

Goulburn Regional Art Gallery presents

15 may – 27 jun. 2020

# Sidney McMahon: Of hope and longing



Education Kit



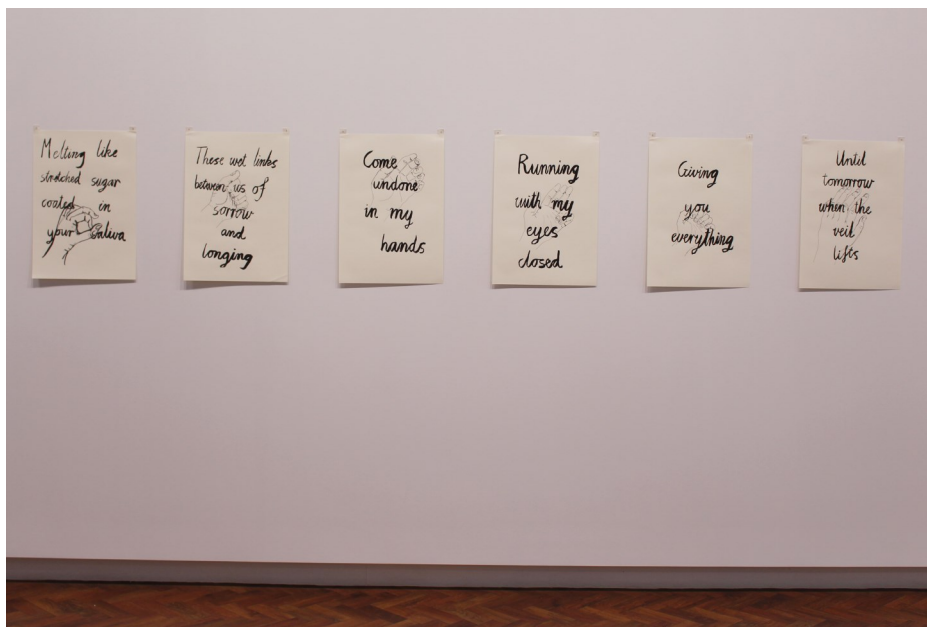
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## About the Education Kit

This Education kit has been developed for 'Sidney McMahon: Of hope and longing' 15 May — 27 Jun. 2020 and prepared by Janet Gordon, Outreach Officer. Gordon has a Bachelor of Teaching (birth to 5yrs) and a Diploma in Children's Services (Centred Based Care), with 20 years experience in early childhood education. Gordon has several years experience in teaching the afternoon art club at Goulburn Regional Art Gallery.

The kit includes practical and theory activities designed for stages 2 and up however may be used by audiences of all ages. The kit is suitable for use before and after visiting the Gallery or viewing content online. Use the table below to help you determine the level of learning.



Sidney McMahon, *Of hope and longing*, installation view, 2020. Photo: Hannah Gee

Preschool	3– 5 years old
Early Stage 1	Kindergarten
Stage 1	Year 1 and 2
Stage 2	Years 3 and 4

Stage 3	Years 5 and 6
Stage 4	Years 7 and 8
Stage 5	Years 9 and 10
Stage 6	Years 11 and 12

## Themes and Influences

The exhibition highlights the following themes:

- Investigation of materials through digital and in person experiences.
- Innovative use of media and sharing it with a digital audience.
- Making connections between identity and association.

## Objectives

As a part of viewing the exhibition and completing the activities in this Education kit, students will:

- Gain an understanding about how artists use art to express ideas and communicate with their audience.
- Develop the ability to interpret concepts and symbols in art and make conclusions about the artist's intentions.
- Identify that artists use a variety of materials and disciplines to convey a variety of messages.
- Discuss and respond to art in a variety of forms.
- Gain a greater knowledge of how art can be a powerful form of documentation and critique of the social, economic, environmental and political context in which it is made.
- Consider the relationship that exists between the artwork, artist, gallery and audience.
- Form an appreciation for the very deep connections contemporary artists have with place as represented in their practice.

## About the exhibition

Sidney McMahon works across sculptural installation, video and performance. They use a variety of materials, textures and colours in their work.

### 'Of hope and longing'

This exhibition is a series of digital performances streamed on social media, as well as works inside the gallery. A poem by McMahon lines the gallery walls in a series of drawings, each drawing individual but at the same time working together to represent a collective idea. The digital performances will draw on McMahon's personal connections between queerness and country music. McMahon appropriates the aesthetics and materiality of country music to unpack the growth, stoicism, longing and hope that this industry nurtured throughout their childhood in rural Queensland.



