

# Canal to Creek

WestConnex

Transurban

THE WESTCONNEX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VADEA  
NSW

VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN  
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

# GREG JOHNS

NEAR THE CENTRE (THERE IS MUSIC) | STAGE 4 WORKSHEET



## CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

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**VOCABULARY** - Recontextualisation, anatomy, science, Aboriginality, Colonialism, Australia, history, installation, sculpture, landscape, power, observer, hybridisation, intertextuality

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## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTIST

Greg Johns is a South Australian based Aboriginal sculptor who is inspired by his own nationality and issues facing Australian society. As an artist, Greg Johns is a facilitator and driver of his mostly large-scale steel sculptural work. He conceptually investigates his world and creates and designs to support the environment given the historic and national influences within that space. In ***Near the Centre (There is Music)*** he focuses on issues of colonialism and the feelings and emotions attached to that. Individually he develops the ideas and organises the direction for the construction of his work. Collaboratively, he contracts the production of the piece through further research and investigation of process.

## ARTWORK

***Near the Centre (There is Music)*** is a site specific, large-scale sculptural installation made of steel and concrete. It includes a large-scale central mandala with surrounding larger than life figurative sculptures produced in steel.

Why do you think the artist uses steel in his artmaking?

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Greg Johns uses a couple of key symbols - the figure and the mandala. What might each of these symbols mean?

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Within the construction of ***Near the Centre (There is Music)*** Johns has chosen to represent issues of colonialism within our national history. How do you think he has done this?

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## ARTMAKING TASK

### STRUCTURAL & SUBJECTIVE FRAMES

#### *Experience...*

**Near the Centre (There is Music)** is an artwork that you need to experience. Walk through the immersive digital site or physical site and connect with the work within your own time and pace. REFLECT on the past and present. What do you see? What do you hear? What does the artwork remind you of? Does the artwork challenge your existing ideas? How do you feel?

Write down words and ideas that come to you while you are engaging with this artwork...Take photos of your journey through the artwork so you can include them in your visual diary later.

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Imagine you have just met with a group of people you have never seen before. They have a completely different appearance to you in terms of looks and dress. How would you feel?

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Consider the atmosphere that Greg Johns has intended to create. Does it create feelings of discomfort that you can reflect on?

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Now choose a position within the space that you might like to draw in your visual diary. It does not have to be a realistic representation but is to be your own interpretation of the landscape within which parts of the artwork stand. Use tones and textures that incorporate the light and shadows cast by the steel sculptures that tower over you.