

The West Australian Pulse 2026

Artwork Labels

Introduction

Welcome to The Art Gallery of Western Australia. This document contains all artwork labels and wall text for this exhibition reproduced in large print.

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Wall Text:

The West Australian Pulse

Welcome to *The West Australian Pulse 2026*, presenting selected works by last year's graduating Year 12 Visual Arts students. This annual exhibition continues a long-standing platform for young people to share works of art shaped by their experiences, independent thinking, and technical and creative development.

Working across painting, drawing, sculpture, animation, textiles and installation, these young artists test the possibilities of materials and artmaking to examine their immediate worlds. Rather than offering fixed statements, many works operate as propositions – asking how identity is formed, how values are negotiated, and how personal experience intersects with broader social conditions.

Developed at a point of transition, these works reflect both the shifts associated with moving from school into early adulthood and the wider changes shaping contemporary life. As these artists explore new forms of independence, responsibility and self-awareness, their art engages with themes including consumer behaviour, cultural inheritance, wellbeing, belief systems and social expectation. Some works are direct in their observations; others are quieter, built through process, repetition or metaphor. Together, they register a moment where individual experience and a changing world intersect,

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revealing how these artists begin to locate themselves within it.

The West Australian Pulse continues to highlight the range of approaches, skills and perspectives emerging from Western Australia's young artists. This exhibition offers a space to encounter how these practitioners are thinking, testing and making – providing a snapshot of creative practice at a formative moment, and an opportunity to consider what matters to them now. With these artists forming part of our wider creative community, their assured, candid and forward-looking perspectives suggest a future shaped with care and intention.

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Chloe Haagman

Anagram

2025

coloured pencil on paper, video, 1 min 16 sec

Iona Presentation College

2025/E427.a-h

My artwork explores the complexities of perception through the manipulation of language. By transforming the words “THE EYES” into “THEY SEE”, I emphasise how eyes act as the lens through which we view art, make judgements, and form critiques, even though each person interprets what they see differently. This reflects how meaning is never fixed, shifting with individual context and perception. I embody this subjectivity through balloon letters; their playful, kitsch appearance contrasts with layered interpretation. The implied reflective surfaces act like mirrors, reminding viewers that perception is shaped by the perspectives they bring, and that art is never experienced the same way twice.

Jaime Macapagal

Kitchen Shift, 2017

2025

oil on canvas

Balcatta Senior High School

2025/E440

This artwork, inspired by my father's early experiences as an immigrant in Australia, explores sacrifice, identity, and resilience. Once a respected sales manager in the Philippines, he arrived here to find his experience diminished, working long nights as a kitchen hand at Crown Perth. Moments like him scrubbing greasy floors on New Year's Eve shaped my understanding of perseverance and quiet strength. This work aims to humanise the invisible labour behind privileges many take for granted. While rooted in my father's story, it speaks more broadly to the experiences of migrants. It invites viewers to consider how living in a prosperous country can allow comfort to obscure hardship, and how easily struggle and sacrifice can remain unseen.

Hannah Marinovich-Zano

Like a Moth to a Flame

2025

oil on board

Seton Catholic College

2025/E441

My piece explores the paradox of seeking comfort within danger. Inspired by Oscar Wilde's line, 'a burnt child loves the fire,' from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, I reflect on how familiarity can make harm feel safe. Through my love of poetry, I examine the fragile intersection between beauty and pain, particularly within cycles of domestic violence where terror becomes confused with care. By juxtaposing confronting subject matter with casual body language, the work expresses a bittersweet oblivion to self-destruction. References to 1950s imagery suggest how these cycles persist across generations, while echoes of J. Howard Miller's *We Can Do It!* poster introduce both vulnerability and resistance, urging recognition of patterns and the possibility of breaking inherited cycles.

Josephine Hunt

Victims of the System

2025

oil and oil stick on canvas

Sacred Heart College

2025/E431

This work conveys feelings of aggression, frustration, and stress that come from the pressure placed on young people, particularly art students. It responds to how rigid marking keys and expectations can stifle creativity and limit genuine self-expression. For me, these constraints create confusion and emotional tension, where making art becomes about validation rather than honesty.

Influenced by artists like Jenny Saville and Francis Bacon, I see art as a way to communicate psychological intensity and contradiction. This painting is an act of resistance and an assertion of creative autonomy, pushing back against systems that confine youth creativity while demanding space for joyful, authentic artistic expression.

Ryan Twomey

Portrait of a Rich Swine

2025

mixed media on board

John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School

2025/E462

Democracy is dead and the rich are snorting with laughter.

This artwork responds to recent political events in America and the growing fear surrounding the rise of the far right and elite power. I depict the wealthy and politically powerful in a negative light to expose hypocrisy, particularly the contradiction between claimed Christian values and actions that harm vulnerable groups. The central figure is a smug, wealthy elite surrounded by cult-like symbols of extremism. Using a layered, mixed media approach, I draw on punk aesthetics that prioritise holding the rich accountable. Influenced by the 2025 USA election, the work critiques a system appearing to shift from democracy toward oligarchy.

Caitlin Perrella

The cost of care

2025

oil on canvas

Perth College Anglican School for Girls

2025/E451.a-b

This work explores the lived experience of menstruation in contemporary society, drawing attention to pain and struggles that are often overlooked or dismissed. For me, creativity is a way to confront taboo subjects that tend to be ignored. Inspired by Yves Klein, I use blue to convey the emotional weight and sorrow surrounding menstrual pain. Through self-portraiture, I reflect the conflict between personal suffering and societal indifference, particularly the expectation that women endure pain without care. One work addresses reliance on superficial remedies in the absence of proper medical treatment, while the other highlights the financial burden of period products. Together, the diptych challenges the normalisation of dysmenorrhea and exposes systemic medical and social failures.

