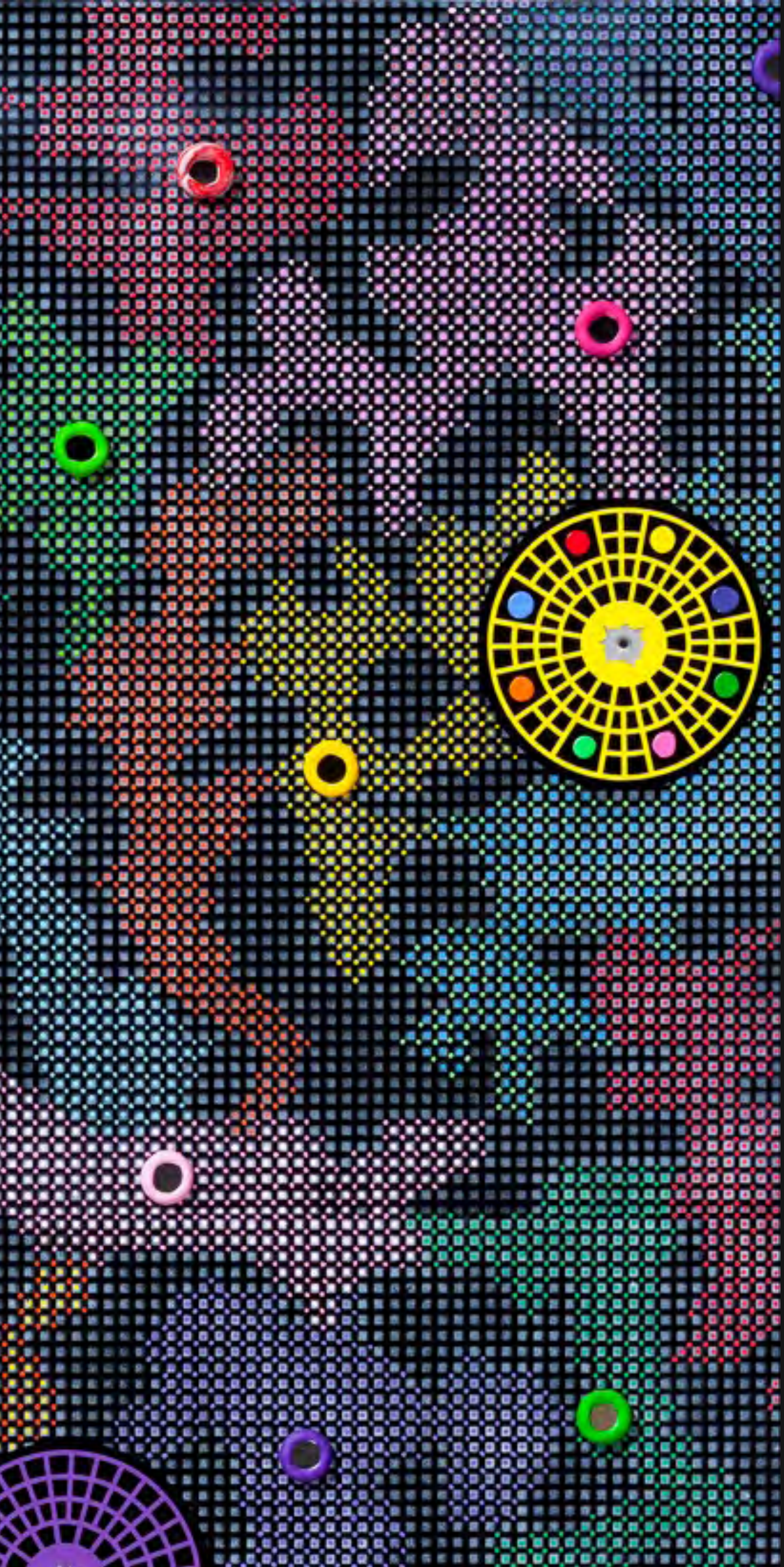


Art and sustainability:  
A Geelong Gallery collection resource

Victorian Curriculum

Levels 5 to 9–The Arts (Visual arts)





