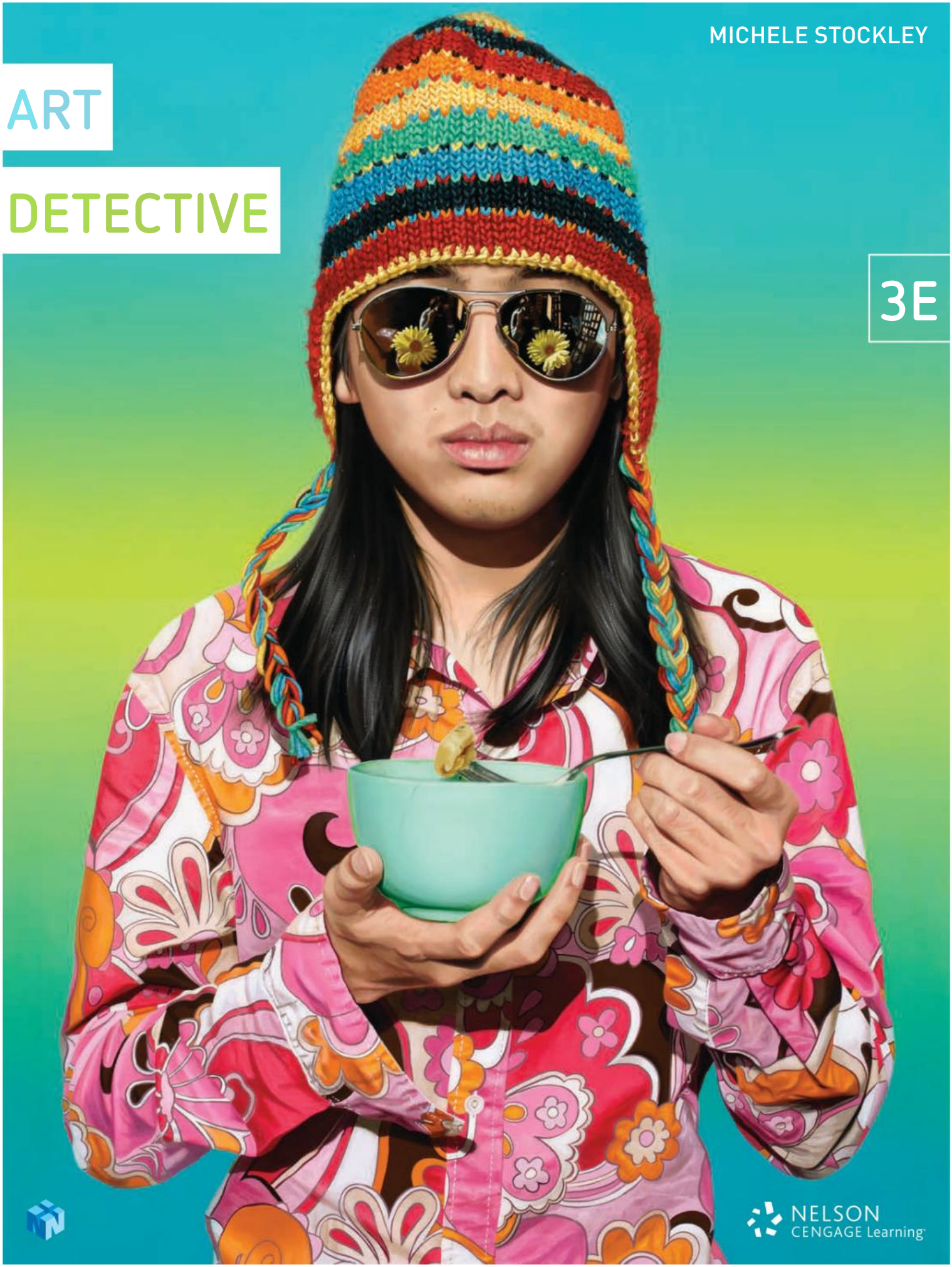
MICHELE STOCKLEY

ART DETECTIVE

3E



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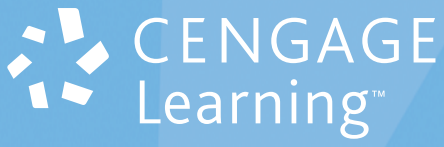

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3E

ART DETECTIVE

MICHELE STOCKLEY

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Art Detective
3rd Edition
Michele Stockley

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CONTENTS

Chapter 4

Subjects and themes

Chapter 5

Styles and ideas

ABOUT *ART DETECTIVE THIRD EDITION*

Art Detective Third Edition builds on the outstanding qualities of the first two editions. It has been rewritten to include new learning activities, new images and new topics, especially in areas relevant to Indigenous Australian art and Asian art.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The Victorian Curriculum

Art Detective Third Edition has been designed and written to specifically support student learning related to:

- the strands and achievement standards in The Arts (Visual Arts) learning area of the Victorian Curriculum
- the strands and achievement standards for capabilities in the Victorian Curriculum (critical and creative thinking, ethical, intercultural, personal and social)
- cross-curriculum priorities in the Victorian Curriculum (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, sustainability).

Links to content descriptions and achievement standards for Levels 7 and 8 are identified online; however, *Art Detective Third Edition* equally supports student learning for Levels 9 and 10.

Selected content and activities in *Art Detective Third Edition* also support student learning related to selected strands and achievement standards in other learning areas, including English and the Humanities. A copy of the Victorian curriculum grid is available on the *Art Detective Third Edition* teacher website.

The Australian Curriculum

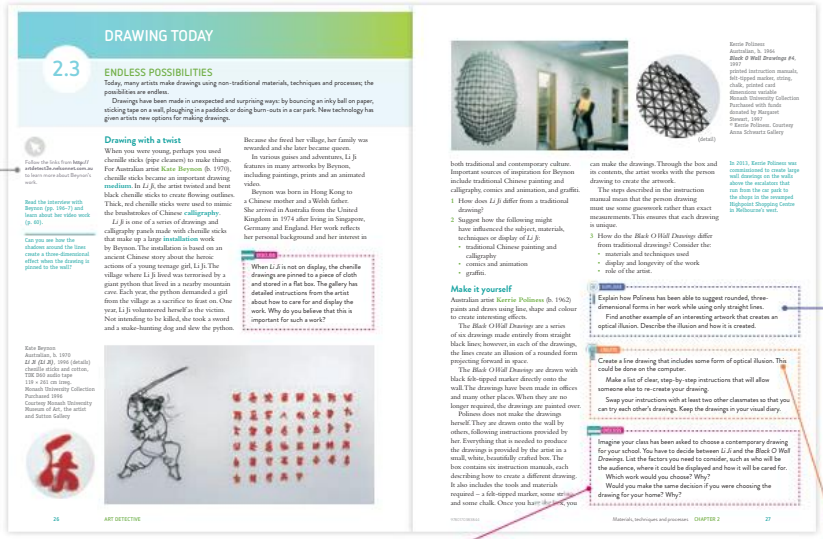
Art Detective Third Edition is also strongly aligned with the content descriptions and achievement standards for The Arts (Visual Arts), and with the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in the Australian Curriculum.

FEATURES

Each chapter in *Art Detective Third Edition* is broken into clearly defined double-page units that scaffold and support student learning.

Each unit focuses on an idea that is related to the chapter theme. Clusters of units about particular themes provide opportunities to explore ideas and to consider different points of view.

Each unit includes numbered questions that encourage students to question and explore the ideas and artworks discussed in the text.



Explore activities encourage students to extend their understanding of the ideas or artworks discussed in the text by analysing and interpreting art examples, and by showing their findings as a written, oral or graphic presentation. These activities may require some additional research.

Discuss activities promote thought and debate about the philosophical issues and ideas raised in the text and shown in the reproduced artworks. They encourage students to think critically and creatively, and to reflect on their own and others' ideas and beliefs.

Create activities are practical activities that encourage students to make their own two-, three- and four-dimensional art using the ideas and skills discussed in the text. The tasks include ICT, individual and collaborative activities. Create activities require the use of art-room materials and may require some further research. Some activities specify a particular medium; however, they can generally be adapted to suit other media.

Weblinks to relevant online resources are provided throughout the text.

GLOSSARY

A glossary of art words and phrases used in this text is provided at the end of the book (p. 224). Many terms are also explained within the text. Glossary terms for each unit are highlighted in bold blue font.

Students are encouraged to use both the index and the glossary when researching art vocabulary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michele Stockley, author of the first and second editions of *Art Detective* and *Art Investigator*, has taught art across Years 7–12 in secondary school and as a museum educator in public art galleries. Michele has extensive experience presenting professional development programs for art teachers and working with students across a range of levels.

Photo: Newspix/Liam Kidston

Olafur Eliasson
Danish, b. 1967
The Cubic Structural Evolution Project, 2004
white LEGO bricks (various sizes), wood, mirror
dimensions variable
Installation view at Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2010
Courtesy of Queensland Art Gallery, South Brisbane, Australia

1

EXPLORE ART

As an art detective, you will discover that questions and ideas arise as you investigate art. Many of these questions will relate to artworks, artists and audiences, which all play an important role in the art world.

Ideas about art can be challenging, and questions about art often have no absolute answers.

Although artworks, artists and audiences are discussed separately in this chapter, in reality, there are strong relationships among them. Understanding these relationships is part of the work of an art detective.

As you explore different aspects of the art world and investigate more artworks, you will form your own opinions and ideas and ask questions about art. That is part of the fun and challenge of being an art detective.

This chapter provides starting points to help you explore the art world.

Learn about:

- artworks, artists, audiences and how they relate to each other
- starting points, tools and words for exploring art
- processes and ideas in art, including how artists use visual diaries and drawing.

Learn by:

- thinking about questions related to art, artists, audiences and their relationships
- considering viewpoints for exploring artworks
- discovering tools for organising thinking and learning in art.

ABOUT ARTWORKS

1.1 THINKING ABOUT ARTWORKS

What comes to mind when you think of an artwork?

Perhaps it will be a sculpture such as *Discobolus*, made in Greece more than 2000 years ago (p. 184), or a painting such as *River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli* by French artist Claude Lorrain (p. 28)? These types of paintings and sculptures have been widely admired and collected in **western art** for hundreds of years, so it is not surprising that such artworks often come to mind when you think about art. Indeed, a painting in a gold frame is sometimes used as a sign or symbol for art.

Art can take many forms

Although what first comes to mind when people think of art is often a painting or sculpture, artworks vary greatly in form, purpose and presentation.

You see this when you compare the traditional **landscape** painting by Claude (p. 28) with *Red Earth* by Andy Goldsworthy (p. 56), an **ephemeral** site-specific artwork made in and of the landscape. Comparisons with other works inspired by the landscape – including *Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight* (p. 121), a Chinese scroll painting from around the same time as Claude's painting, and the *Women's Native Title Painting* (p. 118), a collaborative artwork made by the Spinifex people of the Great Victoria Desert, Western Australia – also illustrate the fact that art can take many different forms.

Kuncan
Chinese, 1612–c. 1674
Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight, 1660 (detail)
ink and pigments on paper
207.2 × 97.6 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of Westpac Banking Corporation, Founder Benefactor, 1978
(AS7-1978)

Claude Lorrain
French, c. 1604/05–1682
River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli, c. 1635 (detail)
oil on canvas
38 × 53 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1967 (1796–5)

Culture and society shape art

Culture and society shape the visual arts. They influence why art is made, what it is made from, how it is made, who it is made for, and how and where it is displayed. Every culture and society has ideas, values and beliefs, and these influence the visual arts.

Art has been created and valued by artists and audiences for many reasons, including to:

- describe or commemorate places, people, events, experiences and objects
- communicate, explore, preserve or challenge ideas, history, beliefs and traditions
- express cultural, national or personal identity
- express feelings and emotions
- explore the imagination and subconscious, including the world of fantasy and dreams
- communicate abstract qualities such as power, beauty, serenity and gloom
- provoke a reaction
- influence opinion
- tell stories.

Tradition, convention and change

How art is made and presented is influenced by social and cultural conventions. The visual arts are rich in tradition, but they are also constantly transforming, making them dynamic and exciting.

Cultural conventions can include visual language, such as how art elements and principles are used and interpreted. For example, different cultures have different conventions associated with the representation of space (pp. 96–9) and the symbolic meaning of colour (pp. 70–1).

The type of art that is made is also influenced by the society in which it is made. For example, traditionally, Chinese artists and audiences have favoured calligraphic ink painting, whereas European artists and audiences have favoured oil paintings on canvas.

While many conventions endure for long periods and continue today, ideas about art can evolve and change over time. For example, many Australian Indigenous artists have adapted conventional forms of cultural expression, such as ceremonial body painting and rock painting, to create artworks in new forms, such as acrylic paint on canvas.

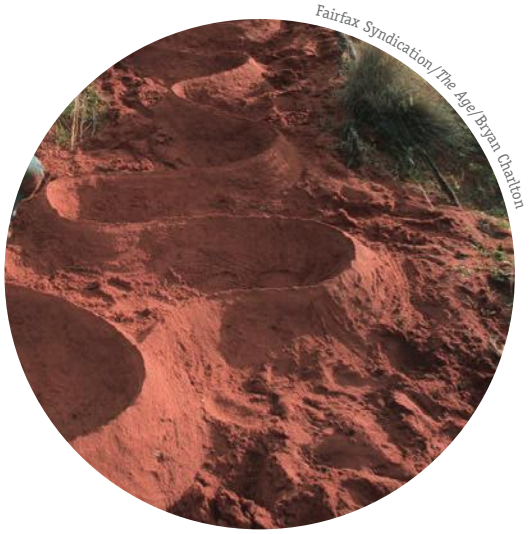
Contemporary art and art exhibitions now frequently reflect global influences.

Art can be anywhere

Throughout history, artworks have been made for and displayed in many locations, including temples, churches, palaces, private homes and public buildings. The idea of displaying art in public galleries is a convention that developed in Europe in the eighteenth century, but it has had an enduring effect on how people experience art.

Contemporary artforms such as **performance art**, **installations**, street art and **land art** challenge many of the conventions associated with the display of art. Often, such artworks exist only for a limited time, although a photographic or video record of them may remain.

Knowing something about the original context in which an artwork was displayed can help your understanding of an artwork.



Fairfax Syndication/The Age/Bryan Charlton

Andy Goldsworthy
English, b. 1956
Red Earth, 1991 (detail)

Art can be anything

In **western art**, ideas about art, including what it could be made from and how it could be presented, changed dramatically in the twentieth century.

Artists associated with the development of **modern art** in the early twentieth century approached traditional artforms, such as painting and sculpture, in new ways. Some artists started to work with unconventional materials, including **found objects**. In the second half of the twentieth century, emerging artforms such as performance art and installations blurred the boundaries between the visual arts and other arts, such as theatre. Materials, techniques and subjects were borrowed from traditional crafts and popular culture, which had not previously been highly valued in the visual arts. Today, artists use almost anything to make art, from industrial products to body fluids (p. 208).

Visual arts practice is dynamic

While people often think of art as something to look at, some new forms of art immerse audiences in environments or experiences that require them to do more than just look. Some art requires you to use other senses, such as hearing or touch. Artworks such as *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* by Olafur Eliasson (p. 62) need you to help create them. *Geology* (p. 61), by David Haines and Joyce Hinterding, shows how technology has opened up new artistic possibilities.

1. Select an artwork in this book that you find easy to define as art. List three reasons why this artwork is obviously art.
2. Select an artwork in this book that you know nothing or little about but you feel is difficult to define as art.
   - List three reasons why you feel it is difficult to define it as art.
   - Read the text about the work you chose. Does the explanation change your opinion of the work? Why?
   - Compare your chosen artwork with those chosen by others in the class. Have others chosen similar or different examples? What does this reveal about ideas about art?

ABOUT ARTISTS

1.2 MAKERS AND CREATORS

Artists are people who make art, but what else do you know about artists?

Photo: Terry Owen

John Brack in his studio in February 1977 as he completes ***Nude on Shag Rug*** (1976–77)
© Helen Brack

To find out more about the working life of artists today, read pp. 190–1, 194–7.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read the stories of contemporary Australian artists on the website of the National Association for the Visual Arts.

Many artists, many paths

There are many different paths to becoming an artist. In some societies, including in many Indigenous cultures, artists learn under the mentorship of senior artists.

Ron Mueck's parents were toymakers, and he created models for television and film before taking up art (pp. 172–3). Reko Rennie became an artist after working as a journalist (p. 81). He says, 'I realised that in art I had more power than I ever did as a journalist.'[1]

Artists come from every type of cultural, social and educational background.

What is the role of artists?

In some historical periods, artists have been skilled **artisans** who crafted products for others, such as the artists who produced art for the tombs of ancient China (p. 48). In some cultures, including Indigenous Australian cultures, artists play a significant role in communicating and preserving cultural knowledge (pp. 22–3, 146–7).

In western cultures, artists have often been seen as people with special talents and insights, and as creators of new and original images and forms; however, many contemporary artists choose to rework existing images and forms (pp. 170–1).

While many artists have made artworks that celebrate aspects of their society, artists also have a long history of criticising the values, history, people and institutions of society (pp. 156–61).

Some artists offer insights into imaginary worlds and create visions of the future (pp. 166–7).

Throughout history, the work of artists has also often been widely valued for its beauty and the skill required for its creation.

What is art practice?

When artists talk about their **art practice**, they are referring to everything involved in how they make art: how and where they work, what their art is about, who they work with and how they present their work.

Research is an important part of most artists' work. It may involve visiting and studying places, observing and collecting things, and learning more about ideas, issues and the work of other artists.

Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images

Chinese Emperor Qianlong with a writing brush at his desk

Courtesy of Louise Allerton

Artists from the Women's Collaborative at Tjintirkara

© Cameron Robbins

Cameron Robbins and his wind drawing machine at Queenscliff pier

Many artists keep visual diaries in which they record thoughts, plans and images that inspire them. Trialling and refining ideas is an important aspect of art practice (pp. 12, 16–17). Some projects require extensive planning and development, including preliminary drawings, models and experiments.

The art practices of some artists, including many Indigenous Australian artists, are often based on the cultural knowledge and understanding acquired over a lifetime.

Where do artists work?

Artists' work environments are determined by their personal circumstances, their interests and the society or culture in which they live and work.

Historically in China, artists were scholars who worked in studies that were designed as quiet, contemplative spaces. They were surrounded by carefully selected objects that provided moral and philosophical inspiration for **calligraphy**, painting and poetry.

Historically in Europe, master artists worked in busy **studios**, aided by assistants, apprentices and students who mixed paint, prepared canvases and worked on paintings under the master's supervision.

Today, some artists work at home in part of their living space. (Many artworks have been made on kitchen tables!) Many artists work in studios surrounded by equipment, materials and sources of inspiration, such as objects, books and images. Some artists, such as Marc Quinn (p. 208), have large studios and employees who help them produce artworks or manage administrative tasks.

Artists who work with specialist technology or materials sometimes work in industrial sites or laboratories.

Some artists create work on location. This includes artists who create **performance art** or **site-specific installations**, as well as many artists who make work inspired by the natural environment, such as Cameron Robbins (pp. 17, 163). Working outdoors is common in Australian Indigenous communities, as seen in the photograph of artists from the Women's Collaborative at Tjintirkara.

Working with others

Although many artists work alone in a studio, an artist's practice usually involves working with others. Artists who share common interests may also share ideas, work closely with each other or exhibit together.

Some artists choose to work collaboratively with other artists or specialists. **Collaboration** involves all participants working together equally to plan and create an artwork, such as in the work produced by the Spinifex artists (pp. 118–19).

Artists do not just make art

The business of being an artist involves more than just making art. It can involve applying for grants, organising materials and equipment, and doing a range of tasks associated with exhibiting, promoting and selling artwork, including working with **curators** and art dealers.

Artists are also often expected to comment on their work in interviews or artists' statements, and they are expected to participate in public events, such as exhibition openings and talks. Some artists choose to make such activities an important part of their work; others prefer their interests to be represented by dealers or other art professionals.

A whole industry revolves around the work of artists.

1 Think of an artist who interests you. Imagine you are a journalist, and write a letter to the editor of a magazine proposing an article about the artist.
   - Explain why you think your chosen artist would make an interesting subject for an article.
   - List four questions you would like to ask the artist.
2 What roles do you think artists have in contemporary society?
3 Look at the photographs of the artists at work on these pages. What does each photograph reveal to you about each artist's practice?

Fairfax Syndication/*SMH*/James Hopwood

Grace Cossington Smith

ART AND AUDIENCES

1.3 THE ART OF CONNECTION AND EXPERIENCE

Making and experiencing art are closely connected. Artists make artworks to communicate ideas to audiences.

Getty Images/AFP/Torsten Blackwood

Visitors viewing art in an art gallery

Photo: Newspix/Liam Kidston

Olafur Eliasson
Danish, b. 1967
The Cubic Structural Evolution Project, 2004
white LEGO bricks (various sizes), wood, mirror
dimensions variable
Installation view at Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2010
Courtesy of Queensland Art Gallery, South Brisbane, Australia

Points of connection

When you think of an art audience, what comes to mind? Do you think of people admiring art in a gallery? Perhaps you think of people looking at art in other places: in public buildings, on the streets or in private homes.

The audience for art includes everyone from art experts to people who look at an artwork because they happen to pass it on the way to school or work. Art is often a part of cultural or religious ceremonies.

The audience for art also includes the many people who see art **reproductions** in books, on posters or online.

A matter of opinion

Like any industry, the **art industry** includes experts whose opinions are highly valued and often influential. Apart from artists, art industry experts include **art critics**, **curators**, **art historians**, art writers and collectors.

Art experts gain their expertise by studying art, researching, working with artists and looking at a lot of art. They then share their knowledge with audiences via exhibitions, reviews, books, blogs and other forms of media.

Art is a form of communication and expression so, not surprisingly, many people

Dave Carpenter. Image: CartoonStock.com

"We better check first to see if that is trash or a piece of art."

obtain great pleasure and meaning from art without knowing the experts' opinions; however, expert opinions can improve your understanding of an artwork.

Expert opinions can be particularly helpful when you are examining artworks that use unfamiliar subject matter, visual language or conventions, including symbolism. For example, the symbolism and meaning of *Avalokitesvara* (p. 152) would be clearly understood by audiences familiar with Buddhism, but they might need to be explained to other audiences.

A matter of experience

Audiences find their own meaning in art. Everyone, including art experts, has their own ideas, beliefs and experiences that influence how they react to and interpret art. People's beliefs and experiences are influenced by factors such as age, gender and cultural, social, family and educational background.

People respond to artworks in different ways. The process is often unconscious, but it involves their senses, emotions and intellect.

- Senses respond to elements such as colours, textures or sounds in an artwork.
- An artwork might trigger emotions, feelings or personal associations.
- People use their intellect to think about the ideas an artist is trying to communicate.

Depending on the artwork, the audience and the context, some of these responses may be more important than others.

Chris Madden. Image: CartoonStock.com

The curse that afflicts abstract painting

Layers of meaning

The artist's intended meaning may be just one of many ideas associated with an artwork. Part of the role of an art detective is to discover different meanings and to evaluate their significance.

Sometimes artworks accumulate layers of meaning over time. The history of an artwork can add to what audiences know about the artist's intentions and affect how an artwork is perceived. The theft of Picasso's *Weeping Woman* (p. 212) added to the stories and history associated with the painting.

Many contemporary artists make artworks that acknowledge that the meaning of an artwork can vary from viewer to viewer. Some artists encourage the audience to find their own personal meaning in a work. They sometimes do this by including layers of images or elements that can communicate different meanings to different people. In this way, they evoke a personal response from viewers.

Some artists involve audiences in the making of the work; for example, Olafur Eliasson's *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* depends on audience participation (p. 62). Some artists, including Peter Booth (pp. 140–1), deliberately avoid giving titles to their artworks to leave the meaning open for interpretation.

1 Look at the two photographs and two cartoons on these pages. Identify two ideas that each image illustrates about art audiences and how they react to and form opinions about art.

2 Think of an artwork in a public place, perhaps a sculpture or a mural. It could even be an artwork in your school or a major gallery.
   - Describe the work and the location.
   - List at least two different groups of people who may be part of the artwork's audience.
   - Do you believe that both groups would understand the artwork in the same way? Why?

3 Find an artwork that you feel strongly about.
   - What personal meaning does the artwork have for you?
   - What is it about the work that encourages your strong response?

VIEWPOINTS

1.4 PERSPECTIVES FOR MAKING AND INTERPRETING ART

When making and interpreting art, it can be useful to consider different viewpoints.

Viewpoints

Four useful viewpoints for exploring art are the cultural, personal, formal and contemporary. Each viewpoint offers a different perspective for learning about art, artists and audiences, and the relationships between them.

Viewpoints are useful tools for exploring and understanding the different approaches that:

- artists (including you) take when making artworks
- audiences (including you, art critics and other commentators) take when looking at artworks.

A cultural viewpoint

A cultural viewpoint considers how culture, including social, religious and political beliefs, influences art. Culture can affect what the artwork is about, what it is made from, how it is made and how it is displayed and viewed.

Exploring art from a cultural viewpoint may include asking:

- Where was it made, when was it made and who made it?
- How has the culture of the time, place and artist influenced what the artwork is about, how it was made or why it was made?
- Who was the intended audience for the artwork?
- How is the display of the artwork influenced by culture?
- How might the audience's cultural background influence their reaction to the artwork?

Units 4.19 and 4.20 focus on artworks where a personal viewpoint is important.

Units 5.1–5.5 focus on artworks where a cultural viewpoint is important.

A personal viewpoint

A personal viewpoint considers how personal experiences or inner worlds – such as dreams, imagination, memories, feelings and the subconscious – influence art. An artist's personal viewpoint affects what an artwork is made from, how it is made and often how it is displayed.

Exploring art from a personal viewpoint may include asking:

- Who made it?
- How did the personal experiences and inner world of the artist influence what the artwork is about, how it was made, why it was made and how it is displayed?
- Who was the intended audience? Who is the current audience? How may the personal perspectives of different audiences influence how the work is understood?
- If someone other than the artist designed the display of the artwork, what personal perspectives have influenced its display?

Tibeto-Chinese
Avalokitesvara, 17th–18th century (detail)
gilt-bronze, semi-precious stones, pigment
115.0 × 72.5 × 45.4 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1966 (1485–D5)

The Art Archive/Nasjonal Galleriet Oslo

Edvard Munch
Norwegian, 1863–1944
The Scream, 1893 (detail)

A formal viewpoint

A **formal** viewpoint considers the structure or form of an artwork. The structure of an artwork is made up of **art elements** (colour, shape, line, tone, form and texture), **design principles** (harmony, balance and variety), materials and techniques (such as painting, photography, drawing, new media and **found objects**). Artists use art elements, art principles, materials and techniques as a visual language to communicate ideas.

Exploring art from a formal viewpoint may include asking:

- What art elements, art principles, materials and techniques were used to make or display the work?
- How were they used?
- What ideas are suggested by the use of art elements, art principles, materials and techniques?

Melinda Harper
Australian, b. 1965
Untitled, 2000 (detail)
oil on canvas
183.0 × 152.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by Robert Gould, Founder Benefactor, 2004 (2004.358)

A contemporary viewpoint

A contemporary viewpoint involves considering how current practices or ideas influence art, including what it is made from, and how it is made, displayed and viewed.

A knowledge of current art practices (such as participatory art, digital technology and **appropriation**) and ideas (such as **feminism** and globalisation) can be useful for understanding both the art of today and art from the past. For example, an understanding of feminism can provide an interesting perspective when studying how women were depicted in historical artworks.

Exploring art from a contemporary viewpoint may include asking:

- Have contemporary practices been used in the making or displaying of the work? If so, what ideas or meanings are suggested by these practices?
- Have contemporary ideas influenced the artist's choice of subject and intended meaning? If so, how?
- Do contemporary ideas influence the way the artwork is viewed by audiences?

Anne Zahalka
Australian, b. 1957
The Sunbather No. 2, 1989 (detail)
C-type photograph (edition of 20)
76 × 76 cm (image area)
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Which viewpoint?

It is possible to consider all four viewpoints when investigating art; however, one or two viewpoints will often be enough to give a good understanding of an artwork.

Depending on the artist and the artwork, some viewpoints are more relevant than others. For example, for many artists, including Australian Indigenous artists, cultural identity and expression are an important part of art-making. Exploring their artworks from a cultural viewpoint will provide valuable insights. Other artists may create work inspired by their dreams and imagination. Focusing on a personal viewpoint will therefore reveal important information about their artworks.

Choosing the most appropriate viewpoints for exploring an artwork is part of an art detective's skill.

1. Find out more about the artworks shown on these pages. Why do you think each image has been linked with one viewpoint?
2. Choose any artwork from this book. Write a few paragraphs about it, focusing on your own personal viewpoint. How does the artwork link to your experiences, inner worlds, feelings and memories? Then, choose one other viewpoint to write about.

Units 3.15 and 5.16 focus on artworks where a formal viewpoint is important.

Units 4.8 and 5.8 are some of the many in this book that focus on artworks where a contemporary viewpoint is important.

1.5 VISUAL THINKING AND RECORDING

Most artworks you see are finished works, but behind every artwork is a process.

The process of creating art typically includes researching, developing, refining, trialling, realising and evaluating ideas. Visual diaries play an important role in the creative process of many artists.

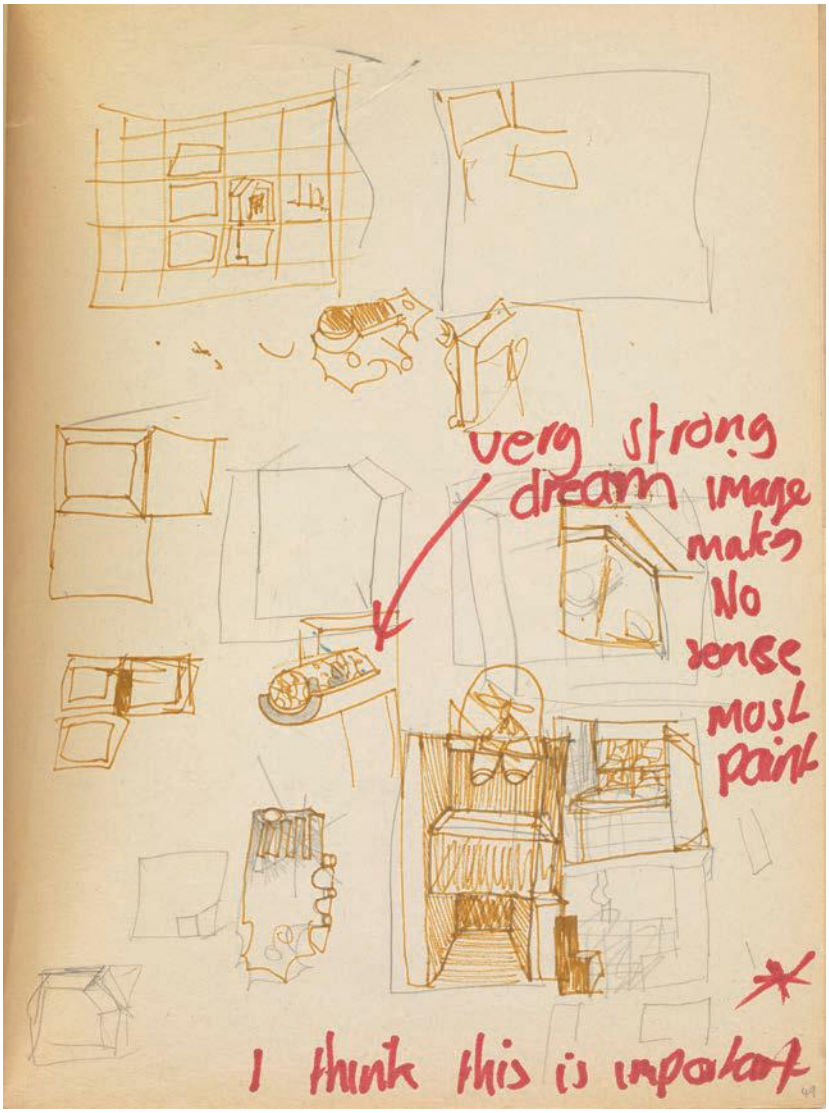
Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to an online catalogue of Arkley's work, including his visual diaries and sketchbooks.

Visual diaries

Artists use visual diaries to collect sources of inspiration, to experiment with ideas, materials and techniques and to plan artworks and their display.

Visual diaries can be bought from art-supply stores, but artists use many different types of books, including sketchbooks, notebooks and exercise books as visual diaries. A visual diary can also be a folio, a collection of images and notes, or even a digital file.

Visual diaries are also often called other names, such as visual journals, workbooks or process diaries.



State Library of Victoria, Howard Arkley collection

Each artist's visual diary will be unique because it will reflect the personal interests and processes of that artist. A glimpse inside the visual diaries of artists reveals a valuable resource for art-making.

An artist at work – Howard Arkley

The 48 visual diaries, notebooks and sketchbooks of Australian artist **Howard Arkley** (1951–1999) provide a fascinating insight into his art practice and processes.

The visual diaries include:

- collections of clippings and images
- doodles, sketches and planning drawings
- notes about art, artists, exhibitions and books and articles that Arkley had read
- ideas for new works and exhibitions
- ideas for titles for new works.

Arkley drew constantly on almost any convenient surface. He sketched on newspapers and magazines as well as in his notebooks. Arkley sometimes referred to notes and images in his visual diaries years after they were made.

The page pictured here from *Sketchbook No. 9* reveals his process of visual thinking. Notice how the artist has added annotations to his sketches to better capture his ideas, which here include an image from a dream.

The other image from Arkley's diaries includes clippings he collected from department store brochures. This page was collected as inspiration for a number of artworks Arkley made of suburban interiors in the 1980s, including *Suburban Interior* (p. 135). Can you see how the artist used them?

Howard Arkley
Australian, 1951–1999
Sketchbook No. 9 (early 1970s?)
Olympic school project scrapbook with orange/black cover (early 1970s?)
65 unruled pages, 34.7 × 24.5 cm

An artist at work – you

A visual diary is a useful tool for exploring and recording your own ideas about art and art-making. As you add to your visual diary, it will become a valuable record of your ideas and artistic development. You can use a visual diary for:

- trying materials or techniques
- exploring approaches to making and presenting artworks
- collecting, recording and displaying ideas, images, articles and quotes that interest or inspire you
- recording your thoughts about artworks
- compiling lists of useful art words.

Many of the activities and questions in this book will encourage you to use your visual diary.

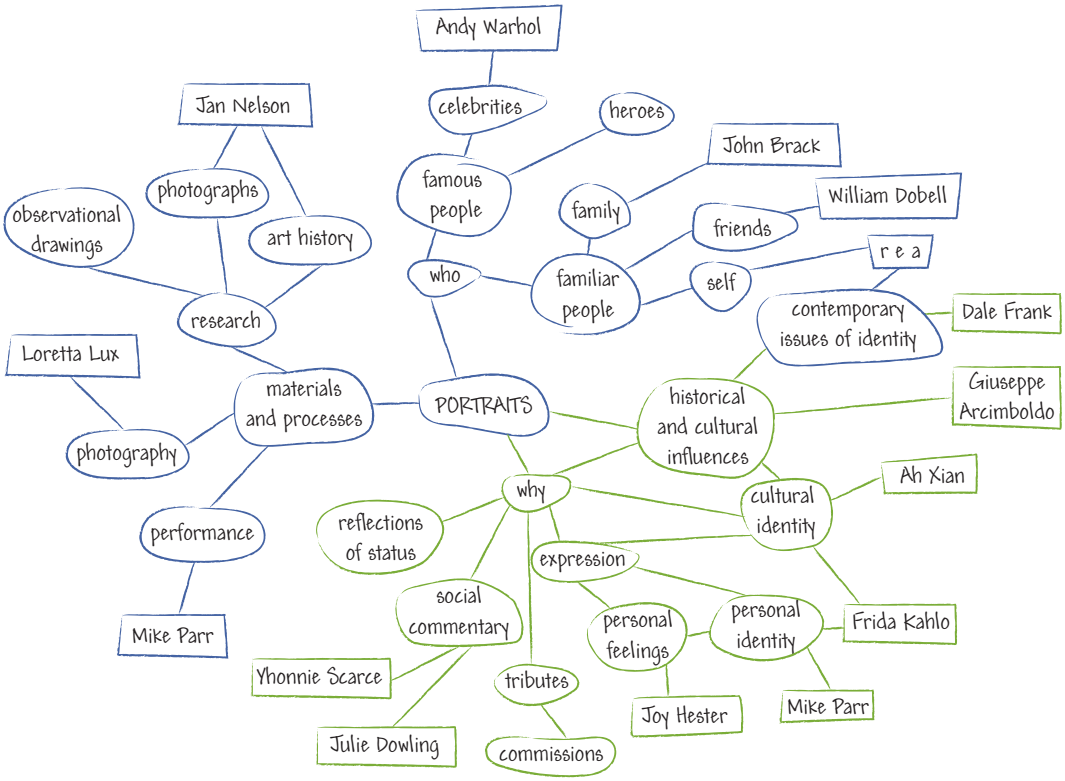
Your visual diary is a creative working space, not a finished work of art. It should be an ongoing collection of images and ideas that reflect your individual interests, thinking and experimenting.

Your visual diary does not just have to be about your current projects. Collect and record interesting ideas and images, making notes about what interests you. This will help you identify ideas you may be interested in exploring further in the future.

Howard Arkley
Australian, 1951–1999
Undated Sheet of Suburban Source Images (assembled 1983 or later)
John Gregory, *Carnival in Suburbia; The Art of Howard Arkley*, Cambridge University Press, 2006
© The Estate of Howard Arkley. Licensed by Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art

Mapping ideas

A mind map is a useful tool for exploring linked ideas on a theme. You can use mind maps when brainstorming ideas and themes in preparation for your own art-making, or when you are investigating the work of other artists.



A mind map can help you explore ideas.

EXPLORING PROCESSES AND IDEAS

1.6 RESEARCHING

Researching art involves finding and using sources of inspiration and information, including artworks.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to take virtual tours of some of the world's greatest galleries.

The art of research

Looking at art is an important form of research for art detectives. When you visit galleries, you not only see original art but also discover displays and exhibitions about art themes, ideas and styles (pp. 198–201). Major galleries have websites that tell you what is on. As well as exhibitions, many galleries offer a range of learning programs and activities, and many of them are free.

Visit your school library or local library to find art books, magazines and exhibition catalogues. These contain great reproductions of artworks and interesting information.

You can quickly find a wealth of images and information about almost any subject online. Make sure you use reliable sources, such as an artist's own website or the websites of well-known galleries, and always document where you find images and information.

As technology advances, the websites of major galleries are offering more and more resources, including videos. Some galleries have digital curating tools and functions that allow you to zoom in on images in amazing detail. Other galleries' websites offer virtual tours, which allow you to explore rooms of the gallery, see how the artwork is displayed and zoom in on artworks.

Image reproduced with permission

Betty Churcher
Australian, 1931–2015
Sketch in Response to Tiepolo's Banquet of Cleopatra
Betty Churcher, *Australian Notebooks*, The Miegunyah Press, University of Melbourne, 2014, p. 146

Annotated images

Annotated images are sketches or other images, such as copies of artworks, with notes that explain or point out the artwork's features. Annotated images are useful tools when planning your own artwork and when studying other artworks.

Betty Churcher, a former director of the National Gallery of Australia, found drawing sketches of other artworks useful because it forced her to slow down and really look at an artwork. She believed that by sketching she saw things she would not otherwise have noticed. Her drawings include annotations that draw attention to the features of artworks that she found interesting or significant. She travelled the world with her sketchbook and published several books of drawings and commentaries of artworks she admired, such as *The Banquet of Cleopatra* by Tiepolo (p. 97).

Word up

When you are looking for information, it is vital to identify the words about your subject that will help you direct your search. You can use these words to look up an index in a book or to search the Internet. The name of an artist or artwork is a good starting point for any search; however, you may also find useful information by researching the art period, movement or style of an artwork or artist.

The caption accompanying an artwork in a gallery or a book will give you many useful words to use as starting points for finding further information.

Also, an understanding of the following terms will be helpful when researching artworks and when completing questions and activities in this book.

Term	Meaning
Materials and media	What an artwork is made from. For example, Alec Mingelmanganu used earth pigments on canvas to create *Wanjina* (p. 147).
Techniques	How materials are used in an artwork. For example, Louise Weaver tightly crocheted yarn and added decorative embellishments to create *Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love)* (p. 53).
Art elements	The basic components of an artwork, including colour, line, shape, tone, form and texture. For example, in *November* by Lesley Dumbrell (p. 74) the brightly contrasting colours and zigzag lines are art elements.
Composition	The arrangement of art elements in an artwork that creates its complete design. For example, Melinda Harper used an idiosyncratic grid-like structure filled with a mosaic of brilliant colours in *Untitled* (2000) (p. 179).
Design principles	Concepts that explain the arrangement of art elements in a composition. These include balance, unity, variety, rhythm, focal point and space. For example, Tom Roberts used lighting and placed the shearer in the centre-front of the composition to create a focal point in *Shearing the Rams* (p. 150).
Subject or subject matter	What is literally represented or presented in an artwork. For example, the subject matter of *Still Life with Fruit* by Jan Davidsz. de Heem (p. 130) is an arrangement of fruit and luxury objects.
Aesthetic qualities	The elements of an artwork – the materials, art elements, design principles and subject matter – and how they work together to express ideas, feelings and other meanings. For example, the swirling waves of thick black line, heightened with blood red and deep green, create a feeling of an unsettled and disturbed world in *The Scream* by Edvard Munch (p. 138).
Meanings and ideas	What the subject matter and aesthetic qualities of an artwork communicate to audiences. For example, the decaying fruit in *Still Life with Fruit* by Jan Davidsz. de Heem (p. 130) suggests that beauty and life are transitory and fleeting.

1.7 REFINING AND PLANNING

Once artists have developed an idea, they often need to do significant amounts of trialling, refining and planning before the artwork is complete.

Many artists – including artists who work in artforms such as sculpture, installation and moving images – use drawings to develop and refine their ideas. The drawings can be as simple as a rapid sketch of an initial idea for a composition or as complex as a detailed study for a finished work.

Variations on a theme

Variations on the Theme of the Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra by **Giambattista Tiepolo** (1696–1770) is an early drawing for *The Banquet of Cleopatra* (p. 97). Can you recognise some of the figures, details and ideas that Tiepolo is trying out?

Tiepolo produced more than 2000 drawings in his lifetime. Most of his drawings were made as artworks in their own right; however, like many artists, Tiepolo made drawings in preparation for his paintings and kept albums of drawings in his **studio** for reference.

Giambattista Tiepolo
Italian, 1696–1770
Variations on the Theme of the Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra
The National Museum of Fine Arts. Stockholm

The National Museum of Fine Arts, Stockholm

Working out

Can you see what **Howard Arkley** (1951–1999) was 'working out' in this sketch for *Suburban Interior* (p. 135)? The lighter lines that cut through the drawing are a clue. Although they are drawn freehand, they are like the **orthogonal lines** used in mathematical perspective drawings to create an illusion of space and distance (p. 96).

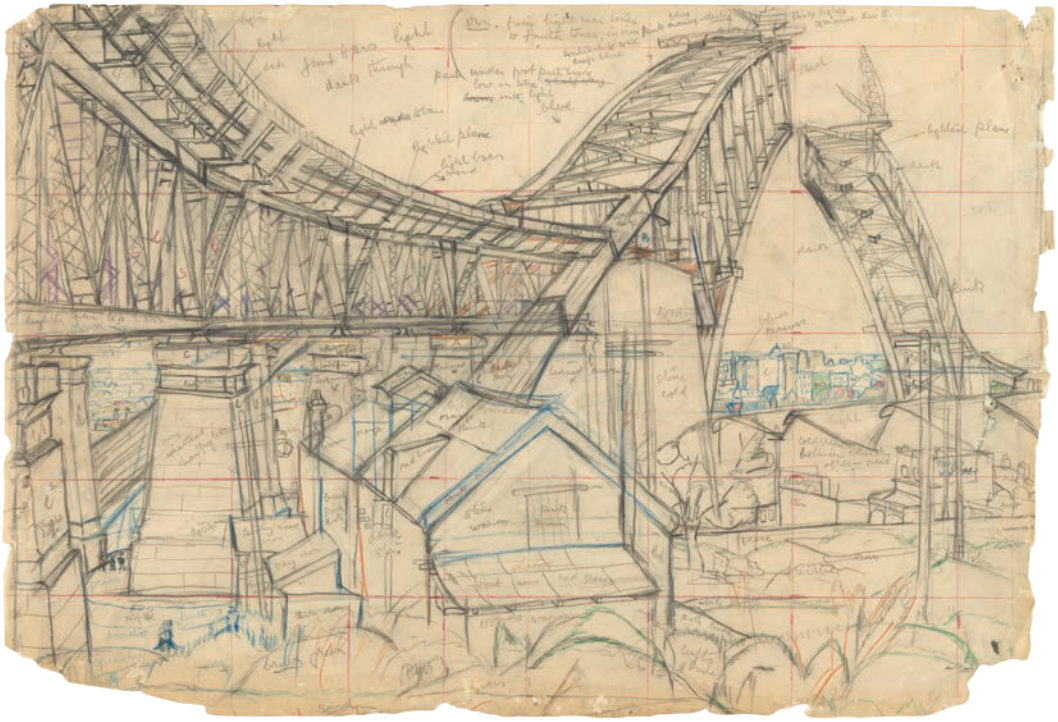
Black marker pens were a favourite drawing tool for Arkley, and you can see how he uses them boldly and confidently to outline the main features in the composition. In the finished painting, an airbrush was used to create similar bold outlines.

Comparing this image with the source material (p. 13) and the finished painting provides interesting insights into how *Suburban Interior* evolved.

Sketching from the environment

As it is for many artists, drawing was an important part of art and life for

Howard Arkley,
Australian, 1951–1999
Working Sketch for Suburban Interior, c. 1983



Grace Cossington Smith
Australian, 1892–1984
Study for the Bridge in-Curve, 1930
drawing in black pencil and colour pencils [recto]; drawing in black pencil, pastel, and colour pencil [verso]
(sheet) 37.2 × 55.8 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1976
Estate of Grace Cossington Smith

Grace Cossington Smith (1892–1984). The National Gallery of Australia has a collection of her sketchbooks, which are full of subjects drawn from her immediate environment, including family portraits, garden scenes and **still lifes**.

Cossington Smith made a number of drawings of the Sydney Harbour Bridge as it was being constructed. This drawing is a study for the painting *The Bridge in-Curve* (p. 95). The lines and forms reveal the strong structure and geometry that underpin the painting's composition.

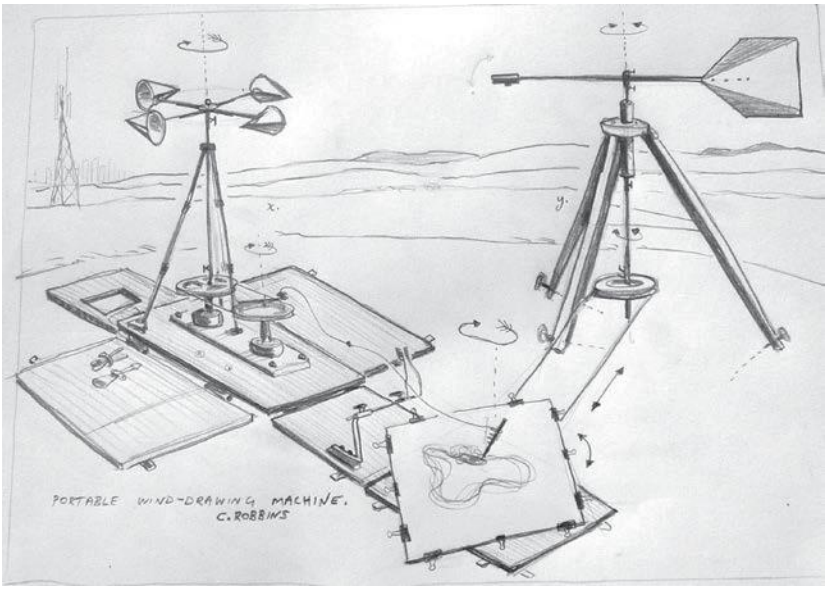
Can you see how the artist has also annotated the drawing with notes about her plans for colour and other effects? As seen in the final painting, colour played a vital role in Cossington Smith's work. The artist became interested in colour theory after reading a book by Beatrice Irwin, *New Science of Color*, which highlighted the emotional and spiritual power of colour.

Drawing machines

Cameron Robbins (b. 1963) creates drawings with nature by using wind-driven drawing machines (pp. 6, 163). He harnesses the energy of natural forces to make art.

The machines respond to wind speed and wind direction, and they allow the rain and sun to play on the drawings. The wind direction turns a swivelling drawing board that is connected to a wind vane, while the wind speed drives a pen on a wire arm around in a cyclical motion.

This sketch shows a portable wind drawing machine. Can you see how the drawing explains how the wind drawing machine works?



Cameron Robbins's sketch of his very slow drawing machine

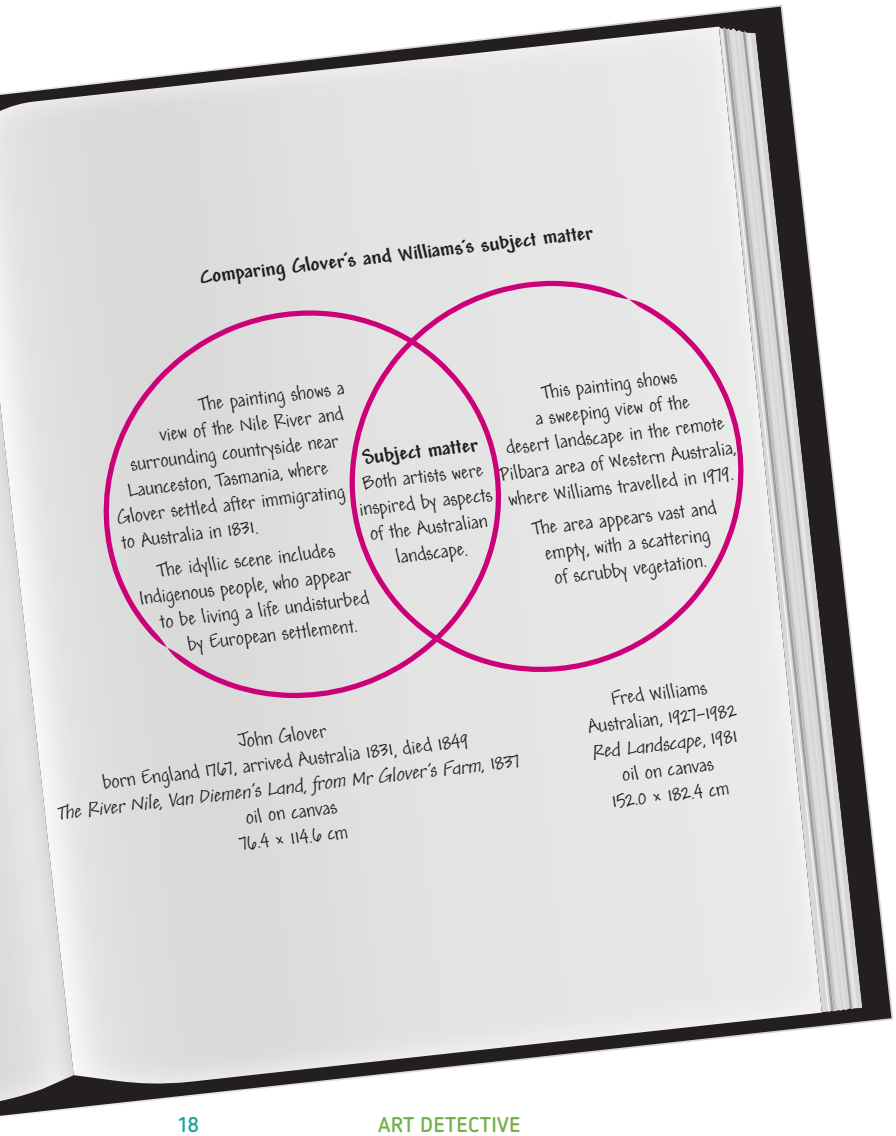
1.8 EXPRESSING AND ORGANISING IDEAS

Exploring art involves expressing and organising your ideas about art.

Express yourself

Every discipline you study has its own language and conventions for communicating ideas. You will discover many widely used art terms in the chapters and glossary of this book. As you investigate art, you will also complete activities and answer questions that require you to express your ideas about artworks.

- To **analyse** an artwork, you need to identify the artwork's features (its art elements, materials, techniques and subject matter) and consider how they relate to each other and contribute to the artwork's aesthetic qualities and meaning.
- To **discuss** artworks, you need to describe the artwork's features and explain any relevant facts, such as the context in which the artwork was made and the artist's working methods, ideas and intended meaning.
- To **interpret** an artwork, you give your opinion about what an artwork means or is trying to communicate. Your interpretation should be supported by evidence, including what you see in the artwork and what you have learnt about the artist and their art practice.
- To **compare** two artworks, you need to identify their similarities and differences. Graphic organisers such as Venn diagrams can be useful tools when comparing artworks.
- To **evaluate** an artwork, you make a judgement about the artwork's **aesthetic qualities**. This includes judging how effectively the artwork communicates the artist's intended meaning. A PMI chart is a useful tool for evaluating artworks.



Making it graphic

Graphic organisers are useful tools for presenting and organising information about your own artworks and the artworks of others. You may find them useful in your visual diary and when answering questions in this book.

Venn diagrams

Venn diagrams are useful tools for comparing artworks or features of artworks.

To create a Venn diagram, draw two overlapping circles. Label each circle with the title of an artwork. The similarities between the two things you are comparing are shown in the overlapping area, and the differences are shown in the areas that do not overlap.

PMI chart

A PMI (plus, minus, interesting) chart is an easy way to identify and evaluate what works well and not so well, and what is interesting and may warrant further investigation. You can use a PMI chart to evaluate the artworks or art issues you explore, or to reflect on your own artworks.

(detail)

PMI chart:
Ash Keating, West Park Proposition

Plus
Adds beauty and interest to an industrial landscape.
Expands art beyond the confines of a gallery.

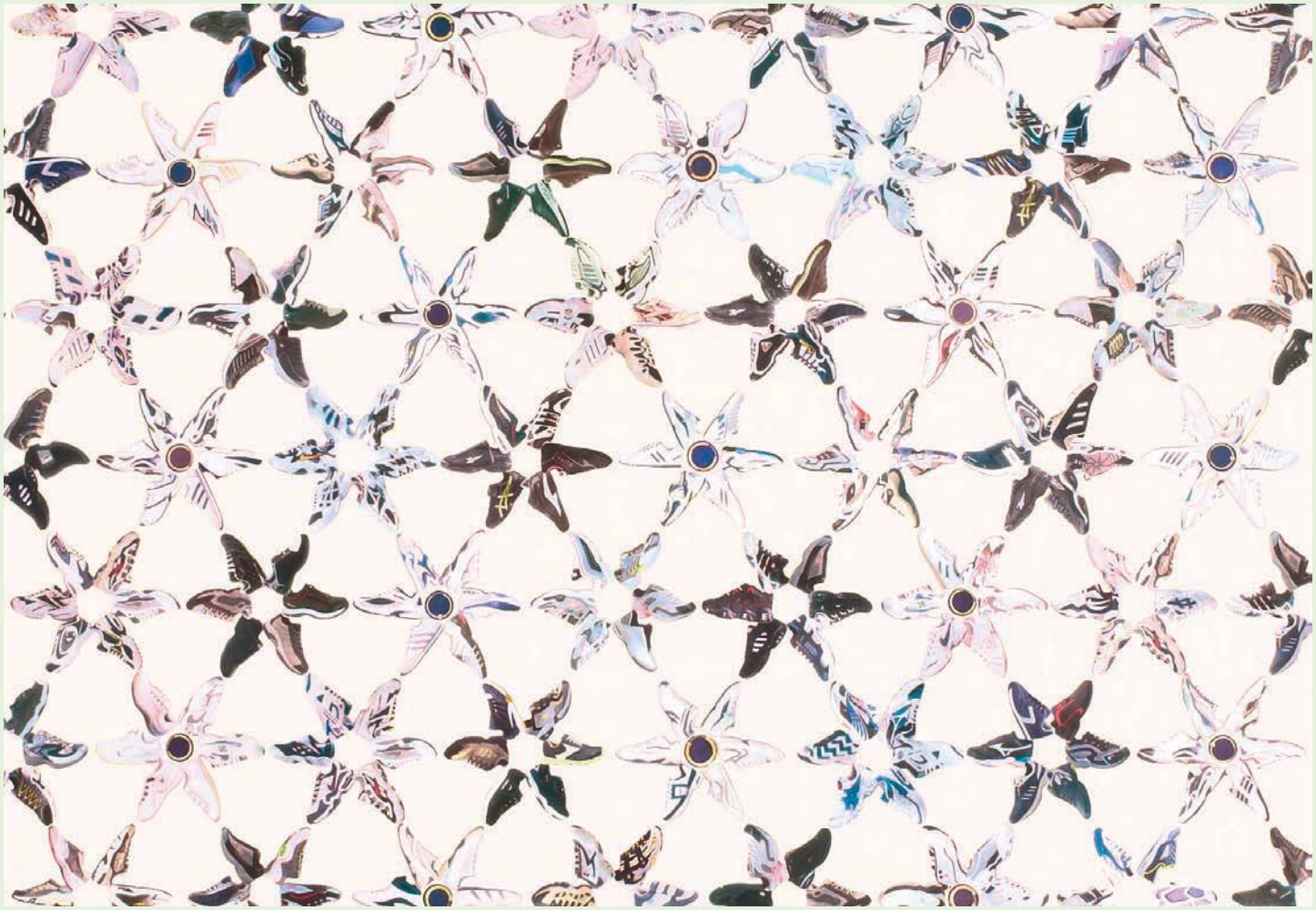
Minus
Only a limited number of people will see the work.
The work is vulnerable to damage.

Interesting
Links to street art.
The work was created using paint-filled fire hydrants.

Photo: by Greta Costello for Ash Keating

Ash Keating painting the ***West Park Proposition***, 2012
© Ash Keating.

Elizabeth Gower



Elizabeth Gower
Australian, b. 1952
Urban Artefacts (Runners), 2004 (detail)
paper on drafting film
180 × 100 cm

2

MATERIALS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCESSES

Art can take many forms. Some of the most familiar artforms are drawing, printmaking, painting and sculpture.

In the past, artists working in these and other artforms tended to use a limited range of materials, techniques and processes. For example, sculpture was often carved from wood or marble, cast in metal or modelled in clay.

In the twentieth century, new ideas and new technology dramatically changed the visual arts. Contemporary art is now made using an eclectic mix of materials, techniques and processes. Today, for example, sculptures can be made from anything – from found objects to human blood and tissue.

Traditional artforms have been transformed, and boundaries between artforms have been blurred. Art often incorporates materials and ideas from other sources, such as popular culture, the performing arts and politics. New artforms have emerged, including multimedia, performance and participatory art, and these affect how audiences experience art.

Artists use materials, techniques and processes to explore ideas and to convey meaning. When you study how an artist uses materials, techniques and processes, you discover many clues that help your understanding of an artwork.

Learn about:

- traditional and contemporary artforms, materials, techniques and processes
- how artists use these to explore ideas, express feelings and communicate experiences.

Learn by:

- comparing, analysing, evaluating, interpreting and reflecting on artworks from a range of cultural and historical contexts
- discussing and communicating ideas and opinions about art
- creating and displaying your own artworks.

MATERIAL CULTURE

2.1 SPIRITUAL AND SACRED

The materials, techniques and processes used in some artworks are a reflection of artists' cultural beliefs and traditions.

Arnhem Land

Yolngu society is divided into two kinship groups, the Dhuwa and the Yirritja. Each group is made up of a number of clans. One of the biggest Dhuwa clans is the Rirratjingu. Mathaman Marika became the head of the Rirratjingu clan, the highest position in Yolngu society, following the death of his brother, Mawalan Marika.

Yolngu artists have the right to depict certain stories and designs through ancestry and tradition. Some artists from each kinship group have the right to paint aspects of the Wawilak story.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Yolngu people and culture.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Australia's bark painting masters.

The Yolngu people

The land in the Northern Territory bordered by the Kakadu National Park, the Arafura Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria is known as Arnhem Land. The Yolngu people have lived in the area for at least 60 000 years.

Sacred stories and designs

The stories of their spirit ancestors play an important role in the cultural life and beliefs of the Yolngu. During the creation period, which the Yolngu refer to as *wangarr* time, the spirit ancestors travelled across Arnhem Land and created the landscape, plants, animals and people. They gave the land its geographical features, such as waterholes, and they also gave the people laws, ceremonies, songs, and sacred objects and designs. Today, the essence of the spirit ancestors remains in their creations.

The stories of the ancestral Wawilak sisters are important to the Yolngu. *Wawilak Ceremony* by **Mathaman Marika** (c. 1916–1970) portrays a ceremony that re-enacts a creation story associated with the Wawilak sisters.

Black footprints indicate the sisters' journey across Arnhem Land. In the centre of the painting is a sacred waterhole where the sisters camped. The sisters were unaware that the waterhole was the home of the powerful rock python, Wititj. The sisters angered Wititj, who rose out of the water and created the first monsoon – a storm and flooding rains.

The descendants of the Wawilak sisters are painted beneath the surface of the waterhole. The four figures surrounding the waterhole are ceremonial leaders.

Around the centre, cabbage-tree palms, participants in the ceremony and ceremonial objects, including spears, spear-throwers, dilly bags and headbands, are depicted. Look also for the water flowing into the waterhole.

The main elements in the painting are arranged in a grid-like structure. The bark paintings of north-eastern Arnhem Land tend to be filled with areas of intricate, abstract patterns that are organised within ordered **geometric** frameworks. The patterns come from sacred designs traditionally painted on bodies or ceremonial objects. The designs have been inherited from the ancestors and are an important way of expressing the power of the ancestor spirits.

The artists start with a basic framework, which is then filled in with patterns of dense cross-hatched lines. These finely painted lines, known as ***rarrk***, create a bright, shimmering effect, known as *bir'yun*, which is believed to make the paintings radiate life, energy and ancestral power.

1 Create an annotated drawing of *Wawilak Ceremony*, and note where you can see:
- the Wawilak sisters
- ceremonial objects
- a grid-like structure
- abstract repetitive patterns
- *rarrk*
- *bir'yun*.

Sacred materials

Bark harvested from the stringy-bark tree (*Eucalyptus tetrodonta*) is painted with red, yellow, black and white **ochres**, which are traditionally mixed with a binder such as orchid juice. Using materials from the landscape of the artist's country adds to the sacred meaning and power of bark paintings.

2 Research how artists gather and prepare materials for bark painting. Create a short presentation in a program such as PowerPoint or VoiceThread.

An artist at work

Art collector Jim Davidson developed a close friendship with Marika. In 1965, he asked Marika to make another version of the *Wawilak Ceremony*. Davidson's observations on how the second version of the painting was made offer insights into Marika's creative process:

> He [Marika] said he could but he had to sing about it first, meaning he would have to chant the Wawaluk [Wawilak] song cycle. A few days later he told me he was ready to start, having prepared a suitable piece of bark in the meantime. I wondered how on earth he would create such a complicated design from memory. I sat with him sometimes as he worked. His concentration was unbelievable. He would complete a section and then chant for a few minutes and go on painting. It soon became apparent that his chanting was his guide to the intricate design.[2]

3 What do you learn about Marika's creative process from Davidson's observations?

4 Read pp. 120–1 and research the materials, techniques and processes used by Chinese scholars to create calligraphic paintings. What links can you find between the materials, techniques and processes used by Chinese painters and those used by Arnhem Land's bark painters?

EXPLORE

Research the Marika family and their art. Choose an artwork by one of the family that interests you.

- What interests you about the work?
- How do the materials, techniques and processes used reflect the artist's cultural beliefs and traditions?

EXPLORE

Mawalan Marika was one of the Yolngu elders responsible for the Yirrkala bark petitions, which were presented to the federal House of Representatives in 1963.

- What were the petitions about?
- Why do you think the petitions were presented on bark?
- How did Mathaman Marika continue what Mawalan Marika began with the 1963 petitions?
- What was the effect of the petitions?

DISCUSS

Imagine that you had the opportunity to meet Marika. What would you most like to ask him?

Mathaman Marika
Australian (Rirratjingu), c. 1916–1970
Wawilak Ceremony, 1963
earth pigments on bark
159.1 × 68.2 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Jim Davidson, 1967 (1512–D5)

DRAWING

2.2 CONTINUING TRADITION

Drawing is an important form of expression and communication. Think about how often people doodle as they think or make a sketch to help explain something.

Nearly all artists, no matter what sort of art they make, do some form of drawing. They draw to record what things look like, to experiment with ideas or to help plan their work (pp. 16–17). Many artists make drawings as works of art in their own right. Artists today can choose from a vast array of drawing media and surfaces, but traditional materials are also still widely used.

Drawing surfaces and media

Charcoal

Charcoal is one of the oldest and simplest drawing media. It is available in sticks and pencils, and there are hard and soft varieties suitable for creating different effects. Charcoal can be used to draw lines, or it can be rubbed into the surface of the paper or built up in layers to make solid areas of tone, as in Gaha's *Untitled Drawing 111*.

Ink

Ink is a 'wet' drawing **medium**, usually applied with a pen or a brush. Ink made from soot was used by the Chinese and Egyptians 4500 years ago. Iron sulfate and squid ink have also been used to make ink. Today, artists also use ballpoint or felt pens.

Wash drawings are a popular way of using ink. Water is added to ink and applied with a brush to make a wash. Lighter tones are made by adding more water. Washes are often used to highlight parts of a drawing.

Pencil

Pencil is a common drawing medium.

The 'lead' in pencils is actually made from a mixture of kiln-fired, powdered graphite and clay. Have you noticed that the lead in some pencils seems very soft, while other pencils seem to have harder lead? This is because different leads have different mixtures of graphite and clay.

B pencils are made from a large amount of graphite and a small amount of clay so they make soft, dark lines. They are good for creating a smudged effect.

H pencils are made from a small amount of graphite and a large amount of clay so they make fine, light lines.

Artists can choose from many types of pencils, including coloured pencils and pencils used with water to create wash effects.

Paper

Although the Chinese invented paper as early as 140 BCE, it was not widely used in Europe until the fifteenth century. Until this time, most drawings were made on vellum or parchment, materials made from sheep, goat or calf skin.

Today, artists often use special papers made from cotton. Cotton papers last much longer and are stronger than ordinary paper made from wood pulp. Some artists work on coloured, patterned or textured papers to create interesting effects in their drawings.

DISCUSS

Drawing is often seen as offering insights into an artist's ideas and personality. Why is this idea associated with drawing more than with other artforms?

1 Would you use a hard or soft pencil to draw a detailed plan or a dark, stormy sky? Why?

A monumental drawing

Learning to draw the human figure (**life-drawing**) has been considered an important part of an artist's training in **western art** for many centuries.

Some life-drawings are made very rapidly to record a figure's pose and form in just a few lines. Other life-drawings, such as *Untitled Drawing III* by Australian artist **Adrienne Gaha** (b. 1960), are made over an extended time and reveal more complex information about the figure.

The first papers were made by hand from pulped linen and cotton rags. In nineteenth-century England, one paper manufacturer, who could not get enough rags to meet the demand for paper, imported mummified bodies from Egypt. He used the cloth and the papyrus bound around the mummies to make a brown paper, which was used for wrapping food. This practice stopped when the infected mummies caused his factory workers to develop cholera.

Rubber erasers were not widely used until the nineteenth century. Artists used fresh breadcrumbs, among other things, to remove drawing marks. Ink and chalk were often scraped off the drawing surface with a knife.

Some artists use the rubbing effects made by an eraser as a feature in their drawings.

Malcolm Cross

Drawing materials

Untitled Drawing III is a monumental drawing; the figure is larger than life and has a strong three-dimensional form. This drawing was made as an artwork in its own right, not as a preparation for another artwork.

2 What aspects of Gaha's drawing indicate that it was made over an extended time?

3 Suggest why Gaha's drawing could be described as monumental. Consider the size and representation of the human figure, including viewpoint.

Adrienne Gaha
Australian, b. 1960
Untitled Drawing III, 1985
charcoal
176.6 × 127.8 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Michell Endowment, 1986 (DC–1986)

Strangely familiar

The art of **Matt Coyle** (b. 1971) is focused on drawing. Over many years, the artist has developed his skills in creating realistic, precise and detailed drawings using black pen on white paper. Coyle's creative process is labour intensive; he creates models from which he then draws his meticulously detailed drawings.

The Village is from a series of drawings completed in 2013–14 in which Coyle added colour to his work for the first time.

Like other drawings by Coyle, this work presents familiar objects in an unexpected and unsettling way. In this strange scene, familiar objects are surrounded by tiny animated ninja-like characters involved in fierce battle.

4 Look closely at Coyle's drawing. Where has he used felt-tip pen and where has he used coloured pencils? Describe how each has been used.

5 Based on your study of *The Village*, suggest why Coyle's working process could be described as labour intensive.

6 Audiences initially often see Coyle's work as playful. They then look more closely and discover unsettling aspects of the work. What aspects of *The Village* appear playful? What aspects of the work are unsettling?

DISCUSS

Coyle has published several graphic novels. Why do you imagine this artform would appeal to Coyle?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Coyle's website.

Image courtesy Anna Pappas Gallery, Melbourne and the artist

Matt Coyle
Australian, b. 1971
The Village, 2013
felt-tipped pen and coloured pencil on paper
81.3 × 54.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2.3

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

Today, many artists make drawings using non-traditional materials, techniques and processes; the possibilities are endless.

Drawings have been made in unexpected and surprising ways: by bouncing an inky ball on paper, sticking tape on a wall, ploughing in a paddock or doing burn-outs in a car park. New technology has given artists new options for making drawings.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Beynon's work.

Read the interview with Beynon (pp. 196–7) and learn about her video work (p. 60).

Can you see how the shadows around the lines create a three-dimensional effect when the drawing is pinned to the wall?

Drawing with a twist

When you were young, perhaps you used chenille sticks (pipe cleaners) to make things. For Australian artist **Kate Beynon** (b. 1970), chenille sticks became an important drawing **medium**. In *Li Ji*, the artist twisted and bent black chenille sticks to create flowing outlines. Thick, red chenille sticks were used to mimic the brushstrokes of Chinese **calligraphy**.

Li Ji is one of a series of drawings and calligraphy panels made with chenille sticks that make up a large **installation** work by Beynon. The installation is based on an ancient Chinese story about the heroic actions of a young teenage girl, Li Ji. The village where Li Ji lived was terrorised by a giant python that lived in a nearby mountain cave. Each year, the python demanded a girl from the village as a sacrifice to feast on. One year, Li Ji volunteered herself as the victim. Not intending to be killed, she took a sword and a snake-hunting dog and slew the python. Because she freed her village, her family was rewarded and she later became queen.

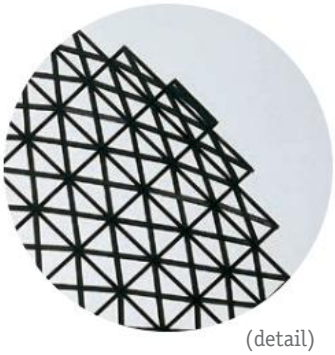
In various guises and adventures, Li Ji features in many artworks by Beynon, including paintings, prints and an animated video.

Beynon was born in Hong Kong to a Chinese mother and a Welsh father. She arrived in Australia from the United Kingdom in 1974 after living in Singapore, Germany and England. Her work reflects her personal background and her interest in

DISCUSS

When *Li Ji* is not on display, the chenille drawings are pinned to a piece of cloth and stored in a flat box. The gallery has detailed instructions from the artist about how to care for and display the work. Why do you believe that this is important for such a work?

Kate Beynon
Australian, b. 1970
Li Ji (Li Ji), 1996 (details)
chenille sticks and cotton, TDK D60 audio tape
119 × 261 cm irreg.
Monash University Collection
Purchased 1996
Courtesy Monash University Museum of Art, the artist and Sutton Gallery



(detail)

Kerrie Poliness
Australian, b. 1964
Black O Wall Drawings #4, 1997
printed instruction manuals, felt-tipped marker, string, chalk, printed card
dimensions variable
Monash University Collection
Purchased with funds donated by Margaret Stewart, 1997

In 2013, Kerrie Poliness was commissioned to create large wall drawings on the walls above the escalators that run from the car park to the shops in the revamped Highpoint Shopping Centre in Melbourne's west.

both traditional and contemporary culture. Important sources of inspiration for Beynon include traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy, comics and animation, and graffiti.

1 How does *Li Ji* differ from a traditional drawing?

2 Suggest how the following might have influenced the subject, materials, techniques or display of *Li Ji*:
- traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy
- comics and animation
- graffiti.

Make it yourself

Australian artist **Kerrie Poliness** (b. 1962) paints and draws using line, shape and colour to create interesting effects.

The *Black O Wall Drawings* are a series of six drawings made entirely from straight black lines; however, in each of the drawings, the lines create an illusion of a rounded form projecting forward in space.

The *Black O Wall Drawings* are drawn with black felt-tipped marker directly onto the wall. The drawings have been made in offices and many other places. When they are no longer required, the drawings are painted over.

Poliness does not make the drawings herself. They are drawn onto the wall by others, following instructions provided by her. Everything that is needed to produce the drawings is provided by the artist in a small, white, beautifully crafted box. The box contains six instruction manuals, each describing how to create a different drawing. It also includes the tools and materials required – a felt-tipped marker, some string and some chalk. Once you have the box, you can make the drawings. Through the box and its contents, the artist works with the person drawing to create the artwork.

The steps described in the instruction manual mean that the person drawing must use some guesswork rather than exact measurements. This ensures that each drawing is unique.

3 How do the *Black O Wall Drawings* differ from traditional drawings? Consider the:
- materials and techniques used
- display and longevity of the work
- role of the artist.

EXPLORE

Explain how Poliness has been able to suggest rounded, three-dimensional forms in her work while using only straight lines.

Find another example of an interesting artwork that creates an optical illusion. Describe the illusion and how it is created.

CREATE

Create a line drawing that includes some form of optical illusion. This could be done on the computer.

Make a list of clear, step-by-step instructions that will allow someone else to re-create your drawing.

Swap your instructions with at least two other classmates so that you can try each other's drawings. Keep the drawings in your visual diary.

DISCUSS

Imagine your class has been asked to choose a contemporary drawing for your school. You have to decide between *Li Ji* and the *Black O Wall Drawings*. List the factors you need to consider, such as who will be the audience, where it could be displayed and how it will be cared for.

Which work would you choose? Why?

Would you make the same decision if you were choosing the drawing for your home? Why?

PAINTING IN OILS

2.4 A LONG TRADITION

Oil paints were first used by artists in the fifteenth century and are still widely used today.

What is paint?

All paints are made from a mixture of **pigment** and **medium**. Pigments give paint colour. Pigments have been made for thousands of years by crushing and grinding natural materials – such as coloured clays, minerals and plants – until they become a fine powder.

Throughout history, artists have experimented to create new pigments, but many pigments have proven to be expensive to produce or have made paint colours that were poisonous or would fade. One very valuable colour called Tyrian purple was made from the glands of sea snails found only off the coast of Lebanon. It was so expensive to make that it became known as royal purple. Today, paint pigments are made easily using chemicals in laboratories.

To make paint, pigment has to be mixed with a medium that moistens the pigment, holds it together and makes it stick to the painting surface. Animal fats and plant juices were among the earliest mediums used.

Claude was born Claude Gellée in a small village in Lorraine, France. He became known as Claude Lorrain because of his birthplace. Although it is traditional to refer to artists by their family name, Claude is usually referred to by his given name.

Claude Lorrain
French, c. 1604/05–1682
River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli, c. 1635
oil on canvas
38 × 53 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1967 (1796–5)

Oil paint

Oil paint is made by mixing coloured pigment with an oil that dries over time. Oil paint is a thick, stiff paint that dries very slowly. It can be used straight from the tube or thinned down with pure turpentine or linseed oil and applied in layers.

Traditionally, stiff-bristle brushes are used for applying oil paint, although palette knives are often used for very thick paint and textured effects. Oil paintings are usually painted on canvas stretched over a frame or on boards with a specially coated surface.

A traditional landscape

River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli was painted by French artist **Claude Lorrain** (c. 1604/05–1682). He used a traditional oil painting technique in which colour and detail are gradually built up in layers of paint and **glaze** (thin, transparent layers of paint) to create rich, dark tones and glowing, light areas.

Although **landscapes** are a popular subject in art today, until the seventeenth century, they were generally only painted as backgrounds to other subjects, such as portraits. The landscape itself was not considered a subject worthy of great art.

Claude created beautiful landscapes bathed in a warm, golden light. His work helped establish landscape painting as an important and popular artform.

The inspiration for Claude's landscape paintings came from Rome, where he spent most of his working life. Like many of his contemporaries, Claude greatly admired **classical art** and architecture, which he studied first-hand in Rome. Claude also became fascinated by the Roman countryside. He spent many hours observing and drawing the landscape; however, following the tradition of the day, he painted his landscape paintings in the **studio**, not outdoors.

His images are carefully constructed to create the ideal beauty, harmony and order that he admired in classical art. Can you see

in *River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli* how Claude has organised the landscape into three clear sections: the **foreground**, the **middleground** and the **background**? He creates a feeling of space in the scene but also gives the painting a strong sense of order and structure. The large, dark shapes of the trees on either side of the painting work like a frame to focus attention on the light area at the centre of the **composition**.

Painting with vigour

Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) was inspired by **Impressionism**. Unlike many earlier artists, such as Claude, who were interested in creating images of perfect beauty, the Impressionist artists were interested in painting everyday subjects, including familiar places and ordinary people.

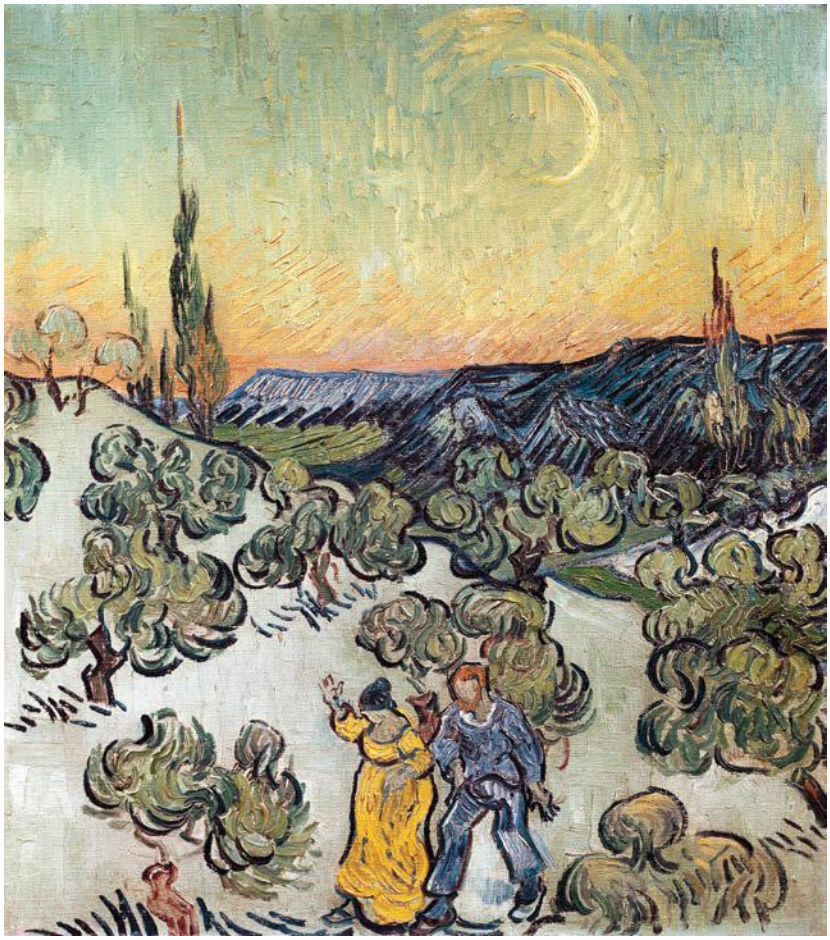
The Impressionists rejected traditional painting techniques and applied paint in bold and obvious brushstrokes, often working very rapidly. They were more interested in recording an 'impression' of their subject than in describing the subject in great detail.

Many of the artists associated with Impressionism, including van Gogh, used colour in new and adventurous ways. In *Moonlit Landscape*, van Gogh has used yellows, mauves, greens and blues to paint a rural landscape illuminated by the soft glow of moonlight.

Can you see the bold, obvious brushstrokes that van Gogh has used in this painting? This sort of painting technique is often described as **painterly**. You may also notice that the paint surface in van Gogh's painting is thick and textured. Thick, textured paint is often described as **impasto**.

Like many artists of the nineteenth century, van Gogh worked **en plein air** (outdoors), painting directly onto the canvas without preliminary drawings. *Moonlit Landscape* was painted at Arles in the south of France, where van Gogh moved in 1888. He painted a range of subjects, but the landscape is a strong theme in van Gogh's work.

Although he suffered periods of mental illness in the last few years of his tragically short life, van Gogh worked with passion, intensity and energy.



amanaimages/Leemage/Corbis

Vincent van Gogh
Dutch, 1853–1890
Moonlit Landscape, 1889
oil on canvas
Museu de Arte, São Paulo, Brazil

1 Suggest two natural substances that may make a suitable medium to add to a pigment to make paint. Why would water not be suitable?

2 Compare, perhaps using a Venn diagram, the paintings by Claude and van Gogh. Consider the painting technique, use of colour and subject matter.

Which of the landscapes do you prefer? Why?

Shutterstock.com/Oleksiy Rybakov

PAINTING IN WATERCOLOUR

2.5 FLUID AND TRANSPARENT

Watercolours first became popular in the eighteenth century.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video discussing *The Large Piece of Turf*.

Watercolour paint

Watercolour paint is made from **pigments** that are held together by a sticky resin called gum arabic. Watercolour paint can be bought in solid blocks or in tubes. Traditionally, watercolours are painted with soft hair brushes on good quality 'rag' paper. The texture of some watercolour papers adds to the paintings' effects.

Only a small amount of paint mixed with a little water is necessary for watercolour painting. The more water used, the lighter the colour.

Watercolour is a transparent paint. The lightest and most watery colours are applied first, and then thin layers of the darker colours are added. Each layer is like a see-through layer of fabric; you can see the paper and other colours underneath it.

Albrecht Dürer
German, 1471–1528
The Large Piece of Turf (***The Great Piece of Turf***), 1503
watercolour and gouache on vellum
40.8 × 31.5 cm
Albertina Museum, Vienna

GraphicaArtis/Getty Images

Usually, each layer of paint is left to dry before another is applied; however, working on wet paper or painting wet paint on top of wet paint can create interesting and beautiful effects as colours dissolve and run into each other.

Up close

Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) was born and lived in Nuremberg, Germany, but he travelled widely and enjoyed international fame during his lifetime.

Dürer created drawings, paintings and prints, and wrote theoretical texts. He was a contemporary of the Italian **Renaissance** artist Leonardo da Vinci (p. 162) and became known as the Leonardo of the north. Like da Vinci, Dürer had great scientific curiosity about the world, and his art was informed by a close study of nature.

Although Dürer often depicted important historical and religious subjects, in *The Large Piece of Turf* Dürer applied his phenomenal observation skills to painting a commonplace clump of weeds. He painted the plants with such precision that botanists today are able to identify the different species.

Can you see how Dürer has applied layers of watercolour to paint the dense mass of grasses and earth in the centre of the painting, while the tall, feathery grasses are painted with thinner, more transparent colour?

1 Look carefully at *The Large Piece of Turf*. Write a precise description of at least two plants you see pictured. Imagine your description will be used by a botanist to identify the plants.

DISCUSS

While the plants in *The Large Piece of Turf* are depicted with scientific accuracy, do you think that the arrangement of plants is exactly as Dürer found them in nature, or do you think he 'constructed' the arrangement? Why do you think this?

Photo: John Leeming

John Wolseley
Australian, b. 1938
Clumner Bluff, Tasmania, with Snow, Spores and Pollen, 1995
watercolour and pencil on paper
110.0 × 223.5 cm
Collection: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery

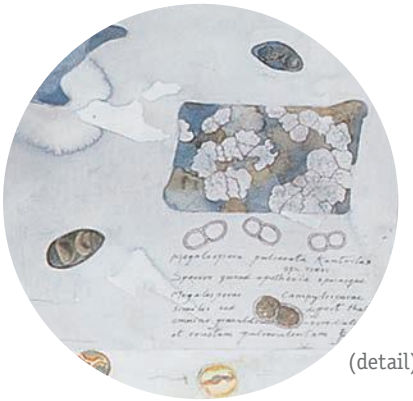
Micro and macro

English-born Australian artist **John Wolseley** (b. 1938) often uses watercolour in his **landscape** paintings. Wolseley spends long periods camping, exploring and getting to know the landscapes he paints.

Many of Wolseley's paintings, such as *Clumner Bluff, Tasmania, with Snow, Spores and Pollen* are made up of multiple sheets of paper. Several ideas and **viewpoints** are frequently included in the one image. Micro and macro views, intricate drawings of natural specimens, watercolour washes and written notations provide a richly layered view of a landscape and its geography, flora and fauna. Through his work, Wolseley invites you to experience a place with him.

Sometimes Wolseley even collaborates with the landscape to make his work. He has made drawings using natural **ochres** found in the landscape and by rubbing paper over and through trees burnt during a bushfire. He has also left a watercolour painting covered in sand to allow the actions of earth, water and air to become part of the work.

2 Describe – in words or by using an annotated image – where you can see in Wolseley's painting:
- transparent layers of colour
- strong, intense colour
- different viewpoints
- something surprising.



(detail)

3 Based on your understanding of Wolseley's art, suggest why he favours watercolours.

4 Compare Dürer's and Wolseley's paintings. Consider the artists' interests in nature and their use of materials, techniques and processes.

iStock.com/Robert Kirk

Watercolour paint

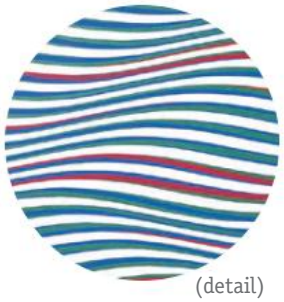
CREATE

Using watercolours and drawing materials, create an artwork about a familiar environment. It could be a built environment (such as your school or room) or a natural environment (such as the beach). Include many viewpoints of the place in your work. You may also want to include other ideas, such as a reference to the history of the place.

PAINTING IN ACRYLIC

2.6 A MODERN PAINT

Acrylic paints are modern, water-based paints that dry very quickly.



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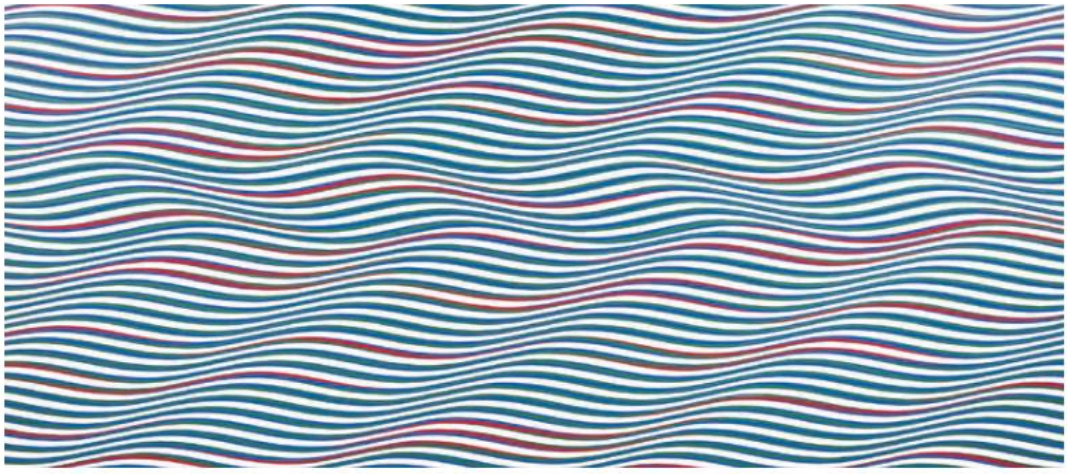


Bridget Riley
English, b. 1931
Streak 2, 1979
acrylic on canvas
113.7 × 251.5 cm

Viewing one of Riley's paintings can be quite uncomfortable for some people, making them feel motion sick. The studio assistants who make the paintings tend to work on small parts of a painting at a time to avoid being overwhelmed.

Acrylic paints

Acrylic paint is made from **pigments** that are ground into man-made substances, such as resin and polyvinyl acetate. Acrylic paint can be used in similar ways to **watercolour paint** or **oil paint**. They can be watered down and used as a wash or a spray, they can be built up in layers or they can be applied thickly and directly.

Exercise your eye

In the paintings of English artist **Bridget Riley** (b. 1931), colour, line and shape are used to create powerful visual effects.

Streak 2 gives viewers a sense of strong, rippling movements across the surface of the painting. The sensation of movement is more powerful when viewing the actual painting, which is approximately 2.5 metres long and more than 1 metre high.

The optical illusions in Riley's paintings reflect her understanding of colour, especially the relationships between grouped colours. Each painting requires extensive preliminary work, such as making precise, small-scale studies on graph paper and testing various colours. Her compositions are then painted full size and completed by studio assistants, following her instructions.

Many of her finished paintings are made with acrylic paints, which dry quickly. Sometimes she uses enamel or oil paints, which are more difficult to paint smoothly.

Although Riley's paintings involve visual illusion and **distortion**, optical tricks are not the focus of her work. She creates optical illusions to express emotions and experiences. Often her work is inspired by something she has seen or felt in nature.

Riley believes the discomfort people experience when confronted with optical illusions is because their eyes have become lazy. She sees her paintings as good exercise for the eyes and the mind.

1. Describe the visual sensations you experience when viewing *Streak 2*.
2. Explain how Riley's use of colour and painting technique contribute to the painting's visual sensations.
3. Do you associate any emotions or feelings with the colours, materials, techniques and visual sensations of *Streak 2*? Describe them.

DISCUSS

Bridget Riley paints to express emotions and experiences. Often, her work is inspired by something she has seen or felt in nature. Are these ideas also relevant to the work of the Kaiadilt artists? Explain why or why not.

Birmuyingathi Maali Netta Loogatha
Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori
Warthadangathi Bijarrba Ethel Thomas
Thunduyingathi Bijarrb May Moodoonuthi
Kuruwarriyingathi Bijarrb Paula Paul
Wirrngajingathi Bijarrb Kurdalalngk Dawn Naranatjil
Rayarriwarrtharrbayingathi Mingungurra Amy Loogatha
Australian (Kaiadilt)
Dulka Warngiid, 2007
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
195 × 610 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Catherine Allen, Carolyn Berger and Delma Valmorbida, 2007 (2007.527)

Celebrating country

Seven senior Kaiadilt women made this immense and powerful work that depicts the women's ancestral home, Bentinck Island in north-west Queensland.

During the 1940s, all of the Kaiadilt from Bentinck Island and nearby islands were forced to move to the mission on Mornington Island. It was not until the 1990s, when small settlements on their traditional land (known as outstations) were re-established, that the Kaiadilt people could return to their island.

Mission life and separation from their country had a devastating effect on Kaiadilt culture and language; however, a few older members of the community retained memories of their culture and language.

In 2005, as part of an arts and crafts program on Mornington Island, acrylic paint, brushes and canvases were introduced to the community. This program started an outpouring of vibrant paintings about culture and country.

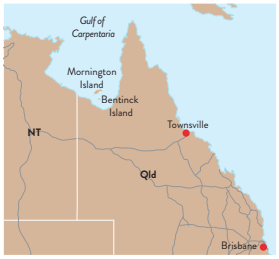
Unlike other Indigenous communities that have a strong tradition of body, ground, rock or bark painting, the Kaiadilt women had no painting tradition to build on. The women – led by Sally Gabori, who was in her early eighties when she started painting – were inspired by their culture, by the weather and by the colours and patterns of their country. They found inspiration in their environment, in the mangroves, estuaries, saltpans, turtles, dugongs and fish.

Using bold, expressive brushstrokes and vibrant colour, they created powerful paintings. Each artist developed her own style and themes. *Dulka Warngiid* displays both the individuality of each painter and a great visual unity.

4 Identify the section(s) of the painting each artist created. Note three words or phrases to describe each artist's painting style.

5 Find another work by one of the artists. How does this work compare with *Dulka Warngiid*?

6 What aspects of *Dulka Warngiid* create a sense of unity in the work?



Bentinck Island and Mornington Island, Queensland

The seven Kaiadilt women who made this painting were the only remaining members of their community still fluent in Kayardild language.

In 2007, the Australian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne was commissioned to create a tapestry of *Dulka Warngiid* for the Melbourne Recital Centre, where the tapestry is now on display.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see the tapestry version of this painting, the artists at work on Mornington Island and views of Bentinck Island.

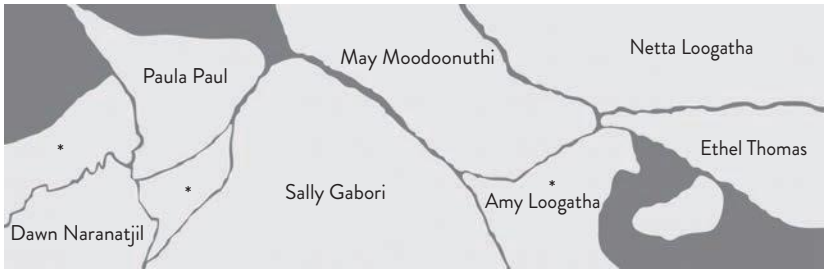


Diagram: © Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

This diagram shows which section of the painting was completed by which artist.

PAINTING IN PIXELS

2.7 USING TECHNOLOGY

Personal mobile devices are now commonplace. They are not just useful communication tools; they can be powerful tools for creativity. The many different creativity apps available for iPhones, iPads and Android tablets offer artists a treasure trove of possibilities for experimenting, trialling, exploring, creating and presenting.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see photographs of Woldgate.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other works by Hockney, including other works in the same series and installation views.

Hockney has had more than 400 solo exhibitions since he began exhibiting in 1963.

The large pockets that Hockney has sewn into his jackets for his sketchbooks easily accommodate his iPad. One advantage of drawing and painting on the iPad is that he does not need to carry extra materials such as pencils or paint.

Hockney has embraced technology for making and sharing his art. He regularly emails iPhone or iPad drawings to friends and colleagues. Some of them have amassed quite a collection of digital originals.

David Hockney

Throughout his long and successful career, British artist **David Hockney** (b. 1937) has been curious about technology and eager to explore new materials and techniques. He has worked in a wide range of artforms, including drawing, painting, printmaking, stage design, photography and collage.

When photocopy and fax machines were new to offices, he experimented with how they could be used to create art. He has also used Photoshop and researched the technology and optical devices used by the Old Masters. Most recently, Hockney has been working with video, iPhones and iPads.

iPhone and iPad

Hockney made his first iPhone drawings in 2008. He used the Brushes app and drew with his thumbs. He liked the boldness of the lines and the way layers of colour could be laid down without losing intensity and purity. In conventional painting, when colours are layered without adequate time to dry, they mix together and become muddy.

Hockney started working on an iPad in 2010. He still uses the Brushes app but tends to work with a stylus more often than with his thumbs or fingers.

While Hockney still draws using traditional methods, he enjoys the many aspects of drawing on a tablet that a traditional sketchbook cannot offer. A drawing's scale can be easily changed, and the colours on a screen have a unique luminosity. The Brushes app can also be used to 'play back' drawings and to create animations that show the process of creating a drawing.

AAP/EPA/Alfredo Aldai

David Hockney often used iPads to create and display his art.

Recording the seasons

Hockney was born and raised in Yorkshire in the north-east of England. Although he moved to California in the United States in the 1960s, he frequently returns to the United Kingdom.

The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in 2011 (twenty eleven) – 18 December depicts the quiet country area of Woldgate, where Hockney spent several summers as a teenager working on farms. This artwork is one of a series of drawings of the Woldgate countryside that Hockney made on his iPad during the transition from winter to spring in 2011. Each work depicts a particular day, and through the series the landscape and weather change with the seasons.

Water and reflections have always fascinated Hockney. In this artwork, he has captured the effect of reflected light and gently falling rain on a wet road by using vivid contrasts of colour, and strong lines and shapes.

DISCUSS

Look online for photographs of locations and seasons in Woldgate, the place that is the subject of Hockney's drawing. Compare the photographs with the iPad drawings. What do you notice?

On display and in context

When Hockney first began creating drawings on his iPhone and iPad, his plan was to present his works on screen. He has held a number of exhibitions that have included iPads featuring a rotating display of drawings.

Rapid developments in printing technology soon opened up new possibilities for presenting his drawings. For the exhibition David Hockney: The Arrival of Spring, which has been seen in London, New York and Beijing, the drawings were printed on large sheets of paper using sophisticated printers that allowed the images to be printed large without becoming pixelated. The work pictured here is very large and made up of four separate sheets of paper.

The exhibition also included a series of charcoal drawings and a nine-channel video **installation** that focused on the changing seasons in the Woldgate landscape. The video installation was made by mounting nine cameras on a vehicle and driving slowly through the countryside, and it was presented on a multiscreen grid. The many screens showed views of the countryside through the seasons.

1 What was the weather like on 18 December 2011 in Woldgate? Describe the weather using the clues from Hockney's scene. How has Hockney conveyed the weather in his landscape?

CREATE

Look at examples of Hockney's iPhone drawings. Many of his drawings are simple still lifes of everyday objects. Consider how Hockney makes his simple compositions interesting by using viewpoint, colour, tone and line.

Using something from your own environment as a subject and a tablet with a Brushes app or similar, create your own simple still-life composition.

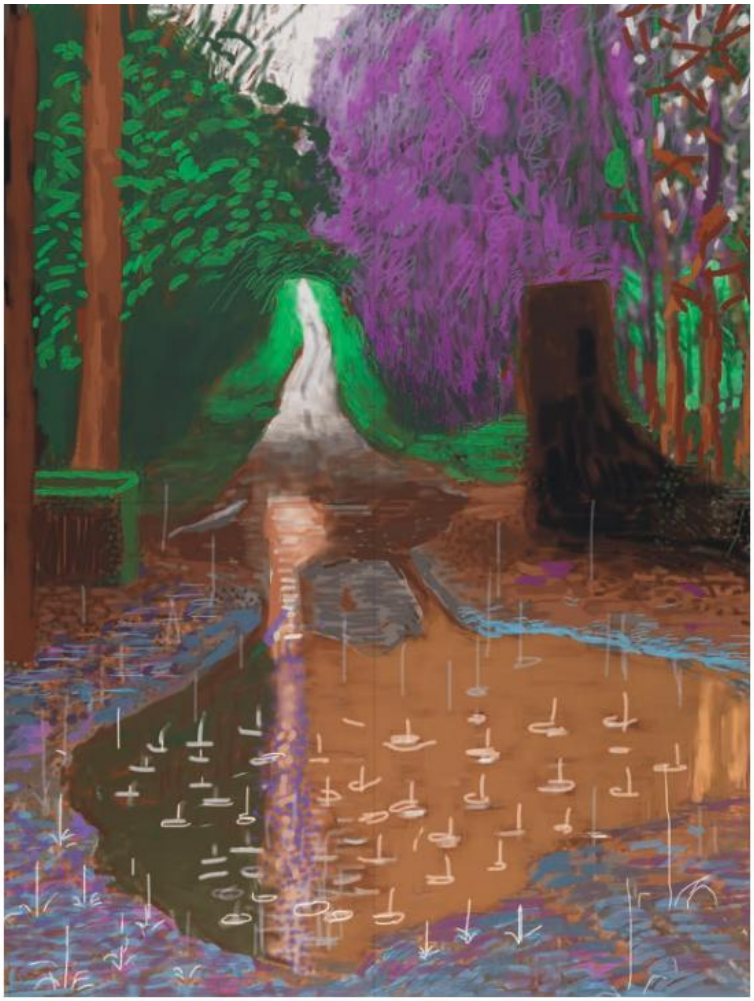


Photo: Richard Schmidt

David Hockney
English, b. 1937
The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in 2011 (twenty eleven) – 18 December, 2011
iPad drawing printed on four sheets of paper (118.1 × 89.9 cm each) mounted on four sheets of Dibond
edition of 10
236.2 × 177.8 cm overall
© David Hockney

2 Experiment with two or three apps for painting and drawing on a tablet. Write a review of the apps to be published on a website for art students. Which app do you preferred working with and why?

3 Use a Venn diagram to compare drawing and painting on a tablet with conventional drawing and painting.

CREATE

Collect digital landscape photographs that show distinctive weather or seasonal conditions. Re-create one of these scenes using a tablet with a Brushes app or similar.

DISCUSS

Identify different ways that digital images can be shared, such as social media and email.

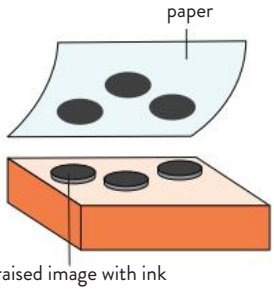
Use a PMI chart to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each method. What would be your preferred method for sharing work with friends? What about sharing with a wider audience? Do you think any of these methods would be suitable for professional artists? Explain.

PRINT IT

2.8 MAKING AN IMPRESSION

A print is the impression or mark that is made when two surfaces are pressed together. A foot pressing into sand makes a footprint; fingers leave prints on the surfaces they touch.

A feature of printmaking is that the process allows artists to produce many original artworks.



Relief printing

Relief printing

A **relief print** is a print made from a raised surface, usually a wood or lino block. A design is drawn on the surface of the block, and areas that are not part of the design are carved away. The design is left as a raised surface that is covered with ink. A print is made when a piece of paper is laid over the raised, inky surface and pressure is applied to the paper by rubbing or by using a printing press.

Photo: AGNSW 204.1977

Margaret Preston
Australian, 1875–1963
Wheel Flower, c. 1929
woodcut, black ink hand coloured with gouache on buff laid Japanese paper
44.0 × 44.3 cm (blockmark); 54.9 × 45.6 cm (sheet)
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Bequest of WG Preston, the artist's widower, 1977

Photo: AGNSW DA55.1963

Margaret Preston
Australian, 1875–1963
Woodblock for Wheel Flower, c. 1928
nine end-grain Huon pine blocks, butt-jointed and engraved
43.9 × 44.5 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Gift of Mr WG Preston, the artist's widower, 1963

Flowers off the block

Australian artist **Margaret Preston** (1875–1963) had a particular enthusiasm for **woodblock prints**, a form of relief printing. She even wrote articles encouraging others to try this 'friendly little craft'.[3]

Because woodblock prints were quick to produce and affordable to buy, Preston believed that they were an effective way of communicating ideas to a wide audience.

As a young student, Preston became very interested in **modern art**, which led her to create simplified designs with strong, bold outlines, shapes and colours. In the 1920s, Preston also became passionate about creating distinctly Australian art, leading her to focus on Australian subjects and forms, including native flowers.

Can you see how Preston's different interests come together in *Wheel Flower*? Like many of her other prints, *Wheel Flower* has been coloured by hand after printing. Preston considered *Wheel Flower* one of her best woodblock prints.

1 Compare the woodblock used to make *Wheel Flower* with the print. What observations can you make about the:
- relationship between the print and the areas that are raised and cut away on the block
- ink colours used
- colour of the print surface
- parts of the print that are hand coloured
- reversal of images in printmaking?

DISCUSS

The term '**print**' is also widely used to describe photographic **reproductions** of artworks, such as those produced for posters and books. How do the characteristics of these prints differ from prints produced as original artworks?

Intaglio prints

An **intaglio print** is made from a design cut below the surface of a printing plate. Intaglio prints are traditionally made from metal plates, and the most common forms of intaglio prints are **engravings** and **etchings**.

In an engraving, the design is cut directly into the surface of a metal plate using engraving tools.

In an etching, the plate is covered in an acid-resistant paint, such as bitumen, and the design is drawn into the painted surface using a pointed, metal tool. The plate is then put into an acid bath. Where the drawing leaves the metal exposed, the acid eats into the metal to form grooves below the surface of the plate. The longer the plate is left in the acid, the deeper the grooves become. When the grooves are deep enough, the plate is taken out of the acid, cleaned and made ready for printing.

Etching and engraving plates are printed in the same way. Printing ink is applied to the surface of the plate and then carefully wiped away to leave ink in the engraved or etched lines, below the surface of the plate. A printing press is used to press damp paper hard against the plate. The pressure forces the paper into contact with the inky grooves and lines, thus transferring the design from the plate to the paper. Deep grooves hold more ink and so print as darker lines.

Ferns etched in line

Australian artist **Fred Williams** (1927–1982) (pp. 126–7) was a prolific printmaker. He saw his prints as being of equal importance to his paintings.

Following a bushfire that ravaged the landscape around his home in the Dandenongs outside Melbourne in 1968, Williams made many drawings, paintings and prints related to the fire. The destructive aspect of the fire is seen in images of devastated landscapes dotted with charred tree stumps. In other images, Williams focuses on the remarkable process of regeneration after fire. Williams was particularly fascinated by the tree ferns, which are one of the first species to regenerate after a bushfire.

Williams had a thorough understanding of etching and engraving. He produced a variety of textures and tones in *Regenerating Fern* using different tools and processes, including working with an electric hand-engraving tool and applying acid directly to the metal printing plate to 'bite' into the surface of the metal.

2 Suggest why Williams chose to represent the fern in an etching rather than as a painting.

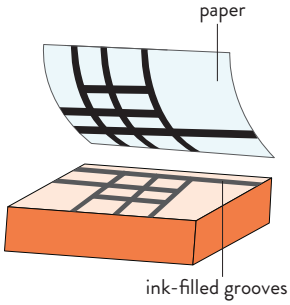
3 Compare the prints by Williams and Preston. How does the appearance of each image reflect the medium used to make the work?

CREATE

Choose an Australian native plant that interests you and make some detailed drawings of it. Use the drawings to create a design for a relief or intaglio print.

Think carefully about what you want to communicate about the plant and how you can use the features of the medium to create an interesting design.

You may like to hand colour some of your prints, or you could scan your print and colour the image using a computer's paint program.



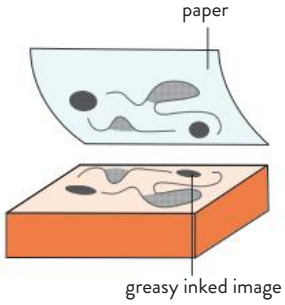
Intaglio printing

Fred Williams
Australian, 1927–1982
Regenerating Fern, 1970
etching, flat and rough biting
35.0 × 20.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by James Mollison, Governor, 1980 (P22–1980)

A set of identical, original prints produced by an artist from a particular printmaking process is called an **edition**. Traditionally, artists give each print in an edition a number that is written as a fraction on the bottom of the print near the artist's signature. The number 6/15 on Williams's print means that this print is the sixth print in an edition of 15.

PRINT IT

2.9 MAKING IT IN MULTIPLES



Lithography

Lithography

Lithography was invented in 1796. It quickly became popular among artists because it allowed the freedom of pen and crayon drawing.

To understand lithography, you need to understand that grease and water cannot mix: they repel each other.

To create a lithograph, a design is drawn onto a lithographic stone using a special greasy crayon or ink. The design is then fixed to the stone using chemicals so that it cannot be rubbed off. The stone is washed with water, and the areas of the stone with no drawing collect water, while the greasy crayon or ink areas resist water. When greasy printing ink is rolled over the surface of the stone, it sticks to the greasy crayon marks but not to the wet, unmarked stone.

Paper is laid on the stone surface, and the stone and paper are put through a printing press. A print is transferred to the paper from the inked drawing. For a colour lithograph, a different printing stone is required for each colour.

Posters as art

Lithography was widely used to make posters in the late nineteenth century. French artist **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec** (1864–1901) revolutionised the art of the poster with his bold and economical use of line, shape and colour and his innovative compositions. His first lithograph and his first poster was *Moulin Rouge Concert Bal*, made in 1891.

Between 1891 and 1900, Toulouse-Lautrec produced almost 400 lithographs. Although only 30 were posters, it is for these posters that he has become most famous.

Toulouse-Lautrec was a contemporary of the **Impressionist** artists in Paris. Like those artists, Toulouse-Lautrec took his subjects from everyday life. His particular interest was the night-life of Paris, including the café-concerts, theatres, and music and dance halls, such as the famous Moulin Rouge.

The performer in the poster reproduced here is La Goulue, who became famous for her sensational cancan dance. Easily recognised by her distinctive topknot, she appears in a number of Toulouse-Lautrec's works.

In this poster, Toulouse-Lautrec conveys a vivid impression of his subject with great

The Art Archive/Musée de l'Affiche Paris/Dagli Orti

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec
French, 1864–1901
Moulin Rouge Concert Bal, 1891
colour lithograph (French poster)

economy. Just a few simple lines, colours and shapes are used to describe La Goulue's high-kicking legs and the vast expanse of frilly underwear exposed by her energetic dance. In the background, the people in the crowd are simple **silhouettes**.

1 Look at the colours in Toulouse-Lautrec's print. How many printing stones would have been used to make the print? In what order would they have been printed?

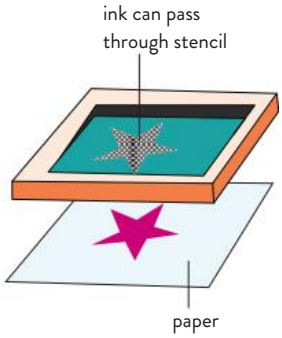
2 Briefly explain what evidence you can find in this print of:
- bold and economical line, shape and colour
- innovative composition.

Stencil printing

One of the simplest ways to produce a print is to use a **stencil**. **Silk-screen printing** is a common form of stencil printing that involves attaching stencils to a fine, silk-like fabric stretched across a wooden frame. The stencils can be made from paper or by drawing directly onto the fabric screen using special glues, lacquers or wax. Special photographic equipment can also be used to make stencils of drawings or photographs.

The screen, with the stencil attached, is laid with the silk side down on a sheet of paper. To hold it still during printing, the screen is usually attached by hinges to another board. Ink is poured along the top end of the screen. A rubber squeegee, the same width as the screen, is used to drag a thin coating of ink down over the surface of the screen. In areas not covered by the stencil, the ink is forced through the silk-like fabric to make a print on the paper underneath.

When a design uses many colours, a different stencil must be made for each colour. One sheet of paper will go through several printings: one for each colour.



Silk-screen printing

Santa Claus

In the 1960s, silk-screen printing became a favourite technique of some artists associated with **Pop art** (p. 132), including American artist **Andy Warhol** (1928–1987). The Pop artists took many of their subjects and techniques from **popular culture**, including advertising, movies, magazines and cartoons.

Silk-screen printing allowed artists to mass-produce images and to create many of the visual effects found in the images and consumer goods of popular culture. Although Warhol's prints were carefully and professionally printed, he deliberately mimicked some of the effects found in commercial printing, such as including areas where colours or lines did not quite register or line up precisely.

Many of his prints, including many portraits of celebrities, were based on newspaper or magazine photographs. Warhol's interest in fame and celebrity is reflected in the Myths series, which features modern, fictional characters whose stories are well known to millions of people in the United States and beyond. The series included

Andy Warhol
American, 1928–1987
Santa Claus, 1981
from Myths series (FS II.266)
colour screenprint and diamond dust on Lenox Museum Board
96.5 × 96.5 cm

Santa Claus as well as images of other famous characters, such as Superman and Mickey Mouse. Warhol added star quality to these prints with diamond dust.

3 How many stencils would Warhol have used to make *Santa Claus*?

4 Myths are usually associated with characters and stories of the ancient world. Suggest why Warhol decided to create a series about modern myths, including characters such as Santa Claus.

5 Both Toulouse-Lautrec and Warhol created prints that reflect their interest in popular culture. Do you agree? Why?

CREATE

In the past, original prints were often used as bookplates: labels pasted into a book that name a book's owner. Design your own bookplate using a printmaking method of your choice.

Remember that in some forms of printmaking your design will be reversed when it is printed.

DISCUSS

What are some of the advantages and disadvantages associated with producing prints when compared with other artforms, such as painting or drawing, where only one original work of art is produced? You could use a PMI chart to organise your thoughts.

PHOTOGRAPHY

2.10 DEVELOPING IMAGES

Today, photography plays such an important role in our everyday lives that it is hard to imagine a world without photographs.

Although people had been experimenting for centuries with ways to mechanically record an image, the first photographs were not made until the 1830s in France. Early photographers were limited by the equipment and processes available, but by 1890 photography had been revolutionised by the development of film in rolls and portable cameras. By the 1960s, colour photography was relatively common. Now, digital technology creates new possibilities.

Progression of the camera

Photography as art

From the earliest days of photography, people marvelled at the camera's ability to record an impression; however, from the middle of the nineteenth century, there was considerable debate about whether photography was worthy of being described as art.

Photography was seen as a mechanical process that simply recorded information. It was seen to lack the creativity and feeling of other artforms. In an effort to have photography regarded as equal to painting, some photographers began to incorporate qualities associated with painting into their work. For example, they created photographs with soft, blurred edges inspired by painting effects and avoided the sharply defined forms and detail common in photographs of the time.

A passion for photography

Jacques-Henri Lartigue (1894–1986) was only six years old when he took his first photographs. His father gave him his first camera when he was eight, and he took this photograph of his cousin Bichonnade 'flying' down the front steps when he was just 11 years old. He also learnt to process photographs at an early age.

Lartigue's family was wealthy and adventurous. They lived in a period when the world was rapidly changing due to the invention of and increasing access to electricity, cars, radio and moving images. Lartigue's father loved racing cars and building gliders, his brother was known for his crazy inventions, and the family was involved in many sports and activities.

Lartigue created hundreds of photographs of his family life and acquired a number of cameras. When he grew up, he became an artist and designer, but he continued to document his life in photographs.

Lartigue's mother had kept his early photographs in scrapbooks and albums, and this is how Lartigue continued to keep his photographs for most of his life. The albums and scrapbooks were shared only with family and friends until 1964, when a curator at The Museum of Modern Art in New York saw Lartigue's photographic work and recognised his talent. An exhibition of his work was organised and, at the age of 69, Lartigue began a new

Jacques-Henri Lartigue
French, 1894–1986
Cousin Bichonnade in Flight, 1905, printed 1972
printed under the artist's supervision by Jean Yves du Barré (French, 20th century)
gelatin silver print, No. 1 from *A Portfolio of Photographs* by Jacques-Henri Lartigue (1972), edition 9/50
17 × 23.1 cm (image); 17.8 × 23.9 cm (paper); 38 × 33 cm (mount)
Kathleen W Harvey Memorial Fund, 1974.222.1, Art Institute of Chicago

career as a photographer. His work is now widely published and collected by museums.

Lartigue made *Cousin Bichonnade in Flight 1905* as a stereo photograph. It is one of approximately 5000 stereo photographs created by Lartigue.

Making photography modern

By the 1930s, many people felt that photography should more directly reflect the modern world. This feeling led some artists to focus on subjects that were obviously modern, including cities, machines and daily life.

Artists also tried to make their work look modern by using strong, simplified shapes, forms and compositions: characteristics that were seen to reflect the streamlined, modern world.

Artists also became increasingly interested in making photographs with qualities particular to photography. Rather than trying to make photographs look like paintings, modern photographers created images with strong contrasts of light and dark, and sharply defined forms.

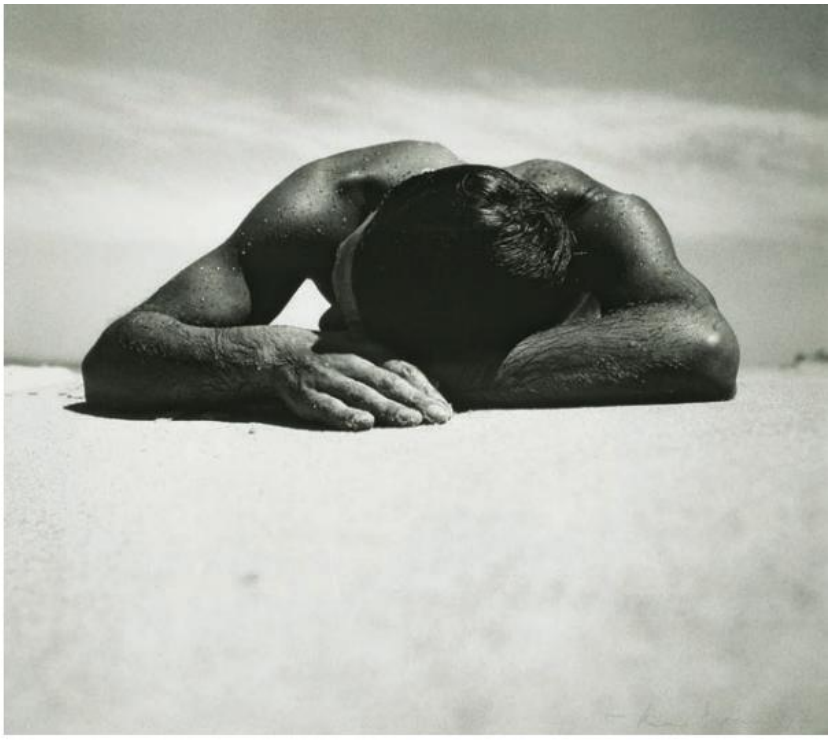
An Australian icon

Sunbaker by Australian artist **Max Dupain** (1911–1992) reflects a modern approach to photography in its strong, simplified composition and the bold contrasts of light and dark. Can you imagine where Dupain must have been positioned with his camera when he took this photograph?

Sunbaker has become one of the best-known Australian photographic artworks. The image of the deeply sun-bronzed swimmer – lying prone on the sand with droplets of water still clinging to his body – has become a powerful symbol of Australian life. The relaxed, athletic outdoor lifestyle that Dupain represents in *Sunbaker* reflected an Australian ideal in the 1930s. It is still regarded by many as an important aspect of life in Australia.

Dupain is closely associated with the development of modern photography in Australia.

1 Both *Cousin Bichonnade in Flight, 1905* and *Sunbaker* reflect the time and place in which they were made. Do you agree with this statement? Consider the appearance and subject of each artwork.



Max Dupain
Australian, 1911–1992
Sunbaker, 1937
gelatin silver photograph
38.6 × 43.4 cm (printed image); 52.8 × 55.0 cm (sheet)
Purchased 1976
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2 Can *Sunbaker* still be seen as a powerful symbol of Australian life? Explain.

3 Which photograph – *Cousin Bichonnade in Flight, 1905* or *Sunbaker* – do you find more interesting? Why?

EXPLORE

Create a timeline to show at least six major technological developments in photography since the first camera. For each development, include a few lines of text to explain its significance.

DISCUSS

Although cameras are mechanical, photographs are not.

What do you think this statement means? Do you agree?

Use your knowledge of at least one photographic artist to justify your answer.

An ancient Christian story tells how a young woman, Veronica, wiped Christ's brow as he marched towards Calvary to be crucified. His image is believed to have remained permanently on the cloth she used: the first directly transferred image. Veronica is regarded as the patron saint of photography.

Stereoscopic photography involves capturing and displaying two slightly offset images. When viewed with a special viewer (not unlike the glasses used to watch a 3D movie), the image looks three-dimensional.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

2.11 NEW POSSIBILITIES

In traditional (analog) photography, an image is recorded on light-sensitive film as continuous tone and colour. In digital photography, an image is recorded as separate units of mathematically encoded data (pixels) and can be easily stored, edited, manipulated and transmitted on a computer.

It is possible to combine and manipulate traditional photographs; however, digital technology has created many new possibilities for creating photographic images.

Digital images can be created with a digital camera or can be scanned from existing images.

Mori produced an edition of Star Dolls based on this work. One is in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see images of Mori's Star Dolls.

Constructing an image

Japanese artist **Mariko Mori** (b. 1967) attended a strict girls' school in Japan where she felt restricted by the rules that ensured everyone looked and behaved in a similar way. After leaving school, she studied fashion and worked part-time as a model in Japan. She later studied art in London and the United States. All of these experiences influenced her work.

The artist features in most of her artworks, performing different roles. In *Birth of a Star*, she appears as a teenage pop star with spiky purple hair and brightly coloured plastic clothes. The artificial and constructed nature of the pop star's world is emphasised by the bubble-filled, futuristic setting and the highly **stylised** pose of the artist.

The influence of **popular culture**, including fashion, advertising and pop music, is evident in the subject and presentation of the artwork. The image is a Duratrans, a type of photographic image that is lit from the back by fluorescent light. Duratrans images are often used for advertisements in bus stops and railway stations. A pop song, composed and sung by the artist, was made to accompany the *Birth of a Star* image.

Mori uses computer technology to manipulate and enhance her images. In *Birth of a Star*, she combined her own image with a computer-generated background. Since this series, she has produced increasingly ambitious and complex works, often on a large scale. She continues to be the subject of her work, using the computer to help create startling synthetic identities and worlds.

Mori's work is often seen as a comment on the role of women in society. Her work also reflects the complex nature of cultural identity in modern Japan, where traditional, conservative Japanese culture coexists with technology and western influences.

DISCUSS

Why might some people believe that digital photography is an artform quite distinct from analog photography? What do you think?

Photo: Nathan Keay, © MCA Chicago

Mariko Mori
Japanese, b. 1967
Birth of a Star, 1995
3D Duratrans, acrylic, light box and audio CD
178.3 × 114.9 × 10.8 cm
Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
Gift of the Peter Norton Family Foundation, 1996.6.a–c
© Mariko Mori/ARS. Licensed by Viscopy, 2016

1 Suggest how Mori's early experience in the fashion industry might have influenced her art.

A personal viewpoint

Australian artist **r e a** (b. 1962) uses photography to challenge photographic traditions and stereotypes.

Technology plays an important role in r e a's art. Her work typically involves manipulating a photograph using image editing and paint programs. By editing the image to include layers of colour, graphic elements or text, she changes both the appearance and meaning of the original image.

Green, I Wish I Could Be Seen is one of five similar images in the series Highly Coloured, My Life Is Coloured by My Colour. The artist features in the centre of each image. She appears life-size and is pointing a camera at the viewer.

As an Indigenous woman, r e a is acutely aware of ethnographic photographs that made Indigenous people the passive subject of the camera. Such images, which were widely collected and studied, generally represented Indigenous people according to European ideas about Indigenous culture. The people represented had very little control over how the images were made or viewed.

R e a's work creates a very different relationship with the audience. The camera is not only turned on the viewer, it covers the face of the subject, frustrating our desire to identify the person. Even the clothes, which could be worn by either gender, provide few clues. The audience are forced to contemplate their roles as viewers and the meaning of the bold green pattern and text in the image.

Each artwork in the series has a different colour, pattern and text that symbolically represent the artist's memories of childhood. R e a states, 'In each [image] I am revealed in different ways ... blue and green is about growing up ... the struggles and insecurity.'[4]

The title *Green, I Wish I Could Be Seen* suggests a feeling of being overlooked or shut out. This idea is strengthened by the horizontal lines that look like blinds or bars across the image.

2 What meaning do the green colour, pattern and text suggest to you? Why?

3 How does the series title, Highly Coloured, My Life Is Coloured by My Colour, add to your understanding of the work?

4 The digital manipulation of images makes an important contribution to the appearance and meaning of r e a's and Mori's work. Do you agree? Use evidence from both images in your answer.

5 Both Mori and r e a explore issues of personal and cultural identity. Do you agree? Why?

CREATE

Create an image of yourself that communicates something about your identity, such as your interests, family, friends, experiences, culture, dreams or beliefs. Think carefully about the ideas you want to communicate to determine how you represent yourself – your clothes, pose, expression, etc.

Take a digital image of yourself to reflect these ideas. Then, use image editing and paint programs to manipulate the image to add meaning.

Aim to produce an interesting artwork that communicates something about you rather than just a physical likeness.

EXPLORE

Research, list and briefly explain some of the advantages and disadvantages of photography and digital images. Consider issues such as image quality, longevity, storage, display, editing, manipulation and cost.

You may want to use a PMI chart for this activity.

Photo: AGNSW 573.1994.a–f

r e a
Australian (Gamilaroi and Wailwan), b. 1962
Highly Coloured, My Life is Coloured by My Colour: ***Green, I Wish I Could Be Seen***, 1994
computer-generated photograph on perspex
185.0 × 58.5 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased with funds provided by the Young Friends of the Art Gallery Society of New South Wales, 1994
© r e a

Ethnography is the scientific description and classification of cultural and racial groups.

2.12 THE ART OF PRODUCTION

Artists creating photographic art today are often working on an ambitious scale and employing sophisticated production techniques.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other works in the weather series 2006 and a more recent series, The Paper 2013, which was included in an exhibition at Heide Museum of Modern Art in 2015. You can also go to the Art+Climate=Change 2015 Festival website to explore the role the arts can play in action against climate change.

Staging a scene

Since the invention of photography in the 1830s, photographers have staged images using models, sets, props and lighting. During the 1980s, a number of contemporary artists began to create staged photographs that drew on production techniques more commonly associated with filmmaking and cinematography.

In its extreme forms, such staged photography involves large production crews, actors, set builders, lighting technicians and many more. Creating work in this way requires artists to take on the role of director and to work closely with others to realise their ideas.

DISCUSS

Photography is often perceived as a mirror of reality. Why do you think it is perceived in this way, and do you think it is any more or less a mirror of reality than other artforms?

DISCUSS

Art can show us where we have been, where we are now and where we might go. Art can be a call to action. Art can be a catalyst for change. Do you agree?

Creating a storm

Australian artist **Rosemary Laing** (b. 1959) originally trained as painter. She started taking photographs as reference material for her paintings. She is now an established photo-based artist and has exhibited widely in Australia and internationally.

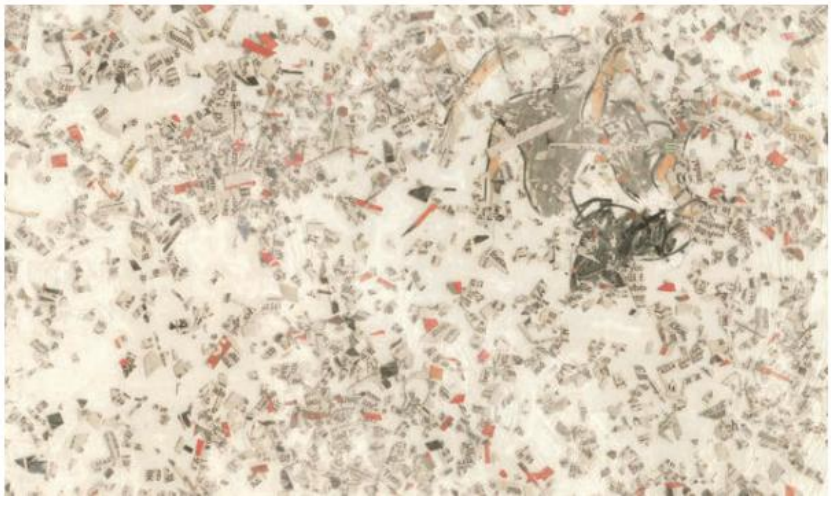
Laing's *weather #15* is from a series of 16 works. Many of the works in the series feature a woman tumbling through the air, caught in a swirling storm of shredded paper. The paper is cut from texts about environmental issues and climate change; however, the words and their meanings are now fragmented as they eddy and whirl around the woman, buffeting her as she falls through the sky.

Laing creates her work in series of related images. Each individual image is powerful and full of meaning, but when seen together, the images in a series often suggest a **narrative** about a particular theme or idea.

Laing also explores similar ideas and themes across different series. For example, ideas and themes related to flight, movement and people's relationships with the natural environment and weather are represented in earlier series. In a more recent series, The Paper 2013, Laing used paper in a different way – as a carpet on a forest floor – to explore ideas related to people's relationship with the landscape.

Viewers often assume that *weather #15* and other images by Laing that depict dramatic or unnatural events or scenes are digitally constructed; however, Laing's

Tolarno Galleries



Rosemary Laing
Australian, b. 1959
weather drawing #13, 2006
paint, pencil on paper and acetate
21 × 29.7 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tolarno Galleries

Rosemary Laing
Australian, b. 1959
weather #15, 2006 (from the weather series 2006)
C-type photograph
129 × 198 cm (large); 83 × 120.5 cm (small)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2007 (2007.116)
Courtesy of the artist and Tolarno Galleries

photographic images are made in real time. She created *weather #15* on a photoshoot in a **studio** using a powerful wind machine and a crew of 24 people, including a stuntwoman. The weather series took two years to complete.

Laing's working process is complex. For each series, she does extensive research. She spends time visiting locations to find suitable sites, to become familiar with the environmental conditions and to seek permission to work there. Sketches, such as *weather drawing #13*, and storyboards are used to carefully map out ideas, and equipment and a skilled crew are assembled. After the photoshoot, a proof sheet and test prints are produced, and the images that will make up the series are selected. The chosen images then need to be printed and prepared for exhibition.

Laing's works have been exhibited in many settings, including as outdoor billboards.

1. After closely studying images of Laing's work and reading about her process, what similarities and differences can you see between her work and cinema or film?
2. What is a metaphor? Laing's weather series has been described as a metaphor for how people are affected by the media's discussions and debates about climate change. Why might the image be described in this way?
3. Use a Venn diagram to compare *weather #15* with *Cousin Bichonnade in Flight, 1905* (p. 40). What similarities and differences can you find?

EXPLORE

Research other series by Laing. Choose one series and one work from that series that interest you. Explain what interests you about the work and why. What links can you find between this work and *weather #15*?

DISCUSS

Many of the titles of Laing's series and individual works are written entirely in lower-case letters. Why do you think she does this? Consider if this presentation of the title influences how people interpret the work.

CREATE

Create your own photo-based artwork that addresses an environmental issue that concerns you.

Think about the photo-based media you have access to and how you can use it creatively to make an interesting and meaningful image. Consider using symbolism to convey meaning.

Use your visual diary to try ideas and plan your work. In your visual diary, describe how you would like to present and display your work so that your ideas reach a wide audience.

COLLAGE AND ASSEMBLAGE

2.13 COLLECTING AND CREATING

In the early twentieth century, collage and assemblage were among the new artforms that helped change ideas about art, including what it should be made from and how it should be made.

Collage was first used around 1911–12 by Pablo Picasso (pp. 156–7, 212–13) and Georges Braque (1882–1963). They stuck pieces of newspaper, wallpaper, cane and wood veneer onto their paintings.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other collages by Gower, including images of The Cutting Table exhibition.

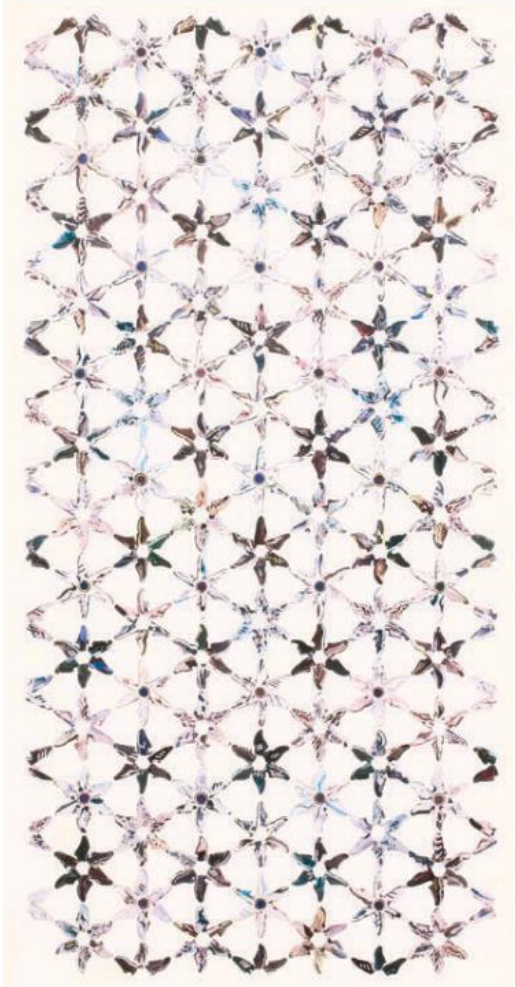
Collage

The term **collage** comes from the French verb *coller*, which means 'to stick'. Collages are made by sticking paper, fabric, photographs, newspaper cuttings or other materials onto a flat surface, such as paper or canvas. Often collage is used in combination with painting or drawing.

Collecting and sorting

Each artwork in the Urban Artefacts series by **Elizabeth Gower** (b. 1952) is a collage of photographs collected and cut from shopping catalogues. The images are carefully sorted, arranged and glued onto drafting film (a heavy, semi-transparent paper) to create an intricately patterned design. Each collage is made from variations of a particular item. The delicate, floral pattern seen in *Urban Artefacts (Runners)* is created from images of running shoes. Other collages in the series are based on items such as lipsticks, watches, video cases and calculators.

Elizabeth Gower



(detail)

Elizabeth Gower
Australian, b. 1952
Urban Artefacts (Runners), 2004
paper on drafting film
180 × 100 cm
© Elizabeth Gower

DISCUSS

Elizabeth Gower presented an exhibition in 2013 called The Cutting Table, which featured a collection of the cut and collected paper that she uses for her collages. The paper pieces were sorted according to shape and colour and displayed on long trestles. Suggest why the display was of interest to audiences.

It is not until you look closely at the collages that you recognise what they are made from. The first impression is of an abstract pattern, with subtle variations and repetitions of colours, tones and positive and negative shapes. Many of the collages have designs that suggest Middle Eastern decorative patterns (p. 187), quilts or even **non-representational art**.

Why do you think viewers are usually surprised to discover what these designs are made from? Perhaps they do not expect such beautiful artworks to be made from something as ordinary as shopping catalogues or images of running shoes. Before looking at Gower's collages, most of us would probably never have considered the subtle visual qualities and variations of items such as running shoes. Gower's Urban Artefacts series presents a new way of thinking about humble items.

By highlighting the many variations of such products, her collages could also

Bendigo Art Gallery

Rosalie Gascoigne
Australian, 1917–1999
All Summer Long, 1995–1996
acrylic on wood
RHS Abbott Bequest Fund, 1998
Collection Bendigo Art Gallery
1998.46a-f
© Rosalie Gascoigne. Licensed by Viscopy, 2016

be seen as a comment on the excesses of contemporary society, where fashion and consumerism create a constant demand for new goods.

1 Gower uses precision and care when cutting, gluing and arranging the shapes in her collages. What evidence can you see of this precision and care in *Urban Artefacts (Runners)*? Why might it be important for Gower to work this way?

2 What does the series title Urban Artefacts add to your understanding of the artwork?

3 Why do you think Gower chose to create her collages from images cut from shopping catalogues?

Assemblage

Assemblages are artworks made from a carefully arranged collection of objects. Assemblages can be two-dimensional or three-dimensional. They are usually made from **found objects** rather than from things that the artist has made. Artists choose the objects carefully; an object might have a special shape, colour or meaning that the artist wants to include in the artwork.

Art by arrangement

Many of us would look at an old, discarded wooden crate and think no more of it, or perhaps even see it as rubbish; however, as is evident in her assemblages, **Rosalie Gascoigne** (1917–1999) saw special qualities in such found objects.

In most of her works, Gascoigne used the humble materials she collected to make art about the landscape; however, she was never interested in describing the landscape as it is seen. She carefully selected and arranged materials to suggest an atmosphere or a feeling associated with the landscape. Can you see how she has done this in *All Summer Long*?

All Summer Long is made from strips of wood cut from old soft-drink crates. The horizontal rows in each of the six panels and the horizontal format of the composition strongly suggest a landscape.

The title of the work prompts thoughts about summer; however, this idea is also communicated visually in the work. The worn surface and warm, earthy tones of the yellow paint convey the atmosphere of an Australian landscape baked dry by a long, hot summer. Did you notice the rhythmic pattern across the length of the work, created by the reversal of light and dark areas across the panels? This could be seen as referring to summer's steady pattern of hot days and nights.

4 Consider the title of *All Summer Long*. Does the title help your understanding of the artwork? Why? Think of an alternative title and explain why you think it suits the work.

5 What evidence can you see of wear and weathering on the materials used to make *All Summer Long*? How does this add to the appearance or meaning of *All Summer Long*?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Gascoigne's works on the National Gallery of Victoria's website.

CREATE

Collect images of an everyday item from magazines, newspapers and catalogues. Sort the images by size, colour or style, and use them to create a collage with a strong pattern or movement. Consider repetition and variety in the arrangement of elements in your collage.

Alternatively, scan images into Photoshop or a similar program and use the cut, copy and paste functions to create a pattern.

Aim to create an artwork where attention is focused on the pattern or effect you create, not on the images your collage is constructed from.

2.14 MODELS, MOULDS AND CASTS

Sculptures are artworks that have three dimensions: length, width and depth.

Chinese Tang dynasty, 700–750 CE, Henan/Shaanxi province, North China
Guardian Spirit, 700–750 CE
earthenware (Sancai ware)
74.4 × 23.4 × 19.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1926
(2784–D3)

Models and moulds

A **sculpture** made by **modelling** is built up from a soft material that can be shaped. Clay, wax and papier-mâché are commonly used modelling materials. All of them become hard and solid when they dry.

Soft materials, such as clay, can also be pressed into **moulds** to make sculptures. Materials such as plaster, cement, metal or plastic, in their liquid form, can be poured into a mould. Once the material in a mould is dried or set and removed from the mould, the mould can usually be used again to make another identical form.

Protecting the dead

The ancient Chinese *Guardian Spirit* was made by pressing clay into moulds. You can tell by the complicated shapes in the sculpture that several moulds were necessary. The clay was removed from the moulds before it was completely dry, and the pieces were then joined together using a clay and water mixture to make the finished sculpture.

From the second century BCE until the eighth century CE, when this sculpture was made, it was common practice in China to bury **ceramic** figurines with the dead. The Chinese people believed that the figurines would provide for and protect them in the afterlife. There was a great demand for burial objects, and it was more efficient for many to be made using moulds than for each one to be modelled individually.

This figurine depicts Tubo, the lord of the underworld, who used his power to keep evil spirits away from the dead.

1 The bodies of ancient Chinese guardian spirits often combine animal and human forms. What human and animal forms can you recognise in *Guardian Spirit*?

2 How might a body made up of different animal and human forms assist the guardian spirits to protect and provide for the deceased in the afterlife?

3 List two fictional characters with special powers who have a combination of features from animals and humans. What are the powers of each character and how is their power reflected in their features?

CREATE

Create your own guardian spirit from clay. Before you start, think about the qualities you want your guardian spirit to have and how different human or animal body parts may best suggest this. Sketch the different parts you want to incorporate in your guardian spirit before you begin.

Give your guardian spirit a name and write a short story that explains its symbolism and significance. You could assemble the stories into a class book of myths.

Cast in bronze

Through the ages and in many parts of the world, bronze has been a popular material for making sculptures. Bronze sculptures commemorating important events or people are found in many cities and towns.

Making a bronze sculpture usually begins with an artist making a model in wax or clay. A mould is then made from the model. Molten bronze is poured into the mould to create a sculpture. Special techniques are used to create hollow sculptures. **Casting** a bronze sculpture, especially a large work, involves technical expertise and specialist facilities. For this reason, most artists work with a professional **foundry** when creating bronze sculptures.

Larger than life

Imagine walking through a garden and discovering a giant bronze ape finger projecting from the ground. How would you feel if you then heard ape noises? The visitors

Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Gavin Hansford

Lisa Roet
Australian, b. 1976
Chimpanzee Finger, 2005
bronze
145 × 55 cm
edition of 6
McClelland Sculpture Park, Victoria

to McClelland Gallery in Victoria, where *Chimpanzee Finger* was installed in 2003, had just this experience.

Lisa Roet (b. 1967) has been fascinated by simians (apes and monkeys) since childhood. She has been making artworks related to this theme for many years and has travelled to Europe, the United States and Malaysia to study and observe primates in the wild, in zoos and in scientific research institutes. She is particularly interested in the similarities between simians and humans, and in the different ways simians relate to each other and to humans.

Roet has used different artforms – including drawing, stained glass, ceramics, computer-generated images and video – to explore different ideas related to simians. Roet has made several sculptures of giant simian fingers, such as *Chimpanzee Finger*, for different locations. These works are closely related to some of her very large drawings that examine simian hands, fingers and feet in extraordinary detail.

Roet worked in **collaboration** with others to produce *Chimpanzee Finger*. The work was cast at a **foundry** from a model made by the artist. The soundtrack that accompanies *Chimpanzee Finger* was produced by musician Charlie Owen. It is an edited remix of chimpanzee sounds recorded by the artist.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to visit Roet's website.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Voiceless and the exhibition they organised.

DISCUSS

Lisa Roet was one of a group of artists whose work has been featured in an exhibition to support Voiceless, an animal protection institute. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the works goes to Voiceless to support their work protecting animals.

What does the Voiceless exhibition reveal about links between the artists, the art world and the broader world?

DISCUSS

Look at other artworks by Roet and find out about the primate research that has informed her work. How does scientific research influence her work and how does her work present different ways of looking at science?

EXPLORE

Research the characteristics of bronze and explain why it is such a hard and durable material.

- Find out when and how two different cultures developed the technology to use bronze.
- Discuss an example of a bronze object produced by each culture, explaining the qualities and purpose of each object.

EXPLORE

Research one of the methods commonly used to cast bronze sculptures, such as lost-wax casting. Create a step-by-step guide describing the process. Include illustrations in your guide if you wish.

2.15 ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

While construction sculpture involves adding parts, carving involves removing material from a solid mass.

Many sculptures are freestanding; they can and should be looked at from all sides. Such sculptures are called sculptures in the round.

Other sculptures have a raised, three-dimensional surface but are made to be seen against a wall or other surface. These are called **relief sculptures**.

A **low-relief sculpture** has a raised surface that does not stand out much from the background. A **high-relief sculpture** has a raised surface that stands well out from the background.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see further details of *Tender* and other works by Hall.

Construction

A **construction sculpture** is built up from different parts. Any material or combination of materials can be used to construct a sculpture. Metal, wood, plastic, paper and fabric are commonly used materials. Artists use many techniques to construct sculptures, including gluing, nailing, welding, tying and stitching.

Inspired by environment

Australian artist **Fiona Hall** (b. 1953) has constructed sculptures using a wide range of materials, including sardine tins, soap, videotape, soft-drink cans, glass beads, PVC pipe and plastic containers. She uses ordinary materials in innovative ways to create interesting visual qualities and powerful meaning in her work.

The delicate objects illustrated are from the work *Tender*. You can probably see that *Tender* was inspired by birds' nests. Hall has a passionate interest in natural history and has spent many hours studying different birds' nests in museums and in the natural environment.

If you could look at the exquisite nests closely, you would see that each is made from shredded American dollar notes and the words 'legal tender' are visible on the notes. The American dollar is one of the world's most powerful and desired currencies and can be seen as a symbol of western wealth and global trade.

The empty nests reflect the ingenuity and beauty of nature while also representing some of the most vulnerable and threatened species. The unexpected combination of materials and subject matter provokes questions about connections between the environment, politics and power.

1 In *Tender*, what evidence can you see of an innovative use of materials to:
   - create interesting visual effects
   - suggest powerful meanings?

2 Suggest why studying real birds' nests might have been important for Hall when making *Tender*.

3 Hall had a large nineteenth-century-style museum cabinet constructed to display *Tender*. Suggest how this display might have added to the meaning or ideas associated with the work.

(detail)

Fiona Hall
Australian, b. 1953
Tender, 2003–05
US dollars
vitrine dimensions 220 × 360 × 150 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Carving

Carving involves cutting, grinding or otherwise removing material to create a sculpture. Common materials used for carving include stone, wood and plaster. Each material has its own unique qualities and can be worked using tools such as saws, chisels, rasps and sandpaper.

A matter of time

Australian artist **Ricky Swallow** (b. 1974) carved the life-size sculpture *Killing Time* entirely by hand. The artist worked long days for over six months to complete this sculpture.

Although Swallow has made some artworks that require industrial processes, the often time-consuming and skilful process of crafting a work by hand is an integral part of his work. In a world in which technology has mechanised and hastened the production of most objects, Swallow's intricately hand-carved and detailed sculptures can be seen as a monument to time. As the title of *Killing Time* suggests, time is an important theme in Swallow's work.

Many of Swallow's artworks relate to times past, including the artist's early life. Swallow grew up in San Remo, a small coastal town in Victoria, where his father was a fisherman. The table is a replica of the family kitchen table. The fish and crustaceans represent those that Swallow caught and killed when he was young. The careful positioning of the sea creatures and other objects on the table suggests a bountiful sea harvest.

Killing Time also alludes to the art of another time and place – the **still-life** painting tradition of seventeenth-century Netherlands (p. 130). Unlike artists in other parts of Europe at the time, Dutch artists valued still life and lavished care and attention on the representation of everyday objects. Their work was often rich in symbolism. Symbolic references to the passing of time were common.

Dutch still-life painting is characterised by its rich colour and texture. In contrast, *Killing Time* is **monochromatic** and pale. It is carved from jelutong, a type of hardwood commonly used by model-makers. The blond colour and light grain of this material are distinctive features of *Killing Time* and contribute to the mood of stillness and silence that surrounds the work. The dramatic lighting used to display the work heightens this effect.

Photo: AGNSW 125.2004

(detail)

Ricky Swallow
Australian, b. 1974
Killing Time, 2003–04
laminated jelutong, maple
108 × 184 × 118 cm (irreg.)
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales
Rudy Komon Memorial Fund and the Contemporary Collection Benefactors, 2004

4 Suggest why *Killing Time* can be seen as:
- an artwork about the artist's personal experiences and memories
- a contemporary interpretation of still life
- a comment on contemporary life.

Provide at least one reason for each point.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to visit Swallow's website and to learn more about this artwork at the Art Gallery of New South Wales's website.

EXPLORE

Research a form of sculpture not discussed here, such as mobiles, stabiles, kinetic sculpture, environmental sculpture or ready-mades.
- Name and describe an example of the sculpture technique.
- What makes your chosen form of sculpture different from others?

DISCUSS

Do you think there is a link between the time an artist spends making a work and the time a viewer spends with an artwork? Discuss a variety of artworks, including *Killing Time* and *Tender*.

2.16 FORMED IN FIBRE

Many cultures have long traditions of creating with fibre; however, because fibre has often been associated with utilitarian and domestic objects, it has not always been highly valued as an artform.

New ideas about art and the creativity and inventiveness of many artists working with fibre have generated new interest in fibre-based artforms. Today, artists create fibre art from a wide range of natural and synthetic materials.

Ngarrindjeri country

Shutterstock.com/Konrad Weiss

Sedge grasses

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the history and practice of coiling in contemporary Australian fibre art.

Tradition and innovation

Yvonne Koolmatrie (b. 1944) is a Ngarrindjeri woman. Ngarrindjeri country incorporates the Coorong wetlands and the mouth and lakes of the lower Murray River in South Australia.

Koolmatrie's parents were part of the Stolen Generations so when she was growing up she learnt very little about her family's traditional culture.

In 1982, Koolmatrie attended a workshop taught by elder Aunty Dorothy Kartinyeri where she was introduced to the traditional methods of weaving the sedge grass that grows along the Murray River.

Importantly, she learnt how to sustainably harvest the sedge grass so that the roots and young shoots are not damaged, and how to prepare the grass for weaving. Once the grass is collected, it can take several weeks to dry. The grass is then moistened again to make it pliable enough for weaving.

The workshop with Aunty Dorothy changed Koolmatrie's life. Sadly, Aunty Dorothy – who was one of the last people practising the traditional coiled bundle weaving technique – passed away not long after the workshop, but Koolmatrie continued to practise, to research and to refine her technique. She developed her skills and used the technique to create both traditional forms – such as eel traps and baskets – and more experimental forms – including hot air balloons, aeroplanes and animals. Local species such as the Murray cod, freshwater turtles and echidnas have also inspired many works.

Koolmatrie is passionately committed to keeping her Indigenous tradition alive and thriving. She strives to do this by creating quality artworks and by organising workshops to teach others. In 1997, Koolmatrie represented Australia at the Venice Biennale exhibition with Emily Kam Kngwarray (p. 77) and Judy Watson (b. 1959).

1 Look closely at *Echidna*. Describe how Koolmatrie has used materials and techniques to capture the characteristics of an echidna.

2 Koolmatrie works intuitively, without preliminary sketches, to create her woven forms. Why do you think she is able to work in this way?

Echidna incorporates real echidna quills sourced from road kill.

Yvonne Koolmatrie
Australian (Ngarrindjeri), b. 1944
Echidna, 1999
sedge (*Carex sp.*), echidna quills
14.3 × 47.4 × 28.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1999 (1999.286)

DISCUSS

What does it take for a tradition to stay alive and thrive? How does the work of an artist such as Koolmatrie contribute to keeping tradition alive?

An art of transformation

You may recognise something about this bird. Artist **Louise Weaver** (b. 1966) used a foam taxidermic model of a Pacific gull, a common bird in many parts of Australia, to make the work; however, unlike the Pacific gull, which has predominantly white, grey and black plumage, Weaver's bird has brilliantly coloured striped skin and elaborate, sparkling embellishments.

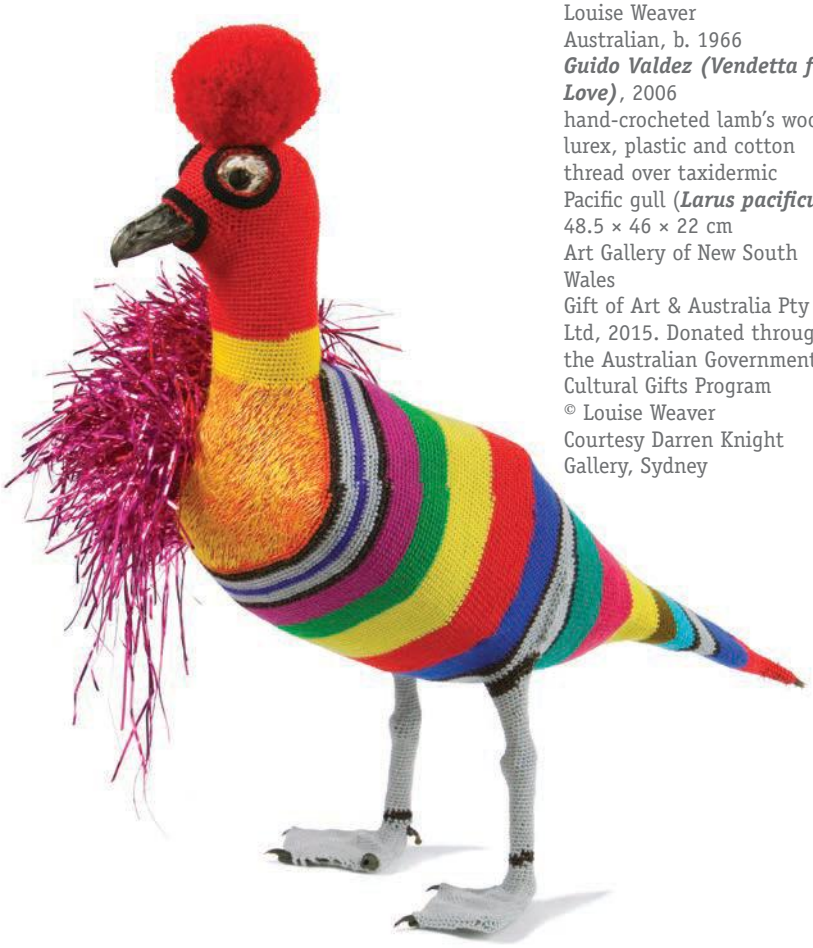
Weaver trained as a painter but has worked in a wide range of artforms and materials. Weaver's choice of materials is driven by the ideas that she is interested in exploring and expressing. Many of her artworks explore ideas related to concealment, camouflage and metamorphosis, and they reflect an interest in the natural world, colour, texture, design, fashion and ornamentation.

Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love) is one of many works that Weaver has created by transforming taxidermic animal models and other objects by covering them with tight, colourful skins made from crocheted yarn. Crochet is a craft technique for making fabric out of yarn. It is similar to knitting. A crochet hook is used to create interlocking loops of yarn that form the fabric. Her sculptural forms are also often embroidered or embellished with sequins or other decorative elements, such as pompoms.

Sometimes a form will stand alone, but Weaver also often displays many forms together or creates installations where elements such as sound and lighting are used to add to the mood and meaning of the work.

3 Weaver's work has often been associated with fantasy and wonder; however, it can also be seen as having a darker, more sinister side. Consider how both these views could apply to *Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love)*.

4 *Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love)* was a commission for the cover of the art journal *Art & Australia* (issue 44.3, autumn 2007). Suggest how creating a work for this purpose might influence how the artist approaches the work.



Louise Weaver
Australian, b. 1966
Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love), 2006
hand-crocheted lamb's wool, lurex, plastic and cotton thread over taxidermic Pacific gull (***Larus pacificus***)
48.5 × 46 × 22 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Gift of Art & Australia Pty Ltd, 2015. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

Courtesy Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

CREATE

Investigate techniques for working with yarn and fibre – such as knitting, crocheting, knotting, weaving, twisting, felting, plaiting and braiding. Choose a technique that interests you and use it in an innovative way to create a sculptural artwork of an animal.

CREATE

Make a two-dimensional colour copy (such as a photograph, painting or drawing) of *Echidna* or *Guido Valdez (Vendetta for Love)*. Create an appropriate habitat for the animal, using colours and textures inspired by the artist's work.

EXPLORE

Research yarn bombing. Briefly explain what yarn bombing is. Collect at least three images of yarn-bombing projects that interest you. Annotate the images to identify what interests you in each project.

Working in small groups, identify an area in your school or community that you think could be improved by yarn bombing. Create a proposal for a yarn-bombing project for the site. Include hand- or computer-generated sketches of how it might look, a budget and a plan for creating and installing the work.

2.17 A MATTER OF TIME AND SPACE

Three-dimensional art has length, width and breadth. Some artworks also have time or spatial dimensions that make them four dimensional. Such artworks include moving images, performance art and installations.

Photo: Hal Reiff

Yayoi Kusama
Japanese, b. 1929
Self Obliteration by Dots, 1968

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about the 2012 major exhibition of Kusama's work at the Queensland Art Gallery.

See an installation work by Kusama on p. 201.

Performance art

Some artists perform their artworks; they use their own bodies to create art. Costumes, props, lighting, sound and other elements can be an important part of **performance art**. A performance can last for a short time or extend over hours or days.

Performances can happen anywhere. They can be carefully planned, or they can be spontaneous. Sometimes, artists actively involve the audience in a performance; other performances are made just for the camera.

Obliterated by dots

Can you guess from the photographs of the performance by Japanese artist **Yayoi Kusama** (b. 1929) what the artist was trying to do in this work? The title, *Self Obliteration by Dots*, provides a clue. In this performance, the artist placed dots all over her body and her surroundings to blend herself into the background.

The dots in Kusama's works can be interpreted in many ways. Dots are often seen as symbols of the molecules that make up all matter, including humans. Perhaps Kusama's performance is a reminder that, despite our humanity and individuality, we are only one small part of a complex universe.

Kusama's dots also have personal significance. Since childhood, the artist has experienced hallucinations and visions in which dots, or sometimes nets and flowers, envelop and float around her. These motifs are repeated in infinite variations and patterns throughout her work. Making art has helped her cope with this condition.

Kusama has worked in a variety of artforms during the last 50 years, including painting, sculpture, collage and installation, to explore themes related to obliteration, nothingness and infinity.

1 How does Kusama convey the idea of 'obliterating' herself in this work? Think about her use of materials and elements, and the performance aspect of the work.

Installation art

Installation artists create environments or arrangements of objects, materials or other elements, such as video, light, colour or sound. Many installations are **site-specific**, which means they are made to suit a particular environment. Some installations are **ephemeral** and exist for a limited time. Some can be taken apart and reassembled in different environments.

DISCUSS

Many **four-dimensional artworks**, such as performances and installations, are known through photographic, video and written documentation.

Discuss how experiencing a recording of a four-dimensional artwork would differ from experiencing the artwork in real time.

How important is it to permanently record such artworks? What role does the recording of the artwork play in how the artwork will be viewed once it no longer exists?

Dots and more dots

Viewing *Atomic: Full of Love, Full of Wonder* by Australian artist **Nike Savvas** (b. 1964), visitors were indeed filled with wonder. The vast exhibition space was a spectacle of gently shimmering coloured balls. Up close, it was easy for viewers to be transported to another realm and see the gently hovering balls as brilliantly coloured molecules suspended in space. From a distance, the same balls formed distinct horizontal bands of colour that suggested the red soil and blue skies of the Australian landscape.

Although Savvas grew up in Australia, she now lives in London. Her longing for the Australian landscape partly inspired the work.

It took more than 67 000 coloured balls to create this **installation**. Each of the spray-painted balls was threaded onto transparent fishing line to create a giant 'necklace'. Hundreds of necklaces were then methodically installed across, up and along the walls to fill the exhibition space. Every ball was then spaced apart and glued into place. Fans were installed in the gallery space to move the balls.

Savvas researched and planned this work in London. Some preparatory work was started by assistants before the artist arrived in Australia, but it took a large crew of people working around the clock to complete the installation.

Savvas is interested in creating works that viewers experience rather than just look at. She relates this interest back to her experiences as a child attending mass at a Greek Orthodox Church. Although she did not understand what was being said, the atmosphere of the church, created by the scent of frankincense and the rich variety of sights and sounds, made the experience memorable.

2 Suggest why *Atomic: Full of Love, Full of Wonder* can be seen as an artwork about the artist's personal experiences and memories.

3 People usually only spend a few seconds looking at an artwork; however, visitors often spent extended periods viewing *Atomic: Full of Love, Full of Wonder*. Suggest reasons for this.

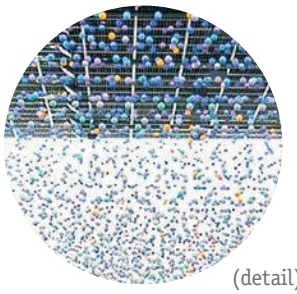
4 Whose work interests you more: Kusama's or Savvas's? Why?

Photo: John Brash

Nike Savvas
Australian, b. 1964
Atomic: Full of Love, Full of Wonder, 2005
polystyrene balls, paint, nylon wire, electric fans that gyrate the balls
dimensions variable
Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

EXPLORE

The work of French artist Georges Seurat (1859–1891) was one of the things that inspired *Atomic: Full of Love, Full of Wonder*. Find an example of Seurat's work and suggest what aspect of his art might have inspired Savvas.



(detail)

The balls in Savvas's installation are fishing floats.

Savvas made the first work of this kind with suspended polystyrene balls in 1994. It was titled *Simple Division* and was collected by the Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand.

CREATE

Work with other students to collect a particular object, such as plastic milk bottles, coloured plastic bags or old tins: anything you can find plenty of. Use the objects to create an interesting installation. You may like to incorporate sound or lighting. Your work should encourage viewers to think about more than the objects you have collected.

Document the development of the work in photographs or video.

SITE-SPECIFIC

2.18 ART IN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Many artworks are made for locations other than galleries and are often **site-specific**. The materials, ideas and designs of such artworks reflect strong connections to their environments.

Goldsworthy was commissioned to create a permanent work for the Adelaide Botanic Garden during his visit to Australia in 1991. Since this time, he has also produced several permanent works for Herring Island Environmental Sculpture Park in Melbourne and Conondale National Park in Queensland.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch how Goldsworthy built *Strangler Cairn*.

Land art

Land art (or earth art) is art created in the natural environment. Some artworks involve significant and often permanent changes to the environment; other land art has a more subtle or temporary presence in the environment.

Art in nature

English artist **Andy Goldsworthy** (b. 1956) creates his work in the landscape, often in remote locations, and his materials are what nature provides. He often works with stones, pebbles and twigs, but his materials have also included snow and ice in Antarctica and brilliantly coloured autumn leaves in Japan.

Goldsworthy's sculptures have a sense of place and reflect a sensitivity to the materials, patterns and rhythms of nature. He generally does not work with living plant materials, and most of his works are made to be absorbed back into the environment by the forces of nature, such as water, sun and wind. His artworks are photographed and, very importantly, continue to exist as memories for those who experience them.

In 1991, Goldsworthy spent several weeks at Mount Victor Station, east of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Goldsworthy was struck by the colours in the Australian landscape. The red sand became an important feature of the **ephemeral** artworks he made in this environment, including *Red Earth*, the sand sculpture at Mount Victor Station that appears to flow through the landscape like a river.

DISCUSS

Think about sights, people, events or activities you have known or experienced that now only exist as a memory. How important is memory when experiencing an artwork? Is the importance of an artwork diminished if it is not permanent and can only exist as a memory or a photograph?

1. What ideas, feelings or other meanings does *Red Earth* suggest to you? How?
2. Goldsworthy has said that his experience working on a farm affected his art more than going to art school. Suggest why this might be so.

Fairfax Syndication/*The Age*/Bryan Charlton

Artist Andy Goldsworthy, created a sculpture entitled ***Red Earth*** in the Australian outback, 10 August 1991.

Art that grows

Karakarook's Garden is a permanent **site-specific** work in the grounds of Heide Museum of Modern Art, which has an extensive garden and sculpture park. One of the features of the museum's garden is a large kitchen garden of vegetables, herbs and roses, planted by the former owners of Heide, John and Sunday Reed. In contrast to this garden, *Karakarook's Garden* is planted entirely with indigenous plants, native to Australia.

The title honours Karakarook who, according to local Wurundjeri culture and tradition, taught the Wurundjeri women about edible and medicinal plants. Many of the garden's plants have edible or healing properties.

The environment and sustainability are a continuing focus for **installation** artist **Lauren Berkowitz** (b. 1965). Berkowitz characteristically works with found, recycled or natural materials, including materials sourced from the local environment, to create both **ephemeral** and permanent artworks.

Her work involves extensive research and often features connections between the environment, history and culture. The ordered, geometric structure of the plantings in the garden bed in *Karakarook's Garden* are a reference to the **modern art** styles that were championed by John and Sunday Reed.

3 What does multisensory mean? How can *Karakarook's Garden* be described as multisensory?

4 Suggest how *Karakarook's Garden* highlights connections between the environment, history and culture.

Lauren Berkowitz
Australian, b. 1965
Karakarook's Garden, 2005–06
indigenous plants and Dromana toppings
12 × 7 m
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Commissioned through the Heide Foundation with the support of Arts Victoria through the Arts Development Program, 2005

EXPLORE

In 2011, Goldsworthy completed *Strangler Cairn* to celebrate the Conondale Range Great Walk.

Watch the YouTube video about the making of the work.

What materials, techniques and processes were used to create this work, and what informed the artist's selection of these?

What similarities and differences are there between this work and *Red Earth*?

DISCUSS

Goldsworthy's sculptures sit gently in the landscape so that people discover them in the same way as they might discover any natural form or feature. Suggest how experiencing an artwork in this way differs from looking at an artwork in a gallery.

DISCUSS

Discuss why artists may want to make artworks for the natural or urban environment rather than for traditional art spaces.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see Berkowitz's website and to learn more about the Heide Museum of Modern Art.

EXPLORE

Although land art is a relatively recent development in western art, other cultures have long traditions of such art.

Find out how another culture has used natural materials to create artwork in the environment, for example, Aboriginal sand paintings and Japanese gardens.

CREATE

Do some research to learn about other projects by Goldsworthy and Berkowitz.

In your school grounds or another suitable location, create an environmental work inspired by and using natural found materials from that environment. Take care to show the same respect for the environment that Goldsworthy and Berkowitz do.

SITE-SPECIFIC

2.19 ART IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Urban environments – the streets, laneways, buildings and other locations of a city and its suburbs – provide many artists with inspiration for making and displaying art.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see photographs and videos documenting ROA's work.

Bringing nature to the city

ROA (b. 1976) is a renowned street artist whose works can be found around the world. He first discovered the magic of street art as a teenager growing up in the city of Ghent, Belgium.

ROA is best known today for his large-scale murals of animals, painted mainly in black and white. ROA has had a fascination with animals since he was a boy.

The animals that are the subjects of his murals are native to the place he is working. He has a strong interest in animal welfare and finds it helpful to get to know the characteristics and behaviour of the animals that he depicts. When ROA visited Melbourne in 2012, he visited Healesville Sanctuary, where he closely observed and sketched native animals and was given the opportunity to go behind the scenes and speak to keepers and vets.

ROA also exhibits his work in galleries. At a solo exhibition in Melbourne in 2012, he exhibited paintings of animals on found objects.

In 2010, more than 2000 people signed a petition to save ROA's 3.5-metre commissioned mural of a rabbit on the side of a recording studio and café in London after the local council demanded the removal of the work.

While in Melbourne, ROA completed a number of murals, including several at Healesville Sanctuary and *Echidna* in the inner-city suburb of Fitzroy.

Photographs documenting the process of making *Echidna* reveal how ROA began by painting a solid white background on the brick wall. He then sketched out the contours of the echidna with a roller before using a variety of techniques – including spray paint and a combination of matte and gloss paint – to add shading and details such as the echidna quills.

1 What ideas, feelings or other meanings does ROA's depiction of an echidna suggest to you? What about the work causes you to think or feel this way?

EXPLORE

Look at other murals by ROA. What evidence can you see to show that ROA's work relates to the location in which it is painted?

DISCUSS

Although ROA's work is very public, and the process of making his art is often well documented through photography and video, he prefers to remain anonymous. His real name is not public, and he works under the pseudonym ROA. Suggest why this might be.

ROA
Belgian, b. 1976
Echidna, 2 December 2012
Fitzroy, Melbourne

Photo by Greta Costello for Ash Keating

Ash Keating
Australian, b. 1980
West Park Proposition,
2012 (production still)
three channel video
installation
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Foundation,
2012

Landscape on a grand scale

Melbourne-based contemporary artist **Ash Keating** (b. 1980) has an art practice based largely outside of galleries. His works include many **interventions** in the urban environment, and they are often designed to provoke audiences to think about urban development.

The photograph here shows a 50-metre painting that Keating made on the wall of a tilt-slab concrete factory building in a new industrial park in Truganina, on the outskirts of Melbourne. The horizontal bands of shimmering colour echo the colour and textures of the surrounding spring landscape.

The painting was made in just eight hours. The artist used paint-filled pressurised fire extinguishers (a technique he has worked with since 2004) and flung buckets of water-based house paint at the wall to create the painting. The process of painting was physically demanding and was recorded by director and editor Jason Heller, who worked in **collaboration** with Keating to create a three-part video **installation**, *West Park Proposition*. The installation has featured in a number of exhibitions and is an important documentation of the painting, but it is also a separate artwork.

2 Watch the three-screen video installation *West Park Proposition*. Suggest how the video work, as well as the process of creating it, provokes audiences to think about urban development.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch videos of the making of *West Park Proposition*.

EXPLORE

Imagine that you have the task of commissioning an artwork for a large blank concrete wall in your school. Identify an artist who you would like to hire for this project, and write a proposal that explains why you recommend your chosen artist. Include background information about the artist and their work in your proposal.

DISCUSS

What challenges do you think artists working in urban environments and public spaces might face?

NEW MEDIA

2.20 ART AND TECHNOLOGY

New media art is a general term used to describe artforms that use technology invented since the middle of the twentieth century, such as video, sound art and computer-generated art, including Internet art.

Technology has influenced not only how artists create art and what art looks like but also the way art is viewed, displayed and stored. Sometimes new technology is also the subject matter of art.

Kate Beynon
Australian, b. 1970
Li Ji Warrior Girl, 2000
(stills from animated video)
Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery

Moving images

Artists have been working with moving images since the first motion-picture cameras were invented late in the nineteenth century.

Li Ji in Melbourne

Like many contemporary artists, Australian artist **Kate Beynon** (b. 1970) (pp. 26, 196–7) works in a variety of artforms and uses both traditional media and new technology.

The ancient Chinese heroine Li Ji (p. 26) is the subject of many of Beynon's artworks, including an animated video, *Li Ji Warrior Girl*. In the video, Li Ji appears as a Chinese-Australian girl walking through Melbourne towards Chinatown.

The first scene pictured here shows Li Ji walking along Swanston Street; it is loosely based on John Brack's iconic painting *Collins St., 5 p.m.* (p. 94). While the people in Brack's painting appear to have an uneventful journey through the city, Li Ji's journey is more emotionally confronting. She sees evidence of Chinese migration being welcomed by the city; however, she also sees racist graffiti. While walking, she has flashbacks to her previous life as a heroine in ancient China. The memories give her strength as she thinks about issues of racism and her own identity as a Chinese-Australian.

1. Suggest why animated video is an effective medium for the story of Li Ji.
2. In her past life, Li Ji battled with and defeated a giant python. What battle does she face in a modern city?
3. Compare the still from *Li Ji Warrior Girl* with *Collins St., 5 p.m.* How has Beynon adapted Brack's image to present a different view of Australian society?

A virtual world

Joyce Hinterding (b. 1958) and **David Haines** (b. 1966) have been working on solo projects and in **collaboration** for several decades. They often create works that explore ideas and phenomena more commonly associated with scientific inquiry, and they are fascinated by unseen energy, including radio emissions, electromagnetic energy and paranormal or psychic activity.

Technology has been an important tool for these artists. Their work takes many different forms and innovatively harnesses technology's potential. About 15 years ago, they began using 3D simulation in their work after teaching themselves to code in 3D computer programs usually used for gaming. They used this technology to create *Geology*, an immersive, **interactive installation**.

Geology is a 16-metre-wide high-resolution projection of a 3D, computer-generated virtual world. Motion sensors, which respond to visitors' movements, allow visitors to enter and explore three layers of a vast, dramatic, rocky landscape. Through 'portals' in the landscape, the audience is able to navigate cavernous, fantastic and spectacular subterranean worlds.

4 The artists were inspired to create *Geology* after they visited Christchurch, not long after its devastating 2011 earthquake. Suggest how their visit might have inspired the work.

5 How does *Geology* differ from the virtual worlds in computer games? Compare the appearance and experience that this work offers the audience with those of a computer game.

DISCUSS

Have you any old film at home, but no projector to view the film? Perhaps you have information on a disk, but your new computer does not have a disk drive.

Technology is constantly evolving, making previous forms obsolete. What implications might this have for artworks stored or displayed using media that become obsolete? How can such problems be overcome?

Photo: Christopher Snee

David Haines and Joyce Hinterding
Australian
Geology, 2015
real-time 3D environment, 2 × HD projections, game engine, motion sensor, spatial 3D audio
Installation view
Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, June 2015
Commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, supported by Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Christchurch, New Zealand
© the artist. Courtesy Sarah Cottier Gallery

CREATE

Using technology of your choice, create a virtual world that takes the audience on a journey. You could use a simple animation program and base your world on a familiar environment, as Beynon has done, or you could create an environment for an imaginary, futuristic adventure into an unknown world, as Haines and Hinterding have done.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for learning resources related to Energies: Haines and Hinterding, a major exhibition of Haines and Hinterding's work.

Photo: Christopher Snee

This production still shows the final layer with geometric crystal structures.

PARTICIPATE AND COLLABORATE

2.21 INVOLVING THE AUDIENCE

Participatory art is a form of art-making that requires the participation of the audience.

Participatory art

Participatory art can take many forms, but it includes interactive environments, events or activities that create opportunities for audiences to be actively involved in experiencing or making art. **Collaboration** and social interaction play an important role in participatory art projects.

DISCUSS

How does participatory art differ from more traditional artforms? What challenges might participatory art present for artists, audiences and galleries, and for other places where these works are presented?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a time-lapse video of *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* when it was on display at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

Make and remake

Did you play with Lego as a child? *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* is made up of tens of thousands of white Lego bricks laid out on long white tables. Visitors are invited to use the Lego to construct a cityscape. As people come and go, fabulous buildings and spectacular structures of all shapes and sizes emerge out of the rubble. Then, they are modified, destroyed and rebuilt. The shape and form of the city evolves during the exhibition, reflecting the imagination and creativity of all those who contribute.

Photo: Mark Sherwood, QAGOMA

Olafur Eliasson
Danish, b. 1967
The Cubic Structural Evolution Project (installation view), 2004
white LEGO bricks (various sizes), wood, mirror
dimensions variable
Purchased 2005, Queensland Art Gallery Foundation Grant
Queensland Art Gallery

Eliasson (b. 1967) is a Danish artist who lives in Berlin. He works with a range of media and artforms, including photography, sculpture and **installation**.

Eliasson is very interested in how people perceive and experience the environment. His parents are from Iceland, and Iceland's dramatic landscape and climate have been an important source of inspiration for many of his works, including installations where he has used mist and light to create immersive environments for audiences.

1. What similarities can you see between *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* and a real city? Do you believe these similarities are part of the meaning of the work? Explain.
2. Discuss how each of the following contribute to *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project*:
   - audience participation
   - the use of Lego bricks
   - the colour of the Lego bricks.

Group work

Although artworks are often thought of as being created by individual artists, artists sometimes work together in groups.

DAMP is a Melbourne-based art collective whose members have worked together on many different projects, including performances, **installations**, sculptures and videos.

For their *Untitled Pencil* collaborative drawing project at Monash University Museum of Art in 2013, four members of DAMP – Narelle Desmond, Sharon Goodwin, Deb Kunda and James Lynch – made a giant pencil and invited visitors to use the pencil to create a collaborative drawing in a small group or in pairs. The audience became artists.

Photo: Matthew Stanton

DAMP
Untitled Pencil, 2010–
graphite, timber and acrylic
ongoing performance
© DAMP

DAMP is very interested in the relationships between audience, artist and artwork. DAMP's works often involve exchanges with their audience. In an early work, *Clothing Exchange* (1997), they displayed items of clothing belonging to members of the group. A note was pinned to each piece of clothing to explain its significance to the owner. People were invited to take a piece of clothing. In return, they were asked to agree to be photographed wearing the clothing. The photographs were then displayed as part of the exhibition.

DAMP started as a drawing workshop at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne in 1995, but it became an independent collective in 1997. Since then, over 70 artists have come and gone from the group, and the group has been involved in many projects around Australia and overseas.

Members meet weekly, in 12-week blocks, for a few hours at a time to discuss ideas and plan their works. While one person may propose an idea, the proposal is always followed by a lot of group discussion, debate and teamwork. This means that the artworks created by DAMP are true **collaborations**.

3 In what way do you think the *Untitled Pencil* project reflects DAMP's interest in the relationships between audience, artist and artwork?

DISCUSS

What are some of the challenges and advantages for artists working together as a group? Is working as a collective or group more suited to some forms of art-making than others? Explain.

EXPLORE

Research a range of participatory art projects, such as Erwin Wurm's *One Minute Sculptures*, Carsten Höller's slides, Rivane Neuenschwander's *I Wish Your Wish* and Yayoi Kusama's *Obliteration Room*.

Identify one work that you would like the opportunity to interact with. Briefly describe the work and explain the ideas the artist is interested in. How has the artist used audience participation to explore these ideas? What appeals to you about the work?

CREATE

Form your own art collective with a group of friends. Give your group a name.

Brainstorm ideas for an artwork that invites audience participation. Your artwork should only use simple materials and should be something that will be accessible and interesting to people of different ages and backgrounds.

Think about where and when you could present your artwork. Perhaps your school has an arts week or an arts festival?

As a group, pitch your idea to the class, explaining how your work will involve audiences in experiencing or making art.

Amanda Marburg
Australian, b. 1976
Garden, 2002
oil on linen
181.0 × 120.5 cm
Private collection
Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery

3

ART ELEMENTS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Colour, line, shape, tone, form and texture are art elements. You will already know something about these elements because you see them every day in the world around you.

Artists organise the art elements in an artwork using design principles, including balance, unity, variety, rhythm, focal point and space.

Understanding art elements and design principles will help you discover more about the artworks you investigate.

Art elements and design principles are an important part of the visual language used by artists. Artists use art elements and design principles to explore ideas and to convey meaning. When you investigate how an artist uses art elements and design principles in an artwork, you discover clues that will help your understanding of the artwork.

Learn about:

- art elements and design principles
- how artists use art elements and design principles to explore ideas and to convey meaning.

Learn by:

- comparing, analysing, evaluating, interpreting and reflecting on artworks from a range of cultural and historical contexts
- discussing and communicating ideas and opinions about art
- creating and displaying your own artwork.

COLOUR

3.1 A WORLD OF COLOUR

Colour is an important part of the world. Imagine a world in black and white. It would be dull and uninteresting. A colourless world would also have practical problems – think about how colour helps you to identify things (such as coloured folders for different subjects) and communicates important ideas (such as red for danger).

Colour is an important element in many artworks. Learning about colour will help you understand the important role that colour can play in expressing experiences, ideas and feelings.

Talk about colour

When creating and viewing art, it is useful to know some of the terms commonly used to differentiate and describe colours.

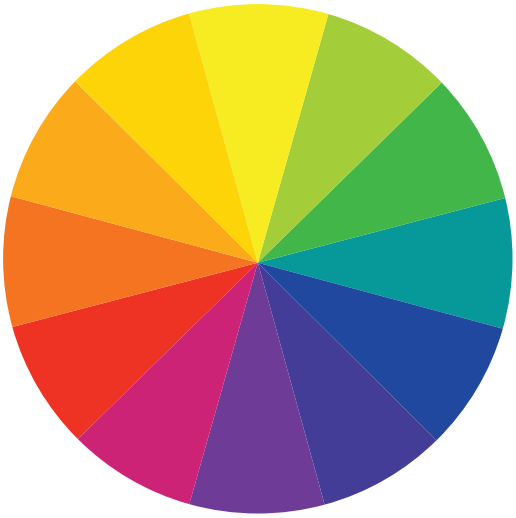
Primary, secondary and tertiary colours

Using a colour wheel and experimenting with paint is a useful way to learn about colour. You only need three colours to start with: red, yellow and blue. These are the **primary colours**. You cannot make a primary colour by mixing other colours; however, you can use different combinations of primary colours to create a rainbow of other colours.

The first colour wheel was developed in the middle of the seventeenth century as a result of experiments by Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1726). Newton split light using a prism to reveal the spectrum of colours that make up the colour wheel.

Mixing two primary colours will create a **secondary colour**. There are three secondary colours: orange, violet and green. On a colour wheel, the secondary colours can be found between the primary colours they are made from.

A **monochromatic** colour scheme has one **hue** of colour – or **tints**, **shades** and **tones** of that colour.



Twelve-part colour wheel with primary, secondary and tertiary colours

The colour wheel pictured on this page includes **tertiary colours**. Tertiary colours are made by mixing a primary colour with the secondary colour next to it on the colour wheel. There are six tertiary colours: red-orange, yellow-orange, blue-violet, red-violet, yellow-green and blue-green.

Hue and value

Every colour is characterised by its **hue**. The name of the colour, such as red, orange or blue-violet, describes the colour's hue. A colour of any hue can also have darkness or lightness. This is the **value** of the colour.

Tints, tones and shades

Variations of colour can be created by mixing colour with black and white.

Mixing a colour with white creates a **tint**. Mixing a colour with black creates a **shade**. Mixing a colour with grey (black and white) creates a **tone**. Different quantities of black, white or grey will create different tints, tones or shades. The colour wheel pictured on the next page shows tints, tones and shades of the primary, secondary and tertiary colours.

1. Make your own colour wheel that includes the:
   - three primary, three secondary and six tertiary colours (label each hue)
   - tints, shades and tones of each colour.
2. Cut out or collect squares of different colours from photographs or magazines. Arrange and stick the squares of colour into a grid to show a sequence of hues (for example, blue, blue-green, green, green-yellow, yellow).

Colour power

Colour is the most important element in **Colour Field painting**, a style that developed in America in the 1950s. The Colour Field painters, such as **Mark Rothko** (1903–1970), worked with broad expanses of colour, often on a large scale, to create paintings that enabled the viewer to really see and feel the effect of colour.

For Rothko, colour had great emotional and spiritual power. *Untitled (Red)* is painted with many layers of thin paint. Each layer of paint is like a thin veil that subtly changes the colour of the area it is painted over. Can you see how the layers are built up in some parts to create broad areas of intense colour that appear to hover on the surface of the painting?

3 What ideas or meanings does the colour used in *Untitled (Red)* suggest to you? What is it about the colour that suggests this?

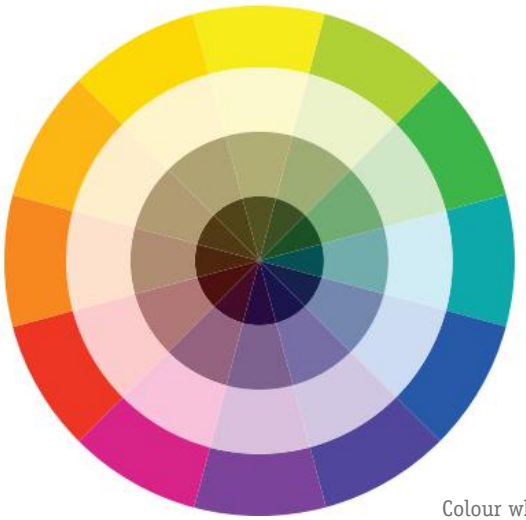
4 What techniques do you think Rothko used to apply colour? How do you think these techniques add to the effect of the colour in the painting?

DISCUSS

Rothko had strong ideas about how his work should be displayed. He preferred his works to have a space of their own to immerse people in the viewing experience.

Suggest why he had such strong feelings about how it should be displayed. What role should artists have in determining how their work should be viewed?

Mark Rothko
American, 1903–1970
Untitled (Red), 1956
glue, oil, synthetic polymer paint and resin on canvas
209.5 × 125.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Helen M Schutt Trust, Governor, the Commonwealth Banking Corporation, Fellow, and The Signet Group, Fellow, 1982 (EA1–1982)



Colour wheel showing tints, tones and shades

3.2

SCHEMING WITH COLOUR

The combination of colours in an artwork is called a colour scheme. The relationship between colours in an artwork plays an important role in conveying meaning. The colour wheel (pp. 66–7) is a useful tool for understanding colour schemes and relationships.

Harmonious colours are sometimes described as **analogous colours**.

Warm colours look as though they are coming towards us, while **cool colours** look further away. Many artists use this effect to suggest distance and space in their paintings.

Harmonious colours

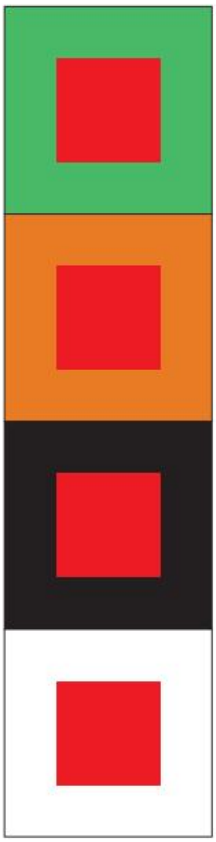
People who get on harmoniously usually have something in common – so do **harmonious colours**. Harmonious colours are side by side on the colour wheel. In a twelve-part colour wheel (p. 66), any sequence of three colours represents a colour **harmony**. For example, red-orange, red and red-violet. Because harmonious colours are alike, colour schemes that use harmonious colours are usually gentle and serene. The painting *Untitled (Red)* by American artist Mark Rothko (p. 67) has a harmonious colour scheme. Every colour in the painting is related to red.

Complementary colours

Look for the three **primary colours** on the colour wheel. Do you notice that the colour directly opposite each primary colour is made from a mixture of the other two primary colours? For example, red is opposite green, which is made from blue and yellow.

Opposite colours have nothing in common. When placed side by side they create **contrast** because they are so different. It is like putting people with opposite personalities together. Because they are so different, each makes the other stand out. Opposite colours are called **complementary colours**.

In colour schemes with complementary colours, the contrast can create a feeling of vibrancy and energy.



Captured in colour

French artist **Camille Pissarro** (1830–1903) has used complementary colours in *Peasants' Houses, Eragny*.

Pissarro painted this work in a style known as **Pointillism**, in which artists applied paint in small dots of colour. From a distance, viewers optically mix the coloured dots to see broad areas of colour, light and shadow rather than individual dots.

Pointillists understood that when a colour is placed next to its opposite colour, it appears brighter than when it is near like colours. The dots of complementary colours in Pissarro's painting include pinks, greens, purples and yellows. Together, they capture the brilliant light and atmosphere of a sunny day.

1 Note two examples of where you can see complementary colours together in Pissarro's painting.

2 Consider the type of day Pissarro has described.
- List four words or phrases that describe the light, atmosphere and weather.
- Explain how colour helps communicate these conditions.

Colour associations

Certain colours may stir memories, evoke an emotional response or have other associations.

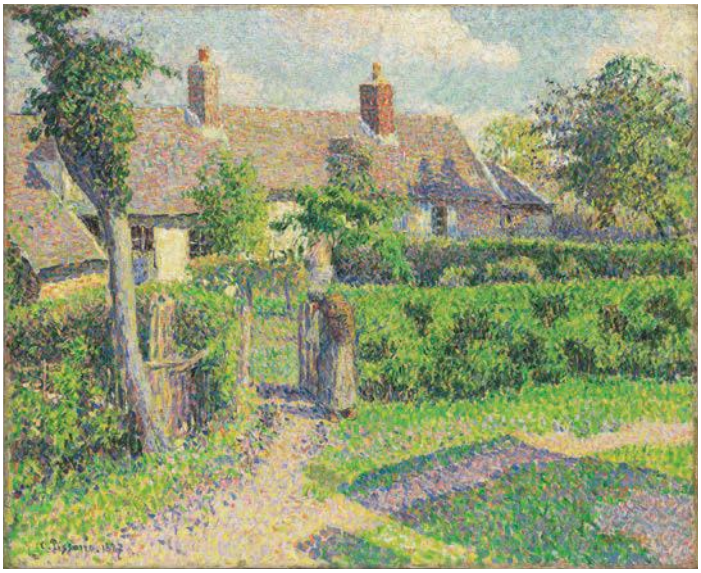
The colours associated with fire – reds, oranges and yellows – can make you feel warm or hot. The colours associated with water, ice and plants – blues and greens – can make you feel cool or cold. Artists can use the 'temperature' associated with colour for effect or to communicate meaning.

Some colours remind you of feelings or objects. For example, red is often associated with blood, anger, passion or energy.

3 Find two photographs or make two drawings of rooms or environments, one with warm colours and the other with cool colours. Explain what it is about the colour in each image that makes it appear 'warm' or 'cool'.

DISCUSS

Look at the four squares of red against the four different backgrounds. Which red appears brightest? Which red square appears largest? In fact, the red squares are all the same. Why do you think the background colour changes how we see the red?



Alamy Stock Photo/Heritage Image Partnership Ltd

Camille Pissarro
French, 1830–1903
Peasants' Houses, Eragny, 1887
oil on canvas
59.0 × 71.7 cm (stretcher); 83.0 × 96.6 × 11.0 cm (frame)

(detail)

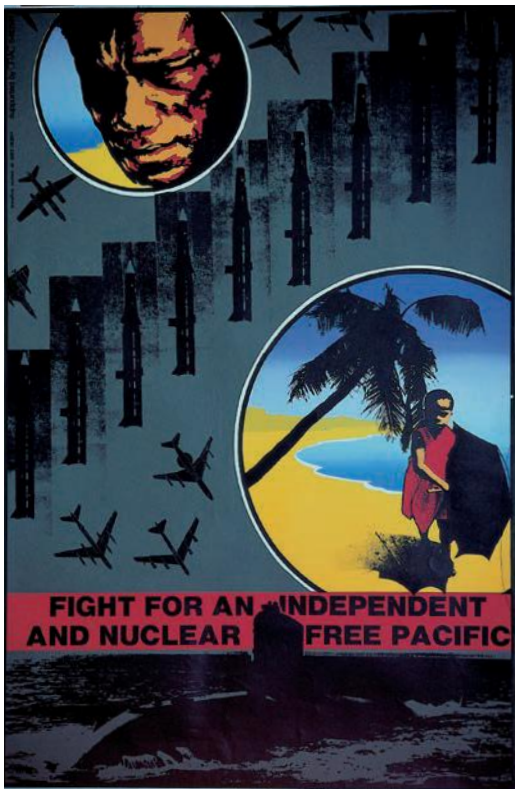
A message with colour

Colour plays a powerful role in communicating the artist's message in the poster by **Bob Clutterbuck** (b. 1959).

The poster was made when worldwide concerns about uranium mining and nuclear war were running high. The issue caused concern in the Pacific, where many Indigenous people were forced to move from their homes when foreign powers, (including China, the Soviet Union and the United States) undertook atomic tests and military exercises.

4 Describe the colours and colour relationships in Clutterbuck's poster and explain how they communicate the artist's message.

5 Create a table with four columns. In the first column, list black, white and at least four colours. In the remaining columns, add words or phrases that describe:
- emotions or feelings associated with the colours
- objects, ideas or other meanings associated with the colours.



Bob Clutterbuck
Australian, b. 1951
Fight for an Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific 1, 1982–84
poster, screen printed on mg litho paper
76 × 51 cm

CREATE

Close your eyes and draw on a large piece of paper:
- two horizontal lines
- three vertical lines
- two large circles, one medium circle and two small circles.

Use this as a template to make an abstract painting of different tints and tones of harmonious colours. Towards the end, add some complementary colours to create contrast and interest.

Many people other than artists work with colour. Colour therapists use colour to influence the way people behave and feel by creating suitably coloured environments in places such as hospitals, factories and schools. Colour forecasters predict colour trends – from the colours of the cars we will drive to the colours we will be wearing and using to decorate our homes.

The Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) Movement has nominated 1 March each year as NFIP Day to remind people of the harm that has been caused to the Pacific's environment and people by foreign colonial powers, especially as a result of nuclear testing.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video about this issue.

COLOUR

3.3 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Since ancient times, people have experimented with ways of creating colour for painting and decorating. Many colours have assumed special or symbolic meanings. Conventions about how and where colours should be used have also emerged.

Creating colour and meaning

The history of colour includes fascinating stories about the origins and significance of colours.

The earliest known paint **pigments** came from coloured clays and chalks so they tended to be in earthy hues. Black was created from burning materials such as wood or bone. Later, minerals were used to produce colours such as greens and blues.

The ancient Egyptians created a colour known as Egyptian blue by grinding down blue glass. In ancient Egypt, blue was associated with the colour of the sky, the heavens, water (including the River Nile), fertility and rebirth. The creator god, Amon, was often shown with a blue skin.

Experiments to create pigments resulted in many colours that faded quickly or were toxic. A colour known as 'emerald green' – manufactured in England in the nineteenth century and widely used by artists and in house paints – contained poisonous arsenic.

The precious gemstone lapis lazuli was used in the Middle East to create blue as early as the sixth century; however, it was not until the thirteenth century that a technique for creating a permanent, intense, rich blue from lapis lazuli was perfected. The precious blue pigment was transported by boat from the Middle East to Europe, where it became known as ultramarine, which means 'from the sea'. It was worth its weight in gold and could only be afforded by the very wealthy.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, synthetic pigments gave artists and industry inexpensive alternatives to many natural pigments and a significantly expanded range of colours.

The colour carmine red is made from tiny cochineal insects that live on cacti in Mexico and South America. It is widely used as a colourant in many products, including cosmetics and some foods.

Mummy brown was a popular colour in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was available until the 1960s. It was made from pigments obtained by grinding down ancient Egyptian mummies.

Madonna means 'my lady' in Italian.

EXPLORE

Research the history of one colour.

- How was the colour first made?
- Describe how the colour was used in two cultures or historical periods.
- What meanings or ideas are associated with the colour?

Create a presentation to share your findings with the class.

An image of devotion

Christians are followers of Jesus Christ, and Christianity has been practised in Europe since the first century.

In the fourteenth century, devotional images, such as the painting by Italian artist **Agnolo Gaddi** (active 1369-96), became very popular. Such paintings were used as a focus for private prayer and worship and were designed to create an emotional link in which the viewer felt an attachment to the subject of the painting.

In this image, baby Jesus, nursed by his mother, Mary, is surrounded by saints and angels. Images of the Madonna and child have a long history in the Christian tradition and reflect many **conventions**. For example, Mary is conventionally shown wearing a blue gown. The value of the blue pigment reflects Mary's important status, and in the Christian tradition, blue is also associated with truth, the sky and heaven. Gold is also highly valued and reserved for important subjects in many cultures. In the Christian tradition, the brilliance of gold is associated with the majesty and presence of God.

When this painting was first made, it would have been displayed on an altar in a church lit only by candle or oil lamps.

1 How do you think this painting might stir emotions in a viewer? Consider how colour was used and how the work was displayed.

Agnolo Gaddi
Italian, active 1369–96
Madonna and Child with Saint John the Evangelist, Saint John the Baptist, Saint James of Compostela and Saint Nicholas of Bari, c. 1388–90
tempera and gold on wood panel
97.5 × 53.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of two anonymous donors, Neilma Gantner, Honorary Life Benefactor, Paula Fox, Governor, Lady Reid, Governor, and the proceeds of the Inaugural Fundraising Dinner at NGV International, 2003 (2003.690)

From a holy text

India is a country often associated with vibrant colour, and many of the colours have symbolic and cultural significance linked to Hindu traditions. In Hinduism, red is often associated with purity, fertility and passion; red is the colour worn for celebrations, including marriages. Red dots are applied to foreheads on important occasions. White has a spiritual significance and is also the colour of mourning worn by widows.

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions and is the main religion in India. Although Hindus believe in one universal god, Brahman, Hinduism includes many other gods and goddesses who represent different forms of Brahman.

One of the most popular gods is Krishna, who is associated with love and joy. Krishna is commonly depicted with blue or sometimes black skin. Blue is often used to represent Hindu gods. It has been suggested that blue represents the infinite presence of god because it is associated with the vast oceans and the sky.

This painting is from a Bhagavata Purana. The Puranas are ancient holy texts that might have been written as early as the sixth century. The Puranas include the story of the birth of Krishna, who was born to Vasudeva and Devaki. On the night of Krishna's birth, Vasudeva gave Krishna to Nanda and Yashoda (a cowherd and his wife) to save him from his evil uncle. The Puranas describe the strong love that Yashoda developed for Krishna and include many stories of Krishna's childhood among the *gopis* (wives and daughters of the cowherds).

2 It has been suggested that Indian art places more importance on emotional realism than on realistic appearance. How is this evident in the image of Yashoda nursing the child Krishna?

3 Compare the use of colour in these two religious paintings.

Rajasthan is in north-west India and is India's largest state. Three cities in Rajasthan are known for their colours: Jaipur, the pink city; Jodhpur, the blue city; and Jaisalmer, the golden or yellow city.

Krishna is from a Sanskrit term that means black, dark or dark blue.

The Hindu festival of Holi is also known as the festival of colours. It celebrates the arrival of spring in India and in many other communities around the world. During Holi celebrations, people traditionally spray family and friends with brightly coloured powders.

Mithram
Indian
Folio from a Bhagavata Purana: Yashoda Nursing the Child Krishna, c. 1525–50
opaque watercolour on paper
14.0 × 22.4 cm (image)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1976

LINE

3.4

ABOUT LINES

A line is a mark that has more length than width. It may be straight or curved, long or short, thick or thin, broken or solid. There are endless possibilities.

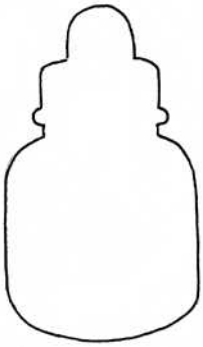
Different types of lines create different effects. Lines can take you to places or make you feel things. Before you begin to investigate lines, you need to know where to find them.

The Swiss-born artist Paul Klee (1879–1940) once said that drawing was like 'taking a line for a walk'.[5]

Line hunt

There are lines everywhere you look – in the world around you and in artworks.

Even in artworks where it may seem that the artist is not deliberately making lines, you will usually discover some sort of line. For example, when two colours or tones are placed side by side, where they meet forms a line. You see this type of line in the Henri Matisse cut-out (p. 78). If the colours or tones in an artwork are similar, the line may be unclear or hard to see.



Outlines define boundaries and edges.

Contour lines are more descriptive; they define form, contours and detail.

Described in line

Can you see how many different ways Australian artist **John Brack** (1920–1999) (pp. 94–5) has used line in his drawing *The Children's Heads*? Strong **outlines** describe the shapes of the children's heads and shoulders. **Contour lines** describe the details of their faces, hair and clothes. To create shadow behind the children and in the children's faces, the artist has built up areas of fine lines, known as **hatching** and **cross-hatching**. Hatching is often used to create shadows and the effect of three-dimensional form. Without the hatching and cross-hatching, the drawing would look flat.

1 Find an example of an artwork where lines are created when different colours or tones meet.
   - Make a copy of the artwork using line instead of colour and tone to show the main outline and contour lines.
   - Are the lines clear or hard to see in the original artwork? Explain why.

Many artists have made work inspired by their children. *The Children's Heads* is one of many drawings and prints that Brack made of his young daughters. These works vividly capture the personalities of his children.

John Brack
Australian, 1920–1999
The Children's Heads, 1957
pencil and wash
39.5 × 79.9 cm
Private collection
© Helen Brack

2 Choose a simple object with an interesting shape. Using different types of line, make three small drawings of the object, including:
   - an outline drawing using pen or pencil
   - a contour drawing using pen or pencil
   - a drawing or collage where an outline is created where two colours or tones meet.

3 Find four different sorts of lines (such as heavy, fine or parallel) in *The Children's Heads*. Explain in words or on an annotated image:
   - where each type of line is used
   - the purpose of each type of line (what it describes or what effect it creates).

4 Think about what Brack's drawing communicates to you about the personality of each child. Give each child a name and briefly describe each child's personality, explaining what it is about the drawing that suggests the personality traits.

Falling in line

Line is an important element in *Falling* by Iranian-born Australian artist **Hossein Valamanesh** (b. 1949) but there are no drawn or painted lines. The lines in this work are formed by the edges of the sculpture, which is made from wood and bamboo stems. The bamboo stems are gently curved and tapered to create lines that flow through space and suggest a gentle falling movement.

5 What ideas or other meanings does *Falling* suggest to you? Why? In your answer consider:
   - the role of line and shape
   - the role of the materials used
   - any personal associations you have with the art elements or materials.

EXPLORE

Find an artwork that interests you in which line is an important element.
- Describe the types of lines that are used in the artwork and how they have been used. Are they outlines, contour lines or lines that suggest feeling or depth?
- What ideas or other meanings are suggested by the lines in the work?
- What interests you about the work?

Another work in the series featuring falling figures by Valamanesh, *Falling Breeze* (1991), uses an outline of the body of his son, Nassiem, whose name means breeze in Farsi.

Hossein Valamanesh
Australian, b. 1949
Falling, 1990
wood, bamboo, sand, steel, black granite
390 × 55 × 50 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 2002

3.5

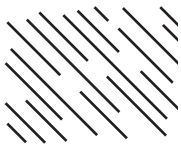
FEELING AND MOVING WITH LINE

Lines create movement. They direct attention around or through an artwork by tracing or suggesting a path for our eyes to follow. Lines can also communicate feeling. They can make you react and feel emotion just as colour can.

The characteristics of lines influence perception. A heavy, thick line will have a dramatic effect. A delicate, fine line might only suggest something, rather than state it boldly. Artists sometimes repeat lines in an artwork for added effect.

Horizontal lines are associated with lying down. They look still, peaceful and calm. They can create movement from side to side.

Vertical lines are associated with standing up. They look active, upright, alert, strong and formal. They can create movement up and down.



Diagonal lines are associated with movement. They are full of energy and action.

Buzzing with energy

The work of Australian artist **Lesley Dumbrell** (b. 1941) is often inspired by things that the artist has seen or experienced in nature, although she does not represent what she sees or experiences in a realistic way. She uses just the visual power of art elements, such as line and colour, to express her ideas about a subject.

November suggests buzzing energy. At first glance, it may appear that the artist has achieved this effect very simply; however, once you spend time exploring the painting, you will discover interesting things about line and colour. Did you notice that some lines seem more powerful because they are painted with two colours?

It is also interesting to focus on a particular colour or type of line in the painting. You then realise how variations of the same line are repeated over the whole surface of the painting.

1. What aspect of the natural world might have inspired *November*? Why?
2. What would you call the painting if you were the artist? Why?
3. How do the colours in *November* add to the meanings associated with the lines?
4. Dumbrell was influenced by the work of Bridget Riley. Compare *Streak 2* (p. 32) with *November*. Consider the similarities and differences in:
   - colours and lines
   - painting technique
   - ideas and meanings.

Lesley Dumbrell
Australian, b. 1941
November, 1982
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
183.0 × 211.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1983 (AC4–1983)

Dale Frank
Australian, b. 1959
The Appealing Eyes of the Blacksmith Facing the Tyrant, 1981
pencil
185.0 × 267.7 (image); 189.4 × 272.0 cm (sheet)
Michell Endowment, 1982 (DC34–1982)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Caught in a whirlpool

What is your first reaction to the drawing by Australian artist **Dale Frank** (b. 1959)? Your reaction would be stronger if you were able to view the drawing in real life because it is very large. The repeated swirling lines create giddying patterns that sweep across the surface of the work and at various points seem to almost suck viewers into a whirlpool or vortex.

Frank made this drawing by pinning a large piece of paper to the wall. He started drawing outward from a mark near the centre of the paper, following his instincts rather than any set plan.

This drawing is one of a series of self-portraits. It is possible to see how some of the linear patterns suggest facial features, but Frank was not interested in making a self-portrait that described his physical appearance. His drawing is a self-portrait because of what it tells us about the artist's thoughts and actions.

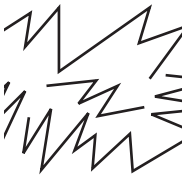
5 Look at the lines in the two artworks pictured here. For each artwork:
- List six words or phrases that can be used to describe the lines.
- Describe the ideas or meanings the lines suggest to you.

6 Frank gave mysterious titles to each of the drawings in his self-portrait series.
- What does the title of his work add to your understanding of the drawing?
- Why do you think he gave his drawings such titles?

7 What challenges might Frank have faced making this drawing? Consider the size of the work and how it was made.

8 Imagine that you have won a competition and you can choose as your prize either the painting by Dumbrell or the drawing by Frank. Which will it be? Why?

Lines can be free form; they can go in a number of different directions. This gives them a feeling of movement and energy. The directions they follow will also create associations and feelings.



Zigzag lines can be associated with lightning or anger.

Curved lines may suggest water and create a feeling of gentle movement. Spirals may create a stronger, swirling movement.

CREATE

American artist Alexander Calder (1898–1976) made line drawings using wire. To find an example of Calder's wire drawings, try an Internet image search for 'Alexander Calder wire sculpture'.

To make your own wire drawing, set the end of a long piece of flexible wire in a container full of plaster. Use the wire to make a three-dimensional line drawing of a person involved in some sort of physical activity, such as running or dancing.

Before you begin, observe a person in action and make some quick pen or pencil drawings. These will help you determine the outline you need to 'draw' with the wire to effectively suggest movement.

LINE

3.6 POWER LINES

Lines play an important role in art in creating impact and communicating ideas and meanings.

In the work of John Mawurndjul and Emily Kam Kngwarray, you see how two Indigenous Australian artists have used line to create images that are powerful expressions of culture.

A later work by Mawurndjul is on p. 149.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a short film that includes footage of Kngwarray painting.

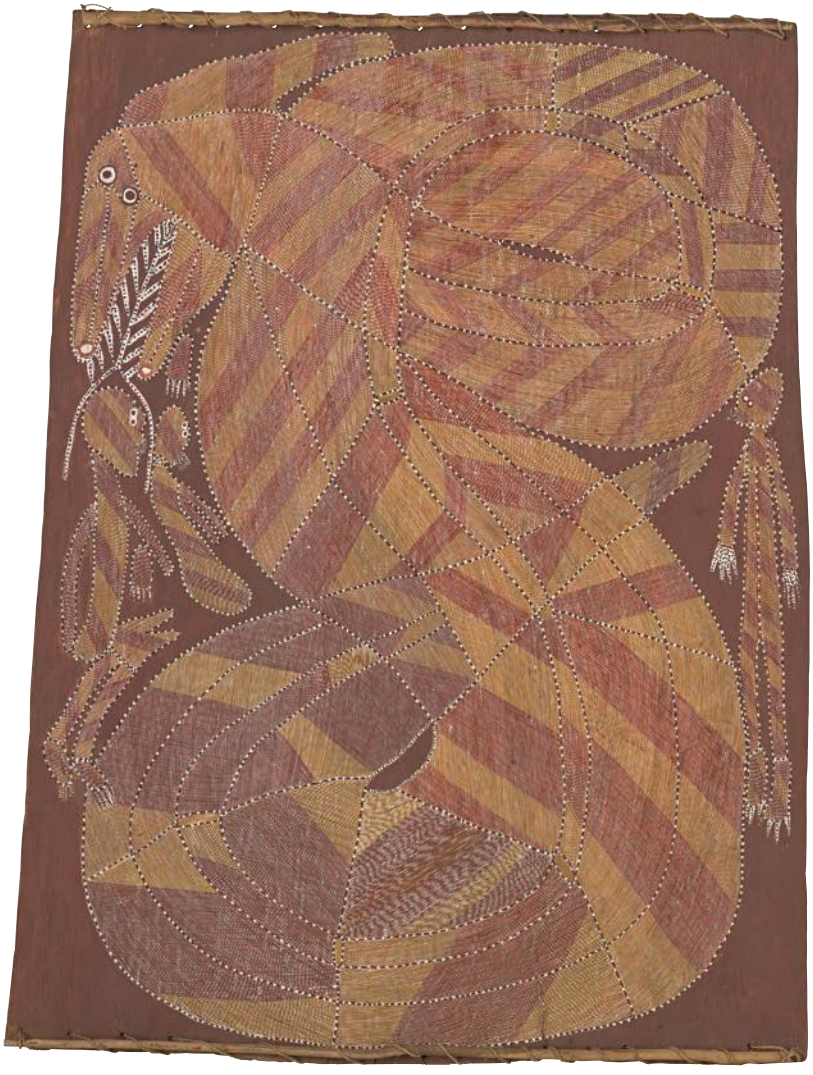
Ancestral power

Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent, is an important and revered ancestor spirit for the Kuninjku people of western Arnhem Land (p. 22). The Kuninjku believe that Ngalyod created the sacred sites (*djang*) in Kuninjku clan land and that he continues to guard them. According to Kuninjku mythology, some of the sacred sites were created when Ngalyod swallowed and transformed other beings during the ancestral period. Ngalyod lives in deep waterholes and brings the life-giving rains of the wet season.

This is one of many paintings of Ngalyod by **John Mawurndjul** (b. 1952). Mawurndjul is a member of the Kurulk clan of the Kuninjku people. Dilebang is an important Rainbow Serpent site for the Kurulk clan.

Line is an important element in Mawurndjul's work. Can you see how he uses lines to depict the power of Ngalyod? The strong, twisting form of Ngalyod's body is outlined against a plain background and swells to almost the edges of the bark painting. Ngalyod's skin is painted with a ***rarrk*** pattern that is created from finely painted cross-hatched lines. The intricate pattern of lines creates a brilliant shimmer that reflects Ngalyod's spiritual significance and power. The *rarrk* also encodes layers of meaning about sacred sites that are not public knowledge.

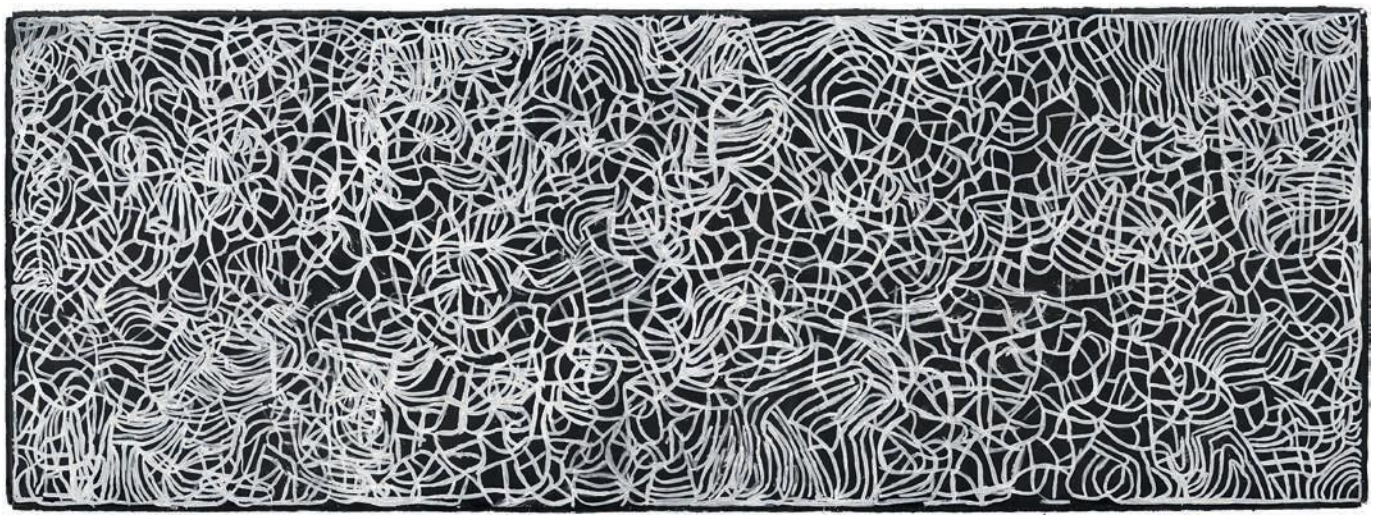
1. Consider the different lines that Mawurndjul has used in *Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent at Dilebang*. List three adjectives that describe the lines used to:
   - outline of body of Ngalyod
   - create the *rarrk*.
2. Do you agree that the lines used in *Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent at Dilebang* reflect the significance and power of Ngalyod? Why?



John Mawurndjul
Australian (Kuninjku, eastern Kunwinjku people), b. 1952
Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent at Dilebang, c. 1979
earth pigments on stringy-bark (*Eucalyptus* sp.)
127.2 × 88.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the Premier's Department, 1980 (0.1–1980)

Power of country

In *Anwerlarr Anganenty (Big Yam Dreaming)*, flowing lines meander and weave under and over each other to create an intricate linear



Emily Kam Kngwarray
Australian (Anmatyerre), c. 1910–1996
Anwerlarr Anganenty (Big Yam Dreaming), 1995
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
291.1 × 801.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Donald and Janet Holt and family, Governors, 1995 (1995.709)

web across the vast 8-metre canvas. Can you see how the lines converge in some areas to create intense patterns but spread out in other areas to create a more open pattern? The contrast between the white lines and the black background is dramatic and conveys a pulsing energy.

In this painting, **Emily Kam Kngwarray** (c. 1910–1996) communicates the life and abundance of her country. Kngwarray was born around 1910 at Alhalkere, the country of her father and grandfather. Throughout her life, Kngwarray maintained strong connections with her country and the Dreaming (*Altyerr*), which is a source of important knowledge about the land and cultural lore. She was an important leader of women's ceremonies (*awelye*) in her community.

The Dreaming story of the pencil yam (*anwerlarr*) was particularly significant for Kngwarray. Her middle name, Kam, means the seeds and flowers of the pencil yam plant. The pencil yam is a creeper with fibrous roots that are an important desert food. As the roots ripen, the earth above cracks. The pencil yam is celebrated in women's ceremonies through songs and dances to ensure that it continues to proliferate. Many of Kngwarray's paintings also celebrate the pencil yam.

3 List adjectives to describe the lines in *Anwerlarr Anganenty (Big Yam Dreaming)*.

4 Suggest how *Anwerlarr Anganenty (Big Yam Dreaming)* can be seen as a celebration of pencil yams.

EXPLORE

Identify another work by Kngwarray or Mawurndjul in which line is an important element.

Briefly describe the way line is used in the painting and explain how this contributes to the ideas, feelings or other meanings communicated by the work.

CREATE

Identify an animal, plant or natural landscape feature that is of interest or significance to you. Research its attributes and physical characteristics.

Using line as the main element, create a work in a medium of your choice. Through its use of lines, your work should communicate something about the characteristics of your chosen animal, plant or landscape feature.

Traditionally, in Kuninjku culture, younger artists have learnt to paint from older artists. Mawurndjul was taught by his elder brother Jimmy Njiminjuma (1947–2004) and his uncle Peter Marralwanga (1917–1987). In turn, Mawurndjul has become an important teacher and mentor for other artists.

He has been instrumental in supporting Kuninjku women to become artists. He taught his wife, Kay Lindjuwanga (b. 1957), and his eldest daughter, Anna Wurrkidj (b. 1975), to paint in the 1990s, and they have both become accomplished artists.

Although Kngwarray made sand and body paintings as part of her traditional culture throughout her life, she did not start painting with acrylics on canvas until 1988. In the eight years until her death in 1996, it is estimated that she made more than 3000 paintings.

Alhalkere became part of a pastoral lease known as Utopia in the 1920s. The pastoralists named the area Utopia because when they first arrived they were able to catch rabbits by hand, and they thought they had discovered an abundant source of food. Located approximately 250 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs, Utopia was returned to the traditional owners in 1983, following a successful land-rights claim.

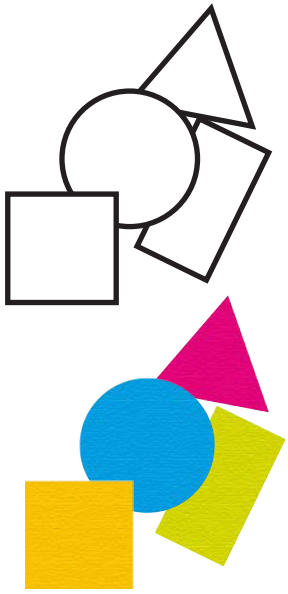
3.7

FEELING IN SHAPE

An endless variety of shapes is all around us – from the regular, geometric shapes of the man-made environment to the irregular, **organic** shapes of nature.

Shapes are important in art because different types of shapes create different effects. Like colour and line, shapes can suggest or communicate ideas and meanings.

The three basic shapes are rectangles, circles and triangles. Because shapes are made from lines, or edges that are seen as lines, the reactions you have to shapes are similar to those you have to the lines that created them.



Shapes are flat and two-dimensional. They can be made from an outline or they can be made when a flat area of colour or tone is separated from the background by an edge.

Later in life, Matisse made huge paper collages. Even when he was weakened by illness, he would cut out the shapes for collages, and assistants would arrange them with his supervision.

Any object can be presented two-dimensionally as a flat shape. The easiest way to see and make a shape is to look at an object's shadow. A shadow can be produced easily by standing an object between a light and a flat surface, such as a wall. By tracing the outline of the shadow onto some paper, you will make a **silhouette** of the object.

Positive and negative

Whenever a shape is drawn, painted or cut, another shape is made around it. The shapes that artists make are called **positive shapes**. The shapes that are made around positive shapes are called **negative shapes**. Although people tend to notice positive shapes more than negative shapes, both are important in an artwork.

Henri Matisse
French, 1869–1954
Icare (Icarus), 1947
from the portfolio *Jazz*
colour stencil, printed from multiple papercut stencils, lithograph, printed in black ink, from one stone
42.2 × 32.8 cm (comp and sheet)
Image courtesy of National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1980

Shaping Jazz

In *Icare* by French artist **Henri Matisse** (1869–1954), the black and yellow shapes are positive shapes. The blue in Matisse's print is the negative shape.

Matisse was fascinated by the effects that could be created by using colour, shape and line. He was often inspired by what he saw in the world around him, but he was not interested in describing the world in a realistic way. He would simplify and change the appearance of an object to create an exciting arrangement of colours and shapes that had a life of its own.

In 1943, Matisse began work on a book called *Jazz*. The book, which explored many of his ideas about art and life, included 20 **silk-screen prints**. *Icare* uses bold, bright colours and shapes to show the mythical bird-man Icare (Icarus) falling through space.

The prints in *Jazz* were based on a series of small paper **collages**. Matisse loved the effects that he could create using paper collage and the freedom of the technique. For Matisse, collage was like drawing with scissors.

Although the compositions that Matisse created often appear simple and spontaneous, he thought very carefully about each shape's colour and placement. Try to imagine *Icare* without the red dot or yellow stars – just a black shape by itself in the middle of a large area of blue. The blue would tend to take over. Every shape is vital to the energy and life in the composition.

1 Suggest how Matisse has ensured that the black positive shape is not dominated by the blue negative shape in the composition of *Icare*.

2 Look at the shapes in *Icare*.
- List at least two describing words or phrases for three different shapes.
- What ideas or other meanings do the shapes suggest to you? Why?
- How does colour add to the ideas or meanings suggested by the shapes?

CREATE

For this task, you will need three pieces of paper or card: one light coloured and two dark coloured.

Trace the silhouette of an interesting shape, such as that of a plant, onto the piece of light-coloured paper. Very carefully, cut out the shape (the positive shape) without damaging the surrounding paper (the negative shape).

Stick the positive shape on one piece of dark paper. Create a reverse of this image by sticking the negative shape on another piece of dark paper.

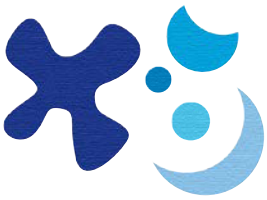
Shaping an investigation

Homage to the Square: SP-J is one of a series of artworks that **Josef Albers** (1888–1976) started in 1950 and worked on until his death. The series included more than one hundred paintings, prints and tapestries. Each artwork features the same format of three or four squares nested inside each other. Each of the inner squares is positioned an equal distance from the vertical outside edges, but it sits low horizontally.

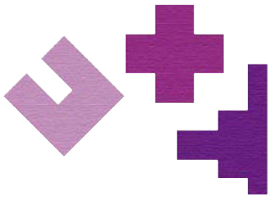
Albers used his basic square format as a starting point to systematically investigate how people perceive colour. By using different colour combinations in the squares, he showed how the relationship between colours influences our perception of colour and space. For example, dark colours against a light background appear to advance towards us. Can you see evidence of this in *Homage to the Square: SP-J*?

3 Suggest why Albers chose to use a square rather than another shape for his colour investigations.

4 Compare *Icare* with *Homage to the Square: SP-J*. What does the use of shape in each artwork add to the ideas communicated?

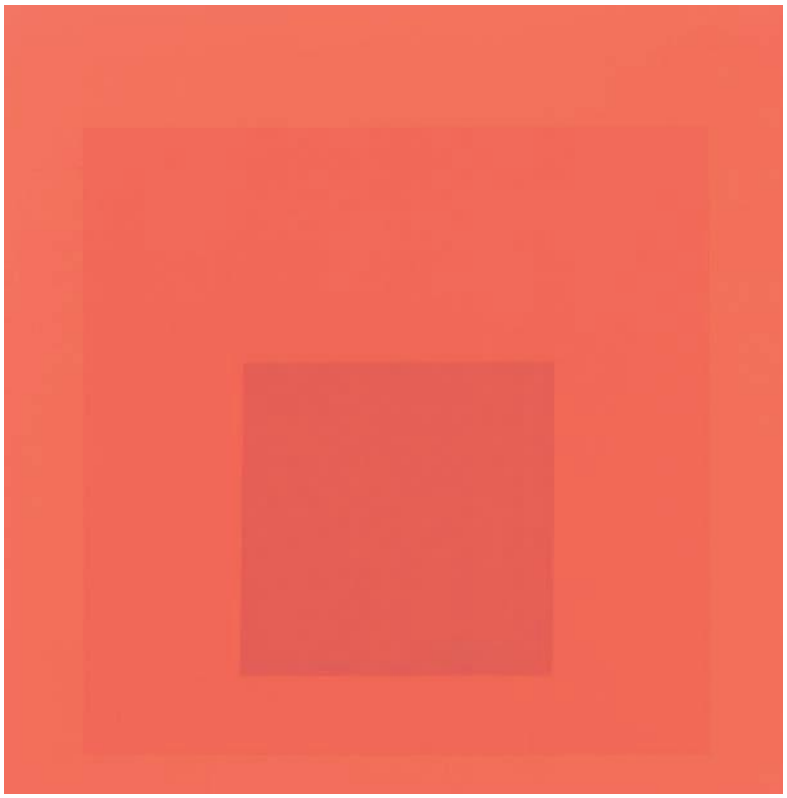


Rounded shapes have curving, sinuous lines and edges. This gives them a feeling of growth and flowing movement. They remind us of things in the natural world so they are sometimes called organic.



Blocky shapes grow from squares and rectangles. They look strong, regular and permanent. They usually make us feel calm because they are solid and still. We do not often see these shapes in the natural world, but they are quite common in the constructed world. Such shapes are sometimes described as geometric or inorganic.

Angular shapes grow from triangles. They can look sharp, energetic and even explosive. They can make us feel angry, excited or tense.



Josef Albers
German-American, 1888–1976
Homage to the Square: SP-J, 1971
colour screenprint
32.2 × 32.1 cm (image); 83.0 × 62.0 cm (sheet)
edition 53/150
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Dr David Rosenthal, Governor, 1995 (1995.551)

3.8 SHAPING MEANING

Shapes can communicate meaning – in everyday life and in art.

In ancient Egypt, squares represented the idea of truth and order. Shapes can also represent cultural or national identity, as seen on many flags. The Star of David is an important symbol in the Jewish faith. The crescent shape has a long association with Islam.

Symbolic shapes can also have a personal meaning.

Common symbols

Clouds, boomerangs, windbreaks

Kangaroo

Spear thrower (*woomera*)

Person sitting, windbreak

Two men sitting

Campsite, stone, well, rockhole, breast, fire, hill, digging hole, waterhole or fruit

Central Australian Indigenous symbols

Symbols of culture

1 What ideas do you associate with the symbols pictured in the margin? Do your classmates have similar or different interpretations to your own? Why?

2 Draw three other familiar symbolic shapes. Note the meaning of each and where you would expect to find them.

3 Draw two symbolic shapes that have cultural significance. Annotate them to explain their significance.

Symbolic shapes are an important part of the visual language used by many artists. The Indigenous people of central Australia have a long tradition of using symbolic shapes to communicate meaning. Traditionally, such symbols were used in ground and rock painting, and in body art. Since the late 1970s, artists have incorporated the symbolic shapes of their culture in paintings on canvas.

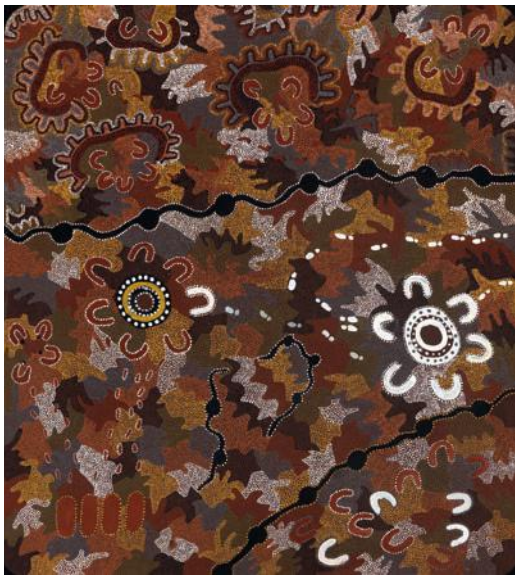
As the art of this area has become more widely known, non-Indigenous audiences have also become familiar with some of the shapes' symbolic meanings; however, Indigenous symbols can have different meanings in different contexts. Artworks can have encoded meanings understood only by those who truly know the culture.

It is also important to understand that different Indigenous communities across Australia use different symbols.

Shaping a message

Can you recognise any of the symbolic shapes in the painting by **Malya Teamay** (b. 1957)?

Like traditional ground paintings, paintings such as *Broken Law* depict country and tell stories from a **bird's-eye view** or aerial view. It is sometimes useful to think of them as a map of place and time.



Malya Teamay
Australian (Pitjantjatjara), b. 1957
Broken Law, 1989
synthetic polymer paint on metal sheet
100.0 × 90.5 cm
Purchased 1990 with funds from ARCO Coal Australia Inc. through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation
Queensland Art Gallery

Teamay's painting is divided into three parts by strong, black lines with bead-like, rounded shapes. The lines represent traditional Aboriginal law. The lines and symbolic shapes in the painting tell of the effect of European settlement on traditional Indigenous culture.

One part of the painting shows Indigenous culture before the arrival of Europeans. Symbolic shapes show people gathered around camp fires and protected by wind breaks. In another part, shapes reveal the arrival of the Europeans and the disruption of traditional Indigenous culture. In the third part, the shapes suggest some hope for the future as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people meet.

4 Create an annotated sketch of *Broken Law* and identify the areas that show:
   - Indigenous culture before the arrival of Europeans
   - the effect of Europeans on traditional Indigenous culture
   - hope for the future.

   Indicate how these ideas are communicated using symbolism, including symbolic shapes.

Personal perspectives

No Sleep till Dreamtime is a visually dazzling large-scale **installation** by **Reko Rennie** (b. 1974). It is made up of 44 separate panels that feature graphic symbolic shapes in brilliant neon and metallic colours. The work reflects the influence of graffiti and hip-hop subcultures that Rennie first discovered as a teenager growing up in Footscray in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

Do you notice three repeated symbolic shapes in a hand-drawn graffiti style: the diamond, the crown and the Aboriginal flag? The diamond reflects Rennie's connection to the Kamilaroi people of northern New South Wales. In Kamilaroi culture, designs of repeated diamonds are important markers of cultural significance and identity. Rennie has described the diamond as something like a family crest. The crown is a reminder that the Aboriginal people are the original sovereigns of Australia. The flag is a sign of respect to all Aboriginal people.

These three symbols are the core of a personal visual language that Rennie has developed to express his identity and to challenge stereotypical representations of Indigenous culture and identity. The same symbols recur in other artworks by Rennie, including prints, neon-light works, sculptures and large public artworks.

5 Explain how Rennie's representation of the diamond, the crown and the Aboriginal flag:
   - express his identity
   - challenge stereotypical representations of Indigenous culture and identity.

CREATE

Design a personal crest. Your crest should incorporate at least two shapes that have personal or cultural significance to you.

Think about how you will use art elements (such as colour and shape) and materials to give your crest a contemporary edge.

Make a class display of the crests. What can you learn about others from their crests?

A painting by Teamay that portrays important Dreaming (*Tjukurpa*) stories of Uluru features on the entry ticket to the Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park.

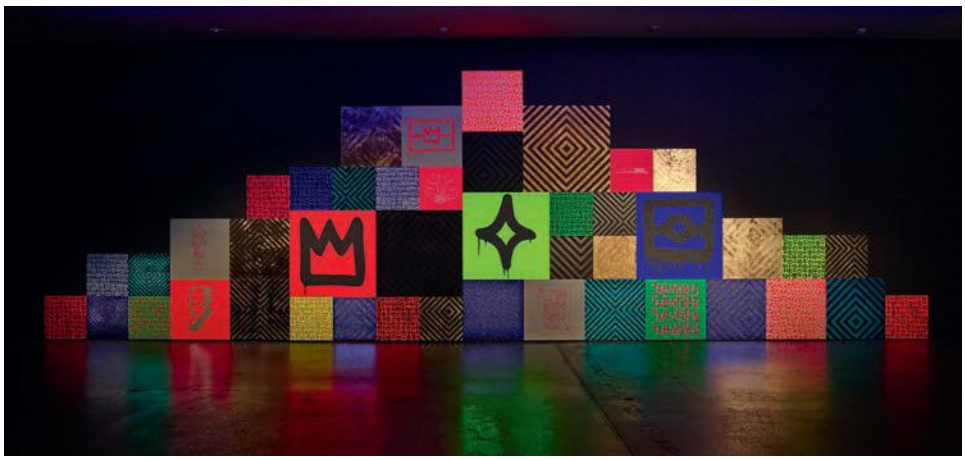
Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Anangu rock art.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Rennie's website and to interviews with the artist.

In addition to representing the sovereignty of the Indigenous people, the crown symbol used by Rennie acknowledges New York street artist Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960–1988) who frequently incorporated a crown shape in his work.

The title *No Sleep till Dreamtime* refers to 'No Sleep till Brooklyn', a song by the Beastie Boys, an American hip-hop group.

Photo: AGNSW 173.2014.a–rr



(detail)

Reko Rennie
Australian (Kamilaroi), b. 1974
No Sleep till Dreamtime, 2014
birch plywood, metallic textile foil, synthetic polymer paint, diamond dust, gold leaf
310 × 1030 cm (dimensions overall)
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Society of New South Wales Contemporary Group 2014

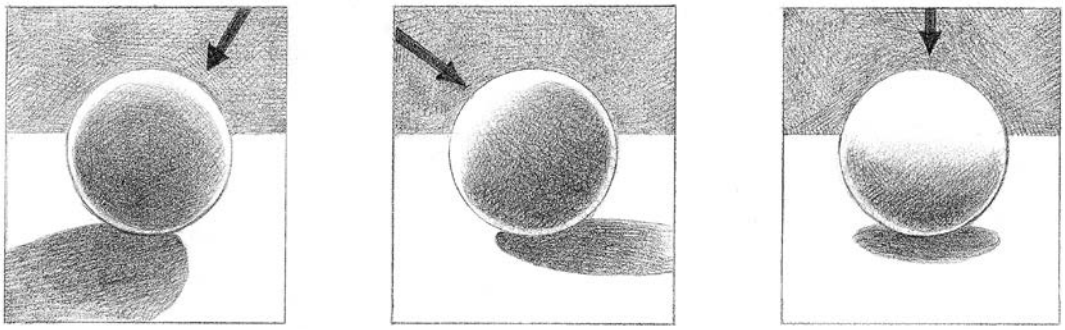
TONE

3.9 THE ART OF LIGHT AND DARK

Light creates tone. Where there is little light, you see dark shadows or tones. Where there is a lot of light, you see light, bright tones.

Tones vary from dark, velvety blacks through greys to bright, light whites. Every colour that you see has a tone. You see the tones of colours when you look at them in black-and-white photographs.

Photographic artists work directly with light. Photographs not only record light but also are made using techniques and processes that use light. Photographic artists control and manipulate light to create the tonal effects in their work.



The direction from which light comes affects the light and shade on an object and the shadow it casts.

X-ray vision

Untitled Christening Robe by Australian artist **Anne Ferran** (b. 1949) is a **photogram**.

Making photograms is one of the oldest and simplest photographic processes. No camera is involved. Instead, items are placed on light-sensitive photographic paper in darkroom conditions. When the paper is exposed to light, the uncovered areas of the paper react to the light. An image is produced when the paper is put into developing fluid. The areas that were fully exposed to light will emerge as dark shadows or **tones**. The areas of the paper that were fully protected from light will emerge as bright white. Anywhere light has been able to partially penetrate through to the paper, in-between tones will be produced. The darkness or lightness of tones in a photogram will relate directly to how much light reached the paper during exposure.

Photograms have become an important part of Ferran's work in recent years. *Untitled Christening Robe* is one of a number of photograms of nineteenth-century women's and children's clothing that Ferran produced while she was **artist-in-residence** at Rouse Hill House & Farm, a Historic Houses Trust of NSW property. Ferran was interested in exploring the hidden or unknown aspects of the history of the house, which had been home to six generations of the one family.

Ferran was inspired by the idea of X-ray images and became increasingly interested in what could be achieved by making photograms of clothes.

The process produces a hovering, ghost-like image of empty clothes that makes us very aware of the bodies that once wore them. The X-ray quality of the images also makes the structure and history of the clothes completely transparent. Details such as seams, folds, lace trims and even mends often assume unexpected importance. Such details are reminders of not only who wore them but also who made and cared for the clothes. Other ideas about how history is recorded and constructed and about the fragility of life could also be associated with these images.

1 Describe what you see in *Untitled Christening Robe*. What ideas or meanings does the image suggest to you? Why?

2 Would a traditional black-and-white photograph of the same dress positioned in the same way suggest the same or different meanings? Explain.

CREATE

Place objects on a scanner bed and scan them into a computer's image manipulation program.

Use tools such as image adjustment, contrast, brightness and colour saturation to create a new image. To create an X-ray effect, try converting the black and white image using the inversion tool.

Use a data projector to project the class's images onto a wall at your school.

CREATE

Make your own photogram. Aim to make it as interesting as possible by carefully selecting and arranging objects before you go into the darkroom. Once in the darkroom, try to add to the tonal effects by using several short exposures and by adding, moving or removing objects in between exposures.

EXPLORE

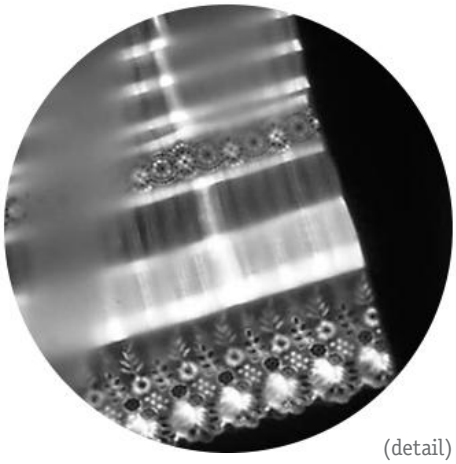
Research the resources and techniques involved in making a photogram. Make a flow chart that will clearly explain the requirements and the process to others.

DISCUSS

Why might organisations such as the Historic Houses Trust of NSW employ artists? How might art or artists add to visitors' understanding of history and historical places? In your discussion, refer to the work of Ferran.

What other organisations do you think would benefit from an artist-in-residence? Why? What does this add to your understanding of the role of artists in contemporary society?

Anne Ferran
Australian, b. 1949
Untitled Christening Robe, 2001
from Flock
silver gelatin photogram
127 × 90 cm, unique print
Courtesy Still Gallery, Sydney



(detail)

Ferran worked in an old schoolroom, temporarily converted into a darkroom, during her residency at Rouse Hill House & Farm. To make each photogram, Ferran would carefully arrange an item of clothing on a large sheet of light-sensitive paper laid out on the floor. The paper was then briefly exposed (5–15 seconds) to weak light. Ferran would then roll the paper up, seal it in a light-proof tube and send it out to be commercially processed.

3.10

MAKING TONES

Colours have many tones, which can be made in many ways, depending on the materials used.

In painting, tones can be made by adding black or white to a colour (p. 66).

In drawing and printmaking, the most common technique for creating tone is hatching and cross-hatching, where artists build up areas of line to create tone.

Sculptors use real light and shadow to create tone in their work. You can see this in *Killing Time* by Ricky Swallow (p. 51).

Gradual transition of tones

Contrasting tones

The shell is an etching, so the image is the reverse of what Rembrandt drew on the etching plate. Rembrandt had to sign and date the work in reverse for it to be printed the right way around; however, he did not reverse the direction of the spiral on the top of the shell, which is anticlockwise. In nature, this spiral pattern is always clockwise.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see reproductions of both the first- and second-state prints of *The Shell (Conus marmoreus)*.

Tone and form

Artists can use **tone** to make flat, two-dimensional shapes appear solid and three-dimensional. Sometimes artists use a range of tones that gradually change from dark to light. A gradual transition of tones usually suggests solid, rounded, three-dimensional forms. In some artworks, however, dark and light tones are used side by side without other tones between them. Such a contrast of tones also suggests three-dimensional form, although the effect is flatter.

Observing light and shade

Dutch artist **Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn** (1606–1669) based his many paintings, prints and drawings on a careful observation of his subjects.

The Shell (Conus marmoreus) is Rembrandt's only print of a **still-life** subject. In this tiny print, he has focused on the effect of light on the shell. A range of **tones**, from crisp whites to dark, intense blacks, have been used to describe the effects of light and shadow.

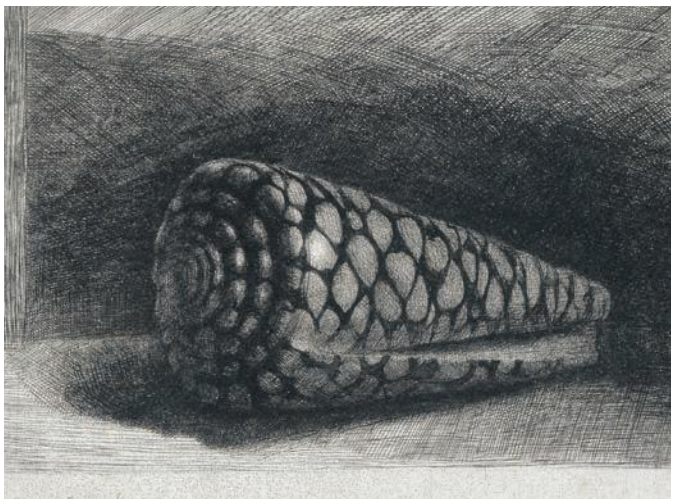
The tones reveal the rounded, conical form of the shell, including its spiral end. The dark tones around the shell also indicate that the shell is sitting on a shelf.

The print is an **etching**, a printing technique that involves working with line, so the tones in this work have all been created using **hatched** and **cross-hatched** lines.

There are two states of this print. Rembrandt made one set of prints from his etching plate (first-state prints) before reworking the plate and printing another set of prints (second-state prints). The version pictured here is one of the second-state prints. The dark shadows surrounding the shell were added during the reworking process.

1 Which direction is the light coming from in *The Shell (Conus marmoreus)*? How can you tell?

2 Suggest why Rembrandt might have added the darker tones around the shell in the second version of the print. What effect do they create? You may find it helpful to look at an earlier version of the print to compare.



Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn
Dutch, 1606–1669
The Shell (Conus marmoreus), 1650
etching, drypoint and burin
9.6 × 13.3 cm (plate and sheet)
Bartsch 159; Hind 248 ii/iii
2nd of 3 states
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1973 (P5–1973)

Mattia Preti
Italian, 1613–1699
Sophonisba Receiving the Poison, c. 1675
oil on canvas
143.8 × 259.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1968
(1818–5)

Meaning and focus

Artists can use tone to express ideas and other meanings. Dark tones are associated with night and can feel sombre, sad, depressing, mysterious or evil. Light tones are associated with brightness and light, and can feel delicate, radiant or airy.

