



ESCAPE artists

modernists in the tropics

e d u c a t i o n k i t

INTRODUCTION & TEACHERS NOTES

Almost two years in development, **Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics** is the first exhibition by Cairns Regional Gallery to tour nationally. In this exhibition, you and your students will see how the tropical north of Australia has influenced Australia's greatest artists, some of whom you will be familiar with, others less familiar. The artists featured in the exhibition are:

- Harold Abbott
- Valerie Albiston
- Douglas Annand
- Yvonne Atkinson
- John Bell
- Yvonne Cohen
- Ray Crooke
- Lawrence Daws
- Russell Drysdale
- Ian Fairweather
- John Firth-smith
- Donald Friend
- Bruce Gould
- Elaine Haxton
- Frank Hinder
- Frank Hodginson
- Sydney Nolan
- Alan Oldfield
- Margaret Olley
- John Olsen
- Tony Tuckson
- Brett Whitely
- Fred Williams
- Noel Wood

The lure of an exotic, untouched, tropical paradise has a tradition in modern art beginning with Gauguin in Tahiti. It was this desire to discover and explore new worlds which attracted these artists to the Far North - a part of Australia like no other they had seen. Here they found a region of extraordinary, abundant natural beauty and a cultural pot pourri of indigenous inhabitants and people from all over the world.

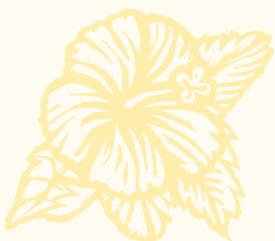
This exciting mixture of important artworks was assembled from major private and public collections by Gavin Wilson, curator of the successful **Artists of Hill End** exhibition at The Art Gallery of New South Wales. **Escape Artists** provides a significant look at the cultural and historic heritage of North Queensland and the rest of northern Australia.

You and your students will find some pleasant surprises among the works in the exhibition. Displayed are some of the more esoteric works of Australia's major artists – some of whom still call Far North Queensland home.

Students of all ages – from the little ones in lower primary to those studying majors – will enjoy and benefit educationally from **Escape Artists**. In this kit you will find suggested activities to be undertaken before, during and after the exhibition. Please be aware that these are suggested only and that their use and interpretation is entirely up to your professional judgement. How you incorporate the visit and associated activities into your program of work is also left to your professional determination. To assist you, starting points, topics for discussion and tips for creating student artworks have been provided.

Although the activities in this kit have been written in the first person, some teachers may prefer to change the wording and language to suit their own students. You may find that some of the activities from one level of schooling may be of use to you for another level. Please look at the suggested activities of the other levels for further ideas and activities.

If you wish, you may help your students prepare for the visit by exposing them to the work of some of these artists through the facilities of your school's resource centre, or through the internet. You may wish to procure a copy of the catalogue as a future reference point for study and inspiration.



ESCAPE artists

modernists in the tropics

A CAIRNS REGIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION

Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics explores the journeys of artistic self discovery by many of Australia's greater and lesser known artists. The colour, light and heat of the tropics, the characters, tales and ancient landscape of the North have profoundly influenced the development of Australian art.

The aim of the exhibition is to extend our perception of Australia's tropic realm and celebrate the creativity of artists who went North with a passion to visually 'rediscover' the region. The majority of works on display in ***Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics*** suggest rather than describe an event or experience. While recording the extraordinary landscape and diverse culture that characterises the region, the images also convey the artists' sense of personal experience.

Escaping society's settled, civilised model is not a rejection but a reaffirmation of life; a recognition of its inter-connectedness and its constant state of flux. The inspired practice of escape is a means of extending and redefining the physical and imaginative boundaries of human experience.

The world of the escape artist is essentially a poetic world of the imagination – a world first grasped by the romantic impulse. Yet the art – the evidence of the engagement – is derived from deeply felt encounters with reality, where sights and sensations have been transformed by the imagination into scenes of compelling beauty and mystery.

