquer the world but the only bender who has enough power, the Avatar, can stop this.

Katara and Sokka discover that Aang is the long-lost Avatar. Now Katara and Sokka must safeguard Aang on his journey to master all four elements and save the world from the Fire Nation. As the show progresses Avatar travels to each kingdom and finds a bending master.

There is a strong focus of spirituality and meditation. Being one with the earth but also coming to terms with yourself. The focus on earth I think is very beautiful and inspiring.

Wabi - Sabi

I was introduced to the concept of Wabi-Sabi in Japan. In 2019 I studied abroad in Tokyo and Kyoto Japan for two months in the design discipline. I loved my time in Japan, the art design and architecture is incomparable and very impressive.

The concept of Wabi-Sabi is one of traditional Japanese aesthetics, wabi-sabi is a world view centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection. The aesthetic is sometimes described as one of appreciating beauty that is “imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete” in nature.

Celebrating the raw beauty and simplicity of nature and the earth inspires all of my work. I love to paint on surfaces from the earth like shells, rocks, and wood. I find art that is perfect to be a little unsettling honestly. Nothing or no one is truly perfect so to keep things realistic art should portray and celebrate those imperfections, because they are beautiful.

Wabi-sabi is the view or thought of finding beauty in every aspect of imperfection in nature. It is about the aesthetic of things in existence, that are “imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete”.



watercolor

watercolor

watercolor



From a very young age I loved to paint. My favorite paint was watercolor because you could get messy with it and it would still wash off all of your clothes and surfaces. These are both watercolor paintings that I have made. I love the blocking technique where blobs of color that do not perfectly blend are built up in layers. I love abstract pieces because they are not scared to use white space and drippage.

Water color is ideal for making these drips because you can just let the water take its natural course and then once it dries you have a unique masterpiece. Unlike an oil piece or an acrylic piece you can not really sketch out a watercolor piece because the water will make the pencil marks bleed. This allows the full creativity and freedom for the artist to create organic shapes and pieces of art. Watercolor paints are made of pigments suspended in a water-based solution.

Watercolor refers to both the medium and the resulting artwork. Watercolor paint is an ancient form of painting. In East Asia, watercolor painting with inks is referred to as brush painting or scroll painting. In Chinese, Korean and Japanese painting it has been the dominant medium, often in monochrome black or browns, often using inkstick or other pigments. India, Ethiopia and other countries have long used watercolor painting traditions as well.



My mom is from Banaras, also known as Varanasi. Banaras is a city on the banks of the river Ganges in Uttar Pradesh, India, 320 kilometres (200 mi) south-east of the state capital, Lucknow, and 121 kilometres (75 mi) east of Allahabad. A major religious hub in India, it is the holiest of the seven sacred cities (Sapta Puri) in Hinduism and Jainism, and played an important role in the development of Buddhism and Ravidassia. Varanasi lies along National Highway 2, and is served by Varanasi Junction railway station and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport. Banaras grew as an important industrial center famous for its muslin and silk fabrics, perfumes, ivory works, and sculpture. Buddha is believed to have founded Buddhism here around 528 BCE. I have been to Banaras



only once in the early 2000s but the Ganges River winds through Uttar Pradesh which is where my dad is also from and where all of my family resides in India. Both my Nana and Nani's ashes were poured in this holy river. I found the true meaning of life during my time in India. As I said in my manifesto, the true meaning of life is non-materialistic. We come from nothing and end as nothing all of the materialistic things we own don't matter. It is the legacy and memories that we leave behind that live on. Banaras has been a cultural centre of northern India for several thousand years, and is closely associated with the Ganges. Hindus believe that dying here and getting cremated along the banks of the "holy" Ganges river allows one to break the cycle of rebirth and attain salvation.

Banaras, India

गंगा नदी



collages

The best artists steal the work of others and make it their own. Collaging, scrapbooking, and abstract art are all things that I am passionate about and have dabbled in my whole life. The collages you see here were made by me and my friends over time using magazines, newspapers, paint, markers, glue, stickers, and more. I love arts and crafts if you can't tell.

A collage is an artistic composition made of various materials glued on a surface. It is a creative work that resembles the original composition by incorporating various materials or elements that incorporate several artistic styles. The overall purpose of using collages in the design process is to bring together visual elements to explore their commonalities.

We can find similarities in any two things, everything does not need to be perfect. This is why I am drawn to abstract collages. They don't need to have a purpose or meaning but they will have a unique composition and feeling. From the French meaning "to glue," collage describes the technique of composing an artwork by gluing a wide range of materials - including pieces of paper, fabric, newspaper clippings, and sometimes readymade objects - to a surface.

Coined by cubist artists Braque and Picasso, the term "collage" comes from the French word *coller*, or "to glue." The movement itself emerged under this pair of artists, who began working with various mediums to create avant-garde assemblages around 1910.

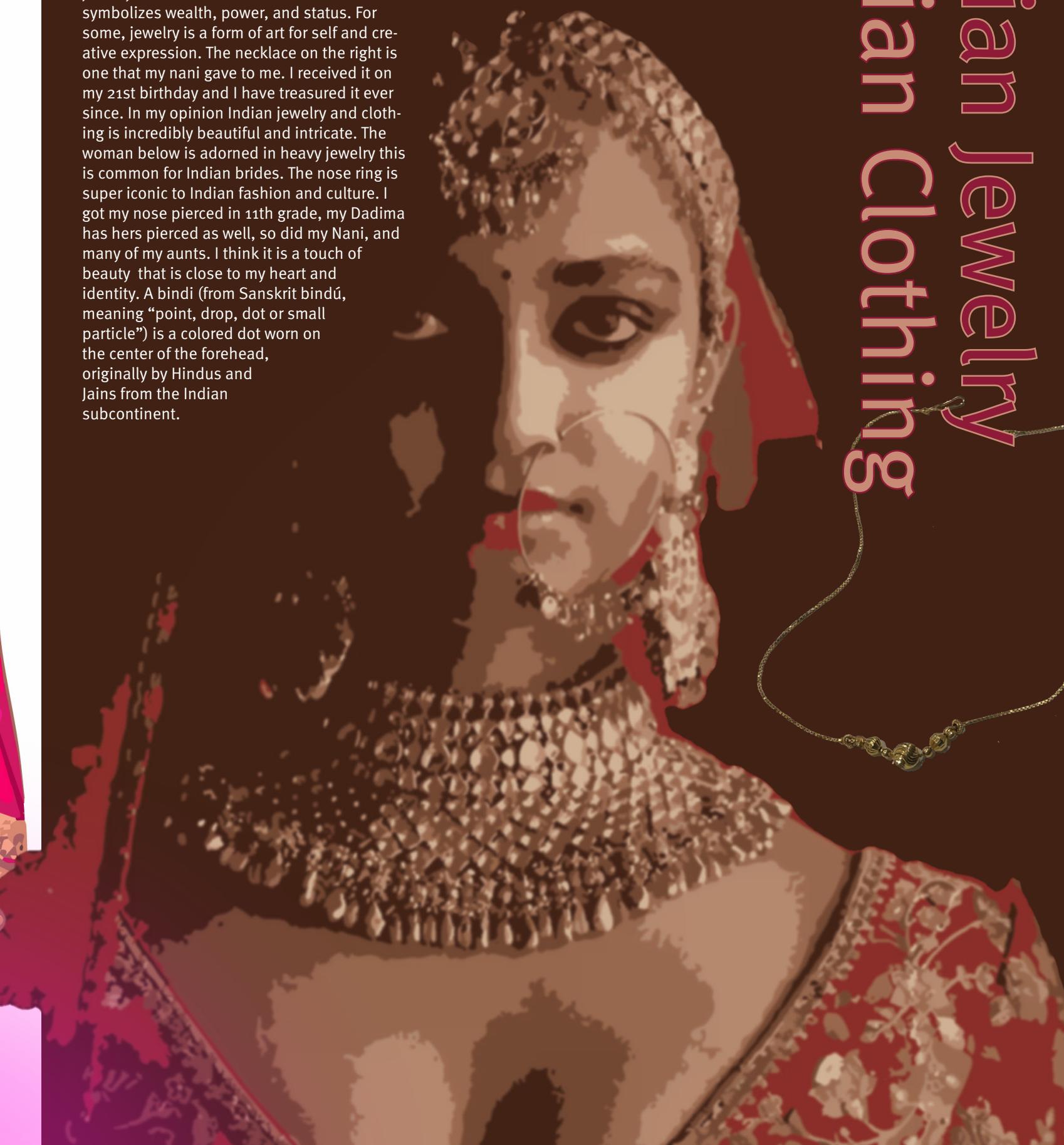


Indian Jewelry

Indian Clothing



The vector image on the left is a picture of me and my Dadima. Dadima is wearing a Sari and I am wearing a Lengha. The bright pink is bold and beautiful. Indian jewelry is elaborate, decadent, and detailed pieces that are often made of gold, diamonds, or silver. Wearing jewelry is traditional in Indian culture. It also symbolizes wealth, power, and status. For some, jewelry is a form of art for self and creative expression. The necklace on the right is one that my nani gave to me. I received it on my 21st birthday and I have treasured it ever since. In my opinion Indian jewelry and clothing is incredibly beautiful and intricate. The woman below is adorned in heavy jewelry this is common for Indian brides. The nose ring is super iconic to Indian fashion and culture. I got my nose pierced in 11th grade, my Dadima has hers pierced as well, so did my Nani, and many of my aunts. I think it is a touch of beauty that is close to my heart and identity. A bindi (from Sanskrit bindū, meaning “point, drop, dot or small particle”) is a colored dot worn on the center of the forehead, originally by Hindus and Jains from the Indian subcontinent.



Kathak



I started dancing when I was very young. I first started with Bharatanatyam. Bharatanatyam is a traditional Indian form of dance that consists of a solo dancer or a group of dancers, accompanied by musicians and one or more singers. Bharatanatyam is a major form of Indian classical dance that originated in Tamil Nadu. Bharatanatyam is one of the oldest classical dance traditions in India. It has been nurtured in the temples and courts of southern India since the ancient era. When I started middle school I switched to Kathak.



Kathak is one of the eight major forms of Indian classical dance. The origin of Kathak is traditionally attributed to the traveling bards of ancient northern India known as Kathakars or storytellers. It is a device for portraying the epic tales from Hindu scriptures, Mahabharata and Ramayana. Poetry was combined with rhythmic movement to aid in the worshipful storytelling. Kathak is performed while wearing bells on the feet, ghungroo which are seen on the left. The mesmerizing, precise, and pulsating footwork, as well as the graceful yet detailed carriage of the upper body, hand placements, and facial expressions demonstrate Kathak's diverse cultural influences. Kathak incorporates elements of both Hindu and Muslim cultures.