Artists can also use tone to focus attention on particular parts of an artwork. Often this is done by using a light tone against a dark tone, which creates a contrast that works in the same way as a spotlight on a stage.

A dramatic story

Italian artist **Mattia Preti** (1613–1699) uses tone dramatically in his painting. He uses bright, light tones to attract attention to the most important parts of the painting, almost like a spotlight. He also uses tone to create atmosphere and feeling.

The subject of Preti's painting is taken from ancient history, when the powerful Roman Empire extended into many parts of the world. In 204 BCE, the Romans conquered Cirta (Constantine, Algeria) in northern Africa. General Massinissa fell in love with and married Sophonisba, the queen of Cirta. The Romans, however, did not approve of their marriage and insisted that she be imprisoned as an enemy of Rome. What was the general to do? He knew that she would rather die than be taken prisoner by the Romans, so he sent her a gift ...

3 Describe how tone is used in the painting to:
- focus attention on details that provide clues about the story
- add mood and atmosphere
- suggest three-dimensional form.

4 Describe the techniques used by Rembrandt and Preti to create tone.

5 Make some tonal grids by drawing two rows of six small squares. Use a soft lead pencil and blending and smudging techniques to draw tones in the first row. Use a fine pen to draw lines or dots that create tones in the second row. The darkest tone should be at one end of each row and the lightest at the other. The tones in between should show a gradual transition from light to dark.

CREATE

Find a white, three-dimensional object with an interesting, irregular shape. Place the object against a white background and shine a light on it so you can see obvious shadows. (You could paint an object white for the purpose of this exercise. It could be something as simple as an egg container.)

Make a drawing or painting using tone to make your object look solid and three-dimensional.

3.11 CREATING ANOTHER DIMENSION

Three-dimensional shapes are called forms. Forms take up space: they have length, width and height. Form can be described in many ways; a pencil has a cylindrical form, while a tennis ball has a spherical form.

'Real' form is found in **three-dimensional art**. In **two-dimensional art**, such as painting and drawing, the illusion of form is often found.

An illusion of form can be created using contour lines or tone.

Feeling in form

Line, shape and form are closely related. The reaction we have to a particular form is related to the reactions you have to the shapes and lines that you see in the form. Notice how different the shapes and lines in *Covert 7 City* are from those in *Garden*. The different forms in each artwork give each artwork its distinctive quality and play an important role in communicating the artists' intended messages.

Building a city

Covert 7 City by **Tim Jones** (b. 1962) contains many of the blocky, rectangular forms that are common in built environments, especially cities; however, in *Covert 7 City* many of the forms, especially those that appear to be rising from the solid base of the sculpture, appear exceptionally tall and elongated.

Not long before making the sculpture, Jones visited old cities in Tuscany, Italy, including a thirteenth-century city of towers. He was fascinated by this and other cities, such as Manhattan and London, and even fictional cities. Batman's imaginary Gotham City was another source of inspiration for this work.

The sculpture is also about Melbourne. Jones was born in Wales but spent some time working in Melbourne. In 1989, he returned to Melbourne after several years' absence and was amazed at the sight of so many cranes and towers on the skyline. He was happy to be back in the city, where he eventually settled, and to see this growth and construction.

DISCUSS

Jones has also made a wood-engraving print of *Covert 7 City*. Why might artists choose to represent the same object in different media?

Tim Jones
Welsh, b. 1962
Covert 7 City, 1989–90
wood, ink, paint, bitumen, steel, lead, cord, plaster, pigment
336 × 211 × 55 cm
Purchased 1989
University of Melbourne Art Collection

1 Describe how Jones has created three-dimensional form in *Covert 7 City*.

It is a strange world

The forms in *Garden* by Australian artist **Amanda Marburg** (b. 1976) are not what they seem. *Garden* may look like a three-dimensional model, but it is actually a painting of a photograph of a three-dimensional model, which was based on a photograph of a television image of a real

thing! If that sounds confusing, it is hardly surprising. There is a complicated process behind Marburg's paintings.

The artist usually begins with a photograph, often taken from television. The photograph is therefore already quite removed from the original subject. Marburg then uses plasticine to make a small, three-dimensional model based on the photograph. The model is photographed and used as a reference for a painting. The photograph is usually enlarged and projected onto the canvas during this step. The end result is a smoothly painted image of a strange, artificial world. The colourful, lumpy forms represented in Marburg's paintings have a playful quality; however, their artificial qualities may also be a reminder of how information can become distorted as it passes from one point to another.

2 How has Marburg created an illusion of three-dimensional form in *Garden*?

3 Use contour lines or tone to make a circle, a triangle and a square become three-dimensional forms. What is the correct geometric name for each of the forms you have created?

4 For the two artworks pictured, list four words or phrases to describe the forms.

5 What ideas and meanings do the forms in each work suggest to you and why?

6 Draw a flow chart to show how Marburg creates her paintings. At each point in the process, indicate how the information she is working with changes.

7 Imagine you could somehow visit either *Covert 7 City* or *Garden*. Which place would you most like to explore? Why?

Amanda Marburg
Australian, b. 1976
Garden, 2002
oil on linen
181.0 × 120.5 cm
Private collection
Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery

(detail)

CREATE

Create a three-dimensional wild plant from another planet. Clay or found materials, such as foam rubber, would work well. Make your plant look as alive, colourful and interesting as possible.

Set up a classroom plant or flower show to display your specimens. You might even put your plants in pots. Think of a descriptive name for your plant.

Alternatively, instead of plants, your class could create buildings to make a futuristic city, with each member of the class completing one building or structure.

Take a photograph of your plant (or building) and use it as the basis of a two-dimensional image. Use appropriate techniques to describe the three-dimensional quality of your sculpture.

TEXTURE

3.12

REAL OR SIMULATED?

When you touch something, you feel its texture. Every object has texture: it can be rough, lumpy, scaly, slimy, smooth, furry or spiky. You can usually imagine what an object's texture will feel like just by looking at it.

You need to look for two sorts of texture when exploring art: real and simulated. Real textures are those that actually exist; they are what you would feel if you touched the artwork. Simulated texture is an illusion of texture. When you look at artwork, the textures can sometimes appear to be real.

Because people often associate textures with certain ideas or meanings, artists sometimes use textures in unexpected ways to surprise or shock. Examples of texture used in this way are *Gift*, an iron with spikes on the bottom made by Man Ray (1890–1976) in 1921, and *Breakfast in Fur*, a teacup, saucer and spoon covered in fur by Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985) in 1936.

Ideas and meanings in textures

Textures can suggest ideas and meaning. Smooth, polished textures usually look soothing and make us feel calm. Spiky, prickly or rough textures often look aggressive, or even dangerous, and can make us feel disturbed.

1 List three objects with different textures. List two words to describe the texture of each object.

2 Identify a texture that you strongly associate with an idea or meaning. Describe the texture and where it is found, and explain the ideas or meanings that you associate with it.

3 List examples and collect images of simulated textures and where they can be seen, such as simulated stone on kitchen benches.

Deborah Klein
Australian, b. 1951
Vorticist, 2004
oil and acrylic on linen
122 × 91 cm
Art Gallery of Ballarat
Purchased with funds from the Colin Hicks Caldwell Bequest, 2005
© Deborah Klein

Elaborate style

Vorticist is from the Tease series of paintings by **Deborah Klein** (b. 1951). In each painting, the focus is on a gleaming, smooth head of hair that has been carefully parted, twisted and knotted into an elaborate hairstyle. In some of the paintings, the hair is pinned in place with decorative combs. The focus appears to be entirely on the hair; there are no other clues about the identity of the person depicted.

Before the Tease paintings, the artist worked on a series of **linocuts** and pastels of tattooed faces and figures. It was the last work of this earlier series that sparked the artist's interest in hairstyles. Linocuts did not suit the effects she wanted to achieve, so the earliest works in the new series were paintings made with acrylic paint. Eventually, however, oil painting proved to be the most suitable medium, especially when she began working on a larger scale. **Oil paint** dries slowly, which means she could easily blend colour. Klein also liked the rich surface of oil paint.

4 List four words or phrases to describe the textures in *Vorticist*.

5 Explain how Klein has used elements such as colour, line and tone to achieve an illusion of texture in *Vorticist*.

6 What feelings, ideas or other meanings does *Vorticist* communicate to you and why? In your answer, consider the significance of focusing on the hair rather than on the woman's face.

Artist in the house

In the **installation** *The Macleay Women* by English-born Australian artist **Anne Graham** (b. 1949), the hair is real (or, more precisely, real imitation hair).

People often have strong reactions to the presence of hair, perhaps because it is so closely connected to the human body. What does the sight of those long plaits feeding through the bars of the window in the basement and spilling across the floor suggest to you? Some people may be reminded of the fairy-tale *Rapunzel*, in which the princess Rapunzel escapes imprisonment in a tower by using her long plait as a rope.

Other associations come from the context of this **site-specific** work. Graham was one of 14 artists invited to participate in a series of exhibitions at Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney, in 1997. Artists were asked to consider the history of the house and its occupants, and to create work that communicated something about the significance of the house. Graham's interest was in the Macleay women. Alexander and Eliza Macleay had six daughters, all with red hair. Graham used red hair as a symbol of the women.

7 Why do you believe Graham used a material with the texture of real hair in *The Macleay Women*?

8 Apart from the texture of the hair, what other textures are important in this artwork? Explain why.

9 Suggest what meaning might be associated with the number, length and placement of plaits in this work.

Courtesy of Anne Graham, WW Artist Projects, Sydney

Anne Graham
Australian, b. 1949
The Macleay Women, 1997
installation at Elizabeth Bay House

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to find an interview with Klein and the artist's website.

CREATE

Create an image of a person with an elaborate and extravagant hairstyle by gluing string and other textured materials to a heavy piece of card. Roll ink over the design and print it to create a **collograph** print.

Because the focus is on the hair, a head-and-shoulders rear view of your person would be best.

EXPLORE

Find an artwork in which you believe texture plays an important role. Explain how texture has been used and how it adds to the meaning suggested by the work.

DISCUSS

The following comments were recorded in the visitors' book at Elizabeth Bay House, where *The Macleay Women* was exhibited in 1997.

'Contemporary art belongs in contemporary museums not historic buildings. Maybe in 50 to 100 years it will be appreciated but not now in this context.'

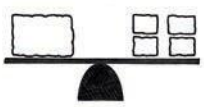
'The introduction of contemporary art invigorates the house and makes some interesting connections with the past – makes it a living place.'[6]

What ideas or beliefs about contemporary art and its role are reflected in these comments? What would you write in the visitors' book? Explain.

3.13 MAKING IT BALANCE

You have probably heard people speak of the importance of a balanced diet or a balanced life. **Balance** suggests a state where everything is in the right measure for the benefit of the whole.

A balanced artwork composition is important for the same reason. For an artwork to appear visually complete and whole, there needs to be a sense of balance in the way the art elements, such as colour, line, shape, tone and form, are used and arranged.



Large shapes or forms appear heavier than small shapes or forms.

Bright colours appear heavier than dull colours.

Warm colours appear heavier than cool colours.

Dark, thick lines appear heavier than light, thin lines.

Dark tones appear heavier than light tones.

Rough textures appear heavier than smooth textures.

Detail appears heavier than plain areas.

In a two-dimensional work, things nearer the edge appear heavier than things close to the centre.

In a two-dimensional work, things that look closer appear heavier than things that look further away.

Symmetrical balance

Some artworks, such as *A Man Taken Ill* by English artist **Laurence Stephen Lowry** (1887–1976), have **symmetrical balance**. Think of a seesaw balanced with exactly the same weight on each side. If you ruled a line down the centre of a symmetrically balanced composition, you would find the same or very similar art elements on either side of the line.

Symmetrical balance usually looks ordered, calm and formal. It is often used in the design of public buildings or in formal portraits, such as school photographs.

Taken ill

The everyday life of Manchester, an industrial city in the north of England, was the main subject matter of Lowry's art. His paintings vividly describe the people, the terraced streets, the textile mills and the factories of the area.

Lowry worked for many years as a rent collector. During this time, he became familiar with many of the poorer areas and people of the city, and they often appear in his paintings. Although he was a very quiet character and did not form many close relationships, Lowry was a great observer of the people around him. Most of his paintings, such as *A Man Taken Ill*, are views observed from a distance.

Laurence Stephen Lowry
English, 1887–1976
A Man Taken Ill, 1936
oil on plywood
40.5 × 50.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1946 (1544–4)

1 Explain why Lowry's painting can be described as having symmetrical balance.

2 What evidence can you find in *A Man Taken Ill* that:
- the view was observed from a distance
- Lowry closely observed the people and life around him?

Asymmetrical balance

Some artworks, such as *Children's Hoops* by Australian artist **Ethel Spowers** (1890–1947), have **asymmetrical balance**.

Imagine a line running down the centre of this artwork. The arrangement of art elements on each side is quite different. A pair of scales is balanced as long as the weight on either side is equal; it does not matter if the weight is made up of different things. Artists can use combinations and arrangements of art elements to create balance in their compositions because the elements of art have different visual weight.

Asymmetrical balance is less formal than symmetrical balance and more natural.

At play

Like Lowry, Spowers took her subjects from life around her. Children playing and scenes of city life were common themes in Spowers's work.

Spowers's best-known works are **linocuts**. Linocut was a new and popular medium in the 1930s.

Spowers's modern approach to making art is seen in the strong, simplified shapes and colours that she used to suggest movement and energy in her print.

3 How has Spowers achieved balance in *Children's Hoops*?

4 Explain how the symmetrical balance in *A Man Taken Ill* and the asymmetrical balance in *Children's Hoops* contribute to the ideas or meanings communicated by each artwork.

5 Imagine you are one of the characters in either *Children's Hoops* or *A Man Taken Ill*. Describe what is happening, including how you feel and what you see and hear. You could present this as a diary entry for your character.

Ethel Spowers
Australian, 1890–1947
Children's Hoops, 1936
colour linocut
19.8 × 26.2 cm (block);
22.7 × 31.3 cm (sheet)
Coppel, ES 31
edition 9/50
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1937
(435–4)

In 2000, a new visual and performing arts centre, The Lowry, was opened in Manchester. The Lowry houses the major collection of Lowry's paintings and drawings.

CREATE

Make a series of photographic portraits of your family or a group of friends. Try different arrangements, including some with symmetrical balance and some with asymmetrical balance. Before you begin, think about all the elements that need to be balanced in the portrait. Consider the colours, shapes and textures in the background and on the people.

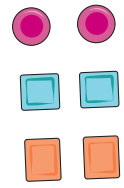
Choose two of your photographs and note what you believe was successful and unsuccessful about each arrangement.

EXPLORE

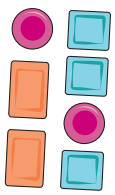
Lowry and Spowers lived and worked at about the same time. Look at the work of each artist and find out more about each artist's life.

Look for three facts that you think explain something about each artist's work. What do you believe each fact adds to your understanding of the artist's work?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about the art and life of Lowry on the website of The Lowry.



Symmetrical balance

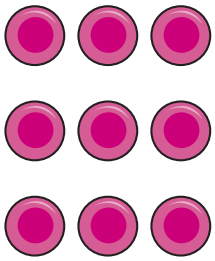


Asymmetrical balance

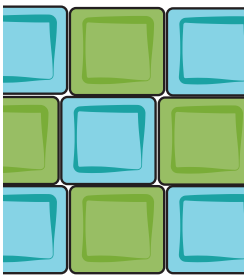
3.14 UNITY AND VARIETY

When things or people are united, they work together as a whole. In the composition of an artwork, unity is achieved when all the art elements work together to create a strong visual whole.

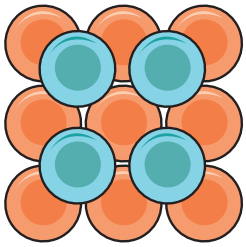
A unified composition often contains some variety in the art elements, but this can make a composition more interesting.



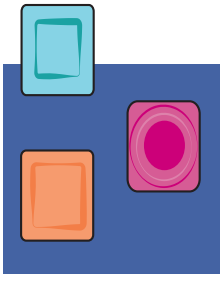
Repetition



Harmony



Overlapping



Linking

Unity

One way of creating **unity** is through repetition. A team in uniform looks united because each team member is dressed in the same way. In an artwork, artists sometimes create unity by repeating the same element, such as a particular colour or shape.

People who live and work in harmony usually have something in common that unites them. Harmonious art elements also have something in common. For example, green is in harmony with blue because it has some blue in it; squares and rectangles are harmonious shapes because they are both made from straight lines and right angles. Because harmonious elements are visually similar, when they are used together in an artwork, they can help create a feeling of unity.

When art elements in an artwork are overlapping, it forms a relationship between the elements that can help create a feeling of unity.

Linking art elements can also help create unity in a design. For example, a line may be used to link three shapes that would otherwise appear isolated from each other.

Variety

Even in a composition where art elements seem to be repeated many times, you will probably find some **variety** that adds interest to the artwork when you look closely. Look, for example, at the variety of blues in *The Melbourne Panels*.

In many artworks, variety is added by using **contrast**. Contrasting elements have nothing in common. For example, green contrasts with red, jagged lines contrast with curved lines, and light tones contrast with dark tones. Because they look so different, contrasting elements stand out from each other.

Strongly contrasting elements can often add a feeling of energy or movement, and interest, to an artwork. You can see this effect in the contrasting blues and oranges in *The Melbourne Panels*.

1. Collect three images that you believe display unity. Annotate each image to explain what it is that unites the images. Is there repetition, harmony, overlapping or linking of elements?
2. Collect three images of artworks, outfits, rooms, buildings or environments that you believe show the use of variety to add interest to a design. Annotate the images to explain where and how variety has been added.

Jon Cattapan
The Melbourne Panels, 2003 (detail)

Jon Cattapan
Australian, b. 1956
The Melbourne Panels, 2003
oil on canvas
(a–c) 200.6 × 545.0 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Commissioned through the NGV Foundation by The Hugh DT Williamson Foundation, Founder Benefactor, 2003
(2003.655.a–c)

A city alive

The Melbourne Panels by Australian **Jon Cattapan** (b. 1956) is a very large **triptych** painting where colour, line and shape work together to create a powerful impression of a busy city.

Can you see how repetition and harmony of colour, line and shape help unify the design of this painting? Did you notice that the red used in some large areas of the painting is repeated in tiny dots? Contrasts of colour, line and shape are also used in the painting to add variety and interest.

Cities have been a strong theme in the work of Cattapan for many years. In many of his city paintings, the city is portrayed as though viewers are looking down from a very tall building, or even an aeroplane. *The Melbourne Panels* includes a number of city landmarks, but the artist is not interested in describing or mapping the city in a realistic way.

The buildings hover ghost-like on a sea of aqueous blue that ebbs and flows from the deep violet-blues, which dominate the distance, to the milky pools of colour in the foreground. Some areas are illuminated by the glow of brilliant reds and oranges that suggest heat and pulsing energy. Complex networks of dotted lines link the buildings and extend into the distance. The lines could suggest street lights or car lights, or they could be seen as representing forms of connection in the city, such as data communication. The artist leaves it to your imagination.

3 Annotate an image or explain in words where you can find evidence in *The Melbourne Panels* of:
- repetition, harmony, overlapping and linking to create unity
- contrast to add interest.

4 Compare *The Melbourne Panels* with *Collins St., 5 p.m.* by John Brack (p. 94) or *The Pioneer* by Frederick McCubbin (p. 104).
- For each painting, consider the:
  - aspect of the place that is represented
  - art elements
  - design principles, especially unity and variety
  - painting technique
  - meanings or ideas communicated about the place.
- List three ways each painting reflects the time in history in which it was made.
- Which painting interests you the most and why?

CREATE

Imagine you own a shop. It can sell whatever you like; use your imagination.

Draw your shopfront on a large sheet of paper. Make sure that your shop has a very big window that you can fill with an interesting display of products. You can draw, paint or make a collage of your display, but your display should demonstrate art principles, such as balance, unity and variety.

Make a class display of all the shops. Put them in a row to create an interesting streetscape and do some window shopping.

3.15 RHYTHM AND FOCAL POINT

In the composition of an artwork, rhythm and focal point create movement and focus.

Rhythm

When you listen to music, the repetition of beats creates a pattern called a **rhythm**. Visual rhythms are created by the repetition of art elements in the design of an artwork. The repetition creates a pattern that you follow with your eyes. Visual rhythms are an important way of suggesting movement in art.

City rhythms

To learn more about John Brack, read p. 72.

Both *Collins St., 5 p.m.* by **John Brack** (1920–1999) and *The Bridge in-Curve* by **Grace Cossington Smith** (1892–1984) are paintings about a city, yet each painting has different visual rhythms that communicate the artists' ideas about the cities.

In Brack's painting, the repetition of vertical lines, squared shapes and dull colours, and the spaces between them, create a regular, steady rhythm. The orderly pattern of lines, shapes, spaces and colours has been used by the artist to suggest the regular, even monotonous, routine of working life.

In Cossington Smith's work, the irregular, angular shapes of the buildings, pylons and bridge, the bright colours, and the obvious brushstrokes create a more energetic pattern. The visual rhythm in this painting seems to build up with nervous energy towards the massive arc of the bridge, culminating in a strong sense of forward, surging movement.

Focal point

Visual rhythm and movement in an artwork are often strongly associated with creating a **focal point**. When you enter some rooms, you find that they have an obvious focal point: a place that immediately attracts your attention. In a classroom, a whiteboard is often the focal point. Everything in the room is arranged to draw your attention towards it. Many artworks also have focal points that draw your attention to a particular area of the composition.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to access education resources about Brack.

John Brack
Australian, 1920–1999
Collins St., 5 p.m., 1955
oil on canvas
114.8 × 162.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1956 (3302–4)

A focal point can be created using these techniques:

- Contrast can attract your attention because things that look different stand out. A light tone will stand out against a dark tone, red will stand out against green, and a square will stand out against circles.
- Size and placement can attract your attention. A large shape in the centre of a painting will stand out more than a small shape near the edge. You also tend to look at something when it has been placed apart from other things in a painting.
- Lines and visual rhythms in an artwork can be used to move your attention towards a focal point.

Some artworks do not have a focal point. Instead, they have a repetitive pattern that keeps your attention moving around the artwork.

A modern marvel

The Bridge in-Curve is a dramatic view of Sydney Harbour Bridge as it was being built. It focuses your attention on the space where the two massive arms of the bridge will soon join.

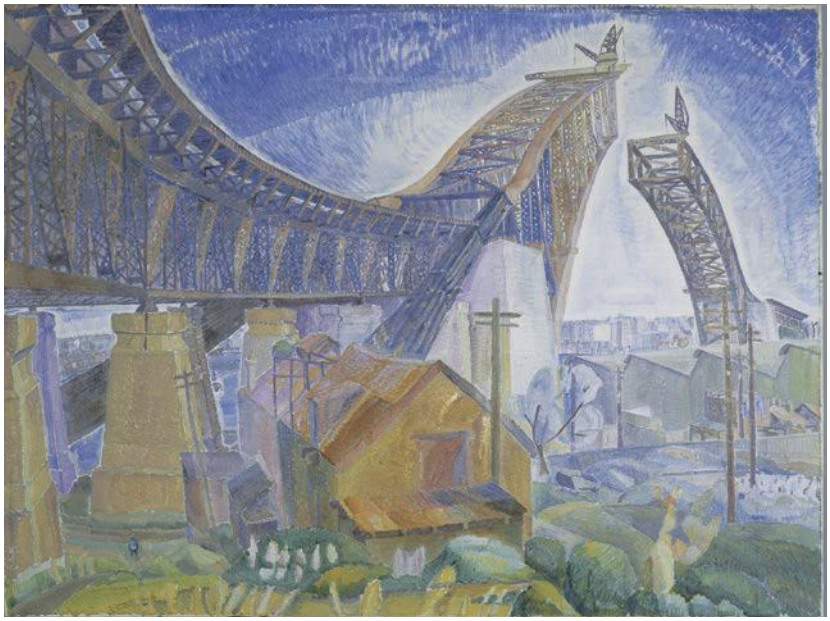
Cossington Smith felt that it was important for artists to paint modern city life. She also took a modern approach to painting her subjects, using strong shapes, simplified forms, bright colours and obvious brushstrokes.

A regular routine

Collins St., 5 p.m. does not have a single focal point. The regular visual rhythms in this painting move viewers' attention steadily through the entire scene rather than directing it to a particular point.

Like Cossington Smith, Brack was interested in painting modern life. During the 1950s and 1960s, he made many paintings about life in the city and suburbs. The artist stood in a doorway in Melbourne's Collins Street every night between 4.45 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. for several weeks making drawings of the passing crowd in preparation for the painting *Collins St., 5 p.m.* In the final painting, the artist carefully arranged art elements to communicate his ideas about the city.

1 Make an annotated sketch of *The Bridge in-Curve* and indicate the techniques that have been used to focus attention on the space where the bridge will join.



Grace Cossington Smith
Australian, 1892–1984
The Bridge in-Curve, 1930
tempera on cardboard
83.6 × 111.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by the National Gallery Society of Victoria, 1967 (1765–5)
© Estate of Grace Cossington Smith

2 What ideas or feelings do the visual rhythms of *The Bridge in-Curve* and *Collins St., 5 p.m.* communicate about the cities they represent? What is it about the visual rhythm in each work that communicates these ideas or feelings?

3 Collect images that you believe display a strong focal point or visual rhythm. Annotate two images to explain how the elements create a strong visual rhythm or focal point.

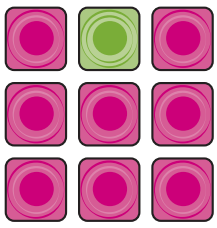
CREATE

Create a two-dimensional image of a familiar city or town. Think carefully about how you will use art elements and design principles, especially rhythm and focal point, to communicate your ideas about the place you are representing. Do some research to find photographs or take photographs of the place and make preliminary sketches.

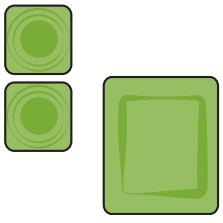
In your finished artwork, try to communicate an idea, feeling or quality about the place instead of simply portraying an exact physical appearance.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video about Cossington Smith.

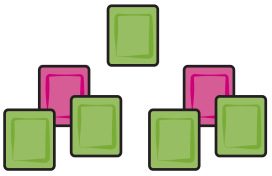
To see a preparatory drawing for *The Bridge in-Curve*, see p. 17.



Contrast



Size and placement

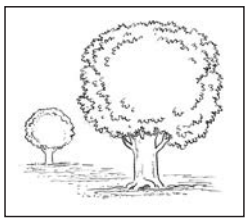


Lines and visual rhythms

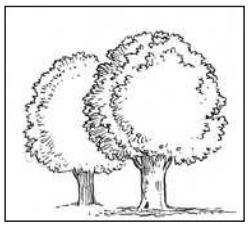
3.16 PUTTING IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Space is an important aspect in the composition of all artworks.

Sculptors arrange art elements in three-dimensional space. Painters and others who create art on flat surfaces arrange art elements in two-dimensional space; however, many artists working on a two-dimensional surface arrange art elements to create an illusion of three-dimensional space.

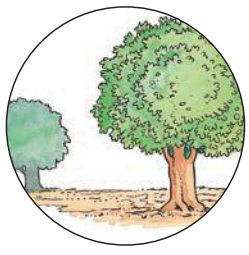


Size

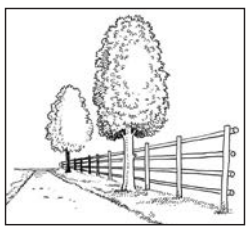


Overlapping

Foreshortening



Colour



Detail

Perspective conventions

Artists use perspective **conventions** to create illusions of three-dimensional space on flat surfaces.

The size of objects affects **perspective**; objects that are far away appear smaller than things that are near. To put things in perspective, distant shapes or forms should be smaller than close shapes or forms.

For an object to be put in front of another, three-dimensional space is required. Overlapping shapes or layers can therefore make things appear in perspective. The shapes or layers in front appear closer.

Three-dimensional objects have height, width and depth. When you look at an object in space, the depth lines appear shorter than they really are because they are projecting back into space. This visual effect is known as **foreshortening**. Foreshortening distorts the 'real' shape of the object but makes it appear in perspective.

When things are in the distance, they have less intense colour because of dust and haze in the atmosphere. You also see them with less detail than you see things close to you. Aerial or atmospheric perspective creates an illusion of space by showing things in the distance with lighter, less intense colour and less detail.

Bright, warm colours tend to appear closer to us. Cool, light colours seem further away.

Lines can be used to suggest depth and space. The lines that you see around you on buildings or on roads trace a path through space. Re-creating these lines on a flat surface can make things appear in perspective.

Linear perspective involves using:

- the **horizon** line (equivalent to the viewer's eye level)
- a **vanishing point** (or points) on the horizon line
- **orthogonal lines** that recede from the objects in a composition to meet at the vanishing point(s). Orthogonal lines are like guidelines that help artists logically work out the size, placement and form of objects in an image.

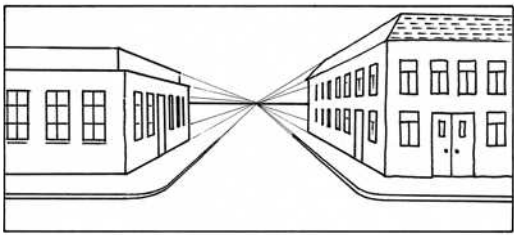
Most artworks use **one-point perspective** or **two-point perspective**. One-point perspective has only one vanishing point and is used for objects that are seen face on or parallel to the **picture plane**.

Two-point perspective has two vanishing points and is used for objects that are seen at an angle to the picture plane.

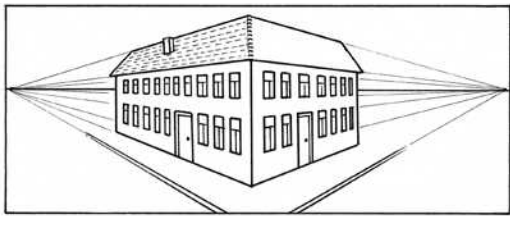
The perspective will depend on where objects are placed in relation to the picture plane. If you think of a two-dimensional artwork (such as a painting) as a window, the picture plane is like the glass in the window.

An amazing banquet

The **illusion** of three-dimensional space in *The Banquet of Cleopatra* by Italian artist **Giambattista Tiepolo** (1696–1770) is so strong that viewers almost feel as though



One-point perspective



Two-point perspective

Giambattista Tiepolo
Italian, 1696–1770
The Banquet of Cleopatra,
1743–44
oil on canvas
250.3 × 357.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1933 (103–4)

they can step into the painting and join the characters at the table. The receding lines of the floor tiles highlight the one-point perspective that Tiepolo has used to create an illusion of space.

The Banquet of Cleopatra is based on a story about the famous Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Cleopatra had a wager with Mark Antony, the Roman consul in Egypt, that she could exceed his extravagance and spend 10 million sesterces (a vast sum of money) on a single feast. Lucius Plancus, who sits behind the table, was appointed to act as umpire for the contest.

Tiepolo's painting focuses on the most dramatic moment of the story. The perspective lines provide an important clue to what is about to happen. Not only has Tiepolo used these lines to create an illusion of three-dimensional space, but he has also used them to direct attention to the **focal point** of the painting, near Cleopatra's raised hand. The gestures and glances of many of the figures also direct attention to this point.

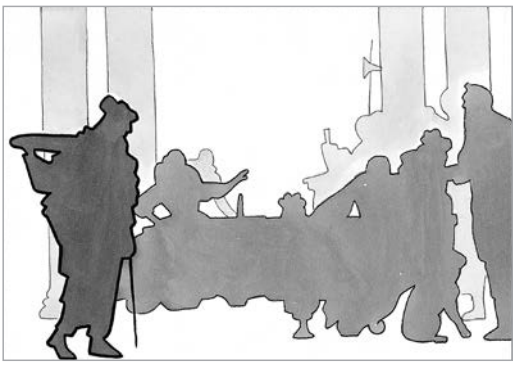
At the focal point, Cleopatra is holding a very large and exceedingly valuable pearl earring. She wears another on her ear. After the first course of her banquet, Cleopatra had a servant bring her a glass of strong vinegar. She dropped her priceless pearl into the vinegar, the pearl dissolved and she drank it.

EXPLORE

Create a set of instructions that explains how to draw a few basic objects in one-point and two-point perspective. Include drawings as well as written explanation. Your guide should include the terms 'vanishing point', 'orthogonal' and 'horizon'.

With this exceptionally extravagant single drink, she easily won the wager.

1 Create an annotated copy of *The Banquet of Cleopatra* and identify:
   - the vanishing point, the horizon and the main orthogonals
   - the ways in which Tiepolo focuses attention on Cleopatra's hand
   - the conventions that Tiepolo has used to create an illusion of three-dimensional space.



The **foreground** of a two-dimensional artwork is the area that appears closest to us. The **background** is the area that appears most distant. The **middleground** is the area between the foreground and the background.

In an artwork, each of these areas usually has different qualities to create an illusion of depth and space.

3.17 A MATTER OF CONVENTION

The conventions traditionally used in **western art** for representing perspective (pp. 96–7) are only one way of portraying space on a flat surface. When you explore the art of different times and places, you discover that there are many other ways of representing space.

A **stela** is a rectangular stone slab.

An ancient perspective

Most artworks made by the ancient Egyptians were associated with rituals and beliefs related to life after death.

This **stela** shows Mentuwoser, an official, at his funeral banquet. He is seated at a table loaded with food. Can you see the loaves of bread, meat and vegetables? The two small figures on the bottom right are family members. Mentuwoser's daughter is kneeling and holding a lotus; his father offers food and drink. Above these two figures, Mentuwoser's son is summoning his father's spirit. The hieroglyphs explain details of Mentuwoser's work and his many good deeds.

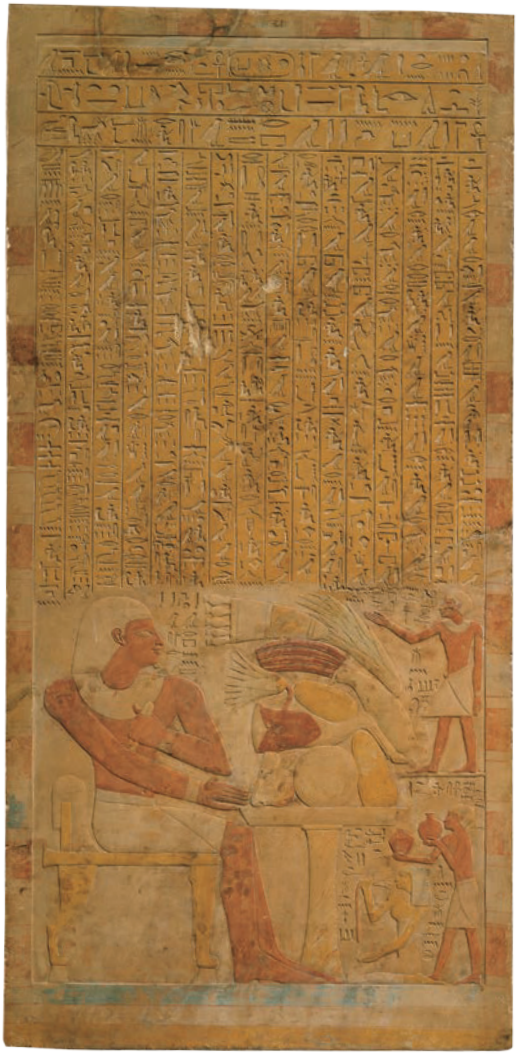
The stela not only provided evidence that Mentuwoser was worthy of a life after death but also helped ensure that Mentuwoser would always be honoured and provided for by his family.

The ancient Egyptians developed many art conventions. The conventions, including those used to represent space and the human figure, ensure that the important messages were clearly communicated and understood.

Conventions for representing the human body in ancient Egyptian art were more focused on ensuring that images were clear and in order than on mimicking their real appearance. Each figure was assembled from body parts shown using different **viewpoints**; the head, legs and feet are shown in profile, from the side, while the eye and torso are shown from the front. Doing this helped ensure that each of the major parts of the body could be seen in its most complete form. Convention also dictated that the more important figures in an image were shown larger than other figures.

Another convention of ancient Egyptian art was that people, objects and symbols were represented as clearly outlined flat shapes placed beside or above one another along a ground line. Elements were arranged in the two-dimensional space to allow everything of importance to be shown as clearly and completely as possible. Overlapping was generally only used for less important characters or objects because part of the object may be concealed.

1 Draw a small sketch of Mentuwoser at his funeral banquet with his family, but use some of the conventions for representing space commonly found in western art, such as overlapping and foreshortening.



(detail)

Stela of Mentuwoser,
c. 1955 BCE
painted limestone
49.8 × 104.1 cm
Gift of Edward S Harkness, 1912 (12.184)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

2 Draw a small sketch of *The Banquet of Cleopatra* (p. 97). Focus only on the main characters and use the ancient Egyptians' conventions for representing space and the human figure.

A view of court life

Dewali Celebrations at Kotah provides a fascinating view of life at a Rajput court in the late seventeenth century.

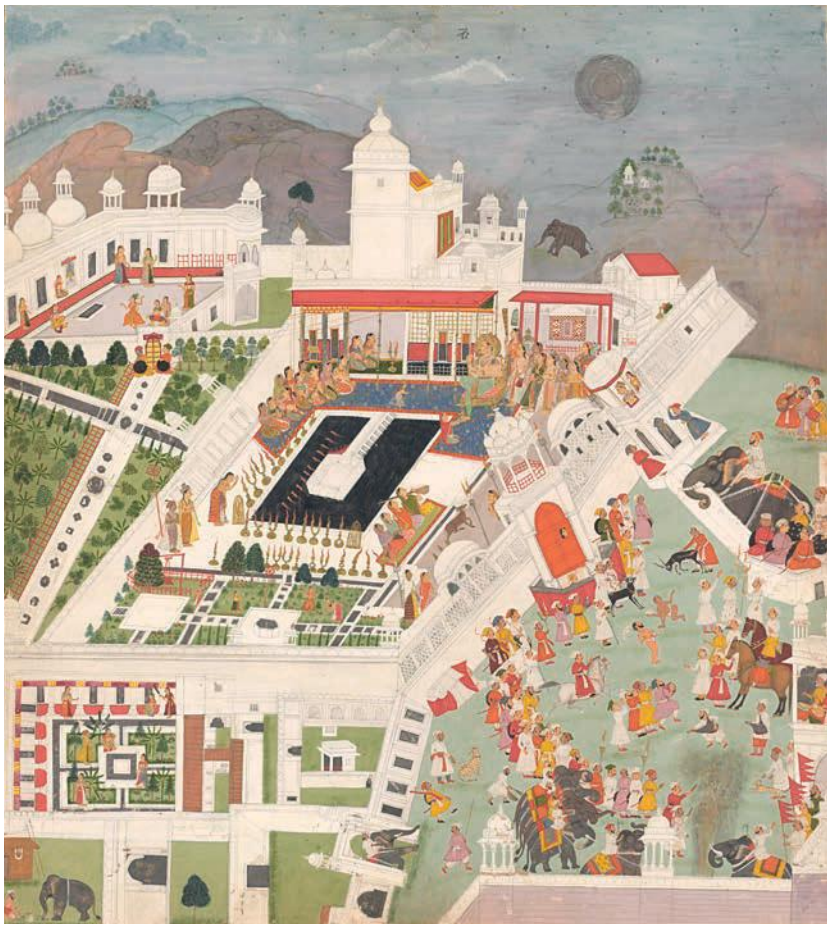
The scene is shown in intricate detail and using multiple **viewpoints**. Some parts of the palace are shown from a **bird's-eye view** or perspective and have a plan-like appearance. Other parts of the painting feature evidence of different perspective conventions, including **linear perspective** to describe the elaborate architecture and atmospheric perspective in the landscape.

Vivid colour focuses attention on the animated activity of the figures in several sections of the composition. Can you see how the relative importance of different people is indicated by their size?

The exact subject of the painting is not known, but it is thought to depict Dewali, the festival of lights. Dewali is an important Hindu festival held at Hindu New Year. The festival celebrates the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil.

3 Create an annotated copy of *Dewali Celebrations at Kotah* to identify the different perspective conventions used.

4 What clues can you find that this painting might represent Dewali?



Indian
Dewali Celebrations at Kotah, c. 1690
opaque watercolour and gold paint on paper
48.2 × 43.8 cm (image)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1980 (AS68–1980)

Traditionally in India, religious narratives and *ragamala* paintings, images celebrating musical melodies (*ragas*), were the main forms of painting at the Rajput court; however, from the eighteenth century, portraits and images depicting daily life at court – including religious festivals, performances and leisure activities – emerged as the most popular subjects. *Dewali Celebrations at Kotah* is an early example of this latter form of painting.

EXPLORE

Choose two landscape paintings that were painted in different places and times.

- Describe how each artist represents space in the landscape. Does it appear to be two-dimensional or three-dimensional? Why?
- Suggest factors that might have influenced the way each artist has represented space, such as culture, tradition or personal interests.

CREATE

Create a two-dimensional artwork about a special meal, banquet or celebration. It may be a banquet with a fantastic feast (such as Cleopatra's), a more humble meal (such as Mentuwoser's) or a significant cultural celebration (such as Dewali). Think about the people, objects and activities you will include.

Consider the perspective convention you will use to best represent your subject.

Before you begin, you may like to collect images by other artists who have painted banquets, meals or celebrations.

Christopher Langton
Australian, b. 1954
Brat Pack, 1996
PVC, synthetic polymer paint and air
dimensions variable
Lyon Collection of Australian Contemporary Art

4

SUBJECTS AND THEMES

This chapter investigates common subjects and themes that have inspired artists throughout history. Exploring subjects and themes in art reveals clues that will help you understand artworks.

Artists have created art to tell stories, to represent people and places, to record everyday life and to reveal artists' inner and imaginary worlds.

How and why artists choose to explore particular subjects and themes can be influenced by the artists' personal experiences and beliefs, and by the historical, cultural and social context in which they work.

Learn about:

- subjects and themes in art
- how art can be influenced and inspired by an artist's personal experiences and beliefs, and by their historical, cultural and social context.

Learn by:

- comparing, analysing, evaluating and interpreting artworks
- discussing and communicating ideas and opinions about art
- creating your own artwork.

THE ART OF NARRATIVE

4.1

THE ART OF STORYTELLING

Artworks that tell stories are often described as **narrative**. 'Narrative' is another word for 'story'.

Artists throughout history have created narrative artworks to tell stories about real and mythical events. They also tell stories about their culture, beliefs and personal experiences, and other stories from their imagination.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about a related artwork by Munduwalawala.

Stories in Country

Stories from the **Dreaming** are an important source of inspiration for many Indigenous Australian artists.

A story from saltwater country

Ginger Riley Munduwalawala (c. 1936–2002) was born in the coastal saltwater Mara country in the Gulf of Carpentaria, south-east Arnhem Land. As a young man, he worked as a stockman and travelled extensively in the Northern Territory.

An encounter with artist Albert Namatjira (1902–1959) left a lasting impression on the young Munduwalawala; however, it was not until 30 years later, in the 1980s, when Munduwalawala had returned to the Aboriginal community of Ngukurr, that he had the opportunity to make his own paintings.

Munduwalawala painted his mother's country and stories relating to its creation. He used brilliant colour and expressive **painterly** marks that ranged from broad, sweeping strokes to delicate, stippled patterns.

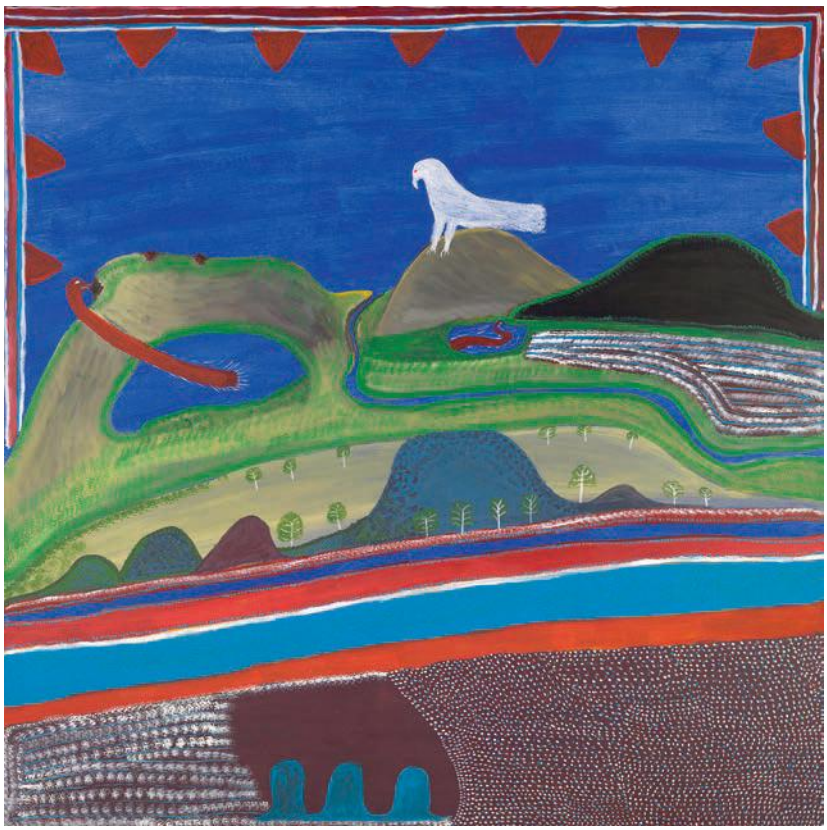
Recurring motifs in his paintings of the country around Limmen Bight include important landmarks, such as the Four Archers; Garimala, the powerful ancestral snake that created the Four Archers; and Gnak Gnak, the white-breasted sea eagle.

Mara Country was inspired by the story of a group of young boys who angered Garimala by killing some flying foxes that lived near the Four Archers. Garimala could take different forms, and in the form of Bulukbun, an angry,

Munduwalawala was a custodian or guardian (*djungkayi*) of his mother's country around the Limmen Bight area of the Gulf of Carpentaria. His country includes the Four Archers, a group of rocky ridges near the Limmen Bight River and about 45 kilometres inland from the Gulf of Carpentaria.

In July 2000, the Australian Federal Court recognised native title rights to the land around Limmen Bight River and other nearby areas on the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Munduwalawala became widely known as the 'boss of colour'.



Ginger Riley Munduwalawala
Australian (Marra), c. 1936–2002
Mara Country, 1992
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
244 × 244 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by the artist, Fellow, (1997.146)

fiery serpent, he pursued the boys and killed some of them. The boys who escaped hid in caves at the top of the Four Archers. Bulukbun reached in and breathed fire on them. Gnak Gnak is seen watching over the scene.

The triangular shapes that frame the sky are based on traditional designs used for body painting.

A story from the east Kimberley

Rover Thomas (c. 1926–1998) was born in the Great Sandy Desert, but he lived most of his life in a small Aboriginal community called Warmun, near Turkey Creek in the east Kimberley. Like Munduwalawala, Thomas spent many years working as a stockman before he started to paint in 1982.

Thomas's first paintings were made on boards for the Kurirr-Kurirr ceremony, an important public ceremony in the Warmun community. Thomas helped to establish Warmun as an important art centre.

Thomas developed a unique, abstract style of painting, stripped back of all but essential detail. His paintings depict the landscape from a **bird's-eye view** and include many stories of country. The stories of country are told in a distinctive visual language made up of bold, simple shapes edged with subtle dots and textured surfaces painted with natural **ochres**.

In *Dreamtime Story of the Willy Willy*, Thomas depicts the path and power of a willy-willy in Jaru country. A willy-willy is a whirlwind or dust storm; it can move quickly, sucking up dust in a vertical spiral.

In the top right-hand corner of the painting, the willy-willy starts as a gentle swirl. It then gathers momentum and force as it moves through the country. When it reaches a waterhole, seen at the centre of the canvas, the willy-willy is swallowed by Garagi, the Rainbow Serpent, who is associated with storms in the Kimberley.

1 Compare *Mara Country* with *Dreamtime Story of the Willy Willy,* explaining how each artist communicates a story about their country.

EXPLORE

Find another painting by Munduwalawala, Thomas or another artist from the Warmun or Ngukurr communities that includes a narrative about country. What is the story and how is it told in the work?

DISCUSS

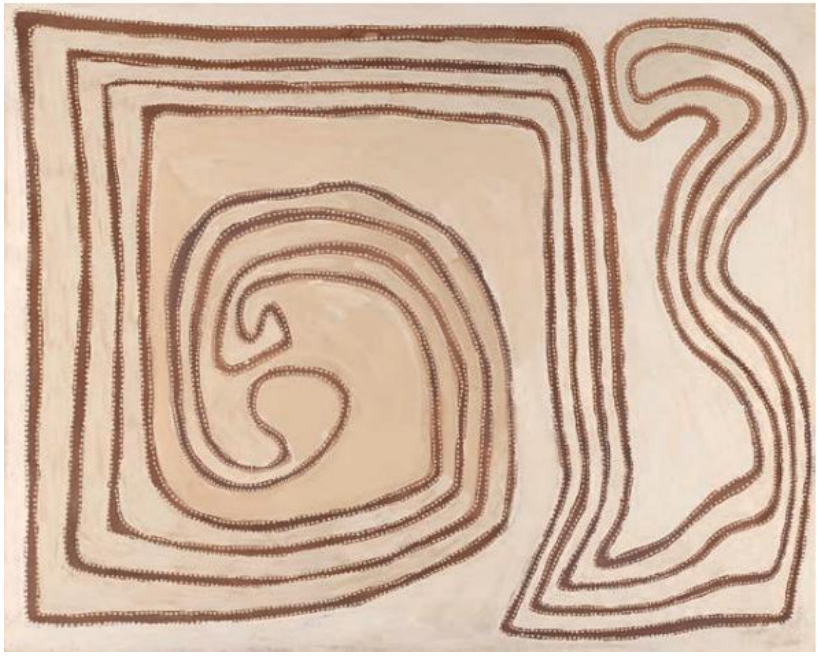
The individual styles of painting that Munduwalawala and Thomas developed challenged the stereotypes often associated with Aboriginal art. Do you agree? Why?

The Kurirr-Kurirr ceremony was revealed to Thomas in dreams not long after a female relative died in a car accident in 1974. The journey of the woman's spirit over sacred and historic sites in the Kimberley formed a cycle of songs, dances and images for the ceremony.

Thomas, who had not yet started painting, explained the stories to his uncle Paddy Jaminji (1912–1996), who was already a painter and who painted the boards.

Aboriginal workers played a significant role in the development of the pastoral industry in central and Western Australia; however, it was not until 1968 that they were legally entitled to equal wages for their work.

Because of equal wages and other industry changes (such as low beef prices, helicopter mustering and rural recession), pastoral employment opportunities rapidly declined, and many Aboriginal people were forced to move from stations where their families had lived for generations.



Rover Thomas
Australian (Kukatja and Wangkajunga), c. 1926–1998
Dreamtime Story of the Willy Willy, 1989
earth pigments and natural binder on canvas
160.1 × 200.1 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1990 (0.1–1990)

4.2 AUSTRALIAN STORIES

Stories of the settlement of Australia have shaped Australian history and identity. Stories about life in modern cities often reflect a different perspective on Australian life.

Settlement story

The Pioneer by Australian artist **Frederick McCubbin** (1855–1917) tells a story about Australia's past. It was painted just a few years after Federation, a time of great **nationalism** in Australia. The large scale of the work and the **triptych** format (which is traditionally used in religious paintings) indicate the importance that McCubbin placed on this Australian story.

The triptych format divides the painting into three parts and creates a beginning, middle and end to the story. Repeating elements, including colour, create a strong feeling of **unity** across the panels; however, the differences in each panel, especially in the sky, landscape and figures, suggest the passing of time and provide important clues to the story. The gestures and expressions of the figures also provide clues.

Many viewers agree that the first two panels tell the story of a young couple who work hard, with few resources, to create a life in the bush; however, viewers often have different ideas about the identity of the figure in the last panel. The distant city and the grave are perhaps the most important clues, and they indicate that a considerable period of time has gone by. The grave may represent the passing of the pioneers, while the city seems to suggest what was achieved as a result of their hard work.

DISCUSS

Why might different groups of people have different opinions about McCubbin's portrayal of Australia's settlement? For example, consider how the scene might be viewed or understood by an Indigenous person, an environmentalist or someone newly arrived in Australia.

Consider how the view of settlement in *The Pioneer* differs from that in Malya Teamay's *Broken Law* (p. 80).

At Federation, on 1 January 1901, the six self-governing colonies of Australia were united under one central government.

Nationalism is a form of national pride that values and promotes the unique qualities of a nation.

A pioneer is someone who leads the way in opening up or settling an area.

McCubbin was part of the group of artists who became known as the **Australian Impressionists**. Working **en plein air** was an important part of the practice of artists associated with Impressionist painting.

McCubbin was living in Mount Macedon, a rural area outside Melbourne, when he painted *The Pioneer*. Although the painting is large, he worked outdoors. By lowering the painting into a deep, specially prepared trench, he was able to reach the top.

Frederick McCubbin
Australian, 1855–1917
The Pioneer, 1904
oil on canvas (three panels)
225.0 × 295.7 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1906 (253–2)

1 Describe how McCubbin achieves unity across the three panels in the composition of *The Pioneer*.

2 Write a short paragraph explaining your understanding of the story in *The Pioneer*.

3 Make an annotated copy of *The Pioneer* and note where you see evidence of your understanding of the painting's story.

4 McCubbin's painting is often seen as a celebration of the settlement of Australia. Suggest why the painting might be interpreted in this way.

5 What different ideas about Australia are communicated by *The Pioneer* and *'Boatman' No. 2* by Guan Wei (p. 159)? Suggest reasons for the differences.

Art inspires stories

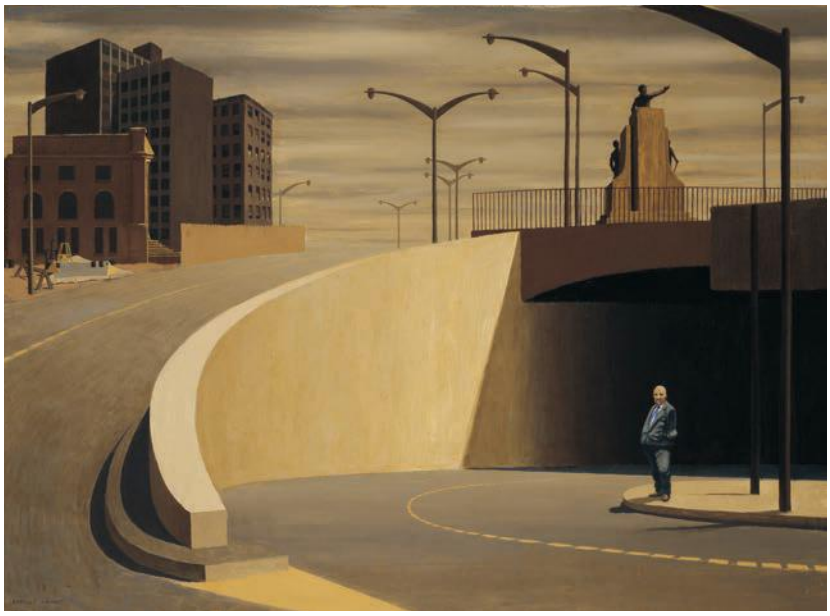
Even when an artist does not intend to tell a story, sometimes viewers build a narrative from what the artist presents.

Australian artist **Jeffrey Smart** (1921–2013) did not set out to create narrative paintings. He was more interested in the **formal** aspects of painting and was inspired to paint by the strong, simple, geometric shapes, lines and forms that he saw around him in the constructed environment. He found beauty in the modern world, and his subjects included highways, factories and apartment blocks.

Smart painted with realism but was selective about what he included in his compositions. His urban landscapes are often strangely empty and mysterious. He said he included people mainly to emphasise the size and shape of the buildings and constructions; however, their presence adds to the mystery of his images and often encourages viewers to create stories about what they see. What do you think the man in *Cahill Expressway* is doing? Why is he all alone? Why does he have only one arm?

EXPLORE

Write your own fictional short story inspired by *Cahill Expressway*. Your class's stories could be assembled to create a short-story collection.



Jeffrey Smart
Australian, 1921–2013, lived in Italy from 1965
Cahill Expressway, 1962
oil on plywood
81.9 × 111.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1963 (1306–5)
© The Estate of Jeffrey Smart

The Cahill Expressway was built in the early 1960s to efficiently move cars through Sydney.

Expressway, a book of short stories inspired by Smart's *Cahill Expressway*, was published in 1989.

6 Suggest why *Cahill Expressway* may inspire viewers to create a story around what they see. Consider:
- what is represented
- how it is represented, including the arrangement of objects in the composition and how elements such as line, colour and form are used to move viewers' eyes around the composition and create mood.

7 Is it obvious that *Cahill Expressway* was painted more than 50 years ago? Why?

CREATE

A well-known 1948 film, *The Naked City*, which later inspired a police drama television series (1958–63) ended famously with the lines 'There are eight million stories in the naked city. This has been one of them'.

Working as part of a small group, use this line as the starting point to create a photograph or series of photographs that tells a story about life in the place where you live.

Your story should include at least one character. Consider how your character's gestures, expression and costume, as well as background, lighting and props, may be used to make your story clear.

THE ART OF NARRATIVE

4.3

INSPIRED BY MYTHOLOGY

Traditional stories, including myths and legends, often have their origins in religious and cultural beliefs. Some of these stories are thousands of years old. Art has played an important role in preserving and transmitting such stories in many cultures.

Myths and legends are traditional stories, and they are common in many cultures. Although they characteristically include improbable events, they usually have deep symbolic significance and help explain difficult concepts about the world and human behaviour.

Myths are generally understood to be entirely fictional. Legends are understood to contain some historical fact, such as references to a real person or event, but often aspects of the story become exaggerated or distorted over time.

The Iliad tells the story of the Trojan War, during which the city of Troy was under siege for 10 years. The conflict was triggered by the abduction of Helen, wife of the Spartan King Menelaus, by Paris, a prince of Troy.

The Odyssey focuses on the aftermath of the Trojan War, particularly Odysseus's long and challenging journey home to the island of Ithaca after the war. He faced many obstacles, including the wrath of some of the gods he had angered in the war.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other views of the siren vase.

The name and details of the artist who painted this red-figured vase are unknown; however, scholars have named him 'the siren painter' based on the subject matter of this vase.

Classical myths and legends

Classical myths and legends have been an important source of inspiration for many western artists since ancient times. Classical mythology encompasses a rich variety of ancient Greek and Roman myths and legends. They feature a cast of characters that includes many gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, and fantastic creatures.

Many myths and legends originated in Greek literature, including Homer's epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, written in approximately the eighth century BCE.

The ancient Romans' gods and goddesses were closely aligned with those of the ancient Greeks. The Romans also adapted many Greek legends, as well as creating their own.

Ulysses and the sirens

The ancient Greeks were accomplished potters. They made vases in different shapes and sizes for use in daily life, including for storing, carrying and serving water, wine or oil. Vases were also made for rituals and offerings to the gods.

Many vases were decorated with scenes from myths and legends, and Greek vase painting has played an important role in preserving ancient stories.

This vase features the story of Odysseus and the sirens. In the twelfth part of *The Odyssey*, Odysseus and his ship's crew encounter the sirens who lived on the cliffs above a stretch of water they needed to pass on their journey home. Odysseus was forewarned that the heavenly singing of the sirens lured men towards the dangerous rocky coast and death.

In this vase painting, the artist has depicted the sirens with the body of a bird and the head of a woman. Can you see that there is a siren perched on the clifftop on each side of the boat? Mysteriously, another siren appears to be plummeting downwards to the boat, her eyes closed as if she were dead.

Getty Images/Leemage

Greek art
Odysseus and the Sirens, c. 480–470 BCE
Attic red-figured stamnos, by the siren painter, from Vulci
35.56 cm (height)
The British Museum, London, United Kingdom

Odysseus was curious to hear the sirens' beguiling song. Can you see how he survived this? He instructed his men to lash him tightly to the mast of his ship so he was unable to steer his boat towards the dangerous shore. He also instructed his sailors to plug their ears with beeswax so they could not hear the sirens' song. In the painting, the sailors maintain their focus and safely row their ship through the perilous stretch of water.

A story retold

Narrative paintings featuring stories from classical mythology have been of interest to artists and audiences during many periods of **western art**. The English artist **John William Waterhouse** (1849–1917) was well known for his paintings of Greek and Roman subjects.

Can you see the connection between Waterhouse's painting and the Greek vase? Waterhouse visited The British Museum and studied this Greek vase to give his painting historical authenticity. *The Odyssey* does not

John William Waterhouse
English, 1849–1917
Ulysses and the Sirens, 1891
oil on canvas
100.6 × 202.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1891 (p.396.3–1)

Odysseus was one of the heroes of the Trojan War. It was his idea for the Greeks to build the giant wooden horse that ended the war.

Greek soldiers were hidden inside the horse, which was left outside the city of Troy. When the Trojans discovered the wooden horse and saw the Greeks retreating, they believed the horse had been left as a peace offering. They took the horse into the city. At night, the Greek soldiers inside the horse came out of hiding and opened the city gates to let in the Greek army, which finally conquered the city and ended the war.

In Roman times, Odysseus became known as Ulysses.

specifically describe the appearance of the sirens, so Waterhouse took his inspiration for the sirens in his painting from the vase.

Since ancient times, it had become popular to depict the sirens as beautiful women whose bodies were as seductive as their song, so some viewers in the nineteenth century were shocked to see the sirens in Waterhouse's painting represented as birds of prey with the heads of beautiful women.

1 Compare the ways the siren painter and Waterhouse have told the story of Odysseus and the sirens.

2 Waterhouse's *Ulysses and the Sirens* continues to be admired by audiences visiting the National Gallery of Victoria. Why do you think many people admire this work?

EXPLORE

Identify an artwork based on a myth or legend that interests you. Create a presentation that explains:

- the cultural and historical context in which the myth or legend developed
- the main characters, events and places of the tale
- how the narrative is communicated in the artwork.

CREATE

Create an artwork inspired by Greek vases.

Find or write a legend or myth that explains something significant to you, and create an artwork that tells the story.

Study a range of Greek vases that feature paintings of myths or legends. Look at the shapes of the vases and how their images complement the form of the vase and tell a story.

Create a large **silhouette** of a vase of your own design, and add a narrative image to the vase. Use art elements, including pattern, to add interest to your work.

Display the class's designs and share the stories that have been told.

DISCUSS

Modern audiences are still fascinated by ancient stories such as that of Odysseus and the sirens. What gives a story enduring appeal?

4.4 STORIES AND HEROES FROM JAPAN

Ukiyo-e, manga and anime originated in Japan. They are important artforms for storytelling and have reached wide audiences.

Popular subjects for *ukiyo-e*, manga and anime include legendary and fictional heroes.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to access educational resources about *ukiyo-e*.

The samurai were a powerful military ruling class in feudal Japan. The samurai followed a strict ethical code (*bushido*) and were men of culture as well as warriors.

Kabuki is a popular form of traditional Japanese theatre that began in the seventeenth century. It is characterised by dramatic and spectacular staging and costumes, and **stylised**, exaggerated movements and gestures.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the life of Yoshitsune.

Ukiyo-e

Colourful **woodblock prints** known as ***ukiyo-e*** were an important artform during the Edo period in Japan (1615–1868).

Ukiyo-e literally means pictures of the floating world; *ukiyo* means floating world, and *e* means picture. Initially, the subjects for *ukiyo-e* were drawn from the cities' pleasure districts and depicted a world of fashion, glamour and human drama.

By the nineteenth century, the subject matter of *ukiyo-e* had broadened to include views of popular landscapes and subjects inspired by history and myth, including heroes and warriors.

Ukiyo-e were produced by commercial publishers who **commissioned** artists to create the designs. The publishers then employed skilled craftsmen, including carvers and printers, to make the prints. Each multicoloured print required many wooden blocks.

Ukiyo-e were produced in large numbers, especially if the subject was popular. They were affordable to ordinary people and were usually simply pinned to a wall, more like disposable posters than precious artworks.

A warrior in action

Yoshitsune (1159–1189) was a famous Japanese samurai. His heroic adventures, tactical skills and military victories are celebrated in many legends, stories and kabuki plays.

As a young man, Yoshitsune was known as Ushiwaka (little ox). After his father and two brothers were killed in a rebellion, he was sent to live at a temple where he devoted many hours to studying and practising martial arts rather than to his religious studies. He ran away when he was 15 years old and joined an armed caravan of gold merchants.

A gang of bandits attacked the caravan. The ensuing drama, and Yoshitsune's fighting prowess, are clearly revealed in this **triptych**. The scene takes place at night, but a beam of light cuts across the three panels and illuminates the main action. Yoshitsune is in the centre panel; he is fighting one opponent while fending off another. In the subdued tones of the surrounding shadows, the artist has included other views of the fighting that add to the drama and energy of this action-packed scene.

1 Describe how art elements are used in Yoshitora's work to create a bold and innovative composition and to tell a story.

Utagawa Yoshitora
Japanese, active 1850s–80s
The Night Attack of Kumasaka at Akasaka Station in Mino Province, 1860
colour woodblock (triptych) (a–c) 36.9 × 75.4 cm (image) (overall);(a–c) 36.9 × 75.4 cm (sheet) (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1992 (AS12.a–c–1992)

Manga and anime

Manga and anime have their origins in Japan, but they have become popular worldwide.

Manga are Japanese or Japanese-influenced comics. Comics are often thought to be just for children, but there are many forms of manga that cater for audiences of different ages and interests, such as salary-man manga for businessmen, mecha manga about robots, magical girl manga and school-life manga.

Japanese manga developed from early forms of popular art, including *ukiyo-e*, expressive line drawings and caricatures made by artists such as Hokusai (1760–1849). Modern manga developed after the Second World War and were influenced by American comic books and animations, notably the work of Walt Disney (1901–1966).

Anime are Japanese, or Japanese-influenced, animated films and television shows.

Both manga and anime have a graphic style; they use strong lines, bold contrasts of tone and colour, flattened space and dramatic **viewpoints** and characterisation. Characters tend to have large, exaggerated eyes and hair, and small noses and mouths.

The father of modern manga

Astro Boy has been a favourite character for many generations of children. He is an android, a nuclear-powered boy robot who lives in a futuristic twenty-first century world and fights injustice and evil using his seven powers, which include great strength, jet flight and high-intensity lights in his eyes.

Astro Boy is the most famous creation of **Osamu Tezuka** (1928–1989), who became known as the 'father of manga'. His Astro Boy manga series (1952–68) was adapted for a television series that ran for 193 episodes (1963–68). The television series was the first example of the modern anime style.

From a young age, Tezuka was constantly drawing, and he developed a love of storytelling from going to the theatre with his mother. He completed medical studies as a young man but followed his mother's advice to pursue what he loved most. He was a great fan of Walt Disney, whose work was an important early influence on Tezuka's art.

2 Suggest a storyline that might be linked with this image of Astro Boy. Give reasons, based on your observation of the work.

Osamu Tezuka
Japanese, 1928–1989
Astro Boy, title page for ***Mystery Man of the Blast Furnace***, 1961
gouache
34.3 × 23 cm
Shonen, published by Kobunsha

3 How does the image of Astro Boy communicate his character and powers?

4 Compare the image of Astro Boy with the portrayal of Yoshitsune.
- What connections are there in the subject and themes?
- What qualities do the works have in common? How are they different?
- Which work interests you the most? Why?

EXPLORE

Find an example of *ukiyo-e*, manga or anime that tells a story. What is the narrative and how is it communicated through the artwork?

CREATE

Identify a hero or heroine from mythology or real life. What stories or qualities make the person or character heroic?

Create a narrative work about the hero inspired by the style of *ukiyo-e*, manga or anime.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video about Hokusai's manga.

The term 'manga' literally means whimsical drawing.

Manga is usually read right to left, unlike western comic books.

A manga is usually the work of a single cartoonist (*manga-ka*), but anime is often created in a production house by many people.

Tezuka was a prolific artist. He is said to have created over 150 000 pages of manga during his lifetime.

4.5

PORTRAITS AND IDEAS

Portraits are representations of people.

Portraits often depict a physical likeness and focus on the sitter's identity and personality. Artists also make portraits to explore and express other ideas. These ideas frequently reflect an artist's formal or artistic concerns or the influence of the time and place in which the artist works.

Grace Cossington Smith
Australian, 1892–1984
***Not titled* (*Sister Sleeping*)**, c. 1920
drawing in charcoal
39.1 x 28.8 cm (sheet); 30.2 x 28.0 cm (sight)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1975
© Estate of Grace Cossington Smith

A personal context

Australian artist **Grace Cossington Smith** (1892–1984) was the second eldest of five children and was still a teenager when her family settled in the Sydney suburb of Turramurra in 1914. Although she travelled and lived abroad on several occasions (1912–14 and 1948–51), the house at Turramurra remained her home for the next 65 years.

At a time when there was not always a strong focus on the education of girls, Cossington Smith grew up surrounded by books, music and interesting discussion. Her family encouraged her interest in art and professional art career, building her a studio in the garden of the family home, and supporting her art studies.

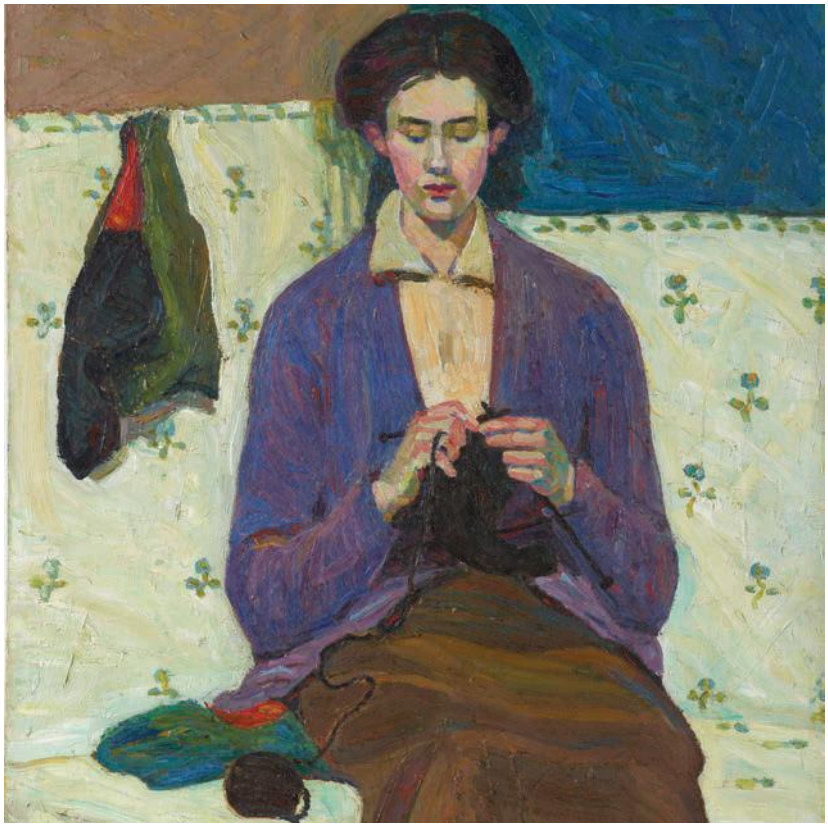


Photo: AGNSW OA18.1960

Although perhaps most well known as a painter, drawing was an important part of Cossington Smith's art practice, and she filled numerous sketchbooks with drawings. Her drawings include many informal portraits of family members. *Not titled* (*Sister Sleeping*) features her younger sister Madge, who was also the subject of *The Sock Knitter*, one of just a few painted family portraits by Cossington Smith.

1 Suggest why Cossington Smith made so many drawings of family members but painted only a few portraits.

A historical and social context

In *The Sock Knitter*, Madge is depicted in the garden studio knitting socks for the Australian troops fighting in the First World War. Although women were not allowed to fight, many supported the war effort in other ways, such as by making quilts and socks, and by providing other comforts such as cards, cakes and chocolates for the troops. Cossington Smith volunteered in the War Chest Flower Shop in Pitt Street, Sydney, to raise funds for the soldiers. She was also a strong supporter of conscription, an important issue in Australian society during the First World War.

While we can recognise Madge's features in *The Sock Knitter*, she is not identified in the title. The painting is widely seen as a symbol of the contribution women made to the war effort, rather than solely a portrait of a specific person.

Grace Cossington Smith
Australian, 1892–1984
The Sock Knitter, 1915
oil on canvas
61.8 × 51.2 × 1.7 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased 1960
© Estate of Grace Cossington Smith

2 What is your personal interpretation of the significance of *The Sock Knitter*? Do you see it as a family portrait, a work with social and historical significance or both? Why?

An artistic context

At 18 years of age, Cossington Smith began art classes at the studio of Anthonio Dattilo Rubbo (1870–1955) in Sydney. Rubbo introduced his students to modern artists such as Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) and Vincent van Gogh (p. 29). These artists were associated with the development of **Post-Impressionism**, a style that built on the innovations of Impressionism to use colour and form in new ways. *The Sock Knitter* was possibly inspired by reproductions of paintings by Cézanne that Rubbo had on display in his studio.

Cossington Smith was only 23 when she painted *The Sock Knitter*. For its time, *The Sock Knitter* is a strikingly modern painting. It is often described as Australia's first Post-Impressionist painting because of its bold, strong colour and form. Strong contrasts of light and dark tones focus attention on the central figure of Madge, who is shown seated and three-quarter view, focusing intently on her knitting. Her downward gaze and the strong diagonal lines created by the outlines of her arms, hands and cardigan and the trail of wool, draw our attention to the knitting.

The artist has used broad, obvious strokes of paint and lively colour combinations. Skin tones include green shadows and pink highlights, and the purple cardigan is enlivened by blue and red highlights. In the areas of colour and pattern of the flattened, shallow background, we also see how the artist creates unity and variety in the composition through the repetition of colours such as red and green and a dynamic balance of irregular shapes and forms.

Cossington Smith made a unique contribution to the development of modern art in Australia. By the 1930s, she had developed a distinctive painting style characterised by luminous colour and distinctive mosaic-like brushstrokes. This style is also seen in *The Bridge in-Curve* (p. 95).

3 Create an annotated image of *The Sock Knitter* highlighting how the artist has applied three or more design principles (unity, variety, balance, rhythm, focal point, space) in the composition.

DISCUSS

In the pre-Internet age of the early twentieth century, artists in Australia seeking to learn about international art often relied on black-and-white reproductions and written descriptions of artworks. How do you believe that modern communication technology has influenced how artists learn about art?

DISCUSS

Of the portraits you see in your daily life, how many are photographic and how many are in other media? What are the reasons for this? How do you think the development of photography changed or contributed to portraiture as an artform?

EXPLORE

Compare *Self-portrait* with *The Sock Knitter*. Identify and suggest reasons for any similarities and differences. Which portrait do you prefer and why?

CREATE

Create a portrait of a family member or friend doing an activity that you believe represents contemporary life. You may need to brainstorm a few ideas about activities before you begin.

Carefully consider how you can use art elements and design principles to focus attention on the activity and create an interesting composition.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to view family portraits from the artist's sketchbooks.

To celebrate the centenary of *The Sock Knitter* in 2015, Wauchope Community Arts Council and Mid North Coast Refugee Support Group in New South Wales launched a community arts project. The project asked people to donate wool or knit scarves, shawls and socks for people in Syria displaced by war. Female artists were also invited to participate by painting portraits of the knitters.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read more about the community arts project.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to view *Self-portrait* by Cossington Smith.

Australian women and children knitted more than one million pairs of socks during the First World War. Knitters were provided with an official pattern and were often part of knitting circles.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the woollen comforts provided to Australian solders during the war.

THE ART OF PORTRAITURE

4.6 LOOKING CLOSER

Portraits usually provide clues about the identities of the people they represent. Many portraits also express other meanings and ideas, but you sometimes need to look closely to discover them.

Loretta Lux is not the artist's birth name. She adopted this name just before the opening of her first exhibition in 2000.

Some of the 1970s vintage clothes worn by the children in Lux's photographs were the artist's childhood clothes.

Noticing the unnoticed

Dreamlike, captivating, eerie, haunting, mesmerising, mysterious, intriguing, creepy, serene and disquieting are all adjectives that have been applied to the distinctive portraits of children by German-born artist **Loretta Lux** (b. 1969).

The children of friends are often the subjects of Lux's photographs, but the artist insists that the works are not about the children themselves. Lux is not interested in portraying the personalities or psychology of the children she photographs. She deliberately constructs images that inspire curiousity and invite viewers to discover their own meanings.

Lux leaves nothing to chance in creating her photographs. The children are carefully posed and dressed in 1970s vintage children's clothes. Each image can involve two or three photoshoots and take several months to complete. The artist originally trained as a painter, and she structures the colours and forms in her photographic compositions as a painter might arrange these elements on a canvas. The composition and finish of each photograph is refined on a computer. Backgrounds are taken from the artist's archive of photographs of interiors and landscapes. Colours are manipulated, unnecessary details are eliminated, and heads, eyes and other features are often subtly enlarged.

1 Identify the two adjectives in the first paragraph that you feel best describe *The Waiting Girl*. Give reasons for your choice.

2 Lux prefers that viewers interpret her work in their own way, but she has suggested *The Waiting Girl* is about time and timelessness. What meaning do you see in this work?

Loretta Lux
German, b. 1969
The Waiting Girl, 2006
Ilfochrome photograph
38 × 53 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased with funds provided by the Photography Collection Benefactors' Program, 2007

Photo: AGNSW 220.2007

CREATE

Using a friend or family member as a model, create a photographic portrait that is more than just a representation of the person. For example, your portrait might represent a type of character rather than an individual person, or a more abstract quality such as isolation, innocence or freedom. Think about how you can use visual elements, clothing, setting and pose to communicate your idea.

More than meets the eye

Walking in Tall Grass, Tom is an enticing and alluring **portrait**. The vivid colours, patterns and descriptive details draw attention; however, very little about the identity of the young man is revealed.

The painting is one of many portraits of young people in the series Walking in Tall Grass, which **Jan Nelson** (b. 1955) began in 2001. Each painting is a half-length portrait of a young person. Details in the series – such as vintage and retro shirts, brightly patterned beanies, hoodies, baseball caps, bike helmets and pets – reflect the interests of children and adolescents, who are dressed in a distinctive indie style. Each figure is painted with

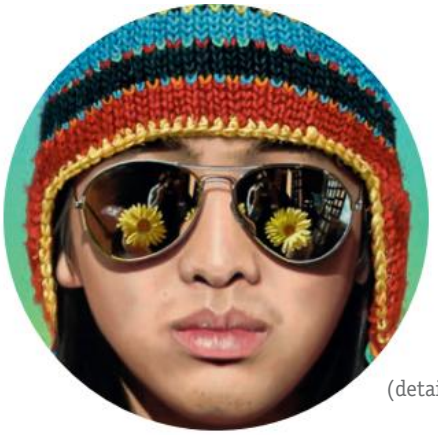
DISCUSS

Look at *The Arnolfini Portrait* (1435) by Jan van Eyck in The National Gallery, London. Notice the reflection in the mirror in the background. What comparisons can you make between this painting and *Walking in Tall Grass, Tom*?

DISCUSS

How do images define and sometimes confine identity?

How do you think these ideas might relate to *Walking in Tall Grass, Tom*?



(detail)

Jan Nelson
Australian, b. 1955
Walking in Tall Grass, Tom, 2009
oil on linen
77.7 × 57.2 cm
Winner 2009 Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize Collection
Bendigo Art Gallery 2009

mesmerisingly realistic detail and is starkly lit and isolated against a brilliantly rainbow-coloured background.

The young people all appear to have been caught unaware; they seem absorbed in their own private worlds. None of the subjects looks directly at the viewer; they are shown turning away, with their gazes averted, masked or, like Tom, wearing mirrored sunglasses.

Look at the reflection in the sunglasses. Can you see a reflection of the artist photographing Tom? The first step in creating this work was a photoshoot.

The finished painting is sophisticated, both technically and conceptually. Nelson shows technical skill, for example, in the details and textures. Conceptually, the painting explores many ideas and provokes many questions, including questions about painting, photography and portraiture.

The title of the series, Walking in Tall Grass, was inspired by the lyrics of American singer-songwriter Bill Callahan and his songs 'River Guard' and 'Held', which include references to sitting and lying in tall grass. For the artist, the idea of walking in tall grass seemed like a good metaphor for adolescence, which is often a time when people are not sure exactly where they are going.

3 In an interview, Nelson explained that she wanted to create an image of emotional and psychological intensity rather than focusing on individual identity. Do you believe this work achieves that? Explain.

4 What questions about painting, photography and portraiture does this painting suggest to you?

5 List similarities and differences you see in Lux's and Nelson's portraits.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to hear Nelson talk about her work and to see her work at the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.

In 2009, Nelson was awarded the Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize for *Walking in Tall Grass, Tom*. This prize has been awarded every two years since 2003.

There are actually three people in *Walking in Tall Grass, Tom*. If you look closely at the reflection in Tom's glasses, you will see the artist and the hand of a third person holding the daisies.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see a reproduction of *The Arnolfini Portrait* (1435) by Jan van Eyck.

The term 'indie' is used to describe aspects of culture – such as music or film – that are independent of mainstream production houses and trends. In fashion, the term refers to an individual style that resists trends and values unique combinations of clothing and accessories, including recycled and vintage items.

4.7

A PORTRAIT TRIBUTE

Portraits are often made as a tribute to an individual.

Do you have any portraits at home of members of your family? Does your school have portraits of past principals, teachers or students? Many private individuals and public bodies, including governments, religious organisations, businesses and schools, have portraits of people who are important to them. Artists are sometimes commissioned to create such portraits.

Portrait in porcelain

The **portrait** bust *Dr John Yu AC* was **commissioned** by the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra. Dr Yu was Australian of the Year in 1996. He is a distinguished paediatrician and administrator, known for his outstanding commitment to children's health, medicine, education and the arts.

Chinese-Australian artist **Ah Xian** (b. 1960) thought carefully about Dr Yu's achievements and interests, as well as his Chinese heritage, when designing the bust.

Dr Yu is represented with his eyes shut, deep in thought. The cool, green, jade-like colour of the celadon **glaze** complements his calm and tranquil appearance. The celadon glaze is a favourite of Dr Yu, who is a passionate collector of Chinese **ceramics**. The colourfully dressed children who scramble over Dr Yu's head and shoulders add contrast

Ah Xian first visited Australia in 1989 but settled here permanently in 1990.

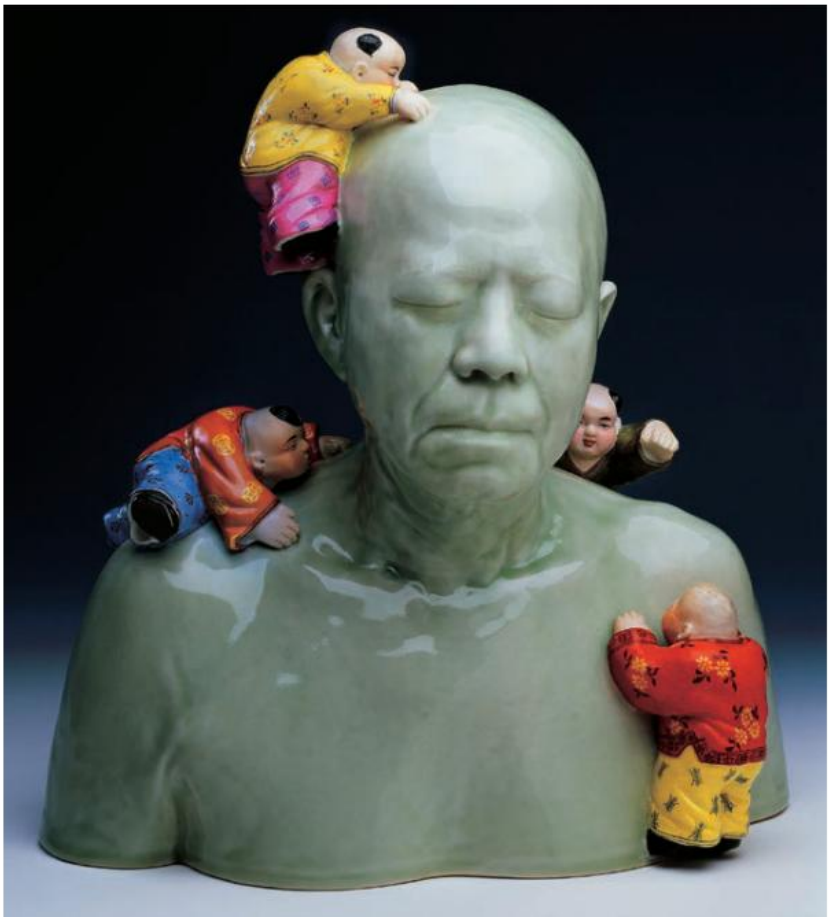
Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Ah Xian's work.

Porcelain is a type of ceramic that is made from kaolin (a pure white clay) and petuntse (feldspar derived from granite). Porcelain is fired at high temperatures and is thinner, lighter and more durable than other forms of ceramic. Very thin porcelain has a translucent quality when held to the light. Porcelain also feels cooler to touch than other forms of ceramic.

Ah Xian's brother Liu Xiaoxian is also an artist (p. 155).

DISCUSS

What challenges do you think artists may encounter when they create a portrait of someone? How might these challenges be increased when the portrait is a commission?



Ah Xian
born China 1960, arrived Australia 1990
Dr John Yu AC, 2003–04
glazed ceramic
Commissioned with funds provided by Marilyn Darling 2004
Collection: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

and a playful element. They clearly reflect Dr Yu's involvement with children, and their presence is culturally significant as many children were seen as a sign of prosperity and happiness in China.

Dr John Yu AC is Ah Xian's first portrait commission; however, he has been making **porcelain** busts since 1998, usually using family members and friends as models.

Creating each portrait is a complex process that begins with making a plaster cast of the subject. The cast is then used to make a **mould** for the porcelain form.

In 1999, Ah Xian began working with expert craftspeople in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province, China, to complete the **casting**, firing and glazing of his porcelain busts. Jingdezhen has been an important centre for Chinese ceramics for approximately 1000 years. The techniques used at Jingdezhen to create and decorate Ah Xian's portrait busts are specialised and were traditionally used for functional objects, such as vases and bowls. Many of the craftspeople working with Ah Xian were surprised at first when Ah Xian wanted to use these techniques to make portrait busts.

Using traditional techniques and materials in an innovative way gives them new life and encourages viewers to see them in a fresh way. This is important to Ah Xian. He was born and educated in China and maintains a deep respect for ancient Chinese art and culture. He is very concerned that the powerful influence of **western art** and culture will mean that ancient Chinese artforms will no longer be valued. He explores this issue in his work by bringing together past and present, east and west.

1 List three ideas about Dr Yu that the portrait communicates to you. What is it about the work that communicates each of these ideas?

2 Does the portrait of Dr Yu match your expectations of a portrait of a distinguished person? Explain why.

3 Referring to *Dr John Yu AC*, give an example of how Ah Xian's work brings together:
- past and present
- east and west.

Consider the subject matter, materials and techniques used in the work.

Ah Xian
born China 1960, arrived Australia 1990
Untitled (Preparatory Study for Sculpture of Dr John Yu AC), 2003
pencil on paper
Commissioned with funds provided by Marilyn Darling, 2004
Collection: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about museums devoted to collecting and exhibiting portraits.

EXPLORE

Imagine the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra has decided to acquire a portrait of you. They have asked for your help to choose an artist who you feel would be appropriate to represent you.

Select an artist who you would like to make your portrait. Because this is a hypothetical exercise, it does not matter if the artist is from the past.

Write a letter, or prepare a short talk, to explain your choice to the National Portrait Gallery's board. In your letter or talk, refer to an existing portrait by the artist.

DISCUSS

Why do you think there are museums and prizes devoted to portraits?

What makes portraiture different from other types of art?

What sort of people do you believe should be the subject of portraits in Australia's National Portrait Gallery?

Several prestigious prizes are awarded for portraiture. In Australia, the Archibald Prize for portraiture (pp. 218–19), which was first awarded in 1921, is an important annual event that attracts widespread interest.

4.8 A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF IDENTITY

Contemporary artists often explore portraiture and ideas related to identity in unexpected ways. This includes creating portraits that present viewers with multiple perspectives on identity.

Mike Parr
Australian, b. 1945
100 Breaths from ***(Alphabet/Haemorrhage) Black Box of 100 Self-Portrait Etchings 2*** 1992
set of 100 etchings, with foul biting, drypoint, softground, roulette, deep etching, open biting and plate-tone, wood and enamel paint (box)
(a–vvvv) 28.6 × 24.2 cm (image and sheet) (each); (wwww) 7.4 × 27.8 × 31.8 cm (box) unique state
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1994
(P29.a–wwww–1994)
© Mike Parr. Courtesy Anna Schwartz Gallery

Questioning identity

Self-portraits have been an important part of the work of Australian artist **Mike Parr** (b. 1945) since the 1980s. Parr's self-portraits pose many questions about identity and representing identity, and he has explored this theme in thousands of works in a range of media, including performance, sculpture, drawing and printmaking.

In Parr's work, identity appears as something shifting and difficult to define. His face appears in endless variations and repetitions, often distorted and twisted in strange configurations. Sometimes, his face appears erased or destroyed.

DISCUSS

What factors make up a person's identity? Is it possible to absolutely define or represent a person's identity? Why?

In his many self-portrait drawings and prints, the artist characteristically works with expressive lines, gouges and other marks. These marks appear to go beyond expressing emotion or feeling and seem to record an intense battle with the self.

Parr's self-portraits reflect his involvement with both **Conceptual art** and **performance art**. *(Alphabet/Haemorrhage) Black Box of 100 Self-Portrait Etchings 2* is a small, black box containing 100 individual self-portrait **etchings**. The work was made to be viewed as an object rather than as a set of individual etchings.

In 1992, Parr used his etchings in the performance work *100 Breaths*. Parr sat beside the box of etchings, took the etchings from the box one by one and sucked each to his face with a deep breath, before letting it fall to the ground. On the video recording of the performance, the physical effort required is evident in the sound of heavy, gasping breaths and in the image of Parr's increasingly crumpled face.

Parr has since reworked the copper plates used to make the etchings to produce two more series of self-portraits, including *100 Self-Portrait Etchings (The Third Imaginary)*. Each series is presented in a different format. Parr's reworking of earlier works reflects the ongoing and intense investigation of self that is typical of Parr's self-portrait projects.

1. Why might printmaking be an interesting medium for artists who like to rework their artworks?
2. Explain two different ways that the self-portraits by Parr show identity as something shifting and hard to define. Consider, for example:
   - the artist's representation of his physical appearance, including the use of distortion and different viewpoints
   - the form and presentation of the self-portraits, including his use of repeated images and artforms such as printmaking and performance art.
3. Do you think that it is appropriate to describe Parr's work as self-portraiture? Explain why.

CREATE

Make a photographic representation of your personality.

Start by taking a series of photographs of yourself, straight on and in profile, and even some of the back of your head. Scan the images into the computer. Cut sections of the images and paste them together to create a new image. Manipulate the images using the tools in a computer program, such as image adjustment, contrast, brightness and colour saturation.

Write a short explanation of your image in which you discuss why you have presented your personality in this way.

Parr's sister Julie Rrap is also an artist (p. 175). Rrap is Parr spelt backwards.

CREATE

Make a portrait of a split personality that expresses two contrasting emotions.

Before you begin, research the **proportions** of the human face. An understanding of facial proportion – how different parts of the face relate to each other – is helpful when exploring portraits. In realistic representations, the different parts of the face are in proportion. Some artists, however, distort or change proportion for expressive effect.

Make two diagrams of a face, one from the front and one in profile, to show the proportional placement of eyes, nose, mouth, ears and hairline in relation to each other.

Begin your split personality by drawing a large face and dividing it in an interesting way. Complete the drawing by showing a different emotion on each part of the face. Consider how you might distort or change the facial proportions and use art elements, such as colour and line, to express emotions.

DISCUSS

Curator and writer Michele Helmrich suggested that watching Parr's performance of *100 Breaths* is like witnessing *The Scream* by Edvard Munch (p. 138) in reverse.

What might this mean?

Consider what audiences see when they look at each artwork and the ideas each artwork communicates.

4.9

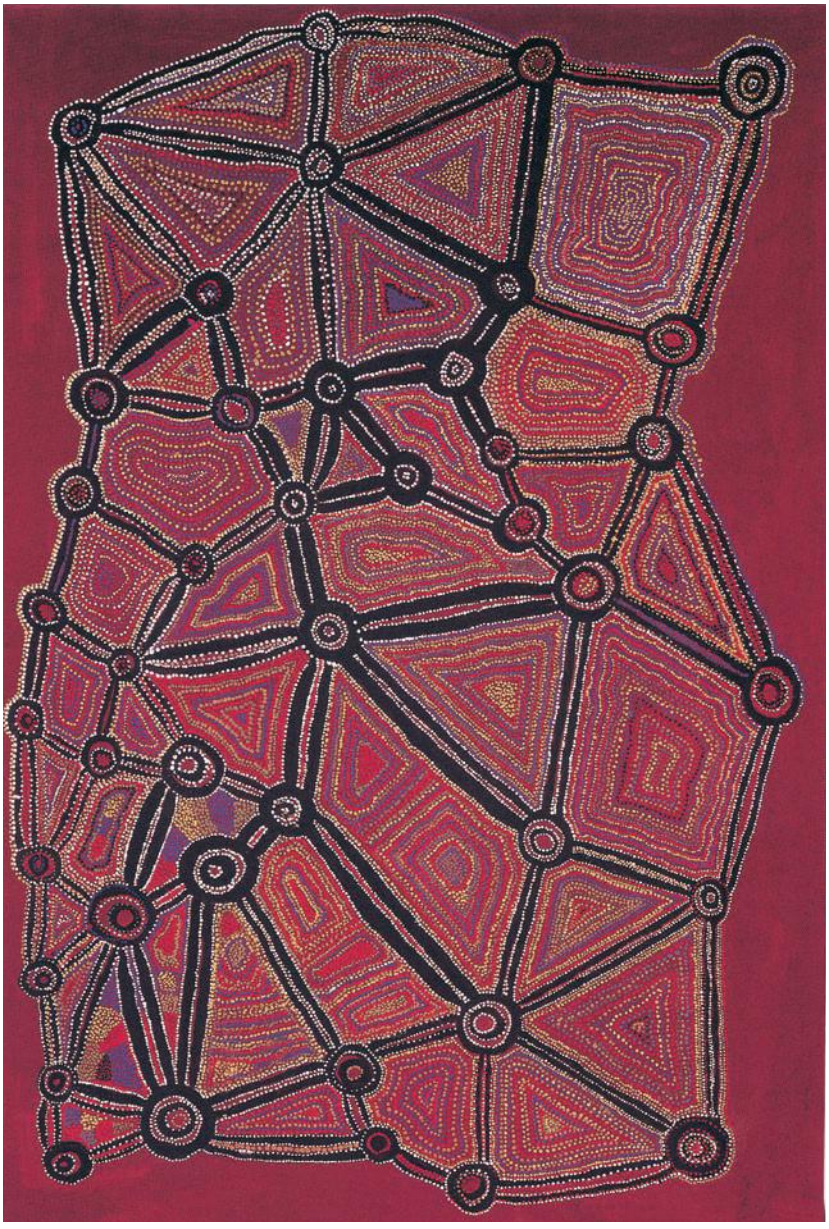
CONNECTION TO COUNTRY

In Australia's Indigenous culture, art (including visual arts, song and dance) is an important expression of the people's cultural identity and connection to the country of their ancestors.

Indigenous people have strong connections to specific areas of land or country through birthplace, ancestors, and Dreaming knowledge and lore. This includes a responsibility for looking after the land.

The effects of colonisation

When the British colonised Australia, they declared the land *terra nullius*, or under no legal ownership. They did not recognise the Indigenous people's ownership of the land or the Dreaming knowledge and lore that binds Indigenous people to their country.



Spinifex Arts Project
Women's Native Title Painting, 1998
acrylic on canvas
187.4 × 123.0 cm

Auscape/Jean-Paul Ferrero

Spinifex (*Triodia* sp.) and vegetated dune, Little Sandy Desert, Western Australia

Many Indigenous people were forcibly, often brutally, removed from their country. Despite the dispossession and the suppression of Indigenous culture by settlers, the spiritual connection to country remains strong for Indigenous people.

The Spinifex people

The Spinifex people are the traditional owners of a vast area of land in the Great Victoria Desert. Unlike many other Indigenous communities, they were relatively undisturbed by European settlement until the 1950s and 1960s when the government attempted to clear the desert for atomic testing at Maralinga in South Australia. Some groups were not found by the authorities and remained in the desert; it was not until 1987 that one extended family had its first contact with outsiders.

By the 1980s, the closure of missions and the growing momentum of the land-rights movement led many displaced Indigenous people to return to their tribal lands. The Spinifex people who returned to their homeland and established a community at Tjuntjuntjara found many changes.

In 1993, the Australian Government introduced the *Native Title Act 1993* to recognise Indigenous land rights. The act allows groups of Indigenous people to claim land with which they can prove a continued connection.

The Spinifex people made an application for native title in October 1995. Their claim was negotiated, in a spirit of reconciliation, directly with the Government of Western Australia rather than through the court system, and it was settled in 2000.

Mapping country

The land of the Spinifex people often appears harsh and inhospitable to Europeans; however, for the Spinifex people, it is physically and spiritually abundant. Over tens of thousands of years, they have accumulated knowledge about the life-giving water sources, bush food and spiritual value of the land. Creator and ancestor spirits live on in the land and its natural species.

In 1996, as part of the Spinifex native title claim, the Spinifex Arts Project was started to help the Spinifex people document their country. This ongoing project involved visiting their country to re-establish connections with important sites and stories. People who had never painted before began enthusiastically recording their ownership and knowledge of the land.

Two collaborative works by the Tjuntjuntjara Spinifex people, *Women's Native Title Painting* and *Men's Native Title Painting*, were formally included in the preamble of the final land agreement between the Spinifex people and the Government of Western Australia. Each painting presents a map-like view of the entire claim area of 55 000 square kilometres and identifies important sites and stories in symbols and strong colour.

The Tjuntjuntjara people also produced another 10 collaborative works to give to the Western Australian people in a symbolic exchange for land when the final land agreement was reached.

Traditionally, Indigenous art has been strongly associated with natural materials, such as bark, rock and sand, and earthy colours produced by natural **ochres**; however, since the 1970s, many Indigenous artists have used new materials to express their culture and communicate it to wider audiences. Like many other contemporary Indigenous artists, the Spinifex Arts Project artists now generally produce their paintings with acrylic paint on canvas or board.

Works from the Spinifex Arts Project have been publicly displayed around Australia and overseas. The project's artists continue to produce paintings that are a vibrant expression of their culture and their strong connection to country.

1. How have the artists who made *Women's Native Title Painting* communicated the physical and spiritual abundance of their country in their work? Consider the use of scale and art elements, such as colour and symbols.
2. Suggest why paintings were formally included in the preamble of the land agreement between the Spinifex people and the Government of Western Australia.
3. Why do you think artists of the Tjuntjuntjara community continue to paint their land and stories even though they have been successful in their native title claim?

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Spinifex people.

Tjuntjuntjara community

EXPLORE

Research other artworks produced by the Spinifex Arts Project artists. Choose an artwork that interests you. Describe what you see in the work, and discuss what it suggests to you about the artist's connection to country and why.

CREATE

Make a large-scale map of your school or neighbourhood using colour and symbols to represent significant places and to communicate the important ideas and history. You may need to do some research about the area before you begin.

This could be a collaborative project.

DISCUSS

Based on your understanding of *Women's Native Title Painting* and other Indigenous artworks, discuss the role that art can play in helping non-Indigenous people understand Indigenous Australians' cultural traditions and beliefs and the issues facing Indigenous people today.

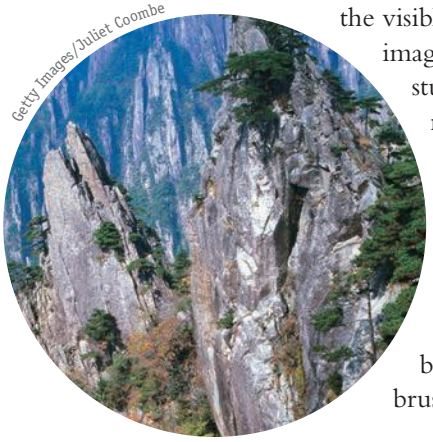
4.10 AN EASTERN PERSPECTIVE

The landscape has been an important subject in Chinese painting for more than 1000 years, long before it was valued as a subject in European art. Contemplating the natural world through beautiful paintings and poetry provided an escape from the everyday world for cultivated Chinese, including the scholar-officials who played an important role in traditional Chinese society.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to an introduction to Chinese painting.

Chinese landscapes

Landscape painting techniques were an extension of **calligraphy** and emphasised expressive line rather than colour to convey the spirit and life force of the natural world. Chinese landscape painters were not interested in imitating the appearance of the visible world. They created images of imaginative places inspired by their study of nature and the art of earlier masters. Painters would picture in their mind what they were going to paint and would work quickly with fluent, confident strokes. It would take many years of study and practice to become an accomplished painter, and they began by studying and copying the brushstrokes of 'old master' painters.



Getty Images/Juliet Coombe

Mount Huangshan, China

The four treasures

Chinese landscape paintings are traditionally made as **scrolls**. The centre of a scroll is usually paper or silk, and it is often surrounded by a silk border. Rods at the top and bottom of the scroll keep the painting flat on the wall for display and make it easy to roll up the painting for storage.

The paintings are made with ink rather than paint. The ink is traditionally made from burnt pine soot and glue and comes as a solid block known as an ink stick. It is ground to a powder on a smooth stone called an ink stone. A little water is added to the ink to create the very dark tones. Lighter areas are painted using more water.

Ink is applied with a brush, which is held vertically. Traditionally, brushes are made from animal hair and bamboo.

Paper, ink, ink stone and brushes are used for both painting and calligraphy and are known as the four treasures in a Chinese scholar's study.

Malcolm Cross

The four treasures: paper, ink, ink stone and brushes

A walk in the forest

The Chinese artist **Kuncan** (1612–c. 1674) became a Buddhist monk when he was 26 years old. He spent many years living and wandering alone in the mountains and wilderness before he settled at a Buddhist temple.

He was first inspired to paint after visiting Mount Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), in southern Anhui Province. Its beauty has inspired many Chinese landscape painters.

Like other Chinese landscape artists, Kuncan was more interested in creating paintings to convey the physical and spiritual essence of nature than to describe a particular place. He created expressive landscape paintings, inspired by his personal experiences of nature.

Can you see the expressive quality of the brushstrokes in *Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight*? The different brushstrokes convey the life and essence of the natural world, including leaves, water, grass, mists and rocks.

Can you also see how Kuncan has structured the composition to guide the viewer through the painting? A clear pathway leads you through the landscape. The journey begins in the bottom left-hand corner of the painting. A Chinese scholar and his servant set you in the right direction. You are led along paths and past buildings and old gnarled trees. You climb craggy rocks and wind your way beside waterfalls and misty rivers before reaching a retreat nestled among the trees high on the mountain. As you observe the natural world that Kuncan describes on the journey, it is easy to imagine the feel of the cool evening air and the fresh scent of the pine forests.

The experience and feeling of the landscape is also powerfully described by the poem that Kuncan has added to the top right-hand corner of the painting. Painting,

Kuncan
Chinese, 1612–c. 1674
Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight, 1660
ink and pigments on paper
207.2 × 97.6 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of Westpac Banking Corporation, Founder Benefactor, 1978 (AS7–1978)

poetry, music and calligraphy were closely related and highly respected artforms in ancient China. They played an important role in the education of high-ranking officials and scholars. Paintings such as *Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight* were collected, studied and contemplated by scholars.

1 Identify and describe four types of brushstrokes that Kuncan has used in *Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight*. Explain the ideas or meanings that are communicated by each.

2 There is very little colour in Kuncan's painting. Does this matter? Why?

3 Imagine you are one of the characters in the bottom left-hand corner of Kuncan's painting. Describe the journey that you take to the mountain retreat. Refer to what you see, feel, hear and smell along the way.

4 Kuncan worked around the same time as Claude Lorrain. Compare *Walking Through a Pine Forest in Moonlight* with *River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli* (p. 28). What similarities and differences can you find in:
- subject matter
- materials and techniques
- art elements, such as colour and line
- composition, including the representation of space
- ideas or meanings communicated about the landscape?

Which landscape would you most like to visit? Why?

Can you see the small, red stamps on Kuncan's painting? The stamps are seals, which were usually carved from soft stone and pressed into red oil-based ink for stamping. Seals were (and still are) commonly stamped onto a painting by artists as proof that it was their work. Collectors also often stamped paintings with their own seal as proof of ownership.

DISCUSS

'If anyone discusses painting in terms of formal likeness, his understanding is almost that of a child.'[7]

Su Dongpo (1036–1107)

'Painting is no equal to [real] mountains-and-water for the wonder of scenery; but mountains-and-water are no equal to painting for the sheer marvels of brush and ink.'[8]

Dong Qichang (1555–1636)

What do these quotes reveal about the role of painting in traditional Chinese culture? Are these comments applicable to non-Chinese painting? Why?

INSPIRED BY PLACE

4.11 FAMOUS AND FAMILIAR VIEWS

Famous and not-so-famous views and landscapes have become familiar to wide audiences through art.

Galerie Janette Ostier, Paris, France/Bridgeman Images

Utagawa Hiroshige
Japanese, 1797–1858
The Bridge with Wisteria or ***Kameido Tenjin Keidai***, 1856
plate 57 from One Hundred Views of Edo
colour woodblock print (*nishiki-e*); ink and colour on paper
35.6 × 24.2 cm
Publisher Uoya Eikichi

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see the complete series of One Hundred Views of Edo.

As a young man, Hiroshige inherited his father's position and became a firefighter; however, in 1811, his interest in painting led him to start an apprenticeship with Utagawa Toyohiro (1773–1828), one of the most celebrated *ukiyo-e* artists of the time. Soon after, he was given permission to use his teacher's family name and was given the name Hiroshige. He resigned from his post as a firefighter to become an artist in 1823.

One Hundred Views of Edo is an abbreviation of the original title of the series, One Hundred Views of Famous Places in Edo.

Hiroshige was still working on the series at the time of his death. It was completed by his pupil and son-in-law, Shigenobu (1826–1869), later known as Hiroshige II.

amanaimages/Stapleton Collection/Corbis

A place in Edo

In the 1820s, **landscapes** became a favourite subject for ***ukiyo-e***. Laws restricting travel in Japan were eased, and people were keen to have mementos of their travels. In the 1840s, the images of actors and beautiful women in the pleasure districts – which had been the main subject of earlier *ukiyo-e* – were banned. This ban contributed to the popularity of landscapes and other subjects.

Utagawa Hiroshige (or Ando Hiroshige) (1797–1858) was a renowned *ukiyo-e* artist who produced approximately 8000 works. From the 1830s, his main subject was the landscape.

Like other *ukiyo-e* artists, Hiroshige created innovative compositions, often with unusual **viewpoints**. Hiroshige built up his designs using layers of colour. He often used gentle gradations of colour in the individual colour layers of his print, which added to the subtle beauty of the scenes.

The contrasting textures of elements such as water, foliage and rocks add interest. His scenes are also often animated by people enjoying the landscape.

Most of Hiroshige's landscapes were completed in series that focus on a particular area. He made several series about Edo (Tokyo), which at the time had a population of more than one million and was the world's largest city. The landscape around Tokyo has many hills, rivers and a bay. This print is from the last and largest series he made about Tokyo, One Hundred Views of Edo. The Kameido Tenjin Shrine is still a popular destination in Tokyo, famous for its wisteria vines and drum bridge.

1 Create an annotated copy of Hiroshige's print to show where you can see:
- innovative composition
- gentle gradations of colour
- contrasting textures
- people enjoying the landscape.

A private garden

Claude Monet (1840–1926) developed a fascination with capturing fleeting atmospheric effects in nature. This led him to work **en plein air** and to experiment with colour, paint and composition.

The work of Monet and other artists of the time who were working from everyday life and creating an impression of their subject rather than a detailed description became known as **Impressionism**.

In 1883, Monet moved to Giverny, a village to the north-west of Paris. At Giverny, where he lived for the rest of his life, he planted a wonderful garden, which he painted over and over again. He planned the garden as he might have planned a painting; the flowers bloomed in different seasons to provide him with beautiful colour combinations to paint all year round. In the 1890s, Monet created a fantastic water garden in the marshland opposite his house. He planted it with all sorts of exotic plants: weeping willows and irises on the banks, and waterlilies of all colours floating on water.

Like many artists in the nineteenth century, Monet was fascinated by Japan, and he collected Japanese prints. He even built a wisteria-covered Japanese bridge over his lily pond, which might have been inspired by a Hiroshige print.

The waterlily pond became the main subject of Monet's paintings in the last 20 years of his life. As the hours and days and seasons changed, it provided him with new, wonderful patterns of colour and light to paint. In many paintings of the series, including *Waterlilies*, the light, colour and pattern on the surface of the lily pond fill the entire surface of the canvas.

2 What evidence can you find in *Waterlilies* of Monet's:
   - interest in capturing fleeting atmospheric effects in nature
   - experimental approach to colour, paint and composition?

3 Compare Hiroshige's print with Monet's painting. Consider the materials, composition and use of art elements.

4 Imagine you are visiting either of the places depicted here. Write a short postcard to a friend to describe the scene.

amanaimages/Franz Marc Frei/Look-foto/Corbis

Claude Monet's water garden at Giverny

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Monet's house and garden at Giverny.

Claude Monet
French, 1840–1926
Waterlilies (Nymphéas), c. 1914–17
oil on canvas
181.0 × 201.6 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1979

Although Monet observed colour and light effects en plein air, he often completed his paintings in the **studio**.

Monet's late work was often extraordinarily large. In 1914, he even built a special studio in his garden so he could work on large-scale canvases. In 1918, he decided to give some huge waterlily paintings to the people of France. He worked on them until his death in 1926. They stretch around the walls of the specially designed room at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris.

CREATE

Identify a place that is important to you. Create an artwork to communicate what you believe to be important about the place.

4.12 A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION

When two artists share ideas and interests, and represent the same place, it is easy to see how making art is a matter of interpretation.

Charles Conder
English, 1868–1909, worked in Australia 1884–90
Coogee Bay, 1888
oil on cardboard
26.8 × 40.7 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with the assistance of a special grant from the Government of Victoria, 1979 (A41–1980)

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Australian Impressionists.

En plein air at Coogee

These paintings by **Tom Roberts** (1856–1931) and **Charles Conder** (1868–1909) were both painted at Coogee Beach near Sydney during Easter 1888. Conder was only 19 at the time and greatly admired the older Roberts, who was visiting Sydney from Melbourne. Roberts had studied in London and was familiar with the latest developments in painting, including the idea of working **en plein air**.

Plein-air painting spread from Europe to many parts of the world in the second half of the nineteenth century. The plein-air painters rejected the traditional practice of creating landscape paintings in the **studio** from sketches. They took their easels and

Photo: AGNSW 9078

Tom Roberts
Australian, 1856–1931
Holiday Sketch at Coogee, 1888
oil on canvas
40.3 × 55.9 cm (stretcher)
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased 1954

paints outdoors to capture the colour, light and atmosphere of the landscape directly on canvas or board. They tended to paint what they saw in obvious blocks and strokes of colour and tone, often working quite quickly to capture the transient effects of colour and light.

In many respects, this approach to describing a subject reflects the way people see. For example, when we look at a scene in nature, we tend to see an impression of colour and light rather than details, such as individual leaves.

Spot the difference

Can you see how Roberts and Conder have both used broad areas of tone and colour, rather than detail, to create vivid impressions of the light, atmosphere and activity at Coogee Beach?

The paintings of Coogee Beach by Roberts and Conder clearly reflect the interest the artists shared in plein-air painting; however, the paintings also reveal the individual way each artist interpreted the subject.

Can you see, for example, how Roberts uses clearly defined brushstrokes and strong contrasts of colour and tone to create an impression of crisp, intense light?

The brushstrokes in Conder's painting tend to be less obvious. The blending of colours and tones creates an impression of a softer light. Conder often incorporated decorative elements in his compositions. You can see evidence of this in the figures and the elegant, flowing lines of the trees in the foreground.

It is not uncommon for landscape painters to rearrange a view, perhaps by moving, removing or adding features in a landscape. Artists have reasons for not imitating exactly what they see. They may want to create a more satisfying or interesting arrangement of elements in their work or perhaps emphasise an aspect of their subject to suggest a particular meaning. After all, making art is often a matter of interpretation.

1 Imagine you are one of the characters in the paintings of Coogee Beach. Based on the artists' interpretations of the scene, write a short diary entry describing your day at the beach.

2 What do the similarities and differences between Conder's and Roberts's paintings reveal to you about:
- the artists' shared interests
- each artist's individual interests and style?

3 Compare the painting of Coogee Beach by Conder or Roberts with the landscape painting by Claude Lorrain (p. 28). What similarities and differences can you find in the:
- subject matter
- painting technique
- atmosphere, light and colour?

4 Imagine you could choose to learn landscape painting from Claude, Roberts or Conder. Explain your choice of teacher by referring to the work of two of these artists.

Not long after Roberts and Conder worked together in Sydney, Conder travelled to Melbourne. Over the next two summers, Roberts, Conder and Arthur Streeton (1867–1943) were among the artists who painted together en plein air at an artists' camp near Heidelberg, on the outskirts of Melbourne. This led to the group being known as the Heidelberg School; however, the term **Australian Impressionists** is frequently preferred because it includes artists who worked at other artists' camps associated with the plein-air movement, including earlier camps at Box Hill and Mentone, where Frederick McCubbin (p. 104) worked with the group. It also links the Australian plein-air artists with international **Impressionism**.

EXPLORE

Australian plein-air painters generally used art elements such as natural colour to create a realistic impression of their landscapes; however, European plein-air artists, including French Impressionists such as Claude Monet (p. 123) and Camille Pissarro (p. 69), became interested in colour theories that saw them introduce bold colour combinations in their work.

Conder moved to Paris in 1890. Imagine you are Conder and you have just seen a painting by a French Impressionist. Write a letter to Roberts telling him about the work of the French artist and explaining what you think the main similarities and differences are between French Impressionism and the work of the Australian plein-air painters.

CREATE

Find an object that is interesting to look at: something that is made up of lots of different shapes. Look at it closely, then put it away and try to draw it from memory.

Draw the object a second time, this time looking at your object and closely observing the colours, shapes, lines, tones, form and texture. Think about how you are going to place the object on your page to make your drawing as interesting as possible. You may even choose to focus on just part of the object.

Compare your two drawings. Which is the most successful and why?

Investigate the role that observation and interpretation play in creating an artwork. If a number of people have drawn the same object, compare your drawing from observation with others' drawings. What evidence can you see of different people making individual interpretations of the object?

INSPIRED BY PLACE

4.13 A DRAMATIC LANDSCAPE

Artists often make art inspired by the places they live in or visit. The Australian outback has been an important source of inspiration for many artists.

The Pilbara

In Australia, the term 'outback' is used to refer to remote, sparsely inhabited locations, especially in inland Australia.

Stock route, Pilbara, Western Australia

The Pilbara

The Pilbara is an area of approximately 500 000 square kilometres in northern Western Australia, extending from the west coast to the Great Sandy Desert.

The Pilbara contains spectacular inland ranges, including the Hamersley Range and Ophthalmia Range, which have rich deposits of iron ore and other minerals. Mining has been the major industry in the area since the 1960s, but the grandeur and beauty of the ancient rock formations, gorges and deserts also attract tourists.

Inspired by the desert

Australian **landscape** artist **Fred Williams** (1927–1982) (p. 37) made two short trips to the Pilbara in 1979. He flew over the area by aeroplane and also spent time exploring the country on the ground. Inspired by the vast and dramatic landscape, he produced a series of more than 100 **gouache** paintings in just a few months. Some were made working **en plein air** in the Pilbara; others were made in the **studio**, using the artist's memory of the area and photographs.

After working on other projects, Williams returned to painting the Pilbara landscape in 1981. He worked rapidly to produce a major series of oil paintings in the studio.

It was common for Williams to immerse himself in a subject and explore its possibilities in gouache, oils and printmaking. His work in each medium influenced his work in other media. While the long break between making the Pilbara gouaches and the oil paintings was unusual, the artist's interest in the Pilbara landscape had remained strong. He noted in his journal at the time, 'I don't think waiting two years has done me one little bit of harm – in fact it has tended to make my response to the subject more intense.'[9]

It was the **formal** challenges presented by the Australian landscape that most interested Williams. He was fascinated by the landscape's colour, form, structure and composition. His paintings often appear deceptively simple; however, every element and mark in his paintings is carefully considered.

In *Red Landscape*, the composition is simply divided in two by a high, unbroken **horizon** line. The painting's focus is a broad expanse of country, painted with brilliant, glowing red. Scattered across the smoothly painted surface are smudges of darker colour, strong strokes and dabs of thicker, textured paint. The marks suggest areas of mineral deposits, scrubby vegetation and isolated trees, and they create a gentle visual rhythm that moves our eyes through the landscape.

Red Landscape demonstrates the bold approach to representing space that Williams pioneered in his landscape paintings. The picture space is flat: there is no **foreground**, **middleground** and **background** to suggest distance as you would see in traditional landscapes. *Red Landscape* seems to combine an aerial (bird's-eye) view, which Williams had already used in other paintings, with a more conventional view.

The simplified compositions, flattened space, intense colour and **painterly** marks in the Pilbara series reflect the unique visual language that Williams developed in response to the landscape.

The Pilbara paintings were Williams's last major series before his premature death from illness.

Fred Williams
Australian, 1927–1982
Red Landscape, 1981
oil on canvas
152.0 × 182.4 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by Rio Tinto Limited, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2001 (2001.588)

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read more about the Pilbara series in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Williams's Infinite Horizons exhibition on the National Gallery of Australia's website.

1 Williams kept a journal. Imagine you are the artist. Write a journal entry about *Red Landscape* to describe how you made it. Use the following questions to get started.
   - What did you use as references for your work, such as other paintings, photographs and memories?
   - Which colour was put on first? How did you proceed?
   - What types of brushes and brushstrokes did you use?
   - Did you work quickly or slowly?
   - Why are you satisfied with this painting? (Williams only kept work that he was happy with.)

2 Explain how *Red Landscape* can be seen to combine an aerial view with a more conventional view of the landscape.

3 Imagine you are in *Red Landscape*. Write a descriptive paragraph to explain what you see, feel and hear in the landscape. Use the clues provided by the painting as your starting point.

4 Based on your understanding of Williams's artistic interests, suggest why Williams often explored a subject in a variety of media.

EXPLORE

Research the work of another artist who has painted the Australian outback, such as Russell Drysdale (1912–1981) or Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri (c. 1933–2002).

Choose a work by the artist who interests you.
- What place or area is represented in the painting?
- What was it about the place that inspired the artist?
- What ideas or meanings does the artwork communicate about the place and how?
- What interests you about this work?

Present your findings as a webpage, publication or PowerPoint presentation.

DISCUSS

Until they were donated to the National Gallery of Victoria in 2001, the Pilbara series was the property of Rio Tinto, a company heavily involved in the mining industry in the Pilbara. Why might the company have been interested in the Pilbara paintings?

4.14 PERSPECTIVES ON RURAL AUSTRALIA

How artists see and represent the world is informed by many factors, including their personal experiences and the influence of ideas such as feminism.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Smart's work.

A personal perspective

Australian artist **Sally Smart** (b. 1960) grew up on a farm in Quorn, South Australia, an experience that has had an important influence on her work. Many of her works include images of strong rural women and present a view of Australian bush life quite different from the iconic images of Australian art that focus on male pioneers and bush characters.

A gender perspective

Smart began her career in the 1980s, when feminism was having a significant effect on the visual arts. Many books and exhibitions focused on female artists, past and present, and many artists were creating work exploring gender issues. The representation and construction of female identity became an important theme in Smart's work. This is evident in references in her work to fabrics, stitching, patchwork and darning: crafts that traditionally have been done by women but have not always been valued in the visual arts.

Sally Smart
Australian, b. 1960
Horsecraft (Shadow Farm), 2001 (detail)
synthetic polymer paint on felt with collage elements
installation view (size variable)
Bendigo Art Gallery

Memories and experiences of farm life are also evident in Smart's work in the connections she makes to nature and the landscape, usually in shapes or fragments of things such as trees, giant insects and clouds.

Smart was particularly interested in making rural environments the focus of *Shadow Farm* because the work was made for the Bendigo Art Gallery in rural Victoria and later toured to other regional galleries around Australia.

Smart has described *Shadow Farm* as an **assemblage installation**. It includes a variety of materials and forms, such as painted felt and fabric cut-outs pinned to the gallery wall, and some smaller, three-dimensional constructions.

Anyone familiar with rural Australia, even as a visitor, will recognise objects that are part of everyday farm life in this work: a ramshackle assortment of sheds, a stately water tank on its spindly stand, the homestead with its wide verandah, the skeletal remains of disused farm machinery and a gathering of farm animals.

Although these elements may be familiar, the image of rural life in *Shadow Farm* is not a direct description. It has more in common with the fragmented, fleeting and sometimes fantastic images of dreams and memories. Objects are represented by their shadows or shapes; some shapes loom unexpectedly large, while others are strangely small. A tractor becomes a surface for colourful, abstract patterns, while a floral sheet lies behind a paddock gate. Smart creates an unstable reality that reflects the influence of **art movements** such as **Dada** and **Surrealism** on her work.

When it toured regional Australia, *Shadow Farm* changed in each location that it was exhibited. The different gallery space in each location was a practical reason for this change; however, Smart was also interested in how the work could be rearranged to create new meaning.

> In *Shadow Farm*, I construct my farm according to an idea of representing domestic spaces in the bush, particularly the spaces of the farmhouse, like verandah, yard, garden and paddock.[10]

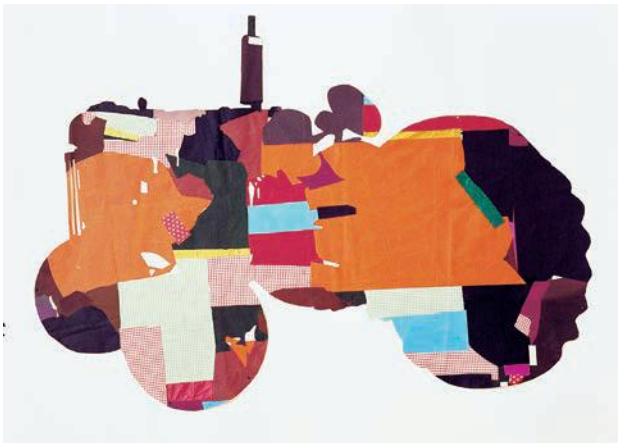
EXPLORE

Hans Christian Andersen's paper cut-outs have been an influence on Smart's work.

Based on your observation of both artists' work, suggest why Smart may be interested in Hans Christian Andersen's paper cut-outs.

Sally Smart
Australian, b. 1960
Shadow Farm, 2003
installation view (size variable)
Wollongong City Gallery, Wollongong, Australia

Sally Smart
Australian, b. 1960
The House that Jack Built, 2001 (detail)
synthetic polymer paint on fabric with collage elements
320 × 410 cm (size variable)



Sally Smart
Australian, b. 1960
Sonia's Tractor, 2001
synthetic polymer paint on fabric with collage elements
240 × 320 cm
Bendigo Art Gallery, Australia

1 What meaning does the title *Shadow Farm* suggest to you?

2 List three things that you recognise in *Shadow Farm*, and describe how the artist has used art elements – such as colour, shape and line – to represent each. What meanings or ideas does this suggest to you about the things you identified?

3 Compare *Shadow Farm* with *Field Naturalists* (p. 193) and *Shearing the Rams* (p. 150) by:
- describing what aspect of bush life is represented in each work and how it is represented
- explaining how each artist's personal interests and background, and the historical context in which they worked, influenced their work.

CREATE

Create a large collage on the theme of identity, such as personal, cultural, school or community identity. Your collage should incorporate a variety of shapes cut from paper, fabric, felt or other materials to represent aspects of identity. Incorporate some **silhouettes** and some free-form shapes.

An easy way to create a silhouette of a person or object is to stick a piece of paper to a wall, shine a light on the paper and, placing your subject between the light and paper, trace the shadow.

Look at Hans Christian Andersen's paper cut-outs on the Internet for inspiration, and consider how he used folding and refolding to create interesting patterns.

Think about how you might scale different shapes and use art elements, such as colour, texture and line, to add interest to your composition. You should also consider how you will arrange your shapes (such as clustering, spacing, overlapping and layering) for maximum effect.

Your class could work together to create a giant wall collage somewhere in the school. It could even be adapted as an outdoor wall collage if appropriate materials (plastic, painted wood) were used.

4.15 STILL LIFE

A still life is an arrangement of inanimate (non-living) objects. Traditional still-life arrangements often include household objects, food and flowers. Still-life artworks often depict subject matter that is rich in symbolism.

While still-life art is often associated with two-dimensional artforms such as painting and drawing, it can also be three-dimensional.

A worthy subject?

Subjects taken from everyday life, including **still life**, are now common in art; however, until the late nineteenth century, ordinary objects, people or places were often not considered worthy subjects in western art. Subjects drawn from religion, history and mythology were favoured.

This was not the case, however, in the seventeenth-century Netherlands. The Protestant north was dominated by a pious, hardworking, urban merchant class who were wealthy and successful but did not approve of extravagant display. They were more interested in paintings of everyday subjects that reflected the world around them.

Artists in the Netherlands tended to be specialised, focusing on a particular category of painting, such as flower painting, peasant scenes or winter landscapes.

The variety of fruit in *Still Life with Fruit* would have been quite rare in many parts of Europe in the seventeenth century; however, de Heem would have become familiar with such fruit while he was living in Antwerp, an important trading port in the southern Netherlands.

The Dutch called a still life with precious objects and exotic fruits a *pronkstilleven* (sumptuous still life) or pronk still life.

Jan Davidsz. de Heem
Dutch, 1606–1683/84
Still Life with Fruit,
c. 1640–50
oil on canvas
67.3 × 79.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1935 (231–4)

A sumptuous spread

Dutch artist **Jan Davidsz. de Heem** (1606–1683/84) was highly regarded as a painter of fruit. Can you see why by looking at *Still Life with Fruit*? The exotic fruit is depicted with convincing realism, as are other items in the picture, including the bread, oysters, fabrics and decorative objects. This is an example of a category of still life called ***pronkstilleven***.

While Dutch still-life paintings are widely admired for their beauty, they usually include symbolic meaning. **Vanitas symbolism** appears in many still-life paintings to remind the viewer of the transitory nature of beauty and life. Sometimes, the vanitas symbolism is obvious, for example a skull may be used to suggest death; however, the symbolism can also be as subtle as a blemish or a touch of decay on a fruit, or a flower's fallen petal.

1 Explain why you think *Still Life with Fruit* could be classified as a *pronkstilleven*.

2 What evidence of vanitas symbolism can you find in *Still Life with Fruit?*

3 Compare *Still Life with Fruit* with *Killing Time* (p. 51). Consider the subject matter, materials, techniques and use of art elements. How does each work reflect the time and place in which it was made?

EXPLORE

Look at other paintings of everyday subjects made in the seventeenth-century Netherlands. Find a work that interests you and describe:

- its subject matter
- how art elements and materials have been used to describe the subject matter
- the use of symbolism to convey meaning.

An artful arrangement

Blue (Bower/Bauer) by **eX de Medici** (b. 1959) is a visual feast – a composition teeming with a diverse collection of objects and dominated by brilliant blue and violet hues with flashes of red and orange.

At first glance, the selection and arrangement of objects appear random. Looking more closely reveals the conceptual complexities of the work. For example, do you notice that the composition spirals out from the tall blue vase on the right to lead viewers' eyes through the composition?

Luxury objects, such as glass dishes, silk ribbons, porcelain bowls and figurines, are interspersed with other objects, including skulls, thorny branches, metal shackles and a smattering of Union Jacks. Can you see the connection to Dutch still-life tradition and vanitas symbolism?

The artist's reference to traditional still-life paintings and her use of **watercolour paint** is deliberate. Historically, still-life and watercolour paintings have not been highly valued and have often been associated with the work of amateurs. The large scale and complexity of de Medici's work challenges such preconceptions.

Blue (Bower/Bauer) was the first of a series of paintings that the artist started when John Howard became prime minister in 1997. The artist was frustrated by the Howard government's conservative stance on many issues. The symbolism in the artist's works includes both obvious and subtle elements of social and political commentary, including the *Banksia menziesii* flowers in the tall blue vase. The banksia flowers are a reference to Robert Menzies, who was prime minister between 1949 and 1966 and a role model to John Howard.

4 Create an annotated copy of *Blue (Bower/Bauer)* to highlight the design principles important in making the work.

5 Identify five objects in *Blue (Bower/Bauer)* that you think have symbolic significance, and explain what you think is the significance of each.

eX de Medici
Australian, b. 1959
Blue (Bower/Bauer), 1998–2000
watercolour over black pencil
114.0 × 152.8 cm (image); 114 × 152.8 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 2004
© eX de Medici

6 Compare *Still Life with Fruit* with *Blue (Bower/Bauer)*. Consider the:
- use of materials and techniques
- subject matter
- the time and place in which it was made.

Which do you prefer? Why?

CREATE

Create your own personal still-life artwork.

Arrange three to five objects that have special significance to you and that communicate something about your life, interests or personality (such as childhood toys or favourite objects).

You may want to represent the objects realistically or simplify them to focus on formal qualities, such as colour or form.

DISCUSS

Although still-life painting has not always been highly regarded as a serious subject in the art world, it has always been popular with the public. Suggest reasons for this difference of opinion.

De Medici's appreciation of the powerful symbolism of objects such as skulls is partly due to her experience as a tattoo artist.

Blue (Bower/Bauer) took the artist 18 months to complete. She did a study for every object in the painting.

In 2000–01, de Medici was an artist fellow at the CSIRO in the entomology division. During this time, she had access to the Australian National Insect Collection, which includes thousands of classified and unclassified species, many rare or extinct. Her microscopic studies of different species of moths became an important source of inspiration for her art.

4.16 ART GOES POP

Subjects, materials and techniques borrowed from popular culture play an important role in the visual arts today.

Popular culture

Popular culture is part of our everyday lives. Popular culture is a general term used to describe products and activities that are usually cheap and mass-produced for broad audiences. It includes consumer goods (such as fashion items and fast food) and popular entertainment and communication (such as movies, comics, magazines and advertising).

Although Pop art became an international movement, it often has an American flavour. The United States emerged as the most powerful industrialised nation after the Second World War. American popular culture (including movies, rock 'n' roll and fast food) spread around the world and became part of the popular culture of many different countries.

DISCUSS

Do you think that there is a difference between high culture, and popular culture in contemporary life? Explain why.

High and low

Popular culture has often been seen as 'low' culture and not as highly valued as **high culture**. High culture is traditionally associated with serious art, music, dance and literature: culture that is highly valued and often only accessible to well-educated and wealthy audiences.

Since the 1950s, many artists have blurred the boundaries between popular culture and high culture. Artists have taken their subjects, and sometimes their materials and techniques, from popular culture.

The colours and tones on many commercially printed images are actually made up of thousands of tiny dots called **benday dots**. Lichtenstein imitated the effect of benday dots in his paintings by using a stencil.

Inspired by comics

When American artist **Roy Lichtenstein** (1923–1997) began making paintings, comic books were popular. Lichtenstein created many paintings inspired by images from comic books. Stylistic features he borrowed from comic-book images evident in *Masterpiece* include strong black outlines and flat areas of bright colour. The figures are very closely cropped as though Lichtenstein zoomed in on the faces. The speech bubble is another widely used convention in comics.

Lichtenstein's characters conform to comic-book stereotypes. Brad is dark, handsome and the hero of the scene. The female is a movie-star-attractive blonde and clearly in a supporting role as Brad's admirer. The art theme of *Masterpiece*, however, is not typical of comics. Perhaps this is Lichtenstein having a bit of fun at the expense of the art world.

You can find other important differences between *Masterpiece* and comic-book images. Comic-book images are small, mass-produced and disposable; however, Lichtenstein's painting is large and has been carefully painted by hand.

Roy Lichtenstein
American, 1923–1997
Masterpiece, 1962

(detail)

Lichtenstein was closely associated with the development of **Pop art**, which emerged in Britain and the United States in the late 1950s and 1960s. Pop art usually features subjects, materials, techniques or visual effects inspired by popular culture.

1 List three things that are important in popular culture today. What were three important elements of popular culture when your parents or grandparents were young? What is the most significant change between the generations?

2 What does *Masterpiece* suggest to you about Lichtenstein's thoughts on popular culture?

Plastic people

Australian artist **Christopher Langton** (b. 1954) is interested in making artworks that relate to contemporary life, and he wants his work to be accessible to a wide audience. Langton has made a significant number of large inflatable sculptures, inspired by the giant inflatables that are often used in advertising and at public events. Cheap, mass-produced novelty toys have also been an important source of inspiration for his work.

Although *Brat Pack* may look like it is commercially manufactured, each figure was produced by hand from PVC and vinyl. Features were painted on using a spray gun.

The size of Langton's sculptures adds to their impact. Langton also adds to the effect of his work by repeating the same or similar forms, as you see in *Brat Pack*. Imagine meeting this group of brats on your next gallery visit. Despite their cute, cartoon-like features and smiley faces, these larger-than-life figures can appear a bit confronting.

The repetition of forms in *Brat Pack* and other works by Langton may also be seen as a comment on contemporary society's mass production and consumption of goods.

3 Explain how the size and repetition of figures in *Brat Pack* adds to the work's effect and meaning.

4 What does the use of plastic add to the effect and meaning of *Brat Pack*?

5 Do you believe that Langton has been successful in creating a work that relates to contemporary life? Why?

Christopher Langton
Australian, b. 1954
Brat Pack, 1996
PVC, synthetic polymer paint and air
dimensions variable
Lyon Collection of Australian Contemporary Art

Langton acquired and refined the skills needed to make inflatable sculptures by trial and error over a long period. He began by taking blow-up toys apart to see how they were made.

CREATE

Create a comic-book hero or heroine for the twenty-first century. Make a drawing of your character in the style of comic-book images. While your hero or heroine should be the focus of the scene, include clues that reveal something about the special character or life of the hero or heroine.

Animate the character using a computer program, such as Flash or Director, or create a series of stills to portray a story.

EXPLORE

What is plastic? When was it invented? What is it mainly used for? How long will it last? Do you believe it is a suitable material for making art? Why?

Find an example of an artwork made using plastic. Describe the artwork, and explain how the use of plastic contributes to the appearance or meaning of the work.

DISCUSS

Consider the differences between *Brat Pack* and the inflatables that are used in advertising and entertainment. Why is *Brat Pack* an artwork, while the other inflatables are not?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other works by Langton.

4.17 ART FROM THE SUBURBS

Domestic and suburban environments have inspired many artists.

Brett Whiteley
Australian, 1939–1992
Interior, Lavender Bay, 1976
Private collection

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Whiteley's work and the Brett Whiteley Studio.

A familiar interior

Interiors are a strong theme in the work of Australian artist **Brett Whiteley** (1939–1992). He made many paintings and drawings of his Lavender Bay, Sydney, home where he moved in 1969.

Like his other interiors, the drawing *Interior, Lavender Bay* offers a fascinating glimpse into Whiteley's life. Two pet dogs snooze on a mattress covered in large, plump cushions. Several of Whiteley's own artworks are in the room: sculptures on pedestals and a drawing of a nude on the wall.

The lush garden vegetation is visible through the open windows. The Lavender Bay house's spectacular park and harbour views inspired some of Whiteley's best-known paintings.

Did you also notice that Whiteley has put himself in the drawing? His hands can be seen drawing in the foreground.

When he made this drawing, Whiteley had made a deliberate decision to leave behind earlier themes that had concerned him, including themes related to social issues, politics and intense self-analysis. He became more interested in exploring beauty. In this drawing, he responds intuitively and expressively to his subject using flowing, elegant lines. Decorative detail and pattern – and several areas of intense line work – add interest and contrast to the composition.

1 How has Whiteley created balance, unity, variety, rhythm, a focal point and a sense of space in *Interior, Lavender Bay*? You may wish to present your answer as an annotated copy of the image.

2 What evidence can you find in *Interior, Lavender Bay* that Whiteley responded intuitively and expressively to his subject?

Dream home

Domestic interiors and exteriors were an important source of inspiration for Australian artist **Howard Arkley** (1951–1999). The rooms and houses seen in Arkley's paintings were created by the artist from images in home-improvement magazines and real-estate brochures. Arkley explained that the images in *Suburban Interior:*

> come from a Myer direct mail colour catalogue, which I collaged together selecting all the elements that I really liked, those items which I thought were the best: the best carpet, the best light, the best chair plus a domestic pet.[11]

Did you notice that the lines in *Suburban Interior* have soft edges? Arkley painted them with an airbrush. When he began working with an airbrush as a young art student, airbrushes were generally only used in commercial art; however, Arkley liked the smooth 'coolness' of airbrushed surfaces and they became an important part of his work.

Suburban Interior also reveals an interest in pattern that began early in Arkley's career. The artist's early paintings include **non-representational art** with patterns inspired by everyday objects, such as decorative screen doors and fabric designs. Real wallpaper adds to the patterned effect.

Suburban Interior was the first painting Arkley made with a suburban house as the subject. Arkley later made many other paintings inspired by suburban interiors and exteriors, often using bright, fluorescent colour and stencilled patterns to create vibrant and dazzling effects.

The Australian suburbs are often dismissed as boring and dull; however, in Arkley's artworks, familiar family homes seem to become fantasy dream homes and you discover new ways of viewing the suburbs.

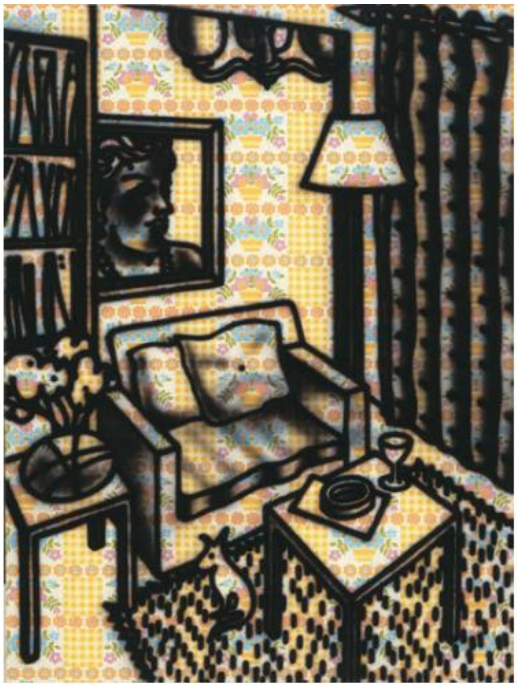
3 Identify two places in *Suburban Interior* where you can see interesting patterns. Describe the patterns.

4 Compare *Interior, Lavender Bay* with *Suburban Interior*. Consider the:
- subject matter
- use of materials and techniques
- use of art elements
- meanings communicated by the work.

Which of the interiors would you rather live in and why?

DISCUSS

Why might *Suburban Interior* be seen by some people as a more accurate reflection of our national identity than Tom Roberts's *Shearing the Rams* (p. 150)?



An airbrush is a mechanical painting tool that uses compressed air to apply paint in a fine spray.

Learn more about the research Arkley did and the working processes he used for *Suburban Interior* on pp. 12–13, 16.

Howard Arkley
Australian, 1951–1999
Suburban Interior, 1983
synthetic polymer paint on wallpaper on canvas
160 × 120 cm
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
The Baillieu Myer Collection of the 80s

CREATE

Collect photographs of room interiors from magazines and newspapers. Find an image of a room, or part of a room, that you think would be a good starting point for your ideal room.

Make a line drawing of the room, then, using other images for reference, add some furniture and objects that you like.

Choose a colour scheme for your room and paint it.

Consider where you could use decorative patterns to add interest to your composition. You could use a stencil to do this.

EXPLORE

Arkley suggested a connection between *Suburban Interior* and the collage of English artist Richard Hamilton (b. 1922) *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Home So Different, So Appealing?* (1956), which is often seen as a key work in the development of Pop art.

Find a reproduction of Hamilton's work and learn more about its significance.
- What connections can you find between Hamilton's collage and *Suburban Interior*?
- How does each work reflect the particular time and place in which it was made?

DISCUSS

Although most Australians live in suburbs, they have not always been a popular subject matter for artists. Why do you think this is so? Does *Suburban Interior* change the way you look at or think about the suburbs? Can artworks change the way we look at familiar things?

ART OF THE EVERYDAY

4.18 A CULTURE OF CARS

Cars and car culture are an aspect of **popular culture**, and they have inspired a number of Australian artists.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read the history of the Holden car on the National Museum of Australia's website.

Dodd used a **mould** to make the basic shape of the Holden cars in this series.

When Dodd made her first ceramic Holden, she was living in an outer suburb of Adelaide called Holden Hill.

A national icon

Although it looks a little unusual in this artwork, the car that inspired this sculpture is a 1948 Holden, the first motor car manufactured in Australia. Because it is regarded as a home-grown car, the Holden is often viewed with great affection by Australians.

Australian artist **Margaret Dodd** (b. 1941) made a series of **ceramic** sculptures inspired by Holdens; however, as seen in *Grassed Holden*, these are no ordinary Holdens. Dodd was not interested in creating the slick finish that is often associated with cars. Her Holdens each have a unique, handmade quality. Each car in the series has a special character that encourages the viewer to think more deeply about the role of Holden cars in Australian society.

What association do you make with the grass on this particular Holden? Perhaps it is a reference to the lawns that have often been seen as an important part of the Australian suburban home. At the time that Dodd was growing up, a Holden car and a house in the suburbs with a nice green lawn was something many people aspired to.

1 Which art elements do you think are most important in *Grassed Holden*? Describe how they are used and the meaning they add to the work.

2 *Grassed Holden* clearly appears to be handmade. What gives the work this appearance? What meaning does this add to the work?

Margaret Dodd
Australian, b. 1941
Grassed Holden, 1972
earthenware
19.9 × 43.8 × 21.2 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1974 (A5–1974)
© Margaret Dodd

Larking around

What connections can you make between the Holden car that is the **focal point** of the large painting by Australian artist **Jon Campbell** (b. 1961) (pp. 194–5) and the title of the painting, *We Wanna Be Free*?

Being in a car and on the road is often associated with travel and freedom. This is probably especially so for teenagers because their first car can represent new independence. The early model Holden in *We Wanna Be Free* is the sort of car that many teenagers might have had for their first car

DISCUSS

Since 1948, when the famous Holden car first took to the road, a succession of landmark models have become an integral part of the Australian way of life. In 2013, Holden announced that the company would cease production in Australia by 2017, although they would continue to import and sell cars here.

Do you think cars, particularly Holdens, are an important part of the Australian way of life? Why? Does the fact that some Australian artists, including Dodd and Campbell, make artworks about cars influence your opinion in any way? Are cars as important in other cultures? Why?

Jon Campbell
Australian, b. 1961
We Wanna Be Free, 1993
enamel and synthetic polymer paint on canvas
183 × 244 cm
The Vizard Foundation Art Collection of the 1990s, acquired 1995
On loan to the Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

when Campbell was young. The exuberant figures that are larking around on the car appear full of youthful energy and excitement, celebrating the freedom offered by the car.

The subject matter of Campbell's art reflects the artist's own experiences and observations of everyday life. Youth culture, suburbia, family and music are all important themes in his work.

Campbell draws on a range of sources for his work, including his own drawings and images he collects from magazines and newspapers. He plans compositions carefully, often making a number of drawings, which he sometimes photocopies and colours to determine how all the elements will work together. When it comes to making the finished painting, he often works quite quickly. He likes the idea of his work looking fresh and spontaneous.

Campbell's painting style is bold and graphic. He is more interested in capturing the essence of his subject than describing detail. Forms are highly **stylised** with simple outlines and bold, flat areas of colour.

3 Campbell often works with enamel or acrylic paint on canvas. Suggest why he might use these paints rather than traditional oil paints.

4 What meanings does *We Wanna Be Free* suggest to you? What is it about the painting that suggests these ideas?

5 Do you think the title suits the painting? Why?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to further information about Campbell and his work.

CREATE

The Holden car is sometimes described as an Australian **icon**. List other Australian icons and choose one as the subject of a two-dimensional or three-dimensional artwork that communicates your ideas about its role in Australian culture.

EXPLORE

Find another example of an Australian artwork in which a car (or cars) is important. What ideas does the artwork communicate to you about the car in Australian culture? How does the artist express these ideas?

You may want to consider other work by Dodd or Campbell, or artworks by John Brack, Tim Jones, Robert Rooney or Patricia Piccinini.

4.19 EXPRESSING THE PERSONAL

Many artists create artworks to express personal feelings or experiences. Artworks that communicate feelings and emotions are often described as expressive.

Munch repeated the same images in different media. There are two paintings, two pastels and lithographic versions of *The Scream*.

Astronomers have suggested that the red sky in *The Scream* was inspired by the unusually brilliant sunsets that Europe experienced in the winter of 1883–84 as a result of the eruption of Krakatoa.

The Scream has inspired artists and filmmakers and spawned a wide range of merchandise, including T-shirts and mouse-pads, and even inflatable sculptures (p. 205).

Inspired by experience

Norwegian artist **Edvard Munch** (1863–1944) suffered emotional trauma and loss in his life. When he was only five years old, his mother died, leaving the family of seven children in the care of their father, who was zealously religious, authoritarian and almost insane. Nine years later, Munch's closest and favourite sister, Sophie, died of tuberculosis. Another sister was hospitalised for melancholia. As an adult, Munch was involved in several complicated relationships with women that left him psychologically scarred.

Munch created powerfully **expressive art** based on events and experiences in his life. His work explores and exposes many aspects of human emotion and psychology, including love, death, desire, jealousy, melancholy, angst, grief and loneliness.

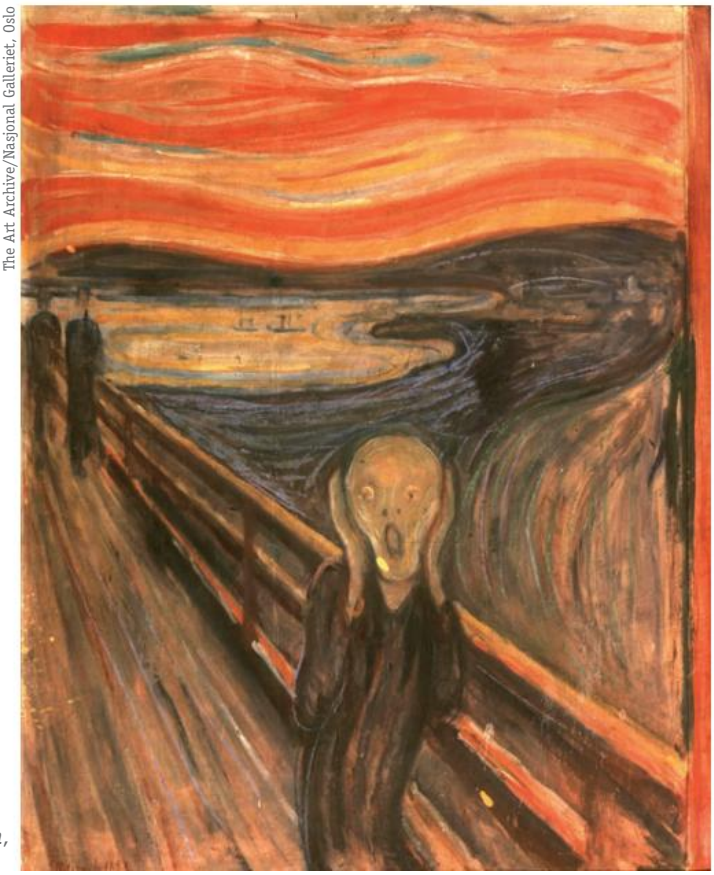
Munch's best-known work is *The Scream*. The circumstances that inspired this image have been described by Munch. He was walking along a path overlooking Oslo with two friends. He could see the place where a good friend had shot himself and he could hear the screams of women in the asylum where his sister was hospitalised.

> Then the sun set. Suddenly the sky became a bloody red. [and I felt a tinge of melancholy, a sucking pain beneath my heart] I stopped, leaned against the railing, dead tired. Over the blue-black fjord and city hung blood and tongues of fire. My friends walked on and I stood again trembling with fright. And I felt as if a loud unending scream were piercing nature.[12]

Can you see how Munch has expressed this experience in *The Scream*? Streams and swirling waves of thick, black lines, heightened with blood red and deep green, flow around the composition, suggesting a disturbed and unsettled world that threatens to engulf the main figure. Although there are others nearby, the pale-faced and tormented figure appears isolated and on the verge of physical and emotional collapse.

1 List three words or phrases that describe the mood and atmosphere of *The Scream*. Explain what it is about the image that suggests these ideas to you.

2 List three words or phrases that describe the emotional state of the main figure in *The Scream*. What suggests these ideas to you?



The Art Archive/Nasjonal Galleriet, Oslo

Edvard Munch
Norwegian, 1863–1944
The Scream, 1893

DISCUSS

The Scream stands alongside the *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) as one of the most recognised and reproduced artworks in the world. What reasons can you suggest for this?

An emotional response

Australian artist **Joy Hester** (1920–1960) admired the work of Munch. She was among the first artists in Australia to work in an obviously expressive style.

Hester was a passionate and complex woman who faced significant challenges in her short life. In 1947, she left her young son and first husband, artist Albert Tucker (1914–1999), to begin a new relationship. In the same year, she learnt she was suffering from Hodgkin's disease, a form of cancer, from which she died 13 years later.

Human emotions and relationships are a strong theme within Hester's work. Her paintings are dominated by images of women, couples and children, usually with a strong focus on the faces.

Hester's preferred medium was brush and ink. She often worked rapidly, making 20–40 drawings over a few days. In *(Untitled) (Woman in Black)* the subject's face fills the picture. Her features are described in strong, black lines of varying thicknesses. The concentration of lines and creases around the mouth and eyes and the dramatic contrast of black and white add to the emotional intensity of the image.

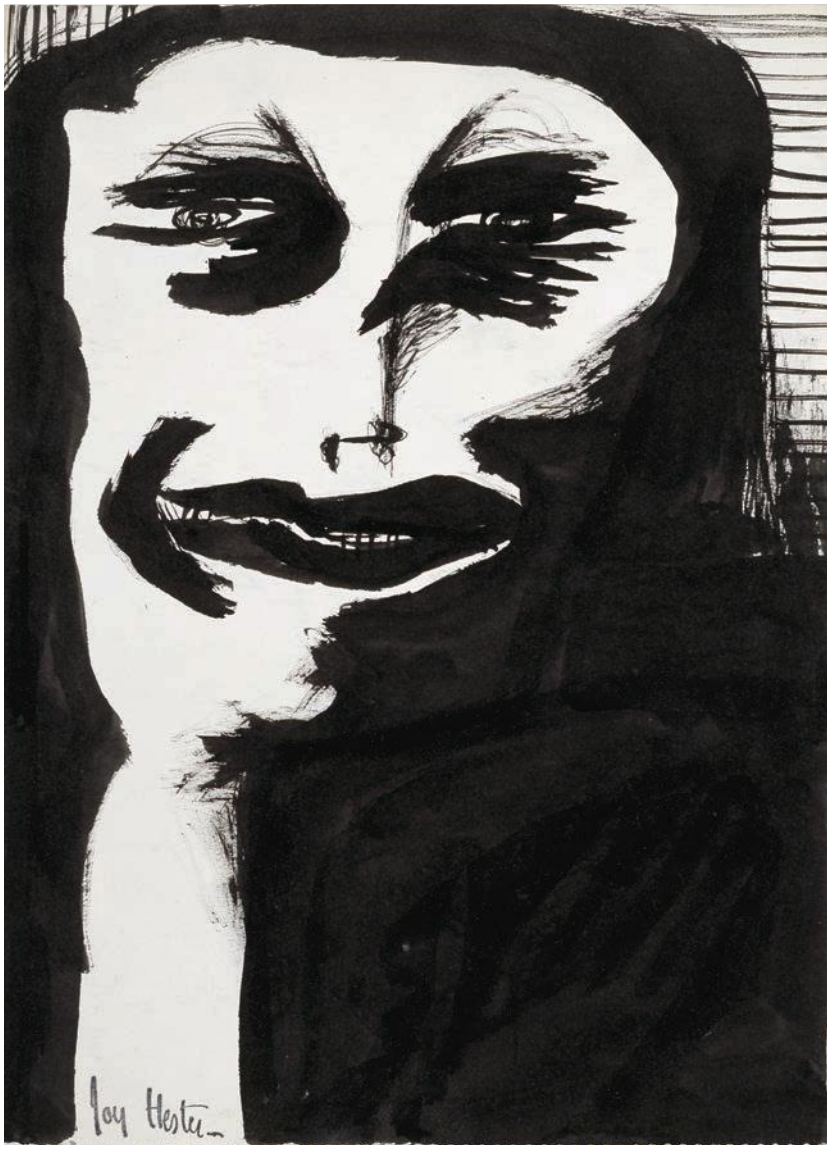
Working expressively

Artists working expressively often create works in which materials and techniques are used in a raw and direct manner. This can sometimes shock audiences who expect artworks to be finished and detailed; however, the rawness and directness of expressive artworks can also make a strong connection between an artist and a viewer.

When the process of making an artwork is apparent, perhaps through bold, flowing lines or obvious brushstrokes, we have a visible trace or sign of the presence, energy and emotion of the artist.

3 Suggest why Hester might have worked with brush and ink rather than other drawing media. (Consider the working methods and visual effects that are possible with brush and ink.)

4 Based on your observations of both Munch's and Hester's work, suggest what Hester might have admired about Munch's work.



Joy Hester
Australian, 1920–1960
(Untitled) (Woman in Black), c. 1948
brush and ink
37.2 × 26.9 cm irreg. (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1976 (P128–1976)

5 Imagine you are the director of a gallery that has just purchased *The Scream* or *(Untitled) (Woman in Black)*. Mr I Luvdetail, a member of the public, has written to complain about the purchase, arguing that the work looks crude and unfinished. Write a letter in reply to defend your purchase.

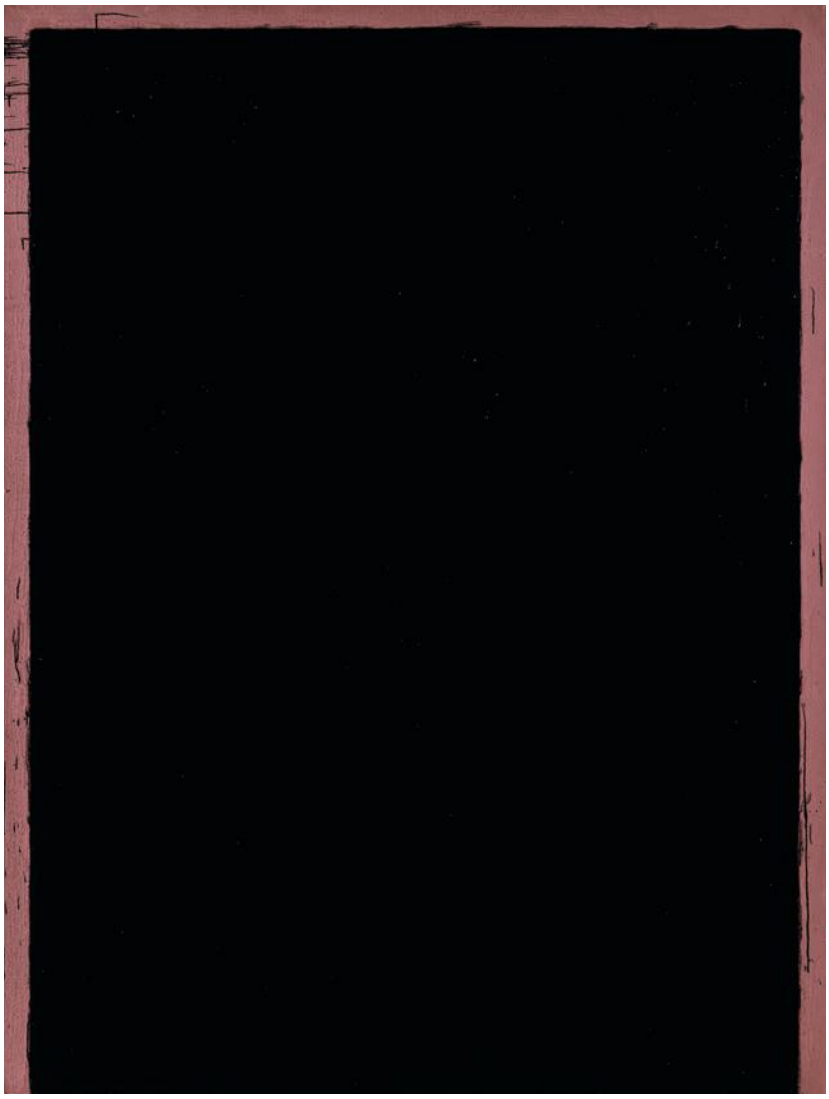
EXPLORE

Find an artwork that represents a person and expresses different emotions or feelings from those expressed in *The Scream* or *(Untitled) (Woman in Black)*. Explain how the artist has used art elements and materials to communicate emotion.

4.20 EVOLVING EXPRESSIONS

The style of most artists evolves over time in response to new ideas and influences.

Peter Booth has moved from making abstract **non-representational art** to **figurative art**, but his work has remained highly expressive.



Peter Booth
born England 1940, arrived Australia 1958
Untitled, 1971
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
245.0 × 184.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1971 (A8–1971)

A doorway?

Look at *Untitled* (1971) by Australian artist **Peter Booth** (b. 1940). What do you see? Almost the whole surface of this large painting is black. The blackness is bordered on three sides by a soft, dark-pink edge. Some people suggest that the edge creates the effect of looking through a window or a doorway. The artist has written on the back of the painting, 'never to be hung more than 6 inches [15 cm] from the ground', suggesting he might have wanted to create such an effect.[13]

Booth made this painting at a time when many other artists were making **non-representational art** (pp. 176–7) and paintings that deliberately avoided references to the visible world or feelings. These artists wanted to create art that was cool and objective. They often did this by using ordered, **geometric** arrangements of art elements and smooth, precisely painted surfaces. In contrast, Booth's non-representational paintings appear emotional and subjective. In his work, he used rich, thick and glossy paint surfaces, and obvious strokes and drips of paint. These marks clearly record the artist's process and 'presence' in the making of the painting.

The **painterly** surface, colour and scale of Booth's paintings also elicit a subjective reaction from viewers. For many people, the black represents a mysterious black space and perhaps the beginning of a journey. For others, the colour black represents darkness and despair. Booth is keen for viewers to form their own ideas about his works; however, he has described the colour black as 'strong and beautiful – the colour of the universe'.[14]

Many people have linked the blackness often found in Booth's work to Sheffield, where Booth lived until he moved to Australia as a teenager. Sheffield is a major steel-producing city in England. The blackened industrial landscape and the destruction of parts of the city during wartime bombing raids left a strong impression on the artist.

Return to figurative art

Drawing has always been an important part of Booth's art. Ever since he was a boy in Sheffield, he has made drawings from nature.

Peter Booth
born England 1940, arrived Australia 1958
Painting, 1977
oil on canvas
182.5 × 304.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the artist in memory of Les Hawkins, 1978 (A24–1978)

He also records memories and dreams in drawings. His drawings were an important source of ideas and images when he began to make **figurative** paintings again after many years of creating non-representational paintings such as *Untitled* (1971).

Painting (1977) marked Booth's return to figurative painting. The composition is dominated by the large figure of a man on an empty road. He stares at you with burning, red eyes. A dog seems to stand guard in a blackened landscape, littered with strange plant-like forms and symbols. A city burns in the background. A blood-red sun (or moon) hovers in the darkened sky. Thick, textured brushstrokes create a swirling movement that suggests a hot wind howling through the landscape.

After *Painting* (1977), Booth made many other paintings of apocalyptic scenes, partly inspired by dreams, imagination and personal experience. These images suggest the destructive tendencies of humanity; however, they also highlight the resilience of nature. Booth strongly believes that all living things in the world are closely connected, and this idea is often important in his work.

1. Although *Untitled* (1971) and *Painting* (1977) are clearly different, they share some similarities. List the similarities and the differences you find in the features (scale, paint surface, colour) and ideas (subject matter, meanings) of each painting.
2. Imagine you are buying a painting for your home. Your choice is *Untitled* (1971) or *Painting* (1977). Use a PMI chart to evaluate each work. Which work would you choose and why?
3. The meanings associated with an artwork can change from viewer to viewer and over time. Suggest how personal experiences or events in the world since 1977 (such as war, terrorism or environmental disasters) may influence the meaning that a contemporary viewer finds in *Painting* (1977).

EXPLORE

Find an example of Booth's later work that interests you.

- What links can you find between this work and Booth's earlier work?
- What evidence can you find of new ideas or directions in the artist's work?

John Brack (pp. 72, 94) was one of Booth's teachers when Booth attended the National Gallery Art School. Brack was an important influence on Booth's art. He reinforced the value of drawing and visual diaries, and he encouraged Booth to read widely and adopt a serious and professional approach to making art.

Booth has noted that in Mayan mythology the white dog is the guardian of a recent death spirit. It has been suggested that the white dog in *Painting* (1977) may be a sign of **homage** to Laurence Stephen Lowry (p. 90), who Booth greatly admired and who died around the time Booth was working on the painting.

Booth's close friend Les Hawkins was also killed in an accident about the time that Booth made this painting.

4.21 FANTASY AND IMAGINATION

Fantasy and imagination are an important source of inspiration for many artists, including artists who have created inventive composite images.

Giuseppe Arcimboldo
Italian, 1527–1593
Vertumnus (Emperor Rudolf II), 1590
oil on wood
70.5 × 57.5 cm

Arcimboldo copied some of his own paintings so that Rudolf II could give them to friends and political leaders.

A composite portrait

The inventive composite portraits by Italian artist **Giuseppe Arcimboldo** (1527–1593) are constructed from carefully selected and artfully arranged objects.

Arcimboldo was born in Milan, but in 1562 he moved to Vienna to become a court artist for the Habsburg emperor. His duties included painting portraits and designing costumes and sets for lavish festivities and pageants; however, it is his imaginative composite portraits that have had enduring popularity.

Vertumnus, a **stylised** portrait of Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612), is Arcimboldo's most famous portrait. Rudolf II was the last of the three Austrian emperors who Arcimboldo served. Vertumnus was the ancient Roman god of the seasons and growth. The portrait's harmonious combination of plants and produce from different seasons is often interpreted as a symbol of the harmony and glory of Rudolf's reign. Arcimboldo's work includes other portraits that feature plants and produce specific to each season.

During Rudolf II's reign, the court at Prague was a leading European centre for art and science. The **Renaissance** was a time of exploration and discovery, and Rudolf II was both a **patron** of the arts and an avid collector of natural science specimens and curiosities. He had a menagerie and botanical gardens that housed exotic species, and collections of stuffed animals, precious gems, mechanical objects, antiquities and other curiosities from around the world. Rudolf II's extensive collections were both an inspiration for Arcimboldo's portraits and a fitting location in which to display them.

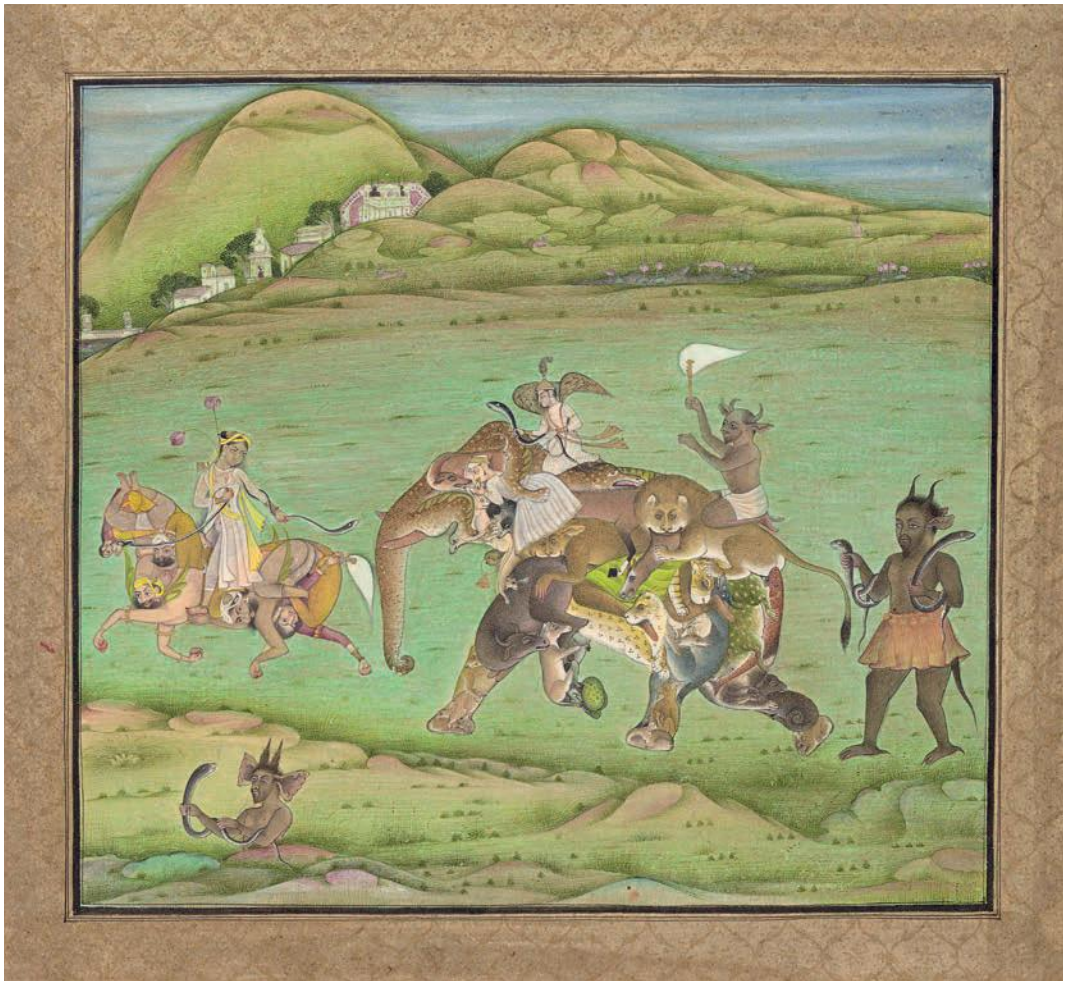
Arcimboldo's paintings combine imagination with scientifically accurate observations of flora, fauna and other objects. Other portraits include a librarian made up of books and an admiral made up of fish.

1 List four plants, fruits or vegetables that you recognise in *Vertumnus*. Describe how each contributes to the portrait. Do you agree that the different elements used to create the portrait are artfully arranged? Why?

2 In what way could Arcimboldo's work be seen as a fusion of art and science?

DISCUSS

Why do you think composite images such as these have enduring and wide appeal?



Deva, son of Nathu
Indian, active mid-19th century
Composite Animals in a Landscape, 1851
opaque watercolour and gold paint on paper
20.6 × 22.9 cm (image); 25.4 × 27.4 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1980 (AS285–1980)

The Mughals, originally from central Asia, ruled most of northern India from the early sixteenth century until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the British began to dominate. Although the Mughals were Muslim, Hinduism continued to be the main religion in India.

Maharaja was the title given to the hereditary Hindu rulers of Rajasthan in north-west India.

The Renaissance interest in studying the natural world was strong in Arcimboldo's home city of Milan, where Leonardo da Vinci, one of the most famous Renaissance artists, also worked.

A composite animal

Composite animals became a popular subject of art in Mughal India. Such images are thought to have been influenced by Persian art, which was introduced to India by the Mughals.

Composite Animals in a Landscape was created by an artist known as **Deva**, who worked at the court of Maharaja Sarup Singh at Udaipur, Rajasthan. At first glance, the painting appears to depict a simple procession of animals and people in an **idyllic** landscape, which includes temples and houses in the background. On closer inspection, however, it becomes obvious that the horse is made up of entwined male and female figures, and the elephant is made up of humans and animals. Notice also how some of the creatures that make up the body of the elephant appear to be biting or eating the other creatures! To add to the strangeness of the scene, there are also three demon-like creatures, two of which, like the two other figures, are brandishing snakes.

It has been suggested that composite creatures such as the elephant and the horse depicted in this painting are symbolic of the unity of living things. While the real meaning is a mystery, the image remains intriguing in its inventiveness.

3 Compare the composite animals in *Composite Animals in a Landscape* with *Guardian Spirit* (p. 48). Consider the:
- use of materials and techniques
- purpose of each work
- way each work is influenced by the culture in which it was made.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to websites devoted to the art and life of Arcimboldo and to see Phillip Haas's sculptures inspired by Arcimboldo's work.

CREATE

Create a composite portrait or animal made up of other objects. You may use objects from nature in the style of Arcimboldo or you could use something relevant to today, such as machinery parts, consumer products or junk food.

Create your artwork as a collage, digital image or sculpture.

Before you begin, look at other work by Arcimboldo and observe how he carefully selects the colour, tone and form of the objects he uses to create a human likeness. You may also find further inspiration by doing an online image search using the terms 'Arcimboldo effect'.

William Barak
Australian (Wurundjeri), 1824–1903
Figures in Possum Skin Cloaks, 1898
pencil, wash, charcoal solution, gouache and earth pigments on paper
57.0 × 88.8 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1962 (1215A-5)

5

STYLES AND IDEAS

Across history and in many different cultures, artists have been inspired and influenced by a wide range of ideas and artistic styles.

This chapter investigates some significant styles and ideas. It explores art as an expression of culture, art as social commentary, connections between art and science, new art inspired by old art, realism and abstraction, art about ideas, and art and beauty.

How and why artists explore particular styles and ideas is influenced by artists' personal experiences and beliefs. The historical, cultural and social contexts in which artists work are also influential. Exploring the style or ideas in an artwork reveals clues that helps understand the artwork.

Learn about:

- styles and ideas in art
- how art can be influenced and inspired by artists' personal experiences and beliefs, and by their historical, cultural or social context.

Learn by:

- comparing, analysing, evaluating and interpreting artworks
- discussing and communicating ideas and opinions about art
- creating your own artwork.

5.1 ART FROM THE DREAMING

In Australia's Indigenous culture, artworks, including the visual arts, song and dance, play an important role in communicating Dreaming knowledge and lore. Many artworks are inspired by creator spirits and their activities.

The Kimberley

As a result of colonisation, many Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal people were displaced from their ancestral lands, making it difficult for them to maintain their Wanjina images.

In 2003, they were successful in gaining native title rights to a significant area of land in the Kimberley. The judgement specifically recognised the importance of rituals associated with rock sites.

The Dreaming

The **Dreaming** is central to Indigenous culture. It embodies the past, present and future, and it permeates every aspect of life.

The Dreaming includes creation stories that tell how the spirit ancestors emerged from a dark, formless earth at the beginning of time. During their epic journeys, they created and named all the physical features of the landscape. They also created the knowledge and lore that govern social and religious customs and behaviour and help people live harmoniously with each other, living things and the environment.

The spirit ancestors eventually returned to the supernatural world below the earth; however, their power lives on in many features of the universe, including the land. This is the basis of the deep reverence for the land in Indigenous culture.

Many Indigenous cultures

Before European settlement, there were hundreds of separate Indigenous language groups, each with their own cultural traditions dating back at least 40 000 years. Ideas and traditions have been shared between many Indigenous groups over time; however, even today, the diversity of Indigenous languages and cultures across Australia is not unlike the diversity of cultures and languages found when travelling across different countries in Europe.

Wanjina of the Kimberley

The Wanjina are the supreme spirit beings of the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples of the north-west and central Kimberley. According to tradition, the Wanjina came out of the sea and sky and created the world and all that it contains. The Wanjina control the natural elements and are associated with the life-giving properties of water.

After they had finished their work, the Wanjina disappeared into caves and rock shelters, leaving behind their images on the walls. These images are a sacred and significant link to the creation period. As the human descendants of the Wanjina, the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples are responsible for looking after the images. Regular repainting helps ensure seasonal rains and the ongoing fertility of the land and its species.

In the mid-1970s, Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal artists began copying Wanjina images onto other surfaces, including bark, then later, board and canvas. Gradually, images of the Wanjina have been produced for a wider audience for commercial and educational reasons.

The large paintings on canvas of Wanjina by Woonambal artist **Alec Mingelmanganu** (c. 1910–1981) are made with natural **ochres**. The ochres suggest the colour and surface of rock paintings and are significant because they are made from the land created by the Wanjina. The colours of the ochres have their own symbolism; red is often seen as the symbol of blood, while white is associated with water.

The Wanjina are characterised by certain features. They are always seen from the front and appear still and solid. Wanjina can be portrayed as full-length or head-and-shoulder figures. Their round heads are surrounded by a halo-like shape that often has a pattern of radiating lines. The lines are commonly associated with lightning, which the Wanjina control. Their faces are dominated by large, black eyes, usually close together, and a beak-like nose, but the Wanjina do not have mouths. Some people believe the Wanjina once had mouths, but they were shut so tightly after the first lightning bolt struck that they have not been opened since. In some places, people believe that if the Wanjina had mouths, it would not stop raining.

Alec Mingelmanganu
Australian (Woonambal), c. 1910–1981
Wanjina, 1980
earth pigments and natural binder on canvas
128.1 × 91.4 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1990
(0.156–1990)

Images of the Wanjina at rock art sites are up to 6 metres long.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about the culture of the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples and Wanjina art from the Kimberley.

Mingelmanganu's Wanjina figures were inspired by cave paintings the artist saw near the Lawley River and have very distinctive, upward-curving shoulders. The Wanjina's body is covered with dots and dashes similar to body-painting designs. The designs seem to shimmer, conveying the spiritual power of the Wanjina.

1 In sentences or using an annotated diagram, suggest how Mingelmanganu communicated the power of the Wanjina in his artwork. Consider the:
- materials
- size of the work
- figure's physical characteristics
- figure's placement within the picture.

EXPLORE

What Indigenous language groups are associated with your area? Find out three facts about the history and culture of one local group.

DISCUSS

Since artists of the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples first started creating Wanjina images to share with wider audiences in the 1970s, Wanjina images have become well known. A Wanjina image was part of the Sydney Olympics opening ceremony in 2000.

Some depictions of Wanjina by artists who do not have the right to use the imagery have created controversy (pp. 204–5).

What differences are there between a rock art Wanjina in the Kimberley, the Wanjina by Mingelmanganu and a Wanjina at the Olympics opening ceremony? Consider the visual qualities, spiritual significance, purpose and intended audience of each.

EXPRESSIONS OF CULTURE

5.2 COMMUNICATING CULTURE

Art and artists play an important role in society in preserving and sharing culture and promoting cultural understanding.

William Barak
Australian (Wurundjeri), 1824–1903
Figures in Possum Skin Cloaks, 1898
pencil, wash, charcoal solution, gouache and earth pigments on paper
57.0 × 88.8 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1962 (1215A–5)

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about three works commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria in 2011 to celebrate Barak.

Completed in 2015, a 31-storey apartment block in the city of Melbourne features a portrait of Barak. The balconies of the building's facade were designed to create a pattern of light and dark tones. When seen from a distance, the effect re-creates a historical photograph of Barak.

Fairfax Syndication/*The Age*/Eddie Jim

A cultural legacy

The Wurundjeri are the traditional owners of country that now includes the city of Melbourne.

Wurundjeri man **William Barak** (c. 1824–1903) saw enormous change in his lifetime, including the end of traditional tribal life. Barak was a young boy when John Batman (1801–1839) acquired Wurundjeri land by 'treaty'. He attended a mission school for a short time and joined the Port Phillip District Native Police Corps before moving to the Aboriginal settlement at Coranderrk in 1863.

Barak became head man (*ngurungaeta*) of the Wurundjeri in 1874. He was an influential spokesman for his people and created a bridge between his culture and that of the settlers.

Most of Barak's paintings were made in the 1880s and 1890s. He had an original painting style; he combined traditional materials such as charcoal and **ochres** with **gouache** and **watercolour paint**. His paintings create a vivid picture of Wurundjeri culture. The repeated lines, shapes and colours in the two rows of men in *Figures in Possum Skin Cloaks* animate the composition and suggest a rhythmic ceremonial dance.

Possum-skin cloaks have both practical and cultural significance. The fur is worn on the inside for warmth, and the outside of the cloak is decorated with designs that are important markers of cultural identity.

1 How do you think Barak's paintings have contributed to creating a bridge between his culture and the settlers' culture in the past and now?

EXPLORE

Research contemporary artists who acknowledge Barak in their artwork. Identify one work that you find interesting and explain what interests you about it.

Sharing culture

John Mawurndjul (b. 1952) is recognised as one of the finest and most inventive bark painters in Arnhem Land (p. 22). Mawurndjul's paintings have played an important role in expressing and sharing Kuninjku culture, and his art has reached wide audiences around the world.

The artist's interest in exploring new ways of working is evident when you compare *Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent at Dilebang* (p. 76) with *Mardayin* (2004). The earlier painting's composition is dominated by the iconic form of Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent, against a plain background. In *Mardayin* (2004), Mawurndjul has created what seems to be a more abstract composition of circles embedded in an irregular grid-like structure. Fine ***rarrk***, which represents the skin and sacred power of Ngalyod in the earlier painting, is in *Mardayin* (2004) used to cover the entire surface of the painting.

Mardayin (2004) is one of a number of paintings Mawurndjul has made inspired by the Mardayin ceremony. Mawurndjul's Mardayin paintings are inspired by the **geometric** *rarrk*-filled designs that are painted on men's bodies for the Mardayin ceremony. The designs are like maps of country. The shifts in direction and tone in the *rarrk* pattern suggest contours and forms in the landscape. The circular shapes represent sacred and significant sites, including waterholes and billabongs where the Rainbow Serpent lives. The use of *rarrk* represents the presence of ancestral power.

2 Create an annotated copy of *Mardayin* (2004) and note where you can see evidence of:
- irregular grid-like structure
- circles
- shifts in direction and tone in the *rarrk*.

3 In what way can *Mardayin* (2004) be considered a powerful expression of culture?

John Mawurndjul AM
Australian (Kuninjku, eastern Kunwinjku people), b. 1952
Mardayin, 2004
natural earth pigments on stringy-bark
188 × 85 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 2005

EXPLORE

Mardayin (2004) was included in the inaugural National Indigenous Art Triennial exhibition in 2007. The exhibition theme and title was Culture Warriors.

Curate your own class exhibition on the theme of Culture Warriors. Each student should select one artist to include in the exhibition. Find an image of one artwork by the artist and explain how the work fits the exhibition theme.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about three works commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria in 2011 to celebrate Barak.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to the website of the Maningrida Arts Centre, where you can learn more about Mawurndjul and watch a video of the artist at work.

Mawurndjul was one of eight Indigenous Australian artists commissioned to create work to be incorporated into the architecture of Musée du quai Branly, a museum that opened in Paris in 2006. The museum is dedicated to the indigenous art of cultures in Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas.

The Mardayin ceremony was the first secret ceremony that Mawurndjul participated in, and it left a lasting impression on him. Mawurndjul has emphasised that what he paints for public display is *inspired* by sacred designs, but it is not the same.

5.3 IMAGES OF A NATION

Many artworks express or explore ideas related to national identity.

Rural life

Australian artist **Tom Roberts** (1856–1931) began work on *Shearing the Rams* in the spring of 1888, the year of Australia's centenary of European settlement. It was a time of intense **nationalism**, a time when people reflected on the history, achievements and character of the young nation and debated the need for artists and writers to focus on distinctly Australian subjects.

Although most people lived in cities, it was the bush and rural life that were widely seen as uniquely Australian. *Shearing the Rams* is a carefully composed image that celebrates the annual wool harvest, rural life and hard work.

Can you see how the boy on the left seems to lead you into the shearing shed? Other cues, including the line along the bent backs of the shearers, draw your attention through the shed where Roberts has described each stage of the shearing process. The composition creates an impression of an environment where everyone works together harmoniously. Do you notice that everyone has a role appropriate for their age and physical ability?

The shearers are depicted as strong, skilful and noble characters. There is a particular focus on the shearer in the centre-front of the painting. His head is down, but his strong, muscular arms are emphasised. He maintains a firm pressure on the struggling ram while cutting away the thick fleece that spills across the floorboards.

For many viewers, *Shearing the Rams* embodies values and ideals – including mateship, fairness and hard work – that are an important part of Australian culture.

1 Explain in sentences, or using an annotated image, how Roberts has structured the composition of *Shearing the Rams* to:
   - direct the viewer's attention through the shearing shed
   - make the figure in the centre-front a focal point.

2 Explain whether you believe *Shearing the Rams* presents a realistic representation of working conditions in a shearing shed.

Roberts was one of the main artists associated with the development of **Australian Impressionism** (p. 125). This group worked together, painting **en plein air** at artists' camps outside Melbourne during the 1880s; however, by 1890, a number of these artists, including Roberts, were working on large-scale paintings and searching for subjects of national significance beyond the suburban bush.

In the nineteenth century, wool production became the most important industry in the Australian economy. The industry reached a peak in the 1880s before crashing in the 1890s due to drought, falling wool prices and industrial unrest.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about how Roberts and his colleagues explored national themes in their art.

Tom Roberts
born Great Britain 1856, arrived Australia 1869, died 1931
Shearing the Rams, 1888–90
oil on canvas on composition board
122.4 × 183.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1932 (4654–3)

3 What does *Shearing the Rams* communicate to you about the bush or bush life? How does the painting do this?

4 Why do you think that *Shearing the Rams* has been widely viewed as a distinctly Australian painting?

5 Do you think that the view of Australian life in *Shearing the Rams*:
- is one that all Australians today can relate to
- was one that all Australians could relate to when the painting was made?

Explain why.

EXPLORE

Read some poetry or writing by Banjo Paterson (1864–1941) or Henry Lawson (1867–1922). What does it have in common with the art of Roberts?

A contemporary perspective

Fake Flag by Greek-Australian artist **Constanze Zikos** (b. 1962) presents the Australian flag as you have never seen it before. The familiar red, white and blue colours are nowhere to be seen. Instead, you see a mural-sized flag made using panels of fake wood-grain laminex, a material usually found in suburban kitchens.

Brightly coloured enamel spray paint and plastic, and metallic adhesive tape have been used to create decorative versions of the Union Jack, the seven-pointed Star of Federation (on the left) and the five stars of the Southern Cross. If you look carefully, you may notice that some of the stars have also taken on a new symbolic identity. Can you find the Star of David and the communist red star?

Zikos often uses forms and symbols that have cultural or national value in unexpected ways. By using materials that are part of our everyday lives, and by focusing on the decorative and symbolic possibilities of the flag, Zikos asks many questions about the flag as a national symbol. Why do we have flags? Do we understand the symbolism of the flag? Is the symbolism relevant to our lives today? Is it possible that Zikos's version of the flag is more relevant to our lives?

Constanze Zikos
born Greece 1962, arrived Australia 1966
Fake Flag, 1994
thermo-setting laminate, enamel paint, crayon, metallic and plastic self-adhesive tape on composition board
(a–h) 198.1 × 262.2 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1999
(1999.29.a–h)

Zikos was born in Greece but grew up in the Australian suburbs, and his experiences of both cultures have informed his work.

6 What does fake wood-grain laminex remind you of or make you think about? Suggest why Zikos might have chosen this material to make an Australian flag.

7 Do you think the Australian flag is a worthwhile subject for an artist to explore? Why? Refer to *Fake Flag* and Jon Campbell's *'Yeah' Flag* (p. 194).

8 How might the subject matter and materials of *Shearing the Rams* and *Fake Flag* reflect the times when each artwork was made?

DISCUSS

Use PMI charts to evaluate *Shearing the Rams* and *Fake Flag* as symbols of national identity. Which do you think is the most effective symbol of Australian identity today? Why?

DISCUSS

What ideas and objects are commonly associated with Australia's national identity? Have these changed since your grandparents' era?

Do you think that these ideas and objects adequately represent the nation? Why?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read a discussion of national themes in art.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other work by Zikos in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria.

5.4 A BUDDHIST IMAGE OF COMPASSION

Images of important Buddhist figures reflect Buddhist ideals and virtues.

Buddhism is the fastest growing religion in Australia.

In China, Avalokitesvara is known as Kuan Yin (also Guan Yin and Kwan Yin). He is known in Japan as Kannon and in Vietnam as Quan Âm.

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, is believed to be a contemporary manifestation of Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva of compassion.

Buddhism

Buddhism developed in India more than 2500 years ago before gradually spreading through Asia. Today, Buddhism has followers worldwide, and it has evolved over time and in the different places it has been adopted.

Buddhism is based on the teachings of Buddha, who lived in India c. 566–486 BCE. He was born a prince, and his early life was one of

(detail)

Tibeto-Chinese
Avalokitesvara, 17th–18th century
gilt-bronze, semi-precious stones, pigment
115.0 × 72.5 × 45.4 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1966 (1485–D5)

luxury and privilege. He was not exposed to the misery and suffering in the world until he was 29 years old. He then abandoned his princely life and went on a spiritual quest.

As a result of his experiences and an extended period of deep thinking, Buddha became spiritually enlightened. He identified desire, the longing for pleasure or power, as the cause of suffering in the world. He taught people to let go of desire to end suffering. Spiritual enlightenment leads a Buddhist to nirvana: release from the cycle of rebirth.

Although the original Buddha is the best-known, there are many buddhas. Buddhas are not gods; they are enlightened beings who achieve nirvana.

Bodhisattvas are also important figures in Buddhism. A bodhisattva has attained enlightenment but delays nirvana in order to help others achieve enlightenment.

In different places and times, bodhisattvas have taken on various names, characteristics and stories. One of the most well-known bodhisattvas is Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva of compassion.

Avalokitesvara

Avalokitesvara is the patron deity of Tibet and the bodhisattva of compassion. Can you see how the spiritual importance and attributes of Avalokitesvara are communicated in this sculpture?

You can find many clues in the physical form of Avalokitesvara. According to Buddhist tradition, when Avalokitesvara saw the suffering in the world, he was so overwhelmed with compassion that his head burst open and 1000 helping arms sprang from his body. His spiritual father, Amitabha, put his head back together, making nine complete faces. Most of the faces are gentle and peaceful. They convey the qualities of moderation and calm that are an important part of Buddhist life. Above these, Amitabha placed the demonic head of Vajrapani to scare away evil. Amitabha placed his own head at the top.

Avalokitesvara's 1000 hands fan outwards from his body. They reflect his ability to extend compassion to those in need. In the palm of each hand is a tiny eye. The eyes show that Avalokitesvara has the ability to see all and seek out those in need.

Buddhist art is rich in symbolism. Buddhas and bodhisattvas are often shown with their hands in special gestures called mudras. Each mudra, or combination of mudras, has a different meaning. In this figure of Avalokitesvara, the central hands are in the gesture of praying. The lower pair of hands has the palms turned outwards in a gesture of charity. Symbolic objects are sometimes included in the gestures. The remaining main hands in this sculpture originally held small objects. If you look closely, you will see that the upper right hand is the only one that still holds an object.

1 Describe how the figure of *Avalokitesvara* communicates the qualities of moderation and calm. Your answer should refer to the body, gestures and facial expressions.

2 Compare *Avalokitesvara* with Gaddi's painting of the Madonna and Child (p. 71) or *Wanjina* (p. 147) to show how each artwork communicates the special attributes of the deity represented. In your answer, consider the:
- use of materials
- representation of the deity
- use of symbols.

EXPLORE

Find an example of an image of a bodhisattva of compassion made in another time or place. Describe the bodhisattva's form. In what way is it different from or similar to the example illustrated here?

CREATE

Create a two-dimensional or three-dimensional image of a supreme being for something you are interested in, such as music, sport, fashion, dance or technology. Before you start, think about how you might select and use symbols, art materials, elements and principles to communicate the special qualities and attributes of your supreme being.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Buddhism.

Charity

Understanding

Meditation

Protection

Praying

Buddhist mudras (hand gestures)

A deity is a god or goddess, or a being of similar status.

5.5 CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

Culturally significant artforms are often used by contemporary artists in unexpected ways. The artists' re-imagining of traditional images and artforms provides new perspectives on traditional cultures.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to discover other artworks by Dono, including paintings.

Wayang kulit and *wayang golek* are two forms of traditional Javanese folk theatre. Both forms use puppets and music to tell stories from mythology and to comment on society. *Wayang kulit* are flat, two-dimensional puppets made from stiffened leather used for shadow theatre. *Wayang golek* are three-dimensional puppets.

Building on tradition

Indonesian artist **Heri Dono** (b. 1960) combines aspects of traditional and contemporary culture in his work in imaginative and unexpected ways.

Traditional Javanese folk theatre (*wayang*) has been an important influence on Dono's work. *Flying Angels* is inspired by Indonesia's wooden three-dimensional rod puppets (*wayang golek*).

Dono's angels also reflect his interest in 1960s American robots and comics; they are hybrid winged creatures with whirring motors made from recycled electronic and clock parts. The first flying figure Dono made was inspired by Flash Gordon, an intergalactic comic-book hero. The incongruous combination of elements in *Flying Angels* gives the work both a playful quality and a slightly disturbing edge.

While angels often have religious connotations, for Dono they are symbols of inspiration and freedom. Indonesia did not have a democratically elected government until 1998, and Dono made his first **installation** of angels in 1996. Political and social commentary is an important aspect of his work.

Dono is one of Indonesia's leading contemporary artists, and he has participated in major exhibitions (including 27 **biennales**) and artist residencies in many countries. While he draws on materials and ideas from his travels, Indonesian artistic practices continue to play a vital role in his work.

1 List antonyms (opposite words, such as traditional and contemporary, mechanical and organic) to describe the incongruous elements and different meanings you find in Dono's work.

(detail)

Heri Dono
Indonesian, b. 1960
Flying Angels, 2006
polyester resin, clock parts, electronic components, paint, wood, cotton gauze
each approx. 59 × 140 × 15 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Gene and Brian Sherman, 2008

Photo: AGNSW 168.2000.a-r

(detail)

Liu Xiaoxian
born China 1963, arrived Australia 1990
Our Gods, 2000
18 C-type photographs
each 100 × 100 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
DG Wilson Bequest Fund, 2000
© Liu Xiaoxian

2 Do you agree that Dono combines traditional and contemporary cultural references in his work in imaginative and unexpected ways? Explain.

3 Suggest what links Dono sees between angels and 'inspiration and freedom'?

East meets west

These photographic artworks by **Liu Xiaoxian** (b. 1963) depict two iconic figures from eastern and western religious traditions. On the left is an image of Jesus Christ. He is wearing a crown of thorns, which represents the suffering he endured for humanity. Such images are very common in Christian churches. On the right is the laughing figure of a popular Chinese Buddhist deity.

This work is monumental. To see each entire image, gallery visitors need to stand back and look at the artworks from a distance. It is also important to look closely at the photographs. When visitors do that, they make a surprise discovery. The figure of Christ is composed of images of the Buddha, and the figure of the Buddha is composed of tiny images of Christ. They are each made up of the other. Each large image is made up of 22 500 smaller images.

Liu Xiaoxian has made many artworks in which he combines symbols or images from different cultures in playful or unexpected ways. In this way, he draws attention to what different cultures have in common as well as what makes them unique.

4 What is your interpretation of the meaning of *Our Gods*? Why do you interpret the artwork in this way? In your answer, consider the significance of the images the artist has chosen, the scale of the work and how the artwork needs to be viewed.

CREATE

Identify an artform, image or symbol that is culturally significant to you. Think about how you can combine this with images, symbols or materials from another context to create a new artwork that has a meaningful and interesting connection between the two.

Liu Xiaoxian is the brother of Ah Xian (pp. 114–15)

5.6 ART OF PROTEST

Many artworks are a critique of society. In such artworks, artists often express strong feelings, criticise events or protest against social injustices.

Devastated by war

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) was born in Spain but moved to Paris in 1900. In Paris, he established his career as an artist.

Picasso strongly opposed the Spanish Nationalists, led by General Franco. In 1936, after years of turmoil in Spain, Franco led a military uprising against the elected Popular Front government and sparked a civil war. In April 1937, Picasso was devastated to learn of the bombing of the Spanish town of Guernica by German forces who were assisting the Nationalists. Both Nazi Germany and fascist Italy supported Franco and helped him achieve power in Spain.

Several days after the bombing of Guernica, the first photographs of the destruction reached French newspapers. The town had been subjected to several hours of intense bombing. Fleeing citizens were gunned down by aerial fire; 1600 people are believed to have died, with hundreds more wounded.

Picasso had been asked to make a painting for the Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 World Fair and had been struggling to find a subject. It was now clear to him. He began making sketches for *Guernica* immediately. The huge painting was finished within three months.

Guernica is a harrowing image that focuses on the suffering and despair that followed the bombing. Can you see the distraught mother holding her dead child, the screaming woman with burning clothes and the speared horse writhing in agony? The scene is one of chaos and confusion. The **distortion** and fragmentation of the forms powerfully convey the violence and fear associated with war.

After being exhibited in Paris in 1937, *Guernica* toured Europe and North America to raise awareness of the dangers of fascism and to raise money to fight the Nationalists. At the beginning of the Second World War, it was housed temporarily at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Picasso wanted the painting to go to Spain, but he refused to allow this while Franco was still in power.

Picasso did not live to see the painting in Spain; he died in 1973, two years before Franco. The painting arrived in Spain in 1981, 100 years after Picasso's birth.

(detail)

Pablo Picasso
Spanish, 1881–1973
Guernica, 1937
351 × 782 cm
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

The Art Archive/Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid

Cubism and symbolism

Stylistically, *Guernica* reflects the influence of **Cubism**. Earlier in his career, Picasso and Georges Braque (1882–1963) had become interested in the contradictions associated with representing three-dimensional forms on flat, two-dimensional surfaces. They rejected the idea that art should imitate what people see. They developed a style known as Cubism, which involved looking at a subject from different **viewpoints** and combining the fragmented views into a single image.

Picasso's interest in symbolism is also important in *Guernica*. The symbolic meanings of elements in the painting have been interpreted in different ways. For example, the horse is often seen as representing the people, while the bull is associated with brutality. Picasso avoided specific explanations of the symbolism in the work as he preferred to let viewers interpret it for themselves.

1 Describe how Picasso conveys his strong feelings about the bombing in *Guernica*. Consider his use of scale and representation of the subject matter, including his use of art elements such as colour, shape and line.

2 Use sentences or an annotated diagram to identify three things in the painting that you believe have symbolic meaning. Suggest what they might mean and why.

For discussion of a related work by Picasso, see p. 212.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to the Australian War Memorial's and the Shrine of Remembrance's websites.

EXPLORE

Look at the work of other artists who have created artworks about war, such as Francisco Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), George Gittoes (b. 1949), George Lambert (1873–1930), Leon Golub (1922–2004) and Jenny Holzer (b. 1950).

Find a work that interests you. What ideas does the work communicate about war and how? What is it about the work that interests you? Present your findings as a short talk to the class.

Pablo Picasso
Guernica, 1937 (details)

EXPLORE

Referring to the websites of the Australian War Memorial and the Shrine of Remembrance (Melbourne), develop a presentation about how heroes of war have been portrayed in art.

Discuss the work of at least three artists. Comment on the types of images, materials and subject matter used to illustrate the theme of war. Present your findings as a PowerPoint presentation.

DISCUSS

Research the Official War Art Scheme. Why do you think it is considered valuable to send artists to war zones?

DISCUSS

A giant tapestry of *Guernica* hangs in the United Nations building in New York.

In February 2003, when the United States presented its case for attacking Iraq, the tapestry was covered so that it was not visible in the background. The official explanation was that a plain background was required for the television cameras; however, many people perceived it as an act of censorship.

Why might people have suspected that the shrouding of the tapestry reproduction of *Guernica* was an act of censorship in these circumstances? What does this controversy suggest to you about the relationship between art and politics?

CREATE

The world has always been affected by terrible conflicts. Create an artwork that reflects your ideas about a modern conflict. It may be helpful to collect media images of the conflict as a reference.

Choose an artform and approach that you believe makes your work relevant to the present time.

SOCIAL COMMENTARY

5.7 A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE

Many contemporary Australian artists create work that addresses current issues in Australian society.

A drama at sea

'Boatman' No. 2 by Chinese-Australian artist **Guan Wei** (b. 1957) depicts a pale blue expanse of water and floating clouds. It is a strangely serene setting for a drama involving dark military machines and small, pink figures who appear to be struggling for survival. Some of the figures are abandoning a sinking boat; others are clinging to floating debris or have been cast adrift in the water. A few figures have reached land, but their poses suggest that their struggle is not over. What do you think their actions represent? Are they desperately signalling the military for help or are these gestures of despair?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Guan Wei.

An asylum seeker is someone who seeks refuge in a foreign country to escape persecution, usually for religious or political reasons, in their own country.

SIEV stands for suspected illegal entry vessel.

Asylum seekers in Australia

When this image is viewed in the context of recent debates in Australia and in other parts of the world about refugees, asylum seekers and illegal immigration issues, important clues about the meaning of the work are revealed. Refugees, asylum seekers and illegal immigration were also topical when Guan Wei made this painting. Of particular significance is a series of events in 2001, including the *Tampa* crisis and the SIEV-X disaster, which triggered heated debate about Australia's treatment of asylum seekers.

In 2001, large numbers of people were arriving in Australia to seek asylum. Many of these people were fleeing religious or political persecution in the Middle East and had travelled here from Indonesia with people smugglers on small, overcrowded fishing boats.

In August 2001, a Norwegian container ship, the MV *Tampa*, rescued a group of asylum seekers from a wooden fishing boat stranded in international waters north-west of Australia's Christmas Island. The ship's captain planned to take the asylum seekers to Christmas Island, but the Australian Government refused permission for the ship to enter Australia's territorial waters. Concerned about the welfare of the asylum seekers, the captain declared a state of emergency and proceeded towards Christmas Island. The Australian Government then sent troops to board the ship and stop its progress. An international stand-off followed, until Australia eventually accepted responsibility for the asylum seekers. Most of the asylum seekers were sent to detention centres on Nauru, an island in the South Pacific. Others were accepted by New Zealand.

Two months later, as the government toughened its approach to border protection and illegal immigration, the SIEV-X disaster occurred. SIEV-X was the name given to a small, dilapidated Indonesian fishing boat carrying more than 400 asylum seekers that sank as it tried to reach Christmas Island in Australian waters in October 2001. A few survived, but 353 people, mainly women and children, drowned.

One of three asylum seeker boats at Ashmore Reef. Two naval boats and a customs boat were close by.

Newspix/Megan Lewis

Welcoming or hostile?

The complex issues related to these events are of concern to many Australians, including Guan Wei. Although *'Boatman' No. 2* does not describe a specific incident, it clearly draws attention to the vulnerability of people who have journeyed from their homeland, sometimes taking great risks, in their search for a better life. The painting raises questions about how these people are received. Are they assisted and welcomed, or are they met with hostility?

Guan Wei was born in China, where he trained as an artist. He first came to Australia in 1989. He became a permanent resident of Australia, but he spends time in both China and Australia. His work often explores themes related to migration, cultural differences and the environment. While his subject matter is serious, his work is characterised by a gentle, quiet beauty and whimsy.

Photo: Sue Blackburn

Guan Wei
born China 1957, arrived Australia 1989
'Boatman' No. 2, 2005
acrylic on canvas
162 × 137 cm (3 panels)
Courtesy the artist, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, and ARC One Gallery, Melbourne

In *'Boatman' No. 2*, it is apparent how the artist's distinctive style has been influenced by his Chinese heritage. The use of vertical panels, the arrangement of the elements and the elegance of the line work suggest a link to traditional Chinese scroll paintings (p. 121).

1 What do you believe is happening in *'Boatman' No. 2*? What is it about the painting that communicates this idea to you?

2 How does Guan Wei's exploration of a contemporary social issue compare with that of Pablo Picasso (pp. 156–7)? Consider similarities and differences in:
- scale
- subject matter
- representation of subject matter (including the use of art elements, materials and techniques)
- mood and atmosphere.

3 Which painting has the most meaning for you: *Guernica* (p. 156) or *'Boatman' No. 2*? Explain why.

4 Compare *'Boatman' No. 2* with the scroll painting by Kuncan (p. 121). What does this comparison suggest to you about:
- the influence of traditional Chinese art on Guan Wei's painting
- how Guan Wei's work reflects a contemporary context?

EXPLORE

Find out more about the *Tampa* crisis, the SIEV-X disaster or the Children Overboard affair of 2001. Make a point-form summary of the event and the issues associated with it.

How does this knowledge add to your understanding of *'Boatman' No. 2*?

DISCUSS

Although *'Boatman' No. 2* was created in 2005, do you think the issues that it addresses are still relevant today? Explain.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for further information about the *Tampa* crisis.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for further information about refugees on the website of the Refugee Council of Australia.

5.8 THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

The legacy of Australia's colonial history is visible in the work of many Indigenous Australian artists who explore how Australian history has affected Indigenous communities and cultures. Sometimes, the stories the artists share are personal.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Dowling and her work, including Federation Series: 1901–2001.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to find out more about the Stolen Generations.

Stolen Generations

The **Stolen Generations** is the term used to describe the generations of children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were removed from their families, mainly between 1905 and 1969, to be raised in orphanages and missions or by non-Indigenous foster families. The legislation behind these actions was based on assumptions and views prevalent at the time, including the idea that Indigenous Australians needed to be assimilated into the culture of the non-Indigenous population.

A national inquiry into the Stolen Generations led to the 1997 *Bringing Them Home* report, which explained the devastating short-term and long-term effects that separating Indigenous Australian children from their families has had on individuals, families, communities and culture.

Family history: Australian history

Australians celebrated the centenary of Federation in 2001; however, for many Indigenous Australians – including **Julie Dowling** (b. 1959), who is of Badimaya (mid-west Western Australia), Irish and Scottish descent – the anniversary of Federation was a reminder of the painful legacy of Australia's colonial history and European settlement's effects on Aboriginal culture, communities and families.

Dowling works mainly in portraiture and creates compelling images of her family and community members.

Auntie Dot 1920–30 is one of ten paintings that make up the Federation Series: 1901–2001, which Dowling created to mark the centenary of Federation in 2001. Each painting features a member of Julie's family and focuses on one decade of Australian history. This portrait is of Dorothy Latham, Julie's great-aunt, who was taken away from her Badimaya mother when she was eight years old and put in orphanage by her non-Indigenous (*wudjula*) father.

Each portrait in the series is surrounded by a background that tells a story of the person. In this portrait, the masses of children in white dresses, the church buildings and the skeletal men in uniform clearly indicate the story of the Stolen Generations.

Like the others in the series, this painting is richly layered with text and images that are drawn from public records, archives and family history. Much of the detail is only visible under close examination.

1 Study *Auntie Dot 1920–30* and suggest what it is that makes Dowling's portraits so compelling. Consider the subject matter and the way it is presented.

A scientific view of culture

From early in Australia's colonial history, scientific research models and methods that are considered inappropriate today were used to study Aboriginal people and their culture. For example, terms such as 'half-caste' and 'quadroon' were used to classify degrees of Aboriginality. Such classifications played a role in determining whether Indigenous Australian children would be removed from their families.

Julie Dowling
Australian (Badimaya), b. 1969
Federation Series: 1901–2001, 2001
synthetic polymer paint, earth pigments, metallic paint and glitter on canvas
(1–10) 60.6 × 555.0 cm (variable) (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of Rupert Myer, Governor, 2001
(2001.538.1–10)

Julie Dowling
Australian (Badimaya), b. 1969
Auntie Dot 1920–30, 2001
From the Federation Series: 1901–2001, 2001
synthetic polymer paint, earth pigments, metallic paint and glitter on canvas
60.6 × 50.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of Rupert Myer, Governor, 2001
(2001.538.3)

Reclaiming images

South Australian artist **Yhonnie Scarce** (b. 1973) is descended from the Kokatha people from the Lake Eyre region and the Nukunu people from the Port Lincoln area. In her work, Scarce explores the effect of colonisation on Indigenous Australian people.

Scarce majored in glass-making during her art studies, and the unique qualities of glass are an important aspect of her work. Her work *N0000, N2359, N2351, N2402* features a set of glass bell jars, which are traditionally used in science laboratories. One jar contains blown glass yams, a traditional and culturally significant bush food. The other jars contain photographs, but the crackles on the glass of the jars make it hard to see them clearly.

The photographs are of Scarce's grandmother, grandfather and father; however, they are not typical family photographs. Anthropologist Norman Tindale took the photographs during the 1930s, when he documented thousands of Aboriginal people around Australia. His research included taking frontal and profile photographs, physical measurements, and blood and saliva samples. Tindale's research data is now held by the South Australian Museum. A number identified each person, as seen in the photographs of Scarce's relatives and in the title of her work.

2 How does the use of glass in *N0000, N2359, N2351, N2402* contribute to the meaning of the work?

3 In what way can the work of Dowling and Scarce be seen as both personal and political?

In the Federation Series: 1901–2001, the arrangement of the ten paintings forms both a timeline of Australian history and a family tree of four generations of Dowling's family.

The term 'half-caste' was commonly used to describe a person with one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander parent. The term 'quadroon' was used to describe a person with one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander grandparent. These terms narrowly define identity, are offensive to Aboriginal people and are no longer used.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identity.

EXPLORE

Identify a work that interests you by an Indigenous Australian artist. The work should somehow address the effects of colonisation on Indigenous people or culture.

Explain the idea explored in the work and what interests you most about the work.

THIS IS NO FANTASY + dianne tanzer gallery

Yhonnie Scarce
Australian (Kokatha and Nukunu), b. 1973
N0000, N2359, N2351, N2402, 2013
blown glass, archive photographs
dimensions variable
glasswork developed with the JamFactory, South Australia
Courtesy of the artist and THIS IS NO FANTASY + dianne tanzer gallery

5.9 ARTISTS AS RESEARCHERS

Although art and science are often seen as separate disciplines, you will find interesting connections between the two in the work of some artists.

Alamy Stock Photo/INTERFOTO

Leonardo da Vinci
Italian, 1452–1519
Anatomy of the Neck, c. 1515

The 2012–13 exhibition of anatomical drawings by da Vinci, Leonardo da Vinci: The Mechanics of Man, included CT and MRI scans and 3D computer modelling of anatomy to allow comparisons with da Vinci's drawings.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see images from the Leonardo da Vinci: The Mechanics of Man exhibition.

Body of work

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) was both an artist and a scientist. Although he is perhaps best known for his paintings, including the iconic *Mona Lisa*, he devoted a significant part of his life to the scientific study of anatomy, zoology, geology, botany, optics, astronomy, aeronautics and hydrodynamics.

Da Vinci lived during the Italian **Renaissance**. Before this period, Europe's knowledge and understanding of the world was largely informed by religious beliefs and superstition. During the Renaissance, however, the focus shifted to developing a rational, scientific understanding of the world.

His extensive body of drawings reveal his curiosity about the natural world, his pioneering methods of scientific inquiry, his inventiveness and his artistic skills. Based on his study of the anatomy and flight of birds and bats, he designed flying machines that anticipated modern aeroplanes and helicopters.

The human body was an endless source of fascination for da Vinci. He did many experiments and studies to learn how the body works. He dissected more than 30 corpses as part of his investigations, and his research into human anatomy is documented in his many anatomical drawings. These drawings reflect an unprecedented understanding of the human body. Modern doctors have been able to identify the medical conditions of the subjects represented in some of his drawings.

Like his other anatomical drawings, *Anatomy of the Neck* is annotated with notes in da Vinci's distinctive mirror writing. In the precise but delicate linear and tonal rendering of the detail of the anatomical structures, you see evidence of the art in da Vinci's science.

1 Do you think da Vinci's artistic skills would have given him an advantage over other anatomists of his period? Explain.

2 The critic Jonathan Jones said, 'Leonardo's anatomical drawings are both icons of science, and wonders of art.'[15]
Explain what you think he meant by this.

DISCUSS

Do you think it is possible for a person to work as both a scientist and an artist today? Why?

Collaborating with nature

Australian artist **Cameron Robbins** (b. 1963) harnesses the energy of the natural world to create **site-specific art**. He has worked with wind, water, sun, fire and even electromagnetic forces. He has worked in urban and remote environments in Australia and overseas. A significant part of his practice involves designing and creating structures that transform natural energy into drawings or sounds. His work often reveals an unexpected beauty and order in this energy.

Wind drawing machines have been an important part of Robbins's art practice for more than 20 years. He says about his machines:

> While it is a mechanical thing with axles, bearings and pulley wheels, it also has inbuilt flexibility which allows it to respond to subtle and chaotic dynamics and to stray from any predetermined path.[16]

In the pattern of marks in each wind drawing, the invisible forces and rhythms in nature are made visible. In *Wind Drawing: 20–24 March 2013 (Equinox) 98 hrs NKD* a vortex-like pattern of delicate lines has been created. Dark masses of lines suggest repeated movement and intense energy. Other lines maintain a circular flow of movement but trace a more erratic path. Can you imagine the sort of conditions that might have created this work?

Robbins's art has been inspired by interests developed in his youth and at art school.

> A fascination with natural dynamics began with an intensive period of surfing as a teenager. Coupled with an enthusiasm for science experiments, astronomy and weather, these experiences informed my studies at art school. Sculpture led to a fascination with objects that responded to the landscape, such as radio repeaters and wind turbines.[17]

3 Study *Wind Drawing: 20–24 March 2013 (Equinox) 98 hrs NKD* closely, and explain how you think Robbins's work can be seen to reveal an unexpected beauty and order in energy.

4 What aspects of Robbins's art practice reflect links to science? What aspects diverge from science?

5 Compare *Wind Drawing: 20–24 March 2013 (Equinox) 98 hrs NKD* with *Dreamtime Story of the Willy Willy* (p. 103) What similarities and differences do you observe? Suggest reasons for these.

Da Vinci planned to publish his anatomical drawings in a treatise on the human body but abandoned these plans. The drawings remained with his papers but were not widely known about until the twentieth century.

Da Vinci's unique form of handwriting is described as 'mirror writing' because it runs from right to left across the page.

'Principles for the development of a complete mind: Study the science of art. Study the art of science. Develop your senses – especially learn how to see. Realise that everything connects to everything else.'[18]

Leonardo da Vinci

To see a photograph of Robbins with his portable wind drawing machine, see p. 6. To see a drawing of one of his machines, see p. 17.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video about Robbins and to learn more about his work.

Wind Drawing: 20–24 March 2013 (Equinox) 98 hrs NKD was made during a residency at the Nordic Artists' Centre Dalse (NKD) in Norway. Over a period of three months, Robbins produced a suite of 16 drawings from a wind machine installed on the roof of an abandoned house.

Cameron Robbins
Australian, b. 1963
Wind Drawing: 20–24 March 2013 (Equinox) 98 hrs NKD, 2013
drawing in pen and black ink
56 × 76 cm (image);
56 × 76 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of the artist, 2014. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

THE ART OF SCIENCE

5.10 NATURE STUDY

The study of nature is an enduring subject in art. Botanical studies have been a particular focus for some artists.

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia/Bridgeman Images

John William Lewin
born Britain 1770, arrived Australia 1800, died 1819
The Gigantic Lyllie of New South Wales, 1810
pencil, watercolour on cream laid paper
53.8 × 43.1 cm (borderlines); 54.1 × 43.6 cm (sheet); 68.0 × 57.5 × 4.0 cm (frame)
Purchased 1968
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

A herbarium is a collection of preserved plant specimens. The National Herbarium of New South Wales contains over one million pressed, dried plant specimens, including some collected by Sir Joseph Banks on Captain Cook's voyage to Australia in 1770.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Royal Botanic Garden's herbarium in Sydney.

Art serving science

Sometimes the links between art and science are practical. English artist **John William Lewin** (1770–1819) specialised in making artworks that scientifically recorded the natural world. He came to Australia in 1800 and was the first professional artist to arrive here as a free settler.

Imagine what an exciting place Australia must have been for an artist with Lewin's interests. He had a whole new natural environment to discover: plants, animals, insects and birds. Lewin's paintings and drawings became an important source of information about Australia for scientists and natural historians. Many of the artworks that he made were sent back to England where they were published as books.

Because the artworks that Lewin made were to be used for scientific purposes, they had to be accurate and provide as much information on the subject as possible. Notice that Lewin has painted *The Gigantic Lyllie of New South Wales* against a plain background to emphasise the detail of the flower. Several of the petals are folded down to show the colour and the pattern on the inside of the petal and the appearance of the plant in more detail.

1. Based on your observation of *The Gigantic Lyllie of New South Wales*, describe the key features of the flower.
2. Imagine you are responsible for training an artist to be a botanical illustrator. The artist you are training has previously only painted flowers as decorative items. Note three important rules that the artist should follow to be a successful botanical illustrator. Give reasons for each rule.

New dimensions

Waratah by Australian artist **Robyn Stacey** (b. 1952) is a **lenticular** image. The flower in the artwork appears to be three-dimensional and when viewed from different angles can be seen in changing states.

Lenticular images are created from a series of still images that are spliced together in a sequence of microscopic strips to create a single image. The image is then overlaid with

DISCUSS

Why have art and science often been seen as separate disciplines? What are their similarities and differences? What can artists and scientists learn from each other?

DISCUSS

Despite the technology now available to record images, there is still a demand for **botanical illustration**. Why do you believe this is so?

a special plastic sheet that has a corrugated surface made up of thousands of facets, which work like lenses. Each lens focuses on and magnifies a strip of the background image. When the lenticular image is viewed from different angles, the lenses control which strips are seen so that a whole image is revealed. An **illusion** of depth and movement is created as you see information from different lenses.

Throughout her career, Stacey has exploited the possibilities of technology to show familiar subjects in new ways. She was one of the first photographers in Australia to use computer technology to create, layer and manipulate images. She is fascinated by how photography can reveal information not ordinarily seen by the eye.

In 2000, Stacey worked as **artist-in-residence** at the National Herbarium of New South Wales, Sydney. *Waratah* is a lenticular image that Stacey made based on specimens in the herbarium's collection. She has also created other photographic works exploring different aspects of botanical images, history and research.

3 Explain three differences between *Waratah* and a conventional photograph of a waratah. In your answer, refer to how the viewer sees and understands each image.

4 If you had a choice between *Waratah*, *The Gigantic Lyllie of New South Wales*, *Wheel Flower* (p. 36) or *Regenerating Fern* (p. 37) for your home, which image would you choose and why?

Robyn Stacey
Australian, b. 1952
Waratah, 2001
From Hot House
lenticular
90 × 90 cm
Courtesy Stills Gallery, Sydney

5 Would your choice change if you were a botanist choosing an image for your workplace? Why?

In 2003, Stacey completed a lenticular portrait of Douglas Frew Waterhouse, a leading Australian scientist and the former head of entomology at CSIRO. The portrait is in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.

CREATE

Create two two-dimensional images of the same subject using photography, digital images, drawing or painting. Each image should show a different state of the subject, such as a happy/sad face or a night/day landscape. It is important to use the same size paper and the same basic composition for each work.

Take a piece of light card, twice the width of your work but the same height. Fold the card into an even number of regular concertina folds to create an upright screen.

Count the number of panels in your screen. Divide this number in half and cut each of your images into this number of strips. Each strip should be the same dimension as the folds on your screen.

Mount the strips in sequence on the surface of the concertina screen, alternating the strips from each image.

The end result should be an image that presents different views of the same subject from different angles. Consider how this presentation of images may relate, in a very simplified way, to the technology used to make a lenticular image.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see Douglas Frew Waterhouse's portrait and other artworks by Stacey.

The technology used to make lenticular images was first developed in the 1940s. It has been widely used in novelty items, such as postcards and winking eyes on plastic toys. Recent advances in technology, including digital technology, have led to images with greater depth and motion.

THE ART OF SCIENCE

5.11 NEW FRONTIERS

Artists who explore new ideas and questions in science can play a significant role in presenting these ideas to the public.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to the Tissue Culture and Art Project.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for information about the Extra Ear project on Stelarc's website.

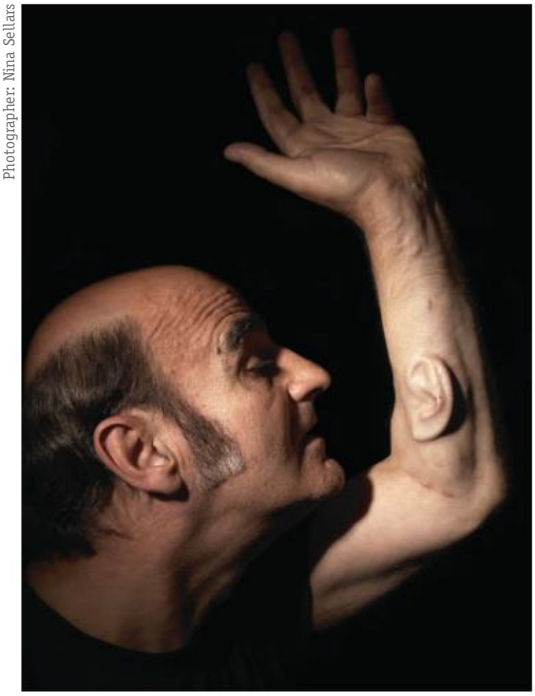
Biotechnology uses living organisms or biological systems to process or produce goods or services.

Reconsidering the body

Australian artist **Stelarc** (b. 1946) has worked extensively with technology to find new ways to explore and extend the human body. His projects include sound and film recordings of inside his own body and a mechanical third hand controlled by electrodes attached to his muscles. Stelarc has collaborated with experts in a range of areas to realise his ambitious projects.

Stelarc envisages a future where we will be able to use technology to redesign our own bodies. He has considered possibilities including replacing limbs or internal organs with artificial components.

Photographer: Nina Sellars



Stelarc
Australian, b. 1946
Ear on Arm, 2006
London, Los Angeles, Melbourne

DISCUSS

A major challenge for Stelarc is finding the appropriate medical assistance. Doctors often express interest in his projects but are not willing to provide the medical assistance required.

Suggest why a doctor might have concerns about a project such as *Extra Ear*. Why might this project be seen differently from cosmetic surgery, which is widely accepted? Would you assist Stelarc if you were an appropriately qualified medical professional? Why?

Stelarc's Extra Ear project reflects this thinking. He conceived the project in 1997. In 2003, he collaborated with the Tissue Culture and Art Project, two artists in Perth. Together with Stelarc they created *Extra Ear – 1/4 Scale*, a small-scale replica of Stelarc's ear made from human cells. Although it was only possible to keep this ear alive for a limited time, it was exhibited in Melbourne in 2003 (and has subsequently been exhibited in Ljubljana and Adelaide).

More recently, Stelarc's Ear on Arm project saw him undergo several surgical procedures to construct a full-sized ear on his forearm. The ear's scaffold was created from a porous biomaterial commonly used as a cartilage replacement in plastic surgery. The skin was suctioned over the scaffold, over a period of six months, allowing tissue ingrowth and vascularisation to occur, fully integrating the ear construct with Stelarc's arm. Stelarc's goal is to equip his extra ear with a microphone connected to wi-fi so that the ear becomes a remote listening device, allowing people anywhere in the world to listen to what he hears.

1. How does the use of human cells add to the meaning or ideas suggested by Stelarc's ear projects? Could synthetic materials have conveyed the same ideas? Explain.
2. List three different questions or ideas that Stelarc's work raises about biotechnology or art. Explain what it is about the work that provokes these questions or ideas.
3. Based on your understanding of Stelarc's work, do you think it is best described as art or science or both? Why?

Artificial life forms

The unusual-looking creature in these photographs was given the Latin name *Exallocephalla parthenopa* by a taxonomist (a specialist in classification) at Taronga Zoo. It is more commonly known as a siren mole, or SO2, which stands for synthetic organism 2.

Australian artist **Patricia Piccinini** (b. 1965) was inspired to create SO2 after learning that scientists had successfully synthesised DNA to create the first synthetic organism, SO1, a life form created entirely from chemicals.

Piccinini's SO2 began as a drawing. Piccinini then worked with expert model-makers to give SO2 physical form. It is constructed from latex, but its body includes robotics so that it looks like it is breathing. Its physical features are inspired by several different animals, including the naked mole rat of Africa.

Social Studies is one of a series of photographs in which SO2 roams the urban environment. In 2001, two SO2s were part of an **installation** in the wombat enclosure at Melbourne Zoo.

Piccinini has explored the implications of new biotechnology, such as tissue engineering, genetic engineering and stem-cell research in two- and three-dimensional images that offer a glimpse into a possible future. Her creations, such as SO2, often have a strong visual or emotional appeal that helps the viewer consider both the work and the issues surrounding it. SO2 encourages people to think about what they want from the technology that allows people to synthesise organisms.

4 Why do you think the artist took photographs of SO2 in urban environments? What is going on in *Social Studies*? What do you think is significant about this?

5 How might exhibiting SO2 in an animal enclosure at the zoo add to the ideas associated with the work?

6 Imagine you have just visited the zoo and seen two SO2s in the wombat enclosure. Write a letter to the zoo's director expressing your opinion of exhibiting SO2s in this way.

Courtesy of the artist

Patricia Piccinini
Australian, b. 1965
Social Studies, 2000
digital C-type photograph
80 × 80 cm
Courtesy of the artist, Tolarno and Roslyn Oxley9 galleries

7 Contemporary art often provokes the audience to ask questions. List three questions or ideas that SO2 suggests to you, explaining what it is about the work that raises these questions.

Courtesy of the artists

Patricia Piccinini
Australian, b. 1965
Exallocephalla parthenopa vs Vombatus ursinus (S02), 2001
digital C-type photograph
53 × 80 cm
Courtesy of the artist, Tolarno and Roslyn Oxley9 galleries

After talking with zoologists and ecologists about S02, Piccinini was keen to create a new, improved version of her creature. The next stage in S02's evolution is S03, seen in *The Young Family* (2002). Many other works by the artist have explored related themes.

CREATE

Make a model or an image of a hybrid animal, bird or insect. Your creature should have physical features that are clearly adapted to suit a particular environment.

Give your animal a scientific name and write a short entry for a natural history book, explaining its physical features and habitat. (Your science teacher may be able to help.)

If you have access to appropriate technology, consider creating an image that morphs from one creature into another.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to find Piccinini's website, an iPad app she created, her work at the Venice Biennale and *The Young Family* (2002).

5.12 THE ART OF INFLUENCE

Many artists find inspiration for their work by studying the work of other artists. For some artists, this is a form of homage.

Glover's talents as a landscape artist were widely recognised. He was awarded a gold medal for one of his paintings at the prestigious Paris Salon exhibition in 1814.

Since 2004, the John Glover Society, established to draw attention to Glover's innovative work, has awarded an annual prize for a work judged to be the best contemporary landscape painting of Tasmania.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to the John Glover Society's website.

The artist Tom Roberts (pp. 124–5, 150) paid homage to Glover by restoring his grave in northern Tasmania.

Glover used sketchbooks to make studies of different subjects, including plants, animals, figures and the landscape. He often wrote detailed descriptions of the landscape, including atmospheric effects and colour. The sketchbooks were used as a reference for his paintings.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see Claude's *Landscape with Piping Shepherd* and a painting by Glover inspired by this work.

The picturesque

Have you ever heard anyone describe a scene as **picturesque**? Picturesque literally means picture-like. It is a term used to describe a visually pleasing and interesting scene 'worthy of a picture'. Eighteenth-century England was fascinated by the picturesque.

Artists working in the picturesque style often sought inspiration in nature. They usually made many sketches of the **landscape** for their paintings; however, they typically composed their paintings in the **studio**. They arranged the different elements of the landscape to ensure their painting's composition was harmonious and interesting. A picturesque composition typically included the following conventions:

- a clear **foreground**, **middleground** and **background**
- large, dark trees in the foreground to frame the view
- a meandering path or river to lead the eye through the landscape
- figures or other features to add interest to the scene.

The English Claude

English artist **John Glover** (1767–1849) arrived in Australia in 1831. He is one of Australia's best-known **colonial artists**. His picturesque landscape paintings were inspired and influenced by the work of French artist Claude Lorrain (p. 28).

Glover first studied Claude's paintings in London and purchased two paintings by him in 1812. It was common practice for artists to copy the work of artists they admired. This was usually done to pay **homage** to the artist and to learn about the artist's style, colour and technique.

Glover used the lessons he learnt from Claude to create views of the English countryside in the picturesque style. He soon became known as the English Claude. In 1818, he travelled to Italy and visited many of the sites that had inspired Claude, including Tivoli in the hills outside Rome. Glover displayed his own paintings alongside a painting by Claude at an exhibition in London in 1820.

Inspired by Australia

Despite his success in Europe, in 1830, Glover left England to migrate to Australia, where three of his sons were living. He arrived on his sixty-fourth birthday and eventually settled on a property on the Nile River near Launceston, Tasmania. He was excited about what he found in Australia and worked enthusiastically to record his new environment.

The composition of *The River Nile, Van Diemen's Land, from Mr Glover's Farm* reflects links with the picturesque style and the work of Claude; however, you can also see how Glover adapted his painting style to the Australian environment. Glover observed that the Australian landscape is very open: you can see the distance through the trees. He noted that there was 'a remarkable peculiarity in the Trees in this Country; however numerous, they rarely prevent your tracing through them the whole distant Country.'[19]

Many of his Australian landscape paintings include images of Indigenous people. It was common in picturesque landscapes to include figures to add interest to a composition; however, Glover's interest in Indigenous people went beyond this. When he arrived in Tasmania, European settlement had devastated the population and traditional lifestyle of Tasmania's Indigenous people. Within a few years of his arrival, most had been deported to Flinders Island in Bass Strait. Although Glover had limited contact with Indigenous people, he wanted to create a record of the way of life they enjoyed before being disturbed. In *The River*

Nile, Van Diemen's Land, from Mr Glover's Farm, he depicts the Indigenous people enjoying an **idyllic** life, bathing in the clear river water, hunting and sitting around a campfire.

1 Imagine you are Glover and you are visiting an exhibition that includes *River Landscape with Tiburtine Temple at Tivoli* (p. 28) by your favourite artis, Claude. Make a sketch of the painting in your visual diary and add annotations to show what you admire about it. Remember Claude's paintings taught Glover a great deal about creating a picturesque style, so look for characteristics that could be linked to this style.

2 Compare the ideas that Glover and Malya Teamay (p. 80) communicate about Indigenous culture through their paintings. What reasons can you suggest for the differences you find between the two painters?

EXPLORE

Compare a painting by Glover of the European landscape with *The River Nile, Van Diemen's Land, from Mr Glover's Farm*. Consider the:

- subject matter
- composition
- use of art elements to describe the landscape's atmosphere and characteristics.

What do your observations reveal about how Glover adapted his painting style to suit the Australian environment?

CREATE

Design your own picturesque landscape based on a familiar landscape. Make sketches of the landscape's major features before you begin. Use the sketches as a reference to create a painting or paper collage in the picturesque style. When planning your composition, consider the conventions used in picturesque landscapes.

John Glover
born England 1767, arrived Australia 1831, died 1849
The River Nile, Van Diemen's Land, from Mr Glover's Farm, 1837
oil on canvas
76.4 × 114.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1956 (3359–4)

NEW ART FROM OLD

5.13 REVIEWING AND REWORKING THE PAST

Contemporary artists sometimes create new artworks by reviewing and reworking existing artworks to create new meanings and ideas.

Appropriation

Artists have often copied other artists' artworks to show homage or to learn more about their technique (pp. 168–9). Artists today still copy to pay **homage** but also to question or comment on the ideas associated with the artwork they are copying. Artists often present the copied artwork in an unexpected way to expose, question or add to an artwork's meaning.

The process of copying, reworking and re-presenting an existing artwork to create a new artwork is known as **appropriation**.

Anne Zahalka
Australian, b. 1957
The Sunbather No. 2, 1989
C-type photograph (edition of 20)
76 × 76 cm (image area)
Art Gallery of New South Wales

DISCUSS

Why is it sometimes more powerful for artists to appropriate an existing artwork than to create something entirely new?

How does this type of copying differ from other types of copying, such as John Glover's (pp. 168–9)?

If a work includes appropriated images or forms, does this mean that the work is not original? Why?

What is originality in art? Is it important? Why?

To appropriate something is to take it and make it your own.

Artists appropriate images and forms from many different sources, including the work of other artists, archives (such as historical photographs) and **popular culture** (such as movies and advertising). Appropriation became common in the 1980s when it was part of a broader questioning of widely accepted ideas, values and knowledge associated with **Postmodernism**.

A familiar image?

Does *The Sunbather No. 2* look familiar to you? If you have not seen this particular photograph before, you might have seen the photograph that it is based on, *Sunbaker* by Australian artist Max Dupain (p. 41). *Sunbaker* has become an important image in Australian culture. It is often seen as symbolic of an Australian type, the bronzed, athletic male, and a relaxed, outdoor lifestyle.

Australian artist **Anne Zahalka** (b. 1957) presents another way of thinking about this image in *The Sunbather No. 2*. In this work, she has appropriated the composition of Dupain's famous photograph and reworked it using a slimly built model with pale skin and red hair. The model could be male or female.

Sunbather No. 2 is one of a number of photographs that Zahalka has made by reworking artworks seen as typically Australian. Her models are women and people of different ages and diverse ethnic backgrounds to challenge the stereotypes present in the original images. Zahalka's work draws attention to the fact that many of the images often thought of as typically Australian feature certain types of people and exclude others.

By re-creating familiar images, Zahalka reminds you how images often only present a narrow view of the world.

1 Compare *The Sunbather No. 2* with *Sunbaker*. Suggest reasons for the images' similarities and differences.

2 Does *The Sunbather No. 2* alter the way you feel about *Sunbaker*? Why?

Connecting past and present

Australian artist **Leah King-Smith** (b. 1957) portrays an Aboriginal man in a landscape in *#5*. The image has a dream-like and ghostly quality. As the man's body merges with the landscape, he appears to be more spirit than flesh.

This image is from the series Patterns of Connection. King-Smith was inspired to make the series after working with the State Library of Victoria's collection of nineteenth-century photographs of Indigenous people. Most of these historical photographs were made as ethnographic studies for European collectors interested in images representing other cultures.

King-Smith was deeply disturbed by the images. The Indigenous people in the photographs were represented as types rather than as individuals. They were often represented in formal poses and settings that emphasised the fact that they were on display.

In the Patterns of Connection series, she reworked selected images by rephotographing them with her own painted and photographed landscapes. The resulting layered effect and the large size and glossy surface of her photographs give new life and meaning to the original images. The people represented are no longer on display as scientific or historical curiosities; a viewer sees their powerful presence in the landscape.

3 Look closely at *#5*. What clues are there that the original photograph represented the man in a formal pose or setting?

4 What does the representation of the man in *#5* communicate to you about him? How does the image do this?

5 Discuss the value or role that you believe *#5* has as:
- a historical document
- an artwork.

Courtesy of the artist

Leah King-Smith
Australian, b. 1957
#5 from Patterns of Connection series, 1991–92
Cibachrome photograph
© Leah King-Smith. Licensed by Viscopy, 2016

6 Read about the Dreaming (p. 146) and suggest why King-Smith might have chosen to rework the historical images of Indigenous people to include images of the landscape.

CREATE

Think about a famous character and identify what the person is known for.

Find an image of the person (a painting or photograph) and appropriate it to create a new work. Your work should present the viewer with a new way of thinking about the person.

Consider how you can rework the original image to communicate your meaning.

You could use a computer software program to crop, cut or paint over selected areas of the image or to add other images.

DISCUSS

The Patterns of Connection series has been exhibited throughout Australia and overseas, and it is widely reproduced. What do you think it is that has made these images so interesting and appealing to a wide audience?

5.14 ILLUSIONS OF REALITY

Since ancient times, many artists have been interested in the challenge of creating an illusion of reality in their work.

Artists interested in representing the appearance of their subjects in a lifelike way use art materials and elements such as colour, shape and line to create artworks and visual effects that can be described as realistic.

Trompe l'oeil is a French term that means 'tricks the eye'. The term is widely used to describe images and forms that create a convincing illusion of reality.

A perfect illusion?

An ancient Greek story tells about a contest between two painters, Zeuxis and Parrhasius, to determine who could paint the most perfect **illusion** of the real world.

Zeuxis was very skilled in using colour, line and tone to create **realistic** effects, and he painted a **still life** so lifelike that birds pecked at the fruit; however, he had to admit defeat after he asked to remove a veil from the painting by Parrhasius. He discovered that the veil was painted on! While his painting had fooled the birds, the painting by Parrhasius had fooled the eyes of an artist.

Painters such as Zeuxis and Parrhasius created an illusion of reality by carefully observing and describing the colour, line and shadow seen in life. Since ancient times, artists have explored many techniques to achieve realistic effects in their work. The development of **linear perspective** (p. 96) in the fifteenth century gave artists a valuable tool for creating a realistic illusion of three-dimensional space in two-dimensional work.

More recently, artists have used new technology, including photographic and digital technology and modern materials (such as silicone) to create remarkable illusions of reality in two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms.

Almost breathing

Old Woman in Bed by Australian artist **Ron Mueck** (b. 1958) presents an astonishing illusion of reality. The artist has observed and described the frail old woman with lifelike accuracy, including the texture and colour of her wispy, grey hair and pale, wrinkled skin

Photo: AGNSW 9.2003

Ron Mueck
Australian, born England
1958
Old Woman in Bed, 2000–02
mixed media
25.4 × 94.0 × 53.9 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Purchased 2003

and the form of her body curled up under the covers. Some people looking at the work have even been convinced that they can see her breathing.

Mueck's sculptures are so realistic that it is easy to think that they are a clever imitation of something the artist has seen; however, making art rarely involves just directly copying. In researching, making and presenting his work, Mueck determines how his artworks will look and the message they suggest.

One obvious way Mueck controls his work is through his use of scale; his sculptures are never life-size. While he has made a number of larger-than-life sculptures, *Old Woman in Bed* is significantly smaller than life-size.

The artist also carefully considers the expression and pose of his figures and the use of props. Can you see how attention is focused on the woman because of the contrast between her small, delicate face and the vast expanse of crisp white linen and woven cotton blanket that surrounds her? The linen and blanket are the types commonly found in nursing homes and hospitals. Can you imagine how the symbolic significance of the bedding would alter if the woman were sleeping in a bed made with old, patterned sheets and blankets?

A complex process

Mueck usually begins a sculpture by making **maquettes** (small models) to determine the pose and expression of his figure. He then determines the scale of his work and makes a clay model over a wire **armature** (frame). He uses photographs, models and even his own body for reference. This stage can take many months.

A **mould** is made from the model, and the figure is cast in resin or silicone. Resin is a hard material, while silicone is more flexible. Mueck often uses silicone for faces because it appears more like flesh and allows the artist to insert individual hairs for eyelashes and eyebrows. Blemishes and veins are hand painted.

1 Make a list of three trompe l'oeil effects you have seen in daily life, such as fake wood grain or marble. Where did you see each effect? How was it created? Why do you think it was used?

2 Suggest why artists and audiences are often fascinated by making and viewing highly realistic artworks.

3 List three things about *Old Woman in Bed* that you believe show evidence of Mueck's ability to accurately observe and describe detail.

4 *Old Woman in Bed* was inspired by Mueck's wife's much-loved grandmother during her final illness. Does this knowledge add to or change your understanding of the work? Explain why.

Ron Mueck
Old Woman in Bed, 2000–02
(detail)

EXPLORE

Identify a work by another artist that displays a convincing illusion of reality and that you find interesting. How has the artist used materials and art elements to create a convincing illusion of reality? What is it that interests you about the work?

DISCUSS

The incredibly realistic effects that Mueck achieves in his work have led some commentators to describe the style of Mueck's work as **hyperrealism**.

Find out what this term means. Is it a useful term to describe Mueck's work? Explain.

DISCUSS

While most people would not feel comfortable staring at a frail old woman, a dead man or a naked, pregnant woman in real life, they will often spend significant time closely examining Mueck's sculptures of such subjects.

Why do you think people do this? What does this add to your understanding of the role of art and the relationship between artworks and audience?

Mueck did not have formal art training; however, his parents were toymakers, and he often made his own toys as a child. Later, he made models and puppets for children's television, and he specialised in animatronics for the film industry and advertising. His art career began in 1996 after his mother-in-law, artist Paula Rego (b. 1935), asked him to make a model of Pinocchio. The model caught the attention of influential arts **patron** Charles Saatchi, who commissioned Mueck to make several more sculptures. Mueck's work has since been exhibited around the world.

5.15 REAL AND UNREAL

Some artists create realistic effects in their art but use them to construct a view of the world that is clearly unreal.

Surrealism

Surrealism began in Paris in the mid-1920s and has influenced many artists around the world since.

Surrealism literally means 'above reality'. The Surrealists created mysterious images and forms that defy conventional logic and suggest a strange, new reality. Many of the Surrealists were inspired by the world of dreams and the unconscious.

Magritte was only 12 years old when he began to study art.

In his early years, Magritte liked to write detective stories, although none of them have survived.

