

MEET THE ARTIST

Sarah Raphael



About Your Artwork

What motivated you to produce your artwork?

I have always felt a strong sense of pride for my culture and admiration for my grandmother as someone who is selfless, resilient and has a quiet sense of confidence. My motivation for producing an artwork related to my lineage, was driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. The unknown and wondering when I could see my grandparents, who live in Malaysia, in person again was playing on my mind. During the artistic process, I thought about how many people around the world feel the same way and thus the artwork felt important to create given the personal and topical nature of my idea. Focusing my energy on art that was related to my birthplace and family put my mind at ease throughout this difficult time.



How did your artwork evolve during the artmaking process?

My initial idea revolved solely around my dualistic cultural identity, but after producing my first artwork and consulting with my teachers, I realised that experimenting with a range of hand gestures could add greater depth and meaning to the two compositions. Subsequently, my idea changed into a depiction of two different stages of life and my second work became focused on the uncertainty that encompasses adolescence.

Which artist/s had the greatest influence on your work and why?

A major influence was hyperrealist artist Tanja Gant. I admire her meticulous application of colour pencil and the way she sensitively delineates hands. Another influence was my older sister, Rachel Raphael, who recently graduated from art school. She used her experience to offer me support, motivation and advice during my artistic process, which I am extremely grateful for.

How did you arrive at your choice of art medium and materials?

I chose to work in colour pencil to realistically capture the textural quality of hands. The granular effect the medium produced helped to imply the wrinkled, folded nature of skin. It also allowed for more control over the fine details of my composition.

“Evaluation from a range of people can push your boundaries and encourage you to see a greater scope of possibilities and ideas.”

What advice would you give Art students and Visual Art teachers who are keen to exhibit works in shows like Pulse Perspectives?

Plan well in advance and hold yourself accountable to making steady progress each week. This is something that I didn't do despite my teacher's instruction, but it certainly would have prevented a lot of unnecessary stress in the lead up to the submission date! Choose a subject you have a personal connection or affinity with as it will keep you motivated and generate meaningful connections to the subject matter. Be open to feedback or advice you are offered from peers, teachers or family members. Evaluation from a range of people can push your boundaries and encourage you to see a greater scope of possibilities and ideas.

In relation to teachers, keep providing guidance and encouragement to students. Make them aware of the different exhibition opportunities available as this will give them something to strive towards and look forward to. Listen to their ideas as well as offer your own.

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About The Arts

Why do you think art and creativity are important in times of uncertainty and change?

Art and creativity provide a means for articulating our innermost feelings and translating our lived experiences. In the midst of uncertainty or change, this is extremely important as it enables you to reach out to others and communicate shared concerns. In adversity and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when choices were limited and mobility was compromised, the creative arts functioned as an escape, allowing individuals to exercise freedom of the mind and imagination.

In what ways do you think art influences how you feel about yourself and how you connect with others?



Art is a source of confidence for me. It serves as a platform to share what I care deeply about with others and enables me to convey feelings and ideas that are otherwise difficult to express.

What career path are you embarking on and has the arts impacted your choice?

Although I am pursuing a career in STEM, I definitely want to continue producing and immersing myself in the creative arts. In the future, I am interested in running art therapy sessions and teaching artmaking skills such as watercolour and drawing.

How can AGWA support young people to engage with art?

Young people need more opportunities to exhibit their art. Seeing young, aspiring artists, similar in age, exhibiting in shows such as *Pulse Perspectives*, gives them something to strive for. I also believe there should be more opportunities to learn about the creative arts within our own country. Australia is rich in both culture and art, so exposing young people to the art around them will engage learning and encourage a shared knowledge which in turn will strengthen and grow into an appreciation for the creative arts.

Share something that inspires your art practice.

'Both Sides Now' by Joni Mitchell inspired the title of my artwork. It's a song my family and I turn to for easy listening after a long week. As I grow older, the lyrics are more relatable and meaningful to me.

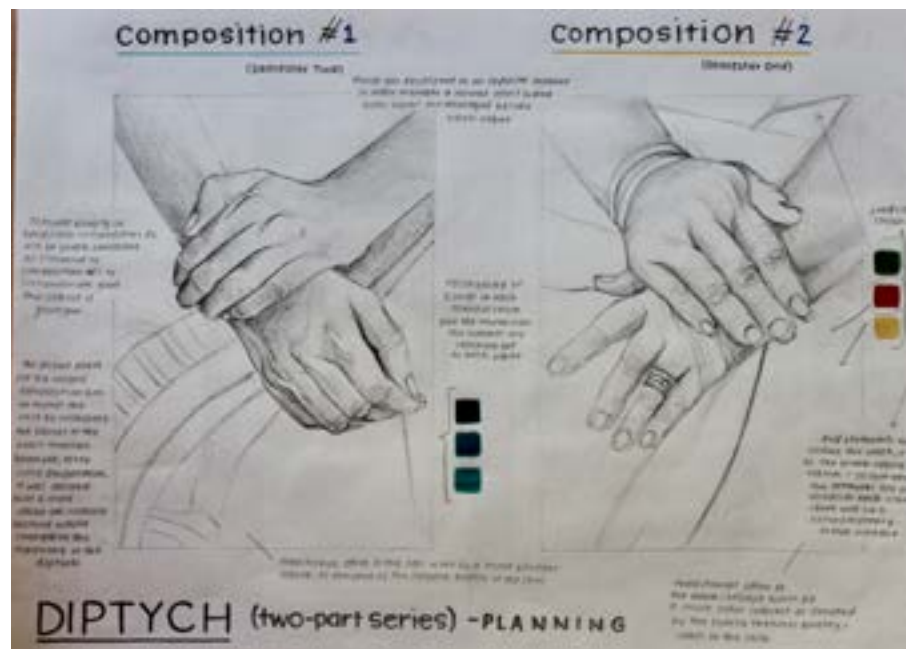
It delves into how we are constantly learning things about ourselves and

the world no matter what stage of life we are in and is a reminder that we are constantly growing and evolving, and that no one has it all figured out. I liken the two versions of the song to my two compositions.

“Art and creativity provide a means for articulating our innermost feelings and translating our lived experiences.”

Both Sides Now - Early version (1966):
[Click here to watch](#)

Both Sides Now - Late version (2000):
[Click here to watch](#)



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Artist Statement

Both sides now

Coloured pencil on illustration board two parts: 58.4 x 40.6 cm each (image)

Both sides now aims to explore how my maternal grandmother has helped me during the liminal period of adolescence. When viewed together, the aged hand that reaches out towards the younger subject communicates the knowledge and qualities of my

Grandma. "Work hard, be patient and appreciate the little things in life". These values are instilled within me by my maternal bloodline and by using coloured pencil in my artistic process, I was able to effectively put them into practice.





Hand studies

Pastel



Charcoal



Lead pencil



Watercolour



THUMBNAIL SKETCHES



To achieve the coarse, implied textural quality of the skin, build up colour gradually with light pressure applied mainly to the teeth of the paper's surface becomes discernible

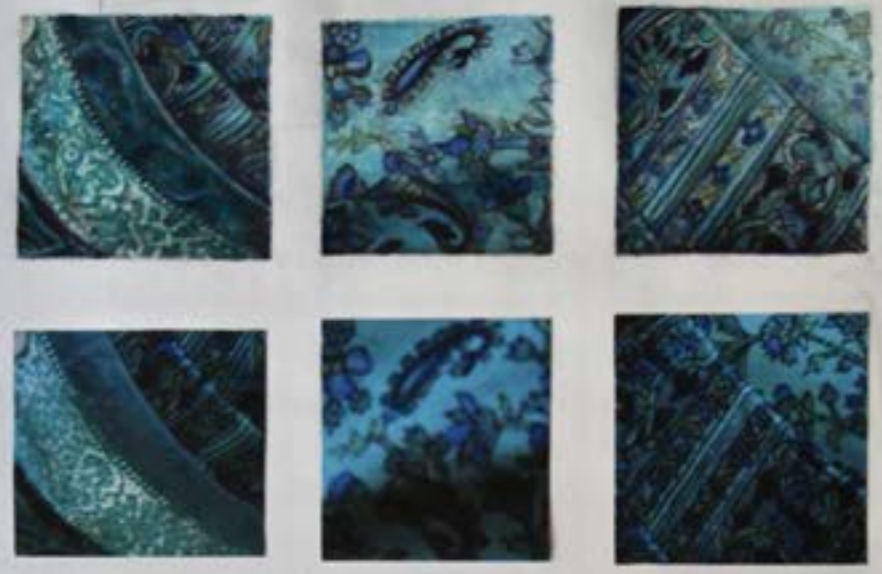
Use a light purple-pink hue first and then overlay with darker purples later (this is particularly important for areas with strong contrast such as the thumb in the following thumbnail image)

Overall, I wasn't very happy with the illustrative effect the dominant block outlines created.

