Two decades of Queensland photography

### Senior: Visual Art

In Unit 2, students explore the concept of 'art as code' to learn how visual language is capable of expressing complex ideas. Although both spoken language and visual language vary by culture, visual language has the potential to transcend and communicate across cultures, time and geography.

Students apply the contexts, foregrounding the formal and the cultural contexts to analyse and interpret visual communication and meaning in artworks. As students make and respond, teachers unpack the art processes of creating a body of work. Students are guided through the development of an individualised focus through learning experiences that facilitate more student-directed investigation and experimentation. Students use a range of materials, techniques and processes to create a folio, including experimental work, artist research and at least one resolved artwork.

Through the inquiry learning process, students explore how visual language, symbol systems and art conventions can express ideas and feelings in images, objects and experiences. They experiment with language in art that can be verbal, inaudible, literal or implied, narrative, metaphoric, persuasive, or decorative. They employ a range of materials, techniques, processes and technologies to make artworks that may be ephemeral or permanent, physical or digital.

As audience, students examine the art practices, and read and interpret artworks of Australian and international artists who innovatively exploit cross-cultural meaning and communication through visual language. As artists, students communicate fluently and expressively through visual forms and engage with audiences to express their ideas.

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/the-arts/visual-art/syllabus





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Visual Art 2019 v1.1	
Unit of Work	Unit 2: Art as Code
Key inquiry questions:	Developing — how do artists generate solutions to visual problems?
	Researching — how do artists react to stimulus?
	Reflecting — how do artists consider ideas and information, media techniques and processes?
	Resolving — how do artists communicate individual ideas as visual, written or spoken responses?
	https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/the-arts/visual-art/syllabus
	Visual Art 2019 v1.1

### **Content Description**

- 1. implement ideas and representations to decode artworks and communicate in visual forms
- 2. apply literacy skills to communicate understanding of visual language, expression and meaning in the work of self and others





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- 3. analyse and interpret artworks and art practices through the formal and cultural contexts
- 4. evaluate art practices, traditions, cultures, and theories to examine how diverse symbol systems are used by artists to communicate meaning
- 5. justify viewpoints using evidence of communication in artworks
- 6. experiment in response to symbol systems used by artists to communicate meaning
- 7. create multiple meaning and representations through knowledge and understanding of materials, techniques, technologies and art processes
- 8. realise responses to demonstrate how meaning is communicated through art forms.

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/the-arts/visual-art/syllabus

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### **Learning Objectives and Success Criteria**

### **Learning Objectives**

Students are learning to:





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- create visual responses to communicate cultural ideas through manipulation of visual language, materials, techniques, processes and technologies of 2D and 3D artworks
- analyse and compare artworks through the cultural context to interpret social influences and representations of time, place, politics, purpose, ethnicity, gender and spiritual and secular beliefs on visual language and communication, and how these contribute to engagement, communication and meaning
- evaluate the various ways artists communicate ideas through visual language and expression
- apply visual art terminology when decoding and verbalizing visual clues and symbols in artworks of self and others.

#### Success criteria

Students will be successful when they can:

- communicate cultural ideas through the use of symbols and the manipulation of media in 2D and 3D artwork
- identify and interpret cultural and formal elements in artist's works
- reflect on languages in artworks and the dialogue between artist and audience as they consider ideas and information, media, techniques and processes
- visually communicate their own viewpoints through the decoding of symbols and visual metaphors.





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### **Teaching Notes**

### **Timing**

6 x 1 hour lessons

#### Resources

- · devices for students to record photographs
- internet access
- printer
- cartridge paper, scissors
- portable lights
- assorted items and objects to use in photographs





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- maps, graphs, small souvenirs
- small boxes, collage and assemblage materials
- · various colours of acrylic paints, paintbrushes
- glue

### **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.

All of the images in this resource can be found in the State Library of Queensland's digital exhibition, <u>TWENTY</u> or in State Library of Queensland's One Search catalogue. Photographs are also listed with their image number throughout to allow students to find the images in One Search.

Didactics included through this resources can also be found in the digital exhibition and projected in the classroom, or viewed on student devices.





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### **Learning Activities**

#### Lesson 1:

Introduce State Library of Queensland's **TWENTY** exhibition.

Discuss the power of photography to document life.

Pose a question to the class about the meaning of 'community'.

Show students the following image:

Traditional Eritrean Fasika meal in Brisbane, Q, 2016, Hannah Roche. (Image number: 30568-0001-0012)

Question students on prior knowledge of what an Eritrean Fasika meal is.

Ask students questions such as:

• What can you see?





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- What else do you think there is that you can't see?
- What do you think is happening?
- How do you know that?
- What else?
- What would you feel like if you were there?

Viewing this image through a cultural context, what clues can you find in the image that alludes to culture? Discuss with students, formal compositional elements such as use of colour, shape, line, repetition.

Show students a second image:

Hungi pit being lit on Recognition Day in Lakes Creek Rockhampton, 2000, Brian Rogers. (Image number: 28873-0001-0044)

Ask students to re-consider the above questions for this second image. In pairs, students compile a list of similarities and differences as they compare the two images. Particular points of interest include:

- Why photograph in Black and White?
- Why crop in close and not show faces?

Discuss the significance of the second image:





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A kup murri, or hungi, is a traditional method of cooking food in an underground pit that Australian South Sea Islanders—descendants of Pacific Islands labourers brought to Queensland in the 1800s, often forcibly—continue to practice. Recognition Day commemorates the moment in 1994 when the Federal Government finally recognised Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct cultural group.

What discussions is the artist provoking with analysis of this image through a cultural context? Students need to consider historical events and social influences.

Read the following didactic from **Community**, together as a class, have students summarise the key points from the text: <u>Community</u>: <u>The heart</u> and soul of Queensland

Queensland is home to nearly 30% of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with over 150 language groups represented. Many First Nations peoples are keeping traditional practices alive by passing onto new generations important knowledge related to language, weaving, fishing, painting, and more. Several major art and cultural events are held throughout Queensland, showcasing the rich and diverse talents of these communities.

Almost 30% of Queensland residents were born overseas. While historically migrants have come from the UK and New Zealand, the state has increasingly welcomed people from countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The many multicultural festivals, global food markets, and culture-





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specific events held throughout the year highlight the enrichment to our community these new residents bring as well as the changing face of the state.

Queenslanders don't only come together in times of celebration; the Queensland community spirit is palpable in clean-up efforts following natural disasters, in protests around human rights and environmental concerns, and in commemorations of fallen soldiers. At their core, these gatherings demonstrate a common concern for humanity, an interest in forging real connections, and a passion for greater tolerance and understanding.

With this information, students collaboratively compile a list of these and any additional communities they can think of. Individually, students choose 3 to 5 communities and undertake quick sketches in their visual diary to symbolise these. Students show sketches to their "elbow partners" to see if they can guess what community groups are symbolised and provide feedback for improvement. Pick the most successful symbols and share them with the class.

Teacher asks students to undertake a 'community' mind map in their visual diaries using some of the community groups already listed, then think of what communities they feel part of and add them.

Show students the following image:

<u>Surf lifesavers guiding the ropes out during a carnival at Kurrawa Beach, Queensland, 2002. Craig Golding.(Image number: 27684-0001-0001)</u>





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Ask students to discuss the following:

- Viewing this image through a cultural context, what might it say to you about living in Queensland?
- A deliberate decision has been made to portray this image in black and white. Why do you think?
- This black and white image seems to have a timeless and nostalgic element. Why might an image of surf lifesavers bring about nostalgia?
- How is Queensland often portrayed? Think of icons and stereotypes.
- In relation to 'Art as Code', what do you think is the artist's personal viewpoint?
- How much influence do you think that the period of history you are living in affects an artist's practice, and audience interpretation?

