

# SALT WATER COUNTRY

New works from Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander artists  
expressing their relationships  
to Queensland's coastal  
environments.



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Image  
Aerial roots of mangroves at low tide on South  
Stradbroke Island, South-east Queensland.  
Photography: Jo-Anne Driessens





Image  
Craig Tapp casting, Dan Watson line fishing  
South Stradbroke Island Artist Camp  
March 2014, Photography: Jo-Anne Driessens



From Curator  
Michael Aird

I have been fortunate to have heard the stories and looked at many old photo albums of my relatives, who have lived on the bay islands such as South Stradbroke and North Stradbroke, and on the banks of the Broadwater and the Nerang River in south-east Queensland.

I have listened to the stories that are attached to these photos. Stories of people earning a living, and surviving in places that, in the past, were not considered prime real estate. It was simply where they lived, and where they earned an income, and where they raised their families. But to my family it was also more than that; the areas of low-lying islands in southern Moreton Bay is our traditional country, our country that our ancestors have lived in for thousands of years.

My grandfather’s grandmother’s father wore a metal breastplate, inscribed with the words “Jackey Jackey – King of the Logan and Pimpima”. A metal plate I trust he wore with pride, as at the time it would have no doubt elevated his status in whatever domestic or political situation he was in.

These plates were handed out by Europeans to those who they thought were Aboriginal leaders. But most Aborigines today would look back at those plates in disgust, as they represent the very fact that Europeans refused to acknowledge that in this country there was a pre-existing Aboriginal political system.

As Jackey’s breastplate testifies, I am connected to the Logan and Pimpama River region through my grandfather’s family, but I am also connected through my grandmother’s grandmother, who was another traditional Aboriginal person from Stradbroke Island and the Logan and Pimpama River region. History books and family oral tradition firmly place these people living in the area that is now known as the northern Gold Coast.



In several history books a photo has been reproduced of a group of men, said to be local fishermen, on the edge of the water. In fact these men were not from the local region, but they were visitors from western Queensland, and they had most likely never seen saltwater before. They were part of a group of around 40 labourers brought by train from Barcaldine to Coomera in 1903 to clear land for agriculture. During their three-month stay they were photographed on the banks of the Pimpama River. Unlike many other parts of the Gold Coast, the very location were they once stood still looks much the same as it did over 100 years ago.

As I pass this location in my boat, or while I am camping on one of the bay islands, I am normally focused on mundane issues, like where shall I place my crab-pots, or where shall I drop a line. But I also often reflect upon the connection I have through my knowledge of history and through my ancestors to this very part of my country. I think of how comfortable I feel in these places, and how more so my ancestors would have been.

Setting up a tent on a small island not far above the high-tide mark is something I have done many times. Each time I do it, I always think to myself how lucky I am to be in such a place, even though many others see a low-lying mangrove island as an uninviting environment. After spending time in these places, I can’t help but love the type of landscape that many others simply overlook.

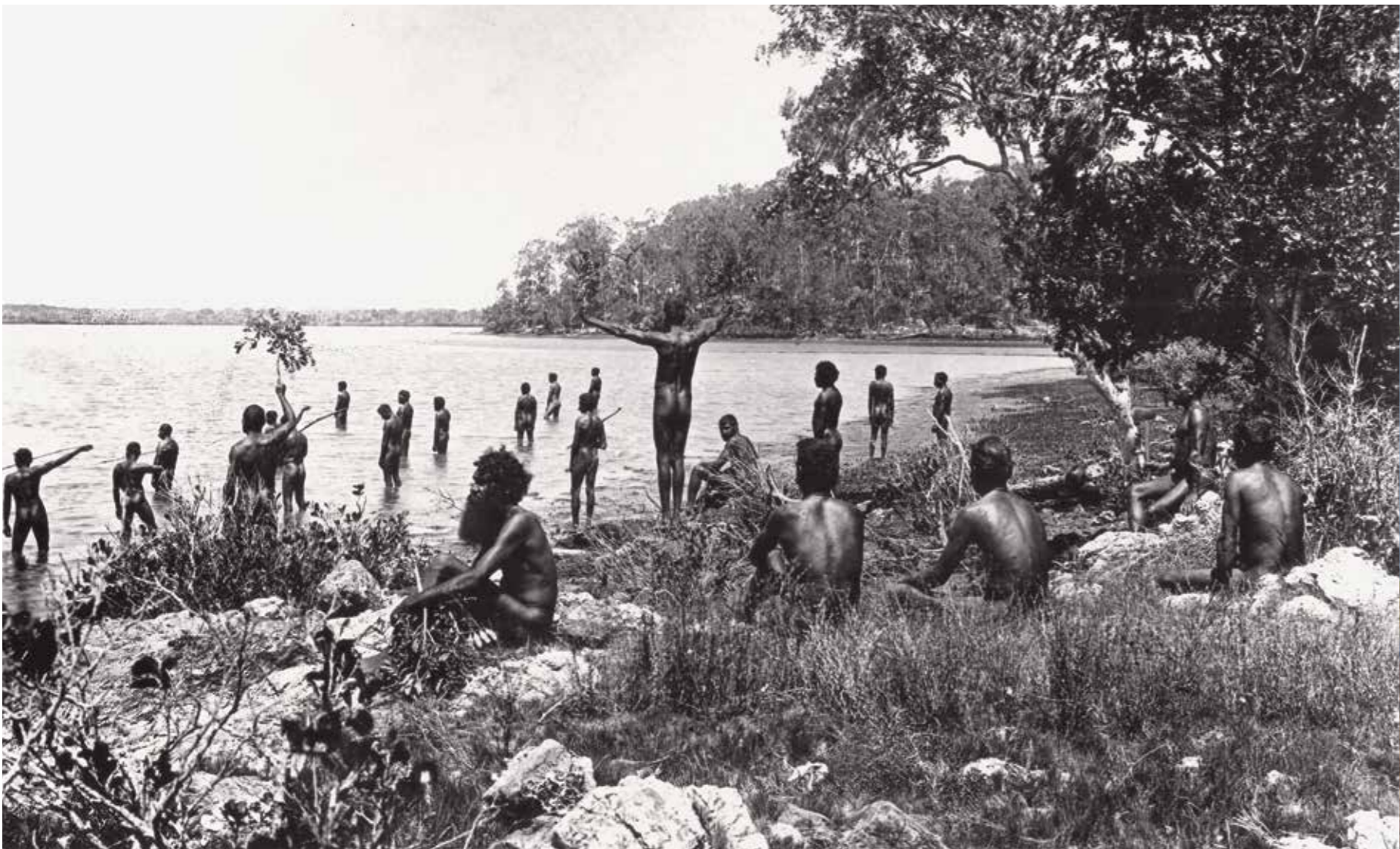
Simple things, like sitting around a campfire or walking through a mangrove mudflat or a shallow creek at low tide, to me are all worthy of being remembered. Each time a fish is on a line, I am tempted to get the camera ready, in case a big surprise is about to surface. Each time I pull in a crab-pot, there is that anticipation as to what may be in it.

Documenting the mundane, the ordinary things that happen in my life, the places I go and the people I spend time with, is central to the photographs that I take and to the exhibitions that I have curated.

The *Saltwater Country* exhibition is an opportunity for the featured artists to discuss their connection to country. Country that may be prime real estate or a remote low-lying swampland but, regardless, it is their connections to this country and how it has influenced their art that they are sharing.

Image

Jackey Jackey, Beenleigh, 1894.  
Courtesy State Library of Queensland  
Photography: Will Stark



#### Images

Page 12  
Pimpama River, 1903  
Courtesy State Library of Queensland  
Photography: A.A. White

Page 13  
Pimpama River, 2003  
Photography: Michael Aird

From Curator  
Virginia Rigney

The term *country* has come to be understood as an all-encompassing word to express the intrinsic cultural connectedness to land and place of birth for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This exhibition explores the way that contemporary Indigenous artists from Queensland, in Australia, express equally strong connectedness to the sea and to the water’s edge. This too is *country* and, despite its inherent fluidity, it is equally embedded by these artists and their communities as a place that defines and shapes culture and identity.

Fluidity also characterises this moment of art making; a highly dynamic time where the artists absorb influences from across the street and around the world, where they take from their own past and from that which is held tight by museums. They have the strength and conviction to assert new forms of creative expression, moving between family and professional life to fulfill cultural responsibilities and play leadership roles in their communities.

Place

The long coastline of this large state of Queensland runs north from the Tweed River to the tip of Cape York and around into the Gulf of Carpentaria. It includes the Great Barrier Reef, the largest living organism in the world, and passes from the mild subtropics to the hot and humid wet tropics. Over one hundred islands make up the Torres Strait, the most northern point of Australia, and are grouped into five clusters. Each of these is uniquely diverse, ranging from volcanic origin to sand-covered coral cays. This vast geography features sweeping beaches, dense mangroves, rocky headlands, expansive river systems that spill in flood, sandy islands and coral reefs – all have been critical in shaping both colonial history and, over a far longer time, Indigenous cultures.

This coastline, whilst still relatively sparsely populated, has seen many towns and a few cities grow up along it which harbour a maritime industry of deep water ports, cruise liners, fishing fleets, dive and charter vessels, and a thriving private recreational boating culture that offers legions of ‘boaties’ a freedom of movement that is not generally found on land.

The predominant visual appreciation of this coastline has been largely framed by its appeal as a tourist destination, conventionally shown with a crisp photographic image of azure waters that shimmer around uninhabited white sand beaches, fringed by tropical palms. Whilst these places exist, the artists in this exhibition posit a richer and more diverse expression of place.

Their saltwater country is a place of bounty and trade; the waters facilitate movement and contact; tidal and seasonal flows structure the rhythms of the day and the year; and the dramatic times of flood and storm bring terror and destruction but also renewal and change. Many of the artists featured in the exhibition have an intimate knowledge of the shoreline and the sea, and their works reflect very sensitive observations about this natural environment.

We recognise the knowledges that are vividly expressed in these artworks – they parallel the rising acknowledgement of the value of Indigenous understanding and observations to science. Over the past decade there has been a growing number of collaborations between Indigenous community members who are keen to express and share their knowledge with researchers and to use this combined work to help guide future land and sea management practices.<sup>(1)</sup> Such research has major implications for the understanding of Indigenous health issues, recognising the intimate relationship that the practice of caring for country has to an individual’s own health and well-being, and realising that the growing effects of climate change might, in turn, have stressful impacts upon individuals.<sup>(2)</sup>

**Rosella Namok**’s large glistening paintings distil, with a refined abstract visual language, the coastal landscapes of far north Queensland. Her paintings primarily have been an expression of her community of Lockhart River in eastern Cape York, and especially of her time spent fishing and travelling over water. Their vivid colours are often punctuated by mark-making that scrapes back the paint into patterns that suggest tidal flows and the elemental forces of rain, wind and storms. She depicts the sea in *Sunset Rain I* as a reflective surface for an extraordinary electric sunset seen through a veil of pelting tropical rain in the wet season. Recently, from her home in Cairns where she has lived for over ten years, the artist has been drawn to express her local environment, and *Stinging Rain...in*

*Yorkey Knob* is one of the first of her pictures to make a specific reference to this area.

**Mavis Ngallametta** lives on the western side of Cape York at Aurukun, a settlement at the meeting point of three great rivers. With its physically huge scale, her painting *Ikalath #6* literally expresses this expansive landscape, and the web of lines and dots and shapes that weave across the canvas are actually made from its earth. The artist has travelled by boat to her adopted son’s country to a place known as Ikalath on the coast, where cliffs rear up from the beach, and there she has collected a white and a yellow coloured ochre, has made the red by burning the yellow, and has taken the black from charcoal fires made on the beach and used all of these to make her work. The underlying blue primer, representing the mingling of the salt and fresh water with the land, is the only acrylic colour used. This practice of using things found in the landscape for making art is likely drawn from the artist’s longer practice of weaving using long leaves stripped from the pandanus and, more recently, from colourful but harmful ‘ghost nets’. Cast adrift by fishing vessels throughout Cape York and the Torres Strait, these long nets indiscriminately catch all manner of marine life in their path, and the sweeping flows of the current through the gulf eventually deposit them as piles of tangled rubbish onto the beaches.



Ngallametta was introduced to painting in 2008 when arts worker Gina Allain was invited to bring three senior women artists from the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) lands in central Australia to Aurukun for a weaving workshop. While staying in the community they also made some paintings and, inspired by the energy and creative focus of these women, Ngallametta began working on small canvases. Within a few years, the depth of her cultural knowledge combined with her personal flair have driven her to realise a suite of canvases on a vast scale. These supremely confident works have been painted against a backdrop of sad personal loss within the artist’s own family, of intense legal action contesting the designation of the Wik lands as Heritage Protected Wild Rivers and, more recently, of the negotiations towards the potential management and development of the lands for mining. Although the artist is not directly involved in these negotiations, it is relevant for the works to be read within this context. They can be seen to take on the tradition of grand history painting with their great complexity and detail and, rather than being regarded as a representation of the romanticised notion of a ‘timeless land’, they are very much of this time; each one a specific memory of a time spent visiting a place. The artist makes poignant reference to the rubbish and oil drums she finds when walking along the shore now – things that were never there before.<sup>(3)</sup>

Mavis Ngallametta stands in her boat with Tim O'Reilly and Dawn Koondumbin, Archer River system, Gulf of Carpentaria, 2012. Photography: Kerry Trapnell

**Ian Waldron’s** traditional country is further south on the western coast of Cape York near Normanton. Over one million acres of this land is now owned and managed by the Kurtjar Elders as Delta Downs Station, one of the largest landholdings by Aboriginal people in Australia. This station was established in the 1880s and Waldron’s family members have been involved in working on the station for generations.

Waldron works from photographs, memory and observation to construct his paintings to represent the many layers of history and experience on this land. His painting, *The Norman River, Kurtjar Country (Gulf of Carpentaria)*, is of the sweeping Norman River and features words in his mother’s language laid into the landscape of place names, seasons, birds and animals. To the side is the bloodwood tree, the artist’s totem. During the wet season, when the rivers flood over this flat landscape, the boundary between water and land merges and in this painting, a coast line is absent and, instead, the blue of sea and sky blurs into the brown earth.

Originally trained in commercial arts, Waldron later studied at university and there encountered the work of artist Imants Tillers. The two have since had an occasional artistic dialogue that also blurs distinctions of appropriation and referencing; in particular, Waldron’s use of multiple small panels and text.

This reclaiming of place through language is also addressed in the work of **Megan Cope**. The eight-minute video, *Toponymic Interventions #3*, was made while on an artist camp on South Stradbroke Island – the long and narrow sand island directly adjacent to the Gold Coast. Cope has made her words as large-scale projections, filming them at night with the names of places, exultations and expressions literally projected onto the dunes, grasses and mangroves. Over the days before the filming, the artist spent time walking and looking over the island, then researched words in Yugambeh language that would describe the places and the emotions that she felt: *Nimbulima ngolongmai* – return soon; *baloon* – swamp; *Tuleen* – the name of a small mangrove-covered island in the Broadwater. Under a full moon, the words fade slowly into the night, but we are left with the sense that the artist has recovered language in a beautiful and potent way. Being on the island was a new experience for Cope, who, although a Quandamooka woman with heritage from North Stradbroke Island which lies only a few hundred metres north of this point, had never been onto this southern island.

Cope’s work often involves an interrogation of maps and mapping. She finds old parish maps and layers them with contemporary and future projections of sea rises to construct a multilayered description of place. Further research on South Stradbroke Island led to her painting *jumpinpin* – the name of the sea passage that is the northernmost point of the island. Historical maps are not always easy to compare to the present-day geography, and what made this particular area more challenging to define is the story of how the islands came to be separated. In 1894 the Glaswegian vessel, *Cambus Wallace*, on her maiden voyage, foundered on the sand bar in heavy seas and broke up, with the loss of five sailors. It was carrying a cargo of whiskey, dynamite and fancy goods. Locals quickly retrieved the whiskey but, because of the obvious danger, the dynamite was blown up where it lay. This action is believed to have caused the sand to become unstable, and two years later the sand bar collapsed, sending the sea rushing into the quiet waters of the Broadwater. Almost instantly, a thriving oyster industry and a shallow water ecology were destroyed, but Cope reflects that

her people now would have been prevented from walking onto this southern part of their island, and that would have had a significant impact on their way of life.

The waterline mark of the high tide is the place where **Judy Watson** has looked closely for what it reveals about the past; approaching it in a similar way as her works on canvas, which she describes as a ‘memory skin’. *“I am always interested in that leakage or that transportation of materials that you see along tide lines – the stingray holes, that sort of thing, those sorts of forms; it is what is left behind that is important to me.”*

Watson has developed four groups of works for *Saltwater Country* involving a range of different materials and processes. These include casting objects and shapes in bronze, painting onto unstretched canvas, and printing and painting onto copper sheets. Some of the works began their development at an artist camp held on South Stradbroke Island on the Gold Coast Broadwater in March 2014. There Watson particularly observed the rounded depressions left on the sand flats where stingrays nestle during high tide, each one with a flicker of a tail mark pointing towards the shore. Later, at Burrum Heads, south of Bundaberg near her father’s country, Watson worked with family members and friends to make plaster casts of these depressions, and those forms have been sand-cast in bronze and installed as fluttering cloud-like shapes which hover just above the gallery floor.

Watson’s second work in bronze, *dead littoral*, was cast using the lost wax technique from objects found washed up on the shoreline at various sites along the Queensland coast. The littoral zone is classified as the area between the high water mark, which is rarely inundated, and the lower area, which is permanently submerged. An attractive and easy place to walk, it is also the place to find things that have been disconnected from their point of origin – objects that are ‘dead’.

The ten objects that the artist has selected and cast are displayed in a line and installed as if floating, on a clear shelf. They include a kelp root, plastic float, a severed turtle skull and chest bones and a giant shell, likely of the *Syrinx aruanus*, the world’s largest snail – the giant whelk. Each of these has its own narrative; the shell is the largest marine gastropod and can grow to a length of 70 cm. This rare large specimen with damage to the shell, found by the artist, is 27 cm long. Kelp is known as the rainforest of the sea and is generally found in cold waters off Tasmania and south-eastern Australia where it shelters

and supports a whole range of other marine life. As the oceans warm, there is concern that the kelp forests will retreat. The turtle skull shows evidence of having been sharply severed from the body, a sad fate for this ancient mammal. The north Queensland coast, because of its relatively sparse population, is one of the most important sites for turtle population in the world, yet these numbers have declined over the past thirty years through impact of human encounter, disease and feral animals.

