

# *Written in Chalk*

THE ECHO OF ARTHUR STACE

## EDUCATION GUIDE

Resources and suggested activities for teachers and students

ENGLISH • VISUAL ARTS • HISTORY • COMMERCE • MUSIC

**General capabilities:** Literacy, Information and Communication Technology, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding

**Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

*Eternity*

writteninchalk.com

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# 01. CURRICULUM LINKS

This study guide is designed to support teachers of Stage 5 students in using *Written in Chalk: The Echo of Arthur Stace* in the classroom across a range of subjects.

With its focus on cultural significance, artistic creativity, Australian history, human society and change, and climate change, the film will be of interest to students of a variety of subject areas such as **English, Visual Arts, History, Commerce, and Music**.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING AND LEARNING CONNECTIONS

### ENGLISH

*Written in Chalk* could be effectively used in **English** in a study of documentary filmmaking, or as part of a unit on text and Australian identity, or a unit on the power of language and how creative endeavours can serve social, political and environmental activism – for example, Australia’s changing recognition of Indigenous Australians embodied in the 2000 Olympics Opening Ceremony, and social/political activism expressed in the ‘Equality’ posters calling for social equality in a range of areas – for example, equality of housing, Indigenous rights, and the green bans movement.

For English-specific teaching and learning suggestions, see activities 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 on pages [14](#), [15](#), [16](#).

### VISUAL ARTS

The film will interest and inspire students of **Visual Arts**, especially in the area of public art and image used for creative self-expression, homage, and social action. Students can find much in the film to stimulate their own creative thinking, planning, art-making and reflection. They can also use the film as a basis for exploring some twentieth-century art history as they encounter the work of Martin Sharp and consider how he used his artwork as social commentary.

For Visual Arts-specific teaching and learning suggestions, see activities 1, 2, 10, 12, 13 and 19 on pages [14](#), [15](#), [16](#).

### HISTORY

**History** students could use *Written in Chalk* as a springboard for researching key events and figures of the Great Depression era in Sydney, or later eras such as the bohemian 1960s/1970s or the beginning of the new millennium. Like students of English, they could also consider Australia’s changing recognition of Indigenous peoples and growth in social/political activism (see above).

For History-specific teaching and learning suggestions, see activities 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, and 17 on pages [14](#), [15](#), [16](#).

### COMMERCE

**Commerce** students could examine the film in the context of intellectual property law, marketing, and the commerciality and commodification of concepts, personalities, images and events that capture the public imagination.

For Commerce-specific teaching and learning suggestions, see activities 6, 18 and 19 on pages [15](#), [16](#).

## MUSIC

Students of **Music** who are analysing the use of music in media and film could observe the way music is used in *Written in Chalk* to complement the content, creating shifting moods in the film and building the sense of celebration through tribute in song. The film is also of interest to students looking at the appropriation and repurposing of non-musical material into musical form (in this case, opera).

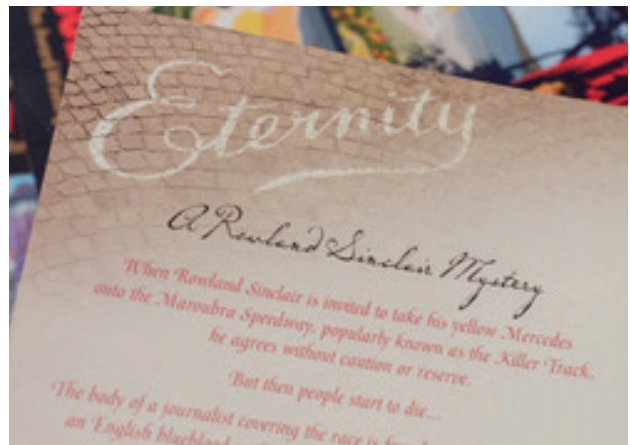
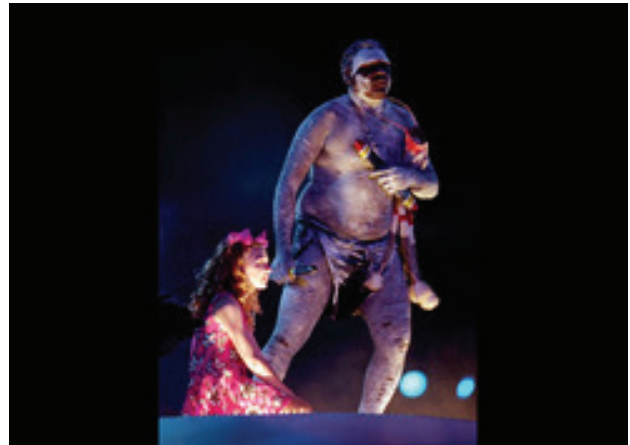
For Music-specific teaching and learning suggestions, see activities 7, 14 and 15 on pages [15](#), [16](#).

## AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

For suggested links to selected Australian Curriculum subject areas and content descriptions, together with explanations of the film's relevance to these, see the Appendix near the end of this Education Guide.

Australian Curriculum General capabilities: Literacy; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Capability (especially Applying social and ethical protocols and practices – e.g. intellectual property); Critical and Creative thinking; Personal and Social Capability (especially Social awareness); Ethical Understanding (especially Exploring values, rights and responsibilities).

Australian Curriculum Cross-curriculum priorities: Sustainability.



## 02. SYNOPSIS: WRITTEN IN CHALK

When Arthur Stace began chalking *Eternity* on Sydney's footpaths in 1932, little did he know that this small, daily endeavour would have a continuing legacy that would impact many generations to follow.

*Written in Chalk* is the next chapter of the *Eternity* story, examining how the word has been used in Australia and around the world since it appeared on the Harbour Bridge as part of the Sydney Millennium Celebrations.

With input from a broad cross-section of well-known television and media personalities, internationally recognised theatre and opera producers, multi-award-winning writers and authors, independent community artists, street artists, university lecturers, and social, political and environmental activists, the documentary explores and celebrates the surprisingly diverse ways in which the word *Eternity* has been embraced and adapted as an indelible vehicle of personal, social and cultural expression.

Nearly a century since it first appeared on a footpath, *Eternity* still captures Australia's imagination, generates headlines, and continues to play a part in our cultural story.

## 03. SIGNIFICANT THEMES IN THE FILM

1. Personal transformation, resilience, and individual faith in action
2. Creative self-expression and homage through appropriation and adaptation: art/architecture/literature/music
3. Special events and how they reflect and shape Australian identity
4. History and the changing face of a city
5. How social connections can transcend traditional boundaries
6. Social action (philanthropy/equality/action on climate change)
7. The importance of friendship, loyalty, respect and trust
8. The commercial value of language and myth, and how a word can inspire and support business ideas (e.g. café, merchandise, components of walking tours)
9. The power of language in general – how one word (and its historical associations) can have such enduring significance and mean such a rich variety of things to different people.

## 04. BEHIND THE SCENES: THE FILM AND THE FILMMAKER

When producer and director Richard Attieh began work on *Written in Chalk: The echo of Arthur Stace*, he started out wanting to tell the life story of Sydney eccentric, Arthur Stace – better known as ‘Mr Eternity’ or ‘the Eternity Man’ – who wrote the eight-letter word *Eternity* in copperplate script on streets and pavements more than half a million times over a period of 35 years.

Earlier films by Lawrence Johnston (1994) and Julien Temple (2008) had previously told Arthur’s life story, focusing on his early life and influences, his radical conversion to Christianity, and his obsessive writing of *Eternity* on Sydney’s footpaths.



As Attieh’s project gained momentum, it began to move in a different direction. Attieh discovered a story that has impacted Australian culture and identity since the millennium. The *Eternity* story had taken on a life of its own, continuing to etch itself into our society and culture.

In the research and writing phases of the documentary’s development, Attieh spoke with television personalities, politicians and social activists, composers, singers, actors and songwriters, clergy, graffiti and street artists, amateur painters, academics, social researchers, university lecturers and secondary school teachers, businesspeople, poets and world-renowned creative directors and personalities. Attieh says:

*As the project developed and I began to see the wide-reaching impact this one man has had across a broad cross-section of people, vocations, groups and interests in Australia and around the world, the story I wanted to tell seemed somehow too small and linear ...*

People’s passion and enthusiasm for the word *Eternity*, the impact the word has had and continues to have on them, and their diverse interpretations and presentations of the word seized Attieh’s imagination. He set about managing and curating the story of Arthur Stace’s legacy in a brand-new way.

Attieh realised that more than 20 years after *Eternity* was shared with the world at the Sydney Millennium Celebrations and the Sydney Olympic Games, the word *Eternity* had gained a momentum and an identity of its own – and the story that began with Arthur Stace in the 1930s would be best told through the impact it is still having today – through the *new* stories of people who are celebrating, using, adapting, and re-presenting Stace’s story and his copperplate script *Eternity* to people in Australia and around the world.

*Written in Chalk* is the next chapter of the *Eternity* story, and builds on the work of Arthur Stace, Martin Sharp, Remo Giuffre, Lawrence Johnston, Ignatius Jones, Ric Birch, Jonathan Mills, and many others.

Attieh says that it has been his privilege to produce and direct this film – to catch the passion and drive of the diverse range of people he has met, and to examine “the way this eight-letter word, written in chalk by one individual, continues to reverberate through the lives of so many people today”.

## 05. SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### 1. SYDNEY DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

When the Wall Street stock market crashed in the USA in 1929 and the Great Depression commenced, Sydney did not escape its impact.

Unemployment escalated rapidly, and as people lost their jobs and couldn't pay their rent or mortgages, many families were evicted. Huge numbers of people who were homeless moved into shanty towns. It seems unbelievable today that one of Sydney's biggest shanty towns, 'Happy Valley', was at La Perouse, now an up-market coastal suburb. You can use an image search on 'shanty town Sydney great depression' to show students pictures of Happy Valley.

Areas of Sydney that were already known to be poverty-stricken and dangerous became even more desperate in these times. Places like Frog Hollow in Surry Hills and the nearby suburbs of Darlinghurst, Woolloomooloo and Kings Cross – areas frequented by Arthur Stace in the decades before his conversion – were known as depraved communities giving rise to desperate criminals. Illegal alcohol sales, gambling and prostitution were rife, as was violence related to rivalries between criminal gangs.

### 2. 1960S AND 1970S: SOCIAL CHANGE, COUNTERCULTURE AND MARTIN SHARP

Students can be introduced to this era of bohemian subcultures, protest movements, the fight for women's liberation and the sexual revolution through looking at the context of Martin Sharp's work and other pop art, and also by looking back at the beginning of the graffiti art/street art movement referenced by contemporary artists in the film. (They can be encouraged to see this era as foundational in leading to later work like the 'Equality' posters created by Wendy Murray and Kurt Iveson.)

To get a sense of the enormity of social change and some of the key issues of this era, students could listen to some protest songs dealing with war and peace, women's rights and racial injustice – for example:

1. Bob Dylan, 'Blowin' in the Wind', 'The Times They Are A-Changing', 'Hurricane'
2. Sam Cooke, 'A Change is Gonna Come'
3. Helen Reddy, 'I Am Woman'
4. Lesley Gore, 'You Don't Own Me'
5. Barry McGuire, 'Eve of Destruction'
6. Creedence Clearwater Revival, 'Fortunate Son'

They could also explore the Vietnam moratorium protests in Australia. Connections can then be made to rap and street art culture today as a vehicle for social commentary, and the connection between art and activism in general, so that students get a sense of how this is a continuum that stretches beyond figures like Arthur Stace and Martin Sharp to this day.



Martin Sharp remembered seeing the word *Eternity* chalked on the footpath as a child, and it remained in his imagination until he incorporated Arthur's Eternity into his pop art works in the 1970s and early 1980s. Remo Giuffrè's 1989 commission of Sharp's Eternity artwork for REMO General Store brought a revival of interest in Arthur's legacy and is an interesting example of the commercial potential of the word.

Students can be encouraged to recognise the significance of this countercultural artist's appropriation of a word previously associated with much more conservative social values – this helps to demonstrate the complexity and breadth of the word's appeal. Martin Sharp bridges the gap between Arthur's world of church/mission and the secular world of art and counterculture. Sharp's work and the work of others like him can be seen as foundational in the public art movement that continues today.



### 3. THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The commencement of a new millennium was always going to feel like a major historical landmark – a momentous event. There was a sense of excitement and forward motion into a bright new future.

However, there was also a sense of uncertainty, and even fear: what if the world ground to a halt because of the 'Y2K bug'? (See vocabulary list for an explanation of this term.)

Students can be encouraged to understand these mixed and heightened emotions surrounding New Year's Eve 1999. They can discuss why a new millennium called for an extra special celebration: Why was it so momentous? Why was it any different from any other year?

One significant aspect of social change at this time was the increasing recognition of Indigenous Australians and the need for reconciliation at this time in Australia's history. In the Closing Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the politically active band Midnight Oil wore the word 'SORRY' printed on their shirts to advocate for an official apology for the way Indigenous Australians had historically been treated. Students can be encouraged to notice that this is another single word with significant and resonant meaning, and also note the connection between art (in this case, music) and public activism.

On 28 May 2000, about 250,000 people walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to show public support for reconciliation between Australia's Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and similar events then took place in other cities and towns around Australia. Eight years later, in February 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered a formal apology to Indigenous Australians for the forced removal of Australian Indigenous children (the Stolen Generations) from their families by Australian government agencies.



## 4. SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES

Ric Birch comments in *Written in Chalk* that it was important to have a strong emphasis on Indigenous culture in the Opening Ceremony. Students could be encouraged to view the Ceremony for themselves, identify how Australian culture and history was represented to the world by Ric Birch and his team of artistic directors, and note the Indigenous recognition as an important reflection of the changing and forward-looking social values of the time.

Similarly, they can note the fact that the athletes chosen to carry the torch inside the stadium were all female – Betty Cuthbert, Raelene Boyle, Dawn Fraser, Shirley Strickland de la Hunty, Shane Gould, Debbie Flintoff-King, and finally Cathy Freeman, who lit the cauldron.

While older teachers (especially those who lived in Sydney at the time) will remember the atmosphere during the Sydney Olympic Games, students and indeed younger teachers will benefit from understanding what an exciting time this was for Sydney as the city took its place on the global stage and presented its ideas about Australian national identity, with great pride, to the world via the Opening Ceremony.

Students, who are now used to easy and instant internet access to information about any place or time in the world, could be encouraged to remember that the Sydney Games Opening Ceremony served to introduce and showcase Sydney and Australia to a world full of people who may not have known very much about it. This opportunity to represent the nation like this was highly significant.

Many people remember the weeks of the Sydney Olympics as a unique time of harmony, positivity, unity and community spirit in the city while its citizens worked together as volunteers, stood together in suburban streets to see the torch relay go by, attended events together, rejoiced in our athletes' achievements, and welcomed visitors from all over the world to a city of which we felt justifiably proud.



