

Practitioner's Statement

Curious and Unafraid

Tahlia Zadow

In the preliminary stages of developing my major, I became interested in watercolour illustrations, and in particular the portrayal of personal ideas through a relationship between a wild animal and a young child. I then began to focus on my favorite animals, in particular grizzly bears. At the time of my initial thoughts and planning for my practical, I was struggling with my ability to remain unafraid of what my future following year twelve would hold, and this is something I wanted to focus on, as it was on my mind. Through this, I decided to portray a detailed magical allegory by portraying a relationship between a grizzly bear and young child; as this represents to me, a wonder-filled, unafraid relationship, a relationship I wanted to have with my future.

Looking at an unafraid relationship, I began investigating different ways to portray a playful grizzly bear, and ways to incorporate parts of myself into the young child. In doing so I looked at a range of different artists, including Furry Little Peach and Carmen Saldana, both enabling me to grow my technical skills but also to look at relationships between animals and children. I wanted to communicate to the viewer a sense of curiosity in the piece, and no sense of fear. Using my illustrative styles and other artists' influences in order to encapsulate my ideas would achieve this.

The colours of the piece were devised from personal preference, in order to create a magical scene. The blues incorporated into the trees allowed for an atmospheric perspective, pursuing an enchanted tone.

As I explored my ideas further I made the decision to create a three-dimensional piece, as this would best support my overall theme. I researched this and allowed myself to practice the process of layering throughout my folio.

I took great care with the composition of the piece, particularly using the rule of thirds by dividing the composition into thirds, vertically, and placing the bear upon one of these lines. This directs the viewer's eyes to the bear initially then leads to the young girl providing a clear focal point. Further, the contrasting colour values played a major role in this piece. By letting the composition be dominated by the cool blues and the greens of the backgrounds, the warm browns of the bear and the bright orange hair of the young girl garner more attention and draw the viewer's eye towards them.

I feel that I effectively communicated the story I planned to tell, in a way that portrays my love for painting and my love of wild animals. Using the illustrative trees as the background of the painting allowed for great complexity, creating a magical scene. The bear was painted over many layers, creating a lot of depth but also hinting at something three-dimensional.

The structure of the piece has created an innocent relationship, where the girl looks to the bear in wonder, and he looks back down at her in love.