Toby Warner

Here, Now and then the Future

2025

acrylic, epoxy resin, synthetic polymer paint, balsa wood and paper

Christ Church Grammar School

2025/E465.a-b

During my final year of school, I was often asked what I wanted to do next. For me, this moment represented a turning point between childhood and adulthood. My artwork reflects on my life during school, my past, and the future I imagined for myself at that time. I explore how choices made during school influence the path ahead. The two figures represent this transition: one looking back, grounded in familiarity, and one stepping forward into uncertainty. The solid objects from my present and translucent forms of future aspirations highlight both optimism and doubt. Together, they capture my growth and transition into adulthood, and the uncertainty of whether ambition will become destiny.

Rebecca Liu

Under My Skin

2025

digital print on vinyl gloss film

Rossmoyne Senior High School

2025/E439.a-c

My artwork explores the creeping anxiety of Year 12, a pressure that sat constantly at the back of my mind and manifested through habits like biting and peeling my fingers for comfort. It reflects the sense of impending doom created by deadlines, assessment rubrics, and the fear of mistakes. I wanted to capture the alienation of feeling irregular and discordant while being forced into rigid, geometric expectations. Influenced by exams, constant reminders, and pressure to perform, I draw a parallel to *Minesweeper* – a game where one wrong move can ruin everything. This work reflects how Year 12 consumed both my mind and my hands.

Leah Collins

Blood From My Heart Runs Thin

2025

tufted yarn and wire

All Saints' College

2025/E413

Blood From My Heart Runs Thin is a deeply personal exploration of inherited illness and loss. My father lived with Thrombocytopenia and multiple other heart and body dysfunctions, conditions that shaped his life and led to his passing in 2020 when I was 13. I've recently learned that some of these disorders may have been passed on to me, creating a connection that feels both fragile and confronting. This mixed media installation reflects the sensation of blood running thin, the body weakening, and the fear of fading away. It is also a tribute to my father – someone I never truly knew during my childhood years – revealing how grief and love intertwine through the legacy of illness.

Isabella Teo

Fawn-ing For My Life

2025

oil on board

Rossmoyne Senior High School

2025/E459.a-b

5pm. I will peel this pomegranate for you. Cut it and beat it against a board that holds the stains of my choices. I pick at each seed meticulously, so I make no mistakes. 6pm. I serve you the cleanest seeds from my messiest effort. I am stained. I stick to you full of fear – please don't hate me. If you want it, I can be it.

This work explores the trauma response of fawning through people-pleasing as self-protection. The bird's-eye view places the viewer inside or above the act of peeling a pomegranate for someone to seek approval or safety. Stained hands suggest scars, while the fawn echoes the pomegranate and hints at an instinct to camouflage, representing the exhausting balance between being liked and blending in.

Axel Wood

Pray for Peace, Prepare for War

2025

oil on canvas

Hale School

2025/E467.a-c

Pray for Peace, Prepare for War explores rugby not just as a sport, but as a metaphor for conflict, resilience, and unity. Using a Cubist-inspired style, the work employs distortion and rugged marks to reflect the intensity, motion, and physicality of the game. Across the panels, moments of pressure, reflection, and solidarity play out, addressing both on-field confrontation and off-field mental discipline and comradeship. Together, they emphasise that rugby is not just about brute force, but also about protection, trust, and unity. Struggle becomes meaningful through the bonds it creates, positioning rugby as a symbol of facing conflict with courage and seeking peace through connection.

Harley Wright

Next steps

2025

synthetic polymer paint, oil and spray paint on canvas

Ocean Reef Senior High School

2025/E468

My artwork captures a friend gazing toward an uncertain future, reflecting the fragile tension between adolescence and adulthood. As we move through our schooling years, the world becomes increasingly complex, and questions arise about our generation and the roles we may play in society. What was once a simple, carefree journey through childhood transforms into a layered and intricate path toward adulthood. Through overlapping imagery, I explore the passage of time and the uncertainty of what lies ahead. The work invites viewers to reflect on growth, change, and moments of introspection, capturing this pivotal stage of transition between past, present, and future.

Nicholas Daly

Signs of Youth

2025

oil on canvas, oil and synthetic polymer paint on street sign

Hale School

2025/E415.a-b

My artwork explores themes of youth, recklessness, and the fragile boundary between control and chaos, using driving as a metaphor for the choices that shape our lives. In the first painting, the depiction of the boy behind the wheel with a distant stop sign hint at confidence, impulse, and the quiet warnings we often ignore. In the second painting, created directly onto a real stop sign, the familiar word “STOP,” usually a symbol of safety and caution, becomes a warning unheeded. Through this work, I contrast freedom with consequence, reflecting how quickly control can fracture and how the signs are often there, waiting, if we choose to see them.

Jake Ieraci

Blind Exchange

2025

oil on canvas

Trinity College

2025/E432.a-b

Blind Exchange explores how misguidance, vulnerability, and self-destructive behaviour persist across time. Reinterpreting Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Blind Leading the Blind*, I use allegory to question patterns of human behaviour and society's tendency to ignore warning signs. Influenced by artists such as Kehinde Wiley and Banksy, I was interested in merging historical imagery with contemporary concerns to reveal continuing cycles of neglect, addiction, and systemic failure. The diptych format allowed me to place past and present in conversation, suggesting that blindness is not only physical but social. Through this work, I express my belief that art can expose uncomfortable truths and prompt reflection on what we may choose not to see.

