

# sculpture encounters granite island

## Sculpture Encounters at Granite Island EDUCATION KIT: Artists and their Artworks

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## Introduction to this resource

The information provided here has been developed to support primary and secondary teaching. The content can be applied across a range of learning settings, as a handout for students and in conjunction with existing curriculum.

Included are profile pages featuring the exhibiting Artists and their artworks accompanied by suggested activities and questions that address a variety of subject areas. The information and activities are designed to create fun and engaging teaching and learning opportunities before, during and after visiting *Sculpture Encounters at Granite Island*

*We welcome your feedback please get in touch:*  
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## Sculpture glossary

**Abstract:** not representational or concerned with depicting something actual or easily recognisable. The use of basic elements seen in an object and rearranged /reassembled to create another shape or pattern which may or may not suggest a theme or subject matter. The use of shapes and colour to express an emotion or idea.

**Balance:** the ways in which elements (line, shape, colour, texture, etc.) of a piece are arranged. Balance can be achieved when all elements of a piece are given equal 'weight' and are distributed equally around an imaginary middle line.

**Carving:** the process of cutting away from a material to produce a desired form. Artists may use hand and electric tools, such as drills, hammers, chisels and knives to cut away from hard materials such as stone, cement, clay, plaster and ice. Once the material has been carved away it cannot be replaced so the carving process is often slower to avoid unnecessary mistakes.

**Dimensions:** the measurable qualities of an object, such as length, breadth, depth, or height.

**Engineering:** a branch of science and technology and is concerned with the design and building of engines, machines and structures. It is a discipline that studies and develops new technology. Mathematical concepts are applied to solve problems.

**Environmental:** artworks that use materials or ideas that reference the land, environment, and the natural world.

**Ephemeral:** an artwork that is temporary, existing for a limited period of time. The artwork may be documented and recorded via film, photography or written forms, enabling the work to exist outside of its intended exhibiting period.

**Figurative:** representational, that is, representing something real or recognisable in a straightforward manner, generally the human form.

**Installation:** the arrangement of objects within an environment, space or architecture that changes the manner in which audiences actively engage with that environment, space or architecture.

**Kinetic:** Relating to or resulting from motion. A kinetic sculpture is one that utilises constructed or natural forces or energy, it moves in reaction to those forces. In some cases the artwork is created by these forces.

**Shape:** the external form, contours, or outline of an object.

**Site-specific:** an artwork that directly relates to a particular space or environment, conceptually or materially.

**Three dimensional (3D):** a solid object that possesses height, width and depth, the object is not flat (2D).

**Oxy cutting:** the process of using a blow torch to cut through metal. The heat energy and high temperatures needed to melt the metal, and therefore 'cut' through, is provided by the combustion of fuel and oxygen in a torch, hence the name 'oxy cutting'.

## Looking at and interpreting art: On site at the exhibition

*These questions can be used to guide discussion and assist students in interpreting artworks and document their responses at Sculpture by the Sea.*

### 1 DESCRIPTION

- Write three words to describe your initial response to the work. Avoid using subjective responses, e.g. beautiful, ugly, good or bad and consider instead the ideas or memories you immediately associate with the work.
- Describe the shapes, colour, scale, line, texture, patterns, sound, and movement.
- What might the work taste like, smell like, or feel like?
- Walk around the sculpture – how does it change?
- Use the Sculpture Glossary to describe how the sculpture might be categorised - is it 'abstract', 'kinetic', 'ephemeral', 'interactive' etc.?

### 2 HOW WAS THE WORK WAS MADE

- Identify the materials and techniques used to make the work.
- How has the sculpture been engineered to maintain balance and securely positioned?

### 3 INTERPRETATION

- Does the artwork remind you of anything? Describe the associations.
- Discuss how the material selected to make the work contributes in communicating its subject matter and mood.
- Is humour, parody, playfulness essential to the work? Why?
- What is the title of the artwork? How does the title of the work contribute to your understanding? Does it change your response to the artwork?
- Does the work reference a cultural, historical, literary, social, environmental, political event or concern?
- Describe how the posing of the work on site contributes to our experience and interpretation of the artwork? Consider the work exhibited in an indoor gallery space and compare.
- Does the work question our ideas about what sculpture is or what it could be? How has it changed our ideas about sculpture?

### 1 Description:

### 2 Materials and techniques:

### 3 Interpretation/analysis:

**Marcel Cousins | VIC**

**Pot Plant**

Materials: aluminium, steel, coloured Perspex and auto paint  
(216cm height, 122cm width, 34cm depth)

*“My work sets out to shed light on the way we receive and interpret the world around us.”*

The aim of *Pot Plant* is to provide viewers with an experience that sheds light on the joys of life, focusing on the things that we experience on a daily basis but sometimes overlook. Through the use of bright colours, seductive forms, humour and a Pop aesthetic, the work sets out to provoke thought rather than provide a definitive cultural statement. When viewed in a variety of contexts both physically and philosophically the work serves as a departure point that will hopefully encourage discussion and debate.

*Pot Plant* translates an image of a flower through a process which mimics industrial methods of production using computer manipulation, oxy-cut steel, waterjet cut aluminium and auto paint. The initial starting point for the work was a photo of a plant in a garden. Pencil sketches of the plant were then drawn and scanned into a computer. The outlines formed the contours of the design which were drawn using a vector graphics software program. The sculptural components of the work are not just faithful reproductions of source material but are worked on and developed over a period of time, allowing for chance and experimentation to play a role in the final outcome. Like the elements of a Japanese garden the sculpture aims to represent an experience of nature but one that has been manipulated and highly stylised. The result is a stereotypical representation of a flower in a pot, similar to an imaginary flower, the image is reduced to a generic representation allowing the viewers to relate their own memories and experiences of nature to the work and in effect completing the picture.

My work is characterised by a stance that is open-ended, allowing the viewer to complete the puzzle through memories, experiences, understandings of media representations and the cultural background that each viewer possesses. Our sensors change in relation to the media and mediums we use. This transformation can result in very powerful shifts in the way we understand the environment we live in and lead to radical transformations in human thought. Technology, in particular print reproduction techniques and multiple production methods, has formed a core component of my art practice for the past twenty years. The mediums I have worked with include screen-printing, lithography, photography, digital printing, 3D printing, painting, stencilling, airbrushing, and polyester resin.

The sculptural forms, paintings and installations I produce are informed by magazines, the Internet and the world of graphic logs. With shifts in scale, content and materials, my work sets out to explore the way we receive and interpret the world around us and the media systems that influence and define how we see the world. Art should not simply serve as a mirror to what we already know but present a mirror image on a slightly obtuse angle, simultaneously showing us what we know and what we could not see before.



From above: Computer generated drawing for *Pot Plant*; drawing in Illustrator for *Pot Plant* maquette

**PRIMARY**

How is this pot plant different from a real pot plant?

Where do you usually see pot plants? Where is this sculpture positioned? Describe the surroundings.

Look at the black lines that outline the coloured shapes. How are the lines like drawing? Discuss the differences between a two dimensional drawing of something and a three dimensional sculpture.

In class collect examples of photographs of objects in magazines. Select one and copy it – using coloured paper for the shapes and black paper for the outlines.

**SECONDARY**

How does context contribute to an art works meaning and audience responses?

Consider how the technical processes involved in the artists practice contribute to the works 'Pop aesthetic'.

Compare and contrast the concepts and concerns explained in the artist's text with the work of Howard Arkley. How do they represent suburban Australia?

Discuss the idea that art should show us, at the same time, both, "what we know and what we could not see before".

**Britt Mikkelsen | WA**

***Ocean lace***

Materials: acrylic, polyurethane resin, steel  
(204cm height x 200cm width x 9.5cm depth)

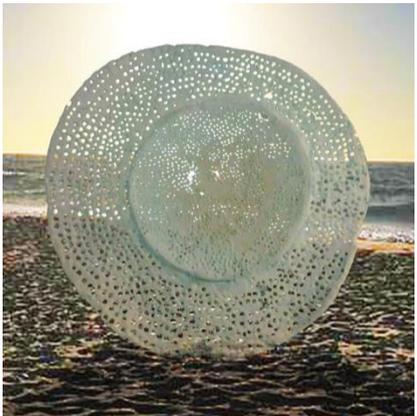
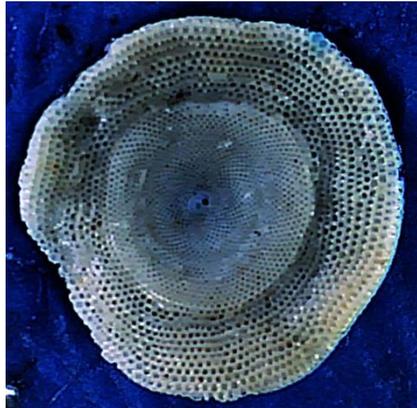
*“I want the audience to be seduced initially by the sculpture’s intricate beauty and then spellbound by the play of light and negative space.”*

This sculpture is a supersized version of a tiny shell-like fragment I found on South Cottesloe Beach. Much of my recent pieces are inspired by miniscule found objects, but this one is particularly spectacular. The fragment is from a creature called a *Foraminiferan*, a single celled organism that ingests nutrients through protoplasm that extends from the perforations in this shell. I came across the object whilst casually beachcombing. As with all my work I looked at it under the microscope and only then was its true beauty revealed.

The fragile, ephemeral nature of this object is an essential element of its beauty. It is literally so thin that it glows when held up to the light. As such I have created an artwork that is semi translucent and glows when backlit by the setting sun, whilst thousands of perforations in the sculpture allow us to glimpse the sea from where the fragment came. Light is an element that I feel an affiliation with. The use of light to create a sense of awe and theatre is foremost in most of my works. I want the audience to be seduced initially by the sculpture’s intricate beauty and then spellbound by the play of light and negative space. Perhaps then they will take the time to question the origin of this beautiful form.

I knew I wanted the end result to be translucent, so I went about experimenting with materials to achieve this end. As such the sculpture is constructed out of clear acrylic sheet and coated in multiple, thin coats of white polyurethane. It is punctuated by over three thousand holes, some laser cut, and some hand drilled and sculpted. The sculpture contains steel sections that strengthen its structure, like a skeleton. These were integral from a safety perspective, but I also had to ensure that they worked aesthetically with the sculpture. With all public works, one of the hardest things to achieve is the balance between durability, safety and aesthetics. Many hours of negotiation with my engineer achieved this end result.

The world’s environment and the problems our future generations face concern me, particularly since I have become a mother. For me my art is a reflection of these concerns. I want to appreciate the little things. I want to be present in my world and not get lost in the crazy bustle of my everyday existence. If we all take the time to stop and take notice, we may all have a deeper appreciation of the world in which we live.



From top: Magnified shell fragment; Artist working on a maquette; Artist’s concept for *Sculpture by the Sea*, Cottesloe 2015

**PRIMARY**

Guess how much bigger this sculpture is from the original shell that the artist found on the beach?

Discuss the title of the work. Where do we see lace and how is it made?

What type of sculpture would you make for this exhibition? What would it be about? What materials would you use? How would you make sure it was securely upright, safe for the public and protected against rain and wind?

Make a VERY big detailed drawing of something very small.

**SECONDARY**

Describe the work and how scale is a vital component expression.

Investigate the history and use of the magnified glass and the invention of the microscope. Consider its importance and significance in science. How have artists and writers made use of its potential?

How has the artist maintained the ‘fragile’, ‘intricate’ and ‘aesthetic’ aspects of the original shell that she found in the sculpture she has created?

Many artists make work in the hopes that it will make us more aware of present and future environmental problems. Can art change the way individuals and governments think?



**Peter Lundberg | USA**

***Adam and Eve***

Bronze  
(180cm height x 600cm width x 180cm depth)

*“The forms I see and feel in nature give me the substance to explore my sculptures.”*



My idea was to make an impressionistic sculpture in cast bronze. I wanted it to be made spontaneously as a way of exhibiting that raw power which comes from nature and its creation. An experience of our own physical relationship with nature is intended with the big scale of my sculpture. The sculpture should also be played upon, which further bonds our relationship to the form.

I more often build sculptures from cast concrete but I really enjoying cast bronze and the new language I find working with it. I first built bronze sculptures from old metal roofing which I twisted into shapes. Once the metal is formed a sand mould is made of the metal and liquid hot bronze is poured into the mould.

I like to make things with my hands and building sculptures feels right to me. It feels like I am doing something good. It is important that my sculpture is an expression of myself. I have spent my whole life searching for that expression that feels right. I was at first a musician, then a mathematician before I became a sculptor. All of those disciplines felt right to me. Music, Math and Sculpture all have something in common. They are pure and abstract languages we use to describe the world we live in. The passion that drives my artistic practice is the same that drives my life. The passion is a search for meaning in the beauty and mysteries that surround us. The sculpture does not have to be beautiful or mean anything. The beauty and meaning are in the search.

I draw inspiration from all that is around me, both beautiful and ugly, but primarily from nature. Within nature’s varied beauty I find the meaning of my existence. I often look to the sea, observe patterns in nature and gaze into the night sky. The forms I see and feel in nature give me the substance to explore my sculptures. I explore my sculptures the way a musician tries to develop a song, looking for a beat or rhythm. When a sculpture feels right, it is usually because I have found the right beat. I also reflect upon civilisation and utilise the materials coming from sophisticated cultures both ancient and new. The materials I use give me inspiration as well, through working. The process of making art then sometimes takes over and becomes the inspiration itself.



From above: the artist with his work in the foundry; *Adam and Eve* during the mould making process Photos: Yan Lu; *Adam and Eve* at *Sculpture by the Sea* Bondi 2016, Photo: G Carr

**PRIMARY**

Touch the sculptures. What do they feel like? Tap them – what noise do they make? Are they hollow or solid? Move in and around and on the sculptures!

What is a mould? Research and experiment with how they are made. Identify objects that we use in everyday life that have been created using moulds.

Look and draw shapes from nature. Develop your drawings into big twisted shapes using wire, wood, plastic bags tape, string and rubber bands. Cover the shapes with mod roc (Plaster of Paris modelling bandage).

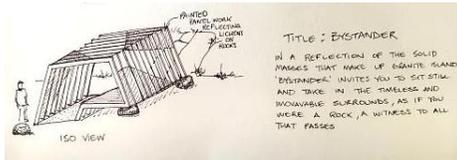
**SECONDARY**

Why is scale such an important part of the artists work?

Research the complex process involved in casting bronze. Find examples of bronze sculptures and describe their subject matter and where they are located.

The artist states that, ‘Music, Math and Sculpture all have something in common’. Discuss.

How would you define ‘beauty’? Research how ‘beauty’ has been interpreted by artists and writers.



From above: artist's sketch and concept for *Bystander*; the work being constructed; the final work in Granite Island

Hamish McMillan | SA

## **Bystander**

Materials: salvaged timber and stone  
2.4m high x 2.2m width x 3.1m depth

*“I look for a question worth asking and then I create a situation to prompt thought, discussion and conversations between people or within themselves.”*

South Australia's coastline is one shaped by time and the elements. Before any human stepped foot on Australian soil, millions of years ago, the forces of harsh winds and waves buffeted and challenged the land. At places like Granite Island the stone sits heavily. These rocks may be worn, but they are largely unchanged. They have seen the coming of this country's first people and the arrival of tall wooden masted ships full of colonialists. They have seen the exponential growth and change that has occurred over the last 50 years, and when we are long gone these rocks will remain.

Our daily lives are seemingly plagued by drama, both real and perceived, but all of this is irrelevant if seen from the position of an everlasting onlooker. When asked to create a sculptural piece for Sculpture Encounters, I looked and wandered the island paths, and I thought about what those rocks had seen. I thought about their ancient perspective and the trivial nature of our worries as individuals and our impermanence in the context of such an old landscape. *Bystander* seeks to give the viewer a chance to join with the landscape for a moment, to become part of the earth and to watch the world go by.

In developing *Bystander*, I began with sketches and concept drawings, which progressed quickly into construction. There really isn't a separation for me between art and those STEM subjects. In all aspects they come together. The joins at the knuckles between roof and walls are designed in line with engineering principles to provide inherent rigidity. And the painted panels are in effect bracing to counteract wind loads. Layout of the frames may appear to be haphazard, but even this was carefully measured and managed to deliver the overall effect I was after. Possibly one of the most fun parts of this project, and a first for me, was to use a mix of modern and ancient technology to split a 1 tonne granite boulder down the middle by my own hand.

In all areas of my life, I want to contribute to and making the world a better place. Through my art I want to give people opportunities to open their minds to alternative ways of thinking. I look for a question worth asking and then I create a situation to prompt thought, discussion and conversations between people or within themselves. I am an observer and am inspired by the world around us, both natural and contrived. For some time now, I've been focussed on the effects of humans on nature, and nature on humans. The world is an amazing place, beautiful and powerful, quiet and unassuming.

### PRIMARY

You are a rock on Granite Island, write a poem that describes some of your memories.

Sit inside the work and draw what you see through the spaces on one side then the other side and then the spaces above.

Back in class develop these drawings onto large stripes of paper. Present all the drawings together to represent the shape of the original structure.

### SECONDARY

Write a paragraph which describes the structural (physical) understanding of the work (consider scale, shape, texture, context, materials and techniques). Write a paragraph that describes your response to the work. What does it remind you of? How does the artist's text contribute to your understanding and experience?

Discuss how Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths have played an essential role in creating this sculpture.

To 'anthropomorphise' is to attribute human qualities to inanimate objects. Produce a series of drawings and a narrative for a short animation featuring the characters of several objects living on Granite island.



From above: *Blue Cylinder Revolution*,  
*Sculpture by the Sea*, Cottesloe 2017  
Photo: Stellar Fraser

## Masayuki Sugiyama | Japan

### *Blue Cylinder Revolution*

Material: stainless steel, paint  
(240cm height x 200cm width x 100cm depth)

*“The work causes a moiré effect which you will see if you are still or moving.”*

The form of a cylinder is based on the world map. By connecting both ends of world map, the cylindrical shape of earth is made. I think the word ‘Global’ used politically and in business is like this cylinder earth. I try to make a really round earth by revolving cylinders.

The artist Go Hayashi wrote a text entitled, *Looking as a form of movement* about an exhibition of my work in 1999. He developed a theory in this text by coining a new word ‘Eyewalk’. He explained that, “Eyewalk implies a rather passive state of mind; our sight unselectively accepts the things around us, while we are walking without a positive direction. We have to solely devote ourselves to what we see.” I think that sculpture is an interactive media of art and nature. Every action involved in seeing is interactive.

For over ten years, I have used a perforated metal which has many holes, as a sculpture material. The space inside a specified boundary created by perforated metals is ‘outside’ for a person seeing it. My works blur our sense of distinguishing the boundaries between the inside and outside of an object. The idea of subject and object replacing each other - inside becoming outside - is the core of the problem in my art works. In the past I had large scale installations at a vacant lot in the city. A vacant lot which exists in the city is inside of our world but its soil has the same matter as the wider world, so it seems to represent something from the outside.

I do not use any difficult process or technique. I roll up an expanded metal net of stainless steel and weld it. *Blue Cylinder Revolution* has six cylinders made of 2mm thick stainless steel expanded metal which are bended and welded. Each cylinder is joined together at two points. The work causes a moiré effect which you will see if you are still or moving. The moiré pattern moves when the viewer changes position. The cylinders that are positioned at an angle seem to move but the cylinder standing vertically appears still. Our sight line comes to melt into the space!

#### PRIMARY

Look closely at the work without moving – and then change position. Discuss the optical effect that you experience.

Write a story describing a short journey where you ‘take your eye for a walk’.

In class explore moiré patterns and other optical effects.

#### SECONDARY

Research ‘moiré’ as applied in Maths, Physics and Art. Describe how that artist has employed the use of moiré in his work.

Consider the use of optical illusion used by artist to create a sense of movement for example the work of Bridget Riley.

Discuss the Artist’s idea of, “subject and object replacing each other – inside becoming outside”, that is central to his work.



From above: *Oushi Zokei 2017, Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2017*, Photo: G. Carr; *Oushi Zokei 2016 Sculpture by the Sea Bondi 2016*. Photo: R Indrawan

## Keizo Ushio | Japan

### *Oushi Zokei, 2017*

Materials; black and white granite, colathar  
(240cm height, 180cm width, 120cm depth)

Extracts from *Keizo Ushio's Sculptures, Split Tori and Möbius Bands*,  
N. A. FRIEDMAN and C. H. SEQUIN, University of California, Berkeley.  
<http://www.ce.berkeley.edu/~sequin>

Keizo Ushio is a leading international stone sculptor with a large body of work that is of special interest to mathematicians. His sculptures of split tori and Möbius bands invite mathematical minds to ponder the underlying geometrical and topological paradigms, without reducing the enjoyment that these sculptures create at a purely intuitive, emotional level.

Artwork can be analysed from many different perspectives: based on its message, based on the materials or tools employed, based on its execution style and craftsmanship, or based on its historical and cultural context. A large part of Keizo Ushio's work can be enjoyed from a mathematical perspective.

Starting with a simple circular torus or with more elaborate twisting bands, he drills a large number of closely spaced holes to form two strands, which may or may not be connected, depending on the overall rotation of the cutting void. Keizo's split loop sculptures are reviewed and classified by the geometrical rules that govern how toroidal structures can be split in a regular way. The models can also become a small work to display on a desktop.

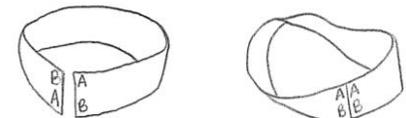
The basic concepts related to these shapes are clarified and explained with computer generated renderings and through stylised plastic maquettes built on a rapid prototyping machine. These models are also used to explore possible configurations that could not easily be carved from stone.

This sculpture carries the name *Oushi Zokei*. Keizo Ushio refers to many of his other pieces also by the same name. Here we summarise his explanations: *Oushi Zokei* is obviously a cyclic permutation of the letters in his name; it was assigned as an overall name for Keizo's work by his main teacher, who was himself a pioneer in geometrical sculpture in Japan. The name has many different interpretations – just like Keizo's work itself. One translation of *Oushi* is "deep truth", another one is "bull" or "steer". *Ushi-o* also refers to the shape of a bulls back or tail; the latter thus relates to the twisted forms often found in Keizo's work. *Zo* means "creating" or "forming", while *Kei* refers to "shape" or "form". Thus overall *Oushi Zokei* alludes to the creation of twisted forms.

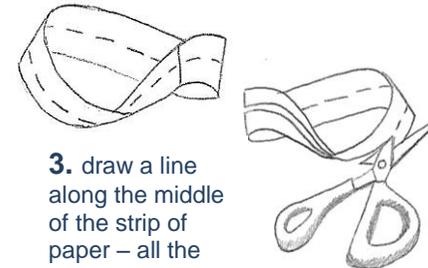
Complete this activity and discover the magic of the endless loop (*Möbius strip*).  
You will need: A3 paper, scissors, tape, pencil



1. cut a strip of paper



2. flip and twist one end of the strip over and join to the other end with tape



3. draw a line along the middle of the strip of paper – all the way around until you end up back where you started

4. carefully cut along the line

What happens when you cut the *Möbius strip* along the middle?  
Keep repeating this!



From above: *Walking Looking Talking: Noppan Nukka Yunnan* installed at Granite Island; details showing the symbols for talking, walking, looking, the orange lichen on the granite rocks; the artist and crew on site

**Margaret Worth | SA**

## ***Walking Looking Talking: Noppan Nukka Yunnan***

Materials: granite, paint  
(variable)

*“Painting on rocks, about what is important is an ancient practice. This is rock painting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”*

Walking, looking and talking are what people do on Granite Island. This artwork creates a moment of refuge, under an old tree, to contemplate ‘then’ and ‘now’. Painting on rocks, about what is important is an ancient practice. This is rock painting in the 21st century. It is one of the impermanent installations. The paint will fade and disappear, making space for something new, just as with all things.

Producing this work had to fit the available resources of time and budget. It also had to enhance rather than compete with the experience of the environment into which it was going. With two weeks from contract to public launch, I chose to work with rocks from the local quarry and to paint on them the symbols for walking, looking and talking. The materials were low cost. The rocks are evidence of geological time – very, very long. The paint is short lived, reflecting the passing moment of experience.

The success of the work relied on the placement of the rocks and the selection of symbols. Each rock has its own visual ‘gesture’ and requirement for space. Understanding this was crucial and the installation team were true collaborators. We scattered them like fallen ‘fruit’ under the old pine tree. The symbols needed to present both the primary means of walking, looking and talking as feet, eyes and mouth, with the now mediated means of high-tech footwear, drones and smart phones. Orange patches were painted on the rocks in a way that referred to the lichen on the granite rocks of the island. Then an artist with sign writing skills and a sure hand replaced my old and sketchy hand for painting the symbols onto the orange patches.

My inspiration comes from the physical environment. The experience of it and the science of it constantly fill me with wonder. I learn about particle physics from Brian Greene’s *The Elegant Universe*, about environmental sociology from Jared Diamond, and every day, I feel the air over the land and the sea. My sense of purpose is to celebrate its wonder and share it with others.

### **PRIMARY**

Walks around the work and find the symbols for ‘walking’, ‘talking’ and ‘looking’.

Why has the artist chosen to use the colour orange?

Discuss the way the rocks have been carefully arranged by the artist.

Write a poem or story that describes your visit to Granite Island from the point of view of your voice and ears, feet and eyes.

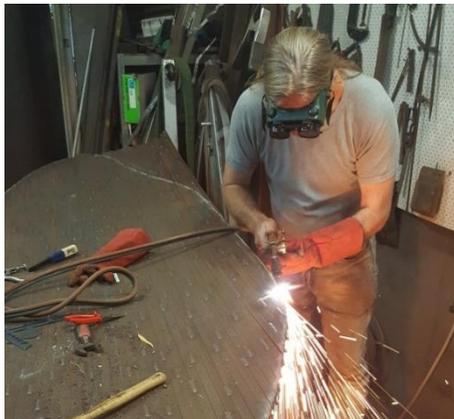
### **SECONDARY**

Investigate the history and development of Isotype (picture language).

Research and present examples of rock painting in Australia and from other countries and cultures.

Discuss how science has inspired and informed the artist practice.

Explain the use of ‘installation’ and ‘ephemeral’ with reference to this work.



Above: *Horizon Figure* Sculpture Encounters at Granite Island 2018, *Sealing The Land – Feeling The Land (Shedding Figure)*, 2006, Palmer Sculpture Landscape, Palmer, S.A.; the artist welding in his studio.

**Greg Johns | SA**

## ***Horizon Figure***

Materials: corten steel  
(350cm height x 600cm width x 150cm depth)

*“The whole form has a figurative, protective feel to it - a spiritual figure with outreaching arms, embracing the land to protect it.”*

*Horizon Figure* is from one of my best known series. Since the early nineties I have been attempting to produce sculpture which can be referred to as Australian sculpture. The large arching form at the top references our extraordinary horizon lines, the body shape is derived from drawings of rounded rock forms in our landscape. There is a void feel about the body too, suggesting the openness of our interior. At the ends of the arms tendril, finger like forms reach towards the ground plane, suggesting a connection to it. The whole form has a figurative, protective feel to it – a spiritual figure with outreaching arms, embracing the land to protect it.

My sculptures are fabricated from corten steel; that is they are fully welded box section structures. Engineering is important - the structures must withstand substantial wind loadings and impact from the public. Initially simple drawings are done, models (maquettes) may then follow and then work can commence on the final large scale sculpture. Geometry has a role in my sculpture, the circle, patterns in nature, conceptual notions of holistic, fugal systems interest me.

I am interested in questions of spirit, of interconnectedness, of relationship to the Australian landscape.

I study extensively in the interconnected areas of the arts, psychology, physics; these areas of investigation provide valuable input for my sculpture. Observation of the Australian landscape and a felt response are also important. Contemporary sculpture and sculpture before my time from many cultures also provides invaluable input.

### **PRIMARY**

Discuss the ways the sculpture and the landscape work together. What does the sculpture remind you of?

Explain the steps involved in making the work as described by the artist. How is engineering and maths an important part of making this sculpture?

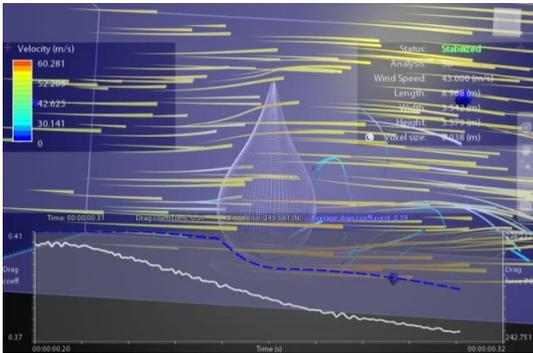
Consider how the sculpture is balanced. In class find and draw examples of objects that are symmetrical and objects that are asymmetrical.

### **SECONDARY**

Discuss the notion of 'Australian art' and 'Australian sculpture'.

Write a paragraph that describes the work and provides your explanation and understanding and of the terms 'figurative' and 'abstract' as used in visual art vocabulary.

A fugue is a piece of music that begins with a simple tune which is then repeated by other voices or instrumental parts with small variations. Discuss how the artist's work reflects his interest in 'fugal systems'.



Above: Fabrication of laser cut stainless steel pieces for *And another (drop in the ocean)*; wind tunnel simulation test; *Just Another, Sculpture by the Sea* Bondi 2016  
Photo: G Carr

## Norton Flavel | WA

### *And another (drop in the ocean)*

Materials: stainless steel, swarovski crystal  
(300cm height x 120cm width x 120cm depth)

*“ My key concepts are those of the human condition, and in particular those relating to the creative, emotional and cultural aspects of it.”*

The key concept behind the work is the idea of *And another (drop in the ocean)* references the idea of the significance of human endeavor. The work achieves this by creating an image of a drop that when viewed from a particular angle is suspended and about to fall in the ocean.

The sculpture has been designed to be suspended from one or between two objects with minimal loading. The size of the work needed to be over 2 meters high as the sculpture needed to be visible from a long distance and the material needed to have sufficient strength and visibility. A lattice structure of mirror finished stainless steel was found to be most suitable as this had a porous surface that would create minimal wind resistance with good visibility and also use minimal material reducing weight. It is also a very strong method of construction having 1600 interlocking welded slots. The total weight is about 40kg and the wind loading at 150kmph is approximately 50kg. The drop was 3d CAD designed and tested using wind tunnel simulation software before being exported to a 2d file for laser cutting of the stainless steel.

My key concepts are those of the human condition, and in particular those relating to the creative, emotional and cultural aspects of it. I try to choose concepts that have particular significance to me and the potential audience for the work.

I usually draw inspiration from the site as well as construction material possibilities. I also try to relate my work to an idea or words that already exist and have a particular meaning to my own life. For example, in this particular artwork, *And Another (drop in the ocean)* was referring to the feeling I often have as an artist of being unable to create or make anything of lasting significance.

#### PRIMARY

Discuss the phrase, 'another drop in the ocean'. Think of examples when you might feel like the ocean and examples when you might feel like a drop.

List and explore systems that we use to measure liquid.

#### SECONDARY

Consider the engineering skills and requirements employed to create and install this work as explained by the artist.

How is scale an important factor in the successful realisation of this work?

Write a description of the work, emphasising the importance of where and how it has been installed in relation to the landscape.

Discuss the artist's idea that the work represents, 'the significance of human endeavor'.

## Lucy Barker | NSW

### ***Furball***

Materials: discarded electrical cable, plastic pallets  
(95cm height, 80cm width, 70cm depth)

*“This work is about our society’s thoughtless waste of resources, including power. The dark knots and tight tangles reference our entrapment in this type of lifestyle.”*

*Furball* is a big black blob constructed from discarded electric cables. Many of which were never used. The cables have been knotted one after the next to form a big tight, tangle in the shape of a large lump of coal. My sculpture talks about the thoughtless, excess consumption of power and alludes to the wastage of our energy heavy modern lifestyles.

The tight knots and tangles speak of our society’s entrapment by non-renewable power sources and the companies that run them. An alternative title could be “Big Coal “. On Granite Island *Furball* sits amongst the big ancient rocks inviting us to consider what our human trace will be in geological time.

I selected a recycled material that is readily available and durable. I like materials that people recognize as they already carry an inherent meaning. Last year I completed a successful small version of this sculpture so I was inspired to make a large version. I therefore had a vision which helped me keep going through the process of making when things got harder and took much longer than anticipated. In the centre of the work there is an internal structure made from discarded plastic pallets onto which I attached foam tiles before tying the cables.

One of my interests is in properties of emergent behavior - the creation of complex systems through the repetition of simple actions or rules. For example tying each cable is a simple action that follows a few basic rules. After completing hundreds and hundreds of the same actions, a complex structure emerges. The rules in making *Furball* are: the cables must be black; must attach to another cable at either end, must pull back tight and perpendicular to any loose cables crossed; must weave in a way that tightens the surface and fills in any empty space. What emerges is a visually very complex and unpredictable structure that even takes on the appearance of a human brain, wriggling worms or even liquorice. What can you see in the sculpture? The process drawings of Sol Lewitt are an example of art that has been created in this way.

In my practice I am interested in observations of the digital revolution and how this rapid rate of change has affected society and the environment. My process typically involves a lot of play and experimentation with materials. The materials I use are usually a big part of the concept itself and tell their inherent stories and draw the viewer into the visual puzzle.



From above: *Furball* , Granite Island 2018;  
*Furball* detail.

#### PRIMARY

Look closely at the sculpture and describe how it has been made.

What can you see when you look at the sculpture? What does it remind you of?

Discuss how the material used to make this work also talks to us about the problems of waste and of using electrical and coal power.

#### SECONDARY

Investigate, ‘the creation of complex systems through the repetition of simple actions or rules’ as explained by the artist in the making of her work.

Research the 1960s and 1970s drawings of North American artist Sol Lewitt. Consider how his work has influenced *Furball*. Develop these ideas and process in your own work.

Research Nicolas Peronyt, the animal scientist, and his explanation of the difference between ‘complex’ and ‘complicated’ systems.

‘Anthropocene’ is the name scientists propose for the geological era marked by human impact. Write a short article for a future history describing the Anthropocene era.



**Jette Mellgren | Denmark**

**Nests**

Materials: peeled white willow  
(various dimensions)

*“Nests identify the need of having a home – a fundamental prerequisite for any life.”*

*Nests* is an ephemeral work weaved with peeled white willow sticks. Technically I draw my inspiration from the Weaverbird and all my travels to Uganda, Africa. The ideas come from aspects of life, war and refugees. My work is an interpretation of the nest building - a product made out of natural materials with an organic outlook twisted with a cultural touch.

