

# ROLLING THE DICE WITH CANCER

*Limited print run catalogue*



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## Limited art prints for sale

Rolling the Dice with Cancer" Exhibition. The Cottage, Hazelhurst Gallery, Gymea 18-21 October 2024. Artist Becky Louise.

Becky Louise has decided to release a limited print run of all of the images in this booklet, excluding Rolling the Dice (right) and Love Never Ending, 2024 (p34).

**A percentage of all art sales will be used to support Southern Cancer Care in continuing the Art Therapy that Becky Louise has started.**

All images printed in CMYK on archival paper, signed by the Artist and will be posted to you with an accompanying story and a certificate of authenticity.

**First image - \$500**

**Additional images in the same order ( max 5) - \$250 each**

If you are interested in purchasing any of the images, please contact Becky Louise directly [beckylouiseart@gmail.com](mailto:beckylouiseart@gmail.com).

Event concept SCC and delivered in partnership with Tynan Motors.

Proudly sponsored by Sutherland Council, Hazelhurst Gallery and Tradies Gymea.



NOT FOR SALE



## Hippo Hope, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Cancer had made its cruel way to Nat's brain. As the team at the Mater Brisbane prepared Nat for brain irradiation she was desperate to have someone sit with her and explain exactly what was about to happen to her. We leaned on Julia, our dear friend to explain the treatment from the heart.

Julia not only supported and explained the treatment with detail; face mask, positioning, side effect, positives and negatives of treatment, she gave Nat the Hope story.

Nat used her story of hope to help her survive this new curve ball.

Knautschke – was the famous hippopotamus – born in 1943 at the Berlin Zoo and survived the bombs of the Second World War. Knautschke became a symbol of hope for the war torn people of Berlin.





## Knitting Nude, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Knitting and crochet passed the long time between treatment, appointments, 22/24 hours sleeping, recovery and the ticking of a thousand clocks. I drew this on reflection of a long two month stretch in Brisbane. It was hot hot hot and I found myself too scared to leave Nat's side, so I'd often knit in my undies. Each stitch and colour was my constant wish that this pain would end and My Nat would return.





## Rubber Gloved Pain, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Pain became Nat's life. I captured this pose while Nat was sitting for a breath following her many attempts to be normal. She was rubber gloved, cleaning her castle which she loved to do. I drew her in this element, to show the pain of the carer watching their loved one surrendering to their unwelcomed and increasing disabilities.



## Tangled in buttons, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Hope is really all you have on a cancer journey. In Nat's case we relied on hope. "Buttons fix everything". I drew this drawing to visualise myself fixing her, if only I could hold her tighter and entangle her in my colourful buttons, I could fix her.



## Glasses to see, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

It didn't matter what pair of bright coloured glasses I wore during cancer, my lenses were blurred.

During the journey, Nat escaped from me once, in a busy shopping mall in Brisbane, to choose a new pair of glasses for us both. As I watched her peddling her wheelchair through the crowd of people, I was able to allow myself to cry from joy as I watch my strong Nat chance and chase her independence and embrace what abilities she has left.





## Organ by organ, 2024

**Becky Louise**  
Mix media

I drew this after Nat had departed. I wanted to express or explain how I saw what cancer did to Nat and me. The drawing expressed what I watched Nat having to give up and her loss. The sword and walking stick represents her strength and defeat. The organs represent her loss, the effects of cancer and loss of functions. Within 18 months Nat's sarcoma cancer had metastasized to her lungs, spine and brain. The Cancer affected her heart, bowel and bladder function, it made her unable to walk and took her sight away. Meanwhile I continued to try to draw her back to Nat, with deepest sadness and pain.



