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Master of Art and Design (MA & D)

Imaginary worlds:

an exploration through illustration

Alexandra Catriona Holmes

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School of Art and Design

Primary Supervisor: Dale Fitchett

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief
it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the
acknowledgements), nor material, which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degrees or diploma
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Abstract

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This practice-based project investigates the development of imaginary characters and friends, and the creation of imaginary worlds through narrative illustration. Central to this research is an exploration of visual approaches to the invention and portrayal of a young girl, the central character, and her animal companions. The female child operates as a symbol for all young females, while the imaginary companions represent aspects of the girl's psyche and emotional state as they relate to the self. The author's illustrations are a narrative, drawn from personal childhood experiences or reflect the girl's, dealing with the escape from everyday life and the creation of imaginary friends and worlds.

Max in "Where the wild things are" said " *Let the wild rumpus start"* (Sendak, 1963, p. 22).

Introduction

In this project I will use illustration as the medium to investigate enquiries into the imaginary. Illustration is a form of storytelling: a visual form of narrative created through drawing and painting. Illustration in a series with no written words, tells a story that can be read by viewers challenged to create their own informed narrative.

In developing the illustrations, influences came from two sources. First is a recollection of drawing animals when I was a young student of five years of age. I was asked along, with the class, to draw a bird of prey. I do not remember the finished drawing but I do remember my awe in creating a figurative drawing of the creature. At the end of class, outwardly, I seemed no different from other students; but within myself I had changed. I see this as the first stage of becoming an artist who loved to draw birds and animals. The second influence was from having stories read to me as a young child before bedtime. The narratives were fairy tales, in particular "Rapunzel" and "Little Red Riding Hood." From this fascination with both other worldly narratives and drawing animals, I developed a curiosity regarding the discipline of painting and illustration. At the beginning of my undergraduate degree I combined the two elements, culminating in drawings, paintings and installations (Figs. 1 & 2).

The drawing of "Wolfe and Girl" (Fig. 1), developed in 2010, used the mythology of werewolves as seen in the fairytale "Little Red Riding Hood." The signifiers of the wolf and woman pertain to mythical narratives of werewolves, contextually used in pop culture.

For example, in Figure 1, the wolf juxtaposed with the female can be interpreted as a werewolf – the female and wolf as one creature that can change into either physical form: human or animal. This type of narrative is seen on television, for example in "Supernatural Heart" wherein the central character of the story is a female who has turned into a werewolf. Other media to use the idea of a man or a woman changing into a wolf and back into a human, include the television programme "The Vampire Diaries;" and the "Twilight" movies. These influences, and previous paintings and drawings, created the stimulus to generate the project and the questions raised within this document.

In chapter one I will discuss the importance of the imaginary worlds we create and how they can be created through the form of narrative illustration. Focusing on certain elements that make imaginary worlds recognizable to the viewer, different artists and literature will illustrate the theory behind creating an imaginary world.

In the second chapter I will discuss how the subject developed through the manipulation of media and formal elements. The influence of artists is an integral component in visually creating the girl in the drawings. The character has also developed from using the female as a symbol for all women, to using the icon of the young girl as an interpretation of the autobiographical.

In the third chapter the discussion centres on how and why there is an imaginary companion. Why is the imaginary character an animal and could it be something else? I also discuss the idea of the suppressed inner self and how this state may involve an imaginary friend. The symbolism of the animal in conjunction with the imaginary friend will be examined in its relationship with the female child.

In the fourth chapter I present the practice of creating narrative illustrations how they have developed and why. The practice will research the formal aspects of creating a narrative through drawing and the relationship of these aspects to the ideas discussed in the three previous chapters.

Fig.1. Holmes, A. (2010). *"Wolf and Girl."* [Pencil on paper]
21 X 29.7 cm
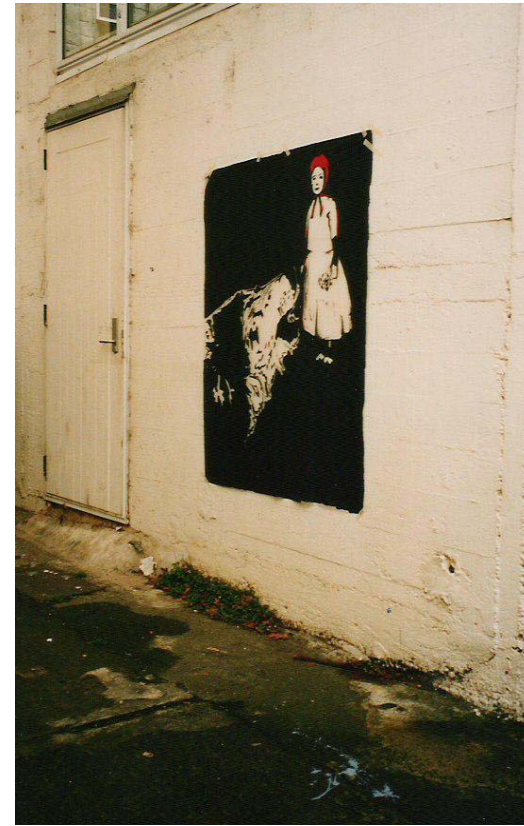
Fig. 2. Holmes, A. (2005). *"Little Red Riding Hood 1."*
[Installation of painting onto plastic]
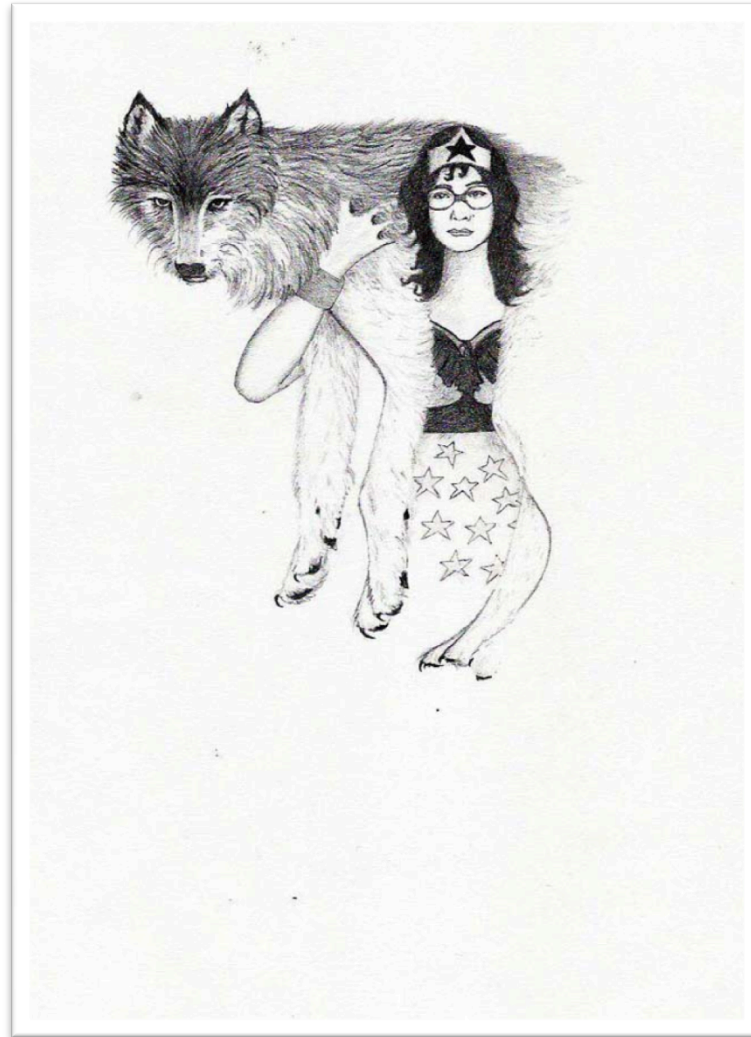
Fig. 3. Holmes, A. (2011). *"I want to be Wonder Woman with you."* [Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Chapter One: Developing and Creating Imaginary Worlds

"The power of our minds is virtually unlimited and largely untapped. With imagination we can create new worlds and improve old ones. We can live our wildest dreams and dream our wildest lives " (Lindsay, 2009, p. 34).

In this chapter I discuss how the concept of an imaginary world developed through the influence of artists, illustrators, theorists and literature. An imaginary world stems from "the desire for the freedom of the uncivilized is founded upon the restraints of the domesticated world" (Shaddock, 1997, p. 2). An idealized form of imaginary world can be expressed in the practice of illustration, and these make-believe worlds are sometimes a representation of a nostalgic childhood. By creating an imaginary world, the artist represents the perspective of a young child from an adult's nostalgic viewpoint. An example of this can be seen in the narrative and illustrations from "Winnie the Pooh" by A. A. Milne (Fig. 4) and "Where the wild things are" by Maurice Sendak (Fig. 5). In both narratives the main character is a young child who creates an imaginary world; Christopher Robin in "Winnie the Pooh" and Max in "Where the wild things are." Through both characters we can see their interpretation of an imaginary world and their companions. In author and illustrator Maurice Sendak's visual narrative of Max, the person creating the imaginary world in the narrative is the child Max. Max is made a prisoner "in his room by his mother and by his imagination he was to get through those few hours where he was isolated and trapped"(Setoodeh, 2009, p. 3). From the perspective of the nostalgic childhood, the make-believe worlds are

created and used as they "can serve as an adaptive function for dealing with the resentments and frustrations of everyday life, diminishing the pain of loneliness, and compensating for social isolation" (Golomb, 2007, p. 144).

Fig. 4. Shepard, E. H. (1926). An illustration from "Winnie the Pooh." [Book illustration]

Fig. 5. Sendak, M. (1963). An illustration from "*Where the wild things are.*" [Book illustration]

Even though the child is created from an adult's perspective from childhood nostalgia, creating the imaginary world is "about the ability of children to imagine themselves in another place" (Setoodeh, 2009, p. 3). In "Where the wild things are," Max's make-believe world of a chaotic wilderness, "represents prehistory-grass, shrubs, trees, the sky, the moon" (Shaddock, 1997, p. 4). Thus, imagined worlds are made up of an environment of recognizable components of flora and fauna. The elements are romanticized from our own familiar images of nature and are idealized into a landscape of an imaginary world that is primitive and undeveloped.

The imaginary is contained separately from our reality and is an environment the female character in my narrative can escape to with the intention of "dealing with the resentments and frustrations of everyday life" (Golomb, 2007, p. 141). While " daydreaming or waking fantasy is an aspect of an ongoing thought process" (Golomb, 2007, p. 141), the make believe worlds are like "images of 'golden hours,' the 'fairy dream,' and 'the bright summer day" (Hemmings, 2007, p. 61). Also the "daydreams are highly personal, they are an individual's creation and as such can also evoke the images of failure, guilt, and shame" (Golomb, 2007, p. 141). The female child creates her imaginary world because she wishes to escape her reality, which feels like an imprisonment. From this perspective, the girl's imagining of the make-believe derives from the need for something to aspire to and retreat from. Likewise, Max in "Where the wild things are," creates an imaginary world because he wants to escape his imprisonment.

Fig. 6. Sendak, M. (1963). *"Where the wild things are."* [Book illustration]

As Hemmings (2007) notes: "The nostalgia of Winnie the Pooh is manifest in its own bucolic setting, an escape from a modern industrial world now also reeling from lingering consequences of the First World War, and in the adult desire to return home to a safely reconstructed childhood." In my project the illustrations are re-contextualized in today's society so that the elements and repercussions of a materialistic world recede. This influences the individual's ability to fantasize about an otherworldly existence where these issues do not arise. For example the "forest is a setting of life, sunshine, running water, woodlands,' certainly 'clear of the clash of sex' and superficially 'free of problems' from the adult world" (Hemmings, 2001, p. 72). The illusion of nature is further created, by using the formal qualities of blank negative space that imply something like a void that is an imagined world. Hemmings (2007) also suggests the imagined world "co-exists within the imagined space of the forest" (p. 72).

The focus of this project is on "the human relationship to nature" (Cervin, 2007, p. 3), specifically the relationship between human and animal. Berger (2009) states "animals offer man a companionship which is different from any offered by human exchange. Different because it is a companionship offered to the loneliness of man as a species." Animals are used to represent the human relationship to nature as "animals are both like and unlike man" (Berger, 2009, p. 6). This is represented through the visual connection of similar body language and facial expression in man and animal as seen in Mark Ryden's "64 Goodbye Bear" (Fig. 7) where the female and animal mirror each other through body language.

Fig. 7. Ryden, M. (2006). "*64 Goodbye Bear.*" [Oil on canvas] 9.75 X 8 inches

Fig. 8. Garcia, C.R. (2008). *"Escape to Darlingtonia."* [Acrylic on board]

Fig. 9. Garcia, C.R. (2008). *"Royal Disorder Poison Party."* [Acrylic on board]

Focusing on colours that hold connotations of nature, illustrated worlds became identifiable as part of our reality and, at the same time, mysterious through application of blank negative spaces. The influence of Camille Rose Garcia' s palette (Figs 8 & 9) from the series "Escape to Darlingtonia" is seen, where the "palette is borrowed from the colours at dusk: deep lavenders, midnight blues and inky blackberries capturing those fleeting moments reflected in the sky before everything shifts to darkness" (Anonymous, 2007, p. 1). These colours in the imagined world can symbolize "better worlds for others and myself" (Anderson et al., 2010, p. 285). In the creation of the imaginary worlds, Garcia creates "twilight landscapes … populated by animistic sages with human figures" (Anonymous, 2007, p. 1). By using colour to physically represent the emotions of the subject or character, as well as the imagined world, the element of colour also becomes part of the character's identity. However, the choice of colour influences the subject's context and viewer's interpretation, in this case of a twilight landscape. Drawing from Garcia, in my own illustrations as Anderson et al., (2010) I am trying to create a scene that uses the colours of a twilight landscape to represent the imaginary world. As Anderson et al., (2010) note it is "hard to tell … if a scene is in the evening or during the day, which only adds to the nebulous aura of each piece" (p. 49).

Chapter Two: Character Development: The Female

"Chase back through the years. Remember that sense of wonderment you had as a kid: that driving curiosity, that wide–eyed thirst for knowledge. It's still there. Sometimes it's buried under responsibilities. But it's still in you. Release it. Embrace it"(Lindsay, 2009, p. 99).

