

50 YEARS OF COLLECTING

EDUCATION RESOURCE
VCE ART MAKING AND EXHIBITING
AND VCE CREATIVE PRACTICE



DEAKIN UNIVERSITY
Art Gallery

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B.



50
YEARS

50 YEARS OF COLLECTING

The Deakin University Art Collection is a unique and treasured collection of contemporary artworks by some of Australia's leading artists. The collection reflects the cultural aspirations of Deakin and plays a significant role in creating a welcoming environment on campus, enriching the experience of university life and contributing to education and research. Uniquely over 56% of the Deakin collection is on display across our four campuses and in our city centre.

The collection first came together with artworks from Deakin University's **antecedent** institutional collections including the Victoria State Teachers College, Prahran College of Advanced Education and others. It now consists of approximately 2800 artworks by over 900 artists, valued at just under \$30 million. The works in the collection have been **acquired** or **commissioned** by Deakin University, or generously donated by artists and individuals.

The collection is comprised of examples of innovative creative practices including painting, sculpture, print, drawing, ceramics, photography, textiles and includes a large holding of artist's books. Importantly, it is home to cherished artworks by First Nation Peoples, including many artists that are based in South-Eastern Australia. It also houses artworks by our past and present students and staff, telling the special story of the Deakin University origins and its community.

This exhibition showcases a number of important acquisitions to the Deakin University Art Collection, focussing on every decade of collecting. Whilst the exhibition is on display there will be a call out for expressions of interest from alumni, staff and students to send in ideas for submissions in response to works in the exhibition. At the end of the *50 Years of Collecting* exhibition, a selection of these response submissions will be chosen and those artists will be invited to exhibit a new work based on their ideas in the last exhibition of the year.

Glossary

Commission

To officially assign or authorise someone or an organisation to carry out a task or create something:

Eg: "she was commissioned to create a series of drawings"

Acquire

To purchase or obtain an asset or item:

Eg: "We acquired the sculpture at auction"

Antecedent

Previous or pre-existing:

Eg: "the antecedent library had a big collection of picture books compared to the current one"

Things to consider

Why would someone donate their artwork to a university?

What would be the advantages of doing that?

Suggest some things the university might need to consider when **storing** artworks?

What considerations might the university have when it comes to selecting and **displaying** works from the collection in public spaces?

Cover image:

Janet Dawson, *Tuesday Moon* 2019

acrylic on board, 105 x 90cm

image © and courtesy of the artist and

Charles Nodrum Gallery

Photo Simon Peter Fox

50 YEARS OF COLLECTING

Exploring the Exhibition

Take some time to wander through the exhibition and consider the following ideas:

The curators of the exhibition have selected artworks from each decade that Deakin (or its antecedent institutions) have existed. Looking at the works from each decade – is there anything you can find that connects them eg: is there anything that the works collected in the 1990's have in common? Choose a decade, and examine the work collected in that time. Write down your observations:

What are some things you consider to be common to all the works in the exhibition?

Select a work in the exhibition that you are drawn to. What is it about that work that you like or made you connect with that particular work?

Is it the subject matter? The materials used?

Does it remind you of somewhere or something or an experience you have had?

Can you find distinct groupings of works within the artworks on display? Eg; Portraits, works on paper.

Explore the exhibition and write as many themes/ groupings as you can find within the works on display:

Find two works in the same group eg: two portraits, from different decades. Consider what is similar and what is different about them and write your observations below:

How do you think being created at different decades has influenced perhaps what is different about them? Write your thoughts below:

Do you have a collection of something?

Imagine you are going to exhibit your collection in a gallery or museum.

How would you design the space to show your collection?

Will it feature in its own display case or could it take up a whole room?

Sketch your idea here:

VCE ART MAKING AND EXHIBITING

[See End Notes for Curriculum links VCE Art Making and Exhibiting](#)

Consider and discuss the following as it relates to the works in the exhibition.

Art Making Practice

Choose one artwork and consider the following questions as they relate to that work in particular:

Why do you think the artist has chosen to represent their ideas the way they have?

Describe how the art elements and principles appear in the work?

Consider the materials used in the work. How does the type of material used eg: paint, found materials, bronze etc effect how we make meaning from the work?

Are there any unique or recognisable methods or conventions used to create the work? Why do you think the artist has chosen to use these methods or conventions?

Are there obvious influences or inspiration for the work? How are these incorporated into the artist's own ideas?

Exhibiting the Works

Are there any obvious differences between the artworks from each decade? Consider the types of materials used, the themes represented etc

Describe how the curators have chosen to arrange the works in the exhibition. Are there obvious connections between the way the works have been grouped together?

Focus on the works in the exhibition that have been commissioned by the university. What do you think the university has looked for when approaching these artists to create work for them? What are some of the features of these artworks or artists that Deakin have appreciated?

This is a small selection of Deakin's collection of which there are in total more than 2,800 works. Select 5 works from the exhibition and create a list of categories that they would fit into within the collection; for example there are portraits, there are works on bark, there are artist's books. Now choose a subcategory for each work eg: *Grey-Pink Man* by Stephen Benwell = Portrait/ Standing. Try and come up with a third unique, specialist category that fits eg: *Grey-Pink Man* by Stephen Benwell = Portrait/ Standing/ Clay and so on eg: *Grey-Pink Man* by Stephen Benwell = Portrait/ Standing/ Clay/ Small Sculpture.

VCE ART CREATIVE PRACTICE

[See End Notes for Curriculum links](#)
[VCE Art Making and Exhibiting](#)

The Structural Lenses from the VCAA Creative Practice Study Design:

The Structural Lens

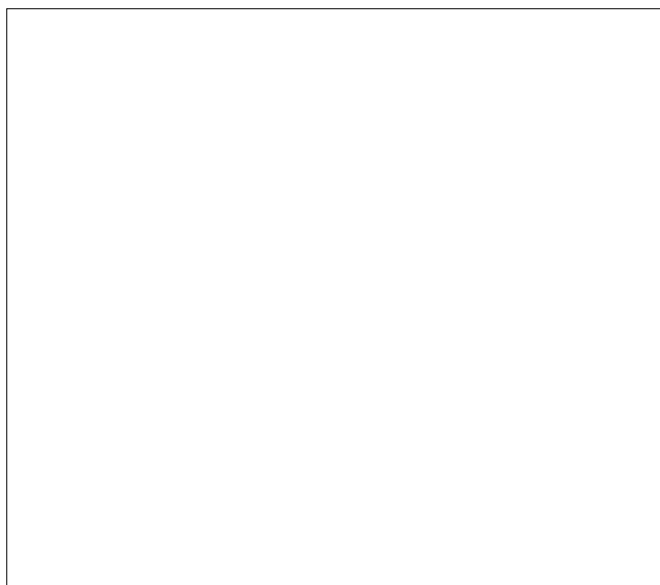
The Structural Lens informs the analysis and interpretation of an artwork, and its relationship with the artist and viewer or audience, through the investigation of the use of art elements and art principles, and the application of materials, techniques and processes. It also considers the stylistic qualities and symbolism evident in the artwork, and the context in which artists work and in which artworks are presented or viewed. The Structural Lens can inform the other lenses.

The Personal Lens

The Personal Lens informs the analysis and interpretation of an artwork through the investigation of the personal feelings, beliefs and life experiences of the artist. The evaluation and interpretation of an artwork can be influenced by the life experiences, personal feelings and beliefs of the viewer or audience and the context in which artists work and in which artworks are presented or viewed.

The Cultural Lens

The Cultural Lens informs the analysis and interpretation of an artwork through the investigation of social, historical and cultural influences and representations. This includes the influence of the time and place in which the artwork is made, presented or viewed, as well as the social, historical, political, philosophical and economic influences on the practices of the artist, and how these are reflected in the artwork.



Complete a quick sketch of the work you have chosen

Artist _____

Title _____

Consider the exhibition and the works featured using the Interpretive Lenses:

Choose an artwork and answer the following questions about the work:

Consider it from a **structural perspective**. Why might the artist have chosen to use certain **materials, techniques and processes** to create the work?

Consider it from the artist's **personal perspective**. What does the work share about the life or concerns of the artist? How are the artist's own **personal experiences and/ or viewpoints** explored through the work?

Think about the work from a **cultural perspective**. What does the work tell us about the world the artist lives in, the **community or society** they are a part of? How do you think the artist is addressing concerns that they see reflected in the society or communities around them?

How has the artist used **visual language** to communicate their ideas? Are there any familiar features to the work? Are there **symbolic features** in the work? Are there parts of the work that the artist is using to represent something other than what you can see?

WORKS IN FOCUS



Leonard French
The Four Seasons of Life, 1987
enamel on composition board
Commissioned to mark the Tenth Anniversary
of Deakin University 1987,
Deakin University Art Collection,
image © and courtesy of the artist's Estate,
photo by Simon Peter Fox.

Best known for his large-scale murals and ornate stained glass, the luminous and emblematic surfaces of Melbourne born artist Leonard French adorn various Australian public institutions. Informed by a mixture of influences such as Mexican Muralists, Homer's 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey,' Christian Byzantine Art, and modern European painting, French fuses his iconographic symbols to reflect the human condition.

French studied at Melbourne Technical College from 1944-47, and went on to study in England, Ireland, Belgium, Asia, Greece, Italy, Spain and America. While producing and exhibiting his work, French taught design at the Melbourne School of Printing and Graphic Arts from 1952-56, and worked as an exhibitions officer at the National Gallery of Victoria from 1956-60.

French has been commissioned to bring his "art into life" by producing large scale works for public arenas including the ceiling for the National Gallery of Victoria and in the National Library of Australia in Canberra.

The Four Seasons of Life combines the universal insignia of the cross, circle, dome, serpent, and bird to create a rich yet spiritual visual impact. These designs are created on a layered enamelled surface, which give the piece a shimmering luminosity. The whimsical abstraction of this work gives way to a lyrical interpretation of the human spirit.

This work as the name suggests, represents the four seasons of life. Looking at each quarter of the image, what parts of life and/or season do you think each quarter represents? What do you see that makes you say that?

How do you think the work represents 'the human spirit'? Like the seasons, do people have different parts to them?

Have you seen the huge coloured stained-glass ceiling at the NGV in Melbourne? Leonard French created that ceiling for the opening of the gallery in 1968. Find an image of the ceiling and compare this work with the design he has created there. What are some similarities and differences?

WORKS IN FOCUS



Deanne Gilson

Karringalabil Bundjil Murrup, Manna Gum Tree (The Creation Tree of Knowledge), 2020

Ochre, acrylic on linen

Deakin University Art Collection

Image © and courtesy the artist

Artwork Story

My painting depicts the Wadawurrung Creation Story of South Eastern Victoria, at a place known as Black Hill in Gordon, situated on my ancestral Country. A man known as Karringalabil the creator spirit, created the first man and woman out of clay paapul. He took bark and leaves from the great birthing tree known today as the manna gum tree. The manna gum tree is a sacred tree that housed all the spirits of creation within its branches.

Karringalabil turned the tree spirits into the birds of creation, who today, represent our ancestral totems. He then turned himself into the largest and most powerful bird, Bundjil the Eagle-hawk. The role of the other birds was to help Karringalabil Bundjil, give and sustain life on earth. After creating the people, plants, animals, waterways, forests and mountains, Bundjil asked his friends the birds, to perform different roles in order to complete his creation. Firstly, Parrwang the magpies lifted the sky, from darkness to light, giving us the first sunrise. Then Waa the ancestral crow, opened his lungs and blew life in to the people, scattering them across the countryside. The inquisitive cockatoo names Jirnap leaned down to see Bundjil's fire and his crest caught alight. As he flew off trying to put it out fire dropped all over the country side and this in turn gave fire to the people that kept them warm and enabled them to cook food.

Bundjil then took his two wives, Kunuwarra the black swan sisters and flew high up in the sky above Lal Lal Falls, our sacred creation site today, where he then turned them into stars and they can be seen as the brightest stars in the sky watching over us today. This star is known as the Nyirram turt-barram (The Morning Star) that gives hope to all.

- Deanne Gilson, 2020

Artist statement by Deanne Gilson, https://www.casulapowerhouse.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/204848/BlakePrize66th_web_02.pdf pgs 70-71 [Accessed 5 October 2021].

Gilson combines natural ochres and pigments found on Country to create this artwork. Can you identify where she has used these found ochres and pigments in the work? Is there significance to where she has used these materials in the work?

Many Aboriginal groups or clans are represented by totem animals or plants – these are often specific to the place that that group comes from. If you could choose a plant or animal to represent you and/ or where you come from what would it be and why? Why does that plant or animal hold specific meaning to you or where you come from?

In the story depicted in the painting, each bird is tasked with a specific role to help Karringalabil Bundjil complete his creation. Describe how the artist has represented the curious cockatoo Jirnap and what is happening in the painting as described in the Creation story?



Jan Senbergs
Geelong Cappricio (If Geelong were settled instead of Melbourne) 2010
 synthetic polymer paint on canvas
 Purchase 2010.
 Deakin University Art Collection
 image © and courtesy of the artist's
 Estate and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.
 Photo by Mark Ashkanasy.

Links to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Art Making and Exhibiting

Including but not limited to...

Unit 1:

Explore, expand, investigate

Area of Study 3 – Investigate – research and present

What role do artworks and their presentation play in society?

Outcome 3

Key knowledge

- the influence of context on the practices of Australian artists and their artworks
- characteristics and properties of materials used by artists to make artworks
- ways in which artists apply materials in the making of artworks
- ways in which artists use techniques and processes to make artworks
- how artists represent ideas and use subject matter to communicate meaning in artworks
- strategies used to create a cohesive presentation about artists and their artworks
- ways to discuss artworks and art forms on display
- strategies used to prepare information for the exhibition of artworks
- appropriate terminology used to discuss artworks and exhibitions

Key skills

- explore and discuss the contexts of a range of Australian artists and their artworks

- use a range of resources to research how artists have used materials, techniques and processes in the making of their artworks
- explain and evaluate how artists have used materials, techniques and processes to make artworks
- analyse how artists represent ideas and use subject matter to communicate meaning in their artworks
- use a variety of methods and strategies to present information for a proposed exhibition of artworks by Australian artists
- develop and present information discussing a range of artworks by Australian artists
- use appropriate terminology in the discussion of artworks and their presentation

Unit 2:

Understand, develop and resolve

Area of Study 1 – How are thematic exhibitions planned and designed?

Outcome 1

Key knowledge

- background information about artists and artworks
- the ways artworks in an exhibition have been selected for display
- the influence of contexts on the representation of subject matter and the communication of meaning in artworks
- connections between artworks in a thematic exhibition
- strategies used to exhibit artworks from different contexts in a thematic exhibition, including ways to select and form relationships between artworks in the exhibition
- processes used to document the design of an exhibition in their Visual Arts journal
- use of appropriate art terminology in the presentation and evaluation of artworks

Key skills

- use a range of resources to investigate information about artists and artworks
- justify the selection of artworks for a thematic exhibition
- identify and analyse the influence of contexts on the representation of subject matter and ideas to communicate meaning in artworks
- explain the connections between artworks in a thematic exhibition
- discuss the ways in which artworks from different contexts are exhibited in a thematic exhibition
- research and select artworks to design a thematic exhibition
- explore a thematic exhibition and then design a thematic exhibition for an audience
- develop and present information about a range of artworks in a thematic exhibition
- document the research and design of a thematic exhibition in their Visual Arts journal
- use appropriate art terminology in the evaluation and presentation of artworks

Unit 3:

Collect, extend and connect

Area of Study 3 – Curate, design, propose

Outcome 3

Key knowledge

- the characteristics of exhibitions
- the characteristics of exhibition spaces
- the responsibilities involved in curating an exhibition
- methods used for identifying and analysing the curatorial considerations and the thematic connections between the artworks and artists in an exhibition
- methods used to develop didactic information about the theme, artists and artworks in an exhibition
- the strategies used to plan and develop an exhibition in a specific space
- art terminology used to discuss exhibitions, artists and artworks

Key skills

- research and discuss the characteristics of exhibitions
- research and discuss the characteristics of exhibition spaces
- research and discuss the responsibilities involved in curating an exhibition
- discuss and analyse the curatorial considerations and the thematic connections between the artworks of artists in an exhibition
- develop an exhibition proposal for a specific space using the works of the three selected artists from Unit 3 Area of Study 1
- explain and analyse the presentation of artworks in the exhibition and the thematic connections between them
- present and discuss didactic information including the theme of the exhibition, and the artists and artworks
- discuss the characteristics of exhibitions, exhibition spaces, artists and artworks using art terminology

Links to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Art Creative Practice

Including but not limited to...

Unit 1:

Interpreting artworks and exploring the Creative Practice

Area of Study 1 – Artists

Artworks and audiences

Outcome 1, applying the structural and personal lenses when analysing artwork

Key knowledge

- the practices of artists from different periods of time and cultures
- the use of the Structural Lens and the Personal Lens to analyse and interpret artworks
- the use of personal opinions and points of view about artworks
- the ways artists use visual language to communicate ideas and meaning in their artworks
- terminology used in discussion of artists and their artworks

Key skills

- analyse and discuss the practices of artists from different periods of time and cultures
- apply relevant aspects of the Structural Lens and the Personal Lens to analyse and interpret artworks
- formulate and justify personal opinions with reference to artworks and related sources
- analyse and discuss how artists use visual language to communicate ideas and meaning in their artworks
- use appropriate art terminology and references to a range of sources in the discussion of artists and their artworks

Unit 2:

Interpreting artworks and developing the Creative Practice

Area of Study 1 – The artist, society and culture

Outcome 1, use the cultural lens to compare the practices of artists and artworks from different cultures and times

Key knowledge

- the role and purpose of art in different cultural contexts and times
- the use of relevant aspects of the Cultural Lens to analyse and interpret artworks
- the use, as appropriate, of relevant aspects of the Structural Lens and the Personal Lens to analyse and interpret artworks
- diverse and alternative approaches to making and presenting artworks
- methods of making and presenting artworks in different historical and contemporary cultural contexts
- how artworks reflect the beliefs, values and traditions of different cultures
- the different ways that artists collaborate to make artworks
- the practices of artists from different periods of time and cultures
- referencing to support the analysis, evaluation and interpretation of artworks
- art terminology used in the analysis, evaluation and comparison of artworks and the practices of artists

Key skills

- apply the Cultural Lens to analyse and interpret artworks from different cultures and times
- apply, as appropriate, relevant aspects of the Structural Lens and the Personal Lens to analyse and interpret artworks
- compare artworks from different cultural and historical contexts
- analyse diverse and alternative approaches to making and presenting artworks
- analyse methods of making and presenting artworks in historical and contemporary cultural contexts
- analyse how artworks can reflect the beliefs, values and traditions of different cultures
- investigate the different ways that artists collaborate to make artworks
- evaluate and compare the practices of artists from different periods of time and cultures
- use references to artworks to support analysis, evaluation and interpretation
- use appropriate art terminology to analyse, evaluate and compare the practices of artists and artworks

Terminology From the VCE Art Making and Exhibiting Study Design

[VCE Art Making and Exhibiting](http://vcaa.vic.edu.au)
(vcaa.vic.edu.au)

Art elements

Colour, line, shape, form, tone, texture, sound, time and light

Art principles

Emphasis (focal point), movement, rhythm, unity, variety, space, repetition (including pattern), balance, contrast, proportion, space and scale

Aesthetic qualities

Aesthetic qualities are usually explained as the way in which art elements, art principles, materials and techniques work together to influence the mood or emotion of an artwork. The term refers to the visual appeal of an artwork and how aesthetic qualities evoke an emotional impact and reaction within the viewer.

For the purposes of this study the following are accepted explanations of aesthetic qualities:

- the visual appearance of an artwork
- an emotional impact or reaction the artist intends the viewer to experience
- the use of art elements and art principles that allow the artist to convey a certain mood and evoke feelings in the viewer
- the materials and techniques used in an artwork to create qualities that speak to the overall feeling, mood or emotion of the artwork.

Art forms

An art form is an established form of artistic expression. For the purposes of VCE Art Making and Exhibiting, art forms can include but are not limited to painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, film, video, ceramics, sound, photography, digital artworks, installations, performance, interdisciplinary practices, fashion, textiles and street art.

The materials are the various properties and characteristics of an art form. Materials are manipulated through the use of tools and equipment, known as techniques. The processes used in the making of artworks in specific art forms include the activities, procedures and investigation engaged by artists.

Context

The context of an artwork is the frame of reference that allows the meaning of the artwork to be interpreted. Interpretation of the meaning of an artwork can evolve from the context. The context of an artwork can be the location and time in which the artwork is made, presented or viewed. Context can also be economic, philosophical, historical, social or cultural influences on the practices of the artist, the artist's intentions, and their representation of ideas, values and beliefs in their artworks. The artist's intentions for the presentation of their work, its exhibition in current and subsequent locations, and the values, beliefs and interests of the audience also provide the context for the artwork.

Critique

A critique is a discursive collaborative environment that is organised to engage, explore, express, present and evaluate artworks and to understand, reflect on and improve awareness of the characteristics of art making.

Influences and inspiration

Influences occur and are used throughout art making and include artists and artworks. Inspiration can be viewed more broadly and includes objects, memories and contexts that are personal to the artist.

Visual language

Visual language combines the art elements and art principles with materials, techniques and processes to communicate meaning and personal, cultural and contemporary ideas to an audience.

Additional Terminology From the VCE Art Creative Practice Study Design

[Pages - VCE Art Making and Exhibiting \(vcaa.vic.edu.au\)](http://vcaa.vic.edu.au)

Body of Work

In VCE Art Creative Practice, the Body of Work consists of personal responses by the student in their art practice. The Body of Work consists of artworks that integrate the four components of the Creative Practice: research and exploration, experimentation and development, reflection and evaluation, and refinement and resolution. Using the Creative Practice the student will produce a collection of artworks, related to each other through ideas, subject matter, style, art form, or materials and techniques. Each of the artworks that comprise the Body of Work should be of equal complexity and importance to the overall collection.

Contemporary artworks and artists

For the purposes of this study, contemporary artists are defined as those who have produced art in the 21st century or since 2001. Contemporary art mirrors contemporary culture and society. Throughout this study students compare historical and contemporary artworks and artists' practices.

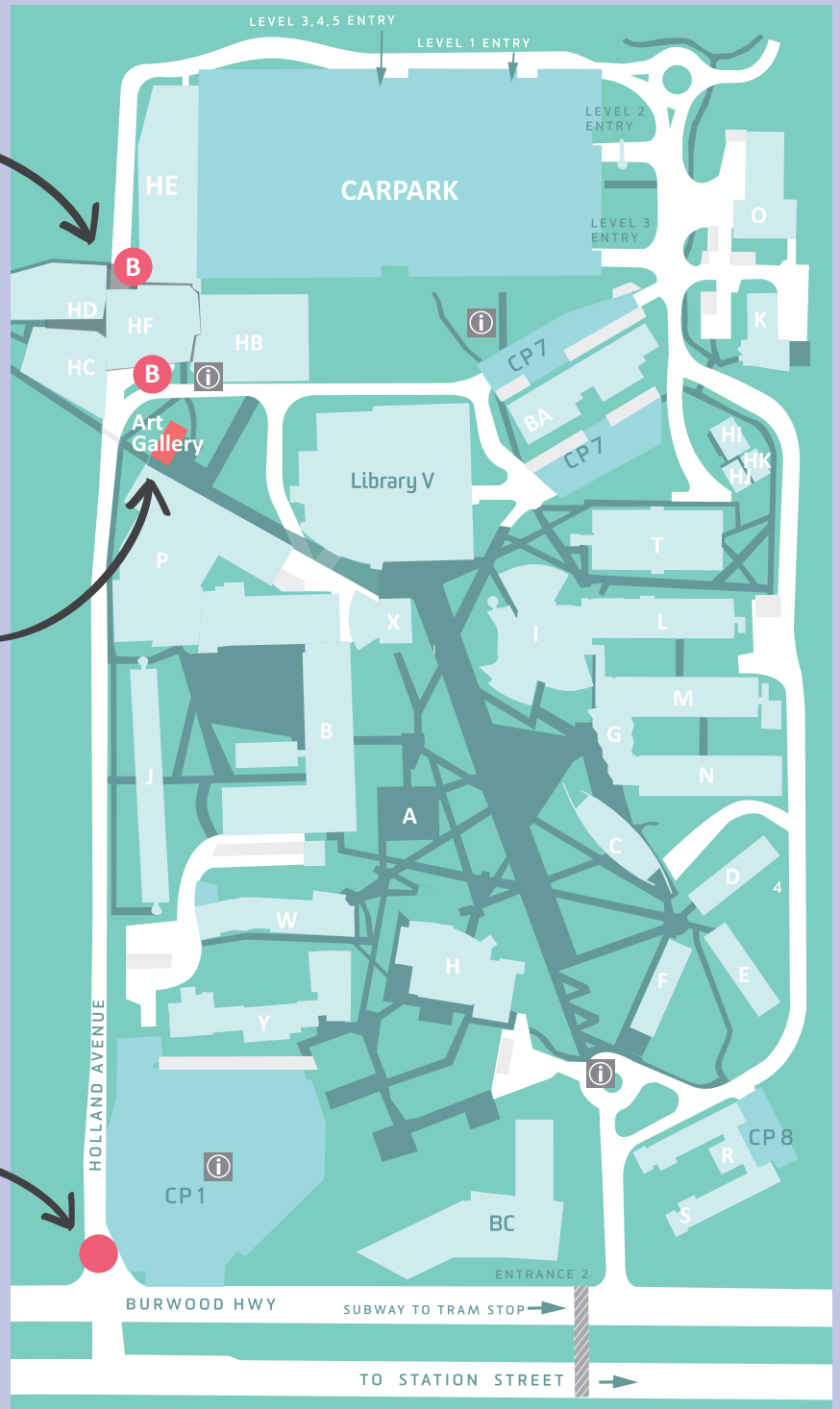
Bus Drop Off Point

30-minute Loading Zone here – this is the drop off point for school buses. Additional bus drop off point 10m along if Loading Zone occupied.

Deakin University Art Gallery
Building FA

Deakin University Burwood Campus

Enter via Gate 1 from Burwood Highway. Travel down Holland Avenue to Bus Drop Off Point, just after bridge overpass.



The Deakin University Art Collection and Galleries Unit offers school tours and hands on workshops for students from F – 10 and for VCE Art Making and Exhibiting and Art Creative Practice. To discuss our programs and how we can tailor a program to suit your school’s needs, please contact our Education and Public Programs Officer, Tabitha Davies.

Education and Public Programs Officer
Tabitha Davies

P: 9244 6519
M: 0491 974 249
E: t.davies@deakin.edu.au
W: [School programs](#) | [Deakin University Art Gallery](#)

Deakin University Collection and Art Galleries
Building FA

221 Burwood Highway, Burwood 3125
Ph: 9244 5344
E: artgallery@deakin.edu.au
W: [Deakin University Art Gallery - Exhibitions and Events](#)



DEAKIN UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

Head to our website deakin.edu.au/art-collection/ for information about current exhibitions and keep up-to-date on our activities and exhibitions here:

-  [Facebook.com/ArtDeakin](https://www.facebook.com/ArtDeakin)
-  [Twitter.com/ArtDeakin](https://twitter.com/ArtDeakin)
-  [Instagram.com/deakinartgallery](https://www.instagram.com/deakinartgallery)
-  [izi.travel](#) - Deakin Art Collection and sculpture walk guides

STAY IN TOUCH!

Scan the code to become a gallery subscriber and stay up-to-date with exhibitions, openings and events.



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

For information regarding our school Programs or to book a tour and/ or workshop, please scan here.



Deakin University Art Gallery Building FA, Melbourne Burwood Campus, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood VIC 3125
Enquiries T +61 3 9244 5344 E artgallery@deakin.edu.au
Gallery Hours Monday – Friday, 10 am – 4 pm During exhibition periods. Closed public holidays. Free Entry

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which Deakin University stands and pay our respect to Elders: past, present and future.