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Sample assessment 2020

Stimulus book

Visual Art



Queensland
Government



Queensland Curriculum
& Assessment Authority

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Stimulus 1

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Lin Onus, Wiradjuri/Yorta Yorta people (born Melbourne, Australia, 1948; died Melbourne, Australia, 1996)

Fruit bats, 1991

Polychromed fibreglass sculptures, polychromed wooden disks, Hills Hoist clothesline
250 × 250 × 250 cm

Art Gallery of New South Wales

Purchased 1993

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Photo: Jenni Carter, AGNSW

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Context statement

Lin Onus focused on bridging Aboriginal culture and non-Aboriginal Australian culture in his artwork. His cross-cultural family instilled in him a strong sense of social justice. This background and Onus's own experiences of racism informed his art practice.

In later life, Onus explored his Aboriginal identity by travelling to Arnhem Land. Through this experience, he developed close relationships with senior artists and was given permission to use traditional inherited stories, imagery and *rarrk*. *Rarrk* is crosshatching made by applying ochre with a very fine brush. When applied skilfully, it evokes ancestral power.

In one Arnhem Land clan story, deceased people take the form of bats, butterflies and praying mantis, and roam the clan's lands.

The Hills hoist is an Australian cultural icon. It was invented in Australia as an innovative way of drying clothes after washing them, and became a feature in suburban backyards during the post-World War II housing boom of the 1950s and 1960s.

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Stimulus 2

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Henri Matisse (born Le Cateau, France, 1869; died Nice, France, 1954)

The Blue Window, summer 1913

Oil on canvas

130.8 × 90.5 cm

Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund.

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Digital image © 2019, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence

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Context statement

Henri Matisse focused on colour as an expressive device in his artworks. Matisse did not restrict his use of colour to realistic description. Rather, he used colour to express emotions. He was a founding member of the Fauvist movement (1905–1910), known for its use of unrealistic and bright colour. Fauvist works were so radically different from the traditional, realist paintings of the time that they profoundly shocked the public.

Matisse had a large personal collection of textiles, sculptures, masks and carvings. These reflected his travels and contributed to his understanding of colour and pattern. They were repeatedly included in his paintings. *The Blue Window* is a view from Matisse's bedroom window at his home in Issy-les-Moulineaux, France. Matisse's studio is visible through the window.

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Stimulus 3

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Ken Thaiday Senior, Meriam Mir people (born Erub, Torres Strait Islands, Australia, 1950)

Beizam Headdress (Black Bamboo Triple Hammerhead Shark), 1999–2000

Plywood, synthetic polymer paint, black bamboo, hose fitting, trickle hose, cat's eyes, fishing line
100 × 98 × 113 cm

Purchased 2000. Queensland Art Gallery Foundation Grant

Collection: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

© Ken Thaiday Sr

Photograph: QAGOMA

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Context statement

Ken Thaiday Senior focuses on place and identity in his artwork. As a child growing up on Erub, a small, remote island in the eastern Torres Strait, Thaiday spent time fishing, tending gardens and participating in ceremonial performances at weddings, feasts and tombstone openings.¹ His father was an important dancer and choreographer in the region and as a child Thaiday accompanied his father to ceremonies throughout the Torres Strait.

Thaiday is known for creating elaborate headdresses that are worn by dancers during ceremonial dance performances. These performances portray beliefs, including ancient myths and legends, as well as social and cultural practices, including rituals, storytelling and daily domestic chores. The term *beizam* means *shark*. The hammerhead shark is Thaiday's family totem and is greatly respected for its power, speed and dominance in the marine environment of the Torres Strait Islands. Thaiday used non-traditional materials in the creation of this work.

¹ A tombstone opening is a significant community celebration of the life of a deceased person in the Torres Strait. It is held up to five years after burial, when the tombstone is laid on the burial site.

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Stimulus 4

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Simryn Gill (born Singapore, 1959)

A Small Town at the Turn of the Century, #28, 1999–2000

Type C photograph

Image size 91.4 × 91.4 cm, sheet size 101.6 × 101.6 cm, series of 40 images, edition of 5 and 1 Artist's proof.

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Context statement

Simryn Gill focuses on the transitions between culture, identity, memory and time. Gill grew up in Port Dickson, a small coastal town in Malaysia. She was educated in India and the United Kingdom. She now lives and works between Sydney and Port Dickson.

The area we now know as Malaysia has a long history of colonisation by Asian and European powers, including Britain, who wanted to take advantage of its rich natural resources and geographic location on a shipping route. Colonisation has had an impact on Malaysian culture — colonisers caused social and economic changes that helped them to maintain power and profit from Malaysia's resources. Since 1957, Malaysia has been independent from Britain.

This photograph is one in a series of 40 portraits of Port Dickson residents. In each photograph, the subject wears a different indigenous tropical fruit as a headdress. The identity of each subject is obscured. The subject of the photograph in Stimulus 4 wears a bunch of rambutans on her head. Rambutans are edible tropical fruit, similar to lychees, and are native to South-East Asia.

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