

Macedon Grammar School

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Details of this project can be found below

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This project involved working with Senior Art students from Macedon Grammar School, a Victorian rural school located in a natural bush setting. It should be cross-referenced to the exhibitions titled Stone Sculptures in Nature and the exhibition on the tragic bushfires in the hills around Melbourne in early 2009 titled Bushfire: Out of the Dark (both found under the Exhibition file – see side menu).

Two major tasks were set

1. Each student was to construct an installation made entirely from natural items found in the surrounding bush location. The found objects were to be arranged in an order that still suggested the natural setting (that is they were to appear as though they might be found that way). Nothing from

the bush setting was to be broken or destroyed.

2. Students were to combine with one or more students to undertake the same task in a cooperative venture. Students chose with whom to work and most groups were 3 in number. While the task was similar to the first one, there were various levels of negotiation and decision-making employed. Photographs of these works are still be uploaded.

The decision-making was observed and this included selecting working partners, deciding what to do and how to work, and making on-going evaluations about the works in progress. This made the project more than an art education activity although that was its major focus.

The installations were to be left as arranged. As a result the importance of each of the ideas explored was critical and needed to reflect what was already natural and observable in the area rather than appear as though they had been constructed.

There was an important and intended tension established for students so that they were confronted by what might be considered 'natural aesthetic appeal' and 'constructed aesthetic appeal'... and the relationships they were building between those two things.

References were made to the works of Australian artists including John Davis and John Wolseley.

The site of the student works, located in the bush at the back of the school. Students were free to wander and work in locations they selected.

The relationship between the bush and art is one worth pursuing whenever the opportunity arises.