

DOBELL DRAWING PRIZE #22

Education Kit



DOBELL DRAWING PRIZE #22

CONTENTS

Overview	3
The Dobell Drawing Prize	3
William Dobell	4
Years 7–12	
General Activities	5
Euan Macleod	6
Brian Martin	7
Leonardo Uribe	8
Travis Paterson	9
Iluwanti Ken	10
Years K–6	
Todd Fuller	11
Anna Mould	12



NATIONAL
ART
SCHOOL



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Cover image:
Iluwanti Ken, *Walawulu ngunytju kukaku ananyi (Mother eagles going hunting)* (detail)
2020, pigment ink on Saunders Waterford
300gsm, 152 x 200 cm, image courtesy
the artist and Tjala Arts © the artist

DOBELL DRAWING PRIZE #22

OVERVIEW

This resource is written in line with the years 7–10 Visual Arts Syllabus and the Higher School Certificate Visual Arts Syllabus, as a guide to exploring the exhibition or as a pre/post visit resource. Tertiary students and the general public may also find the resource useful.

Teachers can use this resource to engage students in a critical appreciation of contemporary drawing. The resource encourages students to consider a range of forms, themes and genres which will inform their own artmaking.

THE DOBELL DRAWING PRIZE

William Dobell's love of drawing was recognised in 1993 when the Art Gallery of New South Wales established an annual drawing prize in his name, initiated by the trustees of the Sir William Dobell Art Foundation (SWDAF). For twenty years, the annual Dobell Prize for Drawing encouraged excellence in drawing and draughtsmanship among Australian artists. Past winners include Kevin Connor, David Fairbairn, Virginia Grayson, Nicholas Harding, Ann Pollak, Gareth Sansom, Jan Senbergs, Garry Shead and Aida Tomescu.

Building on the legacy of this respected award, the National Art School partnered with the SWDAF in 2019 to produce the inaugural Dobell Drawing Prize. This new iteration of the Prize celebrates technical skill, innovation and expanded definitions of drawing. In 2019, the \$30,000, acquisitive prize was awarded to Justine Varga, who uses photographic processes as a means of drawing. In 2021 the *Dobell Drawing Prize #22* showcased drawings by 64 artists from around the country. The 2021 guest judge was celebrated artist Lucy Culliton, who awarded the prize to Euan Macleod for his pastel on paper drawing *Borderlands – Between NSW and QLD* (2020).



Exhibition view of the *Dobell Drawing Prize #22* at NAS Gallery, March 2021
Photo: Peter Morgan

DOBELL DRAWING PRIZE #22

WILLIAM DOBELL

Sir William Dobell was born in Newcastle, New South Wales, on 24 September 1899. He moved to Sydney in 1924 to study at the Julian Ashton Art School, where he met many artists who would later teach at the National Art School. In 1929 he won the Society of Artists Travelling Scholarship and lived in London for ten years, painting and studying at the Slade School of Fine Art. When his scholarship ran out after three years, he supported himself by producing posters and illustrations for magazines, acting as an extra in films, and working with fellow Australian artists decorating the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow in 1937.

On his return to Sydney in 1939 his friend Douglas Dundas offered him a part time teaching position at East Sydney Technical College (now the National Art School). He taught drawing from nature, costume drawing and became highly respected as the 'life master', teaching life drawing in the studios on the top floor of building 16. He taught at NAS until 1941, when he left to work as a camouflage artist during WW2. After the war, Dobell occasionally filled in as a lecturer at NAS, teaching the students studying there under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme.

In 1943 Dobell won the Archibald Prize, Australia's principal award for portraiture, for a painting of fellow artist and former NAS student Joshua Smith. The award was challenged on the grounds that Dobell's entry showed a degree of distortion, which made it a caricature rather than a true portrait, but the court upheld the judging panel's decision. Resultant newspaper publicity expanded interest in Dobell's work, but because of the controversy Dobell withdrew to Wangi Wangi, a small coastal town north of Sydney, where he set up a studio. He won the Archibald Prize twice more, in 1948 with a portrait of former NAS student Margaret Olley, and in 1959 with a portrait of Dr Edward McMahon. Dobell continued to draw all his life, filling sketchbooks, and recording the life and people of Wangi Wangi. He was knighted in 1966 and died on May 14, 1970.



It was not, of course, a photographic portrait of Miss Olley (who poses for this picture with Dobell), a fact which enraged the legions clinging to "true-portrait-from-life" schools.