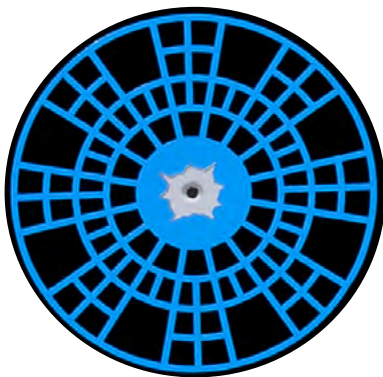


## About this resource

Geelong Gallery is committed to engaging with the realities of our changing climate and environment through the works of leading artists. With your students, explore the potential of artists to address current global sustainability challenges and inspire change.

This education resource examines five key works in the Gallery's permanent collection that highlight themes such as human impact on the environment, sustainable farming and globalisation.

Teachers are provided with practical insights into artworks with questions for viewing, research topics and art-making activities that promote visual analysis and foster critical and creative thinking across the different learning areas. The learning material also provides further opportunities to incorporate 'sustainability' into teaching and learning practices in The Arts, History, Science and Geography.



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### Curriculum links

Victorian Curriculum Levels 5 to 9–The Arts (Visual arts)

Explore and express ideas, visual arts practices, present and perform, respond and interpret.

This resource promotes the four capabilities within the Victorian Curriculum F–10: Critical and Creative Thinking; Intercultural; Personal and Social; and Ethical Capability.

### Learning objectives

- Analyse and interpret themes, concepts and ideas in artworks included in the resource and discuss how they are expressed;
- Discuss how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise the intentions in their artworks;
- Discuss important influences on an artist's style and art making; and
- Identify and connect specific aspects of an artist's work to a wider historical, cultural and social context.

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The works included in this resource are a part of the Gallery's collection and may not be on display.

Janenne Eaton  
*REEF* (details) 2015  
enamel, vinyl, mirror and  
polymer clay on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the artist, 2019  
© Courtesy of the artist



# Raymond Arnold

Australian, born 1950

Themes: Printmaking, landscape, capitalism, mining industry, human intervention and land care



Raymond Arnold is an acclaimed master printmaker whose intaglio prints are inspired by the natural landscape and human impact upon it. Over the course of four decades, he has produced an extensive body of work that celebrates the raw beauty of the landscape, and the ways in which natural forces and human intervention shape and alter the environment.

*Elsewhere world (Final consolidated A-H)* is a monumental eight-metre wide, eight-sheet multi-plate etching inspired by the rugged landscape of the west coast of Tasmania. Arnold has lived in Queenstown since 2005—a township with a rich mining history and in close proximity to Tasmania's World Heritage Wilderness Area. The impact of copper mining and extensive tree logging on the land over time, the landscape's capacity for regeneration once these activities cease, and the beauty of protected wilderness regions all inform Arnold's imagery.

Arnold's interest in the constantly changing landscape finds its natural expression in the technique of etching—a process that involves the laying of a ground upon a copper plate, drawing or scratching into the prepared ground to enable acid to eat away the plate creating channels to hold printing ink.

