

## Practitioner's Statement

### ***Friends***

Sarah Paige Freeman

I have always been interested in portraits and enjoy drawing faces but decided to focus my attention on women, especially done in graphite pencil.

Graphite pencil and the greyscale work it produces have always appealed to my personal aesthetic, especially when the pieces depict people, whether they are in portrait or the whole figure. The shadows and highlights are more defined in greyscale graphite work and I find them much more appealing than the tones of coloured pieces.

An artist whose work I explored was a YouTuber who goes by the username JustWannaBeArtist. She is a self-taught artist who has posted many video tutorials about how she creates her artwork. The piece that I learned her technique from was a watercolour portrait. I found that the techniques she used were fun because they were more carefree than rendering realistically. I was able to let go of my perfectionist mindset and have a bit more fun with it.

Another more applicable artist whose work I explored was Carlos Aleman. He is a Cuban American artist, writer and book cover designer. He posted a step-by-step tutorial of a woman's face and neck, which I recreated a portion of. This tutorial was very helpful because it helped me explore new skills that I used in my final pieces. Although most of the tutorial was helpful, I didn't like some parts of it and, which helped me to find the techniques I didn't like and to avoid using them in my finals.

My sources of inspiration for my subject were my two best friends, making the pieces more personal by featuring them rather than a model that I didn't know personally. I faced them in towards each other to symbolize the bond between the three of us and how even after many years we can still have this close connection.

One of the biggest difficulties I faced throughout was achieving successful toning. I usually only use a HB pencil in my graphite drawings so I had to gain more experience with other grade pencils. I darkened the areas gradually, at first using a 2B, then a 4B, and finally a 6B in the darkest areas, creating very convincing tones.

The highlights held a whole new set of difficulties in themselves. In most places the skin was too dark to be left unshaded but didn't need much colour at all. I eventually found that I could use my already-dirty paper blending stumps to add a small amount of shade to the skin without it being too dark. I also used my kneadable eraser to lighten off any areas that were too dark and to add clean highlights.

Although I encountered and overcome many challenges throughout the process of creating my finals, my pieces have perfectly captured my friend's faces and personalities as I set out to do.