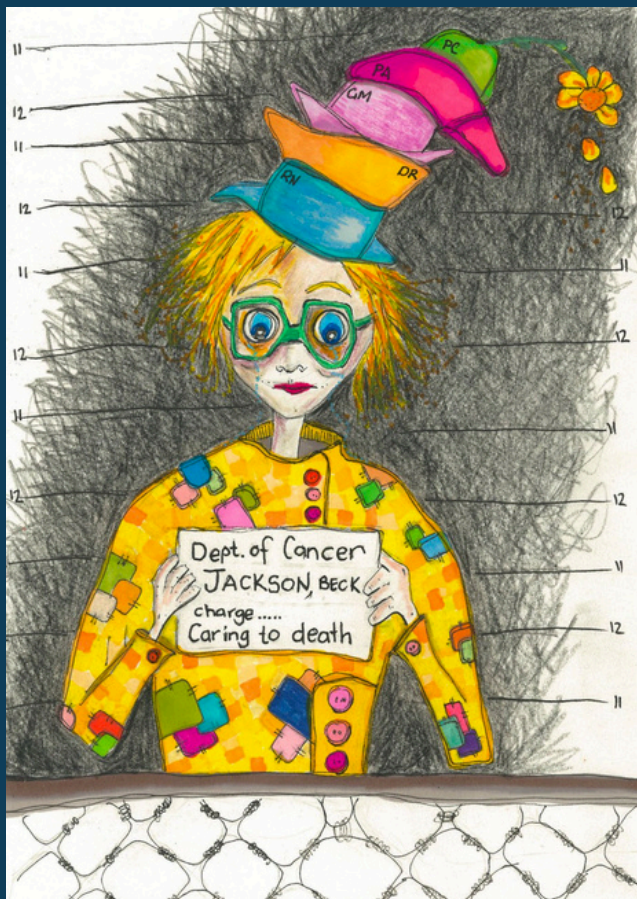
## Joined to carry cancer, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Gracie Mae came into our lives to support Nat. Sadly in 2022 we lost our beloved Ruby Rose to a stomach tumor. "I can't do this cancer thing, without a dog Becky Louise, and you will need a dog when this is done with me". We decided to find new life, joy and friendly unconditional support. "I want a golden retriever or Labrador, and I will name her Gracie Mae." I found a golden retriever - labrador cross and when Nat seen her photo, she said "that is my Gracie Mae".

As a young pup Gracie Mae was joined to Nat, never left her side day or night. Nat received her wish "I want to die at home in my bed with my girl and my dog by my side".



## Caps of Caring, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this drawing after Nat had departed. It was within my emptiness that I reflected on the many hats that a carer must wear. I've stated in the drawing that my charge is 'care to death' for I soon realised that I lost and failed, and that was my crime. That to care for a loved one during cancer, is the hardest learning module you'll ever apply to, and there is nothing for your achievements or the role you played, only a death certificate.





## Cancer Cancelled, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Cancer takes over and takes away, everything that is important to you. I drew this self portrait to depict my loss, shock and devastation. Cancer successfully turned our wedding day into day one palliation. Nat and I were to be married on the 11/01 Nat departed at 12:25 on the 12/01/24.



## Knitting you in, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this drawing during a long stretch in Brisbane. Knitting helped me to distract my thoughts and pass the time of the long days, weeks and months. I always visualised myself fixing Nat and protecting her.



## The R's of Cancer, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

There was a moment in late September 2022, when I realised that my life was never to be the same. This drawing brings all my R's to the face. Realisation, resilience, reflection, respect, rage, responsibility and regrets.





## Chemo 3, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Chemotherapy slowly strips away the core of you and the carer. I drew this image while supporting Nat in the Brisbane Mater Icon Cancer Clinic. The room was soaked in chemicals, tubes and Nat's infectious smile.



## Many Hands, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Pencil drawing

During cancer there are many hands. My hands and many others are responsible for caring for patients living to survive cancer. I drew this drawing during a very lonely stretch on the oncology ward with Nat. I had never seen Nat so still and physically disabled and welcome to people being hands on and helping her.



## Fear and Hope, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I soon realised that to be a carer/loved one to a cancer patient, there is so much to balance. The biggest one was fear and hope. From diagnosis day, I was balancing my biggest fears and I carried Nat with hope every day.

