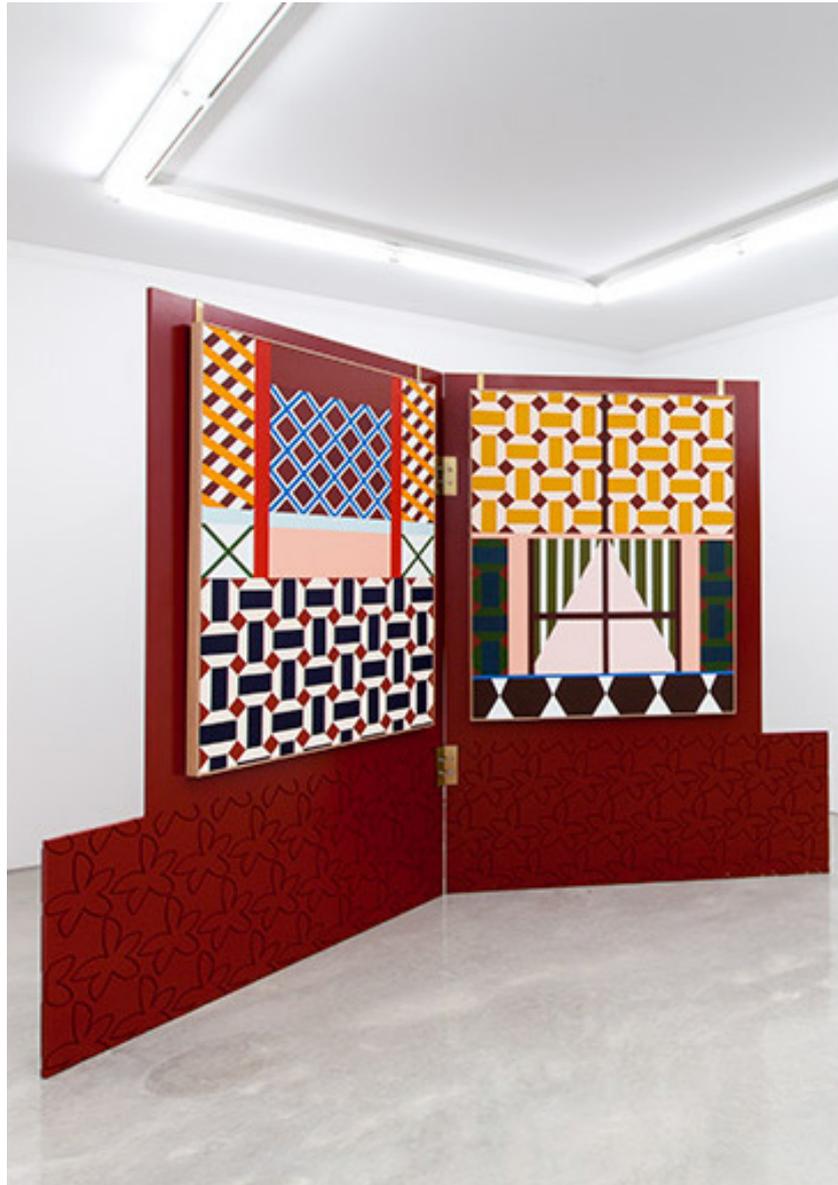


Esther Stewart



Esther Stewart, *Behind Closed Doors*, 2016, installation view at Sarah Cottier, Sydney.

Contemporary Art on the Road is a unique program that provides teachers with 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.

Contemporary Art on the Road is funded by the Department of Education and Training Victoria (DET) through the Strategic Partnerships Program (SPP) and partnered with the following organisations:



Contemporary Art on the Road is an initiative developed by Gertrude Contemporary and in partnership with Monash University Museum of Art, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and three regional Victorian galleries: Latrobe Regional Gallery, Horsham Regional Art Gallery and Shepparton Art Museum.



About the Artist

Esther Stewart (b. 1988 Katherine, Australia) creates paintings and installations that examine the endless possibilities offered by the visual language of architecture, design and geometry. In her hands, the axioms of Euclidian geometry result in new and utopian interiors that are both impenetrable and inviting. Stewart's practice makes use of paintings, carpets, flags and screens in her construction of architectural experience, establishing a space between form and function, art and design.

Stewart's hard-edged geometric abstractions invoke a complex genealogy of historical references, simultaneously calling upon the techniques of Islamic mosaic, Russian Suprematism and Constructivism, and Neo Geo & Memphis Group design from the 1980s. This extensive visual vocabulary is harnessed to describe a unique fictional space that references different ideas, times and cultures to construct new work.

She holds a Master of Arts and Cultural Management from the University of Melbourne and a Bachelor of

Fine Arts (with Honours) in Sculpture and Spatial Practice from the Victorian College of the Arts. Her works have been shown at: *Melbourne Art Fair 2018*, Bowerbank Ninow, Sarah Cottier Gallery, Heide Museum of Modern Art, TCB, First Draft, Australian Centre of Contemporary Art, Two Rooms, Auckland; *Art Copenhagen*, Denmark and *Víctor Lope Arte Contemporáneo*, Barcelona. In 2016 she was the recipient of the Sir John Sulman Prize for the work *Flatland Dreaming*. Stewart is represented by Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney.

What ideas/ concepts do you base your artworks on?

I am currently interested in the architectural spaces of artists homes and studios and mythology that surrounds them. I have an ongoing interest in architectural and theatre models and 1970's DIY that continually feed into how I think about what I am making.

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

Many of the western art historical movements that I engage with are male dominated, I see it as important to change the diversity of voices that are heard and seen in our cultural spaces. I enjoy revisiting ideas previously presented and subverting them. I engage with ideas about domestication and decoration and love seeing these ideas within an art context.

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

I begin by researching. I am always interested in the space where the work will be presented and research this as well. I like my works to be context and site specific. Engaging directly with the architecture of the site they will go into. I am also constantly collecting images and ideas even when I don't have a project in mind. I keep a note book and also tend to look back at past works as starting points or for ideas about how to improve something I have already been thinking about.

How has your practice evolved over time?

While my interests haven't changed dramatically, the way that I think about my areas of research especially in relationship to how they relate to my own lived experience has changed. It wasn't until my third year studying sculpture and spatial practice that I established and defined my research interests. At the time of graduating I would have defined these as: portable architecture, minimalism and hard edge abstraction and the future of domestic spaces. Now, I would define my area of research more broadly as an interest in domestic architecture and how that reflects my communities' ideas about, gender, class and race.

Who are your biggest influences?

I am currently reading a lot of short fiction and am interested in the way this format of creative writing can communicate complex narratives in such a short and succinct way. I am trying to expand and develop ways of including a person narrative into my work using similar multi-layered narrative processes.

Workshop Summary

A model: process as practice

Artists have and continue to use models as a way of developing and exploring ideas. Models have the capacity to articulate ideas quickly and generate new ideas. The process of creating models continually presents new possibilities for reconsidering how materials inherently behave.

This workshop will focus on developing an artistic practice that interrogates sculptural concepts of scale, location and material to generate a deepening of studio processes and practices. The workshop will focus on the exploration of materials and their transition through scale as an informative process that enables for greater understanding of space. Participants will be guided through a series of investigations and demonstrations to produce concepts for a model.

Introduction: (30 mins):

Esther will begin the workshop by presenting her body of work to the group. She will discuss the references she draws inspiration from and the techniques she uses in her practice including model making, painting and sculpture. She will situate her practice amongst art history and contemporary arts practice.

Overview + Discussion (15 mins):

Esther will provide an overview to what will be undertaken in the workshop. The aim of this workshop is to look at model making as a way of quickly articulating ideas in 3D. Using cardboard as a simple and assessible material the group will create their own models of a specific piece of architecture in Shepparton. Discussion points and visual examples will include some of Esther's own models and drawings from past works.

Topics for discussion: abstraction and representation, prop and model making and communication of ideas in three dimensions.

Production Phase (1.25 Hours):

This component of the workshop invites participants to explore the possibility of using accessible tools to create an architectural model. Participants will start by taking photos of a piece of architecture in Shepparton. They will be shown how to simplify the forms within their chosen architecture to make it in miniature scale while still maintaining the essence of the building. They will do a series of drawings to understand how to bring a sense of volume to simple drawings.

Using cardboard, scissors, cutting blades and mats - participants will be shown how to cut shapes to build a free standing model. Participants will then look at the models potential to inspire other artistic works, such as photographs, paintings, plans, and large scale models.

Additional task: Participants can decorate their models with geometric, or tessellating shapes using color pencils, textas, paints or collage.

Materials List

Note book + pencil
Photo/s of the structure that will be modelled.
Cardboard
Scissors
Cutting blade
Cutting matt

Goals and Objectives

- Through critical and creative re-thinking of found historical artworks and imagery, students will learn how to situate their works within the canon of art history.
- Students will learn how to transform a two dimensional image into a three dimensional form.
- Students will analyse the crossover of art, architecture, design and geometry.
- Students are encouraged to think about appropriation, remix and referencing found images, in a similar way to Esther's use of 1970's DIY catalogues.
- Students are encouraged to think about how a model can assist in the planning of a sculpture or installation and the critical engagement of a form in three dimensions.

The activity aims to:

- Expand students knowledge about art histories, concepts and techniques.
- Encourage imagination, enjoyment and a personal aesthetic through engagement with scale, geometry, pattern making, colour and decoration.
- Teach students to express themselves through model making and decoration.
- Expand student's critical and creative thinking, using visual languages and art history.

Learning Activity

Discussion

- Discuss Islamic mosaic, Russian Suprematism and Constructivism, and Neo Geometry & Memphis Group culture and art history. Who are significant artists that fit these categories? (Vladimir Tatlin, Alexander Rodchenko, Kazimir Malevich, El Lissitzky and Memphis Group).
- How does Esther use found imagery or DIY books? Talk about design, appropriation, remix.
- Why is it important to create models? Discuss the benefits to making a model of a space for exhibition or sculptural work.
- Discuss how three dimensional and two dimensional outcomes differ in communicating meaning.

Concept Development

Students should begin by undertaking research and discussing the history of Russian Suprematism, Constructivism and Neo - Geometry and look at the presence of design in major institutions such as The Museum of Modern Art or National Gallery of Victoria. Students should build a collection of architectural or design images that appeal to them and will act as a catalyst for their models.

Production

Participants will start by taking photos of buildings or furniture in and around their home or school. Using these photos as a guide, they should draw a simplified form. In their drawings they should try to bring in a sense of volume. Students should draw the form from multiple angles to build a understanding of their object as a whole.

Using cardboard, scissors, cutting blades and mats - students should cut out shapes, that when adjoined build a free standing model. Students should think critically and creatively at the model's potential to inspire other artistic works, such as photographs, paintings, plans, and large scale models.

Additional task: Participants can decorate their models with geometric, tessellating shapes using color pencils, textas, paints or collage.

Links to Curriculum

VISUAL ART EXPLORE & EXPRESS

Levels F – 6

Investigate the ways in which Esther Stewart explores ideas, techniques and materials in her artworks. How are these expressed?

Levels 7 – 10

Explore the practices of Esther Stewart. Through discussion of Esther's use of objects and instruments, examine how she expresses her ideas and develops a particular style with her work. Discuss her work in terms of the history that she reflects. Relate her work to the practices of other artists from different times and cultures. From this discussion, students should develop their own artistic practice through the use of inspiration, materials, techniques and processes to develop their own works.

VISUAL ARTS PRACTICE

Levels F – 6

Based on the artworks of Esther Stewart, students explore materials, techniques and processes. They should identify and describe the use of these in the production of their artworks.

Levels 7 – 10

Think about Esther's intentions when she commences making her work. Discuss her artistic practice. Research a range of artists work, similar to that of Esther as a starting point. Explore materials, techniques and processes to develop an individual artistic intention.

VISUAL ART PRESENT AND PERFORM

View an exhibition of Esther Stewart's work. This could be an online exhibition, or images of an exhibition in a commercial gallery or an example of Esther's work in a public space or public gallery. The students should then plan their own exhibition of their artworks. They should consider who their audience will be and how they wish the audience to interpret the artwork - whilst thinking about ways to communicate their intent.

VISUAL ART RESPOND AND INTERPRET

Level F – 6

Respond to Esther's artwork by identifying and describing techniques and ideas. Consider how and where she makes her work.

Level 7 – 10

Analyse and interpret Esther's artworks discussing ideas and viewpoints. Compare her work with works by other contemporary artists to identify characteristics and features of the works.

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 Esther has used materials and techniques, and interpreted ideas and sources of inspiration in producing her 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 Esther uses found images, 1970's DIY catalogues, appropriation and remix.

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 Esther's artist biography and above interview questions to understand the path of her professional development.

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 her website examine several of Esther's exhibition outcomes. Discuss the presentation methods used and what they communicate to the viewer.

Glossary

Architecture - the art or practice of designing and constructing buildings.

Axioms - a statement or proposition which is regarded as being established, accepted, or self-evidently true.

Constructivism - a style or movement in which assorted mechanical objects are combined into abstract mobile structural forms. The movement originated in Russia in the 1920s and has influenced many aspects of modern architecture and design.

Design - a plan or drawing produced to show the look and function or workings of a building, garment, or other object before it is built or made.

DIY (Do-It-Yourself) - the activity of decorating, building, and making fixtures and repairs by oneself rather than employing a professional.

Domestication - the process of making someone or something fond of and good at home life and the tasks that it involves.

Euclidean geometry - the plane and solid geometry commonly taught in secondary schools.

Fictional - relating to or occurring in fiction. Something that is invented or untrue.

Genealogy - the study and tracing of lines of descent.

Geometry - the branch of mathematics concerned with the properties and relations of points, lines, surfaces, solids, and higher dimensional analogues.

Hard-edge abstraction - is painting in which abrupt transitions are found between colour areas. Colour areas are often of one unvarying colour.

Impenetrable - impossible to pass through or enter.

Inherently - in a permanent, essential, or characteristic way.

Installation - the action of installing someone or something, or the state of being installed. In fine art this refers to an artwork produced for a specific site.

Portable architecture - anything that can be carried out or moved with ease.

Memphis Group - an Italian design and architecture group founded by Ettore Sottsass in 1980 that designed Postmodern furniture, fabrics, ceramics, glass, and metal objects - using bright colours and abstract forms.

Minimalism - a movement in sculpture and painting which arose in the 1950s, characterized by the use of simple forms.

Mythology - a collection of myths, especially one belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition.

Neo Geometry - an art movement that utilizes geometric abstraction and criticizes the industrialism and consumerism of modern society.

Russian Suprematism - an art movement, focused on basic geometric forms, such as circles, squares, lines, and rectangles, painted in a limited range of colours.

Subvert - undermine the power and authority of (an established system or institution).

Three Dimensional - having or appearing to have length, breadth, and depth.

Utopian - modelled on or aiming for a state in which everything is perfect; idealistic.

Western art - successive periods and/or movements, including classical, medieval, Byzantine, Romanesque, Renaissance, baroque, rococo, neoclassicism, Romanticism, realism, Impressionism, modernism and postmodernism.

Assessment Rubric – Contemporary Artist Practice – Level 4

Visual Arts Level 4 Achievement Standard

Students investigate the ways in which the artist explores ideas, techniques and materials in their work and plan their own art works.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
<p><i>Students identify the artist use of materials and techniques.</i></p>	<p><i>Students describe artist's use of materials and techniques and representation of ideas.</i></p> <p><i>There is a link between the artist's work and the student's work.</i></p>	<p><i>Students identify the ideas that the artist has explored in their work. These ideas are reflected in the student work.</i></p>	<p><i>Students describe the artist has explored ideas, materials and techniques in their work. The student has used the same ideas in their own work.</i></p>	<p><i>Students evaluate how the artist has explored ideas, materials and techniques in their work. The student can link the use of ideas, materials and techniques in their own work and link it to the artists work.</i></p>

Organising element	Action	Insufficient Evidence	Quality criteria				
<i>Exploration of artist use of materials and techniques</i>	<i>Documentation of materials and techniques in relation to ideas.</i>	<i>Insufficient Evidence</i>	<i>Materials are identified in the artist work.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are discussed in short sentences.</i>		<i>Materials and techniques are described and related to ideas in the work.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are analysed in relation to ideas. The artist's exploration is described.</i>
<i>Student use of materials and techniques.</i>	<i>Exploration of materials and techniques in relation to artists work.</i>	<i>Insufficient Evidence</i>	<i>Use of materials and techniques are evident.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are explored in drawings.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are explored with annotated drawings that relate to the artist's ideas.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are explored demonstrating the student's own personal ideas that relate to the artist's ideas. There are some annotations.</i>	<i>Materials and techniques are explored through annotated drawings demonstrating the students own personal ideas that relate to the artist's ideas.</i>
<i>Art work planning</i>	<i>Students plan their own artwork.</i>	<i>Insufficient Evidence</i>	<i>A plan is evident in the visual diary.</i>	<i>The artwork plan documents the use of materials and techniques and student ideas.</i>	<i>The artwork plan relates to the exploration of materials and ideas and the artist's work.</i>	<i>The artwork plan demonstrates an exploration of materials and techniques that relates to the artist's ideas and work.</i>	<i>The artwork plan demonstrates an exploration of materials and techniques that builds on previous work and expands on the ideas expressed by the artist.</i>

Learning continuum and Formative assessment rubric– Level 4 - 6

VISUAL DIARY – The purpose of a visual diary is to document the creative process from inspiration through to reflection to improve their visual arts practice.

<p>By the end of Level 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students plan and make artworks that are inspired by artworks they experience. They discuss and evaluate the art making processes, materials and techniques they use to express their ideas. <p>By the end of Level 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make and view. They describe the influences of artworks and practices places on their artmaking.

Curriculum Span:			
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
<p>Students at this stage have attempted with assistance to use their visual diary to plan, research and document. Annotations and drawings show some links to artists being explored. Some documentation or verbal discussion of visual conventions.</p>	<p>Students at this stage students have attempted with some assistance to use their visual diary to plan, research and document. Annotations and drawings show some links to artists being explored. Visual conventions and purpose are used to document their thinking.</p>	<p>Students at this stage have independently used their visual diary to plan, research and experiment artworks in their visual diary that express some ideas and show how they have been influenced by artists being explored. Visual conventions and purpose are used to document their thinking.</p>	<p>Students at this stage explicitly plan, research, annotate and experiment artworks in their visual diary that express a wide range of ideas and clearly show how they have been influenced by artists being explored. Students have generated their own viewpoint within their planning. Visual conventions and purpose are used to document their thinking.</p>

Organising element/s	Action		Quality criteria			
Preliminary planning	Skill – use of visual conventions	Insufficient evidence	Draws using media.	Draws using the media to create visual conventions,	Draws using techniques with the media to create visual conventions.	Draws demonstrating technical control of the media to create visual conventions.
	Concepts -expresses ideas, meaning and emotion based on stimulus	Insufficient evidence	Draws subject matter.	Draws ideas that respond to the stimulus.	Expresses ideas through drawings that build on the ideas in the stimulus material.	Expresses ideas through drawings that extend on the ideas in the stimulus material to present a personal viewpoint.
Annotations to explain	Annotation of materials and techniques for preliminary drawings and experimentation	Insufficient evidence	Annotates using key words.	Annotations identifying properties of materials, techniques and visual conventions	Annotations describe the properties of materials, technique and visual conventions	Annotations describe and evaluate the use of materials, techniques and visual conventions to communicate the meaning of the artwork.
	Annotation of relationship to artist/inspiration material. (Book, Artist, Inquiry, Object)	Insufficient evidence	Identifies the artist	Describes the visual elements within their own work and the artwork studied.	Relates observations to ideas by describing the visual conventions used in their own and the artist's and/or artwork.	Explains observational and conceptual ideas by comparing the visual conventions, concepts and/or style/period between their own and the artist's artwork.

Level 5/6 Media Arts

Learning Continuum & Formative Assessment Rubric

<p>Level 6 Achievement Standard</p> <p>By the end of Level 6, students explain how viewpoints, ideas and stories are shaped and portrayed in media artworks they make, share and view.</p>	<i>Curriculum Span:</i>			
	<i>Step 1</i>	<i>Step 2</i>	<i>Step 3</i>	<i>Step 4</i>
	<i>Students structure a media product.</i>	<i>Students develop an understanding of audience and purpose in a media product.</i>	<i>Students structure a media product demonstrating the relationship of audience and purpose.</i>	<i>Students use intent and structure in a media product for a specific audience and purpose.</i>

Organising element/s	Action		Quality criteria			
Planning of a media product with purpose for a targeted audience.	Selection of message with purpose.	<i>Insufficient evidence</i>	<i>Selects message</i>	<i>Selects message for a purpose</i>	<i>Selects message for a purpose and audience.</i>	<i>Selects a message with intention for a specific audience and purpose.</i>
	Communication of ideas through documentation and storyboard	<i>Insufficient evidence</i>	<i>Lists ideas in dot points.</i>	<i>Identifies ideas relating to message.</i>	<i>Describes ideas relating to message.</i>	<i>Expands on ideas relating to intention and message.</i>
	Development of story line and characters in animation.	<i>Insufficient evidence</i>	<i>Sequenced story line</i>	<i>Story line connects to purpose.</i>	<i>Story line connects to purpose and audience.</i>	<i>Story line explains specific purpose of the message to the intended audience.</i>

Formative Assessment Rubric – Contemporary Artist Practice – Level 6

<p>Visual Arts Level 6 Achievement Standard</p> <p>Students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make and view. They demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks.</p>
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Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
<p>Students identify the artist use of materials and techniques.</p>	<p>Students describe artist's use of materials and techniques and representation of ideas.</p> <p>There is a link between the artist's work and the student's work.</p>	<p>Students identify the ideas that the artist has explored in their work. These ideas are reflected in the student work.</p>	<p>Students describe the artist has explored ideas, materials and techniques in their work. The student has used the same ideas in their own work.</p>	<p>Students evaluate how the artist has explored ideas, materials and techniques in their work. The student can link the use of ideas, materials and techniques in their own work and link it to the artists work.</p>

Organising element	Action	Insufficient Evidence	Quality criteria				
Exploration of artist use of materials and techniques	Documentation of materials and techniques in relation to ideas.	Insufficient Evidence	Materials are identified in the artist work.	Materials and techniques are discussed in short sentences.		Materials and techniques are described and related to ideas in the work.	Materials and techniques are analysed in relation to ideas. The artist's exploration is described.
Student use of materials and techniques.	Exploration of materials and techniques in relation to artists work.	Insufficient Evidence	Use of materials and techniques are evident.	Materials and techniques are explored in drawings.	Materials and techniques are explored with annotated drawings that relate to the artist's ideas.	Materials and techniques are explored demonstrating the student's own personal ideas that relate to the artist's ideas. There are some annotations.	Materials and techniques are explored through annotated drawings demonstrating the students own personal ideas that relate to the artist's ideas.
Art work planning	Students plan their own artwork.	Insufficient Evidence	A plan is evident in the visual diary.	The artwork plan documents the use of materials and techniques and student ideas.	The artwork plan relates to the exploration of materials and ideas and the artist's work.	The artwork plan demonstrates an exploration of materials and techniques that relates to the artist's ideas and work.	The artwork plan demonstrates an exploration of materials and techniques that builds on previous work and expands on the ideas expressed by the artist.