Malaytown, Cairns c. 1940 courtesy Cairns Historical Society



ESCAPE artists

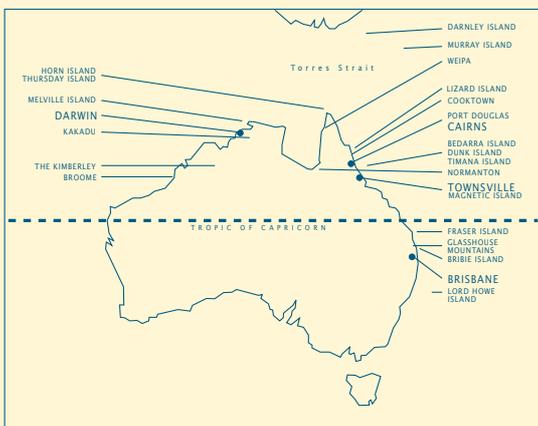
modernists in the tropics

A CAIRNS REGIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION

Over the past 60 years, a disparate group of talented Australian artists have headed north for varying reasons to stay and work in regions as diverse as Broome, the Kimberley, Arnhem Land, Kakadu, Melville Island, Cape York, the Torres Strait, Cooktown, Cairns, Townsville, Dunk, Bedarra and Timana Islands, Fraser Island, the Glasshouse Mountains, Bribie Island and Lord Howe Island.

For a number of these artists including Ray Croke, Ian Fairweather, Yvonne Cohen, Valerie Albiston, Noel Wood, Donald Friend, Douglas Annand, Lawrence Daws and John Bell, the experience of life in the tropics became a key element in their life and work.

For others, a periodic encounter was a sufficient stimulant to inspire works of high quality and originality: Sidney Nolan, Russell Drysdale, Margaret Olley, Tony Tuckson, Yvonne Atkinson, Frank Hinder, Elaine Haxton, Harold Abbott, John Olsen, Fred Williams, Alan Oldfield, Brett Whiteley, Frank Hodgkinson, John Firth-Smith and Bruce Goold.



The tropics are the hottest areas of the earth, located between the tropic of Cancer in the north and the tropic of Capricorn in the south. Unlike temperate regions, there are generally only two seasons, wet and dry, and two landscape types, the wet tropics and dry tropics. The wet tropics are areas with high rainfall generally associated with dense canopied rainforest vegetation. The rainforest belt has an annual rainfall of at least 1300mm and exceeds 2600mm in the wettest areas between Cairns and Tully, and between Daintree and Bloomfield River. The dry tropics are generally associated with dry, open woodlands and hot grasslands.





PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Using a large map of Australia find some of the following places:

- Darnley Island
- Melville Island
- Port Douglas
- Cairns
- Murray Island
- Darwin
- Bedarra Island
- Weipa
- Kakadu
- Normanton
- Lizard Island
- The Kimberly
- Thursday Island
- Cooktown
- Broome
- Horn Island

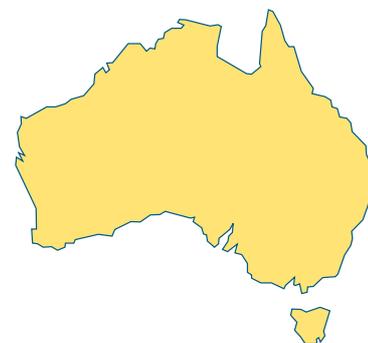
As a class, discuss what you think it would be like to live in some of these places.

- Would it be hot and wet?
- Would there be rainforest and reef?
- What sort of animals would you find there?
- If there is reef, what would the coral and fish be like?

Do some drawings of animals, the reef, fish and the rainforest.
Make your drawings really colourful.

The exhibition that you are going to visit is called Escape Artists. This is because many of the artists escaped from boring places to live and paint in beautiful, tropical northern Australia.

Make up a story that tells about someone moving from a drab, boring place to somewhere beautiful and exciting. Illustrate your story with a painting or drawing, or make it into a comic book or storybook with pictures.



DURING THE VISIT

See if you can find out what the artist is saying to you:

- Are you being told a story of something that happened?
- Are you being shown how the artist sees a beautiful place or are you being shown something sad?
- Do you like pictures with lots of colours?

Look at Alan Oldfield's painting called **The voyage, first day**.

- Are the people in a boat or something else?
- If they are not in a boat what would have happened to make them put to sea in something else?
- Where are the two people looking?
- Why do you think this is so?
- Can you find other paintings by Alan Oldfield in this exhibition?

Look at them all. You will find that he is telling a story. See if you can find out what the story is about.

Find the biggest painting in the exhibition.

