

NAPIER WALLER ART PRIZE

2022 EDUCATION RESOURCE KIT

This Education Resource is paired with the Napier Waller Art Prize 2022 exhibition, and explores the premise, history and content of the prize. It is intended for use in conjunction with the online exhibition. www.awm.gov.au/napier-waller-art-prize-hub/2022-napier-waller-art-prize

The resource can also be used before or after viewing the exhibition of Highly Commended works at Australian Parliament House from 18 June to 20 November 2022.



CONTENT WARNING

This education resource contains content that people may find distressing, including themes of emotional trauma and PTSD, death and serious injury, and amputation. Teachers may wish to consider the needs of those students who have personal experience with conflict, family members who are veterans, or parents serving overseas in war zones.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, tell a teacher or trusted adult.

You can also contact:

[Lifeline: 13 11 14](#) [Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636](#)

RECOMMENDED YEAR LEVEL:

This education resource is recommended for Years 9–10 and Senior Students.

Activities have been developed to align with Australia Curriculum key learning areas. These include:

Year 9 and 10 Art:

- Present ideas for displaying artworks and evaluate displays of artworks (ACAVAM129)
- Evaluate how representations communicate artistic intentions in artworks they make and view to inform their future art making (ACAVAR130)
- Analyse a range of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their visual art making, starting with Australian artworks, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider international artworks (ACAVAR131)

Year 10 History:

Overview of the Modern World and Australia

- The nature of the Cold War and Australia's involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACOKFH023)

Year 9 and 10 Civics and Citizenship:

Citizenship, Diversity and Identity, Year 9

- The influence of a range of media, including social media, in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity (ACHCK080)
- How ideas about and experiences of Australian identity are influenced by global connectedness and mobility (ACHCK081)

Government and Democracy, Year 10

- The Australian Government's role and responsibilities at a global level, for example provision of foreign aid, peacekeeping, participation in international organisations and the United Nations (ACHCK091)

Critical and Creative Thinking

- Reflecting on thinking and processes analysing, synthesising, and evaluating reasoning and procedures

Ethical Understanding

- Understanding ethical concepts and issues
Reasoning in decision making and actions

Intercultural Understanding

- Interacting and empathising with others

PART 1 THE NAPIER WALLER ART PRIZE



Rob Douma NWAP Winner 2018, *Green on Blue: The Betrayal of Trust*, 2018
Charcoal on Snowdon archival paper, 161 x 195 x 3cm, AWM2018.1052.1

Art can be a way for people to express feelings that are difficult to put into words. It has been used by many as a way of sharing and processing experiences and feelings. Australian official war artists paint their experiences of war, but service personnel can also be talented artists and use art as a way of examining their experiences.

The Napier Waller Art Prize is an art competition run by the Australian War Memorial for current and former service personnel. Its goal is to celebrate the artistic successes of those who enter the competition. The artworks can be in any medium and subject matter, so long as they were created within the previous two years. The winner is chosen by a panel of judges, and the winning work is displayed in the exhibition alongside the Highly Commended entrants. The winning work is later added to the Memorial's National Collection. A People's Choice prize is also awarded, and is voted for by the general public.

The Napier Waller Art Prize was named in memory of Mervyn Napier Waller, as an example of an artist who was able to overcome the consequences of his time in war to continue to create art. Despite losing his right arm, Napier Waller continued to produce art throughout his life. His talents have contributed to the Memorial's story, creating the mosaics and stained glass windows in the Hall of Memory. In remembrance of his hard work and dedication, the Napier Waller Art Prize aims to recognise Australia's former and current service personnel in their artistic endeavours.



Eduardo de Araujo, NWAP People's Choice winner 2019, *Line of Sight*, 2019
Textile embroidery on digital photo, 61 x 43cm, AWM2019.1193.1

ACTIVITY

Art Theory

What do you think is important in an artwork?

An example might be if a work has a unique visual style, or conveys a strong message through the work's subject matter.

How do your answers compare with other students' answers?

Take some time to examine the previous years' winners and exhibitions.

A lot of artists explore events in their own lives through art.

Can you see any common themes across these exhibitions?

Discuss why an artist might turn to art to express their experiences.

What are some experiences that you think can be explored only through creative processes?

History

Discuss why a historian might examine an artwork to better understand a historical event.

The Australian War Memorial has a large art collection, which contains works both by official war artists and by service personnel artists who were not commissioned by the Memorial.

What differences do you think there might be between these two types of artworks?

Why do you think it is important to collect both?



Matt Jones NWAP winner 2020, *Yarn*, 2020
yarn, recycled waste fabric, 183 x 183 x 18cm, AWM2020.792.1

PART 2 MERVYN NAPIER WALLER



Studio portrait of 20178 Private (later Bombardier) Mervyn Napier Waller. P07038.006

Mervyn Napier Waller was an Australian artist, born in Penhurst, Victoria in 1893. From a young age he was engaged in art, studying at the National Gallery School in Melbourne, and having his first exhibition of watercolour paintings in 1915. Later that same year, Napier Waller enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and headed to fight in France. During his service, he was wounded in his right arm, which had to be amputated at the shoulder. As Napier Waller was right handed, this could very well have been the end of his artistic career, but he dedicated his time during his recovery to learning to write and draw with his left hand.

Napier Waller returned from the war and began to work in watercolour, painting myths and legends from classical history. However, soon his focus shifted to mural design. In 1927, he completed his mural *Peace and Victory* for the State Library of Victoria, before travelling to Europe in 1929 to study stained glass in Italy. After returning to Australia, Napier Waller created many more murals and mosaics, before being commissioned by the Australian War Memorial to create the stained glass and mosaics in the Hall of Memory.

Despite only having one arm, Napier Waller was an active participant in the process of the creation and installation of his mosaics. Following his detailed designs, over six million tesserae were attached to sheets of paper by art students and war widows to create the mosaics, producing one of the largest mosaics in the world.



Wall mosaics in the Hall of Memory, designed by Mervyn Napier Waller.

ACTIVITY

Art Theory

Napier Waller once said 'An artist draws with his head, not his hands.'

What do you think he meant by this?

A mosaic is a picture or pattern created from tesserae, small pieces of coloured stone or glass set into a surface such as a wall or a floor.

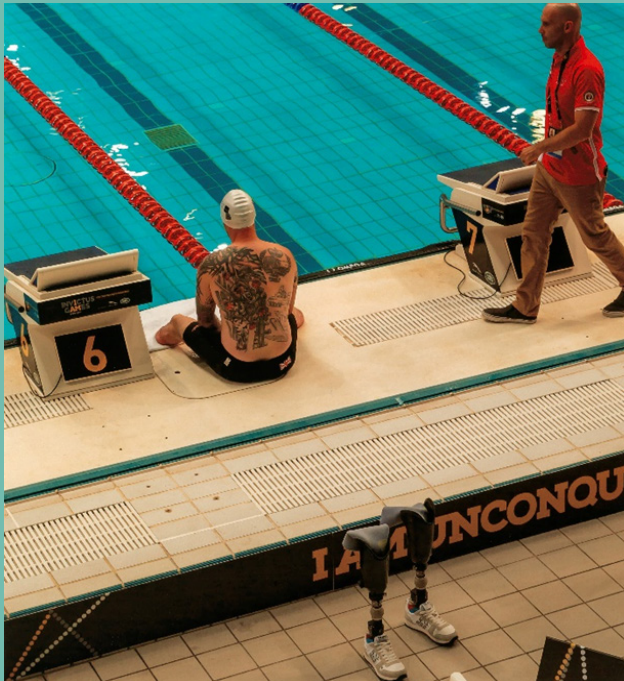
Use this link to examine the Mosaics in the Hall of Memory and answer the following questions.

www.awm.gov.au/visit/visitor-information/features/hall-of-memory/mosaics

What artistic styles and/or movements do you see reflected in Napier Waller's works?

How does Napier Waller portray meaning in his works: e.g. line, colour, form, etc.?

What do you think are the benefits of using mosaic versus mediums such as painted murals or carved stone reliefs?



Gordon Traill, NWAP Finalist 2019 *Unconquered courage*, 2018, photograph, 60 x 60 cm AWM2019.1194.1



Unknown photographer, *A group of amputees from No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield c. 1914-1918*. P00162.016 (Crop of original image)

History

Follow this link to read an article about injuries in the First World War to gain some general information to help with your answers: www.awm.gov.au/wartime/article2

Take some time to examine the previous years' exhibitions, and answer the following questions:

A lot has changed since Mervyn Napier Waller lost his arm.

Can you see any similar injuries represented in the artworks?

Are there any similar or different health concerns that you can identify within the artworks?

If so, what might these be?

Follow this link to see a 3D model of a prosthetic from Second World War; www.awm.gov.au/3dtreasures/items/changi-artificial-leg/

A lot has changed since this prosthetic was created.

What challenges do you think were faced by amputees in Napier Waller's time?

Do you think modern day amputees face similar or different experiences?

PART 3 THE ARTWORKS



Anneke Jamieson, NWAP Winner 2022, *The promotion*, 2021
Acrylic and oil on canvas board, 61 x 46 cm

Take a few moments to examine this year's winning artwork and consider the following questions:

Without reading the artist's statement, what is your reaction to this work?

Read the statement (on the exhibition label or on the online exhibition), and consider what it says.

Do you feel differently about the artwork after learning more about it? If so, in what way?

What do you think are the similarities between motherhood and service? Do they conflict in any way?

Do you think the artist captures these in her work?

SUB THEME PORTRAITS (ART THEORY)



Andrew Littlejohn, NWAP Finalist 2022, *Resilience*, 2021
oil paint on canvas, 20 x 20 x 2.5 cm

Among 2022's highly commended and shortlisted artworks there are a number of portraits. Artists have been creating portraits throughout history, and they can be used to express many different concepts and emotions.

Take some time to examine the following works;

- *The righteous side of hell* by Christopher Forden
- *Resilience* by Andrew Littlejohn
- *The leaders* by Kenneth McGuire
- *See no, hear no, speak no* by Jeff Wharton
- *David* by Robyn White
- *Blood in my shadow* by Jon Oliver
- *Ricky* by Gordon Traill
- *Charlie* by Andrew Littlejohn
- *Brick window* by Martin Scanlan
- *A moment* by Greg Scott
- *The promotion* by Anneke Jamieson

Which of these portraits is your favourite? Consider what your reasons might be?

Select one portrait from the above list, and answer the following questions:

All of these portraits are very different, and try to convey different emotions and ideas.

List some of the messages and meanings that you can see within the works, and discuss how they are expressed. Compare your response to a classmate's.

Are there any themes or techniques which have been used in multiple portraits, or are different techniques used in each portrait?

How does this affect the meaning of the work?

Discuss how these portraits tell us about the sitter: their struggles and concerns, their experiences, and their goals

SUB THEME FORMAL ANALYSIS (ART THEORY)



Sarah Eddowes, NWAP Finalist 2022, *Reef*, 2021
thread, 40 x 29 x 2 cm

In this year's exhibition, a wide range of styles and mediums have been used to create the submissions. Different mediums can be used to convey different ideas, and might have different significance to the artist or the audience.

Select two artworks which use different mediums from the exhibition, and consider the following questions:

Examine each of your selected artworks and briefly outline how each one makes use of the following: Line, Colour, Shape or Form, Texture, Symmetry and Medium.

How has the artist used these elements to convey meaning?

Compare your two chosen artworks to each another.

How are they different? Outline which you consider more effective, and why.

Do you think if the mediums used in these works were swapped it would affect the meaning, and how would it do so?

SUB THEME CURRENT EVENTS (CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP)



Julian Thompson, NAWP Finalist 2022, *Going nowhere: resting monuments in salted earth*, 2021
oil on cotton, 81 x 183 cm

In this year's exhibition, many of the artists have touched on recent historical and current events in their artworks. Art can be a method of exploring and understanding the world as it happens around us.

Select an artwork from the following;

- *We were the 9-11 soldiers (II)* by James Blackwell
- *Climate change* by David Gilbert
- *The leaders* by Kenneth McGuire
- *Messiah, the Liberator* by Craig Rohse
- *Surrender 1-3* by Daniel Kotynia
- *Reckoning* by Kat Rae
- *Blazing banksia* by Matt Kilby
- *Going nowhere: resting monuments in salted earth* by Julian Thompson
- *Redacted II* by Richard Barrett

Take some time to consider the artwork you have chosen without reading the artist's statement, and then answer the following question:

Can you tell just from looking at this artwork what it is about?

Now take some time to read the artist's statement, and answer the following questions;

Is the event described in this artwork one you recognise? If so, what do you know about it?

Does knowing the intended meaning of the artwork change how you view it? If so, how does it change your view, and why do you think this is?

All of the events depicted in these artworks have affected Australia in some way.

How do you think these events have changed Australian society, and Australia's relationship to the rest of the world?

What benefit might there be to exploring an event through art rather than by a different method?

SUB THEME IDENTITY (CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP)



Brianna Briscoe, NWAP Finalist 2022, *Family*, 2021
acrylic, 51 x 35.5 cm

In this year's exhibition, identity is at the centre of a number of the artworks on display. Art is a place where an artist can explore and express their identity, and share their perspectives with others.

Take some time to examine the following works:

- *Iron lady* by Larissa Baglieri
- *Family* by Brianna Briscoe
- *Woortbirrm-gruk (Womanhood/womankind)* by Aimee McCartney
- *Taingiwilta ngayirdila 'Strength in the air'* by Steven Warrior
- *Du'a in despair* by Shairazi Bahari
- *Surrender 1-3* by Daniel Kotynia
- *Flying falling diving drowning* by Glen Braithwaite
- *The promotion* by Anneke Jamieson

Select two artworks from the list to compare, and answer the following questions:

What ideas about identity can you see in each of your selected artworks? Do they have any ideas in common?

How does the artist represent the idea of identity in their work? Is it easy to spot or is it more subtle?

Does this exhibition challenge your expectations around the identities and experiences of service personnel and veterans? If so, how?