

Research Background

“Netouchepas” is French for “don’t touch”. A reflection on emotions when dealing with social isolation during the lockdown period imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic. An expression of self as an attempt to know oneself during psychological hardship (Tomassoni, Treglia & Gargano, 2016). It seeks to answer the question “Is isolation and social distancing during the COVID 19 pandemic reflected in the interpretation of self?”

Research Contribution

This work looks at the face, the germs and representation of the COVID 19 virus itself. The covering of the lower portion of the image in blue represents the mask. A barrier to facial expression, blocking the mouth, suffocating the breath, barring touch. The inability to touch each other, to touch our faces, to touch surfaces in fear of catching the virus. The expression of self is shielded, smothered during the pandemic.

It explores facial expressions; how the eyes portray sadness, suffering and isolation, a world suffering from “skin hunger”. It portrays a longing, a sadness but also deep thinking. Reflections on loss and the multilayered effects of a lifetime on the face.

This illustration was in the first online-only exhibition of its kind exploring self-portraits during the 2020 COVID 19 epidemic.

Research Significance

This digital illustration was short-listed and selected as a part of the Gallery Lane Cove online exhibition “Self Portraits in the Age of COVID 19” 18th May – 7th June 2020. Curated by Director Rachael Kiang and Jennifer Brady. Published via Instagram and gallery website.

