sculpture by the sea

Artists and Their Artworks - Exhibition Information

Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2023

Artists and their Artworks:

Photo above: Merle Topsi Davis, *Sea Anomalies 3*

Education resources created and produced by Sculpture by the Sea with thanks to the exhibiting artists.

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Introduction to this Resource

Sculpture by the Sea Artists and Exhibition information 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. The practices employed in creating sculpture, particularly for a public outdoor exhibition, involve all aspects of Science Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM). Hopefully the information in this resource will assist with the delivery of STEAM learning.

Included are profile pages featuring some of 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 by the Sea*, Cottesloe.

More education resources relating to sculpture and the exhibition are available online:

- *Sculpture by the Sea*: A Case Study
- Sculpture Glossary
- Excursion Management Plan

sculpturebythesea.com/education/nsw-school-education/bondi/resources/

Exhibition Catalogue ($10) and Kids' Guide Catalogue ($7) publications are available at the on-site Information Marquees during exhibition. (Free for schools booked into an Education Program and for all workshop participants).

Schools that provide us with details of their self-guided visit are invited to collect one free Exhibition Catalogue and Kids' Guide from the Exhibition Site Office.

There are many ways to interact with the sculpture. The Kids' Guide and each sculpture site plaque contains symbols indicating 'Do not touch', 'Safe to touch' or 'Adult supervision recommended' This is advice from our site manager and the Artists to ensure the safety of the audience and the sculpture. **Sculptures cannot be climbed on.**

KEY VOCABULARY

3 dimensional: A solid object that possesses height, width and depth, the object is not flat.

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.

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

Engineering: Engineering is 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.

'isms': Describing an art movement from a particular period in history with a distinct style, i.e., post-modernism, impressionism, classicism, cubism, etc.

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.

Mass: Is commonly measured by how much something weighs, it can be measured in grams, kilograms, and tonnes.

Material: The matter from which a thing is or can be made from. A sculpture can be made from a variety of materials ranging from the traditional – clay, stone, wood, metal; and sometimes the unexpected – found objects, wire fencing, plastics, fibreglass, concrete, salt, light, sound.

Negative space: The area of space around and between an object. Make an 'O' with your thumb and index finger. The shape you can see through the 'O' is the negative space.

Perspective: The appearance of viewed objects with regard to their position, compared with the distance from the viewer; it is also sometimes referred to as standpoint.

Representation: The way in which someone or something is shown. Representations can be truthful (accurate) or unrealistic, detailed, or rough.

Scale: The size of an object in relation to its context and/or surroundings.

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. The work is often created in the space.

Static: An object characterised by a lack of movement, action, or change. Most sculptures are static as they don't move or change by influence of external forces.

Technology: The application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes.

Ratio: The relationship between one number to another, it can compare quantity, amount, or size between two or more things.

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Looking At and Interpreting Sculpture: 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 to communicating its subject matter and mood.
- Are humour, parody, playfulness aspects of 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 positioning 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:

Siahne Rogers| WA

Everything must go!

Steel billboard frame, shimmer wall. (260cm x 350cm x 150cm.)

From above: Images from Siahne Roger's works

"The sculpture intends to invite participants to engage with the process of grief in a playful way"

My work "Everything Must Go!" was inspired by the big thoughts that we all relate to, about life and the process of accepting change and loss. Its physical form as an artwork is informed by the nostalgia of billboards which are there to remind us of important messages as we pass by. I wanted to explore these themes filtered through my artistic practice, where I am interested in creating a rich and familiar visual language to make large gestural sculptures and installation art that talk about the relationship between humour and everyday life

Making something like a billboard by the ocean takes a lot of consideration from many different technical avenues! which is what is always great about art-making and the creative problem solving you are met with in your process.
I initially conceptualised my idea through my experience of studying art and art history. I did a lot of writing and drawing about the context of the poetics of messages, signs and what they mean for us as a visual work and how we relate to them in popular culture. After many months or research and many drawings using my own art skills, I moved on to the next phase of planning. Understanding what materials, I need to use to build something like this comes from my sculpture-based art degree, but I could not have made this work without the technical knowledges of building a large object outdoors and enduring weather without the assistance of an engineer and a metal fabricator. It is important to consider the kind of endurance a large object will face in the weather, which of course influences the size and materials you use!

My key passions and concepts which continue to drive my art practice are heavily influenced by the archetypes and historical visual themes in slapstick and humour, and how they can offer alternative ways of understanding and processing everyday life and lived experiences. This merges with how much I am drawn in my practice to making sculptural objects and installations which explore this, inviting people into spaces where they have the permission be playful with the themes of the artwork. These key concepts are important to me when I sit down and think about what I want to offer someone through what I make. I am very passionate about exploring how much of clowning around can help myself and others tackle the big things we contemplate in life, so my influences stretch far and wide. I research a lot into the history of slapstick, to the visual story telling of prop-making and stage building. I think it's important to consider how we grab visual understandings from everything we experience, and how all of that can be very valuable in an arts practice.

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY:

How has humour been used in this sculpture?

What other phrases can you think of that are used in everyday life, but sometimes have more than one meaning?

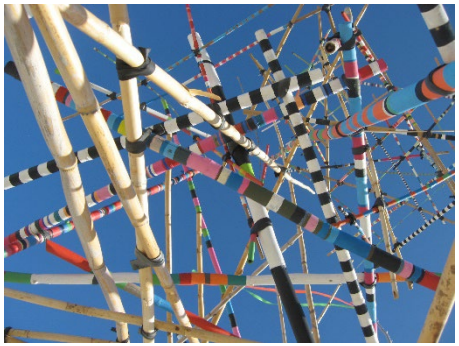
What types of things does the artist have to consider when planning a piece for outdoor exhibition?

SECONDARY:

What is the purpose of slapstick?

Does the use of humour decrease or increase the message of an artwork? Discuss your opinion using examples to support your position.

Online research: find examples of other artists that use humour to convey meaning and write a short piece using persuasive language to support the statement: "Art- why so serious?"



From above: installation work on the beach with Tom's bicycle in foreground; Artist at Work installation piece; close-up detail of rubber and colours used in Tom's work.

Tom de Munk-Kermeer | WA

Artist at Work

Metal, wood, bamboo, rubber, plastic. (350cm x 400cm x 100cm)

The bicycle forms an integral part of Tom's art practice. Riding the pushbike and transporting artworks are part of an ongoing performance offering low cost, more sustainable alternatives.

Tom was born in Australia, but he and his Dutch mother moved back to the Netherlands when he was 2 years old after his father died in a car-crash on Morley drive.
There he grew up going to school, speaking Dutch and as most do, riding a bike.
One of his earliest memories is of being on the back of the bicycle of his mother, climbing a big dune to go to the North Sea to build sand sculptures on the beach.
It wasn't long before he got his own bicycle riding everywhere and he hasn't stopped since.

Tom is now 58 and he has flown halfway around the world several times. He has been on boats, trains, cars, trucks, and buses in many countries. He keeps feeling uneasy about the amount of energy that is used by these modes of transport, uneasy about all the resources that are needed for transport and the effects this has on the planet.

In 2011 Tom participated in the Sculpture by the Sea in Cottesloe for the first time.
Then he transported his work 'LUCHTKASTEEL" on a cart with this same bicycle.
Since then he has moved 100km inland to Northam and transporting sculptures to Cottesloe is just a bit out of range. As a compromise Tom now creates work that can be transported on foot, and on the bike in combination with the train.

Another key resource he uses is bamboo that is grown mostly in his own garden. He sees this global super grass as an ideal resource as it is easy to grow, prolific, light weight, strong. He ties this together with bicycle tube rubber strips that can be reused several times.
The combination of these two materials produces strong temporary structures easy to assemble and to take apart.

The colours of the "Artist at Work" sculpture represent concepts such as: the journey; landscapes; time; distance; emotions; nationalities; ancestry and connections. They form a complex 3D map of Tom's life. Similar stick maps are used by Micronesian seafarers, inspiring aspects of this work.

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY

Where does rubber come from? What are some of its uses?

When was the bicycle invented? Research the invention and development of this machine.

