WAS I HAPPY THEN?

a 2026 mixed-media art collection by

Ashley Wong

ARTIST STATEMENT

Was I Happy Then? is a mixed-media project pairing memory and nostalgia with the emotional turbulence of bipolar disorder. Combining digital art, graphite drawings and photography, I created a linear and chronological collection that explores the winding highs and lows of bipolar over a 20 year period. This disorder often makes me question my memories and past actions, leading me to the thought: "was I actually happy then?" Paired with text in the form of journal entries, post cards, messages to friends and more, I hope viewers can also experience the constant contradictions that I feel in my mind and the ache to return to a time that may or may not have been happier than now.

In this collection the picture frames are photographs, the photographs are graphite drawings, and everything else was drawn in Photoshop. I worked to create realistic digital scenes intentionally disrupted by the physical act of layering and the visual impact of graphite. The effect is a feeling of recognition and remembering, while still feeling ever so slightly out of place.

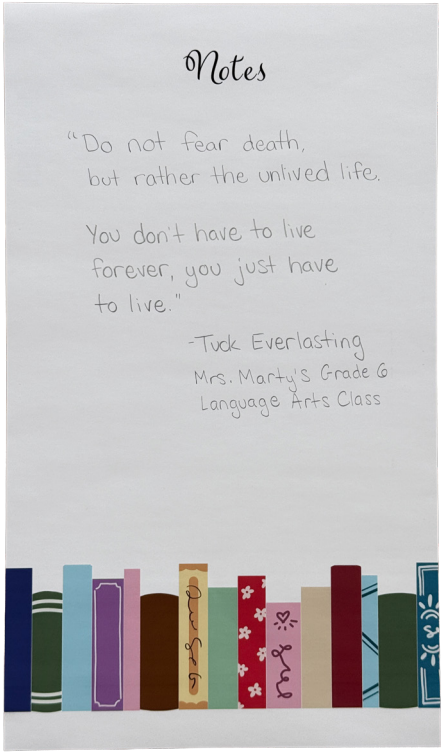


ARTIST BIO

Ashley Wong is a self-taught Canadian-American mixed-media artist based out of metro Detroit who is temporarily calling Germany home. She works with realistic digital illustration, graphite drawing and photography to explore themes of identity, memory and time, drawing deep visual inspiration from her years spent working as a video editor.

Ashley has illustrated two comic books, created promotional artwork for Visit California, and in December 2026 her artwork will be shown at an exhibit in Tokyo, Japan. Her current collection, *Was I Happy Then?*, is a nostalgic look back at her own adolescence and young adulthood, obscured through the haze of bipolar disorder, causing her to question her own memories of happiness and youth.





Piece names: **2001a/2001b**
Year created: 2025-2026

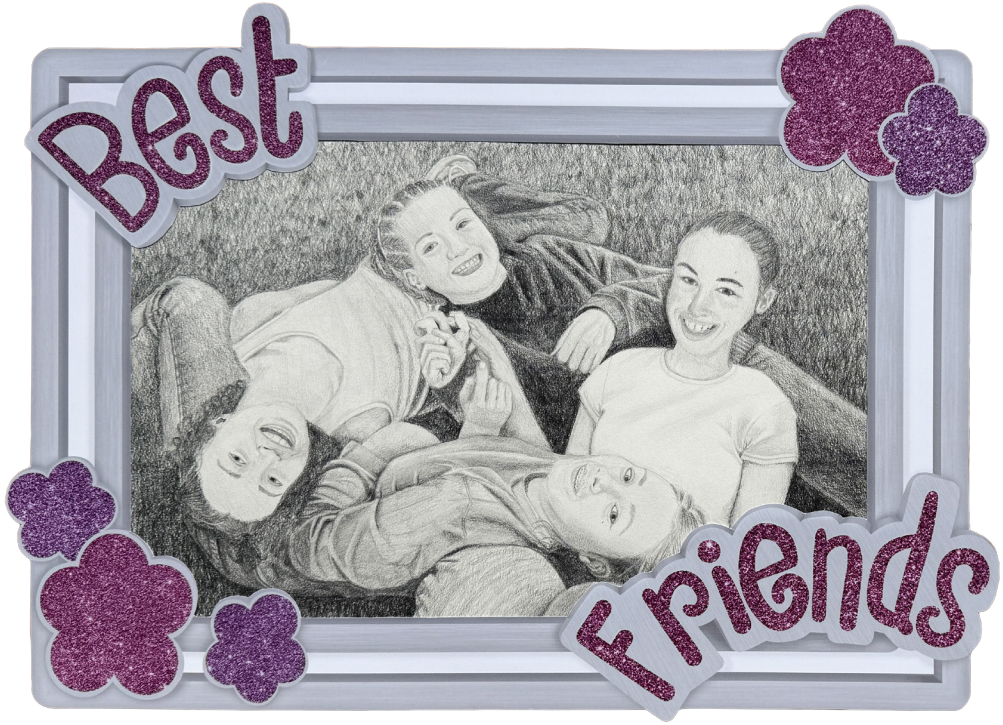
2001a:
560x760mm (22x30")
Digitally drawn wall, shelf and items printed on matte archival paper. Graphite photos drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Photographed frames printed on glossy archival paper.