William Dobell with Margaret Olley, c. 1948

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GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Before visiting

1. In a small group discuss your ideas about what a drawing is. What can drawing be and what can it express? Draw a mind map of the ideas you discuss.
2. Research two of your favorite drawings. Write a paragraph about three drawing techniques that link these works.

In the exhibition

3. Choose three drawings that grab your attention. Look at them closely. How might these drawings be connected and how do they differ? Explain their differences and similarities.
4. Refer to your mind-map and discussion on drawing (activity 1). Has your concept of drawing changed or expanded? Give examples.

After visiting

5. If contemporary artists employ paint, collage and sculptural techniques to make a drawing, how do we distinguish drawing from other artistic mediums? Can a work of art simultaneously be a drawing as well as a painting or sculpture? What artworks in this exhibition are examples of this blending of mediums? Write a 200-word response to these questions.
6. Inspired by this exhibition, choose a drawing technique that you have not attempted before. Apply this approach to a drawing composition of your choice. Consider the following questions when you present your work to the class: What have you learnt from this process? Are you happy with the result?

EUAN MACLEOD

Borderlands – Between NSW and QLD 2020

pastel on paper

156 x 120 cm

Artist statement

In Australia COVID has (among many other things) made us aware of borders that had seemed not much more than lines on a map. Shutting the borders reminds us how much these lines can separate people, something rarely seen in Australia, but becoming even more common globally. This series of drawings were done during a brief opening of the border between Queensland and New South Wales in July this year. All of them were drawn on the spot as we travelled backwards and forwards. I like the idea of assembling them together in no particular order, the parts adding to a unified whole.

Discuss

What is happening in this work? Why has the artist used 15 small drawings to create the composition?

List the similarities and differences you identify in each drawing. What weather, natural phenomena or landscape features can you see?

What techniques and materials have been used by the artist and what do they achieve?

What does *plein air* drawing offer us that a photograph doesn't?

Activity

Create your own set of drawings based on your experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. Try to construct a narrative or a sense of time passing between the drawings.



BRIAN MARTIN

Methexical Countryside Paakantyi #18 2020

charcoal on paper

210 x 150 cm

Artist statement

Methexis emphasises a physical ground and it is through this ground that Indigenous practices resonate. Indigenous culture is based on ancestral history where the various forms of cultural expression are not isolated. There is no distinction between art, culture and living in the mediated experience of human beings. I use the term 'Countryside' instead of landscape to reiterate that Country is a living subject as opposed to an object. 'Land' or 'landscape' tends to convey the notion of object whereas 'Countryside' denotes subjectivity.

My practice is an attempt to reveal this Indigenous understanding of the world and at the same time reveal the dynamics of what constitutes contemporary Aboriginal art practices. Working in charcoal on paper, I use largescale drawing as an immersive and embodied practice. These drawings aim to demonstrate the crucial role of Country and its importance to the foundation of Indigenous ideology and culture.

Discuss

How would you describe the environment that is depicted?

What do you think the artist is trying to tell us about the natural world and our connection with Country?

How does the artist make the landscape feel alive?

Activity

Find a natural landmark or object that is special to you and draw its portrait. Try to capture its essence and unique character.



LEONARDO URIBE

Immigration Form 80 Page 3 2019

human hair on paper

48 x 38 cm

Artist statement

When we apply to live in a new country, we supply facts and figures that define our identity in the eyes of the government; personal information that's at the same time deeply impersonal. The mountains of paperwork involved in applying for permanent residency over the past 12 years inspired me to interrogate the concept of identity and immigration.

My drawings feature symbolic materials, such as my own and my family's hair, which have helped me bridge memories of my past in Colombia with my status as an immigrant in Australia. Hair has a relationship with my childhood, family and cultural origins since I grew up in and around my mother's hair salon. Using hair in my drawings is a literal marker of my identity, my DNA. Drawing is an essential part of my practice. Living for years without permanence, drawing is a portable, compact medium that has allowed me to work in confined rental spaces.

Discuss

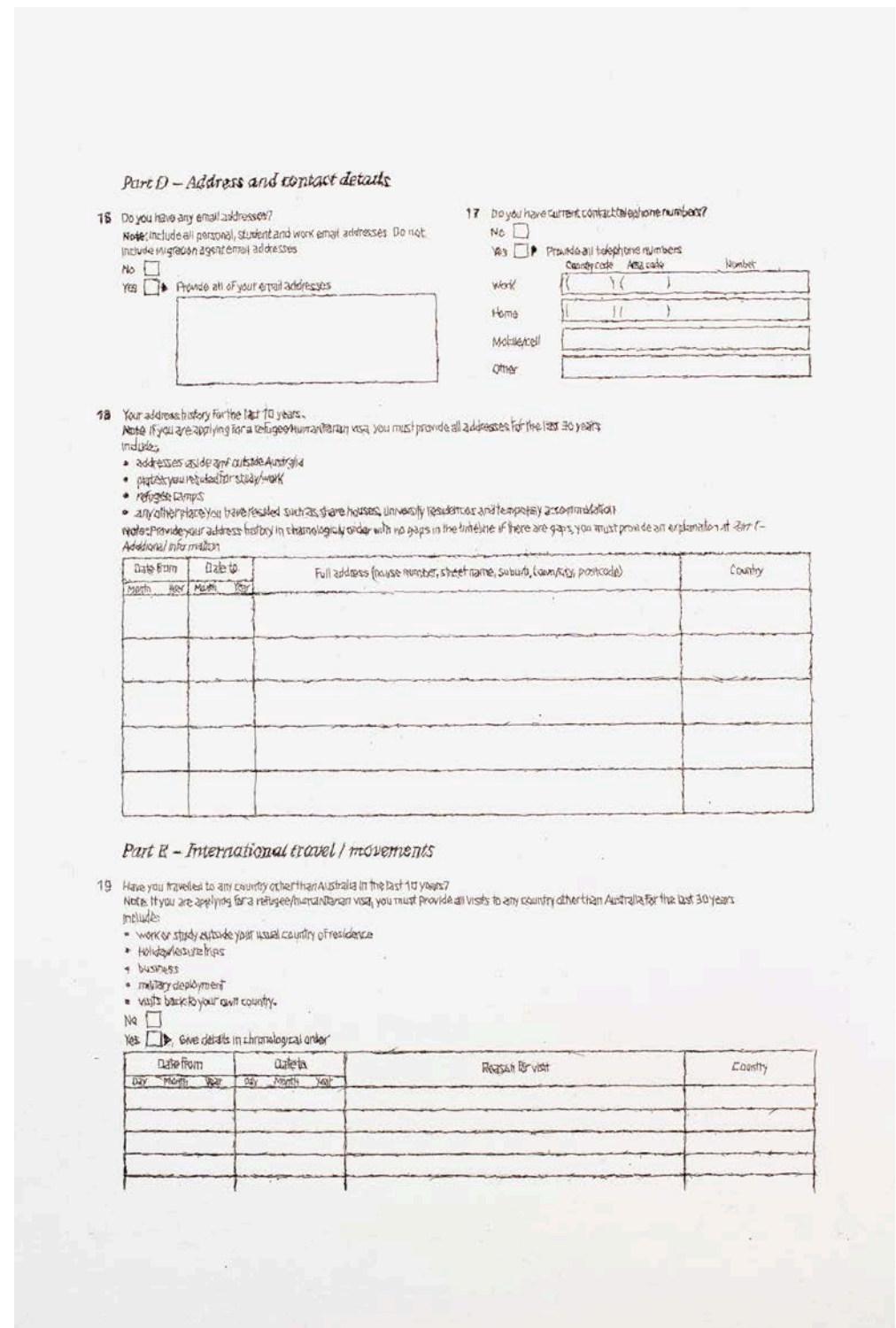
Can you name the material that the artist has used in this artwork? How is this a drawing?

Why has the artist has chosen this painstaking process to highlight the ideas of identity and belonging?

How does this drawing reveal the artist's personal story?

Activity

Experiment with unconventional materials that evoke a special sense of belonging, relating to your home, family or cultural background.



TRAVIS PATERSON

Christine 2020

incised slice tin

20 x 30 cm

Artist statement

Christine is a collaborative work between my mother-in-law, her immediate family and myself. Made over many years, *Christine* is a document of domestic labour and complex familial relationships: a matriarch's slice tin that has been repeatedly filled, baked, incised, and scrubbed over a period of 30 years, leaving behind traces of ritual engagement. Outwardly the grid reads like an unintentional Agnes Martin made slowly over decades. More than that, the history of the marks parallels unknowable internal dialogues spoken over preparatives for countless family gatherings, primarily between a mother, her queer son and myself. The tin is a portrait of Christine's material engagement with her circumstances in life. It came into my care after she passed away in 2020.

Discuss

What process was used to create this drawing?

How does this drawing process stimulate memories and communicate a story?

Activity

Pick an object from your home that has the potential to be used as a drawing tool. Make an abstract composition with this tool and other drawing materials of your choice.



ILUWANTI KEN

Walawulu ngunytju kukaku ananyi (Mother eagles going hunting) 2020

pigment ink on Saunders Waterford 300gsm
152 x 200 cm

Artist statement

'I paint the stories of my father's country – Walawulu Tjukurpa – the story of the eagles. This is my tjukurpa and all of my children's tjukurpa too.'

Iluwanti says that birds like the walawuru (eagles) and patupiri (swallows) have lessons for Anangu women about how to care for one's children. These birds build strong wiltjas (shelters) for their family; they hunt for food and protect their young from dangers. Anangu mothers are like the birds; they hunt for food and bring it to their children, they protect their young from danger and build strong, safe homes for their children.

Discuss

Can you describe Iluwanti Ken's approach to space and perspective?

How does the artist organise elements in this drawing and how does this approach affect the viewer's response?

What is the artist trying to tell us about her cultural identity in this drawing? What is important to her?

Activity

Create a drawing about what family and home mean to you. Consider the materials and mark making you will use to convey your story.



TODD FULLER

Parkside Crescent 2020

charcoal on paper, hand-drawn animation

1:52 minutes edition of 8

Viewing link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjcyBZ3yIZA>

Artist statement

These silhouettes mark a strange moment in history, a year of extremes. This piece forms part of a series of vignettes – from airing out the apartment to dancing in the kitchen after moving in with a loved one. The work was animated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as society stayed home in the interests of community safety.

Discuss

How many people do you see in this animation? What are they doing?

Look carefully at the people – what do you think each character might be thinking or feeling?

What is an animation? How did the artist, Todd Fuller, make this animation?



Activity

Create your own DIY animation

Materials

Cardboard
Pencils/pens
White A4 paper
Smartphone or tablet
Stop Motion Studio App, free to download from:

App Store

shorturl.at/noylU

Google Play

shorturl.at/juCV0

Instructions

1. Think of a story you would like to tell your friends about your experience of lockdown
2. Make cardboard figures depicting the characters in your story
3. Draw a background on white A4 paper – this could be the park you went to with your family, or even your own bedroom
4. Download the free Stop Motion Studio on App Store or Google Play
5. Tell your story by moving the cardboard figures over the paper background and take a photograph of the figures every time you move them
6. Once you are done with taking photographs, press stop and export the film. You have made your own animation!



ANNA MOULD

Dust and Metal 2020

ink and colour pencil on paper

120 x 150 cm

Artist statement

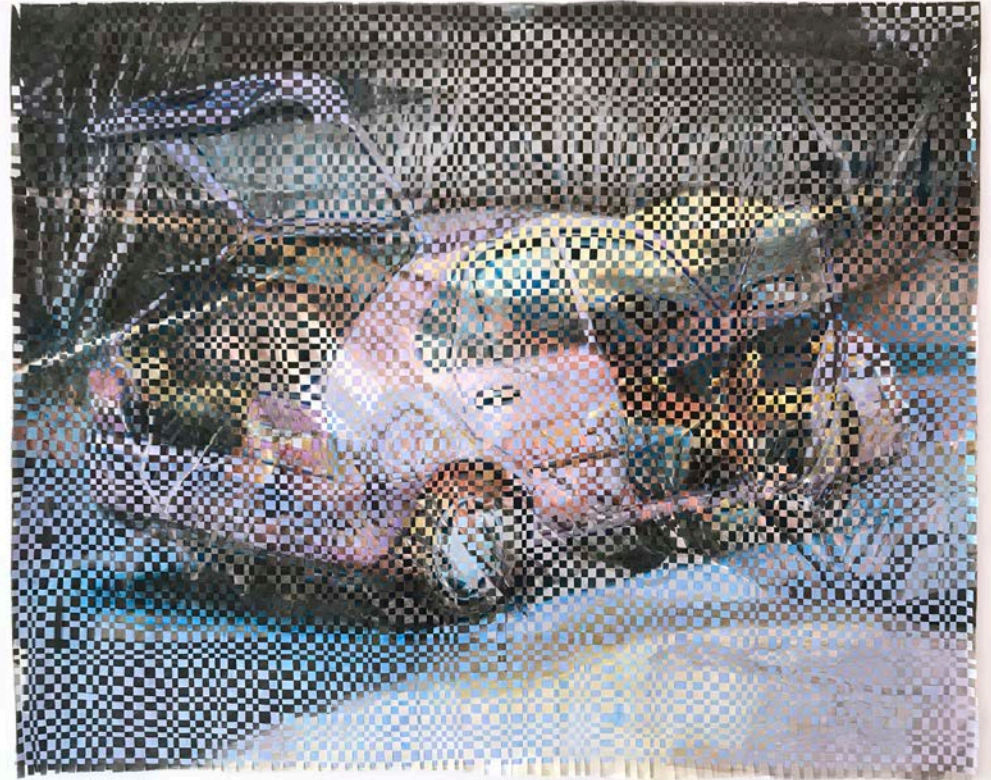
My family's presence in the Central West of New South Wales spans three centuries, and my sense of place and connection to the area develops as I continue to realise my role as a descendant of early European colonists on Wiradjuri country. In *Dust and Metal*, I draw from two contemporary views of Hill End, New South Wales; my own hatchback car perched on the edge of a landfill pit at the bush tip is interlaced with a landscape scarred by decades of gold mining and pastoral clearing. I employ weaving techniques to offer a glimpse of multiple images or perspectives on my subject. This approach follows the striated and layered quality of thought – multiple, conflicting, and nuanced – in our processes of realisation and understanding. *Dust and Metal* is woven of two drawings in ink and coloured pencil to form one shimmering, multi-surfaced work.

Discussion

Look carefully at the objects in this drawing. What do you see?

Name three things that you can see in this drawing.

How did the artist make this drawing?



Activity

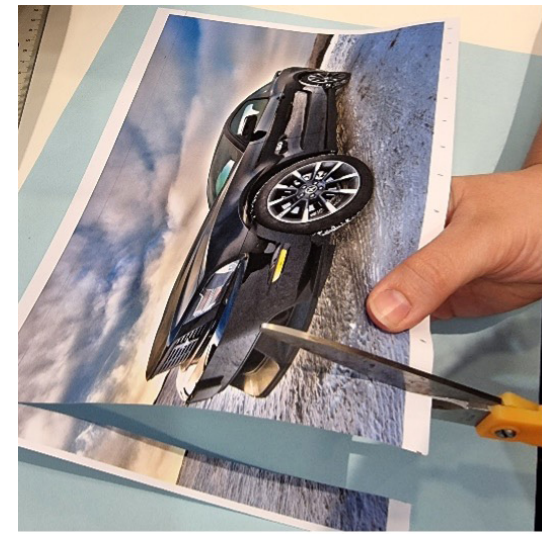
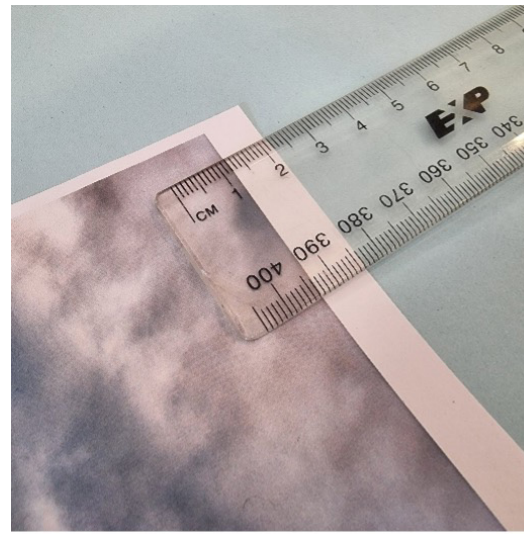
Create a woven drawing

Materials

A3 piece of paper or cardboard
A4 Paper
Pencils (2B and/or coloured)
Scissors
Sticky Tape or glue stick
Colour printer

Instructions

1. Choose a picture of your favourite car and print it in colour at A4 size
2. Make a drawing of a landscape around your home or school at A4 size
3. Measure 2cm from the top of your car image. Draw a light pencil line across the top of the image to create a 2cm border. From left to right, cut into your car picture from the bottom into 2cm wide vertical strips.
4. From top to bottom, cut your landscape drawing into 2cm wide horizontal strips. Place in order on the table as you cut them.
5. Starting with the top strip of your landscape drawing, begin to weave the strips through the car image going under and over the vertical strips to make your artwork. As you weave the pieces, make sure to push them together towards the top so that they fit tightly. Continue weaving until the artwork is finished. (If you have extra drawing strips left over that's ok!)



6. Using your A3 paper or cardboard as a base attach your finished weaving with glue or tape to the page so that it is centred.

7. Display the artworks together and talk about them. Can you see both pictures?

