

## *The Good Girls*

### **Christina Blair**

"The Good Girls" is a mix media portrait series on matte paper, which highlights the impact societal stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination has on how women. Growing up, I had always struggled to reach the 'expectations' of what makes a girl a 'girl,' as I was interested in dressing up acting, and being more a stereotypical 'boy.' This series juxtaposes the 'ideal feminine qualities' and the reality of living up to a perceived standard. The final is inspired by personal experiences, teachers who have had similar experiences and subject matter of Anna Platten and Frida Kahlo works.

The series originally started with three A4 portraits, which would consist of using one medium and focus on multiple feminine characteristics. The final work is compiled of four pieces demonstrating a significant focus feminine characteristic in each and used a variety of media to complete, such as spray paint, acrylic, and pencil. I had a friend take photos of me wearing different feminine outfits to be used as references, in which I slightly altered in the final. Piece 1 portrait displays a figure tightly tying a bow on a dress, the tying symbolic to unrealistic appearance expectations for women. Piece 2 depicts the 'gentle' nature of women and girls, through the stuffed rabbit toy that is held. Piece 3 highlights the expected beauty standards of women, like make-up, jewellery, and painted nails. Finally, piece 4 displays the idea of women wanting to express themselves in a way that makes them feel 'feminine', but feel challenged, and prone to giving up, more so in the 1950's.

Significant elements incorporated in this series is the balance, iconology, body language depicted, colour laydown and appearance. Balance and connection is created through the use of having the figures central to the picture frame, all having their eyes closed. All the figures depicted have bright fluoro pink halos, the bright pink halos contrast the idea of women depicted in religious and modernistic works, and provides a more avant-garde or contemporary perspective on the topic. Body language depicted by the figures expresses the feeling of 'hollowness' and 'soulless' which comes with being restricted to expressing oneself. Leaving white sketched lines on the clothing and faces, highlights the idea that women should not be confined within the lines of society. The colour palette and appearance focused on Platten's hyper-realistic blending and brushwork and was paired contrastive hues of Kahlo's works.

This series is to be displayed on a wall with piece 1 in the middle, piece 2 on the left, and piece 4 to the right with piece 3 next to it but spaced a few centimetres apart. I believe this series expresses the stereotypical views and prejudices of women in society. With this series, I want viewers to reflect on their idea of gender, what defines 'femininity', or 'masculinity' to them, and that they should feel free to express their identity without boundaries.