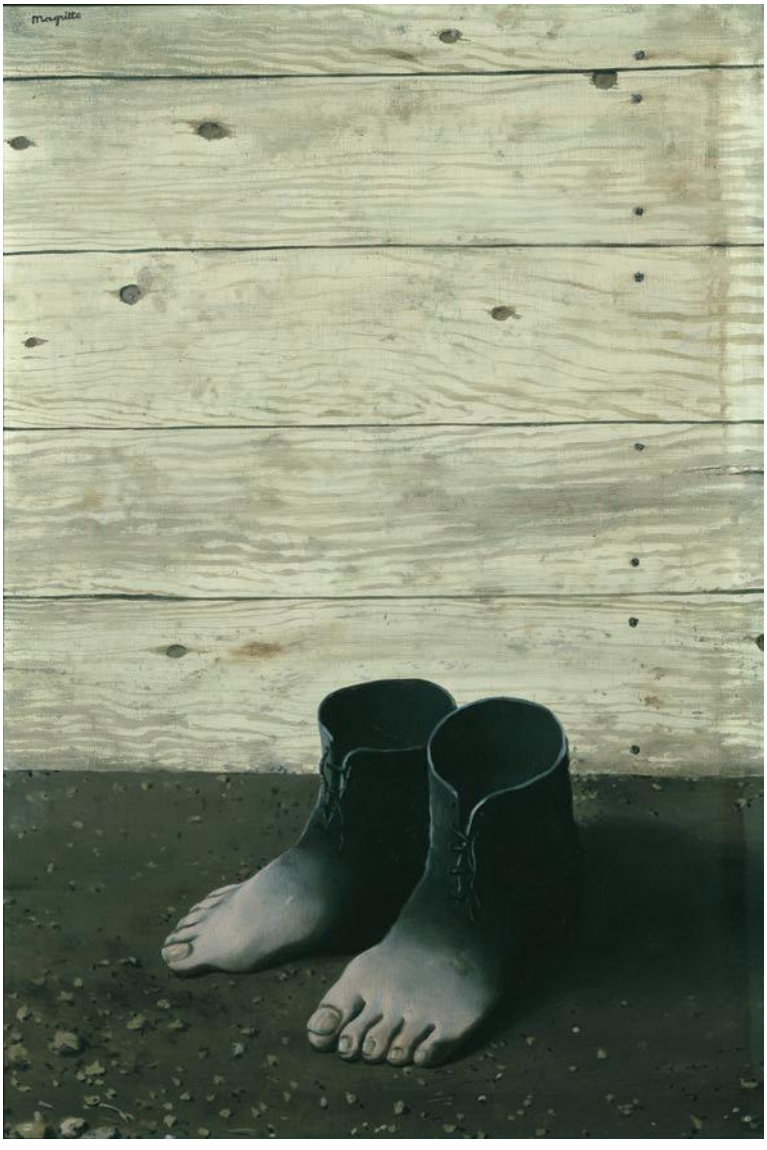


Photo: Moderna Museet, Stockholm

A visual riddle

The paintings of Belgian artist **René Magritte** (1898–1967) have sometimes been described as visual riddles. Can you see why when you look at *The Red Model*? Is it a painting of shoes, of feet, of shoes turning into feet or of feet turning into shoes?

In *The Red Model*, Magritte describes the colour, form and texture of familiar objects with clarity and realism; however, he presents objects in unexpected ways that question our understanding of **illusion** and reality. In many of his works, he combines opposites or explores the idea of **metamorphosis**, as seen in *The Red Model*. In other paintings, he makes puzzling uses of scale and form, such as a room filled with a giant rose, an elegant chair with a lion's tail, or a man with an apple head.

Magritte's work is often associated with Surrealism, but Magritte was more interested in an intellectual investigation of images than in creating images from dreams or the subconscious. He was particularly interested in the relationship between an image and what it represents. His paintings remind you that no matter how real something may look in a painting, what you are looking at is just a painting.

1 Name and describe three objects or surfaces in *The Red Model* that demonstrate how Magritte could paint colour, form and texture with clarity.

2 Magritte wanted his paintings to be a wake-up for those who looked at them. What do you think he meant by this?

René Magritte
Belgian, 1898–1967
Le Modèle Rouge (The Red Model), 1935
oil on canvas
72.0 × 48.5 cm
Moderna Museet, Stockholm

CREATE

Make a shoe-inspired artwork that uses a shoe, or shoes, in an imaginative and surprising way. Your aim should be to create the sort of visual wake-up that Magritte would have been proud of.

Use your imagination, perhaps by combining the shoes with something completely unexpected (for example, high heels with football spikes), by using a shoe in a surprising way (for example, as a hat or a telephone) or by creating a metamorphosis (for example, a shoe changing into a fish).

If your class creates two-dimensional images, you could use these to create a surreal catalogue of shoes. If you create three-dimensional artworks, you could surprise visitors to your school by creating an installation of a very interesting shoe shop.

A strange transformation

Overstepping by Australian artist **Julie Rrap** (b. 1950) portrays what appears to be a pair of perfectly formed feet, complete with red polished toenails, strangely transformed by high, fleshy stiletto heels. Could this be the result of the ultimate fashion makeover?

While Magritte questioned our understanding of reality and illusion in images, Rrap questions our understanding of reality and illusion in relation to the female figure. This is an increasingly important issue in an age when we are entertained by television shows about cosmetic surgery and surrounded by advertising and media images dominated by artificially perfect women.

Like a significant number of artists in recent decades, Rrap has been strongly influenced by **feminism**. Many of her works explore issues related to the representation of women in art. Her earlier work includes photographic collages based on famous paintings of women by male artists. In these works, she used images of her own body instead of the original figures. She rejects the gender stereotypes found in the original artworks and asserts individual female identity.

Digital technology is an important part of Rrap's art practice. As you can see in *Overstepping*, technology allows her to create manipulated images with startlingly realistic effects that provoke a strong audience reaction.

3 What meaning does *Overstepping* suggest to you? What is it about the image that communicates the messages?

4 What clues can you find to show that *Overstepping* was made more recently than *The Red Model*? Consider techniques as well as the ideas explored in the artwork.

5 If you had the choice of owning one of these two images, which one would you choose and why?

Julie Rrap
Australian, b. 1950
Overstepping, 2001
digital photograph (edition of 15)
120 × 120 cm

In 2002, a huge image of *Overstepping* was displayed on a new public art site on the facade of an apartment building in the Melbourne CBD.

In this location, it was seen by thousands of people each day for several months. That there was a make-up store in the building, stocked with products designed to improve the appearance of women, added relevance to the message in Rrap's work.

In 2001, *Overstepping* won first prize in the Hermanns Art Award. The award was offered by a shoe retailer to designers or artists who created a shoe-inspired artwork.

Rrap's brother Mike Parr (pp. 116–17) is also an artist. Rrap is Parr spelt backwards.

ATTRACTION TO ABSTRACTION

5.16

WHAT IS ABSTRACT ART?

Art that has few or no references to real objects, places or people is often described as **abstract art**.

Abstract art is a general term used to describe a wide range of artworks that do not appear lifelike or **realistic**.

Much of Tuckson's life was dedicated to his work at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, where he was deputy director from the 1950s until his death in 1973. In this role, he became an advocate for Indigenous Australian art.

Although he had limited time to devote to art-making, Tuckson made 450 paintings and more than 10 000 drawings.

Figurative and non-figurative

In figurative abstraction, the subject matter is recognisable, but art elements are used in such a manner that the subject matter's appearance seems simplified, distorted or changed in some way. The simplification, **distortion** or change can be slight or extreme. When extreme, it can be difficult to recognise what is represented.

Some abstract artworks are arrangements of art elements (such as colour, line and materials) without any obvious reference to objects, places or people. These artworks are often described as **non-figurative art**, **non-representational art** or **pure abstraction**.

DISCUSS

All art involves some degree of abstraction. Discuss, referring to examples to support your opinion.

1 Make three simple abstract drawings. Use art elements differently in each drawing to create:
- a figurative abstract drawing where the abstraction is slight
- a figurative abstract drawing where the abstraction is extreme, using the same subject as above
- a non-figurative abstract drawing.

A focus on expression

In some forms of abstraction, art elements and materials are used in **gestural** and **expressive** ways that convey emotion and the action of the artist. This approach to abstraction was reflected in **Abstract Expressionism**, a **modern art** style that came to prominence in New York in the 1940s and 1950s. Abstract Expressionist paintings are generally non-representational, but some include figurative elements.

At first glance, *Yellow* by Australian artist **Tony Tuckson** (1921–1973) may appear to be a series of random brushstrokes and accidental drips on masonite board. It seems to have no reference to anything in the real world, but what you see, the paint and the expressive way it is used, provides the key to its meaning and significance.

The asymmetrical composition of the painting is dominated by a hovering, fragile mass of white and yellow tones. These are painted with bold, vigorous strokes that sweep down and across the painting. The thinness of the paint makes the direction and intensity of each stroke clearly visible. Delicate drips

Tony Tuckson
born Egypt 1921, arrived Australia 1942, died 1973
Yellow, 1970–73
synthetic polymer and enamel paint on composition board
(a–b) 213.5 × 244.0 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Loti Smorgon AO and Victor Smorgon AC, 2011 (2011.336.a–b)

and splatters of red, black and white paint concentrated in several areas of the composition provide a contrast to the larger mass of paint. The potency of the painted marks is intensified by the areas of raw masonite board that remain untouched by paint.

The painted marks in *Yellow* are a trace of the physical presence, movement and energy of the artist when he was making the painting. They create a strong connection between the artist and the viewer.

Tuckson's interest in abstraction had many influences, including a deep appreciation of the **aesthetic qualities** of Indigenous Australian art as well as modern art styles such as Abstract Expressionism.

2 List at least six descriptive words or phrases that describe the paint marks you can see in *Yellow*.

3 In what way are the painted marks in *Yellow* a trace of the physical presence, movement and energy of the artist? How does this connect the artist with the viewer?

Purely formal

In some forms of abstraction, the **formal** qualities of art, including materials and art elements, became the focus of art-making. This approach to abstraction was reflected in non-representational styles such as **Minimal art**, **Hard Edge painting** and **Colour Field painting**. These styles, which dominated modern art in the 1960s, reflected a belief that modern art should focus purely on formal concerns, not on representation, description or expressing emotion. For painting, this idea meant a focus on colour and the flat surface and shape of the canvas. For sculpture, it meant a focus on form. Australian artist **Michael Johnson** (b. 1938) was one of many Australian artists in the 1960s who were interested in non-representational art styles focused on the formal concerns of painting.

Frontal 2 is a boldly simple painting made up of two modular panels. It reflects the artist's interest in manipulating the spatial dimensions of painting through colour and colour relationships. The simple **geometric** shapes, compositional order, smooth flat colour and focus on the structural concerns of painting are a contrast to more expressive, personal styles of abstraction.

4 List six descriptive words or phrases that describe aspects of *Frontal 2*.

5 Compare *Frontal 2* with *Yellow*. Consider the use of materials and art elements, and the ideas, meanings or feelings each work conveys.

6 Imagine you are a gallery guide talking to a group of teenage students about either *Yellow* or *Frontal 2*. Write a script for how you will introduce the artwork to the students. Include at least four questions or comments that you anticipate the students will ask or say (such as 'It looks like a kid did it' and 'If I did that, would you buy mine?') and how you will respond to them.

Frontal 2 was one of two paintings by Johnson that were included in the landmark exhibition The Field. The Field was presented at the National Gallery of Victoria when it reopened in a new building in 1968, and it was the first major exhibition of work by Australian artists working in **non-figurative** and geometric art styles, such as Minimal art, Hard Edge painting and Colour Field painting.

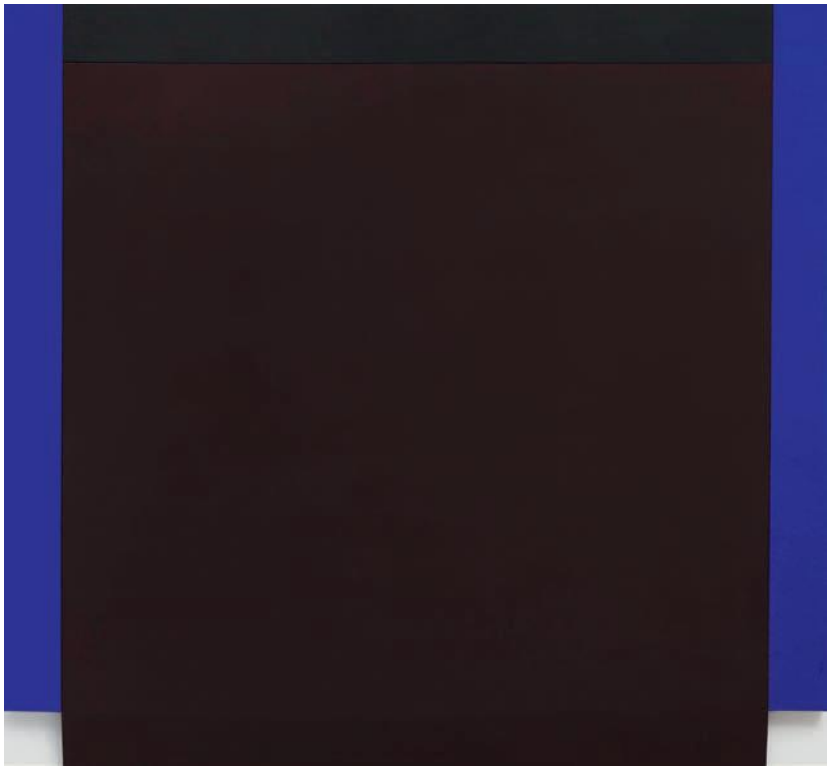


Photo: AGNSW 88.2000

Michael Johnson
Australian, b. 1938
Frontal 2, 1968
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
198.5 × 214.0 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Gift of Michael and Margot Johnson, 2000

ATTRACTION TO ABSTRACTION

5.17

MAKING IT PERSONAL

While the history of art is often analysed by studying styles, periods and movements, in reality, the work of artists is often very personal, as seen in the work of many artists interested in abstraction.

A familiar pattern?

Robert Rooney (b. 1937) was one of many Australian artists in the 1960s and early 1970s interested in **non-representational art** styles, such as **Hard Edge painting** and **Minimal art**.

Can you see how these art styles might have influenced *Superknit 5*? Strong, simple shapes and colours are clearly the focus of the painting; the repetition of elements in a regular pattern across the composition emphasises their importance. The clearly defined hard edges and smooth, flat paint surface focus attention on the shapes and colours in the painting.

The repetition in *Superknit 5* and the smooth paint surface make the painting appear very flat. **Western art** has often been concerned with creating an illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat surface (p. 96). In contrast, many **modern art** styles place importance on acknowledging the flat surface of a painting.

While Rooney was interested in **non-representational art** styles, such as Hard Edge painting and Minimal art, he took inspiration for his work from the patterns of everyday things.

You can probably guess from the title what inspired *Superknit 5*. Rooney is fascinated by pictures or diagrams that look like abstract art. The Superknit series was obviously inspired by knitting patterns. Before this series, the artist made a number of Hard Edge paintings inspired by designs on household packages.

1 In what way can *Superknit 5* be seen as a personal interpretation of Hard Edge painting and Minimal art styles?

Keeping abstraction alive

Melinda Harper (b. 1965) often works on several paintings at once, but each painting can require months of work. She works on one section of a painting at a time, using masking tape to stop the colours bleeding into each other. Once the paint is dry, another area is started. The colour relationships and visual rhythms in the painting evolve slowly as the artist works. Unlike many other forms

Rooney used graph paper to draw the design for the Superknit series. A cardboard template was used to create the repeated curves. Like many Hard Edge painters, Rooney used masking tape to help achieve the crisp, clean edges in his work. The areas that were masked are the white areas of the painting.

Both Hard Edge painting and Minimal art use art elements such as geometric shape and colour in a controlled, precise way. In Minimal art, the elements are kept to a minimum. For example, a painting might have only one or two colours and one or two shapes. The elements are often repeated to create a regular pattern.

Harper was one of a group of Melbourne-based artists involved in an important artist-run space, Store 5 (1989–93). The group, which also included Kerrie Poliness (p. 27) and Constanze Zikos (p. 151), shared an interest in geometric abstraction.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other works by Harper.

Robert Rooney
Australian, b. 1937
Superknit 5, 1970
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
152.5 × 244.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1979
Image courtesy of the artist and Tolarno Galleries

of **geometric** abstraction, Harper's paintings retain obvious brushstrokes and a distinctive handmade quality.

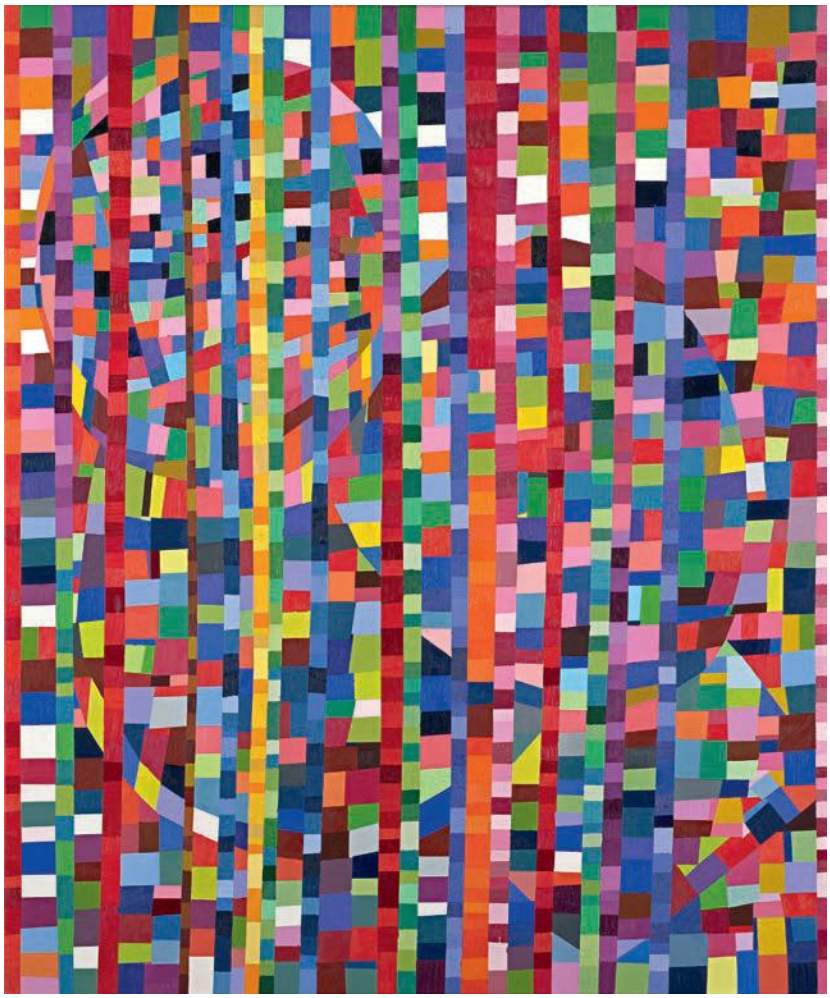
As a teenager, Harper was inspired to become an artist after seeing original artworks by some of the early **Abstract Expressionist** artists, such as Hans Hofmann (1880–1966) and Jackson Pollock (pp. 210–11), in the newly opened National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. She has maintained a commitment to abstract art throughout her career, and she has explored colour and colour relationships in dynamic geometric compositions of dazzling beauty.

In *Untitled* (2000), irregular vertical stripes interwoven with large circles and other geometric shapes create an idiosyncratic grid-like structure that is filled with a mosaic of brilliant colours. The colours jostle against each other, creating a restless energy.

The artist draws inspiration for her work from looking at other art and observing things in her everyday environment, including colours and colour relationships.

2 List six descriptive words or phrases (such as multihued stripes) that describe *Untitled* (2000).

3 Compare the artists' approach to abstraction in *Superknit 5* and *Untitled* (2000).



Melinda Harper
Australian, b. 1965
Untitled, 2000
oil on canvas
183.0 × 152.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by Robert Gould, Founder Benefactor, 2004 (2004.358)

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see Hans Hofmann's *Pre-dawn* (1960), which left a strong impression on Harper.

EXPLORE

A well-known art collector, Ms Abby Straction, wants you to recommend a new non-figurative artwork for her collection. Identify a work for her, and write a short report indicating why you think it is a good choice.

EXPLORE

Down the length of an A4 page, create a scale with non-representational or non-figurative art at one end and realistic, representational or figurative art at the other. Plot the artworks pictured in units 5.14 to 5.17 on this scale. Then, add any two other artworks from this book.

Compare your scale with others in the class. Are the artworks plotted in roughly the same order and position? What might account for any differences?

CREATE

Make a non-representational, two-dimensional artwork using a repetitive pattern with a limited number of interesting shapes and colours.

Try to find inspiration for your shapes in your everyday environment. You could use a viewfinder to isolate or frame interesting shapes on packages, fabrics or coloured papers. Consider how you can rotate, alternate and repeat shapes to create an interesting pattern.

Depending on the medium you work with, you may want to create a **stencil** or a template of your shapes to help you create the repetitions in your design. Use a limited number of colours, and consider how **harmonious** or **complementary colours** (p. 68) may be used.

5.18 IDEAS MATTER

The value and importance of an artwork is not always in the making. The idea or concept can sometimes be the most important thing about an artwork.

Duchamp invented ready-mades in 1914 when he exhibited a bottle rack that he had purchased at a bazaar.

Duchamp's provocative ideas about art did not stop at ready-made sculptures. He proposed making reciprocal ready-mades – where a famous work of art could be used as an everyday object. He thought a Rembrandt painting would make a good ironing board!

In 1999, Dimitri Daskalopoulos paid US$1.76 million for one of the 1964 versions of *Fountain*. He said, 'For me, it represents the origins of contemporary art.'[20]

DISCUSS

Duchamp's original *Fountain* is lost; however, in 1964 a limited edition of eight handcrafted urinals was produced, each signed and dated by the artist to emulate the original.

Some people felt that Duchamp had compromised his original ideas. Others argued that it was perfectly valid and could even be seen as reinforcing some of the ideas in the original ready-made. What do you think?

Ready-made art

To create his artwork *Fountain*, French-American artist **Marcel Duchamp** (1887–1968) took an ordinary porcelain urinal, signed it 'R. Mutt' (the name of a plumbing manufacturer), titled it and exhibited it. It is an artwork because Duchamp presented it as an artwork. Duchamp called this type of artwork a **ready-made**.

The idea of making art by simply selecting an object and exhibiting it as art sounds very easy. Duchamp's ready-mades demonstrate that powerful ideas can be communicated in art without using conventional art materials and processes.

The concepts behind Duchamp's ready-mades are radical and provocative. By presenting an existing object as art, especially a mundane, mass-produced object such as a urinal, Duchamp claimed that artworks do not have to be unique, valuable or beautiful. Furthermore, he challenged the idea that making art involves special materials or skills.

When Duchamp first exhibited *Fountain* in 1917, many people were still struggling to accept that humble objects were subjects worthy of art. Imagine how they felt about humble objects being declared artworks in their own right! Duchamp's ideas have had a profound influence on the way people think about art today. When artists use **found objects** to make art, and when we understand that found objects can be art, we owe something to Duchamp.

Duchamp was closely associated with the **Dada** movement, which

Photo: Vera & Arturo Schwarz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art/Bridgeman Images

Marcel Duchamp
French-American, 1887–1968
Fountain, 1917/64
ceramic
The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel

began in Europe around 1916. The writers, poets and artists associated with Dada were appalled by the horrors of the First World War and disillusioned by contemporary society, which they blamed for the war. They rejected traditional artforms because they saw them as part of the society that they despised. They took a radical, new anti-art approach that challenged traditional social and artistic values.

1 List two ideas about art that *Fountain* suggests to you. What is it about the work that suggests these ideas?

2 Do you think that audiences today are likely to react to *Fountain* in a way that is similar to or different from audiences in 1917? Why?

An interesting concept

Secret Painting by English artist **Mel Ramsden** (b. 1944) has two parts. One part is a small, square, completely black painting that looks like the sort of **non-representational art** that was common in **modern art** in the 1960s and early 1970s (pp. 176–7).

The second part of *Secret Painting* is a panel that declares that only the artist knows what is in the painting – and he is not telling anyone. It boldly denies the viewer the opportunity to find any meaning in the work. *Secret Painting* appears to be questioning how non-representational art styles communicate meaning and how viewers find meaning in these styles.

DISCUSS

Although artists associated with Conceptual art make artworks that question the value of art and art institutions, their work is often highly valued, collected and displayed in galleries. Is this surprising? Why?

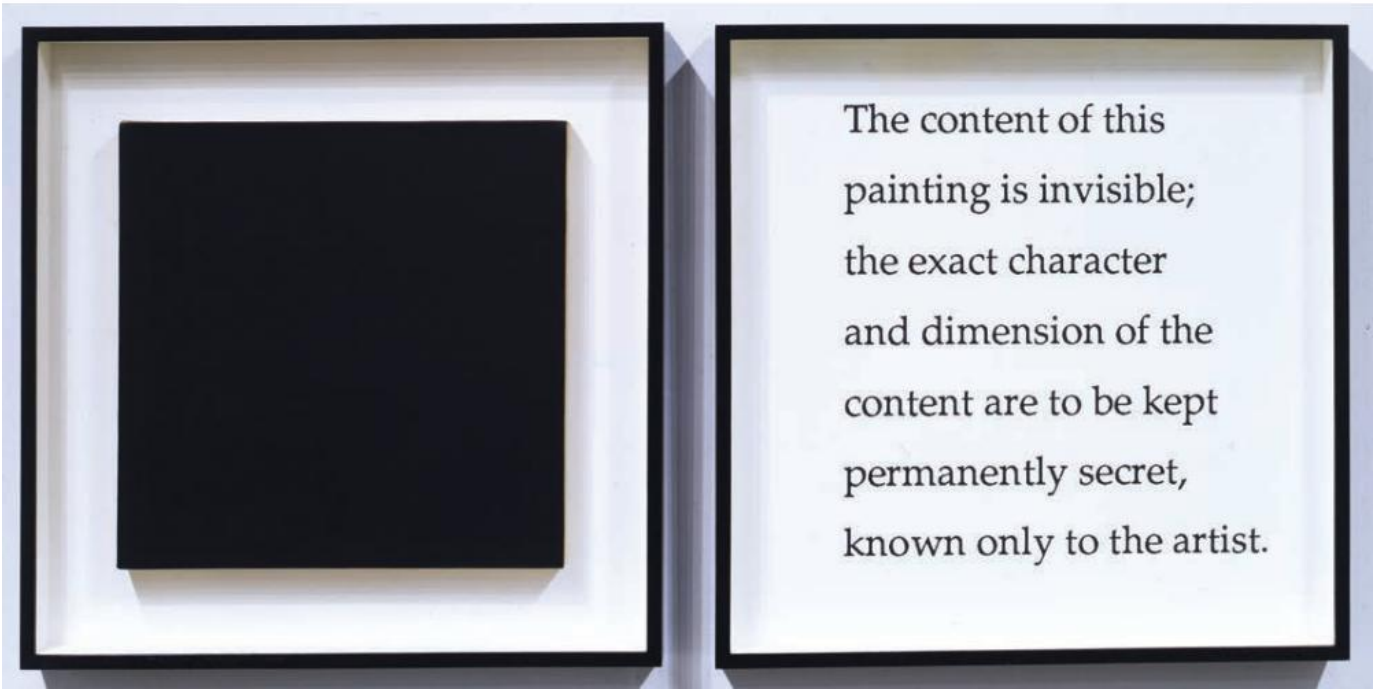
Secret Painting is an example of **Conceptual art**, a term used to describe artworks that focus on ideas rather than description, personal expression or formal concerns. Artists associated with Conceptual art explore many ideas about art itself, including ideas related to self-expression and originality in art, the relationship between the viewer and art, and how art is marketed and exhibited.

Conceptual art became an important **art movement** in the 1970s; however, a significant number of artists before this time, including Duchamp, also created artwork that can be described as conceptual.

3 List two ideas about art that *Secret Painting* suggests to you. What is it about the work that suggests these ideas?

4 What is your reaction to the written message in *Secret Painting*? What is it in the message that makes you react this way?

5 Why do you think Ramsden used words in *Secret Painting*? What might it suggest about the relationship between words and art?



Mel Ramsden
English, born England 1944; lived in Australia 1963–64
Secret Painting, 1967–68
Art & Language series
acrylic on canvas and photostat
102 × 100 × 4 cm (installed)

5.19 QUESTIONING TRADITION AND CONVENTION

Questions and ideas that challenge traditions and conventions in art-making are the focus of some artists' practices.

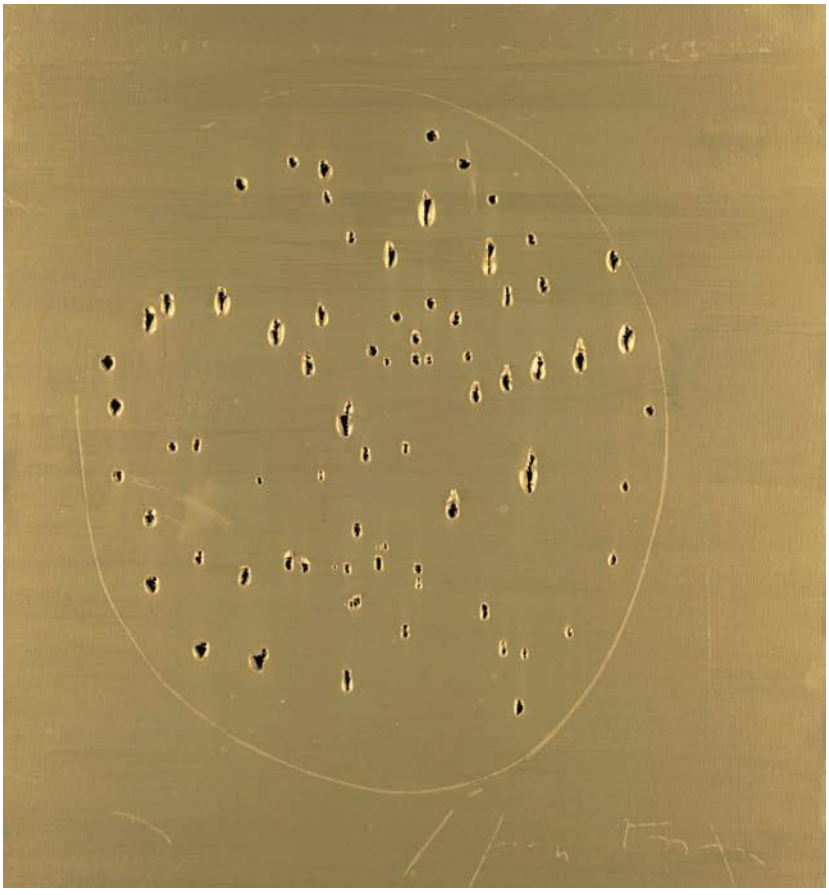
Space explorer

Argentinian-Italian artist **Lucio Fontana** (1899–1968) began his career as a sculptor. He later became interested in ideas about the relationship between art and space, and these ideas took his work in new and radical directions.

Fontana's early experiments included **installations** in darkened environments that attempted to dissolve the boundaries between objects and their surrounding space; however, it was his Spatial Concept series, begun in 1949, that achieved his goals. The series was made using the conventional painting format of a rectangular canvas, but Fontana punctured the surface with a knife to create a series of holes (*buchi*). The hole was the solution! The void of the hole created the authentic connection between the art object and its surrounding space that Fontana was looking for. In 1950, Fontana introduced a new style to his Spatial Concept series using slashes (*tagli*) rather than holes.

It is tempting to read the repeated puncture marks or slashes in the series as violent or to link them with the **gestural** marks of **Abstract Expressionism** (p. 176). For Fontana, however, these works were an exploration of space that opened up new creative possibilities in art. Although he often painted the surface of the Spatial Concept works, or inscribed them with lines that may suggest pictorial references (as seen in the example pictured), Fontana rejected the idea that his Spatial Concept works were paintings.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to view the collection of works by Fontana in The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Lucio Fontana
Italian, 1899–1968
Spatial Concept (Concetto Spaziale), 1964–65
metallic paint on canvas
91.0 × 73.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1973 (EA3–1973)

1 What features or qualities does *Spatial Concept (Concetto Spaziale)* share with a painting? What makes it different from a painting?

2 Write a label that will be mounted on the wall beside *Spatial Concept (Concetto Spaziale)* to explain the artwork to gallery visitors.

Creative force

How do you imagine London-based Spanish artist **Angela de la Cruz** (b. 1965) created *Loose Fit (Blue)*? Smashing, squashing and punching are all possible, although these are not actions conventionally associated with creating a painting.

The work provokes many questions, including whether it is even a painting. It hangs on the wall like a painting, and it is made from canvas with paint on it, but it has a three-dimensional form.

Loose Fit (Blue) and other works by de la Cruz clearly have links to abstract art styles such as **Colour Field painting**, **Hard Edge painting** and **Minimal art**. Some connections have also been made between

the physical actions involved in creating these paintings and the gestural techniques of Abstract Expressionism.

In de la Cruz's work, these celebrated **modern art** styles emerge broken and beaten. The blue-painted canvas with its white border suggests that *Loose Fit (Blue)* previously existed as a large-scale **monochromatic** painting. Now, the stretchers that once held the canvas taut and flat have buckled, and the canvas sags in a crumpled mess. While this suggests violent and brutal force, de la Cruz sees humour in her work.

De la Cruz's work also suggests emotions, which were denied by the 'cool' and unemotional precision, geometry and flat surfaces of many forms of abstraction. The sagging folds and crumpled surface of *Loose Fit (Blue)* appear tragic and dejected. Her work also has connections to the human body; the title alludes to oversized clothing.

How de la Cruz's works are displayed sometimes adds to their meaning. For example, a small, scuffed white painting, *Ashamed* (1995), was displayed 'cowering' in the corner of a gallery.

De la Cruz's paintings playfully challenge many conventions and traditions associated with abstract art and painting in general.

3 List verbs (action words, such as smash and punch) that describe how you think de la Cruz created *Loose Fit (Blue)*.

4 List adjectives (describing words, such as dejected and broken) that describe emotions and ideas you associate with *Loose Fit (Blue)*.

5 De la Cruz's work is often linked to Fontana's. Use a Venn diagram to show similarities and differences in the artists' work.

DISCUSS

De la Cruz has said, 'I like the idea of paintings behaving badly. My work knows very well that it has to be in an institution but they rebel against that, and they do what they like.'[21]

What do you think she means by this statement?

As an artist interested in exploring the boundaries of space in art, Fontana was also inspired by contemporary expeditions into real space. He was fascinated by the launch of the world's first artificial satellite, *Sputnik 1*, by the USSR in 1957 and the launch of *Explorer 1* by the United States in 1958, which triggered the space race between the two nations.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other work by de la Cruz and to watch a video of the artist speaking about her art practice and work in progress.

Angela de la Cruz
Spanish, b. 1965
Loose Fit (Blue), 2002
oil on canvas
111.3 × 112.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of Michael Buxton, Governor, and Anna Schwartz, Governor, 2003 (2003.479)

ART AND BEAUTY

5.20

QUESTIONS AND IDEAS

Beauty is an important aspect of art. When exploring art, it is important to consider how beauty is defined and judged.

The *Discobolus* pictured is one of 20 surviving Roman copies of an original bronze sculpture, now lost, by the Greek sculptor Myron. A copy in The British Museum has been repaired with the head from another sculpture, which is looking down.

The Greek phrase *kalos kagathos* is used to describe the idea that physical beauty is connected to goodness and virtue.

'The chief forms of beauty are order, symmetry and clear delineation.'
Aristotle

'Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity.'
Plato (*The Republic*)

What is beauty?

Beauty is commonly associated with sensory pleasure and satisfaction, and especially with things that are pleasing to look at; however, people can experience beauty through all of their senses – hearing, taste, touch and smell as well as sight.

Beauty can also be appreciated through the intellect and emotions. It is possible, for example, to find beauty in literature or poetry, in something that you perceive as visually ugly but find deeply moving, and in the apparent simplicity of a mathematical formula that solves a complex problem.

1 List things that you personally find beautiful. Include things that you experience through each of the five senses as well as things that you find beautiful intellectually or emotionally.

Alamy Stock Photo/Lev Tsimbler

Myron
Discobolus (Discus Thrower)
Roman copy of an ancient Greek bronze, c. 450 BCE

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to discover why the brain sees mathematics as beauty.

Beauty, art and aesthetics

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that explores questions and ideas about art and beauty. These have been discussed and debated since ancient times, but they remain relevant today.

Artworks are often described as having particular aesthetic qualities, which are the visual or other qualities that elicit a response. The **aesthetic qualities** of an artwork generally relate to the use of:

- art elements – such as colour, shape, form and texture
- design principles – such as balance, harmony and **unity**
- materials.

Our responses to the aesthetic qualities of an artwork can be sensory, emotional or intellectual. In some artworks, elements such as sound and movement are important.

The word 'aesthetic' is also sometimes used to describe qualities or styles considered beautiful in different historical periods or by different cultures or subcultures. For example, a modern aesthetic may reflect ideas of beauty associated with modern art, including strong simplified shapes, lines and forms. A Japanese aesthetic may reflect the elegance and subtlety of Japanese art and design. A street art aesthetic may reflect the style of different forms of graffiti art.

2 Think about a style or trend in any of the arts – such as visual arts, design, dance, drama or music – that interests you. Describe the distinctive qualities that characterise this style's sense of aesthetics. Collect images to illustrate your points.

Perfect beauty

The ancient Greeks aspired to beauty in every aspect of their lives. Ancient Greek philosophers were among the earliest to identify principles that they believed defined beauty. These principles are reflected in many examples of ancient Greek art and architecture.

Inspired by the perfect human form of their immortal gods and goddesses, the ancient Greeks valued the perfect human form in life and art. Physical beauty was linked to virtue and goodness, and beauty was celebrated in athletic competitions and festivals. Artists studied anatomy, **proportion** and movement to create images of ideal types.

Male figures tended to be muscular and athletic, while female figures were graceful but strong. *Discobolus* combines the ideal of an athletic male figure with the harmony and balance that characterised Greek art of the fourth and fifth centuries BCE. Although the athlete in *Discobolus* is shown in a movement that would require extreme physical exertion, the lines and arrangement of the athlete's body create a flowing visual rhythm, harmony and balance. The athlete's face also reflects a serene beauty.

The beauty of ancient Greek art later inspired many **Renaissance** artists and created an ideal of classical beauty that has been influential in **western art** since.

3 Create an annotated copy of *Discobolus* to explain how you believe Myron:
- communicated the ideal of the athletic male figure
- achieved harmony and balance.

A beauty secret

The ancient Greeks believed that the secret of beauty was, at least partly, in mathematics. They noticed the **golden ratio** in many beautiful things – in nature, in art and in the ideal proportions of the human body and face.

The grid lines in golden ratio rectangles and grids, and the points at which they intersect, can be used as a guide to creating visually pleasing compositions. Many artists apply this ratio intuitively in their work.

Artists often approximate the golden ratio by following the rule of thirds: dividing a composition into thirds horizontally and vertically. It is generally thought that locating a focal point on the lines or at the intersection of the lines creates a more interesting composition than a central focal point.

EXPLORE

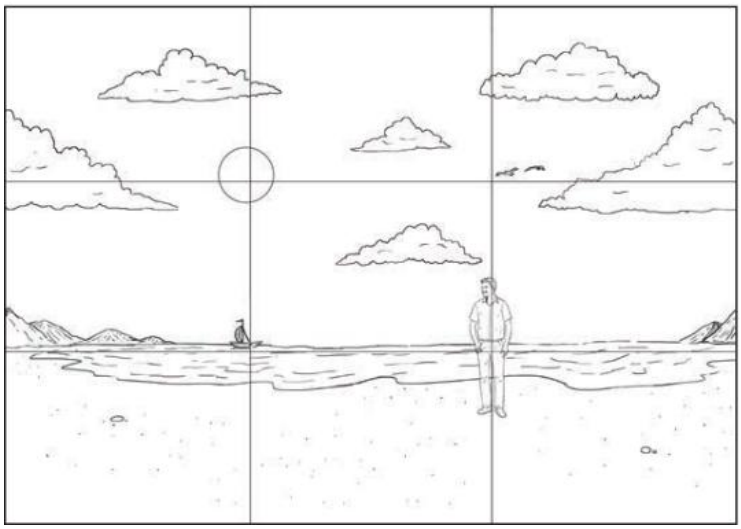
Research ideals of male or female beauty in another culture or historical period. Summarise your findings.

Identify an artwork from the culture or period that reflects the ideal, and briefly describe why it is a reflection of the ideal for that culture or period.

DISCUSS

Are there dominant ideals of human beauty in contemporary society? What are the ideals, who defines them and how are they communicated? Are they any more or less realistic than those formulated by the ancient Greeks?

Socrates advised combining the most beautiful features of different human figures to best portray ideal beauty. How does his advice relate to the way ideal beauty is portrayed in contemporary society?

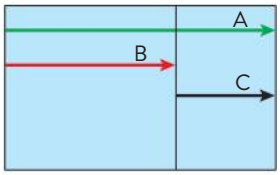


Artists often use the rule of thirds to organise elements in their compositions.

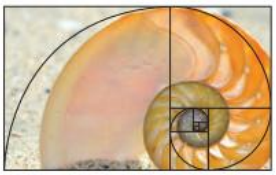
The golden ratio is based on one very special number, a decimal usually rounded to 1.618.

The golden ratio can be illustrated using lines. Line A is made up of two parts: a longer section B and a shorter section C. The ratio of the length of A to B is the same as the ratio of the length of B to C. This can also be thought of as A = B × 1.618 and B = C × 1.618.

The golden ratio is also seen in golden rectangles. As above, the ratio of A to B is the same as the ratio of B to C.



The golden ratio can be used again and again to divide the rectangle on the right. This process can be repeated indefinitely. The effect of this is illustrated in the simple golden ratio grid below. From the grid can be drawn a golden spiral, which is seen in many natural forms.



Shutterstock.com/aaltair

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the golden ratio and rectangles.

The golden ratio is referred to by many different terms, including the golden mean, the divine section, the golden proportion and phi Φ.

5.21 OBJECTS OF BEAUTY

Different cultures' ideas about beauty can be seen in the objects they value.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Princeton University Art Museum's interactive site that allows you to design a Song dynasty vase.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Shigaraki pottery and the Japanese tea ceremony.

Cultural and historical influences

Ideas about beauty are influenced by culture and history. People's cultural beliefs – including their religious or spiritual beliefs, their cultural practices and traditions, and even their physical environment – can influence their ideas about beauty and what is beautiful. Within any culture, ideas about beauty evolve over time.

What any one person values as beautiful will also be influenced by their personal experiences and beliefs.

Beauty in simplicity

Herbert Wade Kent (1877–1952) chose the things he collected for their beauty. While living in China, he developed an appreciation for the elegant simplicity of Song dynasty pottery (960–1279). The vase pictured was his favourite **ceramic** piece. Kent's wife donated it to the National Gallery of Victoria after his death.

The refined beauty, balance and vigour of Song dynasty pottery is seen in this vase. The **glaze** highlights the sensual form of the vase. Rings, just visible under the surface of the glaze, create a subtle play of light around the vase. Subtle imperfections, including some delicate veins of rust in the glaze, animate the surface.

The stoneware ceramics of this period are also known to appeal to multiple senses. They are cool and smooth to touch, and they emit a musical sound when tapped gently.

Traditional Chinese philosophies value the beauty and purity of the natural world. This particular style of vase was made for holding plum blossoms in spring.

Shinto is the traditional religion of Japan. It dates back to the eighth century and was the official religion until 1945. Unlike most other religions, Shinto does not have a founder or sacred scriptures. Practices include the worship of spirits (*kami*) who are believed to be present in objects and processes in the natural world.

It has been suggested that if Kent had been entombed in the traditional Chinese manner, this vase would have been buried with him.

Vase
Chinese, 11th – early 12th century
stoneware (Cizhou ware)
23.1 × 17.4 cm (diameter)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Mrs HW Kent, 1952 (273–D5)

Beauty in imperfection

The Japanese jar pictured on the next page was made at Shigaraki, one of the six ancient kiln sites where pottery production was concentrated between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries in Japan.

The robust form and earthy textures and colours of this pottery jar reflect strong connections to the natural world. Shigaraki clay has a warm orange colour and a rough texture. The intense heat of the traditional wood-fired kilns resulted in subtle colour and texture variations, which give Shigaraki pots their distinctive character.

Reverence for nature is an important aspect of Shinto, the traditional Japanese religion. The surface of Shigaraki pots suggest natural textures and elements, such as water flowing over rock.

The simple, handmade, rustic beauty of this vase also reflects one of the principles of Japanese aesthetics: *wabi-sabi*, which is beauty found in imperfection and in things that are old or worn.

EXPLORE

Briefly explain the origins and purpose of the Japanese tea ceremony. What do you think Japanese tea masters found beautiful about Shigaraki pottery?

Jar (*Tsubo*)
Japanese, 15th–16th century
stoneware (Shigaraki ware)
46.0 × 42.8 cm (diameter)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1984 (AS1–1984)

Tile
Greater Iran, 15th century
fritware, glazed, cut to shape and assembled as a mosaic
61.6 × 59.7 × 7.0 cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
The Madina Collection of Islamic Art
Gift of Camilla Chandler Frost

Beauty in pattern

Islamic art often features complex and beautiful abstract designs and patterns. **Stylised** plant forms and complex **geometric** designs are characteristic of the decorative patterns that adorn many Islamic buildings, ceramics, textiles and metalwork.

Calligraphy is considered the highest artform in Islam, reflecting the importance of the word of God. Beautiful writing and decoration were a way of making words worthy of divine messages.

The Iranian ceramic tile illustrated here was made around the fifteenth century. Over hundreds of years, tiling became a refined and sophisticated artform in Islamic culture. Skilled **artisans** often worked with mathematicians to develop new designs. Many great religious buildings were constructed throughout the Islamic empires, and the buildings were generally made from brick but covered in a skin of brilliantly glazed tiles.

Can you see how the stylised plant forms used in the decoration of the tile have an elegant symmetry and order? This demonstrates the importance of geometry in creating beauty in Islamic design. The geometric shape of the tile would have interlocked with other tiles or panels to become part of a larger, more complex, design on a wall.

1. Create an annotated copy of each of the three objects. Note the elements and design principles that are most important in each of the objects.
2. Which of these objects do you think is the most beautiful? Why?
3. Find a historical or contemporary object that you find beautiful.
   - Explain the qualities that you believe make your chosen object beautiful.
   - Ask two other people of different ages or backgrounds whether they find the object beautiful and why. Summarise their responses.

CREATE

Research Islamic pattern and decoration, and how it uses mathematics. Use your research findings as inspiration for a beautiful, decorative tile that incorporates stylised plant or geometric elements.

Design the shape and decoration of your tile so that it can be linked to other similar tiles as part of a larger design. Make a sketch to show how your larger design will work.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for information and activities about Islamic art and the mathematics behind Islamic designs and patterns.

Islam originated in the Middle East in the seventh century when the word of God (Allah) was revealed to the prophet Mohammed (c. 570–632). The sacred words of God were recorded in the *Qur'an*, the holy book that guides Muslim faith and life. Islam spread quickly through the Middle East and beyond and is now one of the world's major religions.

Arabesque designs are decorative, curving linear patterns, usually based on the forms of plants or other inanimate objects.

Jackson Pollock
American, 1912–1956
Blue Poles 1952
oil, enamel, aluminium paint with glass on canvas
212.9 × 489.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1973

6

INDUSTRY, AUDIENCES AND ISSUES

The art industry is not just about creating art. Artworks are also displayed, collected, discussed and debated. Audiences play an important role in the art industry.

The art industry is dynamic. It changes over time and is different in different cultures and societies. The social and cultural values and ideas of particular places and times influence how art is made, viewed, valued and interpreted. Different values and ideas about art can provoke controversy, which can stir heated debates about art.

Learn about:

- the working lives of artists
- the display of art
- art issues.

Learn by:

- exploring professional art practice, including artists' rights
- examining how and where artworks are displayed
- discussing and communicating ideas and opinions about art ideas and issues
- comparing, analysing, evaluating and interpreting artworks.

6.1 ARTISTS AT WORK

Although the story of every artist's working life follows an individual pathway, many Australian artists start their careers by attending art school. In many Indigenous communities, local art centres play an important role in supporting the production and promotion of artists' work.

The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body. Its role includes awarding grants, doing research and promoting Australian arts nationally and internationally.

The National Association for the Visual Arts is the national peak body for the visual and media arts, craft and design sector. Its website includes many videos of Australian artists, which provide insights into current artists' art practices.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Australia Council for the Arts and the National Association for the Visual Arts.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for an overview of facts about the art industry in Australia.

Art school

Today, most professional artists in Australia have attended art school before they begin their artistic careers. Most art schools are part of a university or other tertiary institution. Art schools offer a range of art courses, which are generally focused on particular artforms, such as painting, photography or new media.

At art school, students learn practical and creative skills by making art and by studying the work of other artists. Students also learn about other aspects of the art industry, such as exhibiting art. The lessons learnt at art school and the people artists meet during their studies have an important influence on an artist's work and career.

1 List three reasons why someone interested in working as an artist might attend art school even though formal qualifications are not necessary to become an artist.

Getting started

An artist's professional career usually begins when they start exhibiting their work. An emerging artist will often start with exhibitions at art school or artist-run galleries. Exhibitions are an important way for emerging artists to present their work to art audiences, including critics, **curators**, dealers, collectors and the public.

Getting recognised

Positive comments from **art critics** and invitations from dealers or curators to participate in exhibitions are important forms of recognition for most artists. Positive reviews of exhibitions can lead to more exhibition opportunities, increased audiences, **commissions** and opportunities to sell artwork. Having an artwork purchased by a public art gallery or included in a significant art publication is an important form of recognition for an artist.

Reilly Gaynor, student, Victorian College of the Arts

For love or money?

Artists identify passion and persistence as important factors to advance their careers. This is just as well because, despite their high levels of education, visual artists often struggle to earn a living from their creative work.

Some artists earn significant incomes from their art; however, most artists' incomes include money earned from work other than art-making. Often, extra income is from an art-related field, such as art teaching, but many artists work in other industries, such as hospitality. Even artists whose works are widely exhibited and highly regarded can sometimes struggle to make a living from their art alone.

One reason why earning a living from art can be difficult is that, while many people in Australia are interested in art and visit art galleries, the number of people who purchase art, especially contemporary art, is relatively small.

2 Imagine you are an artist. Which would you consider the most important form of recognition for your work: an art critic making positive comments, a collector or public gallery purchasing your work or something else? Why?

3 Why might people choose to become artists even though they are aware that their income might be limited?

Support for artists

A range of privately and publicly funded **grants**, awards, prizes and other opportunities are available to Australian artists.

One of the most famous art prizes in Australia, the Archibald Prize (pp. 218–19), is organised by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, but there are many others.

The Australia Council for the Arts provides the most significant publicly funded support for artists. It offers a range of grants, which artists can apply for to fund particular projects, and it has a number of overseas studios. Australian artists can apply for overseas studio residencies to visit, study or work overseas. Many artists have pursued new artistic directions as a result of living and working overseas.

Applying for grants, awards, prizes or studio residencies can be very time-consuming. It is also very competitive. In spite of this, the financial support, professional recognition and opportunities that these forms of support offer can have a significant and positive effect on an artist's work and career.

4 Why do you think individuals, organisations and governments might choose to support art and artists?

5 Suggest two ways that a grant, award, prize or residency at an overseas studio might influence an artist's work or career.

Indigenous communities

In many Indigenous communities, especially in central and northern Australia, art centres play a critical role in supporting artists. Most art centres are community owned and operated, but they often employ art advisers or coordinators from outside the community to support the production, marketing, exhibition and distribution of art. The art centres are also important cultural and community hubs, and they provide a critical source of commercial income for communities.

6 Based on your understanding of Indigenous art and culture, suggest why art centres are valuable for supporting artists in Indigenous communities.

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to be employed in visual arts and crafts occupations in their main job (52%) than non-Indigenous people (9.7%).'[22]

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Aboriginal arts centres.

EXPLORE

Research the training and role of artists in another historical period or culture (such as mediaeval Europe, ancient China or South Pacific island communities).

Briefly outline the working life and training of artists in this culture or period. How does it compare with Australian artists today?

AAP Image/Dan Peled

Local artists learn about business practices at the Arlpwe Art & Culture Centre in the Aboriginal community of Ali Curung, 400 kilometres north of Alice Springs. The centre enables local artists to create and sell their work as well as run bush tucker tours for visitors.

6.2 WHERE WERE ALL THE WOMEN?

When you are studying the art of the past in books, online or in galleries, have you ever wondered why most of the artists are men?

When the British Royal Academy of Arts first admitted a female student, it was by mistake. Hopeful students had to submit a drawing of some part of the human body. In 1860, the examiners chose a drawing that was marked only with the initials LH. They were later shocked to find out that these initials stood for Laura Herford (1831–1870), who became the first female student at the academy.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about Laura Herford and women's struggle for equality at the Royal Academy of Arts.

A struggle for education

In western culture in the past, it was not easy for women to train as artists. Women's lives were governed by social restrictions that made it difficult for them to become apprentices to experienced artists or to attend the art academies where most artists were educated from the middle of the seventeenth century. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that some of the important art academies accepted women students. This was a significant disadvantage for women because the art academies were very powerful. They set standards for art and were often responsible for presenting exhibitions and awarding prestigious prizes and **commissions**.

Most academies did not permit women to attend **life-drawing** classes until the late nineteenth century, making it difficult for women to develop the skills required to make the large-scale figure compositions that were the most highly valued artworks at the time.

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Frederick McCubbin surrounded by his students at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1893. Although a high percentage of the students shown here are female, women were not taken seriously and very few of these women went on to pursue careers as professional artists.

A battle for recognition

While women were generally not encouraged to pursue a serious career in art, by the late nineteenth century, many well-off women studied and pursued art as a hobby. Their creative efforts focused on subjects and artforms that were readily accessible to them, including domestic scenes, flowers or miniature portraits. Many women developed extraordinary skills working with crafts such as embroidery. These subjects and artforms, however, were not recognised or valued in the same way as the more 'serious' subjects and artforms, such as large-scale figure paintings.

Despite significant obstacles, there have always been female artists who have worked with the same subjects and artforms as men; however, often, because of their gender, the work of these artists was not taken as seriously as that of their male colleagues. It was also less likely to be purchased for public collections and less likely to be recorded in the history books. **Feminism** has played an important role in focusing attention on these issues and ensuring that **art history** includes women.

1 Suggest why artforms such as flower painting and embroidery were not as highly valued as the large-scale figure paintings made by many male artists.

2 Do you think that there are artforms or subjects that are more highly valued than others in art today? Explain.

Jane Sutherland

Australian artist **Jane Sutherland** (1855–1928), who attended the National Gallery Art School in Melbourne, was a colleague of the **Australian Impressionist** artists (pp. 124–25). Like these artists, Sutherland was interested in working **en plein air** to capture an impression of the light and colour of the landscape, as seen in *Field Naturalists*. During the 1880s, Sutherland made daytrips to the artists' camps on the outskirts of the city, but it was not socially acceptable for women to stay. It would also have been a challenge to social convention for a female artist to travel further into rural Australia looking for 'typically' Australian subjects as Tom Roberts did when he painted *Shearing the Rams* (p. 150).

Sutherland was actively involved in her profession and well respected. She was the first woman to be elected to the Victorian Artists Society and one of the first women in the Melbourne Buonarotti Club (a society for promoting the arts).

Like many successful female artists, Sutherland had encouragement and support from her family, including some financial support, which allowed her to pursue her career. She devoted herself to her career and never married or had children.

Sutherland's work was not well known or highly valued compared with the work of her male colleagues. The highest price she ever asked for a painting was £21, in 1903. At the same time, some of the male artists she worked with were asking up to £210 for a painting.

Two of Sutherland's paintings were donated to the National Gallery of Victoria, one in 1962 and the other in 1972, but her paintings were not purchased by public galleries until the 1970s.

3 What impression of the Australian landscape has Sutherland created in *Field Naturalists*? Describe the scene, the atmosphere and how the artist has used paint and art elements to convey this information.

4 How might Sutherland or other female artists of her time have been disadvantaged by not being able to spend more time at the artists' camps or travel into rural Australia looking for 'typically' Australian subjects?

Jane Sutherland
born United States 1855, arrived Australia 1864, died 1928
Field Naturalists, c. 1896
oil on canvas
80.9 × 121.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Mrs EH Shackell, 1962 (1062–5)

Feminism forward

Since the 1970s, feminism has had a significant influence on the visual arts. **Art history** has recognised the contribution of artists such as Sutherland, and many artists have addressed issues related to feminism in their work (pp. 128–9, 175). Women today play an equal and significant role in all aspects of the art world, and they do not face the same discrimination as their predecessors. Despite this, research reveals that women still face some disadvantages, and they earn less than male artists despite spending similar amounts of time on their creative practice.

DISCUSS

Does the work of female artists have a distinctive feminine quality in its subject matter or style?

Do you believe the work of female artists is different from that of male artists?

Why do some critics believe that the perceived differences between the art of male and female artists are artificial, and that to emphasise them will once again marginalise and disadvantage women?

Give evidence for your answers based on your observation of a range of artworks.

6.3

MEET JON CAMPBELL

Jon Campbell (b. 1961) was born in Northern Ireland and arrived in Australia in 1964. He studied art at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (1980–82) before undertaking further studies in painting at the Victorian College of the Arts (1984–85). His work is represented in major public and private collections, and it combines images and text from Australian popular culture with the visual language of modern abstraction.

The tertiary orientation program was an alternative to conventional Year 11 and 12 study programs. It has since developed into a TAFE course.

Undergraduate studies are tertiary courses that result in a degree or diploma. Postgraduate studies are higher level tertiary courses undertaken following undergraduate studies.

Gertrude Contemporary, formerly 200 Gertrude Street, is a non-profit contemporary art complex of gallery spaces and studio facilities in Melbourne that provides professional support to artists.

What inspired you to become an artist?
Art and sport were my two main things at high school. There were not enough students at my high school to continue art, so I went and did a tertiary orientation program year. That is when I got more heavily involved in art. There was a lot of practical work, leading to getting a folio together and going on to art school; however, it was not really until I was in my second year of art school, when I started going to exhibitions and I had a bit more to do with artists who were lecturing me, that I got more of an idea of how artists lived, what they did and how they survived. Then, I thought, 'I could do this'.

What did you learn from your art studies?
In my undergraduate studies, there was a lot about materials and how to put things together. When I did postgraduate studies, there was a lot of discussion about what to make art about and the context for this, such as how your subject matter fitted into contemporary culture.

How did you begin exhibiting your work?
My first exhibition was a public three-person exhibition at the Victorian College of the Arts at the end of my postgraduate studies. A lot of people saw the show, and it created a bit of interest in my work. I sold a big painting to the National Gallery of Victoria from this show.

Jon Campbell
Australian, b. 1961
'Yeah' Flag, 2005
bunting, polycotton
90 × 180 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

Photo: Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne

Jon Campbell
Australian, b. 1961
Dream Team, 2012
enamel paint on plywood
22 paintings, installation (variable) 300 × 300 cm
Basil Sellers Art Prize 2012 winner
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

I was aware of places like 200 Gertrude Street. I ended up getting a studio there in the first year out of art school and had my next exhibition there.

Then there was a group show at Melbourne University, and other things started to come up. A few curators showed interest in the work, and I had my first show with a commercial gallery.

I had a job hanging the exhibitions at the commercial gallery before I got taken on as an artist there, and I also did the same job at Melbourne University. I was up for all opportunities, trying to immerse myself in the art world. No-one came knocking on the door and said, 'You're a great artist; we want to show your work.' It was being around on the scene that led to opportunities.

How have travel opportunities and grants affected your work?

Going overseas was an opportunity to see how other artists work. Travel allows you to think closely about what you do as an artist in the context of both contemporary Australian culture and contemporary art culture around the world.

The development grants have been very helpful with the development of work. They have allowed me to make some large-scale works and to take my work into new media that would otherwise have been cost-prohibitive.

How has your work developed over time?

Personal experiences and popular culture have been consistently important in my work, but I have found different ways of using and presenting them.

Text has become quite prominent. I use words that come from everyday conversation, or words that are particular to the Australian vernacular (slang) and little sayings or stories about a particular time or place. Using words opened up some of the ideas in the figurative paintings and has helped keep the work interesting.

How have the materials and presentation of the work changed?

I still paint on a range of surfaces like plywood, masonite and canvas, but found objects have also come into the work. I have painted over old record covers and used perspex cut-outs for words and figures.

The installation of the work has also changed. In the past, it might have been a painting hung on each wall. These days, there may be a couple of paintings leaning up against the wall, an image painted on the wall and some things hung on top of that or on the floor. I have also made flags and banners that have been presented as public artworks to engage people as they go about their daily routines.

I have thought a lot more about what you actually do as an artist – about the best medium to explore a particular idea and how work can be presented in different ways, in different venues, to reach different audiences.

Tell us about your ongoing work with 'yeah'.

'Yeah' can mean a lot of things. It is conversational and has a positive vibe to it.

I had been using 'yeah' in drawings and paintings. Then, I was invited to submit a design for a flag for an exhibition in New Zealand, and I thought 'yeah' would look great on a flag.

The *'Yeah' Flag* has been flown and displayed in many different contexts. It is exciting to see how the flag has taken on a life of its own and asserted itself in contemporary culture.

What inspired *Dream Team?*

The 22 paintings in this installation each feature the nickname of a past or present Australian Rules football player. Part of our history is making up great nicknames. Australians are legends at it.

1. Identify two factors that you believe have influenced Campbell's work and success as an artist. Explain your choices.
2. Compare *We Wanna Be Free* (p. 137) with Campbell's more recent work. What similarities and differences can you find in the subject matter, materials, techniques and ideas?

In 2012, Jon Campbell won the prestigious Basil Sellers Art Prize with *Dream Team*. The Basil Sellers Art Prize was established in 2008 and is awarded every two years. It was established by philanthropist and sports fan Basil Sellers to bridge the gap between art and sport in Australian society.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video of Campbell speaking about his winning entry in the Basil Sellers Art Prize 2012 and to learn more about the prize itself.

See other artworks by Campbell on pp. 137 and 199.

ART IN PRACTICE

6.4 MEET KATE BEYNON

Kate Beynon (b. 1970) was born in Hong Kong and arrived in Australia in 1974. She studied art at the Victorian College of the Arts (1991–93). Her work is in major public and private collections, and it explores issues of cultural identity in a globalised world.

Fairfax Syndication/*The Age*/Andrew De La Rue

Kate Beynon in her studio

Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

Kate Beynon
Australian, b. 1970
Harlem Li Ji, 2004 (detail)
acrylic on maple wood
14.5 × 14.5 cm
Private collection

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to see other work by Beynon and a short lecture by Beynon providing an overview of her work since the 1990s.

What inspired you to become an artist?

I have loved drawing since I was about four years old, and art was my favourite subject at school. As a child, I was always making crafty things: clay models, dolls, and arts and crafts projects.

My grandmother taught me how to use a sewing machine, and my mother would help me to sew dolls, soft toys and their clothes. When I was about 15, I did work experience with a fashion designer, and my interest in sewing and textiles really influenced some of my early work.

My grandfather's artwork, his traditional Chinese paintings and calligraphy, is another really important influence. I also loved the designs and symbols found on many of the artworks and furniture my parents had in the house when I was growing up.

What study did you undertake to become an artist?

After Year 12, I applied to the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), but I was unsuccessful. I started a bachelor of arts at university and took night classes in life-drawing and painting because I really wanted to go to art school. In 1990, I left university and did one year of the advanced certificate of art and design, studying a wide variety of media and techniques, as well as art history, contemporary art and film studies. That year was fantastic – to study so many areas of art in an inspiring environment and be taught by renowned artists, including the late Howard Arkley (pp. 12–13, 134–5). I then reapplied for VCA Painting with my folio and was accepted.

How and where did you begin exhibiting?

During my second year at VCA, I had a solo exhibition, which was a great experience. I sold quite a few works, although some were bargains at just $25!

After graduating, I became involved in an artist-run space, 1st Floor, where I had a solo exhibition in 1994. Being part of the artist-run space was a positive experience

and allowed me the freedom to exhibit challenging and experimental work.

In 1996, I had my first solo exhibition at a commercial gallery, Sutton Gallery in Fitzroy, where I exhibited *Li Ji (Li Ji)* (p. 26), an installation made entirely from chenille sticks.

Tell us something about your use of different media.

At art school, I became antipainting and consciously used traditionally feminine craft materials.

From about 1998, I started to use ink markers and aerosol enamel on paper, influenced by comic-book graphics and graffiti lettering. I was then inspired to make a 2D animated video, for which I applied for and received an Arts Victoria Women's Art Award grant. This project became *Li Ji Warrior Girl* (p. 60), a 14-minute video.

After working on the computer for months, I had the urge to return to painting. Mike (husband and artistic collaborator Michael Pablo) and I had been experimenting with making and spraying stencils directly onto walls, paper and other surfaces. In 2001, I started painting on canvas in acrylic and aerosol enamel.

How have the grants and overseas residencies influenced your work?

The 1999 grant allowed me time to focus and develop my work into an animation. My son, Rali, was born that year, so it relieved some of the financial pressures of being an artist with a family to support.

Before receiving the Australia Council for the Arts grant for the self-organised residency in Harlem, I had unsuccessfully applied three times for the PS1 studio in New York. The street life, culture and night-life of Harlem, New York's famous melting pot, was so inspiring for my work. I saw a fantastic range of exhibitions at galleries and museums.

In Harlem, I made small paintings on canvas and maple wood panels, which became part of a series of works for an exhibition I had at Sutton Gallery on returning to Melbourne, titled *From Harlem to Noco: The Hybrid Life of Li Ji* (2004).

The character Li Ji has been an important part of your work since the mid-1990s. Why does she continue to be important?

I was intrigued by the story of a girl who pretends to sacrifice herself to the giant python but instead takes a sword and a dog and slays the beast to save the girls in her village. I also wondered about the fairy-tale ending of her becoming queen.

Li Ji represents a major part of my work. I have adapted her from ancient warrior girl to other lives and used her to explore issues important to me, such as cultural identity, family, history and belonging. She is a female warrior spirit who promotes strength and positive energy in today's crazy world.

Tell us something about *Harlem Li Ji*.

Harlem Li Ji was inspired by a young woman I saw walking with her son near our apartment in Harlem. She had a braided mohawk hairstyle, and I thought she represented a fierce street style. In the painting, the figure wears a futuristic body suit based on beetle patterns that remind me of batik material, which my grandmother had given me from Malaysia, as well as the striking and colourful African batik that some ladies wear in Harlem.

What do you enjoy most about being an artist?

I love creating art and expressing ideas, and I especially love painting. I like having an unconventional lifestyle and flexible hours so I can spend time with my son and family.

I stay up very late many nights to work towards deadlines for projects, proposals and exhibitions. Although it can be very stressful, I really enjoy creating a series of works for solo exhibitions. It is also great to be included in group exhibitions, to meet other artists and to experience their work.

I have been fortunate to have my income increase from sales of my work, but it can be sporadic. Applying for grants takes a lot of time and motivation, but it has been worth it to fund projects, exhibitions or travel.

I am really happy to have dedicated my time to what I have always wanted to do and love doing.

1. Identify two factors that might have influenced Beynon's success and development as an artist. Explain your choices.
2. Explain how Beynon has used Li Ji in her work to explore a range of ideas and interests.

1st Floor Artists & Writers Space was an artist-run space that operated in Melbourne between 1994 and 2002. Along with several other contemporary artist-run spaces, including Store 5 and Art Projects, it made a significant contribution to the Melbourne contemporary art scene and played an important role in the career of many artists, including Beynon.

PS1 is a contemporary art space and institution associated with The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The dog figure that appears in Beynon's works is a guardian spirit that represents companionship and protection.

In 2015, Beynon's large-format colour hardback book *An-Li: A Chinese Ghost Tale*, based on a retelling of a supernatural Chinese story, was published by Art & Australia. The publication coincided with Beynon's solo exhibition of the same name of paintings, watercolours, suspended sculptural installation and multi-channel animated video work at the TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Beynon has been a finalist in many art awards, including the Archibald Prize, Sir John Sulman Prize, Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, Portia Geach Memorial Award, The Gold Award and the National Works on Paper award.

ON DISPLAY

6.5 PLACES AND SPACES FOR ART

Art can be found displayed in many different places and spaces.

Did you know that more people visit galleries than attend Australian Rules football games?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for further information about participation in the arts.

The term 'art museum' is used to describe an organisation that collects and displays art. In Australia, such institutions are often also referred to as galleries.

The first public galleries were established in Europe in the eighteenth century. Before then, artworks were collected by the nobility and religious institutions and were mainly made on commission.

Galleries

Art galleries are places devoted to displaying artworks, but not all galleries are the same.

Public art galleries

Would you like to own a fabulous piece of contemporary art or perhaps some ancient Chinese ceramics? You (and the rest of the Australian public) already do!

Collecting art is an important role for most **public galleries**. The major state galleries have large collections that include artworks from many cultures and historical periods. Apart from exhibiting artworks from their own collections, public galleries often present temporary exhibitions of local and international artworks borrowed from other galleries, collectors or artists.

Public galleries take special care to preserve the artworks they collect and exhibit. This is known as conservation. Public galleries are also actively involved in researching art and presenting programs, including talks and workshops, to encourage participation in the arts.

iStock.com/Nils Versemann

The National Gallery of Victoria, founded in 1861, is Australia's oldest public gallery.

As well as the large state galleries, Australia has many smaller galleries managed by local councils or universities.

Public galleries are partly funded by public money; however, they cover a significant proportion of their costs by other means, including sponsorship.

DISCUSS

Is it important that we have public galleries in our community? Why?

Should funding art galleries be an important government priority? Why?

Most Australian public art galleries are free to visit. Is that important? Why?

Commercial art galleries

Commercial art galleries are privately owned and operated, and they usually represent a number of artists whose works they promote, exhibit and sell. Exhibitions change regularly and are open to the public.

Exhibitions at commercial galleries generally feature the most recent work of an artist. Being represented by a commercial gallery is often the most effective way for an artist to promote, exhibit and sell their artwork. Artists pay the gallery a fee: usually a percentage of the money earned from sales of their artwork.

Artist-run galleries

Artists sometimes form a group and set up an art gallery to provide exhibition opportunities for themselves and others.

Artist-run galleries are organised in many different ways. Artists are usually selected to present an exhibition based on a proposal. Artists pay a fee for using the gallery space and manage their own exhibition organisation.

Artist-run galleries provide artists who are not represented by a commercial gallery with valuable opportunities to exhibit and sell their work. Both emerging artists as well as established artists, who for various reasons might not want to be involved with a commercial gallery, exhibit work at artist-run galleries.

Beyond the gallery

Artworks can be seen in many places other than in art galleries – from private homes to public spaces.

Many towns and cities have public art. In the past, it was common for important community leaders or local events to be commemorated by a public artwork. Monumental sculptures or **murals** were the most common forms of public art.

Public art continues to be important; however, contemporary public artworks can take many forms, and they are not always permanent. Consider, for example, **Jon Campbell**'s *Yeah Yeah Yeah Billboard* in Altona, which was commissioned by the local council in 2009 following the popular success of the artist's *'Yeah' Flag* (p. 194). Seeing such artworks does not require a visit to a gallery; audiences pass them as they go about their daily lives. They provide a point of wonder and interest in the environment.

Many contemporary artists choose to display their art in locations other than galleries. Sometimes they do this because of the meaning a location can add to an artwork, for example, when **Patricia Piccinini** exhibited SO2 at the Melbourne Zoo (pp. 166–7).

Some artists create site-specific art for particular environments. *Arches* by **Andy Goldsworthy** (p. 56) is one of a collection of significant sculptural works, most of which have been commissioned, on a privately owned farm in a spectacular landscape north of Auckland, New Zealand. The farm is open to the public by appointment on a limited number of days each year.

Courtesy Hobsons Bay City Council. Photo: Tania Blackwell

Jon Campbell
Australian, b. 1961
Yeah Yeah Yeah Billboard, 2009
Koroit Creek Road, Altona
Commissioned by Hobsons Bay City Council

1. Identify a public gallery in Australia that you would like to visit. Look at the gallery's website. What would you most like to see there and why?
2. Suggest two reasons why a commercial gallery would be an effective way for an artist to promote, exhibit and sell their artworks.
3. Name a place where you have seen original artworks displayed, other than in an art gallery. Briefly describe the type of artwork, and how and why it was displayed in this location.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about some interesting international non-gallery art sites.

Photo: David Hartley-Mitchell, © 2016 Gibbs Farm

Andy Goldsworthy
English, b. 1956
Arches, 2005
pink leadhill sandstone blocks stacked into 11 freestanding arches
each arch, 7 m long; each block, 1.4 m²
Gibbs Farm, New Zealand

EXPLORE

Choose a contemporary artist who interests you from those discussed in this book. Find out at least two different places where this artist's works have been exhibited. Find out two things about each location.

The artwork caption will give you hints about where to start your research. Look online to find other galleries or exhibitions the artist has had work displayed in.

EXPLORE

Find an interesting place, outside a gallery, where one or more artworks are displayed. Prepare a short presentation about the place and the artwork(s) displayed there, and explain how you think the place in which it is displayed adds to the artwork.

Once everyone in the class has presented their findings, vote on the most interesting display.

ON DISPLAY

6.6 ON EXHIBITIONS

Artworks are frequently displayed in exhibitions. Exhibitions are permanent or temporary displays of one or more artworks. Exhibitions can be found in dedicated art spaces, such as galleries, and in many unexpected places.

A **biennale** is an exhibition held every two years. A **triennial** exhibition is held every three years. Some international biennales and triennial exhibitions are significant events in the contemporary art world, such as the famous Venice Biennale, first held in 1895.

The Biennale of Sydney and the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane are important contemporary art exhibitions that attract large audiences. These exhibitions present innovative Australian and international contemporary art.

Many famous exhibitions mark significant turning points in artistic and cultural history.

Internationally, these include the Salon des Refusés, Paris, 1863; the International Exhibition of Modern Art, also known as the Armory Show, New York, 1913; the Degenerate Art Exhibition, Munich, 1937; and Sensation, London, 1997, and later in New York and Berlin.

Locally significant exhibitions include the 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition, Melbourne, 1889 (p. 207), and The Field, Melbourne, 1968.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a time-lapse video of the installation of the salon-style display at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Exhibitions about ...

Exhibitions are rarely a purely random selection or arrangement of artworks. Artworks are usually carefully selected and grouped. Often, a **curator** is responsible for developing and researching the idea for an exhibition and selecting and arranging the artworks.

Many exhibitions are curated to focus on one or more of the following:

- an artist
  Such exhibitions focus on artworks by one artist. Often, the focus is the artist's most recent work, but a **retrospective** exhibition includes artworks from throughout an artist's career.
- a time or place
  Some exhibitions focus on artworks from a particular culture or period in history.
- a style
  Some exhibitions display artworks that are related in style. Such artworks are often by artists who have worked closely together, perhaps in a group or as part of an **art movement**.
- an artform, media or technique
  Some exhibitions bring together artworks made with similar media or techniques.
- a subject or theme
  Some exhibitions focus on artworks that share the same subject matter, such as portraits, landscapes or war.
- ideas or questions
  Many exhibitions explore ideas or questions through art. Examples of such themes may include the role of pattern and decoration in art, how national identity is expressed in art and the links between art and science.

The art of display

How people see and understand any artwork is influenced by how it is displayed. An artwork's appearance can be enhanced by careful placement, lighting and colour (such as coloured walls). The relationships between artworks in an exhibition are also important because they help make connections between artworks and the themes or ideas that are the focus of the exhibition.

In large art organisations, curators often work with a team of people, including designers, to display artworks. The design of an exhibition – including the structure of the space, the arrangement of artworks in the space, colour, lighting and furniture – can be an important influence on how an audience experiences and understands an exhibition.

The display of nineteenth-century European art at the National Gallery of Victoria includes a salon-style room. In this space, paintings are presented in a dense display that is inspired by how art was presented in the famous Paris Salon exhibitions (1748–1890) and at the Royal Academy of Arts exhibitions in London during the same period.

The Aboriginal Memorial in the National Gallery of Australia is made up of 200 hollow log coffins, which were made by Yolngu artists from central Arnhem Land (pp. 22–3). The work is a memorial to all the Aboriginal

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The National Gallery of Victoria displays some of its nineteenth-century art in a salon-style hang.

people who have lost their lives defending their land. It was inspired by the Australian Bicentenary in 1988, which marked 200 years of European settlement.

The meandering path that visitors follow through the display was inspired by Arnhem Land's Glyde River, which links the saltwater people of the coast with the freshwater people inland. The different clans' distinctive traditional designs are evident in the designs on the coffins. Each clan's artwork is grouped and positioned along the pathway to show the location of their country along the river and its tributaries.

The Glyde River, central Arnhem Land

During the 1960s and 1970s, the 'white cube' or white-walled gallery became a common convention for displaying **modern art**, and the convention continues to influence the display of contemporary art. Today, however, the diversity and complexity of contemporary artwork mean that it often incorporates elements that need to be presented in a certain way. Artworks may include technology and time-based components (such as sound, video or performance) or **interactive** elements.

Infinity Mirrored Room – The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away by **Yayoi Kusama** is one such complex artwork. It is a mirror-lined chamber that uses LED lights to create an immersive and dazzling display.

Sophisticated design – including multimedia elements and immersive environments – are increasingly being used by galleries.

1 Imagine you have unlimited access to any artwork in the world and can curate your own dream exhibition.
   - Decide the focus and title of your exhibition.
   - List the details (artist, title, date, collection) of at least six artworks you would like to include in your exhibition.
   - Briefly explain why you have included each artwork in the exhibition.
   - Note ideas about how you will design your exhibition and display the artworks.
2 Explore tools for digitally curating exhibitions and create an online exhibition. Present your online exhibition to your class and explain the advantages and disadvantages of the digital curation tool.

Ramingining artists
Ramingining, Northern Territory, Australia
The Aboriginal Memorial, 1987–88
natural earth pigments on hollow logs
327 cm (height) (irregular)
Purchased with the assistance of funds from National Gallery of Australia admission charges and commissioned in 1987
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Yayoi Kusama
Japanese, b. 1929
Infinity Mirrored Room – The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away, 2013
installation, mixed media
287.4 × 415.0 × 415.0 cm

Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo/Singapore, David Zwirner, New York

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for information about the Aboriginal Memorial on the National Gallery of Australia's website.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to watch a video of this artwork by Kusama.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to find several digital curating tools that will allow you to create your own gallery.

ORIGINALS AND COPIES

6.7 IS IT THE REAL THING?

Looking at and learning about art usually involves studying both original artworks and copies. What is the difference between an original and a copy?

Originals and multi-originals

When an artist makes an artwork, it is an original. Just like every live performance, original artworks are unique.

Most artworks are made in such a way that it is only possible to make one original; however, some techniques produce more than one original work. A sculptor can make a **mould** and use it several times to create a set of identical sculptures. Each sculpture is still an original because it is cast from the artist's mould. Photography, video and most printmaking techniques are among other artforms that also produce multiple originals.

When an artist makes a set of multiple original artworks, they are known as an **edition** (p. 37). An edition includes a limited number of originals, and each original artwork is usually numbered and signed by the artist.

Reproductions of artworks on posters, postcards and books are often called prints. Although the word is the same, these mass-produced prints are quite different from the original prints produced by artists.

The Rijksmuseum now awards an annual prize for the best design inspired by its collection.

A world of reproductions

Reproductions are copies of artworks. They are usually made by photographing original artworks. Looking at a photographic reproduction of an artwork is a bit like seeing a photograph of someone you know instead of seeing them in real life – it is not the same as the real thing. Reproductions can vary significantly in quality and do not always accurately capture the colour, size, detail, texture and form of an artwork.

