

Mya Hanson's Artist Statement

In 8th grade, my art teacher pulled me aside and asked if I wanted to enter this contest: create cover art for the MEA Conference program based on the theme “innovation.” So I did. Somehow, my drawing won, appearing on the program’s cover the following fall. That’s when I realized I might be okay at art. When I am creating, time stops. For a minute, the world fades into the background, and I step into the canvas, my mind intertwined with the art in front of me. That moment where it is just me and my art is why I keep creating. I love watching the story unfold before my eyes as my pencil or brush moves across the page.

My technique reflects the styles and forms I’ve received exposure to. I work in drawing, painting, printing, and photography. Graphite encourages me to start drawing because I know it isn’t permanent. Once I like where I am going, I can build off that foundation with paint, pen, or ink to give my work permanency. Most recently, I have found myself drawn to watercolor. I love the fluidity and the translucency of the medium and the expansiveness of the paint as it touches the paper. Its translucency is especially effective as I work to create illustrative pieces focused on the theme of real versus imagined.

I create scenes of childhood and human-centric works in a graphic, storytelling style. I do this—partly—as a reflection on my own life experiences and memories, but mostly in hopes that I can reach an audience and remind them how valuable imagination and innocence—both often associated with childhood—are. Sadly, technology is taking away some of our creativity; new generations are losing their inner child, imagination, and beautifully unique view of the world earlier in their lives. My art investigates the connection between childhood innocence and imagination and how that relationship changes with time. These themes are present in my most recent watercolors that explore nostalgic scenes within reading and outdoor play.