

COLONY FRONTIER WARS

ARTWORK LABELS: FOYER L2 & L3

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Jonathan Jones

Kamilaroi/Wiradjuri born 1978

blue poles

2010

fluorescent lights, transparent synthetic polymer resin,
composition board,
electrical cord, plastic, steel, adhesive

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2010

2010.120.a-f

In this work, which references elements of Western modernism, Indigenous art and history, the symbiotic relationship of the individual and the community is represented by a grouping of lines of fluorescent light. As Jones states:

‘Lines of light are connected to the Aboriginal line designs specific to south-eastern Australia. In this region the line is used to create patterns and designs, often carved into wood, skin and the ground. These designs are best illustrated by the region’s carved wooden shields and the works of Tommy McRae and Uncle Roy Kennedy. This work is based on continuing this cultural vernacular.

Jonathan Jones

Kamilaroi/Wiradjuri born 1978

untitled (muyan)

2011

light boxes

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.119.a-e

'This work is a dedication to the Wurundjeri *Ngurungaeta* (leader) William Barak. Like all true leaders Barak possessed a myriad of qualities and rose to the challenge being many things to many people – a cultural ambassador and advocator, a devoted father and an insightful and gifted artist. The multiple elements of this installation reflect on the different aspects of Barak's life, along with his community responsibilities and in turn the support he received, all of which are brought together by the use of light ... Barak created a new space to live within; a space and an example which we continue to aspire to for future generations.'

JONATHAN JONES, 2010

Left to right

Baluka Maymuru

Manggalili born 1947

Manggalili Yothu Yindi Larrakitj

2007

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*),
synthetic fur

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by friends in memory
of Catherine Allen, 2010

2010.357

Dr Gumana

Dhalwangu c. 1935–2016

Barama

2008

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by friends in memory
of Catherine Allen, 2010

2010.356

Gulumbu Yunupingu

Gumatj 1945–2012

Ganyu

2009

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Elizabeth Foster and Margaret Colquhoun in honour of their mother Madge Minty through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2014

2014.99

Dr Gumana

Dhalwangu c. 1935–2016

Guyamirrilil

2003

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Noel Castan by Anita Castan, Governor, 2003

2003.659

Dr Gumana

Dhalwangu c. 1935–2016

Birrkuda

2002

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Ron Castan AM by Anita Castan, Governor, 2003

2003.658

...continued overleaf

Dr Gumana

Dhalwangu c. 1935–2016

Djarwarrk

2003

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of
Annia Castan OAM by Anita Castan, Governor, 2003

2003.660

Wukun Wanambi

Marrakulu born 1962

Wawurritjipal II

2005

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Mark Young through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2013

2013.59

Nawurapu Wunungmurra

Dhalwangu born c. 1952

Gapu ga Gitkit (Water and birds)

2005

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Jason Yeap OAM
and Min Lee Wong, 2010

2010.526.a-e

Left to right

Helen Ganalmirrawuy

Garrawurra/Liyagalawumirr born 1955

Djiti Djiti body paint design

2006

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Dan Mossenson through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.80

Ruth Nalmakarra

Garrawurra/Liyagalawumirr born 1955

Djiti Djiti body paint design

2006

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Dan Mossenson through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.77

Lena Walunydjunalil

Dambugarramirr born 1944–2015

Djiti Djiti body paint design

2006

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Dan Mossenson through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.78

Helen Ganalmirrawuy

Garrawurra/Liyagalawumirr born 1955

Djiti Djiti body paint design

2006

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Dan Mossenson through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.81

Helen Ganalmirrawuy

Garrawurra/Liyagalawumirr born 1955

Djiti Djiti body paint design

2006

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Dan Mossenson through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.79

...continued overleaf

Jimmy Wululu

Gupapuyngu 1936–2005

Hollow log coffin

1986

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1986

O.37-1986

Joe Djembangu

Gupapuyngu born c. 1924

Wagilag Sisters story

2008

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Gabrielle Roy through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2010

2010.26

Paddy Fordham Wainburranga

Rembarrnga c. 1938–2006

Hollow log coffin

1989

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1992

O.31-1992

Ronnie Janbardi

Gurrgoni c. 1920–94

Lorrkon (Hollow log coffin)

1983

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Geoff and Janette Todd, 1992

O.36-1992

Philip Gudthaykudthay

Liyagalawumirr born c. 1925

Lorrkon

1985

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1986

O.23-1986

Left to right

Willie Jolpa

Burarra c. 1937–2001

Larrkan (Hollow log)

1994

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Bettie Kornhauser, 1995

1995.600

Willie Jolpa

Burarra c. 1937–2001

Larrkan (Hollow log)

1994

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Elliot Swart, 1995

1995.599

Jack Beimunumbi

Rembarrnga 1935–86

Lorrkon (Hollow log coffin)

1985

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1986

O.18-1986

...continued overleaf

Ivan Namirrkki

Kuninjku born 1960

Lorrkon, Gungura (Hollow log representing the spiralling wind)

2005

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through the NGV Foundation with funds donated in memory of Gabrielle Pizzi by Robbie Barker, Michael Casper, Steven Casper, Rodney Davis, Sandra Ferman, Robert Gould, Honorary Life Benefactor, Vivien Knowles, Member, Jan Minchin, Robert Piaggio, Rae Rothfield, Fellow, Geoffrey Smith and Loti Smorgon, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2005 2005.542

Timothy Nadjowh

Kunwinjku born c. 1940

Lorrkon, hollow log coffin

1988

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Penny Blazey, 1989

O.148-1989

Jimmy Njiminjuma

Kuninjku c. 1945–2004

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

1990

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by Gabrielle Pizzi,
Governor, 2003

2003.90

Samuel Namunjdja

Kuninjku born 1965

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2002

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of
Axel Poignant by an anonymous donor, 2003

2003.689

John Mawurndjul

Kuninjku born c. 1952

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2006

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Supporters and
Patrons of Indigenous Art, 2006

2006.221

...continued overleaf

Kay Lindjuwanga

Kuninjku born 1957

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2005

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through the NGV Foundation in memory of Axel Poignant with funds donated by an anonymous donor, 2005

2005.516

John Mawurndjul

Kuninjku born c. 1952

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2003

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Mark Young through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2013

2013.60

James Iyuna

Kuninjku born 1959

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2010

earth pigments on Kurrajong (*Brachychiton diversifolius*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Art, 2011

2011.13

Seymour Wulida

Kuninjku born 1969

Lorrkon (Hollow log)

2008

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetrodonta*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Art, 2008

