

## *Feminine Beauty*

### **Ruby Kitto**

For my body of work, I intended to further develop and explore my curiosity for realism in portraiture as a theme for my artwork. I have spent many years taking art lessons to further practice my skills. I've been inspired by the idea of capturing life like faces and their unique beauty through using drawing materials and my sharp observation skills. My body of work is called Beauty and Balance, this includes a large-scale portrait of my sister in graphite pencil named Feminine Beauty and a portrait of my close friend in charcoal, named Captured Beauty. As a basis for my ideas, I turned my love for beauty by capturing moments, photographs and portrait artworks into hyper realistic portraits which capture the likeness of the person. My body of artwork is inspired by the artistic styles of realism and symbolism, symbolising females' unique beauty. Admittedly in the past I never particularly enjoyed using charcoal, especially when attempting portraits.

The charcoal was just never compliant enough for me. I'm a perfectionist when it comes to my art, this is why I enjoy realism as there is a clear objective, to capture the subject honestly, making it true to life. The charcoal portrait is a close-up snapshot of my friend's face who I've known for many years. Creating a portrait of her has been very enjoyable, I've loved seeing her reaction to my progression. The portrait highlights her beauty and unique features, my friend's features are small and soft, representing what is stereotypically known as beautiful. The piece represents innocence and femininity. I focused on keeping the features true to the photograph, which means adding unique detail including her beauty spots. My charcoal portrait was influenced by artist Casey Baugh, I was inspired by his suite of charcoal studies. I was inspired by the realism he captured through his charcoal suite. Casey Baugh's use of detail and light captured in the eyes to create hyperrealism influenced the way I approached the eyes in both my charcoal and graphite portraits for the likeness and realism to be captured.

I have always held a love for drawing and through experimenting different techniques to achieve a realistic portrait, this inspired me to further develop my skills and perfect facial features that are more challenging. My charcoal portrait enhanced my charcoal drawing capabilities on a larger scale paper (30.3cm x 32.5cm). Most details were completed using a paper stump to blend the charcoal into the paper. I approached the drawing by sectioning areas, this allowed me to really focus on the finer details to achieve a more realistic effect, this is how I have linked my work back to the artist Casey Baugh. I have always been fascinated with realistic drawings and paintings, particularly black and white graphite drawings. From a young age I would look to more experienced artists and aspire to achieve the same skills one day. My body of work is aimed to resemble my photography.

My first stage was creating the best photograph, this was a difficult process I had to take into account the placing of the hair, the flowers, the angle of the light and the right camera angle. The light source was from an LED light, this created in depth light and shadow along with reflection on the water. My graphite portrait is of my younger sister, the image shows her in a body of water, her hair in water swaying in every possible direction. This symbolises the freedom and playfulness, representing our leisurely childhood. In my artwork the water surrounding my sister represents life and growth, her wild hair symbolises our childhood, the water represents our growth from childhood into adulthood.

My graphite portrait enhanced my pencil drawing capabilities on a larger scale paper (43cm x 53cm). I'm pleased with the way the hair and background were blended using a tissue to create the blurred effect of water. The hair underneath the water was lightly influenced by American artist Alyssa Monks, she is well recognised for her figures obscured by water. When considering how to make my artwork more unique and eye catching, I came across the idea of using flowers, these float on the surface of the water surrounding the face. The flowers were used to represent lasting beauty and a happy life, historically flowers are used as a feminine way of expressing beauty. A large range of graphite pencils allowed me to create a greater contrast between the lights and shadows. The lights and shadows are an essential step when creating realism, I wanted the facial features to appear three dimensional. When undertaking the process of drawing the eyes, nose and mouth, I found it important to identify the shapes that captured the most light, these small details are what allowed me to achieve realism. I chose to create this artwork in black and white as it captured the depth and contrast of the lights and darks.

Through the development of my body of work, I thought critically and analytically to determine the right and wrong way of going about realism. Realism requires logic and reasoning, famous artist Albrecht Durer of the Renaissance period inspired me to analyse and determine accurate proportions of the human body, through development of great detail and measurement. During this study I have pushed my artistic boundaries by further using mediums in ways I've never done before. Although I'm familiar with graphite pencils techniques such as blending with a tissue to create a smooth texture was completely new to me. This technique has changed my way of thinking when drawing. It creates a completely different effect, this new effect makes the shading smooth, the result is more realistic. I also used a paper stump to blend charcoal for the first time, this has also changed my perspective on charcoal. My favourite part in each artwork is the life I was able to capture in the eyes.

The artwork I'm most proud of is Feminine Beauty. I'm extremely proud of the great detail I achieved, I learnt great patience through creating this piece. I am exceptionally pleased with my final outcomes, overall, they are the very best drawings I've completed. They are a form of personal expression which represents my continuous love for creating art through realism.