

Practitioner's Statement

Spirited Beauty

Maya Abeynayake

Horses have been a huge centre of my life and I wanted to reflect my admiration for these animals in my final artwork. My passion alone was a motivation, but after researching several equine artists, I gained further inspiration looking at other people's work, particularly admiring the unique styles of artists such as Peggy Judy and Monique Lap. I was inspired by the many ways that the artists had managed to capture the beauty and strength of the horses featured in their artwork. I wanted my own artwork to have the same effect, and this encouraged me to thoroughly plan out my final artwork and take every detail into consideration. This included weighing up the pros and cons for each possible reference photo, deciding on colour of the background, and figuring out the ideal composition.

In my folio I had experimented with different mediums and discovered that I enjoyed using oil paints, and this greatly influenced me to do an oil painting for my final artwork. My interest in this medium steered me away from my original plan, which was to create a final piece painted in Photoshop using my graphics tablet. Instead of sticking to this comfortable method, I decided to push my own artistic limits and step outside my comfort zone with an unfamiliar medium.

In terms of the positive aspects of my work, I believe that using oils worked in my favour as I achieved the well-blended look I was after. The texture around the horse's nose was an element that turned out successfully as it replicated the soft and slightly bumpy texture seen in the reference image. Also, another positive to be mentioned is the intricate detailing of the horse's equipment. I believe that the detail in this area added a layer of depth and realism to the painting. Regarding the negative aspects, the hair was one element which did not quite match the overall style of the horse, as it turned out looking more 'cartoony' as oppose to the realistic.

Looking at other practitioners that explored the same theme, I came across many unique artworks that were created in styles that appealed to me, and this motivated me to try out new and unfamiliar mediums; acrylics and oils in particular. I wanted to improve my skills in these areas so I used these mediums as part of my practical experimentation. I found that looking at other practitioners' work helped me develop my own style and improve my painting techniques.

I believe that horses are sometimes underappreciated as animals. They deserve more recognition for the companionship they provide, their unique personalities, and their willingness to follow commands under the hands of an equestrian. Also, like all natural wonders of the earth, horses should be valued for their spirit and beauty. My artwork showcases these beliefs in a visual form and reflects the passion that I hold for these animals.