



Learning Resource

James C Sourris AM Collection education resource: Years 7 and 8, Visual Arts

Years 7 and 8: Visual Arts

The visual arts has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of students, encouraging them to reach their creative and intellectual potential by igniting informed, imaginative and innovative thinking.

Through Visual Arts, students make and respond using visual arts knowledge, understanding and skills to represent meaning associated with personal and global views, and intrinsic and extrinsic worlds. Visual Arts engages students in a journey of discovery, experimentation and problem-solving relevant to visual perception and visual language. Students undertake this journey by using visual techniques, technologies, practices and processes. Learning in the Visual Arts, students become increasingly confident and proficient in achieving their personal visual aesthetic, and appreciate and value that of others.

Visual Arts supports students to view the world through various lenses and contexts. Students recognise the significance of visual arts histories, theories and practices, exploring and responding to artists, craftspeople and designers and their artworks. They apply visual arts knowledge to make critical judgements about their own importance as artists and audiences. Learning in the Visual Arts helps students to develop understanding of world culture and their responsibilities as global citizens.

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/rationale/>

Unit of Work	Our place in the cosmos
Key inquiry questions:	How do artists represent the cosmos or universe? How can I depict my own universe? How can artists use lines in drawings to create meaning?

Content Description

ACAVAM118 – Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait artists, to represent and theme, concept or idea in their artwork;

- combining and adapting materials, techniques, technologies and art making processes, reflecting upon techniques used by artists including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists
- investigating how different combinations or techniques can represent a theme, concept or idea, for example, applying paint with different tools to create different textures

ACAVAR123 – Analyse how artists use visual conventions in artworks;

- critically analysing an artist's intention for an artwork and their use of visual conventions
- presenting an informed opinion about a display of artworks as a written review, referring to previous and subsequent works by the same artist/group of artists
- considering viewpoints – cultures

ACAVAR124 - Identify and connect specific features and purposes of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their art-making, starting with Australian artworks including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples;

- Considering viewpoints – philosophies and ideologies: For example – Do the artist's past experiences influence the work? Why do you prefer this form?
- Comparing and contrasting different representations and interpretations of Country/Place from a range of viewpoints and contexts, for example, researching and comparing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and colonists in artworks from and about 1788

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>

Learning Objectives and Success Criteria

Learning Objectives

Students are learning to:

- critically analyse Sandra Selig's and Alick Tipoti's artworks and artistic practice

- understand and appreciate different points of view of the cosmos and its relevance to everyday life for Torres Strait Islander people, Sandra Selig and themselves
- creatively manipulate a range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional art materials to express their ideas about their own universe

Success criteria

Students will be successful when they can:

- show understanding of Sandra Selig's art practice and her intentions by making and curating their own artworks in response to her practice
- communicate the importance of the cosmos to our lives and see similarities between the views held by Selig and Tipoti
- manipulate two-dimensional and three-dimensional art materials to express their own ideas

Teaching Notes

Timing

3 x 1-hour lessons

Resources

Lesson 1:

A copy of Table 1 for each student with spaces big enough to write into or Table 1 copied to white board, or projected so students can copy it.

Lesson 2:

Visual diary and drawing media, such as pencils and fine point pens.

For sculpture task, use whatever materials are at hand but suggestions include:

- a range of linear 3D media such as drinking straws, balsa wood, bamboo, fishing line, string, threads, toothpicks, bamboo skewers, paddle pop sticks, florists' wire, twine, twigs, raffia etc.
- a range of non-linear materials such as plasticine, feathers, Styrofoam balls, beads, buttons, paper, cardboard (such as foam core board scraps) that can be manipulated into shapes, have holes poked into it etc.

- provide nails, hammer, craft glue, sticky tape, masking tape or hot glue and glue guns, staplers for joining the material together; scissors craft knives for cutting; pliers for bending wire if needed etc.

Lesson 3:

- sculptures made in the previous lesson or a range of linear objects to draw, such as crumpled chicken-wire or bird-wire, old nets, jumbled up electrical and phone cords, balls of string and wool, steel wool, rope, drinking straws etc.
- drawing paper and linear drawing media such as drawing pencils or fine point pen for each student
- a view-finder for each student - this can be made from an index card with a small square cut out of the centre of it, or a piece of paper rolled up like a telescope
- pins, tape or Blu-tack to display art works

Teaching Notes

In order to get the most out of this resource, become a State Library [member](#) today for free and immediate access to digital resources.

Once you have set up your State Library Membership you can access Kanopy, ebooks and databases including those referred to in this resource.