Sidney McMahon, *Of hope and longing*, Installation view, 2020. Photos: Hannah Gee

These works are based on a poem McMahon wrote while on residency in Collector just 20 minutes from Goulburn! Each work is drawn from a line of the poem, each line referencing to something specific - hope, identity, making Stetson cowboy hats, longing, desire, vulnerability, responsibility, stoicism, disguises.

# Find-a-word

Finding the positive words listed below.

ACCEPTED	FABULOUS	KINDNESS	THOUGHTFULNESS
BELOVED	GENUINE	LIVELY	UNIQUE
BENEVOLENCE	HAPPY	MEANINGFUL	ZANY
CHEERY	INTERESTED	OPENNESS	
CONSIDERATE	JOYFUL	RESPECTFUL	

Z K I Q L V J O P E N N E S S L D Z L T X  
S E Q B W C G E N U I N E A N O J I M L M  
T V J C V U W F Y P K T A T H Q A M Y M V  
I H X J B G Q I V V E I U I G U N P P Q A  
K M O J B D S Z N Z C O C I G E P D K O N  
B E Q U O X V A C T J L J Y T A E T L R U  
E A V G G C V N T Z E S R A H T V U F C N  
N N H F G H H Y I C R R R K P F F F Y S I  
E I A V V E T R O P Y E E E Y T B F G L Q  
V N A V E E P F M N D B C S C H D A Z W U  
O G F I A R K S U I Y C R E T E J B J C E  
L F R G U Y S R S L A A P Z V E E U B E Q  
E U X Y E E F N E Z N S E O G Z D L K O E  
N L F N N R O V M F E E L C X M G O O B X  
C X O D U C I X J R H E S F N O R U J C L  
E B N D I L F I Q P B G H S O H B S Q Y I  
C I F L L D Y H K X F P B H Z E F U N J D  
K H I P Z J O Y F U L J K V G N J J U G W

## About the Artist



### Fill the gaps

rural

1986

Keith

Toowoomba

country

Brookes

London

variety

Kyoto

performance

Tokyo

Dolly

flowers

Sidney McMahon, *Eager and unashamed*, Performance Space, performed as part of Live Works 2018.  
Photo: Alex Davies

Complete the text below about Sidney McMahon by selecting the most appropriate word or phrase from the options above.

Sidney McMahon, born \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ in Qld, and spend their childhood in \_\_\_\_\_ Qld. McMahon has completed residencies in \_\_\_\_\_, Paris, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. McMahon takes inspiration from \_\_\_\_\_ music artists, Garth \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Parton and \_\_\_\_\_ Urban. McMahon works in sculpture, video and \_\_\_\_\_. They use a \_\_\_\_\_ of materials including chains, \_\_\_\_\_, and writing.

## What is Video Art ?

Video Art emerged in the late 1960's as video tape recorders and video technology became available and affordable.

Video Art uses visual and audio as a medium. It may incorporate performers, recorded images, sounds, television sets, dialogue. It can be broadcast in galleries, museums, streamed online, distributed as a DVD.



The Creepy Little Lemon Kids, *You forgot spaghetti's can swim*, installation view with Sidney McMahon and Hannah Gee, 2020.  
Photo: Gina Mobayed





The Creepy Little Lemon Kids, *You forgot spaghetti's can swim*, installation view with Sidney McMahon, 2020. Photo: Gina Mobayed

Take a look at some scenarios below. Draw a circle around the type of art you would consider the artist has used.

In the studio an artist asked the family to sit on the chairs in a well lit area. The artist stands behind an easel. He has a table close by with a variety of pencils displayed on it.	Video art	Drawing
A performer moves around an area in a well thought out pattern as an artist follows the movements with their video camera.	Painting	Video art
An easel is set up on the bank of the Wollondilly River. From where the artist stands the water flowing over the weir can be seen and heard. They use the paints on the pallet to capture the light reflective of the water and the ducks bobbing for food.	Sculpting	Painting
The artist moves around a piece of black material as its raised up to the roof by a winch . Just as the audience watching online get a glimpse of the bright red flowers on the floor the materials falls as mechanical clunky sounds are heard.	Video art	Photography

# Lights, Camera, Action

Video Cameras and technology has changed over the years, from reels to cassettes to digital, from silent movies to talkies, from black and white to colour.

Can you match these movie cameras to the year they were made?

Draw a line from the camera to the year.



1965



1977

1983



1995

1984



1995



2005



1927

2000



# Identity

Your identity is made up of your beliefs, personality, qualities, expressions, likes/dislikes, cultures. Sometimes we label others by what we see and think. But this isn't all there is to a person. Also, do we have the right to label others?

'You are a teacher, so I know you are this and this'

'You are a bus driver, so I know you are this and this'

But not all teachers are the same, not all bus drivers are the same. They have different backgrounds, have had different influences.

What makes up your identity . . . . .

What is your favourite colour?

---

If you could change your name what would it be?

---

What makes you laugh?

---

What makes you sad?

---

How many siblings do you have?

---

## Organic Elements

McMahon often uses a variety of plants in their work. These organic elements change and evolve throughout the exhibitions. They use foliage as a way to explore relationships with the environment and our reliance but careless dealings with nature.



Sidney McMahon and Brooke Stamp, performance still of *Real real #2*, presented by Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2018. Photo: Rafaela Pandolfini

What plants can you see in the images? Have you seen them before? Where have you seen them?

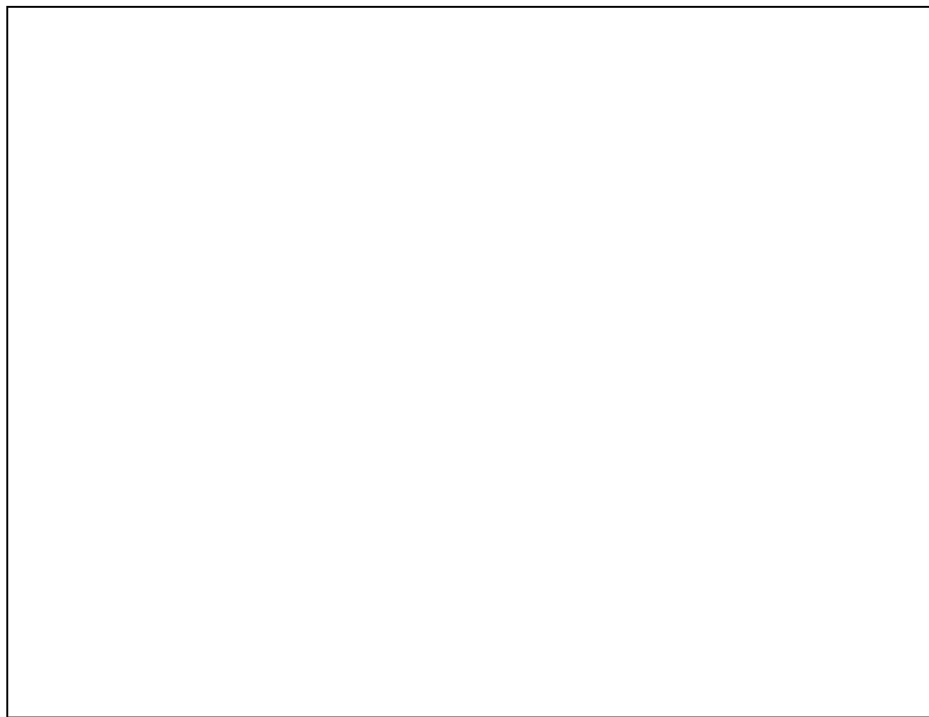


Sidney McMahon, *On the turning point of becoming and returning*, 2016. Photo: Docuquent



Sidney McMahon, *On the turning point of becoming and returning*, 2016.  
Photo: Document

Draw a scenic picture with one of the plants from the images in it

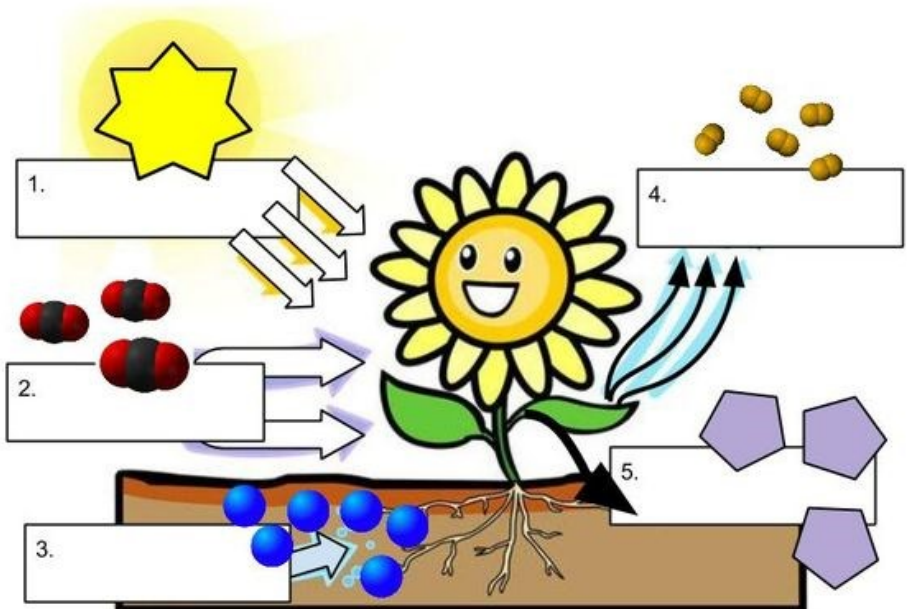


# Photosynthesis

## What is photosynthesis ?

Did you know that plants can make their own food? It's called Photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is a process where plants use light from the sun to convert carbon dioxide from the air and water from the soil into sugar to feed the plant and oxygen is given out in the air.

