



Ruth Ige *Clarity* 2019. Acrylic on canvas.

Resource Card *A Place Apart*

**City
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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Tihaka o te Mātauranga

Resource Card

Education Programme: *A Place Apart*

About the Exhibition

Christina Pataialii and Ruth Ige make paintings that traverse abstraction and figuration, their work manifesting an enigmatic in-between.

Christina Pataialii's bicultural Samoan and Pākehā upbringing is the root of much of her creativity. Her works revolve around personal symbols and motifs—picket fences, rugby posts, cowboy hats, and boxing gloves—which recall her Auckland childhood. She paints energetic compositions, experimenting with materials like house paint, spray paint and charcoal which she paints onto stretched drop cloths. Each of her subjects is of particular significance to herself and the contexts she draws from, exploring what collective consciousness is and what belonging to a place can look like.

Ruth Ige creates rich, hypnotic portraits of imagined subjects. Their bodies blur between blue, watery dimensions, and are at once in our midst as they are in a realm of their own. Using a limited palette of blues and blacks, her paintings suggest groups of figures or bodily forms like hands and faces. Born in Nigeria and based in Auckland, Ige makes images that explore blackness and centre people of colour. She notes that secrecy and mystery can serve to empower.

Vocabulary

Abstraction—art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead use shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect.

Figuration—art that retains strong references to the real world.

Ambiguity—open to more than one interpretation.

Limited Palette—using just a few colours in an artwork.

Analogous colours—colours next to each other on the colour wheel.

Tint—a colour mixed with white.

Shade—a colour mixed with black.

Pre-Visit Discussion and Activity

Given that both artists make work that evoke ambiguity and layered interpretations, how much of what you will see at the gallery do you expect to recognise? Describe any other artworks you have seen previously that are ambiguous. What features make them ambiguous? Search online for visual examples of the painting techniques listed below. Which of these have you used before?

Painting Techniques

Stain—thinned down paint which soaks into canvas or paper.

Scumble—a layer of broken colour applied so that patches of the lower layer(s) show through.

Sgraffito—wet paint that is scratched away to expose the layer underneath.

Dry brush—a very small amount of paint thinly applied with no added water so that the brush is almost dry.

Blend—brushing two or more colours together while wet to create a smooth gradient between them.

Post-Visit Activities

Reflect on your visit. What did you see and do at the Gallery? Which artworks did you find interesting? Why? What did you notice about how the artists made their work? Describe how the paint has been applied. What painting techniques did you use?

Write a story inspired by the painting you made at the gallery. What place does your image conjure up? What mood or atmosphere does it have? What might happen there?

Paint A5 pieces of paper with different analogous colours. Cut them into shapes and arrange them into a picture. Have you created an abstract, figurative, or ambiguous artwork?

Make a painting titled *A Place Apart* to express your lockdown experiences. Which objects, places or activities do you particularly remember from your time in isolation?