Students to ponder this question when viewing the next image:

Child talking to his mother through a window during the Covid-19 pandemic, Ferny Grove, Brisbane, 2020. Jeremy Santolin.

Ask students the following questions prior to discussing the artist's explanation below:

- What is happening here? What can you see?
- What could the teddy bears in the window symbolise? Why?





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Read the image didactic with students:

"This image captures my youngest son during the COVID-19 pandemic. Exercise was one of few outdoor activities still permitted. Putting out teddy bears for kids to spot on their walks created a bit of joy for the young spotters. Every bear sighting was an unspoken message of hope in a restrictive and uncertain time." – Jeremy Santolin.

Ask students the following questions:

- Do you think you would have even noticed the teddy bears in the window if this image appeared prior to January 2020?
- What other symbols can you think of that could represent the COVID19 pandemic in 2020?

### **MAKING:**

Students are to create original designs of symbols to represent COVID19.

### **RESPONDING:**

Teacher to lead students through the following images and discussions:

Lizzie Ansford gets a hug from her dad Steven, Tara, Queensland, 5 July 2013. Shehab Uddin. (Image number: 29871-0030-0001)





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### Discuss the following with students:

- Not only does a community come together for celebrations or commemorations, but communities provide strength and support. What is the first thing you notice in this image? What do you think the story is?
- Why would the photographer deliberately step away from using a colour image? (In considering this question, ask students to think about where we still commonly see black and white photographs.)
- Is the photographer trying to communicating a story about these two people that may be newsworthy? OR Would colours distract the viewer from the important parts of the image such as the emotion on the faces and the strong hands and arms of the father as he provides comfort?

Old and young deep in conversation, Doomadgee outstation, Queensland, 2013. Hamish Cairns. (Image number: 30818-0002-0023)

Ask students to write answers for the following questions in their visual diaries:

- Viewing this image through a cultural context, what does it say about 'community'? Look at the posing of the boy, as he seems to be sharing a secret with the older woman, who is positioned floating within the frame, dressed in white with her hand on her heart.
- What does any text or objects within the frame allude to?
- What story do you think the artist is telling and what do you think their viewpoint is?





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#### Lesson 2:

Building from the work done in the previous lesson, lead students into a discussion on Jonathon Jones' <u>artwork</u> that was created through community involvement. Jonathon Jones relied on cultural knowledge and community for the skills to create the pieces in his work, as well as a community of collectors to contribute items to create the artwork.

Students work in groups to discuss the following:

Viewing his work through a cultural context, how has Jonathon Jones communicated to the audience through the use of symbols?

Students should also consider audience engagement with a particular focus on the additional elements of sound and eucalyptus scents.

#### **MAKING:**

Students are to plan for a photo or series of photos to represent 'school community' without showing faces.

To assist with ideas and techniques, teacher shows students the following video:

7 How-to tips for shooting still life photography, COOPH.

Students are to draw four thumbnail sketches of their ideas, taking into consideration suitable objects, backgrounds, vertical or horizontal format as well as colour or black and white photography.





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Once photography has been completed, students view and critique their images, choosing the best five images to share with a partner. Students view each other's images, provide constructive feedback and assist to choose the best two images from each student. Images are then saved onto a compatible IT device for the teacher to project and share with the class. Students reflect on their experimental process and record in their visual diary.

Students choose another community to represent visually and decide on objects they can use to symbolically represent 'community' in a still life photographic image for the following lesson. Students then undertake a series of thumbnail sketches of their ideas, considering each object and a suitable background.

#### Lesson 3:

Teacher asks students to recall the video from the previous lesson and reflect on the most successful images they created. Students create their own mini studio spaces setting up their backdrops, objects and lights. Students undertake still life photography and repeat the process of editing, critiquing, reflecting on their work and sharing it with the class.

