

Hair Me Out!

A Zine by Mississauga Youth

Cover Artist: Ainsley Tunney

Artist Statement: My name is Ainsley and I am a 17-year-old artist from Mississauga, Ontario. I have been creating a variety of drawings and paintings since I was around 10 years old. I hope to major in the visual arts field after graduating high school and eventually build a career around art. As someone who cares a lot about my hair, my goal was to express how the value of my hair goes beyond its appearance. This piece is meant to represent how hair can be a vital part of someone's life and story.

A Note from the Curators

What does hair mean to you? That's the question we ask visitors to consider in the exhibition *The Lengths We Go: Reflections on Hair*. Open at the Bradley Museum in Mississauga from June 24 to September 5, 2021, the exhibition explores the significance of hair throughout time and throughout different people's lives.

This exhibition was our thesis project, but we knew that it was never going to be about us. We picked this topic because of its universality, as well as its relevance to major social discussions, such as issues of racial injustice and inequity. Collaboration with communities in Mississauga and consultations with experts were important for informing the development of this exhibition.

Hair Me Out! evolved from a collaboration with the Museums of Mississauga's New Youth Council and other youth from the city. This zine is full of artworks and writing that tell the hairstories of contributing youth. From their various experiences, we learn that hair is more than just something that grows out of your head—to many, it is deeply connected to identity, self esteem, and culture.

We want to thank all of the contributing youth for trusting us with their stories, and for being willing to share a piece of themselves through this zine. We hope that you, the reader, are as touched by their experiences as we were. Beyond that, we hope their stories make you feel a little less alone in your own life experiences.

With love,

Priscilla Carmini, Denise Tenio, Rebecca Tunney, & Jordan Vetter
Master of Museum Studies Students
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Infinite Choices

So many choices every day,
Ponytail, or should I pick something else today?
Space, messy, or a classic bun,
Yet for school it wouldn't look too fun.
Maybe I should let it down?
Although its frizziness would make me frown.
Perhaps I could stick to curling,
Although I'd get annoyed with the twirling.
Dyeing is something I could try,
But I don't want to catch people's eye.
At this point, I want to cut it short,
I'll call it 'my last resort'.
Yet at the end of the day,
I'll go back to my regular way.
Once it's time to re-arrange,
I will be happy with the change.

Artist: Karolina

Artist Statement: Hi, I'm a student from Mississauga, and I am currently exploring different styles with my hair! I decided to write my thoughts about my hair over the years, but during quarantine I finally got the courage to change it up!



Artist: Chloe Titco (@slate.grey)

Artist Statement: This piece was inspired by my first trip to the Philippines while I was staying at my grand aunt's house in Guagua, Pampanga. I had to wash my hair, but they didn't have an actual showerhead, only a bucket which we call a 'tabo'. I had a really hard time washing my hair, and the water was really cold. It was definitely an eye opener for me as I was able to experience the way of life of many other people, which was drastically different from my usual way of life back here in Canada. In the end, I didn't end up washing my hair properly. I had to rewash it again, a lot more thoroughly.