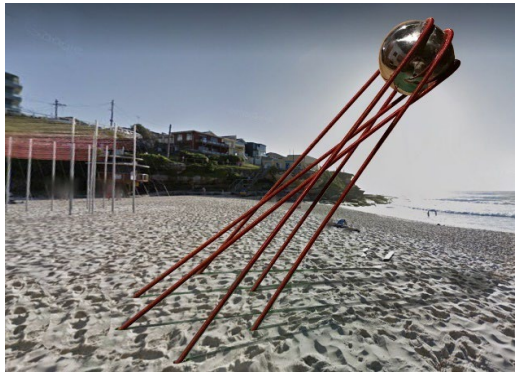
How is bamboo used in everyday life? Researching online, find some examples of how it can be used in various cultures.

SECONDARY

How has the bicycle impacted on society since its invention? Discuss the case for sustainable transportation.

What are Micronesian stick maps? How are they made and how are they used? Research different methods used by various cultures of recording journeys and memories – not all cultures use writing!

What is the role of an artist in our society? How has this changed over time?



From above: *Trap for Dreams* work in progress bending the tubes; welding the parts together. Visualisations of the final work on site.

Leonardo Cumbo | Italy

Trap for Dreams

Stainless steel (240cm x 220cm x 320cm)

"Trap for Dreams is a surreal work, based on the idea of long rubber bands rising from the ground towards the sky and capturing a floating bubble in the air."

From the mainland we often glance towards the sea where we can perceive the changing colours of its surface, its movement, and the sounds. But it is our imagination that captures images and situations that might take place under that surface or beyond the horizon. Science has revealed many mysteries, but there is so much more we can discover and learn. Many mysteries in life are solved or explored using our imagination and intuition. Leonardo Da Vinci was a famous Italian artist and inventor in the 1400's. He is the best example of someone whose curiosity to understand everything started with his imagination and looking at the world around him. One invention he imagined and designed as a result of investigating how birds could fly, was a flying machine.

Trap for Dreams is a surreal work, based on the idea of long rubber bands rising from the ground towards the sky and capturing a floating bubble in the air. A quick action like what a chameleon does when it launches its long sticky tongue against its prey. Technically, the sculpture is composed of eight, three-meter stainless steel tubes painted Venetian red. They are embedded on a stainless-steel base buried 35cm into the ground. A mirror-polished stainless-steel sphere is supported at the top by the ends of the tubes on which it is welded.

I think all artists are curious and have a tendency to wonder and a love for invention. Knowledge, research, patience, the spirit of sacrifice, are some of the main ingredients that artists adopt when they are engaged in their creative activity. Being an artist is not a job that starts in the morning when you begin your working day and ends after you have done your hours. The artist always keeps their engines running, both day and night. They are always ready to take in every stimulus and to transform it into a lifeblood for their ideas, and projects.

I take inspiration from everything. Sometimes a gesture or action, apparently trivial and insignificant, becomes the starting point of something that grows, evolves, enriches itself and transforms itself into something extremely complex and versatile.

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY

List all the things that you can see reflected on the surface of the polished steel sphere. Think about how the metal rods have 'caught' these images.

What other ways can you 'catch' images of the world around us?

Design an idea for a machine that can trap your dreams. Write a story that tells us about your machine and how people use it.

SECONDARY

Describe how the artist has expressed a sense of tension between the forms and materials used in this sculpture. What illusions is the artist creating in this sculpture and how do they make you feel?

Discuss why the artist describes his work as being 'surreal'. Research the surrealist movement and consider how its influence is still inherent in contemporary art practice.

What is the role of an artist in our society? Research the life and work of Leonardo Da Vinci and consider the similarities and differences of what an artist was then and now.

