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.”
INVESTIGATE
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.

_____________________________________________________________________________

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: