

The Black Society

Artist Statement

This conceptual art aims to challenge our perception of ourselves and our world. Using the contrast between our society and the black market, I intend to showcase how our society, similar to the black market, is exploiting and objectifying women with falsely rooted stereotypes and stigmas.

A quote from *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood inspired the creation of this art: "I have given myself over into the hands of strangers, because it can't be helped". The quote expresses the loneliness and helplessness of women in the fictional Republic of Gilead, a dystopian society that suppresses women's rights and freedom; such feelings and the characteristics echo and reflect the world we live in today. Fundamentally, the root cause of those terrible atrocities, such as the prohibition of freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to work and education, comes from societal carelessness and negligence to protect justices. In other words, the Gilead Republic could only rise to power when no one stood up against the wrongdoings. Overall, *The Handmaid's Tale* teaches its readers the significance of diversity and respect while raising the awareness that it takes an effort to maintain the peace among us.

Through symbolic elements representing the common perspective of women's societal roles, such as caring for the house, my art wants to provoke reflection and wonder as you question why: Why do women have to make coffee for men? Why should women serve men? As Betty Friedan writes in *The Feminine Mystique* says: "The moment you ask why is the moment you get a cannon shot". Through my art, I hope to stimulate the cannon shot effect within you, that will empower us, as a whole, to reconcile the past and embrace the bright future.

While provoking a cannon shot effect, my art also aims to honour feminist fighters who stood against discrimination and social norms for a brighter future for us all. By highlighting the parallels between our society and the exploitative black market, I aim to drive our thinking, awareness and action forward. I believe that by acknowledging the past, questioning the present, and embracing a more inclusive and equitable future, we can break free from the chains that bind us and forge a better world for ourselves and future generations.