



SMART EXPRESSIONS

ART SPACE ON THE CONCOURSE

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AN EXHIBITION OF 2023 HSC ARTWORKS
29 FEBRUARY – 24 MARCH 2024

Willoughby City Council presents an exhibition of student artworks selected from the 2023 NSW HSC practical examination in Visual Arts. Celebrating the artistic talents and achievements of young people, the exhibition features a selection of artworks from students who attended six local high schools: Bradfield Senior College, Chatswood High School, Glenside Rudolf Steiner School, Mercy Catholic College, St Pius X College and Willoughby Girls High School. The artworks selected for the exhibition explore a range of subject matters such as immigration, poverty, mental health, identity, and the impact of patriarchal values and the consequences of technological advancement.



IMAGE Alina Rose, *Restaurant AI*, 2023, digital drawing

EXHIBITION AT ART SPACE ON THE CONCOURSE

X Ballantyne

Marco Balverde

Natalia Bennett

Leila Bolto

Dakoda Buchan

Bibi Cassidy

Lucian Chappell

Zoe Chung

Hayley Connors

Zavier Domenici

Mary Domingo

Alba Falkenmire

Dexter Gibson-Cummins

Natalia Heinrich

Henrik Hogg

Siho Kim

Jordan Lagana

Emma Li

Stephy Liang

Belfry May

Natalie McDowell

Yaeli Miller

Angus Ng

Jerome Pickering

Joel Richardson

Isabel Roche

Alina Rose

Cleo Walker

Erik Wild



IMAGE Erik Wild, *Hearing Damage*, 2023, video still



X BALLANTYNE

Escaping Allisticism

Paper, string, spray paint, embroidery, lino prints and analogue photos printed on fabric

Bradfield Senior College

Escaping Allisticism is a mixed-media self-portrait tapestry that represents my experiences as an Autistic person. Including appropriated images and analogue photos printed onto fabric, this artwork represents the pain of existing in a neurotypical society with large organisations that view Autism as a disease. It also celebrates unmasking and Autistic self-acceptance through the embrace of appropriated characters and imagery. The tapestry is tactile and invites people to feel the different textures, as touch is often a heightened sense for Autistic people. The removable zines represent different parts of embracing unmasking and accepting that allistics (non-Autistic people) will view us as different, and advocates to instead embrace being Autistic. The piece has many different elements and textures to give the audience a sense of the overwhelming feeling I experience existing in a neurotypical world.



MARCO BALVERDE

Threads Through Mayaman at Mahirap

Cardboard, paint, metal, wood and found objects

St Pius X College

I aim to express the contrast between the rich and poor, magnifying the slums in the Philippines. I have used an explicit blend of colours, textures, symbolism, and mixed media involving cardboard, paint, metal, wood and Filipino money (Peso). This money represents the privileged class, hidden within the poor, and the slums in the Philippines. I have expressed the harsh living conditions and struggles faced by the marginalised, using colour and textures to create an uneasy look. This piece invites viewers to confront their privilege, urging them to understand the indifference, and engage in recognising the hidden riches behind the poor. The artwork stands as a powerful testament to the urgency of understanding the ideas of wealth to individuals and igniting a view of difference on what rich can mean.



NATALIA BENNETT

Birds of a Feather...

Watercolour and soldering iron on wood

Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School

My work is drawn from my personal struggles as a teenager. Every day I live with fear and anger toward myself, which I'm told is a common experience for my age. It doesn't make my battles any easier and I chose to represent these feelings by controlling the burning and fire, used to create my work, that highlight the intense feelings I deal with. However, with the addition of the burning on the back of the timber, I hope to also address what is often told to me... 'promise that things will look up, and nothing ever stays the same forever'.

LEILA BOLTO

Ode to Light

Oil on board and acrylic on wood

Willoughby Girls High School

To paint honestly is to paint with no goal other than contentment. My body of work, *Ode to Light*, explores the process of learning to love my own company and to trust the company of others. Transcendental abstraction allows me to free myself from the constraints of perfectionism and to be kinder to myself in all stages of the process. By bending the light sources of my reference images into spatial luminous arcs, twists and glows, I aim to immortalise the moments of trust and love that I attach to each piece. The loosely painted frames represent the continuation of those images as fond memories.





DAKODA BUCHAN

Chiengora Zenith

Performance

Bradfield Senior College

Creating the *Chiengora Zenith* has been a deliberate exploration of the path less travelled and of the least resistance. It symbolises my commitment to preserving traditional yet unconventional craftsmanship and highlighting overlooked materials, encouraging viewers to appreciate the beauty in the unconventional and to not view a lack of abundant resources as the lack of potential. *Chiengora Zenith* challenges perceptions, encouraging individuals to forge their unique paths, as symbolically represented in the keys and pearls spilling out of the oyster shells in the wig. Zenith refers to one of two things: the time when something is most powerful and successful, and the celestial sphere directly above an earthly observer. This dress is an artistic statement that invites reflection on the choices we make in our brief journey through life on earth.



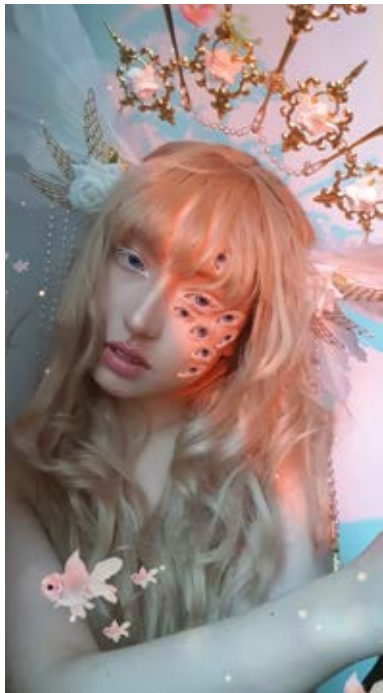
BIBI CASSIDY

Fatal Fragility

Collagraph prints and photography

Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School

As the threat of extinction for many animals is becoming increasingly high, insects are often not considered by people as threatened species. But in fact, the rate of extinction is eight times faster than that of mammals, birds and reptiles. This fuelled me to use my work to represent how insects have been forced out of their natural environment due to pollution and climate change, rendering them highly vulnerable species. My work marvels at their hidden beauty and their vitality in nature, using the collagraph to juxtapose this with their muted colour palette and fading and fragile appearance. I aim to encourage audiences to consider their vulnerability, recognise their tremendous importance, and motivate and spark change to the relationship humans have with nature.



LUCIAN CHAPPELL

Cherish the lost child within

Digital print on decal

Chatswood High School

As we mature, transitioning from childhood to adulthood, we eventually become disconnected from our inner child. The process of acknowledging the state of our inner child can enable the journey of healing, growth and comfort. My major work reveals the effect of embracing my inner child, presenting the idea of make-belief and fantasy. By accepting the inner child and indulging their wants and needs produces an improved quality of life. Imagination is an enabler. The clash of natural elements of earth and water, crossed over with the angel humanoid, are an embodiment of my interest in the impossible.



ZOE CHUNG

My Child, Hope Is a Dangerous Thing

Single channel video with sound

Chatswood High School

The competitive nature of the creative industry, along with limited opportunities and a high demand for innovation, my 2D cel-animation embodies the lengthy time and persistence needed for artists to simply settle in any creative industry sector. I examine how easy it is to abandon childhood interests and dreams to settle for mediocrity in order to obtain career stability. By contrasting the vibrancy of the inner child with the outward dullness, I emphasise the significance of revisiting childhood interests that have been dismissed as failed career opportunities.



HAYLEY CONNORS

Surrendered

Pencil, graphite and charcoal on paper

Mercy Catholic College

Dogs are such precious creatures. Ever since I was little, they have been such a big part of my life. Gary Hodges has been a large inspiration for my media choice and art practice through his original photos of his animal subjects that he recreates in pencil drawings. My concept was influenced by a visit to the Kemps Creek Animal Shelter. All the different natures, personalities, and characters of each of the dogs fascinated me, inciting a curiosity within me about how their different circumstances for being surrendered have shaped their lives up until now. My work communicates each of these dogs' unique perspectives on their lives, and how these have shaped their different personalities. This creates an intimate link between the subjects and my audience.



ZAVIER DOMENICI

Film Fiction

Photographic gloss paper, caution tape, CD case, sunglasses, foamboard, paper napkin, used film reel, PVC pipe, shower drain, electrical tape, duct tape, camcorder tripod and PVC stormwater coupling

St Pius X College

The concept for *Film Fiction* developed from my passion for photography and filmmaking. My intention is to display posters, props, stills, memorabilia, and physical media for a film that does not exist. The aim is to create believable content, ambiguous narrative, and a visual exploration of coming-of-age and sci-fi movie genres. It provides a visual commentary on the mystery and tragedy of lost media, as well as the importance of preservation. The authenticity of the project was the biggest challenge, as it is hard to replicate the big-budget Hollywood standards, so I experimented with various photographic methods, such as flat focal lengths, that imitate the filmic depictions of suburbia in Hollywood films. Other media that has influenced my work is the filmic photography of Gregory Crewdson and the supporting designs for Quentin Tarantino's films.



MARY DOMINGO

“Naiipit” [To get caught in between]

Digital drawing

Mercy Catholic College

I yearn for my unfamiliar home country; a far away, dream-like place I can't really piece together in my mind, but I find myself drowning in the uncertainty of identity as I attempt to navigate through foreign land. Between these opposite sides of a dual identity lies the panging emptiness of a sense of self. Born and raised in Australia to Filipino immigrant parents, I experience this conflicting sense of belonging. This is expressed in a series of surreal, collage-like landscapes. It features my figure on the edges, shying away from confrontation, representing this lack of confidence in identity. The different mediums and imagery from the different cultures blending on a digital canvas reflects how both my Australian and Filipino identity come together to create an individual reflection of myself.



ALBA FALKENMIRE

A window into the ubiquitous patterns of Omnism

Pen on paper

Chatswood High School

Many people consider different religions to be dissent concepts, in constant battle to answer the universes questions by their own means. Through pointillism, I wanted to show how—although separated by seas and beliefs—religions share motifs and patterns that are inherently connected through ubiquitous architecture. To their core—and underneath the prejudice, war and oppression—theology is a form of art. Each tile correlates to a culture/religion from different countries around the world, forming windows of interchangeable patterns, and displaying how cultural Omnism is ultimately connected through pattern.



DEXTER GIBSON-CUMMINS

The Big Thing and the Small Thing

Collage, balsa wood, foamcore, wood, LED, acrylics, cellophane and pool cue

Bradfield Senior College

Since before I could see clearly, my eyes have grown at a different rate to my body, a condition called Dysmetropsia. Commonly known as 'Alice in Wonderland Syndrome', my vision in the darkness begins to warp and distort my bedroom. Fluctuating shapes and disproportionate expanses of colour would loom around me. From a young age, I would be kept awake by feelings of anxiety, confusion and disorientation as my safe place would warp into an unrecognisable mesh of shadow. A corporeal sculpture of collaged wallpapers, unsettling artworks, disproportionate architecture, and deluded perspective is encased in a comically-inconspicuous white box, reflecting the unassuming external presentation of my repressed fears. This work explains the relationship between physical and mental growth, and how I developed my anxieties into curiosity, and fear-induced-paralysis into creativity.



NATALIA HEINRICH

*'Congratulations! You're a winner!
\$1,000,000 click "ok" to claim your prize'*

Oil on canvas

Bradfield Senior College

My artwork is about the effects of the internet on my generation, including its impact on mental health, the blurring between the real and digital world and our slow progression into becoming totally dependent on technology. My self-portrait depicts how the digital world affects how I perceive myself and the world around me. My artwork reflects the two sides of life in my generation, the real world and the digital world. This is reflected through the slow process of glazing with oil paints, juxtaposed with technological subject matter.



HENRIK HOGG

A man is who he hides

Digital photography

St Pius X College

Our youth defines development and growth; it lays the foundation for who we grow to be and the paths we choose in life. This growth presents challenges of physical development and mental wellbeing, which I have depicted within the portraits. Their raw emotion, layered on top of their struggles, combined with religious and historical symbolism, demonstrate the (Janus) or duality of man. I drew inspiration from Sam Taylor-Wood's work *Crying Men & Peachtree Road*, which depicts the unseen side of typically masculine men (Daniel Craig and Laurence Fishburne) in tears, underlining the fragility of virility.



SIHO KIM

Scary and dangerous animals

Oil on canvas

Chatswood High School

There are a lot of dangerous animals in the world. My body of work is about drawing and painting of wild animals in the world. In my mind, I've always wanted to draw and paint dangerous and wild animals for sure. Because I especially love dangerous animals. Every animal that I have painted is very dangerous and scary if you've seen it in real life, face-to-face.