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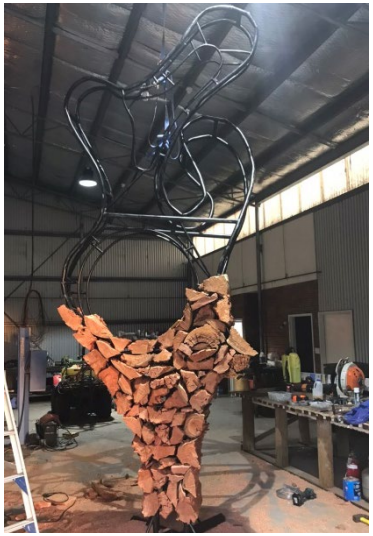
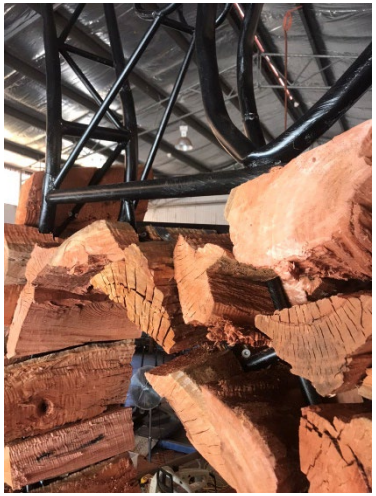




From above: Images from Marcus Tatton's workshop showing the details and process of creating 'Unprecedented'

Marcus Tatton | Tasmania

Unprecedented

Jarrah, steel, concrete, microplastics. (450 x 1500 x 450 cm each)

"We live in unprecedented times"

The concept behind 'Unprecedented' is that today we are all experiencing life as new, unique, and without traditional preconceptions. We have taken on much more information in the digital age, so we are now confronted with the understanding that we each know very little and remember less. Now there are new perspectives, perceptions, and possibilities to be encountered at any moment.

The stark white sand provides a high contrast to the stacked wood sculpture. This strong visual impact reinforces the concept of fresh and unique perspectives. There may also be messages of desertscape, trees, people, water and environmental balance found within the sculpture group.

The wood stacks appear to defy gravity. Inside the stacks there are strongly welded steel skeletons called armatures. The weight of the wood is significant and so the steel armatures have been calculated by measuring the surface area of the wood if the wind was to push against the sculpture and the likelihood of shapes overturning given the stability of the sand on which the sculpture is placed. The concrete footing under the sand is 300mm, the extra weight of sand sitting on top of the concrete is included in the measurements.

To make the armatures, steel is curved, and welded following scaled up drawings of the sculpture. Split wood pieces are then cut to fit around the steel parts. The wood is then screwed into the steel using steel straps to hold each piece onto the steel. The steel armature becomes invisible and the wood itself is the only surface we can see – unless we walk up very close and study the sculpture closely.

"A key concept that drives my practice is that of learning from my hands, i.e. doing experimental things that lead my thoughts and enquiries to make unique sculpture. This helps me view the world without prejudices and with clarity."

Key passions are that layers of meaning can be woven into sculptural form – this can happen without having any words. Inspiration comes to me often early in the morning after falling asleep thinking about a sculpture idea. My inspiration is almost never found from viewing other artworks. I choose to keep my art practice extremely unique and 'one off'. I trained in this for 5 years at University and I have almost never repeated an artwork over 35 years of making sculpture.

"My main source of inspiration is drawn from observations of real contemporary life and drawing in my sketchbooks. I love going back over my sketchbooks and I still wish I could make many of the sculptures I drew 25 years ago!"

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY

Walking around the sculpture, what feelings does the work evoke in you?

What do the shapes remind you of? Plants? Animals? Or do they remind you of something else?

Sand is not a very strong material to build heavy structures into. In a drawing, imagine how these heavy objects are being held in place and supported.

SECONDARY

Research what an 'armature' is in sculpture. Investigate how an armature exoskeleton can support a large-scale outdoor sculpture. Think about the challenges an artist has to consider for an outdoor sculpture, what natural elements will they have to withstand and what audience/human elements need to be considered?

Marcus Tatton states: "We have taken on much more information… we now … know very little." Do you think that with the increase of availability of information we know more or less? Discuss.

Sian Watson| ACT

Waiting Rastor

Steel rod, cementitious grout, sealant, paint.(180cm x180cm x 75cm)

"I have always been interested in capturing energy and movement of creatures. I often surface my works with a rusty aesthetic to reference decay and the passing of time."

The relationship of humans and horses has been a point of interest within my artistic practice for a long time. *Waiting Rastor* explores the shared vulnerabilities between humans and horses in the context of environmental, social and economic change. The placement of the figure on the cliff above the crashing waves refers to vulnerability and exposure to external forces.

