

Practitioner's statement

Cats

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Due to my first practical being a self-portrait I wanted to also relate to my second practical in a personal way. When brainstorming ideas and personal connections, cats surfaced as a point of interest. I chose cats because I have many as pets, and my niece Hazel and I have a mutual love for them. Cats have charming characteristics and are children in nature, which I wanted to portray in a piece of art work for my niece.

I researched on the internet and in the library for resources on cats. I found some interesting factual information and was surprised at how many different breeds of cats exist, domestic and wild. I initially focused on my own pets as a topic but extended my generation of ideas from different sources to enlarge my collection of images.

My main inspiration was drawn from French impressionist Pierre Auguste Renoir. Renoir created beautiful paintings with cats featuring in many of his compositions. His love for nature and the creatures within, is expressed through his paintings, which influenced me to create paintings that depicted cats that are life-like and beautiful. I was also intrigued by the work of Diane Hoepfner. She paints reflections of her life, as a person and as an artist and cats feature in many of her paintings. She aims to celebrate the beauty in the world and finds comfort in her floral still life and cat paintings. Her focus in her artwork is in a variety of outcomes, she likes to create visual images while using opposites on the colour wheel, and to have passages of light to dark in her compositions for contrast. Her cat paintings are very realistically painted. Another inspiration was drawn from award winning painter Elin Pendleton, who is known for her paintings of animals, particularly cats and dogs. Pendleton uses a variety of media including watercolour, acrylic and oil.

Images out of the book were chosen for my final practical, due to it being very difficult to capture my own cats in the pictures of quality that I wanted to use. I chose three images to feature on the three circular canvases I had purchased. I chose three circles for a more unusual effect of composition, conscious of the need to have a different use of positive and negative space, but with the same topic "Cats" each as individual images, but unified as a theme.

Although I was aware of what I wanted to achieve for my practical work, I needed to work on the processes to develop the effects and expertise I wanted. It required a comprehensive experimentation with a range of mediums and techniques in drawing and painting, especially to get their fur looking realistic. Although I was happy with development of the effect and technique that resulted, with especially coloured pencil, ultimately I found I was happiest with the results from using good quality acrylic paint.

I believe I have created a practical which displays my love for cats which is life like and aesthetically pleasing.