Eva Forster

The Mourning

2025

oil on canvas

Swan Christian College

2025/E421

Inspired by Renaissance works that capture deep, emotional scenes, I became intrigued by the way colour and value were used to communicate mood. I was also drawn to Social Realist artworks and their unsentimentalised records of daily life, particularly their willingness to capture sadness and struggle. My work depicts a moment of loneliness as the subject awakes the morning after a loss. It responds to my internal fear of losing loved ones by presenting that fear as a reality. I aimed to capture the numbness and emptiness that may be felt during the mourning process. The work does not present a particular message but acts as a way of expressing an inner feeling.

Ruby van der Lee

In Your Presence, Let Me Break

2025

graphite and charcoal on paper

Corpus Christi College

2025/E464

In Your Presence, Let Me Break captures a moment of silent unravelling in the presence of God. Set within the intimacy of a bedroom, a sacred personal space, it reflects the belief that God draws closest during times of hardship. The work expresses a desire to be seen not in strength, but in brokenness, and to find grace through vulnerability. Using charcoal and graphite, the drawing invites viewers into a quiet space of confession and reflection, as the figure reaches toward light that symbolises God's presence. Inspired by my own experiences, the work affirms that hardship does not weaken faith but shapes us into who God calls us to be.

Yuvan Muthusami

The Last Embrace

2025

ink on paper

Bob Hawke College

2025/E445

Since 1995, over 400,000 Indian farmers have died by suicide, driven by debt, corruption, and systemic violence. This crisis is personal for me, as members of my extended family in India have faced similar pressures, giving me a strong sense of urgency to respond through art. *The Last Embrace* portrays a farmer in his final moment, holding his bull, his partner in labour, as authorities wait to seize his land. The irreversible nature of lino-cut carving mirrors the permanence of these losses. This work is both a reflection and a protest, honouring lives erased by systems that reduce human labour and land to collateral.

Amelia Williams

Don't Pull the Wool Over their Eyes

2025

charcoal on paper

Swan Christian College

2025/E466

This artwork comments on the societal issue of banning live animal export, a political matter that is close to my heart after growing up around the agricultural industry. I explore how political campaigns and media narratives often rely on shock tactics, while overlooking the lived realities of farmers and the wider economic impact of such decisions. The work challenges the imbalance between public perception and firsthand experience, questioning who is given a voice in these discussions. Influenced by Vernon Ah Kee's large-scale portraits, I use scale to highlight the importance of this issue and encourage viewers to consider the bigger picture beyond campaign imagery.

Eva Doyle

The Unaltered Soul

2025

oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Servite College

2025/E418

The Unaltered Soul portrays my grandfather, who lives with Parkinson's disease. I wanted to show three perspectives experienced by people with Parkinson's or other age-regressive illnesses. The first is his own: he still sees himself as the man he was before diagnosis, wanting to drive and walk unaided even as these things become impossible. The second is the view of strangers, who notice tremors, frailty, and slurred speech. The third is mine, shaped by knowing who he was before the disease. I painted his bruised, aging face with loose palette knife strokes against a smooth background to emphasise the imperfections brought about by age, but focused his eyes with care – they hold the stories and the person he still is.

Dan Pham

Intersections

2025

oil on canvas

Chisholm Catholic College

2025/E453.a-c

Intersections explores tensions of cultural identity, displacement, and belonging through scenes of everyday Vietnam. These environments reflect lived realities I have observed during visits to Vietnam, filtered through the perspective of someone born and raised in Australia. Across the canvases, a recurring blurred, glitching figure appears, dressed in Western clothing. Although Vietnamese, this figure feels out of place, representing the tension of inhabiting two cultural identities without fully belonging to either. Influenced by artists Hung Liu and Dede Eri Supria, the work reflects how cultural memory, movement, and environment intersect. Together, the panels form a meditation on identity existing between places, familiarity, and estrangement.

Zoe Ong

Makan! Makan!

2025

synthetic polymer paint, coloured pencil and resin
on board

Applecross Senior High School

2025/E448.a-c

Makan! Makan! explores cultural identity through food as a first-generation Australian. The circular panels position a shared meal as a site where belonging is negotiated. For me, Malaysian cuisine is more than nourishment; food is a language that speaks to presence and absence, and to generational and geographical divides. The inclusion of the Australian brand Maxwell & Williams situates the work within my life in Australia, while batik-inspired patterns and native flora reflect the meeting of cultures. Through this work, I honour food as a marker of identity and invite viewers to reflect on home, heritage, and ritual.

Evangeline Lau

Aston Casino

2025

graphite on paper with mixed media

John Curtin College of the Arts

2025/E437

Aston Casino is a portrait of my once foster greyhound, Aston, and a reflection on the injustices of the greyhound racing industry. The work highlights how racing dogs are valued only for performance, despite being gentle, athletic animals capable of full lives beyond competition. Once deemed unfit for racing, they are often discarded, carrying lifelong internal and external injuries. By presenting Aston as both a cherished companion and a specimen for study, I question the industry's treatment of these dogs and the normalisation of harm in the name of sport. Through this portrait, I encourage reflection on the ethical cost of racing culture.

Amelia Do

“Mini, what you want for dinner?”

2025

charcoal and oil on board, bowls

Penrhos College

2025/E416

Food brings people together – to each other and to their heritage. For me, phở is more than a dish; it’s memory, sustenance, comfort, and connection. Coming home to the smell of peppery star anise and velvet broth was the rhythm of my childhood. A dinner table reveals a family: its habits, chaos, and shared histories. My three-generation household is made up of storytellers, and almost every story is told over dinner or lingers long after. Some stories are embellished, drawn out, or half-censored. Sometimes language lets details slip or words don’t land quite right, but meaning still finds its way through. In my family, certain phrases say everything: “Eat more. Take more food.” They always mean: “I love you.”

