

Kayleen Dolan '26

Project Title: *Undine: A Visual Narrative*

Major(s): Graphic Design & Studio Art

Hometown: Avoca, PA

Faculty Advisor: Jenny Kowalski

My work explores storytelling through versatile approaches, ranging from traditional drawing and painting to digital illustration and graphic narratives. Through these posters, I present a narrative series that retells the story of *Undine* by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué through the visual language of Art Nouveau. Inspired by artists such as Alphonse Mucha, I use flowing linework, ornamental framing, flattened space, and symbolic motifs to translate the story's emotional arc into a sequence of large-scale, illustrative posters.

This project merges fine art and graphic design, treating each poster as both a standalone composition and a narrative fragment within a larger sequence. Rather than illustrating the text literally, I focus on atmosphere, gesture, and recurring symbols to evoke Undine's longing for a soul, her transformation through love, and the inevitability of tragedy. The repetition of these motifs creates visual continuity across the series, guiding the viewer through the narrative without reliance on extensive text. While Art Nouveau is historically associated with romanticism, mythology, and decorative unity, I use it not as a period style to replicate, but as a flexible visual system to reinterpret. By simplifying and structuring its ornamental elements through contemporary design principles, I adapt the style to function in a modern context. In doing so, Art Nouveau becomes a bridge not just through its historical position, but through its transformation into a present-day language for storytelling. This approach allows me to reintroduce *Undine* to modern audiences while demonstrating how illustration and design can expand the possibilities of literary adaptation and sustain the enduring power of narrative.