

Exhibition
Student C (HL)

Curatorial Rationale

My body of work has moved through several different ideas, but they all relate to the theme of the corruption of childhood. I have tried to explore this theme in several different ways – by looking at bullying, in work inspired by the children’s home in Nepal, by looking at some of the impact technology is having on the children of today and finally, by exploring my own childhood, and how part of the nature of this period of late childhood is that you are aware that your time left as a child is short. My works have incorporated sculptural and textural elements and I’ve used a number of processes to adapt the medium to my purpose, such as deliberate destruction of parts of my painting surface and the incorporation of leaves and soil into my paint. I began IB Art as a photographer, and this has been the basis for the majority of my work. I use photographic references and usually have a photo shoot before starting a piece so I have the image to base the painting on.

My three pieces that focus around bullying, Feral 1, Feral 2 and Feral 3, were inspired by the work of Egon Schiele. The theme he tended to explore was sexuality, but I chose to use his style to explore something more personally relevant to me, and look at bullying. I wanted to depict the bullies as people who were both vulnerable and threatening, because I think bullies are often trying to hide the fact that they’re afraid or have been hurt.

I developed these pieces with the viewer firmly in mind. I wanted the meaning to come from observation, rather than from personal relevance, and so the first thing I considered was how to effectively communicate my meaning to the viewer. I kept the backgrounds plain to ensure that the figures stood out and I used warm earth tones for the backgrounds to make it feel inviting to look at, while the people are shaded with cool blues to remove harmony with the background. I designed the people to look like they were reacting to a threat, and so I placed them on the canvas in a way that the threat appeared to be standing in front of the canvas – their bodies are angled with backs and elbows pointed at the viewer and they are staring at that point.

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The next group of pieces were inspired by time I spent in Nepal for my school's project week. We spent time working with the children in a home for orphans and children displaced by other unfortunate circumstances. I was struck by how universal some aspects of humanity are: we had come from a privileged background and these children came from broken homes, we were easily able to make friends and have fun with them. I wanted the work I did based on my time there to portray them as just people, not as people you ought to pity or feel sorry for.

In these works, I wanted to make the viewer feel like they weren't a part of the experience, the opposite of my intentions for the *Feral* pieces. The people are not looking directly at the viewer; they are looking at each other. I've used blue and grey tones to make the images look less inviting and to make the people n them appear to be more self-possessed.

My pieces related to my own childhood – Matsubokkuri Koen, Juvenescence and Collision – have incorporated textural elements to make the viewing experience more interesting. I brought leaves, pine cones and soil back from the forest depicted and used them in Matsubokkuri Koen and Juvenescence. Collision is a more abstract, impressionist style. It looks better from a distance, when the shapes start to look like something, rather than close-up where the individual details don't make sense. I've positioned it on its own along the western wall of the exhibition, so that the viewer can stand at a distance and focus only on this painting.

