

## *Human Habitats*

### **Hilary Clarke**

Prior to the creation of my final piece, I was heavily inspired by various contemporary artists. This exploration allowed me to identify all the possible techniques that I could employ to produce my final piece. The style I am drawn to and feel confident in is thick and suggestive brush strokes. This style best reflects my intentions and skills in a suggestive painterly manner.

The biggest challenge was deciding the theme of my art. I wanted to create something unique to myself, yet I wanted it to be a piece that everyone could relate to. Initially, I wanted to create a series of four paintings, all showcasing a different individual. I was attracted to this idea to display the variation and similarities between individuals. However, after further deliberation, I decided to focus on one person as I felt this clearly displayed the disparity between human life and our experiences. The painting was interesting because at first glance, it seems so insignificant, however, its ambiguous nature allows for interpretation from the audience. I appreciate that the audience can reflect upon these everyday scenes and relate them to their own life. Appreciating the ways in which they are different to this person and in what ways they are similar. One problem I did face during the completion of the paintings was the time it took for the paint to dry, due to the nature of the oil paint. This did set me back, however, to progress past this, I alternated between each painting while working on the pieces.

I was able to take inspiration from artists such as Thom Minnick, who inspired me to utilise expressive brush strokes that effectively portray the effect of natural light. Artist Caroline Walker inspired my composition, with the incorporation of human life and its experiences. Both artists captivated a painterly aesthetic, in which I could also combine their characteristics with my own. Despite the painting style appearing 'rough', due to the large size of the canvas and the detail I wanted to include it was a time-consuming process. I found that doing sections or elements at one time allowed for an easier process, in which I could slowly watch the piece come together.

All three pieces effectively featured a consistent colour palette, with accents of warm brown timber and various blues that unify the paintings. I am pleased with the texture, and how the brush strokes are easily visible, also adding interest to the piece. Furthermore, I enjoy the juxtaposition between organic and geometric shapes. The natural form of the subject effectively contrasts against the man-made elements, highlighting their geometrical structures. In society today, it is easy to be overwhelmed. I appreciate how unassuming this final piece is. The painting serves a simple purpose, to provide a point for the mind to wonder. In a world of constant chaos, the paintings are calm, revealing the simple tasks of everyday life that everyone can relate to.

Through this creative process, I have learnt that art helps us to make sense of the world. Art is therefore a way we process our experiences of life in a way that can be shared with others.