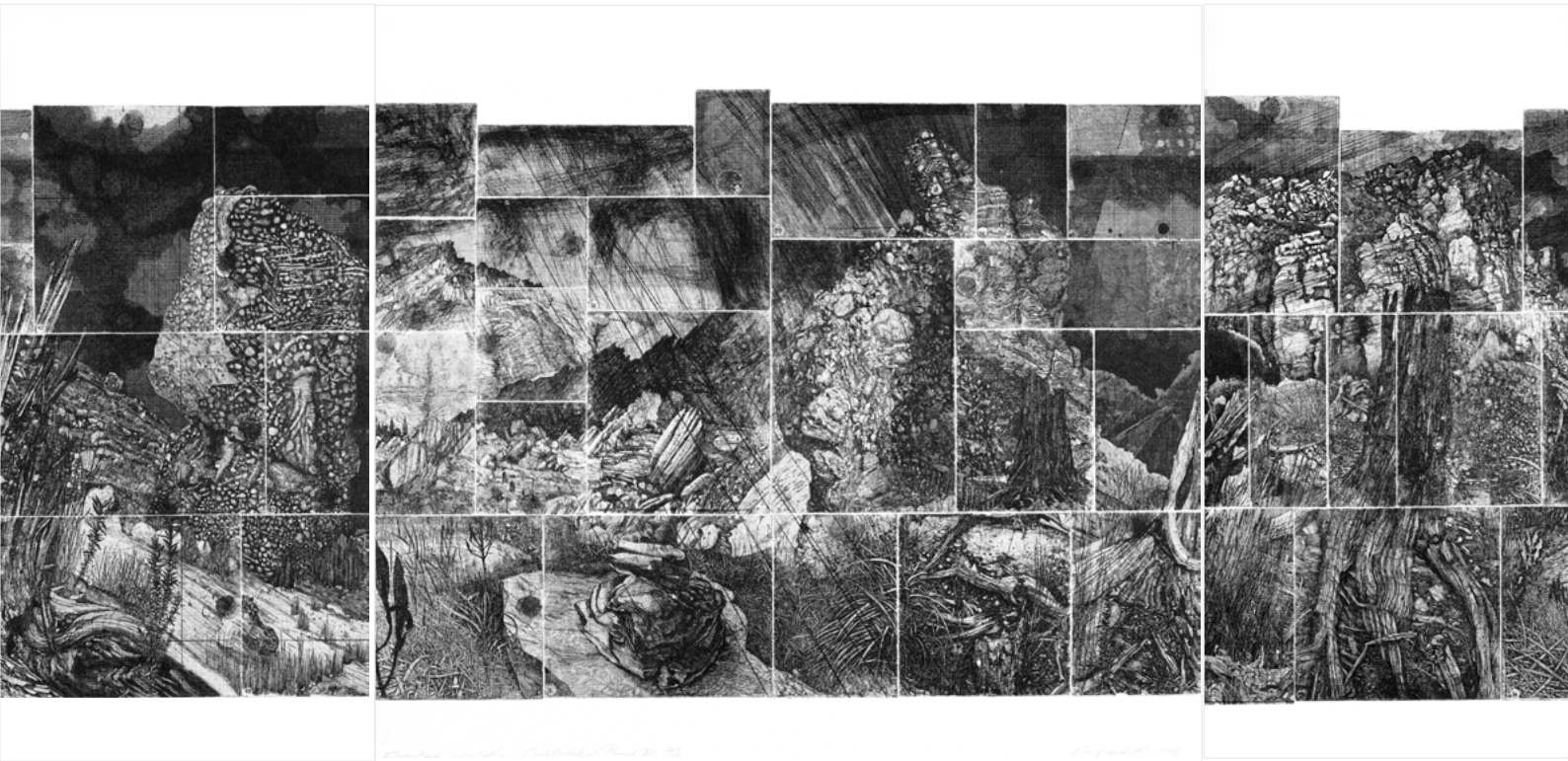
Just as the landscape transforms, etched plates also go through a series of transitions, or states, as the artist crafts the composition and its tonal range.

In describing this panoramic work, Arnold has stated:

Foreboding skies, damaged rocky outcrops, and blackened tree-stumps remain, but are balanced by new grasses and foliage taking root. Sheet by sheet, vigorous etched lines entwine and 'mend' the harsh landscape: re-balancing degradation with natural renewal. Geological damage and re-growth exist together, and a new place, a new world 'elsewhere' is forming. As viewers, we share the encounter between these opposing forces. This is a work about possibilities.

