Celebrating Townsville

EDUCATION RESOURCE

Hervey's Range [detail] by James Brown 1992, JCU Art Collection
Celebrating Townsville EDUCATION RESOURCE for secondary students

The aim of this resource is to offer insights into the works of art featured in the exhibition. It is intended as a starting point for generating ideas, for encouraging student research, and as a basis for discussion during exhibition visits. The resource provides background information on the development of particular works, and offers focus questions and suggested activities. It can be used in a variety of ways, both for student groups, and for individual study and research.

Acknowledgment: Thank-you to the artists who provided a statement about their work to assist with the development of this resource.

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Townsville City Council is proud to support the “Celebrating Townsville” exhibition and supporting education programme which has been made possible through the Townsville 150 Anniversary Grant Programme.
ARTIST: JAMES BROWN
ARTWORK: Hervey’s Range Diptych

James BROWN
b.1953 Australia

Hervey’s Range 1992
Encaustic on canvas
144 x 114 cm [each panel]

Donated by the Artist in 1992 to the James Cook University Art Collection, Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

At the time that James Brown created Hervey’s Range (1992) he was exploring the painting medium called encaustic painting. Brown’s approach to this medium was to mix oil paint with melted beeswax in a frying pan. His manner of working allowed for quick gestures. If he did not move quickly, the paint began to dry as the brush moved from the hot wax mixture in the pan to his canvas.

The process also allowed for an equally quick potential to layer colours and make alterations. More important to Brown, however, is that the wax-based medium took on the appearance and “feel” of skin that seemed to float above the canvas, even though the paint in reality was firmly attached to it.

This idea of the paint film being likened to physical skin underpins this painting. Brown’s vision of this portrayed landscape—as a screen of thin trees wedged amongst boulders—is all about seeing landscape as a skin or a veneer of superficial forest features underneath which lies the growing humus and burnt remnants of trees.

To capture his vision of landscape as a skin overlaying an internal support, Brown initially drew his subject in charcoal. This charcoal drawing signifies the landscape’s internal support—its grit and structure. He then overlaid this drawing with translucent encaustic colours. By intention, the charcoal drawing is left exposed through gaps in the encaustic layers of paint.

In short, Brown’s process in creating this painting mirrors his view of landscape as a system of internal structures supporting an outer layer of surface details.
QUESTIONS/DISCUS

Look closely at the painting. Can you locate some of the underlying areas of charcoal that were initially laid down by the artist?

Read about the artwork and find what is meant by the term encaustic. Explain it here:

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Compare the encaustic process used by the artist in Hervey’s Range (1992) with the oil painting process used in his other painting in the exhibition titled Referencing Strang (2011).

If you look at both paintings can you describe any difference in the type of paint marks that the artist has used?

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ARTIST: JAMES BROWN
ARTWORK: Referencing Strang

Sometimes paintings have their origins in uncommon circumstances. This is certainly the case with James Brown's painting, Referencing Strang (2011). About five years ago Brown was purchasing antiquarian European etchings from an online auction site and found the soft-ground etching, House in the Lane (1897), by the British printmaker, William Strang (1859–1921). Brown was only able to view a thumbnail illustration of this print before purchasing it.

Brown’s interest in Strang’s etching was based on what he could see of its composition and curving rhythms. Sadly, on receiving the print through the post, his vision of what he had seen in the thumbnail picture did not match with the reality of the full-size print. Essentially Strang’s print was “too English” for Brown’s North Queensland taste and it lacked the strong dynamic lines and visually arresting features that Brown wanted to see.

Disappointed with his print by Strang, Brown sought to reconfigure the composition of the etching into a painting that captured his vision. In short, he transposed the essential compositional structure of the print into the painting, Referencing Strang, but added the colours of the North Queensland bush, the awkward structure of the gum trees, the spikiness of tropical foliage and, importantly, he presented the centre-of-interest in the painting as barren of key pictorial features — unlike Strang’s print which focuses attention on a distant house.

House in the Lane (1897), by the British printmaker, William Strang (1859–1921) from the artist's Print Collection. Photograph: James Brown.
Examine the William Strang etching and the James Brown painting. List the main differences between the two.

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Do you agree that Brown has given his painting a certain quality that reminds us of the Australian landscape? Explain how he has achieved this?

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Throughout history artists have been influenced by earlier artworks and made reference to them in their own work. If you intended to make reference to an important historical artwork in your own art, which artwork and artist would you choose and why?

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ARTIST: JANE HAWKINS
ARTWORK: Recognition

Jane HAWKINS
b.1958 Australia

Recognition 1990
Clay overpainted with acrylic
181 cm high

Purchased for the James Cook University
Art Collection in 1991

Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

This sculpture is a work the artist made in 1990 and is part of a series of five works. The series was based on poses that were taken from selected figures in British painter Euan Uglow's paintings. The artist selected the poses that best showed the aspects of the personalities that she was looking at representing. This work titled Recognition was the first executed in the series. This sculpture is based on the shadow, which is one of the Jungian archetypes that Hawkins was looking at in relation to personality types. The shadow represents the persona (Meaning: the aspect of someone’s character that is presented to or perceived by others).

Hawkins has stated “The sculpture represents the opposite of what people see me as. That’s why I chose the standing figure with arms behind the back looking confident, which is not how I usually see myself.”

The dark colour that the artist chose for the sculpture relates to the idea of the shadow but is also opposite to the artist’s fair complexion.
All five figures in the initial exhibition (that this sculpture was part of) were life-size figures and all were made of clay. Clay was initially sculpted over a steel frame. A plaster mould was then made over this that resembled a 3D jig saw of about 30 interlocking pieces. The artist then pressed clay into the mould to make a cast and joined the pieces together to end up with a whole hollow figure made out of clay. The artist then built a kiln around the figure and fired it over a 24 hour period. The fired ceramic sculpture was initially painted with a red oxide colour with added patches of gold leaf and then black paint over the top of that. The artist then rubbed some parts back to reveal the under-layers of red and the gold. Even though the work looks like bronze it is quite fragile because of the choice of materials.

After this body of work was complete the artist went on to produce a number of figurative sculptures in bronze. These include “Prometheus”, a sculpture in the JCU Eddie Koiki Mabo library, as well as the life-size figure of Robert Towns located in the Townsville CBD on the banks of the Ross River near the old Victoria Bridge.

Now that you know this sculpture is made of fired and painted clay describe what might be the advantages and disadvantages of using this medium for large scale sculptures.

PROJECT

Create a self-portrait representing the shadow (the way that your character is perceived by others).
ARTIST: JANE HAWKINS

ARTWORK: Picture Block Seats with Cushions

Jane HAWKINS
b.1958 Australia

Picture Block Seats with Cushions: Fingerprint, Lotus, Sticks/Stones/Bones, Ant Track 2012
MDF, trapunto/quilted cushions
Each block 40 x 40 x 40 cm

Collection of the artist

Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The picture blocks and the three small window sculptures relate to a theme recalling memories of childhood experiences that ran through the artist’s exhibition held in 2013 at Umbrella Studio contemporary arts (Townsville). This particular work is based on the picture cube games that the artist’s generation played with as children, where a different picture was on each face of 9 (or more) movable blocks. The sculpture is a bit like these 3D puzzle blocks.

Each face of each cube is quite different but in the right configuration they make an image. The artist configures the units in different arrangements each time they are displayed. There are four different images which can be created by arranging these blocks. These are:

1. An ant trail; a vertical trail (which is probably the way it will be exhibited in this exhibition).

2. A thumb print; the whole print can be revealed if the blocks are placed in the correct position.

3. Sticks, stones and bones; which relate to a children’s nursery rhyme or chant “Sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me”.

4. A lotus pod; a reference to an earlier exhibition.

Figure 2.
TECHNIQUE

The marks and images on each face were cut into the wood using a router saw. After this process was completed the surface was covered with many layers of clear Estapol sealant.

The cubes have a practical function and can be used as seats in different arrangements using the cushions which reside inside each of the blocks. The quilted image on each cushion relates to each of the 4 images created by arranging the blocks.

INVESTIGATE

This sculpture has both a practical and an artistic (or aesthetic) function. Can you think of other examples that you have seen which function both as works of art and have practical or functional applications? Clue: teacup, chandelier.

Imagine that you were going to make a four sided puzzle sculpture - like this one - of your four favourite foods. What foods would you choose that when assembled would give a clear and complete picture? Draw a sketch of your design.
ARTIST: JANE HAWKINS

ARTWORK: Arch, Round and Square Window

Jane HAWKINS
b.1958 Australia

1. Arch Window: Reliquary 2012, Wood, cloth, cast iron, 27 x 21.5 x 8 cm, Private Collection,
2. Round Window: Treasured Memories 2012, Wood, cloth, plumb-bob, gold leaf, stones, 21 x 21 x 5 cm, Private Collection,
3. Square Window: I had a little nutmeg 2012, Wood, cloth, card, cast bronze, gold leaf, 21.5 x 21.5 x 7 cm, Private Collection,

All works photographed by Michael Marzik.

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

These sculptures also recall experiences of childhood. The windows loosely relate to an Australian ABC television program (Play School) which has had a long history. When a story is told the narrator leads the children to look through one of three windows: the arch window, the round window, or the square window. After they are taken through the window, the story begins. The windows become symbols for narrative and imagination.

TECHNIQUE

The artist made the window shapes out of thick pieces of mango wood which she cut using a hole-saw, circular saw and sanding machine. On the inside of each of these shapes she laid a piece of cardboard covered with fabric, the colour of which related to the object that was contained in each window.

The arch window contains a found object which is reminiscent of either a religious symbol (hence the colour red, representing blood), or a graveyard object. The artist thinks it is a cast iron finial off an old gravestone or fence. The artist, Hawkins has stated, “It reminded me of when, as University lecturers, we would take groups of students to a local cemetery to draw the grave stones and the landscape around it.”

The round window contains a plumb-bob with a stone below it. This relates to her father in-law’s career as a surveyor; hence the choice of the colour orange. Surveyors often use orange coloured flags and spray orange paint to mark the boundaries of their measurements.

The square window contains a bronze pear which the artist found in her studio (cast years earlier from an actual pear), which related to her memory of a nursery rhyme about the little nut tree - “nothing would it bear, but a silver nutmeg and a golden pear.” The artist covered the bronze pear with gold leaf. She admits that it has, “now tarnished quite a bit and looks old, which I like”. The purple represents royalty as in, “the King of Spain’s daughter came to visit me, and all for the sake of my little nut tree.”
Nursery rhymes have interesting and varied histories. If you were to make a series of artworks from a nursery rhyme, which rhyme would you choose? A rhyme with a meaning that you can relate to would be a good place to start. Write down the rhyme you have chosen.

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Explain why you would use this particular rhyme and what artwork you could make from it as a starting point. Draw a preliminary sketch.

_____________________________________________________________________________

Reference List:

ARTIST: ANNE LORD
ARTWORK: UNTITLED (N. W. QLD)

Anne LORD
b. 1953 Australia

Untitled (N.W. Qld) 1988
Lithograph
42.5 x 57 cm
Edition 2/10

James Cook University Art Collection
Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK
Anne Lord creates artworks across a broad range of media that includes printmaking, painting, photography and installation as well as digital media. Her printed works most often represent the landscape she knows well – that of north west Queensland. Lord has described her work as being “founded in concerns of place and environment, exploring the dramatic tropical seasons, growth and decay, monsoon, floods, grasslands, drought and bushfires in north Queensland”.

ARTIST STATEMENT
With regards to this artwork, Lord has stated, “during the 1980s I made numerous visits to north west Queensland where I grew up. The 1980s in this region saw significant drought. Drawings, lithographs, paintings and wood engravings followed these visits. This untitled lithograph is one of a series about this decade of drought. Other lithographs are titled 'Drought' and 'Crop'.

She has also said, “Place is important and in this work I reflect on beauty in the natural environment. In the 1988 untitled lithograph it is the details in tall grass and low horizons even when the country is dry. The linear elements show the strength of the natural grass”.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSS
How do the lines (their use and formation) in the lithograph give us the sensation of being immersed in the environment of the dry, western grass lands?

What is your favourite natural environment in north Queensland (ie rainforest, wooded bushland, beaches etc) and if you were to create an image of that place what would you put in the picture?
ARTIST: ANNE LORD
ARTWORK: *Shards - Walking on the Beach*: difference between sand and wood

Anne LORD
b.1953 Australia

*Shards – Walking on the Beach: difference between sand and wood*
Digital Print
43.8 x 32 cm

Collection of the artist
Photograph: Anne Lord

ARTIST: ANNE LORD
ARTWORK: *Shards - For a Fire Ravenswood*: difference between glass and resin

Anne LORD
b.1953 Australia

*Shards – For a Fire Ravenswood: difference between glass and resin*
Digital Print
32 x 45.7 cm

Collection of the artist
Photograph: Anne Lord
ARTIST: ANNE LORD
ARTWORK: *Shards and earth – Surveyor: difference between ochre and card*

In Anne Lord’s more recent digital works she blurs the boundaries between drawing and digital imagery. Found objects collected over decades, declared as shards or trinkets, are used to investigate passages of time in material and historical capture.

**ARTIST STATEMENT - 3 DIGITAL PRINTS ABOUT FRAGMENTS AND PLACE**

Lord has stated, “This series is about shards, fragments or trinkets that lie on the ground or pavements and capture my imagination. The objects chosen for the series made in 1999 were the flotsam and jetsam collected from the ephemeral zone of The Strand [Townsville]; since then other places such as the holiday beach, Ravenswood (the historic mining town), and working sites for a surveyor have all been rich sources for visual collection. The 2012 digital images with a focus on shards from specific places have inherent opportunities to show how differences in materials can be part of an artist's inquiry. Mixing photographs of materials and drawings in an image are ways to show difference.”

**THE ARTIST’S DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKS:**

*Shards – Walking on the Beach: difference between sand and wood* (Photograph) is made up of a drawing of beach walkers and photographed collections of shells, beach shards and turquoise beads that have been washed up. The shells are from the beach where the drawing was made. It is a personal look at a shoreline.

*Shards – For a Fire Ravenswood: difference between glass and resin* (Photograph) started as a drawing of a night-time fire used for warmth, leisure and talk at Ravenswood. The metal, glass and resin trinkets, collected mainly from Ravenswood enabled photographic reflections on materials that could add to the fascination of fire. The place has significant local history.
Shards and earth – Surveyor: difference between ochre and card (Photograph) has a 1917 survey peg from North West Queensland set amongst natural ochre from a local creek and a drawing of the surveyor. The ochre has been collected from the local area in which the surveyor was working. This artwork represents local history and facts.

INVESTIGATE

In each of the photographs found fragments from the environment play an important part. List the types of fragments you can see in the digital works and where they come from according to the artist statement.

What do each of the different sets of fragments tell us about the environments that they came from?

The background material is different in each digital image. List the background material used in each one. How do you think each material relates to the story of each piece?
ARTIST: RON MCBURNIE

ARTWORK: A Rake’s Progress – Sale of the Century I and II

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The artist made this diptych (of two related etchings) to be part of a series which was titled “A Rake’s Progress”. The series was loosely based on an earlier series of paintings and engravings by the great English artist William Hogarth (1697-1764).

Hogarth’s Rake’s Progress was made initially as a series of paintings which the artist popularised in an edition of prints (made using the etching and engraving process). Hogarth’s series followed the descent of young Tom Rakewell after he inherited and squandered the wealth left to him by his miserly father. After a series of bad decisions including gambling, loose living etc. Tom ends his days in the Bethlehem Hospital (aka Bedlam), London’s famous mental asylum.

Ron McBurnie made his own series of images of the Rake’s Progress in which his Rake is somewhat autobiographical and follows the life of the then artist living his early life as an art student in Brisbane. Many of the images are set in Brisbane city or surrounding suburbs and depict political and social events and topical landmarks in the area. In each etching the artist, or Rake, appears sometimes hidden within the landscapes depicted.

The two Rake’s Progress etchings in the exhibition printed from zinc plate have a link to Hogarth’s last engraving of Tom Rakewell’s incarceration in the Bedlam mental asylum. A link to the image can be found in the street sign as well as the position of the dogs on the street and several other clues. Unlike Hogarth’s Rake who seems destitute, McBurnie’s Rake is still active and has hope even though raking leaves in the middle of a cyclone may be seen by some as an irrational activity. Pandemonium can be observed on the street with the burning of art books and a piano suggesting the loss of our culture. Inside the houses people watch a popular 1980’s quiz show called Sale of the century, which is symbolic of what is happening to the land just outside their door.