In this chapter the elements of how the female character are created are discussed. Gestalt cognitive theory defines character development as the psychological behaviour of in a person focusing on the attributes that makes the character "stand out as interesting and idiosyncratic" (Burley, 2004, p. 1). Within the context of illustration, the aspect of character development which I focused on reveals psychological elements in physical appearance. The elements pertinent to the development of the characters in illustration are the physical attributes that contribute to creating their personality through their appearance, and this is achieved through facial expression, body language and physical traits. The most obvious attributes that have to be consistent within the flow of the narrative are the physical traits. Within the context of creating the imaginary across a series of illustrations in my project, the development of the girl character is reliant on a similar continuous aesthetic that is also open to an interpretation of who she could be. Concurrently the female character must have clear characteristics of appearance relating to where she comes from, her culture, ethnicity and identity in order to represent a clear idea of her mood within the illustrations. In Maurice Sendak's

"Where the wild things are" for example, it is clear that the story is about a boy on the cusp of adulthood, in the process of questioning himself and others. So while this narrative is of the imaginary, "the beauty of 'Where the wild things are' is that for all its fantastical elements, it's a work of realism, an exploration of mood and emotion" (Pols, 2009, p. 2). This would be considered the psychological element of the character, which is similar to my approach in the development of the female's character in the narratives. The physical appearance of the boy in the illustrated narrative "Where the wild things are," is the same throughout the story (Fig. 13). Hair colour, eye colour, weight, height, build and the essence, spirit, soul of the child, so too personal, identifiable features, such as freckles and moles are peculiar to the physical essence of the character. The girl, in my narrative, has long hair, dark eyes, and pale skin and is small in stature. While the illustrations are created in reference to myself and are autobiographical, the final outcome of the artwork has many layers of meaning to represent the idea of a female child, including such notions as her being symbolic of childhood innocence.

Fig. 10. Sendak, M. (1963). *Where the wild things are.* [Book illustration]
A series of illustrations representing Max's personality in "Where the wild things are."

In my illustrations of the female child developed for this research project, I explored a variety of approaches to body language some of which included poses in which the girl looks up toward the sky. The angle at which the girl looks up towards the sky refers to the stance individuals take when creating images within their minds. This pose alludes to the way we create imaginary worlds and companions, which can be attributed to the process of visualization. Weldon & Ankerberg, (1996) outline the technique of receptive visualization which " 'lets the movie roll' from an initial theme, setting or the like, developed in the consciousness. The method is passive in that it receives whatever comes to the mind, which is visually interpreted as a special guidance of some kind, such as instructions from one's 'higher self,' 'inner guide,' or 'divine consciousness" (p. 1). The subject that creates the imaginary usually favours a pose, left or right, up or down, to reflect the intense internal imaginings; however, in this research the female child favours most often a 'looking up' pose. In "Where the wild things are" the character Max closes his eyes to take himself to his imaginary world and his companions (the monsters) (Fig. 11). The stance of the girl in my illustrations suggests she is creating and imagining within her mind but also could suggest that she is looking forward towards her destiny. The girl subject presents a positive outlook by looking up towards the sky, the heavens. It may also lead her, and the viewer, to question there whether is more to life than our existence.

Fig. 11. Sendak, M. (1963). "*Where The Wild Things Are.*" [Book illustration]

In creating the female character, consideration was given to a key element, which is the active role of pretence play. "Pretence play involves a mental action that expands the horizon of the playing child who is aware 'that she is thinking it up,' even though she may not be able to fully articulate it in words" (Golomb, 2007, p. 114). The female character within my compositions is actually creating the projection of the imaginary world and companion as seen in the illustrations. The role of the female is a vehicle to the imaginary realm and is a representational subject we can relate to, either as a sister, cousin, or some other female relative. In "Where the wild things are," Max is the central figure and vehicle to the imaginary world. Like Max, in the role of the creator, the female can "represent themselves the way they think of themselves in everyday life, while in their waking fantasies they imagine themselves as they wish to be" (Golomb, 2007, p. 144).

The "Gaze" of the subjects, or how they are looking, is interpreted within my illustrations but could also be interpreted by viewers from their own bank of knowledge, from the outside influences of culture, society and independent thought. However, the reason the girl creates imaginary worlds is a state of unhappiness and being unable to create her own destiny in her true reality. This element of the female's emotional state is represented in the questioning gaze towards the viewer and the animal, prompted by a level of unhappiness and sadness. By playing with the formal techniques of the pencil, the companion or animal can simulate the same expression as the female to create empathy. This is done through the formal and emotional connection of the eyes. Leonardo Da Vinci and others believed that "the eyes are the windows of the soul" (English proverb). Using the eyes to portray the emotional sadness of the female (and animal) was influenced by Marion Peck's paintings creepy, compelling animals and children (Anderson et al, 2010). The portrayal of the female character and the animals and the connection between the two subjects creates a relationship we can understand through their body language and facial expressions, such as in Peck's works "Girl with a Kitten," and "Boy with a Puppy" (Figs. 12 & 13).

Fig. 12. Peck, M. (2007). *"Girl with a Kitten."* [Oil on canvas]

Fig. 13. Peck, M. (2007). *"Boy with a Puppy."* [Oil on canvas]

Chinese Malaysian Poh Ling Yeow's paintings are autobiographical: the artwork concerns the artist incorporating her personality into the main subject. "Yeow's works emphatically explore notions of belonging and origin … [her] paintings are an attempt at reconciling this heritage with her western identity" (Yeow, n.d.). Yeow's main subject is a girl with her menagerie. This is her alter ego, amplifying and emphasizing the Asian features of her culture in a consistent manner within all her paintings (Figs. 14 & 15). By personalizing my illustrations through technique and application of the pencil, the technique of light and shadow, the girl becomes a part of the landscape, as well as part of the artist, although not only in an autobiographical context. It is instead the idea of the female subject, the female child symbolizing anyone's younger sister, cousin or relation in the illustrated narrative.

Fig. 14. Yeow, P.L. (2008). "*Lost tribe.*" [Acrylic on canvas] 155 X 150 cm

Fig. 15. Yeow, P. L. (2007). "*"I Waited & Waited with the Major."* [Acrylic on canvas] 120 X 120 cm

Abbey McCulloch (Figs. 16 & 17) uses unusual colours when rendering the female figure to create a "fantasy side" (King, 2008, p. 124). "Her colour schemes, those combinations of pinks and yellow, flesh colours, tend to be muted, rather than hot synthetic colour" (King, 2008, p. 124). It is this idea of the application of colour in creating the female figure in my work that pushes the boundaries in creating the imaginary world. As the imaginary world is a further extension of the girl, the world is created through colour that reflects the emotions of her nature, happy or sad. In doing this, the colour, as in McCulloch's strategy, creates a fantasy element in my narrative of the female. My female subject encompasses all females, as the child is the symbol of innocence lost; lost in a world that has become industrialized and not "conducive to happiness" (Anderson et al. 2010, p. 285). The girl in my narratives is the centre of the imagined world, the focus of the composition, and a nymphet-like creature although still human: 'the companion and the world are secondary.' The character is developed through reflecting on and analysing how much of you or any viewer is within the subject. As, in Mark Ryden's (2007) work, the female within my illustrations is a creature "of virginal demeanour" (p. 13) and it is through her gaze we see the imagined worlds and beings. Ryden's females also present "a cool canny gaze whose movements suggest a state of harmony with the Arcadian landscape in which they roam" (Ryden, p. 13), and this is also being explored in my narrative.

Fig. 16. McCulloch, A. (2010). "*Gloria.*"
[Oil on Canvas]

Fig. 17. McCulloch, A. (2010). *"Nancy and the Grey."*
[Oil on Canvas]

Chapter Three: Character Development: The Imaginary Companion

"Dreams are like micro-holidays, whether in sleep or as daydreaming. Some make sense of our daily lives. Some are extensions of our hopes. They remove our barriers. They open possibilities" (Lindsay, 2009, p. 123).

In this chapter I discuss what was used to influence the creation of the imaginary companion. The physical and psychological elements of the imaginary companion were developed alongside the female character. The psychological elements were again drawn from the Gestalt cognitive approach; in particular "The Concept of Character" in which "we speak of character in the following ways: 1. Attributes that can be relied upon: or 2. One who stands out as interesting and idiosyncratic" (Burley, 2004, p. 2). As a character, the imaginary friend would be portrayed as having similar attributes, feelings and emotions to humans even though they are animals. In the drawings the animal companion would present facial expressions and body language which refer to the psychology of the human mind. The creation of a number of companions was explored. The intention of each illustrative frame is for the female character to be accompanied by a different imaginary animal: for example a red panda in one, a monkey in another or a deer. The use of different types of animal, as part of the development that connects to the female child's character, is to reflect the changing personality of the girl in her endeavour to find herself, her path or destiny. The deer represents the innocence of her childhood, the monkey her playfulness and troublemaking. In "Where the wild things are" the many different monsters represent the many sides to Max's personality (Fig. 18). Likewise Winnie and Piglet in "Winnie the Pooh" (Fig. 4) are Christopher Robin's

imaginary friends and could represent the psychological issues that the boy must deal with in growing up. "The aim therefore is that the 'Winnie-the-Pooh' characters, which are hypothesized as reflections of emotional states/ positions-of-the-self experienced by Christopher Robin, are personal, self object-related representations shown in his internal world. "The 'Winnie-the-Pooh' characters are thus reflections of Christopher's developing states/ position of self as shown in these characters" (Bennett, 2001, p. 1).

As Golomb (2007) notes, "The child who is able to create and recreate real or imagined scripts can give expression to often puzzling, confusing or conflicting thoughts and feelings and in this process gain some mastery over distressing impulse." The make believe that the child creates reflects "the child's idiosyncratic interests, having characteristics that are not particularly logical or internally consistent, or evolve to suit the whims of their creators" (Taylor, 1999, p. 64). Invisible friends can be companions, who "may have no basis in reality but are based on real people, or a story, movie or television characters" (Gleason, 2006, p. 67). The companion of the girl's private world in my narratives is created through her imagination within the projected imaginary world. The companion is a participant there to help her confront and understand her emotions and actions, in her everyday life. The make believe creature is not imagined in the public arena within the girl's reality, even though the illustration presents the imagination of the child for public viewing within a gallery or my project. However because we can see what she imagines, she has allowed us into her imagined realm. For example in Seraphine Pick's "Imaginary Friend" we can see the young girl's imaginary friend, a black dog, (Fig. 19) and are able to see the girl's imaginary friend as real.
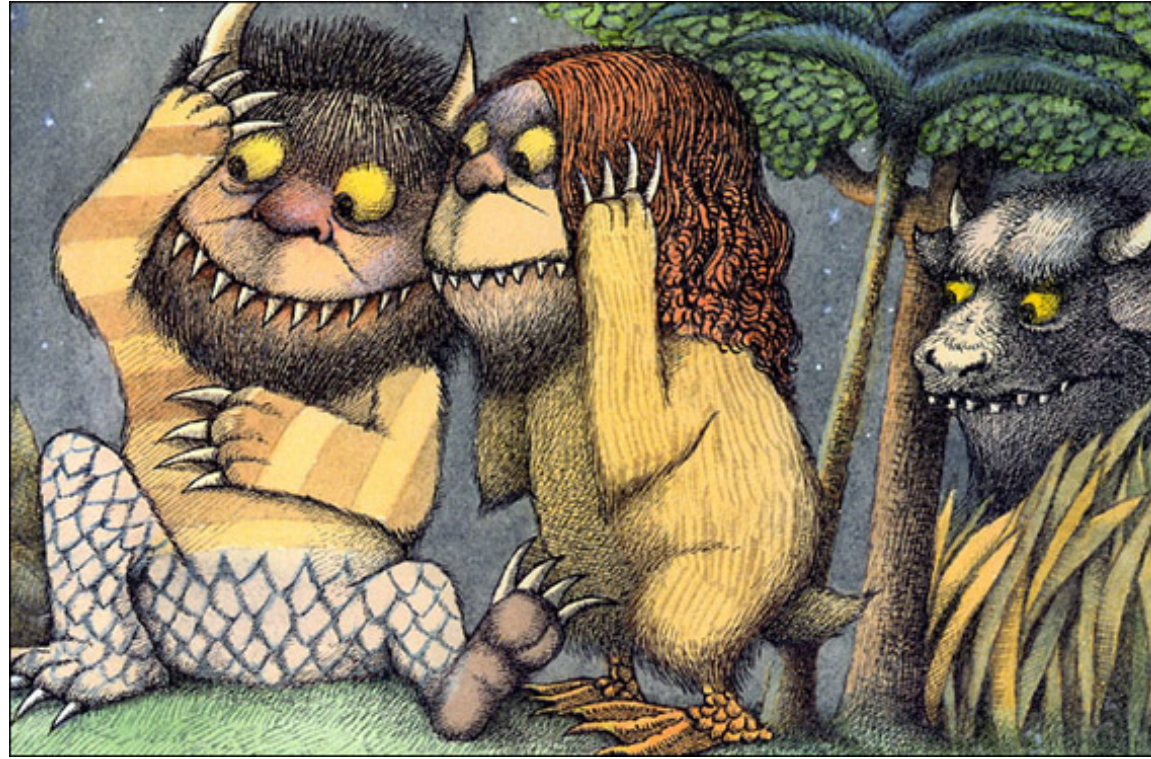
Fig. 18. Sendak, M. (1963). *Where the wild things are – Monsters* [Book illustration]

Fig. 19. Pick, S. (2006). *"Imaginary Friends."* [Oil on canvas]

As Golomb (2007) notes "Girls populate their stories with domestic animals that have a friendly rather than a ferocious disposition. Between the ages of three to eight years animals both wild and domestic, are favourite themes, most likely stand-ins for the self and its conflicting emotions and troubles." The animals in my narratives are not domestic but wild: monkeys, red pandas, and deer. The animals are like "stand-ins for the self" (Golomb, 2007, p. 155) and represent different parts of the child's personality. The deer may reference the naïveté and innocence of the child, the monkey the naughty side of the personality. They are not an alter ego but a visually separate entity to the female child. The animal chosen is an idealized version of the girl's self or a part of her that cannot be seen physically in her real world. The animal or "talking animal in a story is often the voice of nature. Among other messages we are being reminded that we are also animals" (Young, 1997, p. 2). The "guiding animals are crucial in mythic stories. Psychologically, this might well present the wisdom of the body" (Young, 1997, p. 2). The animal's symbolism can "represent a mental link to-the-age-old search for "man's place in nature. Through such symbolizing, there is a kind of merging – humans take on animal qualities" (Lawrence, 1997, p. 3).

Children's possessions are sometimes thought of as personified objects." Personified objects are usually stuffed animals or dolls that children animate and treat as people" (Gleason, 2006, p. 67). The relationship between the person and the possession is usually about the visual attachment to the object: a buzzy bee, a doll, or a teddy bear. An example of this is evident in Mark Ryden's paintings of the "The Tree Show" in " 64 Goodbye Bear," where an oversized teddy bear is placed in the landscape with the little girl as the imaginary friend (see Figure 7). In the context of popular culture, the object of a doll is used as an imaginary friend in television series "Supernatural," season 2, episode 11, "Playthings." The female child at the centre of the storyline has a doll, which she sees as an imaginary friend called Maggie. In the context of the series "Supernatural," the imaginary friend is a hoodoo demon that wants to kill. In the 1980's film "Drop Dead Fred" the title refers to the name of a mischievous imaginary friend of the main

female character. The make-believe playmate has her childhood friend and comes back when she is an adult, when something happens to traumatize or alter her life. In the comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes," the imaginary friend is Hobbes, a soft toy tiger. The boy, Calvin, sees him as an imaginary friend that moves and talks to him but is a real wild tiger. However, in the viewer's reality Hobbes is a stuffed toy rather than the real boy Hobbes thinks he is. This exploration and reflection of who and what the imaginary companion could be is what helped develop the purpose of the character of the companion in this research project. The imaginary friend in my narratives has become an animal that the girl associates with in temperament, likeness and as a more interactive playmate than a personified object such as a toy.

