

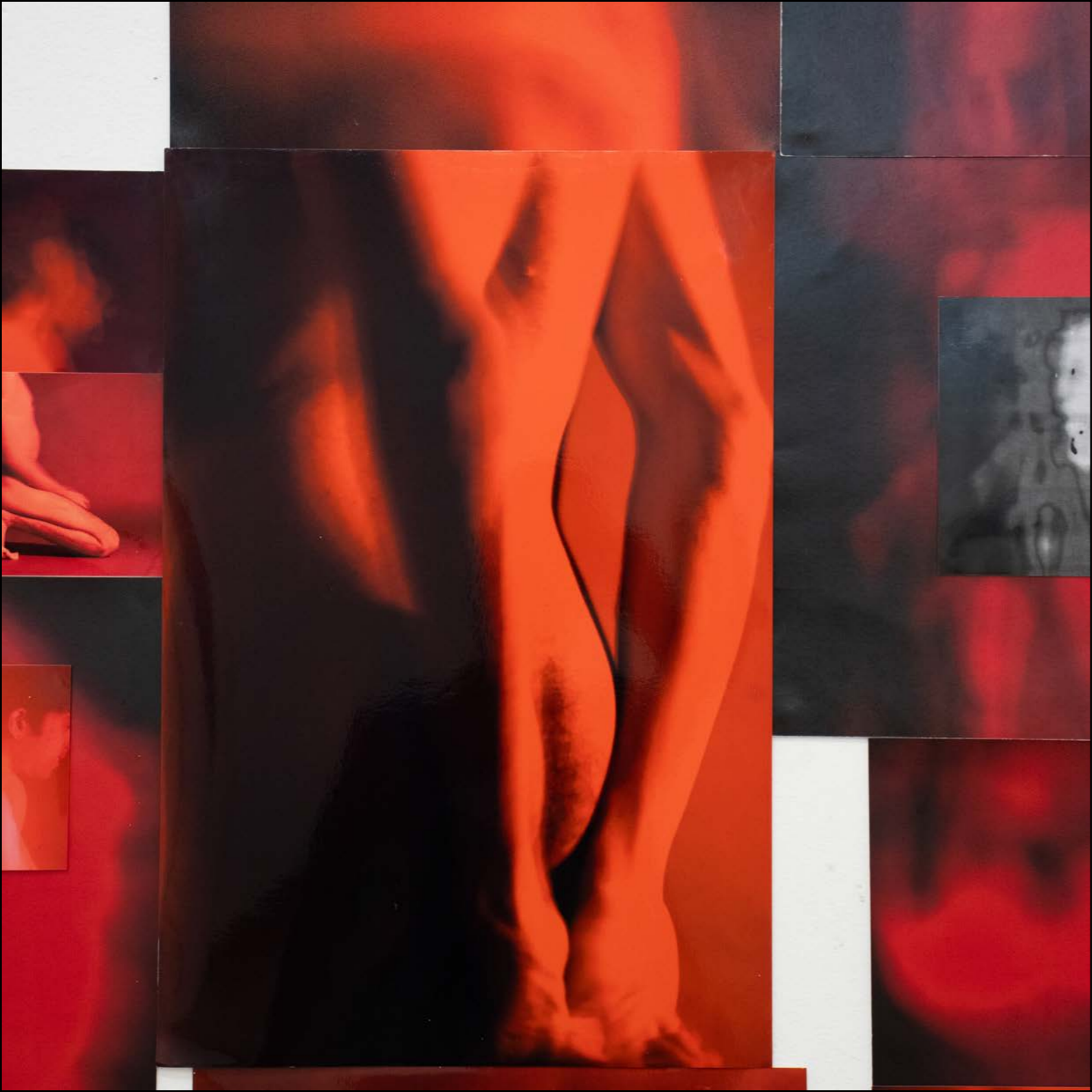
DYSMORPHOPHOBIA

DWAYNE NARAINEN



*"Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter."
- Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray*





CONCEPT

My work has always been centred around the exploring the mental and physical form of my own personal body. My experiences with using my own body as my main source of inspiration have been turbulent and almost polarising. It has forced me into a conversation with myself over the course of the year examining how I view myself internally and externally. This conversation has raised many questions that have, in turn, created multiple subconversations. This led to my development shifting throughout the creation of my work.

I became far more self-conscious about my own body after being put in front of a lens in my most vulnerable state. The act of being alone in a room with just a camera pointed at my body was a process that I was not comfortable with. It brought out a sense of dysmorphia and vulnerability within my body that became heightened as I continued to explore this form of photography.



