

Teacher Notes

Joanna Langford



Beyond Nowhere, 2011

Joanna Langford's first survey exhibition, ***Beyond Nowhere***, highlights the past ten years of Joanna Langford's practice. Over the decade Langford has created a series of sculptural installations in all the major public art galleries in New Zealand. ***Beyond Nowhere*** presents ten of these installations.¹

¹ Helen Kedgley

Artist Motivation

While Langford's work speaks about ideas of consumerism and waste she is driven by the concept of transformation of humble materials rather than recycling.



computer keyboards and bamboo skewers become...

The Beautiful and the Damned



The Beautiful and the Damned, 2008, Courtesy of the artist and Jonathan Smart Gallery.



The Beautiful and the Damned, 2008

Dozens of hundreds and thousands biscuits become...



Big Rock Candy Castle, 2004



Compiled by Pataka Education. Based on exhibition and catalogue text by Senior Art Curator Helen Kedgley, Pataka Museum of Arts and Cultures.

Plastic shopping bags and polystyrene balls become...



Honey in the Rock, 2011



Honey in the Rock, 2011, detail, Courtesy of the artist and Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch.



Honey in the Rock, 2011, detail, courtesy of the artist and Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

Honey in the Rock, 2011 was inspired by the volcanic landscape of Mt Cargill on the outer reaches of Dunedin that dominates the countryside and stands around 680 metres high. Formed around 10 million years ago it is part of the immense extinct shield volcano. The Maori name for Mt Cargill is Kapuka-taumahaka.²

Artist Practise

'The hands on process of making is at the centre of my practice'...'Structures are assessed and strengthened as needed while the construction is in process. Joanna Langford.

The installations are created on site in response to the space. She usually begins a work with a combination of materials and construction techniques, practicing with materials in the studio before the install. Most of her constructions are deliberately low tech, temporary forms ie: bamboo skewer are joined by dots of hot glue

There is a carefree casualness to the design of her structures, calling on her own childhood memories of building tree huts and dams on the family farm in Gisborne.³

² wikipedia

³ Helen Kedgley

Multiple ice cream cones become...



The Wanderers, 2005



The Wanderers, 2005, Courtesy of the artist and Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

Joanna likes the idea that viewers can imagine what they will in her work, and that it can start an imaginary journey for them. ⁴

⁴ Smith, C. Otago Daily Times on Thu, 24 Mar 2011

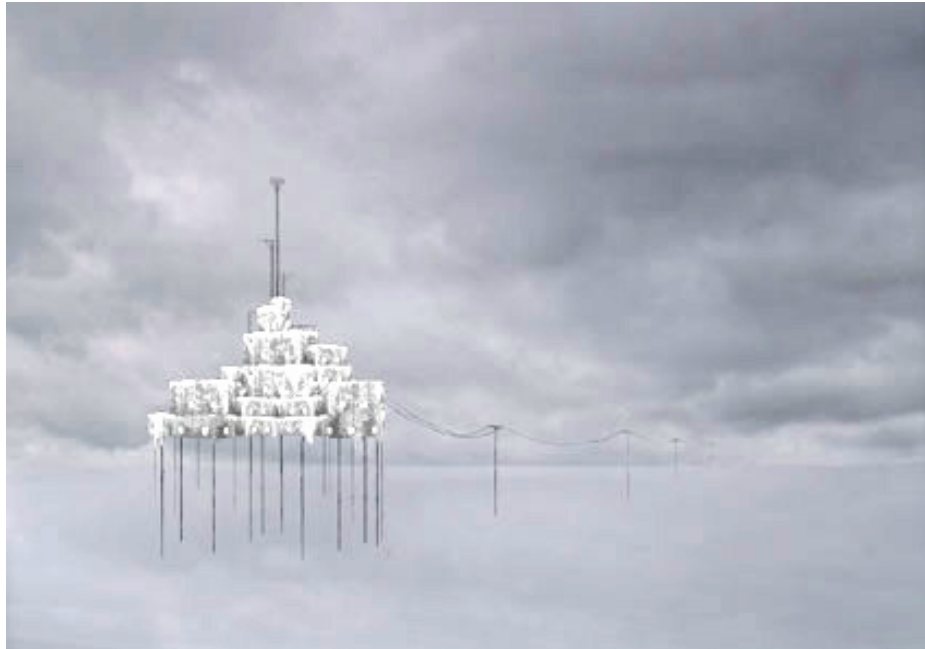
Artist Influences

While memories of Langford's personal adventures and travels have become references for her work, mythical and mystical places have also had an influence. Her work is inspired by landscapes – especially romantic ones with magical and mythical possibilities. While there are overt references to cloud-filled skies and volcanic outcrops in her work, her fantastical landscapes are invaded by architectural structures that speak of the urban built environment.

