*First Job* is apart of a larger series, entitled *Virgin Encounters*, which explores the firsts of teenage life. This image, among all others in my series, was inspired by the experiences of my peers, which they recounted to me in a series of interviews. The practise of drawing inspiration from another’s personal experience was adapted from Brian McCarty. In his series, *War Toys,* McCarty works together with art therapists to visualise the drawings produced by children affected by war. McCarty produces emotionally rich photos, informed by real experiences, and his practises are what inspired me. Rather than asking my friends to draw their feelings, I interviewed them one-on-one, and their responses formed the basis of my series.

While McCarty uses toys in his work, I moved away his child-like style. I was inspired by the symbolism in classical art, specifically the style and meaning behind vanitas still-life paintings. Some vanitases are deceptively simple, or appear to be a random assortment of items, but they are rife with meaning. The meaning in vanitases lies in the symbols and motifs they employ. Drawing from the style of vanitas allowed me to do justice to the multi-faceted nature of the topics I chose to explore in my series. I was able to incorporate several motifs in a single frame and have them interact with each other in a way that created a narrative within each photograph.