

ARTEXPRESS



THE ANNUAL ARTEXPRESS has become household lore – not only within families with growing schoolchildren but for all those interested in the arts, and not only in its home state of New South Wales, but Australia-wide and beyond. The calibre and virtuosity of each year's intake of students and selection of artworks seems to surpass previous years—although that could hardly be possible. However, what clearly grows year upon year is visitation — EVERYONE wants to see this show.

How did it all begin? Originally these annual shows of work submitted by students to the Leaving Certificate in the late nineteen-fifties were selected by the State's Supervisor of Art, Bob Winder who

went on to become the NSW Director-General for Education. Venues then included the Commonwealth Bank and the faculty common rooms at Sydney University and the University of NSW. In acknowledgement of the work of students in country and widely dispersed areas of NSW, small selections were also packed and transported free of charge by the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper delivery trucks to various country high schools where art teachers hung and supervised their exhibition. It sounds very Australian and very romantic.

In the 1960s the Higher School Certificate replaced the Leaving Certificate and by the seventies the various satellite exhibitions had expanded to more

ArtExpress is an annual series of showcase exhibitions of exemplary HSC Visual Arts works created by NSW year 12 students. It is a joint venture of the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Education Standards Authority.



sites in outer metropolitan schools. By 1978/79 exhibition venues were chosen with increased profile and public accessibility with Orange Regional Gallery showing a small collection.

Next the name ArtExpress was adopted and in 1982 the Sydney Town Hall hosted the exhibition as part of the Festival of Sydney and in 1983 the exhibition moved to Centrepont Tower and a small collection was shown at the Art Gallery of NSW. But while ArtExpress's star was definitely on the rise, times were a'changing in other ways and the country tours ceased for a while when the newspaper delivery truck service was disbanded.

Zhixuan Zhuo
Homebush Boys High School
Deluge, painting, oil on canvas

Inspired by American artist Gregory Thielker, *Deluge* explores ideas of mood and the atmospheric qualities of rain on a windscreen. The paintings in my body of work represent uncertainty and the diversity of natural beauty, and a sense of unpredictability.

The contrast between the colourful elements of the work and the ominous atmosphere reinforces the idea of uncertainty. I chose an extensive yet deliberate range of bright, bold, pulsating colours to reflect on the vibrancy, beauty, simplicity and peacefulness which can be associated with the notion of rain.



Huasheng (Anna) Pahl
Pymble Ladies College
Urban Melancholy
Photomedia (Ink on Kodak smooth art paper
and cotton rag)

In 1984/5 the Hunter Region organised exhibitions in Newcastle which were supported by the Newcastle Herald newspaper and the United Permanent Building Society and country tours were enabled once more with the assistance of the Regional Galleries Association, the Arts Council and the Country Areas Program. A new, wider circle of patronage and support was building and in 1986 an art teacher was employed to manage ArtExpress

together with the Department of Education's William Wilkins Memorial Art Collection – the collection of high quality HSC artworks which provides an educational resource for teachers as well as for members of the public.

From 1989 the Art Gallery of NSW became the principal venue for ArtExpress with satellite exhibitions in up to six other locations and in



As day transforms into night, an elegant beauty is revealed by the remnant light, a beauty often unseen and unexplored.

These images explore both the intrigue and the dread of darkness within the urban context. For this series I became a *flaneur* – an observer of the city around me –

to capture the hidden beauty of the nightscape with its loneliness, melancholy and sense of mystery.