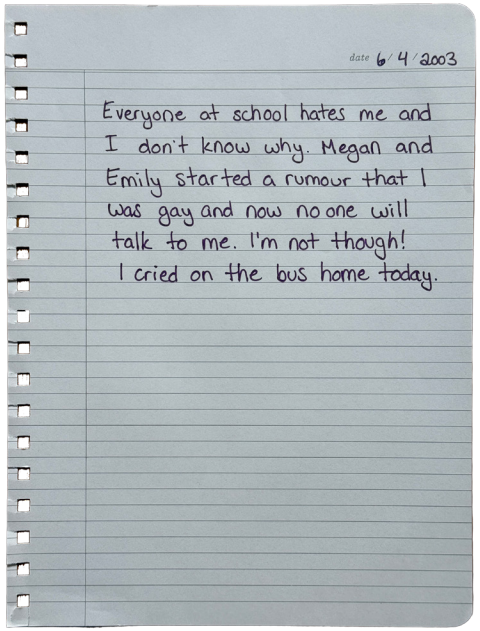
2001b:
175x300mm (7x11.75")
Pencil on digitally drawn notepad, printed on archival paper.

Availability: available
Price: $780 USD



relative size shown for reference



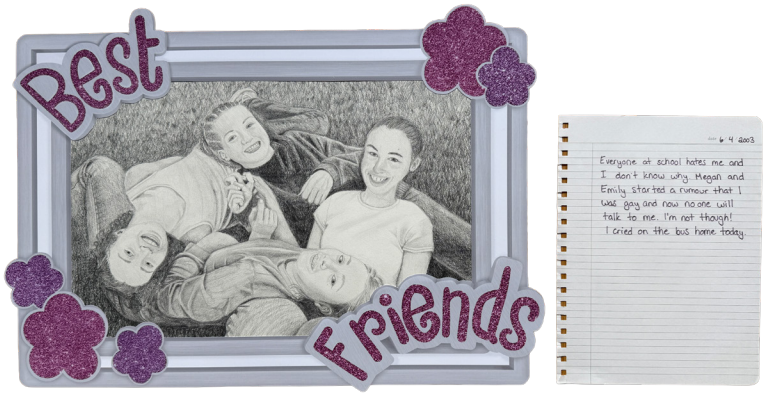


Piece names: **2003a/2003b**
Year created: 2025-2026

2003a:
500x360mm (19.75x14.25")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn frame printed on glossy archival paper.

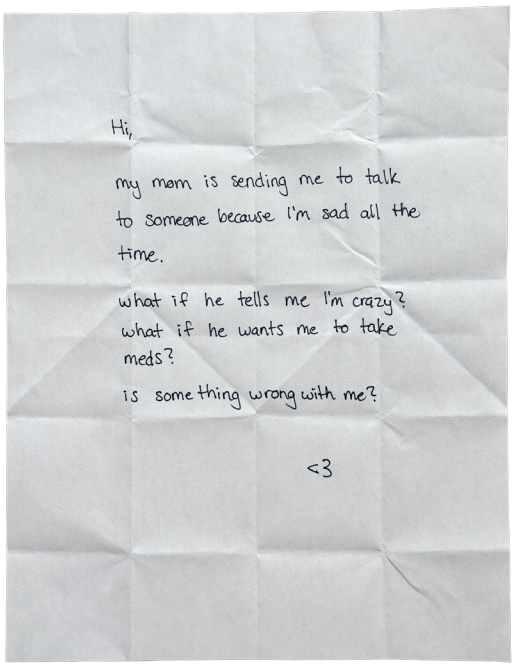
2003b:
245x185mm (9.75x7.25")
Pen on paper

Availability: available
Price: $510



relative size shown for reference



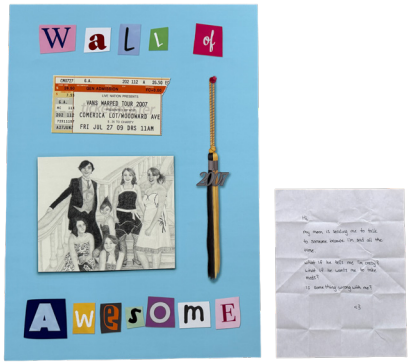


Piece names: **2007a/2007b**
Year created: 2025-2026

2007a:
590x420mm (23.25x16.50")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn wall and items printed on matte archival paper.

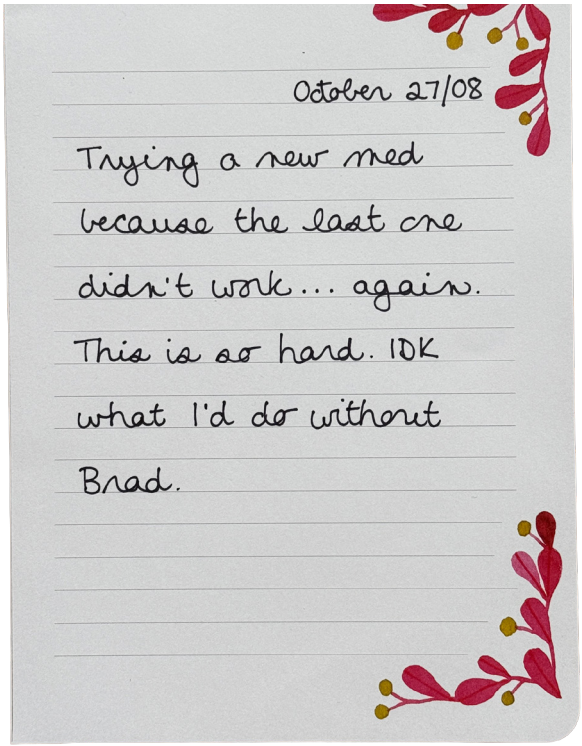
2003b:
245x185mm (9.75x7.25")
Pen on paper

Availability: available
Price: $600



relative size shown for reference





Piece names: **2008a/2008b**
Year created: 2026

2008a:
590x670mm (23.25x26.25")
Graphite photos drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn scrapbook printed on matte archival paper.

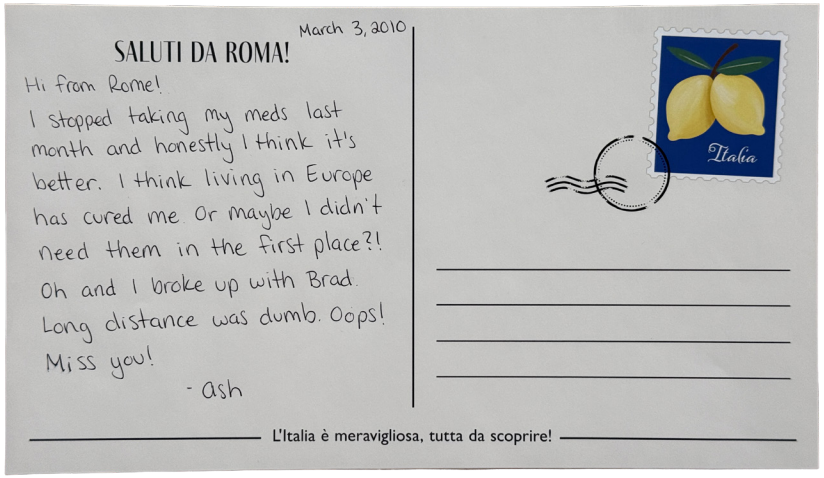
2008b:
135x190mm(5.25x7.25")
Pen on paper