Introductory text, *Elsewhere world (Final consolidated A-H)*, Geelong Gallery, 2019

Raymond Arnold  
*Elsewhere world*  
(*Final consolidated A-H*) 2018  
etching; edition 3/4  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the Colin Holden  
Charitable Trust, 2019  
(installation view, Geelong Gallery, 2019)  
© Courtesy of the artist  
Photographer: Andrew Curtis



### Explore

As a class explore the following question:

What is the role and responsibility of visual arts as a means of challenging environmental and political issues?

### Discuss

How do you respond personally to this artwork?

What questions do you have about this artwork?

Reflect on the statement from the artist. What do you think Raymond Arnold is trying to show you in his artwork?

### Make

Is there an area near where you live that faces environmental impact due to industry? Create your own etching exploring a local landscape under threat using the following steps.

1. Create a line drawing of your landscape or local area.
2. "Etch" or "engrave" your design into a plastic etching plate using an etching tool—remember once you print your design it will be the opposite of how you draw it.
3. Choose a colour of paint and place a small amount on your plastic board.
4. Use a roller to spread the paint evenly along a clear surface both front-back and side-side, until the roller is coated with an even layer of paint.
5. Roll the paint on to your etching plate—be sure to press firmly and ink the entire plate.
6. Once the paint is evenly placed on your etching plate, lay a blank damp sheet of printing paper on top and run them through a printing press.
7. Lift your paper up slowly, and allow the paint to sit on your blank sheet. Label your first print "etching 1". Put this aside to dry, and begin again with a new blank sheet. Create 5–10 prints.

Raymond Arnold  
*Elsewhere world*  
 (Final consolidated A–H) (detail) 2018  
 etching: edition 3/4  
 Geelong Gallery  
 Gift of the Colin Holden  
 Charitable Trust, 2019  
 © Courtesy of the artist  
 Photographer: Andrew Curtis