JORDAN LAGANA

Psyche

Single channel video with sound

Bradfield Senior College

'Psyche', meaning soul in Greek, is an image born of our contemporary collective unconscious, as defined by Carl Jung. We recognise she is human, almost. Something about her is inaccessible to us. Surrealist artworks and my own experience consuming digital material of the modern era inspired my work. I wanted her to be difficult to define, an uncanny figure, echoed in the dated analogue-film presentation, and directly juxtaposed with the contemporary subject matter. The distorted and fragmented format recalls imagery in dreams. I wanted the audience to understand what she is as they would a figure they'd find in a dream. What is she? Why is she here? Is she like us? Is she like me?



EMMA LI

Coalescence

Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Chatswood High School

Inspired by the many parallels between natural and human bodies, I have combined watercolour, ink and graphite pencil to merge such anatomy in a spontaneous yet controlled resolve. We are more similar to nature than we think; trunks support trees like spinal cords support our bodies, delving roots bring water back up to flora like our blood vessels transport essential nutrients, and soil nurtures the growth of flora and fauna like the female womb carries new life. Thus, I aim to express a need to embrace a symbiotic relationship with nature, and to love it as if loving oneself.



STEPHY LIANG

Travelling Between Figuration and Abstraction

Cyanotype, textiles and fibre

Chatswood High School

My body of work explores the immigrant experience through the conflicting yet ever-present mixture of tradition and modernity that has permeated my sense of identity. Positioned amidst an immigrant upbringing, I, like many other immigrants, am constantly exposed to various cultures and locations. Through the combination of cyanotypes—a traditional photo media technique that captures the past in a nostalgic blue—and sewing—a versatile medium that has been a major part of my upbringing—I depict figurations of landscape with abstractions of Chinese culture. In doing so, my body of work explores the intersection between these sociocultural and sociogeographical discourse, and their subsequent impact on my sense of identity.



BELFRY MAY

Change is Imminent

Oil on board

Bradfield Senior College

Everything changes. It is a given, from the day you are born to the day you die. *Change is Imminent* was created to reflect this fact. The sketch explores impermanence through a stylised portrait of a young woman, her face partially obscured with a veil. The veil is representative of impermanence, a ceremonial piece hiding the woman's face before she's married or after she's died—a signifier of change. The oil painting on board depicts a lone figure standing in a hallway, her face veiled with a cloth. The space which the figure inhabits is liminal, a transitional place between places, shown through the closed doors in the background. The figure herself is representative of change, standing between doors, her arms slightly open, welcoming. Her shrouded face allows her anonymity.



NATALIE MCDOWELL

The Eternal Quest

Yarn, clay and digital photo on acrylic

Glennaeon Rudolf Steiner School

My work *The Eternal Quest* explores the concept of how women have been objectified and judged for who they are throughout history. Within the traditionally female practice of crochet, I portray the bikini top as a symbol of the oppression females face. The photograph illustrates the oppression females encounter through silencing. I have incorporated linear figures of well-known females in art that were purposefully painted naked to fulfil the ideals of the male gaze. The bikini tops are displayed in clear boxes to illustrate how women are displayed, judged and objectified. Additionally, they are positioned on shelves to present the idea of time, arranged in layers like earth stratum signifying the long history of these issues.



Yaeli Miller

Welcome

Fibre and textiles

Bradfield Senior College

Welcome to the future. Join me on a journey following the unending conflict between nature and technology. With technology's reign reaching its tipping point, it will not be long before nature turns the tide. The cars represent the patriarchal system of consumerism and capitalism. The car's masculine features juxtapose the dystopian yet beautiful feminine landscape of nature. The luxury and comfort of textiles in the contemporary human experience is challenged by mother nature's revitalisation and transformation. As the shiny duco of luxury cars shift to nature's russet autumn leaves, the exponential growth of technology serves as a precipice on the overtaking of nature. Consider your own relationship with technology and the environment. We possess the power to alter the course of our fate; the dreaded future is looming on our doorstep. Welcome.



ANGUS NG

everything i do takes me further from you

Digital photography and film negatives

Chatswood High School

An object itself is merely a vessel for our emotions. Exploring the identities and meanings given to *one* object shows the multitude of interpretations each individual will have. This interpretation could be influenced by their beliefs, preferences, experiences or religion. From Expressionist influences to psycho horror, this work represents an endless cycle of passing and repurposing, departing the intent further and further from its true self.