Look at McMahon's artworks then label the photosynthesis process by filling in the blanks.





Sidney McMahon, *Untitled #2* from the series *Holding my breath*, 2018. Photo: Document Photography



Sidney McMahon, *Untitled #6* from the series *There's no easy way to say this*, 2016. Photo: Dan McCabe

# Colours

Colour is a big part of some artists works.

## Colour and emotion

Colours can make us feel a particular way by evoking different emotions. Not everyone associates the same emotions to the same colours. There are a few factors that influence our thinking - psychological effects, biological conditioning and cultural imprinting - in other words, past experiences or cultural differences.

For example -

The colour black - for some it is powerful, mysterious but for others it is scary.

The colour blue - for some it is calming, friendly but for others it is cold.

The colour yellow - for some it is happy, but for others it is overwhelming.

The colour red - for some it is energising but for others it is danger, anger.



Sidney McMahon, *Misunderstanding of what it means to be tender*, installation view, 2018.  
3331 Arts Chiyoda Gallery





Sidney McMahon, *Misunderstanding of what it means to be tender*, installation view, 2018.  
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### Colour association

Colour the circle a colour that makes you feel happy.

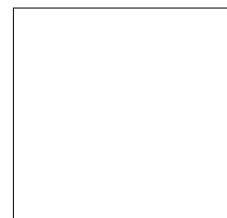
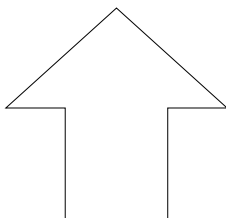
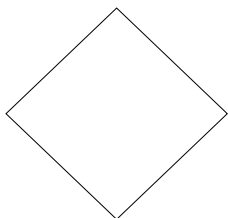
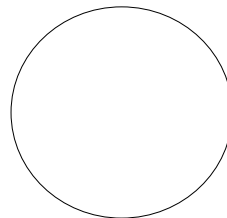
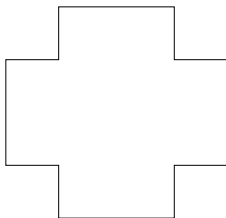
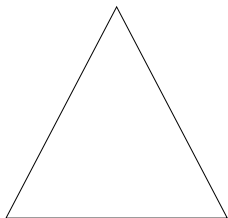
Colour the square a colour that makes you feel powerful.

Colour the triangle a colour that makes you feel cold.

Colour the diamond a colour that makes you feel creative.

Colour the cross a colour that makes you feel sad.

Colour the arrow a colour that makes you feel loved.



# Textures

McMahon uses different textures in their works. The texture of the materials used, the textures in the room.

Answer the following questions to complete



## Across

2. Dried cement can feel \_\_\_\_\_
5. Sand and gravel can feel like this
6. Peanut butter choice
8. Flowing substance
9. Change one letter in bumpy

## Down:

1. Not hard
3. The opposite of soft
4. Something a biscuit can be
7. Not a liquid or gas

## Clues

- Rough
- Smooth
- Hard
- Soft
- Liquid
- Solid
- Lumpy
- Gritty
- Crumbly

A crossword puzzle grid with the following numbered starting points:

- 1**: Down, 1 cell
- 2**: Across, 4 cells
- 3**: Down, 5 cells
- 4**: Down, 2 cells
- 5**: Across, 6 cells
- 6**: Across, 6 cells
- 7**: Down, 4 cells
- 8**: Across, 7 cells
- 9**: Across, 4 cells



# Words

## Words in art

McMahon uses words that have meaning to them in their works. They draw inspiration from childhood memories and lyrics of country music songs.

In McMahon's exhibition, 'Canter' in 2019 at Outer Space ARI, Brisbane, they used words and drawings to express feelings that surrounded memories.



The word canter brings back childhood memories for McMahon.

What does the word canter mean to you?

Can you draw what it means?



Do you notice anything about this hand?

What did you notice?

Photo by Julie Manning, 2018.



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Goulburn Regional Art Gallery is supported by the NSW government through Create NSW