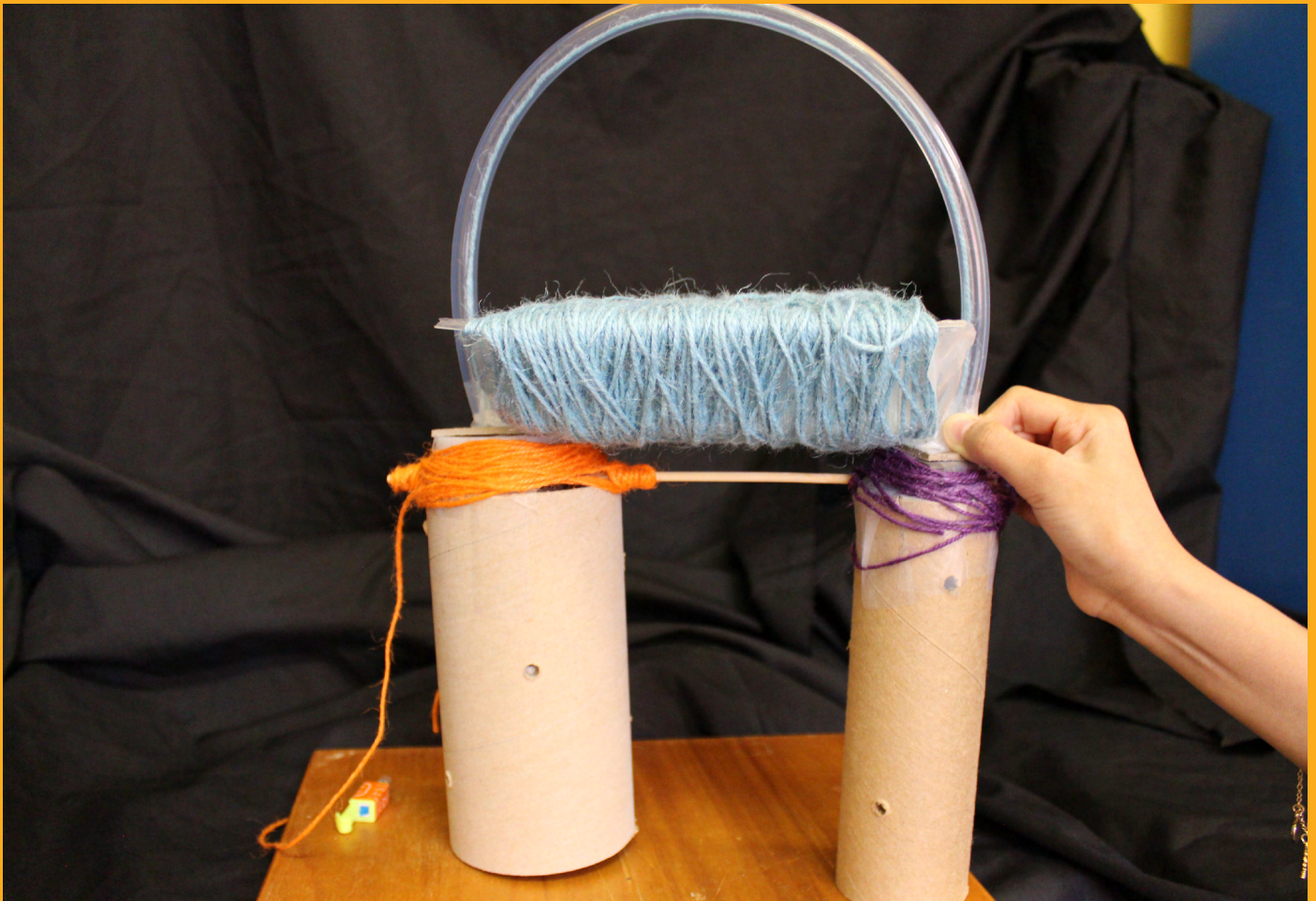


NEON STORIES

Creative
Process &
Exhibition
Guide



Presented by Footscray Community
Arts Centre and Western English Language
School in collaboration with
the indirect Object.



Acknowledgement of Country

Footscray Community Arts Centre acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land from which this content was created and broadcast, the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We extend this respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be watching. We acknowledge their place in our history as the original story-tellers, their living cultures, and that sovereignty has never been ceded.

Neon Stories Western English Language School in collaboration with the indirect Object

Ice cream and zombies, snails and sakura trees, Neon Stories is an interactive exhibition sharing the things we love.

