



# TIMOTHY HORN

Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Divided Worlds

ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

NORTH TERRACE, ADELAIDE Open daily 10am–5pm [artgallery.sa.gov.au](http://artgallery.sa.gov.au)



## TIMOTHY HORN

Melbourne-born, Timothy Horn is a leading contemporary artist and designer living and working in Massachusetts (USA). Horn reinterprets forms found in nature into sculptural works made from blown glass, cast crystal and various metals. His work references decorative art objects and often explore the intersection between natural and constructed worlds.

A seventeenth century pattern for a hair-ornament was the starting point for Horn's *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)*. Horn magnified and expanded the pattern before creating a structure in wax and casting it in bronze, which was then nickel-plated to transform its surface. The subtitle *Trident* references a human-made catastrophe – specifically the Chernobyl nuclear disaster of 1986 and the Trident tree, a tree deformed as the result of radiation exposure. The term trident is also the name for a three-pronged spear attributed to Neptune, Greek god of the sea and earthquakes.



image (cover and above): Timothy Horn, Australia/United States, born 1964, *Tree of Heaven 7 (Trident)*, 2016, Burlington, Vermont, United States, nickel-plated bronze, mirrored blown glass, 185.0 x 119.0 x 15.0 cm; Courtesy the artist and PPOW Gallery, New York, photo: Ethan Bond-Watts

## IN THE COLLECTION – GORGONIA 5 (FULL FATHOM FIVE), 2015

*Gorgonia 5 (full fathom five)*, 2015 was inspired by seventeenth century jewellery patterns by Gilles Légaré court jeweller to Louis XIV's and illustrations of lichen (fungus), coral and seaweed in zoologist Ernst Haeckel's nineteenth century book, *Art Forms in Nature*. Horn visited Australia's Great Barrier Reef in 2008 where he witnessed the damaging effects of climate change on the coral that forms the world's largest living structure. *Gorgonia 5 (full fathom five)* addresses Horn's concern about climate change and human contribution to environmental disasters.



### DID YOU KNOW

The title *Gorgonia 5* references gorgonian coral. This coral is soft and commonly known as sea fans due to its flat and branching forms. There are about 500 species found particularly in the oceans of the western Atlantic and the West Indies.

image: Timothy Horn, Australia/United States, born 1964, *Gorgonia 5 (full fathom five)*, 2015, Burlington, Vermont, United States, nickel plated bronze, mirrored blown glass, 213.0 x 244.0 x 22.8 cm; James & Diana Ramsay Fund assisted by Helen Bowden in memory of her husband John Bowden 2015, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; Courtesy the artist

### DID YOU KNOW

Gilles Légaré was a Parisian jeweller to Louis XIV who was known for his highly decorative broches with mounted stones and painted enamel flowers and leaves. Horn's *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)* and *Gorgonia 15 (Sycorax)* were inspired by a hair-ornament and chandelier earring pattern by Légaré.

## GEOGRAPHY: LAND COVER TRANSFORMATIONS – SENIOR SECONDARY

Biologist and artist Ernst Haeckel (1834 – 1919) created over 100 detailed and multicoloured illustrations of animals and sea creatures. Compare these nineteenth century coral formation studies to scientific images available today. Evaluate the reliability, validity and usefulness of both these sources. How can images of coral from the nineteenth century inform your understanding of how coral reefs have altered, as a result of human activity?

'The title *Full Fathom Five* is a quote from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Ariel's song spoken by Ferdinand, who believes his father has drowned in a storm at sea. A fathom is a unit of measurement equal to the span a person's outstretched arms. Fathom, also refers to a problem difficult to comprehend' – Timothy Horn. Assess the effectiveness of programs currently in place to restore or rehabilitate the Great Barrier Reef. Compare the effects of climate change on coral reefs in Australia to other locations in the world.

## EARLY YEARS



image detail: Timothy Horn, Australia/United States, born 1964, *Gorgonia 12 (Strange Love)*, 2016, Burlington, Vermont, United States, nickel-plated bronze, mirrored blown glass, 213.0 x 335.0 x 17.0 cm; Courtesy the artist and PPOW Gallery, New York, photo: Ethan Bond-Watts

### RESPONDING

What does *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)* remind you of?

Which parts of *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)* appear smooth or rough?

### MAKING

Biologist and artist Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919) created over 100 detailed and multicoloured illustrations of animals and sea creatures. Look closely at the work by Horn and engravings by Haeckel. What similarities do you notice about these artists' works? Select a natural form such as coral, flowers, leaves or plants. Look at your specimen through a magnifying glass. Draw an enlarged and detailed version of your specimen.

Create a collage using a combination of natural and manufactured items. When designing your work of art consider texture, colour, contrast and balance.

