

The background of the entire image consists of several thick, dark, wavy lines that resemble stylized mountain peaks or ocean waves. These lines are irregular and organic in shape, creating a sense of movement and depth across the white space.

OBJECTS & ENERGIES

JOYCE HINTERDING · AGNES MARTIN · LINDA MATALON

O B J E C T S & E N E R G I E S

JOYCE HINTERDING · AGNES MARTIN · LINDA MATALON

EDUCATION RESOURCE

REGIONAL TOUR

BROKEN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY, NSW
29 NOVEMBER 2014 - 22 FEBRUARY 2015

WESTERN PLAINS CULTURAL CENTRE, NSW
18 APRIL 2015 - 31 MAY 2015

TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL GALLERY, QLD
15 JUNE 2015 - 2 AUGUST 2015

CABOOLTURE REGIONAL ART GALLERY, QLD
5 MARCH 2016 - 7 MAY 2016

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is designed to enhance the visitor experience of the *Objects & Energies* exhibition. It provides strategies and suggestions for avenues of investigation for the three artists and their works. Designed primarily for teachers and their school groups, the resource focuses on each of the artists with critical/historical and artmaking suggestions for primary and secondary students.

Additionally this resource is useful for non-school visitors hoping to gain a greater insight into the themes of the exhibition, and can be used as a support to the accompanying catalogue.

Further reading suggestions and a glossary are provided at the back of the resource, with associated in-text words underlined.

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Resource written by Annika Patrick, 2014

SUGGESTIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

This is just one possible way of navigating the exhibition:

- ◊ In small groups walk around the gallery and familiarise yourselves with the space.

Carefully observe the works in the exhibition.

- How do the works make you feel?
- What elements can you see in the work (lines, colours, shapes, etc?)
- How do you think the artists might have made the work?
- What do you think the artists might be trying to convey?
- What themes can you observe?
- Does the title give you any additional clues?

- ◊ Read the wall text and compare it to your own ideas about the works, are they very different?

- ◊ Discuss your findings with your peers.

CROSS-CURRICULUM CONTENT

The themes explored in this exhibition can be used across the curriculum:

Visual Arts

- The natural world as a source of subject matter for artists
- Abstraction and the spiritual
- Feminist perspective

Science and Mathematics

- Fractals
- Sound and electromagnetic waves
- Antennas and electrical circuits

English

- Response to stimulus through creative and critical writing.

Music

- Acoustics and sound waves.

PRE-VISIT

The following points can be used as generators for discussion prior to visiting the gallery, or as part of an extended learning sequence. They are not prescriptive readings and rather act as a reference for comparative studies.

COMPARATIVE ARTISTS AND ART LINKS

Abstraction

- | | |
|---|--|
| Notions of the <u>sublime</u> | - JMW Turner |
| Abstract Expressionism | - Barnett Newman |
| Minimalism | - Sol LeWitt |
| Post-Minimalism | - Eva Hesse |
| Australian Aboriginal art | - Yukultji Napangati
- Gloria Tamerre Petyarre |
| The history of drawing as a method of artmaking | - Preparatory to painting
- Mapping and notations
- 'Preciousness'
- <u>Connoisseurship</u> |

THE ARTISTS

JOYCE HINTERDING

b.1958, Melbourne, VIC, Lives and works in the Blue Mountains, NSW (AUS).

Joyce Hinterding explores and reveals forces of energy through experimental sound installations, performance sculptures and drawings. Using carbon and graphite she investigates natural phenomena to create drawings that act as both media and antenna, revealing the invisible energies of the surrounding environment.

The sound works in this exhibition are fragile, whilst you are invited to touch them please be gentle with your interactions. Teachers may need to supervise students with these works.



Joyce Hinterding, *Simple Forces* (installation view with Richard Kean) Breenspace, Sydney, 2013

photo: Mim Stirling

K - 6

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Listen to one of Joyce Hinterding's sound works, close your eyes and try to imagine what patterns the sounds would make. Where or when have you heard sounds similar to these?

Artmaking

- ◊ Pretend you are an antenna and make a drawing based on the information you receive.
- ◊ Play some music and without taking your pencil off the page draw a line that responds to the changing elements in the music.
- ◊ Try the same exercise listening to different pieces of music. How does your line change?

7 - 10

Critical and Historical

- ◊ In reference to Joyce Hinterding's work it has been said that the, "process, with all its performative potential, is as important as the outcome". How could you justify this statement making reference to the artmaking process?
- ◊ Evaluate the role of the audience in the *Dirty Drawings* and the *Soundwave: Induction Drawings*?

Artmaking

- ◊ Experiment with the idea of recording non-visible information by creating a map of your local area.
- ◊ Invent a non-figurative visual language that represents elements such as smells, sounds, textures or your feelings about your chosen place.
- ◊ Write your language on a key and take it with you on your walk, using your visual language mark on a sheet of paper the elements of the landscape as you encounter them.

*There is a wonderful crossover between aesthetics and invisible activity, interior activity as sound and the secret language of measuring equipment.*²

– Joyce Hinterding

*Electricity is the prevailing element that accompanies all material existence, even the atmospheric. It is to be thought of unabashedly as the soul of the world.*³

– Goethe

*Hinterding uses graphite in both fixed and moving ways. She uses it to draw and to draw energy. Sound in her work is the continuation of energy.*⁴

– Douglas Kahn

11-12

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Examine the role structural elements play in Joyce Hinterding's work and assess their importance to the functional nature of her work.
- ◊ Hypothesise what Hinterding would like the audience to consider about the world in which we live and evaluate the effectiveness of her chosen communication method.

Artmaking

- ◊ Investigate the circuit and antenna systems Hinterding explores, such as the fractal designs of the Wunderlich Curve and/or electrical circuits and turn your research into a sculptural work that explores the notions of sending and receiving information, or harnessing energy. You may wish to make or represent an active circuit or explore the idea more conceptually.

A G N E S M A R T I N

b. 1912, Maklin, Saskatchewan, (CAN), d. 2004, Taos, New Mexico (USA).

Agnes Martin is highly respected for her rigorous style in which she aimed to reduce elements to simple, pared-down fields of lines, grids and subtle colour. From an early age she was influenced by Eastern philosophies, having attended lectures by a Zen Buddhist scholar while she was at college. She lived in New York from 1957 and was part of the developing art scene along with artists such as Ellsworth Kelly, Robert Indiana, Ad Reinhardt and Barnett Newman.

In 1967 Agnes Martin decided to leave the city and settle in New Mexico, adopting a different lifestyle and consciously distancing herself from the art world for a period of reflection. She built herself a simple adobe house and studio and did not paint for a period of seven years.

When she began working on her art once more, she developed her signature lines and grids as a response to the purity she thought inherent in nature and all things. Agnes Martin meditated daily and pursued a modest life. The work *On a Clear Day #12* (1973) in Objects & Energies is part of a portfolio of 30 serigraphs that marked the artist's return to painting. Her lines and grids are simple, but not perfect; the artist believed the subtle variations to line, weight and colour respects the fact that it is drawn, and nothing is perfect in nature either. In this regard her work is closer to abstract expressionism than the minimalists she knew during her New York period.



Untitled, 1991 (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam portfolio of 10 prints); colour lithograph (right)

photo: Mim Stirling

K - 6

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Examine the *Untitled, 1991* series, closely tracing the lines with your eyes. What are the qualities of these lines? Are they perfectly straight?
- ◊ Agnes Martin has said she started drawing grids after she saw the perfection in a tree. What parts of a tree could she be responding to?

Artmaking

- ◊ Go for a walk in your local area or school grounds and be on the lookout for an object with a repeating pattern like petals on a flower, or spirals on a pinecone. Take your object back to the classroom and draw the pattern in the centre of the page, extending the pattern in repetition outwards so that it covers your whole page. Then with either paint or with coloured pencils colour in alternate spaces creating a new pattern. Give your abstract artwork an appropriate title.

7 - 10

Critical and Historical

- ◊ *On a Clear Day*, 1973 was the first series of artworks Agnes Martin made after leaving New York in 1967. This series inspired her so much she decided to build a studio and begin painting again⁵. She has said of this series, "These prints express innocence of mind"⁶. What do you think Agnes Martin was referring to?
- ◊ Demonstrate how *On a Clear Day*, 1973 illustrates this statement by Martin.

Artmaking

- ◊ Think of a place you pass frequently on your daily travels such as a bus stop or a building and draw it from memory making sure to emphasise the most important lines.
- ◊ Place tracing paper over the top of your drawing and trace only some of the lines so that a non-representational grid appears.
- ◊ Measure the distances between the lines and redraw onto a new sheet of paper. Consider how this drawing and your chosen place makes you feel, what colours do you associate with this place?
- ◊ Carefully paint these colours in washes over sections of the grid. Repeat this process with different landmarks forming a series of drawings.

*When I first made a grid I happened to be thinking of the innocence of trees and then this grid came into my mind and I thought it represented innocence, and I still do, and so I painted it and then I was satisfied. I thought, this is my vision.*⁷

*Reality is seen as beauty; felt as truth, and responded to as art.*⁸

– Agnes Martin

11-12

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Agnes Martin lived much of her later life humbly in New Mexico removed from, and at times deliberately rejecting, the artworld. She has said of the role art plays: "Art work is a representation of our devotion to life"⁹. Consider how Agnes Martin might have used artmaking in her daily life.
- ◊ Hypothesise why you think she rejected the artworld. How do her artworks support your conclusions?

