

Student intro:

Artemisia Cornett is a 22-year-old from Camden, Australia, currently studying a Master of Fine Art in Drawing at the National Art School. She received a BFA at NAS in 2022, majoring in Printmaking. Artemisia has a love of literature, gothic illustration, skateboarding and heavy metal music.

Talk summary paper:

The natural world inspires human curiosity, the desire to understand ourselves in relation to an expansive and vibrant world fostering evocative artistic expression. Such interpretations of the world are informed by the evolving relationship between local historiography and geography, which can be demonstrated in the works of Angus Fisher and Elsa Guillaume. Playing with the familiarity towards the Australian landscape, Angus Fisher translates his observed world through the aesthetic language of colonial nature illustration. With pen and watercolour, Fisher realises Australian wildlife including birds, fish, and mammals in meticulous fashion, emphasising their fascinating shapes and vivid patterning that honours their aesthetic beauty and the capacity of nature to provide such visual spectacle. The material translation to a flattened picture plane atomises and reconstructs the creatures through the binary, quantified relationship of linear pen drawing, injecting the works with a sterile boldness that is divorced from their geographic context. His printmaking-like materiality is a vehicle to an aesthetic goal, furthering allusions to conventional models of categorising presenting Flora and Fauna. Interfacing with the philosophical tensions and unnerving historical connotations to colonialism embedded in scientific illustration, Fisher offers a space to reflect on the shifting relationship between post-colonial humanity and its perceived dominion over the natural world. Where Fisher's work interprets natural curiosity through a scientific lens, French artist Elsa Guillaume uses drawing and sculptural techniques to produce wildly imaginative interpretations of the natural world inspired by the dense folkloric history of Europe, evoking the smallness of the Individual in the unknown expanse. A frequent sea voyager, Guillaume dives into the fathoms below to procure features of aquatic life and landscapes that are conjoined into unfathomable beings, her bestiary organised into a personal aesthetic language that matches the gentle and endearing with mythological monstrosity. Her 2020 series *TRITONADES* &

*CÆLACANTHES* offers a procession of these fantastical beasts, held in an evolutionary middle ground between the aquatic and terrestrial, recalling the evolutionary narrative in a dreamlike haze of biological forms. Other works in her Oeuvre include a set of terracotta sculptures depicting dissected, squid-like masses. The cross-sectional presentation offers a revelatory experience of the fantastic, furthering the possibility of impossible creatures by mirroring the interior flesh. Presented on steel trolleys within the white cube gallery space mirrors the decontextualization present in Fisher's scientific drawings, contemplating humanity's positioning of the natural world and in particular the ocean, as a subject of examination.