

Kembali

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I have always been passionate about the environment with an aim to work in the field of conservation. Prior to this investigation, my understanding of animals in art was primarily influenced by practitioners Nick Sider and Richard Symonds. Each of these artists use big cats as focal points, my personal favourite animal, and create works with a hyper realistic style. After reviewing the work of Slaveika Aladjova, I was inspired by her vibrant watercolour art that used both realistic and abstract concepts in unity. My piece reimagines the style of Aladjova using a more understated colour pallet to symbolise the sadness of animal extinction along with the beauty of big cats.

I aimed to capture my own images of the tiger at Adelaide Zoo that could be used as a reference image; however, this enclosure was temporarily closed due to the arrival of a new female Sumatran tiger for a breeding program for this species. This gave new meaning to my work.

My piece represents animal extinction by acknowledging the work of conservationists around the world. Tigers are devastatingly affected by human activities like deforestation and poaching but the endless efforts of zookeepers, scientists, conservationists, volunteers, and individuals who care maintain the hope that species can still thrive and inspires others, like myself, to protect the world we live in. I now look at the work, not with sadness, but with hope and admiration for those protecting our planet. I have painted *Kembali*, the breeding male tiger of the Adelaide Zoo, using acrylic paint. Fittingly, the name *Kembali* means 'return' in Indonesian, symbolising hope that endangered species will return.

Acrylic paint allowed me to use water in varying amounts. Thin paint was used in splatters to create the illusion of a tiger while thicker paint was used to emphasise the more realistic section, *Kembali's* face, with directional line. This was an effective technique that connected both realistic and abstract styles. Tones of orange and brown were used to capture the tiger's natural hue with the addition of gold and crimson, representing their strength and beauty. The colour choice for both the tiger and foliage was paramount as the two could easily clash or mix to make unwanted brown tones. However, experimentation and refinement allowed me to select a colour palette that complemented one another. Much of the final touches to the work consisted of the addition of black and white tones. This created crucial contrast, especially on the face of the tiger that needed definition to appear eye-catching and three dimensional. Next time, I would continue the foliage technique in sections of the bottom, using the orange tones already present there, to make the composition more cohesive.

Overall, I am proud of the piece and believe I completed a successful investigation. Along with learning and experimenting with mediums and art styles, I have learnt the importance of reducing carbon footprint and protecting wildlife. By recycling, reducing meat intake, investing in renewable energy, and supporting programs investing in the environment, we can all help protect the environment and its species.