

curriculum connections

burning issues

at a glance

THEO MODRA, BURNING LOGS, 2005, COLOUR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, 850 X 430MM.



ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

FOR MANY DAYS AFTER THE FIRES, LOGS AND TREE STUMPS CONTINUED TO BURN, DOTTING THE HILLSIDES, CLEARLY VISIBLE AT NIGHT.

On 11th January 2005 bushfires devastated large areas of lower Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. In the aftermath a group of people from the affected area worked to develop an exhibition that told the story of the fire and its impact on people's lives.

Out of this came *Burning Issues*, a remarkable exhibition that records not only the event and the immediate impact on people and the environment, but also expresses widespread community emotions of loss and grief, mixed with those of resilience and hope.

Exhibition theme

"Our aims were simple—to acknowledge the personal tragedy, the destruction of property and the devastation of the environment. We wanted to show the strong sense of community within the region, to record the event for future generations and finally to show the strengths and determination of those affected."

We felt that our community should have a chance to tell their stories through the mediums of visual art, photography and written and spoken accounts." JILLIAN PARKER, CHAIRPERSON OF THE BURNING ISSUES EXHIBITION COMMITTEE, FOREWORD, EXHIBITION CATALOGUE.

"The Burning Issues project is more than an exhibition – it is a process for identifying, documenting and rebuilding. For reassessing relationships and priorities, opening hearts, and finding a way to move forward." KEN LLOYD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COUNTRY ARTS SA, PREFACE, EXHIBITION CATALOGUE.

Exhibition content

"The exhibition commemorates the first anniversary of the fire. It brings forward cultural material and mementos of the event which together form an installation which is an expression by the community about an event that shocked us all. Some items are creative expressions of aspects of the fire and its aftermath—some documentary in character and some—the found objects—are graphic or quirky reminders of the ferocity of the fire storm. Other items depict the extraordinary capacity of our bush land, like the people, to regenerate and recover. Artists have made paintings, drawings and prints and photographers have offered an amazing selection that documents many aspects of the fire."

JOHN BAILY, AM, ARTIST AND PORT LINCOLN RESIDENT, FROM HIS ESSAY 'FIERY TSUNAMI', EXHIBITION CATALOGUE.

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curriculum connections burning issues at a glance

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:
ALL THE BEAUTIFUL
FLOWERS ARE GONE,
ASHES REPLACE THE
BRICK PATH AND THE
LARGE BURNT TREES
STILL HAVE THEIR
FOLIAGE BUT IT IS
NOTHING BUT BLACK.

MARILYN MAYNE, HYDE'S LOST GARDEN, 2005, WATER COLOUR IMAGE, 56 X 76CM



Origins & development

Following the fire a group of people from the affected region formed an Exhibition Committee to tell the story of the fire and its impact on the community and the land. Jo McLeay, Program Manager for the Walter Nicholls Memorial Gallery and Rotary Gallery in Port Lincoln, was chosen to be the curator of the exhibition.

In beginning this task McLeay asked herself, 'How do I integrate the historically informative aspects of the story with the reflective and expressive needs of the exhibition?'

She also faced a dilemma in the selection of works. As a member of the community she knew that every piece submitted had an important story to tell. By identifying experiences and emotions common to many of the works, she decided that it was possible to select works that not only represented the responses and experiences of the individuals who made them, but also spoke for the collective experiences of groups within the community.

She comments, "From this point of understanding I was then able to identify those art works which together best told the story of fire, aftermath and recovery."

These three aspects,—fire, aftermath and recovery—provided the framework for the selection of works and also the basic themes for the exhibition.

Artists

The exhibition incorporates a wide diversity of work by practicing artists and other members of the community, including school aged children, who were compelled to record, through pictorial works, photographs or collected artefacts, what they saw and experienced.

Works

The exhibition contains:

- a wide range of pictorial works in traditional mediums of oil and acrylic on canvas, watercolour, pastel and collage
- a large body of photographic works which capture all the immediacy of the emotions of the people impacted by the fire and its awesome destructive power
- salvaged artefacts such as sheets of corrugated iron, signs and gas bottles, collected by locals as they returned to their devastated communities. These items give insights into the impact of the extreme conditions of wind and fire
- sculptural works created from materials affected by the fire



Much of the content of *Burning Issues* is concerned with the expression and communication of deeply felt emotions. Through many works it is possible to share these emotions and see the world and events through the eyes and minds of a wide diversity of people of all ages and from across a wide spectrum of the community.

As such, teachers will find in this exhibition visually exciting, challenging and thought-inspiring images that can be used to motivate and engage students.

Burning Issues is a unique exhibition. At one level it is an art exhibition. It shows how artists and others in the community use different forms of visual art to document events and express thoughts and feelings. As such *Burning Issues* offers unique and rich resources for teachers developing and delivering learning units and programs in the areas of **Visual Arts**.

It is also a social document. It is about different kinds of people who have been motivated by their need not only to tell others about their loss and grieving, but also to show their strengths as a community and their determination to rebuild their lives. It is also about natural and built environments and how natural forces impact on both. As such *Burning Issues* offers unique and rich resources for teachers developing and delivering learning units and programs in the areas of **Society and Environment**.

Key Competencies

Actively engaging with artworks within this exhibition will support Key Competencies development as follows:

- **KC1 Collecting, analysing and organizing information** - *Explore* tasks require students to use a number of strategies to collect and organise data on individual works and groups of work

- **KC2 Communicating ideas and information** - *Explore* tasks require students to scribe, debate and report findings
- **KC4 working with others in teams** - some of the *Explore* tasks can be undertaken by teams

Essential Learnings

Futures - the RECOVERY theme of *Burning Issues* invites students to engage with the idea of a community planning or envisaging the future in the face of diversity. The challenge of learning from tragic events in order to build a better future offers students an opportunity to evaluate this exhibition as a reflection on past history and future directions.

Identity - *Burning Issues* is very much an expression of community identity. The diversity of their works and their content allows student to investigate the question of what makes up a sense of local or regional identity.

Interdependence - the fire brought to the surface the reality of peoples' lives being closely interdependent. It also highlighted the close relationship with the land both as a source of income and also a place to which people belong and which people value for a wide range of reasons.

Thinking - the power of many of the images will cause students to stop and think about many things such as the tenuous nature of life on earth, the power of nature, the deep affection that people have for others and the way people deal with strong emotions and tragedies. Analysing why particular artists chose to interpret events in one way and not another, or reflecting on a personal response to works, will also lead students into modes of thinking that can lead to a wide range of outcomes. It is also an opportunity to scope the way creative minds think.

Communication - analysing works, or reporting and debating findings related to viewing works, will require students to make effective use of language and writing skills. Analysing and responding will also allow students to learn more about art as a special and powerful form of communication.



curriculum connections

Learning Areas Outcomes

The following chart identifies a number of outcomes (within Visual Arts, Society and Environment) that are particularly relevant to *Burning Issues* as a learning resource

visual arts

Key Ideas	Early Years	Primary Years	Middle Years	Senior Years
arts practice	Express feelings and ideas about past present and future	Experiment with ideas and think in concrete and abstract ways Engage in a range of techniques	Develop knowledge of different art systems and styles Engage in a range of techniques	Research different methodologies and techniques Research ideas and reflect on effectiveness of different artist's methods and ideas
analysis and response	Gain an understanding of different forms of art	Learning how to effectively respond to art works	Distinguishing between different styles and genres Communicating informed/reasoned responses to works	Using independent research to develop an informed understanding of art Exercising critical language
arts in context	Learning about art and artists in everyday life	Learning about the different kinds of artists and art forms within contemporary society	Learning to see particular art works and kinds of art within wider contexts	Understanding how exhibitions like <i>Burning Issues</i> fit within an Australian (and global) contemporary context

society and environment

Key Ideas	Early Years	Primary Years	Middle Years	Senior Years
time, continuity and change	Developing skills in representing the concept of time	Learning the importance of material evidence of events	Investigating and analysing events, issues and lives of people within a local community	Researching a range of sources to critically analyse, contextualise, evaluate events
place, space and environment	Develop an understanding of the significance of place	Exploring issues related to sustainability	Explore environmental, conservation and resource issues	Developing a critical understanding of past and present practices Critically analyse the relationships between community and the environment
societies and culture	Develop an understanding of shared values	Analysing artworks to develop an understanding of social structures	Understanding the nature of social cohesion Develop an awareness and understanding of Indigenous perspectives	Critically analysing social issues and considering alternative futures

JANE HUTCHINSON, FIRE ORCHID, 2005, PYROPHORCHIS NIGRICANS IN VANILLA SETTLEMENT, COLOUR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, 670 X 555MM



The *Burning Issues* Education Pack provides teaching resources built around the exhibitions three themes of **FIRE**, **AFTERMATH** and **RECOVERY**.

It offers strategies for both Primary and Secondary teachers to use the experience of viewing the exhibition with students to explore art-related aspects (including the role of art in reporting and documenting contemporary life) or to engage students with issues and themes linked to studies of Society and Environment.

Visual Arts

Burning Issues offers unique opportunities for students to:

- Learn about:
 - Different kinds of art practice
 - Different kinds of art-based methods and materials
 - Links between artists and their communities
 - Different ways that art communicates
- Develop skills in:
 - Engaging with, analysing, communicating about and responding to challenging art works
 - Visual thinking
 - Problem solving
 - Using imagination

Society and Environment

- Learn about the social role of art
- Develop skills in analysing and responding to art works in order to:
 - Engage with central concepts related to time, continuity and change
 - Explore the significance of place in the life of individuals and communities
 - Explore concepts related to community identity and values
 - Investigate issues related to the environment and sustainability
 - Apply Indigenous perspectives to an understanding of time, continuity and change

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curriculum connections **learning area** and year level-specific outcomes

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:
NO ONE KNOWS
HOW MANY SHEEP
WERE IN THE SHED.
THEY ALL PERISHED,
AS DID THE ONES
PENNEDED OUTSIDE.

THEO MODRA, COMMUNITY SHED - NORTH SHELDON, 2006.
COLOUR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, 375 X 465MM.



Year Level suitability and focus:

Visual Arts

Primary (Years 3 - 5)

Particular focus:

- learning about different forms, styles and techniques.

Middle - Senior (Years 6 - 10)

Particular focus:

- understanding why artists use different methods and styles
- learning to analyse and respond to a diversity of art works
- developing an understanding of the role of art and artists in society
- generating ideas for arts practice

SACE 1 & 2 Visual Art course work

The exhibition delivers a broad spectrum introduction to the diversity of contemporary art practice and to individual artists' styles of expression and methodologies

SACE Visual Art Stage 1

- Practical Work - ideas and models for creating works and expressing ideas
- Contemporary Practice - resourcing individual studies of aspects of contemporary practice/s
- Investigative study - possible candidate for investigation of an artist

SACE Visual Art Stage 2

- Creating - offering models and options for inventive thought and action
- Perceiving - offering resourced engagement with original art works to support the development of skills in analysing and expressing opinions about art works, understanding art in a wider cultural context, writing about art works and researching using original art works
- Exhibition analysis and design

Society and Environment

Primary: Years 3 - 5

Particular focus:

- developing concepts of time
- developing an understanding of the significance of place

Middle: Years 6 - 9

Particular focus:

- time, continuity and change
- concepts of community and identity
- the relationship between societies and nature

Senior: Year 10 and SACE

Particular focus:

- reading artworks as social documents, engaging with issues related to sustainability



country arts SA exhibition program 2007 and 2008

The professional development and practical workshop programs for 2007 are currently being developed in conjunction with the galleries as listed below. Contact your local gallery or Country Arts SA arts officer in the first instance to express interest in participating.

BURNING ISSUES

Mount Gambier Riddoch Art Gallery May 5 – July 1
Ph: 8723 9566 pichlerlucia@riddochartgallery.org.au

Berri River Lands Gallery July 13 – Aug 24
Ph: 8582 2288 danyon.debuell@countryarts.org.au

Murray Bridge Regional Gallery Sept 1 – 30
Ph: 8531 2606 k.varga@murraybridge.sa.gov.au

Goolwa South Coast Regional Art Centre Nov 1-28
Ph: 8555 1500 Leah.Grace@alexandrina.sa.gov.au

SNAPSHOT

Streaky Bay Supper Room Studio Apr 20 – May 27
Ph: 8626 1926 jayne.holland@countryarts.org.au

Kadina Ascot Theatre Gallery Jun 4 – 29
Ph: 8821 2404 binnawoil@dodo.com.au

Mt Gambier Riddoch Art Gallery Jul 7 – Aug 5
Ph: 8723 9566 pichlerlucia@riddochartgallery.org.au

Renmark Chaffey Theatre Gallery Aug 27 – Sept 28
Ph: 8582 2288 danyon.debuell@countryarts.org.au

Murray Bridge Regional Gallery Oct 7 – Nov 11
Ph: 8531 2606 k.varga@murraybridge.sa.gov.au

Millicent Art Gallery Nov 23 – Jan 2008
Ph: 8733 0903 janice.nitschke@wattlerange.sa.gov.au

COLLECTANEA

Berri River Lands Gallery May 1 – June 15
Ph: 8582 2288 danyon.debuell@countryarts.org.au

Waikerie Rain Moth Gallery July 1 – 29
Ph: 8582 2288 danyon.debuell@countryarts.org.au

Maitland Bob Landt's Corner Gallery Aug 3 – 24
Ph: 8832 2383 boblandts@internode.on.net

Mannum Arnold Gallery Aug 31 – Sept 23
Ph: 8569 2733 mannumdockmuseum@baonline.com.au

Mt Gambier Riddoch Art Gallery Sept 29 – Nov 18
Ph: 8723 9566 pichlerlucia@riddochartgallery.org.au

Roxby Downs Regional Gallery Nov 30 – Jan 2008
Ph: 8671 2001 rodney.mitchell@countryarts.org.au

Snapshot, Burning Issues and Collectanea all continue throughout 2008. Teachers are most welcome to attend professional development workshops in a nearby centre in preparation for 2008 if they wish.

