



Imagine this: Mai Long with her adventurous, playful mutts and other characters.

Picture: Anna Joske

Art's a dog of a thing

By Pinar Gencturk

MEET artist Mai Long's colourful friends Aqua Mutt and Dag Girl in an exhibition at the Moonee Ponds Incinerator arts complex.

The visually arresting exhibition features 30 papier-mâché figures. The main characters are Aqua Mutt and Dag Girl, who have adventures of self discovery in an imaginary world.

Through the pair, Long has brought to life her experiences and observations of society.

"I chose a mutt as my main character because a mutt is a mongrel, not quite as valued as a pure breed and confused about his identity — something I can relate to. And Dag Girl just wants to be loved and accepted," she said.

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Mai Long

Born to a Vietnamese father and Australian/Irish mother, Long has always tried to legitimise her identity. The New South Wales-based artist said the exhibition brought out a lot of revelations about herself.

"Making art is meditative and helps me process and manage information I get on a daily basis."

The papier-mâché art form adopted by the young artist reminds her of her childhood and took 12 months to create. Although bright and playful, the figures highlight important social themes critiquing human nature.

Aqua Mutt: an installation with Dag Girl is at the Atrium Gallery, Incinerator Arts Complex, 180 Holmes Road, Moonee Ponds, until September 16. Call 8325 1750.



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