Presented by Footscray Community Arts Centre and Western English Language School in collaboration with the indirect Object.

Neon Stories is the culmination of a six month collaboration between Footscray Community Arts Centre, Western English Language School Footscray Campus, and the indirect Object. As the second wave of COVID-19 took hold, the need to radically change our process and outcome became clear. Gone were the weekly sessions of group play and tactile exploration, replaced with hour long online classes.

We asked ourselves, how do you retain the essence of a fundamentally fluid, exploratory and hands on collaboration while working in isolation?

Our approach was to embrace the possibilities this seismic shift in scale and space gave us. We used our online classes to emphasise transformations, just as our online process would be transformed into a real, tangible exhibition. Here around you, the handmade becomes digitised and the digital is made real.

An artist led process was replaced with cooperation and mutual support between teachers and artists. The teachers became the creative team in the classroom, and none of this would have been possible without them. Through a week-by-week curriculum of focused creative activities, the students' developed 2D and 3D design skills in response to simple questions designed to promote creative thinking, informal communication, and new language acquisition.

We began with selecting and sharing our favourite things. We drew and built models of our favourite places. We wrote and performed stories about these places, people, animals, objects and natural landscapes. As the weeks went on, we shifted from the known and figurative to embrace, pattern, texture, abstract design and wildly imaginative scenarios.

These are our Neon Stories, told through our drawings, models, voices, text, light, sound and yes, even neon.

Creative Learning Partnerships - A Victorian Government Initiative



THE INDIRECT OBJECT

What Neon Stories has meant to Western English Language School...

Neon Stories fosters the opportunity for our students and their families of Western English Language School, Footscray campus, to participate in the critical nature of making and displaying art that reflects their own understandings of the world. It hopes to create future connections for these children and their families to the broader art world by the provision of an immediate connection to the local community arts facility, FCAC and through the unique and valuable opportunity for a school to work directly with artists, the indirect Object.

After a tumultuous 2020 year, it was with such joy that students were provided with packages and boxes of art materials ready to execute a term of art making, creativity and exploration. Neon Sharpies, blue lights, cardboard tubes with drilled holes, clay, brightly coloured lids, shiny pieces of fabric, boxes of string, unusual objects all ready to thread, draw, build, mould, tie and construct favourite or imaginative places. Teachers supported and watched as their students manipulated these brightly coloured art materials and utilised their own language and their acquiring English language to tell stories about them.

A series of 'How To' videos and Google Meets with Beth and Mike provided the students with engaging and exciting weekly art workshops that adopted a shared love of art making between the students, teachers and artists. Through these meetings, online 3D building programs and sound design workshops, a kind of 'Mash Up' between the digital landscape and these real tactile materials began to unfold. The exhibition of these works brings the objects back into real life and showcases the impressive intuition and insightful collaborative effort of our artists.



ACTIVITY 1 - ALL CLASSES

Over three weeks the students used their favourite things as inspiration to design and make a paper puppet theatre, then wrote a story connecting all these elements together. In the final week, the students performed their stories and puppet shows in a livestream shared with the artists and the other classes.

OBJECTIVES

Students use manual drawing and construction techniques to illustrate what things, people and objects would be in their favourite place. They begin the process of building their own conceptual worlds.

- Explore visual arts practices and link them to storytelling
- Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to create 2D and 3D artworks
- Express our own and identify others ideas in artworks

LOCATION IN THE EXHIBITION

Entrance Gallery:

This gallery is dedicated to the Paper Theatre and Puppet designs. Conceived as a giant diorama, all the students' hand drawn designs are here, including replicas of hand written stories and soundscapes created by the students in response to their Paper Theatre stories and favourite places.

Gabriel Gallery:

The trunk of the installation is decorated with black and white patterns of the favourite things Puppets made by FO1 (Foundation). Footage of the livestream performances can be seen in the documentation film.

*What are your favourite things
and why do you like them?
Tell us a story about your
favourite things.*



ACTIVITY 2 – CLASS Fo2 & Fo4



Using your imagination and the materials provided, can you make a model of your favourite place?

It can be a made-up place, a room, a place in nature, from a story, or a place you know.

The students began by drawing a reference picture of their favourite places, then investigated the shapes of the materials provided in their recycled materials boxes. The students used these materials to build models of their favourite places.

- Utilise the language of shape for the making of artworks
- Consider the different ideas and possibilities with making a 3D model with the materials that are available
- Link artworks to storytelling

OBJECTIVES

Students use manual construction techniques to build a favourite place.