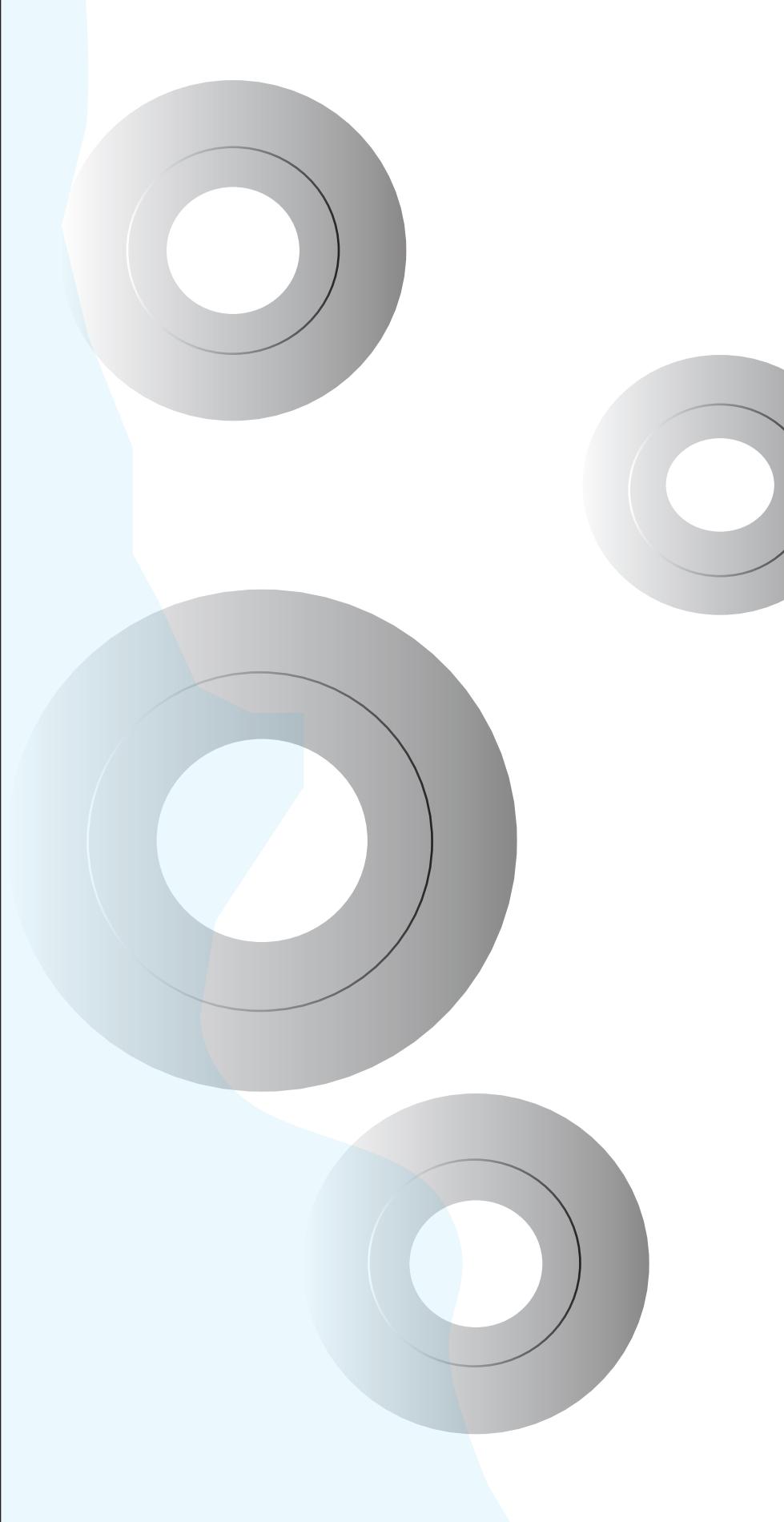
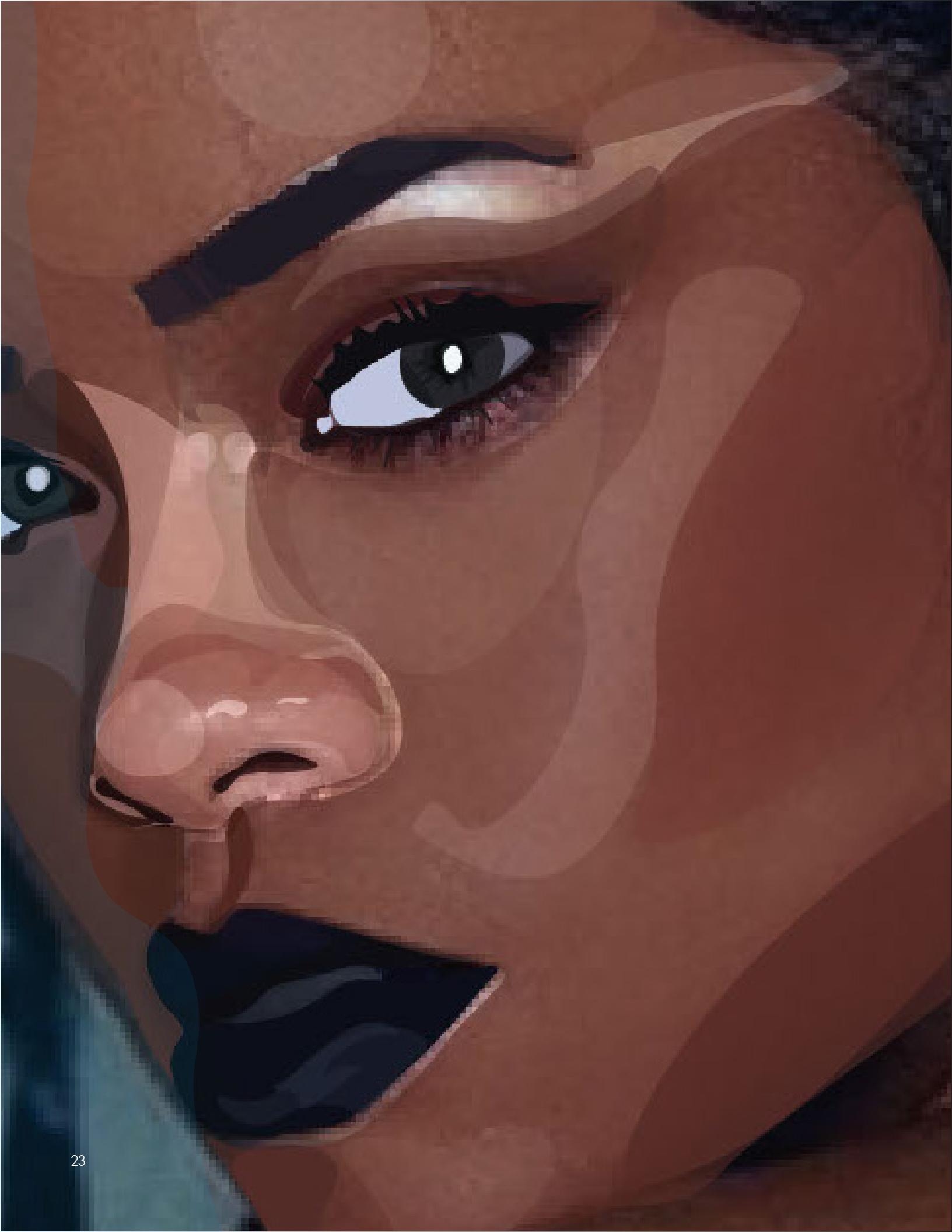
Mehndi, also known as Henna is a form of body art and temporary skin decoration usually drawn on hands or legs, common in the Indian Subcontinent, in which decorative designs are created on a person's body, using a paste, created from the powdered dry leaves of the henna plant (*Lawsonia inermis*). It is a popular form of body art among the women of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and the Maldives, and resembles similar practices found in North Africa and the Middle East.

