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The Expressionist

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Creative Writing

By

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The greater danger
for most of us
is not that our aim is
too high
and we miss it,
but that it is
too low
and we reach it.

Michelangelo (1475-1564)

Dedication

It has always interested me, when reading a dedication inside the first few pages of a book, album, thesis or exegesis, that the words read in such a way that they don't really say very much about the words.

It seems so obvious to thank my supervisors – Dr David Musgrave and Dr Caroline Webb.

As well as thanking my family – my beautiful wife and my powerful and very cheeky children and the library where all the books came from as well as the people that I discussed the project with and bounced ideas off.

But does it not ever occur to the writer student author, that they should thank the words? Thank the characters, the belief and the energy that parallels the process of creativity in the form of words.

Perhaps not! So it is here that I am going to!

To the words, the characters, the thoughts, the moments of clarity and the inner knowing that all this would be made manifest when I surrendered to the universe, believed and acted on the knowing that is inside of us all.

Belief, belief, belief!

Thank you!

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Abstract

The novella *The Expressionist* centres on the development of an Australian boy living in rural and regional areas, and his coming of age into a realm of artistic and creative tendencies. The story involves loss, sadness, physical, spiritual and artistic growth. Humour and spiritual conflict associated with the development into an artist, the artistic genre in the framework of the *Bildungsroman* and *Kunstlerroman* as well the desire to participate or be in the world offering so many variables for the individual human being on their chosen journey.

The Expressionist is written with the understanding that life, and all it entails, suggests that we as human beings are able and willing to accomplish, overcome and establish an individual path. This is possible despite the many and varied challenges associated with growing up: spirituality, relationships, life choices, artistic practice, emotional stability and the attitude of society towards those who choose 'the path less taken'. The protagonist of *The Expressionist* works towards an understanding of self through conditioned individual experience; however idealistic the notion of truth and hope is in the protagonist's way of thinking, and what is experienced, his aim is to accept and understand better the process by which he lives.

The artist, by embracing rurality in their artistic approach provides the opportunity to express positive interpretations of hope and individuality in its simplest form. Therefore, the argument within this exegesis is that the simple and the rural are uniquely placed within the realm of artistic expression.