Watson’s bronzes are dark, slightly blackened, and their patina has been chosen by the artist as a reference to the devastating effects of the oil spillage by the *Pacific Adventurer* in 2009 where 270 tonnes of oil were lost in high seas into Moreton Bay. *“The oil spill that left traces along our coastline coated objects in a dark oil slick, conjuring ideas of a deadly embalming of our coastal collateral damage.”*<sup>(4)</sup>

Watson’s painting on canvas references her long-standing interest in mapping and the way that maps are often a statement of power that represent historical, political and cultural understanding of place. *“I was interested in the Matthew Flinders’ expedition and how it touches on places from the gulf through to the east coast. I was interested in following his boat from Blue Mud Bay in Arnhem Land around to the Queensland coast. I am interested in the north-west Queensland gulf country, where my mother’s family is from, through to Burrum Heads where my dad’s family is from and the saltwater connections there.”*<sup>(5)</sup>

The artist had the opportunity to see the rare original copies of these important maps made in 1802–1807 by Matthew Flinders.<sup>(6)</sup> Flinders had taken Bungaree, an Aboriginal man from the Sydney region, on this voyage around the coast and his maps feature notes about specific past events such as Captain Bligh’s voyage through the Torres Strait in 1789. Watson’s painting traces the section of coastline drawn in *A chart of the Gulph [sic] of Carpentaria and the neighbouring parts, 1807*. These maps were made while Flinders was held in detention by the French on Mauritius. Through her over-painting of this map, the artist brings these events of world history into connection with her own family histories and their intimate knowledge of that part of the coast, represented by the hovering, fluttering shape of the stingray form.

The sculptures of **Ken Thaiday** draw from both his traditional cultural background of Erub Island in the Torres Strait, as well as his strong Christian beliefs. Fishing, and a life spent around the rhythms of the sea with the birds and fish that live alongside him, populate Thaiday’s creative imagination, and as he speaks about his works they become animated both with movement and character. For each of the sculptures, the artist designs a mechanism to make it move; strings to be pulled, levers, joints, balancing points – all to give life to the sculpture, for the artist considers that to be still and static would be empty of power. The design of these animations is based upon observation and an intimate knowledge of behaviour and place, and a desire to express this essential character in movement. The frigate bird is an important totem for the artist, and Thaiday admiringly describes the bird’s skills in capturing fish by circling high above the water then darting down with wings straight like an arrow into the water to retrieve its prey.

The sculptures themselves are often designed to be worn as a mask or headdress or held in the hand as a ‘dance machine’. In one of these, the artist has made what he describes as a landscape of his home island of Erub; its distinctive mountain rising from the sea; the sun, moon and the morning star rises; the red hibiscus flower blooms – all essential elements of the daily cycle of life on the island. The whaleboat comes from the artist’s memory of the days on the island before long jetties were built, and supplies had to be rowed ashore in old whaleboats.

The wet tropics of north Queensland, where dense rainforest meets coral reef, is a landscape unique in Australia. **Napolean Oui** lives here, close to where his maternal grandmother was born just north of Cairns and has worked as a dancer and cultural storyteller for a number of years at Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, one of the oldest Aboriginal-owned dance and interpretive centres. Oui began working as a visual artist after 2009 and undertook a personal research project to learn about one of the strongest expressions of his traditional cultural heritage – that of the rainforest shield, to form the basis for his contemporary art practice.

These shields were made from hardwood timber, each one carved with unique patterns that expressed the traditional knowledge and identity of the maker as an initiated man. Very few remained within communities as they were usually destroyed upon the passing of an individual, and so the only way to see them today is to identify those held in museum or private collections. In interpreting these designs, Oui is very clear about not intending to copy or replicate a traditional design, but sees his work as a creative contemporary re-interpretation.

For the group of four works in *Saltwater Country*, the artist uses deep coloured oilstick on bark cloth, a traditional material made from rainforest timbers, and he relishes the potential of creating a rhythm of abstracted forms. As a rainforest man, Oui lives close to the freshwater that cascades through this country, but he also has a close connection to the saltwater and recalls that it would be common to go down to the sea at least once a month to fish. His work references his memory of seeing stone fish-traps made at the water’s edge. These large traps, made of low rock walls, dot the coastline of the state and were made in a variety of designs, depending on the typography, and usually maintained by a local family. The fish would come in at the high tide and as the water receded would be trapped, making them easier to spear or catch with a small net.<sup>(7)</sup> ●

### Histories

As beautiful as the subtropical beaches are, this coastline is also a dramatically contested place. The resonance of the beach, as the historic site of first contact and colonial engagement, layers the way that a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists symbolically and conceptually render this meeting point between land and sea.

**Michael Cook** uses highly constructed and staged photography to re-vision the encounters between the earliest explorers and colonists to Australia from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Portuguese, Dutch, French and English each brought their own value judgements and perceptions of what represented civilised behaviour, and Cook’s work sharply interrogates these attitudes.

The *Civilised* series places his subjects on the shoreline – the highly charged site of encounter – with the viewer



Judy WATSON, *flinders chart, cottonwood leaves*, 2014. Ink on copper shim: group of five elements. Dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane QLD. Assisted by David Jones and Carolyn Craig. Photography: Murray Waite

looking out to sea, forcing the viewer to imagine themselves watching from an Aboriginal perspective as these new arrivals came ashore.

Looking closely at conventions of portrait paintings of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries at the National Gallery in London, Cook noticed how the figures are painted with a sharp intensity bathed in light, while the backgrounds are muted and retreating. His earlier practice as a fashion photographer gave him skills in developing a visual narrative and placing his models on a constructed stage. Moving into art practice he carefully developed the objects and costumes for his models, many of whom he has known since childhood, and has staged them in poses that reflect the modes of encounter that occurred over two centuries of first contact: the missionary brandishing a Bible; an adventurer or explorer searching for bounty in new lands; or a colonialist, lofty with uniform and gun sitting high upon a horse. The series both seduces and disorients, and a feeling of deep sadness pervades the images for the loss of opportunity for a genuine respectful relationship between the Indigenous peoples and those who came to take their land.

A number of artists in the exhibition have made works that respond to events that happened later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which occurred around the coastline and were distinctive to the history of Queensland. These include the missionary activity; the dark history of indentured labour – blackbirding – whereby South Sea Islanders were brought to work in the vast cane fields of the tropical north; and the multiracial pearling industry that developed in the Torres Strait and the practices of forced Aboriginal labour in the fishing industry.

**Fiona Foley**’s diverse practice includes site-specific installation, staged photography, painting and sculpture. She identifies strongly as a Badtjala woman whose traditional country is the great sand island known as Fraser Island off the coast of central Queensland. Foley’s work powerfully draws together her own personal and family experiences to uncover lesser-known histories of colonial displacement, violence, racism and exploitation – often told with an enticing beauty that initially draws the viewer into the work.

Foley’s practice is informed by rigorous research into what are often little understood or unacknowledged stories within Australian colonial history. Her series, *The Oyster Fishermen*, was initially informed by her reading of research by Shirleene Robinson<sup>(8)</sup> into the history of forced Aboriginal child and women’s labour in the Queensland fishing industry around the turn of the century.

With close attention to detail, the artist has developed the idea for a narrative sequence that would tell this story. Foley researched the objects and fabrics of the day, and she places herself in the position of a woman beaten and abused and left to die at the hands of a team of fishermen, a group shown early in the sequence as ‘good Christians’ reading the Bible. In making this contemporary work on her own country, the place where these events occurred, the artist effectively reclaims this forgotten history and brings it into collective consciousness.

A number of artists have referenced museum collections and museology in the creation of their work, critiquing and commenting upon the way that institutions nationally and internationally have framed and structured the histories of their culture.

**Daniel Boyd**’s art practice is often concerned with investigating the way in which historical representations in photography and art frame our view of the past and, as such, inform culture in the present. The thinking about these issues is bound up in his knowledge and connection to his own family history.

Boyd lives in Sydney and grew up just south of Cairns, and he describes himself as very much a saltwater man. He recalls how his extended family virtually spent all their time by the beach and is affectionately known locally as the ‘beach dogs’.

Boyd’s great-great-grandfather was from Pentecost Island in the South Pacific. He was one of a generation of men forced to leave their islands and come to Queensland as an indentured labourer, joining over 60,000 others to build up the sugar industry in Queensland’s far north over a period of forty years from the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Boyd’s great-great-grandmother was from the Daintree area of far north Queensland.

In his recent series of paintings, Boyd particularly looks to photography, not because he imagines that the historical image is a faithful and accurate record of the past, but instead to express what remains obscured or misunderstood. In his painting, *Untitled*, beneath a veil of slightly raised monochrome dots, a group of young girls in grass skirts are dancing together. The artist redraws the original photograph, taken by missionaries on Pentecost Island in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in charcoal onto the canvas. Boyd sees the shrouding of the image with these dots as a metaphor; a prism by which historical understanding is fractured, and he leaves the spaces in between as the unexplainable void. He notes that missionary activity on the island was desperately keen to convert the islanders, but that, undoubtedly, mutual misunderstanding saw them have little success with conversions. Just discernable is the expression of the smallest girl as she turns to look to the older girls around her to watch what they do. This intimate painting, made as a gift for the artist’s young twin nieces, offers them a glimpse of and connection with their cultural past.

Like a number of artists in *Saltwater Country*, Boyd interrogates the ways in which objects are collected, displayed and stored in museums, and seeks to express how these museological practices frame our understanding of these objects. He undertook a residency at the National History Museum in London in 2012 and, within their vast collections, was able to view the journals, artwork and objects from Captain James Cook’s First Fleet voyages to the Pacific and the east coast of Australia. One drawer that Boyd pulled out revealed a whole group of flutes from Pentecost Island. The artist has taken these small delicate objects as he found them, lying mute and probably silent for over two centuries, and repainted them on a grand scale, taking obvious delight in being able to re-discover their vigorous geometric patterns.

The museum has recently developed special boxes to store the human skulls that were collected in the colonial period and which still remain there. These boxes are designed in such a way that the skull does not have to be handled in order to be viewed. Boyd has made his own vitrine using these boxes, and has placed inside a copy of an image of a fish painted by one of the artists on Cook’s voyage, which has been drawn from the collection and covered by the same veil of dots. ●

## People

**Vernon Ah Kee** forcefully brings together historical knowledge with contemporary expression. The two large finely drawn portraits of his teenage son, Gavin, directly appropriate the formal scientific photographic methods of Dr Norman Tindale who, in his role as anthropologist with the South Australian Museum, conducted extensive field trips throughout Australia from the 1920s to the 1950s. Ah Kee has looked closely at the images from the field trip Tindale undertook in north Queensland in 1938 with American anthropologist Joseph Birdsell, when they visited the coastal and island Government Settlement and Mission communities of Yarrabah, Cherbourg, Mona Mona, Palm Island and Woorabinda.

With unquestioning scientific confidence, they aimed to systematically measure and record the people there in order to determine their genetic profile and, by taking detailed genealogical notes about each person’s family, the scientists proposed to assess the impact of their contact with white settlement. In each of these black and white photographic images, the Aboriginal person looks back at the camera with an unflinching stare, very likely uncomfortable in knowing that they are being treated as a genetic curiosity.

Ah Kee has found his own family members in these old photographs and, over a number of years, has redrawn them in such a way that demonstrates a powerful reconnection with them as individuals. These are portraits on a grand scale, the viewer cannot help but be awed by the quiet intensity of their gaze, and the fluid lines of charcoal that the artist builds up to create their form. These works effectively counter and dispel the arrogance of the original anthropological method and they state powerfully the family ties of people connected to the saltwater.

A second body of work in the exhibition reflects on more recent Australian history. The artist comments that *cantchant* “is a critique of beach culture and beach psychology and how that informs Australian national culture. It also critiques the so-called ‘riot, clash or uprising’ on Palm Island in 2004. And it critiques the Cronulla riot as well.”<sup>(9)</sup>

In an individual photographic work from this *cantchant* project, *wegrewhere #2*, Ah Kee has dressed his cousins from head to toe in the latest high street surf fashions and placed these men on the iconic beachfront at Surfers Paradise, holding surfboards painted with rainforest shield designs – not to make them look like they fitted in, but to highlight the awkwardness and sense of exclusion that a contemporary Aboriginal person feels in this environment. “... *Nobody goes to the beach like that. They just want to fit in, and they think that is how you dress. As much as they want to fit in, their skin colour excludes them.*”

In contrast, *wegrewhere #3* shows the athletic exuberance of Aboriginal surfer Dale Richards as he flies off the lip of a breaking wave at one of the famous southern Gold Coast surf breaks. In 2007 Richards was the first Aboriginal surfer to qualify for a place at a local World Championship Tour event, and this work celebrates his natural grace and intimate belonging to this saltwater environment in a contemporary way.

Contemporary events and the potential for artwork to effect change propels early career artist **Ryan Presley**. He writes, “*All you have to do is pay genuine attention to the multitude of actions and events that unfold regularly around us; to witness these and contemplate how they may affect our lives in myriad ways... This is what fuels my need to shape my artwork the way*

*I do; to attempt to be politically aware and to refute in some way what is happening around me.*”<sup>(10)</sup>

His fine linocuts immediately dazzle with their graphic skill, and *Good Co-op, Bad Cop* has the kind of visual complexity found in the prints of M.C. Escher. Although Presley has studied Escher’s work, he does so for the technique and avoids the kind of empty play of visual effect often found in this Dutch graphic artist’s work. In contrast, Presley’s chains become a never-ending pattern, transforming a fluid sea into a symbolic web of constriction surrounding a divided police force – the bad within the good, the good within the bad – represented here by the little shark within the big shark. The artist is referencing the events of 2004 following the death of Mulrunji Doomadgee in police custody on Palm Island. The shark is the most feared of marine creatures, and Presley intends to draw a parallel between the methods of this great ocean hunter as it cruises the depths for prey, and the way that police might patrol the streets.

The more recent work, *The Good Shepherd*, makes less overt reference to a single political event, but rather takes the form of a multilayered narrative scroll. Presley moved to Brisbane from Alice Springs as a boy and attended school and now university there, so his practice draws from these experiences. This kind of movement over vast distances between states and away from the traditional country that individuals associate with, is increasingly common for Indigenous families – but it does not now mean a complete disconnect with those places. This is reflected in Presley’s work that weaves together the artist’s family heritage from Northern Territory, the Christian symbols imparted in desert communities through missionary activity, and the artist’s own attraction to Russian icons and the idea that these are not meant to be considered as a visual representation of a religious subject but are actually the embodiment of spiritual phenomena.



**Brian Robinson** has been described as a contemporary traditionalist<sup>(11)</sup> and, like Presley, draws literally from a constellation of visual references. Apart from the lush tropical growth outside that threatens to overtake his tight studio in Cairns from where his large sculptural works emerge, the visitor might imagine they are in the creative space of an inner city artist; a host of his favorite contemporary characters from the Simpsons, Marvel and Disney jostle each other on the shelves and around the large-screen computers; spray cans of brilliantly hued paints are lined up; and sheets of acrylic are ready to be cut. Robinson is from the generation that has experienced rapid

Brian Robinson visits Art Under Pressure, street and skate art and supply store, 1342 U Street, Washington DC, October 2014. Photography: Virginia Rigney

globalisation via the media which meant that, although growing up in one of the remotest communities in the world on Waiben Island and spending most of his time out on the dinghy with his grandfather or on the wharf fishing, he also watched Saturday morning cartoons. At school his art books introduced him to the Renaissance masters Michelangelo and Leonardo, and in these powerful masculine figures the artist has found a universal connection to the great Torres Strait Islander stories – many of whose mythologies were also played out around the sea and islands of the Mediterranean. “...*With the strong cult figures such as Achilles, Zeus, Poseidon and the tragedy of Icarus, I was thinking of these powerful heroes and warriors and finding similarities with Torres Strait heroes such as Kulam, Waikimab and Amipurur. Tying these things together and seeing what parallels are present, like the great sea voyages that the big Torres Strait canoes used to make, and finding connections between those and the voyages of Jason and the Argonauts.*”<sup>(12)</sup>

With sweeping arabesque shapes rippling in three dimensions, Robinson’s major work for *Saltwater Country, Woven Waters*, combines his childhood memory of the wharf as the place where everything happened on the island, the spear and line fishing that is integral to daily life, and the powerful forces of stories that bind the culture together. Dazzling colour and sprayed–on pattern reflect the distinctive Torres Strait aesthetic love of embellishment and pattern, and the many layers of the relief sculpture suggest the complexity and richness that is bound up within the artist’s creative imagination.

Through their work, a number of artists reflect that the beach and waterways are sites charged with contemporary concerns over environmental climate change, pollution and human impact.

**Laurie Nilsen** has been active as an artist and mentor to a generation of young Indigenous artists in Brisbane since the late 1980s. His own work for *Saltwater Country* has, at its starting point, the artist’s own deep love of fishing and being on the water. Like Presley, Nilsen has moved to the east coast city of Brisbane from inland, where his most memorable childhood experiences revolved around swimming and fishing in the freshwater rivers around Roma. *Once were fishermen* is an installation that is both a message to us all and a salient warning to his own community. The graceful shape of a traditional fibrous fish trap is remade with spikey barbed wire – a material often used by the artist for his sculptural work that references his time spent working in the bush with this ubiquitous fencing material. Inside the trap, instead of fish, we find a catch of plastic rubbish, bottles, containers and wrappings that the artist has found at the mouth of the Brisbane River. Projected behind is a time lapse sequence filmed there that gives us a view of the way the tide rises and falls over the mangroves, together with a sequence of texts. Apart from the obvious visual pollution this rubbish represents, Nilsen’s concern is also that the plastic breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces that fish invariably swallow and so enters our own food chain.

A second trap contains a new species to nature, a ‘fish–finger’ fish – possibly the most common ‘fish’ that a child might encounter on their plate, now that cost and convenience have replaced any connection with the waterways.