Burning Issues in 2008: Streaky Bay, Millicent, Naracoorte, Pt Augusta, Kadina.

Snapshot in 2008: Pt Augusta, Pt Lincoln, Pt Pirie

Collectanea in 2008: Millicent, Murray Bridge, Goolwa, Naracoorte, Jamestown, Wudinna, Pt Lincoln, Streaky Bay, Whyalla (2009 - Pt Augusta and Kadina).

| the workshops

Learning Connections Teachers' Workshops

These workshops are designed to provide teachers across year levels and learning areas with an introduction to the exhibition content and themes and relevance as teaching/learning resources. **The workshops include:**

- Demonstrations on how to make effective use of the Education pack
- Interactive activities using problem-solving and art games components from the Education Pack
- Suggestions for creative and successful teaching strategies
- Behind the scenes insights into exhibition design
- Learning to 'unpack art' activities using selected works from the exhibition

- An overview of art-historical contexts related to the exhibition
- Information about forthcoming Country Arts SA / Learning Connections exhibitions throughout 2007 - 2008

cost: FREE

bookings: required (contact local arts person)

venue: These workshops are conducted in the exhibition.

duration: 90 minutes. The workshops are usually scheduled 4.30pm–6pm but are negotiable at each regional venue

participants receive: a copy of the Education Pack and a PD participation certificate



Learning Connections School Student Workshops

A number of school group workshops will be offered as part of the Learning Connections Teachers' Workshop package.

These sessions will be conducted by one of the Learning Connections team presenters, in the exhibition and scheduled during school hours.

Sessions are 60 minutes in length (45 minutes core activity with LC presenter plus debrief/close-out tasks).

Content and focus of each session is negotiable according to year level and learning area/key competency focus. Teachers making bookings are encouraged to check out the on-line Education Packs (for year level/learning area guidelines) and to specify areas of particular interest when making a booking request.

Where scheduling allows, teachers organising a group visit are encouraged to book in for a Learning Connections Teachers' Workshop.

These sessions are specialised teaching/learning experiences designed to engage student's curiosity and imagination and to support structured learning. They incorporate learning to learn strategies. Students will be introduced to a variety of methods that can be successfully used to engage with and derive meaning and relevance from art works. The value of this session is enhanced when it is incorporated within a school-based learning program which makes strategic use of pre and post-visit activities rather than sees an exhibition visit as a 'one-off' activity.

Art Connections Community Workshops

These workshops are designed to get members of the local community really connected with Country Arts SA touring exhibitions (and Learning Connections exhibitions in particular) and through this with the wider world of art. Gallery staff and volunteers are encouraged to participate. **These workshops (presented by one of the Learning Connections team) include:**

- A guided tour through the exhibition, exploring the underlying themes and ideas

- An in-depth look at selected works
- A demonstration of 'learning to look' techniques
- Informal discussion about ways of looking at modern art
- Some art-historical insights into ideas and styles relevant to the exhibition
- Art Games – for all ages

These Art Connections workshops are presented in the exhibition. Duration 90 minutes.

cost: FREE

bookings: required (contact the gallery or local Country Arts SA arts officer)

venue: in the exhibition

duration: 90 minutes. The workshops are usually scheduled 7.00pm – 8.30pm (negotiable per regional venue)

Workshop Presenters:

The Learning Connections team consists of John Neylon and Anne Keast.

These high-energy art educators are skilled in engaging children and young adults with art and in supporting teachers in the development and delivery of art-based learning programs.

Both have worked at various times as Education Officers at the Art Gallery of South Australia and are currently registered teachers.

In presenting these workshops Anne will be drawing on her extensive experience as a secondary visual arts educator and John as an arts educator, and prominent art critic and curator.

Art Connections Practical Workshops

Country Arts SA is hosting **public workshops** around the state to coincide with *Collectanea* and *Snapshot*. Artists who are represented in the exhibitions will provide practical workshops in a variety of media. Whilst these workshops are aimed at people of all ages and will be held on weekends, young people, particularly those who have been engaged with the exhibitions through their school work, will be encouraged to participate. Register your interest with the Country Arts SA arts officer or gallery staff in the first instance.

WHO TO CONTACT

General Information: contact Jo Pike, Senior Project Officer, Statewide Initiatives Unit 8444 0400 or learningconnections@countryarts.org.au

Workshop bookings and school visit bookings:

contact your local gallery at the number listed on page 10, or your Country Arts SA arts officer

Country Arts SA 2 McLaren Parade, Port Adelaide 5015 **T** 8444 0400

E learningconnections@countryarts.org.au **www.countryarts.org.au**