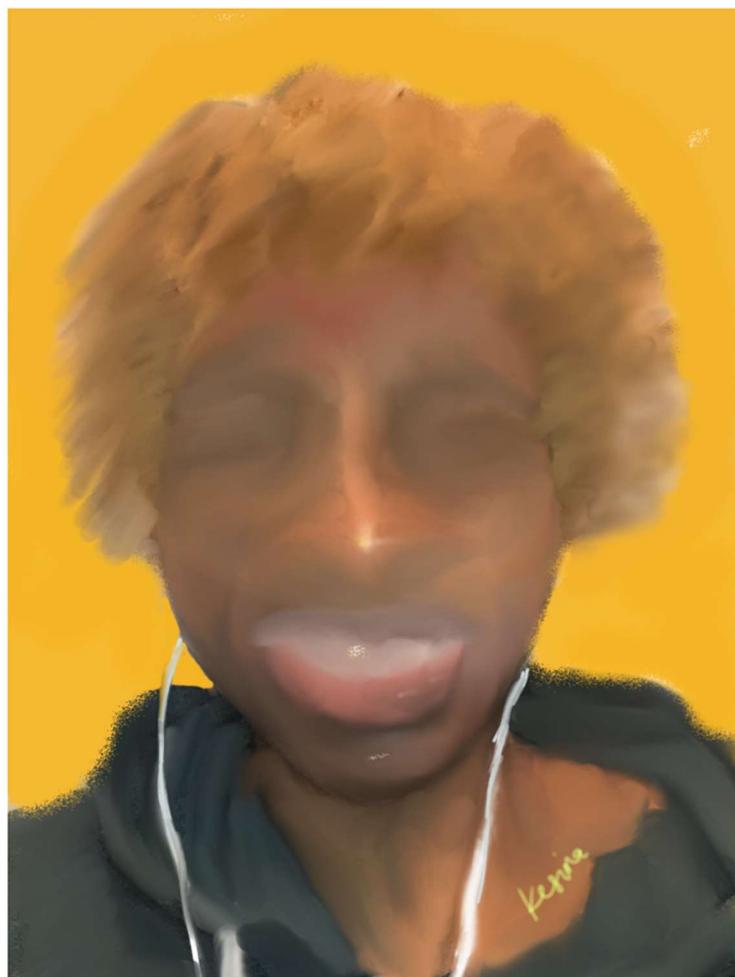




A Self Portrait

Kesina Ejoor



Critical commentary

This piece is inspired by Joseph Lee's oil and pastel on canvas *In the Flesh* (2018). Lee's technique of solid strokes is grounded in human expression and observation, thus fully encapsulating the projections of my mind.

This piece started with an inability to recognise my face. Whenever I saw my likeness in a photograph or a passing car, my brows wrinkled and I wondered, 'Is that what I look like?'

I thought this was normal but when this forgetfulness started affecting my daily life through a series of lost conversations, difficult paying attention, time slipping capsules, I began having questions. It was like existing as an out-of-body projection with another; my consciousness and my body, two different beings that I had convinced myself were the same. The blurred-out features and large strokes I have incorporated, define the fuzziness of my features in my memory. It is a face that morphs into something new anytime the apertures of my mind focus on me.

The creation process was riddled with the recurring thought, 'Do I love myself?' I did, I always knew I had. While merging my features I was assaulted with the second thought, 'Do I respect myself?' The answer is one of the things I pushed to the back of my mind. It wasn't that I didn't love myself, but I never thought that focusing on every part of me was important.

The realisation did not hurt me as much as I expected it. And I think that was a second awakening.

These conversations and thoughts are a form of self-care and therefore important to have with ourselves occasionally.

References

Lee, J. (2018). *In the Flesh*. [Oil and Pastel on Canvas]. Available at:
<https://www.josephleeart.com/paintings> (Assessed 06 March 2021)