

tough(er) love

art from Eyre Peninsula

COUNTRY ARTS SA LEARNING CONNECTIONS **RESOURCE KIT**

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE KIT

This Resource kit is published to accompany the exhibition *tough(er) love: art from Eyre Peninsula* at the Flinders University City Gallery, February 23 – April 28 2013 and touring regionally with Country Arts SA 2013 – 2015.

This Resource kit is designed to support learning outcomes and teaching programs associated with viewing the *tough(er) love* exhibition by:

- Providing information about the artists
- Providing information about key works
- Exploring Indigenous perspectives within contemporary art
- Challenging students to engage with the works and the exhibition's themes
- Identifying ways in which the exhibition can be used as a curriculum resource
- Providing strategies for exhibition viewing, as well as pre and post-visit research
- It may be used in conjunction with a visit to the exhibition or as a pre-visit or post-visit resource.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Resource kit written by John Neylon, art writer, curator and arts education consultant.

The writer acknowledges the particular contribution of all the artists and the following people to the development of this resource:

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FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

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BACKGROUND

ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

Eyre Peninsula is a tougher place than most in which to be an artist. But it gives much in return as a place which offers freedom from urbanised life, access to landscapes of spectacular beauty and traditional significance, and a sense of belonging to this place, known to many as the 'West Coast.' Selected artists from across the region were invited to explore and express the complexities of this 'tougher love' affair. The outcome is *tough(er) love*, an exhibition that presents new work by Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists working out of larger population centres including Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Ceduna and by other artists working in smaller communities. *tough(er) love* involved the curator, John Neylon, supporting the artists in reflecting on and extending their practice to create bodies of works which made statements about a commitment to being an artist. From this process a remarkable story has emerged, one that speaks about the centrality of art within the cultural life of this unique place.

A key aspect of the project was to give regional artists the opportunity of having their work showcased in a major city gallery. Another was to support artists in developing a body of work, which expressed their ideas and aspirations as artists. City-based artists take this as a given but in regional South Australia and particularly on Eyre Peninsula where lines of access and communication are always stretched, most artists establish a market and sell works or undertake commissions on an individual basis. The lead role played by Country Arts SA, supported by agencies including the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre, Kuju Aboriginal Arts and the Regional Galleries Association of South Australia, in facilitating and touring exhibitions such as *Desert to Dunes* (2010) and *Burning Issues* (2006-07) has made a significant difference. So too have metropolitan partnerships including Flinders University Art Museum, with its own long-term commitment to supporting Indigenous art and regional arts development, The Adelaide Festival Centre (*Our Mob*), Red Poles Gallery McLaren Vale (*Tjutjuna Palya Kutu*) and South Australian Living Artists Festival (SALA).

THE ARTISTS

Participating artists: John Baily, Cindy Durant, Amanda Franklin, Siv Grava, Joylene Haynes, Karl James, Elma Lawrie, Verna Lawrie, Beaver Lennon, Leith O'Malley, Pungkai, John Turpie.

THE CURATOR

The curator of *tough(er) love* John Neylon is an independent art writer and curator, and formerly Head of Education, the Art Gallery of South Australia.

He writes for The Adelaide Review and The Melbourne Review, has written several books on nationally prominent artists including Hans Heysen, Robert Hannaford, Aldo Iacobelli, Greg Johns and Stephen Bowers and curated several exhibitions including *Design Now* (touring with Country Arts SA in association with JamFactory), 2009 – 2010 and *Robert Hannaford: Open Studio*, touring South Australia and New South Wales (through Country Arts SA), 2010 – 2013).

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CURATORIAL PERSPECTIVE

tough(er) love brings together the work of a select group of artists currently working in Eyre Peninsula today. The selection reflects the cultural and geographic diversity of the West Coast's far-flung art communities and includes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists working out of larger population centers including Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Ceduna as well as others working in isolation or small communities.

The works were selected on the basis of saying something about the commitment that each artist has to making art. In many cases this has meant giving priority to works which the curator and artist consider to be 'heartland' in terms of best representing ideas and imagery that matter above all. Within this group of works are a number which represent more speculative modes of practice and investigation.

tough(er) love represented a challenge to the participating artists to reflect on practice and consider exhibiting works which offer insights about their commitment to making art and their sense of place within the region and the wider art community.

Strands of commonality run through the exhibition. These include; representations and celebrations of country, individual and community histories, nature as a source of beauty and design, the impact of change and exploration of the inner life.

In the final analysis *tough(er) love* succeeds as an exhibition of outstanding works of art that authentically represent each artist as creatively talented, professional, aspirational and above all capable of making art works which will engage new audiences.

The fact that this caliber of work has emerged from a region which relatively few South Australian or Australians have visited or fully experienced, let alone associated with unique and significant visual art expression, contradicts the view that significant art is always found in urban centres.

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tough(er) love is not a survey or thematic exhibition of art from Eyre Peninsula. It is the end result of a curatorial process which supported each artist in critiquing and extending their practices. From the perspective of the curator and artists it is this element of critical evaluation and support that mattered above all.

John Neylon
February 2013

BEHIND THE SCENES

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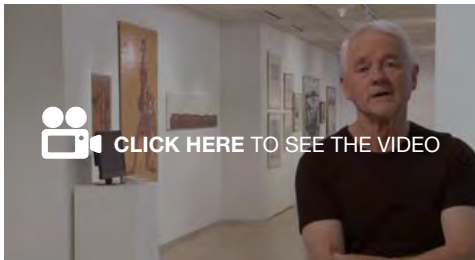
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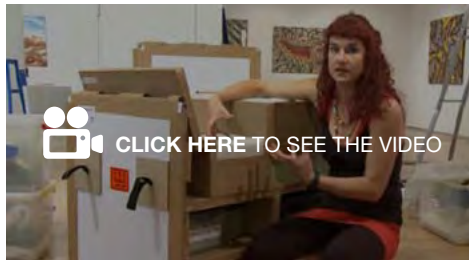
CURATION

John Neylon and others talk about the curatorial process.



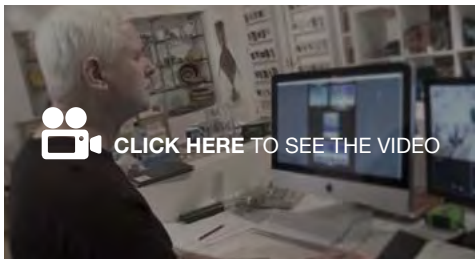
TRANSPORTATION

Anna Goodhind talks about preparing and packing the works for transportation.



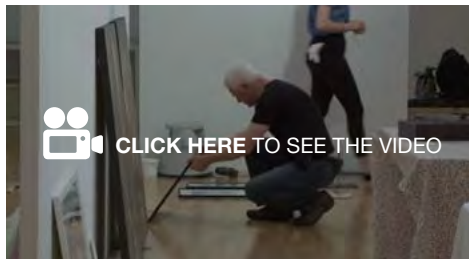
SELECTION

John Neylon talks about the process of selecting and working with the artists.