Above: Maquette from 2019 Rust Spray material. Armature process picture in studio of *Waiting Rastor* 2021. Watson welding in studio 2021.

The sculpture is made from welded steel rod frame that has been covered in a fine mesh. The mesh is then cladded in a cement grout and texture is developed by applying lumps of grout with a spatula. Once dry, the work has been sealed and painted with an outdoor speciality paint that looks like the surface of rusted metal. This work is based on a maquette and is the largest (180 x180 x80cm) and heaviest concrete work I have made to date (around 250kg).

My ideas mostly come through the process of fabricating artworks in my studio. I have never done much drawing when I am developing ideas and find it easier to bend and weld steel than put a pen to paper. Making human/animal forms has always been a part of my practice as I like to try and capture a gesture or movement at a single moment in time.

When it comes to thinking conceptually, the first artworks in a new body of work are not always based around a fully formed concept. Often, I will make two or three works that are similar to each other and let the sculptures lead me into the development of a story. As someone who grew up on a property riding horses and worked for many years as a vet nurse, I have always been interested in capturing energy and movement of creatures. I often surface my works with a rusty aesthetic to reference decay and the passing of time.

I have recently been exploring prehistoric rock art and drawing on depiction of movement in rudimentary and distorted proportions of both humans and animals. The evolving understandings of what imagery from around the world is portraying is something that I try to express within my artworks, letting the viewer develop their own interpretations.

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY

Look at all sides of the sculpture. Does is look like a horse as soon as you see it? What parts of it make you think of a horse and what parts seem a little strange and unusual looking?

Think about where the sculpture is located. How does the location make you feel when you look at it? Can you think of a story for the horse about where it is, and would that story change if the horse was somewhere else? (your backyard, your school, in the water on the beach, in the desert).

SECONDARY

Research prehistoric rock artworks and drawings compare the sculpture to the images of ancient people and their animals.

Think about how Sian Watson's "Process-led" method affects how her sculpture looks. Try building an armature of a horse out of wire and then "cladding" it with newspaper and finally coating it in a thin layer of clay. No drawing allowed, see how the process of building just with your hands without planning changes and distorts your sculpture from life-like to strange and imaginary.

From above: A member of the Territorial Defence Forces guards a checkpoint, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues, at Independence Square in central Kyiv, Ukraine March 3, 2022. REUTERS/ Valentyn Ogirenko; carboard maquette; drilling holes to attach perspex to steel frames.

Emryn Ingram-Shute | NSW

No Colour in War

Coloured perspex, powder coated steel, zinc plated nuts and bolts. (140 x 1600 x 800 cm)

"*Due to the war in Ukraine, artists' studios have been used to make anti-tank obstacles***"**

No Colour in War was made in response to the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Watching the news, I saw anti-tank obstacles (also known as Czech Hedgehogs) line the streets of Kiev to help protect the city from tanks. Ukrainian artists turned to making these anti-tank obstacles in their studios. I remember wishing instead of them being made of steel they could be made of coloured perspex. So, as a message of hope and solidarity I made this parallel installation. What is important about the way I placed these sculptures on the site is that they form a barricade people move slowly through. In planning this work, the Ukrainian Business community was consulted to see if it was culturally sensitive to make these objects to raise funds.

To make this idea, I researched online the various types of anti-tanks obstacles that there were and how big they were compared to humans. As there were no dimensions anywhere, I made a cardboard maquette to a one-to-one scale based on the human body. One of the things that struck me when I was researching, was how the forms of the anti-tank obstacles were dynamic because of their strong vertical lines that pierce space. However, the first maquette I made was visually too thick which made them look sluggish. By reducing the width of each frame by 2 cm, it helped make them much more dynamic. It was a very small change, but it made all the difference. Initial discussions with an experienced public arts company left me concerned about the structural strength of Perspex and so a new solution was needed. It is amazing how strong cardboard is. After investigating laser-cut wood as an option, a solution came to me to use steel as a frame and bolt the perspex to it. It also lent more to my aesthetic and used my skills in welding.

