



UPPER PRIMARY
SCOTTISH ART



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UPPER PRIMARY | TEACHER'S NOTES



CREATIVE THINKING AT ABERDEEN ART GALLERY

Welcome. This pack has been put together by our experienced learning team to help you explore the building and the collection with your pupils. Every artwork tells a story, giving an insight into a particular culture, society or time in history. Exploring the collection will encourage curiosity, imagination and problem solving.

About Aberdeen Art Gallery

The opening of Aberdeen Art Gallery on 7 July 1885 was made possible by financial contributions from local businessmen including granite and flour merchants, art collectors and civic-minded individuals. The people who paid for this building also donated many of the older paintings that you see on display today. They were philanthropists who wished to give something back to the community by establishing a public venue for the enjoyment and appreciation of art.

Before your visit

You may want to begin with a picture of Aberdeen Art Gallery and ask your learners to set some questions about the gallery and what they might see there.

This will help to de-mystify what an art gallery is, who it's there for and hopefully have them looking forward to their visit.

How to use the teacher's notes

In order to make these notes work for you, we have chosen artworks and activities that are age appropriate. Primary is divided in to Lower and Upper and Secondary is divided in to Junior and Senior phase.

This resource provides you with suggested activities and background information on selected artworks. There are six themes that will direct you to at least three gallery spaces, but you can of course look at more artworks along the way.

As these teacher's notes will be available to download from our website, some images of the artworks are copyright protected and cannot be included in the pack.

Visit our website at www.aagm.co.uk to see images of all the artworks featured in this pack as well as many others from the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums.

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THEME FOR THIS PACK: SCOTTISH ART

Preconceived ideas of Scottish Art can include lovely landscapes, tartan and stags. Scottish artists have been exhibiting on the international stage for centuries and our collection shows the breadth of their talent. As well as celebrating their creativity, our displays also demonstrate the impact Scottish artists have had on artistic styles and continue to have on contemporary visual art.

On arrival

Go to the welcome desk and staff there will tell you where to store your coats and bags.

They will also point out where the toilets and lifts are.

Our staff will provide you with any equipment you have booked in advance of your visit.

If you have booked our Learning Centre to use for a snack or lunch, please let our staff know. Eating and drinking in the gallery spaces is not allowed.

Around the Gallery

Explain to your learners that they must not touch any of the art on display (oily hands can damage artworks) unless a label invites them to touch.

You are welcome to sketch with pencils in the Art Gallery but please make sure your learners are creative on their paper only, not on any other surfaces!

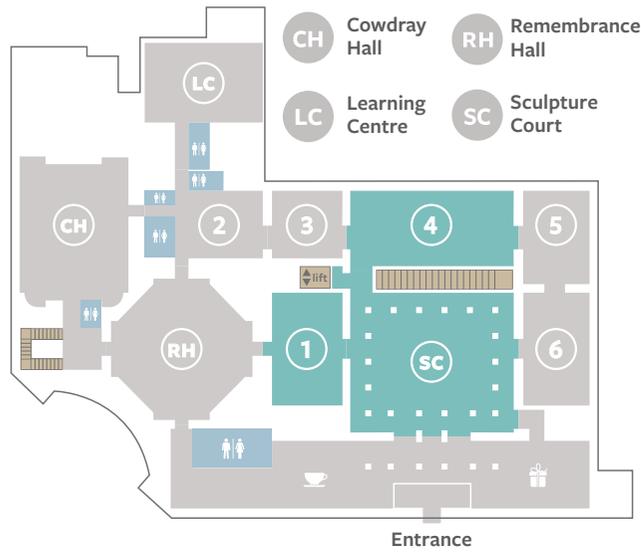
Please supervise your pupils appropriately at all times and ask them to be considerate of other visitors.

We really hope you enjoy your visit to Aberdeen Art Gallery and we welcome any feedback on how to improve the experience for others.

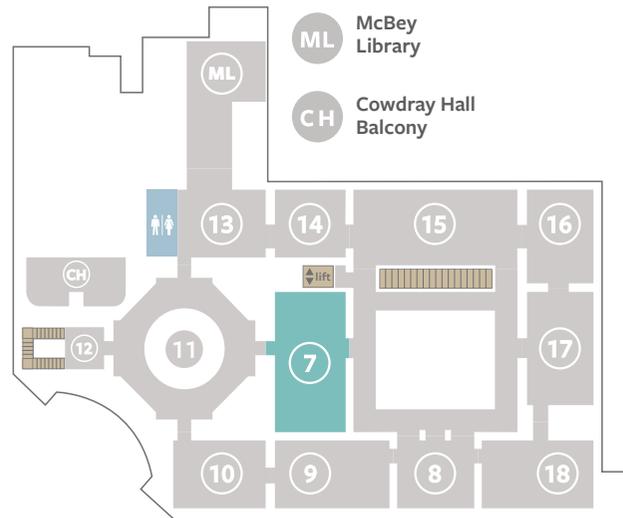
GETTING AROUND THE ART GALLERY



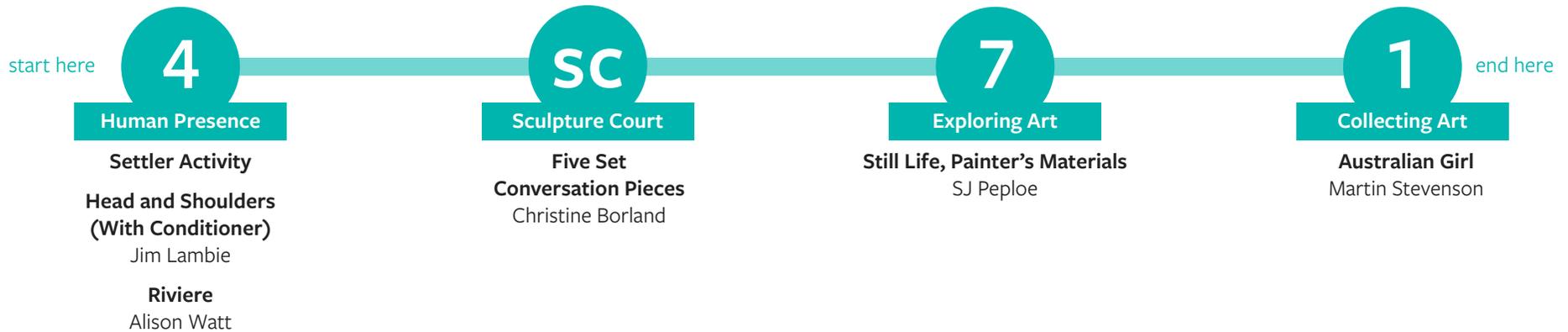
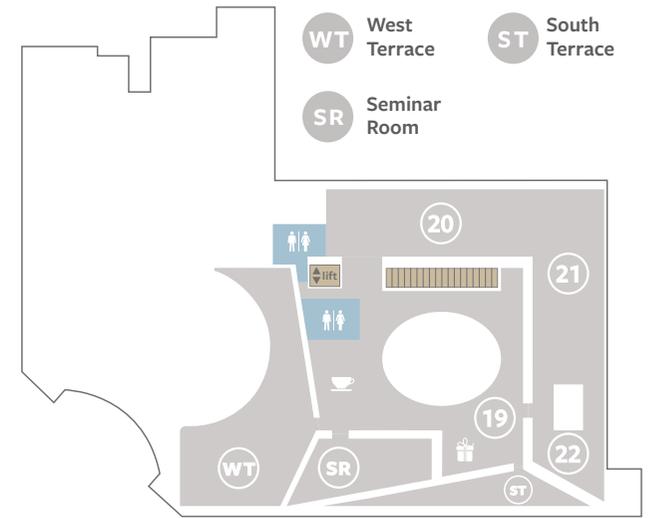
Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



SETTLER ACTIVITY

Gallery 4: Human Presence

Gallery 4
Human Presence



When you enter the gallery tell your learners they are to look for artworks created by Scottish artists. Take them on a quick tour looking at all the artworks on display and get them to decide if the artist is Scottish or not, just by looking at the subject matter.

This will show that it is easy to have preconceptions on what a Scottish artist may create. It is not all tartan and lovely landscapes.



HEAD & SHOULDERS (WITH CONDITIONER)

Jim Lambie, 2003

Gallery 4
Human Presence



Jim Lambie was born in Glasgow in 1964, studied at Glasgow School of Art (1990-1994) and continues to work and live in Glasgow. His work has been exhibited internationally and in 2005 he was nominated for the Turner Prize with his work *Metal Oyster*.

Lambie is known for his use of everyday objects and materials which are used as reference points and as original objects which he transforms to give an alternative function. He doesn't claim any obvious political or personal meaning as inspiration, but his choices of materials and methods show his imagination is rooted in the everyday and in popular culture.

This work combines the artist's two loves: music and colour. In the 1970s his father operated The Spinning Wheel, Scotland's first ever mobile discotheque. Even a brief consideration of Lambie's creative output illustrates the power of colour in his work.

In *Head & Shoulders*, a series of album covers featuring portraits of pop stars and classical singers are combined to provide an amusing montage. Lambie gives the work a distinctively Scottish element by involving images of Scottish performers such as Andy Stewart and Bill Tarrant. By covering the text with tape he focuses our attention on the faces and dated hairstyles and transforms the album sleeves into one giant humorous image.

Coincidentally in the same year he made this artwork out of album covers, he also designed the album cover for Primal Screams compilation album, *Dirty Hits*.



Activity for *Head and Shoulders* (with conditioner)

Please read the joint activity on the next page.

RIVIÈRE

Alison Watt, 2000

Born in Greenock in 1965, Alison Watt attended Glasgow School of Art in the mid 1980s. While a student there she gained a great deal of public attention on winning the National Portrait Gallery's annual award in 1987. She was subsequently commissioned to create a portrait of the Queen Mother in 1989.

Although she was known for her work on human figures, often female nudes, a childhood trip to the National Gallery in London resulted in a lifelong admiration for artists such as Ingres and the suggestive power of fabric in painting. Her exhibition *Fold* in 1997 at Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery, marked a turning point as she introduced paintings of fabric alongside her figurative work. Her solo exhibition, *Shift*, in the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in 2000 marked her moving away from a figurative subject matter entirely as she displayed 12 large-scale works depicting swathes of fabric.

In this artwork the figure is suggested only subliminally and the fabric that once surrounded it, is now the principle subject. From a distance the work appears almost photo-realistic but up close the delicate brushwork is revealed.

Activity for *Head & Shoulders (with conditioner)* and *Rivière*

Divide your class into two groups, with each looking at and discussing the highlighted artworks for ten minutes before swapping over. Do not provide any information on the artworks, just ask some leading questions that will generate discussion:

- what are you looking at?
- do you like the artwork?
- do you know what an album is?
- why are the artworks on display together in this particular room?



Now go to the **Sculpture Court**.

When moving between galleries ask your learners to look out for other examples of Scottish art, such as sculptures, photographs, prints and drawings.



FIVE SET CONVERSATION PIECES

Christine Borland, 1998

Christine Borland is one of Scotland's most successful contemporary artists. She has exhibited extensively in Europe and the United States.

Born in Darvel, Ayrshire in 1965, she studied at Glasgow School of Art and the University of Ulster. Her first solo show in London was in 1997, the same year she was nominated for the 'all women' Turner Prize which was won by Gillian Wearing. Forensics and family history are among the many themes Borland explores in her artwork and she has collaborated with partners as diverse as the police, judicial and public health services.

On a visit to Liverpool Museum, Borland saw examples of delicately painted china bowls dedicated to ships' maiden voyages. Her response was to create these five hand-painted and glazed female pelvises, moulded from obstetric models, and five baby heads. The baby heads are set in different positions by the pubis bone according to the five most common delivery positions.

This marrying of art and science, which is a common theme in Borland's output, leads to many discussions about the artwork. Bone china was originally made with human bone ash. Before the days of modern midwifery and the availability of caesarean sections, infant and mother mortality was high. There was a high probability that those who did not survive ended up becoming part of bone china wares.

Activity for *Five Set Conversation Pieces*

One of the main difficulties with groups looking at sculpture is the desire to touch the artwork. Explain to your group the reasons why touching objects is not normally permitted in art galleries. Ask them to imagine what the artwork might feel like and also how heavy it might be.



 Now go to **Gallery 7: Exploring Art.**

STILL LIFE, PAINTER'S MATERIALS

SJ Peploe, 1900-1905

Born in Edinburgh in 1871, Samuel John Peploe tried various career options before deciding to become an artist. He began his art training aged 20 and divided his time between Edinburgh and Paris. His professional career started five years later in 1896 when he took his first studio in Edinburgh and exhibited with the Royal Scottish Academy and the Royal Glasgow Institute for the first time.

Peploe's name is forever associated with the artists John Duncan Ferguson, Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell and George Leslie Hunter, who are collectively known as the Scottish Colourists. This term was not coined until an exhibition in Glasgow in 1948, by which time all but Ferguson had died. They never constituted a formal group and only exhibited together on three occasions in their lifetimes. This artwork was created before the colourists knew each other – in the early 1900s Peploe was already acquainted with Ferguson, but was still to meet Caddell and Hunter.

As much as Peploe is known for his vibrant landscapes he also maintained a studio practice focussing on still life and figure study. He developed his interest in the work of the 17th century Dutch Old Masters, Rembrandt and Frans Hal, during a trip to Holland in 1896 or 1897. He was also familiar with the work of the French realist artist, Edouard Manet. Their influence is apparent in the still lifes and figure studies Peploe created at this time. The dark background and muted colours of this artwork may not just be a result of all these influences. He was working in a dark studio in Edinburgh at this time and he preferred minimal light so he could accurately pick out the tones of the highlights and shadows on his objects.

Activity for *Still Life, Painter's Materials*

Look at the other still life paintings in this area, pointing out the different styles and colour palettes being used. Use the interactives that are available for your learners to get a better understanding of the complexities of still life.



Now go to **Gallery 1: Collecting Art.**

AUSTRALIAN GIRL

Martin Stevenson, 1988

Martin Stevenson is a contemporary Scottish painter and a graduate of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design in Dundee. He has previously been selected for the BP Portrait Award in 1983, 1990 and 2014, and won the Premier Award at the Scottish Society of Artists Annual Exhibition in Edinburgh in 1983.

He is inspired by the people he paints and captures their individual character: the personal stories of the models in his portrait paintings are just as important to Stevenson as the finished works of art. He builds layers of acrylic paint with the use of bright colour and strong, deliberate brushstrokes.

In *Australian Girl*, the tousled hair and reddish complexion of the sitter are emphasised by the blank pale green wall behind. Having the girl in profile allows the viewer to consider the elegance of her neck and subtle changes in skin tones.

Activity for *Australian Girl*

The colours of this painting have been deliberately chosen, as was the decision to depict the sitter in profile. Ask your group to discuss the colour of clothes they would wear and what pose they would adopt when sitting for a portrait.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

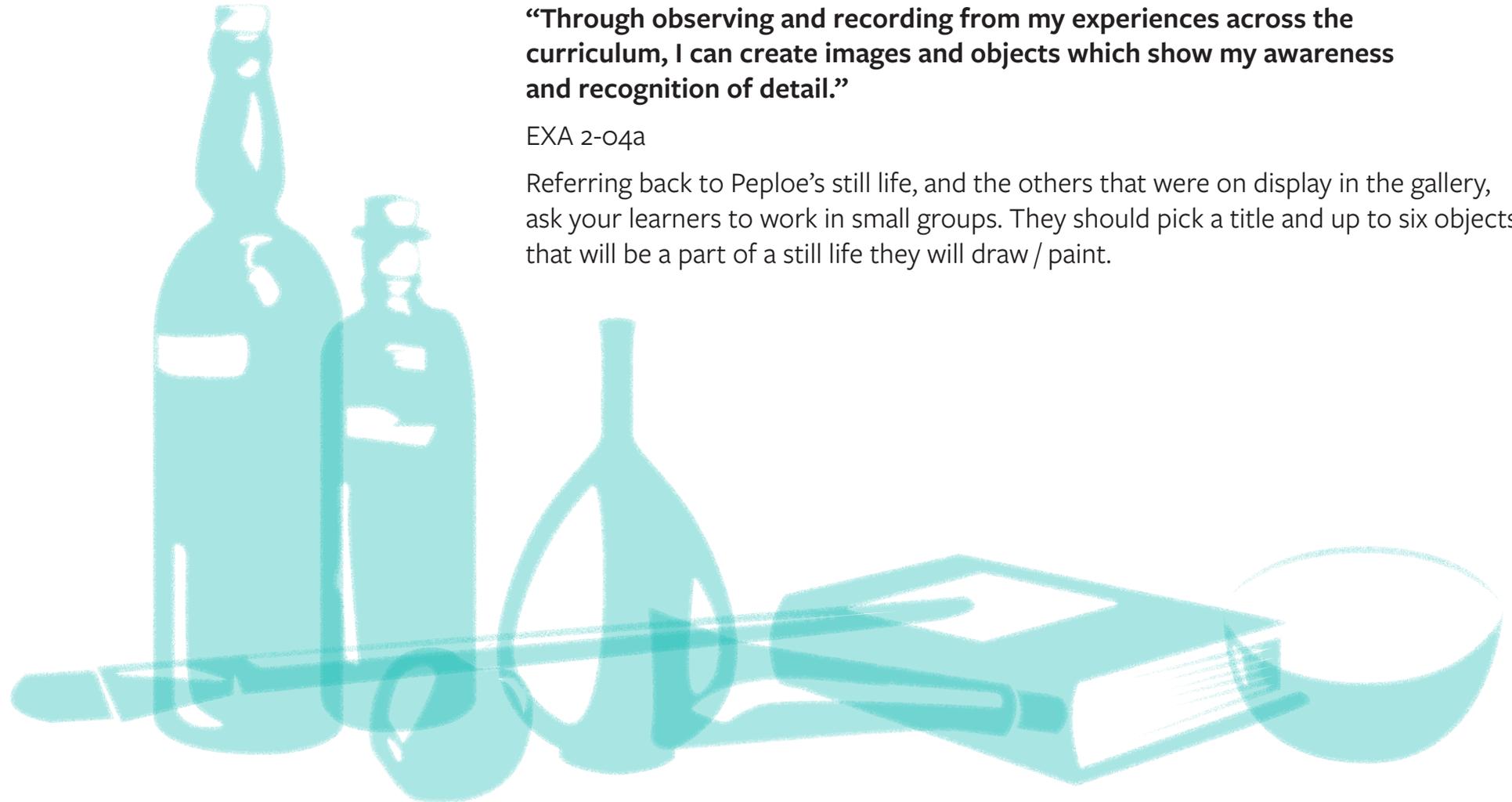
Complete back at school



“Through observing and recording from my experiences across the curriculum, I can create images and objects which show my awareness and recognition of detail.”

EXA 2-04a

Referring back to Peploe’s still life, and the others that were on display in the gallery, ask your learners to work in small groups. They should pick a title and up to six objects that will be a part of a still life they will draw / paint.





Head & Shoulders (with conditioner), Jim Lambie, 2003

Rivière, Alison Watt, 2000 Artist © Alison Watt (2007)

Five Set Conversation Piece, Christine Borland, 1998 Artist © Christine Borland (2002)

Still Life, Painter's Materials, SJ Peploe, 1900-1905

Australian Girl, Martin Stevenson, 1988



@AbdnArtMuseums

Aberdeen Art Gallery | Schoolhill | Aberdeen AB10 1FQ | tel. 03000 200 293 | www.aagm.co.uk



ABERDEEN
ART
GALLERY