## 5. ARTHUR STACE'S LIFE: OVERVIEW

While brief references to some events in Arthur's life are made in the film, students may be interested to know more about his life and his difficult background, and particularly about the dramatic personal transformation that led to his *Eternity* chalking.

### — 1885

Arthur Stace is born on **9 February 1885** in Redfern, Sydney to parents William Wood Stace (29) and Laura Lewis (25). Older siblings: Clara (8), Minnie (4), William John (3) and Samuel (17 months).

### — 1886-1892

Stace family living in working-class inner-city suburbs of Sydney – Petersham, then Newtown, then Alexandria – under difficult circumstances. During this time, Arthur's baby sister dies of malnutrition; his older sister Clara is arrested for 'vagrancy and truancy' (possible code for prostitution) and sent to a home for delinquent or neglected children; Arthur and his siblings steal milk and bread to survive; the children huddle under the house to escape their parents' alcohol-fuelled fighting; and Arthur's older brother William is charged with theft.

**Note:** the early 1890s saw a severe economic depression across all of the Australian colonies. Life was difficult in many ways for many families like Arthur's.

### — 1892

Arthur's father deserts his family. Mother Laura and her five children are evicted from their rented Alexandria house. Laura takes herself and the five children to the Sydney Benevolent Asylum. Arthur is sent to foster care in Goulburn at the home of Mrs Catherine Campbell, a mother of 11 grown-up children.

### — 1893 - 1900

Arthur attends Goulburn Public School, where he learns how to write in copperplate. He leaves school at 15 and leaves Goulburn. He is placed in foster care with Thomas and Maria Smith and their four daughters on the south coast of NSW. He starts work at the Mt Kembla Coal Mine.

### — 1901

By the age of 16, Arthur is already drinking a lot of alcohol.

### — 1902

Aged 17, Arthur is discharged from the care of his foster family and goes to new foster parents, Alex and Janet Dagleish, a childless couple in north Wollongong. He begins working at the Mt Pleasant Coal Mine.

### — 1903-1904

Arthur turns 18 and leaves the south coast to spend almost two years as a swagman travelling around NSW. He is now an unemployable alcoholic, sleeping rough. He even spends one night sleeping in a hollow log with a tiger snake.

### — 1905-1908

Arthur returns to Sydney and bases himself in and around Surry Hills. He obtains work as a labourer for the City Council. He also works in various low paying and not always legal jobs, including as a 'cockatoo' (or lookout) for his sister Minnie's brothel. He is dismissed from his City Council job for persistent drunkenness and absenteeism.

### — 1909–1916

Arthur abandons himself to Sydney's criminal underworld. As well as his work for Minnie's brothel, he becomes involved with gangs of violent robbers, acting as a lookout.

### — 1916

World War I (1914–18) is in progress, and Arthur volunteers for the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) – the army – lying about his age and health on his recruitment form. He is accepted and goes into training. He departs Australia by troopship.

### — 1917–1918

Arthur serves on the Western Front as a stretcher-bearer in 1917 before falling ill with pleurisy. He recuperates in various English military hospitals then serves the AIF in England performing administrative duties.

### — 1919

Arthur returns to Australia on a hospital troopship. No-one greets him. He is discharged from the AIF three months later suffering 'shellshock' (today known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD).

### — 1919–1930

Arthur drifts into a life of alcoholism and unemployment. He is regularly arrested for drunkenness in the Kings Cross/Darlinghurst area. He is sometimes among the men being ministered to by Rev. RBS Hammond in the 'drunks' yard' at Sydney Local Court.

### — 1930

A significant year in Arthur's life. Still caught in a cycle of alcoholism, unemployment and court appearances, he voluntarily checks himself into a psychiatric clinic but it fails to cure him. On **6 August 1930**, Arthur attends a Wednesday night men's meeting at St Barnabas Anglican Church on Broadway in hope of getting supper afterwards – a cup of tea and a rock cake. He hears Rev. Hammond preach and immediately afterwards feels a strong conviction of sin and helplessness. He prays under a large fig tree in Victoria Park in Sydney, and he never drinks alcohol again. Arthur goes to see Hammond and tells his story. Hammond welcomes him to St Barnabas and puts Arthur to work on various charitable relief programs, initially at a hostel for drunks in Ultimo.

### — 1931

Arthur, now 46, begins to turn his life around as a sober, believing Christian. He obtains a State Government job as a labourer, levelling the sandhills at Maroubra.

### — 1932

Another significant year in Arthur's life, central to the *Eternity* story. Arthur continues quietly rebuilding his life. On **14 November 1932**, Arthur hears a sermon by Rev. John Ridley, a guest evangelistic preacher, on 'Echoes of Eternity' at Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle (now the Eternity Playhouse Theatre). Immediately afterwards, Arthur chalks *Eternity* on the pavement outside; and he will continue to do so on Sydney pavements almost every day for the next 35 years.

### — 1933

Arthur makes his first advertised public speaking appearance, speaking about 'The Captivating Jesus' at the YMCA in Pitt Street, Sydney. His identity as 'Mr Eternity' is not yet known.

### — 1934–1939

In this period, Arthur engages in a range of church work and mission programs. He works for RBS Hammond, worships at St Barnabas, and begins his involvement in charitable activities. He works for several years at the 'Hammond Hotel' (a shelter for the homeless and the unemployed

established by Hammond). He meets Pearl Dawson, 43, while they are co-workers at one of Hammond's 'soup kitchens'.

#### — 1939–1941

The Hammond Hotel closes. Arthur leaves St Barnabas to worship at the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle (where he had heard the sermon in 1932 that prompted his *Eternity* chalking). Arthur is part of an open-air mission each Saturday evening on the corner of George and Bathurst streets in the city. His identity as 'Mr Eternity' remains unknown, and public interest in this mysterious figure is building.

#### — 1941

Arthur becomes engaged to Pearl Dawson. (Pearl proposes to him.)

#### — 1942

Arthur, 56, and Pearl, 46, are married by Rev. Hammond at St Barnabas Church. After the marriage service, Arthur offers money to Hammond for conducting the ceremony. Hammond refuses to take the money, saying that it was his privilege to officiate at the ceremony.

#### — 1943–1954

Arthur and Pearl worship together at Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle. During this period, Arthur continues to have evangelistic speaking opportunities, including in rural NSW, in which he tells the story of his life transformation. In 1949, he begins work at the Sydney offices of the Red Cross as a cleaner and lift-operator. He speaks about his faith every lunchtime on the corner of Jamison and Clarence streets. In 1953, Rev. Lisle Thompson, minister at the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle and personal friend of Arthur, sees Arthur writing *Eternity* on the street and asks him if he is 'Mr Eternity'. Arthur responds, "Guilty, Your Honour, but you won't tell anyone, will you?" Thompson agrees to keep his identity secret, and media fascination with the mystery of 'Mr Eternity' continues to increase. By the end of this period, Arthur becomes the paid caretaker/cleaner at the Tabernacle as well as continuing his work for the Red Cross.

#### — 1955

Now aged 70, Arthur retires from his job at the Red Cross to devote his whole days to writing *Eternity*.

#### — 1956

Arthur gives his pastor, Rev. Lisle Thompson, his consent to the telling of Arthur's story to the Sydney press. His identity as 'Mr Eternity' is revealed.

#### — 1961

Pearl Stace dies.

#### — 1965

Arthur, now 80, is admitted to the Hammondville Nursing Home suffering severe bronchitis. After recuperating for a few weeks, he regains his strength and resumes chalking *Eternity*. He continues to live in the nursing home.

#### — 1967

Arthur suffers a stroke in April and dies a few months later in the Hammondville Nursing home on **30 July 1967** aged 82.



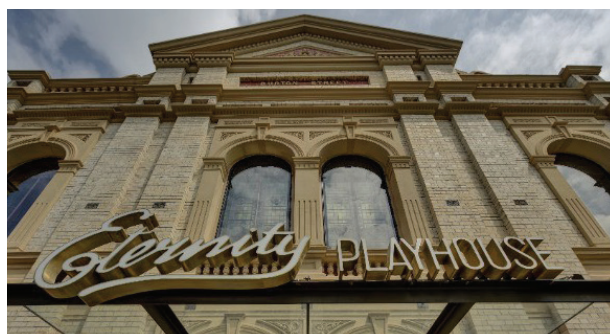
## 06. STUDENT QUESTIONS: UNDERSTANDING THE FILM

These comprehension-style questions are provided to help students grasp the main events and some of the key ideas in the film.

Teachers can use some or all of these questions or move straight to the discussion questions and activities that follow, depending on their students' needs and interests.

1. What was the general response of Sydneysiders to seeing *Eternity* written in the sky by a skywriter?
2. What is the effect of including social media reactions beside the images in the montage of photographs of the skywriting from many different vantage points?
3. For what major event was the word *Eternity* lit up on the Sydney Harbour Bridge?
4. What could be heard when the word was being lit up after the smoke cleared from the fireworks?
5. How was the *Eternity* on the Harbour Bridge used in the Sydney Olympic Games Opening Ceremony? What do you think was the significance of Nikki Webster, the non-Indigenous child performer, and Djakapurra Munyarryun, the Indigenous storyteller and guide, standing together under this symbol at this climactic moment in the ceremony?
6. Who owns the intellectual property rights to Stace's *Eternity*? (In other words, who trademarked it and owns the rights to it now?)
7. What filmmaking techniques are used in the film (just after the trademark discussion) to show how *Eternity* is still a feature of Sydney today?
8. Apart from going there to eat and drink, why do a lot of people go to the *Eternity* Café at Town Hall Station in Sydney?
9. Why does the café owner think the message of *Eternity* resonates with so many people?
10. What are some key facts given about Arthur Stace by the walking tour guide?
11. What points does historical novelist Sulari Gentill make about the single word *Eternity*?
12. What major event happened in Sydney the same year Arthur Stace began chalking *Eternity*?
13. Who and what inspired and motivated Arthur Stace to start chalking *Eternity*?
14. Why was the minister at St Barnabas Anglican Church Broadway in the 1930s, Rev. RBS Hammond, so well known outside his church congregation?
15. What type of food was on offer for supper at St Barnabas Church, which resulted in Arthur Stace coming in to attend the meeting?

16. What social needs existed in the 1930s that were met by Sydney's churches and faith-based groups? What important community services did the churches provide?
17. Describe the challenges that the architects of the Eternity Playhouse Theatre in Darlinghurst faced. What did they need/decide to preserve?
18. Who decided the theatre's name would have the word *Eternity* in it, and why?
19. According to Amylia Harris, what are some of the similarities between church and the theatre? What does she hope people may receive from the experience of attending a show in the Eternity Playhouse Theatre?
20. What key factors do you think led to *Eternity* (and the man who wrote it) becoming iconic during Arthur Stace's own lifetime?
21. In what year was Stace's identity finally revealed? How did this come about? What does this part of the story tell you about the loyalty, trust and friendship that existed between Lisle Thompson and Arthur Stace?
22. What are some of the major historical events that took place in Australia and the world during the 35-year period in which Arthur Stace chalked *Eternity*?
23. Where in Sydney is there a surviving *Eternity* that was probably chalked by Arthur Stace?
24. How would Dr Matthew Nott quite like to be known as he does his work advocating for clean energy?
25. Where was the *Eternity Man* opera first performed? What was the audience reaction like in different places?
26. What did artist Martin Sharp create for Remo Giuffre's REMO General Store in 1990?
27. What sort of work does graffiti artist 'Mistry' do, apart from creating art? Do you think he has anything in common with Arthur Stace? If so, what?
28. How does Mistry describe Arthur Stace's place in the history of graffiti art?
29. Why does artist 'Days' think the location of his *Eternity* mural in Kent St, Sydney is significant? How does its location add to the significance of the work and its message?
30. How tall is this *Eternity* mural?
31. What do you think is the purpose of the last five minutes of the film?



## 07. CLASS DISCUSSION: BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS

1. Why is this one word *Eternity* still resonating with people today? What makes it as relevant today as it was in 1932? Can you think of any other words that have maintained their integrity and significance in a similar way over a long period of time?
2. What do you think of the notion of trademarking a word? Can people own words? Is Arthur's *Eternity* different from just any other ordinary word? What makes it different?
3. Discuss the extremely varied ideas about what *Eternity* means to the people in the film. How are these ideas similar or different to Stace's original intention in chalking the word? Does *Eternity* mean different things now compared with what it meant to people in the past? Do any of these responses resonate with you? Which speaker in the film says things that most closely resemble how you feel about this word? What does *Eternity* mean to you?
4. Consider how people have embraced and adapted *Eternity*, and the range of cultural forms and purposes with which *Eternity* has been associated. Why do you think Arthur Stace's legacy has continued in this way? How do you explain the ongoing success of *Eternity* in capturing people's imaginations?
5. (a) What do the following have in common: skywriting, chalking, fireworks, and writing on sand?  
(b) What is ironic about the word *Eternity* being written in these ways? How does this relate to the overall purpose of this documentary?



6. What is 'clean energy' and how does it relate to the idea of *Eternity*? As we think about climate change and the actions needed to combat it, is *Eternity* an appropriate word to use? Do you think the natural environment will last forever – into eternity?
7. How has life in Sydney and in Australia changed since Arthur Stace began chalking *Eternity* in 1932? Make a list of as many changes as you can think of.
8. If you were to choose a single word to light up on the Sydney Harbour Bridge for a major celebration today, what would that word be? (Think carefully about the breadth of appeal that *Eternity* has had. Is there another word that could have the same breadth of appeal across our society?)
9. What does *Written in Chalk* have to say about friendship, loyalty, respect and trust? How might this connect to the concept of *Eternity*? (Tip: think about some of the 'side characters' in the *Eternity* story, like Rev. Lisle Thompson.)
10. How do you think Arthur Stace would respond to how *Eternity* has been appropriated and used in so many ways since he died in 1967? What would delight him about this? Do you think he would have any concerns?
11. Art is always open to interpretation and part of its message is in the eye of the beholder. Arthur Stace's *Eternity* has clearly been appropriated, reinterpreted and represented in many different ways by people with a range of interests, priorities and messages to deliver, and has found a very diverse audience. Do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing?

## 08. ENGAGING WITH THE FILM FURTHER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1

Create a graffiti wall/mural in the classroom. Use *Eternity* as the central concept and invite students to contribute other relevant text, tags, and visual representations of aspects of the film and its themes: e.g. Sydney, the past, Arthur Stace, faith in action, celebration, ... etc.

**English  
Visual Arts**

Alternatively, agree on another abstract noun that has broad appeal and resonance throughout society (e.g. from discussion question 5 above) and create the graffiti wall/mural as a representation of that noun.

### ACTIVITY 2

Research one or more of the following in more detail:

1. Life and social problems in Sydney during the Great Depression
2. 1960s Sydney, 'pop art', and the work of Martin Sharp
3. Darryl McCray ('Cornbread'), the development of graffiti as an art form, its relationship to other countercultural movements, and other famous graffiti/street artists (e.g. Banksy)
4. The lead-up to the new millennium and fears about the 'Y2K bug'/'millennium bug'
5. What Sydney was like during the 2000 Olympic Games, such as the atmosphere, the events, the role of volunteers, and the torch relay (part of your research could be interviewing your parents/grandparents for their memories of this time).