Given the importance of fishing, it is not surprising that another reinterpretation of a fish trap is presented in the exhibition, this one made by a collective of artists from Erub, one of the most north–eastern islands of the Torres Strait. Known also as Darnley Island, Erub is closer to New Guinea than to

mainland Australia and is home to 400 residents who reflect the island’s diverse cultural history of contact and inter–marriage between local people and those from Polynesia, Melanesia and Japan who were drawn there to participate in the fishing and pearling industry. Formed by volcanic activity, Erub’s distinctive mountain rises from the shallow turquoise waters that surround it. Life is shaped intimately by connection to the sea – even travel between the islands is referred to, not in kilometres, but in the fuel required for a boat to get from one place to another.

**Erub Arts** had its origins in the 1990s as the craft group Ekkilau, and in 2008 Erub Arts became the first incorporated Arts Centre in the Torres Strait. Artists there began working primarily with linoleum–cut printing, ceramic sculpture and textile printing. In 2010 the Centre hosted its first workshop using abandoned fishing net as the primary material. These ‘ghost nets’, as they are known, have become a major environmental scourge in the seas around Cape York and the Torres Strait. Once they are lost by commercial fishing operations, they continue to trawl the ocean, indiscriminately catching all manner of marine life and finally washing onto the beaches in giant mounds. A ranger program was initially supported to collect these nets and a community arts organisation, Ghost Nets Australia, originally organised workshops to introduce weaving techniques and sculptural practices to a number of communities. Weaving is an essential traditional practice throughout the Torres Strait using coconut and pandanus leaf to make a wide variety of objects including cooking implements, mats, fishing nets, sails, and as part of worn ceremonial costume, so there was a both a familiarity with technique as well as a community practice of sitting and working together to make such objects.<sup>(13)</sup> The tough ghost net is not an easy material to work, and must be sorted and unraveled, but within a few years the community has produced a number of significant large sculptural works as well as smaller individual objects of sea life, baskets and body ornamentation.

The work, *Weres*, made for *Saltwater Country* was a major initiative involving fifteen artists<sup>(14)</sup>, and the idea for the project was developed with Erub Arts as a mentoring opportunity facilitated by artists Judy Watson and Lynnette Griffiths. The weres is a small hand–held fish trap made from bamboo that is used to scoop up the darting silver sardines as they swim at the water’s edge. The translation of this object into a fully realised artwork installation involved extensive collaboration, starting with singing the traditional song and retelling the story by Elder Moa Sailor, with translations provided by Elder Billy Bourne, then drawing out and welding the steel frame, sorting and selecting a muted palette of net, and the underwater filming of a shoal of sardines. A drawing workshop with Judy Watson led to the development of a complementary new textile print.

The artists conceived the integration of projected video with the net as a critical element of the display, and the final installation reveals an exciting play of shadow and movement against the elegant shape of the traditional form.

This willing capability of finding new forms of expression drawn from traditional visual culture and language is also found in the work of senior Torres Strait Islander artist **Alick Tipoti**. His extraordinary linoleum–cut prints, one of which extends to over eight metres long, are the most widely recognised element of this artist’s practice, and these prints invariably express a direct relationship to the sea and to dance and song; all of these elements intimately bound as the artist’s creative expression<sup>(15)</sup>. For example, *Dhangalaw Kab*, his new hand–coloured print for

Alick Tipoti with his personal dictionary of language of Badu Island, Cairns, 2013. Photography: Virginia Rigney



the exhibition, depicts a mother dugong about to give birth to her calf. She is guided on her journey into the shallow waters by a song performed by the ancestors who ride upon her back.

Tipoti has drawn deep cultural knowledge of language and custom from his family background on Badu Island. He channels this knowledge through all forms of his art practice and also leads the Zugubal Dancers, performing both at important private family ceremonial occasions and public festivals.

The performance art work presented in this exhibition is projected at human scale and features the artist using his voice, dancing and wearing a mask and adornments that he has made. The masks of the Torres Strait are a unique art form combining animal and human characters, and are traditionally made from the products of the sea: flakes of shell, shark teeth, bone, and cut and shaped hawksbill turtle shell. Tipoti has had to travel to museums around the world to view these masks – which were collected by institutions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries – as few remain in Australia. There he has sung to them and absorbed the cultural knowledge that they embody.<sup>(16)</sup> The contemporary use of turtle shell is not allowed, and Tipoti has adapted contemporary material of fibreglass to create the base shape of his masks. He has also used this material to make an oversized sculptural form of the bu – the conch shell – which is traditionally used like a trumpet to call for ceremonial purposes.

Audiences have become familiar with seeing Islander dance performed as celebratory occasions at festivals, but in the work for *Saltwater Country* we see the artist alone emerging from darkness – referencing the traditional Islander practice of dance taking place at night with dancers illuminated by flame light.

We hear Tipoti coming before we can see him, rattling his chain of skulls, his deep voice booming and the drum beating. The three works he presents have different intentions, and these are expressed in the titles of the works – *testing the area/ guarding the grounds/checking for bad spirits; calling of and communicating with the spiritual ancestors*; and *songs and chants to acknowledge the spiritual ancestors*.

In making artworks about these issues and places, of their shared past and their private experiences, these artists are redefining the practice of caring for country in contemporary ways; they are leaders in their communities and they offer us new understandings and ways of appreciating the rich and beautiful landscape of Queensland’s coastal waters and the narratives and histories embedded within them. ●

Virginia Rigney  
*Saltwater Country* Curator

Notes

- (1) See for example: Donna Green, Jack Billy and Alo Tapim, ‘Indigenous Australians’ knowledge of weather and climate’, *Climatic Change* 100, 2010, pp. 337–354. DOI 10.1007/s10584-010-9803-z
- Kristen Maclean and the Bana Yaralji Bubu Inc., *Water Dreaming: Kuku Nyungkal People, Culture and Water in the Wet Tropics*, CSIRO, 2011.
- Marcus Barber, Susan Jackson, Jeff Shellberg and Viv Sinnamon, ‘Working Knowledge: characterising collective indigenous, scientific, and local knowledge about the ecology, hydrology and geomorphology of Oriners Station, Cape York Peninsula, Australia’, *The Rangeland Journal* 36, CSIRO Publishing, 2013, pp. 53–66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/RJ13083>
- ‘Indigenous Engagement with Science: towards deeper understandings’. Report prepared by the Expert Working Group on Indigenous Engagement with Science, chaired by Winthrop Professor Jill Milroy, AM, Dean, School of Indigenous Studies, University of Western Australia. Published by Inspiring Australia: Department of Innovation, Industry, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, ACT, 2013. <http://www.innovation.gov.au/>
- (2) See: Donna Green and Liz Minchin, ‘Living on Climate-Changed Country: Indigenous Health, Well-Being and Climate Change in Remote Australian Communities’, *EcoHealth* 11, 2014, pp. 263–272. DOI 10.1007/s10393-013-0892-9
- Stephen Garnett, Bev Sithole, Peter Whitehead, Paul Burgess, Fay Johnston and Tess Lea, ‘Healthy Country, Healthy People: Policy Implications of Links Between Indigenous Human Health and Environmental Condition in Tropical Australia’, *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 68, 2009, pp. 53–66.
- (3) Conversation with the artist and Gina Allain, 7 August 2014.
- (4) Judy Watson, Email to author, 1 September 2014.
- (5) Judy Watson, Recorded conversation, South Stradbroke Island, March 2014.
- (6) Over the summer of 2013, the artist traveled to see *Mapping Our World: Terra Incognita to Australia* at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT.
- (7) See: Ian Waters, ‘The Toorbul Point Aboriginal Fish Trap’, The University of Queensland Department of Anthropology and Sociology. Unpublished essay, 1985. Accessed 8 August 2014. <https://www.library.uq.edu.au/ojs/index.php/qar/article/viewFile/306/348>
- Michael J. Rowland and Sean Ulm, ‘Indigenous Fish Traps and Weirs of Queensland’ *Queensland Archaeological Research* 14, 2011. Accessed 8 August 2014. <https://www.library.uq.edu.au/ojs/index.php/qar/article/view/1892/1910>
- (8) Shirleene Robinson, *Something like Slavery? Queensland’s Aboriginal Child Workers 1842–1945*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne, 2008.
- (9) Vernon Ah Kee, Interview by Michael Aird, 7 May 2014.
- (10) Ryan Presley, ‘Outlearn them, outlive them and know more than they do’, *Blak Wave* exhibition catalogue, Next Wave Festival, Melbourne, 2014, p. 37. Co-Curators: Tahjee Moar and Emily Sexton.
- (11) Beverley Mitchell, ‘the contemporary traditionalist: media and themes in the work of Brian Robinson’, *Brian Robinson: men+Gods*, Djumbunji Press, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, 2012, pp. 21–54.
- (12) ‘I would eat art if I could’, Interview with Brian Robinson by Sally Donald and Amanda Black, *ibid.*, p. 19.
- (13) Lindsay Wilson, ‘The islands of the Torres Strait’, *Aratjara: art of the first Australians: traditional and contemporary works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists*. Exhibition catalogue conceived and published by Bernhard Luthi in collaboration with Gary Lee. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany; Louisiana Museum, Humlebæk, Denmark; Hayward Gallery, London, et al., 1993, p. 102.
- (14) Erub Artists: Milla Anson, Emma Gela, Florence Gutchen, Lavinia Ketchell, Nancy Kiwat, Nancy Naawi, Racy Oui-Pitt, Alma Sailor, Ellarose Savage, Jimmy Thaiday. Collaborating artist: Ceferino Sabatino. For a full list of project participants, see page 84.
- (15) See the exhibition, *Performative Prints from the Torres Strait*, The Arts Centre, Melbourne, 2013. Works by Brian Robinson, Alick Tipoti, Ellen Jose, Ricardo Idagi. Curator: Dr Steven Tonkin. Archived: <http://performingartscollection.wordpress.com/2013/04/09/performative-prints-from-the-torres-strait/>. Accessed 12 August 2014.
- (16) Author conversation with Curator of World Cultures, Pat Allan, August 2012, regarding the visit by Alick Tipoti to Glasgow Museums Scotland to view items collected by Glaswegian missionaries in the Torres Strait in the 1890s. Alick Tipoti was awarded a British Council Accelerate Grant in 2011 to travel to museums in Britain.