2008.570

Left to right

Unknown

Tiwi active late 1950s

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D128-1971

Unknown

Tiwi 1925–99

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D133-1971

Declan Apuatimi

Tiwi 1930–85

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D134-1971

Declan Apuatimi

Tiwi 1930–85

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D132-1971

Unknown

Tiwi active late 1950s

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D131-1971

Unknown

Tiwi active late 1950s

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D129-1971

Mani Luki

Tiwi c. 1914–80

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D124-1971

Mani Luki

Tiwi c. 1914–80

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D127-1971

Mani Luki

Tiwi c. 1914–80

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D125-1971

Mani Luki

Tiwi c. 1914–80

Pukumani tutini

late 1950s

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Mr Roderick Carnegie, 1971

D126-1971

Left to right

Karl Portaminni

Tiwi born 1964

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.9-1994

Karl Portaminni

Tiwi born 1964

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.11-1994

Francis Damien

Tiwi born 1960

Kevin Cook

Tiwi born 1960

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.14-1994

Francis Damien

Tiwi born 1960

Kevin Cook

Tiwi born 1960

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.12-1994

Vincent Mungatopi

Tiwi born 1967

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.6-1994

Jean Baptiste Apuatimi

Tiwi c. 1940–2013

Geoffrey Tipiloura

Tiwi born c. 1957

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.5-1994

Francis Damien

Tiwi born 1960

Kevin Cook

Tiwi born 1960

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.13-1994

Leon Puruntatameri

Tiwi born 1949

John Martin Tipungwuti

Tiwi born 1969

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.15-1994

Patrick Freddy Puruntatameri

Tiwi born 1973

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.2-1994

Jean Baptiste Apuatimi

Tiwi c. 1940–2013

Geoffrey Tipiloura

Tiwi born c. 1957

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.4-1994

Vincent Mungatopi

Tiwi born 1967

Brendon Mungatopi

Tiwi born 1937

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.8-1994

Karl Portaminni

Tiwi born 1964

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.10-1994

Leon Puruntatameri

Tiwi born 1949

John Martin Tipungwuti

Tiwi born 1969

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.16-1994

Vincent Mungatopi

Tiwi born 1967

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.7-1994

Patrick Freddy Puruntatameri

Tiwi born 1973

Paddy Freddy Puruntatameri

Tiwi c. 1925–2001

Pukumani tutini

1993

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1994

O.3-1994

Left to right

Timothy Cook

Tiwi born 1958

Pukumani tutini

2006

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Supporters and
Patrons of Indigenous Art, 2006

2006.425

Pius Tipungwuti

Tiwi born 1954

Pukumani tutini

2001

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of The Hon. David Angel QC through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2010

2010.139

Leon Puruntatameri

Tiwi born 1949

Pukumani tutini

2002

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Gabriella Roy through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2013

2013.285

Pius Tipungwuti

Tiwi born 1954

Pukumani tutini

2001–02

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of The Hon. David Angel QC through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2010

2010.140

Pedro Wonaeamirri

Tiwi born 1974

Tutini (Pukumani pole)

2003

earth pigments on Ironwood (*Casuarina sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Gabriella Roy through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2014

2014.343

Julie Gough

Trawlwoolway born 1965

Observance

2011–12

colour high definition video transferred to media player,
sound, 17 min 9 sec, ed. 2/10

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Arts, 2012

2012.213

'Observance is all about trespass – “for they know not what they do”. The film is a meditation about history, memory, ancestry, and ongoing colonisation by anonymous groups of uninvited walkers, the descendants of the colonisers, the inheritors (according to Western legal systems) of our lands. The Aboriginal words and translations that float across the footage are drawn from the last words “formed” by Tasmanian Aboriginal people in their own language, before it was banned on Flinders Island ... These last words, of which I have used half in the film, are of introduced things – animals, objects and actions of violence and encounter.'

JULIE GOUGH, 2002

r e a

Gamilaraay/Wailwan/Biripi born 1962

PolesApart

2009

high definition digital colour video, silent, 6 min 55 sec,
edition of 10

Collection of the artist, Sydney

'*PolesApart* was inspired by the ongoing violent impact that colonisation, the declaration of *terra nullius* and the Frontier Wars has had (and continues to have) on the blak female body. I reflect on the overwhelming trauma and loss that my grandmother, Ruby Pearl Leslie, nee Williams-Madden, and her sister, Sophie, experienced, when they were forcibly taken to the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal girls, c. 1911–68, in 1916. The framing and content of *PolesApart* was inspired by the absence of the blak body in Australian colonial paintings ... It is as if the traditional owners of this land never existed.'

r e a, 2017

Tommy McRae

As a consequence of colonisation, Tommy McRae created cross-cultural figurative drawings on paper as a means of recording a culture subjected to profound change. During the 1860s he made the acquaintance of Roderick Kilborn, the Canadian-born telegraph master and justice of the peace at Wahgunyah, Victoria. Kilborn's property, Goojung, was very close to Lake Moodemere, where McRae and his family lived from the early 1880s. Kilborn commissioned the *Notebook* of 1875 and *Sketchbook* of 1891. Significantly, as a result of the long association between McRae and his patron, Kilborn, a Wiradjuri vocabulary was entered in the *Notebook* in 1891. In these artist's books there is a progression of thought and idea; we see McRae's mind at work and the acuteness of his observation.

McRae's style and medium are unique, his pen and ink drawings distinctive in their delicate use of the silhouette. His *Sketchbook* and *Notebook* reveal captivating continuities and changes in life on the colonial frontier and reflect his keen-eyed determination to maintain cultural lore at a time of rapid social upheaval. McRae's iconography includes from hunting and fishing techniques, ceremonial stance and attire, warriors in battle formation, Chinese prospectors on the goldfields, European squatters and finely dressed women.

Tommy McRae

(Kwatkwat/Wiradjuri) c. 1836–1901

Sketchbook

c. 1891

sketchbook: pen and blue ink on paper, 26 pages, paper and cardboard cover, stitched binding

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, 2001 Purchased with the assistance of Ian Hicks AM, John Higgins and two anonymous donors, 2008

2001.838

Tommy McRae

(Kwatkwat/Wiradjuri) c. 1836–1901

Notebook of Mr Roderick Kilborn

1875

notebook: pen and ink on paper, 50 pages, leather cover,
stitched binding

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 2001

2001.837

COLONY FRONTIER WARS

ARTWORK LABELS: EXHIBITION SPACE L3

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terra nullius

Colony: Frontier Wars

Australia was founded in 1788 as a British penal colony under the doctrine of *terra nullius* (nobody's land), meaning the original inhabitants were not recognised as owners of the land, and the British therefore felt empowered to take possession of it. *Colony: Frontier Wars* examines the devastating consequences of Cook's claiming of the eastern coast of Australia for Britain, which marked the beginning of a process in which Aboriginal people suffered huge losses. Lands and waterways were taken, burial grounds desecrated, languages silenced, cultural practices suppressed and families torn apart.

Colony: Frontier Wars reveals through historical and contemporary works of art the legacy of loss caused by British expansion, which endures for many in the form of social inequalities, inherited trauma and misdirected violence. *Colony: Frontier Wars* celebrates Aboriginal resistance and the resilience of culture and community through art, and memorialises the trauma of the past by making space for First Peoples' voices in the now.

Marlene Gilson

Wathaurong born 1944

Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner

2015

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Collection: City of Melbourne Arts & Culture Collection

Marlene Gilson's history painting depicts the public hanging of two Tasmanian Aboriginal 'outlaws', Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner. In accordance with European law, the men were executed on 20 January 1842 on what is now the corner of Bowen and Franklin streets, at the northern end of Melbourne, in front of 5000 people (approximately a quarter of Victoria's white population at that time). Supreme Court Judge John Walpole Willis, who handed down the sentence, said the execution was designed to inspire 'terror ... [and] deter similar transgressions'.

Gordon Bennett

Australian 1955–2014

Terra Nullius

1989

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Gold Coast City Gallery, Surfers Paradise
Purchased with funds raised by Gold Coast City
Art Gallery Volunteers, 1989

1989.43

Gordon Bennett critiques historical narratives of exploration, colonisation and settlement which failed to recognise the sovereign rights of Australia's First People. *Terra nullius* is a Latin term which translates literally as 'empty land' or 'nobody's land'. When James Cook sailed into Botany Bay on 28 April 1770 he declared Australia to be *terra nullius* and claimed the land for Britain. Cook's proclamation omitted to recognise the fact that hundreds of distinct groups of Indigenous people occupied the land.

Gordon Bennett

Australian 1955–2014

Interior (Abstract Eye)

1991

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by the Moët & Chandon Australian Art Foundation

Fellows Collection, 2000

2000.79

Gordon Bennett's work is grounded in a critical engagement with issues of identity and cultural power as they relate to postcolonialism and its Australian context. *Interior (Abstract Eye)* shows an Aboriginal group, superimposed with a European perspectival grid, being observed by a human eye. In this history painting Bennett challenges the representation of First Peoples and their cultural systems within the dominant construction of Australian history. As part of his focus on the convergence and collision of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures, Bennett addresses issues of how Aboriginal people are seen and stereotyped and how the continent is viewed and idealised.

Julie Gough

Trawlwoolway born 1965

Chase

2001

Tea Tree (*Myrtaceae fam.*), cotton, steel, jute

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the artist, 2005

2005.400.1-374

'*Chase* is about terror, flight, this is the unspoken space and place called Australia: terror nullius. The tea-tree forest between E. Phillips Fox's *The landing of Captain Cook* and my work, *Imperial Leather* holds the trace of a pursuit. Torn scraps of cotton flagging and red towelling fixed within its grasp bear testament to a struggle within this space, a flight of passage took place and took parts, pieces of both works into this otherworldly configuration ... I don't believe that Australia has left behind the two aforementioned stories but is still enmeshed in their dialogues of invasion, control and silencings.'

JULIE GOUGH, 2001

E. Phillips Fox

Australian 1865–1915

Landing of Captain Cook at Botany Bay, 1770

1902

oil on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gilbee Bequest, 1902

119-2

The landing of Captain Cook and his raising of the Union Jack renders absolute in pictorial terms his land claim over the continent of Australia as a possession of the British Crown.

Julie Gough comments: 'Whilst Cook is clearly sleep-walking across Fox's canvas, his hand outstretched, his face avoiding the Aborigines awaiting the landing party, I suggest that the reality is that a pursuit came next ... That story – the result of Cook's landing, the result of European arrivals determined to find a terra nullius is carefully avoided by Fox and offered by *Chase* – an ongoing tension and presence in this country'.

JULIE GOUGH 2001

Julie Gough

Trawlwoolway born 1965

Imperial Leather

1994

wax and cotton rope and drawing pins on tie-dyed cotton
on composition board

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria

by Gabrielle Pizzi, Member, 1995

1995.726.a-pp

'Imperial Leather addresses notions of Imperialism, cleanliness/cleansing, whitening, placement, loss of self, identity, policies of rendering indistinct. The title conveys notions of imperial invasion alongside leather which suggests whipping, punishment and control. The heads are wax, cast from an original aluminium positive of the kitsch plaster Aboriginal boy head commonly suspended in Australian lounge room walls in the 1950s. The layout of mathematical regularity speaks of order, control and containment over Aboriginal people. Power is held by those whose flag is the control mechanism. The hanging and pinning relates to the exploration and labelling of the 'new' worlds and their flora and fauna.'

JULIE GOUGH, 1994

Brook Andrew

born Australia 1970

The Island IV

from The Island series 2008

2008

synthetic polymer paint and screenprint on blue metallic foil on canvas, ed. 3/3

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Michael Schwarz and David Clouston through the
Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2017

2017.212

The Island IV reimagines, magnifies and renders fantastical a previously little-known photographic reproduction of an etching by Wilhelm von Blandowski of a men's ceremony of the Nyeri Nyeri people of the Murray–Darling region of southern New South Wales. Andrew's gigantic screenprint parodies Blandowski's grotesque misunderstanding of the customary ritual of tooth evulsion as a lurid blue reflective myth-scape invaded by crudely drawn 'savages' – whom Blandowski described as 'writhing and convulsing in the dust'.

stolen

From the 1850s onwards, Aboriginal people across Australia were removed from their communities under various colonial policies and relocated to missions and government reserves. Having already lost their lands and waterways post European settlement, Aboriginal people faced policies of removal, implemented to assimilate Aboriginal people into settler society, and protect them from frontier violence.

In spite of the missionaries' best intentions, for Aboriginal people life was sedentary, regimented and vastly different from that experienced on Country. Aboriginal people were prevented from speaking in their own languages, performing ceremonies and practising their culture. Many children attended mission school to learn about Christianity; separated from their families, they slept in dormitories and often worked long hours in gardens. The introduction of Aboriginal people to the Christian faith destabilised ancestral belief systems which had been passed down for millennia.

Yvonne Koolmatrie

Ngarrindjeri born 1944

Mother

2005

sedge (*Carex sp.*), wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Supporters and Patrons
of Indigenous Art, 2006

2006.183.a-b

'At a workshop with Aunty Dorothy Kartinyeri, I was introduced to the traditional methods of weaving sedge rushes (*Lepidoserma canescens*). This type of sedge grows along the Coorong and Murray River in Ngarrindjeri Country and so weaving is linked to the river and its health. Going to the river and sitting in country helps me feel a link to the past, to the old people. The river connects people, connects Country and me to my past. The material is everything to me, it's my strength and it motivates me. This skill, and the grass itself, are gifts of the old people.'

YVONNE KOOLMATRIE, 2012

Yvonne Koolmatrie

Ngarrindjeri born 1944

Stolen baby

2008

sedge (*Carex sp.*), kangaroo skin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Helen Kennan, 2008

2008.569.a-c

From 1910 to 1970 countless Aboriginal children, who are now known as the Stolen Generations, were forcibly removed from their families as a result of various government policies. In this installation Yvonne Koolmatrie has woven an imagined version of herself and a baby in a coolamon, which in the context of this exhibition draws attention to the policies of child removal, and the legacy of trauma and loss still experienced by Aboriginal communities today.

For kids

Yvonne Koolmatrie grew up in the Coorong, at the mouth of the Murray River in South Australia. Her people have lived there for a very long time and used special grasses that grow there for weaving. Here Yvonne has woven a mother and her baby in a coolamon (container) before the baby is taken away from her.

John Packham

Ngarrindjeri born 1966

Ponun – death (to our culture)

1999

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1999

1999.333

‘When white man came to our part of the country he brought Christianity and built missions and farms. Christianity played a big part in the death of our culture by turning our people from our God to a white God, thus destroying the ways of our people. Then farmers took the land, put up fences and built churches. With the clearing of the land and killing of our native animals came the loss of our hunting skills, thus driving the stake through the very soul of our culture.’

JOHN PACKHAM, 1999

Bindi Cole Chocka

Wathaurong born 1975

Wolf in sheep's clothing

2013

inkjet print

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2014.46.a-c

'In Australia, early colonial Christian missions were sometimes regimented places that meant the loss of freedom for Aboriginal people, and the decimation of culture and language. Yet often, too, they were places of safety and survival for a people suffering at the hands of the first convict colony. It is with this understanding that I approach my own conversion to Christianity ... I've discovered a peace and a way of life that far surpasses anything I've experienced. Yet, I struggle with the notion that many people, in the name of God, ran missions that failed Aboriginal people leaving a painful legacy that lingers today.'

BINDI COLE CHOCKA, 2017

Julie Dowling

Badimaya born 1969

Goodbye white fella religion

1992

synthetic polymer paint, earth pigments and blood on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased NGV Foundation, 2007

2007.456

Goodbye whitefella religion reveals Dowling's strong interest in looking at Christian missions, which is central to the story of European settlement in Western Australia and her own family history. Tiwi people in the background are embellished with jilamara (designs) derived from ceremony. The children in the foreground bear crosses emblematic of indoctrination in the tenets of Catholicism, and are shown forcibly expelling 'whitefella religion', personified by the figure of a robed cleric. The work alludes to the Bathurst Island mission, where Father Gsell outlawed customary ritual and marriage practices.

Julie Dowling

Badimaya born 1969

Federation series: 1901–2001

Melbin 1901–1910

Uncle Sam 1910–1920

Auntie Dot 1920–1930

Ruby 1930–1940

Mollie 1940–1950

George 1950–1960

Nan 1960–1970

Ronnie 1970–1980

Carol 1980–1990

Julie 1990–2001

2001

synthetic polymer paint, earth pigments, metallic paint
and glitter on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance
of Rupert Myer, Governor, 2001

2001.538.1-10

'Colour has always been constructed as a factor that determines how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have related to each other since Australia was invaded in 1788. Skin colour charts were used to grade Aboriginal people to determine how civilised we were according to ethnocentric Social Darwinian theory. Eugenic practices were made concrete in Australian government policy affecting thousands of Indigenous families including my own. Notions of colour being bad or good became deeply entrenched in the Australian psyche as markers of intelligence ... black was considered bad and white was the epitome of moral goodness and reflected an idealised Australian nationalism.'

JULIE DOWLING, 2004

For kids

Julie Dowling has created this series of portraits to tell heart breaking stories of her family, including that of her Great Uncle George. Like many other Aboriginal children born 1940s-60s he was taken away from his Aboriginal family to be raised by wudjula (white) families. These generations of Aboriginal people who were forcibly taken from their families as children and put into white homes according to various government policies are known as the Stolen Generations.

By remembering the stories of her family Julie connects to her ancestors and makes sure that people remember some of the sad things that have happened to Indigenous people.

Arthur Boyd

Australia 1920–99

Shearers playing for a bride

1957

oil and tempera on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Tristan Buesst, 1958

11-5

During the early 1950s Arthur Boyd made two visits to Central Australia and encountered Aboriginal people living in extreme poverty and being treated as marginalised outsiders. Before this, as art historian Grazia Gunn has noted, Boyd had only seen, 'one Aboriginal, a chap around Melbourne who played a gumleaf'. On a visit to Arltunga, a small settlement about 110 kilometres east of Alice Springs, Boyd made seven pen-and-ink drawings of Aboriginal people in his sketchbook. Several years later, Boyd transformed these graphic notations into modernist allegories on half caste lovers who transgress convention and are made into outcasts, caught between two faces of Australia.

Arthur Boyd

Australia 1920–99

Bride and groom by a creek

c. 1960

oil on composition board

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The Joseph Brown Collection.

Presented through the NGV Foundation by

Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2004

2004.145

Top row, left to right

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Foster parents

1992 synthetic polymer paint on canvasboard

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Margaret Bullen through the
Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2014

2014.355

Italy

Crucifix

17th century
bronze, wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Bequest of Howard Spensley, 1939

3985-D3

Second row from top, left to right

Yosl Bergner

Austria 1920 – Israel 2017, Poland 1921–37, Australia 1937–48, Israel from 1950

Aborigines

1946, dated 1944

oil on composition board

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the artist, 1979

A6-1979

Yosl Bergner painted within the terms of social realism – representing workers, slums, street scenes and instances of social injustice. He was one of the first artists to address the brutal oppression of Australia's First Peoples. Here, he depicts Aboriginal people from the inner Melbourne suburb of Fitzroy as prisoners in their own country, dispossessed of their land and denied basic human rights. The image of Aboriginal people chained to a tree was prompted by a photograph published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of Aboriginal men incarcerated in neck chains, a practice then widespread in Australia, which shocked the artist.

John Packham

Ngarrindjeri born 1966

Ponun – death (to our culture)

1999

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1999

1999.333

‘When white man came to our part of the country he brought Christianity and built missions and farms. Christianity played a big part in the death of our culture by turning our people from our God to a white God, thus destroying the ways of our people. Then farmers took the land, put up fences and built churches. With the clearing of the land and killing of our native animals came the loss of our hunting skills, thus driving the stake through the very soul of our culture.’

JOHN PACKHAM, 1999

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Live the way we want

2002

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by

Supporters and Patrons of Aboriginal Art, 2003

2003.486

‘Ever since white settlers came to Australia, we Aboriginal people have had to live hard lives. They made us live on missions, took away our lands, our languages, our happiness. They put white priests on the mission to teach us about god and religion but we didn’t care too much for it ... For some Aboriginal people it was too hard to live like this. They would hang themselves. In years to come more white people will come to study what the white man did to our people. Why don’t they all just let us live the way we want to?’

H. J. WEDGE, 2002

Michael Riley

Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi 1960–2004

Untitled

from the Flyblown series 1998

1998

inkjet print, ed. 7/20

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased NGV Foundation, 2008

2008.368

This work is a meditation on the social, environmental and cultural implications of colonisation. The graphic image of a dead galah lying on the cracked, scorched earth is emblematic of the severe ecological damage that accompanied European settlement, which was paralleled by the drive to convert Indigenous peoples to Christianity. The bird's wings outstretched as if in implausible flight allude unnervingly to martyrdom yet have an ironic angelic dimension, perhaps offering the prospect of renewal to Indigenous people.

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Welfare

1990

synthetic polymer paint on canvasboard

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Christine Collingwood, 1997

1997.88

‘When the white man came to this great land of ours, they changed a lot of things, destroyed a lot of things, wanted to wipe us out in many mysterious ways, so they started welfare. You had no say in these things ... They took children of mixed backgrounds from their mothers and families and said it was for our own good. They can try all different ways of wiping us out but it won’t work – there’s too many of us. They have tried to call us half-caste and other names but, as I heard Kev Carmody say, ‘what part is half-caste?’

H. J. WEDGE, 1994

Third row from top, left to right

Queenie McKenzie

Gija c. 1915–98

God sending the Holy Spirit on apostles and Mary

1991

earth pigments and natural binder on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria

with the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1991

O.148-1991

This painting represents the Christian feast of Pentecost, which the artist's mother taught her as a child, as part of her Catholic upbringing. The Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles following the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. As Queenie McKenzie stated, 'Ngapuny [God] came in a cloud, He talked to the Apostles, gave them the law and the Holy Spirit and Mary got that Spirit too'. The clouds symbolise heaven whereas the ochre ground is Gija Country. The forms of Ngapuny and the Apostles seem to emanate from the body of the land.

Noel Counihan

Australian 1913–86

Albert Namatjira

from the *Lino cuts Counihan '59 folio* 1959

1959

linocut, ed. 1/50

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, 1959

397.2-5

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Sea rights too

2002

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Supporters

and Patrons of Aboriginal Art, 2003

2003.487

‘Ever since white settlers came on their big boats with white sails they didn’t want to be our friends: they just wanted what we had. We had lots of bush tucker, tools and weapons, beautiful art, and lots of land that we looked after. Now Aboriginal people have the right to claim sea rights just like land rights ... I hope that we get as much sea rights as land rights because we know how to look after our land and sea better than anybody else. We don’t take too much, only what we need from our sea and our land.’

H. J. WEDGE, 2003

...continued overleaf

John Packham

Ngarrindjeri born 1966

Petin – to abduct, steal

1999

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1999

1999.332

'Petin – to abduct, steal was inspired by my mother's grief. She still suffers, along with so many others, because she was taken, stolen at birth, back in the mid-1900s and institutionalised at Colebrook Home, Eden Hills ... White men got the idea to take away children, babies up to teenagers, from their families. Most were taken by force, or by forced signing of legal documents. The white men either came in groups, or singly, with guns. A lot of parents sent their children off to hide in the bushes, which I've depicted. I've also shown the great grief of the mother.'

JOHN PACKHAM, 1999

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

British justice

1990

coloured crayons

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by
Christine Collingwood, Member, 2002

2002.171

‘The white man has been butchering, murdering and raping the women ever since they first landed in Australia. That’s what you call British justice and they have been getting away with it ... Ever since they stole this land from us, we have been ruled by the British flag, been ruled by the British Empire.’

H. J. WEDGE, 1990

Jumbo Dawulinyera

Burarra c. 1939–90

Crucifixion

c. 1968

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Utah Foundation,
Fellow, 1990

O.53-1990

Bottom row, left to right

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Immaculate conception – What hypocrisy! (Nun)

1992

synthetic polymer paint on plywood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Supporters
and Patrons of Indigenous Art, 2006

2006.223

S. T. Gill

England 1818 – Australia 1880, Australia from 1839

The avengers

c. 1869

watercolour with scratching out and gum arabic over
pencil

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1954

3136-4

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Blind faith

1992

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with

the assistance of Waltons Limited, Fellow, 1994

O.85-1994

‘The right hand side shows the soldiers escorting the tribesmen away from their homes to be locked up in prison and some of them died in these rat holes. The middle shows men, women and children being killed because they placed their trust in the strangers but the strangers like a snake blinded them with false promises and false hopes. Today these betrayals are still happening but there are some politicians who are trying to give some of the land back to us. Aborigines today are too knowledgeable to be tricked again.’

