

Canal to Creek

WestConnex

Transurban

THE WESTCONNEX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VADEA
NSW

VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

EMILY CROCKFORD

OYSTERS EATING RAINBOWS | STAGE 5 WORKSHEET



Emily Crockford
Oysters Eating Rainbows

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

VOCABULARY - mural, public art, ecology, lyrical, placemaking, stylised



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTWORK

As part of the [WestConnex Public Art Program](#) – Canal to Creek, ***Oysters Eating Rainbows*** was chosen from a range of submitted artwork proposals by a selection committee. It is a large-scale mural that has been painted on the Kingsgrove Karingal Underpass and consists of a brightly painted mural depicting local land animals such as the kookaburra within its natural habitat at the start of the mural. As the mural progresses it converts into an underwater ecosystem featuring patterned fish and oysters lining the river bed.

Oysters Eating Rainbows aims to bring colour and beauty to the underpass and celebrate the local natural treasures that surround the underpass and looks to remind audiences to appreciate and protect the natural environment.

In ***Oysters Eating Rainbows*** Crockford draws attention to endangered wildlife, such as the Regent Honeyeater, by painting large scale portraits within the mural. These significant artistic portrayals remind the audience that natural environments and species are under threat and should not be taken for granted by the community. Instead they should be protected and celebrated.

'I love to imagine the creatures under the water and the possums sitting on the trees looking at the house. I love foxies in the tree and owls having a happy life. Birds singing in moo moo trees. I wish for my tunnel audience to swim with my river creatures.'

Emily Crockford's initial proposal

Using the word bank, complete the artist statement below:

Word bank: pedestrians, colour, ancestors, generations, design, environment, ecological, community

Oysters Eating Rainbows brings _____, beauty and nourishment to _____. However the work is not simply aesthetically appealing, the _____ also acts as an important reminder. It reminds the _____ of the local natural treasures that surround them. Wildlife and environments that have fed, entertained and comforted _____ past are now under threat. Now more than ever it is critical the splendor and vulnerability of the natural _____ is given centre stage. ***Oysters Eating Rainbows*** showcases what the St Peters' community needs to protect. It is a calling card from future generations to the current. Emily's design honors St Peter's _____ diversity and reminds commuters to ensure this natural paradise exists for _____ to come.



Oysters Eating Rainbows depicts imagery that represents the various species of animals and natural environment of the site and showcases Crockford's concerns for the environment. By drawing attention to vulnerable and endangered species, she hopes to ensure their protection and future existence. This is opportune given the urban setting of the mural and acts as a reminder to viewers of the work that they too play a role in protecting our natural heritage.

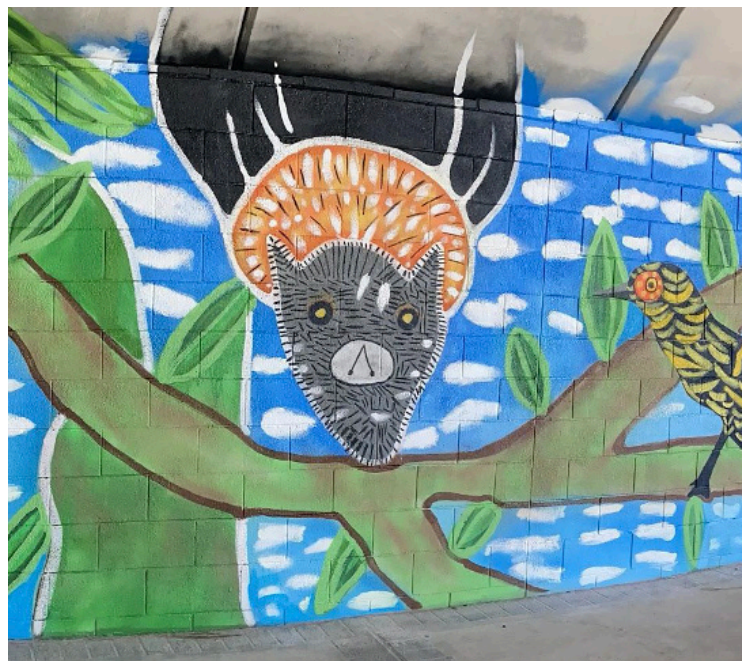
- **How does *Oysters Eating Rainbows* communicate a sense of place?**
- **How have ecological interests been represented in this work?**

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTIST

Emily Crockford's broad creative practice encompasses painting, textiles and soft sculpture. Her work can be seen across Sydney and in high profile institutions. Emily was a finalist in the 2020 Archibald Prize, and has been awarded high profile public art commissions for Westpac's Concord offices, City of Sydney's Creative Hoardings Project and a collaborative mural for the University of Technology Sydney.

Emily is an artist with **Studio A**, a supported studio based in Sydney that tackles the barriers that artists living with intellectual disability face in accessing conventional education, professional development pathways and opportunities needed to be successful and renowned visual artists.

Learn more about Emily - [here](#)



ARTMAKING PRACTICE

Emily Crockford and her artist support team have activated the Kingsgrove Karingal underpass by hand painting a large-scale mural specifically designed to represent the local wildlife and varied landscapes.

Crockford initially sketches a panoramic mural design onto long reams of paper, she uses photographic print outs of local animals as reference images during this process. Crockford then applies coloured paint to the initial sketch. Studio A assistants then use photoshop to make edits to the design in order to create a final composition.

The final draft is printed and used as Crockford's visual guide as she hand paints the mural onto the prepared tunnel surface. Crockford uses various paints and brushes to create her own stylistic interpretations of birds, fish, yabbies and oysters. The bright hues, intricate details and use of pattern within the artwork is designed to bring colour, beauty and nourishment to the murals audience.



INVESTIGATION QUESTIONS -

- How have materials been used in the creation of *Oysters Eating Rainbows*?
- How would you describe the artmaking techniques and style employed by Emily Crockford?
- How has the artist used their imagination in *Oysters Eating Rainbows*?
- How has she used research?



EXTENDED RESPONSE

Explain how Emily Crockford's artmaking practice reflects her ecological concerns for the environment.

ARTMAKING TASK



1

Initial sketch and panoramic painting based on local landscape and animal photographs



2

Painting scanned and uploaded into Photoshop. Components of the mural design are edited and arranged into a final composition



3

Tunnel wall is cleaned with an undercoat applied to the surface where the mural will be painted



4

Crockford uses a print out of the design as a visual reference as she hand paints part of the mural onto the tunnel surface

Review Crockford's process for creating ***Oysters Eating Rainbows***. Create your own mural design inspired by one of the environments listed below. Refer to the steps used by Emily Crockford and consider including animals, nature, landscapes, patterns, shapes, signs and symbols relevant to your chosen natural environment. Ensure you collect and document your research and image collection in your visual art diary. Consider how you might include extinct or threatened flora and fauna in your work and how you might denote their real or potential loss.

Rainforest • Wetlands • Coastal • Woodlands • Desert



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Consider translating your hand created work to a digital form using a digital platform you are familiar with or take the opportunity to learn a new creative software. Talk to your teacher about what software you can access at school and look up online tutorials to teach yourself how to use it.