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SP. 747 Final Project

I wake up dreading the day, and slowly make my way through my daily routine with dread and a growing frustration. When I can finally return home after a day of school and work, I feel relieved but anxious about what the next day will bring. In this self-portrait I wanted to capture the frustration and feeling of claustrophobia that I wake up with each day before I head off to class.

I wanted this to be a strong image, so I played with several types of lighting in order to get deep shadows and strong areas of light. I chose to use a daylight bulb, and for this image I was lit from below. This gave me strong shadows on my face that helped me seem more menacing. Shadows also hid part of my body and helped blend my hair with the background. I liked this effect and I chose to emphasize this in photoshop to create the sense that I was trying to separate myself from the background.

I chose to shoot digitally, because I knew it would take trial and error to get the right shot. I wanted to work with photoshop because I think this program will be invaluable to me as a designer. The first thing I worked on was my hair. I used the liquify tool in order to get nice swirls and puckered spots. Then cut and pasted and used the clone tool in order to even things out. The hair is very important, because I think it shows the transition from background to foreground.

Next I focused on my face. I made my eyes and mouth bigger using the liquify tool. The eyes were important in order to draw attention down from the hair. I made th lips bulge in order to make my face seem a little more surreal, and a little less human. I widened my face, because the big hair made it seem too thin.

I then duplicated the background layer and put it over the layer where I altered the hair, eyes and mouth. Then I erased everything except the hair. I used a mask with different shades of grey to create a gradient that gives the hair a little smoke effect. I erased the door in the first layer and put this hair layer behind that layer.

The next layer I created was also a duplicate of the background. I set this layer above the layer with the hair and eyes, and set it to screen. This desaturated the image a little bit. Then I erased the eyes, mouth and skin from this layer, so they glowed a little brighter than the paint and door. I used the dodge tool on the eyes to make them more intense.

I then made a layer to focus on the door. I used the clone tool to get rid of the doorknob. Then I darkened the door a little bit. Next I took an image of water, decreased the opacity and put it over the door and hair layer in order to give the door faint swirls. I erased the water over the body and most of the hair, so only the edges of the figure are covered with water.

I used the light flare to create those swirls of light. I did this because I wanted something in the background to connect with the figure. That's why the swirls are mostly concentrated in the background but a couple come up and touch the figure especially the one by the right eye.

I think I was able to create a good digital image expressing some of the frustration I felt. During this process I learned a lot of new tools in Photoshop, and though I don't think I would want to Photoshop an image as much as I did this one, I am happy with the result.