

Practitioner's Statement

825 words

See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil

Ink on paper + acrylic on paper

2 x (A3 297 x 420 mm)

Society is turning a blind eye to the destruction of the planet caused by over-farming, littering, overfishing, pollution, deforestation, and urbanization. Many people need to stop ignoring everything going on around them and start making changes in their life and calling out those with practices harming the Earth. If we remain compliant in our current lifestyles, the Earth will begin its self-destruction.

My body of work consists of two artworks - one B&W drawing, one colour acrylic painting, visually displaying the conflict between nature and humanity. These are connected by two seated test dummies facing opposite directions in the middle of the artwork.

The destruction can be seen in the intricate, black and white wasteland, acting as a bleak warning. I came up with my message while viewing *Seaspiracy* and *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret* by Kip Andersen. The figure in the lower corner of my left artwork is covering their eyes, ears and mouth, visualizing the proverb; "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil", representative of society turning a blind eye from the darker parts of the world to avoid inconveniences. The imposing geometric cityscape on the right represents the expanding urbanization around us. This contrasts with the baren decaying fields on the left, being a result of companies abusing our rich land, represented through intensive inking to sparse outlines.

I was really inspired by the graphic novels of Davide Puppò's use of hatching, crosshatching, and scribbling to provide his graphic novel, *Noah's Island*, a gritty texture and comic-book-inspired style. Tony Daniel's work on *Batman R.I.P*, with his use of heavy shadows with very textured lighting was also a large inspiration for the dark comic-book style.

Through a workshop I had with calligrapher Margaret Lewis, I learned many kinds of interesting pen nibs and tools she used to create different shapes, textures and line consistencies in her work. Such tools include objects such as plywood, successfully used to display the bold elongated buildings. I learned from Margaret how to use traditional lettering techniques in an artistic way, instead of writing. Using a combination of flat nib, calligraphy pens, paintbrush withdrawing ink, I successfully created billowing, flowy clouds and strong contrasting scratchy linework in the waste.

I kept the inked drawing from having too much to focus on at any given point in the piece, although I made sure to make the rubbish in the middle the main focus, by utilizing its central position in the piece and by giving it the most detail, so that viewers eyes would immediately be drawn to it and be enticed to look through it for the little unique details hidden throughout.

In contrast, the nature painting on the right side provokes a sense of tranquility, harmony and wonder, which is the beauty of nature. I surveyed a variety of age groups to ask the question; "when you picture the beauty of nature, what do you envision?". Common elements were trees, sunsets, water, mountains, the use of green and harmonious colour palettes. This provided a solid base to create the landscape composition that would encompass this 'beauty of nature' ideal. The composition of this piece mirrored that of the inked work, to emphasize the contrast between the two, both reacting to the landscape before them in different ways. The colour figure is facing outward in awe of the visual landscape, instead of hiding from it. The highly saturated hues I used in my painting were heavily inspired by the work *Leland Klander*, as he used bright paints without the painting becoming garish, this cementing the painting as the antithesis to its colourless counterpart and furthering the beauty of the landscape it used to portray. The dense forest surrounding the figure represents engrossment in mother nature as it is often associated with protection and safety, while the mountains and vast ocean create a sense of calmness, combined with marvel at the boundless and expansive size of the world. Long strokes of paint were used to create the reflective waves of the ocean and small dots can be found on the beach to illustrate the granular texture of sand.

From my drawing, I grew to understand the medium of pen and ink, how to work in shading, texture, and elements of the gritty and dark comic-book style I had in mind. I was able to learn processes such as masking to keep ink out of particular areas of the piece. From painting, I've learnt to utilize white in colour blending to show contrast within colours and the importance of layering to show gradients, tone and realism. I found my final practical to be very successful as my artwork both conveyed a variety of problems very well through placement of key features, but it also matches the dark style of some comic books, as well as the vibrant work of Klander, boosting the emotion behind the message. This being that society needs to take everything in the world into account, not just the pleasant parts, calling more attention to larger environmental issues.