Joanna Langford says 'I love the fact that you can take everyday kind of rubbish and just tweak it into something magical.' Langford continues, 'The type of work I make certainly has its origins in the **Arte Povera** movement. Those artists took familiar, everyday materials and presented them in what appeared to be magical new ways, taking on the role of magician or alchemist to engage the imagination of the viewer'.

Baltic Wanderer. 2011

Baltic Wanderer, 2011 is a digital animation work, the result of an artist's residency in Iceland in 2008.



Baltic Wanderer, 2011 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago

Joanna Langford says "I like landscapes that lie in the balance that could be fictional or real. As research I try to travel to places that hang in the balance, like Iceland or Peru or Turkey." ⁵

⁵ Smith, C. Otago Daily Times on Thu, 24 Mar 2011

Before or after your visit you could...

IMAGINE yourself as a tiny person in one of Langford's installation works...

DISCUSS your thoughts and ideas in class or with a friend and...

WRITE a story about what you are doing, where you might be doing, who might you see and what might you talk about?

RESEARCH the Arte Povera art movement...

FIND OUT about other artists and what part of the world they are from...

VIEW images of the artists and...

DISCUSS the materials the artist's used and why they may have chosen them.

IMAGINE your own fantasy city and...

CONSTRUCT an installation at your school using everyday materials like pencils or paper cups joined together with masking tape, or use some of the material Joanna uses like recycled shopping bags or kebab sticks.

DRAW, PAINT or PHOTOGRAPH your city on a large sheet of paper.

SHARE your work with the rest of the school community.

EXPLORE geometry and measurement related to your constructed city's...

MEASURE height, width, angles and base area...

IDENTIFY two dimensional and three dimensional shapes...

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Joanna Langford was born in 1978 in Gisborne, New Zealand. Langford completed a Bachelor of Media Arts in 1999 at Waikato Polytechnic in Hamilton. In 2004 she graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Masters in Fine Art. Now Wellington based, she received the Olivia Spencer-Bower Fellow award, the SIM residency in Iceland and the Frances Hodgkins Fellow award, University of Otago, Dunedin.

Education

2004 Master of Fine Arts (Painting) - Canterbury University, Christchurch

1999 Bachelor of Media Arts (Painting) - Wintec, Hamilton

Awards/ Residencies/ Experience

2010 Frances Hodgkins Fellow, University of Otago, Dunedin
2008 Icelandic Residency – SIM Association, Reykjavik
2007 Tylee Cottage Residency – Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
2007 Royal Overseas League Residency, London/Scotland
2006 Olivia Spencer-Bower fellowship, Christchurch
2004 Art Tutor, Wintec, Hamilton

ART TERMS

Installation art

Installation art describes a type of art that is site-specific and three-dimensional. The work is designed to influence how an observer views a space. The term generally applies to interior space.

Arte Povera

Arte Povera is a style of modern art. The term was introduced in Italy during the period of turmoil at the end of the 1960s. Artists began to disagree with the values of established institutions of government, industry, and culture.

A group of Italian artists introduced a new form of art by using unconventional materials and style. They often included found objects in their works. Leading artists included Giovanni Anselmo, Alighiero Boetti, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Luciano Fabro, Piero Gilardi, Jannis Kounellis, Mario Merz, Marisa Merz, Giulio Paolini, Pino Pascali, Giuseppe Penone, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Emilio Prini and Gilberto Zorio.

Italian art critic Germano Celant organized two exhibitions in 1967 and 1968, followed by a booked caaled Arte Povera, promoting a new type of art free of convention, the power of structure, and the market place.