

Family Portrait

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For my second practical I wanted to show the other key relationships in my life – that of my family. My family is very large and has always been important to me. Each family member has shown and taught me different life lessons that I will forever use and remember throughout my life. Each member of my family has different characteristics and traits that I wanted to portray in my artwork. This body of work is intended as a tribute to them and shows the importance of my family to me; how they all have different characteristics and strengths that their love and care has helped shape who I am. They are the most supportive family and I know that they would do anything to help me if I was in need.

Developing this work I was influenced by a range of artists who employ drawing as a key technique. Notably by Australian artist's Robert Hannaford and Jeffery Smart, who both have contemporary styles that are realistic, but have a sense of movement and character in them. Both artists also have strong understanding of form and tone shown this in their skillful rendering of their subjects and both use drawings to plan their major painted works. Their pencil drawings in particular, influenced my style drawing for this practical. I explored their techniques and media applied in their works and was particularly interested in experimenting with the confidence of Hannaford's rendering with loose hatching and construction lines still evident. I also did studies on Diego Koi and his hyper-realistic works. In particular his work of an eye in extreme close up inspired me to create the works I did, as they were drawings of close ups and sections of the body or face.

After rough sketches, I took photos of each of my family members from different angles and different parts of their bodies. I then created compositions from these rather than just relying on the more traditional facial portrait format. Keeping the works smaller created a sense of intimacy and I interpreted the quality of movement and character in my work that I was looking for, with the application of graphite pencil rendering and by cutting back through the work with an eraser to give it an almost unfinished look. This unfinished look represents how my family is still growing with nephews and nieces to yet still be born. Presenting the works in a concertina folded book allowed me to expand and contract the images and refers to the strong connection that we all have.

The three associated images support this work and explore a different application. Creating 'Crystal Clear' transfers from my photos that relate to the sketches, drawn over loosely using a nib pen and ink to emphasize the individual features of each family member, these works helped me to consolidate my final compositions for my family portrait.

Overall, I am very pleased with the final work as it has a sense of personal intimacy and importance in my chosen subjects and compositions that really only need to resonate with myself and my family – it expresses my love and appreciation for these people who whilst are just average people, they are the most important people to me. #

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