

THE Microscope Project

Education Resource

Flinders University City Gallery

26 July - 21 September 2014

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Flinders University City Gallery
State Library of South Australia
North Tce, Adelaide SA 5000

Gallery hours
Tue-Fri 11 - 4, Sat & Sun 12 - 4

www.flinders.edu.au/artmuseum



Flinders University
Art Museum
& City Gallery



Government of South Australia
Arts SA

Introduction

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The Microscope Project is an exhibition developed by Flinders University Art Museum (FUAM) which brings together the disciplines of art and science. It developed from an idea to repurpose high-end scientific hardware decommissioned from the Department of Anatomy and Histology at Flinders in 2012.

Curated by FUAM staff Fiona Salmon and Madeline Reece, the project involved five established South Australian artists including Nicholas Folland, Ian Gibbins, Deb Jones, Catherine Truman and Angela Valamanesh as well as writer Melinda Rackham.

The resulting exhibition includes sculpture, installation, moving image, sound, photography and text. It aims to raise questions about how we see and construct the world in which we live.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The education kit is designed for Middle and Upper Primary Years but can be adapted by the teacher for older or younger visitors. It aims to draw out observation skills and develop students' visual literacy.

SACSA Standards for Arts and the ACARA Australian Curriculum Framework have been observed with tasks designed to foster:

- awareness of how and why artists realise their ideas; and
- material exploration.

Suggested follow-up activities for the classroom will encourage:

- individual approaches to creative practice.

Further information about the artists can be found at the following links:

Nicholas Folland
Ian Gibbins
Deb Jones
Catherine Truman
Angela Valamanesh

For further information about the development of the project watch the video.

For further queries, to request a catalogue or to book a tour of the exhibition with a FUAM guide please contact Madeline Reece, Communications Assistant, maddie.reece@flinders.edu.au or 08 8201 3247

Notes to the Teacher

PREPARING FOR THE GALLERY VISIT

Students will investigate ways in which technology has been recycled to make different works of art.

The gallery activity is divided into 3 parts:

1. Teacher led discussion (approx. 10 minutes)
2. Student investigation (approx. 15 minutes)
3. Feedback to the group (approx. 15 minutes)

Print investigation worksheets as required in advance to bring to the gallery.

Students will require a pencil (no ink). Allow 40 minutes in total.

A maximum of 32 students can be accommodated in the gallery at one time. One adult is required per 8 students. Gallery bookings are essential.

Teachers will need to be familiar with the following work in advance of the visit:

Thesaurus of Reconstructive Microscopy

Ian Gibbins, Deb Jones & Catherine Truman
mixed media, dimensions variable

The *Thesaurus of Reconstructive Microscopy* is a playful installation inspired by the small components of the microscopes and their technical terms. It was instigated by scientist and poet Ian Gibbins and developed by visual artists Catherine Truman and Deb Jones. The work aims to take the microscope and its specialist parts from the foreign to the familiar. Neatly labelled components are arranged in alphabetical order along a wooden shelf in what appears as a 'serious' museum display. However close examination reveals technical terms have been elaborated with verse, giving them entirely new meanings, and many of the components have undergone subtle mutation, prompting reflection on what is 'true'. The *Thesaurus* is a work that invites close observation, a kind of looking that is rewarded with curious and unexpected encounters.



Image: Installation view of *Thesaurus of Reconstructive Microscopy*. Photograph Flinders University Art Museum

IN THE GALLERY

1. Teacher led discussion (10 minutes)

Thesaurus of Reconstructive Microscopy

Guided questions -

- There are different parts that make up this work, describe what you can see.
- Look carefully at the artwork title, what does each of the words mean to you?
- In what way is this work like a thesaurus?

2. Student investigation (15 minutes)

- Divide the students into 4 groups and allocate each group with ONE of the four investigations.
- Students discuss thoughts with the group and record their responses on the worksheet

3. Reporting back to the group (15 minutes)

- Each student will have focussed on a particular artwork as directed by the investigation.
- Speaker reports findings back to the larger group.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

Source discarded hardware, electrical material and the like and use as the basis of creative works.

Start with an examination of the material at hand and ask students to select an item of interest to them.

Describe the item and its intended purpose if known.

Imagine new possibilities for the item and write them down.

Choose one and draw and/or make.

Make a label describing your work and exhibit in the classroom.

Investigations

INVESTIGATION ONE



DIFFRACTION LIMIT

According to a rule
we may have
misunderstood,
sweep prejudice aside,
unless, unless.

Describe what you see?

Imagine what the object might have been used for?

Now, look around the gallery and find the work *Gravity* by Angela Valamanesh.

It is on a table in the middle of the gallery space.

Investigations

INVESTIGATION ONE



Angela Valamanesh

Gravity, 2014

reclaimed microscope parts, wax
dimensions variable, 12 parts

Describe what you see?

How is this similar to *Diffraction Limit*?

Do you like / dislike this artwork? Explain why?

Investigations

INVESTIGATION TWO



EYEPIECE

Distant horizons
beg familiarity,
level your spirit,
double-brace
your anchorage.

Describe what you see?

Imagine what the object might have been used for?

Look around the gallery and find the work *Chandelier*
by Deb Jones, Catherine Trumand and Ian Gibbins.

It is in a small room and hanging from the ceiling.

Investigations

INVESTIGATION TWO



Deb Jones, Catherine Truman & Ian Gibbins

Chandelier, 2014
mixed media
160 cm diameter

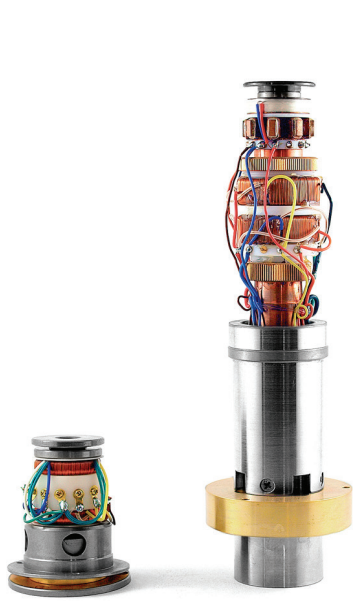
Describe what you see?

How is this similar to *Eyepiece*?

Do you like / dislike this artwork? Explain why?

Investigations

INVESTIGATION THREE



SCAN RATE

Weigh up your chances,
calculate the laws of
probability, the counting,
discounting, a recount
to summons the odds.

Describe what you see?

Imagine what the object might have been used for?

Look around the gallery and find the work *Popular science - still* by Nicholas Folland.

It is against a small wall, with a coffee mug.

Investigations

INVESTIGATION THREE



Nicholas Folland

Popular science - still, 2014
reclaimed microscope parts
dimensions variable

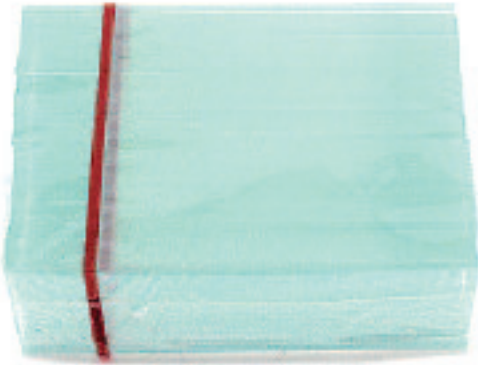
Describe what you see?

How is this similar to *Scan Rate*?

Do you like / dislike this artwork? Explain why?

Investigations

INVESTIGATION FOUR



FOCAL PLANE

This,
and
only
this.

Describe what you see?

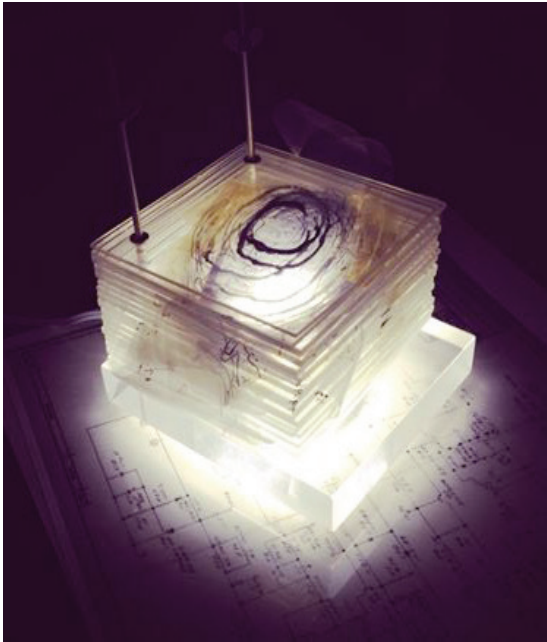
Imagine what the object might have been used for?

Look around the gallery and find this object within the installation *The Microscopist's Light Lounge* by Catherine Truman, Deb Jones and Ian Gibbins.

It is on a wooden table near a yellow lounge chair.

Investigations

INVESTIGATION FOUR



Catherine Truman, Deb Jones & Ian Gibbins

The Microscopist's Light Lounge, 2014
mixed media
dimensions variable

Describe what you see?

How is this similar to *Focal Plane*?

Do you like / dislike this artwork? Explain why?
