A painting of a landscape with a river, trees, and a distant mountain. The scene is viewed from a high vantage point, looking down at a river that flows through a valley. The river is a vibrant blue, contrasting with the surrounding green and brown landscape. On the left bank, there are several trees with dark, gnarled trunks and sparse foliage. In the middle ground, a small cluster of buildings, possibly a farm or a small village, is nestled among the trees. A few cows are visible grazing in the fields. In the background, a large, rounded mountain rises against a pale sky. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, textured surface.

HOME OF THE BOYDS

HARKAWAY AND
THE GRANGE

EDUCATION KIT
BUNJIL PLACE GALLERY

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1.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The relationship of the famous Boyd family dynasty with the Harkaway and Narre Warren region is featured in *Home of the Boyds: Harkaway and 'The Grange'*, the first to focus exclusively on a little known but nationally significant Australian story.

It was at Harkaway that the pioneering W.A.C. à Beckett and Emma Mills acquired and built *The Grange*, a house and surrounding property that was to feature prominently in the art of the Boyds from the mid-19th century through to the 1960s. It was where the aspiring artist Emma Minnie Boyd (1858-1936) learnt to paint and where the internationally acclaimed novelist Martin Boyd (1893-1972) penned his semi-autobiography about the many comings and goings to the house and his aspirations for a new life in Australia. It was also at Harkaway where the young Arthur Boyd (1920-1999), one of Australia's most celebrated artists, created Old Testament frescoes on the dining room walls and perfected his open air and studio painting, producing what many consider to be one of the finest body of Australian landscape paintings.

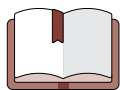
ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This education kit has been developed with teachers and students in mind. Teachers are invited to utilise the classroom activities and focus questions to enhance their students' experience of *Home of the Boyds: Harkaway and 'The Grange'* prior to and post visiting the exhibition.

KEY CONCEPTS



VISUAL ART



HISTORY



ART AND
CONTEXT



CONSERVATION



ART AS
NARRATIVE



VISUAL ARTS
PRACTICE

2.1

ONE HOUSE, MANY STORIES

The Grange at Harkaway tells the story of the á Beckett and Boyd families and their connection to the Casey area. The property began as a modest homestead and was later transformed into a more formal Georgian style villa before it was eventually demolished. Over the 100-year time span that the property existed, the house itself and the surrounding area provided endless sources of artistic inspiration for the families that lived there and the friends that visited.

Right **Emma Minnie Boyd**
(Minnie's house) 1880
watercolour on paper
18.2 x 26.7 cm (sheet)
Bundanon Trust Collection

Below **Arthur Merric Boyd**
Sheds and stables at The Grange,
Harkaway 1889
watercolour on paper
22.0 x 44.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria
Photography: Viki Petherbridge





Above **Penleigh Boyd**
Back paddock, The Grange c.1910
oil on board
30.0 x 40.0 cm
Private collection, Melbourne
Photography: Viki Petherbridge



Right **J. Charley**
The Grange 1925
watercolour on paper
38.0 x 48.5 cm (sight)
Private collection, Victoria
Photography: Viki Petherbridge



FOCUS QUESTIONS

Why do you think *The Grange* was such a special place?

What are some of the common threads between the different interpretations of The Grange and the Harkaway area?

Artworks that tell stories are described as *narratives*. What is the narrative of this exhibition? What are some of the stories that are being told through these artworks?

Imagine you are putting together an exhibition of your family home. What stories would you tell? Create a timeline of significant events.

Research the history of where you live, what sources of inspiration for possible artworks can be found there?

