

Start at home

Symbolic Selfies

ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



**“She told Mum she was taking me
for a ride down the road but she not.”**

– Laine, resident of Coen, Queensland, 2019

About the artist

Naomi Hobson attributes her creativity and imagination to her childhood in Coen, in far North Queensland: making her own toys from bits and bobs and taking long, rambling walks with her grandparents, noticing all the strange and beautiful details of their Country along the way. A Southern Kaantju/Umpila artist, well-known for her colourful abstract landscape paintings, Naomi developed her photography skills working for the local Land Trust before turning her lens towards the young people of Coen for this series, *Adolescent Wonderland*. “They are filled with life,” she says of the children and teens of her hometown, “they fill this community with light. And I wanted the rest of the country to see that.”

About the work

This photo is half of a pair, capturing two moments in the life of sisters Laine and Katarna. In this picture, *Road Play*, Laine is placed front and centre, and the caption tells the story from her perspective as the younger sister: impatiently watching Katarna play with her phone, when she promised to take Laine for a bike ride. But the story doesn’t end there! In the second photo, Laine and Katarna are both perched on the bike – happily posing for a selfie together. This photo is titled *The Good Sister*, and the caption is in Katarna’s words. By showing both sides of the story, Hobson captures the funny, complex push and pull of family life.

Presented by

image Naomi Hobson, Southern Kaantju/Umpila people, Queensland, born 1978, Coen, Queensland, *Road Play* “She told Mum she was taking me for a ride down the road but she not.” Laine, from the series *Adolescent Wonderland*, 2019, Coen, Queensland; printed by High Res Digital, Sydney inkjet pigment print on paper, 81.0 x 110.0 cm; Acquisition through Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art supported by BHP 2019, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, © Naomi Hobson/ReDot Fine Art Gallery.

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Materials you need

- a camera, smartphone or tablet
- coloured paper or cardboard
- textas
- scissors
- elastic or wool
- toys, dress ups and other random things!

Take it further

Work with a friend or family member to set up symbolic portraits together.

Draw a symbolic self-portrait with pencils or textas. Are there things that you can show in your drawing that you couldn't capture in a photo?

Create your own Symbolic Selfies

- 1 In *Road Play*, we can't see the girls' faces, but the photo still shows us their personalities, interests and style. Let's create a symbolic 'selfie' that says a lot about you, without showing your face.
- 2 Start by making a simple mask. Draw the shape that you want on an A4 piece of paper or cardboard and cut it out. Then hold the mask in front of your face and gently mark spots for your eyes. Draw eye holes around these marks, and carefully cut them out. Decorate your mask and attach wool or elastic to hold it on your face.
- 3 Now choose your outfit. Pick out clothes that you feel good wearing. This could be a whole costume, or just your favourite t-shirt – whatever feels the most like 'you'.
- 4 Finally, find one or two props. These could be toys, books, musical instruments, or sporting equipment – or any objects that are special to you, representing your interests and ideas.
- 5 Put on your outfit and mask, and find an interesting and well-lit spot for your selfie.
- 6 It's photoshoot time! Have fun trying out different angles, posing with your props or placing them in the foreground and background. Can you use facial expressions and body language to show your personality through the mask? Take lots of photos and then choose your favourite one. What does it show about you?

detail Naomi Hobson, Southern Kaantju/Umpila people, Queensland, born 1978, Coen, Queensland, *Road Play* "She told Mum she was taking me for a ride down the road but she not." Laine, from the series *Adolescent Wonderland*, 2019, Coen, Queensland; printed by High Res Digital, Sydney inkjet pigment print on paper, 81.0 x 110.0 cm; Acquisition through Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art supported by BHP 2019, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, © Naomi Hobson/ReDot Fine Art Gallery.

Road Play is on display as part of Tarnanthi 2020: Open Hands

We would love to see your work! Ask your parent or carer to post a photo on Instagram and tag the Art Gallery of South Australia. Or you can email your photo to us at public.programs@artgallery.sa.gov.au

@agsa.adelaide #agsastart