

Dinner with our Future

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My body of work has evolved from the concept of sustainability. Sustainability holds the key to the preservation of the earth's natural resources for future generations. Consequently, my primary focus became how I would encourage people to adopt sustainable practices through visually engaging with my artwork.

Initially, I began to explore the use of ceramics as a natural material and an alternative to plastic. Interested by clays' malleability, I began experimenting with forms discovering how the use of free-flowing shapes appeared more organic and reflective of the environment. Influenced by the talented potter, Hessa Ajamani, I began embossing plants into my clay, capturing the delicate details of flora and exploring its fragile structure. By imprinting the gentle flowers, I was able to capture the purity, innocence and raw beauty of nature. It helped reinforce the wholesomeness of connecting with nature and living off the earth in a sustainable manner. In saying this, I envisioned my pieces to be reflective of a whole environment, rather than one fine detail, in hope of evoking a stronger impact on my audience.

This is when I started researching abstract landscapes, specifically Australian landscapes. I felt abstract landscapes more accurately reflect the ever-evolving chaotic yet tranquil environment, whilst realistic paintings capture environments in one moment in time, or one specific state. I wanted my piece to reflect the environment as a whole, in all of its states. Influenced by Katie Wyatt's vibrant colour palette and bold dramatic brush strokes, creating a sense of place in association to a positive environment. I wanted to explore how colour could reflect an environment in its entirety.

I chose to represent five iconic Australian locations; Uluru, The Great Barrier Reef, The Three Sisters, The Daintree Rainforest and The Great Australian Bite, in hope of establishing an initial connection between the audience and my artwork. By drawing on this personal connection between the audience and the locations, through memories or experiences, I will be more likely to encourage the audience to adopt sustainable alternatives and purchase the handmade serviettes rather than paper ones.

Inspired by Kati Romanowska cohesive bleeding colours and organic forms which emulate the beauty of the ocean, I began exploring how to reflect an environment by employing the same design principles to my own work. Consequently, I decided to merge the concept of form and colour to create my piece. Aesthetically I knew what I wanted to create, but I was unsure how I could functionality play into my design so people will actually use my artwork. With this I decided to craft some aesthetically functional ceramic plates, seeing as crockery lies at the heart of the dinner table and is used by everyone! Through the vibrant colours and tranquil swirls, I decided that the ceramics would reflect what our environment could look like if we choose to adopt sustainable alternatives and with this in mind using these plates would be a way of adopting a sustainable alternative by minimising mass plastic consumption.

My second body of work was serviettes, which began with my exploration of the use of textiles and the plethora of vibrant patterns which could be displayed on their design. Influenced by artists, such as Tiff Manuell, Ettavee and Gormon prints, I thought the serviettes, complemented by the ceramics, would epitomise what will transpire if we do elect to adopt a sustainable way of life. However, I realised that it engendered a greater concept and aesthetic if the ceramic plates reflected what could be achieved and the serviettes reflect what will happen if refusal to take action continues.

Influenced by artists such as Emma Fennell and her unique chaotic style of abstract artworks, I realised the serviettes needed to be quite disruptive of the table set, contrasting to the calm natural swirls and form of the ceramic and a topic of dinner conversation.

What may at first glance appear like a harmless dinner conversation regarding whether or not to adopt a sustainable lifestyle, it is actually a table setting disguised to determine the future of life on our planet. Consequently, one side of the argument will safeguard and preserve the environment, whilst the other will continue to destroy it and inevitably provoke the onset of humanity's own mass extinction.

This quite severe contrast depicts the thin ice we are currently tip toeing on, how we choose to act next will ultimately determine whether we sink or swim.

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