#### Lesson 4:

### **RESPONDING:**

Show the following image to students:





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Young people participating in the Deadly Didge 'n' Dance Festival, part of the centenary commemorations for Palm Island, April 2018. Alf Wilson. (Image number: 31493-0001-0102)

Pose the following questions to students:

- What do you think is happening here?
- Why do you say that?
- What else do you think is happening?
- Why do we celebrate?
- What do we celebrate?
- What physical things do we do for celebration?

Teacher asks students to watch a video on <u>The Laura Dance and Cultural Festival</u>. During this biennial three-day celebration, festival elders pass on the stories and meaning behind the dances and songs to the next generation (Korff, 2018).

This celebration helps support the communities and bring about family focus. Ask students to reflect on their own family traditions and think about what and how celebrations occur. What traditions may they continue with as they grow older? How important do you think family traditions are?





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Discuss the cultural aspect of celebrations and ask students to think about the significance of Fiona Foley's memories of Fraser Island whilst viewing Fiona Foley 5 minute interview: The James C Sourris AM Collection.

Students to reflect on the everyday things they celebrate, like watching those first rays of sun reaching over the horizon, or the smell of rain.

Discuss with students: What effects do celebrations have in a community?

Lead a discussion into examining various cultural celebrations, then project the following image (and didactic below) for the class:

Jade Atkinson, Festival Princess contestant, Babinda Harvest Festival, 2019. Glen O'Malley. (Image number: 1838029240-0001-0050)

- · What do you think this image is about?
- What is happening outside the frame?
- Look at the use of colour, placement of the main subject and objects in the image to assist.

Running for over 50 years, Babinda Harvest Festival celebrates harvest time. In Babinda, the locals celebrate with tractor pulls and a grand street parade, culminating in an evening festival with fireworks and the crowning of that year's Harvest Festival Queen.





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Project the following image: Audio mixing desk setup for live performance by The Go-Betweens, Brisbane, 2005. Stephen Booth. (Image number: 27383-0001-0004)

Ask students to view this image and think about what celebration may be represented. Explain the significance of The Go-Betweens and the Brisbane music scene. Students analyse the image.

Ask students to think of other festivals held in Queensland, including the Greek Festival and Woodford Folk Festival. Discuss how these and other celebrations assist with cultural identity in such a diverse population.

In small groups have students create mind maps, exploring the concept of 'celebration', adding symbols and imagery.

#### **MAKING:**

Have students use their visual diaries to brainstorm ideas for a photographic work symbolising a particular celebration. They will need to gather props and undertake photography for this.

Students also search for images online that they can print out and include in a 3D work using artist, Joseph Cornell as a stimulus.

#### Lesson 5:





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Students to think about creating meaning through the use of symbols and objects after viewing the following video: <u>Judy Watson – blood</u> <u>language</u>: <u>James C.Sourris AM Collection</u>

Discuss Judy Watson's artmaking process.

- What interested you with this process? Is there something with your own work you could use?
- What parts of the artmaking process surprised you?
- What do you know now that you didn't know before?
- What would you like to learn more about?

After viewing the video, students are introduced to the work of indigenous artist, <u>Adoption, 1993-2000</u>, Destiny Deacon. Encourage students to think about how celebration and community are represented and create meaning.

Working in groups, students examine and compare the work of the two artists. Viewing their work through a cultural context, students discuss how these artists use their work to create cultural awareness, inviting discussion and change. Students write a paragraph and share their responses.





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### MAKING:

Ask students to review their designs for their experimental work. Have students reflect on their learnings and how to apply them to their work.

#### Lesson 6:

### **MAKING:**

Students use new knowledge of artist's practices to inform them with their 3D experimentation.

Teachers will also have items available to use, including:

- maps
- graphs
- small souvenirs
- birthday candles other images, mud army (use State Library Queensland's One Search).

At the end of the lesson, students should be able to reflect on their experimental processes so far in response to images from the **TWENTY** exhibition.





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Students are asked what they know now that they didn't know before:

- What was the most challenging aspect?
- · What was something unexpected they found?
- What they would like to investigate further?

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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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Date prepared: 16 July 2020

Date revised:



