

Lee Salomone's studio, 2024. Photography by Peter Fong.

Lee Salomone*: Fragments; a widening vision*

Exhibition Kit

This exhibition kit has been developed by ACE Education to support student learning and engagement with the ACE exhibition *Fragments; a widening vision*. Inside, you'll find a curatorial overview, background information on the artists, and insights into selected artworks.

The kit includes discussion prompts to encourage critical thinking, along with a flexible activity designed for use in the classroom or gallery setting. Educators can adapt the content to suit primary or secondary students, integrating it into broader visual arts, history, or cultural studies learning.

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About the Exhibition

Fragments; a widening vision is Lee Salomone's profound return to the institutional stage (his first major exhibition in over a decade) running from 1st June to 10 August, 2024 as a recipient of the 2024 Porter Street Commission. This installation transforms ACE's gallery intertwine in poetic dialogue.

Salomone's sculptural language springs from his personal and ancestral histories. He reconfigures found objects (tabletops, legs, garden hoses) into evocative compositions, inviting us to explore his poetic process of recalibration and recollection. This garden-like environment is more than sculptural, it is relational. Salomone's installation was nurtured through intergenerational learning and deep consultation with Kaurna Elders and community; his practice centers acts of allyship and storytelling that bridge migrant and Indigenous experiences.



Lee Salomone, *Fragments; a widening vision*, 2024, installation view, Adelaide Contemporary Experimental. Photography by Sam Roberts.

About the artist

Lee Salomone is a South Australian-based visual artist whose creative journey stretches back over four decades, with more than 30 solo exhibitions and over 70 group shows both nationally and internationally. He graduated from the South Australian School of Art in 1991 and divides his time between Adelaide and Berlin.

His early training was in photography, but he gradually gravitated toward sculpture and installation. Today, his hybrid, process-based practice spans work on paper, object-making, photography, found-object assemblage, and hand-crafted bronze sculptures. Often calling his creations "contemporary artefacts," Salomone layers lived experience and keen observation to transform everyday or reclaimed materials into narrative-rich artworks.

Born to Italian migrants from Benevento (Campania), Salomone's childhood was shaped by post-war diasporic traditions (land cultivation, seasonal rhythms, community interdependence, frugality, and Catholic influence). These ancestral memories inform much of his artistic inquiry, enabling him to explore themes of identity, memory, displacement, and belonging.



Lee Salomone

Selected Artworks

L'animale/ The animal is a central sculptural work with the exhibition. Evocative and materially rich, this piece powerfully encapsulates Salomone's conceptual interests in ancestry, ecological entanglement, and post-colonial dialogue. Comprising a reclaimed wooden table pierced by a cluster of bronze-cast xanthorrhoea (grass tree) spears, L'animale presents a tension between the domestic and the wild, the human-made and the elemental.

The title, which translates from Italian as "The animal," hints at instinct, inheritance, and return to raw, pre-linguistic forms of knowing. The table (a symbol of shared culture, work and family life) is repurposed here as both ground and barrier, containing but also pierced by the spears that emerge from it like native flora reclaiming a settler space. The bronze spears, modelled on Kaurna Country's xanthorrhoea plants, serve as metaphoric agents of resurgence. They honour the land's enduring spirit while also pointing to the rupture of colonial occupation, where native ecologies and Indigenous knowledge systems were suppressed or severed.

Salomone's use of bronze imbues the spears with permanence and reverence, transforming what is often overlooked into sacred material. This gesture reflects his ongoing artistic practice of elevating the mundane into the mythic. At the same time, the work expresses his personal negotiation of cultural inheritance. As a child of Italian migrants, Salomone occupies a space of both settler and outsider; L'animale becomes a sculptural meditation on that duality, recognising the weight of history while seeking pathways to ethical and meaningful presence on Indigenous land.

Diffinitively, *L'animale/ The animal* is not a static object but a vessel for dialogue: between cultures, between land and body, and between memory and matter. It stands as a powerful emblem of care, accountability, and artistic humility.



Lee Salomone, *L'animale/ The animal*, 2024, installation view, Adelaide Contemporary Experimental. Photography by Sam Roberts.

Discussion

- What happens when an ordinary table is combined with plant forms, how does this change the way we see something familiar?
- Why might the artist have chosen to make the grass tree spears out of bronze instead of using real plants, how does this choice affect the way we understand the artwork?
- The artist sees the work as a "vessel for dialogue." What kinds of conversations do you think this artwork invites — about land, history, or community?

Gallery Discussion

- What does the title “Fragments; a widening vision” suggest about the themes and concepts explored in the exhibition? How does the exhibition’s duration reflect the depth and complexity of the artist’s work?
- The exhibition is envisioned as an expansive metaphorical garden, fostered and cared for by elders, family, and educators, proposing a site for growth. What significance does the metaphor of a “garden” hold in the context of the exhibition and how do the roles of elders, family, and educators contribute to the nurturing of artistic growth?
- Salomone’s work intertwines memory, personal and ancestral histories, and a profound connection to the land, grounded in intergenerational learning and an acknowledgment of First Nations country. In what ways does the exhibition address the impact of immigration and assimilation on personal and collective identities? How does the acknowledgment of First Nations country deepen our understanding of settler colonial experiences?

Classroom Activity

- Begin by brainstorming a collection of “fragments of place”, these could be memories, landscapes, plants, objects, family stories, or migration stories. Think about what connects you to land, heritage, or community. Sketch or write down your ideas.
- Create a small artwork using found or natural materials (e.g., leaves, soil, twigs, fabric, old tools, recycled objects, photographs). Combine these fragments to make a sculpture, assemblage, or collage that represents your personal connection to land, culture, or memory.
- Bring all of the artworks together as a class to form a shared installation, a “garden of fragments.” How does displaying your individual works side by side change the way they are read? What new stories or relationships emerge?
- Walk through the class installation and reflect together. What do you notice about the similarities and differences in how people represented their fragments? How does this activity help you think more deeply about place, ancestry, migration, and belonging?

Further Reources

- Jane Llewellyn writes InReview, Gallery Smith, article
- ‘Fragments; a widening vision’ – Audio Recording, Youtube, video
- Lee Salomone’s ‘garden’ takes root in gallery space, In Daily, article

Curriculum Links

Australian Curriculum / Visual Art /
Years 11–12 SACE Objectives

- Implement ideas and representations
- Apply literacy skills
- Analyse and interpret visual language, expression and meaning in art
- Evaluate art practices, traditions, cultures, and theories
- Experiment in response to stimulus
- Create meaning through the knowledge and understanding of art materials, techniques, technologies, and processes
- Realise responses to communicate meaning

Australian Curriculum / Visual Arts /
Years F-10

- Use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks (AC9AVAFD01 - AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVAFC02 - AC9AVA10C02)
- Explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations (AC9AVAFE01 - AC9AVA10E01) (AC9AVAFE02 - AC9AVA10E02)
- Respond to art works and consider where and why people make them, including visual art works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (AC9AVAFE01 - AC9AVA10E01) (AC9AVAFE02 - AC9AVA10E02)
- Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how they use materials, techniques, technologies, and processes (AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVA10D02)
- Practice techniques and processes to enhance representation of ideas in their art making (AC9AVAFD01 - AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVAFC02 - AC9AVA10C02)

Visit Us

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Tours

We welcome visits from education groups, primary through to tertiary, and encourage self-guided visits to our exhibitions. For more information about how to book, visit our website or email us.

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Curator: Rayleen Forester

Lee Salomone is the 2024 recipient of the Porter Street Commission – ACE's annual award supporting new artwork commissions by South Australian artists.

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