

Oncoming Storm, Moonta Bay

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The starting points for my visual thinking for my second practical began with inspiration drawn from the coastal environment in which I live. My home town has been exposed to some of the worst winter storms that locals can recall. A love of my surroundings and the vast, ever changing skies created by atmospheric weather conditions is what inspired me most. Storms, sunsets, luminous skies and the way weather conditions change the colours of both water and land became my area of focus.

My first Practical was heavily concept and research orientated so in this Practical I aimed to explore and employ the techniques and styles of different artists. My intentions were to practice the techniques used by artists who focus on painting weather conditions and to use my learning to guide the process of creating my own artwork using a similar subject matter. Media Experimentation in the style of various artists meant that I could refine my own painting style and techniques.

I researched artists in chronological order, starting with renowned English Romanticist painter, Joseph Mallord William Turner. Turner best known for his ability to paint light painted mesmerising land and sky scapes. It was his painting "Steamer in a snowstorm" that inspired me to develop my theme of storms. Turner's landscape paintings were believed to be the prelude to impressionism.

Impressionist, Claude Monet inspired my initial experimentation, where I used obvious brush strokes to paint in an impressionistic style. I liked this technique, and it proved to be effective in creating movement in the slightly choppy sea in my final piece. The expressionist techniques employed by Emil Nolde also inspired the freedom of my strokes in several of my experiments more so than my final piece. "Pt Hughes storm" was an experiment painted directly from a photo I had taken. I was pleased with the movement and spontaneity of approach using impressionistic and expressionistic painting techniques. I worked quickly and expressionistically and paid less attention to detail than in my final painting.

As I gained confidence in exploring other practitioner's styles I began painting my own photographs and experimented using a more personalised style. My painting of a sunset over Pt Hughes was a successful experiment as it realistically captures the colours, mood and atmosphere of my local environment.

Similar to Eugene Boudin's "Deauville, Low Tide" and "Approaching storm". I have depicted places that are sacred to me. Much like many of the artists I had explored and analysed, my piece emulates the more obvious compositional elements and characteristics of their work: the low horizon line which adds dramatic effect. The larger sky to land ratios was used by the Romanticists and Expressionists to capture that feeling of power created by different weather conditions. This knowledge led me to photographing my landscape during change of weather and concentrating on achieving similar compositions.

While painting "Approaching Storm, Moonta Bay" it was hard to resist the temptation to stray from the original photograph. I felt the need to add more contrasts, movement and tonal variation into the cloud formations. Working larger scale also presented different challenges, I used larger brushes, sponges even my hands to create the effects I was seeking and represent the light, atmosphere and colours that come with an approaching storm.