

Canal to Creek

WestConnex | Transurban

THE WESTCONNEX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

ADAM KING

ABORIGINAL SYDNEY | STAGE 5 WORKSHEET

Aboriginal Sydney, is a series of steel sculptures that feature 135 cut-out silhouettes of Aboriginal peoples from Sydney's past and present. Unlike other public sculptures of figures from history, the faces depicted in **Aboriginal Sydney** belong to those of the general public rather than well-known people. The artwork can be seen as an exploration and celebration of the ongoing survival of Aboriginal peoples in this area and their continued connection to country.



Adam King, *Aboriginal Sydney*

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

VOCABULARY - silhouette, connection to country, contested land, Aboriginal peoples, colonising, dispossession

INVESTIGATION QUESTIONS - CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3. Research the significance of the site of **Aboriginal Sydney**. Use the prompts in the table below as a guide.

Features of the Site	Significance
Specific location in Sydney	
Proximity to Wolli Creek walking track	
Location in a highly-used public area	

4. Use your research to explain how the artwork’s location engages audiences with ideas about Aboriginal history and land.

RESEARCH AND RESPOND: Research and/or discuss recent controversies surrounding public monuments and their depiction of figures associated with colonial violence. Use writing or discussion to respond to the following questions:

- What is the role of public monuments in contemporary Australia?
- How could recent controversies surrounding public monuments have influenced the creation of **Aboriginal Sydney**?
- How does **Aboriginal Sydney** offer another perspective on Australian history and the figures we choose to remember?

ARTMAKING TASK

Silhouette Cut-Outs

Explore Adam King's practice by creating a collaborative artwork that features significant figures from your local area.

1. 1. Decide who you will include in your artwork, considering how your choices. In small groups, brainstorm and research significant or lesser known figures from the past and present who live in your local area. Find out about important Aboriginal community members or figures from your local history. Consider how your choices could reflect a particular story or theme, e.g. leaders in our community. Choose two or three individuals each to include in your artwork.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Research Opportunity: Does your local area have any public monuments? Research the figures who are represented in these monuments. Do these figures tell the whole story of your local area? How can your artworks add to the story told?

2. Use photographs or drawings to record the silhouettes of the people you choose to include.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Practice your portraiture drawing skills by completing a series of sketches of your chosen profiles. Research and experiment with a range of techniques, e.g. blind contour drawings and using a grid to achieve proportion.

3. Draw or trace your chosen profiles on to a large sheet of card. *Tip: Cut out the profiles from photographs and use these as a template to trace on to your card.*
4. Cut the profiles out with a pair of scissors or a stencil knife on a cutting mat.
5. Display all of the artworks together to create a collaborative exhibit. Some questions to consider when you present your work include:
 - How will we display the artworks? E.g. mounted on a wall, free-standing with a base or suspended from a string?
 - How can the order of portraits be used to tell a collective story about our local area?
6. Write a wall label to accompany the collaborative artwork. Include in this text an explanation of the aspects of local history the artwork focuses on and the intentions of the group in choosing these figures and stories.