Lisa Ho

Made In Australia

2025

earthenware, cobalt, timber, coloured pencil on paper

Santa Maria College

2025/E429.a-b

Made In Australia explores the tension I experience as an Australian with Chinese-Malaysian heritage. As the child of immigrants, I was raised differently from my peers, often leaving me questioning where I belong. This quiet frustration sits at the centre of the work. I was inspired by Shaun Tan's short story *Eric*, particularly his subtle portrayal of cultural difference through domestic spaces like pantries and food. The mix of pantry items rendered in slip-cast ceramic reflect the lived reality of growing up between cultures. The contrast between the Vegemite jar and the crimson background of Chinese dragons symbolises the push and pull between cultures and the nuanced struggle of feeling in between.

Josephine Purcell

Whatever you say, Doc

2025

Sculpey, waiting room chair, synthetic polymer paint, pom-poms, paper, oil on board

Shenton College

2025/E454.a-b

My artwork recreates the tension of sitting in a waiting room chair, rehearsing lines as if presenting my case to a court. Compiling evidence and practising rebuttals becomes a way of forcing my experiences to be heard. The work critiques diagnostic overshadowing, where pre-existing diagnoses are treated as fixed templates, causing symptoms outside them to be dismissed. This comes directly from my own experience of being failed by the medical system and resisting dismissive GPs for years before receiving proper evaluation. Inspired by artist Kathleen Ryan's *Bad Fruit*, decay becomes a metaphor for neglected health, while discarded medical paperwork reflects how people are reduced to data rather than treated as complex individuals.

Arabella Barnaba

Twee Landen

2025

ceramic, porcelain plate, cobalt stain, pen, jarrah, copper wire and paper

St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

2025/E409.a-c

My mixed-media installation traces my family's migration from Holland to Australia in 1954 and the fracture created by the passing of my great-grandmother, Oma, at 103. The terraced Amsterdam houses, sculpted from paper clay with a Delft Blue wash, evoke my great-grandparents' homeland and stand as symbols of family and origins. Porcelain clogs, slip-cast from my Opa's original pair, show one preserved and one shattered, reflecting the loss of cultural continuity. Influenced by artists Bouke de Vries and Rob Strati, I emphasise breakage, allowing fragments to hold history and beauty rather than concealing damage. Through these shards, I express how heritage and identity transform, never erased, but carried forward and reimagined in new ways.

Arket (Itsaranuwat) Udkaew

Ute and Wats

2025

underglaze, spray paint and gold leaf on ceramic and wood

Melville Senior High School

2025/E463

Ute and Wats explores identity, belonging, and the navigation of dual heritage from a Thai-Australian perspective. After three years of living in Australia, I find myself existing between two cultures, noticing differences in values, logic, and ways of living. Influenced by artist Vipoo Srivalasa, whose work reflects both Thai and Australian identities, my clay sculpture draws on personal and cultural symbolism to create a totem as a vessel for growth. The juxtaposition of the Australian ute with the sacred architecture of Thai wats brings together the everyday and the spiritual. A palette of blue, white, and gold references porcelain traditions and spiritual symbolism, evoking calm, reflection, and enlightenment while mirroring the ongoing balance of identity within a hybrid self.

Joanne Goh

Fish Capture

2025

stoneware, mineral stain, synthetic polymer paint, Sculpey and epoxy resin

Applecross Senior High School

2025/E425.a-d

Inspired by writer Marya Mannes' words, "we abuse and the living things we kill will, in the end, take their revenge," my work explores the destructive cycle of overfishing and human greed. As the anthropomorphised tuna bust gains human anatomy, it reveals emotions of fear, agony and despair. The melting and decomposing forms suggest that both humans and fish will eventually disappear as destruction continues. Manipulated tuna cans expose greenwashing by brands claiming their products are responsibly caught, while their indentations reflect frantic attempts by fish to escape inescapable nets. The distorted forms suggest the violence of bottom trawling fishing methods, showing how overconsumption traps both marine life and us in an endless cycle.

William Jones

Joy

2025

oil on board, seeds, Sculpey and synthetic polymer paint
on wood frame

Wesley College

2025/E433

My artwork portrays my mother, Joylene, and her resilience as a proud Yamatji woman shaped by the legacy of the Stolen Generations. Her story is rooted in generational trauma: my nan was forcibly removed from her family under the White Australia policy, and all seven of my mother's older siblings were also taken. My mother was briefly removed as a baby. Despite these profound disruptions, she has built a stable family and now supports others through her work. Inspired by artist Kehinde Wiley, I sought to elevate her story with dignity and strength. The work speaks to cultural reclamation, connection to Country, and the enduring resilience passed down through generations.

Lauren Branch

Life's Ephemeral Dance

2025

oil on board

Seton Catholic College

2025/E410

My artwork explores how life's beauty is both fleeting and profound, blooming brightly but briefly like a flower. It reminds viewers to embrace each moment and spend time with the people they love, because nothing is permanent. When my Grandma passed away from leukemia, grief became a bittersweet reflection of a life well lived. My mum always said dragonflies are gentle visitors from departed souls, and on the morning I began this piece, one landed outside my home and became my reference image. The dragonfly, the tear, and the soft smile express grief's mix of sorrow and gratitude. Inspired by memento mori, I included falling petals and depicted my Grandma and me as dragonflies, symbols of remembrance, transformation, and love.

Ken Asaoka

Looking Back, Looking Up

2025

synthetic polymer paint, oil and gold leaf on canvas

Bob Hawke College

2025/E408

My work explores cultural in-betweenness and the feeling that my identity is slowly fading. After moving to Australia following eleven years in Japan, I often struggle to find a sense of belonging. The large crane, painted in the repetitive Seigaiha pattern, symbolises my Japanese heritage, and its upward flight toward the golden moon reflects how distant that part of myself now feels. The boy in the foreground, a self portrait, represents my childhood and the challenges of separation. The wooden fence forms a barrier between us, showing how my roots remain visible yet inaccessible. Influenced by Kehinde Wiley's patterned backgrounds, I have used ornamentation to express fragility, memory, and shifting identity.

Kira Landuyt

Dear Saigon, From, Ho Chi Minh

2025

oil, egg shell, silk, satin, rope and resin on board

Butler College

2025/E435

Dear Saigon, From, Ho Chi Minh is a reflection on loss, growth, and honours Vietnamese art. The work traces four periods of Vietnam's history, exploring loss of youth, love, faith, and freedom, and how individual stories shift alongside changes in culture and environment. Vietnam is my mother's birthplace and an important part of my identity, so my love for its culture naturally shapes my work. Inspired by Vietnamese lacquer painter Nguyễn Gia Trí, I draw on his use of colour and symbolism to relay notions of heritage, prosperity, and loss. Through traditional materials, I explore how growth often emerges through loss, both in Vietnam and in life.

Tahlia Ashwin

My Country, My Family, and the Stories That Formed Me

2025

glass and found objects

Prendiville Catholic College

2025/E407.a-c

My artwork reimagines my childhood vanity, turning it from a surface that shows my outward form into one that reveals the stories and spirit within me as a Wangai Yamatji girl. The mirror becomes a window into identity and Country, transforming reflection into remembrance. The scorched timber frame connects me to the earth, solid and enduring, while the layered glass creates a crackled surface that recalls the glowing hues of sunset. The frameworked glass depicting kangaroo tracks and frit glass imagery honour my family and ancestors. When I look into it, I see my Country, my kin, and the stories that formed me.

Isabella Hogg

Taking Off

2025

pencil, oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas

St Mark's Anglican Community School

2025/E430.a-c

My work explores migration through my family history. My popo (grandmother), was born in Alor Setar, Malaysia, later studying in Taiping where my mother was born, before emigrating to Australia, where I was born. The White-throated Kingfisher symbolises this movement across generations, taking off from Taiping and continuing on to Perth. Although the bird usually remains close to its territory, some wander further, reflecting the bravery and adaptability of my family. Inspired by artist Giacomo Balla's expression of movement, I use repetition, flight anatomy, and three shifting landscapes to express transition. The final panel shows the Kingfisher reaching new heights, reflecting my personal growth and evolution.

Benjamin Stack

Moort Boodja

2025

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Scotch College

2025/E458

Each section of my work represents one of the 14 individual Noongar language groups of the Noongar Nation in Western Australia. It includes boorna (animals), such as the yongka (kangaroo), bamba (stingray), karda (racehorse goanna), and weitj (emu). These boorna are part of the Dreamtime stories. I have included our bilya (river) to represent our connection to it and how it gives us life. In the middle is the Wagyl, the Dreamtime serpent, who lives in the bilya amongst all the other boorna and still, to this day, protects us from the yundok, the ancestral crocodile who does not belong on Noongar boodja (land) and wardan (ocean). Ngany boodalang, yangka (I am boodalang, thank you).

Isabelle Tewman

Home

2025

felt and thread on embroidery hoops

St George's Anglican Grammar School

2025/E460.a-e

This artwork is inspired by Australian landscapes. I used aerial photographs from different places around Australia as references for my embroidery hoops. I was also inspired by Cassandra Dias, an embroidery artist from Southern California who makes stitched landscapes. Through this series, I wanted to highlight the beauty of the land we live on and share my appreciation for my home country. I used a range of embroidery stitches to add texture and define landmarks such as trees and paths. I chose photographs and places that allowed me to use a wide range of colours to highlight how beautiful and colourful Australia is.

Charli Gherardi

Time and Place

2025

oil on board

Leeming Senior High School

2025/E422.a-h

I have changed a lot throughout high school, both in personality and mental state. I accumulated the photos my artwork is based on over this time, and I associate each of them with a different version of myself. The locations in the artwork also hold sentimental value to me. For example, the road leading to the studio I have danced at for 13 years, and the sawmill near Donnelly River where my family used to go on holiday every year.

Caitlin Graham

Trust the beast - hide from him

2025

oil on board

John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School

2025/E426

On average, one woman is killed every nine days by a current or former partner. This reality frames my work, which responds to the viral man versus bear debate, where many women chose the bear over a man when asked who they would rather be alone with in the woods. The irony of suggesting that a woman might find safety with a wild animal critiques the everyday dangers women face. Influenced by artist George Gittoes, whose work uses powerful social commentary to portray devastating realities with emotional clarity, I question whether protection is found more easily in nature than within society itself.

Grace Bray

GG

2025

clay, feathers and twine

Living Waters Lutheran College

2025/E411

I created this sculpture as a tribute to my great-grandmother, who was part of the Stolen Generations. It honours her legacy and expresses the pride I feel in her courage and resilience in the face of adversity. The figure is made from clay, feathers, and twine, materials that helped me bring a sense of movement into the work. I drew inspiration from Jess-Riva Cooper and Robyn Varpins, whose work with nature and gesture guided me in creating a piece that has a sense of liveliness, symbolising bravery and strength.

