



# VISUAL ARTS

## IN FOCUS

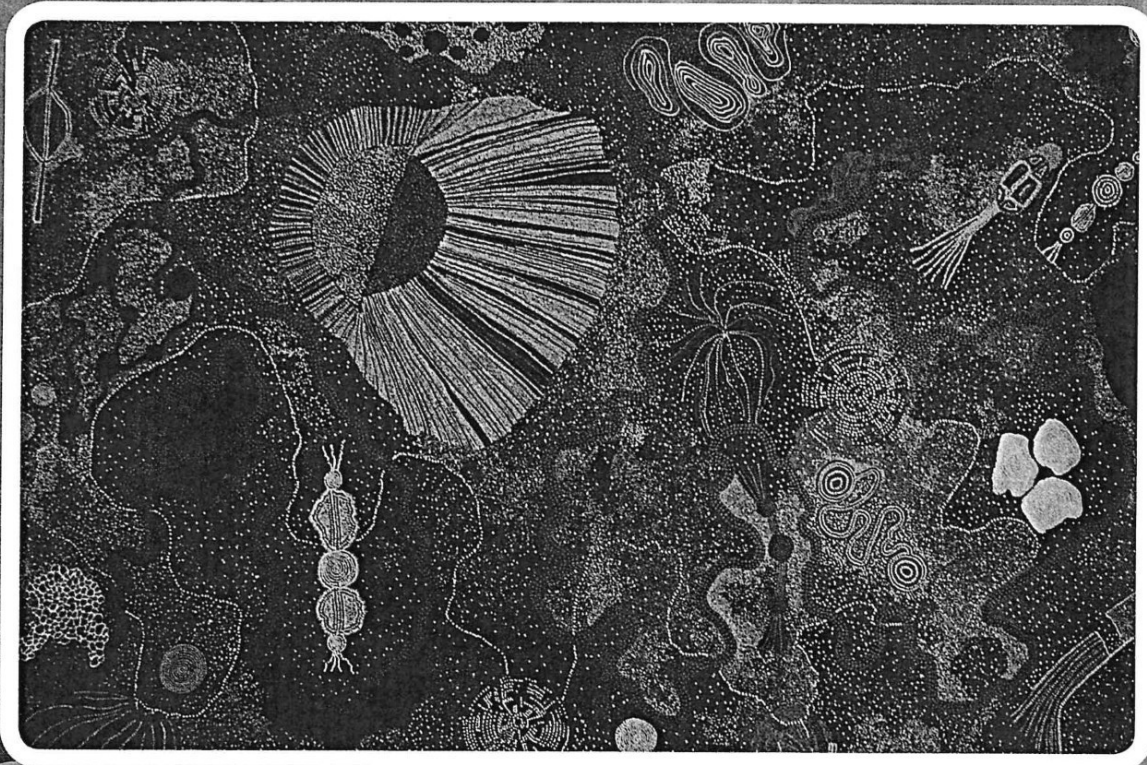
Heather Hammonds

### *A World of Art*

There are many forms of art. Artists create art by drawing and painting, making sculptures, weaving, making music and in many other ways. Art can tell a story or express an artist's feelings about something. Sometimes a work of art is simply something beautiful for everyone to look at. Art is limited only by the artist's imagination.

### *Painting, Drawing and Sculpture*

Painting, drawing and sculpture are called visual arts. This is because the artworks created are meant to be looked at. Many talented visual artists live in Australia and New Zealand. Often they paint, draw and sculpt works of art that are unique to this beautiful part of the world. Some artists use the land and culture as inspiration for their works of art.



*My Mother's Country – Coloured Series by Indigenous Australian artist Barbara Weir is painted with acrylic paints on linen. It represents the artist's traditional land.*

## Indigenous Art

Indigenous artists from Australia and New Zealand often use materials and practise art styles that have been used by their ancestors since ancient times. Many Indigenous artists create works of art that tell stories of their cultures and the land, its animals and its people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists today may use traditional materials such as ochre (a soft type of rock) to make paints. Or they may use modern paints. Indigenous Australian artists create traditional, modern and experimental works of art. These include bark and wood paintings, paintings on canvas, body art, traditional baskets, and sculptures in glass and stone.

In New Zealand, Māori artists carve traditional and modern designs in wood, bone and stone. Māori artists often use a stone called jade to create works of art. Weaving is also an important traditional form of art that many Māori artists are keeping alive today. Another traditional art form is moko: body art or tattoos. Moko designs show such things as who the wearer's family is and where they came from. Many Māori artists also draw and paint in modern styles.

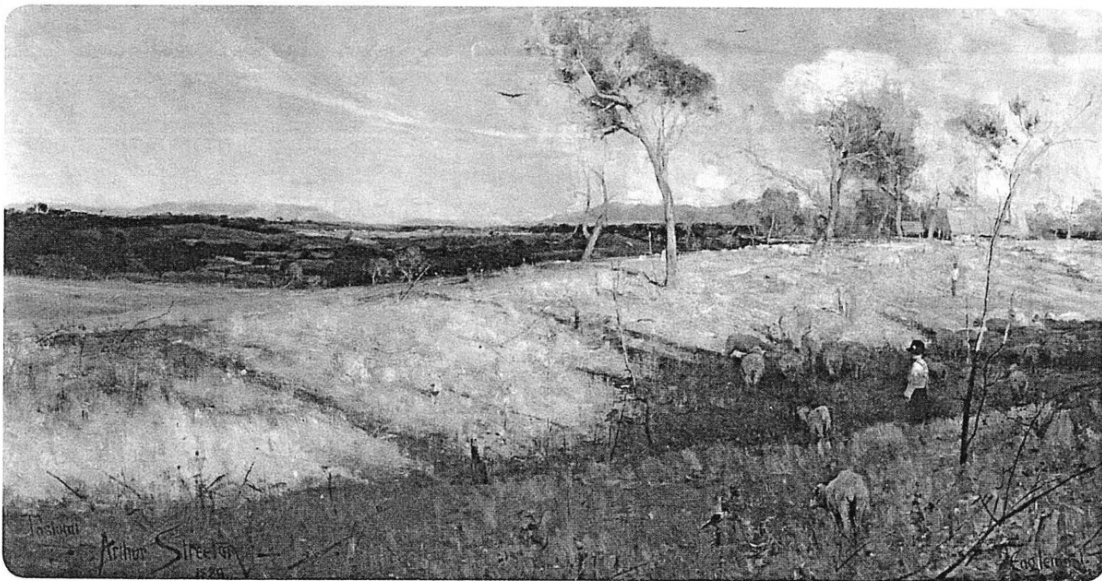


*This jade carving by Māori artist Hepi Maxwell is called Kahurangi Kiwi, which means "small treasure".*

## Art Past and Present

Art from the past can show us how the artists viewed the world around them at the time. When European artists first visited Australia and New Zealand, they were amazed by the wildlife. They drew and painted many pictures of the birds and other animals they saw. These works of art were sent back to Europe, to show others these animals that were so unlike European fauna.

When European artists began painting landscapes in Australia and New Zealand, they used many of the same colours as were used in European paintings. These pale, soft colours suited Europe, where the light was not as bright as it was in Australia and New Zealand. But these colours did not show what Australian and New Zealand landscapes truly looked like. Over time, many artists began to change their styles to reflect the true light and colours they saw around them.



*Golden Summer, Eaglemont 1889 by Australian artist Arthur Streeton is a painting that shows the true colours of Australia.*

Artists today paint and draw city and country life in many styles. Artists from cultures all over the world have contributed to the development of Australian and New Zealand visual arts.

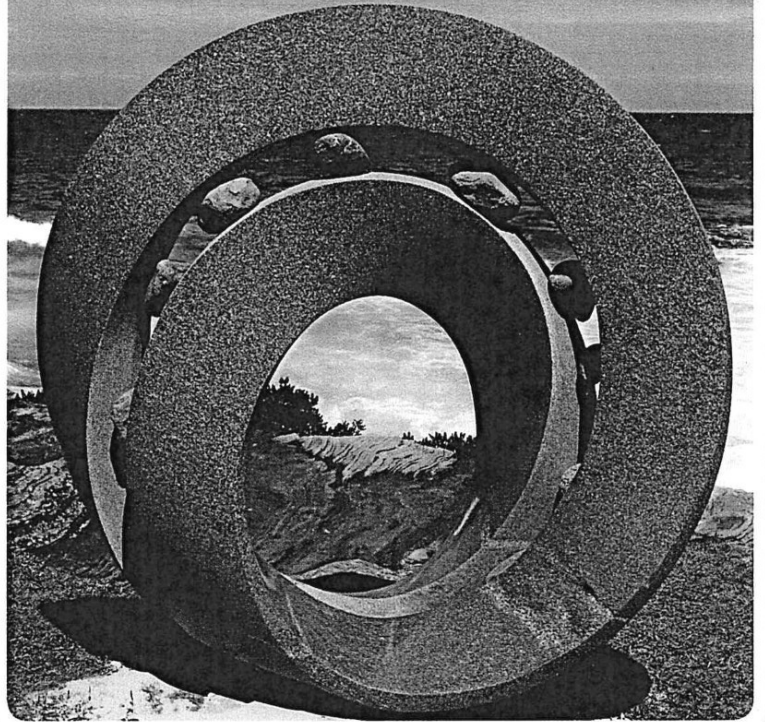
### The Heidelberg School

Arthur Streeton was one of a number of artists in the late nineteenth century who wanted to capture the harsh, bright sunlight and the rich colours of the Australian landscape. A group of artists who all have similar styles and aims is called a "school". This group was called the Heidelberg School because many of the artists were based in the rural area of Heidelberg, near Melbourne.

## Art Is for Everyone

Art can be found in lots of different places. People can visit art galleries to see works of art. Sculptures and murals are sometimes placed in town squares or other public places so they can be enjoyed by everyone. Huge statues along the sides of modern freeways add interest to car journeys. Artworks made of stone or metal can often be found in public parks. People can see and touch them every day.

Australian and New Zealand artists create many beautiful and interesting paintings, drawings and sculptures. Visual arts help everybody to think about their surroundings, land and culture.



The sculpture moebius in space planet by Keizo Ushio, photographed here by Samantha Burns, was part of the Sculpture by the Sea exhibition in 2011. The exhibition is held at Bondi Beach in Sydney every year, and is free to anybody who wants to go and see it.

## Making Meaning

- 1 What are three common forms of visual art?
- 2 What do Māori artists do in *keeping alive* the art of weaving?
- 3 What is meant by *Art is limited only by the artist's imagination*?
- 4 Why do many indigenous artists use traditional materials and styles in their artwork?
- 5 How would you summarise the development of visual art over time?
- 6 In the painting *Golden Summer, Eaglemont 1889* by Arthur Streeton, what would you describe as *the true colours of Australia*?
- 7 Of the paintings and sculptures in this card, which style do you prefer? Why?