Use the Narre Warren and Berwick districts as inspiration to create your own artwork or series of artworks

What is your favourite interpretation of The Grange or Harkaway area from the exhibition? Give reasons for your answer

2.2

THE WORK OF EMMA MINNIE BOYD

FAMILY PAINTINGS

W.A.C á Beckett and his wife Emma Mills lived in many different places across Melbourne and London before they found the quiet, rolling hills of the Narre Warren North and Harkaway region. After visiting Emma's mother in Berwick, they decided to build their house in the hills nearby. They called their house *The Grange*, after W.A.C's Grandfather's house in England. Emma Minnie Boyd was the second born of six children and was known to her family and friends as Minnie. Minnie was an avid painter and drawer. Her parents were very supportive of her art and encouraged her not only to paint and sketch, but to also exhibit her work. At the age of 15, Minnie had an art studio built adjacent to *The Grange*. Her paintings document her family members, and day to day life at *The Grange*.



(page 5) **Emma Minnie Boyd**

An afternoon nap 1874

watercolour on paper

17.0 x 22.5 cm

Private collection, Victoria

Right **Emma Minnie Boyd**

Willie á Beckett at his desk in the Blue Room, The Grange 1883

watercolour on paper

24.7 x 34.5 cm (sight)

Private collection, Melbourne



FOCUS QUESTIONS

Imagine you are Willie á Beckett. Describe what you can see, feel, hear and smell.

How does this painting reflect the time and place in which it was made?

Compare the desk that Willie á Beckett is sitting at to your own desk. Create a 'contemporary' version of this artwork. Sketch your ideas first and then complete a finished version using watercolours as Emma Minnie Boyd did.

An open window or door was a common motif in the work of Minnie Boyd. What reasons could you suggest for this? How might it relate to life at The Grange?

Afternoon Nap 1874, is a beautifully rendered portrait of Minnie's mother resting on the chaise lounge in the drawing room of *The Grange*. How does this work and her other portraits differ from the landscapes that Minnie painted? Think about the differences in style, colour and use of paint.

Where would you go for an afternoon nap? Write a paragraph describing your place. Try to capture the ambiance of your place through adjectives.

Research the work of other Australian artists who have been inspired by domestic interiors. (Brett Whitely, Howard Arkley, Grace Cossington Smith are some possibilities) Compare and contrast one of these artists with the work on Minnie Boyd. Which interior would you rather live in and why?

Create an artwork of your favourite room in your house.



Above **Emma Minnie Boyd**
The Grange, Berwick 1874
watercolour on paper
16.0 x 25.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

Right **Emma Minnie Boyd**
(The quail shooter) 1884
watercolour on paper
17.3 x 25.6 cm (sight)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 2006



THE GRANGE

Minnie completed many watercolour paintings and sketches of *The Grange* and its environment throughout her time there. These include intimate family portraits like the one of Willie á Beckett and picturesque landscapes like the two paintings above. *The Grange, Berwick* 1874 and *Untitled (The Quail shooter)* 1884 were both painted in summer but 10 years apart.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Complete a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between the two works. How did Minnie's painting style change in that time?

About these works curator Rodney James says, "They convincingly evoke the crackle and dry of the Australian bush and the softer and more diffuse morning and evening light" Discuss specific aspects of each of these artworks that would support this commentary.

Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry that uses just a few words to capture a moment and create a picture in the reader's mind. Traditionally, Haiku is written in three lines, with five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line, and five syllables in the third line. Write a Haiku about either *The Grange, Berwick* or *Untitled (The quail shooter)*. Have you been able to capture the atmosphere of the scene in your poem?

Choose another painting from the exhibition to write a poem about.



Above left **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Emu, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872
oil on gum leaf
10.0 x 14.0 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Above right **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Kangaroo, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872
oil on gum leaf
9.5 x 20.0 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Left **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Two kookaburras, one with snake) 1872
oil on gum leaf
12.5 x 17.5 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970



GUM LEAF PAINTINGS

These three paintings of bush scenes on eucalyptus leaves have been attributed to Minnie's younger sister Constance, although it is possible that Minnie assisted her. They represent an area near *The Grange* and exemplify the significance of the area to those that lived and visited there. The fact that these leaves can still be exhibited today is testament to the way that they have been cared for over many decades.



FOCUS QUESTIONS

What are some of the conservation issues in relation to these artworks?