Word count: 670

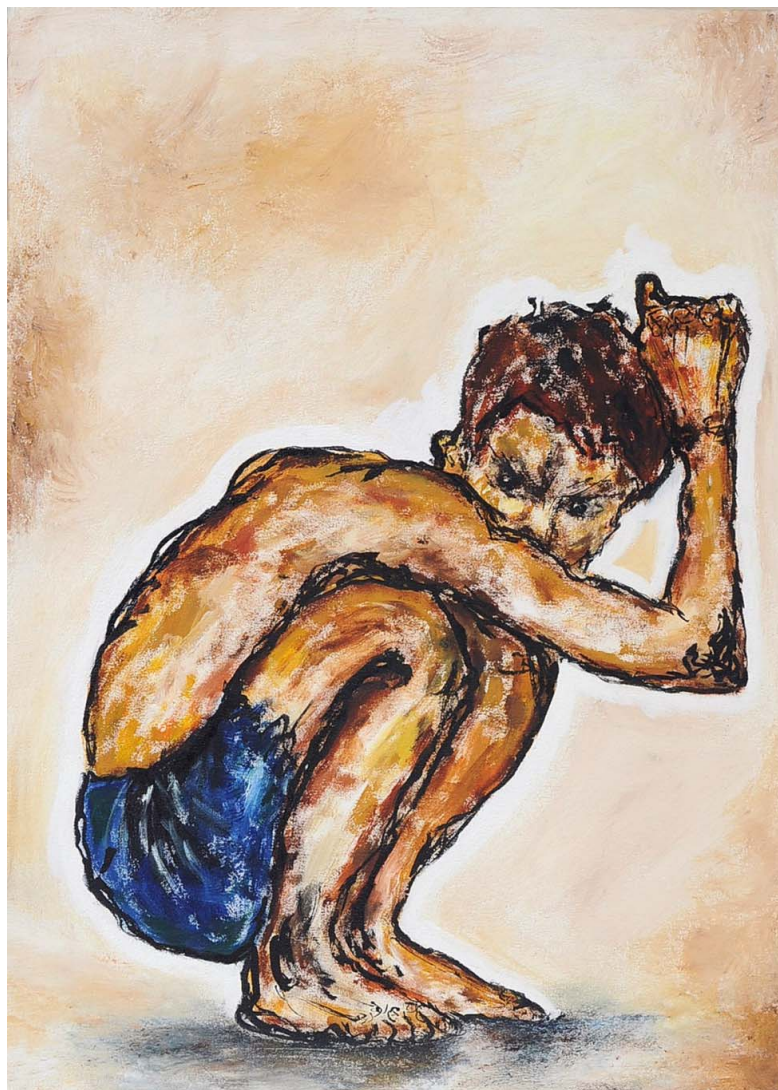
Exhibition Photograph



My exhibition space

I have the north wall of this room, with space on the east and west walls. The white background and spot lighting are helpful for making the pieces of work stand out without distraction. The two pieces that benefit from distance – Collision and Feral 3 – each occupy a single wall.

Artwork 1

**Feral 1**

Medium: Acrylic on wooden board

Size: 89x59cm

This was the first work I did using acrylic and depicts a victim of bullying. Inspired by Egon Schiele I used rough textures, light layers of paint and choppy brush strokes to create a sense of constant uneasy movement. The distorted anatomy, textured skin and mix of earth tones help to make the person look more animalistic. I wanted him to look like he was afraid and vulnerable, but to also convey a certain amount of menace – to give off the feeling that he was like a wounded animal who might snap if you tried to help.



Feral 2

Medium: Acrylic on wooden board

Size: 109x35cm

Artwork 2

Second in the bullying series inspired by Schiele, this painting uses a lot of the same techniques as the first. I've tried to create some uncertainty— you don't know if the person portrayed is bully or victim, reflecting the fact that often, bullies have learned from other bullies. The girl's posture is defensive: she has her back to the viewer and her arm's crossed. She's positioned so that part of her body is cut off by the edge of the painting, which makes the composition more asymmetrical and more off-balance. The restricted palette of opposing colours – warm oranges and cool blues – also helps to create a sense of disharmony.

Artwork 3

**Feral 3**

Acrylic on wooden board
80x245cm

I followed on from the other paintings with this one, in which I really tried to use scale to get across the emotion of the piece. I wanted the viewer to feel like they were threatened by the figure in the painting, because I didn't think the two smaller ones were effective in that respect. I've focused on the eyes to make it feel like they're staring down at you, and used the size of this painting to enhance the feeling of menace. This picture has the most distorted anatomy of the three, and I think is the most threatening and the least vulnerable. When you stand in front of this portrait, it feels physically threatening because it looms above you.



Breakthrough
Acrylic on canvas and ink
41x80cm

Artwork 4

This was inspired by a piece by an Indonesian artist, Wahyu Widiyanto. I spent time visiting children in a home in Nepal, and the paradox of the art piece, in which the depiction of the smiling child was ripped, reminded me of those children. I used a photograph of a child I took during that week, ripped it, and used charcoal to dominate the composition and add to the sense of destruction and corruption surrounding the child.

Moments (Series)

Photographs, inkjet print

117x28

Artwork 5



I am drawn to series: I like the storytelling potential of a single piece of work that is made up of lots of individual ones. I looked at the work of Richard Avedon, who uses stark white backgrounds to isolate the subjects of his portraits. This focuses the photograph strongly onto its subject and puts the focal point onto the face, which makes it easier to use the eye line of the people in the photographs as the method of leading the eye between individual shots. This series has a flow of movement and is not just static individual shots.

