

Tracey Rae Wilcox, *Flower Triptych (Iris, Daisy, Poppy)*, via face-to-face interview with Jennifer Mayer on 10/22/15

Birth year: 1975

Explanations of process and technique:

I use paper and glue on canvas. I hand cut the paper—like Edward Scissorhands—thousands of pieces of paper, which I use to build upon and shadow. Collage is a meticulous process and it is permanent. Unlike a painting, the collage process, once it is on there, there is no going back. I like to work large. I like the control and layering and detail of collage, I do not have that control when I paint. I am a professional photographer, and I create my collages from photographs, I enjoy transferring those images. I need to have a photographic reference point. An artist I know calls collages “paper paintings,” I like that term.

I made the three collages at Coe Library in a seven day stretch—I didn’t eat, sleep, shower (laughs). My daughter stayed at my parents and I worked hard. I never had that feeling before, I just had to get it out. I think I created the daisy first, then the poppy, then the iris.

I use turquoise duct tape as a border to my collages (my signature) because the edges of the collages are bumpy where the paper wraps around, and the tape keeps them smooth. It is a permanent process, but not archival. I haven’t had to do any maintenance on my pieces yet.

Inspiration or Intent behind the piece:

My work is inspired by nature, I like bright, fun, happy pieces. I have an associate’s degree in biology. I love science, but realized I would rather be painting and photographing nature than in a lab, analyzing it. I like the combination of art and science. My work is an expression of me, it makes me happy and others happy. I like when people enjoy my work. I’ve been called “flower child,” and that I use Skittles colors, but that is who I am. I’ve had my work called “living room art” and I am fine with that—as long as people enjoy it and I enjoy it.

Content of the piece:

I was happy the library bought the triptych, because I had some people approach me, wanting to buy only one of the flowers. This is a triptych and all three pieces belong together.

In each of the Flower Triptych pieces, you will find a small letter M hidden. M is for my daughter Miraya, who is now 9 years old.

I can almost use the three pieces in this triptych like a personality test, depending on which is your favorite (the poppy, iris or daisy) I can tell a lot about your personality (laughs).

Additional information:

The reception to my collages range from delight, to “I can do that,” to “I want to try it”—which I love! I say go for it.

This piece was created in 2011 and purchased by UW Libraries at the 2012 UW student Salon des Refuses show. That year the salon was held in the WOW Gallery at the Laramie Civic Center location.