Can you think of any other unusual surfaces that artists have painted on?



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Collect an interesting material from nature and have a go at painting on it? What will be your subject matter? What are some things you need to consider when working on something small and fragile like a leaf?

Create a collage of a landscape using materials you have collected from your surroundings either at school or at home. What will you need to do to preserve your artwork once it's finished?

2.3

THE GRANGE MURALS

Arthur Boyd was commissioned by his uncle Martin Boyd to paint a mural on the dining room walls of The Grange in 1948/49. The murals consisted of large Old Testament frescoes and formed part of an ambitious restoration of the property. Arthur Boyd used the Berwick landscape as the basis of the murals and combined this with religious stories including The Prodigal Son. The painting of the murals was an exhausting undertaking for Boyd and took two months to complete. The unveiling of this significant work was accompanied by a formal gathering with over 100 carefully selected guests. The fight to save the murals after the house deteriorated in the late 1960s is a fascinating one and eventually led to some of the mural being preserved and eventually restored for public viewing, fragments of which are displayed in this exhibition.



Left **Arthur Boyd**
The prodigal son (Harkaway mural, The Grange) 1948-49
casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Below **Arthur Boyd**
The prodigal son (Harkaway mural, The Grange) 1948-49
casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





FOCUS QUESTIONS

Arthur Boyd studied reproductions of many of the great European masters in preparation for the production of the murals. He was especially inspired by Tintoretto, Titian, Rubens and Rembrandt. In what ways is this obvious? Refer to specific aspects of the European master's work.

Boyd used a technique known as *fresco secco*. What does this technique involve and why do you think he chose to work in this way?

What are some of the issues that Boyd would have faced creating work of such a grand scale?

It was decided that the murals would be based around biblical stories such as *The Assumption of the Virgin*, *Susannah and the Elders* and *The prodigal son*. The Harkaway landscape was used as the backdrop for the stories. What do you think is the significance of choosing to merge the local landscape with religious iconography?

What are the underlying themes of *The prodigal son*? Why do you think Martin and Arthur Boyd chose this story as the subject for one of the murals?

The prodigal son was exhibited as part of a major retrospective of Arthur Boyd's work held at the National Gallery of Australia in 2014 entitled *Agony and Ecstasy*. Before it could be displayed, it had to be restored. Research the extensive process that was undertaken in order to exhibit the work. Why do you believe it was so important to save and unveil this work?



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

As a class reproduce one of Arthur Boyd's works on a large scale using the grid enlargement technique. Begin with an A4 colour photocopy of the chosen work and divide it into equal rectangles. Use one A4 sheet per rectangle. Work together to match the colours and techniques as best you can. Oil Pastels work well for this activity but you can use whatever medium you choose.

Tip: Make sure you label both the original and enlargement properly so that you can easily match up the pieces when finished.

Create a class mural based on a story of your choice. As a class brainstorm possible ideas and then choose a group of students to design the mural. What will your mural be about? How big will your mural be? Where will the mural go? How will you complete your mural?

Create a painting based on a historical event or biblical story of your choice.

Arthur Boyd painted the subjects of his murals together with the Harkaway landscape. Choose some historical or contemporary figures and paint or draw them in your local environment.

2.4

ARTHUR BOYD'S BERWICK LANDSCAPES

This exhibition is the first time that Arthur Boyd's series of Berwick Landscapes have been displayed together as a comprehensive group since 1948. The subjects were mostly found within a one or two-kilometre radius of *The Grange* and included a variety of different viewpoints. They depict a personal and distinctive view of the bush and helped cement Arthur Boyd as one of Australia's most admired contemporary painters.



Above left **Arthur Boyd**
Berwick landscape c.1943
oil on canvas on board
48.0 x 58.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria
Photography: Viki Petherbridge
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust.