THE ARTISTS

Image  
Intertidal zone, Burrum Heads,  
central Queensland  
Photography: Judy Watson

MEGAN COPE .....24

DANIEL BOYD .....28

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LAURIE NILSEN .....44

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NAPOLEAN OUI .....76

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MEGAN COPE  
Melbourne VIC



Megan Cope, 2014 / Photography: Alex Chomicz

My arts practice investigates issues relating to identity, environment and mapping practices. The video works that I have developed and have titled *Toponymic Interventions* are a natural extension of my mapping works. I am interested in place names and people’s names and how they relate to space, and I am very interested in the movement of people and the changing environment.

I usually talk about Aboriginal people because I am Aboriginal, and I guess it is normal to investigate that aspect of my history.

In my physical maps I write Aboriginal language groups’, people’s and place names back into the landscape. With these projections I am taking it one step further and projecting it into the physical space. Some of them can be quite haunting.

With my painting works, I talk about the sea level rising with a four–degree rise in temperature. So on a low island, I think even more and more about reclamation of these islands via the sea, imagining it in a completely different way.

**Megan Cope**  
South Stradbroke Island, 19 March 2014

Images

Page 25  
Megan COPE  
*jumpinpin* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 77 x 77 cm (circular)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Murray Waite

Page 26  
Megan COPE  
*Toponymic Interventions #3* 2014 (still)  
Single channel video (8:39 mins)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Alex Chomicz

Page 27  
Megan COPE  
*Toponymic Interventions #3* 2014 (still)  
Single channel video (8:39 mins)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Alex Chomicz





26.



27.

DANIEL BOYD

Sydney NSW



Daniel Boyd, 2014 / Photography: Mick Richards

I grew up in Cairns, and my relatives... we all grew up by the sea, so we are saltwater people. My family live at Giangurra on the way to Yarrabah<sup>(1)</sup>, so whenever we have a family gathering we go back there. We are known as the 'beach dogs' and so we have that kind of connection to the beach and the water. We hunt food in the saltwater – it's a big part of who we are as a people. I think we have a special connection to the water.

My approach to history painting is more lateral. The idea that the surface is made up of multiple lenses – cultural lenses – it's a way of bringing more people into the work and it's a way of telling a story about who I am, but also connects to as many people as possible.

Looking at the history of Blackbirding<sup>(2)</sup> – in Australia making a work that relates to that is also connecting all those people back in Queensland and northern New South Wales who have that connection to that history.

In 2011, I was artist-in-residence at the Natural History Museum in London. My starting point there were the watercolours of the First Fleet collection. Not everyone knows that the Museum has close to 30,000 individuals (skeletal remains) in their basement. I think it was really good for the Museum to allow me to work with this material that was quite a sensitive subject. That's where the watercolour of the fish comes from – the First Fleet collection. Basically the fish didn't look too happy to be in the library in the Natural History Museum in the special collections, so I had to bring the fish back to Sydney – so that's where that work came from.

Daniel Boyd  
Sydney, April 2014

Images

Page 29 (top)  
Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2014  
Oil and archival glue on linen  
Dimensions: 97 x 84 cm  
Private collection and courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Jessica Maurer

Page 29 (bottom)  
Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2013  
Oil and archival glue on polyester  
Dimensions: 198 x 168 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney  
Photography: Ivan Buljan

Pages 30–31  
Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2012  
Oil and archival glue on photocopy in Natural History Museum skull box  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 x 6 cm (total size, comprising two elements)  
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney  
Photography: Ivan Buljan

Notes

- (1) Yarrabah is just south of Cairns in far north Queensland.  
(2) Blackbirding is a term used to refer to kidnapping or coercing people through deception to work as labourers.





FIONA FOLEY  
Hervey Bay QLD



Fiona Foley, 2012 / Photography: Mick Richards

I came across a chapter in this book (*Something like slavery? Queensland's Aboriginal child workers, 1842–1945*. Author, Dr Shirleene Robinson)<sup>(3)</sup>, about the fishing industry in Queensland which reached its height in the 1880s. There were two big industries ... the bêche-de-mer and the pearling industry, and what used to happen, unbeknownst to a lot of people here in Queensland, is that they used to kidnap Aboriginal people – men, women and children up along the east coast – and they would take them on these luggers (shipping vessels). Up to 40 Aboriginal people on these boats, and they would work them really hard, and also there was a lot of brutality that took place on these boats – so it's another aspect of this hidden history that we have here in this country.

Through reading that particular chapter, it fascinated me ... they did take people from Fraser Island and so I thought, wouldn't it be great historically to make a work that is related to this history but also to do the work back on my country at Hervey Bay and Fraser Island.

The idea for the work, the photographic series *The Oyster Fishermen*, sat with me for about two years and I scouted out different locations on the Island and the mainland, and I had the dress made, based on an old mission dress from a black-and-white historical photograph of an Aboriginal woman in a mission. There are threads that run through the work. There is the blue dress – that is the only colour, the rest is sepia tone. I wanted a sense of the violence that was being perpetrated against this woman. There are other threads – there are three fish heads relating to the three men in the series ... and the 'hiddenness' of the woman and the reveal, and I wanted that to be a part of the work as well.

Notes

This is an edited transcript of an interview with Fiona Foley in association with the exhibition *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, June 2013, and originally shown on QAGOMA TV, <http://tv.qagoma.qld.gov.au/2013/05/29/fiona-foley-artist-interview-the-oyster-fishermen-2011/>  
Reproduced with kind permission of the artist and Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art

(3) Dr Shirleene Robinson, *Something like slavery? Queensland's Aboriginal child workers, 1842–1945*. Australian Scholarly Press, Melbourne, 2008.

Images

Page 33 (top)  
Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #1* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

Page 33 (bottom)  
Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #2* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne





Images

(top left) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #4* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 103 x 85 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(bottom left) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #5* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(top right) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #8* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(bottom right) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #10* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(top left) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #11* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(bottom left) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #12* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(top right) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #15* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

(bottom right) Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #16* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane, and Niagara  
Galleries, Melbourne

# VERNON AH KEE

Brisbane QLD



Vernon Ah Kee, 2014 / Photography: Michael Aird

I have done work around the beach, trying to think of the psychology of the beach and in the context of Australia. The psychology of what it is to be Australian is very much about the beach. Wherever you are in Australia, everybody knows how far they are from the coast.

Even people from the central deserts, who have not seen saltwater, know how far from the coast they are. I think it is part of the Australian psyche. I find it really interesting that everybody thinks of themselves in relation to their proximity to the coast, to the beach. So in that way, we are all saltwater people.

*cantchant*<sup>(4)</sup> is a critique of beach culture and beach psychology and how that informs Australian national culture. It also critiques the so-called ‘riot, clash or uprising’ on Palm Island in 2004. And it critiques the Cronulla riot (2005) as well<sup>(5)</sup>.

When you live in Brisbane, it is in close proximity to the coast – Coolangatta, Kirra and Surfers Paradise. When I made the *cantchant* project in 2007, I wanted to utilise these ideal locations. When I say ‘ideal’, in the psyche of what we think about as the beach and surfing and surf culture, these are classic beaches – talking about Main Beach, Kirra, Duranbah and Coolangatta. These are the beaches that when you look at surf brochures of

people dressed up in surf gear, that’s where they take the photos. You go down there and those beaches are beautiful. They are amazing really. I come from north Queensland and I’d seen beaches like that on TV and in advertising, but I had never actually walked on them. I thought they were amazing, and no wonder whitefellas want to own them.

The two artworks for *Saltwater Country* are large-format portraits of my son Gavin, directly referencing the Tindale images of my grandfather and great-grandparents.<sup>(6)</sup> One is forward looking and the other is a profile; talking about the same things that my other Tindale portraits have referenced – archival photography, museology, inaccurate representations of Aboriginal people through science, through anthropology – instead of how people would want to see themselves in contemporary society.

A lot of what I do is about my family. I usually stick to themes and issues that still inform the ways that my family is affected and the way my family think about themselves and think about their histories. Our histories are very much disparate now, but we are still very much informed by the history of our family and the way this country has treated us historically.

I think of my family as rainforest people, but the rainforest where I am from is literally the coast. I don’t actually think of myself as a saltwater person, but I could not imagine myself living far away from the coast.