I drew this image one night after Nat departed to express the balance of a carer. My ticking clock in my head had been smashed, the lenses in my eyes were worn out, our missed opportunity to celebrate our love through marriage remains a reminder of the balance, and my many buttons didn't fix my beautiful Nat. The two coffee cups always represented my strength for Nat and to keep things as normal as possible. I hoped to keep us together and that Nat's honest goodwill for others would fight her cancer, and I feared that I was going to lose Nat.





## Hour Glass Timed, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Water colour and Ink

Cancer taught me that we never truly know when our time is up or how long we are together. I drew this to represent that while our life was amazing we couldn't see that we were always on the same page living an amazing life together but we were walking with a different timeline.



## Two faced, 2024

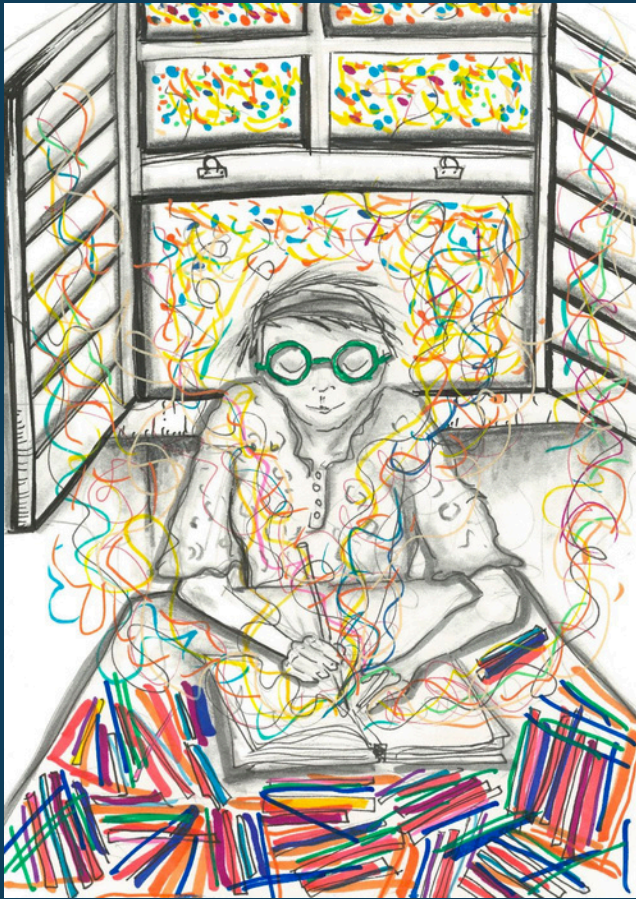
**Becky Louise**

Mix media

During the end of our time together. Nat became even more private. Nat called the shots and made the rules that paved the pathway for her departure. While I promised to respectfully grant all her wishes and instructions, it was never easy. Nat knew we were on limited time and she wanted to share that with a small selection of people and her dog. I was like a tea bag, the longer and deeper I sunk into the hot water of cancer, the stronger I become. I drew this self portrait of my true two faced self. I was confident, resilient and soaked in courage, while my smile and positive energy shadowed how lost, lonely, exhausted and terrified I was, of drowning.







## Drawing away my fears, 2022

**Becky Louise**  
Pantone pen

I was not scared of death, but I feared losing Nat, and imagining my life with out my best friend. This drawing expressed the importance of my art during the cancer treatment. It supported my fears and stabilised my mental health, while providing Nat and I a focal point of conversation that was not about cancer. So I drew and I drew, every day and during every lonely, heart aching and devastating thought of my life without her. I just kept drawing to taking my pain away.



## Nat's Windows, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Cancer and caring for cancer either increases or decreases your windows. In Nat's case, she decreased her windows. Nat knew she had little time and embraced having control of her time. This drawing represents a cancer patient's choices and how they navigate and control their time and people at the end of their lives.



