

*Muriel*

## **Hayley White**

My piece aims to capture the essence of my grandmother, Muriel, who passed away in 2018. I wanted to complete a portrait of my grandmother, as in the last few years she spent with us I felt much closer to her, and that she greatly influenced my life. I always like my work to be personally relevant, so this was not a difficult decision to make.

The piece itself is a 16.7x30.2cm lino print done with black water-based ink. The piece is composed of three images of my grandmother. The central image is of my grandmother looking forwards. The image to the left, she looks towards the left, and the image on the right, she looks to the right. I felt this truly captured her essence as we are able to see view her from every angle.

The most challenging element of completing this practical piece was trying to get the desired effect from the lino printing method I used. Originally I had decided to only cut out the drawn details of the photo, so when printed, the parts that should have been white were black and vice versa. Although from my initial testing it printed out well, I was not happy with the outcome. To counteract this, I decided to carve another lino block, this time cutting out the light. This decision was an integral part of creating a piece I was happy with.

To figure out the best way to complete this lino print, I researched two artists who created lino prints in the style that I found visually appealing. Through looking at prints by Marinka Parnham, I learned how to include elements into the background. I very much liked the inclusion of natural Australian native flora, and found links between this and my grandmother, as she used to wear a wattle brooch. From this link, I included stylised wattle flowers into the background of my print.

From looking at prints by Barbara Hanrahan, I learned how to incorporate detail and pattern into my prints. This allowed me to appreciate detail in prints. Through copying elements of Hanrahan's work, I was able to learn what techniques are best at carving detail into lino. This included using blades for very intricate areas like the eyes.

A learning curve that I had to face was learning how to best use the printing press. I found that changing the pressure was a crucial part to achieving a good print. I learnt that when not enough pressure is applied to the lino, the print is patchy. I also learnt that when too much pressure is applied, the ink fills the gaps, distorting the image. This learning curve was crucial to obtaining a print that justified the many hours I spent carving the lino.

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