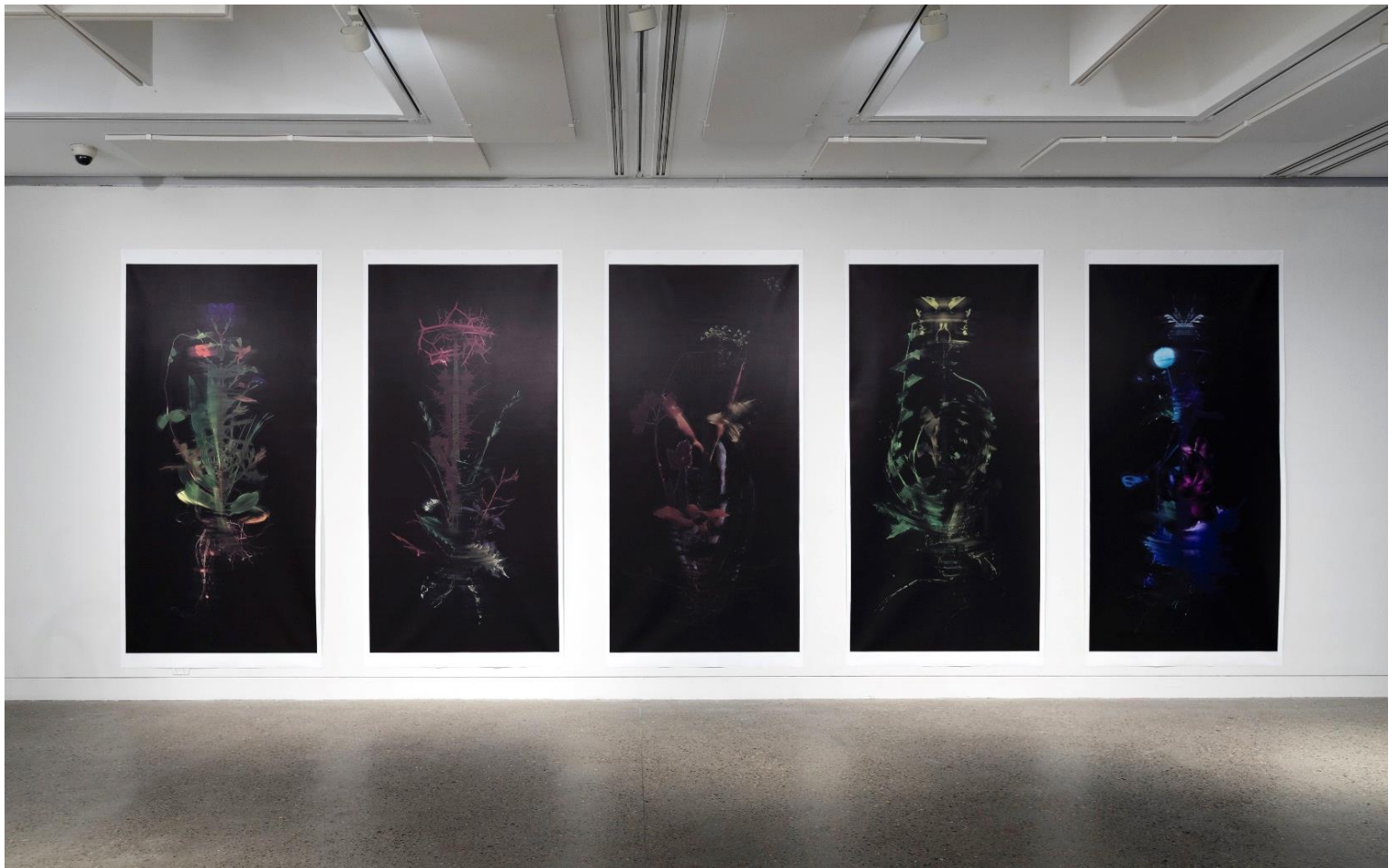


Hazelhurst Arts Centre

Young At Heart

Artist Focus: Caroline Rothwell



Caroline Rothwell, *Primal Plant 2011-2021*. Silversalt Photography

Hazelhurst

SUTHERLANDSHIRE
ARTS
CENTRE

Developed by Hazelhurst's Public Programs & Education team in collaboration with Caroline Rothwell, 2021

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Image: Artist Caroline Rothwell, Silversalt Photography

Caroline Rothwell

Caroline Rothwell is a Sydney artist who explores the ideas of human interaction with nature. Her exhibition *Horizon* is exhibited at Hazelhurst Arts Centre, until 28 November 2021.