To access Kanopy, databases and other e-resources suggested in this resource, ensure students are logged in with their State Library membership before following the resource link.

Learning Activities

Lesson 1

Inquiry question: How do artists represent the cosmos or universe?

Before viewing

Students individually reflect on what they think the cosmos is. Allow 2 minutes for students to quickly draw a picture to express their idea of the cosmos. Students turn to their neighbour and share their ideas about the question: *What is the cosmos and what is our connection to it?* Set a timer for two minutes and when time is up partners share some thoughts and ideas from their discussion with the class.

View video

Students view [Sandra Selig digital story: The James C Sourris AM Collection](#)

After viewing

1. Facilitate a [Whip-around activity](#) about how Selig's art practice explores the cosmos. To do this each student has a turn describing Selig's art practice using only the first word they can think of. The only rule is no repeating of words. The word can be something that they see in Selig's works of art or a descriptive word. It allows for every student to speak and there are no wrong answers. As students speak the teacher writes their words on the board as visual reminder of their thoughts.
2. Students work with a partner and talk about what Selig means when she says: *"Because the universe is here as well as out there."* Set a timer for two minutes and when time is up partners share some thoughts and ideas from their discussion with the class. Encourage students to consider Selig's ideas about the connections between humans and the world around them and the universe.
3. Ask students to reflect on their original ideas about the cosmos and if they have now thought about any other ways of thinking about it. Invite students to share these thoughts.

Responding

4. Show students the QAGOMA video [Alick Tipoti introduces his mural, "Kudusur"](#) Tipoti's work is an example of the cultural and spiritual importance of the connection between people and their environment (including the stars and planets) in the lives and stories of the Torres Strait Islanders. Give students a copy of Table 1 or ask students to copy the headings from it to use in this task. Students make dot points under each heading as a way of analysing the visual language and meaning in **"Kudusur"**.
5. Students do an individual Google image search (use search term Sandra Selig artist) for an example of one of Sandra Selig's spider web or thread installation artworks such as ["mid-air", 2003](#) or ["Spider web" 2010](#). Again, students make dot points in the table as they analyse the visual language and meaning in Selig's work.
6. Students note the similarities and differences between Selig's work and Tipoti's **"Kudusur"**. Students summarise their findings into a paragraph about the different artist's viewpoints of the cosmos.

Table 1

	Artwork title	Artwork size	Artwork medium	Artwork permanent or ephemeral?	Dominant elements of design (line, colour, shape, texture, tone, form?)	Subject matter: what you see in the image?	Cosmos theme is evident because..
Sandra Selig							

Alick Tipoti	“Kudusur”						
Similar or different							

Extension

Students could develop their analysis into an article for the school newsletter about how artists view and represent the cosmos.

Lesson 2

Inquiry question: How can I depict my own universe?

Equipment and materials

Use whatever materials are at hand but suggestions include:

- a range of linear 3D media such as drinking straws, balsa wood, bamboo, fishing line, string, threads, toothpicks, bamboo skewers, paddle pop sticks, florists’ wire, twine, twigs, raffia etc.
- a range of non-linear materials such as plasticine, feathers, Styrofoam balls, beads, buttons, paper, cardboard (such as foam core board scraps) that can be manipulated into shapes, have holes poked into it etc.
- provide nails, hammer, craft glue, sticky tape, masking tape or hot glue and glue guns, staplers for joining the material together; scissors craft knives for cutting; pliers for bending wire if needed etc.

Making

1. Ask students to think about Sandra Selig’s idea of the universe as a web of connections.
2. Students make a few small drawings of the connections in their own universe. This could show how they are connected to their families, environment, school, friends, sports teams and so on. It should be up to the student to choose what aspects of their lives they will focus on. If students find this overwhelming show them some images from a Google image search for *the internet of things*. This will display several styles of diagrammatic approaches to a web, but it is important that teachers prevent them from copying. Allow about 20 minutes for this process and encourage students to try several different ways of depicting their own web.
3. Students develop one of their drawings into a sculptural map of their own universe. Provide a range of linear and non-linear materials that students can choose from. Each student chooses two materials that appeal to them and they use them to build the universe beginning with themselves. The non-linear material will represent the people or things in their universe and the other, linear material must be used to show the connection between them. The components can be joined by using knots, glue, tape or whatever is most effective and convenient and pleasing to look at. Allow experimentation.

4. Students discuss their results in small groups, sharing how they are connected to their worlds and evaluating the success of communicating this intention. They should respond to these questions:
 - How have I communicated my universe in my sculpture?
 - How did I solve problems in making my sculpture?

