

"NANA"

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Nearing the end of my childhood, I found myself reflecting on who I am today. What experiences shaped me? Who influenced me and how? Hence my topic of influences. I began my folio exploring 6 people I find most influential in my life, now and in the past. I noted what they taught me and how they inspire me. Two people I felt influenced me in different ways I wanted to dedicate a piece to, were my brother and nana.

Initial influences from artist Ben Quilty, whose work explores a more abstract portraiture style than I typically emulate. I began studying his minimalistic technique utilizing thick applications of paint and employing colour psychology to portray his subject. An approach I wanted to influence my final piece. However, studying his piece 'Fairy Bower Rorschach' I recognised connections with his printing technique of applying thick paint and printing it onto another canvas of memories with my nana. Reminding me of a similar technique used as a child to paint butterflies that I would paint with her because of her great love for butterflies, particularly blue. Loving the idea of incorporating both my nana and butterflies in a tribute to her, I continued down this road.

David Bromley combined both portraits and butterflies. Exploring his unique style, dry brush technique that portrayed an almost antique style along with his use of butterflies in his compositions, I explored my first ideas and concepts which involved, my nana, butterflies intermingled within her voluminous hair peeking out like a plant, possibly incorporating leaves. Rather than having them solely as a background subject, I wanted to represent a closer relationship between the two. Exploring more artists, such as Michael Sydney Moore and Vincent Van Gogh, I experimented and developed my painting style and technique I wanted to use. Looking at Moore's more realistic and traditional technique and Van Gogh's impressionism, I found myself favoring Moore's style but still very much influenced by Van Gogh's embracement of colour in unconventional aspects of a portrait as did Quilty.

My aim was to portray my nana the most appropriate way, capturing her beautiful, selfless, youthful nature. I wanted my family to look at this piece and have them say that I really captured her as a person, in addition I wanted strangers to be intrigued by the piece and imagine who this person is and maybe have it remind them of a similar mother figure in their life.

When planning my final piece, I considered my colour palette. By painting her in my favorite pink knitted jumper she has worn since I was little, surrounded by a lavender blue background – her favorite colour. Tones of analogous colours represented my Nana along with rough gold leaf outlines of butterflies. Wanting to add another dimension I incorporated 3D blue butterflies drawn and printed on plastic that follows through her hair and off the canvas. This represents both my nanas free spirit and unconditional love and encouragement she provides me with, which inspired me to explore art off the canvas.