



HALF PENNY  
STAMP  
MESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN HERE

# Education Resource

**MYTHO-POETIC**  
**GLEN SKIEN**



would be ~~the~~ ~~could~~ ~~and~~ ~~be~~  
~~to~~ ~~tell~~ ~~him~~ ~~they~~ ~~would~~  
~~with~~ ~~my~~ ~~poes~~ ~~to~~ ~~com~~  
have ~~a~~ ~~book~~ ~~at~~ ~~them~~  
at ~~two~~

## About this education resource

These educational activities have been designed for teachers, students and families to use within the exhibition space.

The booklet for Lower Primary is designed for Prep - Grade 3 children and includes group discussion and short independent response questions and activities.

The booklet for Mid - Upper Primary is designed for Grades 4 - 7 with the aim that Grade 6 -7 students finish the activities independently and the lower grades with some group discussion and prompting.

The Secondary Student Worksheets are designed to be flexible depending on grade level.

The activities cover the following general capabilities:

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Literacy & Numeracy

Curriculum includes:

- Visual Arts
- English

## Exhibition Summary

*MYTHO-POETIC* investigates the human condition with artist's books, assemblages, collages and installations that bring to life social histories and vexing questions of the Australian identity, place and myth.

Glen Skien's etching practice is the platform for his work in other media, which underlies narratives that are presented through the use of symbolic imagery such as maps, postcards, books and ephemera. The exhibition offers an immersive experience rich in imagery that navigates residues of the past and creates new

propositions for identity and historical awareness.

Glen Skien spent the major part of his exhibiting life as a printmaker in the Central Queensland coastal city of Mackay. After completing a four year signwriting apprenticeship and a year travelling and working in Europe he returned to study a Diploma of Fine Arts in Townsville, graduating in 1988.

Since 1990 he has exhibited consistently throughout regional Queensland with a major survey exhibition "Palimpsest The Art of Glen Skien" touring throughout regional Australia.

Constellations 1 (detail) 2013



*"The past is foreign and historical understanding is not so much a recovery of the past as a mediation between our sense of ourselves and our sense of the past."*

*Hans--Georg Gadamer*

In the mid-nineties he worked as a set designer with Crossroads Arts, a Mackay based deaf theatre ensemble. This experience was to be influential with the discovery of how objects and surfaces contain the possibility of revealing their own narratives.

Several years later Skien established Silent Parrot Press, a studio with a focus on creating limited edition prints and artists' books.

In 2007 he relocated to Brisbane to complete post graduate studies at Griffith University Queensland College of Art.

*MYTHO-POETIC* is a constellation of postcards, letters, photographs and drawings that are stitched together and are obscured through the process of etching, drawing, collage and construction. Fish and birds, boats and houses, solitary figures and cryptic inscriptions appear frequently as myths and icons. These motifs are highly evocative of familiar places, lost encounters' life histories and autobiographical chronicles.

Glen Skien's imagery suggests an understanding of history, both universal and personal. He questions that the stories we claim as 'our own' grasp the framework of our personal references. However, these stories are transformed once shared with the community. The imagery in *MYTHO-POETIC* gives us the opportunity to reflect our own personal stories.

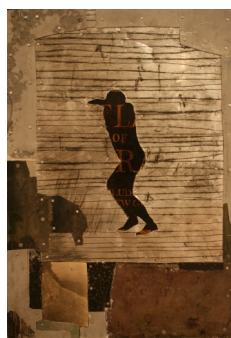
In 2003, following the death of his grandmother Glen Skien was gifted a collection of postcards that were written in the first half of the twentieth century.

Glen Skien says in his catalogue essay titled *Mytho-Poetic: Foreign Correspondence* that, "Postcards have a way of negotiating the relationship between self, memory and place that corresponds with our experience of maps. Through an abridged use of language they order, recall and impart descriptions of a particular spatial environment."

Memory is fused within text and image. With the presence of the photographic image, space is transformed into spectacle and display. The photograph's capacity to reduce personal experience to a Western universal likeliness dispossesses place of the possibility of engaging with pre-existing narratives. As such a space is denied a more original geographical identity, rendering personal experience of place less authentic.

*MYTHO-POETIC* describes the capacity to reaffirm a deeper reflective quality within our personal stories. In so doing they have the potential to blur the divisions between fiction and non-fiction, the individual and the collective, the poetic and the rational.

Sometimes this is not a specific history of place and time but rather an understanding of history as a process of destruction and fragmentation - a strange space where memory, fiction, reality and dreams intersect.



*Readers Digest Atlas of Australia Vol. 1 - 6*  
2 of a series of 6 2012 Mixed Media

Despite the possibility for sentimentality associated with the images and iconography that Glen works with, there is little room for nostalgia; rather there is something disquieting in the way he obliterates elements of the past with slashes of red ink, roughly hewn sutures of thread, or opaque layers of encaustic.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND SUGGESTIONS



Prior to the exhibition visit the website of Glen Skein to view the range of the artists work.

<http://www.silentparrotpress.com>

### POST EXHIBITION ACTIVITIES

- Collect postcards, old letters, memorabilia and images from family members to make a collage wall in the classroom.
- Ask members of the community to come and tell their story as a personal history.
- Make a simple artist book telling a personal story. A very simple book can be made via YouTube. A good one can be found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaP3vXii0Jk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaP3vXii0Jk) but there are many others.
- Try monoprinting without the use of a printing press. There are many YouTube videos for inspiration. A simple glue printing technique can be found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3DT121kxx0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3DT121kxx0)
- Do texture rubbings of leaves, textured walls, floors, soles of shoes and other flat surfaces with wax crayons. Paint with coloured ink and watch it resist the waxy areas.



*MYTHO-POETIC: Print and Assemblage Works by Glen Skein* is organised by the Gympie Regional Gallery and toured by Museum & Gallery Services Queensland. This project has been assisted by the Gordon Darling Foundation and the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.