

EDUCATION KIT



# TENSION[S] 2020

Tamworth Textile Triennial

TAMWORTH



This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.

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## HOW TO USE THIS KIT

This kit was developed to be used in conjunction with the 4th Tamworth Textile Triennial: *Tension[s]* 2020, whether the student makes a physical visit to the exhibition, or engages with the Online exhibition, or both. Activities are arranged in stages based on the NSW Creative Arts Syllabus.

More activities and content can be found at:

[www.tamworthregionalgallery.com.au/online-exhibition](http://www.tamworthregionalgallery.com.au/online-exhibition)

**TENSION[S]**  
**2020**

Tamworth Textile Triennial

## INTRODUCTION

How the world around us has changed over the past several months. Drought, fires, smoke – and now a pandemic – have subjected our communities to various and changing tensions. Aptly named *Tension[s] 2020*, the fourth Tamworth Textile Triennial is not only a product of the now, but also a testament to Tamworth Regional Gallery's past and nearly 50 years of working with textiles.

The Triennial, held every three years, showcases the best of Australia's textile art, attracting artist participation from every state and territory. Previous iterations have attracted wide audiences and enthusiastic critical review. The 2020 Triennial is curated by Vic McEwan, who has generated a relevant and immersive exhibition using themes of Performance, Interaction and Material Futures. I thank him for his support and professionalism, and for the immediate relevance he has brought to this Triennial.

*Tension[s] 2020: Tamworth Textile Triennial* utilises Augmented Reality (AR), a technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world, thus providing an enhanced or augmented view. AR solutions are used in *Tension[s] 2020* to engage and educate by bringing an extra dimension to the works and creating tension between traditional and contemporary approaches.

In this exhibition, we have created custom AR applications for our subject matter that include exhibition interpretation to invite a response from the audience. AR is used to generate a direct voice from each of the artists participating in the exhibition, enabling them to expound on the process of making their work and the story behind the process. Instead of further removing us from our environment, AR can build on it by creating deeper, richer, more meaningful experiences. Presented as audio, film and animations, AR enhances our telling of provocative and powerful stories.

It is important to acknowledge all the artists represented in *Tension[s] 2020: Tamworth Textile Triennial*. Many of these contemporary artists are working in textiles because of the medium's inherent properties. By articulating today's multifaceted approaches to art making through textiles, these artists reveal their strong engagement with and comments on contemporary life. The artists in *Tension[s] 2020* have made a unique record of the various techniques, styles and mediums of textile practice from a national perspective, while also creating a dialogue of current conversations and, indeed, a record of our society in recent times.

*Tension[s] 2020* also has an Online version of the exhibition, offering audiences from around Australia and the world the opportunity to take a digital wander around the Gallery, from the comfort of their own environment.

We wish to acknowledge the contribution and support of Create NSW and Visions of Australia in the development of this exhibition and its corresponding national tour. A special thank you goes to all my colleagues who have worked to support this exhibition: Kate Armstrong, Brian Bernays, Naomi Blakey, Pamela Brown, Dianne Cole, Kay Delahunt, Eloise Newall, Eleanor Pengilley, Emma Stilts and Jonathan Stilts.

Tamworth Regional Council's ongoing support for the development of the *Tamworth Textile Triennial*, both financially and strategically, is essential. The exhibition and the National Textile Collection are written into essential planning documents for our city and region. Additionally, the continued dedication of the Tamworth Regional Gallery Friends plays an important role in the success of the exhibition and in the purchase of new acquisitions for the development of the National Textile Collection.

Tamworth Regional Gallery's association with textile art dates back to the early 1970s. The Gallery has focused on developing an Australian textile collection that embraces all related art and craft forms. The nationally significant collection comprises excellent examples of works that document the changes in textile practice over almost 50 years. *Tension[s] 2020: Tamworth Textile Triennial* continues this dialogue by recording recent history and its tensions.

