



Mary–Anne Stuart

Artist Bio

Mary-Anne Stuart is a contemporary mixed media artist based in Melbourne, Australia.

Driven primarily by a love of colour and pattern, Mary-Anne believes pattern is integral to life - the very fabric of life, whether human, botanical or animal. Her art works reflect this through the lens of her love of Australian flora and fauna, especially the banksia plant species which has been her number one subject for a number of years.

Environmental concerns lead her to re-use everyday items as mark making tools - from kitchen utensils to paper coffee cups, cardboard and sticks, packaging and plastic waste material as well as plant matter.

“The process of creating an artwork is one of real joy and absorption of attention for me and I want people who see my works to also realise the joy I feel about the beauty of the natural world. If there is one thing I’m trying to communicate, it’s that.”

“There is a constant overlapping of art, nature, science, music; I see patterns in all of these. Nature seems random and chaotic but there is a plan; it just takes a while to find it. I like to let the materials find their way, to replicate nature.”

Her method is often guided by the materials; letting them medium show the way, thus emulating the randomness of nature in the act of making art. Her works are created using a variety of mediums: oil, acrylic, gouache and watercolour paints, inks, coloured pencils, wax pastels and collage and can be canvas, wood panel or paper based. Occasionally fabric and thread are used.

As a self-described late bloomer, Mary-Anne is very aware of the opportunity she now has. Although she’d had art lessons throughout her 20s and 30s, it was the return to study in 2007 after raising her children that led to an overwhelming urge to immerse herself in learning about and making art. Completion of a bachelor’s degree in media and communications (majoring in visual communication) in 2014 was followed immediately by a diploma in visual art. In 2020, she quit her part time office job to concentrate solely on making art and running her art business. After three and a half years in a studio in Melbourne’s iconic Nicholas Building, from 2021 Mary-Anne works from her home studio in Coburg.

Mary-Anne cites many and widely varied influences including the Arts & Crafts movement artists and designers such as JH Dearle, CFA Voysey, Walter Crane, William Morris, mid-century American modernist painters such as Mark Rothko, Morris Louis, Ellsworth Kelly, natural history illustrators such as Ernst Haeckel and Celia Rosser, as well as the late American collage artist Rex Ray. Australian influences include John Olsen, Frank Hinder and contemporary Australian artists Tiffany Calder Kingston and Dana Kinter.