View images of Hogarths Rake’s progress at this website
https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/monarchy-enlightenment/britain-18c/britain-ageof-revolution/a/hogarth-a-rakes-progress
INVESTIGATE

_Sale of the century_ is described as an etching on paper. **Find out** what an etching is. From reading about the artwork, what metal has the artist used to make this etching?

**Look online** for an image of Hogarth’s last engraving of the _Rakes Progress_. **Compare** that work with McBurnie’s _Sale of the Century_.

**List** any similarities between the two works. _Clue: Street names, dogs._

**Write down** why you think McBurnie called his diptych “Sale of the Century”. Does the title relate to any activities taking place within the etching? _Clue: Game Show, selling something._

**Locate** the artist on the left side of the left panel. What activity is he involved in completing and why do you think he is doing it?

Who is the unluckiest animal in the etching?
ARTIST: RON MCBURNIE
ARTWORK: The Oberon Tree

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The Oberon Tree is a large painting made after the artist had made a smaller study drawing from life while staying in a private park in Oberon, which is at the foothills of the Blue Mountains in New South Wales. The artist’s initial study drawing referenced the strength and roughness of an ancient gnarled pine tree in the grounds of the park. The final, larger painting as shown in the exhibition took many elements from the initial study but also drew on ideas from Dutch and Flemish engravings held in the artist’s own private Print Collection.

Aegidius Sadeler and Jan van de Velde are two artists who have been a strong influence on the artist’s recent work. Their work often focused on the grandeur of landscape and the way it dwarfed the people who were travelling through it.

Ron McBurnie's study for The Oberon Tree, 2010 (ink and watercolour) Photograph: Ron McBurnie

Influence on the making of The Oberon Tree: Aegidius Sadeler I (c.1555-1609) Landscape with three men and a dog on the path above a waterfall, engraving, on laid paper, c.1600, from the artist’s private Print Collection. Photograph: Ron McBurnie
The Oberon Tree takes on a sense of monumentality through the viewpoint the artist has used as well as variations of strong, warm, foreground colours to the cool background colours with their subtle variation in washes and tones in the distant hills.

How does the artist give the tree a sense of scale in this watercolour?

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Some people have noted that they have seen different things revealed within the trunk of the tree. **List** what can you see?

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**Look online** at the landscape engravings of Aegidius Sadeler and Jan van de Velde. **Describe** similarities can you find between their work and this painting?

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PROJECT

**Make** a painting using a limited range of colours like those used in *The Oberon Tree*.

*Reference List:*

ARTIST: ROBERT PRESTON

ARTWORK: Naxos Mirror

Robert PRESTON
b. 1942 United Kingdom

Naxos Mirror 1984
Casein, dry ground pigment, charcoal, pastel, conte, crayon and chalk on canvas
159 x 125 cm

Purchased by James Cook University from the exhibition, DRAWINGS x 4 held at Perc Tucker Gallery in 1984 and travelled in 1985

Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The image Naxos Mirror is derived from the decorated flat side of an ancient pottery artefact created in the shape of a frying pan. These artefacts, found in graves in the Cycladic islands off the coast of Greece, are around 5000 years old. They nearly all represent female figures with non-functioning legs for a handle. The artist studied these ceramics in the Museum of Archaeology in Athens.

The pictures which appeared on the Cycladic frying pan vessels were either engraved or stamped and in-filled with lime or a white substance. They depict stylised symbols for ocean waves, the sun, moon and stars, dolphins, boats and occasionally seabirds. Archaeologists are not sure of the real intent of these mysterious objects, however, they are thought to have had a magical purpose. Filled with water and placed in the grave, the reflections of the moon and stars would be brought into the grave to give light to the dead as they travelled into the after-life.

Figure 1. Early Cycladic II “Frying Pans” National Museum Athens, (Dan Diffendale, 2008)
INVESTIGATE

_Naxos Mirror_ depicts a number of symbols which are related to the ancient influences which have informed its creation. **Draw** the symbols you can recognise. Here are some clues to help you.

**Figure 2.**
Modern x 4
(Lay Anglicana, 2014).

**Figure 3.**
Vesica Piscis

QUESTIONS / DISCUSS

In art, a **medium** is the material that artists use to create their art work. Whatever a piece of art is made out of is its medium. The plural of medium is **media**. So, one piece of art can be made of one medium or several media. Robert Preston used a range of art media to create the _Naxos Mirror._

Take a close **look** at the artwork and **list** which types of media were used to create it?

Artists often make drawings from life, meaning they draw in the presence of the object or subject of their artwork. Other artists create work in their studio away from their subject. The marks we can see in Preston’s drawing suggest that the symbolic shapes have been carefully considered and measured.

**Describe** what you think the artist’s process was to create this artwork. Do you think that the artist drew directly from objects or planned the shapes in a preliminary study which evolved onto the canvas?
ARTIST: ROBERT PRESTON
ARTWORKS: *S’labicated Monument 1 and 2*

Robert PRESTON
b. 1942 United Kingdom

*S’labicated Monument 1* 2010
Charcoal and black chalk on paper
55 x 75 cm
Collection of the artist
Photograph: Michael Marzik

Robert PRESTON
b. 1942 United Kingdom

*S’labicated Monument 2* 2010
Charcoal and black chalk on paper
55 x 75 cm
Collection of the artist
Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

These two large drawings are based on the decorative concrete slabs which form part of the architectural design of the School of Creative Arts (SoCA) building on the JCU Townsville Campus. The artist was fascinated by these structures which did not appear to have any particular function.

