

Living in the Moment

Ruby Williams

Living in the moment is a struggle for many in this day an age of growing technology and a desire to share every memory online in order to gain validation from friends, family and even strangers. Taking pictures of scenic views and memories is how we remember our feelings in that moment. Instead of enjoying the moment in front of us, we minimise the memories by seeing it behind a camera lens. My interest in living in our moments without diversion, stems from my time spent travelling in rural areas of Asia and countryside's of France. Since then, my appreciation for our natural world has grown immensely after seeing what Mother Nature has to offer in person. Furthermore, living in the moment relates to being present with your surroundings. We often do not appreciate our everyday living spaces for the function that they serve. Our kitchen is a place where food is created to share with friends and family, embracing new aspects of cultures. Our living room is a place of relaxation and unwinding from the day, watching TV and movies where we escape from reality. The bathroom serves to refresh and clean ourselves from the day, and our bedroom is a place of vulnerability, where we rest for the new day. The atmosphere of the environment you are living in often dictates your mindset, and how you go about things. My interest in the surrounding layers of our environment stems from my observations of the living spaces of people close to me. In particular, the interior design and mood of the space has urged me to capture this composure.

Through the idea of living in the moment, I have taken great inspiration from the southern parts of France and Italy, renowned for their vast countryside and relaxed atmosphere. The vast landscapes are filled with remote communities with a friendly and helpful culture. I came across an array of artists that have been a fundamental aspect of my inspiration, and thus helped me refine my concept and curate the compositions of my final art pieces. My main sources of inspiration include Henri Matisse, Andre Derain, and Pierre Boncompain, Georgia Cheesman and Jan Brewerton. Matisse and Derain helped inaugurate my vision of Fauvism, with their vivid use of colour and free form of shape expressed in their landscapes. I began incorporating bright, unusual use of colour in my landscapes, still-life's and nudes. I chose to experiment with oil paint, and discovered this was my preferred medium due to its high quality pigmentation. I explored how the nude body connects to living in the moment, as I often found pictures of individuals with partial clothing on in a country side backyard, living life without distractions and taking in the surrounding nature. I began the study of nudes by attending a life-drawing workshop by the Adelaide Art Gallery, and produced a piece from a two-hour life observation. This session helped me draw from sight, and I learned to appreciate aspects of the female nude body. Boncompain's simple tone, form and infrequent details of the nude body attracted me to compose my figure in a similar style. He often positions his muse in relaxed and/or vulnerable positions, a technique that fits well with my style.

The first part of the suite comprises of a life drawing and an oil painting. The life drawing is an appreciation of the structures that compose of a female nude body, and the painting incorporates this body with an array of everyday objects in a living room, observing the natural view of a beach in front of her. The living room that opens out to a window suggests a place where an individual can be relaxed and indulge eating, drinking, while taking in the serenity in front of her. The still-life objects a filled with a range of vibrant colours with visible brush strokes to enhance the abstract technique Matisse and Derain commonly utilised. To enhance the objects further, I used a range of complementary colours such as yellow and purple, orange and blue and green and red. The nude body similarly features a range of olive tones, suggesting the ethnicity of the model is from European descendants, who commonly has access to warm coast.

The remaining part of the suite consists of five oil lino block prints, the main one being (53cm x 45cm) and four smaller prints. I chose to seek inspiration from Georgia Cheesman, who commonly composes highly detailed lounge room environments. I incorporated elements of Cheesman's style by depicting my sister's lounge room as my main piece. I recognise her house as my second home, a place I can visit and always feel welcome, filled with a lived in atmosphere. I incorporated Matisse's floral cut outs, including his 'Blue Nude' as I have always found inspiration from his artwork, as they were commonly displayed in my house. His simple form and flat tone of bright colour is simple yet effective. I frequently used repetitive fine lines in the couch, wallpaper, rug, piano and wood flooring to add texture and dimension to the objects. Incorporating a clothesline revealing the undergarments from outside the window, shows the personal aspect of a home. I retained the piano from the original reference, as I believe it is the focal point of the piece, with the fine details of the keys and symmetry of the object drawing the viewer in. The rug is similarly a focal point of the piece, with its geographic repetitive horizontal lines and triangles. I used a vanishing point for all the placements of my objects, as it creates a first person perspective viewing of the entire living room. Contrasting horizontal and vertical lines helps add a dimension of confusion and chaos to the print.

The minor pieces depict two bathrooms, a bedroom and a still-life, each representing the function each room in a house serves. The still-life features an overlap of jugs, wine bottles and glasses, allowing the contrasting tones of black and white to dictate the piece.

Overall, I am very happy with my final pieces, and believe both pieces effectively convey the importance of living in the moment wherever that may be, and to recognise how the surrounding spaces where you live play an integral component to how you free yourself from distractions in the modern era.

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