

REFRAME

2022 QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ART AWARDS
TOURING EXHIBITION

Education Resource

Reframe is the touring exhibition outcome of the 2022 Queensland Regional Art Awards.

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About the Queensland Regional Art Awards

The Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAA) is Flying Arts' signature annual art awards for established and emerging artists living in regional, rural and remote Queensland. The award aims to showcase new artworks while providing a platform for artists to receive both cash prizes and further professional development and opportunities.

About 'Reframe'

In 2022, the QRAA invited artists to explore the concept of 'Reframe'. This prompt called for artworks inspired by recent experiences and observations, with 'Reframe' offering artists an opportunity to see from a different perspective, consider alternative ways of working and learn from the stories of others.

The 2022 QRAA was judged by a panel consisting of Aven Noah Jr, Rebecca McDuff, Elisabeth Findlay and Hamish Sawyer.

About the Ekphrasis Challenge

A co-production of Flying Arts and Queensland Poetry Festival, the Ekphrasis Challenge asked poets Australia-wide to respond to the award-winning artworks in the Queensland Regional Arts Awards 2022.

The winning poets for each of the categories have their matching poem featured on a label in the touring *Reframe* exhibition, while the other winning poem that responded to the Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award is exhibited in Brisbane at the Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award exhibition.

The QRAA Ekphrasis Challenge 2021 category winners are:

Queensland Poetry Festival's mission is to support great artists to inspire, entertain and challenge a diverse audience base by delivering excellence in all forms of poetry and spoken word, to create stronger communities and improve people's health and wellbeing through the power of poetry.

About the Artists

The *Reframe* touring exhibition features the works of 8 artists. This Education Resource contains activities relating to their artworks.

1. 'ART FOR LIFE' AWARD

Thanks to Holding Redlich and Artist Profile.

Kellie O'Dempsey *Wish You Were Here 1*, 2021, Mixed media collage and projection, 120 x 120 cm.

2. THE ANNIE TAN MEMORIAL WATERCOLOUR AWARD

Thanks to the Booth Memorial Fund of Annie Tan (Yuh Siew) and The Geoff Booth Foundation.

Jule Polkinghorne *The Swimming Lesson*, 2021, Watercolour and gouache on paper, 79 x 67 cm.

3. ART EDUCATOR AWARD

Thanks to Queensland College of Art, Griffith University.

Rose Rigley *Cataloging Absence*, 2021, Mixed media, found objects and textile, 15 x 17.5 x 13.5 cm.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ART AWARD

Thanks to Turner Family Foundation.

Julie Field *Signed Planet Earth*, 2022, Ceramic and timber 36 x 14 x 35 cm.

5. FIRST NATIONS ART AWARD

Thanks to Mitchell Fine Art.

Rosella Namok *My Place (Sea Green)*, 2021, Bronze and patina, 47 x 10 x 39 cm.

6. 'TAKE FLIGHT' AWARD

Thanks to Onespace Gallery.

Alexandra Baxter *I Know How You Must Feel, Brad (1 of Series of 5 prints)*, 2021, Cyanotype and screenprint on paper, 22 x 22 cm.

7. TEXTILE ART AWARD

Thanks to an 'Art for Life' Donor.

Karika Ashworth *Who Gives a Crap*, 2022, Toilet paper, stabiliser and thread, 35 x 50 x 50 cm.

8. REMOTE ART AWARD

Thanks to Woolloongabba Art Gallery

Helen Dennis *Resilience*, 2022 , Acrylic on canvas, 76 x 61 cm.

About this Resource

Reframe, the touring exhibition of the Queensland Regional Art Awards 2022, is visually and conceptually rich. The display features artworks from 8 regional Queensland artists, with this Education Resource serving as an entry point to further discussion surrounding the artist's stories, the content of their creative practice and activities relating to the materiality of their work.

This resource is most suitable for students in upper primary and lower secondary, however can be adapted to early primary, upper secondary and adult learners.

Throughout, students will be offered the opportunity to explore new technologies, materials and equipment. The artist's personal stories and their diverse locations will take young creatives on a 'tour of Queensland', spanning the Torres Strait to Noosa and west to Chinchilla.