**Bridget Guthrie**

Director, Tamworth Regional Gallery

## HISTORY OF THE EXHIBITION

Tamworth Art and Craft Society began holding competitive art exhibitions in the late 1960s, with the main focus on paintings and only a minor section for 'crafts'. The first Fibre Exhibition was held in the Wallamore Road Art and Craft Centre, Tamworth, a converted fertiliser shed. A collection of works previously acquired was hung in the Tamworth City Art Gallery for the duration of the exhibition.

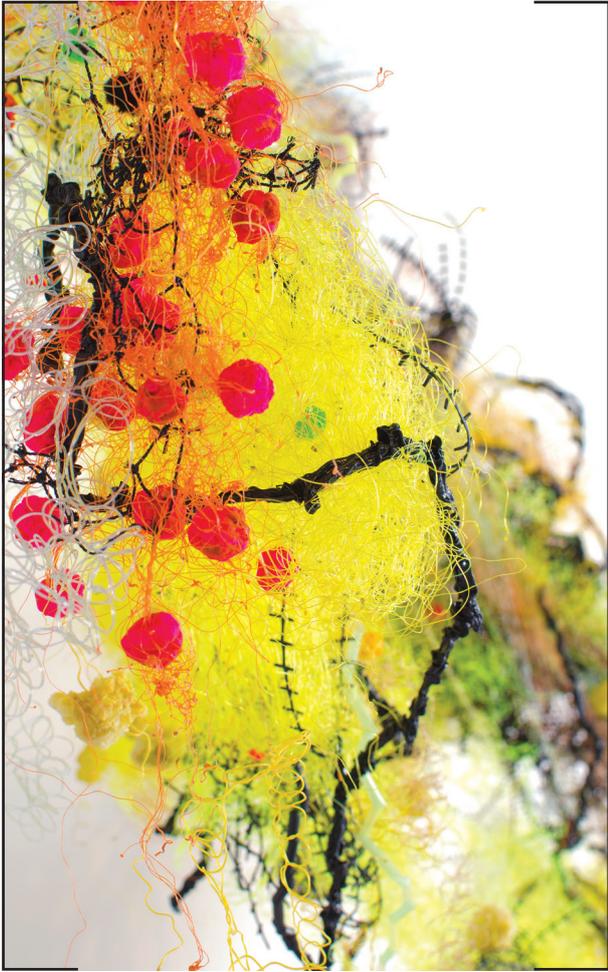
From these humble beginnings, and due to great dedication and interest from a core group of artists from the Tamworth region and beyond, a fibre exhibition with an open entry system in the 1980s developed into a professionally selected and curated biannual show in the 1990s. The exhibition evolved into its current format, the Tamworth Textile Triennial, in 2011, when it was decided to hold the exhibition every third year.

The fourth iteration of the Triennial, *Tension[s] 2020*, attracted applications from artists working in the contemporary textile art practice from every state and territory in Australia.

The curator of *Tension[s] 2020*, Vic McEwan, began planning for the exhibition with his curatorial brief in 2018. The curatorial premise of *Tension[s] 2020* acknowledges that the world has long been a place under various tension(s), both harmonious and dissonant. Of that premise, he now says:

Little did I know at the time of writing the curatorial brief for the artists that the year would pan out the way it has. Devastating destruction through bushfires; isolation, illness and death through global pandemic; the ongoing prevalence of inequalities that are fermenting in the Black Lives Matter movement – all set against a backdrop of unfolding climate catastrophe. Unfortunately, this description, which reads like a stark premonition from the pages of a dystopian novel, isn't a highly emotive play on words; rather, it is a simple, matter-of-fact description of the past year.

The exhibition will tour the country and carry with it the legacy of the story of the year that was 2020 as captured in the current and emerging practice of the textile arts in Australia.



## EARLY STAGE 1–STAGE 1

LINDA ERCEG

*BIOMORPH*

### IN THE GALLERY

Walk around *Biomorph*. Look carefully at the work, and observe the colours, lines and patterns you can see. Can you find some dots? Swirls? Straight or curved lines?

### AT SCHOOL OR HOME

This artwork was made with recycled plastic materials that may have gone to waste in landfill. They are old fishing nets, fishing lines, pom poms, drinking straws, and ropes that would not biodegrade in the earth. Using found materials in your environment, create an animal that lives in the habitat near your home or school.



Fill this box with the different types of lines and patterns you can see.

 **IN THE GALLERY**

Choose your favourite work at the Gallery today. Look at the label beside the artwork and record the following:

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_



Draw the work you selected in this box.

Explain what you like about this work.

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Write a list of adjectives you would use to describe this work.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

 **AT SCHOOL OR HOME**

Using this artwork as a starting point, create an artwork of your own using similar colours, textures or materials. Think about the colours, patterns and shapes the artist used to make their artwork. Use your drawing from your visit to the Gallery as inspiration.



JANE THÉAU

ANCA

Have you ever created a portrait? A portrait can represent a person, pet or thing.

Jane Théau created this portrait of a dancer named *Anca* by using a sewing technique that makes it look like the figure is drawn in the air using one long connected line.

 **IN THE GALLERY**

Observe Jane Théau's work.



Without taking your pencil off the page, draw a portrait of a person's face. It is harder than it sounds!

Watch the video component of this work. Choose one of the dancer's poses and try to re-create it using your body.

Answer these questions about the artwork:

If you could touch this artwork, what would it feel like?

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How many figures can you see in this work?

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This artwork is about a dancer, and part of the work is of her dancing. If you created a work like this about yourself, what would you be doing in the artwork? Dancing? Playing a sport? Drawing or painting? Something else?

Write a description of your favourite activity here.

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 **AT SCHOOL OR HOME**

Using pipe cleaners or a long piece of string, try to make a portrait. See if you can include eyes, a nose and other features of the face.

Trace this work in texta or pencil without taking the texta or pencil off the page. This kind of drawing is called a continuous line drawing.

When you are finished, use different thicknesses of lines to add interest to your drawing.



GEORGIA CHAPMAN

*MY PLACE*

Look at the long fabric hanging, *My Place*. Carefully observe the textile, paying attention to its texture, colour and composition.

Soon after Georgia Chapman started this work, the coronavirus lockdown was declared. The lockdown changed the trajectory of her work.

Out of necessity I began to look more closely at what was around me: I noticed motifs I had overlooked, and remembered my own stories.

Look at the work. Can you see any motifs the artist has used? What do you think they might symbolise?

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If you had to create a work about your own stories, sourcing content and symbols from your local environment and drawing inspiration from the world directly around you, what symbols or motifs might you use?

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Read the information on the artist's wall label. What do you think the artist is trying to convey through the title of the work? If you had to give this work a title, what might you call it?

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Consider the choice of materials in this work. How has Georgia Chapman used these materials effectively to convey her message?

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 **BACK AT SCHOOL**

Research footage, photography, fabric printing and digital printing onto textiles. Design your own wall hanging based on what you have learned. If possible, use digital manipulation and design tools.

## STAGE 5

Select two contrasting works in this exhibition. Record below the information from the wall labels.

### ARTWORK 1

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

### ARTWORK 2

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare and contrast these works. Consider the materials and tools the artists may have used, and the works' size, scale and subject matter.

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Observe the exhibition design of *Tension[s] 2020*. Imagine you are the curator. How would you install this exhibition? How would you organise it to engage the audience?

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The *Tension[s] 2020* exhibition is professionally selected and curated. This means that the artists whose work you see here had to apply to be part of the show and then create a work especially for the exhibition. Consider the exhibition as a whole and critically reflect on the selection of artists. Choose an artist or artwork that, had you been the curator, you might not have selected. Explain your choice.

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Find a number of works that you feel have a theme or something else in common. It could be the artists' use of similar materials or colours, or a similar arts practice. Name these works below and describe why you feel there is a connection between them.

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Can you find any works that utilise signs and symbols? Identify the work(s) and discuss the use of these symbols and the effect they have on the viewer.

