

Practitioner's Statement

Together

Katherine de Groot

The subject I explored in my artwork involved the integration of nature into the human form. I wanted to express a togetherness between the natural world and the humans that inhabit it. I was also interested in the early stages at looking at incorporating animal/ human hybrids in my final composition. This came from looking at the artist Caitlin Hackett. But as my compositions developed my concept changed.

My main inspiration came from artist Audrey Kawasaki who uses a lot of foliage and natural elements in her artwork. I particularly liked the way she allowed nature to be part of the human body as well as inhabit segments of the background scene. I have always enjoyed drawing and creating my own imagery in pen and ink. In my research I discovered a small Adelaide based artist by the name of Tsunami Hee Ja and after purchasing her book "Thirty One," I was fascinated with how she achieved such intricate detail in her imagery with ink and decided to develop my skills in this area further.

Line was an important element to my drawing. I had to ensure that each image complemented each other. It was important that each piece of flora didn't look out of place but appeared balanced within the composition. While I start with a rough plan I tend to work intuitively and allow the imagery to emerge naturally and I would then to work back into necessary areas later, being mindful of achieving good balance. Thickness of lines was also an important feature to provide depth and tone to the piece. To create light and dark areas, besides line density, I used varied spacing between lines. Other shading techniques that were implemented include stippling and cross hatching. All these put together allowed me to be able to achieve the amount of detail I wanted in the work.

Achieving my final outcome was a long process and it went through many different development stages. With lots of experimentation and refinement of techniques I was able to develop and further the idea of using organic line work to create a very naturalistic looking image. The most challenging parts for me was creating convincing human figures which I was ultimately happy with. Anatomically wise my piece isn't perfect in the way the bodies of the two girls but, I was not striving for perfect anatomy in my piece. My goal for the human bodies was to create figures that intertwined well with the foliage that surrounded the two women. This is why their backs and shoulders are not overly defined so the foliage can weave its way in to create the detail that is missing from their bodies. My art work has developed from my initial concept. Although I initially wanted to create something with an animal human hybrid, I found that as my experiments developed so too did my concept and final composition. I am glad that my final turned out the way it has though.

I am quite proud of the drawing and the quality I was able to achieve. Using ink pens can be both relaxing and frustrating at the same time. The pens gave me a lot of freedom to create the designs that I had imagined easily with the different sized pen thicknesses as well as having more control over the pen itself. On the downside the problem with working with ink is if one mistake is made there is erasing. If I accidentally drew a line or did something that I decided didn't compliment the drawing I had to use my own creative methods to incorporate the mistake into the drawing and make it fit. Drawing long, repetitive and organic lines is very relaxing for me and I often caught myself getting lost in the process of creating the intricate flora the surrounds the two women. I believe I have succeeded in creating a piece that conveys a natural and organic style that intertwines the human figure and nature well.