

# Andrew Atchison



Andrew Atchison, *Figure in the Round (Statue/Lens – La Trobe) (detail)*, 2016, acrylic, photographic lighting stands, irregular dimensions.  
Photograph: Bryony Jackson

Contemporary Art on the Road is a unique program that provides access to artists and art experts from some of Melbourne's leading art institutions. This resource was created to introduce teachers to a range of hands-on, expertly designed strategies and resources for teaching contemporary art in their classroom.

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## About the Artist

Andrew Atchison is an artist who works across sculpture, drawing, curation, writing and education. A central exploration within his practice relates to how sculpture can characterise spaces, both public and private, and how those spatial dynamics can be further manipulated. Alongside, he is engaged with drawing as a propositional form, and maintains an ongoing research project that responds to the question, 'how can abstraction be applied to queer representational forms?'

He completed a Master of Fine Arts (research) at MADA, Monash University in 2018. He has exhibited extensively, including at Testing Grounds, Greenwood Street Projects, Light Projects, First Draft, West Space, Kings ARI, TCB Art Inc, Seventh Gallery, First Site Gallery, and Next Wave and Midsumma Festivals. In addition, he has completed several artworks for public space, including a public art commission for The City of Melbourne. In mid-2019 he curated the exhibition ...*(illegible)*... at MADA Gallery. In December 2019 he will hold a solo exhibition at Incinerator Gallery, Melbourne.

### **What ideas/ concepts do you base your artworks on?**

Ideas I am interested in include - how definition is achieved in artworks and in deciding where the line is between delivering meaning and leaving room open for interpretation. I concentrate on sculpture because I am interested in how it occupies the same space as our bodies, and how throughout history it has been used to communicate various messages and ideals, particularly through figurative sculpture. I am engaged with drawing because it is immediate, inexpensive and highly suited to propositional ideas. Where sculpture confronts the viewer's mass and material actuality, drawing is more about projection or suggestion of meaning and concept.

### **Why are your ideas/ concepts/ discussion important to a contemporary audience or in a contemporary context?**

I am interested in reflecting upon how we live, interact and think, but I want to approach those ideas in non-didactic ways. At the moment there is a huge amount of conversation about personal and communal representational territories, and identity-based approaches to art making. Right now I am most interested in how abstract artworks can be interpreted to represent facets of lived experience but in ways that are indirect or oblique and so allow space for the viewer to form their own understandings. I think that art that allows that interpretive space is important in the current arts ecology.

### **How do you begin your studio practice? Where do you find inspiration?**

I find I have an idea at the back of my mind for a long time. If it persists then I guess there must be some value in pursuing that idea. I then usually begin with a sketch or maquette in paper and move on from there. Sometimes, an idea will be triggered by reading. Hearing other artists talk about their work is often very inspiring.

### **How has your practice evolved over time?**

Although I studied drawing and printmaking at university, I have gravitated toward sculpture over time. Drawing has remained a constant since childhood and all through my studies and independent practice, both a way of working out ideas and as means to realise finished artworks.

### **Who are your biggest influences?**

My biggest influences are other artists, including Rita McBride, Lawrence Weiner, Cerith Wyn Evans and John Meade, who also mentored my practice for a period.

**Artist Website:** <https://andrewatchison.com/>

# Workshop Summary

In this workshop students will consider how and/or what messages a readymade object communicates through its visual language. Students will create an artwork that takes the form of a sculptural intervention into the space between the object and the viewer. Students will focus on different ways of mediating, interrupting or accenting the experience of viewing the object using a range of translucent, transparent, opaque, and reflective materials. Students are tasked with exploring how the meanings or narratives associated with the object's visual and symbolic language can be subverted or shifted through their interventions. The idiom '*to look at the world with rose coloured glasses*' is relevant here. For example, when the chosen object is viewed through transparent coloured material a particular emotional temperature or mood might be brought to the viewing experience. By contrast, an opaque material might obscure part of the object, connoting hidden knowledge, history or meaning. If an object can be visually 'read', like a text, then the strategies in this workshop can be thought of as analogous to using annotation, highlighting, editing, erasure or redaction to change meaning.

## **Instruction and demonstration: 10 minutes**

- Gather a varied selection of everyday items and/or interesting objects from home, work or school. For example - a water jug, dictionary, hammer, mannequin hand. Allow students to select one object each.
- Give each student a 30cm x 30cm MDF or heavy cardboard square as a base for their artwork.
- Provide a range of two-dimensional materials (fabric, acrylic, cellophane, foil, mirror, mesh, paper) in a range of colours and including transparent, reflective and opaque materials.
- Discuss how each might inflect the experience of viewing an object, for example – the strong associations people have with colour; reflective materials as a way of bouncing the viewer's gaze back at them; opaque materials as a means of censoring, protecting or obscuring features.
- Provide a selection of structural materials including wire, skewers, tape and hot glue. Demonstrate how these can be used to suspend and arrange materials around the chosen object.
- Instruct students to approach the activity as an experimental process, to add and subtract items until they are satisfied with the result. They might also document this process for discussion or annotation to aid reflection later.

## **Work time: 90 minutes**

- Students place one chosen object in the centre of a wooden or cardboard base. They view it from all angles. Ask: 'What associations do you make?' 'What encoded messages can you interpret?' 'Does the object suggest any 'correct' orientations for viewing (the glazed front of a framed picture, for instance, suggests it should be viewed from the front)?' 'Does it tell you about a particular culture and its values?'
- Begin to install these materials around the chosen object. You are trying to work both with and against the visual language of the object. Consider what perspective or vantage points you want to emphasise or diminish. Your selection of transparent or opaque materials will decide how you communicate your intentions to the viewer.
- Use skewers, wire, tape and hot glue to create support structures that suspend cut to size and shape pieces of material in chosen places. Work swiftly to experiment with different materials in different positions. Add, move, adjust as necessary. If possible, document your different arrangements along the way.
- Reappraise the chosen object in light of your changes. What is left visible of the object? What is now shielded from view? How might a viewer understand the object now? What else can be emphasised? Have you created a visual hierarchy? How has colour contributed to meaning interpretation?

## **Group reflection: 15 minutes**

- Students gather as a group to view each others work in silence for several minutes, mentally noting any questions that they have for a fellow artist about their work. Question time follows.

## **Summary**

- Introduction (10 mins): Introduction to the artists practice and materials that will be used in the workshop.
- Production phase (90 Minutes): Participants will build their own sets using the materials provided.
- Discussion (15 mins): Group discussion in response to ideas presented and brainstorming.

# Equipment List

- 30 x 30cm MDF boards (1 per participant)
  - Textured acrylic or glass
  - Sheet metal
  - Aluminium foil
  - Thicker bendable wire
  - Assorted coloured & patterned papers
  - Bamboo skewers
  - Pliers
  - Hole punch
  - Coloured acrylic or glass
  - Cellophane
  - Mirror
  - Florist wire
  - String
  - Masking, gaffer & clear tape
  - Hot glue guns & glue sticks
  - Scissors
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## Goals and Objectives

- Through critical and creative re-thinking of found objects students will learn how to think creatively about everyday objects and their artistic potential.
- Students will learn how to create and play with three dimensional forms.
- Students will learn how to develop conceptual ideas and allegories in relation to found object / sculptural assemblage.
- Students are encouraged to think about how art can reflect and shape contemporary social issues and dialogue.
- Students are encouraged to think conceptually about art elements and principals like: shape, tone, colour and texture.

### **The activity aims to:**

- Expand students' knowledge about artistic concepts and techniques.
- Encourage imagination and enjoyment through engagement with found objects.
- Teach students to express themselves through visual language and develop skills of working with three dimensional objects and space.
- Expand students' critical and creative thinking, using visual languages and art history.
- Teach students how to respond to space and create art installations strategically.
- Provide students with confidence to communicate and describe social issues and ideas, and how their artwork relate to them.

# Learning Activity

## Discussion

- Discuss the artworks of John Meade and Cerith Wyn Evans. How do they communicate emotions and ideas through spatial and sculptural play?
- How does Andrew use found figurative sculpture and objects? Talk about his sculptural intervention in public spaces.
- Discuss how three-dimensional and two-dimensional outcomes differ in communicating meaning. What experiences do you get from a three-dimensional object that you can't from a photo of that same object? Teachers, show students a photo of a chair, have them discuss what they see and feel, what connotations that chair may have (corporate or lounge for example). Then view that same chair in real life / three-dimensional form. How has their perception of the object changed?

## Concept Development

Students should begin by discussing the practices of Andrew Atchison, John Meade, Cerith Wyn Evans, Rita McBride, and Lawrence Weiner. They should discuss how these artists communicate complex and conceptual ideas through colour, shape/form, space and text. They should select one image each and do an in-depth analysis in their visual diary.