While layering, being one of the various ways that achieves this censorial undoing, the use of colour plays heavily into the conversation between forms. It has been a consistent exploration of how colour interact with each other when either lying next to each other or as a layer.

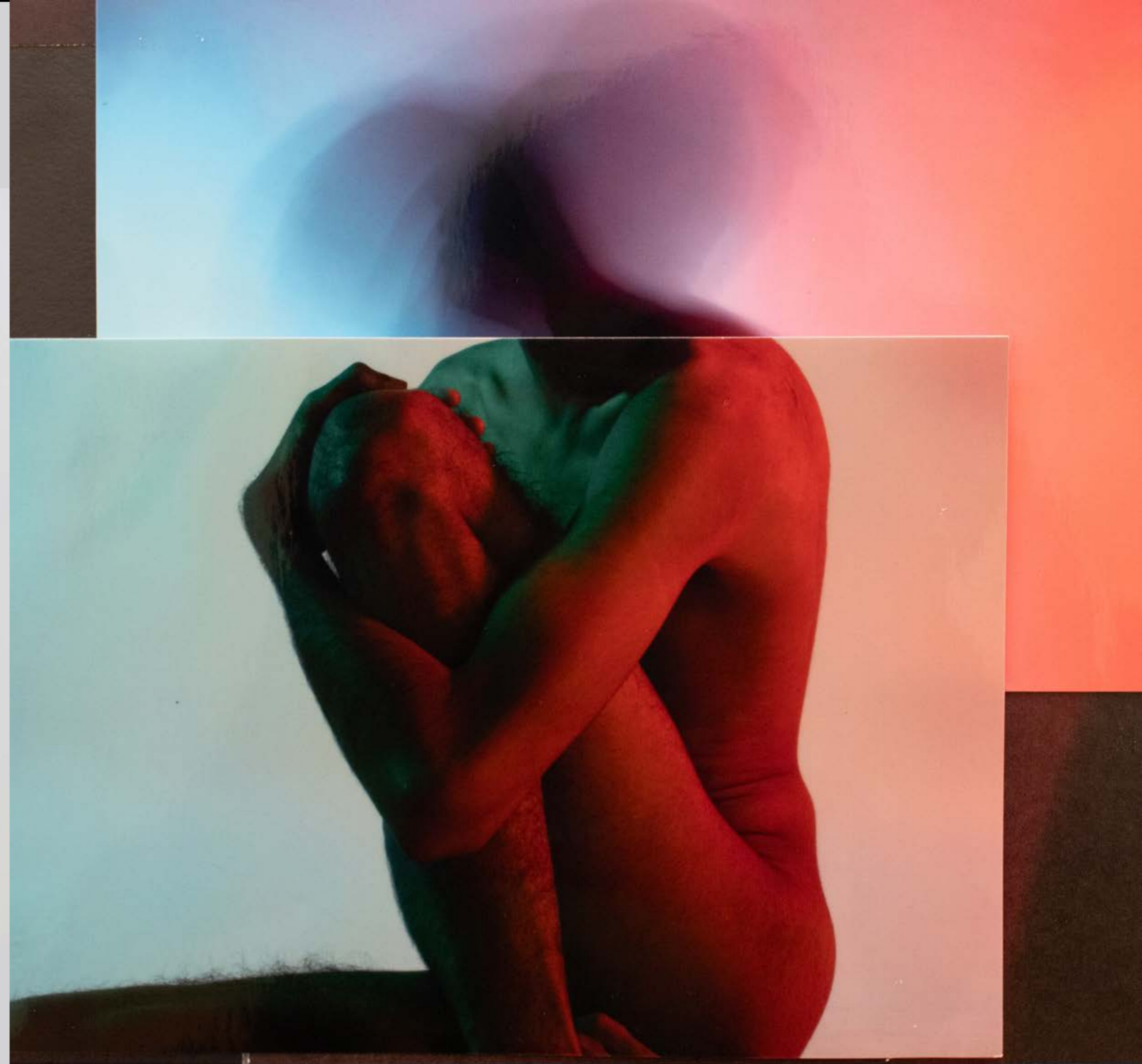
Each colour bringing forth a different emotion and suggestiveness. The negation of colour by a black and white overlay withdraws the raw nature of the body and leaves a more intimate version. This, in turn, resulted in the body appearing to be gentle and calm while also