H. J. WEDGE 1992

Queenie McKenzie

Gija c. 1915–98

God sending the Holy Spirit

1991

earth pigments and natural binder on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria

with the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1991

O.147-1991

...continued overleaf

Michael Riley

Wiradjuri/ Kamilaroi 1960–2004

Untitled

from the *Flyblown* series 1998

1998

inkjet print, ed. 7/20

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased NGV Foundation, 2008

2008.367

This imposing crucifix rising against a blood red sky, with swirling clouds reflected in its mirrored arms, has an ominous and inescapable presence. It looms over the landscape as a symbol capable of inspiring awe, fear, devotion and bereavement. Riley reflects on the imposition of Christianity on the lives of Indigenous people since colonisation. The interrupted view of the sky, enforced by the dominant cross, becomes a metaphor for the dispossession of Indigenous people, many of whom were separated from their families and placed on mission stations where they were forbidden to speak their languages or practise their culture.

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Immaculate conception – What hypocrisy! (Man)

1992

synthetic polymer paint on plywood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation
by Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Governor, 2006

2006.224

‘Ever since I could remember going to Sunday school, they’ve been teaching us right from wrong and about the bible. I had a lot of questions about the bible when I was a kid and the Christian teachers seemed to be giving me the run around ... We did worship the land, the land was our spirit and that’s what I believe in. White people don’t know what to believe in and that is why they have a lot of religion ... Probably when I die I will go straight to hell and I shall meet you down there and we’ll burn together.’

H. J. WEDGE, 1992

lament

History has been indeterminably cruel to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, yet they continue to thrive. Theirs is a history of survival, resistance and resilience against nearly insurmountable odds. Before British colonisation in 1803, there were an estimated 3000–15,000 Aboriginal people living in what the British initially called Van Diemen's Land.

Today, returning to their traditional lands, remembering ancestors lost and reconnecting with culture and Country are forms of memorialisation and healing for Tasmanian Aboriginal people and forms the basis of these works of contemporary art.

Ricky Maynard

Big River / Ben Lomond born 1953

Portrait of a distant land

**The Healing Garden, Wybalenna,
Flinders Island, Tasmania**

Broken Heart

**Vansittart Island, Bass Strait,
Tasmania**

Custodians

Death in Exile

Coming Home

The Spit

Mission

A Free Country

Traitor

2005

set of 10 gelatin silver photographs

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2012

2012.197–2012.206

...continued overleaf

Ricky Maynard uses photography to address historical events and places. He states:

'In a small forest west of the Bay of Fires our chief Mannalargenna and his people made an agreement with George Augustus Robinson. A temporary stay on the islands of the Bass Strait. If only they knew, not only of their imminent death but the future of the surviving tribe.

'We, still remember.

'A site that changed the course of history.'

RICKY MAYNARD, 2007

Genevieve Grieves

Worimi born 1976

Lament

2015

colour video, sound, 6 min 40 secs

Collection of the artist, Melbourne

‘This work was inspired by a place in the Country of friend and sister, Dianne Jones, where a tragedy unfolded that has waited to be explored ... It is also very much inspired by the dancer, Yaraan Bundle. She dances for the individuals in this story we are reflecting on, but she is also dancing for us all. It is an act of memorialisation; an act of remembrance. As it is through the recognition of what has gone before – however difficult this journey may be – that we can mourn, heal and find some peace within and between our selves.’

GENEVIEVE GRIEVES, 2015

Brook Andrew

born Australia 1970

Vox: Beyond Tasmania

2013

plywood, wood, glass, bone, cardboard, photocopied paper, books, postcards, colour 35 mm transparencies, glass plate negatives, 8mm film reels, quartzite, basalt, plastic, gelatin silver photographs, tin (film reel cases), wood, sinew, resin, metal (springs, fasteners), steel (cable), emu feather

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2014.58.1-58

'*Vox: Beyond Tasmania* is an archival sculpture that reflects on a 1909 book on Tasmanian Aboriginal skulls documented from mainly personal collections by Richard Berry from the University of Melbourne. These skulls were collected as trophies and were recorded by Berry as a great concern as Tasmanian Aboriginal people were seen as becoming extinct. The other archival material and human skeleton tie together a global concern for the international trade in human remains. The gramophone horn amplifies this voice. The gruesome stories of how Aboriginal people were treated, their bones traded internationally is the main focus of this sculpture.'

BROOK ANDREW, 2013

Once known

active mid 19th century

Breastplate of Simon Faithful, King of Pelawer, Chief of the Billebong

mid 19th century

brass

Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne

AH 3415

Once known

active mid 19th century

Breastplate of Billy Elingeit, King of the Barweegeee tribe

c. 1870

brass, metal

Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne

AH 0144

Once known

active mid 19th century

Breastplate of Duncan Campbell, Chief of the Swan Hill tribe

1865

brass

Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne

AH 0138

Breastplates are crescent-shaped metal objects modelled on military neck plates that were given by European settlers to Aboriginal men and women. They were presented to perceived leaders and faithful servants of the colonisers for purposes of alliance and pacification, on a continent without formal treaties.

James Eseli

Kala Lagaw Ya c. 1929–2009

Headdress: World War II fighter aeroplane

2001

synthetic polymer paint on wood and plastic

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation by Dieter Blass
and Violet Sheno, Members, 2002

2002.112

During World War II many Torres Strait Islander children were taken to Waiben (Thursday Island) for their safety. James Eseli recalls at the age of twelve seeing bomber and fighter aircraft, lit by searchlights, taking off, from Ngurapai (Horn Island) towards Papua New Guinea. In 1988 he choreographed a 'story dance' that interprets a raid on Japanese targets wherein a bomber and four fighter plane headdresses, designed and made by Eseli, are worn by dancers moving in an arrowhead formation. This dance is regularly performed at ceremonial tombstone openings in the Torres Strait to commemorate a period of political upheaval in the Torres Strait.

Vernon Ah Kee

Kuku Yalanji / Waanyi / Koko Berrin / Yidindji /
Gugu Yimithirr born 1967

If I was white

2002

inkjet print on polystyrene board on polyvinyl chloride,
ed. 1/5

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 2003

2003.29.a-dd

This text-based installation is a critique of Australian popular culture and more specifically the division between black and white. Ah Kee challenges racism in Australia by drawing attention to the unquestioned hegemony of whiteness. He speaks directly to a white audience through an (invisible) chorus of black voices. By turning the tables on his audiences and switching the subjective positions between the viewer and viewed, Ah Kee seeks to make the 'coloniser' feel colonised.

James Eseli

Kala Lagaw Ya c. 1929–2009

Headdress: World War II fighter aeroplane

2001

synthetic polymer paint on wood and plastic

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation by Dieter Blass
and Violet Sheno, Members, 2002

2002.111

World War II burst upon the Torres Strait when Japanese forces bombed Ngurupai (Horn Island) in March 1942. Almost all Torres Strait Islander men of military age joined the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion (TSLIB). TSLIB soldiers on leave on Badu in 1944 performed an aeroplane story dance for a RAAF unit based there, which was revived during the 1980s for performance at tombstone openings of former Torres Strait Islander soldiers who had passed away, with headdresses made by James Eseli.

Christian Thompson

Bidjara born 1978

Museum of Others

**Othering the anthropologist, Walter
Baldwin Spencer**

**Othering the explorer, James Cook
Equilibrium**

2015–16, printed 2016

type C photograph on metallic paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of an anonymous donor through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2017

2017.113.1-5

'Today, we are still conditioned by historical tropes such as the bust-style portraits of colonial men who had roles in furthering the position of colonial Britain at the height of the imperial pursuit for claiming new frontiers, at the expense of the Indigenous custodians of countries including Australia. However, as famous as these colonial figures still are, I try to demonstrate that it is never too late to pierce, subvert and re-stage the spectres of history to gain agency from the position of the other. Through the work, I am proposing: let us scrutinise your history, your identities, your flaws.'

CHRISTIAN THOMPSON, 2017

Queenie McKenzie

Gija c. 1915–98

God sending the Holy Spirit on apostles and Mary

1991

earth pigments and natural binder on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation, Governor, 1991

This painting represents the Christian feast of Pentecost, which the artist's mother taught her as a child, as part of her Catholic upbringing. The Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles following the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. As Queenie McKenzie stated, 'Ngapuny [God] came in a cloud, He talked to the Apostles, gave them the law and the Holy Spirit and Mary got that Spirit too'. The clouds symbolise heaven whereas the ochre ground is Gija Country. The forms of Ngapuny and the Apostles seem to emanate from the body of the land.

absence

Europeans began collecting Aboriginal material culture in the eighteenth century. Objects were traded and lent, sold, and on occasion lost. Those that survived were mostly catalogued in terms of who collected them, when and sometimes where. The result is a mass of poorly documented Aboriginal material culture, held across numerous collecting institutions, and rarely exhibited. Today, it seems unfathomable that information as important as an artist's name could have seemed unimportant to collectors. The values and beliefs of those early collectors continue to have repercussions, because they have led to large gaps in our understanding of these objects – gaps that have been filled with terms such as 'maker unknown'.

When we encounter the term 'unknown' it is essential to remember that every 'unknown' artist was in fact 'once known'. This installation of women's and men's cultural objects, comprising four woven baskets, two containers, two spears, seven spearthrowers, five clubs, three boomerangs, sixty-three shields and one stone axe, serves as a memorial to the makers whose names have been lost, and attests to the refusal of Aboriginal people to disappear. These objects have been carefully placed to simulate a midden, in honour of their makers.

J. W. Lindt

Germany 1845 – Australia 1926, Australia from 1862

Harry Neville

Bushy haired bearded man

Seated woman

Snowy and his wife

Seated man with greying beard

Two stalwart men of the coast tribe

Seated man holding a rifle

Four generations

Young woman seated with a baby

from the *Australian Aboriginals* portfolio

1873–74

albumen silver photograph

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of David Syme & Co. Limited, Fellow, 1991

PH78-1991, PH77-1991, PH76-1991, PH75-1991, PH74-1991, PH72-1991,
PH71-1991, PH70-1991

PH79-1991,

During the 1870s, J. W. Lindt produced a series of portraits of Goori people from the Clarence Valley near Grafton, New South Wales. Set against naturalistic landscapes painted by Lindt's artistic mentor, Conrad Wagner, these aesthetically lit and studio-composed photographs are of great historical interest. All the sitters are posed; some are dressed in kangaroo skins, but most wear European attire.

James Tylor (Possum)

Kaurna/Māori born 1986

Un-resettling (Scar Tree)

from the *Un-resettling (Hauntings)* series

2016

hand-coloured inkjet print

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for

Living Australian Artists, 2017

2017.447

James Tylor (Possum)

Kaurna/Māori born 1986

Un-resettling (Bird snare)

from the *Un-resettling (Hauntings)* series

2016

hand-coloured inkjet print

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for

Living Australian Artists, 2017

2017.446

‘The *Un-resettling* project is a contemporary self-experimental attempt to learn my Kaurna cultural heritage, knowing the British Government deliberately removed cultural knowledge and practices from my Kaurna ancestors over a hundred years ago. Growing up as an Australian with Kaurna heritage I wasn’t taught about Aboriginal culture or history because of the legacy of assimilation policies imposed by the British and Australian Governments on Aboriginal people that stopped the teaching of Indigenous culture in Australia. I wanted to learn Kaurna culture as an act of defiance against the South Australian Company and the British Empire.’

JAMES TYLOR, 2017

James Tylor (Possum)

Kaurna/Māori born 1986

Fallen tree half dome hut

from the *Un-resettling (Dwellings)* series

2016

hand-coloured inkjet print

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for

Living Australian Artists, 2017

2017.449

Leah King-Smith

Bigambul born 1957

Untitled

Untitled

Untitled

1991, printed 1993

from the Patterns of Connection series 1991

cibachrome photograph

Purchased, 1993

PH216-1993, PH213-1993, PH217-1993

‘The making of this series was in response to the concept that museum-owned nineteenth-century photographic representations of Aboriginal people are entangled with the colonialist mind-set of possessive ownership. The series proposes the idea that Aboriginal people have spiritual, cultural and political sovereignty, and are not confined to the indexical nature of photographic documentation, nor to the political and legal system of government that had set out to abolish Aboriginal culture and Country. The images are archival retellings and respect the traditional contexts of names, kinship and Country, all of which, in the Imperialist museum, are tactically reduced in many ways.’

LEAH KING-SMITH, 2017

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spear

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.23-1987

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spear

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.24-1987

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spearthrower

19th century

wood, sinew, resin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.26-1987

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spearthrower

19th century

wood, earth pigments, resin, sinew

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.27-1987

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spearthrower

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.28-1987

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Shield

19th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.29-1987

Once known

Victorian / Western Australian Aboriginal active
19th century

Boomerang

19th century
wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.30-1987

Once known

Victorian / Western Australian Aboriginal active
19th century

Boomerang

19th century
wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.31-1987

Once known

Aboriginal active 19th century

Boomerang

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.32-1987

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 19th century

Club

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.36-1987

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 19th century

Club

19th century
wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.37-1987

Once known

Aboriginal active 19th century

Club

19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.38-1987

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Spearthrower

19th century

wood, resin, fibre string

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O.40-1987

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 19th century

Boomerang

19th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Georgina Carnegie, 1988

O.28-1988

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Shield

19th century

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.146

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Gulmari shield

19th century

natural pigments on wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.150

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Shield

19th century

wood, natural pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.153

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Gulmari shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on hardwood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.156

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.163

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Gulmari shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.164

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.165

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 19th century

Wunda shield

19th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, National Cultural Heritage Fund, 2009

2009.580

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Rainforest shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.157

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Gulmari shield

19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.162

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active mid 19th century

Shield

mid 19th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.159

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 19th century

Gulmari shield

c. 1850–1875

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.152

Once known

New South Wales Aboriginal active mid 19th century

Shield

c. 1860

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.138

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active late 19th century

Spearthrower

late 19th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1972

D39-1972

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active late 19th century

Boomerang

late 19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Georgina Carnegie, 1988

O.29-1988

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active late 19th century

Shield

late 19th century

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Georgina Carnegie, 1988

O.30-1988

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active late 19th century

Shield

late 19th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.180

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active late 19th century

Boomerang

c. 1880

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented from the Estate of Mary Gilbert, 1989

O.166-1989

Once known

Northern Territory / Victorian Aboriginal active late
19th century

Stone axe

c. 1880

wood, stone, natural fibres, resin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented from the Estate of Mary Gilbert, 1989

O.167-1989

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active late 19th century – early 20th century

Rainforest shield

c. 1900

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1980

O.2-1980

Once known

South Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Shield

c. 1900

earth pigments on wood, pipeclay

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.126

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1900s

Rainforest shield

c. 1900

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.147

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1900s

Parrying shield

c. 1900

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.140

Once known

Queensland / New South Wales Aboriginal active 1900s

Gulmari shield

c. 1900

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.151

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1900s

Rainforest shield

c. 1900

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.166

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1900s

Rainforest shield

c. 1900

natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.167

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Wunda shield

c. 1900

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.174

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Marrka (Shield)

c. 1900

earth pigments on wood (*Gyrocarpus sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.177

Once known

South Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Shield

c. 1900

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.178

Once known

New South Wales / Queensland Aboriginal active 1900s

Shield

c. 1900

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.161

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1972

D38-1972

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Hilda Richards, 1973

ETH29-1973

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Spearthrower

early 20th century

wood, resin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Hilda Richards, 1973

ETH28-1973

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Spearthrower

early 20th century

wood, earth pigments, fibre string, resin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Hilda Richards, 1973

ETH27-1973

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Rainforest shield

early 20th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.148

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.149

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Rainforest shield

early 20th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.154

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Rainforest shield

early 20th century

earth pigments on wood and natural pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.155

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Parrying shield

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.168

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 20th century

Shield

early 20th century – mid 20th century

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythina vespertilio*), falcon feathers, natural binder

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.170

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.171

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Wunda shield

early 20th century

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.175

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.179

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century – mid 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.181

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 20th century

Shield

early 20th century – mid 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.183

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.184

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

early 20th century

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.160

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active early 20th century

Club

c. 1903

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela Berry, Members, 2004

2004.321

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active early 20th century

Boomerang

c. 1903

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela

Berry, Members, 2004

2004.320

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active early 20th century

Boomerang

c. 1903

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela

Berry, Members, 2004

2004.319

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active early 20th century

Boomerang

c. 1905

wood, cane

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Eric Moorhead, 1980

O.3-1980

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1920s

Gulmari shield

c. 1920

pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented through the NGV Foundation by
Todd Barlin, Governor, 2006

2006.187

Once known

Queensland Aboriginal active 1920s

Woorabinda mission shield

1926

natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.158

Once known

South Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Shield

1900

earth pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.126

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active 1930s

Shield

1930s

wood, earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Georgina Carnegie, 1988

O.27-1988

Once known

Western Australian Aboriginal active early 20th century

Shield

c. 1930

earth pigments and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.176

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1970s

Shield

1960s

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.169

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1960s

Shield

1960s

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Art, 2010

2010.319

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active mid 20th century

Shield

c. 1960

earth pigments, synthetic polymer paint and natural pigments on wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2011

2011.182

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.287

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.288

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.289

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.290

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.291

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.292

Once known

Northern Territory Aboriginal active 1980s

Shield

1981

earth pigments on beanwood (*Erythrina vespertilio*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Ross Howie, 2013

2013.293

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 1910s

Basket

c. 1915

sedge (*Carex sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela

Berry, Members, 2004

2004.315

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 1910s

Basket

c. 1915

sedge (*Carex sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela

Berry, Members, 2004

2004. 316

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 1910s

Basket

c. 1915

sedge (*Carex sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela Berry, Members, 2004

2004.317

Once known

Victorian Aboriginal active 1910s

Basket

c. 1915

sedge (*Carex sp.*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation in memory of Jeannie Gunn by Cate Lewis and Angela

Berry, Members, 2004

2004.318

Once known

South Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Container

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented by Hilda Richards, 1973

ETH30-1973

Once known

South Australian Aboriginal active 1900s

Container

early 20th century

wood

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented by Mrs Elizabeth Winifred Morris, 1987

O35-1987

Steaphan Paton

Gunai / Monaro-Ngarigo born 1985

Cloaked combat

Cloaked combat #2

Cloaked combat #3

2013

bark, carbon fibre, synthetic polymer resin and synthetic polymer paint

colour high-definition video, stereo sound, 37 sec, (looped), artist's proof

colour high-definition video, stereo sound, 33 sec, (looped), ed. 2/3

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2013

2013.720.a-e

Gift of the artist through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2017

2017.215

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2017

2017.445

'*Cloaked combat* is a visual exploration of the material and technological conflicts between cultures, and the roles they play in one culture asserting dominance over another. Aboriginal bark shields, traditionally used in combat to deflect spears, are here bearing the force of a foreign weapon. Cloaked in a contemporary European camouflage and fired by an unseen intruder, the arrows rupture the bark shields, representing an attack on Aboriginal nationhood and traditional culture. The jarring clash of weapons illustrates a material conflict between these two cultures, but also suggests a deeper struggle; a battle of old versus new.'

STEAPHAN PATON, 2017

Brook Andrew

born Australia 1970

Gun-metal Grey

Muuruun (Life)

Dhaagun (Earth)

Galang-galang (Locust)

Buunan (Dust)

Galiyn (Rain)

Ngalan (Light)

2007

set of 6 screenprints printed in grey ink on metallic foil and cotton, ed. 3/3

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2007

2007.714.1-6

...continued overleaf

'Images of disappeared Aboriginal people who may have suffered the same fate as other disappeared people anywhere in the world reveal extraordinary stories of cultural identity, persecution, racial discrimination, history, and the human condition. Colonial politics, activism and personal experience in Australia have commonality and shared experiences internationally and therefore should be aroused in the public domain. In my experience, Australian and international collections have complex protocols and taboos in the access and use of ethnographic photography. Images of death, sexuality and evidences of colonial wars are thought not to exist and therefore erased or hidden from public eye without witness or assessment.'

BROOK ANDREW, 2003

presence

William Barak, the great artist and Wurundjeri leader, occupies a unique place in the history of Australian art. This true hero of Narm (Melbourne), who experienced the imposition of colonisation and dispossession and witnessed immense social change in his lifetime, was a diplomat, deeply respected and revered by all who knew him, black and white. Barak lived at Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, a farming community near Healesville, from 1863 until 1903, becoming an influential spokesman for the rights of his people and an important source of knowledge on Wurundjeri cultural lore.

Barak left an authoritative record of his culture in a corpus of fifty or so drawings, each an unmediated expression of his hand and unlike the work of any other artist – then or now. In unequivocal pictures, we observe the strength of his cultural belief and his masterful command of communicating this knowledge to others. The central preoccupation of Barak's work is the business of ceremony – a powerful cultural memory for the artist, a precious record for his Wurundjeri descendants and an unqualified fascination for Europeans. People dancing, gathering together, disputing and occasionally fighting, hunting and respecting the food of the land, loom large in Barak's vision.

Maree Clarke

Mutti Mutti / Wamba Wamba / Yorta Yorta / Boon Wurrung
born 1961

Ritual and Ceremony

2013

gelatin silver photograph

Collection: the artist

‘This work represents the mourning practices of Aboriginal people along the Murray/Darling rivers. It talks about loss of land, language and cultural practices. I worked with Aboriginal women who represent the thirty-eight tribes of Victoria. The women are dressed in long black dresses that represent our mourning practices today and the men wear black T-shirts with my interpretation of scars worn for different events including the loss of a member of the tribe. The white marks across the eyes of the men and women represent traditional mourning practices. All eighty-four people had the opportunity to share their stories of loss, sorrow and mourning.’

MAREE CLARKE, 2013

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are advised that this work contains images of Indigenous people who are deceased.

For Kids

We are heartbroken when someone close to us dies. Every culture has special ways of celebrating life and death. Maree Clarke is from Country along the Murray and Darling rivers in northern Victoria. She worked with many men and women from her community to remember members of their families who have passed away. To create these photographs, Maree explored past and present mourning ceremonies performed by Aboriginal people as a form of healing.

