

Practitioner's Statement

Recast

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Having a passion for our planet and a growing concern for its deteriorating health, I explored into the causes in which our driving our planet into a devastating state. After finding confirming evidence that's showed humans have the greatest negative impact I was set on creating a piece that expressed this. My final practical piece came together with the influential themes surrounding the devastation humans inflict on our environment.

I began my folio with looking at some of the most obvious concerns, ones that are raised within the media. A prime example of this is climate change, which seemed to be the perfect place to begin my folio. The first artist I looked at was Jill Pelto, her artworks were of statistics depicting the change in land over years due to climate change. These were displayed incorporated with watercolour paintings of scenes that have also been effected such as the melting glaciers and rising sea levels. I found the patterns within these images that were used to represent ice glaciers and the ocean inspiring, they reminded me of weather maps that are utilised to show the changes and movements within day to day weather. Through experimentation I concentrated on these patterns drawing with black art liner on graph paper in an attempt to bring in a element of fact, similar to Pelto using statistics. Continuing with this from of pattern I created a variety of samples using different layers papers.

As I progressed through my folio I moved onto the ideas of land destruction, which coincidentally aligned well with the patterns I had previously explored while looking at weather maps. I continued to look into this topic with more depth finding specific procedures that cause destruction. One arising issue is deforestation, the loss of trees due to humans for products used by humans also. After exploring with creating things that resembled cut down forests I came to the conclusion that my best option was to use small pieces of timber as it best represented the scene of destructed trees.

Another major concern was different forms of mining, in particular copper and oil. As well as disrupting land these forms of mining often cause devastation to our oceans through spilling into waterways. With these themes in mind I began experimenting with materials. I looked at materials with a texture similar to oil, with influence from Oliver Jeffers artwork snf drip paintings I found the process of dripping emulsion paint was most representative and effective. I was drawn to the artist Ah Xian during the Adelaide Biennial with his response to man and the mining of minerals in his sculptures however I wanted to represent the same scarring effect that the man had on the land. For copper mining I toyed with different products that were made to look like copper such as paints, paper and foils. I was unhappy with many of these until I came across copper leaf. This was perfect as when it was applied to a surface parts of the leaf broke away leaving the look of erosion, which further expresses the effects copper mining has on the environment.

Continuing on with research and experimentation I stuck to the topic discussing the negative impact on our oceans. Covering issues such as coral bleaching which is caused through high water temperatures causes through a domino effect of climate change. Here I played around with the idea of paper sculpture to create miniature representations of bleached coral.

I graph paper initially connecting with Peltó's work but this was a fiddly task and was difficult to achieve desirable results with. I soon discovered a product called magi-clay, this was an enjoyable material to work with and I found I was able to produce reasonably accurate representations of bleached coral. I then continued on with paper sculpture as I went onto the issue of water pollution, looking at old fishing nets which when littered trap and cause serious harm to a wide range of sea creatures. Using the technique of paper cutting I was able to make detailed replicas of simple fishing nets, although a time consuming process I found it to provide effective relevant results.

Throughout my folio I used a lot of white, which I found myself to be drawn to. With this in my mind I decided to look further into colour theories. Finding that the colour white represents throughout a variety of religions the beginning of a new life, enabling the slate to be wiped clean. It is often symbolised positive growth and cleanliness, it is considered a colour of safety. For my final piece I thought of this to be an ironic colour to utilise as my art was depicting devastation and death. However I felt through utilising the colour white it was promoting a change, in attempt to put an end to the damage that humans are inflicting onto the environment.

Towards the end of the research process I became aware of how many circles seemed to feature throughout my folio, this sparked an interest in looking at the circle of life, which led to symbols of life and various life cycles. I became intrigued with the shape and how well it relate to the themes of my piece, the cycle of change that occurs with the planet earth. This introduced a type of change that hadn't been discussed, one relating to growth and development. From this I went into exploring the formations of human and plant cells. I came across a sculptural piece by Anu Osva, it was called Mother's Pearls which represented the different type of cattle. This simplicity and shape of the piece made a huge impression on me and was a significant source of inspiration for my final.

Tying together all of the ideas and experimentations from throughout by folio I was able to produce a series of clay circles. Each decorated with a different issue that humans inflict upon the planet; copper mining, coral bleaching, oil spills, deforestation, ocean pollution (fish nets) and the imprint left by humans. These feature alongside three frames which display; harm to animals (turtle shell), general land waste and the layers of destruction which represented the plight of our environment.