My mother’s mother, my grandmother, was Kuku–Yalandji and Koko–Berrin; my mother’s father, my grandfather, was Waanji. Koko–Berrin is west Cape York; Kuku–Yalandji is east Cape, rainforest, on the coast; and Waanji is dry country, west Queensland. My father was Yidindji and Gugu Yimithirr, on the coast and very much Rainforest. So while I don’t specifically identify myself as Freshwater, I do identify as Rainforest, coast Rainforest.

The idea is to present a stripped-down version of what Aboriginal people are. Stripping away the romantic and the ideal and the noble savage idea of blackfellas. That is what I am wanting to do. I have been doing these portraits for a while, but what is consistent is the gaze that I want to capture. That will always be a feature of these portraits.

**Vernon Ah Kee**  
Brisbane, 7 May 2014

## Notes

- (4) Two works in the exhibition, *wegrewhere #2* and *wegrewhere #3*, are from Vernon Ah Kee’s *cantchant* project.
- (5) Palm Island is just north of Townsville, off the Queensland coast. Cronulla is a beachside suburb in southern Sydney, New South Wales.
- (6) Dr Norman Tindale, in his role as anthropologist with the South Australian Museum, recorded these images during extensive field trips throughout Australia from the 1920s to the 1950s.



## Images

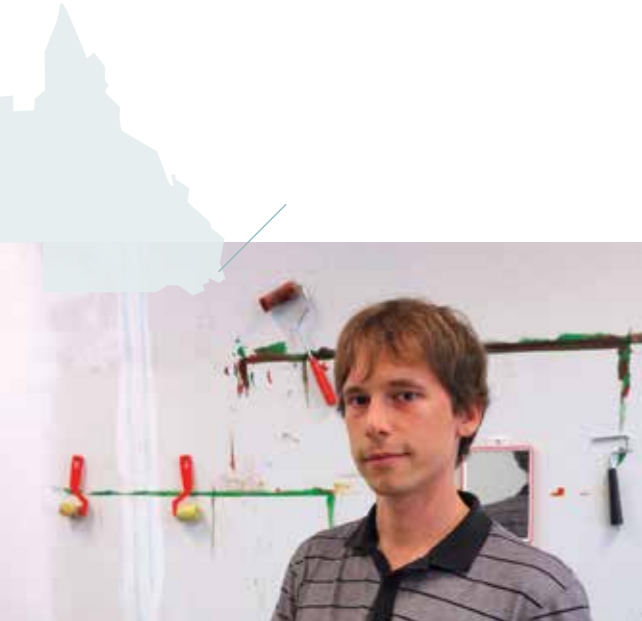
Page 37  
Vernon AH KEE  
*wegrewhere #3* 2009  
Digital print on Fujiflex  
Dimensions: 89 x 127 cm (framed)  
Collection Gold Coast City Gallery

Page 38  
Vernon AH KEE  
*Gavin (Image 1)* 2014  
Charcoal, pastel and acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 184 x 153 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Milani Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 39  
Vernon AH KEE  
*Gavin (Image 2)* 2014  
Charcoal, pastel and acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 184 x 153 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Milani Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards



RYAN PRESLEY  
Brisbane QLD



Ryan Presley, 2014 / Photography: Michael Aird

This piece plays upon the ‘good cop/bad cop’ cliché that has contributed so much to our enjoyment of certain films and television shows. It is a joy to be able to consume gore and violence without an accompanying sense of shame, in the knowledge that we do not always savour what we know inside to be right, or even OK.

The grand narrative of carnage and abuse being a virtue when exercised towards the greater good in the name of justice, elates us and overpowers our wordless and baser aversions towards the unapologetic use of violence and domination upon fellow people. This grand narrative, although it encourages worthy ideals, can have the effect of hindering our ability to navigate moral responsibility and develop a capacity for empathy in our daily lives. For the incidents of reality are complex and painful; they are not subject to the blunt and comforting moral generalisations of our grand narratives.

Which shark is ‘good cop’ and which shark is ‘bad cop’? Is ‘good cop’ swallowing ‘bad cop’ or is ‘bad cop’ overwhelming ‘good cop’? As much as the concept of dedicated citizens performing a constant vigil against injustice towards others in their society is well-meaning and commendable, any such high ideal is too blunt and ingrained with self-vindication. It protects the ‘protectors of justice’ from the scrutiny of justice. We must not be afraid to scrutinise ‘good cop’, we must not be afraid to look into their wholesome, clear-cut face and discover that the hero has been lost. Over-confident faith in a flawed system creates a safe haven for precedent and continuation of injustice.

**Ryan Presley**  
Artist statement, 2014

I like to work with woodblocks because of the long history of woodblocks being used for religious artwork. It was used to promote Christian ideals as it was one of the first print-making techniques.

I like icon artworks because of the bold imagery and the power of the epic and very emotively constructed images about power relations; and the colour schemes are very striking. Christianity melds with different themes and takes on different traits when looking at the Australian context and how it has been used in different ways over the years.

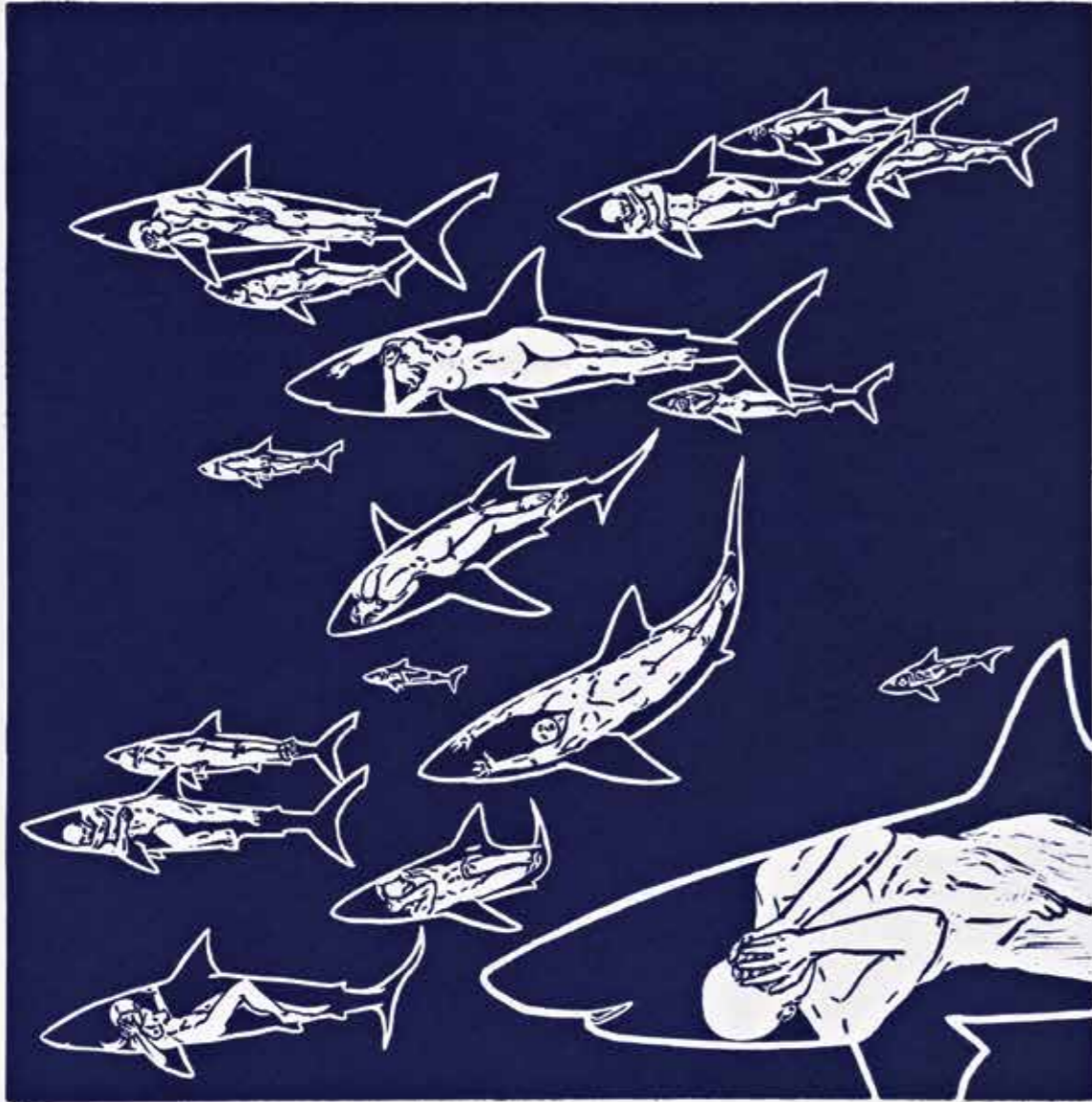
**Ryan Presley**  
South Brisbane, 14 November 2013



**Images**  
Page 41  
Ryan PRESLEY  
*The Good Shepherd* 2014  
Woodcut  
Dimensions: 87 x 132 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 42  
Ryan PRESLEY  
*Maneater* 2012  
Silk-cut linoleum print on  
Magnani paper  
Dimensions: 55 x 52 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 43  
Ryan PRESLEY  
*Good Co-op, Bad Cop* 2011  
Silk-cut linoleum print on  
Magnani paper  
Dimensions: 105 x 76 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards



LAURIE NILSEN  
Brisbane QLD



Laurie Nilsen, 2014 / Photography: Mick Richards

I moved away from my country in western Queensland, where it is all freshwater, to Brisbane when I was sixteen; but just the love of fishing and the water for most people like me... it didn't take long to source out the water. It may be saltwater, but we are all mad keen fishermen – although I still don't like swimming in the saltwater because it's a bit foreign to me.