- Experiment with different materials and techniques to construct a 3D model
- Experiment with new technologies such as light and integrate them in sculptural works
- Make connections between 2D drawings to 3D sculptural works
- Consider the various construction techniques to join two or more objects together

LOCATION IN THE EXHIBITION

Gabriel Gallery:

All the students' models are displayed around the installation. There is footage of students working on their models during our online classes and images of the reference drawings are included in the documentation film. The sound design has been composed by the students and includes voice recordings of them discussing their favourite place designs.

ACTIVITY 2 - CLASS F01

Making shapes, textures and patterns - using clay to sculpt our favourite things



The prep students were given pre-softened oven-bake clay and simple sculpting tools to sculpt their favourite things. Some used the tools provided (bamboo straw, knife and skewers) to make patterns and textures or pressed leaves into the clay for texture, while others made intricate designs of flowers, diamonds, ghosts and animals.

OBJECTIVES

- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to make artworks
- Explore techniques— use our hands and simple tools and natural objects to push, roll, squash, cut and print onto clay
- Make connections from 2D drawings to a sculptural 3D artworks
- Tell stories and share artworks with others

LOCATION IN THE EXHIBITION

Gabriel Gallery:

Hanging from the canopy of the installation are branches of colourful mobiles created by F01 (preps). At the end of each mobile is a handmade sculpture.

ACTIVITY 3 - CLASS Fo2 & Fo4

Use your favourite place model from last week as inspiration to create a digital 3D design.



Over three weeks, the students continued to develop their 3D design skills through learning to use Tinkercad (www.tinkercad.com) and recreating their favourite place handmade model.

Many students made multiple models and demonstrated exceptional skill and understanding of 3D space and scale. During these weeks a flair for the abstract, absurd, and uniquely personal creative expression came to the forefront of their work.

OBJECTIVES

- Consider the use of 3D shapes and placing them into a digital landscape that reflects their hand-built 3D model
- Explore visual arts practices and new technologies to make artworks that reflect our own ideas and understandings of the world around us
- Explore different ways to make and display artworks to enhance their meaning

LOCATION IN THE EXHIBITION

Gabriel Gallery:

The students were asked to number their favourite Tinkercad designs to be printed. Some students chose only 1 design to print, some chose 3. These are displayed with the students' handmade models. Footage of additional designs can be seen in the documentation film. Additionally, footage of preparing designs for print, and the print process is also included in the film.

The 3D models are printed with a glow in the dark blue filament. When the lights in Gabriel Gallery are only UV, the printed models and the clay in the mobile sculptures glow the same colour.

ACTIVITY 3 - CLASS F01

Making our sculptures into mobiles

Each student was provided with a recycled materials box filled with fluorescent strips of fabric, beads, tube, transparent paper, reflective strip, plastic sticks, wool, twine, sequins, ribbons, markers, and a hand cut wooden disc for extra volume on their mobiles. Over 2 sessions, the students of F01 coloured their clay sculptures with neon markers (so much glow!), and used the materials provided to thread, knot, and twist colourful mobiles.

OBJECTIVES

- Use threading, tying and weaving techniques to make a hanging sculpture
- Consider texture, colour and pattern in the creation of a 3D sculptural artwork
- Tell others about our artwork through oral and written language responses
- Observe and respond to others' artworks

LOCATION IN THE EXHIBITION

Gabriel Gallery:

Hanging from the canopy of the installation are branches of colourful mobiles created by F01 (preps). Each mobile is filled with characters and creatures, their stories can be heard in the Gabriel Gallery sound design, and the hand written stories are part of the documentation film.



Isaac Nguyen holding his work.





ACTIVITY 4

What does it sound like?

In our first in-person workshop together, the students visited FCAC for the first time and worked with TIO sound designer Thomas ‘Soup’ Campbell to create original sound designs inspired by their artworks. Each class has a different objective.

Fo1 OBJECTIVE

- What’s the sound of a surprise? Find sounds and make a collage that sounds surprising.

Fo2 OBJECTIVE

- What does your favourite place sound like? Students can choose their handmade model, or one of their Tinkercad models as inspiration.

Fo4 OBJECTIVE

- Tell us the story from your Paper Theatre in sound only. Look at the events, places, and characters in your stories and choose a sound, or a sequence of sounds for each.

LOCATION IN THE GALLERY

Entrance Gallery:

The soundscapes inside the Entrance Gallery have been created by the students in response to their models, mobiles and stories. The floor of the Entrance Gallery has hidden interactive sensor pads, when you step on one, the lights change and a “surprise” sound created by FO1 can be heard, or a short segment of informal dialogue.

Gabriel Gallery:

The Gabriel Gallery includes all the recorded stories. Voice recordings of FO1 and FO2 talking about their models, and mobiles as well as FO4 reading their Paper Theatre stories can be heard here.



HOW TO VIDEOS

Over six weeks from September to early November TIO artists Beth McMahan and Michael Bevitt created 15 short videos introducing and demonstrating the creative steps for each class each week. Used as a reference resource, the students would watch that week's video before each class, and teachers could revisit them during the week as needed. Snippets from some 'How To' videos can be seen in the documentation film.



THE FABRIC ROOM

Created using 94m of digitally printed fabric displaying over 170 individual drawings and images created for the Paper Theatres and Puppets. The Paper Theatres were too fragile to exhibit, so each piece was photographed by the teachers, and these images were used for the exhibition. The fabric room is designed with a flexible layout. In the Entrance Gallery, it is a floor to ceiling immersive space but can also be exhibited as a giant diorama Paper Theatre.

ARBOL

Designed by TIO collaborator Jose Antonio Huanca Azurduy (Architect) in response to the architecture of the Gabriel Gallery to display the handmade models and 3D printed models created by FO2 & FO4. The clear polycarbonate ellipse was originally a standalone structure designed to echo the curve of the Gabriel Gallery bay window. The central trunk was a later addition and displays the artworks of FO1. Their mobiles are the branches, and their Paper Theatre puppets are printed on the trunk. Designed in response to the number of trees (especially Sakura trees), forests and mountains that featured in the students' artwork.



Eca Putri.

SOUND DESIGN

Most of the sound design in Neon Stories has been created by the students under the guidance of TIO collaborator Thomas 'Soup' Campbell. Soup has also created additional original sound design for the exhibition, and created all the sound design for the 'How To' videos.



INTERACTIVITY & LIGHT

The touch free interactive system was designed and built by Thomas 'Soup' Campbell with lighting design a collaboration between Soup and Beth McMahon.

Explore Neon Stories as a virtual exhibition at <https://footscrayarts.com/event/neon-stories/>. Here you will find further documentation of the process as well as videos from the creators.



PARTICIPANT LIST

Western English Language School, Footscray campus

F01 (Foundation)

Tenzin DAKPA
Tenzin DICKEY
Jimin BAEK
Anastasiia MATVIICHUK
Zayed RASHAID
Khang Tan TRAN
TharDar HTAT
Tenzin CHOEKYI
Vanessa LIN
Valeria Mora RIVERA
Charlie JIRAWATTANAPONG
Sophia LIM
Roy DING

F02 (Years 2 - 3)

Tenzin TSULDEN
Tenzin SAMDUP
Johnny NGUYEN
Isaac NGUYEN
Min BAEK
Piyo ABIMANYU
Abdullahi OMAR
Tenzin CHIME
Ameera RASHAID
Vagen LIM

F04 (Years 4 - 6)

Trung NGUYEN
Kim Lam PHAM
Eca PUTRI
Natlada JANKONG
Mohamed OMAR
Danesh HERMAWAN
Mishall FAZZILET (HERMAWAN)
Hannah TRAN
Frank CAI

Teaching Staff

Senior Teacher - Iona Tataio
Visual Arts Teacher and
Project Coordinator - Shannon Slee
Classroom Teachers -

- Nirmal Alexiou
- Laura Jones
- Laura Wright

Multicultural Education Aides

- Ada Peng
- Jessie Long
- Tsering Choekyi

SPECIAL THANKS TO ...

the indirect Object team:

Beth McMahon
Michael Bevitt
Thomas 'Soup' Campbell
Jose Antonio Huanca Azurduy

FCAC team:

Daniel Santangeli - Artistic Director and Co-CEO
Robyn Gawenda - Executive Director and Co-CEO
Urvi Majumdar - Creative Workshops Producer
Bernadette Fitzgerald - Senior Producer
Vyshnavee Wijekumar - Marketing and Engagement
Manager
Cheralyn Lim - Digital Content Producer
Jessica Ankomah - Marketing and Communications
Co-ordinator
Darren Gee - Facility and Resources Manager

Creative Victoria:

Erica Sanders - Program Manager, Arts
Development
Kathleen Hodgson - Senior Arts Officer, Arts
Development



Supported by Creative Learning Partnerships - A Victorian Government Initiative



THE INDIRECT OBJECT

Footscray Community Arts Centre is supported by



For more information,
go to [footscrayarts.com](https://www.footscrayarts.com)
f t i y @footscrayarts