Artwork 6

Nepali Girls: Sunita & Susmita (Dptych)

Acrylic on canvas
100x120cm



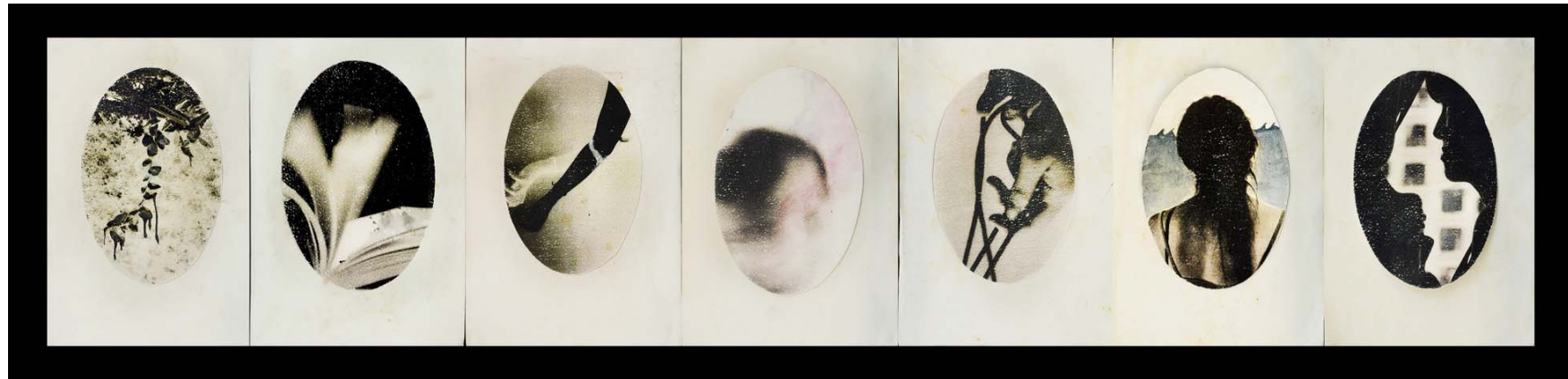
Jan Schlegel is another photographer who designs his photographs to isolate the subjects within the frame. He photographed members of indigenous tribes across Africa and Asia and I like the way the isolated composition and muted colour of the photographs helps to take away any sensationalism of people in very different clothing than the viewer might be used to. I wanted to get some of the same across: the girls I painted are from very different backgrounds to me, but they were still people and I could still connect with them. The girl at the top is looking at the one at the bottom, who is looking out at the viewer, helping to make the painting dynamic.

Symptoms (Series)

Watercolour paper, inkjet print, coffee powder

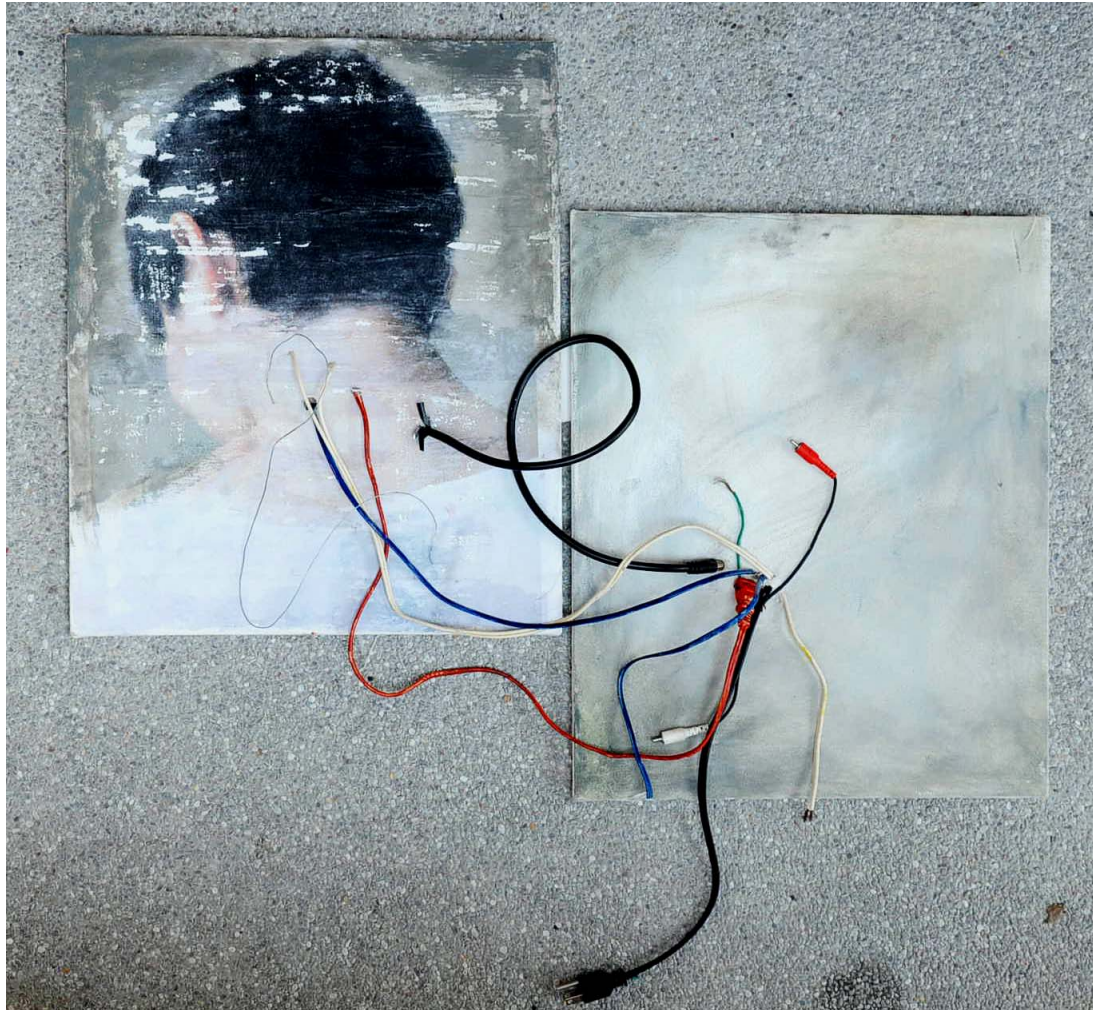
125x34cm

Artwork 7



I begin by looking at Victorian medical images. I wanted to depict the symptom's of society's technology addiction. The images depict the deterioration of nature, a phantom limb to suggest the way people feel when they accidentally leave their phone at home and various images to suggest the way technology isolates people from society. I used Photoshop to create the look of salt printing and printed them on watercolour paper that I'd stained with coffee.