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Group hunting animals

1890s

watercolour over pencil and charcoal

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Michael and Traudl Moon, 1995

1995.44

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Club

1897

wood

Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne

AH 01695

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Shield

1897

wood

Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne

AH 1434

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Ceremony

1898

pencil, wash, ground wash, charcoal solution, gouache
and earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1962

1215B-5

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Ceremony with Rainbow Serpent

c. 1880

pencil, gouache, earth pigments, charcoal

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Alcoa Foundation,
Governor, 1994

O.1-1994

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Figures in possum skin cloaks

1898

pencil, wash, charcoal solution, gouache and earth pigments

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1962

1215A-5

William Barak

Wurundjeri c. 1824–1903

Untitled (Ceremony)

1900

earth pigments, watercolour and pencil on paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Warren Clark Bequest, 2001

2002.31

Captain Harrison

Wergaia c. 1844–1908

Corroboree at Coranderrk

1890

gouache, watercolour, pencil

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 2004

2004.592

Captain Harrison's joyous depiction of a corroboree evokes a holistic picture of cultural life prior to colonisation. The spirited open-air ceremony, involving men, women and children, is set in a horizon-less landscape, abounding with eucalypts, shrubs, bark shelters, dogs, wallabies, goannas and echidnas. The dancers bear detailed customary chest and leg markings, scarification marks, arm bands, lyrebird-feather ornaments and pubic aprons. The presence of two sacred hearths perhaps acknowledges ancestral beings of the Kulin nation, Waa the crow and Bunjil the eagle. The yellow background speckled with blue dots challenges the misconception that Victorian Aboriginal artists did not use dots.

Timothy (Koorook-Koonong)

Wurundjeri c. 1831–75

Untitled

1863–75

pencil

Museums Victoria, Melbourne

X086705

This animated pencil drawing, inscribed 'Timothy/Coranderrk', is believed to be Timothy's only extant work. The artist remembers aspects of Wurundjeri customary life, ranging from men hunting kangaroos and emus with spears and stone knives; men, women and children dressed in traditional attire; and two men coming together in a gesture of greeting surrounded by rows of seated observers. The drawing features a self-portrait of Timothy in European dress, holding a book or sheet of paper. Another singular feature is a frieze in the upper section which appears to represent a lunar phenomenon.

Michael Cook

Bidjara born 1968

Tunnel

no. 2 from the *Majority Rule* series 2014
2014

inkjet print, ed. 8/8

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2014.268

Michael Cook

Bidjara born 1968

Court

no. 7 from the *Majority Rule* series 2014
2014

inkjet print, ed. 8/8

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2014.270

Michael Cook

Bidjara born 1968

Senate

no. 5 from the *Majority Rule* series 2014

2014

inkjet print, ed. 8/8

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2014

2014.269

'In *Majority Rule* I created staged scenarios that question Australian history and the dominance of those in power. The series features the same anonymous Indigenous man, multiplied over and over in each image. Australia's Indigenous population comprises around 3% or 4% of our total population. My images seek to defy this reality and ask the viewer to speculate about an Australia where Aboriginal people constitute the majority of the country's population; they paint a picture of a societal structure reversed ... The works also serve as reminders of the lack of Indigenous representation within Parliament, the judicial system and the business world.'

MICHAEL COOK, 2017

terra nullius

Colony: Frontier Wars

Australia was founded in 1788 as a British penal colony under the doctrine of *terra nullius* (nobody's land), meaning the original inhabitants were not recognised as owners of the land, and the British therefore felt empowered to take possession of it. *Colony: Frontier Wars* examines the devastating consequences of Cook's claiming of the eastern coast of Australia for Britain, which marked the beginning of a process in which Aboriginal people suffered huge losses. Lands and waterways were taken, burial grounds desecrated, languages silenced, cultural practices suppressed and families torn apart.

Colony: Frontier Wars reveals through historical and contemporary works of art the legacy of loss caused by British expansion, which endures for many in the form of social inequalities, inherited trauma and misdirected violence. *Colony: Frontier Wars* celebrates Aboriginal resistance and the resilience of culture and community through art, and memorialises the trauma of the past by making space for First Peoples' voices in the now.

Lorraine Connelly-Northey

Waradgerie born 1962

Possum-skin cloak: Blackfella road

2011–13

rusted iron and tin, fencing and barbed wire, wire

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Art, 2014

2014.1978

'Possum-skin cloak: Blackfella road is my interpretation of a possum-skin cloak. The barbed wire signifies the desecration of Aboriginal skeletal remains, occasioned by the construction of an unsealed road near Swan Hill. The circular forms indicate different modes of transport using this road. The fringe of the cloak represents hunters and gatherers whose remains were desecrated, signified by their multiple artefacts and disembodied hands that clamour for social justice.'

LORRAINE CONNELLY-NORTHEY, 2013

Clinton Nain

Meriam Mir/Ku Ku born 1971

Erub has a bitumen road now

2004

synthetic polymer paint, bitumen and enamel paint on canvas (diptych)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds from the Victorian Foundation
for Living Australian Artists, 2005

2005.417.a-b

This work relates to Nain's mother's country of Erub (Darnley Island) in the Torres Strait. During a trip to Erub for his mother's funeral in 2003, the artist was so concerned about a road that was being built through his family's village that he produced this diptych. A large white cross in the lower right represents the London Missionary Society's arrival on Erub on 1 July 1871, known as 'The Coming of the Light' and refers to the consequent impact of Christianity on Torres Strait Islander culture, language and customary ritual practices, which has resulted in the erasure of Indigenous belief systems.

Judy Watson

Waanyi born 1959

black ground

1989

powdered pigment and pastel on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased from Admission Funds, 1992

O.124-1992

'black ground depicts our Country, a site of massacre and dispossession. The shape of the white line is indicative of a cross-section looking down onto a burial chamber of my people in north-west Queensland. Many of these burial sites were plundered, ancestral remains and objects removed. Waanyi people were hunted and killed in our Country. My great, great grandmother, Rosie, was one of two survivors of a massacre at Lawn Hill. A white line is used to delineate a human death at the scene of an accident or tragedy. The white line is the line of colonisation cutting into black ground.'

JUDY WATSON, 2017

Cliff Reid

Ngaanyatjarra 1947–2010

Yulpurru

2007

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Michael Moon, 2008

2008.280

In this work, Cliff Reid recalls the nuclear tests conducted by the British Government at Maralinga in South Australia from 1956–63, when many Aboriginal people lost access to their traditional homelands and, like the artist, sought shelter on the Christian missions of Warburton, Ernabella or Cundalee. Reid states: 'Dust rising in the air: this is the 1950s when people were encouraged to leave their Country and go to Warburton. It is the time of atomic tests at Maralinga when the big dust clouds could be seen over the ranges'.

CLIFF REID, 2007

Robert Andrew

Yawuru born 1965

Moving out of muteness

2013

water, earth pigments, aluminium, electrical cables

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2015

2015.4

'Moving out of muteness explores Indigenous identity and history through the use of electromechanical technology of the coloniser. It uses earth pigments ... to build stories of relationships to land and culture, and to mine historical, cultural, political and personal events that have been ignored, buried and distanced by the dominant paradigms of our Western culture ... The Yawuru word, Nga-nga, translated to mean 'language' appears in the texture from the erosion process. This palimpsest process of scraping back and rewriting subtly refers to the white-wash of colonising history that has tried to white out and deny Indigenous histories.'

ROBERT ANDREW, 2017

Yhonnie Scarce

Kokatha born 1973, Nukunu

Blood on the wattle (Elliston, South Australia 1849)

2013

transparent synthetic polymer resin, glass, felt, velcro

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Kerry Gardner,
Andrew Myer and The Myer Foundation, 2013

2013.721

‘This work refers to a massacre that occurred in late May 1849 on the cliffs of Waterloo Bay near Elliston, South Australia that led to the deaths of hundreds of Aboriginal people – including children. To acknowledge the lives that were lost at Elliston, I have created 400 long yams which lie over two mounds inside a life-size perspex coffin, that sits close to the ground. Visitors who encounter the work are encouraged to engage with it respectfully. There has been very little acknowledgment of genocide in this country. I am still waiting for more memorials to be installed in areas where many deaths have occurred.’

YHONNIE SCARCE, 2017