

*Untitled*

**Nicola D'Angelo**

This work represents the world of the used and abandoned. As an extension of my first work which was centred on the concept of rot and decay in the natural world, this investigation progressed to the impact of human action on decay, which, I have denoted as Wear and Tear for this work. The starting points for this work sprung from my involvement in football. This led to an investigation of the history of football, specifically the wear and tear on the gear as a symbol of the psychology of the players, their level of exhaustion after game time which is representative of how human wear and tear can relate to the physical demands on athletes. I drew inspiration from DC comics and Borderlands to apply techniques when experimenting with representing wear on sports equipment, gathering some of my old gear and most used school and art supplies for a 'messy bedroom' symbolic of the wear and tear of balancing sport, school and life.

As an extension of these themes, I began to look at other ways humans create wear and tear. I began to notice the decay of buildings surrounding my home and places I visited frequently. Wear and tear is present in the absence of humans, neglected, run down, and abandoned buildings and warehouses became visually interesting. The discovery of the work of Australian born painter Jeffrey Smart, led to a technical exploration of capturing and portraying buildings. I was particularly impacted by Smart's use of compositional techniques such as high and low horizon lines and use of contrasting hues to create a sense of sunlit, industrial scapes. Through research, I came across an article outlining the photography of an abandoned WW1 hospital, which led to further investigation of this subject matter. Scott McCarten, photographer and urban explorer who visually documents Adelaide's abandoned spaces 'Autopsy of Adelaide' further fuelled my desire to depict the wear and tear of architecture. I began my own analysis of my local area, Port Adelaide where I looked for elements of Smart's compositional elements and McCarten's capturing of light quality.

After collecting different photographs, it was a challenge to be selective about an image to base my final work on, eventually I relied on my visual instincts to select an image that highlighted my technical priorities but also which was representative of the concept. I was drawn to the image because of its low horizon line and strong contrasting colours, specifically the text, on the alarms. Everything about this image stood out from the rest with its noticeable age, the miss-matched windows, intricate cracks in the concrete walls, and stained bricks. The process of creating the work enhanced my sense of colour as when I laid the first colours I realised how substantial colour is in representing wear and tear. In the painting of the final work, I focused on capturing contrasting tonal qualities, highlighting sun-drenched colour to contrast against the stormy colour of the road, which, anchors the composition. Completing the painting was a technical journey, as I learned through the progression of the work.