Golomb (2007) argues: "Imaginative children may invent a pretend identity for themselves by impersonating the attributes of another human or animal, enacting the typical gestures, movements, and sounds of the adopted pretend self, and sustaining the impersonation over days" (p. 114). In the context of an illustrated narrative, "the most well-known imaginary playmate is Winnie the Pooh, who played a central role in the life of his friend Christopher Robin" (Golomb, 2011, p. 119). Likewise while Max's imaginary friends in "Where the wild things are", are monsters; their personalities are not scary or ferocious. Instead the companions appear as friendly playmates for the subject that has created the imaginary world and the friends themselves. The playmate teddy bear in Ryden's work "64 Goodbye Bear" also appears friendly despite the exaggerated scale of the animal (Fig. 7). The complexities of the relationship between human and possession in this painting is shown through the positioning of bodies, body language and facial expression.

While I chose to use a variety of animals to represent the complexities of the girl's personality, the cultural reference of the animal adds another layer to the meanings and further deepens the narratives. The companion can represent the countries and places they

come from, for example, the red panda deriving from southwestern China or the capuchin monkey from Central and South America. This element adds to the complex nature of the imaginary world and the relationships, which the girl wishes to escape to, as the animal is the symbol of a place as well as a friend. Ryden uses animals to represent nature and to suggest how we may approach our relationship with it. It should be a "kinder, gentler relationship … one driven by compassion and curiosity rather than covetousness and aggression" (Ryden, 2007, p. 14). This approach is refered to in Ryden's "64 Goodbye Bear" (Fig. 7). The girl and the bear are mirroring each other and relate to each other through body language: holding hands. They also express similar emotions and convey a sadness in the whimsical nature of the setting of an imagined world. Although I investigated the use of toys as imaginary companions as Ryden has done, my choice was to use animal companions as they portray a similar message. My work alludes to how we relate to nature but by using the image of the animal as the companion, it may also question how we, as man, relate to the animal inside ourselves as well as the animals in nature.

Chapter Four: The Practice of Creating the Female And the Imaginary

This chapter is divided into sections to address the visual development of the investigations and research. I will discuss the acknowledgement of the autobiographical, the investigative techniques and methods used in creating the female character, an investigation into the type of companion, the investigations into creating the animal companion, the investigations into how colour and shape create the imaginary world, the investigations into the use of nature as the imaginary world and the exploration of the gaze through illustration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

"I've been painting women for a long time, but in the last couple of years, I've realised that I'm really painting myself. That's something I denied for a long time, because it seemed so indulgent, but now I'm owning up" (Schwartzkoff, 2007, p. 15).

At the beginning of the project the female character had identifying marks such as glasses, curly hair and freckles: which made her easily identifiable as me from photos of myself when younger. In a further development, the girl could still be identified as me, as a European female child, but left more open to interpretation by excluding the strong visual identifiers (glasses, curly hair and freckles). In the next development of an open representation in the concept of the autobiographical, a mask was used to allow the personality of the female to remain open. However, the mask itself became too obvious in the interpretation and was eliminated in the process of developing the girl's identity. Later in the project, the name Sandy for the female character, is used in the illustrations' titles as reference to myself in the context of the autobiographical. Sandy was my childhood nickname: an abbreviation of Alexandra and related to the nickname of my paternal grandfather whose name was Alexander. The purpose was to allude, at a subconscious level, to the autobiographical context in the illustrations in order to achieve stronger links between viewer and artwork. The viewer could perhaps recognize the name and the relationship between the character and the artist. The names of the animals within the illustrations were taken from names of pets I had as a child: Candy, Chinny, Cindy, Jo Jo and Toby. This element of representation and labelling presents another possible relationship between the animal and the girl in relation to the context of the autobiographical.

What follows is the description of the various visual investigations into the autobiographical.

Investigation 1: The rendered pencil drawing is a self-portrait using idea of the fairytale as the foundation of the narrative. The wolf is a signifier for the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" as well as a representation of the werewolf of popular culture. The girl is dressed in a Wonder Woman costume to signify the desire to be independent. By combining the female and imaginary animal companion together the autobiographical self can be mixed into the narrative of the fairytale and, at the same time, be re-interpreted by modern viewers with the visual identifiers, leading to new meanings.

Investigation 2: The female character is developed further by eliminating the obvious signifiers to create the idea of a more open interpretation of her identity.

Investigation 3: Further exploration of the signifiers of the female identity. The female wears a mask to pose questions about her physical representation of who she is.

Investigation 4: Through experimentation, the female subject is created as a streamlined version of myself, dark hair, pale skin and small in stature, young i.e. aged between five and eight. However, the female drawn could also represent other girls of the same age.

Investigation 5: Using my childhood name in the title to the illustration to communicate to the viewer an identity for the girl.

Investigation 6: Naming imaginary animal companions after pets to further connect the work to the autobiographical and also give each subject an identity.

Investigation 1:

The visual diary page presents the elements of the autobiographical sing a photo of me as a source and artists used as a reference to create the final pencil drawing.
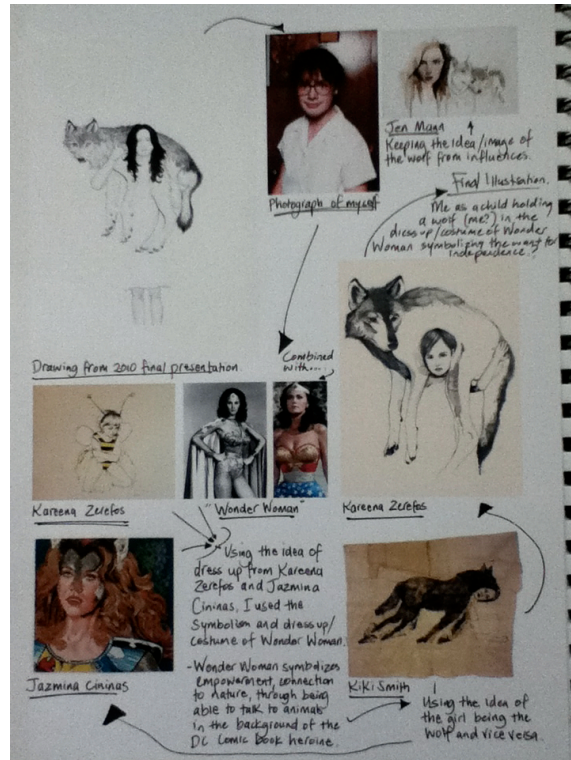
Fig. 20. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Workbook page diagram."*
21 X 29.7 cm
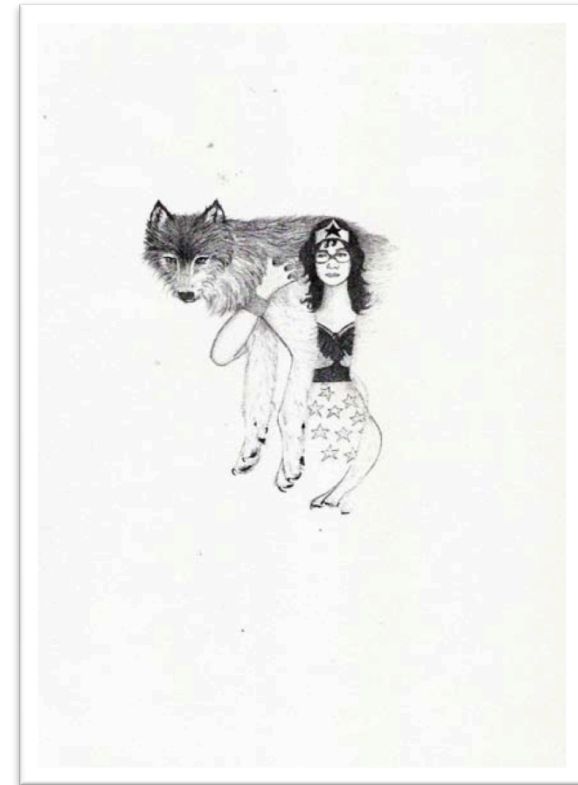
Fig. 21. Holmes, A. (2011). *"I wanna be Wonder Woman with you."*
[Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 2:
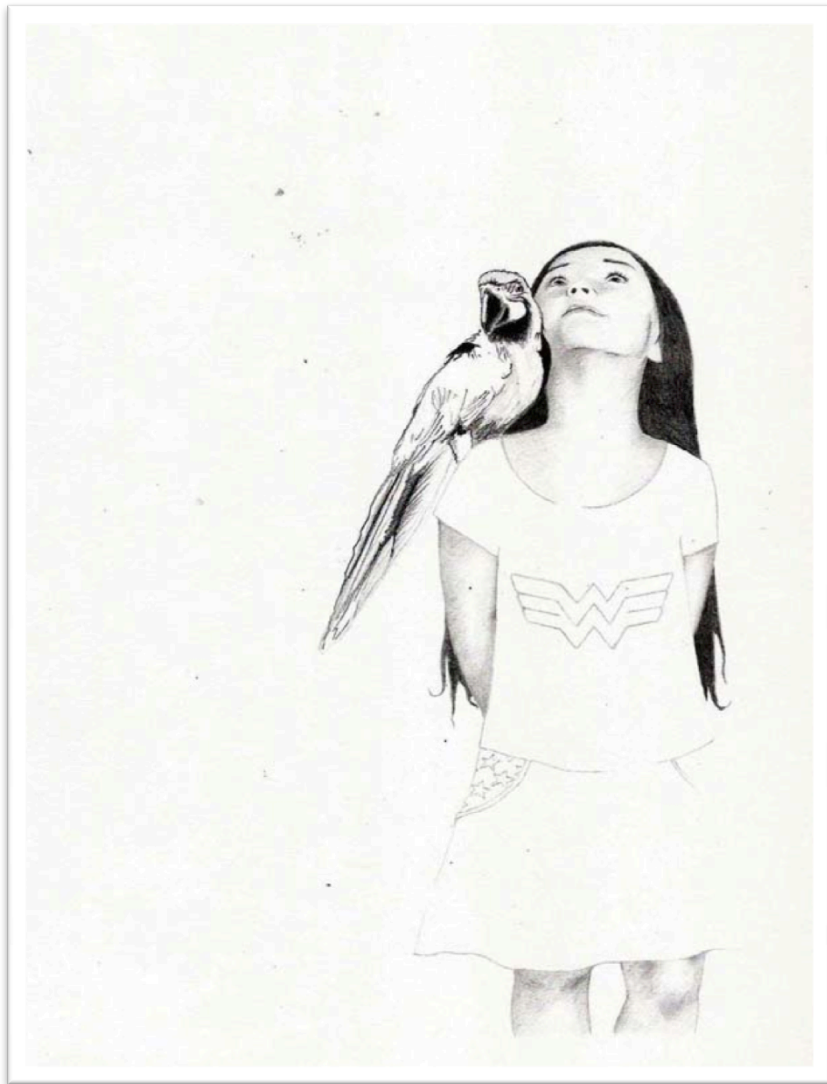
Investigation 3:

Fig. 22. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Parrot and Girl."*
[Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm
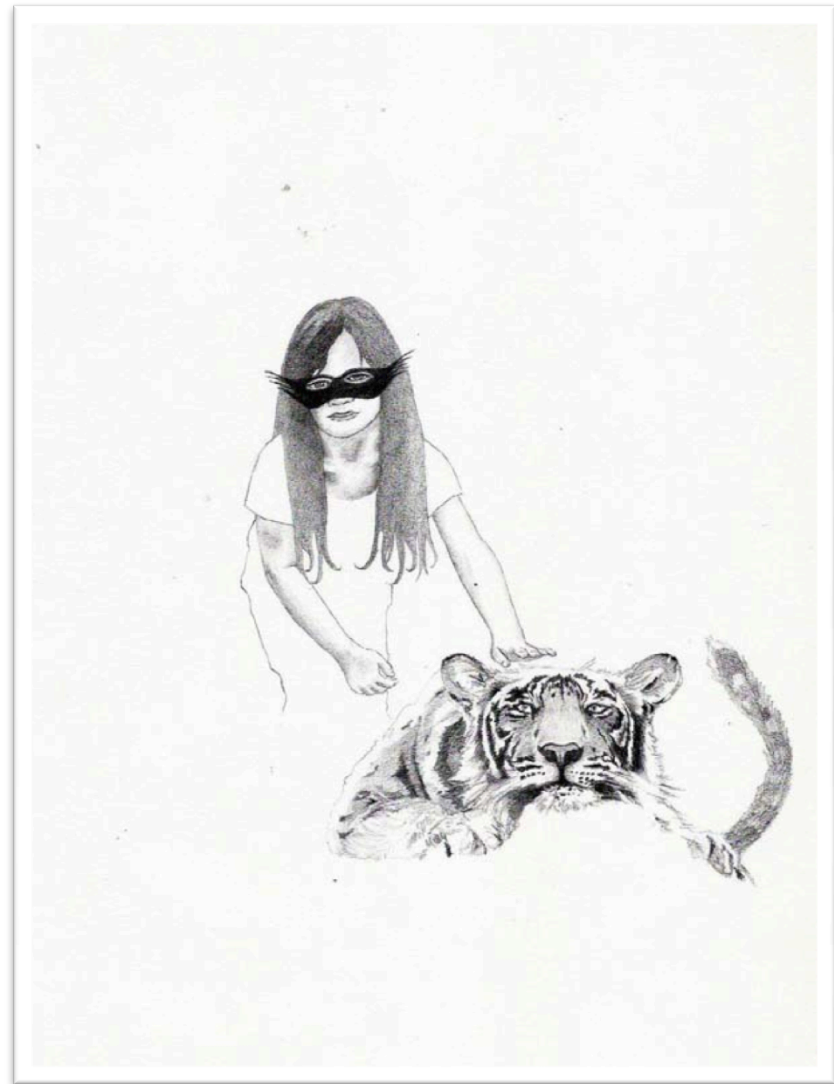
Fig. 23. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Kitty, kitty."* [Pencil on paper}
21 X 29.7 cm
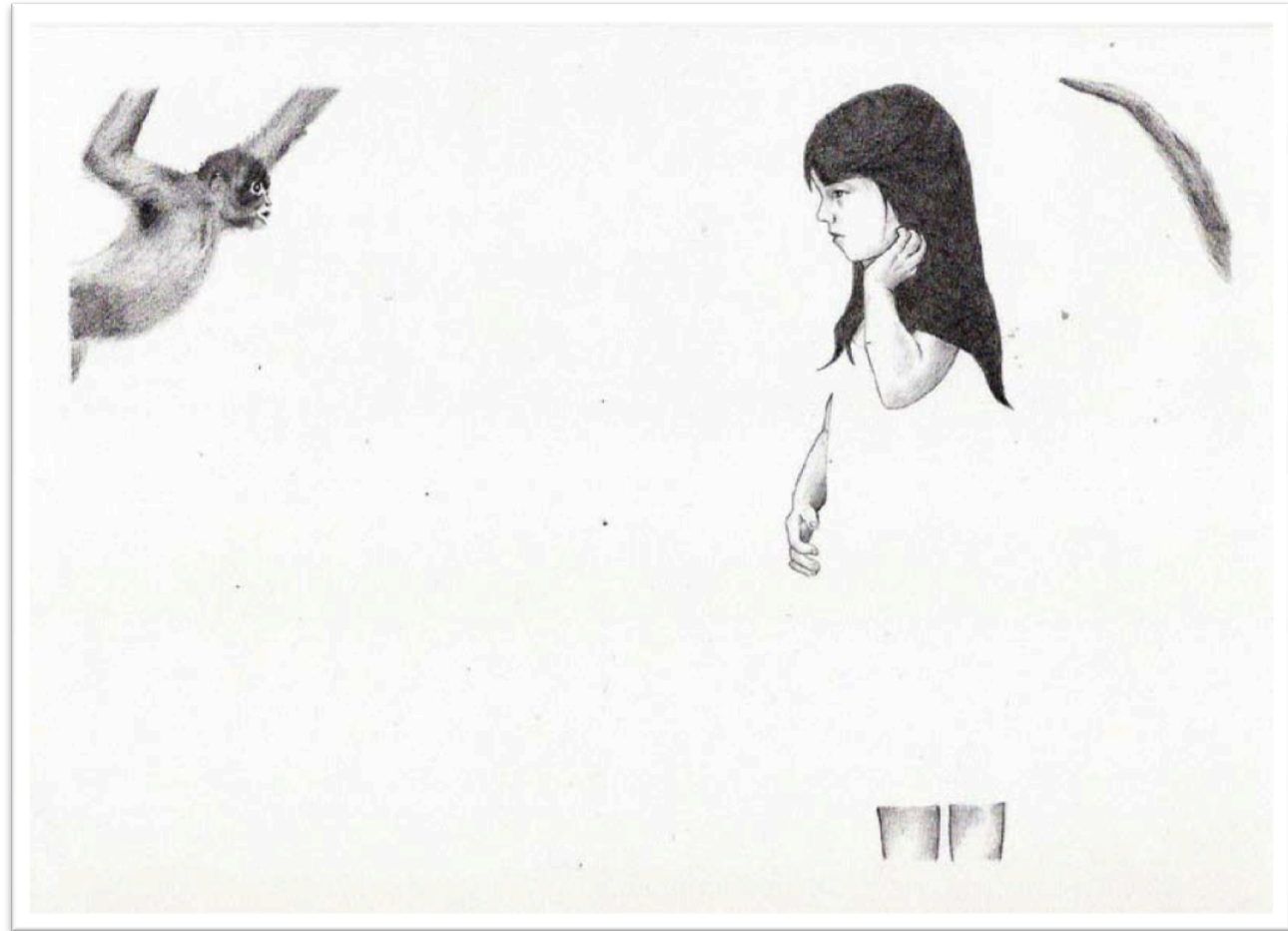
Investigation 4:

Fig. 24. Holmes, A. (2011). *""Monkey, Monkey, part 3."* [Pencil drawing] 21 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 25. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Sandy and the purple eater."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 6:

Fig. 26. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Sandy and Candy."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

INVESTIGATING TECHNIQUES AND METHODS FOR CREATING THE FEMALE CHARACTER

What follows are the images of the investigations into creating the female character.

The female is first drawn using a costume as her outfit to emphasize the point of creating fantasy.
To further create the girl's identity her dress-up items are eliminated and instead the objective is to focus on her face and body language.
In the exploration of the girl's role in the imaginary landscape the character is cut out from the clothing and pasted into the scene.
To further develop the idea of the girl blending into her projected imaginary world, she is drawn into the illustration using masking fluid and parts of her torso are not drawn.

Investigation 1: The female is drawn in dress up costume with the imaginary companion. The costume refers to the idea of her wanting to escape to an imaginary world as well as heightening the idea of fantasy.

Investigation 2: Taking away the costume and instead making the clothing more nondescript, further developed of her identity.

Investigation 3: The girl evolved into being cut and pasted onto the composition as a method of incorporating her into the imaginary world, which she is creating in her mind. This method was used to portray the idea that she is part of the real world.

Investigation 4: The child is then further developed through the method of cut and paste by cutting away parts of the torso and keeping the rest of her within the composition. By doing this, the female blends into the imaginary world.

Investigation 5: Instead of cut and paste, masking fluid is used as an alternative way of creating the girl within the composition.

Investigation 6: To complete the composition the female and the imaginary animal are drawn and painted in the spaces provided.

Investigation 7: In finalizing the idea of the girl imagining the world and the companion, she is brought into focus by highlighting her features with coloured pencil.

Investigation 1:

Fig. 27. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Parrot and Girl in full colour."* [Mixed media on wood] 20 X 20 cm

Investigation 2:

Investigation 3:

Fig. 28. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Polar Bear and Girl."*
[Indian ink on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Fig. 29. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Girl and Toy 2."*
[Mixed media and collage on paper} 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 4:

Fig. 30. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Monkey, monkey part 5."* [Mixed media and collage on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 31. Holmes, A. (2011). "*Work in progress 1.*" [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 6:

Fig. 32. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Work in progress 2."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm
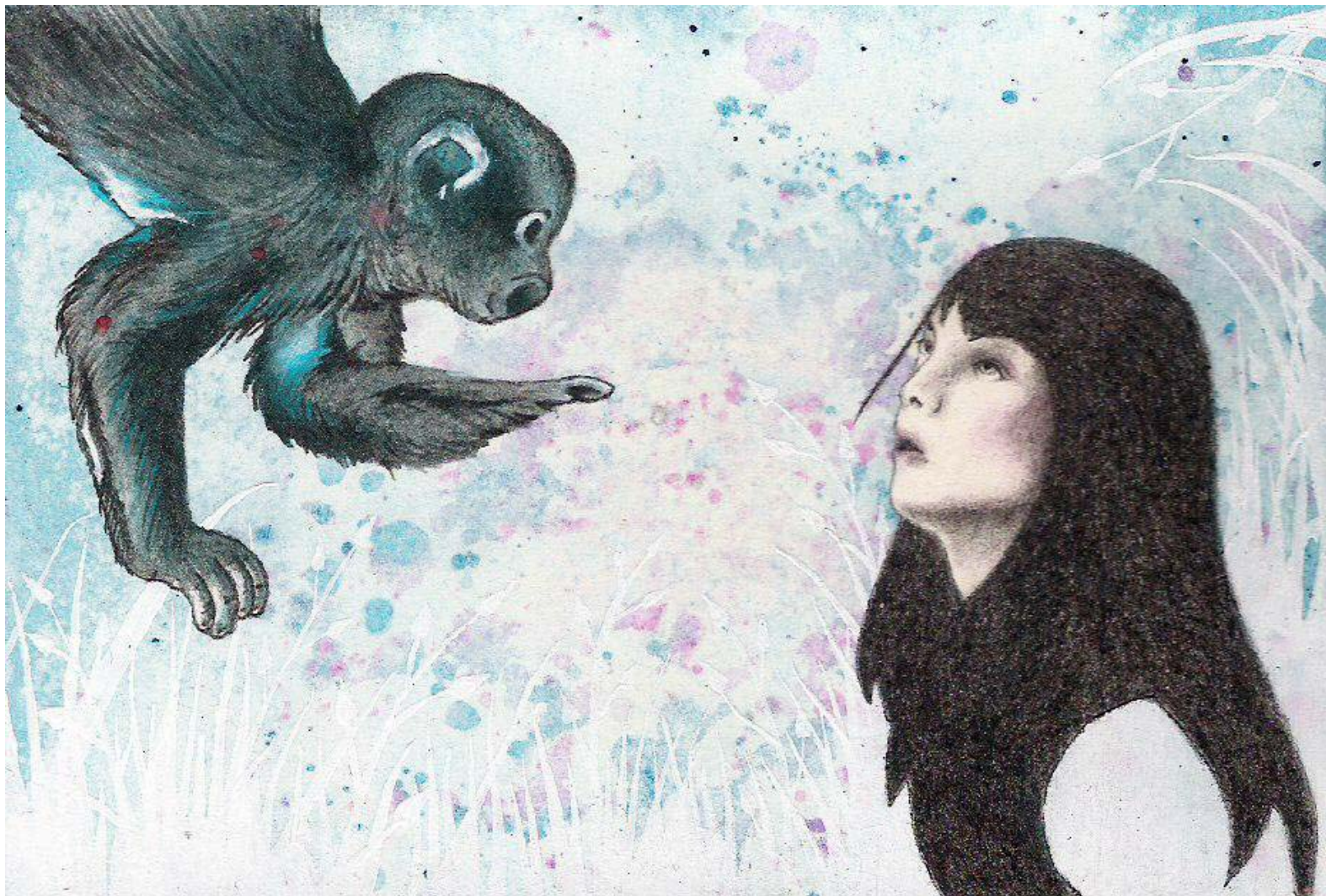
Investigation 7:

Fig. 33. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Sugar and spice, all things nice."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE TYPES OF IMAGINARY COMPANION

What follows is the description of the various visual investigations the imaginary toy companion.

The object/toy the girl engages with makes us inclined to believe it has importance and suggests symbolism through the form of the toy or an ironic theme in the illustration.

When exploring the facial expressions and body language the toy and the female cannot respond to each other on the same level as the animal imaginary companion. There is no connection between the eyes or emotional quality to the relationship of the toy and girl.

The pose of the girl represented in the artwork suggests emotions of aggression, submission or passive energy. However the entity of the make believe toy companion appears static and unemotional. The two subjects together create conflict within the composition and do not connect to create a relationship that supports the idea of an imaginary world and an imaginary companion.

Investigation 1: The buzzy bee toy as the imaginary friend reflects the little girl's age. The pose of the sitting girl reflects an engagement with the toy. However the buzzy bee cannot reflect any emotion like the child.

Investigation 2: The position of the girl represents aggression; anger or frustration while the toy does not present any emotion

Investigation 3: The older female within the illustration stands next to the repeated toy of the buzzy bee. It could have an ironic meaning by positioning the two together. Again there is only emotion conveyed from the physical stance and face of the girl.

Investigation 1:
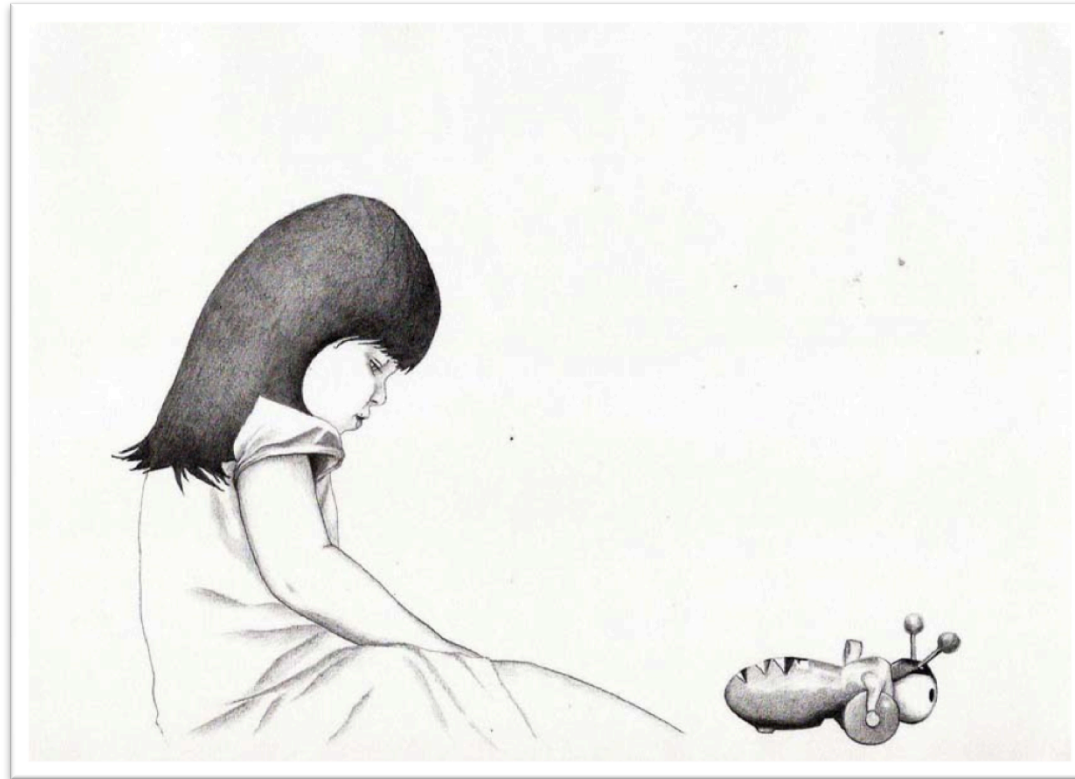
Fig. 34. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Girl with a buzzy bee."* [Pencil on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 2:   Investigation 3:

Fig. 35. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Girl with a soft toy."*
[Mixed media and collage on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 36. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Teenager with a buzzy bee."*
[Mixed media on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

INVESTIGATIONS INTO CREATING THE ANIMAL COMPANION Part 1

What follows are the images of the various visual investigations of the animal companion.

The development of ideas started at the end of 2010 using mythology and the Grimm Brothers fairy tales (Ashliman, n.d.) as the narrative. I explored the element of the fairy tale narrative together with the idea of the imaginary friends being animal companions.

These ideas were explored using pen and ink, the illustrations technically and also emotionally translucent in quality.

By using scraperboard, mark making was strong and definitive so the representation of the animal was more tactile.

The animal is then chosen to reflect the female's psyche, presenting emotions and states of well-being through body language and symbolism.

The animal companion is used to suggest how the female may deal with issues from her everyday reality through the actions of a primal human being that does not understand the consequences of her actions, adding depth to the personality of the companion.

Particular types of animals were used for the imaginary companion that would visually describe the different sides to the girl's personality.

The animal becomes a symbol of the country it was from, being a place she might wish to escape to as a connection to the imaginary world.

Investigation 1: The animals chosen were attributed to fairy tale sources, for example, wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood," pig in 'The Three Little Pigs" and bear in "Beauty and the Beast." Pencil was used as the medium.

Investigation 2: More depth in interpretation was explored by positioning the animal in an unexpected manner creating new interpretations of the fairy tales used.