Commonality between activities is found in the opportunity for reflection, creative thinking and invention. Inspired by the Queensland Regional Art Award's guiding theme of 'reframe', each artist and their contribution to the exhibition offer an opportunity to see visual art as a way to implement alternative ideas.

The overall 'Art for Life' Award winner, Kellie O'Dempsey's work is prime to explore unconventional visual language and means of communicating concepts, context and an evolved artistic focus. Exhibiting artists, Jule Polkinghorne, Alexandra Baxter and Rose Rigley provide an opportunity for students to connect use of colour with memory and mood, prompting critical reflection on their experiences. Materiality is at the fore in the work of Karike Ashworth and Julie Field's, using unconventional resources to question value hierarchies of people and everyday objects. Though Rosella Namok and Helen Dennis' artworks are aesthetically different, their work addresses cultural, social and environmental concerns; for Namok this focusses on the urban development of Aboriginal communities, and for Dennis this is centered on rising costs of living and food insecurity.

Visual art teachers may be interested in the complimentary Ekphrasis Challenge as an opportunity to apply traditional modes of literacy to further articulate an artist's ideas. The accompanying 12-line poems are intended to deepen student engagement with the artworks and provide a different viewpoint through a written, non-visual lens.

For further enquiries regarding this Education Resource, please contact Flying Arts' Program Team Lead programlead@flyingarts.org.au. Flying Arts can provide support to educators for the development and delivery of these workshops and activities through our By Request program, please visit <https://flyingarts.org.au/programs-for-schools/> for more information.

Kellie O'Dempsey

Wish You Were Here 1 (2021)

Mixed media collage and projection

120 x 120 cm



"Wish You Were Here 1 is part of a series of work that began as a re-imagining of post-pandemic life. Here, the uncanny collides with the uncertain. In search of progress a figure attempts to travel, yet goes nowhere. Wish

You Were Here 1 is a moving drawing of collaged works on paper with projection. Using repetitive rhythm and monotonous loops, in a non-specific location and an unspecified time, this works blends the physical and the psychological for a moment of hypnotic and absurdity in an attempt to find balance in an uncertain world."

Artist statement, Kellie O'Dempsey

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. What is the figure in the artwork doing? Consider their placement, pace of movement and repetition.
2. This artwork responds to the artist's experience of Covid-19 lockdowns. Think back to your experience. Where were you? How did restricted movement make you feel? How did your activities change?
3. This artwork combines projection, performance, installation, drawing and mixed media. If you were to add music to this artwork, what instruments would you use?

WORKSHOP

Potential resource (for teachers) about Kellie O'Dempsey's work *Wish You Were Here*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiBHeweV2vw&t=53s>

This is a 70 minute workshop inspired by the material and conceptual aspects of Kellie O'Dempsey's work *Wish You Were Here 1* (2021). O'Dempsey is known to use mixed media collage to combine layers of meaning throughout her work. Throughout this workshop, students will brainstorm and select three experiences from their Covid-19 lockdown to recreate in three different abstracted artworks on paper. Students will cut these into shapes, before layering the pieces into a collage artwork to represent an amalgamation of their experiences during lockdown.

Part 1: Mind Map

Think of at least 5 experiences you had during Covid 19 lockdowns, and brainstorm how each one made you feel, where you were, what it looked like, who was there.



Part 2: Making

Select three experiences from your mind map and create a 10 minute abstract artwork about each (on three separate pieces of paper). You will then cut these up and *reframe* them into one collage artwork to represent your mixed experiences throughout covid-19 lockdown.

Materials (to be adjusted by teacher):

- 4 pieces of card or paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Paint
- Paint brushes
- Water cups (for brushes)
- Drawing equipment (eg. textas, pens, oil pastels, pencils)

Instructions (to be adjusted by teacher)

1. **Select** one person from each group to collect the materials listed above
2. **Paint** your first experience in abstract form. You might want to paint a block colour, a pattern, a series of shapes, or abstracted figures. (Consider the symbolism below to help with representing your experience). **Once finished, place on the drying rack.**
3. **Draw** your second experience in abstract form using oil pastels. You might want to create patterns, a series of shapes, or abstracted figures/objects. (Consider the symbolism below to help with representing your experience).
4. **Sketch** your third experience using pen or pencil. You might want to create continuous line drawings, patterns, a series of shapes, or abstracted figures/objects. (Consider the symbolism below to help with representing your experience).
5. **Collect** your paintings from the drying rack.
6. **Cut** your three artworks into interesting shapes/pieces

Suggestive Symbolism	
Colour	Shapes
Yellow = warm, happy, fun	Zigzag = uncomfortable, anxious
Green = nature, healthy, exploring	Curvy = ease, organic, nature, water
Blue = cool, sad, fresh,	Mixed = messy, unpredictable
Red = angry, hot, danger, stop, love	Squares = trapped, screens, boredom
Pink = love, comfort	Stripes = repetition, bored, trapped
Orange = warm, vibrant, cheerful	Circles = playful, fun, movement, bubbly

Jule Polkinghorne

The Swimming Lesson (2021)

Watercolour and gouache on paper

79 x 67 cm



"I see 'reframe' as an analogy for my artwork, a grid where swimmers move in, around and through the water. The dark waters symbolise the fears and challenges of the unknown. Stills of a video of my family swimming in an indoor hotel swimming pool provided the imagery. It was warm and private, the voices echoed in the enclosed space. The vignettes touch on containment, relationship, isolation, connection, intimacy, support and encouragement. I see 'reframe' as the mind shift we need, with human connection driving the change."

Artist statement, Jule Polkinghorne

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. Look closely at Jule Polkinghorne's work. Which of the 12 stills makes you feel most uncomfortable? Which makes you feel the most at ease?
2. How does Polkinghorne use colour to evoke a mood? (refer to your answer in question 1)
3. List some positive and/or negative experiences you've had with water.

WORKSHOP

This is a watercolour workshop inspired by Polkinghorne's visual representations of water. Like the artist, students will use water as material and subject matter to reflect on and recreate their aquatic experiences. Students will experiment with unconventional resistance materials such as rock salt and PVA glue to develop new techniques in creating texture in their watercolour works.

Materials

- 2 pieces of watercolour paper
- Watercolour paints
- Paint brushes
- Water cups
- Rock salt
- PVA glue

Instructions

1. On your first sheet of paper, **experiment** with watercolour paint.
2. Use PVA glue and rock salt to **create** resistance textures (this works best when you don't use too much water).
3. On your second piece of paper **recreate** one of the experiences you listed in question 3 (above).
4. **Consider** your use of colour to represent the mood (was it dark and scary, blue and sunny, clear and refreshing?).
5. While still wet, **sprinkle** rock salt over areas where you want to create textured effects (was it a smooth, relaxing experience, a splashy, playful experience, a rough, scary experience?).
6. **Dollop** and/or smear PVA glue to resist the watercolour (while still wet).

Rose Rigley

Cataloging Absence (2021)

Mixed media, found objects and textile

15 x 17.5 x 13.5 cm



"Absence is different from non-existence. Absence allows that a person still exists but is not currently present. Absence gives rise to an awareness that we are in a state of being 'without'.

Last year, my sister found items she kept that had belonged to our mother. This salmon-colored "Pandora" box and our mother's old hand-turning Singer sewing machine were among the assorted collection. In my commitment to reframing my relationship to memory and loss, I used both items – mending, stitching, assembling, filling, and stuffing – as the basis for this artwork."

Artist statement, Rose Rigley

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. After finding out the significance of these found objects, what do you feel when you look at this artwork?
2. Loss of a loved one is a core theme throughout this work, what are some positive memories with your loved ones that you are grateful for?
3. Rigley displays a found object in this work that holds great emotional significance. List 5 objects that you think are/were special your loved ones?

WORKSHOP

This workshop is inspired the material and conceptual aspects of Rose Rigley's work, in particular. Students will be creating artist books bound by string in a parcel-like way (similar to those seen in *Cataloging Absence*). Inspired by repetitive themes of sentimentality throughout Rigley's work, students will explore emotional connections to artmaking as they create a gratitude book for their loved ones.

For Teachers: view video below to better understand the glue drawing task.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHmujSn8w9g>

Materials

- String or ribbon
- A4 piece of card or thick paper
- PVA glue
- Refined salt
- Liquid watercolour paints/ ink
- Paint brushes
- Water cups
- Dropsheets/ trays (to catch salt)

Instructions

1. Choose a loved one: this might be a friend, a parent/guardian, family member, or even yourself to create a book for.
2. Brainstorm 8 things that you think make this person happy (eg. objects, hobbies, foods, games, activities, flora, fauna).
3. Brainstorm 8 things about this person that you are grateful for.
4. Fold your piece of card into 8 portions (in half x 3) to make a small rectangle the size of a bank card.
5. Cut along the creases to create 8 small pieces of card.
6. Select 8 of the 16 things you have brainstormed and using PVA glue, draw one on each card.
7. Sprinkle all 8 cards with salt and wait for the glue to set into an almost 3D painting.
8. Use watercolour paint to colour the salted image as you desire.
9. Stack your 8 cards ontop of each other and bind with string (like a gift).
10. Give this gratitude book to your loved one, reminding them of how grateful you are to have them in your life!

Julie Field

Signed Planet Earth (2022)

Ceramic and timber

36 x 14 x 35 cm



"In February 2021 Jessica Blackwells' home was burned to the ground in the Western Australia Wooroloo bushfires. In a miraculous story of survival, Jessica found the remains of this sculpture in the ashes.

The artwork was returned to my studio to be reimagined and rebuilt. The unpredicted third firing from the bush fire resulted in the glaze taking on a completely new form showing coppers, unique tonal variations and remnants of melted objects. The horse remained a symbol of strength and the bird a phoenix rising from the ashes.

I restored the sculpture using Kintsugi, which is based on the philosophy that when you think you are broken, you can pick up the pieces, put them back together and learn to embrace the cracks. Like Jessica, it is now more beautiful and robust; transformed through suffering.

I feel this piece also represents rebuilding and re-framing for a more optimistic future."

Artist statement, Julie Field

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. What would be the first object in your home that you would save in the case of a fire?
2. What are some visual aspects of this work that may have been caused by the fire?
Explain your assumptions.
3. How has Julie Field repurposed the sculpture to tell a new story?

WORKSHOP

This workshop is inspired by materiality and concept of Jessica Blackwell's work. Her sculpture, deconstructed by the bushfires to then be reconstructed into a reimagined artwork is the inspiration of this upcycling project. Students will experiment with creating 3 dimensional forms using air drying clay. The aim of this workshop is to exercise sculptural techniques inspired by Blackwell's horse. Students will each create one miniature animal of their choice and decorate it by deconstructing a piece of jewellery and reconstructing it as a sculptural feature.

Materials

- Air drying clay
- Unwanted/second hand jewellery or recycled bits and bobs (optional)
- Drop sheets
- Cloth

Instructions

1. Lay out a drop sheet (to collect residue of clay)
2. Collect a portion of clay the size of your fist.
3. Create an animal/insect of your choice, beginning with the body and head before moving onto each other body part. If your animal has legs, ensure they are not too long and skinny as they will need to hold the body.
4. Once molded into shape, join each body part together by smoothing the edges with fingers.
5. Deconstruct your necklace or piece of jewellery, repurposing it to decorate your animal. Poke the beads into the animal to create eyes, spots, , patterns or jewellery for your animal.
6. Ensure tables are cleaned spotless of clay, as once dried into dust it should not be breathed in.

Rosella Namok

My Place (Sea Green) (2021)

Bronze and patina

47 x 10 x 39 cm



“Rosella’s artistic practice continues to reflect both traditional stories and contemporary themes associated with cultural, social and environmental concerns. In My Place, she uses geometric patterning to reference urban development in Aboriginal communities (especially, recent construction in her Country).

Themes and variations arise from the artist’s personal response to lifestyle changes for her family and communities, including concerns with urban development, amidst her reflections on the timeless charm of her homeland. The expansion of housing and infrastructure is portrayed as an inevitable force of nature and change within the artist’s own visual language.

Her sculptural works have developed from her paintings, in particular her signature finger-patterned linear arrangements which are created by pulling her fingers through the paint. This technique was inspired by watching her grandmother drawing in the sand.”

Artist statement, Rosella Namok

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. What motion do you think this artwork would move in if it could?
2. Why do you think Rosella has used a square shaped pattern to represent urban expansion?
3. List what shapes you would use to represent each of the following:
Houses:
Nature:
Land:
Ocean:
Roads:

WORKSHOP

Rosella Namok uses repetition of line to represent the inevitable process of urban expansion throughout Australia. Throughout this workshop, students will investigate urbanization of their local land and how this can be represented through juxtaposing linework. Using Google Earth Pro, students will compare their local area now with what it looked like in the earliest available satellite image to visually recognise recent developments of their land. Students will represent the early satellite imagery through watercolour drawing before drawing over the dried painting with symbolic geometric imagery. If students do not have access to Google Earth Pro they may represent a current map (projection or print-out) of their local area using the highlighted steps below.

Materials

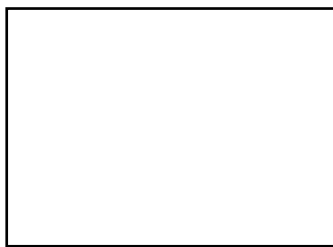
- Download Google pro on devices (OR digital or printed map of local area)
- Fine-tip pen
- Paper
- Watercolour paints + brushes
- Water cups

Digital Instructions

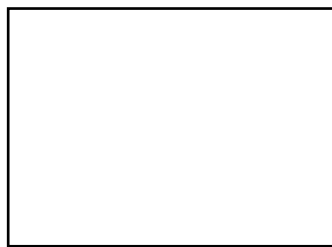
1. Download Google Earth Pro on your device
2. Using Google Earth Pro, type in your local suburb and screenshot your selected area.
3. On the horizontal bar along the top of the screen, click 'historical imagery' and find the earliest satellite image of your area (along the timeline).
4. Screenshot the same selected area.
5. Compare the two images and think about how your area has changed over the past few decades.

Art making instructions

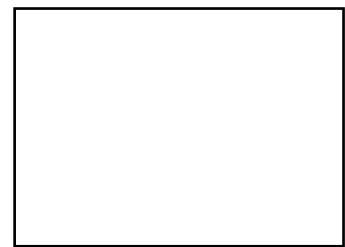
1. With your sole focus being colour, begin a watercolour painting to represent the earlier satellite image of your local area. Avoid use of line, pattern and texture. Consider colour of untouched land compared to urbanized/developed land.
2. Place your painting on the drying rack.
3. Use geometric linework to develop symbolic imagery in each labelled box below. Consider repetitive use of patterns, shapes and line. Use your answers from question 3 above for inspiration.
4. Retrieve your work from the drying rack and begin drawing your symbolic linework over the dried watercolour painting to represent the more recent satellite image and show urban expansion in your area.



Urbanised Land
(Houses, roads,
buildings)



Deforested Land
(Farms, paddocks,
fields)



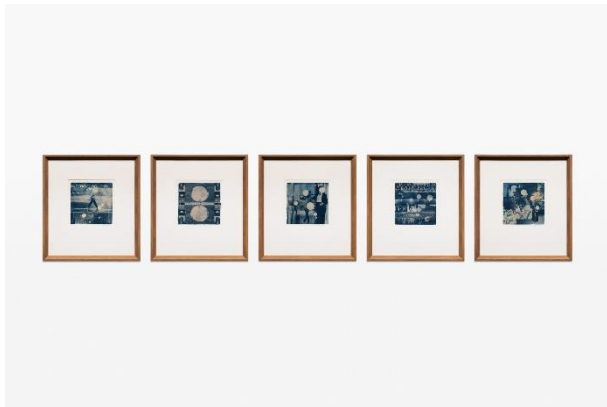
Untouched Land
(Forests, bushland,
natural habitat)

Alexandra Baxter

I Know How You Must Feel, Brad (1 of Series of 5 prints) (2021)

Cyanotype and screenprint on paper

22 x 22 cm



"I know how you must feel, Brad considers how popular historical media might relieve the young contemporary artist of their digital engagement with the world – of saudade: nostalgia or longing for a lost nature. Through the reworking of found images of the mid-century modern man of leisure, in this case the Golfing Gentleman, the artist looks to realise how his seduction endures. Attempting to consciously unbind from the digital system, or

come closer/see more clearly the illusory history, the artist reaches for old imaging technologies and printing processes whose outcomes paradoxically condemn/recover, romanticise/vilify their subject. I know how you must feel, Brad is most concerned with how historical media fashions a nuanced form of nostalgia that is negative and regressive, but also tempting, alluring, handsome.

Above each blueprint sits another, requiring ultraviolet light to be made visible."

Artist statement, Alexandra Baxter

PROMPT QUESTIONS

1. Look closely at the artwork and describe the era that Baxter is reframing. When do you think these photos were taken? What might it have been like to live in that time? (list positive and negative aspects).
2. What media does Baxter use? How does this align with the concept of the artwork?
3. Think of a time in your life that you'd like to go back to. What did it look like, feel like, and who was there?

WORKSHOP

Inspired by Baxter's complex insight into the past, this workshop encourages students to delve into the idea of nostalgia. Students will expand on their memory from question 3, to visually represent a moment from the past (this may be symbolic, literal, figurative or abstract). Students will explore monoprint techniques inspired by Baxter's analogue ways of image making.

Materials

- Pen/pencil
- Paper
- Aprons
- Acrylic paint
- Palette (or disposable plate)
- Sponge roller
- Firm, flat bottomed disposable plate (or any disposable/washable flat surface, eg. glass, plastic sheets, baking paper)
- Masking tape
- Cotton-buds (1 each)
- Found objects if available (eg. feathers, leaves, netting, string etc.)

Instructions (to be adjusted by teacher)

1. **Select** one person from each group to collect the materials listed above
2. Using a pencil and paper, **create** a practice drawing inspired by your memory from Question 3. You may like to consider specific aspects from that memory to recreate (eg. your surroundings, emotions, objects, company).
3. **Place** your plate upside down and tape to the desk (or dropsheet)
4. **Select** two paint colours and place each onto your palette (dollops should be no larger than your big toe).
5. Using your roller, **spread** the paint over the palette surface until you reach consistency of thickness.
6. **Roll** the paint onto the flat surface to achieve desirable colour combination/pattern
7. Using a cotton bud, wipe away the paint to **recreate** your drawing on the painted surface.
8. Gently press a piece of paper over the top of the painted surface and rub to print onto your paper.
9. You may **repeat** the process, perhaps adding found objects to your monoprints to create interesting textures and effects.

Dr Karike Ashworth

Who Gives a Crap (2022)

Toilet paper, stabiliser and thread

35 x 50 x 50 cm



"In an extraordinary act of care, 400 blooms are embroidered from a single roll of Who Gives a Crap toilet paper (200 unpaid hours). Initially conceived as COVID-commemorative flowers, the artist now sees the blooms as individual care workers—medical workers, mothers, childcare workers, teachers, aged-care workers; those that clean our galleries, houses, offices, hospitals. All are endlessly exploited; seemingly disposable, but most of all beautiful, fragile and necessary."

In this installation, each bloom stands erect and proud ready for what is to come. In this pandemic moment, political leaders have turned care labourers into soldiers of sacrifice in exploitative service to capitalism. It may feel like care to valorise the "sacrifices" of our "brave", "front-line" workers but a reframe is urgently needed. Real care would be to carefully assess and restructure a system that undervalues and marginalises care workers, and give them the processes and resources they deserve."

Artist statement, Dr Karike Ashworth

QUESTIONS

Karika Ashworth delves into the necessity, delicacy, beauty and value of care labourers' who could be considered as underappreciated based on their wages and governmental support. She has communicated this metaphorically through her use of the mundane object of toilet paper to create delicate and beautiful flowers.

1. Describe this sculpture in your own words. Consider what it looks like, feels like and sounds like.
2. How has Karika Ashworth created something beautiful out of an everyday object?
3. What is something that you consider to be underappreciated in this world?
4. How might you be able to *reframe* this thing by representing its value through sculpture? (consider beauty, fragility, necessity and how it could be represented).
5. List of 4 mundane objects that you might be able to collect from home to make a metaphorical sculpture of this thing.

WORKSHOP

Workshop Overview

This is a two-part workshop that requires students to collect found objects from home to create something beautiful from the mundane. Students will be required to create a sculpture out of their found objects that represents something valuable or beautiful.

Part 1: Homework task

Think of something that traditionally represents value or beauty (eg. a flower, butterfly, diamond, jewellery, nature, money etc.)

Collect 4 everyday objects from home that are considered to be mundane or undervalued and bring them in for next lesson's workshop where you will create a sculpture of this symbol of beauty/value. Some examples of objects might be empty packets or containers, paper towels/ towel rolls, plastic bags, disposable water bottles, empty coffee cups, empty tissue boxes, zip ties etc.) Ensure objects are clean/washed for hygiene purposes.

For teacher: collect materials for students who don't bring anything (eg. post-it notes, recycled containers, cardboard boxes etc.)

Part 2: Workshop

Materials (to be adjusted by teacher)

- Glue
- Scissors
- 4 mundane objects
- Paper or card (preferably coloured)
- Teacher's mundane materials

Instructions

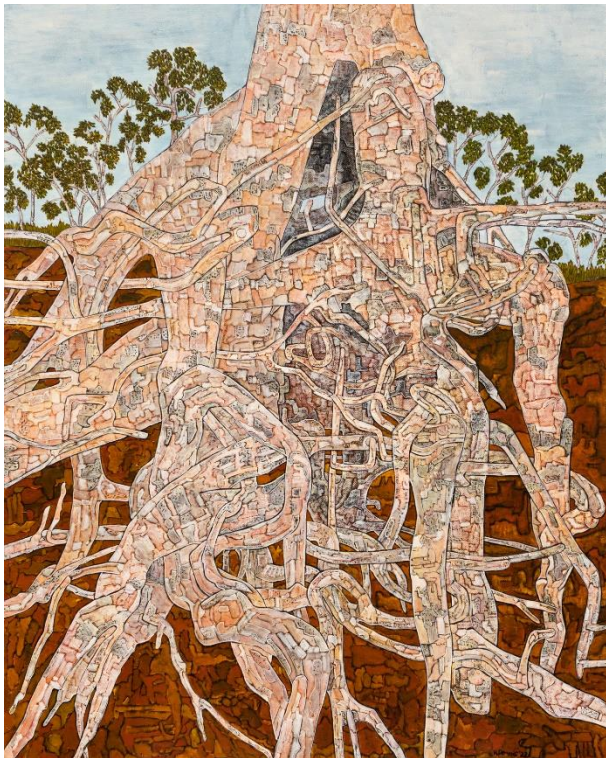
1. **Select** one person from each group to collect the materials above.
2. If you do not have any of your own mundane materials, collect some from the teacher.
3. Use a combination of your mundane materials and paper to **create** a sculpture of your chosen representation of beauty/value (eg. flower, jewellery etc.)
4. You may use a piece of card/paper as a base to build your sculpture onto

Helen Dennis

Resilience (2022)

Acrylic on canvas

76 x 61 cm



“Along our creek stands an ancient eucalypt, its roots exposed by decades of floods and heavy rains; a network of lateral roots anchor it in place; sinker roots blindly seek sustenance and security; huge buttresses support the tree, allowing it to gradually taper skywards.

Like the resilient eucalypt, the challenges we face constantly push us to reframe our life goals. Having resilience enables us to view life from a different perspective, drawing on our personal experiences and observations to problem solve and evolve.

After the reality of lockdowns in urban areas, rising costs of living and food insecurity, we no longer look to ‘retire’ away from the farm. Remaining on our property for the next 20 years has become our goal. We had our lateral and sinker roots in place, our buttress roots strong. All that was needed was a re-assessment of the freedom and opportunities that rural living provides.”