Photographs of the SoCA building, JCU Townsville Campus by Andrew Rankin
ARTIST’S STATEMENT

A search for meaning in the meaningless
“On the one hand the structures had the appearance of an ancient monument like Stonehenge while on the other they looked like a line of letter forms in the style of ‘Superblock’ Graffiti. I wondered if it was supposed to look like a group of letters and if so had they been arranged aesthetically or to construct a word?

If it was a word, it was a strange one- niHl. It seemed at first close to the Latin word ‘Nihil’ (meaning nothing). However a further search led to a match in – ‘Pascuan’ – the Austronesian language of the Easter Islanders, the greatest Polynesian builders and carvers of the giant stone statues.

‘Maoi’: Nihi in ‘Pascuan’ means arch or curve and Nihi- Nihi means great curve, bend or arched like the heavens in a bow, the very antitheses of the SoCA structure. Nihi is a word strongly associated with celestial events which suggests a direct link with the forces of nature and signals the great cosmic cycles which directly influence them. If this was not planned by the architect of the SoCA building it represents a lost opportunity of what could have been”.

INVESTIGATE

The drawings were made from sketches drawn on site and from the artist’s photographs which looked so bland in colour that he converted them into black and white. He felt this lent some drama and an element of mystery to the structures.

The materials used to make the drawing were charcoal and black chalk with a variety of erasers and a chamois leather pad used to vary the tonal values.

Imagine that you were the architect of the building and needed to construct a decorative structure, like the one in Robert Preston’s drawings, based on a word. Choose a word as the basis of your standing structure. Select what font style would indicate or emphasis your meaning and draw it here.
After reading about the artist’s technique, describe why you think he has chosen to work in the black and white tones of the charcoal medium rather than using a colour palette?

THE ARTWORK TITLES

In order to name these two similar but different artworks the artist has created a new word: **S’labicated**

The title of these two works was intended to be discreetly sardonic (or mocking) and is a “portmanteau” or blend, that is the fusing together of parts of existing words.

In this instance the made-up word has three parts:

- The S’ at the beginning of the word refers to syllabary – which means a set of written symbols used to write a language. This also relates to the slabs looking like letter forms.
- Slab – A broad flat piece of wood, stone, concrete etc. but also a mortuary table.
- Fabricated – Something made or built but also something fake, false or untrue.

As the artist felt that all these meanings were important to the subject of his drawing, he invented the word *S’labicated*.

Reference List:


ARTIST: ANNEKE SILVER
ARTWORK: The Contents of the Rainmakers Pouch

This mixed media work is one of a series of six the artist made that relate to her investigation of the seasons in the tropics. The artist was puzzled by people saying that there are no 'proper' seasons in North Queensland. She supposed it was because many early children’s books (often written and published in the United Kingdom and Europe) talk about seasons that are typical for north Western Europe and have no bearing on the seasonal flow in North Queensland. The artist concluded that the seasons in North Queensland were ‘proper’ but that they had no specific names and were therefore not recognised.

The artist observed that in North Queensland we have a wet season and a dry season. Each of those has a beginning, middle and an end. She then came up with a series of six distinct seasons, creating paintings that show what happens in nature during those months.

The series of paintings is called Seasons without Names. Each work in this series consists of a large panel and a smaller one; the larger panel is a watercolour landscape scene (typical for that time of year and her newly named season), while the smaller one functions as a comment panel using artefacts, and found items that characterise the quality of that time of year.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSS

What time of year do you think The Contents of the Rainmaker’s Pouch depicts?

What do you think of the title of the work means?

Do you know if indigenous people have names for the seasons in North Queensland?

What name would you give that time of year?
What months does this weather happen?

Why do you think people say our seasons are not 'proper'?

**Complete the table below.** What are the objects in the rainmaker's pouch in Silver's artwork? And what do they mean symbolically? What materials are the objects made of?

*Clue: The artist has given you some of the answers to get you started!*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colour studies</td>
<td>Artist's own magic to find the right colours for the watercolor</td>
<td>Watercolor on paper, wrapped acid free tissue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Pan pipes</td>
<td>Pipes to play magic tunes on to make the rain come</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two shields</td>
<td>Something so magic that it had to be wrapped and only unpacked on special occasions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Combs in ancient classical times often symbolized rain. The comb model is based on an ancient Greek comb</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>To symbolize new growth that will occur if the rain happens</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A snail</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>To symbolize raindrops</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ARTIST STATEMENT

“The location of the waterhole depicted in the painting is in Bladensburg National Park near Winton. The official name is Skull Hole. This is because it is the site of a massacre of the Aboriginal people who lived there; skulls have been found at the bottom of the waterhole. I have camped near the waterhole and found it a very powerful site. While there I made sketches and took many photos of the area and have completed several paintings of it in the studio, largely from memory.

The title “The last of the good water” implies a number of meanings. It refers in one aspect to the fact that this waterhole has clean water, because the cattle can’t get to it. If they could, the edges would be trampled and the water turned into mud which eventually—during floods—will also wash into the sea and do damage there. In a deeper sense it refers to the destruction of not only the natural environment but the destruction and annihilation of Aboriginal culture and people. The last of the good water signifies the last of intact indigenous culture in that location, before it was annihilated”.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSS

From the artist statement explain how the title The last of the good water is symbolic of what has happened to Australian Aboriginal culture.

