

STAGE 2 VISUAL ARTS – ART PRACTITIONER’S STATEMENT

Three Truths

Acrylic paint on canvas



Truth One

76x61cm



Truth Three

61x91cm



Truth Two

76x61cm

This year I spent a lot of time discovering a part of myself that was influenced and affected by the actions of those around me. The harsh realities of the inequality between the sexes and the unfair treatment of women, sparked a feminist flame inside me that needed fanning. When it came to art I couldn't help but notice my attraction to art that didn't necessarily fit a certain aesthetic but art that instead held and revealed meaning. Artists like Jenny Holzer and Immants Tiller inspired my need to create a body of work that not only appealed to my personal aesthetic but that meant something to me, and which I could share with others. Conveying a narrative in my art is important to me.

My work embodies a notion about the three truths that hold women back in the workplace and at home. It was inspired by a talk I watched about a woman's changing place in the Australian policy process. It talks about Australian statistics that observe the following truths: A girl born in Australia today, unless things change radically, will earn a lot less money in her lifetime than her brother. She will retire with less income, and less wealth than her brother. She will be more likely to suffer violence than her brother. My goal was to bring awareness to these facts through my art – I wanted my art to act as an agent of change. I used each work to express each different 'truth', although not obviously. The portrait of myself which embodies the truth that a girl will earn a lot less money in her lifetime than her brother. I am a young woman about to finish school, and am starting to think about my career choices. With this inequality happening in Australia it affects me directly and consequently, has the potential to hold me back in the future. Opposite this portrait, is a portrait of my mother. I used my mother as she, for one is a woman that I deeply admire, and has very strong equality beliefs which has impacted on my beliefs as well. She is also a woman who is moving towards retirement. For this reason, she represents the truth behind 'She will retire with less income, and less wealth than her brother.' The two portraits not only face each other as a way of creating a sense of old and new, but also create a reflection of past and future self in both women. They are specific to our current situations. For the third truth 'She will be more likely to suffer violence than her brother' I took a slightly less obvious approach in the presentation of the concept. I chose to paint a moment in history. I did research on second-wave feminism, and it's use of rallies as a means for women to get their want for equality across, and found it fitting to use one of these images that would have previously been found in a newspaper as a way to protest violence against women. While the two portraits are very modelled and structured, I wanted the rally image to retain something of its historical presence, and its reference to the immediacy of newspaper print media. The lasting goal of this body of work was to create something that brings attention to these facts with the hope that Australia will then wish to defy them.

This body of work was less about its aesthetic and more about the message it conveys. Some might say that the images themselves lack creativity or imagination, but I used this work as a means to support my beliefs as well as improve my skills as an aspiring artist. Each canvas has something significantly different about the way it was painted. The portrait of myself is painted with a softer touch when compared to the stronger edges used in the portrait of my mother. The defined brush work helped me to further distinguish the age difference between the two subjects and the different situations of our lives as women. To add to this separation, the portrait of myself is painted with quite cool tones with a green tinge to its composition which differs from the warm reds and purples I used to create the portrait of my mother. These tones have a very strong effect in the different of the works as red and green are contrasting colours. The use of the gaze of both portraits was important to capture; conveying a sense of thought that is open to interpretation, but provides a connection between the two. The third canvas differs entirely. A previous study of the use of chiaroscuro was very useful for this particular work, as well as the other two, but the ability to create a work from a black and white image that held a lot of depth was very important for this painting. Other than the contrasting colour scheme of this work compared to the others, the main difference is the soft slightly diffused finish which gives the work a sense of incompleteness. I used this technique because I was depicting a moment from history and I didn't want to make polished and new. Also, the point of the protest is also unresolved in the lives of women today.

I learnt a lot about myself as an artist and an activist whilst creating this body of work. I became very passionate about conveying this particular message, and my views about social justice and gender equality in the work force and at home, are alive in me. It was important to be able to curate the paintings in a way that created a challenging and inquiring narrative. The use of narrative realism in my paintings is not only about honing my skills as a painter but allows me to experiment with storytelling. I hope my work inspires curiosity and exploration of ideas about gender equality.

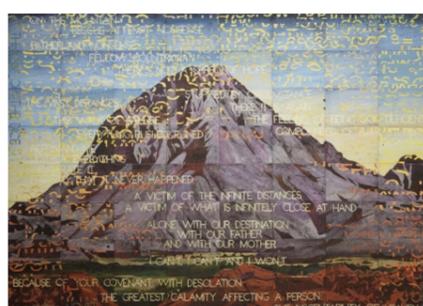
Word Count: 1015

Influencing artists: Jenny Holzer,

Imants Tiller,

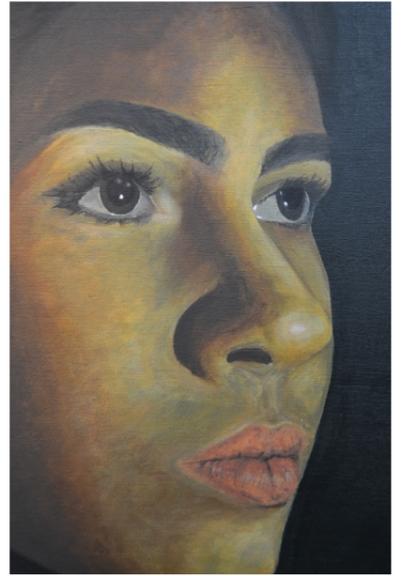
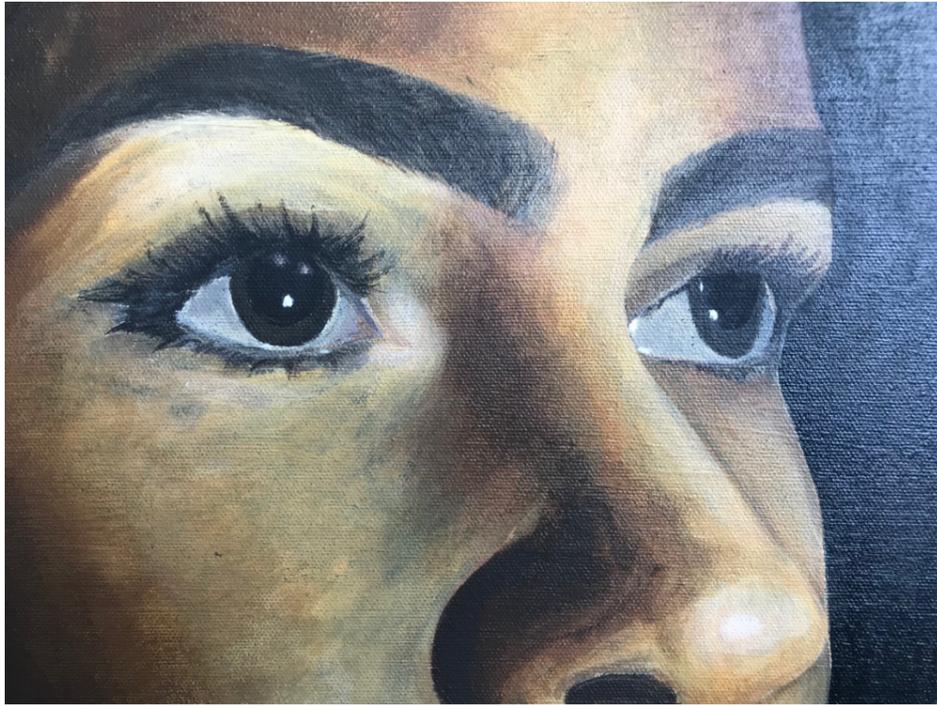
Adam Riches,

Sarah Moller



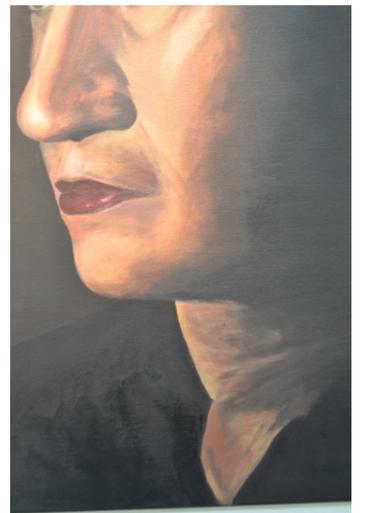
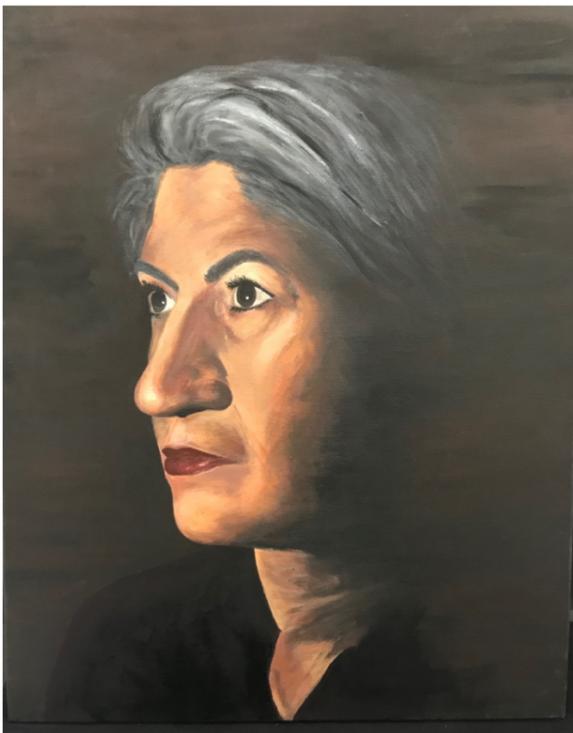
Truth One

She will earn a lot less money in her lifetime than her brother.



Truth Two

She will retire with less wealth and less income than her brother.



Truth Three

She is more likely to suffer violence than her brother.

