



Zac Langdon-Pole *Sleight of Hand* 2020

Resource Card Zac Langdon-Pole: Containing Multitudes

**City
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Resource Card

Education Programme: Mix and Match Blueprints

About the Exhibition

Zac Langdon-Pole is a New Zealand artist whose diverse works often take the form of collages or assemblages of found materials. This exhibition *Containing Multitudes* includes a floor of recycled native timber, where borer trails have been filled with gold in the manner of kintsugi ceramics; a bowl pieced together from ceramic fragments from diverse places and times; a carved fragment of ancient meteorite fitted into the aperture of a paper-nautilus shell; and enlarged photograms of sprinkled sand that look like outer space, jumping from micro to macro.

Langdon-Pole treats things in the world like puzzle pieces waiting to be put together and some of his works take the form of jigsaw puzzles. Learning that jigsaw puzzle makers use the same templates to cut different images, he realised he could create surrealist-style collages by substituting pieces from two different jigsaw puzzles. The works combine on two levels: not only do the jigsaw pieces fit together, the images themselves fuse suggestively.

Langdon-Pole's show recalls a wunderkammer, a cabinet of curiosities. These early proto-museums gathered natural and man-made oddities as springboards for speculation.

Langdon-Pole's works prompt us to think rather than tell us what to think; to reflect on our frames of reference, particularly our relation to colonial histories and the environment.

Vocabulary

Collage—artwork made by combining found images and materials.

Assemblage—sculpture made by combining found objects and materials.

Juxtaposition—things placed side by side for contrast.

Surrealism—a twentieth-century art movement that sought to activate the creative potential of the unconscious mind. Creating unlikely combinations to make the ordinary look extraordinary was a key surrealist technique.

Wunderkammer—'cabinets of curiosity' popular in the sixteenth-century housing collections of natural and man-made oddities.

Kintsugi—the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold.

Cyanotype—an early photographic printing process. It produced a cyan-blue print, a 'blueprint'. The process involves light-sensitive paper exposed to UV light.

Pre-Visit Discussion

Watch a video of Zac Langdon-Pole talking about his exhibition.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyDJhVSfbTM

Discuss examples of artworks you have seen that are made from found materials.

Think about the title of the exhibition *Containing Multitudes*. What do you think of or imagine? What ideas come to mind?

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 the effect of putting unlikely objects or images together? What could you make next to extend this idea?

Make a surrealist collage. Collect images from newspapers and magazines then cut out and arrange them to create unlikely juxtapositions.

Assemble a wunderkammer inspired by the work of Joseph Cornell. Collect images and objects to arrange and display.

www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/joseph-cornell
www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/how-to-make-a-box-like-cornell

Find out more about assemblage and found object art:

www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/assemblage
www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/found-object

Investigate cyanotype photography, an early form of cameraless photography. Research the work of Anna Atkins, a pioneering nineteenth-century photographer and scientist.

Make cyanotypes using pre-coated light-sensitive paper (eg SunArt paper) or mix up your own chemical solution to paint onto paper, fabric, or 3D objects.

www.toyco.co.nz/educational/tedco-sunart-paper
www.alternativephotography.com/cyanotype-classicprocess/

Document a journey using found objects and cyanotype photography. Collect objects with interesting shapes/silhouettes at different stops along the way. Place them on the cyanotype paper and expose to UV light to create a series of photograms. Display them sequentially on the wall or as pages in a book.

Further Reading

www.citygallery.org.nz/blog/introducing-zac-langdon-pole/

www.ocula.com/magazine/conversations/zac-langdon-pole-lines-of-flight