

Practitioner's Statement

The Cyclical Nature of War

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This work began with an exploration of themes depicting dystopian futures. I was originally inspired by Jean Giraud's artistic ability to create worlds from the fabrications of the mind. I wanted to create a place that the viewer might imagine for the future and bring this to their reluctant focus. I experimented with Photoshop by creating landscapes detailing a common dark and infertile tone. The destruction and death resulting from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was also explored, as humans are known to re-create the past within an imagined dystopian future. The themes of disfigurement, radiation sickness, death and destruction dominated my folio.

When humans evolved with their intellect, they developed atomic weapons as a gesture of ultimate power. This resulted in war, destruction of civilians and the crippling of future generations. The three hands, inspired by the superimposed hands in 'Self-Portrait' courtesy of Roy Nachum, are representative of a family affected by atomic warfare. The hands attempt to resurrect themselves from the wreckage. They are searching for a way out of the darkness. The koi fish are symbolic to Japanese culture and represent our abilities to overcome tragedy. They create a pathway for the eye to follow, allowing the piece to be effectively read. My hands, lit by the sun, were used as a reference giving a personal element to my artwork.

The second piece uses a melanoid ambiance to create uncertainty and vastness, and is paralleled to the works of contemporary artist Yan Pei-Ming and Toshimitsu Imai's 'Hiroshima'. The uncertainty of war is reinforced by my use of gasmasks as subject matter. They cover a quintessential aspect of the figure, the face, and are a recognizable symbol of war. To begin, tones were blocked in and enlarging the canvas enabled me to refine the form. This was easy to achieve using Photoshop, and produced a high sense of realism. Using technology, I could successfully implement the illusion of action painting. The static forms juxtapose with the energetic splatter and this gives the illusion of eruption and expulsion, much like the nature of an Atomic bomb and Toshimitsu Imai's explosiveness in 'work'. The central composition maintains the high impact imagery that French contemporary artist Yang Pei-Ming incorporates within his artworks. Overlaps of flesh and bone, and man-made apparatus provide balance in my works.

To create the koi fish featured in the last piece, I observed contemporary Japanese artist Riusuke Fukahori at work. Fukahori light-handedly applies an overlay of cream colours to an underlay of deep blues and this increases the realistic transparency of his painted fish. I learnt how to implement subtle colours that harmonise and reflect with each other. Through observation of my Grandmother's koi fish, I was able to comprehend the reflective nature of fish and I emulated this by applying orange scales against a cherry-red colour.

While the bombing of Hiroshima was a destructive aspect of our history, it also provided a lesson for humanity. I wanted to embody the tone of devastation so that the viewer can contemplate past mistakes and connect them with our future.

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