Artwork 8



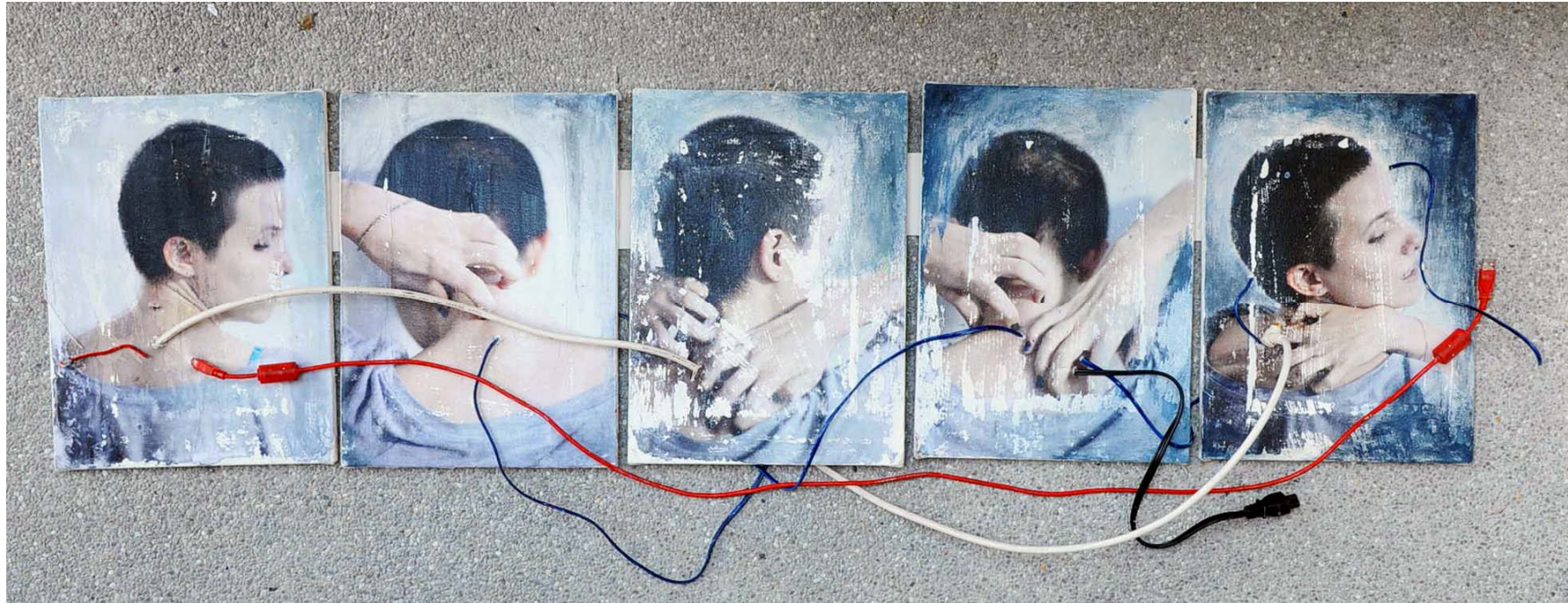
Wired (Series) Photograph 1
 Photo transferred to canvas,
 acrylic paint, wires,
 computer cables
 71x84 cm

One of the images I used for *Symptom* was of a woman with her back to the camera. I transferred my photographs onto canvases and rubbed bits off, to suggest the disintegration of the self as she becomes wrapped up in wires. I liked that image and so took some photographs to use in a project with a similar motif. This piece was inspired by Valerie Hegarty, who uses a lot of different media and installation pieces, and whose works always have a sense of dynamicism and isolation.

Wired (Series) Photograph 2

Photo transferred to canvas, acrylic paint, wires, computer cables

145x38





Artwork 9

Juvenescence (Diptych)

Acrylic on canvas, cotton thread, pine cone
56x30 cm

I moved away from technology and onto childhood. I and my classmates are facing the end of school and the start of university, so the fear of growing up is a big deal for us right now. I wanted to create a portrait that looked like a Victorian childhood portrait, because the style of them looks so prim and sedate. The threads show that things unravel in our lives as we get older, and we'd like to hang on to the strings of the things that have gone before. The pine cone is from the forest I already painted, included as a symbolic artefact of my childhood.

Matsubokkuri Koen

Acrylic on canvas, watercolour, pinecones, pine needles, dried leaves

41x123cm

January 2012

Artwork 10



I used to visit this park as a child to pick up pine cones. It's a small park but when I was young, I felt like it was enormous and so I tried to focus on depth to portray the infinite feeling of size the park gave me. I was inspired by Euclide, who uses a blurring technique in his landscapes to help bring in the sense of depth. I incorporated leaves and pine cones from the forest in Japan to bring the piece a little closer to it, and to bring in some interesting textures.

Collision

Oil on canvas

100x70cm

Artwork 11



I started this course as a photographer and, I hope, ended it as a painter. I did not use a photo as the base for this piece. I wanted to try something more abstract and to experiment with oil, which I had not used before. This painting is loose and abstract, using impressionist techniques of loose brushstrokes, lighting and earth tones to suggest the idea of a landscape. If Kien is symbolic of my childhood, with its realistic depiction of a place where I spent so much time, Collision is symbolic of my adulthood: I can only see an idea of what it is going to look like from a distance, and it is undefined and uncertain.