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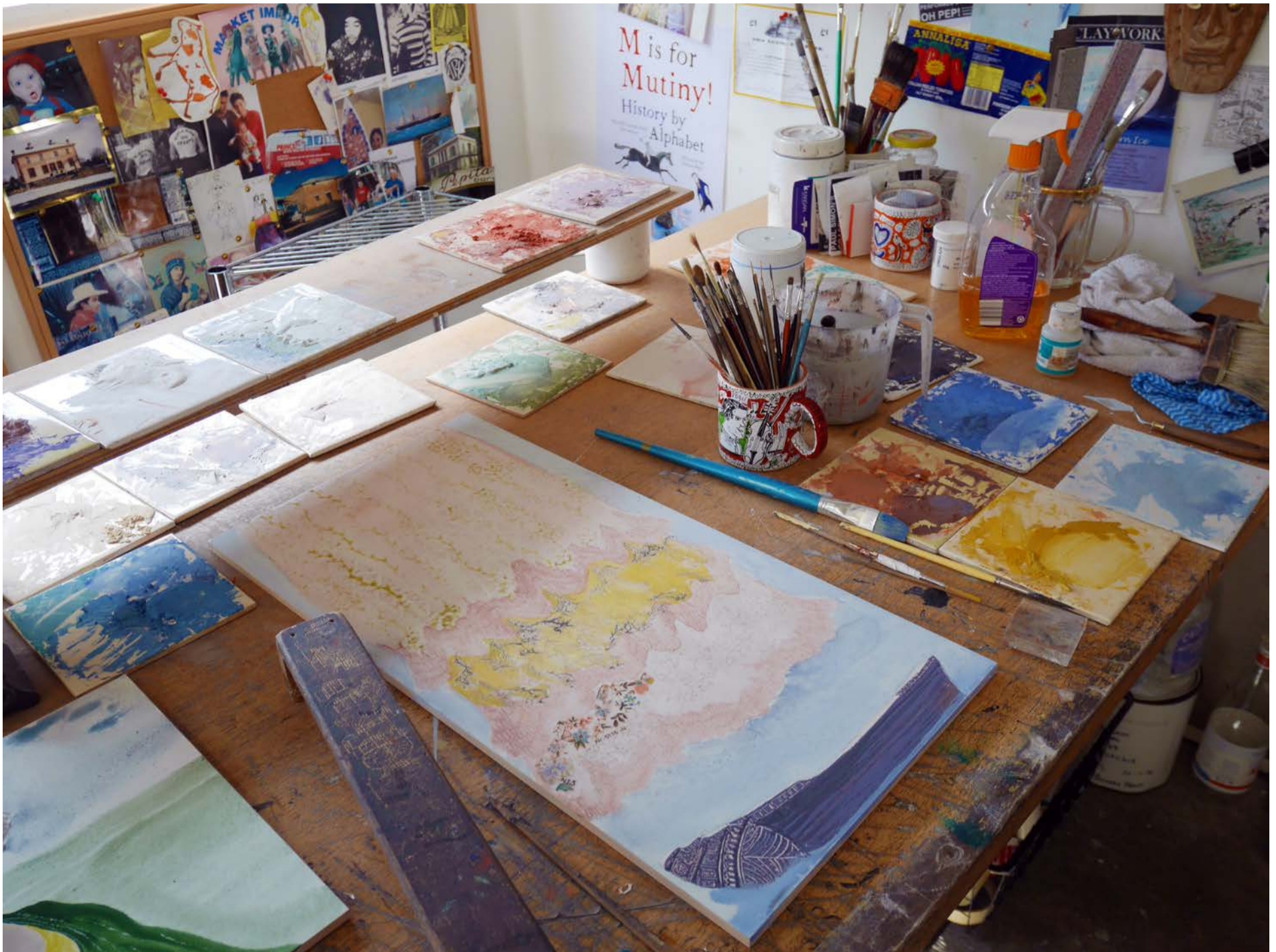


# **BERN EMMERICHS**

## **A IS FOR AUSTRALIA**

### **YEARS 5-6 LEARNING RESOURCE**

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

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WORKSHOP

The NGV gratefully acknowledges the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation for their support of NGV Kids exhibitions and education programs.

(Cover and above image)  
**Bern Emmerichs**, Artist's studio 2018



This resource has been designed to provide teachers with ideas to support students responding to and creating visual artworks that explore historical narratives, related to Australian and personal histories. Students and teachers will engage with the work of Melbourne-based artist Bern Emmerichs and explore her art making process.

This resource includes an exclusive interview with Bern in her studio where she shares how she develops her ideas and artistic techniques.

The activities in this resource are designed to both compliment the YOUR NGV Arts Access *A is for Australia* workshop and as an additional resource to further enrich units of study in the classroom.

## CURRICULUM LINKS

The activities are designed to offer students engaging and practical art making experiences with strong links to the Victorian Curriculum, including [Visual Arts](#) and [History](#) for Levels 5 and 6.



Bern Emmerichs is a Melbourne-based artist well known for her paintings on ceramic tiles. She is an avid researcher and draws inspiration from stories of Australia's history since colonisation.

Bern studied art at Prahran College of Advanced Education and the Phillip Institute of Technology in Melbourne. She has lived in Germany, central Victoria and currently lives and works in inner city Melbourne. Along with exhibiting her work across Australia and internationally, Bern has illustrated children's books, the latest of which, *M is for Mutiny! History by Alphabet*. Bern's work is highly detailed and illustrative, allowing her to share both the familiar and untold stories of Australia's history.

Bern creates her artwork by painting on ceramic tiles. To create her paint, Bern uses a mix of 'on glaze' pigment, a pigment used specifically for kiln-fired ceramics, and Gum Arabic solution. The Gum Arabic solution works as a binder for the pigment, allowing

for an easier application of paint. Bern paints one layer at a time, placing the ceramic tile in the kiln between each layer. She also adds stencils, stamps and decals along the way. This process can take up to 6 kiln firings, at a low temperature, to minimise the risk of any cracks in the tiles.

## ***M IS FOR MUTINY! HISTORY BY ALPHABET***

Written by John Dickson

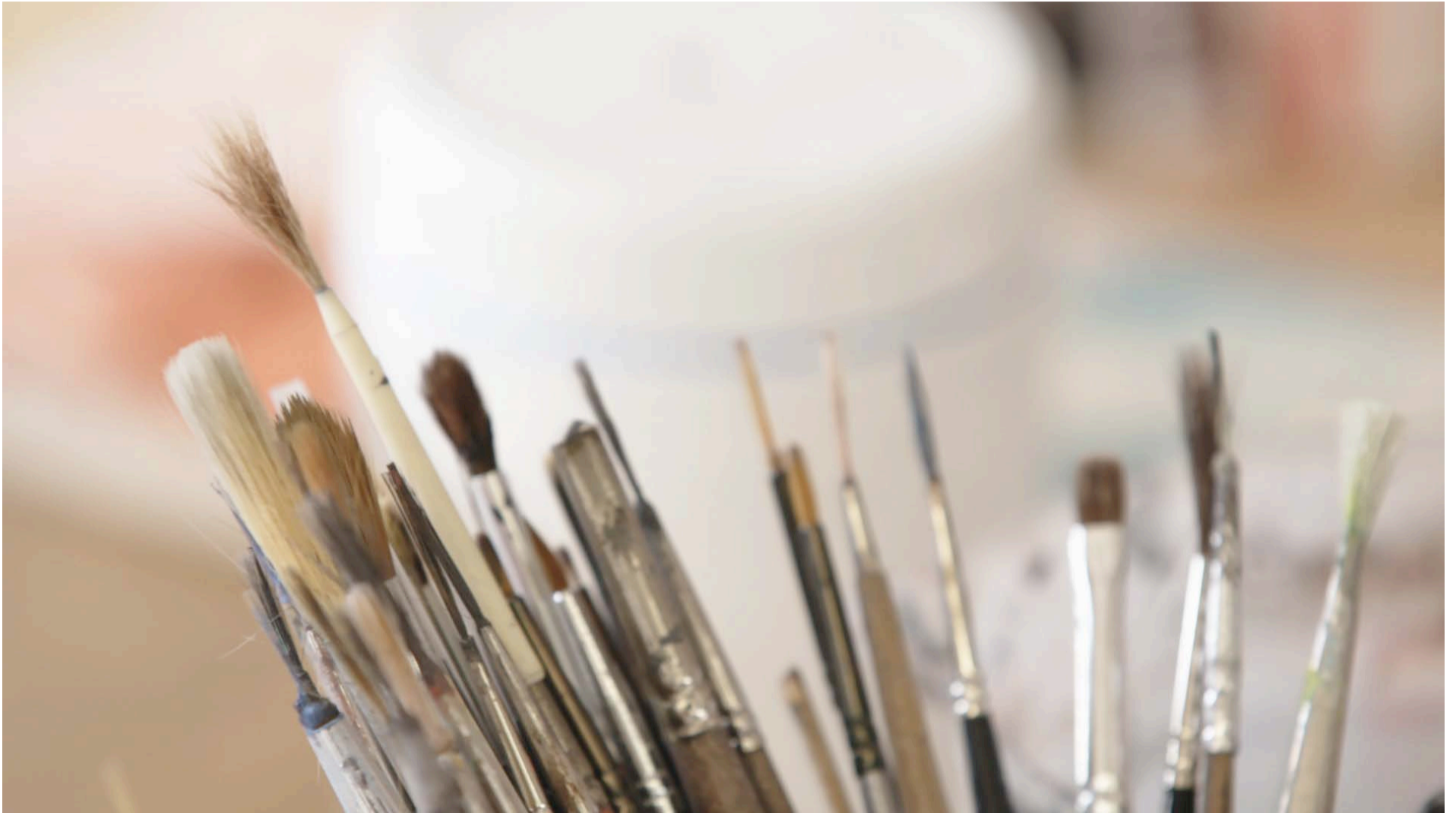
Artwork by Bern Emmerichs

*M is for Mutiny! History by Alphabet* is an introduction to the intriguing history of Australia. Created for the middle primary reader, this alphabet book explores significant historical events and figures of Australia's colonial past.

The illustrations are of Bern's hand painted tiles, which have been photographed and overlaid with the author's text.



(Left) **A is for Australia Workshop**, NGV 2018  
(Right) **Bern Emmerichs**, Artist's studio 2018



## Explore

Watch this interview with Bern in her Collingwood studio and learn more about her art making process.

## Respond

After watching the video interview, facilitate a discussion with your students using the questions below.

1. What is Bern passionate about and why?
2. What materials does Bern use to create her artworks?
3. Where does Bern get her ideas and inspiration from?
4. What does Bern find challenging about making her artworks?
5. What is a kiln? What is a kiln used for?
6. Where might you find Bern's art?
7. Throughout the film, we see Bern working in her studio. What are the similarities and differences between the art we see and the illustrations in *M is for Mutiny! A History by Alphabet*?
8. What advice does Bern give to children who want to become artists?



In collaboration with Bern, this workshop, A is for Australia, has been designed for students to create their own depiction of Australia, past or present. Bern has painted background landscapes that students can use as part of their artworks. These landscapes have been inspired by works of art in the NGV Collection. As preparation for this workshop, read *M is for Mutiny! History by Alphabet* as an additional source of inspiration for your students.

## MATERIALS AND TOOLS

- Bern Emmerichs' painted landscape backgrounds, printed on thick paper
- White A4 scratch paper
- Wooden scratch board tools
- A4 transparency sheets
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Waterproof black fine liners
- Tape

## METHOD

1. Read *M is for Mutiny! History by Alphabet*. View and discuss the illustrations, observing how Bern shows significant people and events of Australia's colonial past.
2. Select a landscape for your background. Brainstorm a list of people, places and objects that can be added to the landscape, representing Australia.
3. Sketch your images using the scratch paper and a wooden scratchboard tool.



4. Cut out your images and experiment with arranging them on your landscape in a way that tells a story of Australia.
5. When you are happy with your layout, paste your images on the landscape.
6. Lay a transparent sheet over the artwork and tape each side.
7. Finally, add text around your images by writing on the transparent sheet using a black fine liner. Think about describing words or sentences that match your images and add to your story of Australia!



Ben Smith 2018

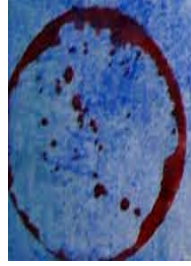




Bern Ennsichs 2018



Ben Summer 2018





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Bern Emmerichs 2018



Landscape Backgrounds, Bern Emmerichs 2018