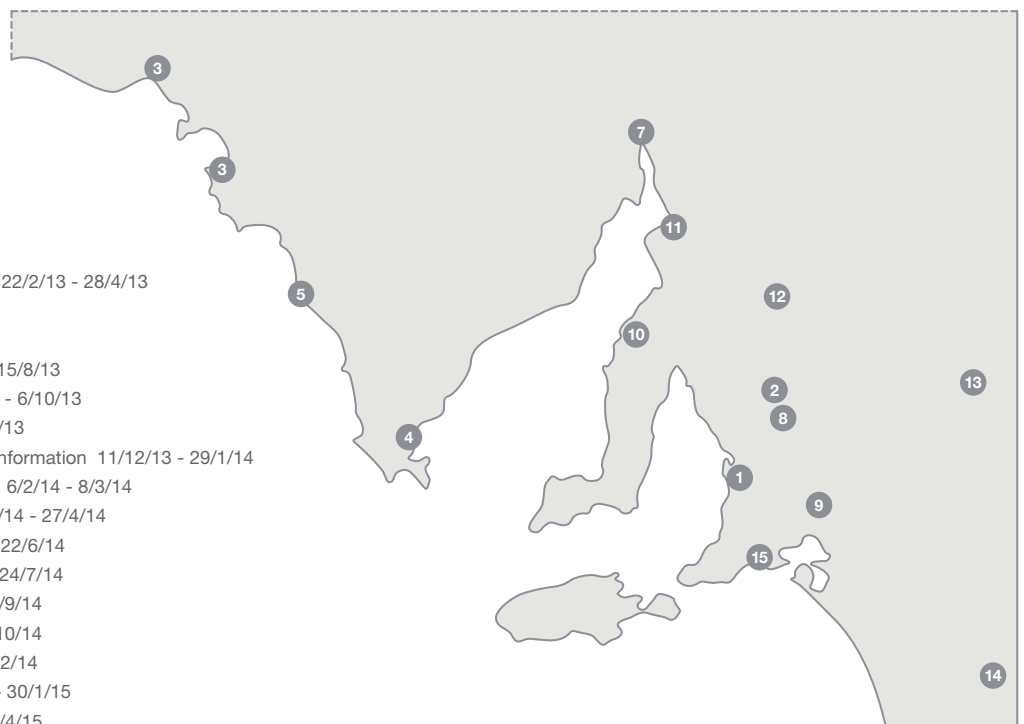
INSTALLATION

Discover how the exhibition was set-up.



CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW THE TOUR AND SEE WHERE THE ARTISTS LIVE

1. Adelaide Flinders University City Gallery 22/2/13 - 28/4/13
2. Kapunda Art Gallery 19/5/13 - 16/6/13
3. Ceduna, Westart Gallery 4/7/13 - 2/8/13
Ceduna District Health Service 4/7/13 - 15/8/13
4. Port Lincoln, Civic Hall Galleries 24/8/13 - 6/10/13
5. Elliston Community Hall 16/10/13 - 1/12/13
6. Streaky Bay, Rural Transaction & Visitor Information 11/12/13 - 29/1/14
7. Port Augusta Cultural Centre-Yarta Purtili 6/2/14 - 8/3/14
8. Tanunda, Barossa Regional Gallery 21/3/14 - 27/4/14
9. Murray Bridge Regional Gallery 9/5/14 - 22/6/14
10. Kadina, Ascot Theatre Gallery 28/6/14 - 24/7/14
11. Port Pirie Regional Art Gallery 1/8/14 - 7/9/14
12. Burra Regional Art Gallery 18/9/14 - 14/10/14
13. Berri, River Lands Gallery 24/10/14 - 5/12/14
14. Bordertown, Walkway Gallery 17/12/14 - 30/1/15
15. Goolwa, Signal Point Gallery 2/3/15 - 12/4/15



EXPLORING THE WORK



JOHN BAILY AM

b. 1927, Perth, Western Australia
Lives in Port Lincoln



John Baily, *Sleaford Mere* (detail), 2006, oil on canvas, 980 x 1285 mm

John Baily's eminent professional career in the arts includes appointments as Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia (1967-75), Chairman, Adelaide Festival Centre Trust (1971-75), Chairman Visual Arts Board, Australia Council (1972-76), Principal of the Sydney College of the Arts (1976-86), Manager, Bonython Meadmore Gallery, Sydney (1986-88) and, in 1981, being awarded a membership of the Order of Australia for services to art. His studio practice, sidelined for a time by a career in arts administration, has flourished since retirement from public life in 1990. Baily has held numerous one-person exhibitions in Adelaide and Sydney, is represented in state and regional gallery collections including the Art Gallery of South Australia, the Queensland Art Gallery and is a much-awarded watercolour and landscape artist. In 2008 he received the Port Lincoln Art Prize (Regional) for his painting *Sleaford Mere* (2006) which is included in *tough(er) love*.

Baily's early training in art, which included studying under Jeffrey Smart and Ivor Hele, laid the foundations for a lifetime of art practice across a diversity of media. Indeed the artist describes himself as 'a painter, enamellist and erstwhile potter'. Key components of this training were sound drawing and compositional skills and disciplined use of colour. Above all, Baily took from Smart an understanding of form as the 'the total sum of a picture', the way everything combines to make it work.

WORKS

The works selected for *tough(er) love* contain a sense of the isolated and pared-down visual identity of coastal locations. His images are inflected by an edginess, which communicates a haunting melancholy, which speaks about the silences and ringing spaces of wind-swept cliff tops, wave-polished rocks and salt-encrusted shallows.

A feature of the works in this exhibition is the capture of light, which bleaches the colour from distant hills and foreground outcrops. This eye for the distinctive visual features of place belongs to a tradition in Australian painting which celebrates bare-boned landscapes as places which offer the spirit room to breathe.

Of this engagement Baily has commented that 'I have come to appreciate the visual qualities of the West Coast landscape... This landscape is visually most interesting, conveying a strong and at times harsh aesthetic character.'

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CINDY DURANT

b. 1960. Southern California, USA
Lives near Penong



Cindy Durant, *Bowl of Rain* (detail), 2010, glass, kiln formed and lampworked, 480mm (diam)

Cindy Durant is a glass artist who lives on a property near the coast at Cactus Beach out of Penong. After working in many different occupations and art media, including textiles and woodworking Durant developed, in the mid 1980s, a passion for working in glass. The subsequent journey has largely been self-directed with the artist teaching herself through experimenting and workshops to work with glass towards expressive ends. Despite the relative isolation of her studio Durant has developed and maintains a successful business in selling glasswork and jewellery with national and international outlets for her work.

The simple forms, subtle colours and patterns of Durant's studio glasswork reflect the play of wind and water and cycles of nature which visually shape and define her environment.