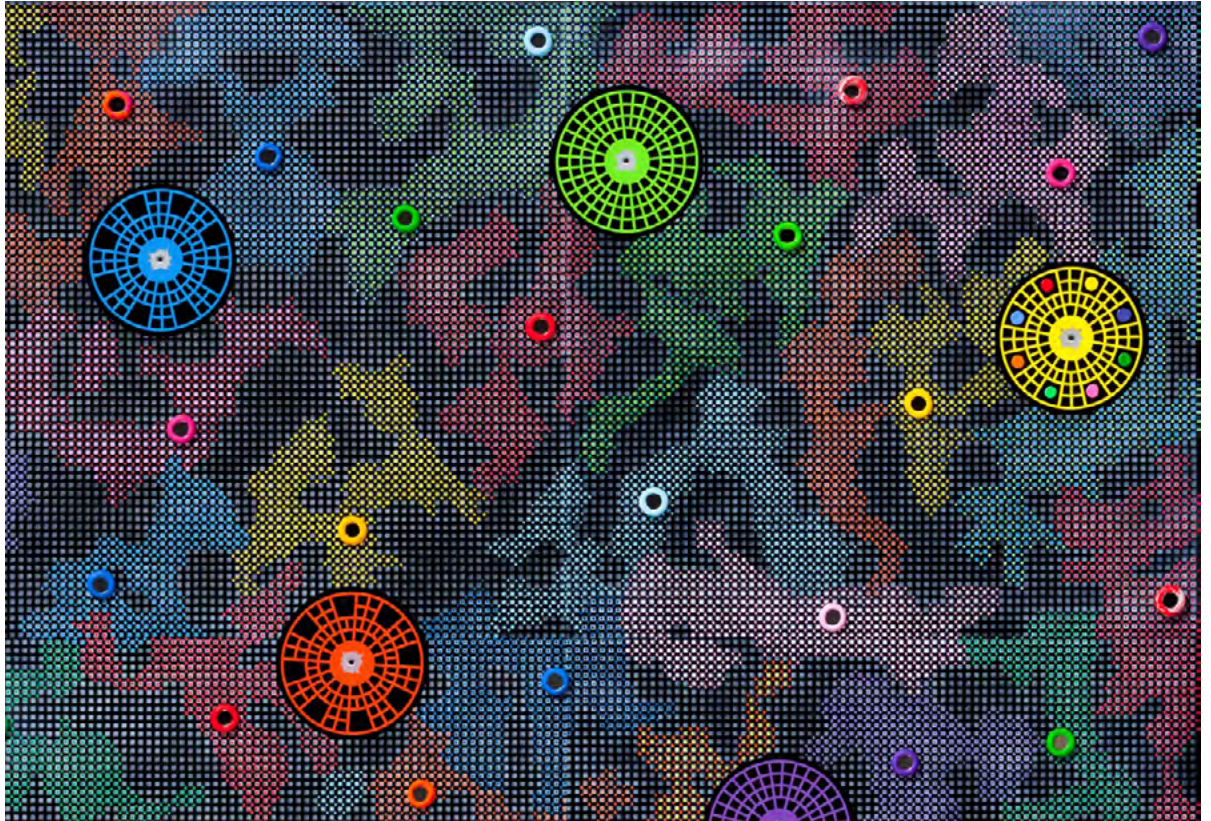




# Janenne Eaton

Australian, born 1950

Themes: Painting, landscape, technology, Anthropocene, globalisation and climate change



Since the 1980s, Janenne Eaton has adopted an archaeological approach in the development of her landscape painting practice. Her works express the impact of the Anthropocene: the current geological era in which human activity is contributing to significant environmental and climate change. *REEF* represents a coral reef observed from an aerial perspective. Its bird's eye view shows how technology allows us to see new perspectives of the natural world. Issues of digital surveillance and the effects of globalisation are raised through the floating discs that resemble a camera's viewfinder or GPS display. The series of small mirrors reflect our own contributions to the current condition of the sea, and the artist's clever layering represents the pixels and grids of the combined human presence on the earth.

## Explore

Since the mid-1980s Janenne Eaton has explored global, political and environmental issues in her art practice. Research other artworks created by Eaton and discuss how she explores those issues through, text, symbols, colour and pattern.

Janenne Eaton  
*REEF* 2015  
enamel, vinyl, mirror and  
polymer clay on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the artist, 2019  
© Courtesy of the artist

## Discuss

When you look at this artwork how does it make you feel? Describe why it makes you feel this way?

Why do you think the artist used bright colours and patterns?

Discuss how the artist has used material and techniques to express meaning in this artwork?

A coral reef is an underwater ecosystem. What are the main environmental issues coral reefs face today?

## Make

The painting is an image of a coral reef from a bird's eye view. Select a location anywhere in the world that is facing an environmental issue using Google Maps. Focus on finding interesting compositions in those areas, look for ways to incorporate a variety of textures and interesting shapes. Then, print the Google Earth images out in black and white and use those printed maps as the basis to create a landscape painting.



# John Davis

Australian 1936–1999

Themes: Environmental art, sculpture, installation, natural materials, indigenous cultural practices and environmental issues

Throughout his thirty year career, John Davis established an acclaimed reputation as an influential sculptor and installation artist. His practice incorporates a diverse use of materials and provides unique interpretations and representations of landscape and ecology. Davis foreshadows contemporary environmental issues in his work, *Koan 64* where sixty-four collections of bound twigs have been gridded in a distinctively formal style.

*Koan 64* belongs to the last body of work Davis produced. The title references a concept derived from seventeenth century Zen poet Basho: the inherent opposition, or duality, present in all things.

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## Explore

Davis drew inspiration from the Australian landscape throughout his career and was concerned with the devastating impact non-indigenous people were having on the environment, particularly in regards to the health of the Murray River. There are many threats to the quality of water in the Murray-Darling Basin. As a class, research how modern human practices such as irrigation and land clearing have caused environmental impacts to the river systems.

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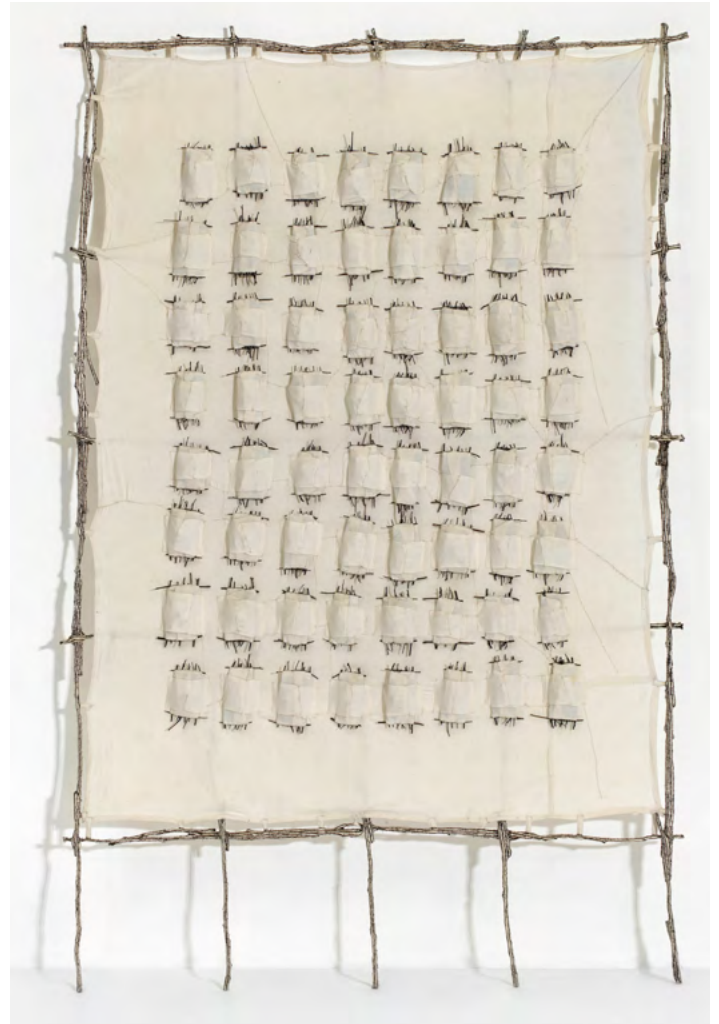
## Discuss

Why do you believe the artist used natural organic materials to create his artwork?

Research 'Land art' (part of a wider conceptual art movement from the 1960s and 1970s) and 'Environmental art' (art that addresses social and political issues relating to the natural and urban environment)—discuss this in relation to Davis' own artwork and practice.

The Australian landscape and environment have played a significant role in indigenous and non-indigenous Australian art. As a class discuss why the Australian landscape has been an important theme in artists' work and how it has changed throughout time.

Davis would go out into the landscape and create ephemeral artworks (lasting for only a short time) in situ (in the original place). Why do you believe the artist worked this way?



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## Make

Create your own three-dimensional sculpture using recycled and natural materials that explores environmental issues that concern you today. Think about your choice of materials and explore how they can represent further meaning and ideas in your work.

John Davis  
*Koan 64* 1994  
twigs, calico, bituminous paint  
and cotton thread  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of anonymous donors through the  
Australian Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program, 2018  
© Courtesy of the Estate of John Davis  
and Arc One Gallery, Melbourne  
Photography: Christian Markel





# Anne Noble

New Zealander, born 1954

Themes: Photography, art and science, human impact on biological systems, documentation and education



Anne Noble is acclaimed for photographic work that demonstrates formal beauty and critical enquiry. *Dead bee portrait #08* is from a series of 15 portraits of dead bees that Noble made in 2015–16 to explore the honeybee and its increasingly unstable, fragile place in our world. Her research was instigated during a Fulbright fellowship when Noble was based at Columbia College in Chicago as an international artist in residence.

The artist states:

Scientists are struggling to understand, contain and manage the impact of technology on the health of the environment and the risks to bee populations with the decline in pollination. Art has an imperative to ask some parallel but different questions that draw on our sensory and imaginative capacity to fully comprehend the impact of human action on natural biological systems.

Anne Noble  
*Dead bee portrait #08* 2015  
pigment print on archival paper;  
edition 5 of 10  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of Christine Bell through the  
Australian Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program, 2018  
© Courtesy of the artist

## Explore

The artist wants her series of *Dead bee portraits* 2015–16 to spark new conversations about the important role that bees play in our world. Research the importance of bees to our survival and their current threat as a class. What can you do to save the bees?

## Discuss

The artist explores art and science to represent issues she cares deeply about. How can science benefit art and how can art benefit science?

The artist worked alongside scientists to create her bee portraits using a scanning electron microscope—an image making process that employs an electron beam. As a class, discuss the quality of the image and how it contributes to the artist's intentions or meaning in the artwork?



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### Make

Create your own portrait of a bee using objects found in nature and a photogram technique.

A photogram is a photographic image made without a camera, made by placing objects directly onto the surface of a light-sensitive material such as photographic paper and then exposing it to light.

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### Instructions

1. Use tape to mount a sheet of photographic paper on a piece of cardboard.
2. Arrange your found objects on your paper to create an image of a bee and secure them with tape.
3. Protect your photogram from the sun by storing it in a folder, envelope or box.
4. Take it outside and expose it to the sun for a few minutes.
5. When the sheet turns light in colour, remove it from the sun.
6. When indoors, remove the materials from the sheet.
7. Place your sheet in a tray of water and develop it for a few minutes and reveal your image.





# Pre-visit information

Learn offers a range of tours, talks, lectures and activities covering a range of themes across the curriculum relating to the Gallery's permanent collections and temporary exhibitions. To gain the maximum benefit from your visit to the Gallery we suggest that Educators visit the Gallery in advance and view the relevant exhibition or discuss the works with a Gallery Educator. If visiting the Gallery is not possible, please ensure all online resources are utilised.

## *Getting to the Gallery*

Geelong Gallery is located in Johnstone Park. The entrance is at 55 Little Malop Street, in Geelong's arts precinct.

## *Travelling by train*

A three-minute walk through Johnstone Park to the Gallery.

## *Travelling by bus*

Arrangements for bus parking can be made with your Gallery booking.

To help us conserve works in Geelong Gallery's renowned collection for current visitors and future generations to enjoy, we recommend the following:

- Prior to your visit, Educators/supervisors to brief students on appropriate behaviour in the Gallery (e.g. walking in the Gallery, listening to instructions and not touching the exhibits)
- Students should take care entering and leaving the building from and to the bus
- Food and drinks are not allowed inside the Gallery
- Please consider other visitors
- Educators to accompany their group at all times during their visit
- Stools and clipboards are available for student use
- Only pencils are to be used in the Gallery

## **Bookings**

Bookings are essential for all Learn programs and group visits:

T 03 5229 3645

An entry fee of \$5 per student will apply to school groups wishing to visit Geelong Gallery and experience a tour led by a Gallery Educator.

Self-directed school groups may visit the Gallery free-of-charge.

Gallery Educator tours are offered on weekdays during school terms only.

## **Gallery Geelong**

55 Little Malop Street

Geelong VIC 3220 Australia

T 03 5229 3645

E [info@geelonggallery.org.au](mailto:info@geelonggallery.org.au)

## **Conditions of entry**

Please refer to the Geelong Gallery website for the COVID-19 safe Conditions of Entry.

This resource is supported by Department of Education and Training Strategic Partnership Program



Education  
and Training





