

Childhood Innocence

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My artwork reflects a child's innocence towards their bright, but unknown future. Much of the inspiration from the glass spheres, which portray events from the child's future, is derived from my parents' memories of life experiences and photos of my childhood. They reflect personally relevant experiences, hobbies, achievements, relationships, and careers. The child is naturally curious in their environment, but does not yet understand the meaning and relevance of the spheres.

Several artists influenced my techniques, style, and concept, including Monika Luniak who exaggerates different hues in her landscapes, which result from highlights and shadows, adding depth and interest. Similarly, I used a variety of hues including soft purples in the sky, and bold greens in the ocean which make it less predictable. Theatrical, figurative artist Victor Nizovtsev inspired my realistic style of painting in conjunction with fantastical spheres, with his mismatched, imaginative objects in unpredictable locations which reflect a child's illogical imagination.

The choppy texture in the distant sea adds interest and depth, contrasting with the smooth spheres. However, the texture presented a hectic mood, which I did not want continuing into the foreground. I smoothed the texture out to create a more peaceful mood rather than a sense of instability or impending danger, because the child is oblivious to her future. A vibrant yellow-green was chosen for the swimsuit, with a more yellow tone than the greens of the ocean, creating contrast, but not enough to distract from the ocean. Through experimentation, I decided against red or pink bathers as they provided dramatic, predictable contrast against the ocean and may have distracted from the spheres. Viewers are drawn to her as the focal point, and then directed towards the spheres she is watching. The asymmetrically balanced composition provides a settling mood, aligning with the idea that the child's future is optimistic.

Initially, I planned to paint the spheres in various monochromatic colours to appear dreamy and intangible. Through experimentation, I discovered this colour palette lacked meaning and suggested predictability, whereas using a variety of realistic colours portrayed the future events as exciting and optimistic. I also experimented with an impressionistic style and scumbling for the ocean, but decided to paint realistically to unite the clear futuristic scenes in the spheres with the ocean. Oils suited my vision well as they're creamy and smooth for the foreground, but can be built up with a palette knife in the distant ocean. A challenge I experienced was trying to palette knife the shallow beach, and lacking the ability to blend colours smoothly or create water transparency to expose the underlying brown sand. I tried using a brush, which left behind textured strokes, leading me to experiment with using my finger to rub the paint with turpentine. This method smoothly blended the paint and the solvent exposed the sand colours beneath, creating transparent water.

Overall, I believe my artwork effectively communicates children's unawareness of the great experiences that lie ahead, whilst displaying an optimistic mood to excite viewers about the child's future.