Lennon Todd

Shielded in Tradition

2025

coloured pencil on board, fabric on board and steel

Swan Valley Anglican Community School

2025/E461.a-b

Two shields, two clans, one story, my family's Scottish heritage brought to life in pencil and tartan.

Shielded in Tradition explores my heritage through portraits of my parents, combined with traditional tartan fabrics and Scottish iconography. The work honours the clans that shaped my family's story and reflects how culture lives on through those we love. The shield-shaped forms reference protection and legacy, echoing traditional clan banners and emblems. The tartan represents the woven history of my ancestry, while the steel border adds strength and resilience. Drawing my parents and using real tartans from their clans allowed me to connect with a part of my identity I am still learning about, and to honour the people who link me to it.

Georgia Curtis

Echoes of Excess

2025

oil, newsprint, fabric, pins, thread and plastic on canvas

Sacred Heart College

2025/E414

‘Consumerism is our idolatry, the heart of our illusions of power, security, and self-sufficiency, which translate into rape of the environment.’

KATHLEEN NORRIS, *THE CLOISTER WALK*, 1996.

My artwork critiques consumerist culture and how it erodes both the environment and individuality, exposing how fragile identity becomes in a society that normalises materialistic habits. I created this piece after witnessing fast fashion, mass production, and obsession with trends. The female figure, suffocated in abandoned landfill fabrics, embodies the weight of overconsumption. Using oil paint and repurposed textiles, I highlight materialism’s allure versus its consequences. Influenced by artists Nicola Samori, Jeremy Mann, Barbara Kruger, and even the movie *Wall-E*, the work reflects how consumption overwhelms people – including myself – reducing us to participants in a relentless cycle of waste.

Elton Giraudo

Bastet's Crown

2025

mixed media and digital print

John Curtin College of the Arts

2025/E423.a-b

My work explores the strength and flamboyance of LGBTQ identity and community. The vibrant rainbow mane symbolises the complexities of identity, while also uniting diverse queer identities. The lion mask acts as a pillar of resilience and pride in the face of oppression and shame. Designed to be worn by anyone, the mask offers protection and security, while also transforming the wearer into a figure of confidence and self-belief. By wearing it they might gain a sense of bold visibility, embodying unwavering pride in who they are.

Eleanor Read

Changeling's Grace

2025

oil on canvas and card

Seton Catholic College

2025/E455

In this artwork, I use a contemporary interpretation of medieval aesthetics to explore how my experience as an autistic person is shaped by historical and modern views of neurodivergence. I draw on the myth of the changeling, an uncanny placeholder believed to replace a child taken by fairies, now theorised as an early explanation for intellectual disability and neurodivergence. Although rooted in harmful ideas, I resonate with this myth, as navigating social cues often feels like mimicking human behaviour from the outside. Through dragon wings and a tail, I connect this sense of otherness to historic views of neurodivergent people as monstrous. Inspired by medieval illuminated manuscripts and tapestries, I invoke the vibrant details of medieval iconography.

Genevieve Mickle

No More

2025

oil and Posca on tin, synthetic polymer paint, found objects, MDF, textiles and animation, 2 min 59 sec

St Mary MacKillop College

2025/E443.a-b

“We said, ‘No. We’re not going back to the station no more.’”

NYAMAL ELDER PETER COPPIN, 1946 PILBARA STRIKE LEADER

My work responds to the 1946 Pilbara Strike, a history of Aboriginal resistance I first learned about through news articles describing rusted cars left behind on Country. Struck by how often this history is overlooked, I felt compelled to explore its legacy. The work centres on the ute as a symbol of movement, resistance, and collective action. At the front, strike leaders Clancy McKenna, Dooley Bin Bin, Daisy Bindi, and Don McLeod drive toward freedom. Influenced by Gordon Bennett, the work examines colonisation, silenced Indigenous voices, and exploitation, while honouring collective resistance and the enduring presence of this history on Country.

Acknowledgement and Consultation Statement

The artist of this work is non-Indigenous. In the development and exhibition of this artwork, the artist and the school consulted with the Mingullathorndo Community and the Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation in Western Australia. Guidance and permission were sought from Elders to inform a respectful approach to filming on Country, the use of materials, and the presentation of histories connected to the 1946 Pilbara Strike. The work is presented with acknowledgement of Aboriginal custodianship of Country and respect for the ongoing cultural knowledge and histories of the Pilbara region.

Harrison Zupp

Tuned to life

2025

oil on board

Emmanuel Catholic College

2025/E469

This painting explores the powerful influence music has on mood and the lasting impressions those moods create. The central figure represents the way we move through the routine and often dull aspects of everyday life. She appears vibrant, bringing colour to her grey surroundings; the ribbon of music twists around her and fills the world with vitality. The work reflects how music can transform internal experience and subtly reshape the world around us, inviting viewers to reflect on their own sources of inspiration and consider how they may continue to resonate beyond the present moment.

Laura Simmonds

Walk On

2025

animation, 2 min 31 sec

Perth Modern School

2025/E456

The world is a vast and overwhelming place. Uncomfortable sounds, unwelcome touch, and sensory overstimulation are an inevitable part of being human, something I am intimately familiar with and will have to embrace in adulthood. In *Walk On*, I use hand-drawn animation alongside real-world footage to explore this experience through a heightened journey home from school. The beginning and ending sequences depict the real world through bright colour and overlapping sounds, while the sketched monochrome section feels quiet and numb; its fragmented movement mirrors sensory overload and dissociation, while flashes of colour briefly pull focus back to reality.

