

TRANSCRIPT

ACCESSIBLE LEARNING WITH ALAN CONSTABLE

This is a transcript of the video featured in the Accessible Learning with Alan Constable resource. You can view the video [here](#).

- 00:00:06 Hi, I'm Leah and I'm a teacher at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, which is sometimes also called the NGV for short.
- 00:00:18 Did you know that the NGV has two gallery buildings that you can visit? One building is NGV International, where you can see works of art and design from all over the world and the other is the Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia, where you can see, yep, you guessed it, Australian art and design.
- 00:00:47 Today we're going to look at an artwork made by an artist who lives and works in Melbourne. His name is Alan Constable, and he likes to make three dimensional artworks out of clay.
- 00:01:03 This is what clay looks like when you have it in your hands. Have you used it before? It's soft and squishy and feels a bit like playdough.
- 00:01:15 Unlike playdough, you can make an object made from clay harden and last a really long time by putting it into a special oven called a kiln.
- 00:01:27 You can use clay to make lots of useful objects like vases and cups or more decorative things like models or small statues. We often call these kinds of artworks sculptures.
- 00:01:44 Let's take a look at one of Alan Constable's clay sculptures. I wonder if you can tell what it is. Hmm. Need a clue?
- 00:01:58 It's something a photographer might use to take a picture. That's right! A camera.
- 00:02:08 Have you seen a camera that looks like this before? It's a pretty old style of camera. And now everyone's phone can take photos, it's not a camera that many people use anymore.
- 00:02:23 But Alan Constable was born in 1956, which is over 50 years ago, and he's loved cameras since he was eight years old. So he's seen lots of different types over the years.
- 00:02:42 Let's look at this camera and Alan's clay sculpture side by side. Let's see how they are similar, or what's the same, about each.
- 00:02:57 Well, they both have the same rectangular form and a big circular shape in the middle. This is called a camera lens. Can you see anything else that's similar?
- 00:03:14 They both have a rectangle in the top right corner of the camera body. That's probably the flash, the bright light that goes off if you take a photo in a dark space.

- 00:03:29 Hmm. What else? Each camera also has a bump on top of it. It looks like a button. What do you think it's for? That's right! To 'click' and take your photo.
- 00:03:47 Oh, and I can see some little loops on the sides of each camera for a camera strap so you can hang on to it.
- 00:03:56 What about differences? What's not the same?
- 00:04:04 Have you noticed that the colours are different? This camera is black and silver and probably made from plastic and metal. Alan's clay camera is the one colour, a deep blue. I wonder why he chose this colour.
- 00:04:26 What else is different? Well, this camera has lots of neat and straight edges and lines, whereas Alan's clay camera looks a bit more bumpy and uneven.
- 00:04:41 Do you know why that is? It's because Alan used his hands to shape the clay into the camera shape and would have used simple tools to help him create the finer details.
- 00:04:56 What's really amazing is that Alan is legally blind, meaning he can't see as well as an artist with regular vision.
- 00:05:07 Alan's hands are really important in the way he makes his sculptures. And this isn't just because he uses his hands to create them.
- 00:05:19 Because he doesn't rely completely on his vision to look at and learn about the cameras that inspire him, Alan uses his hands to feel and understand how a real camera works before he makes his own version out of clay.
- 00:05:37 And Alan has made many clay cameras. In fact, the NGV has 12 of them and two sets of binoculars too.
- 00:05:51 What do you think this says about Alan as an artist and a person?
I think it shows that Alan is determined to find a way to make art about something he loves, even though his eyesight might make it hard.
- 00:06:08 We all have strengths, the things that we're good at, and we all have limitations, things that, well, we're not so good at.
- 00:06:20 What are some of your strengths?
- 00:06:23 You might be musical and able to sing or play an instrument.
- 00:06:29 Or maybe you're a really good listener.
- 00:06:35 You might be really good at getting up and organised for school so that you're on time.
- 00:06:42 Do you know what some of your limitations are? I'll share one of mine. I'm not very good at running fast. But that doesn't mean I don't like running or that I can't become a better runner.
- 00:06:59 If we know what our limitations are, we can decide to focus on them. We can find ways to work around them and not let them stop us. Just like Alan did with his sculpture making.
- 00:07:13 We can also find ways to practice things that we'd like to be better at.
- 00:07:19 Alan has one more strength that drives him to make his clay sculptures. Passion.
- 00:07:28 If you are passionate about something, it means you really love that thing and you feel like you could never grow bored of it.

- 00:07:38 Alan Constable is passionate about cameras and making art, especially clay sculptures of the cameras he loves. I think that's why he's been able to make so many of them.
- 00:07:53 What's something that you're passionate about? What's something you really love that you can make an artwork about?
- 00:08:03 It might be a kind of food, a sport, or a hobby. You might be passionate about animals or the environment.
- 00:08:14 Whatever your passion, there's a way to show it through your own art.
- 00:08:20 When we look closely at art, we can learn things about the artist that created the artwork and be inspired by their story and passion.
- 00:08:30 What did you learn when you slowed down to look carefully at Alan Constable's clay camera?
- 00:08:37 Alan is an artist who has a passion for cameras. He uses clay to create 3D sculptures of the different kinds of cameras that he has discovered throughout his life.
- 00:08:52 We all have strengths, things that we're good at, and we all have limitations, things that we're not so good at.
- 00:09:03 But I also learned that when we know what our limitations are, we can work around them. Alan is a great example of this.
- 00:09:14 Being legally blind, he uses his hands to feel and understand how a camera is built so he can make his own version out of clay.
- 00:09:25 And just like Alan, you can make art about anything that you love or anything that you are passionate about.
- 00:09:35 Thank you for joining me today and I hope you enjoyed learning about this cool sculpture and the inspiring artist who created it.

See you next time.