The title of *tough(er) love* seems to sum it all up for me, that is my life. You have to love it to do it! Living so far from other artists also working in the mediums I use, so far from supplies, networking, studying, galleries, so far from almost everything to do with my art and business... I love where we live and probably could not find the same inspiration if we lived in suburbia. The hurdles have been many but the journey has been rewarding.

Cindy Durant

WORKS

Most of the works selected for the exhibition are essentially open-ended investigations. The *Sketches* series works function as visual haikus in their economy of means. The *Objects of Desire* forms, as well as the small skeletal works, reveal emerging sculptural aspects in the artist's practice as well as technical experimentation inspired by congruence of brilliant light, glittering salt pans, jewel-like colours and an infinite gallery of patterns and texture to be found around the property, along the shore and in the sky above.

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AMANDA FRANKLIN

b. 1979, Port Lincoln, South Australia
Heritage: Kokatha
Lives in Port Lincoln



Amanda Franklin, *Spiral* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 910 x 920 mm

Amanda Franklin was raised in Port Lincoln and is a descendant of the Kokatha people, west of Ceduna. In 2006 Franklin undertook a traineeship at Kuju Aboriginal Arts in Port Lincoln and later worked as Coordinator of the Centre (2009 -11). She is currently Program Manager for the Connecting to Country Program, based in Port Lincoln. Since the mid 2000s she has been actively involved in a wide diversity of community arts and schools programmes, much of it in a leadership capacity.

Parallel to an extensive community involvement Franklin has continued to explore the potential of her own art across a diversity of media including textiles, weaving, jewellery, glass work, photography and painting. Franklin's introduction to painting was informal but in a relatively short period of time her style has taken on a distinctive identity as seen in a series of map-like images of the Port Lincoln area produced around 2010 articulated in veils of fine dots.

Hearing the stories from the elders makes each place more unique and special. You see the landscape through different eyes and it's never the same again... I feel privileged to be a 'West Coast' girl and even though we do it tough we love every minute of it.

Amanda Franklin

WORKS

The works selected for *tough(er) love* express a freshness of vision as if seeing the world for the first time and wondering at its beauty. In an inspired gesture the symbol of the concentric circles in West Coast speaks for all people who live in the region – all connected, as Franklin describes, 'a strong mob.'

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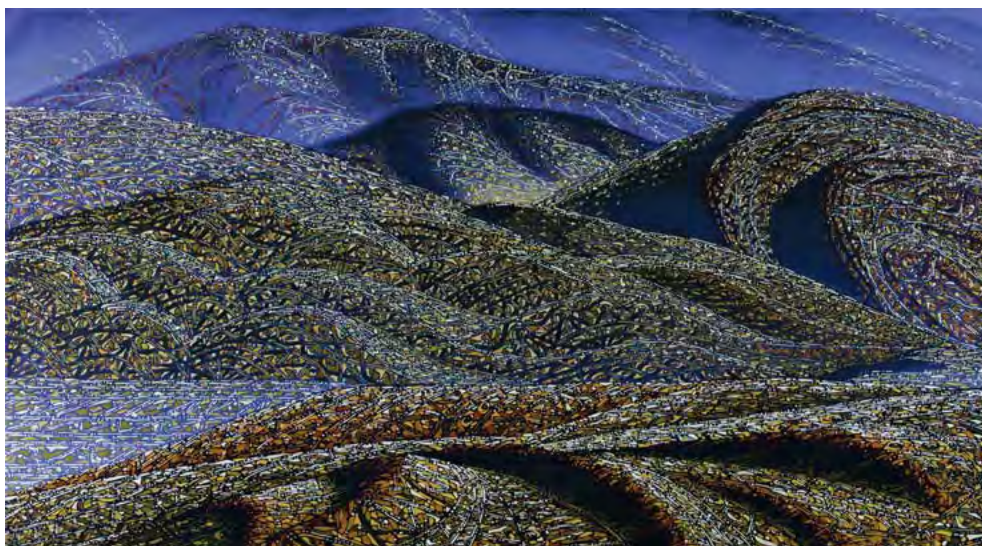


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SIV GRAVA

b. 1954 Melbourne, Victoria
Lives in Elliston

Represented by Art Images Gallery, Adelaide



Siv Grava, *Terrain 3* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 1020 x 1530 mm

Siv Grava's active career in the visual arts includes both studio-based arts practice and involvement in community arts development projects. She has presented major solo exhibitions (Art Images in Adelaide and Anne Harari Art in Melbourne) and participated in many group and touring exhibitions in South Australia and elsewhere within Australia. Awards and prizes include a Community Cultural Development Australian Council Fellowship (2004 –06), Port Pirie Art Prize (2002), the City of Whyalla Art Prize (People's Choice, 1995) and the 1992 Doug Moran National Portrait Prize. Grava is represented in a number of civic and private collections including the Tweed River Art Gallery, the Port Pirie Regional Council and Country Arts SA.

Like many of us, I am fascinated by the intangible. I have a strong sense that the surface isn't everything. That the world goes beyond what we can see and touch and feel. There is something just out of sight, just out of our reach, around the corner. There are forces at play that we don't understand.

Siv Grava

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The *Terrain* works represent new directions in the artist's work. In one sense these images are a continuation of Grava's sustained exploration of landscape as both a celebration of country and also a life metaphor. But the ribbon-strip stylization of mark making which had characterised her work has been replaced by a complexity of layering. These landscapes constitute a finely calibrated balancing act between capturing the essential monumental character of this area of the Flinders while at the same time creating a meta-landscape which is 'of itself'.

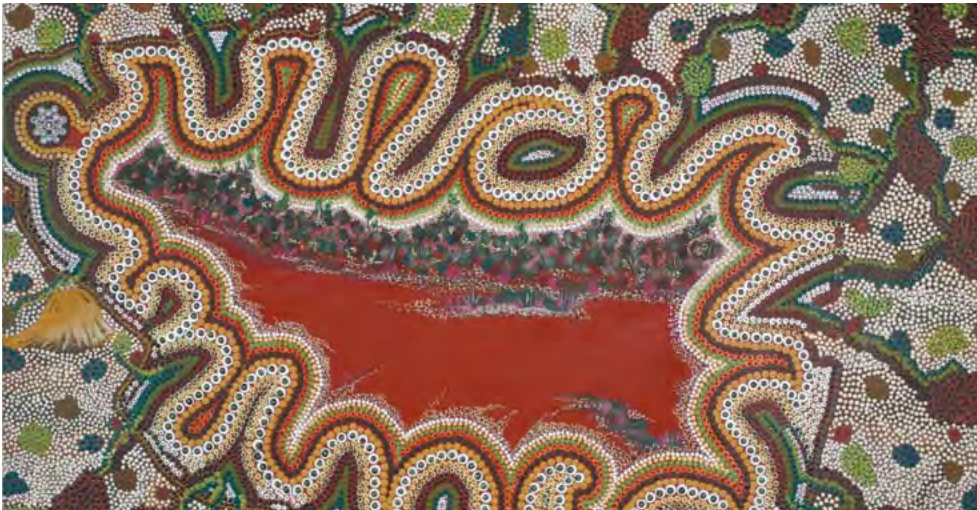
JOYLENE HAYNES

b. 1942, Port Lincoln

Lives in Ceduna

Heritage: Kokatha / Mirning

Represented by the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre



Joylene Haynes, *Red Lake or Painted Lake* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 870 x 1090 mm

Joylene Haynes grew up in Mt. Hope (around 100 kms along the West Coast from Port Lincoln) and began school there. At the age of seven she was put under the care and control of the State Government and grew up in foster-care homes in Adelaide until school leaving age. She later worked as a nurse for around five years in community hospitals at Burra and Karoonda. From her early years, art, culture and family had a formative influence on her life.

Painting has been a healing process for me over the years and helped me with grief and loss for what had happened to me as a result of being taken away.

Joylene Haynes

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The works produced by Haynes for *tough(er) love* share a knowledge and love of unique country beyond the direct experience of most Australians. In geographical terms it embraces large tracts of country north of Ceduna. A geological aspect of this area is the outcrops of rock that protrude within a prevailing landscape of mallee-covered sand dunes. Granite outcrops (known as iselbergs) which trap water, feature in Hayne's *Grandparents' Tjukurpa*, along with the salt lake known today as Googs Lake, and the *Red (or Painted) Lake*.

KARL JAMES

b.1963, Wales, UK
Lives in Whyalla



Karl James, *Everything coming up roses* (detail), 2012, oil on linen, 1220 x 915 mm

Karl James is a prominent and awarded figure within the Whyalla art community and has been represented in numerous touring exhibitions including *State of the Art/Art of the State*. His work is in the collection of the Corporation of the City of Whyalla and also in corporate and private collections in Australia, Canada and the USA.

Karl James is a self-taught artist. A youthful enthusiasm for art was fed by examples of artists' work, in books and in galleries when opportunities presented. A book on the Cubist artist George Braque became a constant reference for early painting efforts and sponsored an understanding of modernist approaches to compositional space and analysis of form.

It's a tough love though (being an artist), painting in a blue-collar industrial paradigm where artistic ideals and thoughts are trampled underfoot like discarded fag ends. So my paintings seem to lurk in a shadowy twilight like answers to softly spoken questions and they stare at you and question back.

Karl James

Looking at artists of interest has continued to inform James' practice to the present day. A checklist of these artists, which includes Caravaggio, Francisco Goya, Max Beckmann and William Kentridge, is revealing in that all these artists use figurative imagery to explore or communicate aspects of the human condition.

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James works at OneSteel Whyalla Steelworks. It would be easy to see stark contrast between the demands of working in this industrial environment and the imaginative life of an artist. But it is not that simple. The artist comments,

The heavy industrial work-a-day world of which I'm part is a wonderful foil for explorations into the realms of soul, hope, temptation and Eastern thought... The beauty of this search through the creative arts is that there are no boundaries and the possibilities are endless.

WORKS

In *tough(er) love* James presents a body of work, which reveals much about choices to be made in leading a fulfilled life. The two self-portraits incorporate symbols, such as the bonsai tree representing for the artist the Tao or path, and the hand clutching a spanner and a paintbrush, which expresses the ongoing tug-of-war between conformity and creativity. The accompanying drawings and relief prints are based on the idea of a journey away from an industrialised world to explore the unknown or to reconnect with nature. As some of the symbolism declares this can be a tightrope balancing act.

ELMA LAWRIE

b. 1947, Koonibba, South Australia

Heritage: Mirning / Kokatha

Lives in Ceduna

Represented by the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre



Elma Lawrie, *The Blowholes of the Nullarbor: Inland (detail)*, 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 900 x 1245 mm

Elma Lawrie is a descendant of the Mirning and Kokatha clans. Most of her schooling was at the Koonibba Lutheran Mission. She recalls enjoying making drawings on the long blackboard in the classroom. Elma was in her mid teens, in Kimba, when she was introduced to painting and the enjoyment of that experience never left her. Lawrie has had a long association with the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre and has exhibited her work regularly, notably in *Our Mob*, Artspace (2010, 2011 & 2013), *Tjutjuna Palya Kutu*, Red Poles Gallery McLaren Vale (2010, 2011, 2012) and *Desert to Dunes*, Country Arts SA Touring Exhibition (2010).

Painting was always my aspiration. Landscapes, birds, and then Aboriginal dot paintings. I think it's in our blood. My family are all artistic, and are passionate about their talents - Verna Lawrie, Beaver Lennon and also the late Bernadette Lennon just to mention a few.

Elma Lawrie

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Lawrie has always enjoyed trying out new things in her art and her work has always expressed this through inventive compositions and rich colour exchanges. The paintings selected for *tough(er) love* have all these attributes. Added to this is an emerging, confident style in creating a powerful sense of movement through a distinctive style of mark making and infilling. In developing this style Lawrie followed her instincts as an artist. As she comments, 'It's that moment when it's coming out the way you want and you say – that's it.'

Of the paintings in *tough(er) love* she comments,

Blowholes can be found everywhere on the Nullarbor. Our ancestors could tell by listening to the sounds of waves and the wind in the blowholes if the tides were in or out, or even if the currents were strong. This happened during every season. When you could hear the soft wind and waves, this indicated that the tides were out and our people could climb down the cliff to collect the seafood from the beach. When the tides are high and the sea is rough you can hear and see the strong wind and waves. The blowholes on the Nullarbor represent the blowholes of the whales. The whales are the totem of the Mirning people.

Particular rockhole sites inland from the coast (such as those at Koonibba) have great cultural importance. Lawrie's keenly-observed and inventive representations of these places honour their significance.

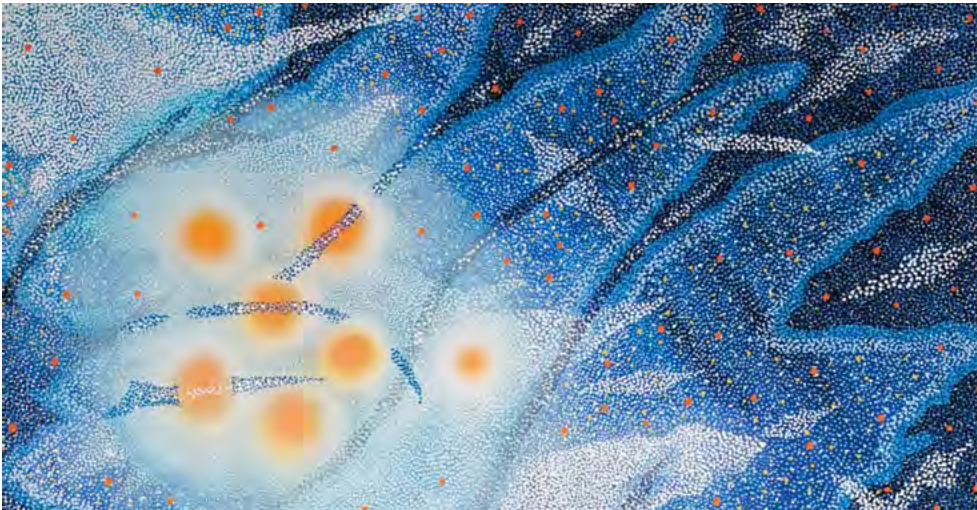
VERNA LAWRIE

b. 1953 Koonibba, South Australia

Lives in Ceduna

Heritage: Mirning / Kokatha

Represented by the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre



Verna Lawrie, *Seven Sisters and the Old Man* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 1290 x 1150 mm

Verna Lawrie is a descendant of the Mirning and Kokatha clans. Early schooling was at the Koonibba Lutheran Mission. She remembers doing painting in primary school while at Kimba and being encouraged by an art teacher while attending high school in Port Augusta. Lawrie moved back to Ceduna from Kimba, with her young family in the mid 1970s. While raising the family she observed her husband, Stanley Lennon, doing paintings. When the children were older she started painting again.

Being an artist comes to me naturally especially because I can relate to it from my culture. My art expresses a lot of story telling of my people and culture and the Dreamtime.

Verna Lawrie

For Verna Lawrie, making art is part of sharing and strengthening culture;

I like attending workshops and cultural trips to the lands which gives me the opportunity to meet other artists and to share stories about their culture. This also helps me to learn and teach culture to my children and grandchildren.

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Verna Lawrie's paintings in *tough(er) love*, like those of her sister Elma Lawrie, are about country and stories central to Mirning beliefs. The Mirning are a whale-dreaming people with close ancestral and Dreaming associations with the Bunda Cliff areas at the Head of the Bight. *Jidirah and the Whale* and the *Seven Sisters and the Old Man* paintings are based on key elements of accounts linked to creation stories involving the spirit whale and to the Seven Sisters narrative which appears in many different forms throughout Indigenous Australia. Lawrie has accepted the challenge of creating for *tough(er) love* compelling images, articulated in an assured style based on multiple layers of patterns and shapes. Inland from the coast, particular rockhole sites (such as those at Koonibba) have great cultural importance. Lawrie's keenly-observed and inventive representations of these places honour their significance.

BEAVER LENNON

b. 1988, Adelaide, South Australia

Heritage: Matutjara / Antikirinya / Yankunyatjara / Mirning / Kokatha

Lives in Ceduna

Represented by the Tjutjuna (Ceduna) Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre



Beaver Lennon, *The Head of the Bight* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 820 x 1175 mm

Beaver Lennon comes from a family of artists. His grandfather Stanley Lennon, was a talented artist who painted landscapes of his own country (near Coober Pedy in South Australia). His mother Bernadette Lennon-Lawrie, (who passed away in 2008), his grandmother Verna Lawrie and her sister Elma Lawrie are critically recognised artists. Awards and inclusion in significant art exhibitions have consolidated Lennon's own emerging reputation as an artist.

Lennon works within a landscape tradition, which can be identified with Albert Namatjira and other artists working out of Hermannsburg NT around the mid twentieth century as well as contemporary Indigenous artists working in similar styles across Australia. Lennon's contribution to this living tradition is increasingly being recognised in terms of its remarkable clarity of vision, its depth of poetic imagination and its capacity to connect urbanised Australians with the beating heart of remote Australia.

WORKS

The country that Lennon depicts in his paintings traverses vast areas of land which encompass the Great Australian Bight westward from Ceduna, The Gawler Ranges, the Nullarbor Plains to the west and the Breakaways at Coober Pedy and further inland to the north. Earlier works were influenced by his grandmother's Dreaming stories associated with the Bunda Cliffs along the Great Australian Bight. Recently he has been influenced by his grandfather's Dreaming of Malu Tjuta (many kangaroos). The duality of this cultural connection is represented in the works exhibited. *Two Dogs: Breakaway*, for example, references the Breakaways Reserve area near Coober Pedy SA where the artist's grandfather Stanley Lennon was born.

I like to paint clouds, skies, sunsets, deserts, rock holes and the coastline in my landscapes. I take time with my work and have great detail and work mainly with acrylics on canvas. So the sky and the clouds are always the main part of my work... through my work I connect to my Country.

Beaver Lennon

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LEITH O'MALLEY

b. 1960 Mt. Barker, South Australia
Lives in Whyalla



Leith O'Malley, *EJE Journals of Discovery 6: The Dead Horse* (detail), 2012, oil on canvas, 1015 x 1525 mm

This love of art and compulsion to continue creating art in the seclusion of regional Australia is indeed a tough love, but one still rewarding me with endless discovery and thankfully the wonders of exploration.

Leith O'Malley

Leith O'Malley's youthful passion for making art, and drawing in particular was influenced by the illustrative style and cartoons in *Mad Magazine* and later, by looking at the work of Australian newspaper cartoonists Paul Rigby, Michael Leunig and the American illustrator, Rick Griffin. A workshop with the Australian artist George Gittoes was responsible for O'Malley taking up the brush in the early 1990s. From this point to the present day he has maintained a very active studio practice, presenting solo exhibitions and participating in group shows within Australia and America. O'Malley's practice includes working in a diversity of pictorial media (drawing, oil, acrylic, pastel and mixed media) as well as digital imagery, graphic design, photography and video.

Being an artist is a lifelong love affair with the light and darkness of self-expression, and the irrepressible urge to create something that conjures a moment of insight, recognition or memory.

Leith O'Malley

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WORKS

The depiction of Edward John Eyre (EJE) as some kind of gentleman-adventurer is robbed of dignity by the incongruity of training a magpie as a (hunting) bird of prey. Depicting EJE as a more dishevelled character astride a kangaroo references the hybridity of Nolan's Burke and Wills 1940s series, man-camel. Yet for all the mockumentary nature of O'Malley's revisitation of Eyre's journey the diaristic panels in particular, with their extracts from Eyre's journal, offer insights into the testing nature and human dimensions of this risky adventure.

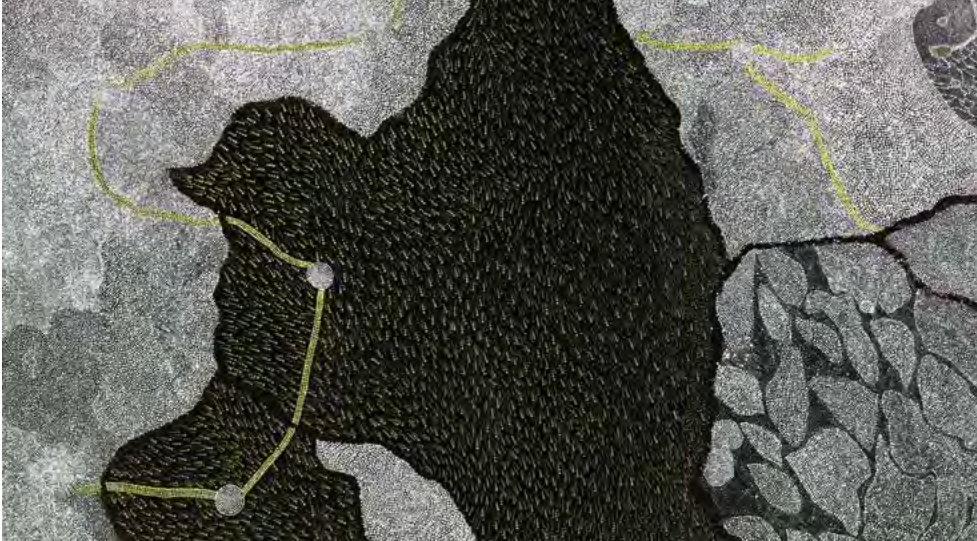
O'Malley's parodic journey begins at 'The Tanks', which West Coast travellers will easily recognise as the much graffitied tanks out of Port Augusta near the turn off to Iron Knob and the west. A logical starting point for viewing O'Malley's body of EJE work in this exhibition is *EJE Journals of Discovery 5: The Tanks – Eyre Highway* (2012). Close reading reveals a subversive rewriting of history with numerous 'EJE (and company) was here' texts and tags scattered across the tank walls in an inspired prequel/sequel to the events of 1840 - 41.

O'Malley attended school at Whyalla's Edward John Eyre High School and sees this as some kind of portent or sign that he is destined to tell the 'real story'. Like Eyre stumbling through the saltbush (as simulated in the *Walking on Eyre* video) this looks like a never-ending journey.

PUNGKAI

Born c. 1958, Boddington, Western Australia
Heritage: Noongah/Balladong

Represented by Marshall Arts, Adelaide



Pungkai, *Nyapari Ngura Wiru* (detail), 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 1800 x 2790 mm

Pungkai's art depicts his Noongah Indigenous culture (south-west Western Australia) and its connection to Pitjantjatjara country. He arrived in Nyapari in 1980 and was adopted by the late Eileen Stevens and her family. Nyapari is an Anangu community located in the northwest of South Australia. When Pungkai first came to Nyapari the community had no infrastructure and the family was living in *wiltjas* (traditional shelters) while lobbying for the homeland to be established. Tjungu Payla (translated as 'Good Together'), an Aboriginal owned and operated art centre based at Nyapari, was established in 2006 and continues to provide a working base for artists from Kanpi, Nyapari, Angatja and Watarru.

In 2012 Pungkai spent time painting at Tjungu Payla. Returning to Nyapari after time spent travelling and working elsewhere has meant much to the artist. He comments,

My environments change. It's an adventure to be at a place, to feel loved. When you feel love only then can I give back. Nyapari is that place, my family *Tjuta* (many) in many homelands.

A key characteristic of Pungkai's art is a close relationship between depiction and mapping which often allows the image to be 'read' as if flying over the countryside.

I love to paint aerial scenes of the country. Not only my ancestral travels but also my own professional travels throughout Australia. Each painting I do is of my learning and adventures of country.

WORKS

The central subject of *Nyapari Ngura Wiru* traces ancestral events as defined by the zigzagging journey of a line on the left of the composition in which a man does battle with an evil spirit. The central area of the painting depicts the flat, grassland area where the settlement of Nyapari is located. The yellow dot-lines are the native grasses characteristic of the area. The varied direction of these lines captures the action of the wind blowing the grasses in different directions. The white dot areas depict the surrounding hills.

In the upper right hand corner of the image is Piltadi, which is a rock hole site to the east of Nyapari of particular significance to the artist and one that he has depicted in a number of paintings. Piltadi is the home of the ancestral Wanampi Kutjara brothers, two powerful water serpent spirits who are engaged in conflict with their mortal wives in a tough love story that defies time.

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JOHN TURPIE

b. 1952. Benalla, Victoria
Lives in Elliston



John Turpie, *Southern Wanderer* (detail), 2012, ink on paper, 1390 x 2580 mm

Following tertiary studies in printmaking and graphic design John Turpie embarked on a wide-ranging career in the visual arts which, in addition to his ongoing studio practice, has included working on numerous public art commissions and a diversity of visual arts projects (many in conjunction with his partner Siv Grava) with non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities in South Australian and the Northern Territory. Turpie has spent most of his professional life living and working 'on the edge'. Living north of Hawker for eight years, in Maree, then Andamooka for ten years before permanently settling in 2000 at Elliston with his partner, Siv Grava, has given him the sense of isolation and a feeling of freedom that is central to his life and work.

Being on the edge you can have your own perspective on things – all the comings and goings in the world. It's like looking in from outer space.

John Turpie

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WORKS

Turpie's pictorial work includes painting and works on paper in which a characteristic feeling for line and the distinctive morphology of sea, shorelines and inland is evident. This can be seen in *Southern Wanderer* (2012) in which the spikiness of the pen lines conveys a sense of compression and release and the edge between line and space. This work references the tragic loss of the artist's son and expresses the artist's belief that his soul now travels freely across the oceans as an albatross. The cliff edge of this image references the cliffs at Elliston. It incorporates the idea of land trapping water and water invading land which has been a constant symbol for the artist of the dualities which define human existence.

In 2006 Turpie created a large ground installation on the cliff top near his Elliston studio using abalone shells arranged in the shape of a human ear. The title of the work *1000 ears to the ground* (2002) reflects the artist's view that in life (and in choosing to live on the edge) one needs be alert and stay in touch. Components of this installation have been used to create a rescaled variation, which is touring to some venues within the *tough(er) love* exhibition.

THE THEMES

Exploring the exhibition extends beyond looking at individual artist's work to identifying and considering relationships between various works in the exhibition. An effective way to do this is to see *tough(er) love* as an exhibition consisting of groups of works that have things in common or, intentionally or otherwise, have things to say to each other. This kind of dialogue is conventionally described as themes.

THEME 1

ENVIRONMENT

Referencing country and land, its significance and meaning is integral to a number of works. This includes a wide variety of responses ranging from confirming connections to country to exploring natural features and communicating individual experience.

Consider...

- The fact that many artists working on the West Coast are attracted to and inspired by coastal locations. Can you think of reasons for this?
- The different approaches used by various artists to interpret coastal landscapes
- The way Amanda Franklin uses a close up focus on such things as shells and bird prints to draw attention to unique forms and patterns
- Cindy Durant's creative use of the glass medium to evoke the colours, textures and forms of beachscapes and lakes close to her home and studio
- John Baily's use of 'bleached' colours (and high key tones) to communicate a sense of bright clear light
- Leith O'Malley's satirical perspectives on early explorers' search for pastoral land and minerals

THEME 2

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

The 'West Coast' is not the only region in South Australia with artists who have something special to say about being there. But the physicality of the place, its rich and complex Indigenous identity, legacy of settlement and more recent industrial development define it in ways that only art can express. This is particularly apparent in artwork by Indigenous artists in the exhibition which in its 'desert/ocean' referencing illuminates the cultural diversity of art from the Wangka Wilurrara region stretching from Port Lincoln to Oak Valley in the far west and links with Country beyond.

Consider...

- The close identification with a childhood growing up in Port Lincoln as expressed through the art of Amanda Franklin
- The centrality of Nyapari as a spiritual home for Pungkai
- The richness of traditional knowledge and beliefs embedded within depictions of country by Elma Lawrie, Verna Lawrie and Joylene Haynes
- Beaver Lennon's exploration and depiction of his grandfather's and his grandmother's country

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THEME 3

CREATIVE JOURNEY

Regardless of location, age or cultural background, all artists in the exhibition can be said to be on a lifelong creative journey. Each journey is different but there are many similarities.

Consider...

- The use of creative play in Leith O'Malley's creation of a character who is half-Edward John Eyre the 'real' colonial explorer and half-fiction
- The high level of visual invention in Verna Lawrie's depictions of Jidirah the whale
- The way in which Karl James uses visual metaphors to communicate ideas about choices to be made in life
- Karl James' creative use of self-portraiture to explore inner thoughts and feelings
- Siv Grava's creation of a rich vocabulary of symbols to explore ideas about the nature of the world of appearance
- John Baily's selective eye for details and situations that capture mood and meaning
- John Turpie's use of symbols and extrapolation of natural forms and features (cliff and coastal edges) to explore inner states of mind

THEME 4

METHODS & MATERIALS

The term 'materiality' refers to the role that the materials used to compose the work, plays in delivering some sense of meaning or significance. While most artist in this exhibition have a conventional approach to materials and methods, all demonstrate an awareness of how techniques and materials can be exploited to communicate ideas.

Consider...

- The wide range of experimental mark making in the work of Pungkai, Elma Lawrie, Verna Lawrie and Joylene Haynes to depict specific aspects of country
- Cindy Durant's wide-ranging experiments in glass working to convey aspects of her immediate environment
- The dot overlay infilling in Amanda Franklin's paintings to render sand and shell surfaces
- John Turpie's use of 'found objects' (abalone shells) to make a bold symbolic statement
- Leith O'Malley's inspired use of video to simulate Eyre's 'bush bashing' across the Nullabor

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PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL GROUP VISIT TO *TOUGH(ER) LOVE*

YEAR LEVEL

The Resource is designed to be used by secondary – senior secondary visual art teachers and students.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Inform the students about the origins and content of the exhibition.

Read the background information about the exhibition.

View the promo video online.



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GET STARTED

IN-EXHIBITION ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The following tasks are designed to support/initiate structured viewing and engagement for students in the exhibition. They can be undertaken in any order and are suitable for individual and small group work. Implicit in some tasks is the idea that students or groups will report findings and discuss works with others.

THINK ABOUT

When you find yourself wanting to look at some works in particular do think it is because the image or subject is interesting or is it because of the artist's technique or way of interpreting the subject?

Is there a particular work in this exhibition which raises more questions than any other work?

What kinds of questions did this work raise? Compare and discuss your findings with others.

FIRST & LAST IMPRESSIONS

What did you think about when you first came into the exhibition and looked around?

Was there any work in particular you wanted to look at or return to and look at again? If so, why?

Is there a work in this exhibition that you think you will remember or find hard to forget? Why?

Before leaving check out the exhibition one more time to see if there's an idea or technique in a work that you could try when you get back to school

ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE

INDIVIDUAL WORK/S

Choose any work that attracts your attention and apply any or all of the following questions...

- Are the visual qualities of this work appealing in any way?
- Would this idea have been better expressed in a different way?
- Can you see any kind of connection between this kind of art and others you know about?
- What do you think this work is about or might be saying?
- Has this given you an idea for something you could make as part of your art studies?
- Select one work that appeals in some way and tell someone else your reasons for your selection

THE EXHIBITION

Write a review of the exhibition that explores the links or relationships between the works.

Choose one of the themes suggested in this Resource Kit and review the exhibition from this perspective.

Are there other themes (not identified in this Resource) that could apply to this selection of work?

Compare two or more works which appear to be exploring similar ideas in different ways.

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FRAMING QUESTIONS

- Consider the comment,

Art, artists and the West Coast is a love story of a kind, but a tough love affair characterised by moments of passion and deep-felt emotions, hopes and abandoned dreams, conviction and uncertainty, but above all it is an intense relationship from which there is ultimately no walking away, no letting go.

See if you can find a work (or selection of works) in the exhibition that appears to reflect this sense of connection in any way.
- The curator talks of certain art works as ‘heartland’, in the sense that these lead the viewer to the very centre of an artist’s practice, where ideas are generated. Can you find any examples of this kind of art in the exhibition (or from your research into a particular artist’s work)?
- Imagine that you undertake to curate an exhibition of artists from your own region or neighborhood? Who would you choose and why?
- Look at a selection of exhibition site videos from the perspective of ‘commitment to making art’. What are some of the reasons artists give for this kind of commitment?
- What does curating an exhibition like *tough(er) love* involve? Check out the exhibition website resource to find out.

JOHN BAILY AM

- Baily’s early art training taught him to look for something called ‘essential form’.

One aspect of this means that when you look at something you try to capture or represent its basic structure or design. In this process, features such as colour or surface details are eliminated in order to keep the focus on the basic structure. Can you find any evidence of this in Baily’s paintings?
- Baily’s formative training brought him in contact with two of South Australia’s most significant artists, Jeffrey Smart (b. 1921) and Ivor Hele (1912 – 1993). Research these artists to get an idea of the kind of artwork they produced. Can you see any similarities between their work and John Baily’s?
- The artist has said of West Coast landscapes that they communicate ‘ a strong and at times harsh aesthetic character.’ What do you think this statement means? Can you see any connection between the statement and aspects of Baily’s paintings?
- Do you agree with the curator that Baily’s images are ‘inflected by an edginess which communicates a haunting melancholy’? Discuss this with others to test your opinion - and the curator’s.
- Many Australian artists have been attracted to ‘bare-boned’ landscapes - usually arid or semi-arid environments. Research this topic to find examples. Why do you think artists are inspired to make art about these kinds of places?

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CINDY DURANT

- Consider the artist's intention to capture and convey a sense of 'being there', and inspire people to visit the beautiful and inspiring coastal landscapes near her house and studio. Has the artist been successful in doing this?
- Has this selection of Durant's work given you an idea you can use in your own studio work?
- Look at the video interview with Cindy Durant from a perspective of understanding the artist's approaches to using different materials and methods.
- Visit the artist's website to get further insights into work and methodology.