JEROME PICKERING

Ititangata Aerenga (Cultural Journey)

Linocut on fabric

St Pius X College

Ititangata Aerenga (Cultural Journey) conveys my personal sense of identity, and the world of third culture living. Through the medium of linocut and print, my work describes my experience of having multiple cultural influences, from both my father's Cook Island and Fijian heritage, along with my mother's Australian heritage. My work aims to provide the audience with an insight into navigating and forging a world of personal identity, whilst being influenced by varying, different cultural heritages. I have been influenced by the works of Teho Ropeyarn. His large linocuts depicting traditional symbols and meaningful aspects of his culture inspired me to show the audience my own sense of cultural identity. My three prints are interlinked through imagery and composition to enhance a sense of simultaneous differentiation and harmony.



JOEL RICHARDSON

Vignettes of Self: Dreams and Dissociations

Fineliner on paper

Chatswood High School

Through my series of drawn works, I have explored and portrayed the disconnect between the human mind and oneself, the damages/dangers of this disconnect and the ways that I have learned to deal with it through some of the most stressful times of my life.



ISABEL ROCHE

Look what I found by the creek!

Watercolour, watercolour paper and pen, polymer clay, copper pigments, acrylic paint, glass and aluminium wire

Willoughby Girls High School

In life, we can stumble upon the strange hiding among the familiar. This work is inspired by my youth exploring the creeks and woolsheds of rural New South Wales. I encapsulate the weird creatures by injecting science fiction into everyday animals. Acting as both a homage to paleoart and my childhood, my work pushes forth questions regarding evolution and our preconceived notions regarding animals, through the lens of science fiction. Inspired by the paleoart of Charles R. Knight, I modernised his materials by using polymer clay, sculpted with skewers and modelling tools alongside big glass eyes to create stylistic yet life-like beings. The creatures are placed within a familiar found object (a box) to connect the strange animals to our world and to force viewers to peer inside and see what was found 'by the creek'.



ALINA ROSE

Restaurant AI

Digital print on decal

Bradfield Senior College

My artwork is a comedic, robotic duo working inside a human-employed restaurant and learning (and struggling) to excel. The artwork explores the emerging technologies of robotics and Artificial Intelligence and how they are replacing human services and interaction. I have replicated contemporary 2D cartoons and digital illustrations to depict this concept. Character designers Andrew Stanton and Shiyoung Kim have been a great inspiration, as they were the designers for *Wall-e* and *Baymax*, two very iconic personified robot characters that inspired the mannerism and character shown throughout my body of work. I believe those who are exploring the philosophical and technological aspects of AI in humanity will be intrigued by my works, as it presents the disconnection robots have from us, and the fear people have of robots replacing human jobs.



CLEO WALKER

Naturally Neurodivergent

Porcelain, paper and wood panel

Mercy Catholic College

Naturally Neurodivergent celebrates my artistic journey as a person with AuADHD. I have found a profound connection with porcelain, a medium that speaks to the very essence of creation and transformation and the core of my symptoms of hyper-fixation, stimming, and as a natural form of creativity. Through my hands, this elemental material takes shape and comes alive, allowing me to express the depth of my imagination and emotions. As I get lost in each piece, I create a unique expression of my thoughts and emotions and a tangible reflection of my mental scape. Embodying my detail-oriented, repetitive hyper-fixation on the process of creating spikes and swirls, and forming uncurled swirls to represent transformation, these three elements infuse my works with a sense of organic harmony and emotional depth.



ERIK WILD

Hearing Damage

Single channel video with sound

Chatswood High School

Oscillating sirens, shrieking trains, elevators and cash machines that talk. The metronomic blasts of horns from oncoming traffic as their engines seek to compete through an equally overwhelming collective of dissonant hums. The quickening pace and conversations of nearby pedestrians followed by the repetitive, yet near-comforting chimes of the Town Hall as the clock strikes twelve. Over time, noise pollution has become an inevitable by-product, an inseparable parasite burrowed deep within our psyches, our consciousness and our being. Using a multi-channel film and an original score, I represent the gradual dominance of urban noise pollution and its undeniable parallels with music and mental health.

IMAGE Yaeli Miller, *Welcome*, 2023, fibre and textiles



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Thank you!