Investigation 3: Using pen and ink, the various animals then took on a stronger personality within the narrative of the fairytale.

Investigation 4: Scraperboard was experimented with as another way to draw the animal with the female. The previous stage influenced this one by continuing the idea of the fairy tale narrative as the foundation of the story that could be reinterpreted by media and position of the subject.

Investigation 5: A second attempt was made with the scraperboard and this time there is more white than black within the finished illustrations. The animal is also more clearly seen.

Investigation 6: The animal is then presented as a make-believe companion to the girl that does not have any connection to a fairy tale. Instead, the animal chosen is to be recognized as part of the girl's psyche.

Investigation 7: The imaginary animal is developed to include the idea of it symbolising the country or place she wishes to escape to as her imaginary world.

Investigation1:
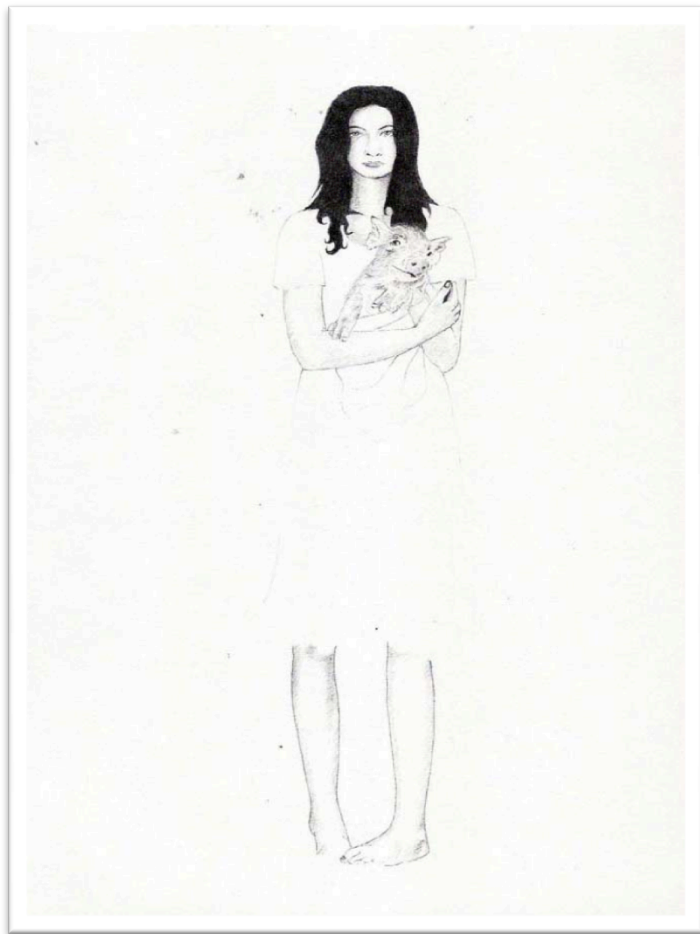
Investigation 2:

Fig. 37. Holmes, A. (2011) *"This little piggy stayed home."*
[Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Fig. 38. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Kea Concept."*
[Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm
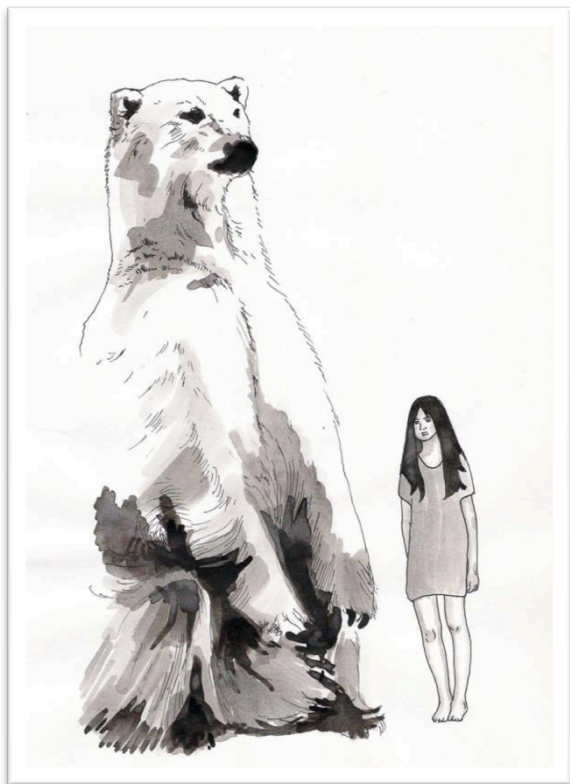
Investigation 3:

Fig. 39. Holmes, A. "*Polar bear and girl 2.*"
[Indian ink on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm
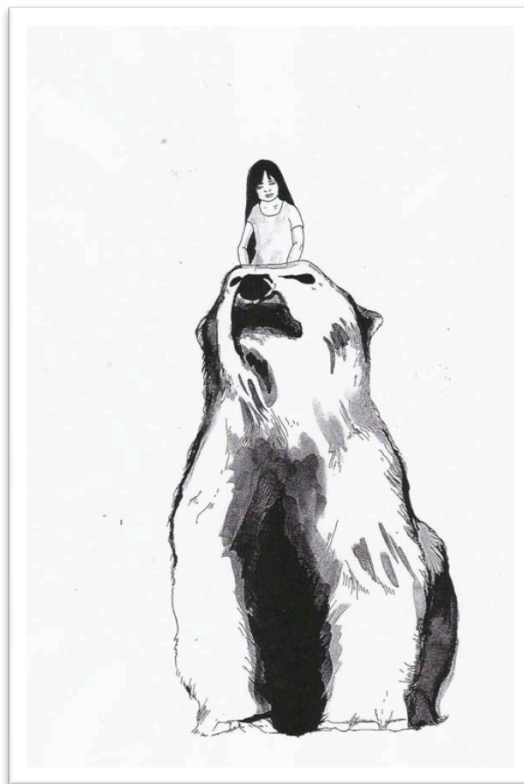
Fig. 40. Holmes, A. *"Bear and girl."*
[Indian ink on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Fig. 41. Holmes, A. (2011) "*This piggy went to market.*" [Indian ink on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm
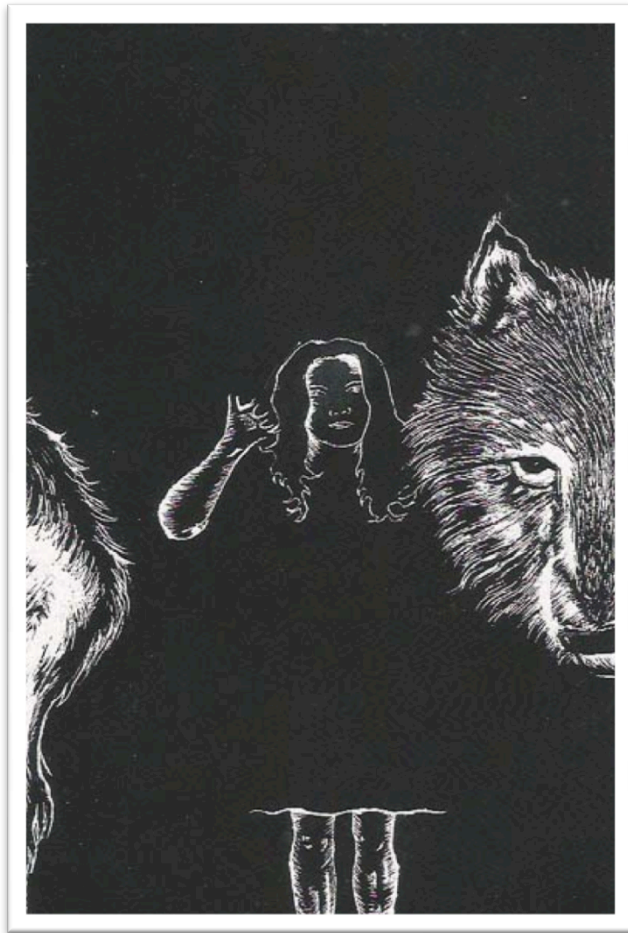
Investigation 4:

Fig. 42. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Test 1.*"
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm

Fig. 43. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Test 2.*"
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm

Fig. 44. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Test 3."*
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm
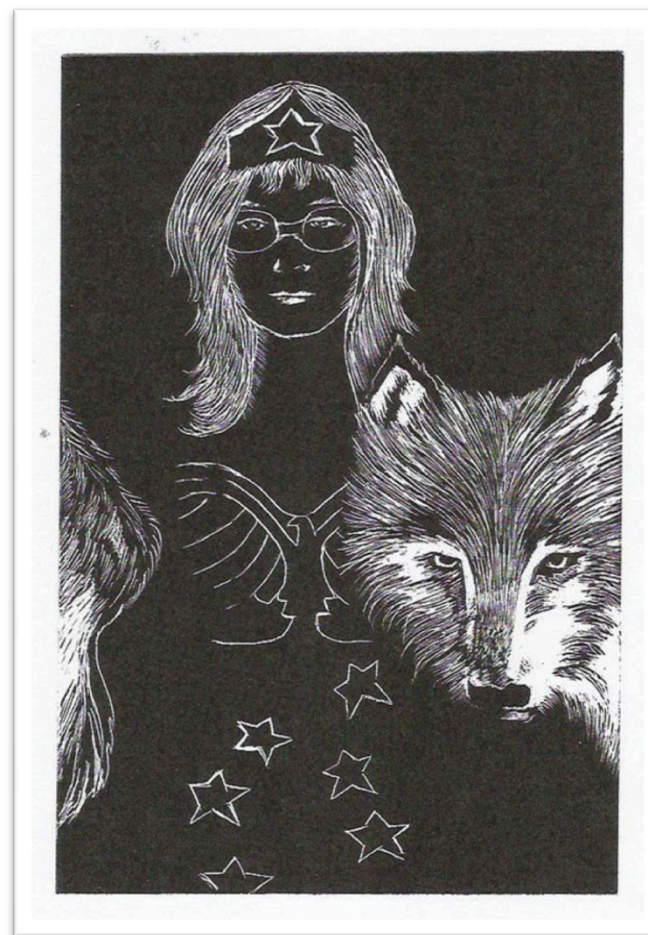
Fig. 45. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Test 4."*
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm
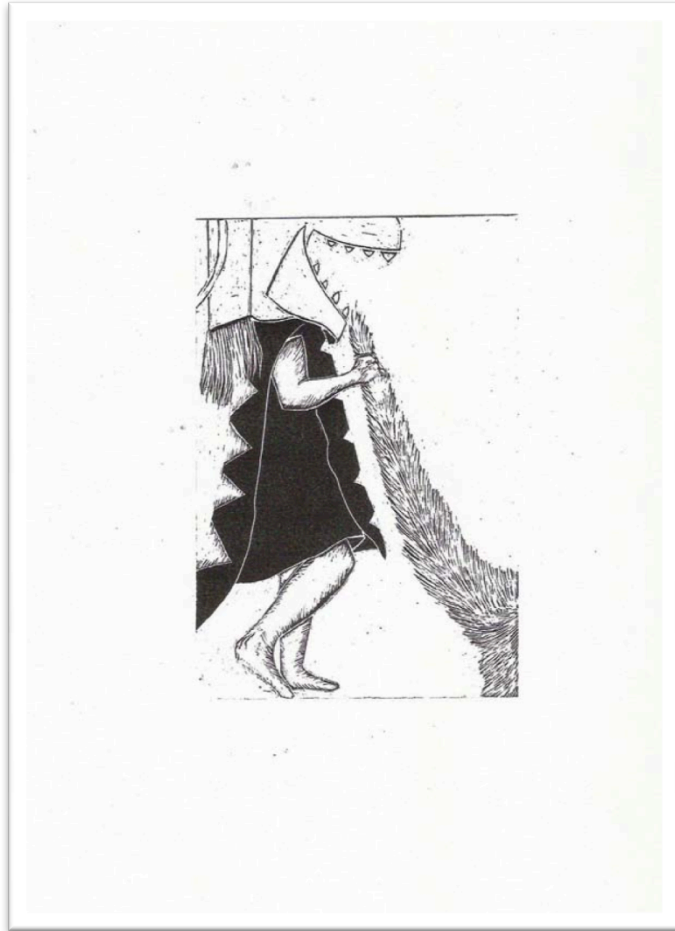
Investigation 5:

Fig. 46. Holmes, A. "*Kid and Cat.*"
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm
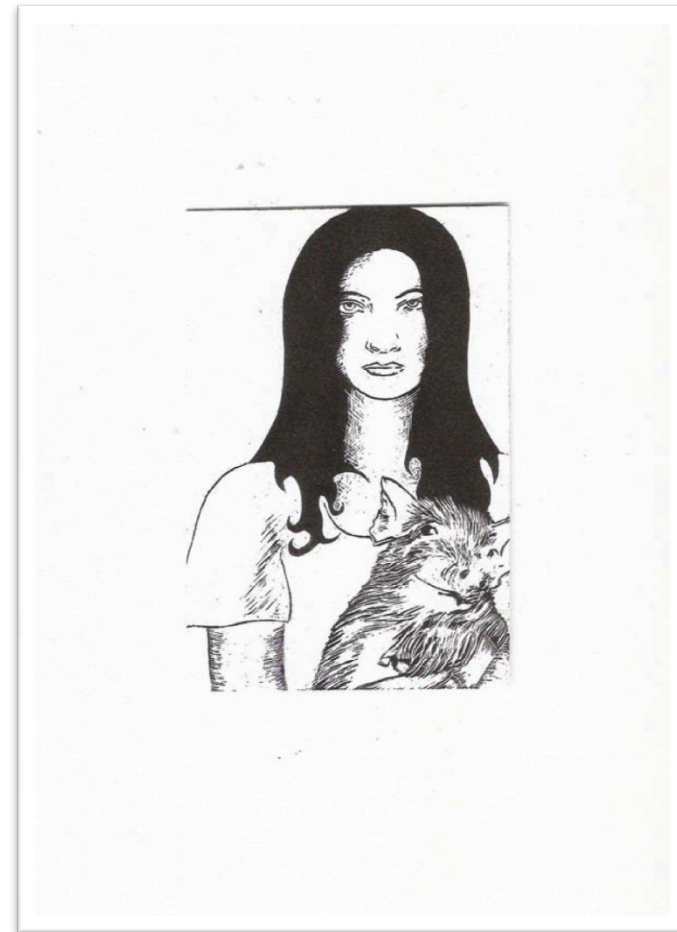
Fig. 47. Holmes, A. *"This little piggy came home 2."*
[Scraperboard] 10 X 15.2 cm

Investigation 6:

Fig. 48. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Lion and girl."* [Mixed media and collage on paper]

Investigation 7:

Fig. 49. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey, monkey part 9."* [Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

INVESTIGATIONS INTO CREATING THE ANIMAL COMPANION Part 2

What follows are images of the various investigations into the animal companion.

Investigation 1: In the development of creating the animal as an imaginary companion, the drawing started as a pencil drawing, representing the animal through light and shadow using technical shading techniques.

Investigation 2: The animal is then developed further by drawing colour over the top of it, the colour attributed to the colour of the imaginary world, to show that the animal had a connection to it.

Investigation 3: The animal is painted with a wash of colour instead of pencil using the same idea as above.

Investigation 4: From the previous stage the wash of colour was darkened to create the animal companion as a more solid entity.

Investigation 5: In the next stage, the colour and pencil mark making of the animal is lightened so that the imaginary creature is actually more convincing as a part of the imaginary rather than reality, and also as a creation of the girl's imagination.

Investigation 1:

Fig. 50. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey, monkey part 8."* [Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 2:

Fig. 51. Holmes, A. (2011) "*As above, as below.*" [Mixed media and collage on paper] 8 X 12 cm

Investigation 3:

Fig. 52. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Who you looking at?*" [Mixed media on paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 4:

Fig. 53. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Jojo and Sandy."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 54. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Blackberry in Twilight."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper]

INVESTIGATIONS INTO HOW COLOUR AND SHAPE CREATES A RECOGNIZABLE WORLD FROM NATURE.

What follows is an evolution of "Monkey Moon and Me."

As discussed earlier, the animal is chosen to represent the idea of another world to which the female subject escapes. The animal is also chosen to reflect the female's psyche. The projection from the female's mind uses symbolism of emotions that are attached to particular colours, for example, using the pastel colours in the final composition in contrast with black in "Monkey Moon and Me" (Fig. 24). This suggests that the female child is in a happy, playful place; acting like a little monkey.

In the series of investigations outlined on the following pages, the imaginary worlds are created and simulated with shapes of clouds, planets or stars, creating a composition recognizable from culture and nature: they may be changed with various colours used in a particular shape, but the essence of the subject matter is apparent and recognizable.

The changes in colour used in the empty spaces create a fantasy, or alternative reality that is imagined by the female character.

Investigation 1: Ideas from Will Cotton's 2010 work are used, by incorporating the idea of the unreal landscape as the imaginary world with my pencil characters of the girl and the imaginary companion.

Investigation 2: Explorations into shape and colour simulating the imaginary world with the girl and animal companion in it.

Investigation 3: The idea of nature is used by incorporating aspects of nature in the imaginary world.

Investigation 4: Exploration using a world within a world and characters central to this world.

Investigation 5: Investigating the idea of three different worlds with different atmospheric backgrounds.

Investigation 6: Exploring the idea of making one of the worlds atmospheric, through application of paint.

Investigation 7: The girl and the imaginary companion are separated into two different worlds through colour, shape and composition.

Investigation 8: Exploring the idea of the imaginary world further through colour and shape by creating a loose representation of the time of night within the concept. The monkey is placed within the composition as part of the moon or planet. The girl is perceived as from another world by the frame of the composition cutting into her body.

Investigation 9: Investigating the previous idea further.

Investigation 10: Exploring the idea of the animal as the imaginary world. The girl is then presented within the composition through the second world that we the viewer and the imaginary companion are both looking at from two different viewpoints.

Investigation 1:
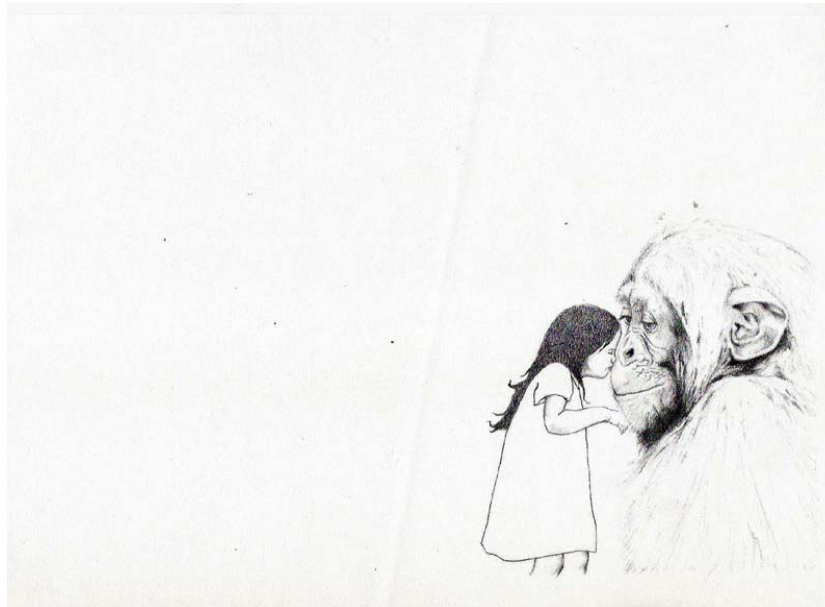
Fig. 55. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey Moon and Me."* [Pencil on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 56. Cotton, W. (2009-2010) *"Consuming Folly."* [Oil on linen] 72 X 96 inches

Investigation 2:

Fig. 57. Holmes, A. (2011)"*Monkey 2.*"
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 4:

Fig. 69. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Monkey 4.*"
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm
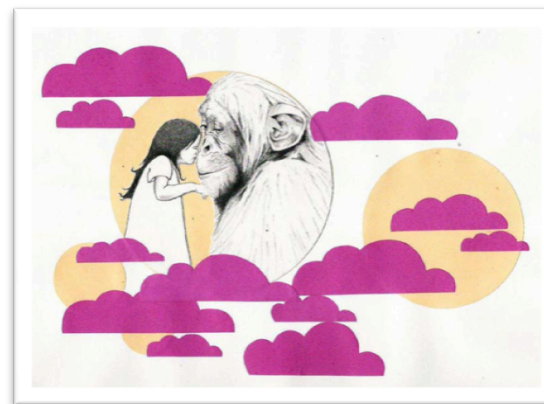
Investigation 3:

Fig. 58. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Monkey 3.*"
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 60. Holmes, A. (2011) "*Monkey 5.*"
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm
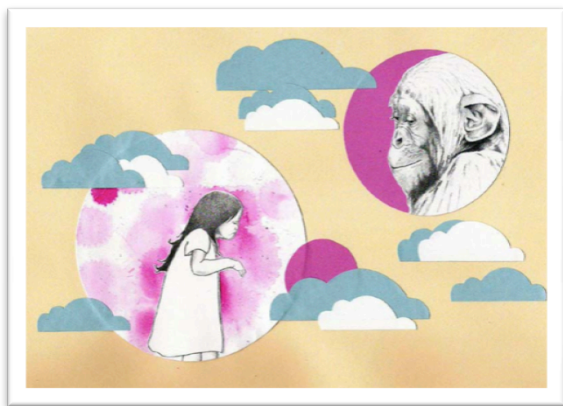
Investigation 6:

Fig. 61. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey 6."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 7:

Fig. 62. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey 7."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 8:

Fig. 63. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey 8."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 9:

Fig. 64. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Monkey 9."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 10:

Fig. 65. Holmes, A. (2011). *"Monkey 10."*
The diagram presents the influence of artist Will Cotton using abstract forms from nature, clouds, as a theme for the environment where the female and the imaginary companion may interact. The application of collage is used as the main medium to construct the imaginary world through shape and colour.

INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE USE OF NATURE AS THE IMAGINARY WORLD Part 1
The following sequence demonstrates the use of watercolour as the first exploration of nature as the imaginary world.

The colour blue was used it the beginning of the project as a representation of the natural world, connoting water and sky. This was accomplished through the use of watercolour. The blue became part of the landscape the female and the imaginary animal companion would be situated within.

Other colours were trialled within the blank negative space to be identified as the natural world, through the technique of layering and washing.

The imaginary world was then further developed through the use of the technique of painting a silhouette of a forest. It was first represented as a black shadow with colours of blue, orange, aquamarine and pink in the background. The element of the silhouette forest developed from a flat surface to one that held the illusion of depth through changing colours and layers of paint and wash. The forest was used as evidence of an imaginary world in the illustrations where flora and fauna took on a visual reference to typical New Zealand landscape.

In the investigation into creating an illusion of another world that attributed to our world of nature, the colours of twilight, different tones of purples and blues, were used to represent the time of day that added to an element of fantasy.

Investigation 1: Blue watercolour is experimented with as the identifier of nature as the imaginary world. Using a previous drawing as the basis for experimentation, I explored through size and scale to understand the impact of colour as nature in the imaginary world.

Investigation 2: The media is changed to acrylic paint, using solid colour as concrete evidence of nature as the imaginary world.

Investgation1:

Investigation 2:

Fig. 66. Holmes, A. (2011) "*PB and G tests.*"
[Watercolour and photocopy] 21 X 29.7 cm

Fig. 67. Holmes, A. (2011) "*An illusion.*"
[Mixed media and collage] 21 X 29.7 cm

INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE USE OF NATURE AS THE IMAGINARY WORLD Part 2

The following images present the visual connection between each stage of development of the silhouetted forest.

Investigation 1: A forest silhouette landscape is created, using my own resources from artwork made in 2005. The forest silhouette is a black flat shadow in the make believe landscape with various colours used as the sky of the world. The female and animal subjects are incorporated into the landscape through the process of cutting and pasting photocopied drawings.

Investigation 2: Investigations were made into the use of various colours for the sky to explore the idea of different atmospheric conditions within the environment e.g., a tornado (Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz travelling to the imaginary world of Oz), walls of rain or a starry night.

Investigation 3: In the development of the forest, finished pencil drawings are used instead of photocopies of the girl and imaginary companion. The forest silhouette was chosen as the main theme of the imaginary world's natural landscape.

Investigation 4: White is trialled for the forest silhouette to create a more open feel to the illustration. This changes the focus to the girl first; with the focus then on the imaginary world and the make-believe animal receding into the abstract.

Investigation 5: The make-believe landscape is painted onto the illustrations using layers to add depth to the world.

Investigation 1:

Fig. 68. Holmes, A. (2011)"*Little, monkey, little monkey.*"
[Mixed media and collage on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 2:

Fig. 69. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Rain, rain go away."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 70. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Starry, starry night."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm
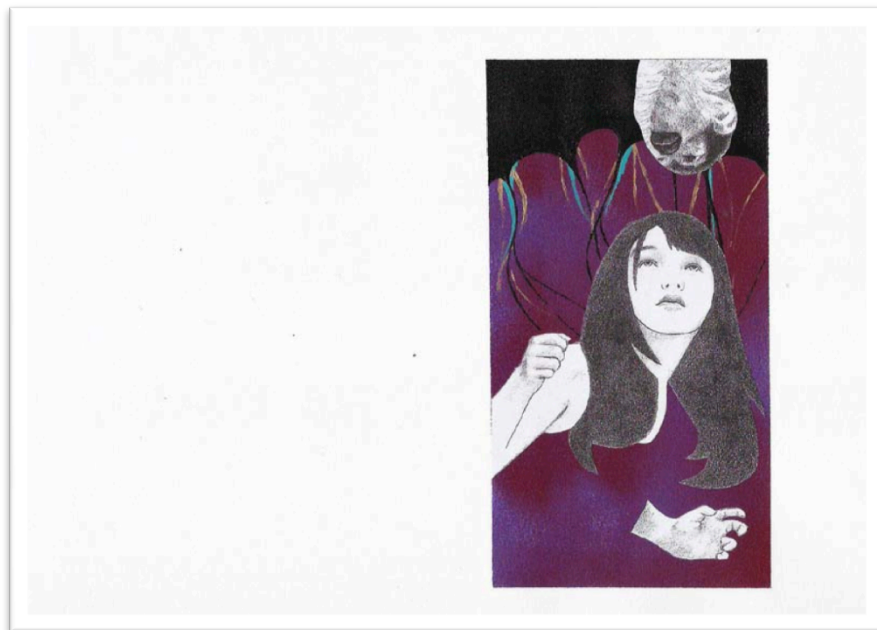
Investigation 3;

Fig. 71. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Land of Oz."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm
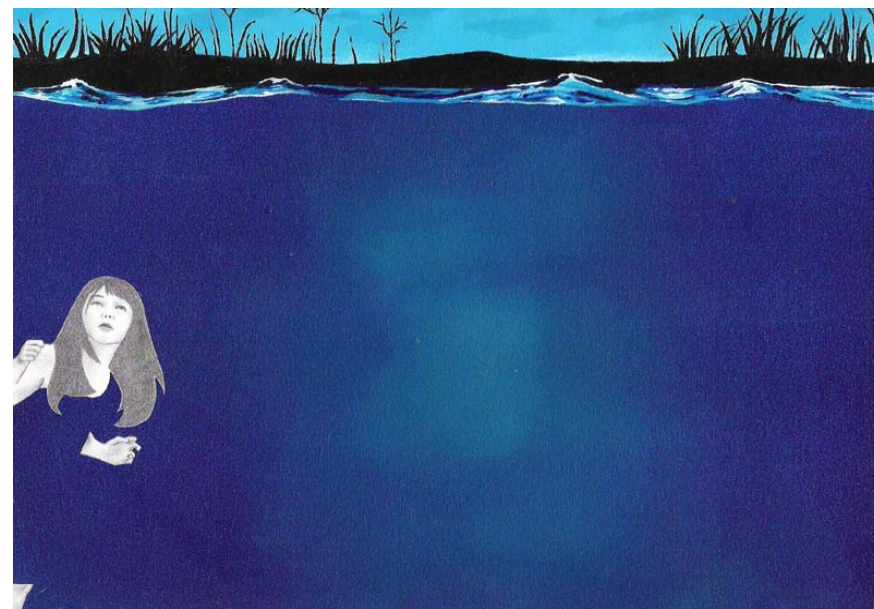
Fig. 72. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Under the sea, under the bam bushes."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 73. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Skippy and me."* [Mixed media and collage] 16 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 4:

Fig. 74. Holmes, A. (2011) *"When we get married."* [Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 75. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Little Monkey."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 6:

Fig. 76. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Little monkeys."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE USE OF NATURE AS THE IMAGINARY WORLD Part 3

The following images represent the exploration of twilight as part of nature within the imaginary world.

Investigation 1: Exploration of transparency to see the different tones of light and dark turquoise.

Investigation 2: In the process of developing colours for the effect of twilight, the focus at the start was on a dark blues and purples.

Investigation 3: Through the development of the tones blue and purple the twilight sky in the forest landscape emphasized an unearthly and fantasy element to the narrative. Within the sky, droplets of watercolour were added to create more atmosphere and depth.

Investigation 4: The tonal range of the purples, mauves, lilacs and lavenders with turquoise became softer to balance out the idea of nature as part of the act of pretence play and daydreaming by the character within the imaginary world.

Investigation 5: The exploration of the colour changed again to create a more muted aesthetic to the imagining of an imaginary world. The various tones of purple were used in layers with white.