AMANDA FRANKLIN

- The artist has said that, in developing her style' she has looked closely at the work of another Australian artist Del Kathryn Barton. Research the work of this artist. Can you see any similarities in the work of the two artists?
- Teaching yourself to become an artist by looking at the work of others is a strong tradition across all cultures. Can you think of any particular challenges associated with this process?
- Much of Franklin's art is based on childhood memories and close-up details of the natural world around Port Lincoln. Consider using a similar approach to create some of your own works.
- The artist has said that 'Making art for me is a way to express myself, a healing, a way to tell a story or live my childhood days again.' Research this theme to see if you can find work by other artists which has similar intentions.

SIV GRAVA

- Some of the artist's insights concerning the *Terrain* series in this exhibition, refer to a Buddhist belief that everything in life is held in a 'glittering net' of interconnection. Research this idea and apply it to your own interpretation of these paintings.
- Research Grava's art practice by visiting the artist's website. Can you see any connections between the *Terrain* series and other works by the artist?
- Have these paintings given you an idea to try in your own studio practice?
- Analyse the exhibition site video interviews with the artist to see if you can get insights into the way the artist develops her ideas.
- Is it possible to make art about 'intangible' things? How would you do this?

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JOYLENE HAYNES

- The artist has said that her approach to landscape painting is based on her ability to visualize things, 'like astro travel, like flying over – that's how I see it.' With this comment in mind consider making one of your own paintings which is based on the idea of flying over your own neighbourhood or district.

- The artist has commented that,

After returning back home to Ceduna having gone out on Country the stories that my grandmother told me became real and lifelike because I was spiritually, physically and emotionally connected to Country again. It confirmed within me that all I knew that I thought of as stories were real and actually existed. I never lost it; it was there in my subconscious mind.

This idea of art being a way to reconnect with memories and places is central to not only many Indigenous Australian artists but also other artists across different eras and cultures. What can your research tell you about this?

- In depicting particular areas of mallee country Haynes developed a special set of visual codes and symbols to accurately reference the topography and physical features of place. Analyse the artist's works from this perspective.

KARL JAMES

- James refers to a number of artists who have inspired him in various ways; Caravaggio, Francisco Goya, Max Beckmann, Honoré Daumier and William Kentridge. To this list can be added the Australian artists Christopher Orchard and Fred Cress. Research the work and idea of a selection of these artists and see if you can identify any connections between their work and that of James.
- James considers that he (along with his artists of interest) intend to make comment on 'the human condition'. What do you think this expression means? How is it explored in James' (and other artists) work?
- The artist has commented that being an artist is a kind of 'scrambling for the prize'. He adds, 'this evolutionary journey as an artist has been one of slowly peeling back the layers of self and plumbing the depths of soul. There's the intriguing paradox in this search as a visual artist and that is the reaching out, the pawing and clawing at the tangible to find the intangible.' Can you find anything in James' work in this exhibition that reflects this idea in anyway?
- Consider making a series of self-portraits, which reveal aspects of your 'inner self'.

ELMA LAWRIE

- Think about places which are personally significant or important to you. Consider making a work of art that expresses this sense of importance.
- Elma Lawrie conveys a sense of movement by the way she angles strokes which infill the shapes. Research this technique to see the other artists have captured and communicated a sense of movement.
- Try making your own map of country (city or suburb) using Elma Lawrie's method of emphasising prominent features using flat colour, patterns and outlines.

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VERNA LAWRIE

- Seven Sisters ancestral accounts are found across Aboriginal Australia. What can your research tell you about this?
- Rockhole sites are prominent feature of the Far West Coast landscape. Start your research on this by looking for information on Yumbarra Conservation Park. Then keep going.
- Information about Whale Dreaming can be readily web accessed. Research this topic to get further insights into Verna Lawrie's imagery.

BEAVER LENNON

- Beaver Lennon works within a landscape tradition, which can be identified with Albert Namatjira and other artists working out of Hermannsburg NT around the mid twentieth century as well as contemporary Indigenous artists working in similar styles across Australia. Research the history and art of Hermannsburg.
- Lennon has said that he knew he wanted to be an artist from an early age.

I did feel that I would become an artist and I knew that I would become a landscape painter. I used to watch my grandfather doing paintings of murals and small works. My grandfather would talk to me about his paintings.

From your own experience has anyone inspired your interest in making art? Has this influenced your ideas about art (or making art) in any particular way?

The Head of the Bight is a popular tourist destination. Do you think Beaver Lennon's painting *The Head of the Bight* will change the way people see or regard this place? If so, why?

LEITH O'MALLEY

- In developing his art practice O'Malley has drawn inspiration and lessons from other artists. These include Australian newspaper cartoonists Paul Rigby and Michael Leunig and the American illustrator, Rick Griffin. Research these artists to get some insights into these influences.
- The artist has said that 'it was through the revisitation of the journals that I also realised how much drawing and painting is in a way, a form of exploration.' What do you think this statement means? Does it offer any insight into the way O'Malley has explored the topic of EJ Eyre?
- There is a strong link between O'Malley's style of interpretation of an explorer subject and the work of other Australian artists Sydney Nolan (see Burke and Wills series) and Albert Tucker (see Explorer series). Research the relevant series by these two artists.
- Has O'Malley's imaginative interpretation of Eyre as an historical character given you an idea you can use in your own studio work?
- Does your local district have any historical characters and events that could be 'brought to life' using a similar style of representation.
- Visit the artist's website to learn more about O'Malley and the diverse range of his art practice.
- A number of modern to contemporary artists use cartooning styles to express ideas and communicate directly with audiences. Research this topic.

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PUNGKAI

- The artist has stated that ‘my Tjukurpa never changes. No matter where I am.’ Find out the meaning of this word *Tjukurpa*. What do you think Pungkai means by this statement?
- Find out about the settlement of Nyapari (e.g. check satellite map images) to get a better understanding of its location. Using this image see if you can find the key topographical features in Pungkai’s painting.
- Tjunga Palya (Good Together) at Nyapari is a significant Anangu art centre. Web access this site to find out about its operations and artists.
- Access the Marshall Arts Gallery website (www.marshallart.com.au), locate and read about other works by Pungkai.

JOHN TURPIE

- In the drawing *Southern Wanderer*, Turpie uses the form of a bird as a symbol of the spirit’s release and freedom. Throughout art history creatures have been used in this way – as symbols for ideas and feelings. Can you find some examples?
- Do you identify in your imagination with any particular creature? Consider, in your studio work, making an artwork which is about this sense of identification.
- The *Ears to the ground: tough(er) love* shells installation is intended by the artist to act as a signpost – ‘Stay alert. Keep in touch’. What do you think he means by this? Do you think this is an effective way to get this idea across?
- The artist appears several times in the *tough(er) love* video interviews. Look at these interviews to get some insights into his ideas and methods.

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