

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS EDUCATION KIT



Wendy Stokes



Collection connections
Wilma Tabacco
Cascade

Wendy Stokes. *Layered Reference 1, 2010*. Screen print on paper. 104 x 76 cm each., frame. Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, gift of the Friends of the Gallery, 2010. © Image courtesy and copyright of the artist. [Themes/Subject/Style: Abstraction, Landscape].

Wendy Stokes *Layered Reference 1-5 2010.*

Born in 1957. Lives and works in Port Macquarie

The layered fragments and bodies of colour which populate this series of prints express an experience of place that is both corporeal and interior. The art practice of Wendy Stokes is deeply situated in landscape and specifically her experience and deep knowledge of her coastal home in Port Macquarie. Her imagery is drawn from this environment, but rather than reproducing a recognisable view, this series of prints evokes merely a sense of the salty air, movement of the water and texture of the sandy ground that is specifically Port Macquarie.

Because the imagery is not representational, the prints seem to refer to a culmination of experiences and thus represent an interior experience of place that is situated in memories, rather than a physical experience of the landscape taken from a specific moment. For the viewer, this series of prints might act as an impetus which sparks memories of their own and thus the series can be understood as an imaginative experience of the land that can also be transferred to other places.

Wendy Stokes has herself stated: "My daily ritual is immersed in the coastal landscape experience of air, light, space and water, so as a painter landscape becomes a spatial experience of nature rather than a view."

Questions and activities

Wendy Stokes *Layered Reference 1-5 2010*

Select one print in the series *Layered Reference*. Examine it closely and create a glossary that lists all of the pictorial elements contained within that print. For each element make a sketch and write a short description. Choose one element from your list and think about what it reminds you of. Write a short poem or song lyric in response.

Using different coloured tissue papers and pastel crayons create a range of abstract forms similar to those found in *Layered Reference 1-5*. Experiment with layering your paper elements in different ways to create a continuous array of pictorial spaces and depths. Explore the different relationships you can create between the different elements depending on how you arrange them together. Take photos at progressive stages of your experimentation. Compare and contrast your photographs. Do they suggest different feelings, connotations or references, according to their different arrangements?

Wendy Stokes grew up on the coastal countryside. Her childhood was spent outdoors roaming the surrounding natural environment and her experiences of being in nature influenced her to make art. Be like Wendy. Spend time in nature immersed in your thoughts and imaginations. Collect materials, make drawings, take photographs and write. Back at home, think about how you might use these resources as the basis for a new artwork.

Wendy Stokes is known for prints and paintings that contain abstract forms and arrangements that suggest landscape, rather than represent it in a literal way. Conduct your own research to find other artists that work in this manner. Consider the choices they have made in terms of colour, lines, shapes and composition. Consider their style of painterly gesture. How do they use the medium of painting, drawing or printmaking to invoke landscape in a non-literal way? The American artist Cy Twombly or Indigenous artist Emily Kame Ngawarray are two great artists to start off your research.