## PRIMARY

### RESPONDING

Describe *Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom Five)* in as much detail as possible. Based on your description, if this work of art was a person who would it be and why?

With a friend brainstorm what you know about the Great Barrier Reef and coral generally. Compare your responses to your observations of *Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom Five)*.

Define the terms decorative art and fine art. Find examples of each category as you explore the Gallery. Can you find any works of art that could be considered both decorative and fine art? Share your findings with your class.

### MAKING

*Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom Five)* references a hair ornament pattern designed by Gilles Légaré, a French goldsmith from the seventeenth century, who made jewels for the King of France. Think of someone you admire. Design a piece of wearable art for this person. Consider how your choice of patterns, colours and any embellishments connect with the person you are designing it for.

Create a sculptural work of art from recycled plastics or plasticine that celebrates the extraordinary beauty of a natural environment such as the Great Barrier Reef or a national park. Join your pieces together to create a collaborative class installation.

## SECONDARY

### RESPONDING

After viewing Horn's work, explore the Gallery's permanent collection. Select a decorative work of art and pair it with either *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)* or *Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom Five)*. Why did you make this selection?

Baroque works of art are often described as exaggerated or overdecorated. Research works of art created during the Baroque period. Explain how Horn's work has been inspired by the Baroque. Compare Horn's work to that of Kate Rohde.

Compare Horn's *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)* and *Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom Five)* to *We Hunt Mammoth* by Sean Cordeiro and Clare Healy also on display in *Divided Worlds*. Discuss the following statement: 'Artists Sean Cordeiro and Clare Healy and Timothy Horn respond to human impact on the world'.

Horn sometimes references Greek mythology, such as the trident, a three-pronged spear attributed to Neptune Greek god of the sea and earthquakes, and Gorgon or Medusa, a winged human female with venomous snakes in place of hair (snaking and branching forms). Locate other works of art in the Gallery's collection that reference Greek mythology. Suggest some reasons why you think Greek mythology remains a source of inspiration for contemporary artists today.



image: Claire Healy, Australia, born 1971, Sean Cordeiro, Australia, born 1974, *We hunt mammoth*, 2015, KAIR, Kamiyama Artist In Residence, Shikoku, Japan, 121 bagged components (entire Honda) in jute and bamboo using traditional Japanese method for packaging, dimensions variable; Courtesy the artists and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, photo: Keizo Konishi

## HISTORY: THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT (YEAR 10)

Significant events contributed to popular awareness of environmental issues, such as the nuclear accident at Chernobyl in 1986.

### RESPONDING

Research the immediate and long term impact the Chernobyl accident has had on the natural environment.

Investigate this incident and discuss how Horn has referenced this event in his work. Using Horn's *Tree of Heaven 8 (Trident)*, evaluate its reliability and usefulness as a historical source in understanding the Chernobyl disaster. With your class debate whether Horn's work of art is a primary or secondary source.

## SECONDARY (continued)

### MAKING

Horn creates works of art that respond to the intersection between the natural and the constructed worlds. Research a human-made event in Australia which has had a devastating environmental impact. Create a work of art that responds to this event.

Horn fuses his interest in seventeenth century jewellery with nineteenth century studies of natural forms. Investigate the following as sources of inspiration:

- Baroque costume jewellery
- Botanical illustrations by Ernst Haeckel
- Contemporary artists Julie Blyfield, Lauren Simeoni or Catherine Truman.

Create a wearable piece of art inspired by antique jewellery making of the past and the natural world.

**TIP** Try using recycled aluminium cans or wire.

The branching forms in *Gorgonia 5 (Full Fathom 5)* references the Gorgon or Medusa of ancient Greek mythology. Research a mythological figure such as Aphrodite, Artemis, Demeter, Poseidon and Zeus. Create a work of art that captures the essence of your character.



image: Julie Blyfield, Australia, born 1957, *Dog wattle vessel*, 2007, Gray Street Workshop, Adelaide, blackened copper, 10.0 x 8.2 cm; Ed and Sue Tweddell Fund for South Australian Contemporary Art 2007, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Courtesy Julie Blyfield

## RESOURCES

Craft – Kate Rohde  
<http://bit.ly/2BW73Ru>

Lux Art Institute – Timothy Horn’s Ornate and Sweet Sculpture  
<http://bit.ly/2FHCiSy>

Timothy Horn  
<http://bit.ly/2EColjU>

### VIDEO

Timothy Horn – Lux Art Institute  
<http://bit.ly/2s6bGIQ>  
<http://bit.ly/2EEeT4S>

Timothy Horn artist talk - The Vermont Studio Centre  
<http://bit.ly/2E0FB6X>

PPOW – Artist: Timothy Horn  
<http://bit.ly/2oaf13g>

The Gallery’s Learning programs are supported by the Department for Education and Child Development.