This painting fits into a grand landscape painting tradition reminiscent of works painted by early immigrant painters of the Australian landscape like Eugene von Guerard, Conrad Martens, John Glover and Louis Buvelot. Look online for these artists and then describe some of the differences between Anneke Silver’s painting and the works of these early immigrant painters.
ARTIST: BARBARA CHESHIRE
ARTWORK: Universal Pulse 1

Barbara CHESHIRE
b.1946 Australia

Universal Pulse 1 2016
Oil on canvas
76 x 123 cm

Collection of the artist, Photograph: Michael Marzik

ARTIST STATEMENT

“This artwork is about a subject I am passionate about. It represents waterways and their importance in the survival of life on earth. The ideas for the painting developed as a result of several amazing experiences at various waterways, both regionally and internationally. Each waterway I visited had the wonderful ‘Wow’ factor about it giving me a sensation of being refreshed and alive. It wasn’t until I started to put my thoughts on canvas that I realized that the rendering of this painting needed to represent both micro and macro points of view of each landscape. On the one hand I needed to show the personal ‘wow’ factor of the waterway and on the other a universal message that when humans respect, nurture and look after our waterways we benefit with life.”

TECHNIQUE

Cheshire has stated that the “techniques used to project these ideas became a very important consideration. I eventually found a technique that would personally communicate my spiritual and sensory understanding of the waterways message. The works were initially drawn up with acrylic paint using a variety of warm tones to represent the hidden blood and pulse of life. Layers of oil paint were then added. These were applied using black and white oil paint and are symbolic of the basic energy of every breath and heartbeat of nature. Such a universal message is timeless, therefore the application of this layer of the painting needed to be an unhurried one. A very fine (No.0) line brush was used in various ways to apply each stroke separately. Although this process took many days, the journey allowed me to contemplate, remember and ponder on my amazing experiences of visiting the waterways and the importance of the universal pulse they provide.”
In the painting, the artist has used a limited number of colours (limited palette). After reading the artist statement, can you suggest some reason for the choice of colours used?

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Explain why waterways are so important to the survival of the natural environment.
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Townsville is dependent on a number of waterways (creek, river, dam). Name two of them. Why are these waterways you have named so important to our survival?
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ARTIST: ALISON MCDONALD
ARTWORK: R.R.R. (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

McDonald has stated “this work began while I was on an artist residency in Aberystwyth, Wales. It was extremely complex to create and was made over three cold months, in a warm Welsh artist studio. I worked for many uninterrupted hours. It was bliss.”

The artwork was originally titled Choker. McDonald wanted it to look like an oversized piece of jewellery, a choker necklace. The sculpture also played on the idea that it was made of rubbish that ‘choked’ our waterways. The sculptor wasn’t completely happy with the title and renamed it to R.R.R. (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) which relates to the chasing arrows that form our recycling symbol and to the Möbius Strip.

The Möbius Strip is a one-sided surface that can be constructed by affixing the ends of a rectangular strip after first having given one of the ends a one-half twist. This space displays interesting properties, such as having only one side and remaining in one piece when split down the middle. The features of the strip were discovered simultaneously in 1858 by two German mathematicians, August Ferdinand Möbius and Johann Benedict Listing.
McDonald states that, “the woven pattern I utilised to join the rings in the work together was inspired by complex Celtic Welsh interlocking knot designs used in jewellery, drawings other designs. It is coloured with the ‘lolly like’ colours that designers utilise to attract us to purchasing unnecessary items instead of reusing”.

Alison McDONALD  
b.1962 Australia

R.R.R. (as in Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) [detail] 2012-2015  
Hand cut and coloured recycled PET plastic, silver-coated wire  
68 x 20 x 38 cm

Collection of the artist, Photograph: Michael Marzik

INVESTIGATE

Make a Möbius Strip.
Obtain a thin length of paper and give it one only twist and tape the ends together.
What happens when you draw a line from the inside of the paper along its full length?

What happens when you cut the joined strip in half lengthways?

Doubling the Möbius Strip in this way also makes it appear like another mathematical symbol. What symbol is it?

Can you identify where else you may have seen the Möbius symbol used?

Each ring in this artwork comes from one plastic bottle. Identify which section of the bottle it comes from.
Discover where, when and who invented the recycling symbol.

What does PET stand for?

List what sort of everyday items are made of PET plastic.

What are some traditional and contemporary uses of the Celtic knots?

Draw your own Celtic knot design.

Reference List:

JILL O’SULLIVAN

ARTWORK: The Annunciation

b.1941 Australia

The Annunciation 2000
Lithograph
47.5 x 32 cm
Edition 2/7

Collection of the artist

Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The Annunciation is part of a print series made by the artist of images depicting people placed in local and domestic settings. These artworks resulted from her research into the depiction of the figure in domestic and religious interior settings during the Northern European Renaissance period of the 15th, 16th and early 17th century.

ARTIST STATEMENT

“This work takes compositional direction from Jan Vermeer’s painting, titled The Love Letter 1666. Receiving a love letter was a recurrent theme in Northern European domestic imagery.”

Figure 1.
“However, through the title, my work also refers to another common theme in the fifteenth century art. The subject of this very popular theme – the Annunciation – depicts the moment that the angel, Gabriel tells Mary that she is pregnant!”

Figure 2
Annunciation Triptych Merode Altarpiece
(TheMet, 2016).

“My work explores the use of light and dark in black and white to create dramatic effects. Notice the dimensional gradation of tone created between the darkened doorway and the lit window in the background. The image was developed through compositional drawings and photographs I made of friends posing in domestic settings.”

INVESTIGATE

Explore the use of tone by drawing a section of a person’s face from life (eyes, mouth, nose etc.). Look closely to identify where the shadows (dark tones) and highlights (light tones) are.
ARTIST: JILL O’SULLIVAN
ARTWORK: *Domestic Artefact*

The artist has stated "Domestic Artefact" is composed of a collection of assorted shaped bottles sitting on a kitchen window ledge above a sink in a Townsville house. It is part of an ongoing series that continues my interest into everyday domestic settings. The work also focuses on compositional patterns created by the placement of the forms in specific positions as well as the meanings that everyday household objects can reflect. This work is loosely linked to the still life paintings created by the Dutch and Flemish masters of the 16th and 17th Century. The use of light and dark plays an important part in this composition to emphasise the rhythmic placement of the bottles which suggest musical notation or a score. This work was developed through photographs, compositional drawings and ongoing observation of this particular setting.

RESEARCH

Both of O’Sullivan’s artworks are described as lithographs. Research what lithography is and describe how a lithograph is made.

For a full explanation see the Minneapolis Institute of Art Youtube video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHw5_1Hopsc
PROJECT

Find examples of Dutch and Flemish paintings and prints that reference the domestic interior.

To get you started, here are a few renaissance artists to search for:
Jan Van Eyck, Jan Vermeer, Robert Campin, Petrus Christus, Pieter de Hooch

Compare how these artists have depicted the various interiors. Draw something from your own home interior/environment.

Reference List:
Retrieved from http://www.johannes-vermeer.org

Retrieved from http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/56.70/
ARTIST: SHEREE KINLYSIDE
ARTWORK: *Fold Liturgy I, II, III*

Sheree KINLYSIDE
b.1955 Australia

object 1 (left): *Fold – Liturgy I* 2014
Acrylic sheeting, box card, bible pages, wire, metal finding, iron shavings in acrylic paint
30 x 11.5 x 11.5 cm

object 2 (middle): *Fold – Liturgy II* 2014
Acrylic sheeting, box card, bible pages, wire, metal finding, iron shavings in acrylic paint
36 x 15.3 x 15.7 cm

object 3 (right): *Fold – Liturgy III* 2014
Acrylic sheeting, box card, bible pages, wire, metal finding, iron shavings in acrylic paint
36.7 x 26.5 x 26.5 cm

Collection of the artist
Photograph: Michael Marzik

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

With this series of three sculptural works titled *Fold Liturgy*, Kinlyside has taken many of the components of a framed artwork (even the wire from the back used to hang the frame) and refashioned them into a kind of bookish hybrid; something else entirely between a book and a wall work. The new hybrid work can neither be placed on a wall nor opened up like a book but still retains the compact, portable and sequential elements of a book. In this series of works the artist is objecting to people’s intent of tearing pages out of a book to make a financial profit.

The artist made the contents of the boxes very special so that the viewer would be able to understand her objection. The pages used were torn from an important book, the Bible, reportedly the world’s best-selling and most widely distributed book. The three works *Fold Liturgy I, II and III* contain pages torn from three different bibles.
The pages in each of the Fold Liturgy works are not flat like a printed image might be if it is placed in a frame on a wall, but are folded which makes the words more difficult, if not impossible, to read. This refers to the destructive nature of the act of tearing pages from books and making the image and text information redundant in the process.

The wires fixed inside the base of each container function to make the pages stay in place creating the look of the “cathedral windows”. The wire words themselves are nonsensical but are echoes of Biblical words that have escaped from the pages. These words are meaningless now because they are read out of context.

The base of each work is made to look like a rusted container to emulate the frame of an old painting. This is also intended to make each work look aged, as a religious icon might be, and therefore more authentic and valid. The decorative motif on the front of each base adds to that impression.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Kinlyside has stated, “some-times printed words and images or a combination of both are removed from books, framed and placed on a wall. Then, as an artwork (hanging on a wall), it has a value both in terms of price and as a décor item. If the very same image or text is left as a folded piece of paper bound into the original book, its value is much less. As a printmaker and maker of books it concerns me that someone could buy an artist’s book that has within its pages, say...6 etchings, then could tear out the image pages and make 6 framed artworks for purely commercial reasons”.
The artist mentions in her statement the “sequential elements” of a book. This means one part following the next in a set order. **Name** the parts of a book. Begin at the front with the “spine”. This is one part but what comes next?

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**Look** at each perspex case from the side. See the “cathedral window” shapes formed by each folded page. **Describe** the similarities and differences between this and the Southwark Cathedral pictured on the previous page.

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By removing pages from bibles and using them in a new artwork, is the artist being disrespectful of the religious icon (the Bible) or is she showing respect for it by presenting it as a sculpture in an art gallery? **Explain** your answer.

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What is your view on the artist destroying books to make a point or comment? Does this artist’s action of carefully removing just a few pages from a Bible for the purpose of creating a new work of art constitute destruction to you?

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**Reference List:**


ARTIST: LUCY T. SMITH
ARTWORK: The Melaleuca Woodlands

Lucy T. SMITH
b.1968 Australia

The Melaleuca Woodlands [detail] 1994
Watercolour on illustration board
22 x 50 cm

Purchased for the James Cook University Art Collection in 1994, Photograph: Michael Marzik

ARTIST STATEMENT

Smith has stated, “this piece represents the woodlands that I was illustrating for my Honours year BVA project when I was a student at JCU. I loved the way the woodlands formed horizontal stripes of colour, which were accentuated if you viewed them from the window of a travelling car, when they went blurry. Those colourful 'stripes' also neatly divided the woodlands into the three areas I would investigate – trees and epiphytes, shrubs and ground plants. The blackened trunks of the trees show that periodical fires occur here and are part of the natural life of the woodlands.

To do this whole project I volunteered as a field assistant to a JCU botanist/ecologist who was doing fire studies on these woodlands. In this way I was able to travel with him to sites between Townsville and Ingham, and even to Hinchinbrook Island. The painting was intended to introduce the viewer to this unique habitat and hopefully entice them in to look closer at it.”

