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Day 6 – Greenest

I chose to depict my piece of upcycled art as the contrast between recycled and non-recycled materials to represent the importance of recycling and our unbalanced relationship between consumerism and the environment. Whilst recycling will not be the complete solution to reducing our waste, it diverts over 37 million tonnes of materials from landfills in Australia annually (Planet Ark, n.d.). This therefore reduces the amount of pollution emitted when waste gets transported to incineration and landfill (Leonard et al., 2007). The coloured materials used are those that can be recycled, representing the positive impact of recyclable materials on reducing our impact on the environment and preventing the linear material economy. The non coloured materials are those that cannot be recycled, representing the negative impacts of single use items on fuelling the endless cycle of consumerism.

Furthermore, this piece represents the struggle between the balance of ensuring our needs are met, and those of the environment are met – a struggle that our 21st century society is largely ignoring. I think of the relationship between the environment and the actions, needs and wants of our society as the biological arms race between 2 trees: the tree that obtains the most light has the greater photosynthesising ability and is thus expected to thrive more than the trees getting less sunlight. Our environment has been here longer than our activities have, and has had a long time to grow and develop. However, our harmful activities are beginning to completely undermine and exploit these centuries of growth and has begun to outcompete the environment, blocking its sunlight and preventing it from continuing to thrive. We need to find our voice to restore the balance between the environment and human activity so that both entities can get the attention they need to thrive.

Leonard, A., Fox, L., & Sachs, J. (2007, April 22). *The Story of Stuff*. Story of Stuff.

<https://www.storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>

Planet Ark. (n.d.). *Recycling does actually get recycled*. Recycling near You.

[https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/nationalrecyclingweek/mythbusters/1#:~:text=The%20](https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/nationalrecyclingweek/mythbusters/1#:~:text=The%20recycling%20process%20recovers%20and)

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pgc_tahlia I recently thought of the relationship between our environment and the waste we generate as the biological arms race: 2 trees side by side competing for the most light. The trees that get the most light are the ones that come out on top.

Our environment has been here longer than plastic, but plastic is starting to outcompete the abilities of the environment, blocking its sunlight and preventing it from thriving. We need to restore the balance between our environment and human activity so that both entities can get the attention they need to thrive.

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