

Hannah Siesel

Title for series: Behind The Gaze

Major: Graphic Design

Minor: Fine Art

Medium: Digital collage

Final Artist Statement

I discovered at an early age that art and fashion provided me with an outlet for my creativity. I spent my time either painting, drawing, or designing and sewing my own clothes. In this project I drew on these passions and utilized my graphic design skills to create digital collages in photoshop that express female empowerment.

The art of collage inspires me through the complexity and depth it encompasses. There is so much that can be said through the layers of a collage. Simple images come together and create a whole new story. Women artists have used collage as a means of liberation to express ideas such as women's rights, femininity, and freedom through creativity. I was inspired by Hannah Hoch's collages which critiqued how society viewed and treated women and she became a strong advocate for women taking on more significant roles in German culture post World War 1.

Through my research I explored how collage is reflected in fashion and many styles correlate back to movements such as Cubism, Surrealism and Dadaism. In my work I used photos from various fashion editorials to create Surrealist collages where the focus leads you to the woman's eyes and portrays the female gaze. In art history, women are often depicted in a passive state, looking away from the viewer. However, in my work the women are looking directly at the viewer to reclaim agency and celebrate

female beauty and power. I cut into the images and overlapped layers, which reveal the eyes to allow the viewer to feel the strength behind their gaze.