



# STUDIO ART UNIT 4

## ART AND INDUSTRY CONTEXTS

EAST GIPPSLAND ART GALLERY



# OUTCOME 3

## KEY KNOWLEDGE

On completion of this unit the student should be able to compare the methods used by artists and considerations of curators in the preparation, presentation, conservation and promotion of specific artworks in at least two different exhibitions. This resource will assist the student with key knowledge and skills relating to:

- the methods and intentions of public art galleries and museums, commercial and private galleries, university art galleries, artist run spaces, alternative art spaces, outdoor spaces and online galleries in exhibiting artworks
- the curatorial considerations, exhibition design and promotional methods involved in preparing and displaying artworks in current exhibitions
- the methods used by and considerations of artists and curators working in galleries in conservation of artworks, including lighting, temperature, storage, transportation and presentation of specific artworks in current exhibitions
- the processes associated with the production, presentation, conservation and promotion of specific artworks in current exhibitions
- the characteristics of different types of gallery spaces visited in the current year of study

## KEY SKILLS

- identify and describe the characteristics of different types of gallery spaces visited in the current year of study
- describe and compare the methods of and intentions in exhibiting artworks in public art galleries and museums, commercial and private galleries, artist run spaces, alternative art spaces, university art galleries and museums, outdoor spaces and online galleries, which have been visited in the year of study
- analyse how specific artworks are presented in different exhibitions and demonstrate an understanding of the artists' and gallery curators' intentions
- analyse and evaluate curatorial considerations, exhibition design and promotional methods involved in preparing and presenting specific artworks for display
- analyse and evaluate methods and considerations involved in the conservation of specific artworks related to exhibitions visited in the current year of study

# WHAT IS A PUBLIC GALLERY?

A public gallery is an art gallery or art space that is owned, conducted or managed on behalf of the public. These galleries are largely funded by the government using public taxes and are accountable to the taxpayers of the nation.

In Australia this refers to galleries owned by;

- federal government (e.g., Australian National Gallery)

- state governments (e.g., National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of South Australia etc)

- local governments – regional galleries ie those located in regional centres or the suburbs of the capital cities (e.g. Geelong Art Gallery, Ballarat and Bendigo Regional Art Gallery).

East Gippsland Art Gallery is principally funded by a service agreement with East Gippsland Shire Council and supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.



MOVABLE PARTITION  
WALLS THAT DOUBLE  
AS STORAGE

# EAST GIPPSLAND ART GALLERY

East Gippsland Art Gallery is the centre for visual arts in East Gippsland celebrating the diverse artistic spirit of the region through a vibrant and dynamic program of art and cultural experiences for the whole family.


We are open to bold ideas, different ways of seeing and championing the visual arts and artists in our region. We are passionate about engaging and inspiring the next generation of art lovers in our community. Every month we have exhibition openings, artist talks, events and art workshops. We also run an education program both online and face to face for students and community members.

East Gippsland Art Gallery was established in 1992 by the then City of Bairnsdale after being approached by local residents concerned that there was no public gallery in East Gippsland. Initially, East Gippsland Art Gallery was provided with one room at its current address, which it soon outgrew. Fortunately, it was eventually able to utilise all of the building as exhibition space. Renovations carried out in 2003 greatly improved exhibition facilities, opened up the foyer and created a display area for a gallery shop that stocks a range of local fine art and craft items.

East Gippsland Art Gallery's exhibition calendar is quite remarkable for a small gallery with only 4 part time staff and is recognised for its dynamic interaction and engagement with its community.

East Gippsland Art Gallery's administration is overseen by a Board of Management whose members are elected annually from the community at an advertised Annual General Meeting. Additional members may be seconded at the Committee's discretion. The Board of Management is involved in the development of gallery policy as well as strategic planning and implementation.

East Gippsland Art Gallery is principally funded by a service agreement with East Gippsland Shire Council and supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria. Due to our unique circumstances we are unable to meet all of the guidelines set by the Public Galleries Association of Victoria, however we are able to provide a rich cultural experience for the East Gippsland community.

The background image shows the exterior of the East Gippsland Art Gallery building. It is a light-colored, classical-style building with a prominent pediment. A small, white, shield-shaped plaque is mounted on the wall above the entrance. The entrance is framed by a large, ornate column. The address number '1868' is visible on the wall to the right of the entrance. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

**EAST GIPPSLAND ART GALLERY  
ACKNOWLEDGE THE BRABRALUNG  
PEOPLE OF THE GUNAIKURNAI  
NATION AS THE TRADITIONAL  
CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON  
WHICH THE GALLERY STANDS AND  
WHERE WE MEET, EXHIBIT AND  
CELEBRATE ART AND HERITAGE.**



# OWEN PIGGOTT | LIGHT

The East Gippsland Art Gallery collection of works by Owen Piggott was kindly and generously donated by Lynette Piggott and family in 2016. Piggott (1931-2015) a renowned painter of the East Gippsland landscape, played a pivotal role within East Gippsland and the broader arts community.

Piggott was born in Worcestershire, England 1931. After his initial art training in the United Kingdom, he relocated to the Mornington Peninsula in 1950 and enrolled at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. His first exhibition was at the Argus Gallery in Melbourne in 1964.

In 2017 the gallery showcased a retrospective exhibition of Piggott's paintings titled *Light*. In 2020 the gallery is revisiting the collection of paintings on display from 22<sup>nd</sup> June – 31<sup>st</sup> July.

For more than thirty years Piggott lived at Metung, overlooking the Gippsland lakes. His paintings draw on the experience of light and atmosphere around the lakes, without making specific reference to the landscape. Instead, these paintings might be read as abstractions, without losing touch with real life perception and phenomena. Comparable to the paintings of Rothko, Piggott immerses the viewer in pure colour and light, transporting us out of space and time to a spiritual destination beyond the material surface of things.

The exhibition covers a segment of Piggott's work from 2011-2014 and includes oil paintings as well as water colour and mixed media. Visitors to the exhibition will be taken on a journey through space, colour, light and atmosphere, with many pieces alluding to an upward passage into the heavens above.

Gallery Director, Crystal Stubbs, curated the exhibition presenting the artworks according to media, size and colour. For example, an alternating balance of pale and deep colours in each of the artworks pictured helps to establish a visual flow and connection between each artwork.

Visit the following link to view the collection of Piggott's work at the National Gallery of Victoria.  
<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/artist/29387/>



# CONSERVATION

At the East Gippsland Art Gallery, factors such as lighting, temperature, storage, transportation and presentation of artworks differ according to each individual exhibition and the needs of the artist. Owen Piggott's artworks are part of the gallery's small collection that is housed on-site. The gallery is temperature controlled only to the degree of which an air-conditioning system is installed to ensure the comfort of staff and visitors and also to provide a space that is suitable for most materials to be stored for short to medium lengths of time.

Due to the materials of the gallery's building structure, the premises keeps relatively cool all year round which is of benefit to many art materials. However, natural light entering through the windows needs to be managed depending on the type of material on show and the length of time it is displayed for. The average length of each exhibition is between 2-4 weeks, sometimes more. This provides the gallery with the ability to show more delicate works that may be effected by long term sunlight and rotate the small collection adequately to maintain a maximum life span for the work.

When transporting artworks to and from the gallery, each artist will package their artworks slightly differently according to their needs and the type of material. The majority of paintings are transported by the artist wrapped in blankets or bubble wrap. Sometimes the Gallery Director will travel to collect and transport artworks to the gallery. Owen Piggott's paintings are wrapped in blankets provided by the family and kept in storage on-site, on high shelving away from light, heat, moisture and dust.

There are various types of lighting throughout the gallery. In the main exhibition space where Piggott and Hobbs are currently on display, you will see track lighting. Track lighting enables the Director and Curator to design the lighting to suit the variety of artworks that are displayed in the space. Due to the installation of moving partition walls, some of the natural light entering the space can be blocked, therefore the use of track lighting assists in providing extra spot lighting where needed. The most recent space "The Vault" to be opened at the gallery contains dimmable spotlights on tracks. The Vault contains zero natural light and requires lighting for all exhibits. The "Sideshow Gallery" includes a combination of spot lighting and natural light. The windows can be covered for flexibility of exhibition design.

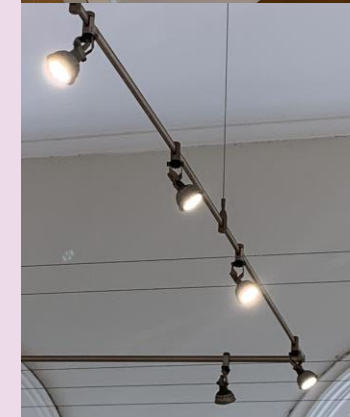
When installing an exhibition the Director/Curator will make a decision to present the artworks in a way that accommodates the vision of the artist, the available space, and the needs of the artwork due to size, material, colour etc. We use a combination of magnetic hanging system, nails, hooks and wire to hang artworks, various sized plinths for 3D pieces, and shelving. For items that require it, we use display cases constructed from Perspex to protect items from dust and of course sticky fingers.



CABINETS



STORAGE



LIGHTING



# CURATORIAL CONSIDERATIONS & EXHIBITION DESIGN

East Gippsland Art Gallery is thrilled to be exhibiting the artwork of renowned children's author Leigh Hobbs. Australia's Children's Laureate 2016 - 2017, Leigh's humorous children's books are loved and across the United Kingdom and Australia. Mr Chicken Comes to Bairnsdale is on display between 22<sup>nd</sup> June – 31<sup>st</sup> July.

Born in Melbourne in 1953, Leigh is an artist and author best known in Australia and overseas for twenty-three children's books he has written and illustrated featuring his characters Old Tom, Horrible Harriet, Mr Chicken, Mr Badger, Fiona the Pig and the Freaks in 4F. Leigh says,

*"I've always been fascinated by characters, and regarding the artwork I produce in its various forms and mediums, this is a constant theme. Children's books have provided me with an excellent way to explore and develop this. Most children have an innate sense of fun and the absurd. I find their willingness to trust and follow me into a world, that I as an author have created in a story, touching. And it provokes in me a feeling of responsibility if not protectiveness. My books are "character studies" rather than being "issue driven". Undeniably my characters Old Tom, Horrible Harriet, Fiona the Pig, The Freaks in 4F, Mr Badger and Mr Chicken range from strange to the berserk. However, while they and my stories may appear to an adult to be subversive, I think children relate to the characters and the relationships between the characters because the themes are classic story telling ones. For example, love, friendship and most terrifying of all perhaps to a child. Being deemed 'different'."*

Gallery Director, Crystal Stubbs, met with Leigh numerous times in the lead up to the show to discuss his intentions for the presentation and overall thematic design of the exhibition. An initial visit to Leigh's home and studio and many phone calls and emails allowed their discussions to take place and plans to develop. Originally, the exhibition occupied the entire building and due to the events of 2020 and subsequent calendar updates the exhibition is now located in half of the space. Crystal, with the assistance of her team of staff, considered all of Leigh's requests including works to be framed and works to be displayed in cabinets. When hanging the show. The gallery team often uses a self levelling laser on a tripod to determine eye level, or other suitable heights. The most important desire for Leigh was for his work to be presented in a sophisticated way so that the show targeted art lovers in general as opposed to solely children.

The current exhibition is designed to best fit the space. Leigh's *Tower* oil paintings are displayed in the newly renovated "Vault" space due to their size and relationship with the small, intimate room. Thus allowing the viewer to observe the paintings up close. The small gallery space contains a variety of illustrations on paper, oil on board and canvas, paper mâché sculptures, a ceramic teapot and book drafts. The sideshow gallery contains more sculptures books and paintings.

Mr Chicken Comes to Bairnsdale was promoted via our website and social media platforms, email and newsletters to schools, community groups and our members. Signage was installed throughout the Bairnsdale Main St in the weeks leading up to the official opening, posters in the gallery windows and a press release to the local, Sale and Latrobe newspapers. The Gallery Director appeared on the local ABC Gippsland radio in an interview to promote the exhibition. Our Projects Manager, Lisa Roberts manages most of the promotional material under the direction of the Director. Lisa also produced the catalogue, removable decal labels and signage installed around the walls, cabinets and plinths.



# REVIEW QUESTIONS

- Describe some of the methods and intentions of the East Gippsland Art Gallery in exhibiting the artworks for Leigh Hobbs
- What were some of the promotional methods that The Gallery employed in the lead up to the official opening of the Leigh Hobbs exhibition?
- What was the most important aspect for Leigh Hobbs in the overall presentation of Mr Chicken Comes to Bairnsdale?
- Describe the types of lighting used at the East Gippsland Art Gallery make reference to the “Vault” gallery.
- Describe how the Owen Piggott exhibition was designed..
- Describe how the Owen Piggott paintings are stored at the Gallery.
- After watching the video, describe the characteristics of the spaces in which the Owen Piggott and Leigh Hobbs exhibitions are displayed. (Don't forget to describe the “Vault” gallery)

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For further information regarding the gallery or our current exhibitions please email

Our Arts Learning Coordinator, Melanie Murphy

[learning@eastgippslandartgallery.org.au](mailto:learning@eastgippslandartgallery.org.au)

Visit our website for more interesting resources

[www.eastgippslandartgallery.org.au](http://www.eastgippslandartgallery.org.au)

Don't forget to watch the accompanying video;

[www.eastgippslandartgallery.org.au/creativeathome](http://www.eastgippslandartgallery.org.au/creativeathome)





VISIT US!



**WE ARE LOCATED NEXT TO  
THE COURT HOUSE IN  
NICHOLSON STREET  
BAIRNSDALE**

**VISIT US BETWEEN  
10AM-4PM TUE-FRI**

Please visit our website for information regarding the latest COVID-19 regulations and conditions of entry

