ARTIST: DAPHNE CAZALET
ARTWORK: On Entering II

Cazalet has stated, “This work is created largely in pastel. It is one of a series of works intended to expose the feelings, both positive and negative, of women forced by circumstances beyond their control, to leave the security and certainty of their own homes and countries and seek a new life elsewhere.

The work speaks of moving into a new and unknown space; of anxiety, of loss, of the feeling of being stripped bare and sent amongst strangers but also of the curiosity, the hope, and the dream-like awe of one who enters a place of safety and opportunity after living through a nightmare.

This work, like all the works of this series, was inspired by stories told to me by women who had faced this situation for real. These formed part of storytelling workshops I conducted, designed to give refugee and migrant women the chance to share the extraordinary stories of determination and survival that were the otherwise hidden background to their arrival in Australia. For me, these stories evoked my personal history when, as a child, with my family, I was forced to leave India, where I was born, and emigrate to Britain. The trauma of that change lives with me still even though I have benefited considerably from the opportunities it also opened up”.

Daphne CAZALET
b. India

On Entering II 2001
Mixed media
153 x 100 cm

Harry Hopkins Memorial Award winner, 2001, acquired for the James Cook University, Art Collection

Photograph: Michael Marzik

ARTIST STATEMENT
TECHNIQUE

This artwork is on paper. It has a painted background over which the artist used broad strokes of pastel in several layers. The effects include rubbing back of the pastel with an eraser and use of white pastel to create light effects.

Pastel is an art medium that is made from raw colour pigment mixed with a binding agent (usually gum arabic) to form it into sticks. The sticks are usually quite short (5-7cm) and cylindrical, square or rectangular. Their texture can vary from quite hard and dense to very soft and velvety. Pastels are available in hundreds of colours just like artists' paints.

Edgar Degas was a famous French impressionist artist (1834-1917) who used pastel very effectively in many of his figurative works, the most famous of which are the pictures of ballerinas and theatre performers. Like Cazalet, Degas's work titled “Singer in Green” is essentially a drawing but because of the use of pastel it has a very painterly look, with the colours being luminous and clearly layered.

INVESTIGATE/DISCUSS

In the drawing by Cazalet, the figure is the main subject of the composition. How has the artist empowered the figure through its size, stance and position in the image?

How does the title On Entering II relate to the artist statement?
Look at the surface of Cazalet’s work on paper. Try to work out which layers were applied first and the ways in which the artist built up the layers to achieve such a rich surface. List the four most dominant colours you can see in the drawing.

In the last few years, as the result of war, many people have been displaced from their homes and homeland and their families. If you were going to make an artwork that made a comment about this subject, describe what you would include in it. Sketch some of your ideas.

Reference List: