

## Practitioner's Statement

### **Heimat' to Home**

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I have always been fascinated by the theories and methods impressionists employed to capture moments in time. Therefore I began my research by deconstructing and analysing the works of Claude Monet, Pierre Auguste Renoir, Gustave Caillebotte, Mary Cassatt and Alfred Sisley, who together helped create the style we now refer to as impressionism. I was captivated by the calm yet expressive atmosphere Sisley portrayed, especially in his skies. Sisley's works demonstrate that the brushstrokes of an impressionistic piece are not realistic depictions; instead they are representations of perceptions. This inspired me to develop my ability to create an atmosphere, rather than focusing on forming an accurate portrayal of an image. Monet's avid utilisation of the simultaneous and complementary contrast, from the theories of M. E. Chevrul, enhanced my understanding of the effect of value on the perception of colour. This inspired me to experiment with the relative value of colour and contrasts in order to fabricate an illusion of light and atmosphere in my work.

Gustav Caillebotte employed a restrained colour palette allowing him to capture simplistic, calm warmth, which I believe conveys a sense of clarity. I value the ability to find stillness in chaos and I believe this is something which can be observed in such an atmosphere. I achieved a similar lucidity in my own work by emphasising the sun's position, through the strong shadows which complement the colour of the sun. Abram Yefimovich Arkhipov's influence assisted me to expressively contrast the values in my work and be bold with my brushstrokes and choice of hues. Moreover, John Asaro's contemporary works taught me to exaggerate the complementary contrast and paint my own impression of the moment.

In line with the impressionists, I used a deep yellow and burnt umber backwash to emulate the warmth of the sunlight. I painted a tonal base, using burnt umber and phthalo blue, over the backwash to effectively reflect the direction and position of the sun. In order to create an impression of the moment I had to work with speed, which restricted the artwork to an easel size canvas. The ratio of the canvas was not in the golden mean because I wanted to modernise the work. However, I was still able to use the rule of thirds in order to create a counterbalanced, dynamic composition.

My work reflects my own impression of a challenging, yet wonderful time in my life. The moment captures my first time on an Australian beach. I had just been pulled away from everything I knew in Germany and landed in a breathtaking place. Although beauty surrounded me with the nurturing warmth of the sun on my back, I struggled to completely leave my past behind. My stance in my work symbolised my physical position in the world, however the direction of my sights highlights the way my mind often travelled back to my 'home'. The juxtaposition of the rough seas with my strong, solid stance represents the challenges I had overcome to arrive here along with those which were yet to come.