

Small Worlds

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Small Worlds is a series of five art pieces that hold individual meaning but as a group to portray different aspects of life. The style that I have used along with my chosen media links these works. Paperboard with various paint and pen applications form the basis of most of the enclosed pieces while wires and plastic offcuts were used in others.

My main inspiration is drawn from Katharine Morling, where her hand-drawn style in 3D forms has influenced the visuals and narrative of my work. I combined aspects of Morling's style with my own to create an aesthetic that reflects my personal character and identity. Morling portrays layers of emotion and story through her composition, often revealing her character with subtle details of placement. Each piece Morling creates are individual aspects of a larger image; they represent her narrative of her progressing story.

I chose *Small Worlds* for the title because each of the pieces reflect aspects of my life. Each of the compositions attempt to portray different aspects through enclosed spaces, such as my perception of home or how I see the world. These compositions are tied together with the tree that is symbolic of life and growth with the idea that beyond all the enclosed spaces are just experiences and memories that are created. They are all a part of us that is constantly growing and expanding.

I drew inspiration from Mohamad Hafez for the train diorama, where his choice of frames and subject emphasises the meaning behind his works. I based the theme on 'home' as the display box I used looked like a house and originally served purpose to grow plants. I made the subject a train as it is symbolic of childhood innocence which reflects freedom and security, a factor I associate with home. The hand-drawn style inspired by Kathrine Morling in combination with stippling was applied with a pen and the use of paperboard as it insinuates the visuals of colour-in books which emphasises the child-like aspect. I based the location on King William Road as the tram station is my drop off to go home. Parts of the composition reflect my character such as the graffiti doodles and the buildings associated with daily rituals like the café with coffee or the advertisements reflecting games. The background was inspired by the style of *Persona 5*. I adapted the aesthetic to my piece as the abstract perception of buildings is appealing and makes the city appear energetic and alive. It maintains simplicity and harmonises with the hand-drawn aesthetics of the composition while also resembling my love for games as a place I can find shelter and freedom from life's tribulations.

The candle diorama reflects society and life. I used cross hatching to create a more realistic tone and chaotic elements as well as manipulating the lighting with a darkened backdrop to simulate depth. Monochrome has been used to focus on contrast and make the viewer focused on the subject. The candles were created using paperboard for. The fire reflects life, it is fragile and can be blown out at any moment, so we do what we can to keep it alive. The candles will one day disappear and so will the fire, portrayed through the irony of the cage where the lack of oxygen will snuffle the flame. The composition shows how the privileged work less while the workers struggle with footing for a candle a third the size.

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This is demonstrated through the dynamic of the workers covered in the wax of the privileged candle towering over them. The composition of candles acts as a guiding focal point, where figures closer to the flames are more composed while chaos ensues beneath. I emphasize this through contrast of positive and negative space, where the workers are harder to see as they blend in with the white while the people up top are well distinguished as they contrast with the dark.

I used the deep set frame to create a shadowbox as it creates a sense of depth that brings the image to life.

I separated the composition into layers to represent the layers of life, the natural shadows casted are things in the past I have grown out of. The figures in the background wearing kimonos are more culture based, while the objects in the foreground are modern like the 5g towers; it reflects my personal growth, coming from a religious background to putting that aside and involving myself with technology. I used watercolours to create texture and a serious tone. Different opacities allowed me to create a sense of depth that was not present in the dioramas. Some of the buildings represent my identity such as the Sydney opera house reflecting Australian culture.

The figure proportions are exaggerated to emphasise their place in the world like the man in the large chair reflects the recent effects of covid, where there is a larger sense of loneliness and feeling small in the world due to isolations. The trees in the foreground reach back, directing the viewers attention to the background, showing that we are the people here because of our growth.

The lightbox was created from plastic cut offs from the final piece. The main idea I convey is of perception with the eyes. The internal light source surfaces from the transparent eyes, suggesting the idea of understanding and openness which contrasts with the eye's judgement.

The tree piece ties everything together, it reflects the underlying message that these are all aspects of my life. Unlike the other pieces, the tree breaks free of the composition through how it isn't encaged. There is less focus on stylisation and more on form and structure. The symbolism of this emphasises that the tree is the source of the other works, they are all memories that sprout and decay. Growth is shown through the spiral of the wood staircase and wires that grow from them which also guide the viewer's attention upwards. Aspects from the other works are incorporated in this piece such as the childhood innocence shown through the adult on the swings. Idea from the candles is reflected with the figures stationed on different stages of the tree, but the meaning is different as it resembles growth and exploration. I added a wire monkey as it reflects my Asian heritage with the Chinese zodiac. The monkey also symbolises curiosity, craftiness and cheekiness, features that I think symbolises myself. I chose the bonsai tree for the subject as the choices the gardener makes influences the form of the tree, reflecting how we shape our experiences.