To alternatively imply form I decided to render the shapes of the hand more using different shades of their respective colour which helped to achieve a more realistic finish for the fabric region of the composition

MEDIA TESTING

The technique of erasure is particularly useful for rendering the intricate meandering lines of the dash and for portraying the slight play of light the silver outlines seem to capture, detail that would be difficult and time consuming to delineate by hand.



accentuate the clumped, uneven textural quality of the fabric by gradually and lightly building up the detached folds and layers in alternate shades of blue with hints of green

Composition #1

(Semester Two)

Hands are positioned in an opposite manner in order to create a mirror effect when both hands are displayed beside each other.



Textural quality of hand from composition #2 will be much smoother as compared to composition #1 to communicate that the subject is younger.

The initial plan for the second composition was to mirror the first by positioning the hands in the exact manner. However, after some deliberation, it was decided that a more elder-or-insecure gesture would strengthen the meaning of the diptych.

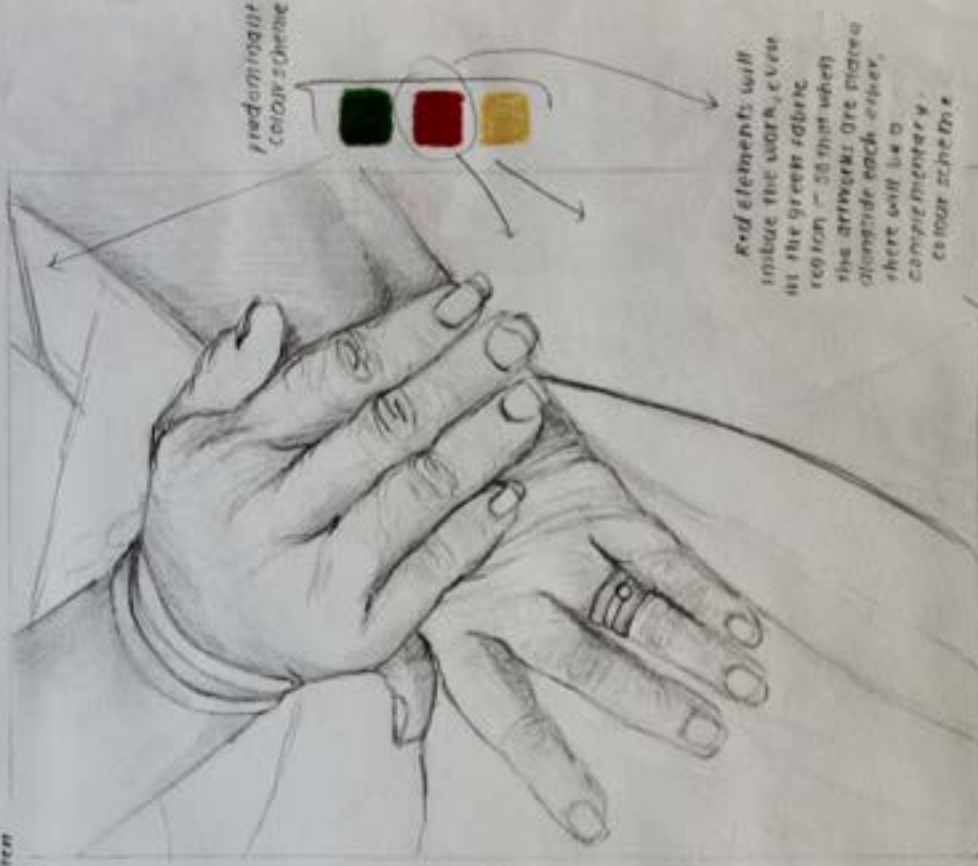


Positioning of hands in each composition give the impression the subjects are reaching out to each other.

Traditional attire of the son worn by a more younger figure, as denoted by the smooth quality of the skin.

Composition #2

(Semester One)



predominant colour scheme



Red elements will imbue the work, even as the green fabric the drapery are placed alongside each other, there will be a complementary colour scheme.

Traditional attire of the father / elderly worn by a much older subject as denoted by the coarse textural quality / redder of the skin.

DIPTYCH (two-part series) - PLANNING

The Art Gallery of Western Australia

Pulse Perspectives

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

Creating, looking, experiencing art connects us to ourselves, our world and each other



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