me and mom



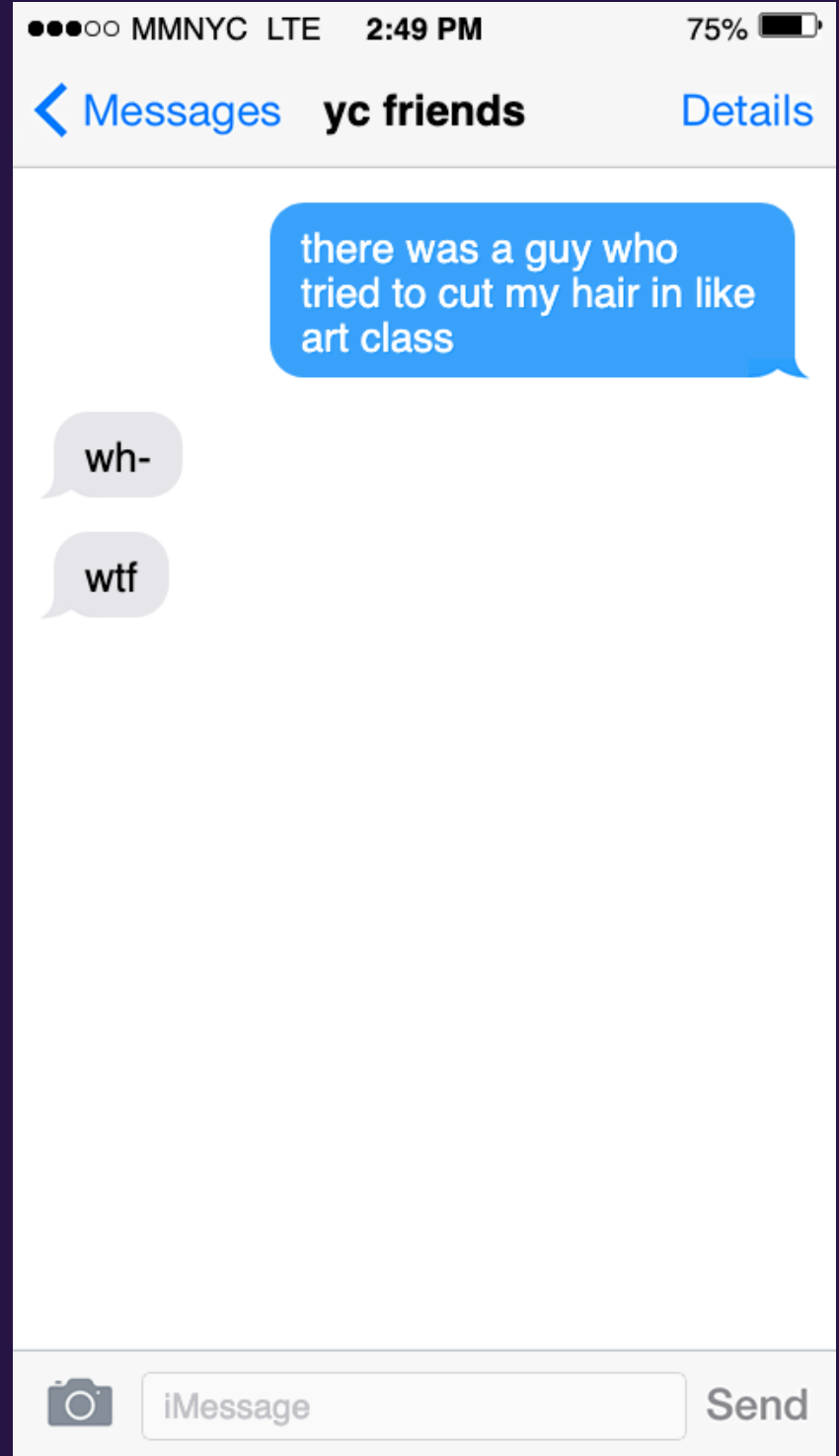
你真係煩
我會做我想做的

do you know what i am

智孝

Artist: dw__09084

Artist Statement: me and mom is a piece about a conversation my mother and I had with my dentist. My mother tries her best to be an ally but sometimes tries too hard and ends up falling through. This time she wanted to confront my dentist about my gender because I decided to wear a skirt to my appointment. She pushed to have my name changed to something more androgynous when it was something that never bothered me nor was it something I asked for. It wasn't an earth shattering argument but the tension in the room could kill someone. This piece is meant to replicate what other people would be seeing. It's meant to not be understood by others as if you were passerbys in an argument.



For your own good



Artist: Anonymous

Artist Statement: When I was a child, my parents would always cut my hair super short and tell me “if you have long hair now, you’ll go bald in the future” which turned out to be a total myth! It upset me a lot because all my favourite characters on television had longer hair and I wanted to be like them by growing mine out too. Unfortunately, I wasn’t allowed, but at least now I’m free to do whatever I want with it!

Length of Confidence

When I was a child, my mother cut off all my hair. She did this because she had 3 children. She didn’t have the time or energy to take care of our hair. Going to school with short hair had destroyed my self-esteem. I got called a boy simply because I had short hair. I was a girl; how could my hair change that?

I begged my mother to let me grow out my hair and eventually, when I was old enough to take care of it, she let me. I began to experiment with different hair styles, clips, headbands and even flowers! In South Indian culture, it was a custom to decorate a girl’s hair with jasmine flowers. They grow in white clusters and are said to add beauty and fragrance.

One day I came home from school with bad news. I had caught lice. My mother was enraged, she got out the lice comb and made me sit outside the house with my hair hanging over a newspaper. As she combed my hair out for lice, she told me she would chop all my hair off if I let this happen again.

I returned to Canada when I was seven and instead of cutting my hair or my siblings’ hair, my mother cut off her hair. My mother had hair up to her waist, but she lost a lot of time taking care of her hair and she wanted to spend that time with her children. As a child, I was worried people would call her a boy. My mother didn’t care.

A few years later, I too was tired of taking care of my long hair. I told my parents I needed a haircut, they assumed it was my monthly trim as usual. I motioned to the hairdresser that I wanted my long hair to be cut up to my shoulders. She asked me if I was sure. She reminded me that my hair was thick, silky, and beautiful. She told me it would take a long time to grow back. I didn’t care.

Artist: Anonymous

Artist Statement: How my mother taught me to prioritize my opinion over anyone else’s regarding my own appearance.

Haircuts



Oh haircuts
Too long, too short
Too wavy, too straight
I don't care what anyone thinks
I think I look great

Artist: Anonymous

Artist Statement: My hair has always been something I am embarrassed about for myself. I never know how I want it to look, and I get too caught up thinking about what other people will think about it. Every time I go for a haircut, I never like how it looks, but I don't say anything. Now because of quarantine I have been able to grow it out, and since I cannot see anyone, I don't have to worry about what other people think. I like how I look, and other people's opinions cannot change that.

They called me a Witch,
so I said *Thank You*.



Artist: RK

Artist Statement: I have long curly hair due to my Black Caribbean genes and I've always loved it, though it's not always that others appreciate it the same way I do.



So Much More

snip
snip
snip

My hair floats towards the ground
Seeming as light as a feather
But to me
It felt like a weight off my shoulders
I no longer had to carry this invisible boulder

I look in the mirror in disbelief
It had to be a dream
I pinch myself
Breathe a sigh of relief

It was just a haircut
But it was so much more
It was freedom
It was Me

Artist: Jasper K.

Artist Statement: I'm a trans person from Mississauga and I wrote this poem about the first time I cut my hair short. I had wanted to do it for a long time but was never able to. The day I was finally able to was a huge relief for me.

Superficial



Artist: Richmond Dakay

Artist Statement: Over time, my hair is something that I've begun to think about more and more; it's the one thing about how I look that I can control. Between coming to terms with my sexuality and friend groups that secretly hated me, I've spent a lot of my time reminding myself of my worth and how to love myself despite my flaws that soon enough I believed it. I'm comfortable with my life as it is - nothing more and nothing less - and yet I want to learn not just how to love myself despite everything, but how to love myself because of everything. There's still parts of me that I hate, so I want to spend less of my time changing things and avoiding others and instead accepting what I am.



Artist: Pokey

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The Lengths We Go: Reflections on Hair

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