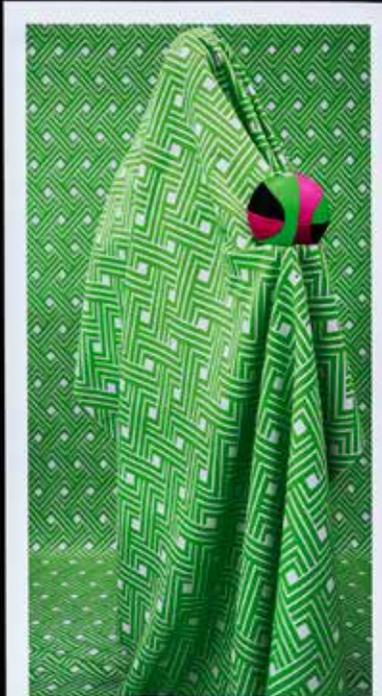
The atmosphere created by the ambiguous locations and images is of isolation and focus, inviting the viewer to look within and confront their own relationship with the darkness and the light of the night.

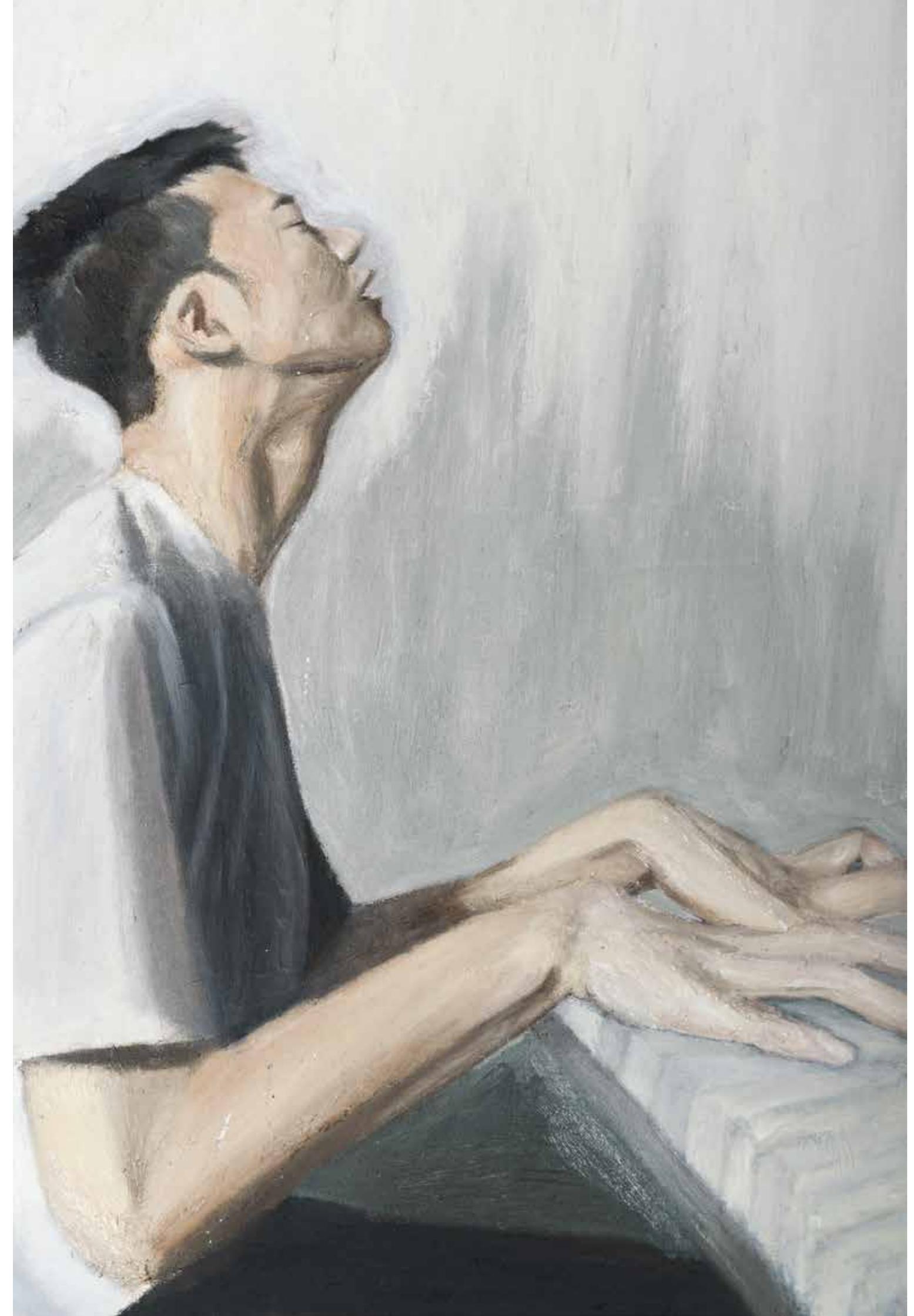


Kai Jadwat
St Josephs College

Pattern Recognition
Photomedia (Photography
on 200 gsm poly paper)

The concept behind my body of work stems from the idea of 'form': what it is and what it represents. My artwork aims to challenge the audience as they are forced to question and reconsider what form really is. The subject matter is aesthetically pleasing while the intricate figures pose a challenging suggestion of the unknown.





1999 the Arts Education Centre (now the Department of Education and Communities' Arts Unit) was made responsible for ArtExpress.

By the turn into the 21st century, ArtExpress attendance figures had exceeded half a million and in 2002 a selection of works travelled to New York's Brooklyn Museum of Art (to be opened by the Australian Ambassador in New York and additionally exhibited at Macy Gallery, Teachers' College at Columbia University).

Today the AGNSW continues as the home of the annual ArtExpress with its visitors now making up a substantial portion of the gallery's visitation and acknowledged as a high point on the gallery exhibition calendar, coinciding with the annual Archibald and Sulman Prize exhibitions.

The aim of ArtExpress is to represent best practice in visual arts education by showcasing high quality teaching and providing a resource for best practice in visual arts education. It brings together emerging student artists, teachers, families and the wider community to experience sophisticated stories told by young people through their individual bodies of work. ArtExpress is tangible proof that the creative arts offer young voices a unique pathway to self-expression and connection with others. Learning through the arts develops creativity, builds problem-solving skills and promotes innovative thinking. And ArtExpress is able to forge a connection between communities, the young artists and the wider world around us.

Kevin Luu
Hurlstone Agricultural High School

Self Portrait, Silent Awake
Painting (Oil on canvas)

Self-portrait, Silent Awake explores the intensity of a silent epiphany, of the emotional adversity yet fulfilment in becoming an artist. My raw, gestural and painterly body of work is orchestrated with emotional immediacy and intuitive spontaneity to represent my confrontation with realities of vulnerability, uncertainty and enlightenment in coming of age. The first portrait reflects the hardship of reaching the profound passion of music. The main portrait describes the vulnerabilities of exposure and uncertainty in capturing the world through art. The last portrait represents the enlightenment and meaning obtained through literature. The work as a whole is a veristic and intimate self-reflection.





How is work selected? In the Sydney metropolitan area nominations for ArtExpress take place after the marking of the HSC Visual Arts bodies of work by the Visual Arts Marking Centre at Homebush Bay. Work from outside this area and for country regions is marked in each school by visiting teams of markers. The bodies of work nominated for ArtExpress come from drawing, graphic design, painting, printmaking, photomedia, designed objects, textiles and fibre, sculpture, documented forms, ceramics, time-based forms and collection of works.

This year exhibitions of works from 2018 were held at the AGNSW, Hazelhurst Arts Centre, The Armory Sydney Olympic Park, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, New England Regional Art Museum, Blue Mountains

Cultural Centre, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Western Plains Cultural Centre and Tamworth Regional Gallery. The selected works were from 8,772 student artists who completed the 2018 HSC in Visual Arts. Of those submitted bodies of work, 402 were nominated for consideration by galleries and 238 were selected for exhibition.

In 2020 exhibitions will be held at the AGNSW, The Armory Sydney Olympic Park, Hazelhurst Arts Centre, Margaret Whitlam Galleries, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and Griffith Regional Art Gallery. The launch of the ArtExpress virtual exhibition will also take place in 2020.

www.artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au



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