The sculpture is a work in progress, placed up in the tree out of reach, where birds usually build. *Nests* will be created specifically for the chosen trees on site and will suggest natural growth and the tension between the natural and the constructed. The nests will frame, surprise and change our experience of bird nests and nature as well as focus on man created objects in nature. Nests are a symbol for a hatching new life, which we usually associate with hope and dreams - just as many people around the world put their life in danger in hope to build a 'nest' and create a better future elsewhere! *Nests* identify the need of having a home - a fundamental prerequisite for any life. The nests also focus on Granite Island as a place for birds nesting and the way we have to be aware of that.

The peeled white willow is used as it reflects my idea about creating tension between the natural and the constructed. Willow is natural and the peeled process is human transformation. Besides that peeled willow reflects the sunlight in a beautiful way.

*Nests* are a series of organic formations woven from peeled white willow in a technique inspired by the way the Weaver bird builds its nests. *Nests* are woven in several layers with a technique that appears chaotic but is actually systematic. *Nests* will be weaved partly on land and partly in the trees using a lift.

I am trained as a basket maker and an artist. My aim is to build a bridge between the old basketry techniques with new design and put basketry into a new context and interpretation. The focal point of my work is to experiment with variations of natural materials and investigate and develop new expressions. I take pleasure in the wealth of opportunities offered in otherwise worthless materials like a pile of branches, cords or discarded wires. Passionately, I weave with branches and draw with twigs. Working in the field of Land Art I challenge the basketry tradition, which historically is associated with function and use, and create sculptural objects, with conceptual context.



From above: *Nests* at Granite Island; Artist drawing for *Nests*

**PRIMARY**

Describe what this sculpture looks like. List all the things that can be made using the techniques of basket making.

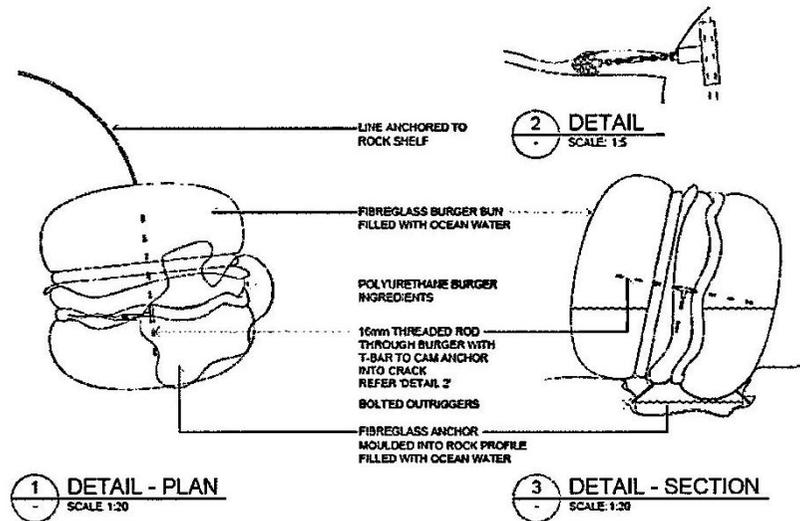
Explore the basket weaving objects made in the Aboriginal communities of Maningrida and Ramingining. What are the objects used for? What stories do they tell?

In class, explore the different types of nests that animals make, particularly the Weaver bird. Where are they found? What animals make them? What materials are used? What sort of 'nests' do humans need and create?

**SECONDARY**

Discuss the concepts addressed in this work. How integral is the material and technique of basketry in expressing these ideas?

The Artist's statement refers to 'ephemeral', 'site specific' and the practice of 'Land Art'. Explain each of these terms and how they help in our interpretation and understanding of the work.



**Scale** is the size of an object in relation to where it is placed and its surroundings (context).

An object could appear very small if it was placed amongst other objects in a giant sized environment.

Artists often explore ideas and the possibilities of scale and context.

James Dive's sculpture, *Just a Nibble* is a giant sized hamburger - scaled up and placed in a different context than usually expected. By attaching a giant sized fishing hook to the hamburger he has created another story and meaning to the work.

Discussion and activities:

How does the scale of the work and its proportion affect your impression of the work?  
How does scale contribute to the work's meaning and the artist's ideas?

Using a camera, Photoshop or images from magazines, use a selection of objects and play with their scale and placement to create a montage of micro worlds.

Consider what sort of information (objects and surroundings) you might need to remove so that the viewer is unable to register (notice) the actual scale of the objects.

Look to the works of artists Christopher Boffoli, Ron Muek and Thomas Demand.

Using a photograph or a small drawing, draw a grid over the image that is scaled to the size of paper you would like to draw the final image on.

Draw the scale grid on the larger piece of paper. The grid will help you to achieve the accurate proportions on your final work.

Look to the works of artist Chuck Close for an example of this technique.

From top: Plan and section diagram; photo montage for *Just a Nibble*, at *Sculpture by the Sea Bondi* 2017