

School No. 232
Nostalgia Point

Prismacolor pencil on prisma colour paper

'Nostalgia Point' was created from my strong memories of a place that has been treasured by my family. Black Point is located on the east coast of the Yorke Peninsula. Since the 1980s, my family have owned a shack there. Since before my own birth, my parents holidayed at Black Point with the extended family, creating long lasting memories and stories that are told and retold till this day. Over time my family have crafted countless albums holding hundreds of photographs of time spent with family at our home away from home. My realistic coloured pencil drawing depicts a moment in time of my brother and myself as children, against a seascape, to demonstrate the general sense of happiness that is felt by my family when visiting our shack.

To demonstrate the extent of Black Point's significance for my family, I have drawn the subjects from a photo taken on the beach at Black Point, over ten years ago. This scene has been juxtaposed with a recent photo I took at the same location, to enhance the context and link the past to the present. By altering the background, I have been able to incorporate our family fishing boat. This boat is symbolic of the adventures we have experienced at Black Point. Additionally, the boat is a metaphor for the journey of life. The boat becomes a focal point as it conforms to the rule of thirds composition, and depicts realism similar to the figures in the foreground. Birds appear next to the boat in the middle ground and create movement as they direct viewer's eyes into the horizon. The two birds are also symbolic of the importance of maintaining strong bonds with our extended families. I chose a more recent photo for its balanced composition, similar to that in "Lost in treasure" (2014), by Australian artist Kim Polomka. The height of the horizon line brings the figures closer to the foreground, and the angle of the shoreline creates depth of field. The size and position of the figures creates a vertical emphasis also. To create a more harmonious composition, I had to extend the smaller figure beyond what the photo captured. The small child had her hair and shoulder extend to add visual interest and gives emphasis to the subjects.

I wanted my background to have personal significance and provide familiar connections as well as a focal point, without overpowering the figures. To achieve this, I used cool grey tones over blue and green tones, in the ocean and the sky, to produce a blurred effect throughout the background. This contrasts well with the detailed, rendered figures in the foreground. This concept is similar to the Impressionist seascapes of Claude Monet. Coloured pencil works by contemporary portrait artists, Barbara Dahlstedt and Bonnie Sheckter, inspired me to depict a scene that has personal meaning to the subjects in the work. Sheckter's work influenced me to look into posed family photos of smiling children in a home environment. I developed this idea further by creating a candid drawing of my brother and me in an environment that we consider home.

I wanted my drawing to depict a serene and joyous figurative seascape that encapsulates the close bond that exists not only between my older brother and me, but my entire family. To achieve this, I gained inspiration from Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art movements. Urban and seascape paintings by Monet helped develop my interest in contrasting warm colours against cool colours. I did this by using warm yellow, orange and red tones in the faces, against cool blue and grey tones in the clothing in the foreground. To add further contrast I incorporated warm orange and yellow tones in both tops to add further visual interest. Similarly, I adjusted the original colour of the buoy, floating in the ocean, making it orange; this directs the viewer's eyes from the foreground into the middle ground. Cultural landscapes by Paul Gauguin inspired me to consider landscapes that were symbolic and personal. This led me to the figurative landscapes of Raoul Dufy and Henri Matisse from the Fauvism art movement. "Girl Reading" (1906) by Matisse encouraged me to work with line and strokes to show depth and movement. I believe I successfully applied this technique to my work by using deliberate and directional pencil strokes to create the form and structure of the figures in the foreground, and the water in the background.

The use of a primary light source allowed me to translate a sense of warmth, and consequently enhance the overall realism. The natural light source from the upper-left corner produced the organic blend of yellows, pinks and oranges in the skin tones. I found colour pencil to be the most effective dry medium in adequately capturing these vast tones. To effectively render all these tones, I layered colours on top of one another and used the Prismacolor blending tool to achieve a smooth transition between layers. This tool was effective in developing the opaqueness in various regions of my work. However, this caused me to over-apply tones and limit the depth I hoped to achieve. To overcome this, I used an elastomer eraser to lighten regions and add pure white as highlight. This improved the structure and form of my work. In conjunction, the blending tool was used to soften harsh lines, particularly those in the faces. By applying black and cool brown to regions in the face, hair and the eyelashes, I was able to produce shadow that looked natural. Through careful and considered selection of colours and tones, I was able to produce a realistic figurative scene that shows my family's enjoyment and love of our holidays at Black Point.