## Visiting hours in Heaven, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

One night, I sat on the phone feeling sorry for myself, talking to Mrs Sullivan (my foster mum). As she supported me, we talked about where our loved ones go and how they're still with us. Mrs Sullivan told me a story about "if only Heaven had visiting hours". As she talked, I drew and cried deeply for my Nat.





## Three Faced, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Cancer changes everything. I knew the three faces of Nat, as courageous, fragile and exhausted. Not one day was the same, I sometimes saw all three faces in one day.



## Thank God I was there, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Pantone pen

Cancer pain is the curse of cancer and becomes a patient's life. You can't avoid pain management and the side effects of opioids. Early one morning an elderly neighbour fell in the street. I ran across the road to find another neighbour and a crane truck driver, who had stopped to help the situation.

With help, I returned my neighbour safely home. I returned home to find Nat on the veranda with the ceiling fan remote in her hand (that she thought was her mobile phone) shouting 'should I call an ambulance'. I helped her back to bed. When she woke that late afternoon, she asked, "Is Sue ok?". I said, "Yes". Nat then said, "thank god the crane driver was there to lift Sue onto my handlebars, so I could ride her home on my bike".



## Loving, Trusting and Kindness, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Nat and I survived every challenge. The stigma of same-sex relationships raising two children, nursing through covid, floods and bushfires. Nat and I were givers so I honestly thought that our loving, trusting and kind nature would cure Nat of cancer. Only to learn that cancer is cruel, not biased and will break you down with it's treatments, symptoms and curve balls all at one time.





## Acceptance, 2023

**Becky Louise**  
Pencil drawing

Nat's cancer got to a point where she knew and she accepted her fate. I drew this drawing in the Mater Hospital moments after she was informed that there was not much more that could be done for her metastatic cancer. I watch Nat face her fate with honourable resilience and strength. In the emptiness of the room, she looked at me and said "Oh my Becky Louise you must be so scared". I held Nat and said "Not for one second". We sat in our honest embraced silence and she fell to sleep with a smile on her face. It was then that I drew her, with my thirsty pencils and tears of my supportive lie, for I had never been so scared in my life.



## I can handle this, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I found myself in a fog of self pity in the beauty of Tenterfield. We were home from another round of hospital life in Brisbane and I had to prepare for the next curve ball. I drew this drawing late one night on reflection of my quick town dash to purchase new accessories for our home that would support Nat's new and developing disabilities. After purchasing hand rails from the hardware and welcoming the lovely men explaining how I was to install them, I found myself walking into Stonefruit cafe/bar and purchasing a bottle of anything to help me through the new challenge ahead of me.



## Fentanyl Poddy Calves, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this fun sketch following one of Nat's many episodes of fentanyl delusions.

Nat could sleep 22/24 hours. One morning I arrived at the hospital, to find her sound asleep and pain free. When she awoke to find me waiting with cold coffee, she said "Becky Louise, do you still want to purchase some poddy calves", when I said "of course I do darling, why?". Nat replied "Great, cause they're on sale at Bunnings for \$2.50 a kilo". Nat drifted off to sleep and I drank both coffees and drew her beautiful sweet innocent dream of her baby cows.





## Faced with the unknown. 2022

**Becky Louise**  
Mix media

I can honestly say that it doesn't matter how much written material of glossy brochures or a medical background you have, nothing truly prepares you for cancer. I thought I had all the right tools in my tool belt to pull off this cancer journey. I drew this drawing in the very early days of Nat's cancer diagnosis. I honestly had it planned, structured and pathed in my head and heart that "I've got this".

"Lucky" we would often say. Many people questioned us with this statement. Nat and I always felt LUCKY during cancer. We were lucky to have found love and each other. We were lucky that we were realists, trained and experienced nurses, knowing what was going to happen next. We felt lucky that we were well supported and cared for by her oncology team. We were lucky that a perfect stranger gifted us an apartment across the road from the Mater Private Hospital, to lessen the burden of eighteen months of interstate travel and needing to find accommodation. We were lucky that we moved to Tenterfield to live a short time of dreams, to heal and grieve. We were lucky that our family and friends provided us with support, comfort and respect. We were lucky that we met Julia, who became our ROCK, my new partner in cancer crime and made Nat's wish come true - that her cancer will be seen through art.