Artist statement, Helen Dennis

QUESTIONS

1. Look at how Helen Dennis has created texture throughout the buttress and roots of the tree. List three things from nature that have a distinct texture.
2. What do each of these things look like? (consider line, shape, pattern and form)
3. What do they feel like to touch?

WORKSHOP

This is a process-based workshop that focuses on the *journey of creating* an artwork more than the outcome. Students will work in groups of three to play a 'pass the paper' drawing game. Inspired by the aesthetic of Dennis' work, students will think of something in nature that they want to draw and will have 5 minutes to draw the texture of that. Once the 5 minutes are up, students will rotate their work in a clockwise direction, passing to their peer on the left. Students will have 5 minutes to add onto their peer's work, assuming what aspect of nature they might have been drawing and expanding on that. After the third rotation, students will rotate their work back to one another (receiving their original drawing back) to then complete, and perhaps modify their original goal. Inspired by Helen Dennis' quote '*Like the resilient eucalypt, the challenges we face constantly push us to reframe our life goals*' students will exercise their resilience through their ability to problem solve throughout the making process.

Materials (to be adjusted by teacher)

- Watercolour paper
- Candle wax and/or oil pastels
- Water colour paints/pens/pencils/inks
- Water cups
- Paint brushes

Instructions (to be adjusted by teacher)

1. **Divide** yourselves into groups of three
2. **Select** one person from your group to collect the materials above
3. Secretly **select** one of the three things from nature that you thought of in Question 1 above (do not tell your peers).
4. Use a combination of candle wax and oil pastels to **draw** the texture of this thing in the centre of your page without outlining it.
5. **Rotate** your paper clockwise to the peer on your left.
6. **Add on** to your peer's work, assuming what they were drawing. You may add texture, shapes, patterns and outlines.
7. **Repeat** steps 5 and 6, adding onto your other peer's work.
8. **Return** the drawings back to the original artist.
9. **Complete** the drawing, using your problem-solving skills to adapt your original goals and embrace what is on your paper.
10. **Enhance** the drawing by adding watercolour to add tonal qualities and fill the background. You will notice the candle wax and oil pastel will resist the water colour.
11. Once finished, **place** your artwork on the drying rack.

Ekphrasis Challenge Activities

An ekphrastic poem is a vivid description of a scene or, more commonly, a work of art. Through the imaginative act of narrating and reflecting on the “action” of a painting or sculpture, a poet may amplify and expand the original meaning of the artwork.

Resource 1 (Introduction to ekphrasis)

What does ekphrasis mean?

- To paint a picture of an artwork using words
- A literary device used to describe visual art in detail
- ‘The verbal representation of visual representation’ – James Herrernan

Watch video:

"What is Ekphrasis?": A Literary Guide for English Students and Teachers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySS-IZMPjjc>

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Resource 2 (Ekphrasis activity)

Choose one of the 8 artworks from the *Reframe* exhibition to write an ekphrasis poem about.

What can you see?

Visual elements:

- Line
- Shape (2D)
- Form (3D)
- Colour
- Texture
- Value/tone (light/dark)
- Material/medium

Notes:

Principles of design:

- Emphasis/focal point (what stands out the most?)
- Proportion
- Movement
- Contrast
- Space (positive and negative)
- Rhythm (repetition, pattern, inconsistency)
- Balance

Notes:

What might this mean?

Symbolism:

- What do you feel when you look at the artwork?
- What colours can you see? What do they represent? (eg. yellow could represent happiness)
- Can you see any signs or symbols? What do they represent?
- What expressions can you see? (consider posture, movement, facial expression)

Notes:

Literal and non-literal meaning:

- What is the title of the work?
- Is there any text (words) in the artwork? What does it say/mean?
- What do you think this artwork is about? (summarise your notes from *symbolism* to support this)

Notes:

Expanded meaning:

- What is left unsaid? (What confuses you about the artwork? What is mysterious about the artwork?) **Answer in question form below.**
- Can you fill in the gaps and uncover deeper meaning? **Fill in the gaps to answer your question below.**

Your question: Why....

Your answer: Maybe because....

Ekphrasis Poem

Using your notes to assist you, complete the Ekphrasis Challenge by describing the artwork in 12 lines or less.

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