

For *David Thomas: Colouring Impermanence* our public programs will form a 'micro-course' that draws on Professor David Thomas' teaching practice. Participants in our free series of eight lessons (one for each week of the show) will undertake activities as if enrolled in David's classes. The micro-course is an introduction to the way David works, how and why the exhibition at Design Hub has been created and how David teaches creative practice. Each lesson will explore ideas such as attentive and 'empathetic' looking, timing, materiality, pictorial space, art history and theory. The lessons will involve looking, drawing, photography, conversation, reflection and review. David will host the majority of the classes and at times will draw on his community of artist, educator and curator peers as well as past and present students.

All events take place in Project Rooms 1 & 2, Level 2.

All events are free but places are limited, so booking is essential. Bookings will open shortly.

Lesson 1. On looking in a changing world: drawing and attentive looking.

Wednesday 2 August

In this first lesson, the concept of attentive looking is introduced and we ask: what does it mean to sit and closely analyse an image or an object or even our environment over time? And how can we do it productively? David asks participants to engage with the complexities of drawing by analysing one of the works on display and the exhibition space itself.

Lesson 2. Analysing a work: on empathetic looking.

Wednesday 9 August

Lesson 2 tightens our grasp on the tool of visual analysis and considers the idea of 'empathetic looking'. This method is applicable to any work of art. In this case we analyse a work by Wurundjeri elder William Barak, unpacking issues of both form and history. In looking closely at one of Barak's works we consider how the artist communicates and how we can participate in respectful observation and response to his works, which were made for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences.

Lesson 3. Pictorial timing and humour.

Wednesday 16 August

Timing is the focus of Lesson 3. We look at how creative practitioners can both conceal and reveal information when they make works, so that details unfold over time. David takes his cues for this lesson from comedy. Monty Python, Spike Milligan, Jacques Tati and Pierre Bonnard are particularly useful for thinking about the value of timing in their tackling of humour and its complexities. Participants will be asked to go on a short walk and explore these ideas through photography.

Lesson 4. Constructing an exhibition.

Wednesday 23 August

Lesson 4 looks at the fundamentals of exhibition making and peels back the layers of how and why we present work, and how creative works should inform their situating within the context of an exhibition. In this lesson we look at how to hang works, the effect of frames, lighting, graphics and how these procedures create readings and communicate with audiences through exhibition making and design.

Lesson 5. Colour as experience. Colour as code.

Wednesday 30 August

Lesson 5 highlights David's interest in learning through doing. In this class we discuss colour as a cultural code and as an experience through mixing paint. In mixing paint, we can become conscious of the properties of colour, materiality and light.

Lesson 6. Painting as / and expanded practice.

Wednesday 6 September

Lesson 6 is a curatorial round-table event with curators who have worked with David and we use his approach to practice as a leaping-off point. In this class, we host a conversation about expanded practice and how the boundaries around the disciplines of art, architecture and design are useful to one another.

Lesson 7. A Group Tutorial: Reflecting on composite realities.

Wednesday 13 September

This lesson returns us to the question of time in a creative work: the 'slow' time of painting, the 'quick' time of photography and the 'real' time of reflection. When we become more aware of ourselves in relation to a work we become aware of the movement of meaning over the time of our engagement with that work. In this group tutorial – a common fixture of art and design schools – we analyse the content and structure of three works by David with the artist present.

Lesson 8. On teaching art and design.

Wednesday 20 September

In lesson 8 we look closely at the practice of teaching itself. This final lesson takes the form of a conversation around teaching creativity and creative thinking – how do we do it, is it possible? We also tackle the concept of teaching creatively. We will cover issues including cultural sensitivity in education; the difference between rigorous teaching and entertainment and the function of humour.