



Education Resource (F-6)

THE Shape OF Things TO Come

EXHIBITION DATES
22 February – 9 June 2025

sam
Shepparton Art Museum

How to use this education resource

This education resource highlights artworks and themes in the SAM exhibition *The Shape of Things to Come* to expand classroom learning for Visual Arts and Humanities subjects. The resources introduces artworks within the exhibition, followed by discussion questions to help prompt conversations when viewing the exhibition with students.

Additionally, there are activities to help dive further into this area of study with your students in the classroom.

This education kit is aimed at students in levels F – 6, Visual Art and The Humanities. Please find Victorian Curriculum outcomes on page 14.

For questions or to book your students in for a tour email: education@sheppartonartmuseum.com.au

The Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) is on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta people. The SAM building, and art museum within it, is located close to the Goulburn River, which is known as Kaiela to the Yorta Yorta.

SAM recognises the Yorta Yorta as the traditional owners and ongoing custodians of the lands and water of the country upon which SAM is built, and that sovereignty of this land has never been ceded

Cover image:
Penny Evans *Heartwood* (from series *Dhuwidha dhurraaya*), 2022, white earthenware, white stoneware, terracotta, and pooling glaze and underglazes, 215 x 160 cm, Shepparton Art Museum Collection, 2022
Indigenous Ceramic Award - feature artist acquisition, purchased, 2023. Photo: Leon Schoots



The Shape of Things to Come

22 February – 9 June 2025

The Shape of Things to Come presents a diverse collection of artworks that encourage primary school students to reflect on the future, exploring everything from apocalyptic visions to hopeful portrayals of sustainability and harmony with nature. These works inspire students to think about themes of change, resilience, and our connection to the world around us.

Featuring a variety of mediums and artistic techniques, the exhibition shows how art can be a powerful tool for understanding complex ideas. Students will have the opportunity to explore how artists express big concepts through different forms of art, helping them develop critical thinking and creativity. The exhibition also encourages discussions on environmental issues, sustainability, and the importance of taking care of our planet, providing students with valuable lessons on how art can help us understand and respond to the challenges of the future.

Curator: Danny Lacy

Exhibiting artists

Penny Byrne
Penny Evans
Bridget Hillebrand
Locust Jones
Douglas Kolk
Lin Onus
John Perceval
Annika Romeyn
Anne Wenzel



The Shape of Things to Come, installation view, Shepparton Art Museum 2025. Photo: Leon Schoots

Penny Byrne



Penny Byrne *The Four Horsemen of the 21st Century Apocalypse*, 2009, found ceramic, re-touching medium, powder pigments, epoxy resin, lentils, corn, rice, kidney beans, glass, silicone, metal and plastic, Water: 66 x 24 x 44cm, Oil: 55 x 27 x 37cm, Food 63 x 23 x 48cm, People: 52 x 22 x 40cm Shepparton Art Museum Collection, purchased, 2009. Image credit: Shepparton Art Museum

Artist Bio: Penny Byrne is a Melbourne-based artist with a background in ceramics conservation.

This artwork taps into Byrne's concerns surrounding climate change and the vulnerability of our planet. Each horse and rider are styled to reflect threats to human existence in the 21st century—water shortages, peak oil, food scarcity, and overpopulation. Byrne's training as a conservator strongly influences her practice. Working with found objects, particularly ceramics, Byrne meticulously manipulates and reconstructs them into new figurines.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

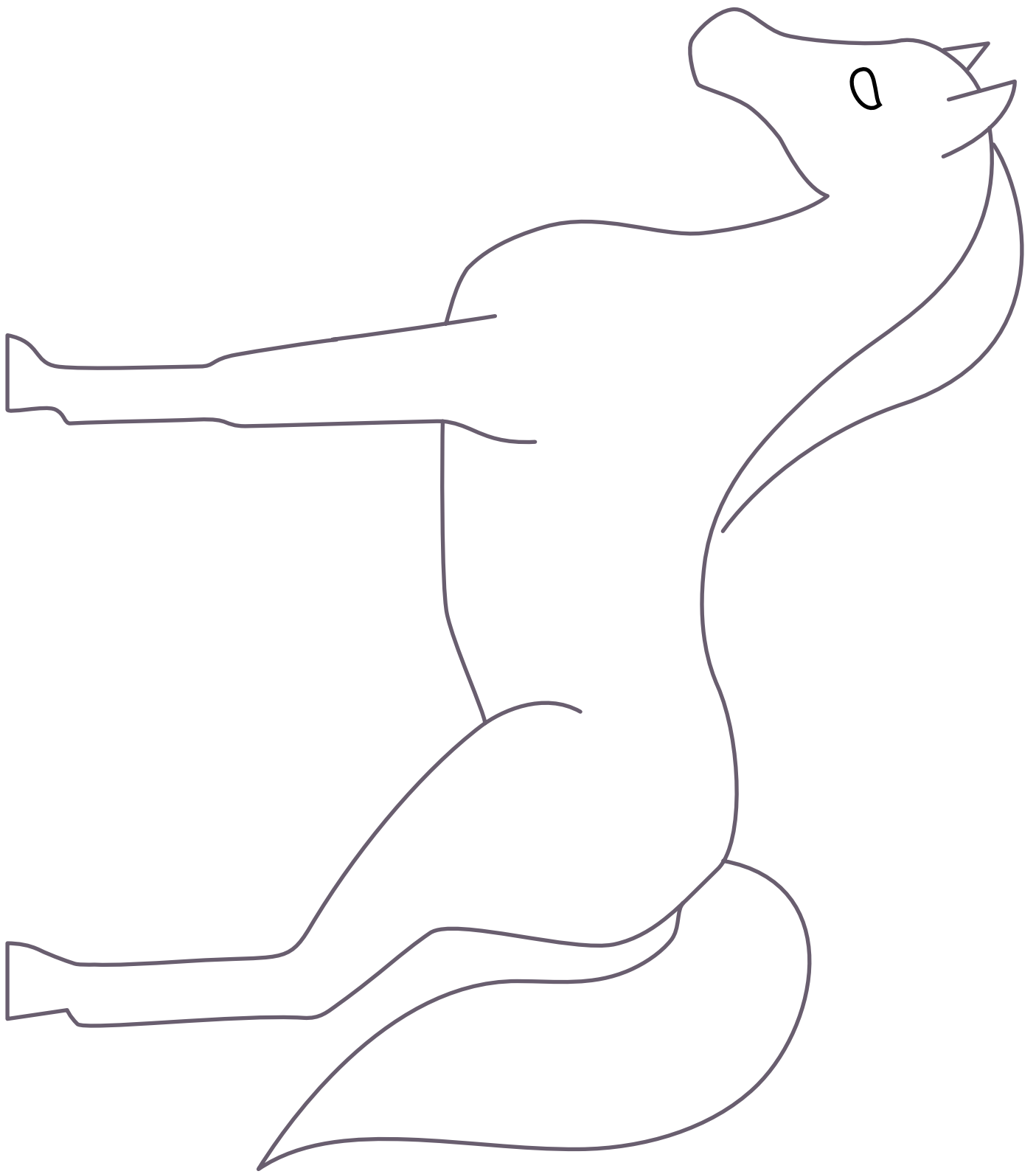
- Look closely at the sculptures. What found objects from everyday life can you see?
- Why has the artist used these objects? How do they help explain the meaning of each horseman?
- How does this work make you feel? Which parts of it make you feel that way?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Design a horse for one of the Horsemen to ride.

- Students choose a global issue or one that personally matters to them.
- Research the impact this has on the environment or community.
- Consider the preventative measures that could be taken and regenerative outcomes.
- Create a collage within the horse outline to explore the issue from either angle.

Materials: Scissors, glue, magazines, craft material, coloured pencils and markers.



Anne Wenzel



Anne Wenzel *Silent Landscape*, 2006-2010, ceramic, resin and wallpaper, 46 x 210 x 300 cm, Shepparton Art Museum Collection, acquired through the 2010 Sidney Myer Fund Australian Ceramic Award – International Artist Category, 2011. Photo: John Stoel

Anne Wenzel was born in Germany and currently resides in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. She predominantly works with clay to create ceramic sculptures and installations, often large in scale.

The devastating aftermath of fire and the resilience that emerges in the wake of catastrophe are present in Anne Wenzel's work *Silent Landscape*. Considering the deeper ecological and environmental shifts at play, this work allows us to confront the reality of bushfire not just as a natural disaster, but as a symbol of the larger crisis of climate change. It also encourages reflection on our collective responsibility in the face of a rapidly changing world.

In addition to evoking the apocalyptic aftermath of a bushfire, this haunting scene is one of stillness and silence, offering a space for reflection and contemplation. Fire, when harnessed with knowledge and respect, can be a powerful force for good. Indigenous fire practices such as cool burning, developed over thousands of years, offer valuable insights into how fire can be used as a tool for land management and biodiversity conservation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you think you could live in this environment?
- What in the artwork makes you feel this way? Consider colour, texture, light, and shadow.
- What makes this landscape “silent”?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Create a ‘Vibrant Landscape’ in paper clay

- Approach *Silent Landscape* from a regenerative perspective by having students draw their definition of a ‘vibrant landscape’. Are there people, animals, or buildings?
- Prepare a 10cm x 10cm base from recycled cardboard.
- Students sculpt their landscape on their cardboard base using paper clay and incorporating collage and craft materials.
- Display students’ work together to create one large collaborative landscape.

Materials: Recycled cardboard, paper clay, magazines, craft materials, scissors, glue.

Lin Onus



Lin Onus *Floodwater 'Woorong Nucko'*, 1995, synthetic polymer paint on Italian linen, 200 x 300cm, courtesy of Carrillo Gantner AC and Ziyin Gantner.

Lin Onus (1948-1996) was a Yorta Yorta artist recognised for his distinctive visual language which fused traditional and contemporary imagery.

In *Floodwater 'Woorong Nucko'* Lin Onus depicts a scene closely tied to the Barmah forest, a place which holds cultural and spiritual significance for Yorta Yorta people.¹ Masterfully combining Western-style landscape painting with traditional Aboriginal imagery, the artist expresses both a personal and collective connection to Country. This convergence encourages reflection on the impact of colonisation on the Australian landscape, current environmental challenges, and potential pathways for its protection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think people paint landscapes?
- How does this landscape make you feel? What might it say about this particular location?
- Is there a part of the artwork that has been painted differently? What does this tell us about who and where it might have been painted?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Use *Floodwater 'Woorong Nucko'* as a springboard to explore artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, focusing on:

- Cultural significance
- Techniques and use of symbolism
- Artist's connection to country
- Convergence of Western-style painting and Aboriginal stories and perspectives as a result of European settlement



Paint a reflective landscape

- Print the provided landscape by artist John Pick.
- Cut and paste the image onto the top half of watercolour paper.
- Students use watercolour paints to create a mirror reflection of the printout.
- Students can incorporate animals that can be found in or around water.
- Students should experiment drawing animals with white pastels before painting their reflected landscape.

Materials: printer, scissors, glue, watercolour paint, watercolour paper

John Pick
Untitled, (detail) c.1942,
 watercolour, 24 x 34 cm,
 Shepparton Art Museum Collection,
 donated by Miss M.E. MacKenzie, 1993.
 Image Credit: Shepparton Art Museum



John Perceval



John Perceval *Black and Gold*, 1961, oil on canvas, 76 x 102 cm, Shepparton Art Museum Collection, donated by Mr. E. McKeon and Mr. W. E. Petherick, 1965
Photo: Leon Schoots

John Perceval (1923-2007) is widely recognised as one of Australia's most formative Modernist painters.

This painting, executed *en plein air*, embraces the essence of Impressionism, capturing the immediate atmosphere and natural light of the landscape. This artwork challenges traditional landscape painting by reducing the spatial planes of the scene to just the foreground and middle ground.² The result is an emphasis on the undergrowth, inviting the viewer to consider the subtle, yet dynamic, activity that occurs within this often-overlooked space.

The artist's use of layering adds depth, while dynamic brushstrokes convey a sense of movement, infusing the scene with energy and life while enveloping the viewer. The result is a vibrant depiction that draws attention to the intricate, lively world beneath the surface of the broader Australian landscape.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you see?
- How is this artwork different to Lin Onus' *Floodwater* 'Wooroong Nucko'?
- How would you describe the way the paint was applied?
- Why do you think the artist painted this outside instead of painting in his studio from a photograph?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Painting with nature

- Students collect objects from the environment that will act as paintbrushes, such as fallen flowers, sticks, feathers, bushy branches.
- Students use the provided template to explore painting techniques with their nature paintbrushes.
- Students create a landscape painting using their nature paintbrushes, incorporating practiced painting techniques.

Materials: Objects from nature, paper, acrylic paint.

2. L. De Neefe, John Perceval: *Black and Gold*, in R. Coates & S. Gory eds., *Eighty Years of SAM: The Collection*, Shepparton Art Museum, Shepparton, 2017, p98.

Artist's name: _____

Paint brush name (feather, twig etc): _____

Drag	Dab
Flick	Swivel

Penny Evans



Penny Evans *Heartwood* (from series *Dhuwidha dhurraaya*), 2022, white earthenware, white stoneware, terracotta, and pooling glaze and underglazes, 215 x 160 cm, Shepparton Art Museum Collection, 2022 Indigenous Ceramic Award - feature artist acquisition, purchased, 2023. Photo: Leon Schoots

Penny Evans is a K/Gamilaroi ceramic and mixed media artist, based on Bundjalung Country, New South Wales.

Penny Evans' ceramic wall work *Heartwood* (from the series *Dhuwidha dhurraaya - Dig Deeper*), features a series of ceramic tree roots, digging sticks, and goannas. Evans' installation delves into the matriarchal symbol of women's digging sticks and the artist's desire for us all to dig deeper into our shared and complex histories. The work explores the connection and symbiotic relationship between the environment and its inhabitants.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do the shapes and patterns in the artwork remind you of anything in nature?
- What is a digging stick, and what is it used for?
- Why do you think the artist used a bird's-eye-view perspective?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Explore artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that use the aerial/bird's-eye-view perspective and explore the following:

- The artist who created the artwork.
- Where the artwork was made.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists' connection to country.
- The use of shape, line, and symbol in Aboriginal art to tell a story.

Draw a landscape from a bird's-eye-view.

- Students choose an outdoor space that holds personal significance for them.
- Ask them to envision themselves as a bird soaring above this place – what lines, shapes, and patterns might they observe from above?
- Locate this place on a map and use it as a guide to inform their artwork.

Materials: Paper, drawing materials, images of maps (aerial Google Map printouts).

Bridget Hillebrand



Bridget Hillebrand *River*, 2023, linocut on washi paper, 380 x 305 x 1500cm (dimensions variable), courtesy of the artist. Photo: Leon Schoots

Dr Bridget Hillebrand is an interdisciplinary artist based in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia.

River, 2023, is a breathtaking 12-metre-long paper sculpture that intricately weaves together the essence of a river's life force. Created in reference to the changing ecology of the Birrarung (Yarra River), the work speaks to the significance of river systems throughout history, driving economies, shaping agriculture, and serving as spiritual symbols.

Drawing attention to their ongoing vulnerability in the face of environmental challenges, *River* serves as a powerful reminder of the vital role rivers play in sustaining life. SAM is fortunate to be located next to the mighty Kaiela (Goulburn River), an important life force for the Yorta Yorta people and the prosperity of our region.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does this artwork remind you of, and why?
- How has the artist created a sense of movement?
- Works on paper are typically considered to be two-dimensional. How would you describe this artwork – is it two-dimensional or three-dimensional?
- Does the surface of the paper remind you of water?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Create a rolling river installation

- As a class, explore the Goulburn River's course, significance, and ecology.
- Have students identify plants, animals, and insects, then draw and cut these out from foam sheets.
- Glue foam cutouts onto cardboard rolls.
- Set up butcher's paper, brushes and acrylic paints.
- Students paint the foam cutouts on the rollers and take turns printing on the butcher's paper. Use rolling pins inside the cardboard rolls for easier handling.
- Repeat on several sheets of butcher's paper to create a collaborative installation for the classroom.

Materials: Butcher's paper, foam sheets, cardboard cylinders (recycled paper towel cardboard, etc), scissors, glue, paint brushes, acrylic paint, rolling pins.

Locust Jones



Locust Jones *The Bird Agents*, 2007-2008, graphite and ink on paper, 400 x 1020cm, Shepparton Art Museum Collection purchased with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation, 2014. Photo: Leon Schoots

Born in Christchurch, New Zealand, **Locust Jones** currently lives and works in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales.

Locust Jones gathers images from the 24/7 news cycle, using them to create large, energetic drawings. His artwork *The Bird Agents*, now on display at SAM for the first time since joining the collection, reflects how the news bombards us with stories of struggle, inequality, and violence from all over the world.

By blending different media, he mirrors the chaotic flow of news, capturing the complexities of the world. The artist uses collage techniques to evoke a sense of urgency and emotional impact.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- If you were to give this work a title, what would it be and why?
- What objects and figures can you identify in this artwork?
- How does this work make you feel?
- Would you feel differently if the artist used colour?

IN THE CLASSROOM

Create a collaborative large-scale drawing

- Lay out a large sheet of cartridge paper, ensuring it's big enough for the entire class to contribute to the drawing.
- Hand out age-appropriate magazines and media images, perhaps focusing on a specific theme such as oceans.
- Students will use the images as inspiration to draw on the paper. Encourage them to explore different areas and create drawings that respond to their classmates' contributions.

Materials: Cartridge paper, drawing materials, magazines/books/printed reference images.

Glossary

Ceramic

An object made of clay and permanently hardened by heat.

Climate change

A change in the typical weather of a region – such as high and low temperatures and amount of rainfall.

Collage

Both a technique and an artwork, created by arranging and attaching different media onto a surface.

Found object(s)

Everyday items used by artists to create art, often repurposed in new and creative ways.

Impressionism

A style of painting that emerged in nineteenth-century France which aimed to capture the impression of its subject, rather than a true reflection. It is characterised by thick, quick brushstrokes that focus on light and colour. The primary subjects include landscapes and scenes from everyday life, with artists often painting outdoors.

Landscape

A depiction of a nature scene.

Mass media

Channels of communication, such as television, radio, newspapers, and the internet to reach large audiences.

Natural disaster

An event caused by natural forces that results in great damage or harm.

Plein air painting

The practice of painting outdoors. The term 'plein air' is French for 'outdoor'.

Symbolism

A mark, sign, or image that is used by an artist to stand for something else, like an idea, object, or feeling.

Washi paper

Traditional Japanese paper made by the fibres of trees, such as the mulberry tree.

Victorian curriculum links

Visual Arts

Level F-2

Explore and Express Ideas

VCAVAE017

VCAVAE021

Visual Arts Practices

VCAVAV018

VCAVAV022

Present and Perform

VCAVAP019

VCAVAP023

Respond and Interpret

VCAVAR020

VCAVAR024

Level 3-4

Explore and Express Ideas

VCAVAE025

Visual Arts Practices

VCAVAV026

Present and Perform

VCAVAP027

Respond and Interpret

VCAVAR028

Level 5-6

Explore and Express Ideas

VCAVAE029

Visual Arts Practices

VCAVAV030

Present and Perform

VCAVAP031

Respond and Interpret

VCAVAR032

The Humanities

Level F-2

Geography

VCGGC057

VCGGC059

VCGGK063

VCGGK066

VCGGK069

History

VCHHK064

Level 3-4

Civics and Citizenship

VCCCC007

Geography

VCGGC071

VCGGC073

VCGGK082

VCGGK083

History

VCHHC070

VCHHK072

Level 5-6

Civics and Citizenship

VCCCC016

Geography

VCGGC087

VCGGK094

VCGGK095

VCGGK097

History

VCHHC085

VCHHK089

Free Entry. Open 6 days. Closed Tuesdays.
530 Wyndham St, Shepparton VIC 3630



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