

Ajay Jennings | *Dormant Tree*

I do not give up on my body.

Dormant Tree is a series of collages created by Naarm based artist Ajay Jennings. Composed with card, paper, ink and paint, these small-scale collages are imbued with a cathartic reenergising, revelling in moments of clarity in the wake of a year spent homebound due to an extreme ME/CFS (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) relapse.

Having first lost the energy to work, leave the house, then walk, stand, or even talk over the course of nine months, in late 2023 Ajay had a spike in energy that enabled him to reconnect with art making. Working in short spurts, Jennings found that as a technique, “collaging takes less.” With fewer tools and materials needed than in Ajay’s traditional practice, collaging could be constructed intuitively or transported with minimal effort – ideal for a life with physical limitations. Wrestling with a total loss of identity through the severity of his illness, Jennings also vitally rediscovered a sense of self through his new medium; the simple act of making art a returning to a part of himself that had felt lost and inaccessible.

Dormant Tree is a collection of mementos, “pinpoints in a recovery timeline with a beginning but no end.” They are small plaques of colour that attempt to actualise Ajay’s experience of living with ME/CFS. They are depictions of his sister’s backyard through a window, or a ‘crash’ after climbing the stairs to the balcony. A tangible rendering of an invisible illness.



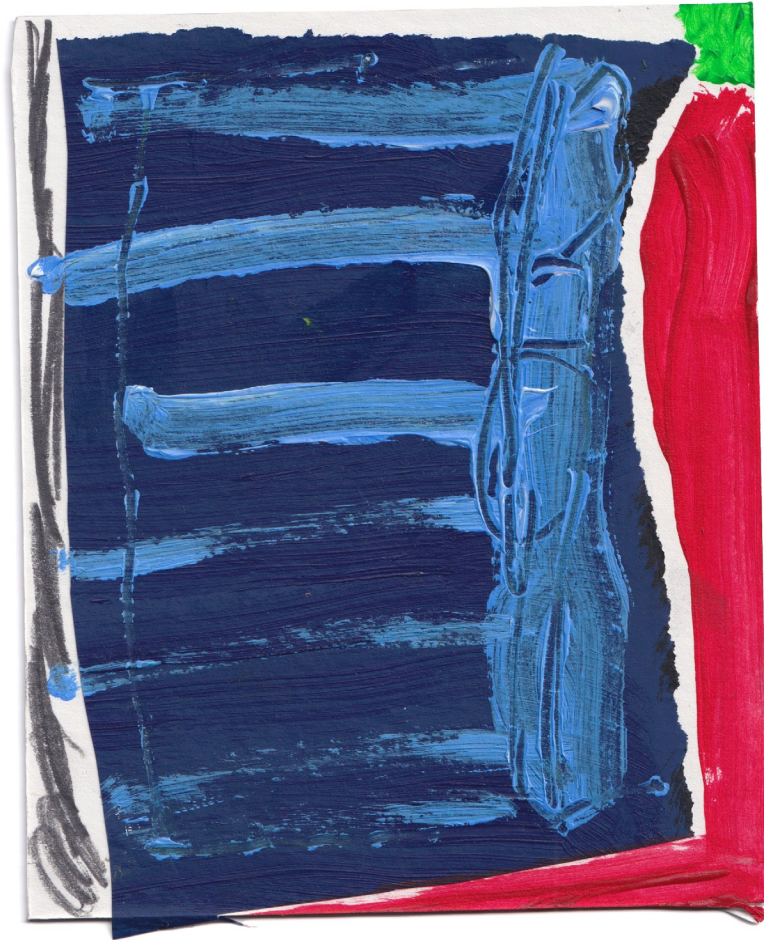
Through It All
2024
mixed media collage
29 x 21cm

\$150 AUD **SOLD**



Over Under
2024
mixed media collage
14 x 19cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**



Biding Time
2024
mixed media collage
18 x 15cm

\$120 AUD



Flare-up
2024
mixed media collage
19 x 14cm

\$120 AUD

Dormancy in trees is the time at which the tree is alive but not actively growing.



Vicarious Living
2024
mixed media collage
17 x 19cm

\$120 AUD



Energy Taken At Night
2024
mixed media collage
18 x 15cm

\$120 AUD



Impaired Vision
2024
mixed media collage
29 x 22cm

\$150 AUD



Foreign Sensations
2024
mixed media collage
19 x 16cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**



Broken Body
2024
mixed media collage
15 x 19cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**

'Burden', the sheer weight of the word makes me shriek inside — for I am every part a burden to those I love as my body is to my own. But I do not give up on my body.



Peaks & Valleys
2024
mixed media collage
12 x 20cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**



Open
2024
mixed media collage
21 x 20cm

\$140 AUD



Second Life
2024
mixed media collage
20 x 16cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**



FREE
2024
mixed media collage
21 x 15cm
\$120 AUD



Room With A View
2024
mixed media collage
16 x 19cm

\$120 AUD



Further Along
2024
mixed media collage
20 x 18cm

\$120 AUD **SOLD**

I will get better. I am getting better. I've gotten better once before. Everyone is behind you.



Harmony
2024
mixed media collage
30 x 21cm

\$150 AUD **SOLD**



Tanjengong
2024
mixed media collage
10 x 15cm
\$100 AUD



Solemn Dirge
2024
mixed media collage
29 x 21cm

\$150 AUD **SOLD**



SLOW DOWN
2024
mixed media collage
29 x 21cm

\$150 AUD **SOLD**

Dormant Tree is a new and ongoing project by Ajay Jennings that uses digital platforms to share the experience of living with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS).

Exhibition text by Michael Kruger

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