Mira Khaled

FOMO: Fear Of Mortality Obscured

2025

oil on board

Applecross Senior High School

2025/E434.a-c

FOMO: Fear of Mortality Obscured explores consumer culture and how fear of missing out distracts from mortality. Influenced by seventeenth-century Dutch vanitas still life paintings, I replace traditional symbols of wealth with contemporary consumer icons to reflect how trends and possessions mask impermanence. The work is shaped by my cultural background, where repurposing is valued and objects are defined by function rather than novelty. By treating branded goods with the seriousness once reserved for fruit and still life objects, the series critiques how consumerism restricts freedom while promoting excess. Ultimately, the work asks viewers to consider how vanity and accumulation fail to obscure the certainty of mortality.

Bridget Fisher

A Girl

2025

pen, ink, synthetic polymer paint and copper leaf on paper

St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

2025/E420

A Girl is a self-portrait that reflects how I see myself as a teenage girl, constantly negotiating between how my body is viewed and how I choose to present it. Drawing myself in pen felt permanent, mirroring how adolescence can feel irreversible and public. The metallic negative space elevates the work, suggesting that vulnerability still holds value and strength. Her gaze is mine, meeting the viewer directly to resist being reduced to an object. The torch represents the burden and power of visibility, carrying my own light forward. The flowers that grow over me symbolise transformation, resilience, and the messy process of becoming. Framed like an icon, the work claims visibility while embracing fragility and self possession.

Clara North

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

2025

oil on vintage frames, mirror and wood

John XXIII College

2025/E446

Am I a product of the people around me? This work explores how identity is shaped by environment, relationships, and circumstance. I reflect on how family and society can influence young people in ways that are both nurturing and harmful. The fragmented facial features and hands speak to scrutiny, judgement, guidance, and neglect, highlighting the ways young people are watched, shaped, or silenced by others. Inspired by the work of Australian artist Rone, the distressed surfaces suggest how environments leave lasting imprints on identity. This piece asks viewers to consider their own influence, encouraging empathy, care, and awareness of how even small actions can shape a life.

Alyssa Henry

“Nice Photo!”

2025

oil on canvas

Sevenoaks Senior College

2025/E428

“*Nice Photo!*” is a small collage of oil paintings made over the school year. For my first year doing portraits, I chose to paint close-ups of some of my classmates from photos they considered unflattering or silly. I believe these types of photos should be just as appreciated as those photos people consider flattering. This work celebrates candid and playful moments as something meaningful and worthy of being captured in paint, challenging ideas that deem them as too informal or unappealing for display.

Maeve Leech

Sonder

2025

synthetic polymer paint on paper

Carine Senior High School

2025/E438

My piece is inspired by the concept of sonder, the realisation that every passerby lives a life as vivid and complex as my own. I aim to express curiosity and appreciation for the individuality of others and their unseen experiences. Trains became a key metaphor, as they bring together people with countless stories, moving through a shared space without personal connection. By separating individuals onto their own planets, I reflect how everyone exists within their own world, often unaware of others. The comic style structure suggests that we are all characters in one another's stories, while layered surfaces add depth, representing the countless people we pass without ever knowing their stories or experiences.

Catherine Mundy

Consumed

2025

coloured pencil and collage on board

John XXIII College

2025/E444

Consumed explores the quiet erosion of individuality within a culture driven by material desire. By replacing human faces with objects and commodities, the work questions how consumerism reshapes identity and reduces people to symbols of status and belonging. In contemporary society, branded goods and trends often act as shortcuts to validation, offering momentary comfort through consumption. The seated figures suggest both ease and restraint, reflecting how material desire can feel reassuring yet confining. The layering of receipts acknowledges my own participation in this cycle, exposing the tension between selfhood and consumption. Influenced by Pop Art, the work highlights how everyday objects infiltrate identity, blurring the boundary between individuality and societal expectation.

Bianca Petsos

Amniotica

2025

oil on board

John XXIII College

2025/E452

Inspired by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, my work explores regeneration emerging from decay, while questioning birth within an artificial world. The figure is nurtured by the very materials that are slowly unmaking her, she is not born, but unborn – delivered into a state of vulnerability and dependence. This reflects how we turn to technology not only to ease our burdens, but to relieve us of the weight of choice itself. But in embracing this comfort, we find ourselves emotionally stifled – sealed in a world that is too sharp, too sterile, too artificial to nourish the soul. Our “mother” is no longer nature, but industry and consumption.

Margaux Parsons

Measured By Waste

2025

oil on canvas, coloured pencil and magnets

Santa Maria College

2025/E450.a-p

Measured By Waste reflects society's growing consumerism and the greed driving overconsumption. The work critiques how identity and value are increasingly measured through material possessions and the pursuit of social acceptance. Hand-drawn brand symbols and luxury items appear as magnetised elements across the portrait, their potential repositioning suggesting how consumer icons can overwrite and redefine identity without altering who exists beneath. These symbols resemble pimple patches, implying the concealment of perceived flaws behind wealth and branding. One panel depicts second-hand shirts from local op shops, highlighting discarded excess and rejecting fast fashion exploitation. Influenced by artists Alex Gross and Yukari, the diptych draws on maximalism and satire to confront consumer excess and expose the emptiness it conceals.

Keira Buschenhofen

Tiikeri

2025

fabric, thread, ink, watercolour, paper and board

John Curtin College of the Arts

2025/E412.a-b

Tiikeri (/ˈti:keri/) is an allegory; when there's nowhere left to run, and you find yourself confronted with the beast, if you cannot defeat it, you must either succumb or survive. Sometimes, to reach the stage in life where you are content, you must first live alongside the parts of yourself you wish to destroy. These, too, are an integral part of your humanity, thus cannot be ignored – they must be acknowledged. The dramatic dip pen and ink line drawings attempt to pull the viewer into interrogating how, when you're accustomed to the safety of a fabricated solace, will you ever realise you're trapped?

