

***'When Art Needs an Essay To be Understood'*¹**

Article by Robert Nelson, 24 January 2021.



'Tracing inscriptions, installation view' Robert Andrew and Andrew Curtis. The Sydney Morning Herald. 2020

Responding to a group exhibit commissioned by The *Australian Centre for Contemporary Art*(ACCA), *'Overlapping Magisteria'*,² This article speaks about the animacy of materials in an installation context. Refers to three artists and three alternate art writers who unpacked the complexities of the artworks.

¹ Robert Nelson, *'When Art Needs an Essay To be Understood.'* The Sydney Morning Herald. 24 January 2021.

<https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-an-design/when-art-needs-an-essay-to-be-understood-20210124-p56wfd.html>

² *'Overlapping Magisteria'* Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2021.

Robert takes a critical approach. Opening conversation around the conceptual relevance of tension and fighting of science and theology. Seen and felt. Suggesting these installations have too many layers of thought to them that an essay is needed to fully understand them. Allowing the audience to fully grasp the depths of the artwork in hand.

I often find my work will host an immediate impression on the audience – colour, texture, sounds, and scale all spark interest and draw on sense memories to begin a conversation between medium and audience. However, there is much more to be unpacked and wrestled within the installation.

I agree with the value that the author in this article places on responsive writing. I am interested in the multiple levels of thought when viewing my installation as an individual and the interactive research process surrounding art viewing.

Britney Saywell 2023.