**History  
Visual Arts  
English**

Take your research and turn it into several pages to be included in a history/art history textbook. Make sure you think about including helpful textbook elements such as clear sections and headings, helpful illustrations and graphic organisers, and student questions and activities.

(Alternatively, use this as the basis for a digital story – see the digital story activity below.)

### ACTIVITY 3

Investigate and write a short account of another major sporting or cultural event that was used to highlight social issues like gender inequality, Indigenous issues in Australia, or racial discrimination either in Australia or elsewhere in the world.

**History**

### ACTIVITY 4

Compose a short story set in 1930s Sydney. If you wish, include Arthur Stace as a character (like the historical novelist in the film did). Suggested opening line: *The man sitting on the doorstep of the house in Frog Hollow was...* (Note: the man in the opening line does not have to be Arthur Stace. What other character could you create?)

**English  
History**

### ACTIVITY 5

Pretend you are Arthur Stace (OR one of the people interviewed in the film). Compose a series of diary entries in which you outline how the idea of *Eternity* has struck you and inspired your decisions and actions going forward. Try to include details about both personal transformation/inspiration and the social/historical context (e.g. social issues, the need for action, changes in society) in your response.

**English  
History**



## ACTIVITY 6

Create a film poster to promote *Written in Chalk*. Think carefully about what you think the purpose of the film is and who the intended audience is, and target your marketing (choice of images, fonts, words, etc.) to the audience to ensure the film is competitive in the market.

**English  
Commerce**

## ACTIVITY 7

Write a poem, song lyric or piece of instrumental music inspired by the theme of *Eternity*. Illustrate your poem/song lyric with relevant images (you can hand-draw these or create a collage of images that you find online) and display your work in the classroom; or play your piece of music for the class.

**English  
Music**

## ACTIVITY 8

Watch some segments of the [Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsLLzL27hYA&ab_channel=Olympics) (youtube.com/watch?v=qsLLzL27hYA&ab\_channel=Olympics). Write a short review-style piece explaining how these segments reflect and contribute to a sense of Australian identity. Make sure you include the part of the ceremony featuring *Eternity* that is mentioned in the film [1:19:15 on the YouTube video].

**English  
History**

## ACTIVITY 9

Imagine you are a news reporter working in Sydney in the late 1930s. Write a feature article on one of the following:

**English  
History**

1. the mysterious chalked word appearing on footpaths
2. the criminal underworld of the Great Depression era
3. other social problems and life in Sydney during the Great Depression

## ACTIVITY 10

Create your own artwork in response to the word *Eternity*. This can be inspired by the *Eternity* story itself (like the various artworks shown in the film) or can be a representation of your own interpretation of the word or the ideas that the word stimulates in your thinking. Write a short reflection statement explaining your concept, its relevance to *Eternity*, and how you have chosen to bring that concept to life.

**Visual Arts**

## ACTIVITY 11

Write a review of *Written in Chalk* in which you analyse and evaluate Richard Attieh's creative choices in creating the film, and reflect on the impact that the film has had on you.

**English**

## ACTIVITY 12

Have another look at the poster series that Wendy Murray and Kurt Iveson produced using *Eternity* as a model for their own key word: *Equality*. Using a similar approach (a single word + image/s), create your own poster series addressing a social issue/calling for social change, using a single word of your own choosing that suits the social issue you are engaging with.

**English  
Visual Arts**

## ACTIVITY 13

Create a two-minute digital story to tell your own version of an aspect of the material covered in *Written in Chalk* – e.g. Arthur Stace's life, or the Millennium celebrations, or any other portion of history or idea that interests you from the film.

**English  
Visual Arts  
History**

For a model of an effective digital story, see Daniel Meadows' piece titled '[Scissors](https://vimeo.com/146879045)' (vimeo.com/146879045).

## ACTIVITY 14

Write an analysis of how non-diegetic music is used in the film to help create meaning and convey the message of the film. Note the way it changes as the story develops, and analyse the moods that are created at key points in the film.

**English  
Music**

Repeat this exercise for other filmmaking techniques that you can observe (e.g. use of montage, stills, archival footage, camera work, anything else you can observe ...).

## ACTIVITY 15

Listen to the variety of musical styles used to help tell the *Eternity* story in the film. Find a short video extract (e.g. a piece of archival footage; a video of a natural setting/animal behaviour; a busy city scene from the present day; or something else that interests you) and compose a short piece of music that helps to convey the subject and mood of the video.

**Music**

Alternatively, choose a slightly longer video and then select a soundtrack to help convey the scene/s in it, using at least two pieces of existing music. This can be either contemporary music or music from the past, depending on what your subject is and what mood you wish to convey.

## ACTIVITY 16

Consider the variety of filming locations used in the film and how they relate to the interview subjects and contribute to the overall narrative. Analyse the choice of location and mise-en-scène employed for each of the interviewees (together with the accompanying music). What effect do these choices have on the viewer? How do they help to tell the story? Choose two or three key interview subjects in the film and, in response to these questions, write an analysis of how they are represented.

**English**

## ACTIVITY 17

Imagine that it is the year 2032, 100 years after the first *Eternity* was chalked. Arthur Stace's grave and memorial statue have fallen into terrible disrepair. You are going to address the local council responsible and try to persuade them to renovate and maintain these significant sites. Write the speech that you would deliver. In your speech, use persuasive language techniques, and try to summarise and convey some of the ideas in *Written in Chalk* about the significance of Arthur's legacy for Sydney and Australia.

**English  
History**

## ACTIVITY 18

Research intellectual property law as a business issue. Devise a plan for a business or not-for-profit organisation in which the City of Sydney Council-trademarked *Eternity* would be a useful promotional tool, and investigate how/whether a license for its use could be obtained. Develop a marketing and advertising plan for this business/organisation using the word *Eternity*.

**Commerce**

## ACTIVITY 19

Investigate famous cases in which intellectual property laws have been breached, and what things can and can't be owned in terms of intellectual property (e.g. Banksy has contested people's use of some of his street art; the Men at Work 'Land Down Under' case). (To extend this into another important area, you could use this as a springboard into investigating how this applies today to Indigenous cultures and intellectual property rights, and research instances of unacceptable appropriation of Indigenous intellectual property – e.g. artwork.)

**Commerce  
Visual Arts**

## 09. THE PEOPLE IN THE FILM IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE



### Eddie McGuire

Television personality and host of the Sydney Millennium Celebrations



### Roy Williams

Author of book about Arthur Stace, *Mr Eternity*, and Australia's leading authority on Arthur Stace and the 'Mr Eternity' story



### Frank Sartor

Lord Mayor of Sydney, 1991–2003 – approved the use of *Eternity* in the Sydney Millennium Celebrations and trademarked *Eternity* for City of Sydney Council in the late 1990s



### Ignatius Jones

Creative Director, Sydney Millennium Celebrations



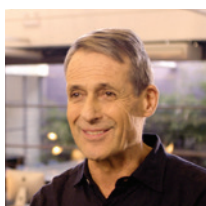
### Ric Birch

Executive Director, Sydney Millennium Celebrations and Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Ceremonies



### Steve Bartlett

Director of Ministries, NSW and ACT Baptist Church Association



### Peter Tonkin

Director, Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects – lead architect on the redevelopment that transformed Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle into the Eternity Playhouse Theatre



### Dr Matthew Nott

Founder, Clean Energy for Eternity – a not-for-profit organisation that advocates for clean energy and aims to reduce carbon dioxide emissions



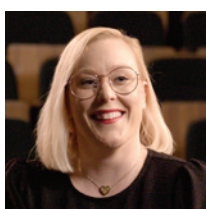
### Sulari Gentill

Historical fiction writer – author of the *Rowland Sinclair Mysteries* series, including *Give the Devil His Due*, which features Arthur Stace as a side character



### Max Burns-McRuvie

Director, Journey Walks – a collective of historians, storytellers and guides who run tours exploring Australia's history and heritage, including Sydney's true crime history



### Amylia Harris

CEO, Darlinghurst Theatre Company – the resident company at Eternity Playhouse Theatre



### Ben Coady

Design and Technology student, Western Sydney University – designer of 'Eternity Robot'



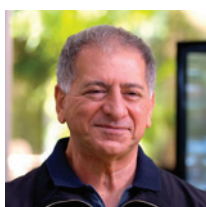
### Steven Green

Director, Olive Tree Travel – travel company specialising in faith-based journeys



### Wendy Murray

Street artist – collaborator with **Kurt Iveson** on *Equality* poster series which adapts Stace's *Eternity*



### George Semaan

Owner, Eternity Café, Town Hall, Sydney



### Sir Jonathan Mills

Composer, *Eternity Man* opera



### Ruth Ridley

Daughter of **John Ridley**, the preacher of the 'Echoes of Eternity' sermon that inspired Arthur Stace to begin his chalking campaign



### Remo Giuffre

Owner, REMO General Store, 1988-1996 – collaborated with artist **Martin Sharp** to create *Eternity* merchandise and a window display for his store selling unique design merchandise (e.g. *Eternity* t-shirts)



### Glenn Terry

Founder, Darlinghurst Theatre Company – the resident company at Eternity Playhouse Theatre



### Loretta Alexander

Art enthusiast – owner of painting of Sydney by **Joy Cooksey**, 'Ghost of Sydney Past', incorporating *Eternity*



### Elizabeth Meyers

Daughter of **Lisle Thompson**, Arthur Stace's minister at Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle and the man who discovered the true identity of 'Mr Eternity'; Elizabeth collaborated with **Roy Williams** on his book about Arthur Stace, *Mr Eternity*



### Kurt Iveson

Associate Professor, Urban Geography, University of Sydney – collaborator with **Wendy Murray** on *Equality* poster series which adapts Stace's *Eternity*



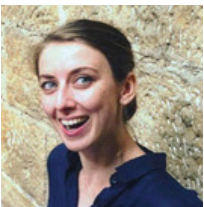
### Joy Cooksey

Artist – painted 'Ghost of Sydney Past' (the painting owned by **Loretta Alexander**) which incorporates *Eternity*



### Matthew 'Mistry' Peet

Graffiti and hip-hop artist, street art teacher, youth worker and public art advocate



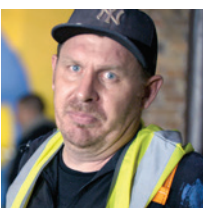
### April Spiers

Tour leader, Journey Walks – a collective of historians, storytellers and guides who run tours exploring Australia's history and heritage, including Sydney's true crime history



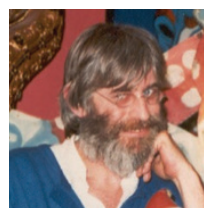
### Julie Mackenzie

Director, Heritage and Adaptive Reuse, Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects – involved in the redevelopment that transformed Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle into the Eternity Playhouse Theatre



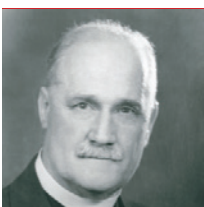
### Dallas 'Days One DCA' Clark

Graffiti artist – creator and lead artist of the 21-metre-high *Eternity* mural in Kent St, Sydney



### Martin Sharp

Artist and cartoonist – particularly active in Sydney in the 1960s and 1970s, part of pop art and literary countercultural scene (co-editor of underground magazine *Oz*); incorporated *Eternity* into pop art pieces in the 1970s/early 1980s and into designs and window display for **Remo Giuffre's** REMO General Store in 1989



### Rev. RBS Hammond

Minister of St Barnabas Anglican Church, Broadway, 1918-1943 – the man whose ministry converted Arthur Stace to Christianity; founder of the work that is today known as 'HammondCare'



### John Ridley

Preacher of the 'Echoes of Eternity' sermon on 14 November 1932 at Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle – prompting Arthur to begin writing *Eternity*



### Rev. Lisle Thompson

Minister of the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle, 1951-1964 – close personal friend of Arthur Stace who discovered the true identity of 'Mr Eternity' but kept his promise to respect Arthur's privacy and not reveal his identity

## 10. VOCABULARY

**Alienation** – a sense of being withdrawn or isolated from other people/society.

**Ascetic** – austere, plain, unadorned. Often associated with religious belief that adornment is not godly or desirable.

**'Banksy'** – a UK street artist and activist. His true identity is unknown (similar to Arthur Stace before his identity was made public).

**Copperplate script** – ornate and old-fashioned style of handwriting. The name comes from its use on the copper plates that were used to make engravings.

**'Cornbread'** – the tagging name of Darryl McCray, an American graffiti artist from Philadelphia who is commonly said to be the world's first modern graffiti artist.

**Cult of personality** – when there is excessive admiration and attachment to a prominent person among their fans or followers.

**Epiphany** – the sudden perception of a truth about something, sometimes associated with spiritual belief and experience.

**Epitome** – the very best example representing a category of things (e.g. Superman is the epitome of a classic superhero).

**Fable** – a tale that teaches a moral or has legendary/mythological status.

**'Getting up'** – succeeding in putting one's graffiti tag in a prominent location.

**Graffiti** – drawings or words written on public surfaces. Often illegal.

**Graffiti art** – a popular art form, usually produced as a mural, which adopts a graffiti style.

**Great Depression** – the worldwide economic depression that commenced in 1929.

**Intellectual property (IP)** – works that are owned by the creative workers who produce them (such as writers, artists, industrial designers, scientists and others), protected by law with copyright, trademarks, etc.

**Millennium Celebrations** – the celebrations that occurred on New Year's Eve, 1999.

**Polarisation** – the extreme division of a community into two sections.

**Shanty housing** – a roughly built house or shelter, often made from found materials/rubbish due to lack of means to find better accommodation. Shanty towns were common during the Great Depression.

**Slums** – an overpopulated, squalid part of a city. Inhabitants live in poverty, and housing is often shanty housing.

**Tag** – the identifying signature or symbol used by a graffiti artist.

**Trademark** – a name, symbol, figure, letter, word, or mark used and registered by manufacturers or merchants to distinguish their goods or services from others in the market.

**'Y2K bug'** – the challenge faced at the end of 1999 that computer systems may collapse, causing worldwide chaos, because they would not recognise the abbreviation of the year 2000 as the final two zeros (also called the 'millennium bug').

**Zeitgeist** – literally: the spirit of the time ('time-spirit'); the general feeling of a society at a particular period.

