

## ***Rose Coloured Glasses***

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'*Rose Coloured Glasses*' is a body of work that was inspired by my time spent with the children of East Timor in 2015, and the metaphor of Rose Coloured Glasses translates to people having an outlook on life that is bright and optimistic. From my perspective, this is how the children saw their world, a place filled with opportunity that is cheerful and positive. Immersing myself in the rural community of Railaco and forming friendships with the children influenced me to capture the emotions and personality that emanated from them. Their welcoming embrace, positivity and compassion are strong memories that will remain with me. Through this artwork I wanted to convey the same emotions I felt whilst in East Timor in attempt to portray the feelings that the children evoked within me.

The use of coloured pencils as one of the mediums for my major was initially inspired by the Renaissance works of *Da Vinci* and *Michelangelo*, particularly in the way they were able to develop realistic forms through the building of multiple layers to create a range of tonal values. Prismacolor pencils assisted in the rendering of this technique enabling me to develop richness by building layers to create visual form and realism. I focused on a restrained palette using the local colours with natural tones and shades to capture the dark qualities and fullness in the child's face and clothes. This natural palette of browns and greens were a stark contrast against his white eyes and lush pink lips and heart, this was perfect as it created emphasis within the work to attract the viewer's eye. The tooth of the brown paper was ideal as it held the pencil well allowing for blending and layering that was optimal in achieving realistic form as well as a smooth surface appearance. It also assisted in creating a contrast between the opacity of the brown paper against the flat flowers painted in Posca marker on the transparent sheeting; this helped to enhance the technique and details achieved with the coloured pencils.

The child in my work is a young boy I befriended whilst assisting at a feeding program for malnourished children in the rural regions of Railaco. He did not speak, I do not know his name or age, however this was irrelevant as his actions and eyes spoke volumes that could not be conveyed through words. I wanted to capture these emotions through a radiating halo of flowers mirroring the way that the Timorese children opened up to us so easily just like a flower. The flowers are symbolic of this and I have drawn the organic shapes in white fluid line to symbolise the purity and innocence of the children.

Inspiration was also drawn from South Australian contemporary artist, *Ruby Chew*, who adopts a halo shape around many of her portraits. Using a similar concept I decided to incorporate the circular shape for my support board, but as a halo of flowers. This circle symbolises the unity and harmony that is evident in the community of Railaco. My decision to convey this through the use of a translucent circular shaped Perspex form that had no straight edges was to represent the way that the community was accepting and generous, and during our time they welcomed us warmly. I drew further inspiration from *Georgia Low* a papercut artist based in North Wales, whose papercut art commemorates key moments in people's lives. I have developed this idea by representing the flowers of East Timor in contoured line drawings radiating outwards. These have been drawn on the surface of Perspex to create shadows within the work that demonstrate the personalities and lives of the people of East Timor emphasising that there is more to them than what we first see. In essence this work is about the human condition of the children of East Timor, representing their nature and character and the way that they live their life through 'rose coloured glasses'.