

And so it comes to a close...

Throughout this final unit, I feel like I was challenged to the point of near break – but through that brutal process, I've worked on developing my understanding of both the industry and my personal approach into and within it.

Through the generation of project proposals and briefs, I was able to better solidify my targets and enable more effective motivation and routes to move my ideas and development forwards. As my ideas shifted and changed, I began to see my approach to work as one that includes both considered rigidity and looser acceptance of new ideas and compensation. The way my work unfolds is often about allowing space and openness to alteration and influence, having a set plan for a project is hard to follow and restricts my creativity. Spontaneous transformation in my design and image making keeps me excited. This is possibly why I have enjoyed and chosen to focus on particular mediums of ink on paper. The variation and texture that can be achieved through my application by hand - with its unexpected bleeds - as well as through the various printing processes I utilised, means that experimentation is forefront throughout the entirety of my projects. Unpursued and previously unsuccessful elements within my projects were not always wasted and experimental endeavours of integrating them inspired new ideas. For example, an unselected screenprint from the *Ampersand* project was re-purposed as a concertina presentation frame for a selection of my zine publications.

A process of trial and error through testing, prototypes and mock ups throughout the unit meant that I was constantly engaging through the investigation into the options of the medium and surface. I evaluated the success of the often unexpected outcomes in order to progress.

I made realisations, after extensive confusion and consideration, of what it is that I like, what I like to make and who I would like to make my work for as I pursue my creative career. My passion for printed matter got me to consider my application of my predominantly hand-rendered drawings towards this format. My resulting work for this year engaged the application into this scene, a hands-on approach reflecting my passion for tactility and touch of physical creative ideas and artwork. I pushed myself into applying my work to forms of printmaking which engaged a physical process (squeegee and mesh labour in screenprinting), and a more technical expertise development (image design, files preparation and printer use for Risograph).



Through each element to the unit, I made further realisations in terms of my personal approach to illustration. Within *Ampersand* and my personal *The Light They Obtain* projects, I noticed my appreciation of working with/alongside text as reference and inspiration. I recognised my attention to especially drawing out phrases and symbols to use as less direct and obvious interpretations. An ambiguity and subtle 'allude' to a feeling or narrative gives a certain freedom for both myself as the maker, but also for the viewer's interpretation.

I also feel like my practice has matured through my techniques to overcome the over-complication of ideas. My intensity and breadth of research and influences can often mean I become incredibly overcome with possibilities and find a direction hard to follow without getting distracted. Through using collage and breaking down my concepts or imagery to follow simplicity allowed better reflection and targeted focus. By creating new crops and selecting key symbols separated elements to advance my visual ideas.

I am really happy with the progress I have made in this unit on the growth of my contextual research to support my ongoing practice. This was both in terms of my contemplative topics as well as my thought and physical process. Japanese and Zen aesthetics and culture have heavily featured as visual and inner reflective inspiration to strengthen my topic and the purpose of my actions. The INTO_VERDE concept as a whole feels strong and I am determined to do IT –as well as MYSELF and my three years at university – justice. I am disappointed at not being able to submit a more finalised example of my INTO_VERDE publication for the unit submission, but I am confident in knowing that I will make every effort to make it what I want and to the standard I feel it deserves for the graduate shows.

It can take me time to feel comfortable with my work – it becomes a constant debate between accepting an aesthetic in imperfection and perfecting the vision I have for the outcome. I feel this pace to my work is an area I need to improve upon. Allowing my sense of openness to be incorporated can sometimes lead to over-saturation of input and I can get confused and bogged down with too much, slowing my rate of decision making. Reducing my time for research and selecting a more precise focus could mean beneficial limitations to quicken the pace of my work and achieve more practical experimentation. Due to this project feeling very personally connected and long-running, it was difficult for me to apply this as I felt so intensely engaged.

A particular element I hope to improve upon is my somewhat single-minded determination becoming a weakness. In my persistence and effort to achieve imagery I was happy with, I often got stuck in a virtual space or inside my own mind and over-analysed and over-complicated my process. I feel like there was time I wasted concentrating too hard at a computer screen, meticulously striving for 'perfection' where I should have really taken a step back to reflect and engage in my previously mentioned 'openness'. Due to the fact I feel I work best on solo, personal projects, I often put too much pressure and impatience on myself to see results and so sharing my work with the creative surroundings of a studio/ my peers (or simply taking a break) can feed the development of my work.

Although I didn't totally achieve an outcome for my INTO_VERDE publication in time for submission I am happy with, I realise that I have achieved a lot over the course of my final year and this result for the end of the unit is perhaps not to be too critical of. All creatives struggle and see results not come together – but this shouldn't be a failure. I'm trying to stay positive in my determination to achieve my personal goal of delivering quality work to show to the industry and the public. This is purely one project of many I have completed to the present day and have the whole of my creative career to improve upon things and this does not determine my success for the future! I can't wait to get stuck into my growth as an illustrator and creative.