## Weeping faces, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this weeping portrait of us to represent that we were so beautiful and strong as a team during cancer, but underneath we were both weeping with fear.



## Tremble Tumbles, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

The cancer made its way to Nat's brain. Game changer. I knew before any scan or Nat could realise. This feeling was soul destroying for me. I drew this drawing after a long day of silent sorrow and realisation that cancer is so cruel. Nat had lost everything and then cancer took her ability to hold and enjoy a tasty drink.



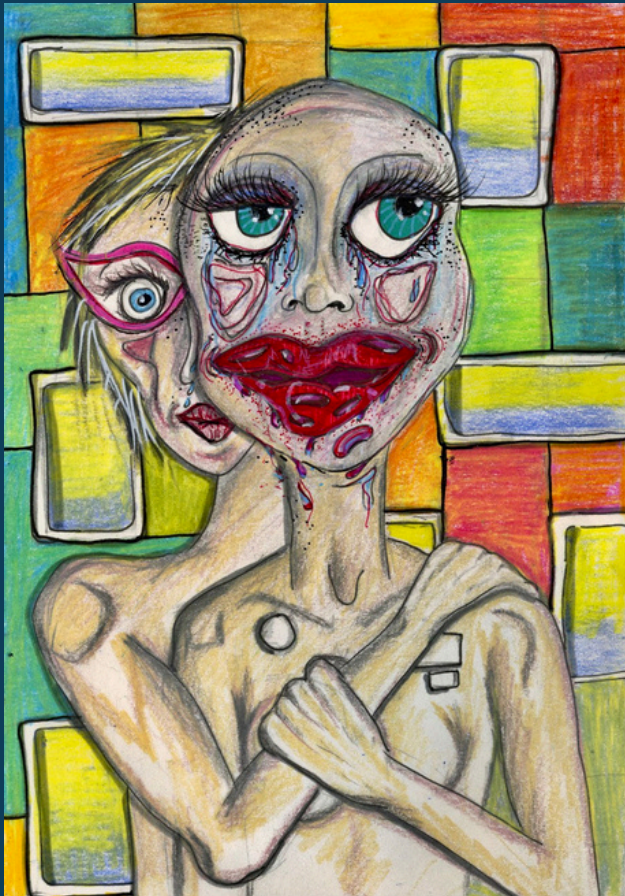


## Faced with Buttons, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this self-portrait to represent that I could not find the right button to fix her.



## Mouth Ulcers, 2023

**Becky Louise**  
Mix media

Cancer treatment kills the good and the bad. I drew this image after a week in Brisbane, where I watched Nat's beauty and strength taken away by mouth ulcers. Within a week she lost 7 kilos and her ability to eat, laugh and talk was taken.



## Love Never Ending, 2024

**Becky Louise**

Pen media

All Nat's wishes were respected and granted. Nat proposed marriage in the most intimate manner. We were on another round of radiation at the Mater Brisbane. We were sitting in the pre-treatment area together wrapped in a hot blanket. Nat turned to me and said "Becky Louise, I wish to ask you something. I am fully aware that I am sitting here in a hospital gown that is so not my style, in an incontinence pull-up and high on Fentanyl, but will you marry me?" I replied 'Of course I will to which Nat relied 'Great, I can leave you to organise it'!

Nat's wish was organised and the women in the image were gathered to support our very private ceremony at home. Sadly, the day before our ceremony, Nat suffered another seizure and did not rally as she usually did. As the women arrived, they soon learnt that our scheduled ceremony of love was to be changed to Nat's other wish – to be provided with a dignified departure surrounded by love and laughter at home with her girl and her dog.

