

Scottish Heritage

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'Scottish Heritage' is a body of work of two graphite and coloured pencil drawings of Scottish children influenced by my own heritage. The maps were inspired by the work of Jacob Everett, who incorporates maps to represent the sense of identity and the place where they belong. 'Scottish Heritage' reflects life back to us with heritage, simplicity and truth.

The children's portraits were inspired by Stefan Zsaisits, who creates highly fascinating dark pencil drawings with geometric urban buildings, which juxtapose against the organic human forms. When trialling Zsaisits's style, it was important to find Scottish buildings that would incorporate my family's culture and identity. I have utilized old heritage buildings to signify a historical link. The choice of buildings were considered to achieve balance and interesting features such as the textural qualities of the stone work and the varied roof lines and turrets.

By incorporating the style of both Jacob Everett, I chose a road map of Glasgow and Scotland to clothe the body as significant metaphor for my family connectors. I found that the portraits with just the maps and Stefan inspired buildings, lacked interest so by adding in the detail of the Stewart Tartan Scottish Hat and the Bagpipes I was able to add more dimension and depth across both works. While seemingly a simple inclusion, I found that I needed to do many trials of maps with colours and sizing of the details to compliment each child as well as compliment each other as a whole.

Zsaisits's work motivated me to utilize the fine detail using graphite pencil for strong monotone contrast and varying tonal values not only in the portrait but also within the Abbotsford House and Balmoral Castle. I was able to achieve this by employing a range of graphite shades between 6H and 6B. Once completed, there appeared to be a disconnect with the coloured map and the graphic pencil drawing with the intensity of the coloured map creating too much visual focus. By adding soft colour pencil in the same hues as the maps into the Stewart Tartan Scottish Hat and Bagpipe, I was able to create a sense of unity between the mediums. Careful pre planning and consideration of the placement of both portraits on the pages was needed to create a balanced view across the two works.

As I grow older I realise the importance of understanding my heritage and connections to the past. Zsaisits portraits "leave us with a haunting impression of the fluidity of identity jarring against the concreteness of its grotesque realisations" (Trapp G, 2017), however for these artwork I want people to leave knowing a bit about my own heritage.