QUESTION/DISCUSS

The illustrating of plants and animals has had a long and honoured history. If you think about the visual arts in general, what industries would make use of the work of nature or natural history illustrators like Lucy Smith?
ARTIST: LUCY T. SMITH
ARTWORK: Apollo Jewel Butterfly

ARTIST STATEMENT

Smith has stated, “within the Melaleuca woodlands there are some amazing plant and animal interactions. This was a page I invented to explain the relationship between a butterfly, some ants, and two plants. All depend on each other – the Melaleuca viridiflora tree is host to the epiphytic Myrmecodia becarrii, whose common name is ‘ant plant’. The ants live inside this plant, and they look after the larvae of the Apollo jewel butterfly, keeping it safe from predators until it reaches maturity, transforms, and flies away. In return the ants get a special treat from the larvae – a sweet food which it produces for them as a treat. Everybody is happy.”

QUESTION/DISCUS

In this illustration the artist explains the narrative of the interaction between plants and animals through the use of images and text. What other examples have you observed here of visual material that makes use of this image/text combination?

Clue: posters, advertisements, signs.
ARTIST: LUCY T. SMITH
ARTWORK: Grass Tree Xanthorrhoea johnsonii

ARTIST STATEMENT

Smith has stated, “a dominant feature of the Melaleuca woodlands are the beautiful, iconic grass trees. Instead of just painting one, I invented another informative page to illustrate the different stages of the grass tree’s flowering spike. I found the shape and patterns of the inflorescence fascinating, and hopefully communicated this to the viewer – perhaps they will stop and look closer next time they walk past a grass tree.”

QUESTION/DISCUSS

Through the construction of their narrative elements, some illustrations can tell us more about a particular organism. In this work, has the artist been successful in giving us more information about the life cycle of the grass tree? If you were going to design a poster on grass trees, describe what you would do differently than the artist.

Lucy T. SMITH
b.1968 Australia

Grass Tree Xanthorrhoea johnsonii 1994
Watercolour on illustration board with printed overlay
43 x 21 cm

Purchased for the James Cook University
Art Collection in 1994

Photograph: Michael Marzik
**ARTIST: LUCY T. SMITH**

**ARTWORK: Gecko**

Smith has stated, “an earlier piece, this illustration aimed to tell the viewer a bit more about the common house geckos which can be found in Townsville houses. I always loved geckos. When it was made in 1993, producing an overlay with text and images was a difficult and time-consuming process – it had to be made from cut up bits of text and ruled lines which were photographed and then printed using a “bromide” machine. The same effect could now be achieved in about five minutes on the computer, using photoshop!”

**INVESTIGATE**

When artists observe a subject for long periods of time they become accustomed to the line, colour, texture and tonality of their subject as well as the way it moves and functions in its environment and they eventually devise ways to illustrate it. In this illustration the artist focuses on several unique parts of the gecko, like the feet, the eyes the tail and the skin.

If you were going to make a detailed illustration study of something from the natural world (plants or animals), what would you choose and why would you choose it?
What parts of the organism would you choose to focus on?
What medium would you use to make it, pencil, paint, pastel etc...?

From your answers above, **draw** your illustration in your choice of medium.
ARTIST: DAPHNE CAZALET
ARTWORK: *On Entering II*

Cazalet has stated, “This work is created largely in pastel. It is one of a series of works intended to expose the feelings, both positive and negative, of women forced by circumstances beyond their control, to leave the security and certainty of their own homes and countries and seek a new life elsewhere.

The work speaks of moving into a new and unknown space; of anxiety, of loss, of the feeling of being stripped bare and sent amongst strangers but also of the curiosity, the hope, and the dream-like awe of one who enters a place of safety and opportunity after living through a nightmare.

This work, like all the works of this series, was inspired by stories told to me by women who had faced this situation for real. These formed part of storytelling workshops I conducted, designed to give refugee and migrant women the chance to share the extraordinary stories of determination and survival that were the otherwise hidden background to their arrival in Australia. For me, these stories evoked my personal history when, as a child, with my family, I was forced to leave India, where I was born, and emigrate to Britain. The trauma of that change lives with me still even though I have benefited considerably from the opportunities it also opened up”.

Daphne CAZALET
b. India

*On Entering II* 2001
Mixed media
153 x 100 cm

Harry Hopkins Memorial Award winner, 2001,
acquired for the James Cook University,
Art Collection

Photograph: Michael Marzik
TECHNIQUE

This artwork is on paper. It has a painted background over which the artist used broad strokes of pastel in several layers. The effects include rubbing back of the pastel with an eraser and use of white pastel to create light effects.

Pastel is an art medium that is made from raw colour pigment mixed with a binding agent (usually gum arabic) to form it into sticks. The sticks are usually quite short (5-7cm) and cylindrical, square or rectangular. Their texture can vary from quite hard and dense to very soft and velvety. Pastels are available in hundreds of colours just like artists' paints.

Edgar Degas was a famous French impressionist artist (1834-1917) who used pastel very effectively in many of his figurative works, the most famous of which are the pictures of ballerinas and theatre performers. Like Cazalet, Degas's work titled “Singer in Green” is essentially a drawing but because of the use of pastel it has a very painterly look, with the colours being luminous and clearly layered.

INVESTIGATE/DISCUSS

In the drawing by Cazalet, the figure is the main subject of the composition. How has the artist empowered the figure through its size, stance and position in the image?

How does the title On Entering II relate to the artist statement?

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______________________
______________________
Look at the surface of Cazalet's work on paper. Try to work out which layers were applied first and the ways in which the artist built up the layers to achieve such a rich surface. List the four most dominant colours you can see in the drawing.

In the last few years, as the result of war, many people have been displaced from their homes and homeland and their families. If you were going to make an artwork that made a comment about this subject, describe what you would include in it. Sketch some of your ideas.

Reference List: