

Places and spaces

Key curriculum links

AusVELS The Arts

- Identify and describe key features of works of art, including the ways elements, principles and/or conventions, skills, techniques and processes are used
- Investigate and talk about the purpose of different works of art
- Discuss how observations, ideas, feelings, things imagined and purpose are conveyed in works of art
- Learn about how works of art can be designed and made to fulfil particular individual and community needs
- Talk about the way the arts connect to personal experiences and cultural and social events in the community
- Explore contemporary art forms, materials and technologies
- Analyse works of art to interpret and compare key features, symbols and cultural characteristics
- Discuss and express opinions about arts ideas
- Identify and explain personal preferences in responding to works of art
- Reflect on features in works of art and links to own art making
- Use arts language to describe, analyse and interpret the content, structure and expressive qualities of works of art
- Consider the relationship between works of art and the audience
- Explore the impact of works of art, art forms and art practices on other works of art and society in general
- Learn about the places where works of art can be found

Overview

'Place and space' is a theme that can be explored in the work of many artists in *Melbourne Now*.

A number of artists create work inspired by or in response to places that have personal, social, cultural or historical significance. Brian Martin creates immersive charcoal drawings based on his photographs and experience of Country of deep cultural significance to him – Wurundjeri, Paakantji, Darug and Wiradjuri. Tom Nicholson's *Comparative monument (Palestine)* began with the artist searching for war monuments bearing the name 'Palestine' erected in and around Melbourne after the First World War. Posters created as part of this project have been pasted up around the streets of Ramallah, and posters are available for visitors to *Melbourne Now* to take away to create new connections between places and their histories.

Melbourne Now includes work created in response to spaces in and around the city. Bianca Hester and Ash Keating present video and photographic work that documents performative project work they have created in public and civic spaces. Emile Zile is represented by a short film that follows a figure as he moves through, and responds to, a series of spatial environments in the inner-western suburb of Footscray. *ALLYOURWALLS* is an offsite project that brings together some of Melbourne's finest street artists and graffiti crews in a major makeover of Hosier Lane. Clare Rae is interested in the body and its relationship to space. Her work includes a series of photographs that depict her physical exploration of the NGV's architectural spaces.

Melbourne Now includes a number of site-specific works that respond to and transform gallery spaces. Robert Owen's expansive wall painting, *Lacuna*, is an intense and enveloping ultramarine-blue monochrome work. Toni Maticevski and Lucy Irvine create large site-specific works that respond directly to the scale and architecture of the gallery

spaces where they are displayed. Daniel von Sturmer and Stephen Bram create installations that explore pictorial and architectural space and visual perception. The installation of the Hotham Street Ladies brings domesticity and humour into the foyer of The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, while Caleb Shea's installation of works in the Grollo Equiset Garden at NGV International responds to both the surrounding architecture and the modernist sculptures on display in the garden.

Some artists in *Melbourne Now* have created work that focuses on places and spaces that are ordinary and unremarkable. Their work draws attention to the personal or cultural significance of familiar things. David Wadelton presents a series of photographs of suburban milk bars. Louis Porter's photographs are unsettling images of domestic or familiar settings. David Jolly uses snapshot-like photographic images of the city as the inspiration for paintings that are strikingly beautiful and poetic narratives of places that are significant to him.

Imaginary and dream worlds are also places explored by some of the artists in *Melbourne Now*. Jess Johnson creates fantastic worlds in images that combine densely layered patterns, objects and figures within architectural settings.

The representations of real and imagined places by artists in *Melbourne Now* are often highly evocative and suggest strong narratives. Consider, for example, the melancholy mood that pervades Rick Amor's painting of a lone figure in a desolate city landscape, or Jane Brown's atmospheric photographs of subjects such as decommissioned libraries and doomed buildings. Siri Hayes' photographs make reference to traditions of landscape painting including the French Impressionists, who worked en plein air (outdoors). However, details such as plantation timber and burnt tree stumps clearly address contemporary issues related to the environment.

The work of architects, who play a key role in shaping the places and spaces we inhabit, is featured in several projects in *Melbourne Now*, including *Sampling the City: Architecture in Melbourne*. ARM Architecture will set up office at NGV Australia, establishing NGV Studio as an incubator for urban research.

Starting points for discussion

Identify a work or project in *Melbourne Now* that responds to or is inspired by a place of personal, cultural, social or historical significance.

- What ideas, meanings or feelings related to place does this work suggest?
- How are these ideas or meanings suggested?

Identify a site-specific work or project in *Melbourne Now* that interests you.

- How does the work relate to the place or space around it?
- What is it about this work that you find interesting?

Find a work or project that represents a familiar or unremarkable place.

- Describe how the artist or artists have represented this place.
- What meanings or ideas does this suggest to you?

Find a work or project that depicts an imaginary place or space.

- Describe this place or space and how the artist or artists have depicted it.
- What do you think might have inspired this work?

Suggested artists/projects

Some artists and projects for investigating the theme of places and spaces are listed below, but there are many more. You can use the *Melbourne Now* microsite or app to find more information about these artists as well as a map showing the location of their work. You might also be interested in the *Representations of the City* tour on the *Melbourne Now* app.

NGV International

Rick Amor
Stephen Bram
Siri Hayes
Bianca Hester
Ash Keating
Tom Nicholson
Robert Owen
Caleb Shea

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia

ARM Architecture

Jane Brown

Hotham Street Ladies

Lucy Irvine

Jess Johnson

David Jolly

Brian Martin

Toni Maticevski

Louis Porter

Clare Rae

Sampling the City: Architecture in Melbourne

Daniel von Sturmer

David Wadelton

Emile Zile

Offsite

ALLYOURWALLS