Availability: available
Price: $740



relative size shown for reference





Piece names: **2010a/2010b**
Year created: 2025-2026

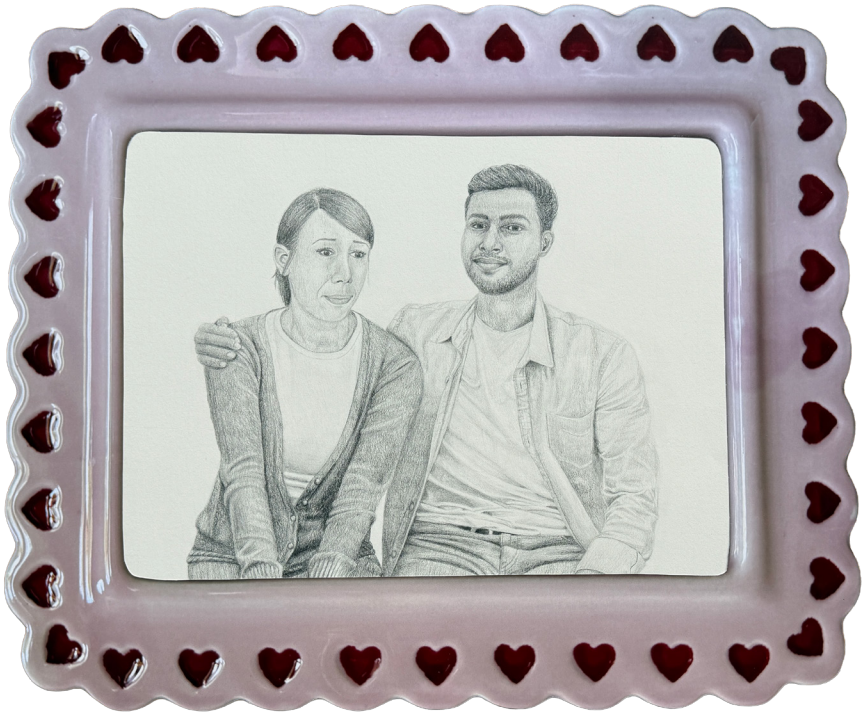
2010a:
600x580mm (23.5x22.75")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn nightstand printed on matte archival paper. Photographed frame printed on glossy archival paper.

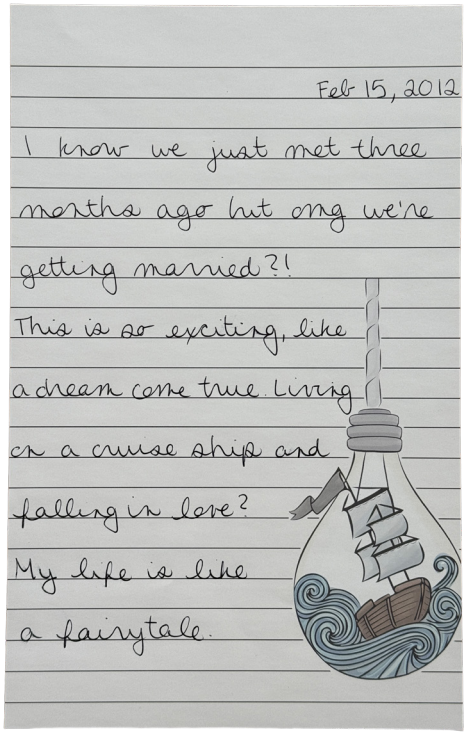
2010b:
295x170mm (11.5x6.75")
Pen on digitally drawn post-card, printed on archival paper.

Availability: available
Price: $700



relative size shown for reference



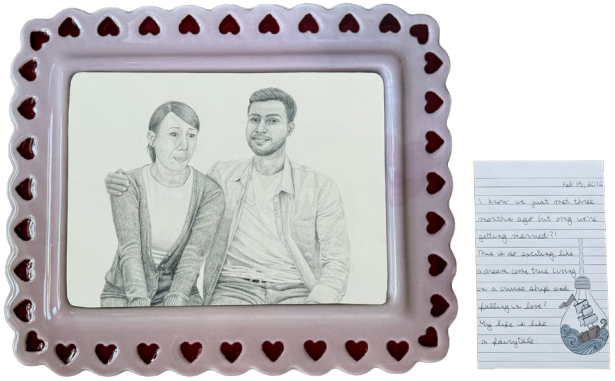


Piece names: **2012a/2012b**
Year created: 2026

2012a:
420x500mm (16.5x19.75")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper.
Photographed frame printed on glossy archival paper.

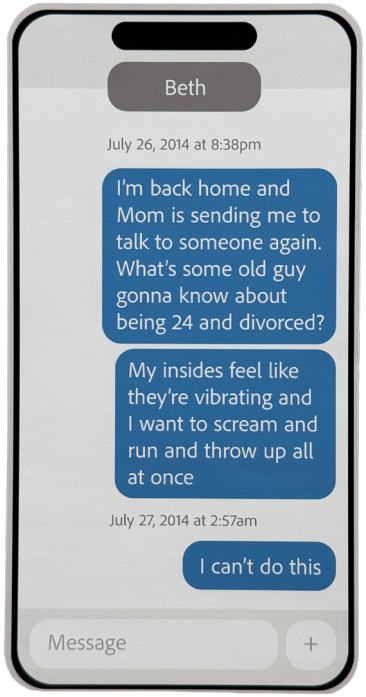
2012b:
145x230mm (5.75x9")
Pen on digitally drawn notepad, printed on archival paper.

