

One's Culture is another country's discovery

Herschelle Castillo

The meaning of the title is quite literal to me, as I have recently come to Australia from the Philippines. The concept of my art is to introduce another country's well-known animals to another country which is to be interpreted as bringing a culture to introduce to other people's culture. I chose animals to do so, as they are a personal interest of mine and a subject matter which I find appealing and endearing.

The animals in my artwork are the Philippine Bald Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*), also known as the monkey-eating eagle and the Tarsier (*Carlito syrichta*). These animals are endangered species in the Philippines. I take inspiration from ballpoint artists, one from the 2022 SACE Art Show that I visited and the other is a famous artist on TikTok that I have come across. The artists that I have investigated to inspire me with my folio are Sarah Esteje, who created a series of animal portraits with blue ballpoint pens, Ler Huang, who mainly created portraits using coloured ballpoint pens and overlapping two or more images on top of each other and lastly, Rob Christensen, who uses stippling as his method of creating artworks about different kinds of dog breeds and architectural subjects.

I used Uni-ball eye fine ballpoint pens in colours of wine red and light blue to create my final practical and to give it a 3D effect. For the paper, I used a handmade watercolour paper with a smooth texture unlike the normal watercolour paper which is more textured. I chose to accompany my practical with a pair of handmade 3D glasses, which could be used by the viewer to clearly see the 2 animals layered on top of each other. This allowed the viewer to see each animal more clearly and adds an element of interactivity to my work.

While creating my art folio and final practical, I learned new techniques such as hatching to stippling and to layering. These were new skills to me, as I previously didn't study Art but have found a new love for it this year. I have developed a whole new set of skills involving pens in general and it influences me a lot more in art making because this might be the style that I get known for. Despite the stippling process taking a significantly long time, I found enjoyment in seeing how the layered dots came together to create this imagery.

My art is important because it introduces my culture to a new country. It gives me the opportunity to show other people from a different country that the animals that are involved in my art are a part of my culture. I can use my art to further promote and share the culture from where I came from, which is the Philippines.