



TARRAWARRA
MUSEUM
OF ART

Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist
Installation view, TarraWarra Museum of Art 2018
Photo Andrew Curtis

Teacher's Notes

Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist

Curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick

TarraWarra Museum of Art

12 May – 15 July 2018

Curriculum Links

This Education Resource is designed to complement the exhibition *Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist* and to focus student visits to TarraWarra Museum of Art. It can provide a stimulus for discussion in the classroom with material that can be adapted for all levels and abilities.

The Education Resources for *Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist* includes teacher's notes, a short biography, resources which provide an opportunity to link to the

- Victorian Curriculum for year 7-10
- VCE Art and
- VCE Studio Arts

The exhibition *Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist* supports the Victorian Government education initiatives, *Exploring and Expressing Ideas, Visual Arts Practices, Presenting and Performing* and *Responding and Interpreting in the Visual Arts*, as well general capabilities including *Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical and Intercultural Understanding*, and *Personal and Social Capabilities*.

Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist supports the VCE Art and Studio Arts curriculum with a focus on *Introducing the Analytical Frameworks, Discussing Art*, and *Studio Practice and Art Industry Contexts*.



Artist Bio

Edwin Tanner (1920-1980) was a polymath whose wide ranging talents and creative drive saw him excel in his various pursuits as a professional engineer, aircraft pilot, champion cyclist, marksman, poet, and philosopher. These experiences provided the artist with a rich, diverse and idiosyncratic store of imagery from which to draw: from shipyards and power plants to velodromes and airfields; from office interiors to literary allusions; and from circuit boards and blueprints to propositional calculus and musical notation.

As an artist-engineer, what distinguishes much of Tanner's practice is his ability to integrate the calculated linear design of his engineering profession, with a poetic sensibility for luminous space and colour. Designing, constructing and working amongst machinery throughout his life, his dual occupation also gave Tanner insights into the interdependence, and even interchangeability, of humans and machines.

A non-conformist by nature, many of Tanner's works convey his scepticism towards orthodoxy and convention whether in workplace bureaucracy, religious belief, social structures, and even the art world itself. While at times his perceptions are gently mocking, tongue-in-cheek and witty, they could also express a more acerbic, troubling and even dystopian world view.

Featuring over 60 paintings and drawings from 1952 to 1980, a range of archival material, and several of Tanner's poems, this survey exhibition reveals a fiercely independent artist whose single-minded pursuit of his own unique vision resulted in a highly distinctive body of work.