Availability: available
Price: $540



relative size shown for reference





Piece names: **2014a/2014b**
Year created: 2025-2026

2014a:
580x400mm (22.75x15.75")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn cork board printed on matte archival paper. Digitally drawn pushpin printed on glossy photo paper.

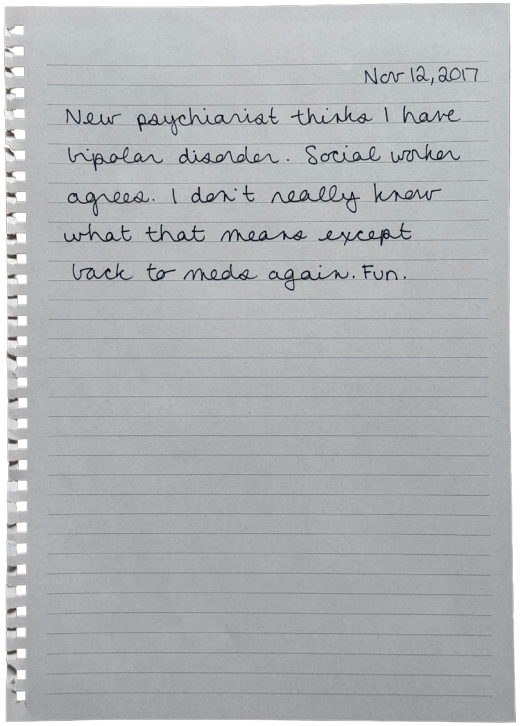
2014b:
250x130mm (9.75x5")
Digitally drawn phone and text conversation printed on matte archival paper.

Availability: available
Price: $580



relative size shown for reference



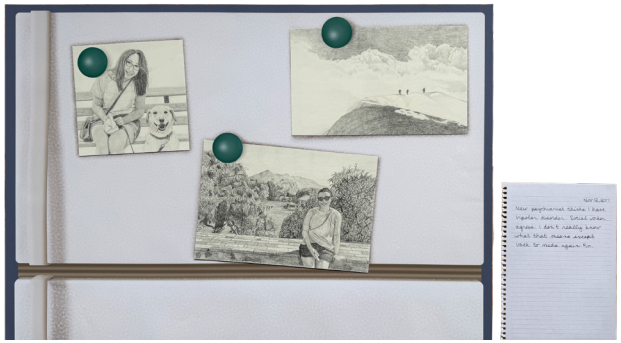


Piece names: **2017a/2017b**
Year created: 2025-2026

2017a:
600x840mm (23.5x33")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn fridge printed on matte archival paper. Digitally drawn magnets printed on high gloss photo paper.

2017b:
290x205mm (11.5x8")
Pen on paper

Availability: available
Price: $850



relative size shown for reference

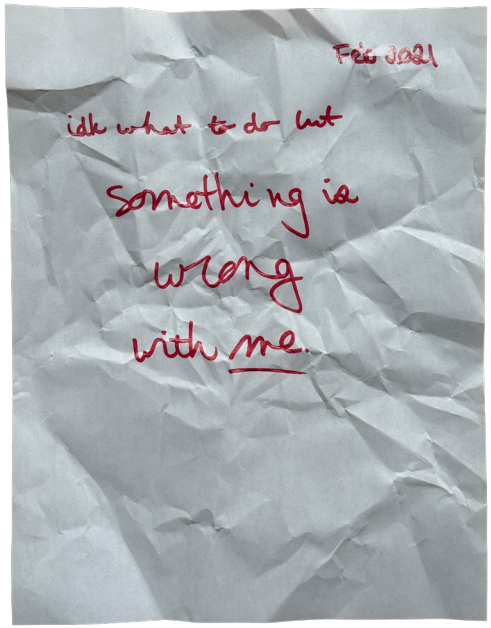


Piece name: **2019a**
Year created: 2026

2019a:
450x760mm (17.75x30")
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Digitally drawn laptop printed on matte archival paper.

Availability: available
Price: $710





Piece names: **2021a/2021b**
Year created: 2026

2021a:
520x670mm (20.5x26.5”)
Graphite photo drawn on 400 series drawing paper. Photographed frame printed on glossy archival paper.

2021b:
280x215mm (11.5x8.5”)
Pen on paper

Availability: available
Price: $700



relative size shown for reference

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