

THEMES

Cultural identity	Loss of culture	Sub-cultures
Personal identity	Memory	Connection to the land
Australia's colonial history	Ceremony	Spiritual connections
Impacts of colonialism	Expression	Family
Language	Gender	Race

WHOLE GALLERY ACTIVITY

The use of costume and body adornment is an important feature of Christian Thompson's artworks. Through the use of costume he is able to assume many different personas to communicate concepts within his works.

Take some time to explore the exhibition. Identify two artworks in which Thompson uses costume or adornment to communicate meaning to the viewer.

Record the title of the works, the year in which they were created and the medium, in your art journal or notebook.

Read the artwork labels carefully and identify the concepts explored in each work and note them down.

In a group of 3 conduct a comparative analysis of the works you have chosen, discussing their similarities and differences.

FOCUS WORK

Australian graffiti 2007

C-type prints

Australian graffiti was the last body of work that Thompson made before leaving Australia for Europe. It connects

FOCUS WORK

Imperial relic 2015

C-type prints on Fuji Pearl Metallic paper

The series title *Imperial relic*, summarises the fundamental philosophy underpinning the colonial occupation of Australia and is closely connected to Thompson's studies in the collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum.

In *Öæ@Á^&}áÁ^/Á* the artist's face is uncovered but distorted by makeup and digital postproduction effects. The title quotes William Shakespeare's Sonnet 73:

As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

In *Ship of dreams* Thompson reprises the motif of Australian flora seen in his works *Black Gum 1-3*, obscuring his face but here his hoodie is stitched together from several flags: the red ensign (flown by British registered ships), the RAAF flag and the Australian flag.

RESPONDING

Do some research into the Pitt Rivers Museum in the United Kingdom. What kind of objects do they have in their collection?

In the past it was common for explorers to take items of cultural or spiritual significance away from their traditional owners without permission, to be displayed in museum collections. Take a moment to consider whether you think it is right for museums to keep these items today? Write a personal reflection justifying your thoughts.

FOCUS WORK

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