Isabella Dods

Assemblage of Characters

2025

metal springs, nuts, screws, bottle tops, balls, bells,
super glue and plastic eyes

Kennedy Baptist College

2025/E417

From a collection of small metal objects, I set myself the challenge to construct as many fantasy, humorous characters as I could. These characters express my joy in stepping into the life of imagined stories. This sculpture celebrates the fun of making something playful and imaginative from everyday objects and letting creativity guide the story.

Sarah Panetta

Bliss

2025

oil on board

John XXIII College

2025/E449.a-c

This artwork reflects my idea of escapism and the things I turn to when I need a break from reality. It centres on the comfort I find in familiar hobbies and personal interests that have stayed with me over time, offering moments of calm and grounding. The softness and harmony of the work mirror the emotional space I seek in moments of stress, creating a sense of being held in a world separate from external pressures. This piece is especially meaningful in the context of Year 12, a time shaped by constant demands and future-focused thinking. It affirms the importance of slowing down and holding onto rituals that sustain a sense of self.

Lauren Smyth

Layered Soul

2025

synthetic polymer paint on linen and board

St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

2025/E457

Layered Soul reflects my inner world through the metaphor of an onion and the walls I build around myself. These layers once protected me, but over time they have become isolating. Each layer represents an experience, fear, or memory forming a barrier around my core. As a child, peeling these layers felt simple, but with age they accumulate, making vulnerability harder to reach. My bedroom becomes the outer skin of the onion, a place of comfort and concealment. Peeling back each layer represents growth, letting go, and allowing myself to be seen. The work captures the tension between protection and isolation, and the search for authenticity at the heart of who I am.

Francesca Gobby

Life of the party

2025

oil on canvas

Perth College Anglican School for Girls

2025/E424

This work explores feelings of isolation and missing out in social settings, particularly when overstimulation and a short social battery make it hard for me to engage and enjoy myself. As someone who is neurodivergent, I often feel physically present but emotionally distant, which is what I wanted to capture. I place myself at the centre, surrounded by figures who dance and interact, highlighting the tension between wanting to belong and feeling drained. Influenced by Canadian artist Owen Rival, I use exaggerated red and blue lighting and dominant darkness to heighten the overwhelming atmosphere. This work is a personal reflection on social exhaustion, showing that even in the middle of a crowd, it's possible to feel isolated.

Ollie O'Neill

Inside the Mind of an Overwhelmed Undiagnosed Attention Deficient Chronically Online Chronically III Wildly Immature Adult (I Could Never Be a Minimalist)

2025

synthetic polymer paint, oil, paper and Posca on canvas,
augmented reality

Duncraig Senior High School

2025/E447

This work reflects how pressure, illness, and online life accumulate inside my mind. The deliberately chaotic title mirrors the feeling of being trapped and consumed by overlapping versions of myself. Inspired by animator Vewn, I explore cycles of inertia, short-lived motivation, anxiety, and hopelessness. The different versions of myself represent these patterns, while memories of past experiences intrude into my present. Using painting alongside augmented-reality animation, I show how repressed experiences can resurface unexpectedly. Despite its angsty themes, the work is layered with sarcasm, jokes, and memes, reflecting my instinct to make light of all my issues, only speaking up when it ends with a punchline.

...continued on next page

Scan the QR code and follow the prompts to access the augmented reality aspect of this work:



Liam Dunn

It's the Inside that Counts

2025

oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas

In the Garden

2025

oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Nagle Catholic College

2025/E419.a-b

The meaning I'm intending to convey through these artworks is centred on identity and self-expression. Each piece reveals parts of myself that are usually more hidden. The work with the skeleton jaw expresses a usually concealed part of myself becoming visible, contrasting with the version of me most people see. The butterflies symbolise transformation, peeling away the cocoon to become something more. The figure in the garden shows me in a place I love – surrounded by nature – yet still not quite fitting in, always sticking out a little. The boxes around me represent how I can feel boxed in or defined by others, even in spaces that should feel comfortable.

Maulina Lantu

Shelved or Boxed

2025

photographic print, coloured pencil and synthetic polymer paint on cardboard

Applecross Senior High School

2025/E436.a-b

Shelved or Boxed explores my relationship with memory, change, and impermanence. Using the unfolded shoebox, I reflect on how moments from my past are stored and revisited, like personal keepsakes. The closed box represents how memories are packed away during frequent moves and periods of transition in my life. The work responds to the biblical concept of hevel, where life is compared to a gust of wind that cannot be reached or held. I reflect on the tension between revisiting memories and allowing them to fade, and how dwelling too much on the past can prevent living fully in the present.

Adi Maynard

दृष्टिकोण – దృష్టికోణం - نقطه نظر (Perspective)

2025

synthetic polymer paint, thread, markers and clay on cotton

Lake Joondalup Baptist College

2025/E442.a-c

My artwork explores Indian culture and how it is perceived by outsiders. Influenced by artists Jamini Roy and Nainsukh, the triptych examines what is often seen as the basis of culture: cuisine, landmarks, and art. Having lived and studied in India for three years before finishing my education in Australia, I have reflected on how culture is understood differently from the inside and the outside. Increasing pixelation across the panels symbolises how more complex cultural practices become misunderstood by those not living within the culture. The use of fabric references tourist commodities and questions how Indian culture, though complex and lived, is often simplified, repackaged, and sold by both Indian and non-Indian people alike.