Write down its title and the name of the artist.

- Why do you think that it is so big? If it were small would it have less impact?

When you go to an art gallery remember not to touch any of the paintings on display. Finger marks can damage the pictures. Take your time and look at each work of art carefully.



Alan Oldfield
The voyage, first day 1992
oil, acrylic on canvas on board
30.5 x 38.0 cm
collection of the artist

For further information visit the Escape Artists website on www.escapeartists.com.au



Ray Crooke
Gayi's house 1972
acrylic on canvas on composition
board
61.0 x 91.5 cm
Connor Family collection



Bruce Goold
SS Makambo 1994
hand-coloured linocut on paper
55.0 x 79.0 cm
collection of the artist

Russell Drysdale has a lot of photographs on display. One of them is called **About Hassan**.

- What do you think that the big metal helmet is for?
- What type of boat is this and what was it used for?
- Do you think that it is a good idea to have photographs in this exhibition?
- Why do you think this?

Have a look at the painting by Ray Crooke called **Gayi's House**.

- Where do you think that this picture was painted?
- Is it a good house for a hot climate? Why?
- Can you imagine what the people in the picture are talking about?

Take your friend to look at Donald Friend's painting called **Johnny Bell's Dream of Thursday Island**.

Explain Johnny Bell's dream to your friend.

The linocut print **SS Makambo** is about a ship that hit a reef near Lord Howe Island. The crew threw the cargo of bananas overboard, along with the rats that clung to them. The rats swam ashore and ate the eggs of the native birds and caused great damage to the island.

- Describe the rats in the picture.
- Do they remind you of cartoon characters?

Find your favourite painting in the exhibition. Write a couple of sentences that explain why it is your favourite. You could try to use some of these words in your explanation:

- | | | | |
|------------|---------------|----------|------------|
| • similar | • different | • tone | • lines |
| • shapes | • recognise | • wavy | • swirling |
| • flowing | • bright/dark | • colour | • image |
| • squiggly | • delicate | | |

AFTER THE VISIT

Pretend you are a tropical fish living with your fishy family on the Great Barrier Reef. Draw or paint your family and where you all live and show what you would be doing. Is there a big brother or little sister fish? What are the grown-up fish doing? Is someone reading the newspaper or feeding the pet seahorse? Who lives next door? Is your neighbour a big fat sleepy cod? Use lots of colours in your artwork.

Go to the garden and find the biggest, prettiest flower that you can. Get the biggest sheet of paper and biggest brush that you can find and do a big colourful painting of the flower. Make the painting much, much bigger than the flower itself.

Tell the story of a small child shipwrecked on a deserted tropical island. Illustrate your story with a picture.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

The exhibition you are going to visit is called Escape Artists. This is because the artists who painted the pictures left the more settled and developed southern cities of Australia to be inspired by the tropical North. Here they found rainforests, deserted islands surrounded by coral reefs, ghost towns and a diverse culture. This culture is made up from the original inhabitants, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander people as well as the descendants of the Chinese gold diggers and South Sea Islands.

Draw a map of Australia. Place the following places on your map:

- Darnley Island
- Melville Island
- Port Douglas
- Cairns
- Murray Island
- Darwin
- Bedarra Island
- Weipa
- Kakadu
- Normanton
- Lizard Island
- The Kimberley
- Thursday Island
- Cook town
- Broome
- Horn Island

Try this: Use a computer to draw your map or scan it onto your hard drive. Type the name of one of these places into a search engine. Go there and cut and paste the images back to your map.

Research and find out about the fascinating story of the Palmer River gold rush. A good book to read about this is *River of Gold* by Hector Holthouse. Find out what you can of the Kanakas. These were South Sea Islanders who were brought to work as labourers in the cane paddocks of North Queensland. Research the story of the pearling industry of Broome in Western Australia and the Torres Strait Islands.

The rainforests of North Queensland contain the greatest bio-diversity of many places in the world. Many plants and animals remain unnamed and undiscovered. Do a class project, which explores the flora and fauna of the rainforest.

Traditional Queensland houses were built on stilts with wide verandahs. Why were they built like this? Compare these with many of the built houses today. Design your own house for a hot wet climate.

UPPER PRIMARY ACTIVITIES



Margaret Olley
Cane farmer's house, North Queensland
1956
oil on canvas
60.0 x 75.0 cm
UNSW Art Collection, The University
of New South Wales, Sydney

DURING THE VISIT

See if you can find out what the artist is saying to you, the viewer. When you look at the paintings in the exhibition ask yourself the following questions:

- What medium was this artwork done in? Was it done in oil paint, watercolour, charcoal or is it a print?
- What kind of print is it? Is it a linocut print, a silk-screen print, an etching or something else?
- Describe the visual art elements. The type of lines, shapes, colours and textures.
- Compare the size and shapes of objects in a painting.
- Look for contrasts of colour, light and dark (tone), line and form (3D shape).
- The words high-lighted below are from the Principals Of Composition:

Focal point	Balance	Movement	Space
Pattern	Contrast	Harmony	
- And the Elements of Design:

Point	Line	Shape	Form
Colour	Tone	Texture	

Use these words when you look at, think about and discuss paintings.

When you go to an art gallery remember not to touch any of the paintings on display. Finger marks can damage the pictures. Take your time and look at each work of art carefully.

For further information visit the Escape Artists website on www.escapeartists.com.au



Look at Douglas Annand's work called **Domestic Architecture, Townsville**.

Describe the piece in terms of the elements and principles.

- Is there a story?
- What is it?

Can you describe how perspective is used in the picture?

There is a painting called **War Memorial, Atherton** painted in 1942.

- What was going on in 1942?
- What does this picture say about this time and this place?

Sydney Nolan has a painting called **Endeavour River**. The Endeavour River is where Captain Cook came ashore to mend his ship after hitting the reef. The small town of Cooktown now sits at the mouth of the river. During the gold rush of the Palmer River this was a wild and boisterous town with over 30 000 inhabitants. Describe the mood of this painting.

Find Noel wood's painting called **Brammo Bay (Dunk Island)**. What can you deduce about the artist himself from looking at this painting? Why do you think this? Has it got something to do with both the subject matter of the picture and the way colour has been used?

Choose your favourite painting in the exhibition. Spend some time jotting down some notes so that when you go home you can describe the picture, say who the artist was and why this painting has inspired you.

AFTER THE VISIT

One of the works in the exhibition was a linocut print by Bruce Goold. The painting was inspired by a story that he read as a boy about an imp in a bottle. Robert Louis Stevenson, another of the world's escape artists, wrote **The Bottle Imp**. It is a great story. If you cannot find it in the library go the internet:

1. Open AltaVista and type "bottle imp"
2. Open the site
3. Open "save as" in the file menu
4. Save it as a txt file to your desktop
5. Open it in a word processing program
6. Print and read it.

Collect some flat plant forms such as leaves, ferns and grass.

Take prints onto paper from these using a roller to apply the paint or ink. When these are dry cut them out and glue them to another sheet of paper so that they form a collage which you have called Rainforest.

Using tropical fish as your theme make a mobile wall hanging. Use light gauge wire for your construction.



Sydney Nolan
Endeavour River 1948
oil and enamel on composition board
90.0 x 120.0 cm
courtesy Corbally Stourton
Contemporary Art Ltd



Bruce Goold
The bottle imp 1998
hand-coloured linocut on paper
51.0 x 76.0 cm
collection of the artist

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Look up the modern art movements. Which movement or style do you like best? Photocopy your favourite painting from this style, paste it into your art journal and write underneath what you have found out about the artist, the movement and why you like this particular painting.

Use a good quality atlas to locate the following places:

- Darnley Island
- Melville Island
- Port Douglas
- Cairns
- Murray Island
- Darwin
- Bedarra Island
- Weipa
- Kakadu
- Normanton
- Lizard Island
- The Kimberly
- Thursday Island
- Cook town
- Broome
- Horn Island

Find out as much as you can of some of these places (people, history, climate, flora and fauna, culture). Find pictures of these places and their people.

The exhibition that you are going to see is called Escape Artists. This is because many of the artists escaped from conventional existence to the bright, colourful warmth of tropical northern Australia, to rainforest and islands, to ghost towns, adventure and cultural diversity. As a class, discuss the romantic and beautiful places in the world that you would like to visit or have already visited.

Design an illustrated travel brochure highlighting the attractions of the tropical north of Australia. Use the Internet to find information and cut and paste pictures from web pages into your brochure.

The first Escape Artist was Paul Gauguin. Find out about his life and the paintings that he did while he lived in Tahiti.



Valerie Albiston
To the islands, Timana c.1950
oil on canvas board
20.0 x 68.0 cm
collection of the artist

DURING THE VISIT

These are basic, generic questions to contemplate when viewing any work of art:

- Who is the artist?
- What medium was used in the work?
- What techniques were used?
- What is the artist's background?
- What issues or events affected the artist's works?
- Who or what influenced the artist?
- Who did the artist influence?
- What is the context (theme) of the work?
- What is the content (subject matter) of the work?
- What and how are the elements of design and the principles of composition used?

Assume that you are the art critic for your local newspaper. Take notes that will assist you to write a critique of the exhibition.

Ask your friend to stand next to his or her favourite painting in the exhibition. Have your friend pretend to be the artist who created the picture and interview your friend. Write down the responses.

For further information visit the Escape Artists website on www.escapeartists.com.au



Ian Fairweather
Black boys c.1961
synthetic polymer paint and gouache
on cardboard
100.0 x 68.5 cm
collection Philip Bacon

Choose an artist whose images/life/adventures/philosophy etc appeals to you and write ten questions you would like to ask that artist if you could speak in person.

Have a look at the watercolour titled **Thursday Island pub** by Douglas Annand. What do you notice is the difference in the appearance of a painting done in watercolour from a painting done in oils? Find another painting in the exhibition done in oil paint and note the differences between the two media. Discuss these with your teacher or another adult. Use words like transparency, opacity, texture and impasto.

Now go to a painting by Ray Crooke called **South Sea Islanders**.

- What are the people in the painting doing?
- Write a paragraph that describes the setting or place that has been painted.
- How does the artist's use of colour portray the feeling of a tropical island?

Describe your response to **Black boys** by Ian Fairweather.

- Does the painting seem primitive to you?
- What is it about the painting that gives you this response?
- What emotions do you feel when you look at the painting?
- Ask somebody to explain to you the meaning of the word 'totem'.

The painting **Trap** by John Firth-Smith can be interpreted on two levels. One is as a reference to the fish traps built by the natives of the Top End, the other as a mental trap or psychological condition.

Explain to your friend how you would interpret the latter meaning.

AFTER THE VISIT

Collect images from travel brochures. Create a postcard designed to be sent from an exotic tropical location. Title it **Wish You Were Here**.

Design the ideal house for a hot tropical climate. Before you begin, research the housing styles of South East Asia. Look at places like Bali in Indonesia, tropical colonial architecture, and the classic 'Queenslander' as well as the indigenous dwellings of the Pacific region. Do you think that modern Australian builders could learn some lessons from these places?

In groups of four or five, make a short video on the works of one of the artists in the exhibition.

Find Darnley Island on the map. Look how far away and remote it is.

Why don't you send an e-mail to the students on Darnley to ask them about the history of their island and their culture? Remember that you are secondary students and that they are in primary school.

Their e-mail address is <diss@130.aune.net.au>

Many of the "tropical paradises" of the world have been discovered by mass tourism. This includes Far North Queensland. What impact does this have on these places? Create an image to answer the question.

Many of the paintings in this exhibition were a response to an environment and its people. How does the environment in which you live influence you? Create your own artwork that in response to an aspect of your environment.



Donald Friend
Canefarmer's house, North Queensland
c.1954
pen and wash with coloured inks on
paper
27.3 x 36.9 cm
National Gallery of Australia,
Canberra

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Take a little time to prepare for your visit so that you come equipped with a sense of time and place.

Using an atlas locate the following places:

- Darnley Island
- Melville Island
- Port Douglas
- Cairns
- Murray Island
- Darwin
- Bedarra Island
- Weipa
- Kakadu
- Normanton
- Lizard Island
- The Kimberly
- Thursday Island
- Cook town
- Broome
- Horn Island

Now use the internet to view images of some of these places and to get local information. Use the Internet to visit the web sites of art galleries, which feature information and images of the work of Brett Whiteley, Fred Williams, Paul Gauguin, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen, Russell Drysdale and Ian Fairweather.

Look up and become familiar with the images of the following art movements:

- Fauvism
- Cubism
- Abstract Expressionism

Use a library to find out the extraordinary legend of Mrs Fraser, who survived a shipwreck off the island that now bears her name and of Mrs. Watson who perished on Lizard Island in 1881. These are sad and poignant stories and you will find reference to them at the exhibition.

Discuss and write about:

Australia's cultural heritage - have we got one? What is it? Is it relevant to young Australians?

Do the culture and images of the USA swamp young Australians'?

What was the cultural cringe?

How much do I know about the culture and the lives of indigenous Australians?

Find someone who was the age that you are now in the 1950's. Interview that person about life in Australia then.

UPPER SECONDARY ACTIVITIES



Sidney Nolan
Mrs Fraser and convict 1962-64
oil and enamel on composition board
151.0 x 121.0 cm
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Purchased 1988 with the assistance of
David Jones Australia (Queensland
Division) and Sir Sidney Nolan to
mark the company's 150th
anniversary, through the Queensland
Art Gallery Foundation

DURING THE VISIT

The light in the tropics is very strong, creating a different appearance of things. Choose two artists in the exhibition and write a paragraph that tells how they have handled light and colour.

Choose an artist whose images/life/adventures/philosophy, etc. appeals to you and write ten questions that you would like to ask that artist if you could speak in person.

Which painting in the exhibition appealed to you the most? In a paragraph tell why it appeals. Is it the image, the story in the picture, or is it the way the artist has put the paint onto the surface?

Choose one artist whose work most appeals to you for later research.

Choose two artists from the exhibition. Make notes that compare and contrast how well their works fit the theme Escape Artists.

Which painting in the entire exhibition best represents the notion of the escaped artist?

How and why is this so?

For further information visit
the Escape Artists website on
www.escapeartists.com.au



Douglas Annand
Domestic architecture, Townsville 1943
watercolour over pencil on paper
39.2 x 26.7 cm
collection: A.M. Annand

Look at Douglas Annand's drawing entitled **Domestic architecture, Townsville 1943**. What are your comments on his use of perspective, line and tone? Comment on how this image creates a feeling of tropical dilapidation.

What does John Bell's watercolour **Locals, North Queensland** tell you about the subject matter of the painting? Note how the figures fill the frame and his strong use of line. Comment on the affect that these have on the viewer.

Observe the paintings of Ray Crooke.

Can you see the influence and inspiration of Gauguin?

Comment and note how the artist captures the contrasts found in the colours of the tropics.

What do you think of his use of tone?

Do you feel that the paintings have a strong feeling of design and why?

In what way do you feel that his paintings tell of the lives and people of the tropical north?

Look at Russell Drysdale's photographs. Most photographers consider black and white to be art. In Drysdale's case it was the reverse: colour was the missing element. Drysdale saw it as an extension or reinforcement of form. Choose the photograph which best illustrates this statement and in a written paragraph explain why.

In 1967 Ian Fairweather wrote: *The only thing worth looking at these days are the abstracts - I have fought against them, feeling that art was losing its roots... I am beginning to see that I was wrong in that too.*

Select two of Fairweather's paintings on show; one figurative, one non-figurative. Make a comparison of these two paintings in the light of his statement.

Look at John Firth-Smith's painting **Through**. This is a fine example of the artist's control of line, form, colour, scale and texture. Observe how he uses these.

Could it be said that the paint is reminiscent of the simple woven grass walls of an Islander's hut?

Look at the linocut prints of Bruce Goold. Do you agree with Robert Holden's suggestion that... *there is a (theatrical element) in all Goold's work as if a curtain had suddenly been lifted on the scene, and with a blinding flash the image is momentarily revealed to our sight?*

Sidney Nolan's two paintings **Mrs Fraser** and **Mrs Fraser and convict** were painted as his response to this tragic event. Do they evoke a feeling of degradation and despair? How does the artist convey this?

Now look at Alan Oldfield's series of paintings on the story of Mrs Watson. These tell of another tragedy. Refer to the catalogue for excerpts from Mrs Watson diary, which describe her dying days. This happened off Lizard Island north of Cooktown.

Can you see a reference to the American artist William De Kooning in Tony Tuckson's painting **No 1: Double-sided?**

What artform would you associate with his **No 62: Four uprights, red and black?**

Brett Whiteley painted **Camp Eden** after a spell at a health resort near the Gold Coast where he had attempted to get rid of his heroin habit.

What does this painting tell you of the artist's state of mind at the time?

What does it tell you of the place?



Tony Tuckson
No. 62 Four uprights, red and black 1965?
polyvinyl acetate on composition board
122.0 x 183.0 cm
collection: Frank Watters



Why do you think that the Cairns Regional Gallery chose these particular artists for this exhibition? What common threads can you see that bind these artists and their works? Can you see how the work and experience of some of them might have influenced others? Discuss this as a class.

Create a work of your own, entitled **My Escape to Paradise**.

... and how many thousands of people are there who find their freedom vicariously – through travel books, through films, through television? these people do in an armchair what I did in a canoe.
Michael Fomenko 1959.

The quote above refers to a journey that Michael Fomenko made from Cairns to Dutch New Guinea in an outrigger canoe. (See page 145 of the catalogue.) Create an image in any medium that expresses your interpretation of Michael's quote and his experience.

This exhibition is entitled **Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics**. The prototype escape artist was Paul Gauguin. His art has all the appearance of a flight from civilisation, of a search for new ways of life, more primitive, more real and more sincere. Read about and research the life and work of Gauguin while he lived in Tahiti.

It has been said that Ian Fairweather's work has a calligraphic quality and that he was influenced by Chinese culture. What is calligraphy? Study some examples of Chinese calligraphic art. Write and explain how you see this influence at work on his paintings.
Create a calligraphic piece of your own using ink and/or water based paint.

Some of the work painted by Noel Wood and Yvonne Cohen while they lived on the islands of the tropical coast of Far North Queensland show the influence of the Fauves.
• What was Fauvism and who were its main artists? Explain how you see this influence on the work of these artists.

The history of European settlement in Far North Queensland is among the most fascinating in Australia with gold rushes, boom and bust towns and colourful characters. Read **Trinity Phoenix** by Dorothy Jones which tells this story.

The mainland Aborigines and Torres Strait islanders are two distinct peoples each with their own unique culture. Non-indigenous Australians as well as people from overseas are showing an increasing interest in Aboriginal art and culture, however fewer people are aware of the culture, customs and art forms of the Torres Strait. Research and find out what you can of this unique and beautiful string of islands to the very north of Australia.

As a class discuss Russell Drysdale's comment about the Aboriginal people of Australia made after his extensive photographic journey of the North ... *they not only seem to me have a particular dignity and grace... but the way a man comports himself in an environment which is his and his alone, he is at ease in it...*

Picture Ian Fairweather's comment on pre-war Melbourne: *I seem to have done nothing but pursue... an open space - any let up in this colossal monotony. There is no break - it is a whole - a matriarchy - a million perfect homes - the pubs are always closed - and smoking is so much prohibited. And the Sundays - oh the Sundays - the Salvation Army prowls the empty streets.*



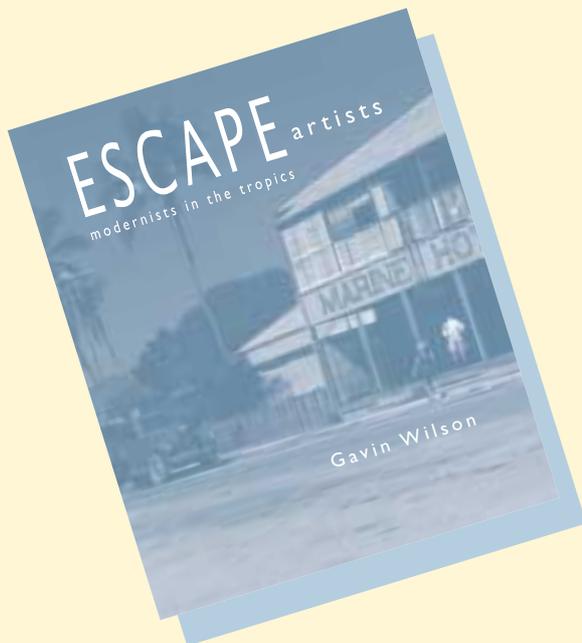
Russell Drysdale
(Dancing, Pukamani ceremony, Melville Island) 1956 (printed 1984)
cibachrome photograph
26.2 x 38.2 cm
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne
Gift of Lady Drysdale

For further information visit the Escape Artists website on www.escapeartists.com.au

ESCAPE artists

modernists in the tropics

BOOK/CATALOGUE
by **Gavin Wilson**



The Australian tropics are a special part of the world. Alluring, unique and spectacularly beautiful they have remained a powerful attraction for Australia's artists, particularly the modernists. Escaping from the confines and complexities of the city — and often their demons — these talented individuals have discovered in the exotic landscape of the tropics a compelling means of expressing their independence and originality.

