



ROBYN STACEY

Ray of Light

ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

NORTH TERRACE, ADELAIDE Open daily 10am–5pm artgallery.sa.gov.au



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

The activities suggested in this resource link with the Australian Curriculum: Arts (Visual Arts) through the strands of Responding and Making, providing opportunities for students to experience and explore the concepts of artists, artworks, world and audience. These can be used as a starting point to consider a range of perspectives within the context of social, cultural and historical viewpoints.

Some of the ways students can learn more about contemporary art include:

- Responding by using eyes, ears and imaginations
- Discussing how and why works are made and displayed
- Investigating the diversity of contemporary art forms
- Exploring techniques and materials
- Making by experimenting with new or familiar materials
- Using art to tell their own story

By viewing works of art in the Gallery and initiating dialogue with students Australian Curriculum outcomes can be met with ease.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The varied learning opportunities presented in the Gallery's collection of contemporary art align with multiple Australian Curriculum areas including Arts, English, History, Mathematics and Science. In addition, the resource supports the cross curriculum priorities of Sustainability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, and Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia; and the General Capabilities of building Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability and Ethical Understanding.

KEY LITERACY WORDS

Camera obscura	Vanishing point
Perspective	Lens
Landscape	Colour
Light	Texture
View finder	Sound
Composition	Atmosphere

RESOURCES

ABC – How to make a camera obscura
<https://ab.co/2BzGLcO>

Artlink – Robyn Stacey
<http://bit.ly/2MENMx8>

The Cedars
<http://bit.ly/2Lhb8US>

Museum of Brisbane – Robyn Stacey Cloud Land
<http://bit.ly/2OVMCL3>

The Magic of the Dark Chamber: The Camera Obscura
<http://bit.ly/2PqZqKF>

Sydney Morning Herald – Robyn Stacey's Dark Wonders of Camera Obscura
<http://bit.ly/2wfpTC9>



image detail: Robyn Stacey, Australia, born 1952, *Comfort Inn Riviera, SAH/MRI*, 2016, Adelaide, type C photograph, 110.0 x 146.7 cm (image and sheet); Courtesy the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

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ROBYN STACEY – RAY OF LIGHT



Robyn Stacey with her work *Lighthouse Wharf Hotel, Port Adelaide, 2016*; photo: Daniel Boud.

Using the camera obscura, Robyn Stacey depicts the city of Adelaide as it has never been seen before. The camera obscura, which translated from the Latin means 'dark room', is an optical device of wonder, whereby the external world is trapped and inverted within the room.

Stacey has selected many sites across the city, including Carrick Hill, the SAHMRI Building, The Cedars at Hahndorf, Parliament House, Port Adelaide, the Brookman Building at the University of South Australia and the South Australian Institute Building, converting these spaces into temporary camera obscura.

Stacey installed a camera obscura by affixing a lens onto a small area of a window and blocking out all other light sources to the room. The result was an inverted view of the external surroundings, cast onto one of the walls in the room. Stacey then photographed each of these views – street scenes, buildings and gardens – as they appeared in each room.

By taking photography back to its most analogue of forms, Stacey becomes, quite literally, a painter of light. Using a slow shutter speed to capture each camera obscura's projected image at its most vivid, the artist reveals Adelaide landmarks cemented in place and time. For example, her photograph of the SAHMRI building and North Terrace skyline was taken before the new university buildings were constructed, while the hotel room she chose to work in at The Lighthouse Wharf Hotel has since been renovated.

For the enjoyment and interest of visitors, room-sized camera obscuras will be installed at selected venues alongside the exhibition of photographs, including the Walkway Gallery in Bordertown, Riddoch Art Gallery in Mount Gambier and the Hahndorf Academy. The *Ray of Light* exhibition will tour regionally until 2020.

PRIMARY



image: Robyn Stacey, Australia, born 1952, *King William Room, Parliament House*, 2016, Adelaide, type C photograph, 110.0 x 146.7 cm (image and sheet); Courtesy the artist and Darren Knight Gallery,

RESPONDING

Use Stacey's camera obscura photographs as a prompt to demonstrate how light travels in a straight path.

Look at the sites depicted in Stacey's photographs. Other than being taken in Adelaide, what do these places have in common?

MAKING

Make your own camera obscura. <http://bit.ly/2LgdROi>

Aim the pinhole toward an interesting building at your school. If you move closer or further away, does this image change? In what way does this image differ from the building itself?

Using the camera obscura, draw the basic shapes and lines on the building. After removing the paper, you may use this sketch for the basis of a larger piece with an emphasis on one or two point perspective.

As a class, research the significant advancements in photographic processes that have occurred since the invention of the camera in the 1800s to the present day. In pairs select a technique or camera. As a class, create a visual timeline to illustrate the variations of approaches to photography. Create a replica of the camera or process from that era.

TIP When examining the invention of the Kodak Box Brownie students might:

- Research a photographer who used the Brownie. Find examples of his/her work and compare how the visual quality of the photographs differs from today's digital prints.
- Appropriate images from that era (consider style, colour or composition). Students may use Photoshop to re-create.
- Re-create a replica Brownie
- Present in their classroom, a physical timeline of photography using the images and objects created as a result of their research.

SECONDARY

RESPONDING

Stacey has included *The Cedars*, home to Hans Heysen after 1912, in her series. The oil painting *Red Gold*, 1913 by Hans Heysen depicts the junction between Hahndorf and Mt Barker, not far from *The Cedars*. Light plays an important part in both artists' practice. Although the photographic process has often been referred to as 'painting with light', Heysen was well renowned for capturing the beauty of early morning light with paint. In groups discuss how light is a fundamental component in the work of Heysen and Stacey.

In the artist's own words, these bewildering photographs become 'a mash-up of inside and outside'. In pairs, select one photograph by Stacey and discuss the connection between the outside scene and the building interior?

MAKING

Both Heysen and Stacey have captured the Australian landscape, emphasising the grandeur of the eucalyptus trees. Instead of looking wide, like Heysen and Stacey, look closer. Take a photograph of a eucalyptus tree. Use a viewfinder to crop your image, highlighting texture and colour. Use your photo as a reference for a larger painting.

Record a soundscape to accompany Stacey's works. This sound may include spoken text, a poem or your own free writing to complement the imagery.

THINK AND DISCUSS

Imagine the world without digital cameras. How would our lives benefit as a result?



image: Robyn Stacey, Australia, born 1952, *Studio, The Cedars*, 2016, Adelaide, type C photograph, 110.0 x 143.5 cm (image and sheet); Courtesy the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney