

Artist Statement:

An Epic Declaration of a Better Ζωή 2010 is a complex and multilayered work that operates as a dedication to the grand journey Gina Kalabishis' parents made to Australia in the 1950s (father) and 1960s (mother). It also refers to her own success at embracing, blending and creating from the combination of cultures that have underpinned and informed her life as an artist, wife and mother.

Kalabishis' triptych of unique and unusually beautiful botanical forms are used as a symbolic platform to investigate the notion of hybrid culture. More particularly, they signify the blending of Greek and Australian cultures that she sees as giving rise to new forms and ideas.

While each of these botanical forms comprises an invented, imaginary hybrid resulting from a combination of Greek and Australian plants, as follows:

- Left to Right: L: Chrysanthemum (European) mixed with Waratah (Australian)
M: Olives (Greek) with Rose (European) + Victorian Wattle (Australian)
R: Chrysanthemum (European) mixed with Coastal Banksia (Australian)

they signify the symbiotic relationship that has occurred between herself and her partner; she being of Greek parentage and an artist (paintings), her husband being of Australian parentage and a landscape architect (plants).

Kalabishis extends her unique symbolism by embedding references to Greek and Australian culture in the centre of each 'flower' thus:

- Left to Right: L: red egg - symbolic of Greek Easter + new life
M: Banksia seed pod - Australian plant-form carrying new life
R: Greek μᾶτι - also occurring in various European cultures

Combined with the hybrid plants, these represent the journey of two cultures and two individuals and the numerous creative outcomes that have resulted from their marriage; from their two sons - Eamon and Alexander - to their garden, which is a mixture of traditional European plants and Australian natives.

Kirsten Rann 2010