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### STRUCTURAL FRAME

What materials have been used to create the works in this exhibition?

What other uses do textiles have in our society?

What symbolic meaning does the use of textiles have? Consider its other functions, uses and properties.

What signs and symbols can you see in this exhibition? What do they convey?

This exhibition reflects current and emerging practice in the fibre textile arts. Which work has challenged you as a viewer today, and why?

### SUBJECTIVE FRAME

What is your first impression of this exhibition?

Do you like the exhibition? Explain your answer.

Select a work you are immediately drawn to. Explain what you like about this work. Reflect on how it makes you feel, what it reminds you of and your emotional response to the work.

Select one work that you would nominate as your least favourite work in the exhibition. Explain why this is so.

### CULTURAL FRAME

View Sai-Wai Foo's Children of the Sun.

Reflect on the work and the information on the wall label, including the materials used. What concept(s) do you think this work is representing?

What message do you think the artist is conveying in this work?

What signs, symbols or materials has the artist used to convey this meaning?

Do you feel this is a successful work? Explain your answer.

### STRUCTURAL FRAME

What are the primary materials used by the artists?

What processes are used?

What formal conventions are used? Reflect on perspective and composition of the works.

View Tjanpi Desert Weavers' work Pitja Nyawa Kulila Pampula (Come Look Listen Touch). Sit inside the shelter and concentrate on how it smells, and on the patterns and textures of the weaving. Using the sensory kit, feel the textures of the materials used.

Write an objective description of the work, as if you are describing it to someone who is not at the exhibition. Describe its size, texture, colour, shape, subject matter and the materials used.

**POSTMODERN FRAME**

Would you consider the works in this exhibition mainstream, or outside the mainstream? Explain your answer.

Can you find a work in the exhibition that uses parody, wit or playfulness? From the wall label for the work, make a note of the title, date of the work and the materials used.

Consider the use of materials in this exhibition. How is the medium of textile fibre used in traditional and non-traditional ways in *Tension[s] 2020*?

# TENSION[S] 2020

Tamworth Textile Triennial

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### EXHIBITION

Curator: Vic McEwan  
Exhibition Manager: Bridget Guthrie  
Tour Coordinator: Pam Brown  
Education Kit: Kate Armstrong  
Online Exhibition: Emma Stilts and Jonathan Stilts

### ART TRAIL

Publisher: Tamworth Regional Gallery  
Art Trail Designer: Melanie Wilke, Wmedia  
Coordinator: Bridget Guthrie  
Editor: Robyn Flemming  
Photography: Miranda Heckenberg (unless otherwise specified)

### TAMWORTH REGIONAL GALLERY

466 Peel Street, Tamworth  
Free Admission  
Tue – Fri 10am – 5pm  
Sat – Sun 10am – 4pm  
P: 02 6767 5248  
e: [gallery@tamworth.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gallery@tamworth.nsw.gov.au)  
[tamworthregionalgallery.com.au](http://tamworthregionalgallery.com.au)

**This exhibition is supported by the Visions regional touring program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to cultural material for all Australians.**

## TENSION[S] 2020: TAMWORTH TEXTILE TRIENNIAL TOUR DATES

Tamworth Regional Gallery, NSW  
1 August – 20 September 2020

Mosman Art Gallery, NSW  
10 October – 6 December 2020

Manning Regional Gallery, NSW  
18 December 2020 – 14 February 2021

Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, NSW  
5 March – 2 May 2021

ArtSpace Mackay, QLD  
28 May – 18 July 2021

Artisan, QLD  
24 July – 5 September 2021

Craft ACT: Craft & Design Centre, ACT  
18 September – 31 October 2021

Wangaratta Regional Gallery, VIC  
20 November 2021 – 13 February 2022

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, VIC  
11 March – 15 May 2022

Ararat Gallery TAMA (Textile Art Museum Australia), VIC  
21 May – 26 July 2022

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, NSW  
5 August – 23 October 2022

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