**NOT FOR SALE**





## Listening to Time, 2023

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

Nat and I would always make our way to New Farm to dine at the New Farm Deli. At one of our dinings, I captured a photo of her that expressed her joy of people watching. I later drew the drawing to express our many last suppers. The drawing brought to surface our honest time that while we both privately knew was becoming smaller, was always quality. While Nat and I knew that our time was running out and that's why we could hear it ticking, we never lost a second and were grateful for every second.

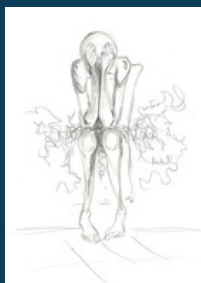
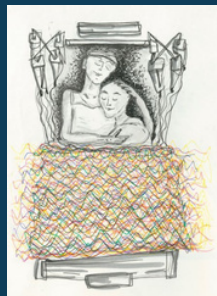
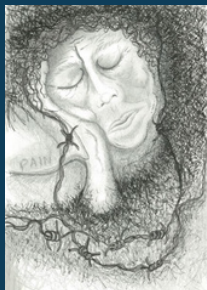
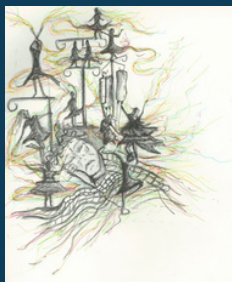


## Chemo, 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mix media

I drew this drawing while watching the many amazing hands of the Oncology team pumping Nat full of chemicals to keep her alive.

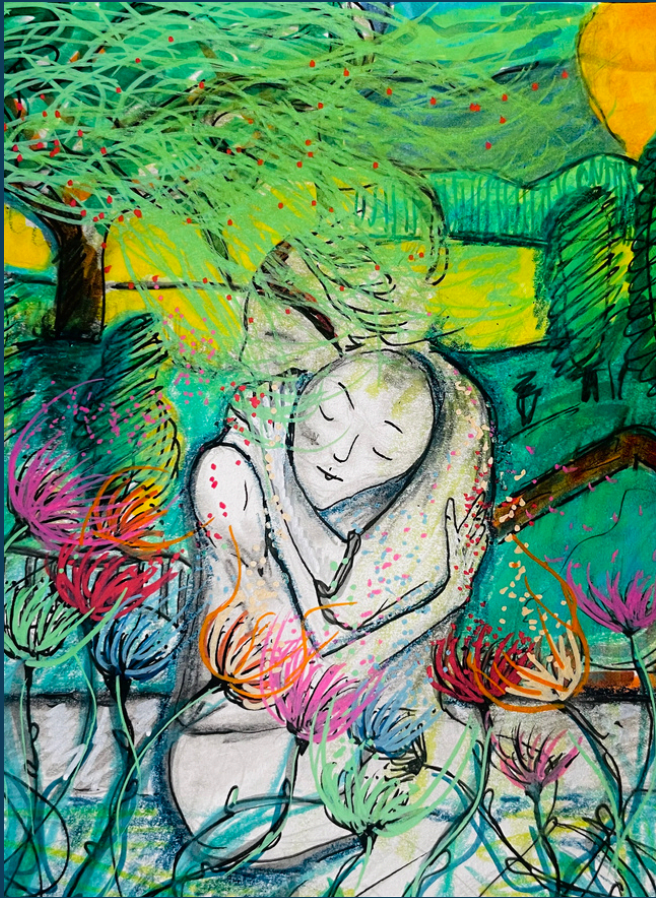


## Images of Hospital, 2022

**Becky Louise**  
Six pencil drawings

I drew these during the early hospital admissions of cancer treatment.





## 'I'll never leave you' 2022

**Becky Louise**

Mixed medium

Cancer draws you close and makes you one. I drew this to express, while cancer destroys everything that you have built together, it could never break us. This drawing captures our long stretches in Brisbane, away from our home, where I never once left Nat's side physically or emotionally.



## Contact us

Southern Cancer Care is a not-for-profit organisation advocating and fundraising for the projects inspired by the cancer care centres within our St George and Sutherland community.

Thank you for your support.

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