

ARTIST STATEMENT

Shana Lichaw

“Break the Photograph” explores how women are depicted in the media through a combination of graphic design, photography and collage. In this body of work I explore the idea of how society throughout the years uses altered images of women in the media. Collage as an art form, began under Picasso and Braque who began working with various mediums to create avant-garde assemblages around 1910. Two famous women collage artists: Barbara Kruger and Hannah Höch have inspired my project.

The title of my artwork “Break the Photograph” references the contemporary use of filters, digital editing, and social media to exploit the ideals of female perfection. Images are put out into the world and we hold ourselves to a certain standard based on what we see. Most people cannot see behind the filters, Photoshopping, and amount of tries it takes to get the perfect shot. This idea became of interest to me after I started studying photography. I first learned the way photographs can be edited with Photoshop which then gave me a different lens to look at the mass media. However, a lot of depictions of women have remained the same since we are still viewed as empowering to others. Women empower others by being strong and independent. The biggest change within the imagery of women has gotten more unrealistic but the standing messages are always constant.

I created this series because a lot of people close to me have been negatively affected by what they see on social media. My series of collages explores how you can break up a photograph with different elements of other works of art and create a beautiful image without giving unrealistic expectations. I want to give people the feeling of "It's okay to see this on my

Instagram feed" or "I do not actually have to look like that" to stop the teenagers around the world fighting the images they see on social media.

Process

I took old magazines, my own photographs, and typography I hand drew and combined them digitally to create a series final collage. First, I took photos of old magazines I purchased with my phone and brought them into Photoshop to combine with my own photographs throughout my travels. I wanted to add this personal aspect of my own travels to the collages rather than using free imagery. Throughout this process I learned how the image that women are depicted by has changed throughout the years while also remaining the same.