

## Level 2 and 3 Artist Model Research: How to find key information in text

Look at this example by clicking on the link and following the information below:

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2022/11/rithika-merchant-mixed-media-works/>

- Pick out key words that relate to the headings:  
CONCEPT (Which country is the artist from? What is/are the Themes, Ideas and Influences of the artist and how do we see these in their work?)  
COMPOSITION (Symbolism, Subject matter and Art Elements and Principles) and  
TECHNIQUES (Processes in art making, materials, methods)
- Read the Title of the article

### Through Mystical **Mixed-Media Narratives**, Artist Rithika Merchant Explores **Intrinsic Connection**

- Start to collect relevant information written in own words under the headings of your essay by using a:
- **Thesaurus** to find similar words. A thesaurus presents words as "word families," listing their synonyms without explaining their meanings or usage
- **Dictionary** to further understand what words mean if you do not know. A dictionary is a collection of words along with their meaning, definition and description of usage.

CONCEPT:

**Narratives:** Storytelling, tales, accounts, storylines (Thesaurus/synonyms)

**Intrinsic Connection:** Relationship with others, being with people (Dictionary)

Key words:

**Literary:** Writings (Thesaurus/Synonyms)

**Mythical:** Folk tales (Dictionary)

**Visual:** Painterly (Thesaurus)

**References:** Alludes to (Dictionary)

COMPOSITION:

**Small details:** Detailed

**Muted:** Soft, subdued (the colour palette you will explore in the drawing standard)

**Subject matter:** **Landscapes**, **Mythical hybrid creatures**, **Foliage** (ideas to start collecting your own subject matter)

**Art Element:** **Pattern** (ideas in your drawing compositions)

#### TECHNIQUES:

**Mixed-Media:** Gouache, watercolour (the materials give you ideas for what to use in the drawing standard)

Fold paper

**Layering translucent pigments:** Glazing

“I’m drawn to works that are rich in symbolism and also have a strong element of storytelling,” says Rithika Merchant. “I love seeing the artist’s hand in the work—I have a huge appreciation for **small details** and works that draw from a multitude of **references**—**literary**, **mythical**, and **visual**.”

Keep reading the text:

The **Mumbai**-born artist manifests these same qualities in her practice, creating works that expertly translate concepts and themes through her own idiosyncratic allusions.

Google search: where is Mumbai?: **Her work draws on her Southwest Indian heritage seen in...**

Beginning with hours of study, research, and reading on an eclectic array of topics, Merchant tends to hone in on an image that she sketches onto sheets of paper, sometimes folded into generous rectangles or triangles. She then paints in **gouache** and subtle, **muted** washes of **watercolor**, (**NOTE: American spelling**) **layering translucent pigments** atop inked **renderings of landscapes, mythical hybrid creatures, and patterns of foliage**. (Techniques).

Sometimes in the text, key words pop out that indicate that it is relevant information.

E.g.

**Influences:** CONCEPT info

**Symbols:** COMPOSITION info

**Concept: Art Movement:** look out for ism on the end of words and search them up. In this case it's 17<sup>th</sup> century botanical drawings, Kalamkari prints, Mughal paintings, and Kalighat folk art.

Use google to search up what it is about by reading information from other websites and look at images by artists.

When you research in depth, you also can extend your understanding about your own work.

e.g.



- Help extend your subject matter through your research for further ideas and starting points for the drawing standard and compositional developments for folio.
- While you research information about the artist and their work, also start to collect images of their drawings (Painting, Sculpture, Photography)

**Tip:** Also, it is helpful to find the answer to: What type of Painter are they? Sculptor are they? Photographer are they?

- Try typing in a variety of google searches  
E.g. What are 17<sup>th</sup> Century Botanical Drawings?

Click on a variety of websites from the search to extend your understanding:

<https://www.botanicalartandartists.com/history.html>

e.g.

- Often you need to click on links within those sites to find key information like:

Studies of plants, natural colour, flora is often stylised, detailed botanical drawings

- Scroll down and read information and you'll find that it was a movement that originated in Italy in the 15<sup>th</sup> century that later spread throughout Europe.

While Merchant's **influences** are broad—they range from the specific like **17th-century botanical drawings, Kalamkari prints, Mughal paintings, and Kalighat folk art** to the general like **religious iconography** and **narrative tapestries**—they emerge as a distinct visual lexicon. The artist often gravitates toward **symbols** that **transcend cultural or geographical boundaries**, choosing to incorporate **human anatomy, celestial objects, and botanical elements**. Although universal, these images are married to language in Merchant's mind and in service of an **individual narrative**. **"I also have a notebook in which I make lots of written notes and diagrams, but I almost never make sketches or studies of things. I sketch more with words than images,"** the artist shares.

- Ask yourself the question:

How do we see these influences in the artist's work?