

Practitioners Statement FOLIO 2:

For this practical, the overall subject chosen to pursue was wildlife, specifically the role a Lion plays in the 'circle of life'. The brainstorming process involved looking at different wild animals in their habitats, observing the way they interact with other wildlife and their role in the so-called food chain. I chose the Lion as this gave me a chance to investigate the themes of royalty and the Lions association as the 'king of jungle or savannah'. Through my research, I found I wanted to focus on the need for each animal to contribute to this circle of life, for all of their survival. I looked at the innocence of carnivores, despite them displaying the sheer violence eating their prey to stay alive. My choice of Lions originally came from my childhood experiences of watching 'The Lion King'. In my research, I looked at famous wildlife photographers, for example, Richard Costin. From this, I selected a photograph which would guide my experimentation and refinement process before creating my final piece. The artists which I used as inspiration were, again Mariana Mezc for her unique greyscale coupled with colour concept, Julie Rhodes for her Graphite wildlife techniques, Pamela Clements for her use of coloured pencils to achieve a personal aesthetic, John Banovich for his technical skills, and his similar inspirations, investigating wildlife and Victoria Reynolds for her use of raw flesh as artwork. Another starting point came from like in Practical 1, using my already capable technical skills with graphite pencil and, mixing them with a new experimental media. This time I chose coloured pencils, resorting to buying polychromos pencils which eventually allowed me to blend properly, after struggling with regular coloured pencils. To portray the innocence of the Lion, the eyes were important, keeping them emotionless, despite showing the Lion chewing into the carcass of its prey. To generalise and allow the meat to represent all prey in the food chain, I avoided my original photo choice which showed zebra skin, causing the viewer to identify with only one wildlife interaction rather than a generalisation covering all carnivorous destructions. With this practical I developed my own aesthetic through colour, drawing the viewers focus to the eyes of the Lion initially to portray its innocence, followed by the burst of colour with my unique coloured pencil flesh feature surrounding the Lion. This came from trying to replicate the meat from the photos exactly, eventually using only brief outlines, choosing different shades of red, yellow, brown and black and combining them with lines, gradients and highlights to achieve this flesh feature, almost acting as a border. In my opinion, this piece worked perfectly, with the combination of colour and greyscale contrasting exactly like my original intent, and the fine detail of the Lion is to the level that I had aimed for. In my opinion, through the creation of a folio of experimentation and research, my final piece is influenced by other artist's work, using their techniques and concepts together to create my own personal aesthetic.