Above right **Arthur Boyd**
Berwick landscape 1946
oil on canvas
50.6 x 60.7 cm
Private collection, Sydney
Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust



Right **Arthur Boyd**

Berwick landscape c.1948

oil on canvas on board

60.0 x 80.5 cm

Private collection, Melbourne

Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Below **Arthur Boyd**

Stone crusher, Berwick 1948

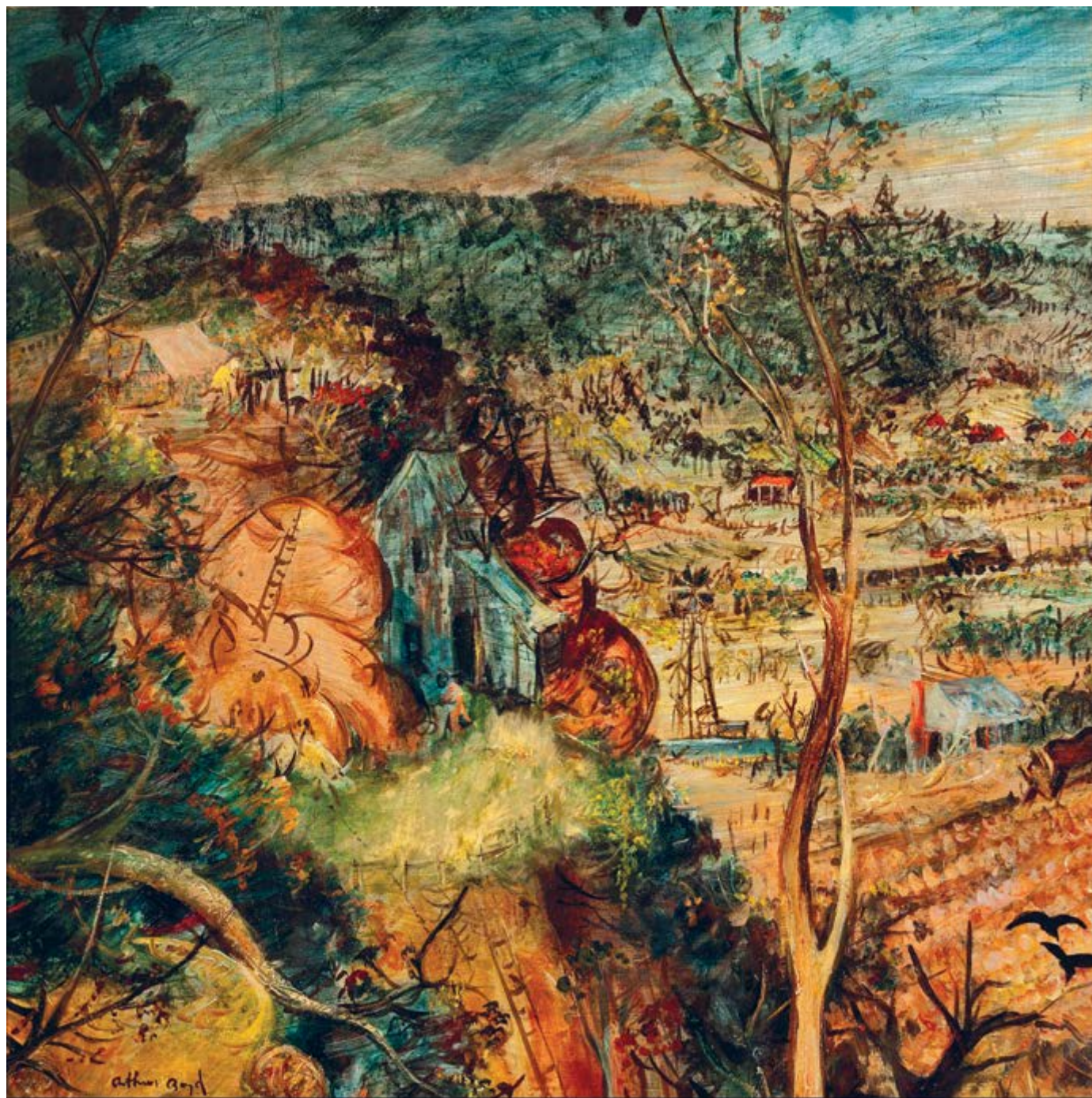
tempera and oil on board

59.5 x 59.5 cm

Collection of Peter Moran

Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





FOCUS QUESTIONS

Choose one of Arthur Boyd's 'Berwick Landscapes'. Imagine you are explaining the view to a friend who cannot see the painting. Use rich descriptive language to write a paragraph about the work. How would you describe the composition? Your description should evoke the feeling and atmosphere of the work as well as the physical characteristics.

Choose two of the 'Berwick Landscape' paintings, compare, and contrast the works. Discuss the similarities and differences in the use of materials and techniques, approach to subject matter and the use of art elements and principles.

How would you describe Arthur Boyd's vision of the Australian landscape?

Arthur Boyd was inspired by the famous landscape paintings of Bruegel and Italian Renaissance masters including Titian and Tintoretto. How is this evident in these paintings?

Examine Arthur Boyd's *Stone Crusher* (page 13) closely and complete a detailed response to the work under the following headings:

Subject Matter: What is happening in the artwork?

Aesthetic Qualities: What art elements and principles are significant in this work? How have they been used to depict a particular style or convey a particular mood?

Cultural and Historical Context: How is the time and place in which this painting was made reflected in the work?

Artistic Influences: Identify and discuss who or what has influenced Boyd to make this work

Materials & Techniques: Discuss the way in which this work has been made

Ideas and Meaning: What is this artwork about? Why was it made?

The above case study addresses Outcome 3 of VCE Studio Arts Unit 1 & Unit 3. VCE Art students could choose one of the 4 Analytical Frameworks to discuss the work.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Complete a series of sketches and drawings of a landscape near you. Consider different viewpoints, close up and distant views. Work 'en plein air' or from photographs you have taken. Choose your favourite image and complete a finished painting of it.

