

NOT FOR REPRODUCTION

QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

THIS **VANISHING WORLD**

PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

**SKETCHING THE
SUBLIME LANDSCAPE**

TEACHING RESOURCE

*Olegas Tuchanas was a man who loved Tasmania
and its wild places.*

*His photographs, words and actions changed
the way we connect with Tasmania's most
remote locations.*

His story is one of resilience, artistry and passion.

*This exhibition tells the story of OLEGAS
TRUCHANAS and his lasting legacy.*

COVER IMAGE Olegas TRUCHANAS *Showers, Frankland Range, Lake Pedder* 1969. Cibachrome print QVM:1999:P:1201

IMAGE Photographer unknown. *Olegas Truchanas at Mount Anne* late 1969. 35 mm colour slide. Truchanas Family Collection, QVM:2014:P:1361

CURRICULUM LINKS: VISUAL ART

YEARS 5 & 6

EXPLORING & RESPONDING

- > Explore ways that visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials are combined to communicate ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning in visual arts across cultures, times, places and/ or other contexts.

CREATING & MAKING

- > Use visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to plan and create artworks that communicate ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning.

YEARS 7 & 8

EXPLORING & RESPONDING

- > Investigate ways that visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials are manipulated to represent ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning in artworks created across cultures, times, places and/ or other contexts

DEVELOPING PRACTICES & SKILLS

- > Experiment with visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to develop skills
- > Reflect on the ways that they and other artists respond to influences to inform choices they make in their own visual arts practices

CREATING & MAKING

- > Select and manipulate visual conventions, visual arts processes and/ or materials to create artworks that represent ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning



YEARS 9 & 10

EXPLORING & RESPONDING

- > Investigate the ways that artist's across cultures, times, places and /or other contexts develop personal expression in their visual arts practice to represent, communicate and/ or challenge ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning.

DEVELOPING PRACTICES & SKILLS

- > Experiment with visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to refine skills and develop personal expression

CREATING & MAKING

- > Select and manipulate visual conventions, visual arts processes and /or materials to create artworks that reflect personal expression, and represent and/ or challenge, ideas, perspectives and/ or meaning.

PRESENTING & PERFORMING

- > Evaluate art exhibits to inform the curation and exhibition of their own and/ or others' artworks and/ or visual practice

CURRICULUM LINKS: HASS

YEARS 1 & 2



KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

HISTORY

- > A local individual, group, places or building and the reasons for their importance, including social, cultural or spiritual significance
- > How technological developments changed people's lives at home, and in the ways they worked, travelled and communicated

GEOGRAPHY

- > The natural, managed and constructed features of local places, and their location

SKILLS

QUESTIONING & RESEARCHING

- > Develop questions about objects, people, places and events in the past and present

INTERPRETING, ANALYSING & EVALUATING:

- > Discuss perspectives related to objects, people, places and events

COMMUNICATING

- > Develop narratives and share observations, using sources, and subject-specific terms

YEARS 3 & 4

KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

HISTORY

- > Causes and effects of changes to the local community, and how people who may be from diverse backgrounds have contributed to these changes.

GEOGRAPHY

- > The importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia

YEARS 5 & 6

KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

HISTORY

- > The motivation of people migrating to Australia since Federation and throughout the 20th century, their stories and effects on Australian society.

CIVICS & CITIZENSHIP

- > How citizens (members of communities) with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve a civic goal.

ECONOMICS & BUSINESS

- > Types of resources, including natural, human and capital, and how they satisfy needs and wants.

PRIOR LEARNING

INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION

ACTIVITY: MAKING VIEWFINDER

ACTIVITY: SKETCHING LANDSCAPE AROUND SCHOOL

DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS HERE

THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

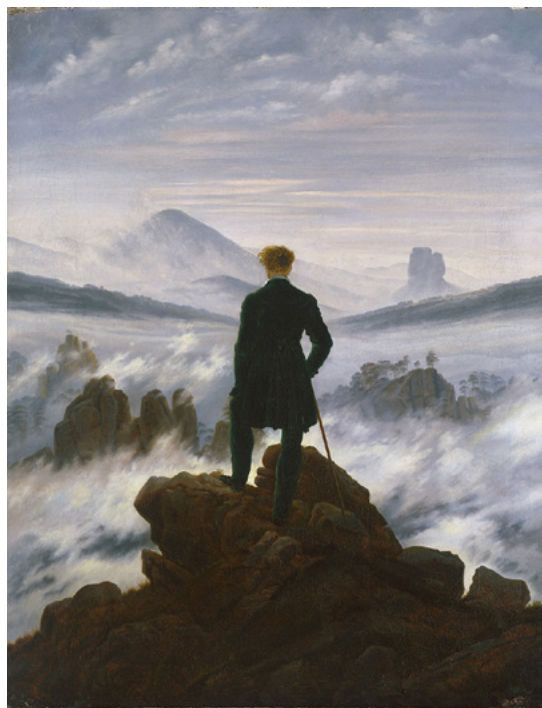
DISCUSSION: CAPTURING THE 'SUBLIME' LANDSCAPE

Olegas Truchanas dedicated years of his life to exploring, photographing and documenting some of the wildest and most remote parts of the Tasmanian landscape. Born and raised in Lithuania, his family fled the country when it was invaded during WWII, and he spent time in refugee camps in Germany. It was there in the mountains where he first discovered and learnt the art of photography. When he relocated to Tasmania, he brought his passion for the outdoors and photography with him. In his photography the viewer sees Tasmania through Olegas' eyes, a Tasmania many of us will never venture to see. His passion for Tasmania's wild places and the inherent value in their natural beauty drove Olegas to join the campaign against the damming of Lake Pedder, using his photographs of the beach and beauty of Lake Pedder as ammunition for its salvation. He lived and worked in a time before digital photography technology and used entry level camera equipment. Although he may not have had a professional's tools, he had a professional's eye for capturing the sublime landscape.

In art terms 'sublime' refers to art that produces feelings of awe, terror, wonder and a feeling of our minuteness in comparison to the grand and powerful or *terrifying vastness*.¹ Art that depicts nature in dramatic scenes of breathtaking landscapes, powerful seas and storms and the feelings that they produce can be referred to as capturing this idea of the 'sublime'. Artists try to recreate the experience of these feelings of awe through dramatic scenes of nature.

Art can be a language through which you express feelings that you cannot find words for; overwhelmed, extreme, intangible feelings; feelings that are difficult to describe in words.

"Artists employ the sublime to comment not only on our relationship with nature, but the fast-changing pace of technology as well as troubling contemporary events of war and violence".²



Caspar David FRIEDRICH *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* c1818
Oil on canvas. 94.8 cm x 74.8 cm. Hamburger Kunsthalle

In this oil painting from 1817, Casper David Friedrich depicts a scene of a hiker standing on top of a mountain looking over a fog-filled valley. The view is vast, but the sea of fog has it hidden from view, perhaps as a metaphor for life's journey into the unknown?

DISCUSSION

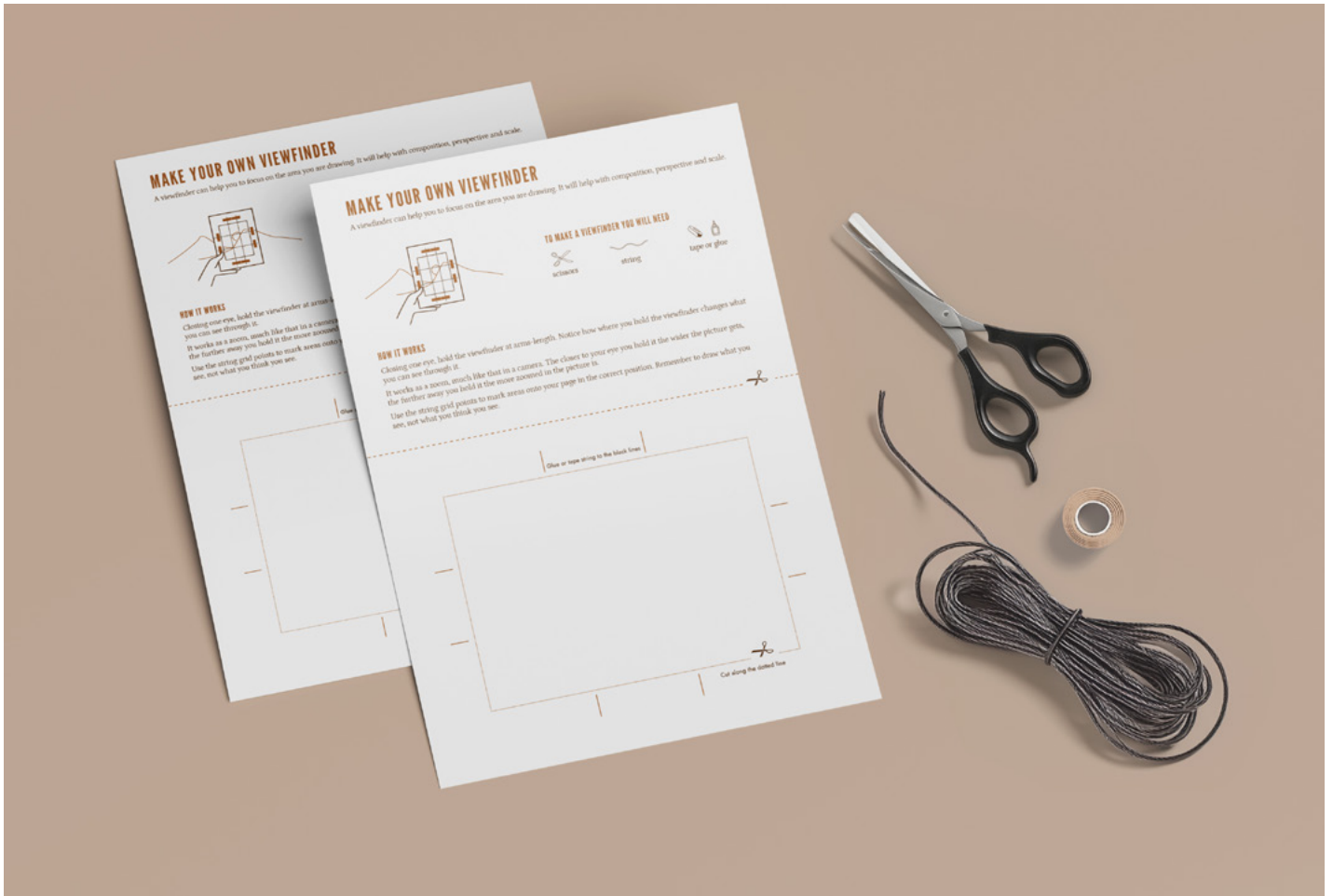
Discuss the idea of the sublime in art in relation to the Caspar David Friedrich painting.

