

## Practitioner's Statement

### ***Stolen***

Chantelle Fey

Between 1910 and 1970, Indigenous Australian children were victims of various deplorable government policies which forcibly removed them from their families creating the Stolen Generations. This shameful event in Australia's history inspired me as I made an attempt to develop a piece directly reflecting my personal notions of the Stolen Generations. I too found motivation was in Western civilizations treatment of Indigenous Australian's since the European invasion of Australia in 1988.

I believe western civilisation strived to completely eliminate the Indigenous Australian culture however the Aboriginal heritage will forever remain. I demonstrated this idea with a white hand tearing away at the skin revealing the Aboriginal flag. The Australian flag is also displayed in the reflection of the eyes to represent the invasion. I was inspired by various images of tattoo's which depicted similar ideas of flags imbedded in the skin.

I analysed the history of the Stolen Generations expanding my personal knowledge which effectively allowed a correct and thorough understanding of the event. I attended a ceremony where three former Stolen Generation children shared their personal experiences which provided me with unique information encouraging conceptual thoughts. I photographed a friend who is of Aboriginal descent and he dressed his face in white ochre, a native body paint used in ceremonies.

Inspired by the work of Dirk Dzimirsky and Lin Onus, I attempted to create a meaningful Aboriginal piece whilst experimenting with hyperrealism and materials such as; charcoal, graphite and acrylic paint. Dzimirsky was my inspiration to attempt hyperrealism as he is infamous for creating pieces of this genre. Onus, however, creates more complex pieces in order to depict the displacement of Indigenous Australians, this influenced how I portrayed my message in my final piece.

Through various efforts of trial and error, I was able to depict my message through a hyper realistic piece. I utilised charcoal for the face and hand, and acrylic paint for the white ochre and the Aboriginal flag. The Australian flag was too small in size to draw so to solve this issue I printed the flags onto cartridge paper and stuck them in place.

This final image portrays my personal opinions and perceptions about the Stolen Generations. My friend Damian, who I featured in my final, embodies the optimism and hopes which inspire future generations. When discussing the meaning of the white ochre with Damian, it became clear to me that he is the legacy of a century long tradition, preserving it with pride.