With over 100 colour plates and historic photographs, many from artists' personal memorabilia, this unique 188 page publication will add a new dimension to the perception of Australia's north.

Website: www.escapeartists.com.au

For further details contact
Cairns Regional Gallery on 07 4031 6865
Cnr Abbott & Shields Streets CAIRNS Qld 4870
FAX ORDERS TO: 07 4031 6067



Featuring the work of

Harold Abbott	Bruce Goold
Valerie Albiston	Elaine Haxton
Douglas Annand	Frank Hinder
Yvonne Atkinson	Frank Hodgkinson
John Bell	Sidney Nolan
Yvonne Cohen	Alan Oldfield
Ray Crooke	Margaret Olley
Lawrence Daws	John Olsen
Russell Drysdale	Tony Tuckson
Ian Fairweather	Brett Whiteley
John Firth-Smith	Fred Williams
Donald Friend	Noel Wood

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

ORDER FORM

Yes! I wish to purchase copies of the Exhibition Catalogue at the special price of \$45.95.

Postage and handling \$10.00 per catalogue ordered.

Copies @ \$45.95 each	\$
Postage/handling	\$
Total	\$

School name

.....

Contact

Delivery Address

.....

Postal Address

.....

Phone no.

Fax No.

Publisher

Cairns Regional Gallery
Cnr Abbott & Shields Sts
Cairns
Qld 4870

PO Box 7784
Cairns
Queensland 4870 Australia

© Cairns Regional Gallery 1998

Education Kit written by Bill Spooner on behalf of Cairns Regional Gallery, with the original research by Gavin Wilson, exhibition curator:

All rights reserved.

This publication is copyright. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this publication may be reproduced by any process, electronic or otherwise, without the permission in writing from the publisher and authors. Neither may information be stored electronically in any form whatsoever without such permission. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the publisher. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher.

Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

Spooner, Bill, 1951-
Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics
Education Kit

ISBN 0 9586858 3 5

Exhibition coordinator: Peter Denham
Designer: Mandy Sullivan
Printed by Bolton Inprint Limited, Cairns



Cairns Regional Gallery is an initiative of the community of Far North Queensland, with the financial support of the Queensland Government. Ongoing support is provided by Cairns City Council.

This education kit was proudly sponsored by Cairns Regional Gallery VIPs



Notes on the education kit

Dimensions of works are given in centimetres (cm), height preceding width.

Every attempt has been made to locate the holders of copyright and reproduction rights of all images and texts reproduced in this publication. The publisher would be grateful to hear from any reader with further information.

Photography:
Greg Weight: pages 5, 6, 8, 12
David Campbell: page 9

© Ian Fairweather; DACS. Reproduced by permission of VISCOPY Ltd, Sydney 1998

© Alan Oldfield. Reproduced by permission of VISCOPY Ltd, Sydney 1998

© Tony Tuckson. Reproduced by permission of VISCOPY Ltd, Sydney 1998

Published in conjunction with an exhibition organised by Cairns Regional Gallery

Exhibition dates

Cairns Regional Gallery

30 May - 30 August 1998

Rockhampton City Art Gallery

23 September - 31 October 1998

Brisbane City Gallery

21 November 1998 - 10 January 1999

Mosman Regional Gallery, Sydney

19 January - 24 February 1999

Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

5 March - 9 May 1999

Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville

21 May - 27 June 1999

Visit the exhibition website at
www.escapeartists.com.au

Front cover: Bruce GOOLD

Commissioned by Cairns Regional Gallery for the production of this education kit.



An official event in **A Sea Change**, a nationwide celebration leading up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games

This exhibition is supported by Visions of Australia.



Visions of Australia is the Commonwealth Government's national touring exhibitions grant program. It assists with the development or touring of cultural exhibitions across Australia.

