



# MEDIA RELEASE

Hazelhurst

SUTHERLANDSHIRE  
ARTS  
CENTRE



Alice Moosavian Mahdavi, Abbotsleigh, *Connecting Threads* (detail), 2019, Photomedia

## 2020 ARTEXPRESS EXAMINES ANIMAL EXTINCTION, CLIMATE CHANGE, GENDER ROLES AND MENTAL HEALTH

Hazelhurst Arts Centre will feature 53 outstanding works in the 2020 ARTEXPRESS, including the works from 10 local schools. This year there is an emphasis on animal extinction, climate change, gender roles, race and culture, family and friendships, and mental health.

Alice Moosavian Mahdavi from Abbotsleigh explores the loss of her Iranian heritage in her work *Connecting Threads*. The photomedia work superimposes images of herself, sister and grandmother onto traditional Iranian carpets using collage and weaving, showing the varying generational connections to Iran. Migrating to Australia with her sister when she was young, Mahdavi has little recollection of Iran and both she and her sister identify differently to their grandmother who lived in Iran her entire life. Hearing about her grandmother's life and culture through recounted stories helped to form Mahdavi's understanding of her heritage –



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the 'thread' binding her to her roots. Through her work she reveals that hope is not lost and making this work has restored her connection to her heritage.

St Ive's High School student Kate Farkis explores the public response to climate change in her work *Meltdown*. The delicate five piece watercolour work depicts animals and landscape that have been affected by climate change in the arctic region. Faded graphs and data have been overlaid onto the images, referencing the hidden turmoil and how one's emotions and attitudes can influence how a problem is perceived. In moving forward to address the issue of climate change, Farkis believes we must first address our emotions and unhealthy coping mechanisms to reach a point of acceptance.

William Todman from Blaxland High School tackles issues surrounding mental health in his work *love, its absence in society, and why I'll never achieve it*. Presented as a series of photographs, Todman documents the varying emotional states he experienced while being diagnosed and treated for depression. Referencing artists such as Cindy Sherman, Sorelle Amore and Rachel Gulotta, Todman captures these freeze-frame moments both as a wall display and in a photobook to show two unique story experiences, linear and nonlinear. The title references his thoughts on the concept of love and is a reminder about Todman's journey, from the mental state he was in, to where he is now. He reveals not only a deeply personal story but tackles an important issue facing many young people today.

Taya Lea Corrigan from Kirrawee High School critiques gender stereotyping in her work *Them, The 'Others'*. Corrigan presents two very large black and white drawings of contrasting figures: a strong, powerful female wearing a black jacket and pants, alongside a gentle, elegant male wearing white flowy clothing. Subverting the stereotypical aesthetics of gender, Corrigan aims through large scale to show who we are, beyond usual expectations.

## **ARTEXPRESS**

**14 February – 13 April 2020**

**Hazelhurst Arts Centre**

**782 Kingsway, Gymea.**

**Open daily 10am – 5pm**



ARTEXPRESS is presented jointly by NSW Department of Education and NSW Education Standards Authority in partnership with Hazelhurst Arts Centre.