What is it about dramatic scenes of nature that can lead to these feelings of awe, terror and wonder?

Why do you think this is?

1 Emmanuel Kant located the sublime in humans' incapacity to understand terrifying vastness and because of this we recognize our own smallness and limitations. Source: *The Art Story: The Sublime in Art - Modern Art Terms and Concepts* | TheArtStory
2 Source: *The Art Story: The Sublime in Art - Modern Art Terms and Concepts* | TheArtStory

ACTIVITY: MAKE YOUR OWN VIEWFINDER



A viewfinder is a useful tool that helps artists visually frame up the landscape, much like a photographer looks through the viewfinder of their camera.

It can help to focus the eye on one part of the landscape, especially where there are other overwhelming elements. It can also help artists draw to scale using the grid method.

TEACHERS

Use the printable handout in the activity sheets document for students to create their own viewfinders. Bring with them to use while visiting the exhibition.

Don't forget to bring clipboards and pencils!

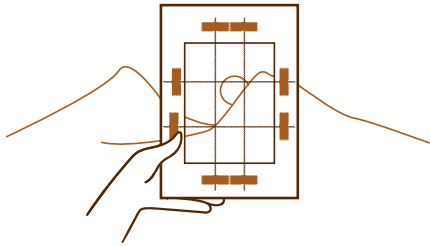


DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS [HERE](#)

THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

MAKE YOUR OWN VIEWFINDER

A viewfinder can help you to focus on the area you are drawing. It will help with composition, perspective and scale.



TO MAKE A VIEWFINDER YOU WILL NEED



scissors



string



tape or glue



thick paper

TIP you can glue the print-out onto thicker card to give your viewfinder more stability.

HOW IT WORKS

Closing one eye, hold the viewfinder at arm's length. Notice that what you can see will change depending on how far away you can hold it.

In some respects, it works as a zoom, much like that in a camera. The closer to your eye you hold it, the 'wider' the view becomes, the further away you hold it, the more 'zoomed in' the view appears.

Use the string grid points to mark areas onto your page in the correct position. Remember to draw what you see, not what you think you see.



Glue or tape string to the black lines



Cut along the dotted line

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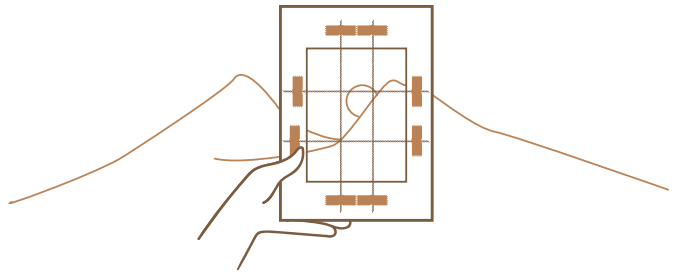
DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS [HERE](#)

THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

ACTIVITY: SKETCHING OUTSIDE

1

Take your viewfinder outside with a pencil, paper and clipboard.



2

Find an interesting composition through your viewfinder to sketch.

5

Where is the focal point in your framed landscape?

What is your eye first drawn to?

3

While holding your viewfinder up, close one eye. This will help you see the frame and the landscape through it.

6

Remember to sketch what you see, not what you think you see.

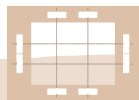


4

Look at the composition of the framed landscape.

Composition refers to the way objects and elements are arranged throughout the frame.

A good composition leads the viewer's eye through the image.



7

Continue drawing with regular checking through the your viewfinder for accuracy.

TIP You can take a photo of the view through the frame of your viewfinder if this helps you to focus.

EXHIBITION VISIT

INQUIRY QUESTIONS
GROUP DISCUSSION: EXHIBITION THEMES
ACTIVITY: SKETCHING IN THE EXHIBITION

DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS [HERE](#)

THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

THIS VANISHING WORLD



Q: As you view the exhibition, consider why it has been named *This Vanishing World*? How do you feel about this and why?

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Q: What challenges did Truchanas face in producing his work? How has technology changed since Truchanas' time (including technology in photography)? How has this new technology reduced/eliminated the challenges Truchanas would have faced?

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Q: What was Truchanas' motivation/meaning behind his work?

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THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

THIS VANISHING WORLD

Q: What is a 'lasting legacy' and why is Truchanas' work considered important?

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Q: Would you consider the photographs of Truchanas as art? Why/why not?

If the photographs had been produced by someone this year, would this affect your opinion?

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THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

ACTIVITY: EXHIBITION THEMES



The curators of the exhibition have organised the content into four themes: resilience, passion, artistry and impact.

In pairs or groups of three, look at the photographs on display throughout the exhibition and choose one to focus on.

Discuss with your partner/group which of the four themes it best fits into and why.

SHARE your ideas with the class.

FURTHER INQUIRY QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION IN THE EXHIBITION

The time Truchanas spent in solitude in the wilderness helped him heal from traumatic experiences. It also inspired his creativity.

Why do you think this helped?

What is it about spending time in solitude/ alone in nature that can have this effect on us?



How do you feel when you look at Truchanas' photographs of vast mountains and skies?

What kinds of emotions do you think his photographs have captured?

How do you think Truchanas felt when he took these photographs?

Would you say he has captured the 'sublime' in his photographs?
Which one(s) in particular and why?

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THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

ACTIVITY: SKETCHING



1

Choose a photograph in the *This Vanishing World* exhibition that evokes feelings of awe and wonder for you.

2

Use your viewfinder to frame one part of the photograph and create a sketch of it.



3

Consider the image you see through your viewfinder may create a more abstract/zoomed in picture of the landscape photograph. This offers a different perspective and changes the mood of the image.

TIP You can take a photo of the view through the frame of your viewfinder if this helps you to focus.

POST LEARNING

DISCUSSION: INQUIRY QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY: COMPLETING SKETCHES WITH WATERCOLOUR

DISCUSSION: LASTING LEGACY

Truchanas' photography was influential in the campaign against the damming of Lake Pedder. Even though Lake Pedder was lost, the lessons learnt from the Lake Pedder campaign made possible the successful Gordon-Below-Franklin dam protests of 1978-1981, putting an end to exponential growth of hydro power damming rivers in Tasmania.

This, and his photographic body of work, is Olegas Truchanas' lasting Legacy.



“
If we can revise our attitudes towards the land under our feet; if we can accept a role of steward and depart from the role of conqueror; if we can accept the view that man and nature are inseparable parts of the unified whole - then Tasmania can be a shining beacon in a dull, uniform and largely artificial world.
 ”

Olegas Truchanas

Discuss this quote above.

What does it mean to you?

What will your lasting legacy be?

DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY SHEETS [HERE](#)

THIS VANISHING WORLD: PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

ACTIVITY: WATERCOLOUR



Complete your sketches from the exhibition using watercolours to bring them to life and add a further dimension of colour.

FURTHER OPTIONAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Using the 'sublime' as inspiration, create a body of work that captures what the 'sublime' means to you. The work may be produced in any media you think most suitable for the assignment. Upon completion share your work with the class and explain why you think it captures the sublime.

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