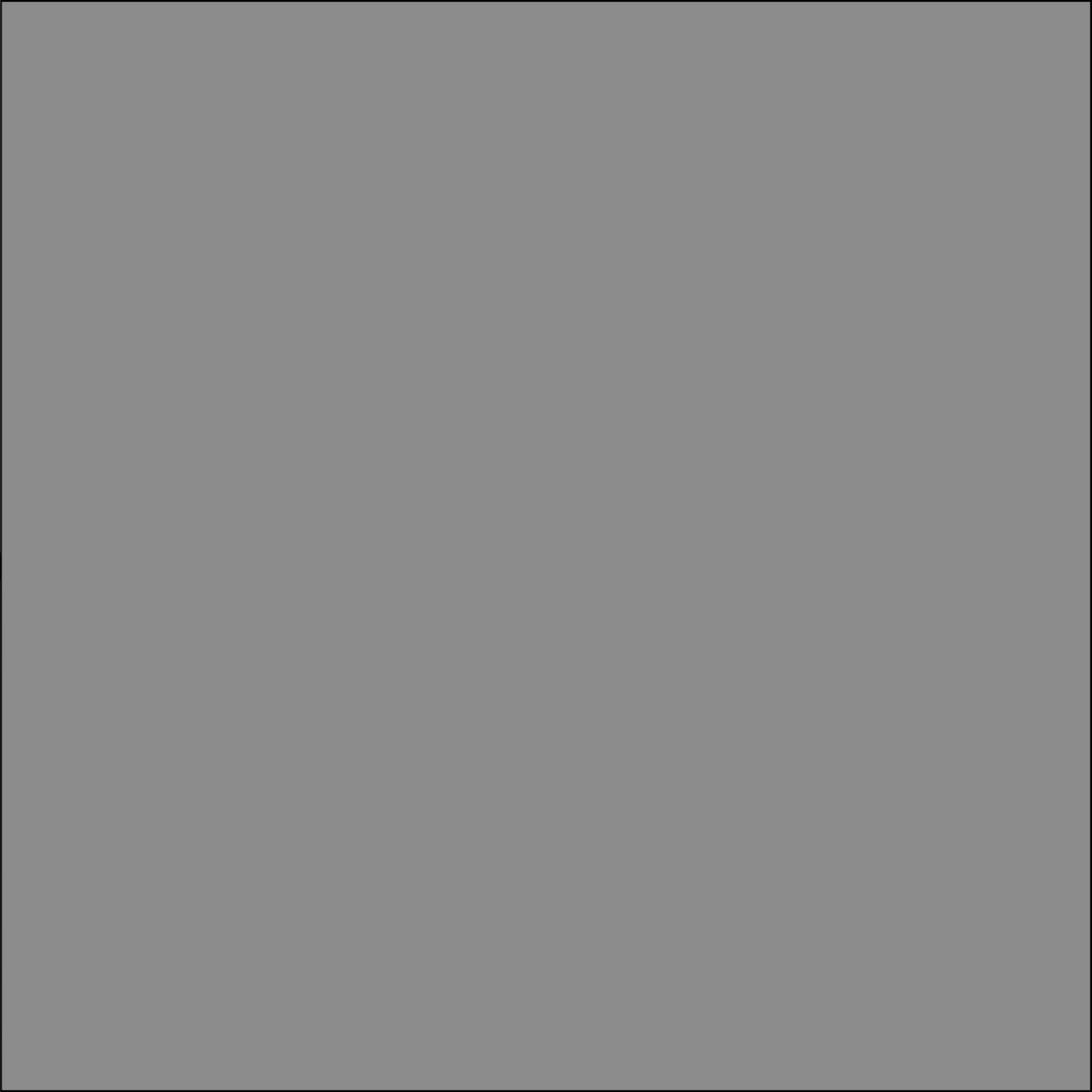
void of any emotion that is associated with each colour. Each image plays a role within the composition linking themselves to one another creating a multitude of bodies, though none appear to be proportionate.



I am rooted in the processes of photography, mainly using a photographic studio as my main setting. This is a major area of exploration in my work. Manipulating lighting, shutter speed and my own movement produce different forms and expressions that create a sense of rawness in the body yet also a juxtaposed sense of beauty. These depictions led to the development of a collage which serves as the structure of my work. A collage of body parts, mainly of pieces that I am uncomfortable with, creates a more distorted version of myself that highlight each dysmorphic part of me. It has forced me to be in contact with my own body through means of piecing together new imagined bodies and confronting that vulnerability that is present

in the images. The form of the body changes drastically under different lighting situations. It grew into a fascination with how the nature of the body would become raw and exposed under warm, red lighting. I associate the terms raw and exposed with red heavily as it is the colour of our flesh and blood, two aspects of the body that are fundamental to our existence. It created a sense of bareness to the body as if the flesh were to act as the skin instead. Such colours suggested that the body did not want to be seen yet also alluded to a sense of eroticism. Pieces of myself are displayed in a way that censors sensitive parts of my body while exposing the remaining pieces.









The exploration of dark room processes has also been integrated into the collage. Images are depicted in their positive and negative forms. The experimentation of creating contact prints using pre-existing images of the body was a process that created unintentional figures that were unrecognisable. Bodies that were crisp now appeared as if they had been drawn creating an extreme grain effect while others consisted of damage and omission due to the developing process.

This in of itself added to a new layer of damage and treatment of body, one that took all the aspects of myself that I grew to be infatuated with and tore it apart.









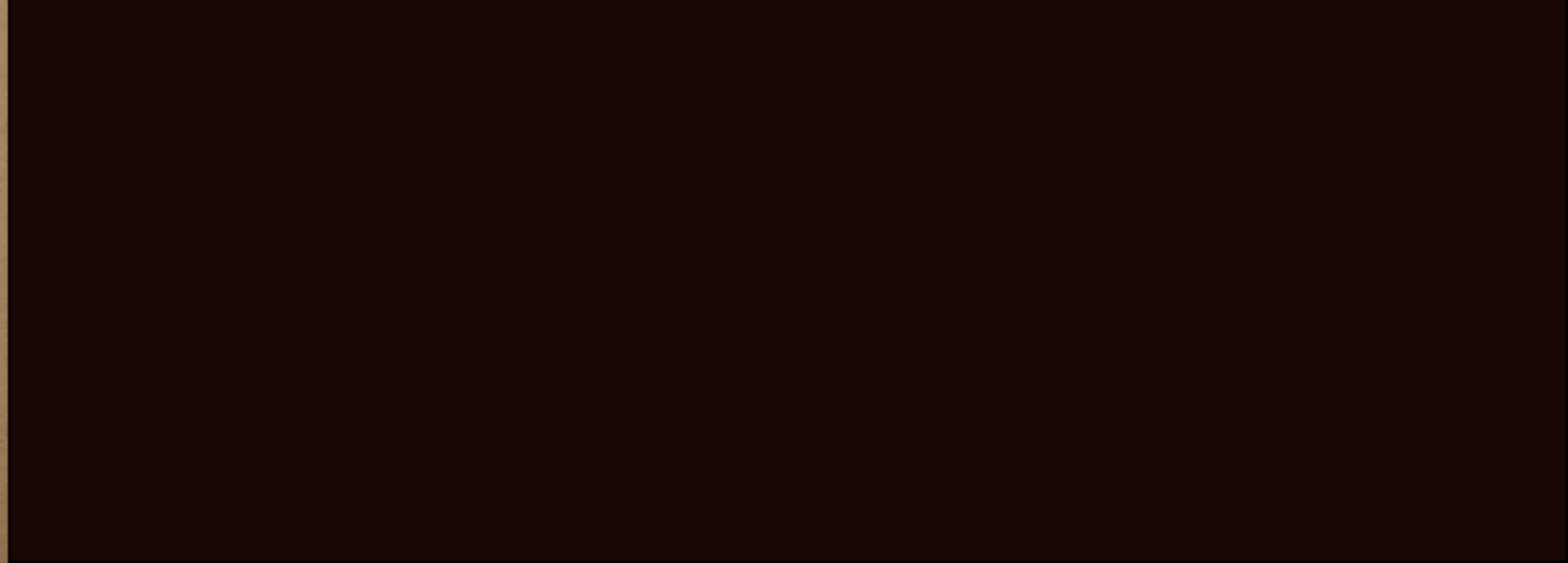




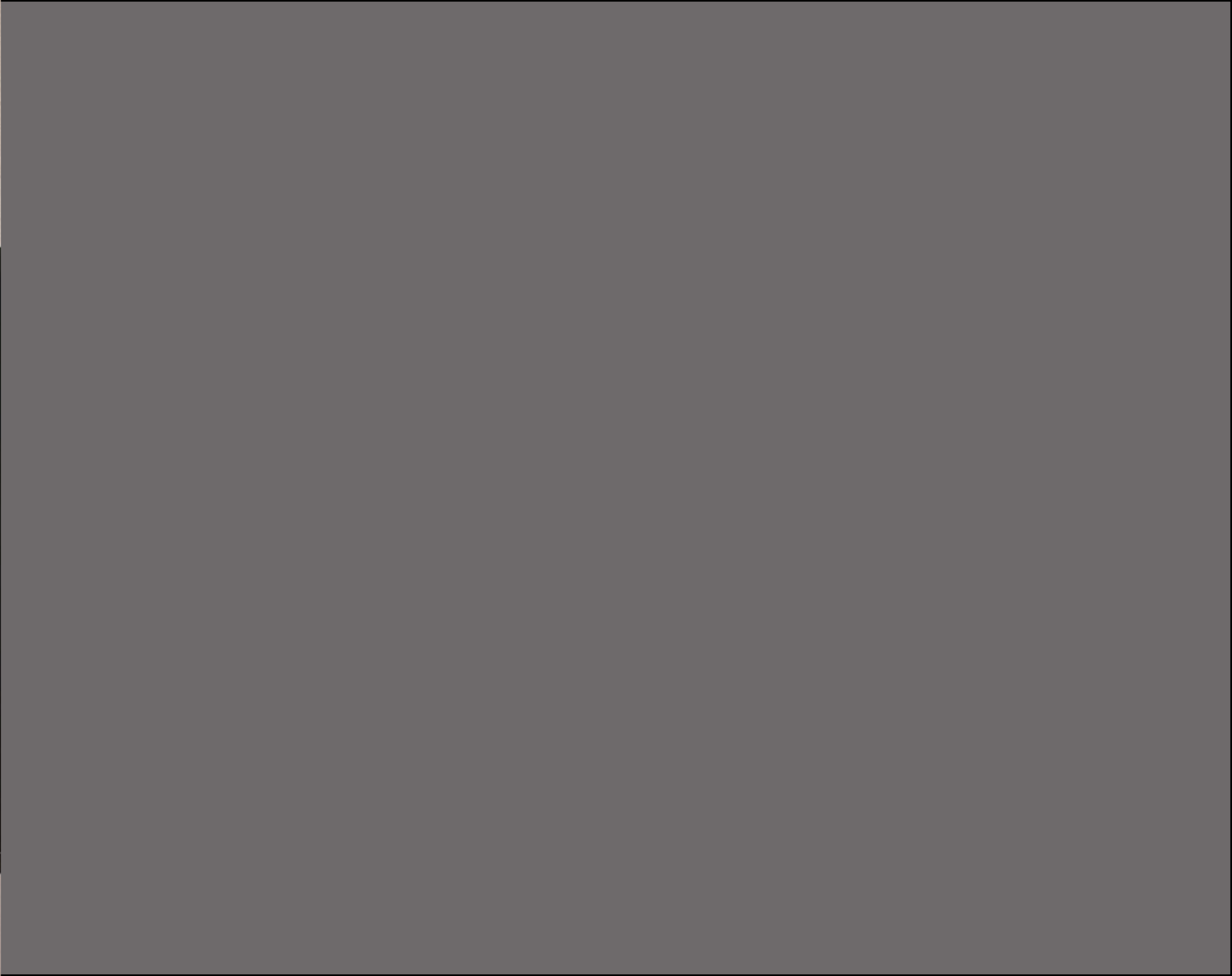
Having the collage take the form of a multilayered and multicoloured piece also invited a deeper inspection into each form, individually and as a constructed piece. While these are the two most present aspects that influence how the body interacts with itself there is also a use of materiality that changes the way the body is treated.

Munken, white paper and photographic paper are present in the collage with each creating a different visual effect using images that have been produced from the same shoot. This experimentation led to the further manipulation of focus within the body. Photographic paper produced crisp and clear images while

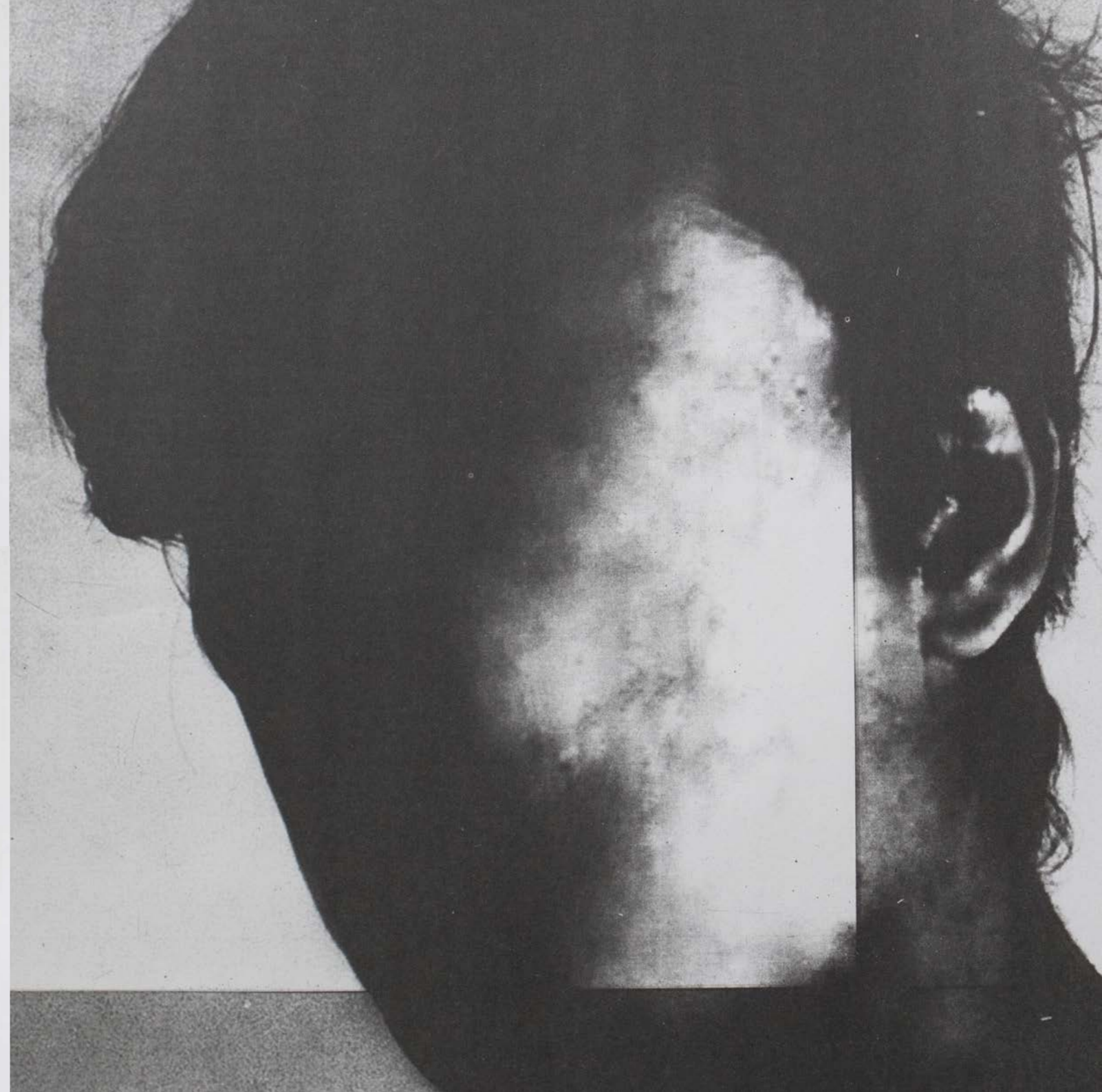
munken paper fell on the opposite end of the spectrum. It created interesting comparisons while still achieving an effect that I had aimed for. Depictions of myself hiding my torso with my arms would appear to be what it is in photographic paper while munken paper added a sort of grain to the image making it slightly unclear to the eye. It creates an unsettling atmosphere thus changing what is experienced in the image.