I had to make a detailed budget and work out how much steel was needed for the sculptures. For example, steel comes in three meter and six-meter lengths. Then, each frame needed one angle bar and two flat bars at 195 cm long. Also, it needed 4, 20 x 2 cm flat bars. Each sculpture needed 96 nuts and bolts of one size and 12 of another and there are 9 sculptures in all. On top of that, the Perspex comes in 2400 x 1200 sheets and each sculpture needs 6 x 195 x 30 cm. A lot of calculations were needed! Then, so they can have a lifespan of ten-15 years outside before rusting, the frames needed to be put through a special process of sandblasting, hot zinc coating and finally painted.

Part of my practice is to re-arrange or dismantle an everyday object so that it takes on a new meaning. In this case, I wanted to disrupt the solid form of the anti-tank obstacle to offer a message of hope to all those suffering due to war. I also wanted to raise money for all the people that needed to flee their homeland and make people in Australia aware of the situation. I am super interested in how art can disrupt the social by making people see things in a different way through our interaction with them.

Questions for year groups:

PRIMARY

How are colour and materials used in this piece to change the meaning of these objects?

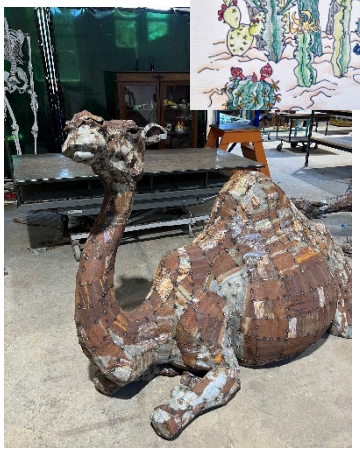
The artist wanted this piece to be a symbol of hope. How did they achieve this?

These objects are made to stop tanks and make people walk through them. What effect does that have on you when walking through them?

SECONDARY

During wartime, arts and industries are frequently repurposed to help production for war efforts. What other examples of this can you find through research?

What difficulties did the artist have in creating this piece? Were these objects more difficult to make than the original objects they are based on?



From above: artist and artwork progress photo; artist's drawing of sculpture; Camel in the welding process.

Hannah Kidd | New Zealand

A Comfortable Introduction

Materials: mild steel rod, flattened corrugated iron, paint (300cm x 600cm x 600cm)

"Nature has a lot more time than we do….it's playing the long game"

Hannah Kidd is a New Zealand sculptor that seems to be extremely inquisitive about life; it's human and animal subjects, as well as all their interactions, machinations and routines.

I'm always amazed at the destructive nature of introduced species — be they flora or fauna. Of course, it is through no fault of their own. From our actions and 'bright' ideas as humans we have introduced species in ignorance, nostalgia, need for feed, sport, or pest control (from previous introductions). They were transported across oceans and continents to a new and foreign environment where they have thrived and are completely comfortable, at home so to speak.

Over time all species evolve, changing slowly to adapt to a shift in environment and some species die out. But a crash introduction has such startling effects on native species that the past equilibrium may never be recovered.

Each of these cacti has a welded steel rod framework, kind of like an exoskeleton of an insect. Underneath they look like a 3D line drawing. Each is then clad in pieces of flattened out corrugated iron, that gives the sculpture it's skin. To last outdoors these have been hot dipped, galvanised and then have had an anti-corrosion treatment which gives them their rough surface

Inspiration can come from so many different places. For me it could be a book or a podcast. Sometimes it's an image that flashes past on social media or a part conversation that I have overheard.

I love to watch how people conduct themselves in everyday life. We are given so much information through our communities - be that school, home, and especially media. Mostly though I watch how we interact with our natural environment, how we respect/disrespect nature.

PRIMARY

Look at the sculpture and walk all the way around it, looking at all the different parts and intricate pieces and colours. What feelings do you notice as you look at the work?

Research what kinds of plants and animals are incredibly strong and durable. Some plants and animals can withstand incredibly difficult environments, like the cactus.

What kind of environment a cactus can survive in and what other animals survive in the same environment? What do you think the artist is saying about the environment, humans and nature?

SECONDARY

Research what an 'armature' is in sculpture. Investigate how an armature "exoskeleton" can support a large-scale outdoor sculpture. Think about the challenges an artist has to consider for an outdoor sculpture, what natural elements will they have to withstand and what audience/human elements need to be considered?

How does this reflect similarly with Hannah's choice of plant?