The picture you see here is my cousin Tanu on the day of her wedding. Mehndi in Indian tradition is typically applied during Hindu weddings. Henna paste is usually applied to the skin using a plastic cone, a paintbrush or a stick. After about 15–20 minutes, the mud will dry and begin to crack. The painted area is then wrapped with tissue, plastic, or medical tape to lock in body heat, creating a more intense colour on the skin.

The wrap (not a traditional method), is worn for two to six hours, or sometimes overnight, and then removed. When first removed, the henna design is pale to dark orange in color and gradually darkens through oxidation, over the course of 24 to 72 hours.

Mehndi





Music Music

I started playing the piano when I was about 5. Since then music has been a big part of my life and my family. My brother also plays the piano and guitar. We would often play songs together and sing our favorite songs.

Here are artists that I love to listen to:

Amy Winehouse, Sampha, Kevin Abstract, Frank Ocean, Erykah Badu, Rihanna, Jorja Smith, Tiana Major9, Tierra Whack, Koffee, Smino, Daniel Caesar, Ms. Lauryn Hill, Kweku Collins, Joey Bada\$\$, ASAP Rocky, Chiild, Solange, Raveena, Aaron May, Amine, Leon Bridges, Slowthai, Shaboozey, Masego, Brent Faiyaz, Don Toliver, 6lack, Teyana Taylor, Kanye, Tobi Lou, Giveon, Childish Major, Steve Lacey, Jimi Hendrix, Nombe, Earthgang, The Notorious B.I.G., Tupac, Vince Staples, Duckwrth, Dominic Fike, Isaiah Rashad, J. Cole, Saba, B Young, SZA, Kali Uchis, GoldLink, Blood Orange, Bas, Drake, Ty Dolla \$ign, MAVI, Still Woozy, Aaron Taylor, Chance the Rapper, Outkast, Soulja Boy, Khalid, Miley Cyrus, Sam Smith, Ed Sheeran, Adele, dvsn, Billie Eilish, John Mayer, Saint Jhn, Anderson .Paak, Mac Miller, Popsmoke, Jessie Reyez, Snoh Aalegra, PartyNextDoor, Genesis Owouw, The Neighborhood, and many more.

Graffiti



Graffiti art has always inspired me. Graffiti ranges from simple written words to elaborate wall paintings, and has existed since ancient times, with examples dating back to ancient Egypt, ancient Greece, and the Roman Empire. Street art and graffiti adorns the public and to some may seem like an illegal act but to me it is beauty and expression.

Graffiti can vary from a small “tag”; someone’s name written on a wall, to a very large mural, which covers a whole wall. Graffiti is much more common in urban areas. The artists argue that without graffiti, cities would just be grey and boring.

I was fascinated by the amount of graffiti and street art in cities like Berlin, Tokyo, and New York. The piece on the right was inspired by a graffiti piece I saw in Berlin at a train station. It was hidden away but to me it was such a gem like treasure I just had to sketch it out and recreate it in my own way. I added watercolor strokes, a yellow crown with red rubies, and a water color background rich with colors.

Graffiti often has a social or political message which it shows in pictures or words or both. A famous British graffiti artist called “Banksy” creates street-art with very clear messages for society. His art is usually made with stencils and spray paint and often reverses the normal roles people have in society.

The images on the left are photographs I took in Tokyo. The mix of graffiti and street fashion was incredible in Tokyo. I felt in awe by all of the street art and street fashion I saw.