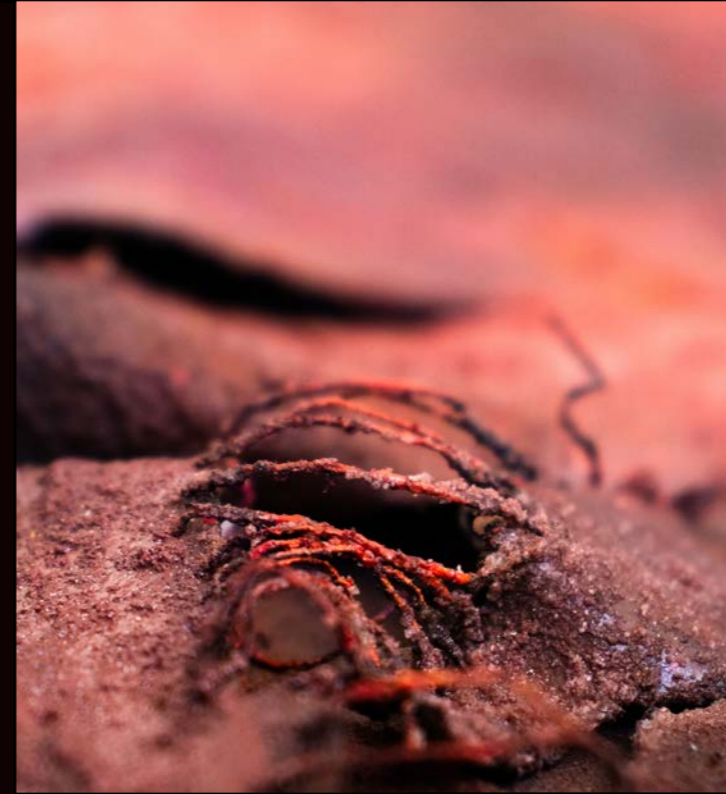


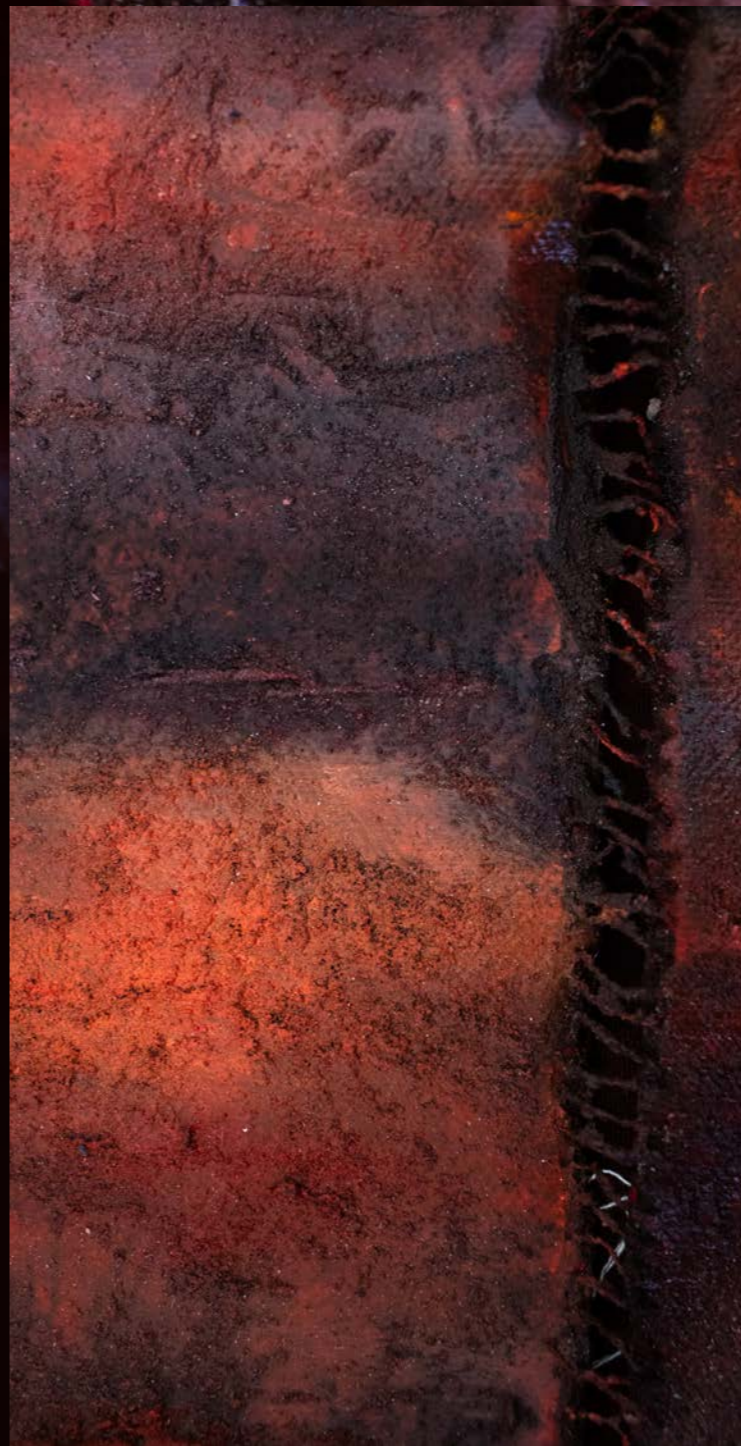
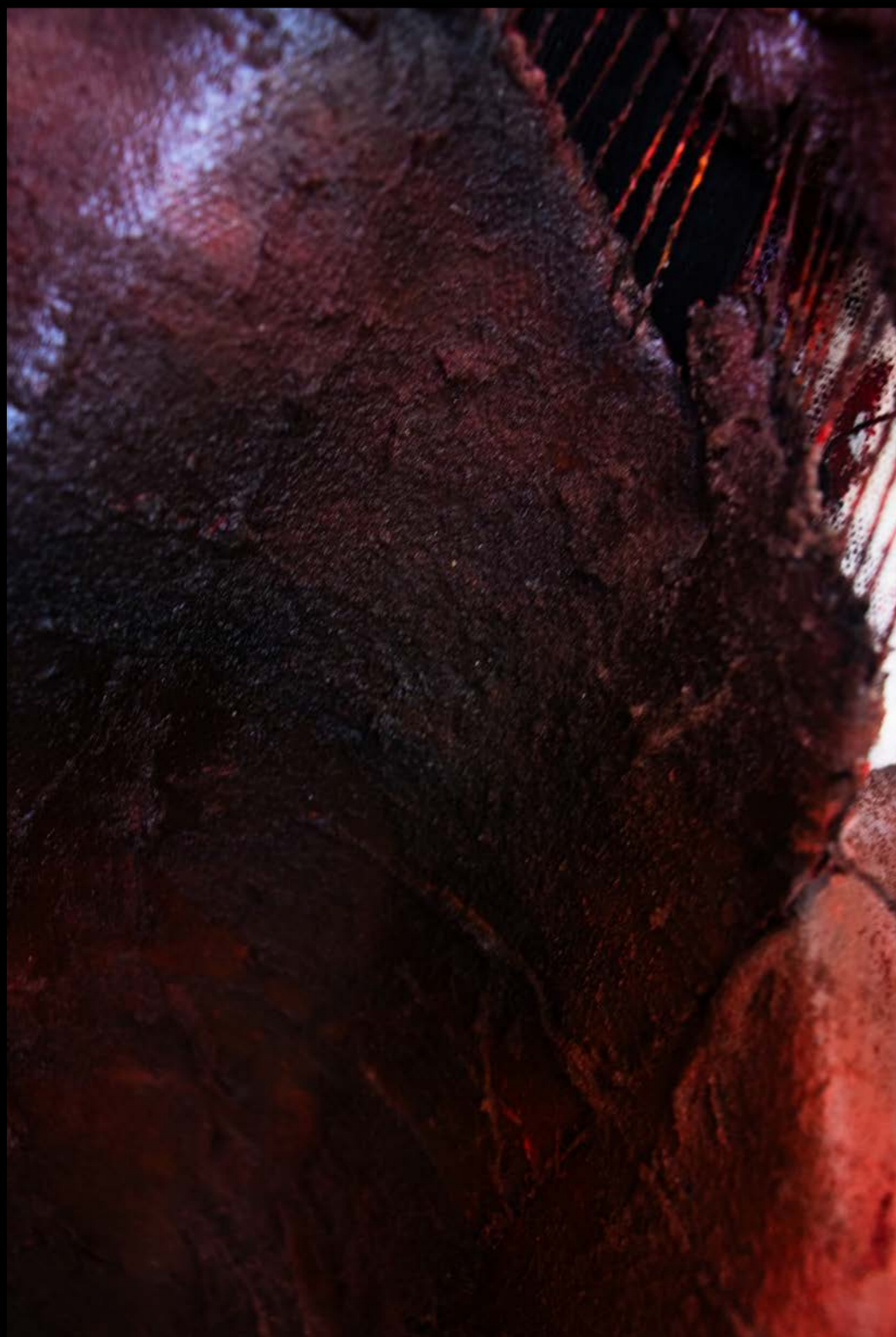












While the collage represents a more physical representation on my appearance and my deepest bodily insecurities and obsessions there is an aspect of painting that plays a role in the more emotional representation of my dysmorphia and the uncomfortable sensation of living underneath my skin.

A piece that has encapsulated the journey that I have been through

throughout the creation and manifestation of the collage. The use of red is heavy in this instance compared to my photographic pieces.

The entire painting is consumed by this deep, raw colour while the canvas struggles to stay intact.

A sense of fragility is added to the canvas.