Rothwell has created digital images, sculptures, drawings and paintings that combine elements of many botanical species to create hybrid forms. She reveals to us the interconnectedness of humans, industry and the natural environment through her work which combines human figures, industrial elements, and animals. These elements combine with plants to create new hybrid species or *uber plants*.

The artist asks us to rethink our relationship with nature and to exist with the environment in a symbiotic relationship. Our interconnection with the environment is vital for humans, the environment, and our future.

Rothwell explores historical imagery and data from the engravings from Joseph Banks plant specimens collected on Cook's voyage in the Pacific in 1768-1770. She also collaborated with Google Lab using botanical illustrations from the open-source Biodiversity Heritage Library. This large data base of botanical illustrations allowed Rothwell to create a work morphing different plants into new hybrid forms in an animated loop.

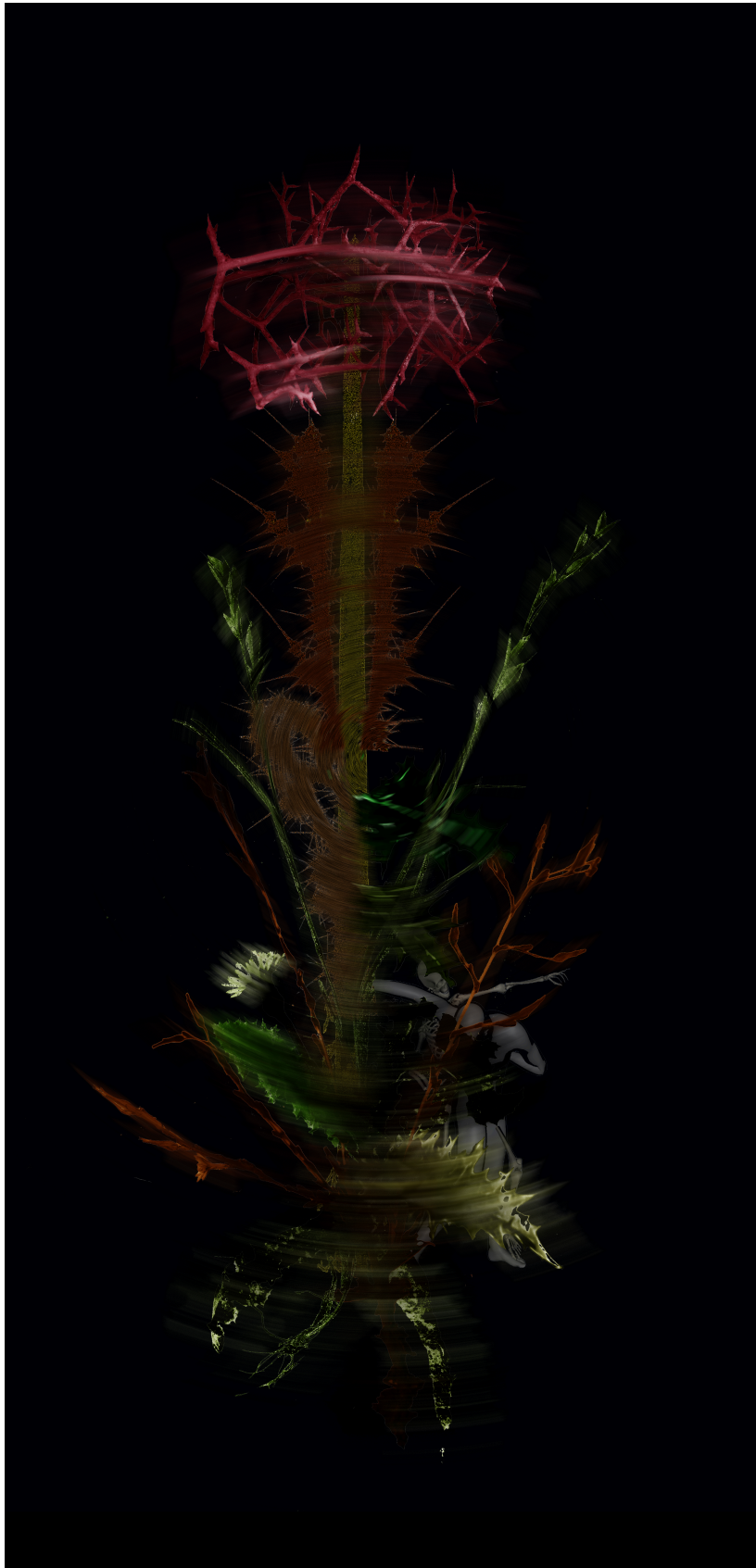
View Caroline Rothwell in conversation about her exhibition *Horizon* [here](#).



