**PEARL TRANSCRIPT - ARMADALE ART STORIES**

**PEARL:** Hi, my name is Pearl. I'm 17 years old and I go to Kelmscott Senior High School. I don't really like being all out there. I'm not very extroverted. I'm more introverted. I like staying at home, just like reading, things like that. I like reading comics. Like just a bunch of romance. It's just good to look at, like... I'm not obsessed. I just like seeing other people thrive in relationships.

Me and my friends, we'd make plans to go out places or just go on picnics and things like that. One of my friends, she lives in Rolleystone, so we just have picnics around there. I have a small friend group that's like, there's five of us. I find that being around people from my community is a little awkward at school, especially because we're in Year 12 and there's different classes, different goals, different things they want to do in life. So yeah. And I just personally tend to stick with the people that would want to do similar things to what I want to do.

I would say it's inclusive... mostly. But yeah, it's pretty nice. Yeah. It's quite diverse. Because when I was younger I didn't really have much because my family are refugees. We came from Thailand and we came to Melbourne and we didn't really have much. So instead of usually watching TV or playing games, I would just draw; it would be me and my brother just drawing because we just didn't have much.

I was basically a baby. I've just heard stories about it. My parents, we come from a place in Burma where there's a civil war going on between the Burmese people and the Karen people and we are the Karen people. My parents just wanted us to have a better life instead of living through the war and constantly on the run. So, we just moved to Melbourne through help through government and things like that and yeah. I hold a lot of respect for my parents because I'm just grateful that I didn't have to go through it.

Of course, I'm grateful for the things my parents have done for me, and they've sacrificed a lot for me, but I feel like sometimes I'm not meeting that level of sacrifice and pressure, you know?

I’m hoping to just go to uni, maybe do some teaching and hopefully be able to be a part of a group where I can just play my instrument. I play the clarinet right now. Yeah, just like join an orchestra or a local band.

Sometime last year, Ms. Richards, she entered me into an art competition. This is like around Armadale, I'm not really sure what it's called, but a portrait I drew won a People's Choice Awards and I got some money out of that. It was a chick holding a banana as a phone. It's called ‘banana phone’. It was like the description was just something so meaningful and I was just like... it's just a chick with a phone!

I'm a Christian, so we go to a church that's basically based around just Karen people. And that's just how I stick to my roots and things because at first, even speaking and writing [Karen] was difficult for me. But I've learned to do that because at church they teach you those things. There's a bunch of young people, young Karen people that go to Kelmscott and yeah, I see a lot of them at church and yeah, we're just a nice little group. We basically grew up into the church. For us Karen people it's like hope. It's a sign of hope because of the struggle that we had to go through, like against the whole civil war and things like that.