Investigation 1:

Investigation 2:

Fig. 77. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The little monkeys."*
[Mixed media on paper] 11 X 17 cm
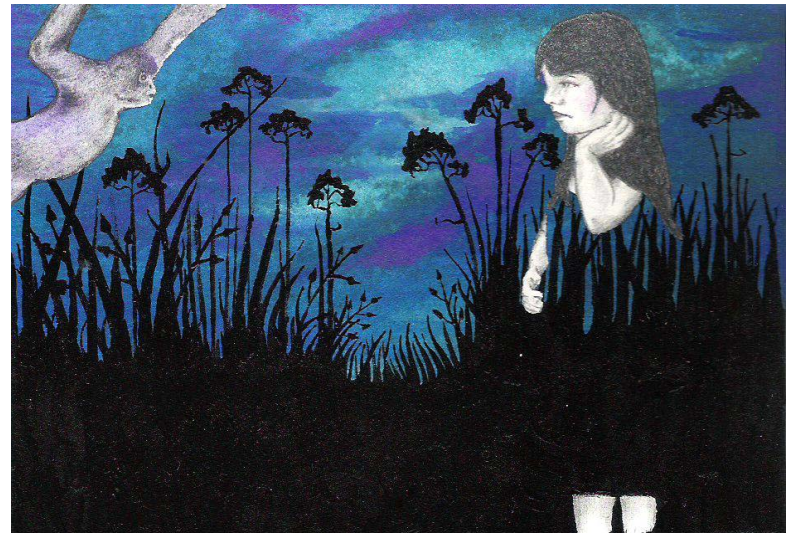
Fig. 78. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Little monkeys at Twilight."*
[Mixed media on paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 3:   Investigation 4:

Fig. 79. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The night dream."*
[Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Fig. 80. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Bambi and I."*
[Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

Investigation 5:

Fig. 81. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Little Monkeys."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 11 X 17 cm

EXPLORING THE GAZE THROUGH ILLUSTRATION Part 1

The following images present the exploration of a world within a world idea.

In the investigation into using the idea of a world within a world, the idea of the peephole evolved from artist Charles Gneich's work: the idea of a subject within a small frame that is floating in another space of flat colour. The frame became the boundary between the subjects and the viewer, a visual barrier in which the viewer could tell that the imaginary world is separate from our reality.

Through the process of developing the world within a world, Alyssa Monk's work influenced the decision to create a more intimate and confronting image, to make the viewer uncomfortable by being in close proximity to the complex nature of the relationship between the female and imaginary animal. This suggested the subjects, the female and the companion are aware of being watched by the viewer.

The other way of 'looking' that was explored through the 'gaze' was the emotional relationship between the girl and the make believe menagerie. By focusing on the physical body language and facial expressions of the two subjects, a relationship was formed by either the female and the animal reflecting each other in physical stance and emotion or by contradicting body language.

Investigation 1: Through the development of the idea of a world within a world the female and the imaginary companion were within a frame that is floating in another blank space of colour.

Investigation 2: Changing the form of the shapes to reconfigure the world into two worlds further develops the previous idea.

Investigation 1:

Fig. 82. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The little monkeys in another world."* [Mixed media and collage on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

Investigation 2:
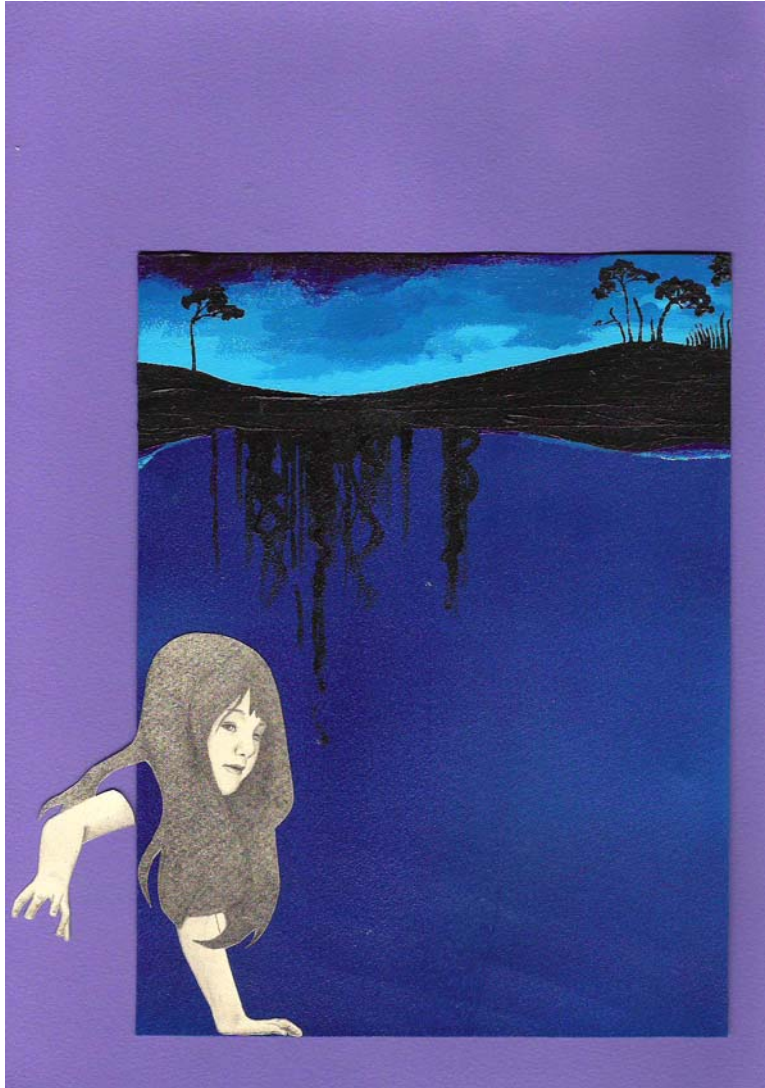
Fig. 83. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Sea world 1."*
[Mixed media and collage] 21 X 29.7 cm
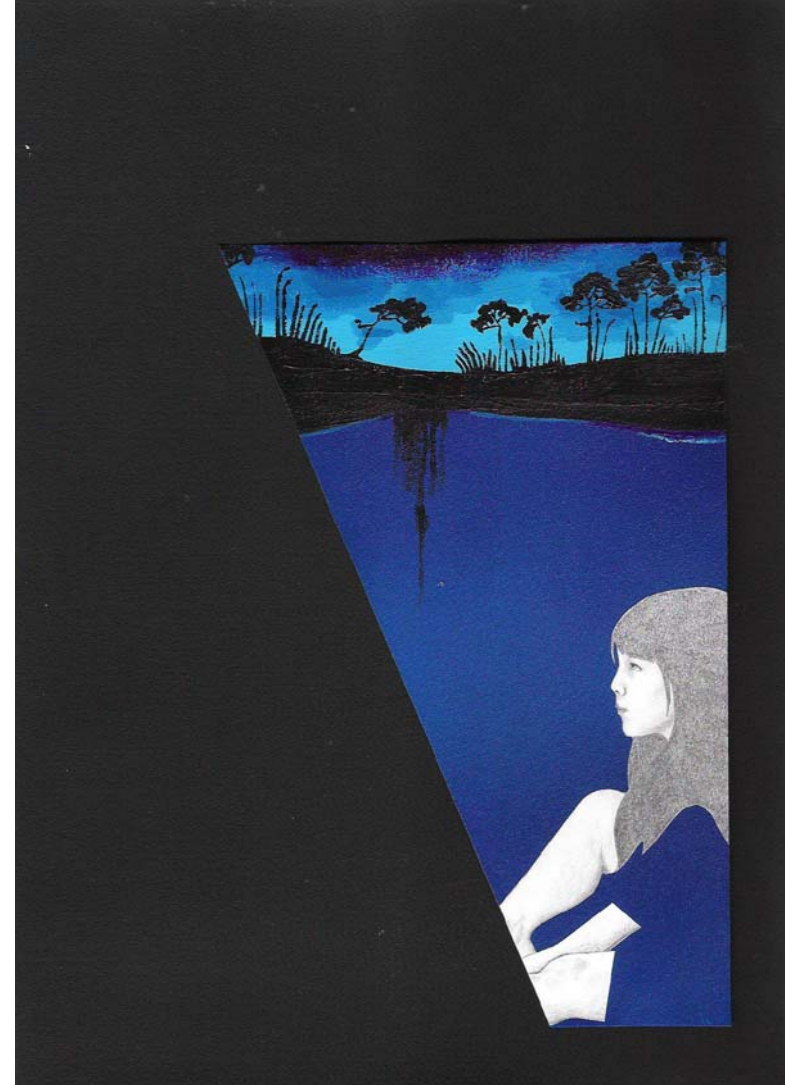
Fig. 84. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Sea world 2."*
[Mixed media and collage] 21 X 29.7 cm

EXPLORING THE GAZE THROUGH ILLUSTRATION Part 2

The following images present the manipulation of the viewer's gaze to create the idea of a world within a world.
Investigation 1: In the development of the peephole as a world within a world the positioning of the subjects was explored to create different narratives within composition. The female and the imaginary animal companion were drawn as a close up portrait.

Investigation 2: This previous idea was further developed using colour to emphasize the idea of a world within a world and using the technique of cut and paste to incorporate the girl and the make-believe companion.

Investigation 3: Using the idea of close proximity to the viewer, other compositions were drawn.

Investigation 1:

Fig. 85. Holmes, A. (2011) *"See you."* [Pencil on paper]

Investigation 2:

Fig. 86. Holmes, A. (2011) *"See you too."* [Mixed media and collage on paper]

Investigation 3:

Fig. 87 Holmes, A. (2011) *"An alternate world.'*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm
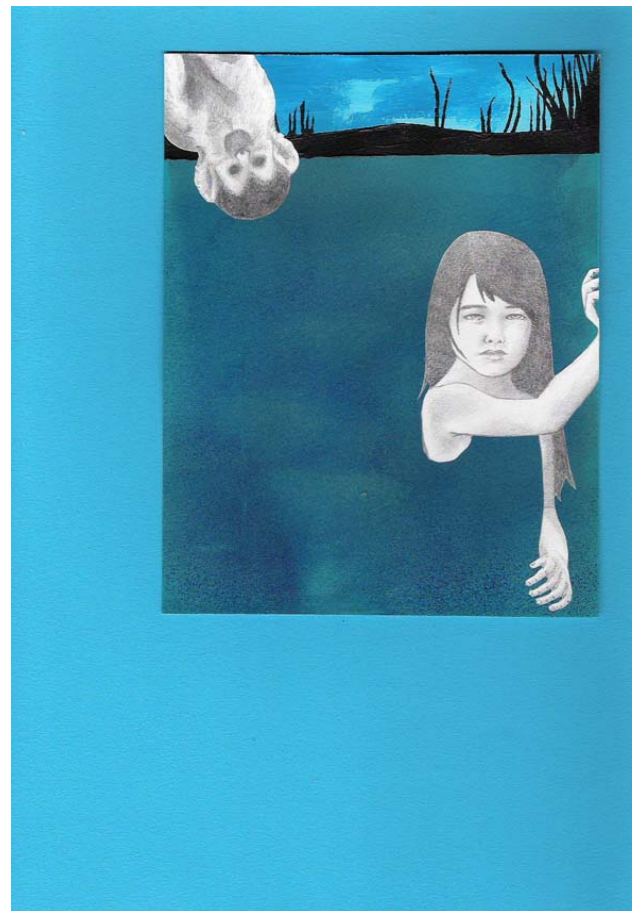
Fig. 88. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Sea World 3."*
[Mixed media and collage] 21 X 29.7 cm

The following images present the evolution of the role of the gaze in the relationship between the girl and the imaginary animal companion.

Investigation 1: In developing the relationship of the female and imaginary animal companion, the focus was on developing symmetry between the body language of the two. This was achieved so that the two subjects were mimicking the same gaze out of the picture frame.

Investigation 2: The relationship between the young girl and the companion was developed through the idea of looking so that the eye connection between them became important.

Investigation 3; In further exploration, the body language of the animal and the female changed from symmetrical, for empathy, to contradiction with opposing physical positions.

Investigation 4: The female child and the imaginary animal's relationship developed further through the idea of how they 'look' and what affect this has on each subject within the composition.

Investigation 1:

Investigation 2:

Fig. 89. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Bambi and I in pencil."*
[Pencil on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 90. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Land of Oz in pencil."*
[Pencil on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 3:

Fig. 92. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Oscar's plea to Briar."* [Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm
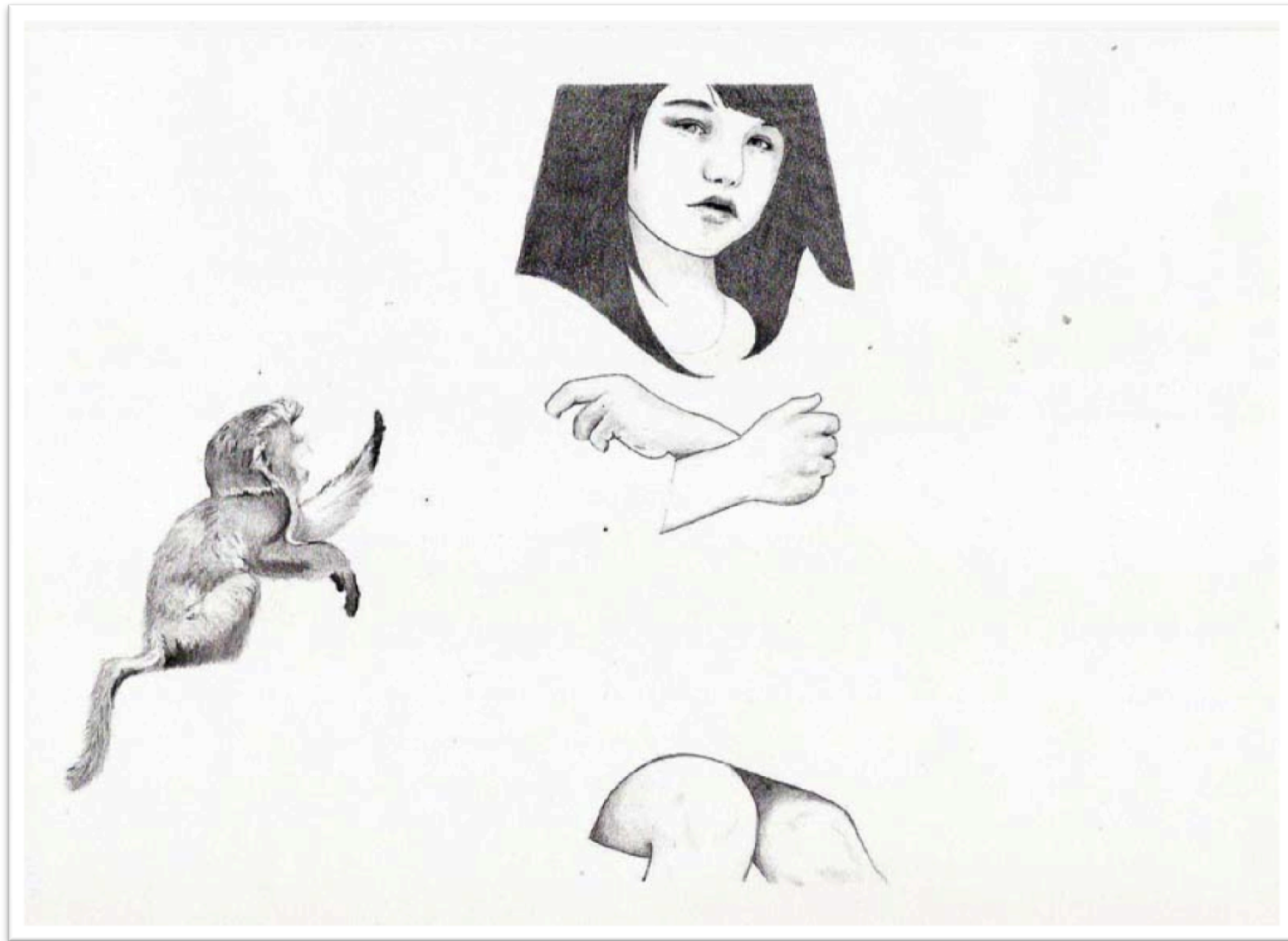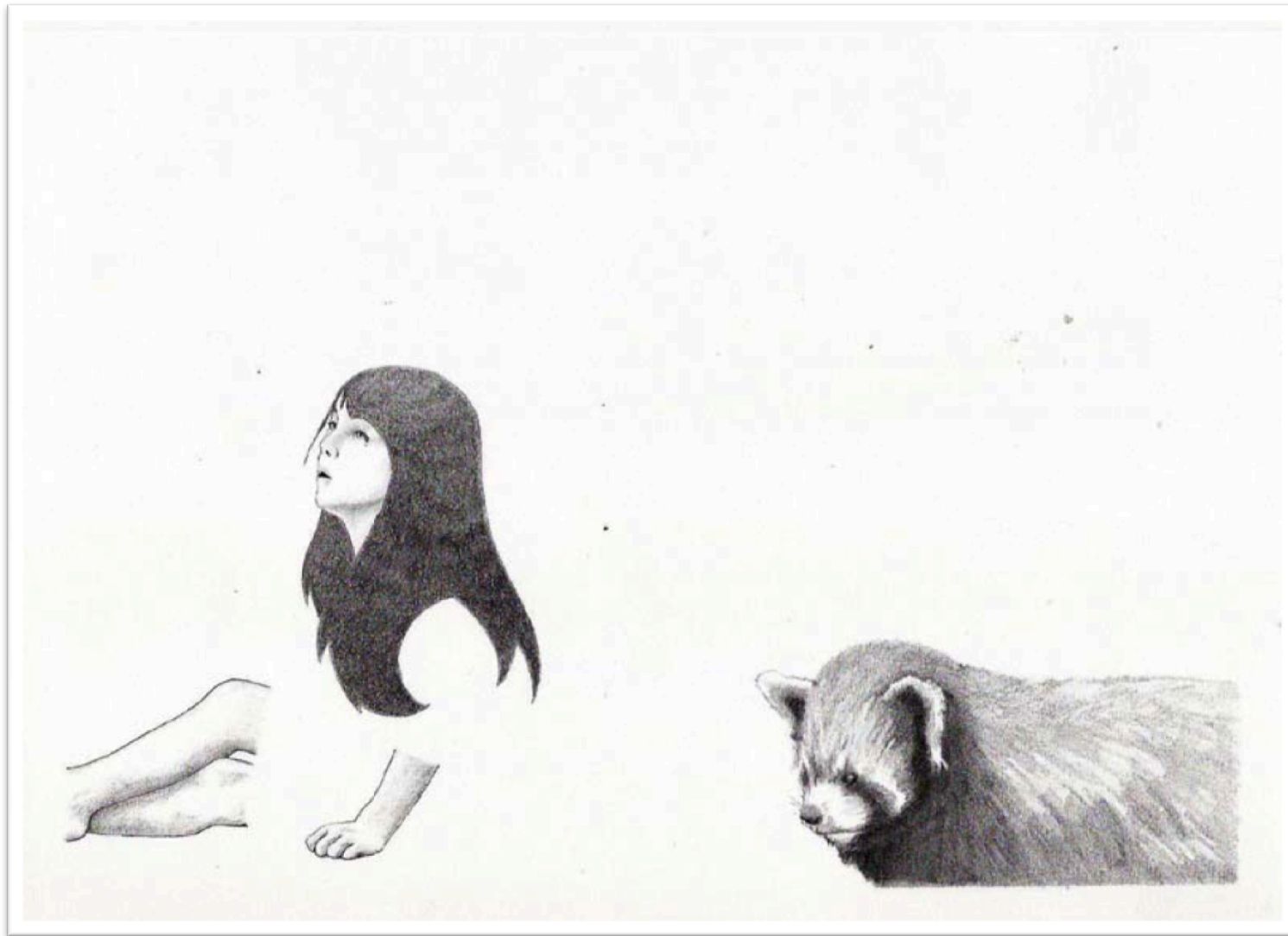
Investigation 4:

Fig. 92. Holmes, A. (2011) *Candy and Sandy in pencil.* [Pencil on paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

EXPLORING THE GAZE THROUGH ILLUSTRATION Part 4

What follows are images of the investigations into the female's gaze looking inwards, creating the imaginary within her mind. Investigation 1: Through the physical position of the female, meaning was developed exploring how she was daydreaming about the imaginary world and the companion. This was first achieved by having the girl looking in a particular direction.

Investigation 2: The previous idea was investigated further through the female child looking towards the imaginary and, in a self-reflective manner, by looking up.

Investigation 3: Exploration of the physical position and gaze of the girl became important as it referred to the self being involved in the non-existent or the imaginary. This position revolved around which part of the dreaming stage she was involved in. By having the girl looking far away and into the distance or sky she held a dreamy expression on her face.

Investigation 1:

Investigation 2:

Fig. 93. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The yellow Bird."*
[Mixed media and collage] 29.7 X 21 cm

Fig. 94. Holmes, A. (2011) *"Best friends."*
[Pencil on paper] 29.7 X 21 cm

Investigation 3:

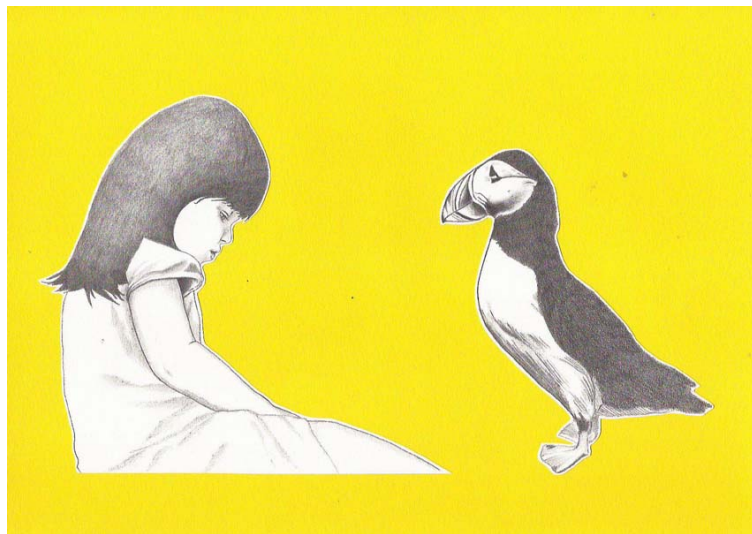Fig. 95. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The disappearance of Jojo and Sandy."* [Mixed media on 640gsm paper] 21 X 29.7 cm

End of year exhibition

In the exhibition "Imaginary Worlds" at Harrisons Gallery the most successful concepts from previous compositions were used and redeveloped further as new artworks in a series. The focus was to differentiate a visual hierarchy between the young girl that created the imaginary worlds and the companions with the imaginary creature as a friend. By emphasizing the female child's feeling of inadequacy within her true reality, tears were applied to the girl's face. The addition of the tears helped to inform the viewer of the distress of the female child as well as create the desired effect of a hierarchy between the girl and the imaginary companions. The use of red in the tears emphasized the hierarchy with the girl, being the dominant character of the narrative. The red tears also provided a contrast with the pretty landscape of the girl's imaginary world and the animals, as the tears are a link to her true reality of disturbance and unbalance within a materialistic world.

The backgrounds of the nearly developed concepts of the female child's imaginary worlds were different from previous artworks, several layers of wash, colour, and mark making creating more depth in the landscapes. Using purples, mauves, violets and lavender the concept represented the in-between time of day and night, twilight. Using these tones with the layering of washes and mark making, the landscapes in each imaginary world was then able to be more realistic through its visual connection to our world of nature as well as be read as a believable, alternate reality.

By presenting the small artworks in the large frames without glass, the wide mount of the matt board acted as a strategy. The small size emphasized the fragile nature of the girl's imaginary world as well as creating a level of intimacy engaging the viewer to more closer to the artwork. The illustrations within the white frames were then seen and read as separate narratives because of the separation of the frames. In the exhibition space, the obstacle of the broken up walls was confronted by using it as a strategy for separating the narratives but at the same time the artworks could still all be read as a series of works through the linkage of similar content and colour palette.
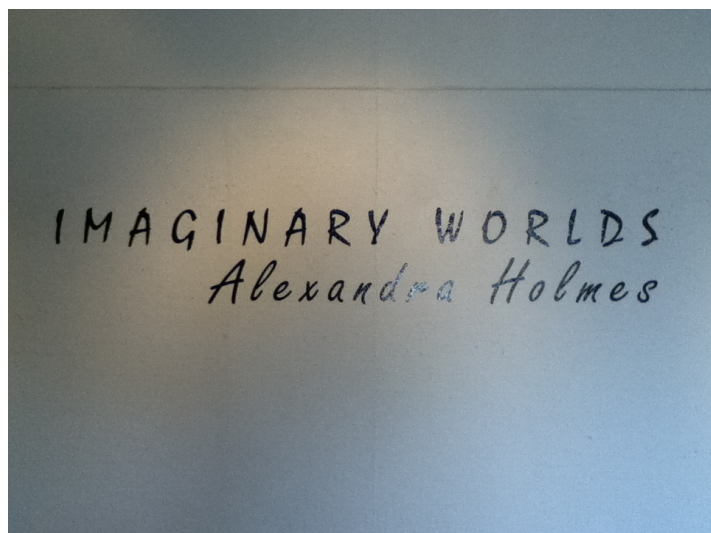
Fig. 96. Holmes, A. (2012) *"Title: Imaginary worlds."*
[Photograph] 6 X 4 inches

Fig. 97. Holmes, A. (2012) *"Tears for tomorrow."*
[Photograph] 6 X 4 inches

Fig. 98. Holmes, A. (2011) *"The weepers."* [Photograph] 6 X 4 inches

Fig. 99. Holmes, A. (2012) "Children of tomorrow." [Photograph] 6 X 4 cm

Fig. 100. Holmes, A. (2011) "The weepers." Enlarged. [Photograph] 6 X 4 cm
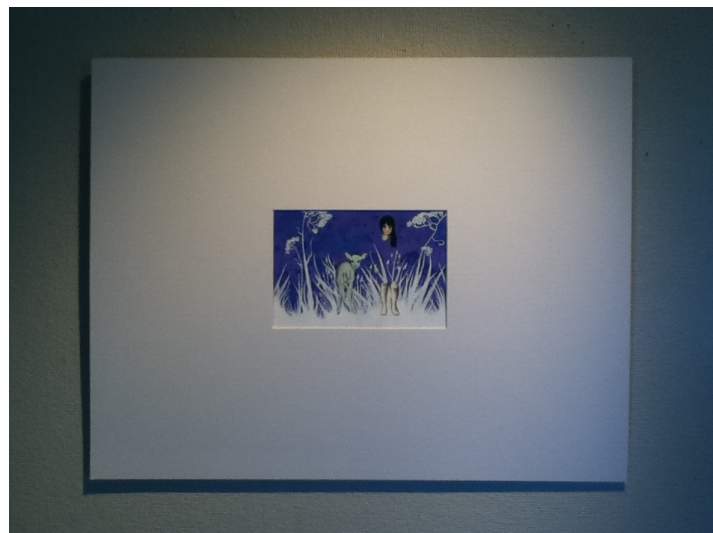
Fig. 101. Holmes, A. (2011) "Tears for yesterday." [Photograph] 6 X 4 Inches

Fig. 102. Holmes, A. (2011) "The keepers of Sorrow." [Photograph] 6 X 4 Inches

Fig. 103. Holmes, A. (2011) "The keepers of Sorrow." Close up. [Photograph] 6 X 4 Inches

Fig. 104. Holmes, A. (2011) "Tears for yesterday." Close up. [Photograph] 6 X 4 Inches

Conclusion

The illustrations in this project, 'Imaginary Worlds,' are about a female child, a girl of European ethnicity who questions her ability to find herself, her path and destiny within an industrialized and commercial world. Yet, through the creation of the imaginary world, she has found somewhere she can feel comfortable and hold the imaginary companion as her confidant. She is then able to stop suppressing her emotions, capabilities and limitations: instead she can work through her issues and emerge as a stronger, more creative individual. As the project developed, I discovered the illustrations are more autobiographical than I realized. By naming the girl Sandy from an abbreviation of my name Alexandra I have maybe connected with the subconscious inner child creating a personal attachment to the artwork and making the character more real by suggesting she may be part of the real world.

By creating the formal image of the female character through different techniques I realized that the girl is the visual as well as the mental and emotional connection to the make believe world including the landscape and the companion. From the exploration of 'looking' I also discovered that there was more than one way of 'looking.' How the female and animal subjects look at each other tends to signify the relationship. This has been important to influence how the viewer may then read the artwork as well as portray how the subjects themselves could perceive us if this illustration were part of our imagination.

An important realization in the project was the scale and size of the illustrations. Given that they portrayed the girl's imaginary world, they needed to be small, delicate and intricate to emphasize that they are something to treasure and potentially something private. The size could then be subconsciously read by the viewer as something that is intimate and precious like a jewel. By drawing the viewer in to stand close to the paintings I hope the viewer will be involved in the imaginary world of the imagined female character, Sandy.

From the investigation into ways of creating the imaginary companion the body language of the animal needed to reflect the female's physical position in sympathy or empathy in order to create the relationship. The type of animal used as the companion reflected the child's psyche and emotional states and also referred a specific place or whereabouts the girl character is escaping into in her imaginary world. Therefore, the identity of the animal could further contribute to the creation of the imaginary world.

The most important development has been in creating the imaginary worlds, realising that they are representations of a nostalgic childhood created through the act of visualization in an act of pretence play. The imaginary landscape created as an escape from the mundane reality of our life can alter our perceptions of reality by creating other alternate worlds that can be parallels or pure fantasy.

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