Do you have a special place that you like to visit? Maybe it's a favourite holiday destination or just somewhere, you like to go to relax. Make a list of the characteristics that make this place special to you. How could you represent this place in an artwork? What materials and techniques would you use? How would you use art elements such as colour to help depict the characteristics you've identified?

Create the same landscape using three different mediums. Choose from oil pastel, chalk pastel, acrylic paint, watercolour, oil paint, coloured pencil and collage. Reflect in your sketchbook on what materials you enjoyed working with most and how the different materials change the aesthetic qualities of your landscape.

How would you depict the Australian bush today? Complete a painting of your interpretation using either traditional or non-traditional painting techniques.

2.5

VCE STUDIO ARTS: UNIT 4

AREA OF STUDY 3: ART INDUSTRY CONTEXTS

As part of this unit, students must visit at least two exhibitions in their current year of study. They must examine curatorial considerations, exhibition design and promotional methods involved in preparing and displaying artworks as well as issues relating to the conservation of specific artworks. The following questions are designed to be used in conjunction with a visit to *Home of the Boyds: Harkaway and The Grange*.



CURATORIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Explain the meaning behind the title of the exhibition

What is the intention of this exhibition? Discuss some of the themes and subthemes used

How does the way in which the works have been displayed help communicate the curator's intentions?



EXHIBITION DESIGN

Draw a plan of the exhibition space

How would you describe the layout and physical characteristics of the exhibitions space? Have the walls been painted a certain colour? If so, think about why that colour might have been chosen.

How have the works been displayed? Are the works framed or unframed, presented in display cabinets? Consider the reasons why certain display methods have been used

How would you describe the lighting in the exhibition? Consider the impact that the type of lighting has on the exhibition design

How are the works of art displayed/grouped within the exhibition space? Are certain works grouped together? Have they been hung at a particular height? What about the spacing between works? Suggest reasons as to why the works have been placed this way

Are there any other factors that you think may have influenced the exhibition design?



CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

What are some environmental factors that might affect works on display in this exhibition? (e.g. lighting and humidity)

What preventative measures can you see to prevent damage to the works on display?

What are some of the factors that would have needed to be considered in relation to storing, handling and transporting works for this exhibition?

Choose two specific works in the exhibition to discuss in detail. Describe some of the methods that might have been used to store and handle the artworks. What issues may have arisen in relation to the conservation of the works? How has the conservation of the artwork been considered when displaying the artwork?



PROMOTION, EDUCATION & MARKETING

What are some of the ways that this exhibition has been marketed and promoted?

What information/resources are provided to assist the public in gaining a better understanding of this exhibition? (e.g. exhibition labels, catalogue)

Are there any additional programs that are accompanying the exhibition? If so, what do you believe is the intended purpose of these and who is the intended audience?

Consider the strategies used to promote the exhibition and how these correlate with the exhibition design and curatorial intent

3.

FURTHER READING

BOOKS:

Brenda Niall, *The Art of the Boyds*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 2002

Deborah Hart, *Arthur Boyd: Agony & Ecstasy*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2014

Ursula Hoff, *The Art of Arthur Boyd*, Andre Deutsche, London, 1986

Janet McKenzie, *Arthur Boyd: Art and Life*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2000

Franz Philip, *Arthur Boyd*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1967

WEBSITES:

The Grange, Harkaway', *Casey-Cardinia - Links to Our Past*, 11 February 2013, caseycardinalinkstooourpast.blogspot.com.au/2013/02.

Bundanon Trust: <https://bundanon.com.au/>

National Gallery of Australia: <https://nga.gov.au/>

National Gallery of Victoria: <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/>

4.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Victorian Curriculum: The Arts, History, English, Critical & Creative Thinking

VCE ART

- Analytical Frameworks
- Unit 1: Artworks, Experience and Meaning
- Unit 2: Artworks and Contemporary Culture
- Unit 3: Interpreting Art
- Unit 4 Discussing Art

VCE STUDIO ART

- Historical and Cultural Contexts
- Unit 1: Interpreting art ideas and use of materials and techniques
- Unit 2: Ideas and styles in artworks
- Unit 3: Artists and studio practices
- Unit 4: Art industry contexts

More specifically this exhibition provides learning opportunities that could link to the following content descriptors within the four learning strands of Visual Arts

LEVELS 7-8

EXPLORE AND EXPRESS IDEAS

Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to explore and develop themes, concepts or ideas in artworks (VCAVAE033)

Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise their intentions in artworks (VCAVAE034)

VISUAL ARTS PRACTICES

Develop skills in planning and designing art works and documenting artistic practice (VCAVAV036)

PRESENT AND PERFORM

Create and display artworks, describing how ideas are expressed to an audience (VCAVAP037)

RESPOND AND INTERPRET

Analyse how ideas and viewpoints are expressed in artworks and how they are viewed by audiences (VCAVAR038)

Identify and connect specific features of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary times, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR039)

LEVELS 9-10

EXPLORE AND EXPRESS IDEAS

Explore the visual arts practices and styles as inspiration to develop a personal style, explore, express ideas, concepts and themes in art works (VCAVAE040)

Explore how artists manipulate materials, techniques, technologies and processes to develop and express their intentions in art works (VCAVAE041)

VISUAL ARTS PRACTICES

Select and manipulate materials, techniques, and technologies and processes in a range of art forms to express ideas, concepts and themes (VCAVAV042)

Conceptualise, plan and design art works that express ideas, concepts and artistic intentions (VCAVAV043)

PRESENT AND PERFORM

Create, present, analyse and evaluate displays of artwork considering how ideas can be conveyed to an audience (VCAVAP044)

RESPOND AND INTERPRET

Analyse and interpret artworks to explore the different forms of expression, intentions and viewpoints of artists and how they are viewed by audiences (VCAVAR045)

Analyse, interpret and evaluate a range of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to explore differing viewpoints (VCAVAR046)