Artmaking

- ◊ Design a non-figurative visual language or symbol that represents yourself. Everyday for a week make a drawing based on this visual language or symbol, altering it with different materials to suit your state of mind. At the end of the week choose 3 that you think work best as a series.
- ◊ Write an artist statement about the series, outlining the reasons for your choice of visual language and anything you might have learned from this project.

LINDA MATALON

b. 1958, Brooklyn, NY. Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY (USA).

Linda Matalon manipulates wax and graphite to create minimalist drawings of luminous fields, interrupted by irregular marks worked into and onto the surface of the page. Her practice has largely focused on drawing, sculptural work and photography, revealing a powerful relationship between her methods and construction. The marks are akin to memories, forming a kind of representation of her experiences.



Linda Matalon, detail from *Untitled (Fore)*, 2008,

16 parts, graphite and wax on paper

photo: Mim Stirling

K - 6

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Look at the drawings in *Untitled (Fore)*, 2008. How do they make you feel? What can you see in the drawings (shapes, lines, colours)?
- ◊ Pick one of these drawings you like the most and try to imagine what kind of landscape Linda Matalon thought of when she created it. Describe this landscape to a friend or write it down (think about the location, weather, time of day, sounds, people, animals, their actions, moods and/or smells).

Artmaking

- ◊ Taking a white sheet of paper cover the whole page in charcoal. Thinking of a dream or journey you had recently, draw into the charcoal by rubbing it out with an eraser.
- ◊ Using a white pencil draw on top of the charcoal background looking at the negative spaces or shapes that are made in-between things, such as window panes within a frame or spaces between flowers in a bouquet.

7 - 10

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Investigate the series of drawings *Untitled (Fore)*, 2008. Consider how time is marked and represented in these drawings. What clues or visual codes are indicative of this?
- ◊ Choose one drawing from the series to explore further, and describe the process you think Matalon used to make the work. What visual clues support your argument?

Artmaking

- ◊ Create a series of drawings using experimental mark making techniques such as: the use of alternative materials (eg. wax), drawing negative spaces, erasing as drawing, responding to sense stimuli and blind drawings. You may wish to use one drawing multiple times creating different layers and textures.
- ◊ Choose one drawing or photograph of Linda's works in the exhibition that would be presented as a diptych with one of your drawings. Write a short statement as a curator justifying your decision.

Whatever mark you put on the paper whether you scrape it, rub it or heat it, it always will leave a kind of a mark. So then what happens in the drawings [is the marks] become sort of like memories, you can't ever get rid of it. The taking away of a mark and the adding of a mark become these equal masses...What's not there and what's there and the thing that is in-between, is something I'm a little bit obsessed with.¹⁰

– Linda Matalon

11 - 12

Critical and Historical

- ◊ Linda Matalon made a conscious decision to focus on making drawings rather than sculptural works in a response to art dealers' increasing demand for her sculptures. Why do you think Matalon decided to do this? How do you think this has affected her artmaking practice? How could her drawings and photographs be considered sculptures?

Artmaking

- ◊ Using only three materials make a small body of work that uses non-representational forms and focuses on the energies and spaces in-between. Understand your chosen materials by experimenting and manipulating them in new and unusual ways. Your body of work might be a series of drawings or you might include sculptural pieces to accompany 1 or 2 drawings.
- ◊ Consider how you would install these works if they were hanging in an exhibition, and write a brief statement that would accompany the works explaining why you chose the materials and what 'spaces' your works convey.

POST VISIT

The following extended writing tasks are designed for senior students following a visit to the exhibition. They are intended to reinforce the experiences gained during the visit by asking students to reflect and extend their knowledge about the artists and artworks.

7 - 10

- ◊ The metaphor of an echo has been used in relation to Linda Matalon's work. How could this metaphor also be applied to the work of Joyce Hinterding and Agnes Martin?
- ◊ Examine and compare the artmaking practices of the three artists and discuss the ways in which they use structural elements to convey subjective encounters.

11-12

- ◊ Joyce Hinterding and Linda Matalon are both interested in the spaces and energies in-between the physical realms; Hinterding through the capturing of invisible electromagnetic energies and Matalon with her mark making process. Examine the role of the curator Katie Dyer in her selection of the two artists and justify her decision to include Agnes Martin in the exhibition. In your answer you should make reference to specific work seen in the exhibition.

GLOSSARY

Abstraction – Refers to the subtraction of figurative elements. Artworks are non-representational and self-referential, relying on the structural (or formal) qualities for meaning making.

Antenna – A device that sends and receives electromagnetic waves. The type of information sent and received depends upon the differing parameters of the antenna, such as the size and shape.

Biomorphic – Referencing of natural organisms through non-representational patterns and forms.

Blind Drawings – Drawings that are made without observing the mark-making process (without looking at the page).

Connoisseur – A master or expert, a person that is vastly knowledgeable regarding a particular subject or field, or someone who has had extensive training or experience. Connoisseurship is the quality, or ability, inherent in having that superior knowledge.¹¹

Eastern philosophies – A way of thinking about life, originating in South and East Asian countries. Zen Buddhism had a great influence on western culture in the mid 20th century, and placed emphasis on meditation and introspection of the inner self.¹¹

Electromagnetic waves – These are energy waves that exist in space, air or solid materials, and are composed of an electric field and a magnetic field. A change in either of the two fields will affect the other. They are the basis of all radio transmissions and are formed by the vibrations of both fields.¹²

Fractals – Patterns that are self-repeating and operate within infinite loops. They are described in mathematics and are frequently found in nature, such as the spiralling segments of a pinecone. Self-repeating fractal patterns are also used in antenna designs for various purposes.

Sound waves – Sound waves are vibrations that move in an oscillatory motion, much like ripples on the surface of a body of water. The waves carry sound from a sender, and are audible upon impact with the receiver.¹³

Sublime – A sense of awe, delight or wonder derived from the vastness, greatness or fear of nature.

The Wunderlich Curve – This self-repeating set of three patterns, begins with a ‘seed’ shape of either an S or an R and forms an infinite loop pattern or curve by either inverting or reflecting the beginning shape. As a plane-filling fractal curve, applications of the Wunderlich Curve can be found in both electronic circuits and fractal antenna designs.¹⁴

FURTHER READING

Joyce Hinterding

Douglas Kahn, *Earth Sound Earth Signal*, (University of California Press: Berkley, Los Angeles & London, 2013)

Max Delany, *Artists' Proof #1*, (Monash University Museum of Art, Victoria, 2012)

Agnes Martin

Arne Glimcher (ed.), *Agnes Martin: Paintings, Writings, Remembrances*, (Phaidon: London & New York, 2012)

Lynne Cooke, Karen Kelly & Barbara Schroder (ed.) Suzanne Hudson, *Agnes Martin*, (Dia Art Foundation, Yale University Press: New York, New Haven & London)

Linda Matalon

Linda Matalon, *Linda Matalon: Work 1977-2012*, (Jaffe-Friede Gallery, Hopkins Center for the Arts: Hanover, 2012)

Linda Matalon, *Linda Matalon: Echo Echo*, (Blackston Gallery: New York, 2013)

END NOTES

1 Carrie Miller, 'An invisible matter', *Art Collector*, 66 (Oct-Dec 2013), p. 107

2 Josephine Bosma, 'Sound Art: Joyce Hinterding: interview transcript', Netttime, (1998, August 24, <http://amsterdam.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-9808/msg00074.html>)

3 Goethe, (1825) in Douglas Kahn, *Earth Sound Earth Signal*, (University of California Press: Berkley, Los Angeles & London, 2013) p. 241

4 Douglas Kahn, *Earth Sound Earth Signal*, (University of California Press: Berkley, Los Angeles & London, 2013) p. 251

5 Suzanne Hudson, 'Agnes Martin, On a Clear Day', *Agnes Martin*, ed. by Lynne Cooke, Karen Kelly & Barbara Schroder, (Dia Art Foundation, Yale University Press: New York, New Haven & London) p. 119

6 Agnes Martin, 1975 in Arne Glimcher (ed), *Agnes Martin: Paintings, Writings, Remembrances*, (Phaidon: London and New York, 2012) p. 61

7 Barbara Haskell, *Beautiful Daughter*, (Whitney Museum of American Art: New York, 1993), p. 131

8 Arne Glimcher (ed), *Agnes Martin: Paintings, Writings, Remembrances*, (Phaidon: London and New York, 2012) p. 110

9 Agnes Martin, 1982 in Arne Glimcher (ed), *Agnes Martin: Paintings, Writings, Remembrances*, (Phaidon: London and New York, 2012) p. 141

10 Linda Matalon, *Artforum*: Linda Matalon, (National Art School, Darlinghurst, 2014, March 26)

11 Jonathan D. Katz, 'Agnes Martin and the sexuality of abstraction', *Agnes Martin*, ed. by Lynne Cooke, Karen Kelly & Barbara Schroder, (Dia Art Foundation, Yale University Press: New York, New Haven & London) p. 177

12 Ruth Netting, 'Anatomy of an electromagnetic wave', *Mission: Science*, (2011, March 22, http://missionscience.nasa.gov/ems/02_anatomy.html)

13 Lamont V. Blake, *Antennas*, (John Wiley & Sons: New York, London & Sydney 1966), p. 2

14 Robert Dickau, 'Wunderlich Curves', Wolfram Demonstrations Project, (2014, <http://demonstrations.wolfram.com/WunderlichCurves/>)