Image: Caroline Rothwell, *Primal Plant 2011-2021*. Silversalt Photography

These are a series of large scale, digitally manipulated photographs exploring the ideas of hybridity and beauty. Amongst the morphed plants we see a faint human presence. These weeds were collected from different parts of the world including Australia, China, UK and Afghanistan.

The artist collected weeds from an area 5 metres square and documented its location and date, in the same way a botanist would do. The artist asked other people to collect samples overseas, such as such as artist Ben Quilty's collection of weeds from Afghanistan. The weeds were photographed against a sheet of white paper before being digitally manipulated. Each plant collection creates a hybrid plant, an uber plant.



Caroline Rothwell, *Tarinkot, Afghanistan* 2011

ABOUT THE WORK



Caroline Rothwell, *Primal Plant* 2011-2021

***Primal Plant* 2011-2021**

These are a series of large scale, digitally manipulated photographs exploring the ideas of hybridity and beauty. Amongst the morphed plants we see a faint human presence. These weeds were collected from different parts of the world including Australia, China, UK and Afghanistan. The artist collected weeds from an area 5 metres square and documented its location and date, in the same way a botanist would do. The artist asked other people to collect samples overseas, such as such as artist Ben Quilty's collection of weeds from Afghanistan. The weeds were photographed against a sheet of white paper before being digitally manipulated. Each plant collection creates a hybrid plant, an uber plant.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What can you see? Is it just plants?
- Many plants have been morphed together to make a super plant. Why do you think the artist chose **weeds** for her work and not plants that people appreciate for its beauty or find useful e.g., food?
- Describe the colours used in this work. What effect does it have on the plants?
- If you could create a super plant what qualities would it have? Perhaps a silver rose? Or chocolate flavoured brussels sprouts?
- Do you think we need to rethink our relationship with nature? What are some of the ways we could protect our environment from further damage from humans?

ART MAKING

Create your own hybrid plant.

You will need:



- Various weeds, leaves (try to find different shapes and colours) and small flowers. It is best if you use leaves that are not too thick or curved as this will make it harder to stick. It works best if you collect your plant samples and press them flat under heavy books between sheets of baking paper for a day or two.
- Baking paper.
- PVA glue, old paint brushes.
- Heavy paper white, black or even light card.

STEPS



Step 1: Place weeds, plants, leaves, and flowers onto black or white paper to create a pleasing arrangement. Once you are happy with the arrangement, it's time to glue

Step 2: Apply PVA glue all over the paper or you can just place it where your plants will be.

Don't worry at this stage if it looks messy- the glue will dry clear.





STEP 3: Once you have glued down the plants, place a sheet of baking paper over the top and press down firmly over the leaves and plants. Then gently pull back the paper and let dry.

FINISHED EXAMPLES



MORE IDEAS

- Take a photo of your artwork. Using your phone, computer, or tablet apply a filter effect. See some examples below.
- Paint or draw your hybrid plant. Try a restricted colour scheme or simplify the shapes to create an abstract work.