Extension

Students photograph their sculptures and manipulate them in photoshop to show how they could become large public artworks in a specific place in the school.

Lesson 3

Inquiry question: How can artists use lines in drawings?

Materials and equipment

- Sculptures made in the previous lesson or a range of linear objects to draw such as crumpled chicken-wire or bird-wire, old nets, jumbled up electrical and phone cords, balls of string and wool, steel wool, rope, drinking straws and so on.
- Drawing paper and linear drawing media such as drawing pencils or fine point pen for each student.
- A view-finder for each student. This can be made from an index card with a small square cut out of the centre of it, or a piece of paper rolled up like a telescope.
- Pins, tape or Blu-tack to display art works.

Making

1. Show students an example of one of Selig's spider web works, such as:
 - ["Untitled"](#) (from *Webs from my garden* series) 2004-5 (click on the spider web art work to see the whole image)
 - ["No. 54", 2007](#) from the *Universes series* 2006
2. Individually students [use a view finder](#) (an index card with a small square cut out of the centre of it, or a piece of paper rolled up like a telescope) to isolate a small section of the drawing at a time. Students spend a minute just observing the drawing as they move the viewfinder across and around the drawing.
3. While continuing to have viewing access to the spider web drawing:
 - Students work with a partner and discuss what process they think Selig used to capture the spider webs onto paper as drawings. Remind students that these are real spider webs. Set a timer for two minutes for this discussion and then ask students to share their ideas with the class.

- Next, while still viewing the artwork, ask students as a class to make a visual inventory of the different types and qualities of lines they notice in the work. This should be a list of adjectives, for example, thin, wobbly, broken, tentative and so on. Keep this list of adjectives on a poster or the board so everyone can see them.
- In front of each group of students place a group of two or three of their sculptures made in the previous lesson or linear objects to use as subject matter for line drawings. These can be pre-arranged on the tables. Use these as the subject matter of a series of slow, line-drawing exercises that rely on close observation, as follows:
 - explore opposite hand drawings - drawing with the non-dominant hand
 - continuous line drawings – the pencil or pen is not raised from the paper
 - blind contour drawings – the drawer observes the object slowly and carefully while drawing the contours or edges of the objects, but does not look at the paper at all
 - modified contour drawings – the same process as a blind contour drawing but with quick glimpses at the paper to check spatial relationships

For all activities, encourage quiet work which allows for closer observation. Encourage students to see the variety and qualities of the lines as they draw and to refer to the adjectives they listed if they need to create variety in their work. (refer to Edwards, Betty *Drawing on Right Side of the Brain* - <https://www.drawright.com/>).

- Students reflect on their drawings by pinning them up to the wall and curating or arranging them according to their linear qualities and looking for other ways to connect them visually so that the display reflects the concept of a web of connections.

Extension

Students explore lines, through hatching and cross hatching, as a means to create tone and form.

References

Edwards, Betty *Drawing on Right Side of the Brain* - <https://www.drawright.com/>.

The Teacher Tool Kit, *Whip around* <https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/whip-around>

Thinking Museum, Tips & Tools: How to use a Viewfinder to Look Closely
<https://thinkingmuseum.com/2020/01/29/how-to-use-a-viewfinder-to-look-closely/>

Additional Resources

Anderson, S (2015, May 17). Blind contour drawing. New York Times Magazine, 24-25. Retrieved from

<https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.slq.qld.gov.au/docview/1681501361?accountid=13378>

Hamacher, Duane W. *A shark in the stars: astronomy and culture in the Torres Strait*

<https://theconversation.com/a-shark-in-the-stars-astronomy-and-culture-in-the-torres-strait-15850>

Myths and Legends of Torres Strait Collected and translated by Margaret Lawrie, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland, 1970

<http://hdl.handle.net/10462/pdf/30>

National Film and Sound Archive, *Tagai Myth, Mabo the Native Title Revolution* Digital Learning resource

<https://www.mabonativetitle.com/info/tagaiMyth.htm>

QCAA, 2018, *Storytelling in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures*

<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/storytelling>

ReTold: A retelling of stories and songs from Myths and Legends of the Torres Strait by Margaret Lawrie, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. http://onsearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/search?vid=SLQ&search_scope=SLQ&query=any,contains,%3D99274643402061&lang=en_US

Sandra Selig introduces her installation 'mid-air'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HKJ9f118qY>

The Margaret Lawrie Collection, <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/research-collections/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-collections/margaret-lawrie-collection>

State Library of Queensland acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their continuing connection to land and as custodians of stories for millennia. We are inspired by this tradition in our work to share and preserve Queensland's memory for future generations.

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