## 11. LOOKING FOR ETERNITY

If you would like to visit (or take students to visit) some significant locations around the city of Sydney that are featured in the film or associated with the *Eternity* story, here is a list:

**Eternity Playhouse Theatre** (previously the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle): 39 Burton St, Darlinghurst

**Eternity mural** outside Papa Gede's Bar: 348 Kent St, Sydney (five-storey high *Eternity* graffiti artwork)

**Eternity Café**, Town Hall Station: Shop 15-16, Town Hall Square, 464-480 Kent St, Sydney (also find the aluminium *Eternity* plaque at the base of the waterfall inside the café)

**Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park**: 12 Military Rd, Matraville (here you will find Arthur Stace's grave, and also the memorial statue with multiple *Eternity* inscriptions)

**Harry's Café de Wheels**: cnr Cowper Wharf Rd and Dowling St, Woolloomooloo (*Eternity* in copperplate font on front exterior of café wall, under the main counter)

**Eternity Bar and Grill Restaurant**, Grand Concourse, Central Station: 12 Eddy Ave, Haymarket

**Equality posters**: William St, Woolloomooloo, hung on exterior of a building near exit of Cross City Tunnel; May Lane, St Peters near May Lane street sign (note that posters may become weathered or be removed over time)

**Eternity in the GPO clock tower bell**: Fullerton Hotel, 1 Martin Place, Sydney (the inscription is chalked in the interior of the main bell, known as the 'Eternity bell')

**Frog Hollow Reserve**: 303-307 Riley St, Surry Hills

**St Barnabas Church**, Broadway: 57-61 Mountain St, Ultimo

## 12. RELATED MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

### ADDITIONAL WRITTEN IN CHALK RESOURCES

[writteninchalk.com/resources](http://writteninchalk.com/resources)

Teachers may wish to access extended audio files with transcripts (interviewees from the film talking about *Eternity*; these include useful additional information about social and historical contexts).

### BOOKS: NON-FICTION

- *Mr Eternity: The story of Arthur Stace*, Roy Williams with Elizabeth Meyers, 2017
- *Ratbags*, Keith Dunstan, 1979 [out of print]
- *Australia's Great Depression*, Joan Beaumont, 2022
- *Grave Tales: Sydney – Volume 1*, Helen Goltz and Chris Adams, 2018
- *Martin Sharp: His life and times*, Joyce Morgan, 2017
- *Sharpest: The biography of Martin Sharp*, Lowell Tarling, 2021
- *The Time of Our Lives: Inside the Sydney Olympics*, Harry Gordon, 2003

### BOOKS: FICTION

- *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, Christina Stead, 1934
- *The Harp in the South*, Ruth Park, 1948
- *Give the Devil His Due*, Sulari Gentill, 2015
- *The Blue Mile*, Kim Kelly, 2021

### FILM AND TELEVISION

- *Eternity*, dir. Lawrence Johnstone, 1994
- *The Eternity Man*, dir. Julien Temple, 2008
- *Underbelly: Razor*, Nine Network, 2011 [**Note:** this material is mostly **unsuitable for young viewers**. Teachers could view this for their own information to see depictions of Sydney in the 1920s/1930s, and judiciously show selected scenes to students if school policies allow.]

### WEB LINKS

- [Great Depression](http://nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/great-depression), National Museum of Australia (nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/great-depression)
- [Skint! Making Do in the Great Depression](http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/skint-making-do-great-depression), Sydney Living Museums (sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/skint-making-do-great-depression)

- [Tilly Devine and the Razor Gang Wars, 1927-1931](https://records.nsw.gov.au/archives/magazine/galleries/tilly-devine-and-the-razor-gang-wars), NSW State Government Archives & Records (records.nsw.gov.au/archives/magazine/galleries/tilly-devine-and-the-razor-gang-wars)
- [Stace, Arthur Malcolm \(1885-1967\)](#), Chris Cunneen, Australian Dictionary of Biography
- [Discovering Anzacs: Arthur Malcolm Stace](https://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/person/324501), National Archives of Australia (discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/person/324501)
- [Stace, Arthur Malcolm \(1885-1967\)](https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stace-arthur-malcolm-8615/text15049), Chris Cunneen, Australian Dictionary of Biography (adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stace-arthur-malcolm-8615/text15049)
- [The Eternity Man, Andrew McKenna](#), 2014 [short video on YouTube about Arthur Stace] (youtube.com/watch?v=bF7X9aiRH7s&ab\_channel=Andrew%20McKenna)
- [A Tribute to Influential Australian Christians: Arthur Stace](https://atributetoaustralianchristians.wordpress.com/2010/10/22/arthur-stace/), John Miller (atributetoaustralianchristians.wordpress.com/2010/10/22/arthur-stace/)
- [Hammond, Robert Brodribb Stewart](https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/hammond_robert_brodribb_stewart), Meredith Lake, Dictionary of Sydney, State Library of NSW (dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/hammond\_robert\_brodribb\_stewart)
- The story of [REMO General Store](https://remogeneralstore.com/pages/our-story) (remogeneralstore.com/pages/our-story)
- [Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony](#) (available in its entirety on the official Olympic YouTube channel) (youtube.com/watch?v=qsLLzL27hYA&ab\_channel=Olympics)
- [‘Martin Sharp Obituary’](https://theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/dec/06/martin-sharp), Marsha Rowe, The Guardian, 7 December 2013 (theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/dec/06/martin-sharp)
- [‘Arthur Stace ‘Mr Eternity’ Memorial’](https://smcnsw.org.au/eastern/memorialisation/unique-memorials/arthur-stace-mr-eternity-memorial), Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries NSW (smcnsw.org.au/eastern/memorialisation/unique-memorials/arthur-stace-mr-eternity-memorial)
- [‘Inscribing Eternity on a Wicked City’](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/130540375), The Canberra Times, 27 November 1994 (trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/130540375)
- Information about the [Eternity Gallery and Exhibition](#) that existed for many years at the National Museum of Australia
- [Millennium Celebrations](#) [YouTube: visual quality poor but a very interesting insight into reactions around the world]
- [Sydney New Year’s Eve 1999/2000 Midnight Fireworks](#) (Highlights) [YouTube: visual quality not good but really highlights the Eternity at the end of the fireworks display]

## SONGS

- [‘Eternity’](#), Nathan Tasker, 2012 [with music video] (youtube.com/watch?v=00ZIW2pj35I&ab\_channel=MarcusLim)
- [‘Mr Eternity’](#), Russell Morris, 2012 (youtube.com/watch?v=a7r\_iAoF\_k0)
- [‘Mr Eternity’](#), Jim Low, 2012 (youtube.com/watch?v=miUcPI39Q4E)
- [‘Arthur’s Song’](#), Simon Grace, 2015 [with music video, including lots of historic photographs] (youtube.com/watch?v=01ip0For7Og)



## 13. APPENDIX: SUGGESTED LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

The Australian Curriculum codes in this table are current at the time of writing and are hyperlinked to Scootle – a national repository that provides Australian schools with digital resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

ENGLISH – YEAR 9	
Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Analyse and explain the use of symbols, icons and myth in still and moving images and how these augment meaning ( <a href="#">ACELA1560</a> )	Students can examine the iconic nature of <i>Eternity</i> and how the film represents its mythological status.
Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts ( <a href="#">ACELT1633</a> )	Students can compare the filmmaker's representations of Stace and the word <i>Eternity</i> with those of the other creative artists shown in the film from different times in history and different cultural contexts.
Explore and explain the combinations of language and visual choices that authors make to present information, opinions and perspectives in different texts ( <a href="#">ACELY1745</a> )	Students can analyse the methods used by the filmmaker to present a range of perspectives about <i>Eternity</i> and Stace's legacy.
Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features ( <a href="#">ACELY1746</a> )	Students can use <i>Written in Chalk</i> , Arthur Stace's experiences and the word <i>Eternity</i> as a stimulus for composing their own texts.

