

Beyond the Visual

Audio guide

**HENRY MOORE
INSTITUTE**

Stop 14. Track 2.

Aaron McPeake, *Icelandic Landscapes* 2007-24

Icelandic Landscapes by Aaron McPeake is a series of four bronze panels, each with a distinct surface texture, that are suspended a little distance from the wall on large hooks. Each panel is roughly the size of an A3 sheet of paper. The surfaces resemble topographical maps with bumps, craters and imperfections suggesting an aerial view of different landscapes. The four, dark-coloured panels are mounted in a line along the white gallery wall, a little like a 35mm film negative strip.

Taking the panels from left to right, the first panel is the thickest of the four. It has a deep, sonorous tone if you tap it with your knuckles, and you can feel the vibrations for a long time afterwards. This panel is the only one with smooth edges, although the surface is wrinkled and folded due to the pouring and cooling processes. It has patches of rusty red colour at its centre, with darker brown and black towards the edges. It brings to mind an erupting volcano, with the fiery red flowing down and cooling in the dark lava field around it. There are five small holes in the panel, almost like bullet holes, roughly the size of a pencil.

The second panel is more uneven around the edges. The colour of this panel is mottled grey, with patches of the bronze metal showing through. The areas of bare bronze are smooth, and the rest of the panel is rougher, almost sharp to the touch. The kind of landscape we might be looking down on is

somewhere quite desolate and featureless, like a desert. There are holes and imperfections on its surface but far fewer than any of the other panels.

The third panel is far less solid than the first two, with large, irregular holes and craters that look as though the metal has been eaten away in places, like a rusty car door that's been sat in a scrapyard. The white of the wall shows through behind the holes, and the surface colour is comprised of greens and browns, with areas of slate grey. If this were an aerial view the landscape could be a forest and lakes, or a coastal area. But the surface is also quite alien, like a lunar landscape with craters. Maybe this isn't something viewed from high up, maybe it's actually something very small seen through a microscope, like bacteria or amoeba, stretching and multiplying.

The fourth and final panel feels like the weightiest of the series. It has a dark, mottled surface of blacks and browns and deep bronze, covered in craggy lumps. There is a small hole towards the bottom left that suggests the mouth of a cave, with jagged walls on all sides. If this were a landscape, it'd be a mountainous terrain, all jagged peaks and underground caverns.

The different textures and colours on the surfaces of the panels are the result of different conditions encountered during the process of casting and cooling molten bronze, which would have been poured into the moulds. Cooling the metal quickly creates ripples and wrinkles, and can cause air bubbles to expand and explode, leading to holes and craters in the surface. Changing the air temperature and humidity during the process can cause reactions that turn the metal dark brown or black. Different quantities of other metals in the composition of the bronze, as well as the sand used to make the mould, can cause wide variations in surface colour. The way that the metal

will respond is difficult to predict, and the artist never knows what the end result will be.

End of Stop 14, Track 2.

This is a transcript of an audio guide produced by Henry Moore Institute for the exhibition *Beyond the Visual*, on display from 28 November 2025 to 19 April 2026. For more information visit henry-moore.org/beyond-the-visual