Although it is ideal to see the real thing, this is not always possible. Reproductions online and in print give you access to an amazing array of artworks around the world. Contemporary technology, including the zoom tools available for some online images, also allow you to see details of artworks that are often not easy to see in real life.

Copyright laws govern the reproduction of artworks (p. 204), but some copyright holders and galleries provide generous access to images for reproduction. The famous Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has made high-resolution images of 200 000 artworks in its collection available online for personal and creative use through Rijkstudio. Rijksmuseum works are now widely collected and shared online and have inspired many creative projects and designs on objects as varied as cars, motor scooters, phone covers, clothing and crockery.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to the Rijkstudio and to images and videos of the Rijkstudio Award finalists.

CREATE

Create a design for an everyday object inspired by an artwork. Your design could incorporate a reproduction of the artwork, or it could be inspired more generally by the colour, the shape or a detail of the work. Think about how the features of the artwork can be used to create a visually pleasing design. You could research works created on Rijkstudio for inspiration.

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Jacob Marrel
German, 1614–1681
Two Tulips, a Shell, a Butterfly and a Dragonfly, 1637–45
drawing, parchment, deck paint, pencil
27.2 cm × 35.0 cm
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Volkswagen Marrel

Copies can be originals

For as long as people have been making art, other people have been copying it.

For centuries, artists have learnt from other artists by copying their work (pp. 168–9). Before artworks could be reproduced by photography, artists would make copies of famous prints and paintings so that they or someone else could have their own record of the original work. Copies of this sort are still regarded as original artworks because they are made by an artist. The copies can be quite valuable artworks; however, because the ideas and techniques are taken from someone else, they are usually not as highly valued as the artworks they are copied from.

Contemporary artists often copy or appropriate existing artworks to suggest new ways of looking at the subject matter (pp. 170–1).

1 List four different places where you can find reproductions of artworks. What types of reproductions are found in each place?

2 Although reproductions can never replace original artworks, list three ways that a reproduction can be useful.

A question of attribution

The portrait pictured was once believed to be a **self-portrait** by Dutch artist Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (p. 84).

There had been doubts about this portrait since its purchase by the National Gallery of Victoria in 1933. In 1972, the Rembrandt Research Project, a group of Rembrandt experts, visited Australia and concluded that the painting was not painted by Rembrandt. They found two other Rembrandt paintings owned by the gallery were genuine.

People who have great expertise in a particular artist's work can often tell if a work is genuine just by looking. They can identify a work by the distinctive features of an artist's style, such as the artist's painting technique.

Scientific methods, such as infra-red photography, can also be used to examine an artwork. Science can reveal whether the materials and techniques are the same as those known to have been used by the artist. In 1997, a technical examination of the canvas and ground layer of the portrait of Rembrandt by **conservators** revealed that the painting

Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (studio of)
Rembrandt, 1660s
oil on canvas
76.5 × 61.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1933 (104–4)

was probably painted when Rembrandt was alive. Further research has since confirmed that the ground layer used was unique to Rembrandt's studio, and the canvas is from the same bolt as an undisputed painting by Rembrandt. The work is therefore now definitively linked to Rembrandt's studio, and it is believed to have been painted by one or more of his assistants. These discoveries are an important step in uncovering the painting's true story.

3 Each artist's style is as unique as their handwriting. Ask a friend or family member for a sample of their handwriting, at least a paragraph long. Annotate the sample, identifying six features of their handwriting that you could use to identify the person's writing elsewhere.

EXPLORE

Choose a well-known artwork and collect as many different reproductions of it as possible. How do the reproductions differ? Which do you think is most like the original? Why?

DISCUSS

How does the knowledge that the painting is not by Rembrandt influence the way the painting is viewed and valued? Why?

In the late nineteenth century, when Rembrandt's work was very popular, the number of paintings believed to be by Rembrandt increased. Many of these paintings were probably copies made by Rembrandt's many students, assistants or admirers but incorrectly attributed to Rembrandt.

Many artworks are rare or valuable. Some people create artworks that are close copies to trick others into thinking that they are the valuable originals.

When a copy is deliberately identified or sold as something it is not, it is called a **fake** or a **forgery**. Professional forgers use many tricks and techniques to make their work look genuine, so it often takes an expert eye to detect a forgery.

Like all fraud, forging art is a serious crime.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to a series of mini documentaries about uncovering and authenticating a lost Rembrandt painting.

ORIGINALS AND COPIES

6.8 ARTISTS' RIGHTS

Anyone working with artworks, including copies of artworks, needs to be aware of artists' rights.

Copyright

How do you feel when someone copies your work and does not ask you for permission or acknowledge your work?

Copyright laws protect artists' rights. When artists create an artwork, they automatically own the artwork's copyright. When artists sell an artwork, unless they agree otherwise, they still own the copyright on the artwork. Copyright is quite separate from the artwork. Copyright is like property and can be given, sold or transferred to another person, independent of the artwork.

Copyright generally applies to an artwork for the life of the artist and for 70 years after the artist's death. It is very common for an artist's family to own copyright after an artist dies.

By law, anyone who reproduces an artwork must ask the permission of the person who owns the artwork's copyright. The copyright owner has the right to decide when, where and how an artwork is reproduced. They may also charge a fee to reproduce the work.

The copyright for many Australian artists is managed by their art dealers or by Viscopy, a non-profit agency established in 1995 with the help of the Australian Government.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to information sheets on copyright and moral rights.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the debate about Wanjina street art.

Newspix/Andy Tyndall

A Wanjina-style figure amid graffiti in Perth is one of many that caused controversy.

1 Imagine you are an emerging artist trying to establish your career. Would you give permission to have your work reproduced in:
- a blog post or book about the problems with contemporary art
- a calendar featuring interesting artworks to be produced and sold by a local business
- an article in an art magazine about emerging artists
- a chapter in a school textbook about the working life of an artist?

Why would you agree to or refuse each of the above? Would you charge a fee for any of the above? Which ones and why?

Moral rights

A company purchased a sculpture for the foyer of a building. It was too tall, so they cut off the top. How do you think the artist who created this work might have felt? This story is often told in discussions about why it is important for artists to have **moral rights**.

In 2000, the Australian Government introduced legislation giving artists moral rights over their work. Moral rights allow artists to take action if their work is altered, destroyed or exhibited in a way that may damage the artist's reputation. Artists can also take action if they are not acknowledged as the creator of their work or if their work is falsely attributed to someone else.

2 Imagine you are responsible for installing artworks in a public building. List two things you can do to make sure you respect the moral rights of the artists whose work you display.

Cultural rights

Many Indigenous art images have cultural significance and belong to communities rather than to individual people. Indigenous cultural traditions determine who has the right to use particular images in their art and how. For example, the Wanjina is sacred to the

Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples of the Kimberley, and only these groups, who are all part of the Mowanjum community, have the right to paint Wanjina (pp. 146–7).

In 2006, Wanjina figures mysteriously started to appear in street art around Perth, attracting public and media interest and discussion. Like most street art, the works were made anonymously. Although the identity of the artist is still not publicly known, the artist did eventually come forward and participated anonymously in a short documentary *Who Paintin' Dis Wandjina* (2007) by Taryne Laffar, which presents the perspectives of both the artist and the Mowanjum community. At the request of the Mowanjum community, the artist also stopped painting Wanjina.

3 Why do you think the anonymous street artist stopped painting Wanjina at the request of the Mowanjum community but was not deterred by the laws that make many forms of street art illegal?

Art business

Artworks and artists' reputations have been used for commercial purposes that the artist could never have anticipated.

The Scream by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (p. 138) is widely admired as a work of great emotional intensity. *The Scream* inflatable by Robert Fishbone and Sarah Linquist has also inspired great interest. Hundreds of thousands of inflatables have been sold since they were first produced in the early 1990s.

The commercialisation of the name and work of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) has been described as Fridamania. In 2005, the Frida Kahlo Corporation, established by Kahlo's niece, allowed the Frida Kahlo name and image to be used on a brand of tequila, an alcoholic drink. Other Kahlo products include clothing, jewellery and dolls.

4 Consider the use of works by Munch and Kahlo in the objects illustrated.
- Does the use of the image change the way you feel about the artist or artwork? Explain.
- What do you think the artist would think about this? Does this matter?

Inflatable sculpture of *The Scream*

Photos: Malcolm Cross

Frida Kahlo doll

Robert Fishbone and his partner Sarah Linquist are professional mural painters; however, *The Scream* inflatable has been their biggest financial success.

The board game The Mystery of The Scream was inspired by the theft of Munch's paintings.

Many artists inspired by ideas associated with **Postmodernism** see themselves as manipulators of images rather than as creators of entirely new images. They often copy and rework images by other artists. The **appropriation** and reworking of existing images can create challenges for copyright law, which is based on the belief that artists have the right to own and control new images they create.

5 If you were a director of an art gallery, would you allow these products to be sold in the gallery shop? Why?

DISCUSS

Create a class collection of images of well-known artworks and artists in advertising.

Find out a few facts about each artwork and artist. Suggest why each artwork was chosen to use in this way.

Many people view the use of images of well-known artworks and artists in advertising and commercial products as amusing and clever, and even good for art and artists. Other people believe such products trivialise the artists and artworks. What do you think?

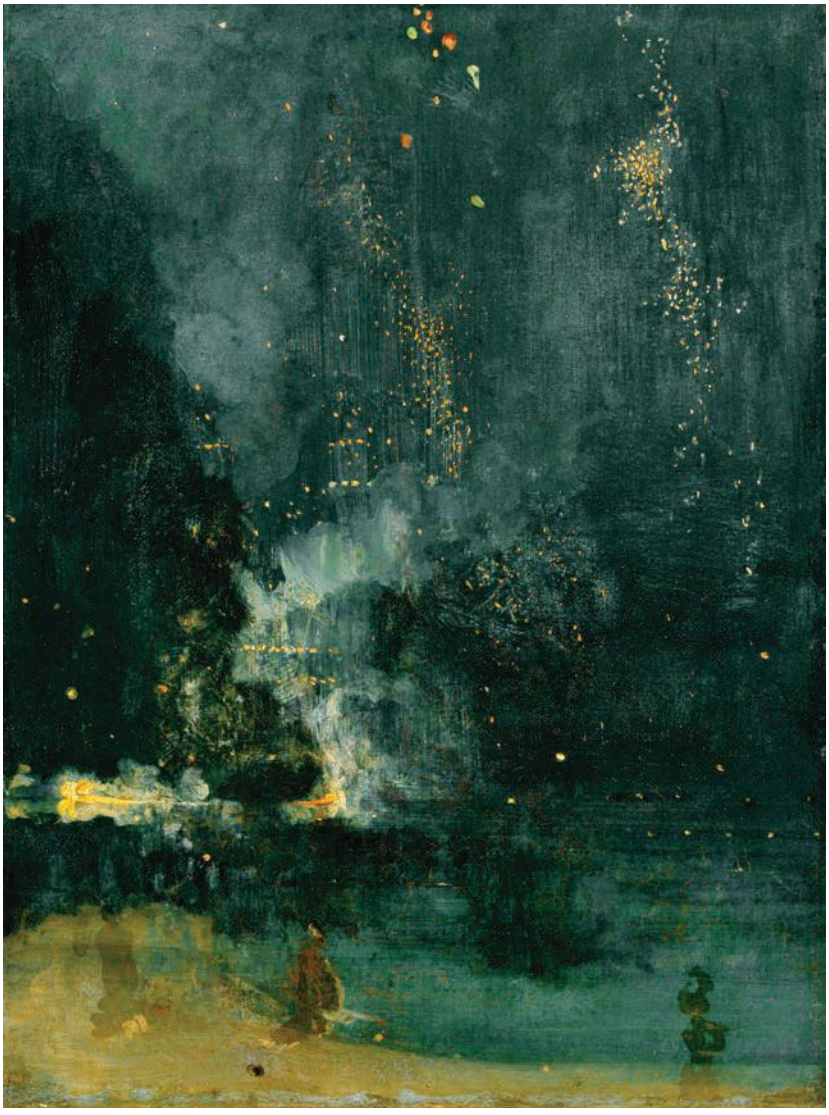
Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about Kahlo and her art.

ART AND CONTROVERSY

6.9 CHALLENGING CONVENTION

People have many ideas and beliefs about what is important or valuable in an artwork, but these ideas vary from person to person and across history and cultures.

When ideas about what is important or valuable in artwork clash, there is often controversy. This often happens when artists challenge convention.



Niday Picture Library/Alamy Stock Photo

James Abbott McNeill Whistler
American, 1834–1903
Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket, 1875
oil on panel
60.2 × 46.7 cm

Art for art's sake

Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket by American-born, London-based **James Abbott McNeill Whistler** (1834–1903) focuses on the abstract beauty of fireworks exploding against a foggy night sky. The composition of the painting is dominated by a mass of velvety black, deep green and blue-grey tones. This mass is illuminated by contrasting strokes and scattered specks of brilliant yellow and white, inspired by distant lights and the sparks of fireworks floating in the air. A few small figures can be made out in the foreground, but they are cloaked in darkness.

Whistler's focus on the abstract beauty of his subject reflects the 'art for art's sake' philosophy of the nineteenth-century **Aesthetic Movement**. In works such as *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*, Whistler translated visual experience into poetic tonal and colour harmonies. His works were a radical departure from conventional painting styles that valued narratives, morals, clearly defined forms and descriptive details. Whistler often used musical terms such as 'nocturne', 'harmony' or 'arrangement' in the titles of his paintings to emphasise his focus on aesthetic qualities.

Art on trial

When *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* was exhibited in London in 1877, it provoked a strong reaction from the influential art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900). Ruskin accused Whistler of asking for 'two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face'.[23]

Whistler sued Ruskin for libel. Their court case generated widespread media coverage and discussion among art experts and the public about what was valuable and important in art.

To nineteenth-century audiences accustomed to traditional styles of painting, the work looked unfinished. The satirical magazine *Punch* characterised the painting as 'Above, all fog; below, all inky flood. For subject – it had none.'[24]

Whistler had to vigorously defend his painting, which he explained was an artistic arrangement rather than a view. In response to a question about how long it had taken him to make the painting, he replied it was made 'in a couple of days'.[25]

When queried about whether he was asking 200 guineas for the labour of two days, he replied dramatically, 'No. I ask it for the knowledge I have gained in the work of a lifetime.'[26]

Whistler won the court case, but he was awarded only a token amount for damages and had to pay half the court costs.

1 Explain two concerns that emerged from the controversy about *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*.

2 Identify and explain two points that Whistler made to defend his painting.

3 What do you think Whistler meant by the 'knowledge [he had] gained in the work of a lifetime'? Why did he believe this contributed to the value of the painting?

DISCUSS

Do the ideas about art that were debated in the Whistler versus Ruskin controversy or the comments by critics of the 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition have any relevance to contemporary art? Explain.

Creating an impression

In August 1889, a group of artists associated with the development of plein-air painting around Melbourne – including **Tom Roberts** (pp. 124–5, 150), **Charles Conder** (pp. 124–5), **Arthur Streeton** (1867–1943) and **Frederick McCubbin** (p. 104) – presented an exhibition of some of their recent work to the public. The title of the 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition was inspired by the size of many of the paintings (9 × 5 inches, approximately 23 × 13 centimetres) and the artists' intention to increase the public's interest in and awareness of **Impressionism**.

Rather than descriptive detail and clearly defined forms, Impressionist painters sought to capture a general impression of colour. The direct painting techniques and relative informality of the paintings, evident in the sketch-like appearance of works such as *Mentone*, broke with many of the conventions of traditional studio painting.

The influence of Whistler was evident in many aspects of the exhibition. Many of the paintings had tonal and colour harmonies and compositions inspired by Whistler's work. The paintings' presentation was also influenced by Whistler; the paintings were displayed in large, plain wooden frames, and the exhibition space was decorated fashionably with silk drapery, Japanese screens and fresh flowers.

Tom Roberts
Australian, 1856–1931
Mentone, 1888
oil on wood panel
11.0 × 18.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1955 (3194–4)

Two hundred guineas, the price of Whistler's painting, was a large sum of money at the time.

The critical response

The artists sold a substantial number of paintings and attracted positive reviews, but they also were criticised. The influential art critic James Smith (1820–1910), a trustee of the National Gallery of Victoria, wrote a scathing review in *The Argus* newspaper on 17 August 1889.

> The modern impressionist asks you to see pictures in splashes of colours, in slap-dash brushwork ... In an exhibition of paintings you naturally look for pictures, instead of which the impressionist presents you with a varied assortment of palettes. Of the 180 exhibits catalogued on the present occasion, something like four-fifths are a pain [in] the eye. Some of them look like faded pictures seen through several mediums of thick gauze; others suggest that a paint-pot has been accidentally upset over a panel of nine inches by five; others resemble the first essays of a small boy, who has just been apprenticed to a house-painter.[27]

The artists displayed the review at the entrance of their exhibition, which drew interested and curious crowds.

4 In what way does *Mentone* reflect:
- the artists' ideas about Impressionism
- shared interests with Whistler?

5 What do Smith's comments reveal about what he thinks is important in art?

Many of the paintings in the 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition were painted on wooden cigar box lids.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** for more information about Whistler's work and the controversial court case.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition on the National Gallery of Victoria's website.

ART AND CONTROVERSY

6.10 ANYTHING GOES?

Artists today create art using a wide range of materials and techniques, some of which challenge not only art conventions but social and cultural values. Does anything go?

The Sensation exhibition was shown in New York City at the Brooklyn Museum in 1999

Sensation was scheduled to travel to the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, but the exhibition was cancelled due to problems associated with the exhibition's commercial sponsorship.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read more about Quinn and to watch a short video of the director of the National Portrait Gallery, London, speaking about *Self 2006*.

Pasteurisation is a process most commonly used for milk. Milk (or in this case, blood) is carefully heated to kill microorganisms that may cause disease or fermentation.

When Quinn is making his blood sculptures, he visits the doctor every six weeks. The blood is collected in the same way as it is collected for a blood donation.

The art of Sensation

Sensation was a famous exhibition of contemporary art. It was first presented at the Royal Academy of Arts in London between 18 September and 28 December 1997, and later shown in New York and Berlin.

The subject matter and materials used in a number of the artworks shocked some audiences. British artists **Marc Quinn** (b. 1964) and **Damien Hirst** (b. 1965) were two of the artists represented. Since Sensation, each of these artists has continued to make art that sometimes causes a sensation.

Photo: Marc Quinn Studio

Lifelike

Self 2006 is a very lifelike **self-portrait** in more ways than you may at first anticipate. The artwork is a cast of the artist's head filled with 4.5 litres of his blood. The sculpture is displayed in a special refrigerated case that keeps the pasteurised blood frozen.

Self 2006 is now in London's National Portrait Gallery and is the fourth in an ongoing series. The artist made the first sculpture in 1991, and he has continued to make a new version every five years. Many of Quinn's works deal with themes related to death and the human body. This series records the artist's ageing and physical deterioration.

Rembrandt's extensive series of self-portraits were a source of inspiration for Quinn's self-portraits. Quinn has explained that the work reflects his desire 'to push portraiture to an extreme, a representation which not only has the form of the sitter, but is actually made from the sitter's flesh'.[28]

1 Identify two things that you believe Quinn is trying to achieve in this series of self-portraits. Use a PMI chart to evaluate Quinn's work. Do you think he has been successful in achieving his aims? Why?

DISCUSS

Are there materials, subjects or themes that are not appropriate for artists to explore?

Marc Quinn
English, b 1964
Self 2006, 2006
blood (artist's), stainless steel, perspex and refrigeration equipment
208 × 63 × 63 cm
Courtesy Marc Quinn Studio

2 Identify some of the challenges that you think this work might present for
   - the artist
   - the gallery displaying the work
   - audiences.

   Consider the making, collecting, displaying and preservation of the work.

A matter of life and death

The **installation** *In & Out of Love (White Paintings & Live Butterflies)* was first created by Damien Hirst in 1991. The work is a specially humidified room with white canvases around the walls. Butterfly pupae were attached to each canvas and, during the course of the exhibition, the butterflies hatched, fed on flowers, fruit and sugar water, bred and eventually died.

The installation is part of the artist's ongoing investigation into themes related to life and death, including the difficulties many people have with ideas related to death. Butterflies appear in numerous other works by Hirst. The artist is fascinated by how they maintain the appearance of life after death. He also sees butterflies, which are widely viewed as symbols of freedom, as having a universal meaning and appeal to audiences.

When *In & Out of Love (White Paintings & Live Butterflies)* was included in a major exhibition of Hirst's work at the Tate gallery in 2012, a controversy erupted about his use of live butterflies. Numerous headlines focused on the fact that thousands of butterflies died during the exhibition.

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals argued:

> Damien Hirst's quest to be edgy is as boring as it is callous … Butterflies are beautiful parts of nature and should be enjoyed in the wild instead of destroyed for something predictable and unimaginative.[29]

The Tate gallery and the artist worked with a butterfly expert to create the work. A Tate spokesman explained:

> The butterflies used in this work … were selected from varieties known to thrive in the conditions created. The butterflies lived out the final stage of their natural life cycle inside this room. Approximately 400 butterflies were introduced to the exhibition over the course of each week, with many enjoying longer lifespans than in the wild due to the high quality of this environment.[30]

Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd

Damien Hirst
English, b. 1965
In & Out of Love (White Paintings & Live Butterflies), 1991
installed at Tate Modern, 2012
primer on canvas with pupae, steel, potted flowers, live butterflies, formica, MDF, bowls, sugar-water solution, fruit, radiators, heaters, cool misters, air vents, lights, thermometers and humidistats
dimensions variable

Patrick Barkham, a natural history writer, wrote, 'Hirst's butterflies encourage us to reflect on how ephemeral life is for every insect – and for their human spectators.'[31]

3 People's opinions will be informed by their experience and values. Where can you see evidence of this in two of the opinions presented?

4 Which opinion(s) do you find most compelling or convincing? Why?

5 Do you think that the critics of this work were only concerned with the welfare of the butterflies or do you think they might have had other concerns about the work? Explain.

DISCUSS

How does Hirst's work differ from a live butterfly house in a zoo? Why do exhibits in zoos not attract the same controversy?

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Hirst's website, further information about his 2012 Tate exhibition and news articles related to the controversy surrounding his work.

6.11 A CONTROVERSIAL ACQUISITION

Collecting art is an important part of a public art gallery's role; however, occasionally a new acquisition can spark controversy.

Approximately 600 art students signed a petition in support of the purchase of *Blue Poles* and sent it to the director of the National Gallery of Australia.

Price, politics and a public gallery

One of Australia's most famous controversies over an acquisition by a **public gallery** erupted in 1973 when *Blue Poles*, by American artist **Jackson Pollock** (1912–1956), was purchased for the still incomplete National Gallery of Australia. The $1.3 million paid for the painting set a world record for the work of a twentieth-century artist. The price of the painting, differing ideas about the painting's artistic value and what the gallery should collect, and contemporary politics all contributed to the controversy about the purchase.

Painting Blue Poles

As a young artist, Pollock explored a variety of painting styles until, in the late 1940s, he abandoned traditional painting techniques and tools, and he began working on large-scale paintings. Placing a sheet of canvas on the floor, he would then move around the painting, pouring and dripping paint onto it. His painting tools included sticks, hardened paint brushes and even cooking utensils.

Although Pollock worked freely and allowed paint to naturally flow, pool and drip, he carefully controlled the process. A close look at the surface of his paintings, such as *Blue Poles*, reveals many layers of paint and trails of different colours weaving and looping across the surface. From a distance, these apparently random markings create strong visual rhythms that give the painting a sense of energy and movement, and draw viewers' attention across the entire surface of the painting.

Jackson Pollock
Blue Poles, 1952 (detail)

Pollock's unconventional painting technique and style were ridiculed by some in the popular media, and he was given the nickname Jack the Dripper; however, his significance as a key figure in twentieth-century art is widely recognised. He is particularly known for the role he played in the development of **Abstract Expressionism**, an influential style of **non-representational art** in which colour and paint are used expressively.

DISCUSS

Consider the headlines and reports relating to the purchase of *Blue Poles* and other media reports about controversial artworks. What role do you think the media plays in creating or contributing to art controversies?

The media response

Immediately following the purchase of *Blue Poles*, the cost of the painting became the focus of media attention. Allegations were made that the artist must have been drunk when he painted it.

In 1973, colour photographs in newspapers were rare; however, months after the purchase, *The Herald* featured a large colour reproduction of the painting on the front page under the headline 'Would you pay $1.3 m. for this?'[32]

1 Imagine you are a journalist. Write a short article, with a suitable headline, about the acquisition of *Blue Poles* by the National Gallery of Australia. Your article should help people understand the painting and its importance for the gallery.

The politicians

Some saw the purchase of *Blue Poles* as a symbol of the progressive character of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's Labor government; however, it was also a source of political trouble for the government when concerns about the cost and artistic merit of the painting were raised in federal parliament.

Some senators tried to prevent the government from getting the money they needed to pay for the painting. TA Hartley, a

Jackson Pollock
American, 1912–1956
Blue Poles, 1952
oil, enamel, aluminium paint with glass on canvas
212.9 × 489.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1973
© Pollock-Krasner Foundation/ARS. Licensed by Viscopy, 2016

Western Australian MP, said it was 'damn foolish' to spend such a large amount on the painting:

> Really. Just put a measuring stick on it. It probably took six months to paint. If there is anyone whose work is worth $1.3 million for six months, I'd like to know who it is.[33]

2 Why might the purchase of the painting have been seen as a symbol of the progressive nature of the government?

The art world

The art world's reaction to the painting was varied. Australian artist Sir William Dargie (1912–2003) said that he would not have spent $1.3 million on the painting. 'For that amount of money or more, it would have been wiser to buy a really top European master's work.'[34]

Australian artist Andrew Sibley (1933–2015) said that it would be better to use the money to buy contemporary Australian works or the painting of a great master:

> Pollock is a great painter, but he stands alone. He is not the sort of artist you can use to educate people in the wonders of art. With Pollock people may think art is simply a matter of bringing out your oil can and dripping paint everywhere.[35]

Eric Westbrook (1915–2005), Victoria's director of the arts at the time, said:

> Jackson Pollock was one of the key figures of contemporary art and *Blue Poles* is the summit of what he did. In a few years' time people won't care what it cost – only that Australia has it.[36]

3 Identify three different ideas about the purchase of *Blue Poles* in the comments above. Choose one of the opinions and explain why you agree or disagree with it.

Blue Poles today

Today, *Blue Poles* is often described as a **destination work**: an artwork that attracts people to visit the gallery where it is exhibited.

In 1998–99, the painting was included in a major **retrospective** of the artist's work in New York and London; its inclusion showed the significance of the painting within Pollock's **body of work**. Estimates of its value were then $20–30 million.

In 2002, to mark the twentieth anniversary of the National Gallery of Australia, the gallery presented an exhibition focused on the painting and published a book about *Blue Poles*.

DISCUSS

Blue Poles was chosen by the director of the National Gallery of Australia and the purchase was approved by gallery trustees. Should politicians have interfered in the painting's purchase? Why?

DISCUSS

It is sometimes important that an art gallery buys a certain artwork, even if some people do not approve of the artwork or its price. Why do you think this is so?

6.12 ART IN THE NEWS

Some artworks become well known to the public through the way they are represented in the news. How does this affect the way audiences perceive and interpret these works?

Pablo Picasso
Spanish, 1881–1973, worked in France 1904–73
Weeping Woman, 1937
oil on canvas
55.2 × 46.2 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased by donors of The Art Foundation of Victoria, with the assistance of the Jack and Genia Liberman Family, Founder Benefactor, 1986 (IC1–1986)

The Print Collector/Alamy Stock Photo

Pablo Picasso
Spanish, 1881–1973, worked in France 1904–73
Portrait of the Mother of the Artist (Portrait de la mère de l'artiste), 1896
pastel on paper
49.8 × 39 cm
Picasso Museum, Barcelona

The Weeping Woman

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) completed his epic work *Guernica* (p. 156), a powerful response to the massacre of civilians during a bombing blitz in the Spanish Civil War, by July 1937, but he had not finished with this subject. A series of paintings he completed later that year, each focusing on a single weeping woman, have been described as postscripts to *Guernica*. The women in the paintings are directly linked to the figure of the screaming woman cradling her dead child to the left in *Guernica*.

In this example from the series, the intense grief of the distraught mother in *Guernica* is powerfully concentrated in the fragmented and contorted shapes and lines of the woman's features and in the clashing of acrid green and mauve colours. Dark, angular shapes surround the woman's crazed eyes, which overflow with tears. The jagged form of the woman's nose and her open mouth are seen in profile. Both are starkly outlined against the plain white handkerchief. The thrust of the woman's tongue suggests a loud and powerful scream. The emotional intensity of the image is strengthened by the enclosed, grey space and the looming, dark shadow in the background.

The model for *Weeping Woman* was Dora Maar (1907–1997), an artist and Picasso's companion between 1936 and 1944. Maar was a strong and passionate personality, and the anguish and emotion in *Weeping Woman* may also reflect the complex relationship she shared with Picasso.

Weeping Woman demonstrates Picasso's innovative and radical approach to art-making. Picasso showed a prodigious talent for art at a young age, and he completed many traditional, lifelike portraits, such as *Portrait of the Mother of the Artist*, in his teens.

Picasso's interest in **modern art** styles drew him to Paris, where he finally settled

DISCUSS

Over time and because of their circumstances and history, artworks can accumulate layers of meaning and significance that the artist could never have anticipated. Discuss this idea, referring to the *Weeping Woman* and other artworks you are familiar with.

How valid or important are these layers of meaning?

in 1904. Between 1907 and 1922, he played a significant role in the development of **Cubism**, a style that had a far-reaching effect on the visual arts. Picasso never stopped experimenting with new ideas. He worked in many styles and artforms throughout his long career, and he is recognised as one of the key figures in twentieth-century western art.

1 Compare *Portrait of the Mother of the Artist* with *Weeping Woman*. Suggest reasons for the differences between the two works.

A major acquisition

The *Weeping Woman* was acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria in 1985. At the time, its $1.6 million price tag made it the most expensive painting ever purchased by an Australian gallery. The next most expensive painting was *Blue Poles* (p. 211).

As with many other well-publicised and expensive acquisitions, there was some negative public reaction to the purchase. Under the heading 'Monstrous Picasso', *The Age* published a letter from Anna Encel:

> Horror of horrors. What a monstrosity. Picasso or no Picasso, who gives them the authority to buy without consulting the ordinary person in the street? We pay taxes; we have nothing to say at all?[37]

The significant funding required for the painting was raised by the gallery through the Art Foundation of Victoria and a private donation. The painting was a major purchase for the gallery, which recognised that it was important to have a Picasso in its collection.

When the acquisition of the painting was announced on 6 December 1985, the gallery director, Patrick McCaughey, declared, 'This face is going to haunt Melbourne for the next 100 years. Everyone will come to know it very well indeed, I hope.'[38] His words were more prophetic than he might have imagined.

2 What are Anna Encel's concerns about the Picasso? Imagine you are a representative of the gallery. Write a letter to Encel addressing her concerns.

Stolen!

In August 1986, eight months after it had been acquired, the *Weeping Woman* was removed from the walls of the National Gallery of Victoria. In its place was a notice regularly used by the gallery when works were removed from display on official business. Alarm was raised on Monday morning when a ransom note was received, and an investigation found the painting had been stolen.

The ransom note was addressed to the Victorian Minister for the Arts. The note demanded an increase in arts funding and the establishment of five art prizes for artists under 30. After the government refused to pay the ransom, a second note was sent. It included a burnt match and threatened to destroy the painting.

The media and the public followed the case closely.

Finally, following a tip-off to *The Age* newspaper on 19 August, the painting was found in a luggage locker at a major Melbourne railway station. It had been carefully wrapped and was undamaged.

The theft remains an unsolved crime.

3 What would the consequences have been for the gallery and audiences if the painting had been damaged or destroyed?

Picasso in popular culture

The status of the *Weeping Woman* as Australia's most expensive painting and its subsequent theft thrust the painting into the media spotlight. The painting became very well known to many people, although perhaps not in the way McCaughey had hoped.

People continue to be fascinated by the story of the theft, which has inspired a short film and several novels. The *Weeping Woman*'s place in popular culture is reflected in sometimes unexpected references to the painting, such as Jim Pavlidis's 2012 cartoon that shows Essendon Football Club coach James Hird in the guise of the *Weeping Woman*, lamenting the poor performance of his team.

4 What do you think McCaughey had in mind when he expressed his hope that people would get to know *Weeping Woman* very well indeed?

DISCUSS

Do you think the publicity surrounding the *Weeping Woman* has helped or hindered people getting to know the painting? Why?

The Art Foundation of Victoria is now known as the NGV Foundation. Its role is to attract and encourage cash donations, gifts, bequests and endowments to support the development of the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria. Contrary to popular opinion, public money does not fund acquisitions in most public galleries.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to information about the theft of *Weeping Woman*.

Ron Tandberg

Jim Pavlidis

Essendon football coach James Hird laments his team's performance.

ART AND CONTROVERSY

6.13 A PUBLIC ART DEBATE IN MELBOURNE

Public artworks are made for large audiences. Individuals and groups in these audiences often have very different ideas and opinions about art.

What is public art?

Public art is created for public places and spaces. It may be paid for with public funds or with money from private individuals or organisations. Sometimes, developers of public spaces and buildings are obliged to spend a percentage of their budget on artworks.

In the past, monumental sculptures and **murals** were the most common forms of public art; however, public art can now take many forms. Public artworks were usually permanent additions to a site, but in recent years some public artworks have been installed temporarily for periods ranging from a few weeks to a number of years.

You can find public art in a range of places and spaces, including parks, laneways, railway stations, hospitals, offices, schools and billboards.

A book on the *Vault* controversy, *Peril in the Square: The Sculpture That Challenged a City* by Geoffrey Wallis, was published in 2004.

DISCUSS

What is the role of public art? Who benefits from public art and how?

Vault in the City Square

Geoffrey Wallis

A sculpture for Melbourne

In 1978, the Melbourne City Council invited three artists to submit designs for a sculpture for the new City Square on Swanston Street. The square's architects specified that the artwork should relate to their modern, streamlined design and be a focus, perhaps through its size or colour.

In December that year, it was announced that Australian artist **Ron Robertson-Swann** (b. 1941) had won the **commission** with his sculpture, which he later named *Vault*. The announcement began a long and often bitter public debate about the project. Many people got involved, including the Melbourne City Council, the arts community and the public.

Vault is a striking sculpture made from seven massive slabs of yellow fabricated steel that are arranged at dramatic angles. Like many artists of his generation, Robertson-Swann was influenced by modern **non-representational art** styles that emphasised formal elements, such as bold, geometric shape and colour.

Opposition

Opposition to the sculpture was led by Councillor Don Osborne, who did not hide his preference for traditional and realistic art. Osborne called the sculpture a 'monstrosity' and was quoted as saying it looked like an 'advertisement for a harvesting machine' and 'left-over equipment from the Town Hall air-conditioning'. He was also responsible for nicknaming the sculpture the 'Yellow Peril'.[39]

Others argued against the work, including the Australian Guild of Realist Artists, the Victorian Artists' Society and Councillor Keith Southwick, who wondered whether the sculpture might have been more suitable for a children's playground.

Support

The strongest support for the sculpture came from Lord Mayor Irvin Rockman, Councillor

Osborne's political opponent. The debate was at times politically driven, but Rockman had an interest in art and believed that the sculpture would become a symbol of progressive thought.

Among other notable supporters were a number of art critics, including Jeff Makin (b. 1943), who wrote:

> The sculpture is a flash of colour, and a 20th-century inspiration in what is essentially a conservative 19th-century space. A space that now wants to reject it because it's afraid of new ideas, progress, youth, and the future.[40]

The result

Opposition to the sculpture posed a serious threat to the project. Robertson-Swann did not get final approval to start work until March 1979. The sculpture was installed in time for the official opening of the square in May 1980, but the battle was not over.

Osborne lobbied to have *Vault* moved from the square. Further debates, protests and a public rally to save the sculpture were to no avail. In the very early hours of 12 July 1981, the sculpture was relocated to Batman Park, under development on the Yarra River. The park finally opened in October 1982 and *Vault* attracted little controversy in its new location.

Vault was again moved in 2002 when the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art moved to a new building in South Melbourne. It now stands, and is likely to remain, alongside the dramatic, angular rusted-steel facade of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art building.

1. If you were commissioning a public artwork for your school, would you favour a temporary or permanent artwork? Why?
2. Suggest why Councillor Osborne and others were opposed to *Vault*.
3. Give two reasons why the supporters of *Vault* thought it would be an appropriate sculpture for the square.
4. Do you think that moving *Vault* from City Square was appropriate? Why?
5. Robertson-Swann said, 'It's not all that dreadful, but I don't like it. The Batman Park site attempts to tame the sculpture. It's usually seen at a considerable distance which shrinks the scale somewhat.'[41]

   Look at the photograph of the sculpture in Batman Park. Do you agree? Explain.
6. Look at the photograph of *Vault* in its current location. Do you think this location is more or less suitable for the sculpture than Batman Park? Explain why.

DISCUSS

Should developers of buildings and public spaces be required to spend money on artworks? Why?

EXPLORE

Research a public artwork in your community. Find out who made it, who commissioned it, why it was made and the intended audience.

What is your opinion of the work? Has there been any controversy associated with the work? Why?

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to read more about the *Vault* controversy.

Geoffrey Wallis

Vault at Batman Park

DISCUSS

Vault was judged to be the most suitable work for the square by the architects, a professor of fine arts and an artist. Do you think it was fair that the council later changed its mind and ignored the advice of these people? Why?

DISCUSS

Moral rights legislation was introduced in Australia in 2000 to protect artist's rights (p. 204). Do you think such legislation might have helped Robertson-Swann at any point during the controversy surrounding *Vault*? Explain.

Geoffrey Wallis

Vault in its current location outside the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in Melbourne's Southbank

6.14 AN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC ART DEBATE

The spectacular **public art** projects of Christo and Jeanne-Claude often attract international interest and debate.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude

Artists **Christo** (b. 1935) and **Jeanne-Claude** (1935–2009) met in Paris in 1958. At that time, Christo was making artworks that involved wrapping everyday objects. In 1961, they began collaborating on large-scale projects and have since created many monumental and spectacular artworks for both urban and rural environments, using fabric as their main medium. Examples of their work include wrapping part of the Australian coastline, *Wrapped Coast,* Little Bay, Sydney (1969); surrounding 11 islands with hot-pink floating fabric, *Surrounded Islands*, Biscayne Bay, Florida (1980–83); and wrapping the German parliament building, *Wrapped Reichstag*, Berlin (1971–95).

The Gates

Central Park is 843 acres (341 hectares) of parkland in New York, one of the world's busiest cities.

After moving to New York in 1964, Christo and Jeanne-Claude began thinking about creating a major public artwork for the city. Their initial unsuccessful proposal was to wrap high-rise buildings in Manhattan. A project to wrap gates in Central Park was started in 1979 and rejected in 1981; however, in 2003, they were given approval to proceed with *The Gates* in Central Park. *The Gates* was completed in 2005.

The 7503 gates were installed along 37 kilometres of curving paths in the park. The gates were all 4.87 metres high and varied in width to span the paths. Saffron nylon fabric panels were suspended like curtains from the top of each rectangular gate, falling to just above head height. Christo and Jeanne-Claude describe their work on their website:

> For those who walked through *The Gates*, the saffron colored fabric was a golden ceiling creating warm shadows. When seen from the buildings surrounding Central Park, *The Gates* seemed like a golden river appearing and disappearing through the bare branches of the trees and highlighting the shape of the meandering footpaths.[42]

A matter of time

After 26 years of planning and costs of US$21 million, paid for with Christo and Jeanne-Claude's own money, *The Gates* were officially launched on 12 February 2005. They were removed only 16 days later, on 28 February.

Unlike most other artworks, the works of Christo and Jeanne-Claude cannot be bought or owned. While they are in place, anybody can view them. When they are gone, all that remains are photographs, books, films and the memories and experiences of the audience.

Art practice

The massive **environmental art** projects of Christo and Jeanne-Claude involve years of careful planning. For each project, they make preliminary artworks, such as drawings, collages and models. They then organise materials and permissions, and plan the construction.

An estimated 4 million people visited Central Park during the 16 days that *The Gates* were on display.

Photo: Wolfgang Volz/laif/Picture Media

Photo: Wolfgang Volz/laif/Picture Media

Christo and Jeanne-Claude ***The Gates***, Central Park, New York City, 1979–2005 © Christo and Jeanne-Claude, 2005

Each work involves many people and organisations, including public officials, engineers, property owners and manufacturers. Often, hundreds of people are employed on a project to manufacture the materials, install the artwork and remove it.

Care is taken to ensure that the artworks cause no damage to the environment. At the end of each project, most materials are recycled.

All costs associated with their artworks are paid for by the artists. The artists do not accept sponsorship, and they generate income to support their work by selling earlier works and the preliminary artworks made for each project.

Audience response

The Gates project generated a lot of public interest, including positive and hostile commentary.

> *'The Gates'* is an abomination. Call me a Philistine, but how can one improve on trees, lakes and rocky outcroppings with miles of plastic-treated cloth? … the color of these bed sheets, plunked down on metal frames every 12 feet throughout the park, is so atrocious that the project's creators ought to be charged with assault.[43]
>
> Andrea Peyser

> Central Park was transformed … On that chilly morning bathed in the milky tea of February sunlight, the Gates kept changing their character. Around the Great Lawn they looked like medieval pavilions. Down near Central Park South, normally a boring part of the part, the Gates fluttered over the stone bridges like the standards of samurai.
>
> They caught every breath of wind. Whole rows rippled with a sudden gust, turning the saffron to white gold in the winter light.[44]
>
> Patrick McCaughey

1 What evidence can you see in photographs of *The Gates* that Christo and Jeanne-Claude thought carefully about the physical features of the park and how the park is used when planning their work?

2 Would an audience viewing *The Gates* in the park differ from an audience attending an art gallery? Why?

3 How do you think the temporary nature of an artwork like *The Gates* might have influenced the audience's perception of the work?

Photo: Wolfgang Volz/laif/Picture Media

Christo and Jeanne-Claude ***The Gates***, Central Park, New York City, 1979–2005 © Christo and Jeanne-Claude, 2005

4 What are the main ideas expressed in Peyser's and McCaughey's comments? Suggest reasons for their different views.

5 What is your personal opinion of *The Gates*? Why?

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Christo and Jeanne-Claude's website.

EXPLORE

Look at the website of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. Why do you think maintaining a comprehensive website about their work is an important part of their art practice?

Do you think having a website is more or less important for Christo and Jeanne-Claude than it would be for other artists who have a more traditional art practice? Why?

DISCUSS

If Christo and Jeanne-Claude were interested in making an artwork on land or property that you owned, would you consider their proposal? Why?

DISCUSS

Why do you believe artworks such as *The Gates* are extensively filmed and photographed? How are such records used by artists and art audiences?

ART AND CONTROVERSY

6.15 A CONTESTED PRIZE – THE ARCHIBALD

Art prizes often spark debate, especially when opinions about the prize-winners are widely divided.

The annual Archibald Prize for portraiture attracts many entries and many opinions. It has had some famous controversies in its history.

About prizes

Each year, a significant number of art prizes are awarded. Artists submit artworks, sometimes by invitation. The artworks are then judged, generally by a number of art experts. An exhibition of the entries is often an important part of art competitions.

Many art prizes focus on one particular type of artwork, such as the Blake Prize for religious art and the Basil Sellers Art Prize for art and sport (p. 195).

Making and transporting artworks for a competition can be expensive for artists; however, the prize money, travel opportunities and recognition that some art prizes offer can be very important in an artist's career.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn more about the Archibald Prize.

The Archibald Prize

The Archibald Prize for portraiture, named after **Jules François Archibald** (1856–1919), is one of Australia's best-known art prizes.

In addition to the main prize, judged by art experts, the People's Choice award was introduced in 1988, allowing visitors to the exhibition to vote. Since 1991, the Packing Room Prize has been awarded by the gallery staff who unpack and hang the entries.

In 2013, the Art Gallery of New South Wales introduced the Young Archies, a portrait prize for artists 5–18 years.

Follow the link from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to learn about the Young Archies.

1 The Archibald Prize attracts interest from a broad audience, including many people who are not otherwise interested in art. Suggest reasons for this.

2 Why do you think the People's Choice award and the Packing Room Prize have become such a popular part of the Archibald Prize?

William Dobell

William Dobell (1899–1970) is one of Australia's most important portrait painters.

His painting technique continued the traditions of the great masters of European art. He would build up a painting using thin layers of paint to create rich, glowing colours; however, Dobell broke with tradition in his approach to portraiture. When he painted a portrait, he was not just interested in showing what a person looked like, he wanted to capture the person's personality or character. This often led him to distort or exaggerate aspects of a sitter's appearance.

Dobell's *Joshua Smith* depicts a fellow artist and close friend. The two met when they worked together as camouflage painters in the army during the Second World War.

3 What evidence can you find in *Joshua Smith* of Dobell distorting or exaggerating the sitter's appearance?

4 What does this distortion or exaggeration suggest to you about the sitter's personality or character?

A controversy and a court case

Dobell was awarded the 1943 Archibald Prize for his portrait of Smith. The painting differed significantly from the conservative, realistic style of previous winners. Many critics supported Dobell's work and felt that it represented a new direction for the prize; however, others were shocked and outraged. A period of intense public debate followed, and record crowds visited the gallery to see the painting.

JS MacDonald (1878–1952), an art critic and former gallery director, was well known for his traditional views about painting and his dislike of modern art. He said:

> Mr Smith is pilloried to eternal, skeletal deformity in the name of up-to-the-minute portraiture ... this epitome of ugliness, malformation and gruesome taste![45]

Responding to his critics, Dobell said that when he painted a portrait he was:

> trying to create something, instead of copying something. To me, a sincere artist is not one who makes a faithful attempt to put on canvas what is in front of him, but one who tries to create something which is living in itself, regardless of its subject … The real artist is striving to depict his subject's character and to stress the caricature, but at least it is art which is alive.[46]

One of the artists who had entered the competition, Mary Edwards (1894–1988), was reported as saying that pregnant women and children should not visit the exhibition. Edwards and another entrant were convinced that the **distortion** and exaggeration in Dobell's painting made it a **caricature** rather than a portrait, and therefore not eligible for the prize under the terms of the competition. They took legal action to prevent the prize from being awarded to Dobell.

Many experts were consulted during the subsequent court case, but at the end of the case the judge supported Dobell's right to be awarded the prize. He concluded that the painting, 'although characterised by some startling exaggeration and distortion … nevertheless bore a strong degree of likeness to the subject and undoubtedly was a pictorial representation of him.'[47]

5 What do you think were the main concerns of Dobell's critics? Why?

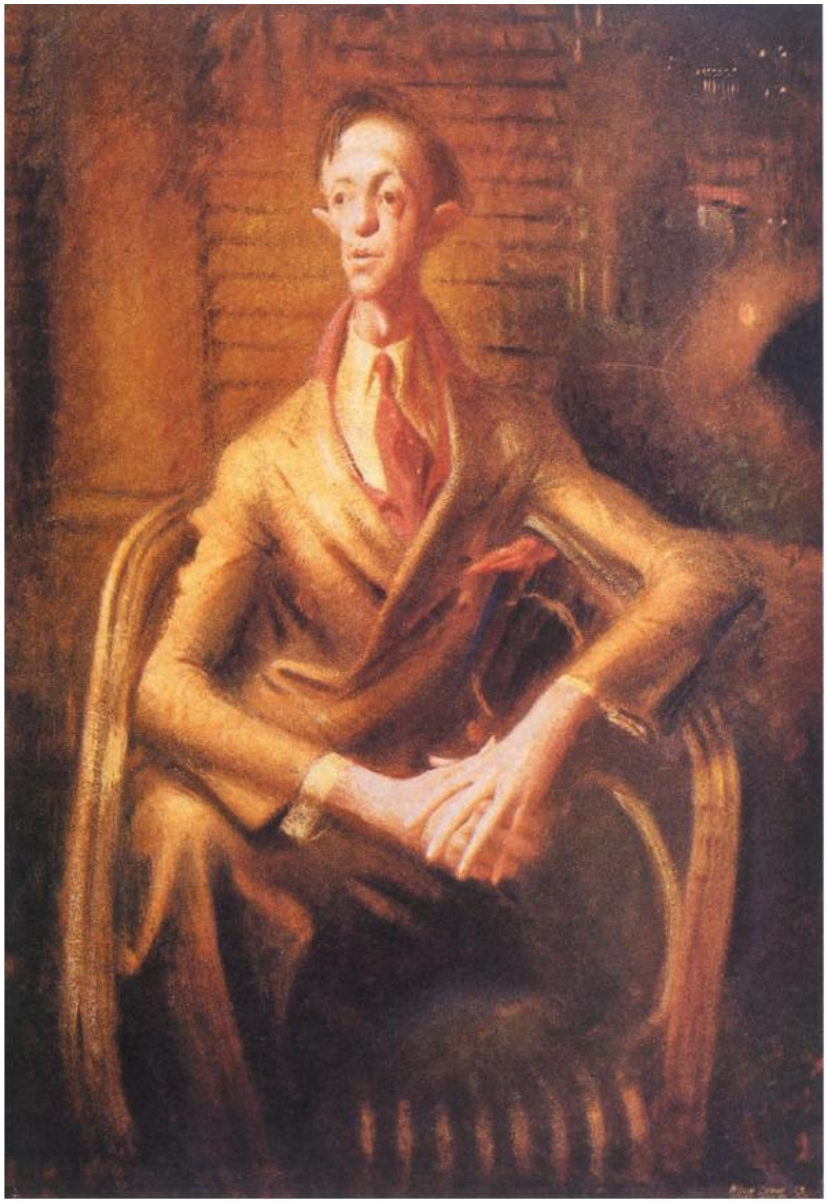
6 Based on your understanding of Dobell's aims, explain why you believe Dobell's work attracted the critics' scorn.

7 Do you think it was important for the Archibald Prize for Dobell to win the court case? Explain why.

8 Imagine you are living in 1943. Write a letter to a newspaper stating your opinion of the portrait and whether you think Dobell deserved the prize.

DISCUSS

What are the positive and negative effects of the debate and controversy that often surround the Archibald Prize?



William Dobell
Australian, 1899–1970
Joshua Smith, 1943
oil on canvas
122 × 81 cm
Private collection

EXPLORE

Other paintings that have won the Archibald Prize have also attracted controversy.

Research another controversial Archibald Prize entry. The Art Gallery of New South Wales's website is a good place to start.

DISCUSS

Dobell's *Joshua Smith* was nearly destroyed by fire in 1958. It was so badly burnt that Dobell refused to restore it. It was eventually repainted in London from a photograph, but the repainting leads to new questions about the work. Is it still a Dobell painting or is it a copy? What do you think?

6.16 ISSUES OF JUDGEMENT

The judging of popular art prizes often brings contemporary art issues to public attention.

Each year, alongside the famous Archibald Prize for portraiture (pp. 218–19), the Art Gallery of New South Wales awards the Wynne Prize and Sir John Sulman Prizes.

The Wynne Prize is offered as a result of a bequest from Richard Wynne (1822–1895). It was first awarded in 1897.

Leach won both the Archibald Prize and the Wynne Prize in 2010. At the time, he was only the third artist to win both prizes in the same year. The other two artists to do so are William Dobell (pp. 218–19) and Brett Whiteley (p. 134).

Leach's work had attracted controversy before. In 2008, he was a finalist in the Archibald Prize with a portrait of himself that clearly refers to a well-known photograph of the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler.

It is a winner

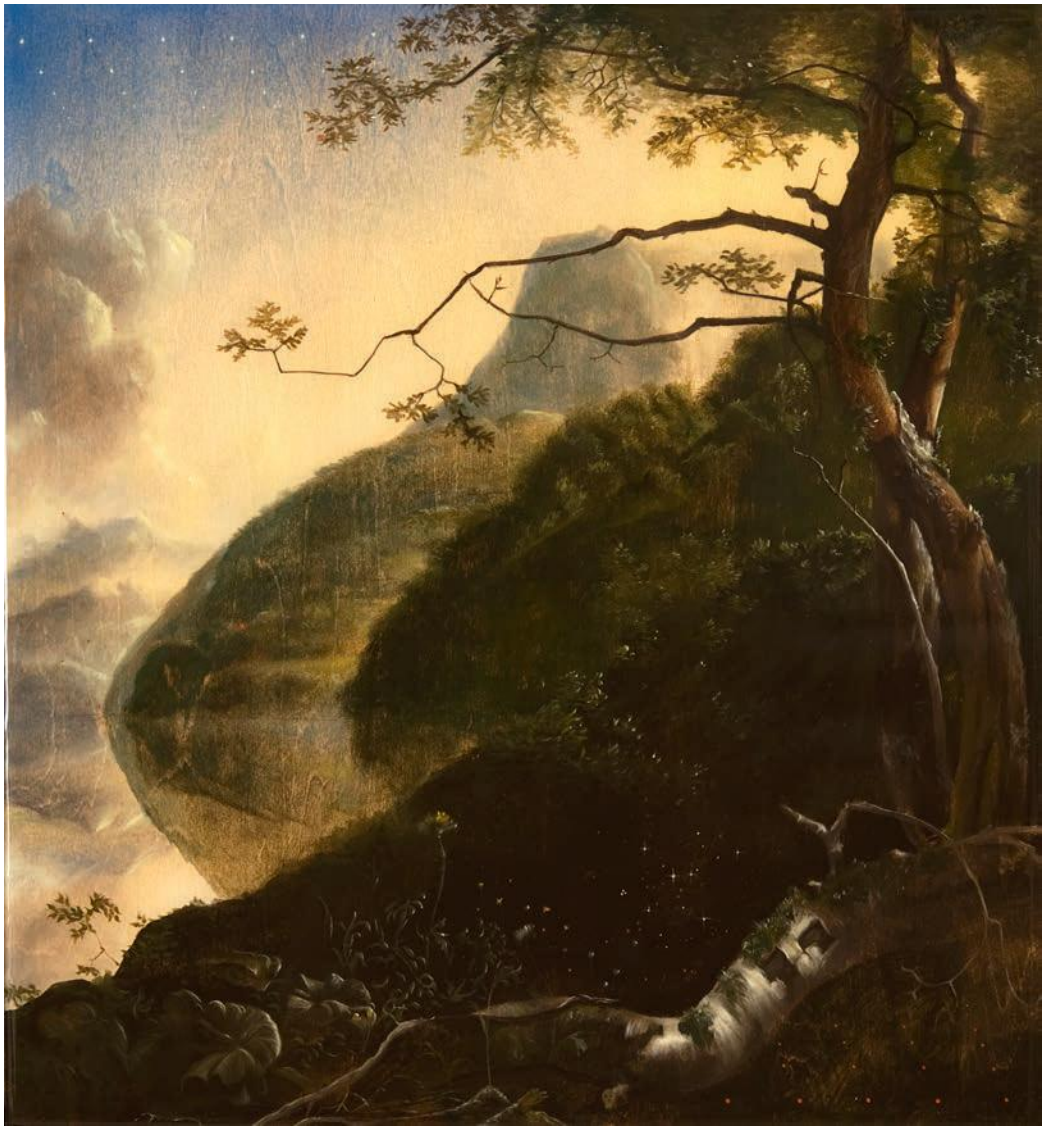
In 2010, *Proposal for Landscaped Cosmos* by **Sam Leach** (b. 1973) won the prestigious Wynne Prize, which is awarded annually by the Art Gallery of New South Wales to the best **landscape** painting of Australian scenery or to the best figure sculpture.

Leach's small work depicts an **idyllic** landscape with a view of distant mountains reflected in the glassy surface of a river or lake. In the darkened foreground, a large tree with spreading branches and a fallen log artfully frame the view. The scene is bathed in a soft glowing light.

Like a number of artworks by Leach, this painting is made using a fine, traditional painting technique. The painting clearly refers to art history. An unexpected addition to the scene (and hard to see in the reproduction) is a grid of tiny stars in the top-left corner and a similar grid of tiny red LED lights in the lower right. In conjunction with the title of the work, these elements provide a clue that the painting is drawing on tradition but also portraying the landscape in a contemporary way.

Getty Images/DeAgostini

Adam Pynacker
Dutch, 1622–1673
Boatmen Moored on the Shore of a Lake, 1660
oil on canvas on panel
97 × 85 cm
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



Sam Leach
Australian, b. 1973
Proposal for Landscaped Cosmos, 2010
oil and resin on wood
30 × 30 cm
Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

A copy or new and distinct?

Several weeks after the announcement of Leach's Archibald and Wynne wins, a controversy erupted when *Boatmen Moored on the Shore of a Lake* by Adam Pynacker (1622–1673), a seventeenth-century Dutch artist, was identified as the inspiration for Leach's winning entry.

The similarities between the two paintings are striking, but there are also some important differences. A group of figures and livestock create a clear **focal point** in Pynacker's composition. The absence of figures in Leach's painting creates a stillness that, with the addition of the stars and LED lights, has an eerie mystery about it.

Images of the paintings side by side at the same scale (Pynacker's painting is actually much larger than Leach's) were reproduced in the media, and sensational headlines fuelled a debate that raised many issues about copying.

Commentators discussed the tradition of artists copying the work of other artists (pp. 168–9) and **appropriation** (pp. 170–1).

> What I see of it, it's not influenced by that Dutch painter, it's actually copied from him. So, from my point of view, it's a flicker of that rather odious post-modern practice of appropriation, which essentially is theft.[48]
>
> Tim Storrier, landscape artist

Leach argued that despite the similarities, it was really a new and distinct work:

> I wanted to take out those things [the figures] that sort of gave me a feeling of that sort of golden, idealised past and turn the meaning of the painting into something that's about … projecting that idea into the future.[49]

For some people, the problem was that the artist had not explicitly acknowledged Pynacker's painting. Others disagreed, saying that such acknowledgement was not necessary when it was obvious that a work clearly refers to a recognisable tradition.

Leach argued that the stylistic links were obvious and that to focus on them would detract from what his work was about. He resisted the suggestion that the title of his own work should mention Pynacker. For Leach, titles are a way that he 'can give the viewers a guide into the painting', and 'the original painting itself is not actually what my work is about. My work is about an idealised future.'[50]

An Australian landscape?

Entangled in the debate about the practice of copying was another problem: the Wynne Prize is for Australian landscapes. Did Leach's painting qualify as an Australian landscape?

Leach had not only appropriated a Dutch painting's composition, the Dutch painting was inspired by an Italian landscape. Leach claimed that his idyllic scene had strong connections to the Australian landscape.

Many Australian landscape painters, including John Glover (pp. 168–9), had drawn on the European landscape tradition in forging their own views of the Australian landscape. European traditions have also influenced the physical environment in Australia; this can be seen in the sculpted gardens and European trees in the area of the Adelaide Hills where Leach grew up. Leach recalled that when he first saw Dutch Italianate paintings in the Rijksmuseum, he felt a strong sense of connection between them and the landscape that he grew up in. Leach claimed that his landscaped cosmos was an imaginative one, influenced by his experience of constructed landscapes in art and real life.

The final word

Following discussion about the debate, the Art Gallery of New South Wales reconfirmed that Leach was the winner of the Wynne Prize. The gallery issued a statement:

> The Trustees acknowledged that at the time of the judging they noted that Leach's painting had the light and air of a Dutch 17th century landscape but also recognised and appreciated its quality and its mysterious implications of the natural world … The Trustees also agreed that what might constitute an Australian landscape was a matter of interpretation and had changed enormously since the Wynne Prize was first awarded in 1897.[51]

1. Suggest how the artist has communicated his interest in an idealised future in this painting. Consider the use of appropriation and other elements in your answer.
2. Explain the two issues that you think are most important in the debate. What is your personal view on each and why?
3. Do you believe the statement by the Art Gallery of New South Wales clarifies the debate? Explain.

Leach's painting includes tiny stars and LED lights. Sam Leach
Proposal for Landscaped Cosmos, 2010 (detail)

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to Leach's website and further information about the prizes awarded by the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Follow the links from **http://artdetect3e.nelsonnet.com.au** to newspaper articles focusing on the debate about Leach's painting.

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GLOSSARY

A

abstract art
Art that displays few or no references to real objects, places or people.

Abstract Expressionism
A style of painting that originated in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s and is characterised by the fluid, rapid application of paint and the expression of feelings and emotions. Abstract Expressionist paintings are generally non-representational, but some include figurative elements.

Aesthetic Movement
A late nineteenth-century art movement that emphasised pure beauty and art for art's sake rather than art with a narrative or moral focus.

aesthetic qualities
Visual or other qualities in an artwork that evoke an emotional, sensory or intellectual response.

analogous colours
See harmonious colours.

appropriation
The process of copying, reworking and re-presenting an existing image or form to create a new artwork.

armature
A supporting frame over which a three-dimensional artwork is built.

art critic
A person who analyses, interprets and evaluates artworks.

art elements
The basic elements of artworks, including colour, line, shape, form, tone and texture.

artform
Any medium or form of artistic expression, including music, poetry, painting and drawing.

art historian
A person who studies or is an expert on art history.

art history
The study of art that focuses on the social, cultural and historical context.

art industry
All business, economic and other activities related to the making, displaying, viewing, promoting and selling of artworks.

artisan
A person skilled in a particular craft.

artist-in-residence
An artist employed to work at a place, such as a school, hospital or historical site, often to create work inspired by the place.

art movement
A trend in art, often associated with a particular style (such as Impressionism) or group of artists (such as the Surrealists).

art practice
The professional work and activity of an artist, including how and where an artist works, what their art is about, who they work with and how they present their work.

art principles
See design principles.

artwork
Any object or image made or presented as art.

assemblage
A three-dimensional artwork made by assembling a variety of materials, often including found objects.

asymmetrical balance
Balance without symmetry, achieved by using different elements on each side of a composition.

audience
People who view and experience artworks.

Australian Impressionists
A group of nineteenth-century artists, including Tom Roberts, Frederick McCubbin and Jane Sutherland, who were associated with plein-air painting and sketch-like painting techniques. They focused on capturing the fleeting effects of light and colour in nature.

B

background
The area in an artwork that seems furthest from the viewer.

balance
A design principle that describes the sense of equilibrium in a composition.

benday dots
The tiny dots that make up the colours in many commercial printing processes.

benefactor
An individual who provides a benefit to others, usually in the form of a donation or gift.

biennale
An exhibition that takes place every two years.

bird's-eye view
See viewpoint.

body of work
A collection of artworks produced by an artist over a period of time. A body of work may be an artist's lifetime work or a smaller group of related works.

botanical illustration
A drawing made to record and study the structure and form of plants.

C

calligraphy
Writing characterised by fluent, flowing lines.

caricature
An image or description of a person that exaggerates physical features for comic or satirical effect.

carving
Removing materials from a solid block or form, usually to create a sculpture.

casting
A sculpture technique that involves pouring a liquid or pressing a soft material into a mould to harden.

ceramic
Made from clay.

classical art
The art of ancient Greece or Rome. Also artworks influenced by ancient Greek or Roman art that are characterised by balanced and harmonious compositions, idealised beauty and restrained emotion and movement.

collaboration
Working with others.

collage
Art created by sticking paper, fabric, photographs or other materials onto a flat surface, such as paper or canvas.

collograph
A form of relief print made from a block (usually wood or thick card) with a raised design made using glue and textured materials.

colonial artists
Artists working in Australia soon after European settlement (late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century). Most colonial artists were born in Europe, and their work reflects the influence of European art.

Colour Field painting
A non-representational painting style, related to Abstract Expressionism, which originated in the United States in the 1950s and is characterised by large areas of unbroken colour.

commercial art gallery
A privately owned and operated gallery that sells art.

commission
A commercial arrangement where an artist produces an artwork to serve a particular purpose or need. Also a fee charged for the sale of an artwork.

complementary colours
Colours that are opposite each other on the colour wheel and have nothing in common. Also known as opposite colours.

composition
The arrangement of art elements in an artwork to create a complete design.

Conceptual art
Art in which ideas or concepts are more important than description, personal expression or formal concerns. Emerging in the United States in the 1960s, Conceptual artists often focus on ideas about art itself and challenge traditions by using non-conventional art materials and techniques, including found objects.

conservator
A professionally trained person who is responsible for the preservation and care of artworks.

construction sculpture
A sculpture created by joining separate pieces of one or more materials.

contemporary art
Art that reflects current approaches, issues and ideas.

contour lines
Lines that define form, contours and detail.

contrast
The effect achieved in a composition when art elements with nothing in common are used together.

conventions
Rules or commonly accepted practices that determine how something is done. Meaning in art is often communicated by convention; for example, black may be used to represent death.

cool colours
Colours associated with water, plants and coolness, such as blues and greens.

copyright
The right to control how a work is copied or reproduced.

cross-hatching
A pattern of parallel lines crossed with a second set of fine parallel lines. See also hatching.

Cubism
An art movement that originated in France c. 1908–18 and took a radical approach to representing three-dimensional form on a flat surface. Different views and fragments of the same subject are combined to create a single image.

curator
A person who researches, collects, cares for and displays artworks.

D

Dada
An intellectual and art movement that rejected and ridiculed the values, ideas and culture of society that it held responsible for the destruction and brutality of the First World War. Starting in Switzerland c. 1916, Dada artists pioneered new and original ideas, including the use of found objects, ready-mades and performance art.

design principles
The principles that help explain how art elements are arranged, including balance, unity, variety, rhythm, focal point and space.

destination work
An artwork that attracts people to visit the gallery where it is exhibited.

distortion
Where the natural appearance of a subject is altered or changed in some way, often to express feelings or ideas.

Dreaming
Cultural knowledge, tradition and lore in Indigenous Australian culture that derive from the creation period. This knowledge continues to govern social and religious customs and behaviour today, and it helps people live harmoniously with each other and the environment.

E

earth art
See land art.

eastern art
Art associated with eastern cultures and traditions, including those of Asia and the Middle East.

edition
A set of identical, original artworks produced by an artist using a technique that allows the production of multiple originals, such as photography, printmaking or casting.

elements of art
See art elements.

engraving
Cutting a design into a surface. In printmaking, an engraving is a form of intaglio printing where the design is cut into the surface of a printing block or plate.

en plein air
A French term meaning 'in the open air' that refers to the practice of working outdoors to paint landscapes.

environmental art
Art related to the urban or natural environment, including art made in and using elements of the environment, such as land art.

ephemeral
Lasting for only a short time.

etching
A form of intaglio print usually produced with a metal plate. The plate is covered with acid-resistant paint. A design is drawn into the paint surface. When the plate is put in an acid bath, the parts of the plate exposed by the drawing are eaten away by the acid to 'etch' the design into the plate for printing.

Expressionism
An art movement that developed in Germany c. 1905–25 (often known as German Expressionism) where artists used materials and art elements expressively to communicate meaning.

expressive art
Art where personal feelings, responses and thoughts are emphasised through the expressive use of art elements and materials.

F

fake
An artwork that is illegally presented as something it is not.

feminism
A movement that advocates that women should have rights and opportunities equal to those of men.

feminist art
Art that emphasises subjects, materials or techniques associated with women's lives.

figurative art
Art with some form of likeness to real objects, people or places. Also known as representational art.

focal point
The part of an artwork's composition that attracts attention.

foreground
The area in an artwork that seems closest to the viewer.

foreshortening
The visual effect that distorts the 'real' shape of an object but makes it appear in perspective.

forgery
See fake.

form
A three-dimensional object or representation of an object.

formal
Relating to the structure or form of an artwork.

formalism
Where the formal qualities of an artwork (art elements and materials) are emphasised over narrative, symbolic or emotional meaning.

found object
Any object (constructed or natural) chosen by an artist and exhibited as an artwork or part of an artwork.

foundry
A specialist facility for casting metal.

four-dimensional art
Art that has the four dimensions of length, width, depth and time, such as performance art, installations and moving image artworks.

G

gallery
A place devoted to exhibiting art.

geometric
Using the regular shapes or forms of geometry, such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles.

gestural
Where the gestures of the artist are obvious, such as obvious brushstrokes.

glaze
A glassy-looking surface or coating, especially on ceramics.

golden ratio
A mathematical ratio (approximately 8:13) that is based on the rounded decimal 1.618 and is associated with visually pleasing proportions.

gouache
An opaque watercolour paint.

grant
A sum of money awarded to an individual artist or group of artists, often for a specific project.

H

Hard Edge painting
A style of painting originating in the United States in the 1960s that is usually non-representational and characterised by precisely defined areas or geometric shapes of flat, smooth colour.

harmonious colours
Colours that are near each other on the colour wheel and have something in common. Also known as analogous colours.

harmony
The effect achieved in a composition when similar art elements are used together, such as by using harmonious colours.

hatching
A pattern of fine, roughly parallel lines. See also cross-hatching.

high culture
Culture that is seen as serious and valuable, such as opera, classical music, ballet, literature and fine arts. Opposite to popular culture.

high-relief sculpture
See relief sculpture.

homage
Honour, respect or reverence. Artists may pay respect to the work of other artists by copying their work.

horizon
A real or imagined horizontal line in the distance, where the sky meets water or land. In linear perspective, the horizon line is determined by the viewer's eye level.

hue
An identifiable and nameable colour, such as red, green or yellow.

hyperrealism
Extreme realism in painting and sculpture, also called superrealism.

I

icon
An image or form that is widely recognised, admired or worshipped.

idyllic
Perfect or ideal. Often used to describe picturesque scenes in nature or art.

illusion
A deceptive appearance, such as when artists use art materials and elements to create realistic three-dimensional effects on a two-dimensional artwork.

impasto
A painting effect where paint is applied thickly to create a heavily textured surface.

Impressionism
An art movement originating in 1860s France. Artists painted informal views of subjects and everyday scenes of life and the landscape. Many artists worked with rapid, obvious strokes of colour to capture fleeting atmospheric effects, a technique that challenged the traditionally accepted idea that paintings should have a smooth surface and carefully modelled colours and tones.

installation
A site-specific arrangement of art elements and materials, and other objects and media, such as sound, light or film.

intaglio print
A print made from a design cut below the surface of a printing block or plate.

interactive
Requiring viewer participation.

intervention
An artwork that 'interrupts' a space or environment to encourage audiences to think in new ways about the space.

L

land art
Art installations in the natural environment. Some land artists use materials from the environment to create artworks that are exhibited in galleries. Also known as earth art.

landscape
An artwork that presents a view of the natural environment.

lenticular
Relating to a lens. Lenticular images are created from still images that are spliced together and overlaid with a sheet that has facets that work like lenses. The lenses control which strips are seen when viewed from different angles and create an illusion of depth and movement.

life-drawing
The practice of drawing from a nude model.

linear perspective
A mathematical system of perspective. It is based on real or imagined parallel lines that appear to recede from the viewer and meet on the horizon at a vanishing point.

linocut
A relief print made from a design carved into a block of linoleum (lino).

lithography
A form of printmaking where a design is drawn and fixed on a surface using a greasy or oily material.

low-relief sculpture
See relief sculpture.

M

maquette
A small-scale model of a three-dimensional artwork made as part of the planning and design process.

medium
A material used to make an artwork (plural – media). Also, a material that moistens the pigments in paint, holds the paint together and makes it stick to the painting surface.

metamorphosis
The transformation of one thing into another.

middleground
The area in an artwork between the foreground and the background.

Minimal art
An art style that developed in the United States in the 1950s and flourished in the 1960s and 1970s that is based on a minimal, highly controlled use of art elements. It is associated with precisely defined areas or geometric shapes of colour (in painting) or forms (in sculpture). Also known as Minimalism.

modelling
Shaping soft materials to create a sculptured form.

modern art
The succession of major art movements and styles in western art from about 1860 to 1970 when art 'progressed' from the naturalism of Impressionism to abstract, non-representational art forms of the 1950s and 1960s, such as Minimal art, Hard Edge painting and Colour Field painting. A belief in innovation and progress are important characteristics.

monochromatic
Having a colour scheme with only one hue of colour, or tints, shades and tones of that colour.

moral rights
Artists' rights to control how their work is presented and be acknowledged as the creator.

mould
A hollow form into which soft or fluid material can be poured or pressed to create a sculpture. See casting.

mural
A large, two-dimensional artwork on a wall.

N

narrative
A story. Telling a story.

nationalism
A form of national pride that values and promotes the unique qualities of a nation.

naturalistic
Portraying a lifelike representation of the subject.

negative shape
The shape created in a design around a positive shape.

new media art
Artforms that use technology invented since the middle of the twentieth century.

non-figurative art
See non-representational art.

non-representational art
Art without any obvious references to objects, places or people. Also known as non-figurative art or pure abstraction.

O

ochres
Powdered pigments made from ground earth, which are combined with natural binders, such as plant gums or saps, to make paint.

oil paint
Paint made from pigment and an oil that dries over time.

one-point perspective
The simplest form of linear perspective in which parallel lines that appear to recede from the viewer meet on the horizon at one vanishing point.

organic
Having irregular shapes based on free-form natural shapes.

orthogonal lines
The real or imagined parallel lines that appear to recede from the viewer to meet on the horizon line in linear perspective.

outline
A line that defines boundaries and edges.

P

painterly
Relating to art where broad areas of colour, light and shade are suggested by fluid, obvious strokes of paint and where the lines between objects are indistinct.

patron
A person or organisation who supports the work of an artist, usually by purchasing or supporting the artist's work.

performance art
Art that includes some aspects of performance. Artists will often use their own body.

perspective
A set of conventions used for creating an illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat surface. See also linear perspective, one-point perspective and two-point perspective.

photogram
A photographic technique that involves placing objects on light-sensitive photographic paper in darkroom conditions and then exposing the paper to light in a controlled way so that an image develops on the paper.

picture plane
The flat, two-dimensional surface of an artwork.

picturesque
Meaning 'picture-like', it describes the type of beauty found in landscapes.

pigments
Powdered colours used to make paints.

plein air
See en plein air.

Pointillism
A style of painting in which different colours are painted side by side using small regular dots or strokes of colour. From a distance, the colours blend in the viewer's eye (optical mixing) to create new colours or tonal effects.

Pop art
An art movement, originating in England and the United States in the late 1950s, that takes its subjects, materials, techniques or visual effects from popular culture, including movies, advertising and fast food.

popular culture
Products, such as fashion, fast food, movies, comics, magazines and advertising, that are usually cheap and mass-produced for a broad audience. Opposite to high culture.

porcelain
A type of ceramic made from kaolin (a pure white clay) and petuntse (feldspar derived from granite).

portrait
An artwork that has a person as its subject matter.

positive shape
Any shape created by an artist as the focus of a design. Opposite to negative shape.

Post-Impressionism
A style that built on the innovations of Impressionism to use colour and form in new ways.

Postmodernism
A range of cultural and critical movements and ideas that have influenced contemporary society since the 1970s. Postmodernism is seen to question the ideas and values associated with modern art and many previously accepted beliefs and values.

primary colours
Colours that cannot be made by combining other colours, i.e. red, yellow and blue.

principles of design
See design principles.

print
An image made by transferring an inked design from a printing block, plate or stencil to another surface, usually paper. Also used to describe photographic reproductions of artworks.

pronkstilleven
A type of sumptuous still life originating in seventeenth-century Netherlands. Also known as pronk still life.

proportion
The size relationship between objects. To depict a human figure in proportion requires knowledge of how the size of different parts of the body relate to the body as a whole.

public art
Art made for temporary or permanent display in public places.

public gallery
An art gallery owned and operated on behalf of the public.

pure abstraction
See non-representational art.

R

rarrk
Finely painted cross-hatched lines, commonly used by artists from Arnhem Land on bark paintings.

ready-made
A form of sculpture invented by Marcel Duchamp in 1913 when he exhibited found objects as artworks.

realistic
Depicting subjects drawn from everyday life, usually in a lifelike way. In art, often used as a synonym for naturalistic.

relief print
A print made from a raised surface.

relief sculpture
A sculpture on a wall or other flat surface where the design is made by leaving some parts raised. A low-relief sculpture has a raised surface that does not stand out much from the background. High-relief sculpture has a raised surface that stands well out from the background.

Renaissance
A period in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe, when there was a revival of interest in learning, discovery and classical culture. Renaissance means 'rebirth'.

representational art
See figurative art.

reproduction
A copy of an artwork, often a photograph.

retrospective
An exhibition showing artworks from all periods of an artist's career.

rhythm
A design principle that describes the repetition of art elements in a composition to create a pattern that suggests movement.

S

scroll
A length of paper used for drawing or painting that can be rolled up.

sculpture
A three-dimensional artwork.

secondary colours
Colours that are created by mixing the primary colours, i.e. green, orange and violet.

self-portrait
An artwork in which the artist represents herself or himself as the subject matter.

shade
What is produced by adding black to a colour.

silhouette
The flat, solid shape made by outlining an object or person.

silk-screen printing
A form of stencil printing that involves attaching stencils to a fine, silk-like fabric stretched across a wooden frame.

site-specific
Made for a particular location.

stela
A rectangular stone slab with an inscription or design.

stencil
A sheet from which a design has been cut. When colour is applied to the sheet, it produces a print in the shape of the cut-out design.

still life
An arrangement of inanimate (non-living) objects, such as fruit, vegetables, flowers or household objects.

studio
An artist's workplace.

stylised
Represented according to a particular style or convention, often involving simplifying the subject matter's shapes, forms or colours.

subject matter
What is literally represented or presented in an artwork

Surrealism
An art movement originating in 1920s Paris that created mysterious images and forms that defy logic and suggest a strange, new reality, often inspired by dreams. Surrealism means 'above reality'.

symmetrical balance
Balance in a composition that is achieved by using the same or similar elements on each side of the composition, like a mirror image.

T

tertiary colours
Colours made by mixing a primary colour with the secondary colour next to it on the colour wheel. There are six tertiary colours: red-orange, yellow-orange, blue-violet, red-violet, yellow-green and blue-green.

three-dimensional art
Art with the three dimensions of length, width and depth, i.e. sculpture.

tint
What is produced by adding white to a colour.

tone
The degree of lightness or darkness. Mixing a colour with grey (black and white) creates a tone of that colour.

triennial
An exhibition that takes place every three years.

triptych
A painting in three parts.

trompe l'oeil
A French term that means 'tricks the eye' and is widely used to describe visual effects or images that create a convincing illusion of reality.

two-dimensional art
Art with the two dimensions of length and width, i.e. flat art, such as paintings, drawings and photographs.

two-point perspective
A form of linear perspective in which the real or imagined parallel lines that appear to recede from the viewer meet on the horizon at two vanishing points.

U

ukiyo-e
Colourful mass-produced woodblock prints that were particularly popular during the Edo period in Japan (1615–1868).

unity
A design principle that describes the way art elements in a composition work together as a whole.

V

value
Lightness or darkness of any hue of colour.

vanishing point
The point at which real or imagined parallel lines in linear perspective meet on the horizon.

vanitas symbolism
Symbolism that reminds viewers of the transitory nature of beauty and life, such as skulls.

variety
A design principle that describes how variations of art elements are used in a composition, usually to add interest.

viewpoint
The position in space from which a subject is depicted in a two-dimensional artwork, such as a low viewpoint (worm's-eye view) or a high viewpoint (bird's-eye view).

W

warm colours
Colours that suggest fire or warmth, such as reds and oranges.

watercolour paint
Transparent paint made from pigments held together by a sticky resin called gum arabic. The paint is mixed with water before applying.

western art
Art associated with western, predominantly European, cultures and traditions.

woodblock print
A type of relief print where a design is created on a wooden block.

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