ENGLISH – YEAR 10	
Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people ( <a href="#">ACELA1564</a> )	Students can consider the inclusive nature of the word <i>Eternity</i> as presented in the film, and also consider Stace's motivation and social empowerment as he chalked the word. They can explore the historical use and ongoing potential of the word as a tool for social empowerment and action.
Analyse and explain how text structures, language features and visual features of texts and the context in which texts are experienced may influence audience response ( <a href="#">ACELT1641</a> )	Students can analyse the choices made by the filmmaker to position the audience to understand <i>Eternity</i> and Stace's legacy in particular ways.
Create imaginative texts that make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts ( <a href="#">ACELT1644</a> )	Students can emulate some of the creative artists in the film, using <i>Eternity</i> to stimulate their own thematically linked creative compositions, such as literary texts and visual representations.
Analyse and evaluate how people, cultures, places, events, objects and concepts are represented in texts, including media texts, through language, structural and/or visual choices ( <a href="#">ACELY1749</a> )	Students can consider how the film uses techniques to represent people, cultures, events and the concept of <i>Eternity</i> in an integrated way, showing (for example) the connection between language and culture and how it continues and changes over time.

<b>HISTORY – YEAR 10</b>	
<b>Content description</b>	<b>Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i></b>
The inter-war years between World War I and World War II, including ... the Great Depression ( <a href="#">ACOKFH018</a> )	Students can use Arthur Stace’s life and his personal and social context as a way into studying the Great Depression in Australia.
Australia’s contribution to international popular culture (music, film, television, sport) ( <a href="#">ACDSEH123</a> )	Students can consider how the major celebrations (Millennium; Olympics) depicted in the film made an international contribution to popular culture, and how <i>Eternity</i> has continued to do so through such works as the <i>Eternity Man</i> opera.
Continuity and change in beliefs and values that have influenced the Australian way of life ( <a href="#">ACDSEH149</a> )	Students can examine the social values that are touched on in the film (such as faith, the role of the church, social welfare/philanthropy, the role of art in society, protest, climate change and social activism) and consider how the film sheds light on things that have continued and things that have changed.
The growth and influence of the environment movement within Australia and overseas, and developments in ideas about the environment including the concept of ‘sustainability’ ( <a href="#">ACDSEH126</a> )	Students can consider the relationship between the clean energy activism in the film and the notion of <i>Eternity</i> (as highlighted in the promotional/advocacy event on the sand at Tathra), and observe how the growth of the environmental movement and interest in sustainability has led to this new way of embracing Arthur’s legacy.

<b>ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS – YEAR 9</b>	
<b>Content description</b>	<b>Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i></b>
The nature of innovation and how and why businesses seek to create and maintain a competitive advantage in the market, including the global market ( <a href="#">ACHEK041</a> )	Students can investigate the various ways in the film in which <i>Eternity</i> has been adopted because of its commercial value. They can research other businesses that have adopted the word <i>Eternity</i> (in addition to those featured in the film).
Develop questions and hypotheses about an economic or business issue or event, and plan and conduct an investigation ( <a href="#">ACHES043</a> )	<p>Students could research intellectual property law as a business issue, devise a plan for a business in which the City of Sydney Council-trademarked <i>Eternity</i> would be a useful promotional tool, and investigate how/whether a license for use could be obtained.</p> <p>Students can use IP Australia (<a href="http://ipaustalia.gov.au">ipaustalia.gov.au</a>) as a resource to research businesses that have trademarked <i>Eternity</i>. They can investigate such issues as choosing the correct kind of license and deciding whether to register a patent, trademark or design in order to protect their intellectual property.</p> <p>They could also more broadly research whether any other single words like this are trademarked, and what things can and can’t be ‘owned’ in terms of intellectual property.</p>

## VISUAL ARTS – YEARS 9 AND 10

Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Conceptualise and develop representations of themes, concepts or subject matter to experiment with their developing personal style, reflecting on the styles of artists, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists ( <a href="#">ACAVAM125</a> )	Students can use <i>Eternity</i> as a stimulus for their own artworks. They can reflect on the changing style of art and its diverse purposes, and experiment in their own art-making with representing a single abstract concept like <i>Eternity</i> in a variety of ways.
Develop and refine techniques and processes to represent ideas and subject matter ( <a href="#">ACAVAM127</a> )	Students can explore techniques through which they can represent their own ideas about <i>Eternity</i> or other concepts.
Evaluate how representations communicate artistic intentions in artworks they make and view to inform their future art-making ( <a href="#">ACAVAR130</a> )	Students can consider the artistic intentions behind the work of the creative people in the film, including those relating to social activism, and connect representation with purpose in both their analyses of other artworks and their own creative expression.
Analyse a range of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their visual art-making, starting with Australian artworks, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider international artworks ( <a href="#">ACAVAR131</a> )	Students can compare street art and commercial art depicted in the film with more traditional art forms, examining how the art in the film conveys differing viewpoints and responses to the word <i>Eternity</i> .

## MEDIA ARTS – YEARS 9 AND 10

Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Evaluate how technical and symbolic elements are manipulated in media artworks to create and challenge representations framed by media conventions, social beliefs and values for a range of audiences ( <a href="#">ACAMAR078</a> )	Students can look at the way the film as a media artwork uses technical and symbolic elements to position the audience to see Stace's legacy in a particular light, and how social beliefs and values have shaped these representations.

## CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP – YEAR 9

Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
How and why individuals and groups, including religious groups, participate in and contribute to civic life ( <a href="#">ACHCK079</a> )	Students can consider what motivated Stace as an individual to make his daily contribution to civic life, as well as the work he did for the church and the work of churches in general in serving their communities throughout history. They can also look at a number of other people interviewed for the film and ponder what has motivated them to contribute to civic life. They can examine the similarities and differences between faith-based and non-faith-based social participation and contribution.
The influence of a range of media, including social media, in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity ( <a href="#">ACHCK080</a> )	Students can look at the film as an example of media shaping attitudes to diversity, as it is inclusive of people from many different walks of life and occupations. They can also consider how a variety of people and major events depicted in the film have helped to shape a sense of Australian identity.

## CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP – YEAR 10

Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Develop, select and evaluate a range of questions to investigate Australia’s political and legal systems ( <a href="#">ACHCS095</a> )	Students can investigate the operation of intellectual property law and contemplate the ethics and legal considerations of appropriating other people’s endeavours for personal or commercial use.
Reflect on their role as a citizen in Australian, regional and global contexts ( <a href="#">ACHCS102</a> )	Students can contemplate the motivations of Arthur Stace and other socially active people in the film and consider their own current or potential contributions to life as an Australian citizen.

## MUSIC – YEARS 9 AND 10

Content description	Suggested connections to <i>Written in Chalk</i>
Evaluate a range of music and compositions to inform and refine their own compositions and performances ( <a href="#">ACAMUR104</a> )	Students could analyse the effect of the different types of music used in the film’s soundtrack to help convey the story and themes. They could then use this as a storyboard for creating their own film music.
Analyse a range of music from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their music making, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider music in international contexts ( <a href="#">ACAMUR105</a> )	<p>Students could note the way music from different eras is used in the film to evoke different times and moods, and also look at the appropriation of Arthur Stace’s story into operatic form reaching an international audience.</p> <p>They could also research and listen to more music from the periods featured in the film: for example, 1930s music (including Depression-era blues songs); protest music of the 1960s/1970s; the music of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Opening Ceremony (including Indigenous music).</p>

# *Written in Chalk*

THE ECHO OF ARTHUR STACE

[writteninchalk.com](http://writteninchalk.com)

Producer/Director: Richard Attieh

Genre: historical/cultural documentary

Running time: 70 minutes

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