

Whale

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My original idea was: 'My love and concern for the natural environment, specifically animals in their environment.' This idea is personally relevant to me as I live in a coastal town and regularly experience of seeing wild animals in the oceans and countryside. As I analysed different artworks and trialled various styles and techniques and considered the loss of habitat as a threat to the existence of wild animals. I found a personal connection between these themes of animal life and their impact on our human life. Hence, I arrived at the final idea: 'My love and concern for wild animals and their importance to human society'

In folio 2, I studied the four artists: Eric Sweet, Guy Maestri, James Stewart and Hua Tunan. Deconstructing each of these artists and experimenting with their style for my topic, animals in the wild, was useful and informative. The main influence was James Stewart as it incorporates his style of metal sculpture and has many similar techniques, like the assemblage of small objects. I picked up skills from the other artists such as Hua Tunan, who taught me the importance of the capturing an animal's natural stance.

My work is highly influenced by the work of James Stewart in several ways. Firstly, the subject matter was similar. James Stewart produces sculptures of animals both wild and domestic and sometimes other topics such as man/machine. I chose to create a wild animal gaining understanding of the techniques to match this subject. Secondly, James Stewart's sculptures and mine were assemblage sculptures created from scrap metal including machine parts and tools as was his. I used similar techniques to James Stewart to create this sculpture, such as the small tack welds to connect each piece of metal together. Based on his advice I polished desired metal with a wire wheel before being welded together and ground back imperfections afterwards. I also sprayed a clearcoat over the top, to highlight certain features of the sculpture/animal and reflect the light.

My artwork is an assemblage sculpture of a whale created with recycled machine parts. The cleaned sliver metal and the bronze of rusted parts combined with the complimentary red and green of old patina paint creates a variegated surface, simulating skin. Selectively combining materials and different shaped machine parts resemble the 3-dimensional form of the whale, the dimples of their skin and the tubular shape of their body. The curved lines of threaded rod formed the bottom jaw and straight lines to create an outline of the section between the main body and tail.

This work communicates the ironic juxtaposition between the sleek organic form of the whale. The scrap metal from discarded objects represents the tension between the wild animals/places and the urban cluttered of fabricated objects that were created to enhance our physical lives. Protecting, co-existing and making connections with wild animals and wild places ensures our mental and spiritual wellbeing.

I have learnt new techniques of welding and improved my selective decision making, analysing industrial waste and connecting it to the natural forms of nature.