## Production

Students begin by placing one found object in the centre of a wooden or cardboard base. They view it from all angles and discuss what connotations or message they can read in the object. They should use the range of materials provided to play with blocking out or highlighting specific areas around their object. They should experiment with transparent, opaque, textured and mirrored surfaces. Once they are feeling confident about where they will place these materials they can begin to fix the materials in place with the skewers, wire and hot glue. If possible, document your different arrangements along the way using phone or tablet.

**Additional activity:** Students can photograph their sculptures and discuss how the two-dimensional representation changes their perception of their creation? Does it help to communicate their idea/narrative by capturing the object from a specific angle?

# Links to Curriculum

## PRIMARY & SECONDARY

### Present & Perform

View the location and exhibition of Andrew's work. Students should plan their own exhibition of their artworks. They should consider the audience of the artworks and how they wish the audience to interpret the artwork.

### Respond & Interpret

Level F – 6

Respond to Andrew's artwork by identifying and describing art elements and principals. Consider how he makes his work. Students could also discuss the range of aesthetic styles throughout art history, specifically conceptual and contemporary art.

Level 7 – 10

Analyse and interpret Andrew's artworks discussing ideas and viewpoints. Compare his work with works by other contemporary artists to identify characteristics and features of the works, think specifically about how they communicate or explore contemporary social issues and ideas.

### Explore & Express

Levels F – 6

Investigate the ways in which Andrew explores ideas, techniques and materials in his artworks. How are these expressed?

Levels 7 – 10

Explore the practices of Andrew. Through a discussion of Andrew's use of found object, discuss how he expresses his ideas and develops a particular style within his work. Discuss his work in terms of the themes that he explores. From this discussion students should develop their own artistic practice through the use of inspiration, materials, techniques and processes to develop their own artworks.

### Visual Arts Practice

Levels F – 6

Based on the artworks of Andrew students should explore materials, techniques, processes and visual conventions. They describe the use of these in the production of their artworks.

Levels 7 – 10

Think about the intentions that Andrew has when he commences making his work. Discuss his artistic practice. Using the artworks of Andrew as a starting point, explore materials, techniques, visual conventions and processes to develop an individual artistic intention or aesthetic.

## VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (VCE)

### Studio Arts

**Unit 1 Area of Study 3: Interpreting art ideas and use of materials and techniques:** The work of artists from different times and cultures is studied to gain a broader understanding of how artworks are conceived, produced and exhibited. Students discuss the way in which Andrew has used materials and techniques, and interpreted ideas and sources of inspiration in producing his artworks.

**Unit 2 Area of Study 2: Ideas and Styles in Artwork:** Students develop an understanding of the use of other artists' works in the making of new artworks, which may include the ideas and issues associated with appropriation such as copyright and artists' moral rights. Discuss how Andrew uses found monuments, appropriation and intervention.

**Unit 3 Area of Study 3: Artists and Studio Practices:** In this area of study students focus on professional studio practices in relation to particular art forms. Students investigate the ways in which artists have interpreted subject matter, influences, historical and cultural contexts, and communicated ideas and meaning in their artworks. Students should examine Andrew's artist biography and above interview questions to understand the path of his professional development and artistic intentions.

**Unit 4 Area of Study 3: Art Industry Contexts:** You will visit a variety of art exhibitions and examine the different methods and roles undertaken in the preparation and presentation of art to the public. Through his website examines of Andrew's exhibitions. Discuss his interventions on monuments in public spaces and what considerations must he make here that differ to those exhibiting in a gallery.

## Related Artists/Artworks



### **Rita McBride (1960 > )**

American artist Rita McBride explores sculptural and architectural form at various scales ranging from small objects to large public commissions. McBride's practice is concerned not only with sculptural or architectural form, but likewise the situations and happenings which arise in the audience's relation to the works. McBride is well known for *Mae West* (2011), a 52-metre tall carbon structure erected in the middle of a public square in eastern Munich.



### **Lawrence Weiner (1942 > )**

New York-based Lawrence Weiner was a leading artist in the Conceptual Art movement of the 1960s. His work often consists of typographic text, using language as a means to create subversive installations that alter an existing space or environment. He considers language to be a sculptural material and believes that a construction in language can function as sculpture as adequately as a fabricated object. His works also often pursue inquiries into a radical redefinition of the artist/viewer relationship.



### **Cerith Wyn Evans (1958 > )**

Cerith Wyn Evans is a Welsh artist whose practice incorporates a diverse range of media. His work includes experimental films and installations that are often site-specific and engage with a repeated set of ideas and visual and textual sources. A sculptural installation by the artists titled *Forms in Space ... by Light (in Time)* was commissioned by The Tate Britain in 2017 to respond to the grand space of the Duveen Galleries. The work is suspended from the ceiling and made from almost 2km of white neon light.



### **John Meade (1956 > )**

John Meade is an Australian sculpture artist based in Melbourne. Combining the rigours of geometry with soft organic forms, John Meade works in an intuitive way to materialise his ideas, creating tightly orchestrated pieces that explore the metaphysical, the surreal and the erotic. Meade uses minimalism and messiness, the deliberate and the accidental, to explore extremes of form and intensities of emotion. Meade employs his superior use of colour, form and material, to produce eccentric and immaculate sculptures that generate a collective presence.

## Glossary

**Sculpture:** A three-dimensional artwork made by casting, molding, constructing or carving.

**Drawing:** A two-dimensional artwork characterised by the presence of lines and gestures that make up a form. Common drawing media include pencil, charcoal, pastel and pen on surfaces such as paper or canvas. The definition of drawing can also expand to include painting media.

**Curation:** The process of organising and selecting artworks to be exhibited together in an exhibition or collection. Art curation often refers to selecting artworks or artists according to a specific theme, time-period or artistic movement.

**Public Spaces:** An area or place that is open to all people, often places where people gather such as parks or city squares. Public space may be owned but is generally controlled as a commons by agreement.

**Private Spaces:** Locations owned by a private body or person, accessible to a limited group of people.

**Spatial Dynamics:** Spatial is defined as 'relating to or occupying space' (Oxford Dictionary) Spatial Dynamics within Art refer to works of art that consider or investigate space.

**Abstraction:** Refers to an artwork that is non-representational.

**Queer:** An umbrella term for sexual and gender identities that do not correspond to established ideas of sexuality or gender; those who are not heterosexual or cisgender.

**Arts Ecology:** Referring to the interactions between artists, arts organisations, audiences and participants and how these interrelate to form the greater arts system.

**Maquette:** A small-scale model or sketch made to prepare for a sculptural work, similar to a 'first draft' or 'mock-up'.

**Conceptual Art** - sometimes simply called conceptualism, is art in which the concept or idea involved in the work take precedence over traditional aesthetic, technical, and material concerns.

**Installation** - Installation art can be either temporary or permanent. Installation artworks have been constructed with a particular site in mind, they are site specific.

**Three-dimensional** - an object with depth, height and width.

**Two-dimensional** - a shape with depth and height but no width.

**Starting task – Explore & Express, Respond & Interpret**

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Andrew Atchison 'To the point where we can see nothing, everything has become clear' 2012-2013  
<https://andrewatchison.com/to-the-point-where-we-can-see-nothing-everything-has-become-clear>

1. Collect a series of artworks by artists who use found objects including Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Merret Oppenheimer, Andy Warhol, Joseph Cornell, Rita McBride, Lawrence Welner, Certh Wyn Evans, Robert Smithson and contemporary artists such as Felix Gonzales-Torres, Stuart Ringholt, John Nixon, Masato Takasaka, Justene Williams, Robert Klippel, John Meade, Andrew Liversidge, Charlie Sofo and Lou Hubbard.
2. These images will form the basis for a work that is inspired by the work of Andrew Atchison. The steps will be included in your visual diary to plan and evaluate your artwork.
3. Annotate the images drawing on the following steps. You can consider:
  - the materials and techniques the artist has used
  - their use of visual conventions
  - the influences of ideas on the work of the artist.
  - What ideas the artist was trying to express? How have they used materials, techniques and visual conventions to express these ideas.

**To develop the artwork, here are some steps for annotation, generation and evaluation.**

Research

- I chose this image because.....
- This image gave me the idea to .....
- Here (the art elements and principles) are used to.....

Idea Generation – media and artwork trials – the students can do some small sketches of their ideas or photograph some trial sculptures.

I came up with this idea from looking at .....in my research. It links to these artworks because .....

Artwork development – evaluation of selected media trials and development of artwork.

I have chosen this as my final design because.....as it includes all the visual conventions/materials/techniques that I came up with in my artwork trials (the student can refer to the use of materials, techniques and visual conventions that relate to their expression of ideas.

Evaluation of final artwork

- My final artwork ..... looks like/doesn't look like I thought it would because.....
- During the making of my artwork I found it easy to.....because
- During the making of my artwork I found it challenging to .....because.....
- If I could make the artwork again, I would change .....

Throughout this unit of work, I have learnt how to/ about.....

**Achievement Standard Extract Addressed**

**Levels 7 and 8**

- Students identify and analyse how other artists use materials, techniques, technologies, processes and visual conventions to convey meaning.
- Students plan and make their artworks in response to the exploration of techniques, technologies and processes used in the work of other artists.

**Levels 9 and 10**

- Students analyse and evaluate how artists communicate ideas and convey meaning in artworks.
- Students identify the influences of other artists and analyse connections between techniques, processes and visual conventions in artworks to develop their own art practice.

**Assessment Criteria**

|  |
|--|
| Concept development using imagery as inspiration |
| Planning for an artwork                          |
| Annotates ideas                                  |

(\*Worksheet based on material developed by teachers involved in the VCAA Formative Assessment project, 2019)

## Formative Assessment sample Level 8 – 10

| <p><b>Learning continuum:</b><br/>Students express personal styles, themes and concepts in planning an artwork.</p> <p><b>Levels 7 and 8</b><br/>Students identify and analyse how other artists use materials, techniques, technologies, processes and visual conventions to convey meaning.<br/>Students plan and make their artworks in response to the exploration of techniques, technologies and processes used in the work of other artists.</p> <p><b>Levels 9 and 10</b><br/>Students analyse and evaluate how artists communicate ideas and convey meaning in artworks.<br/>Students identify the influences of other artists and analyse connections between techniques, processes and visual conventions in artworks to develop their own art practice.</p> | Phase 1  | Phase 2  | Phase 3   | Phase 4   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
|   | <p>Presents existing imagery and re-states information by identifying the influences of other artists and sources.</p> | <p>Explores existing imagery and analyses it to represent ideas and convey meaning in their own art works.</p> | <p>Analyses existing imagery and expands on it to express themes, concepts in planning for an artwork</p> | <p>Synthesises inspirational imagery, by analysing and evaluating concepts and themes to develop personal styles in their own art work.</p> |

| Organising element           | Action   | Insufficient evidence     | Quality criteria           |  |   |   |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Explores and expresses ideas | Concept development using imagery as inspiration | 1.0 Insufficient evidence | 1.1 Lists some information | 1.2 Presents information related to inspirational imagery                | 1.3 Makes connections between inspirational imagery | 1.4 Expresses personal ideas by synthesizing different sources of imagery |
|                              | Planning for an artwork                          | 2.0 Insufficient evidence | 2.1 Reproduces imagery     | 2.2 Generates an idea for an artwork that links to inspirational imagery | 2.3 Generates imagery that expresses a concept      | 2.4 Generates imagery that demonstrates a personal style                  |
|                              | Annotates ideas                                  | 3.0 Insufficient evidence | 3.1 Labels imagery         | 3.2 Presents information related to proposed artwork                     | 3.3 Explains concepts conveyed in proposed artworks | 3.4 Evaluates meaning of proposed artwork                                 |

**Curriculum Continuum Example – Level 8 Visual Arts**

| <b>Curriculum Level 8</b>           |   |   |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Content Description</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to explore and develop themes, concepts or ideas in artworks.</li> <li>• Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise their intentions in art works.</li> </ul> |   |  |  |
| <b>Achievement standard extract</b> | Students identify, analyse and evaluate how other artists use materials, techniques, technologies, processes and visual conventions to express ideas and convey meaning.  |   |  |  |
| <b>Learning continuum</b>           | <b>Phase 1</b>  | <b>Phase 2</b>  | <b>Phase 3</b>   | <b>Phase 4</b>   |
|                                     | Presents existing imagery and re-states information by identifying the influences of other artists and sources.   | Explores existing imagery and analyses it to represent ideas and convey meaning in their own art works. | Analyses existing imagery and expands on it to express themes, concepts in planning for an artwork | Synthesises inspirational imagery, by analysing and evaluating concepts and themes to develop personal styles in their own art work. |



**Charlie Sofo** Balls 2010

Found objects, paper, wool, electrical tape, foil, wood, stone  
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery

<https://www.heide.com.au/exhibitions/charlie-sofo-i-wander>

## Visual Arts

### Levels 7 and 8 curriculum links

**Strand:**

**Explore and Express Ideas**

**Content descriptions:**

Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to explore and develop themes, concepts or ideas in artworks ([VCAVAE033](#))

Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise their intentions in artworks ([VCAVAE034](#)).

**Strand:**

**Visual Arts Practices**

**Content descriptions:**

Experiment with materials, techniques, technologies and processes in a range of art forms to express ideas, concepts and themes in artworks ([VCAVAV035](#))

Develop skills in planning and designing artworks and documenting artistic practice ([VCAVAV036](#))

**Strand:**

**Present and Perform**

**Content description:**

Create and display artworks, describing how ideas are expressed to an audience ([VCAVAP037](#))

**Strand:**

**Respond and Interpret**

**Content description:**

Analyse how ideas and viewpoints are expressed in artworks and how they are viewed by audiences ([VCAVAR038](#))

Identify and connect specific features of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary times, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples ([VCAVAR039](#))

### **Relevant achievement standard extracts:**

- [Students] identify, analyse and evaluate how other artists use materials, techniques, technologies, processes and visual conventions to express ideas and convey meaning.
- Students plan and make their art works in response to exploration of techniques, technologies and processes used in the work of other artists.
- They demonstrate the use of materials, techniques, processes, visual conventions and technologies to express ideas and convey meaning in their artworks.
- Students identify and describe artworks and exhibitions from different cultures, times and places and how ideas are interpreted by audiences.

### **Sample key concepts and ideas**

- Critical and creative thinking can be used to discuss how artists express ideas about contemporary issues in society in their work.
- Critical and creative thinking can be used in art-making activities, for example using materials and techniques to express ideas on contemporary issues.

### **Discussion**

Lead a discussion about everyday materials and words.

- What is the main concept behind the artwork?
- How do you think the artist has expressed the idea?
- Consider the materials and techniques the artist has used to make the work and why he chose those materials.
- Describe how the artist has expressed the concept using visual conventions.

## **Critical and Creative Thinking**

### **Levels 7 and 8 curriculum links**

**Strand:** Reasoning

**Content description:** Consider how to settle matters of fact and matters of value and the degree of confidence in the conclusions  
([VCCCTR038](#))

### **Relevant achievement standard extract:**

Students explain different ways to settle matters of fact and matters of value and issues concerned with these.

### **Sample key concepts and ideas**

- Different disciplines have different ways of engaging with issues of fact and value, but they may share elements such as quality of evidence and its sources, and dispositions such as open-mindedness.
- Resolution of fact or value does not necessarily mean complete consensus. How much disagreement to tolerate is often determined within different disciplines (for example, an agreed process of peer review in science) or may depend on context.

- In an issue involving several stakeholders and several experts and non-experts, it should be considered who has authority over what and the best mode (citizen forum, academic papers) for reaching a resolution.

### **Sample learning activities**

Using a contemporary artwork discuss the concept of 'kitsch' and the role it might play in artworks.

#### **Initial discussion**

Before engaging with the artwork explore the concept of 'kitsch' in general with students.

- Ask: What is 'kitsch'?
- Consider related concepts, such as 'tacky' or 'cheap' or any similar terms students are inclined to use.
- Ask: How much is being 'kitsch' a fact about a work? How much is it a value judgment?
- Even if being 'kitsch' is overall a value judgment, are there certain qualities that 'kitsch' objects have? What are they?
- Are these things qualities in the object (colours, forms) or facts about the purpose or some other aspect of the work?

#### **Responding to the artwork**

Present the artwork to students.

Ask students to look at the artwork and read its didactic label.

#### **Further discussion**

Students discuss the following in small groups and report back to the class:

- Why has the artist chosen these particular 'kitsch' objects?
- What makes these particular objects 'kitsch'?
- How does the choice of these items contribute to the message of the work?
- How important is it that the viewer shares the artist's interpretation of these works as 'kitsch'?

Following reports from the small groups, prompt the class as a whole to consider:

- Where are the points of agreement and disagreement between groups?
- Are there areas of disagreement about particular facts or are the disagreements about value judgments?
- How important is it to resolve these disagreements?

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### **Additional Visual Arts and Critical Creative Thinking learning activities**

Explore how text has been used by artists in the history of art. Look at artworks by Andrew Atchison, Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kasuth, Angela Brennan, Agatha Gothe-Snape, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Roy Lichtenstein, Lawrence Weiner, Ed Ruscha, Bob and Roberta Smith, Jon Campbell and Jean Michel-Basquiat. Complete the activities in this resource using some of the artworks.