This trap is based on traditional fishing nets that you often see in the museums – the long tapered ones that are blocked off at one end. These traps that I make are all based on this concept of the funnels.

I've been using these traps as a vehicle to highlight different environmental and political issues over the past couple of years.

Being an avid fisherman, I see this rubbish floating in and out of the river all the time; and it's become a real problem in some of the places out in the Pacific where hundreds of tons of plastic are floating around and breaking down, and forming a type of silt down on the bottom. And it's killing a lot of the wildlife, these plastics – dolphins and turtles – so there is a lot this poisonous stuff floating around and may look harmless, but when you get hundreds and hundreds of tons, it does a lot of damage.





Image

Pages 46–47  
Laurie NILSEN  
*Once were fishermen* 2014 (detail)  
Mixed media installation and video projection  
Dimensions: 75 x 119 x 75 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards

JUDY WATSON
Brisbane QLD



Judy Watson, 2014 / Photography: Alex Chomicz

I am interested in overlap of histories, in the same way that it is freshwater in my grandmother’s country in north–west Queensland and it is saltwater where my dad’s family grew up. This has influenced my life growing up within Australia.

So I am interested in the north–west Queensland gulf country, where my mother’s family is from, through to Burrum Heads where my dad’s family is from and the saltwater connections there.

Judy Watson
South Stradbroke Island, 20 March 2014

If it is the leaves of plants or the leaves of books... I am led into deeper histories. I feel I can just fall into them. I could be in a library for hours. I am constantly excited as an artist by possibilities. There is something between the drawn line on a page; that memory goes down through my eyes, along my arm, out through my finger and onto the page. It is a body memory that is triggered by just seeing the drawing.

I use my canvas as a memory skin. Many times I have sat on them, used them as tarps, eaten off them. I like to take them to sites and push materials from that site into the canvas... imprint them with the body of what is around me. I often work with a pool of water then allow the material to seep into and gradually filter out into water. I am always aware that when it dries it illuminates the space within. It is really important to me to leave space within the work for it to breathe, space for it to shimmer and flicker against the pigment.

I was interested in the Matthew Flinders’ expedition and how it touches on places from the gulf through to the east coast. I was interested in following his boat from Blue Mud Bay in Arnhem Land around to the Queensland coast.

I am always interested in that leakage or that transportation of materials that you see along tide lines. The stingray holes, that sort of thing, those sorts of forms; it is what is left behind that is important to me.

Judy Watson
South Stradbroke Island, 20 March 2014

These are objects I have picked up from the intertidal zone along the east coast. One of the shells is a freshwater mussel shell. A number of these were washed out from a creek in behind the beach at Burrum Heads. I associate them with Mum and our Aboriginal family. They are known as Malamu or water beef, in Waanyi (running water people) country in north-west Queensland. Middens of them are in our country, and are seen as women’s sites too in some places.

The decapitated turtle head was found at Burrum Heads(7) and is possibly the result of a boat strike. The kelp root I picked up at Brunswick Heads(8). This area is on the Flinders’ map, in the blue float work on canvas.

The objects have been cast in bronze and placed on the lit transparent shelf that could be seen as the edge of the sea, between sky and water. The intertidal zone is contentious and has been the site of two important victories for Indigenous people in Australia, with native title and sea rights given to Yolngu people at Blue Mud Bay and to people in the Torres Strait Islands.

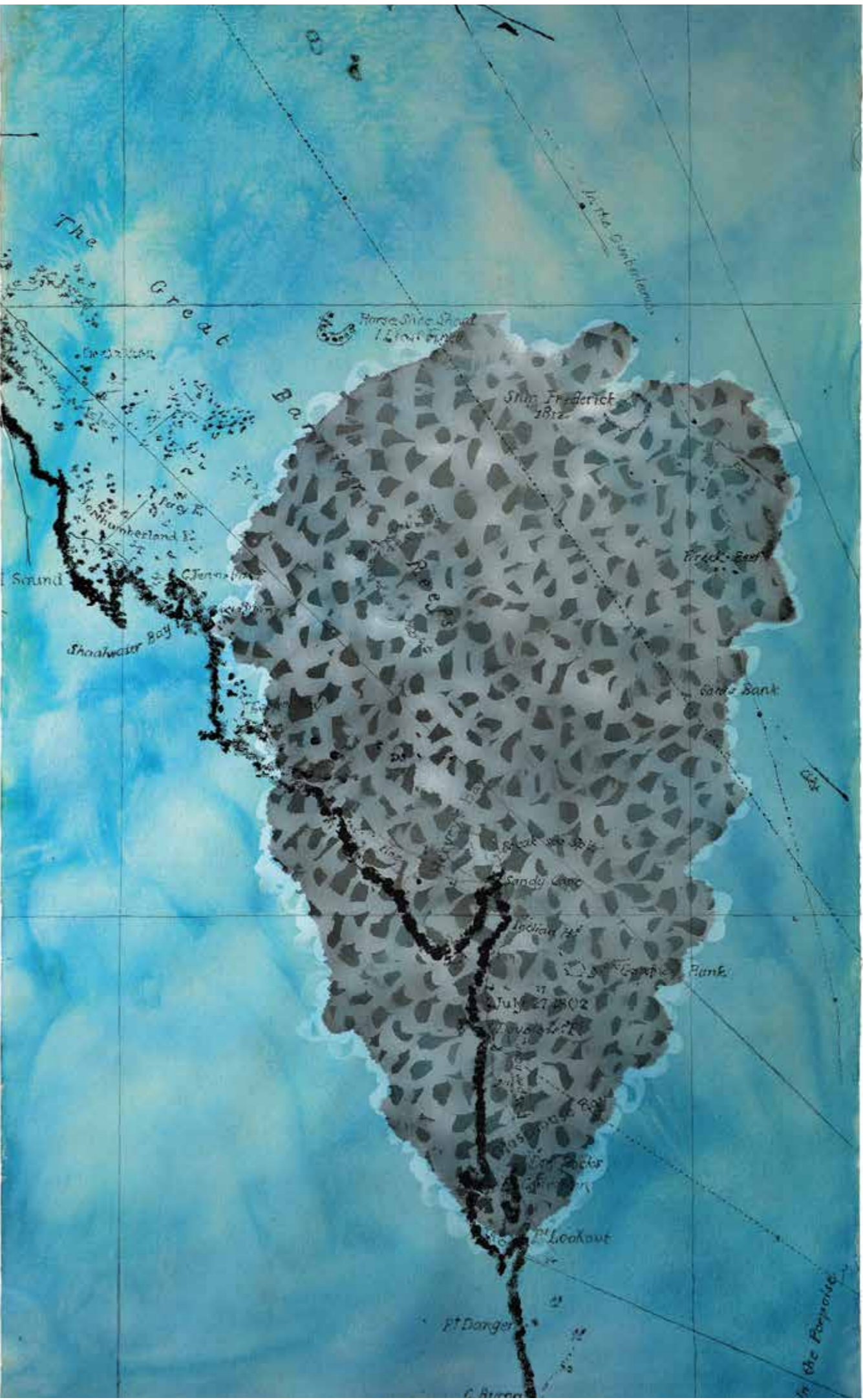
The cast bronze objects on the shelf also comment on the passage of boats in these waters. Previous works that I have made also reference the oil spills along the coast where boats have lost oil and chemicals which have been deposited in our waters and along our beaches, endangering marine and bird life, and threatening the freshwater lens and rivers and creeks – our precious, fragile jewels that are the underlying bodies of freshwater that support the environment in these places.

In fact, years ago I made a print, saltwater country, at the Australian Print Workshop (APW) in Melbourne. It was after travelling up north to the Gulf of Carpentaria, a bit north of Waanyi country, to Karumba and Burketown where we went fishing with our family. We saw willy willy (dust storms) blowing across the salt pans. This APW work is made up of two etching plates and chine-collé, and tried to convey the look and feeling of that place, between saltwater and freshwater.

Judy Watson
Email to curator, 24 November 2014

Notes

- (7) Burrum Heads is a coastal town 300 kms north of Brisbane, Queensland.
- (8) Brunswick Heads is a town on the north coast of New South Wales.





# Image

Pages 50–51  
 Judy WATSON  
*dead littoral* 2014 (detail)  
 Cast bronze installation: group of ten elements  
 Dimensions variable  
 Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane QLD  
 Photography: Murray Waite  
 Casting by UAP and Perides Art Foundry  
 Acknowledgements: Jerko Starcevic, Mary Stuart

MICHAEL COOK  
Sunshine Coast QLD



Michael Cook, 2014 / Photography: Virginia Rigney

Images

Page 53  
Michael COOK  
*Civilised #1* 2012 (detail)  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew  
Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

Page 54 (top)  
Michael COOK  
*Civilised #2* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew  
Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

Page 54 (bottom)  
Michael COOK  
*Civilised #6* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew  
Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

Page 55 (top)  
Michael COOK  
*Civilised #10* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew  
Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

Page 55 (bottom)  
Michael COOK  
*Civilised #13* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew  
Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

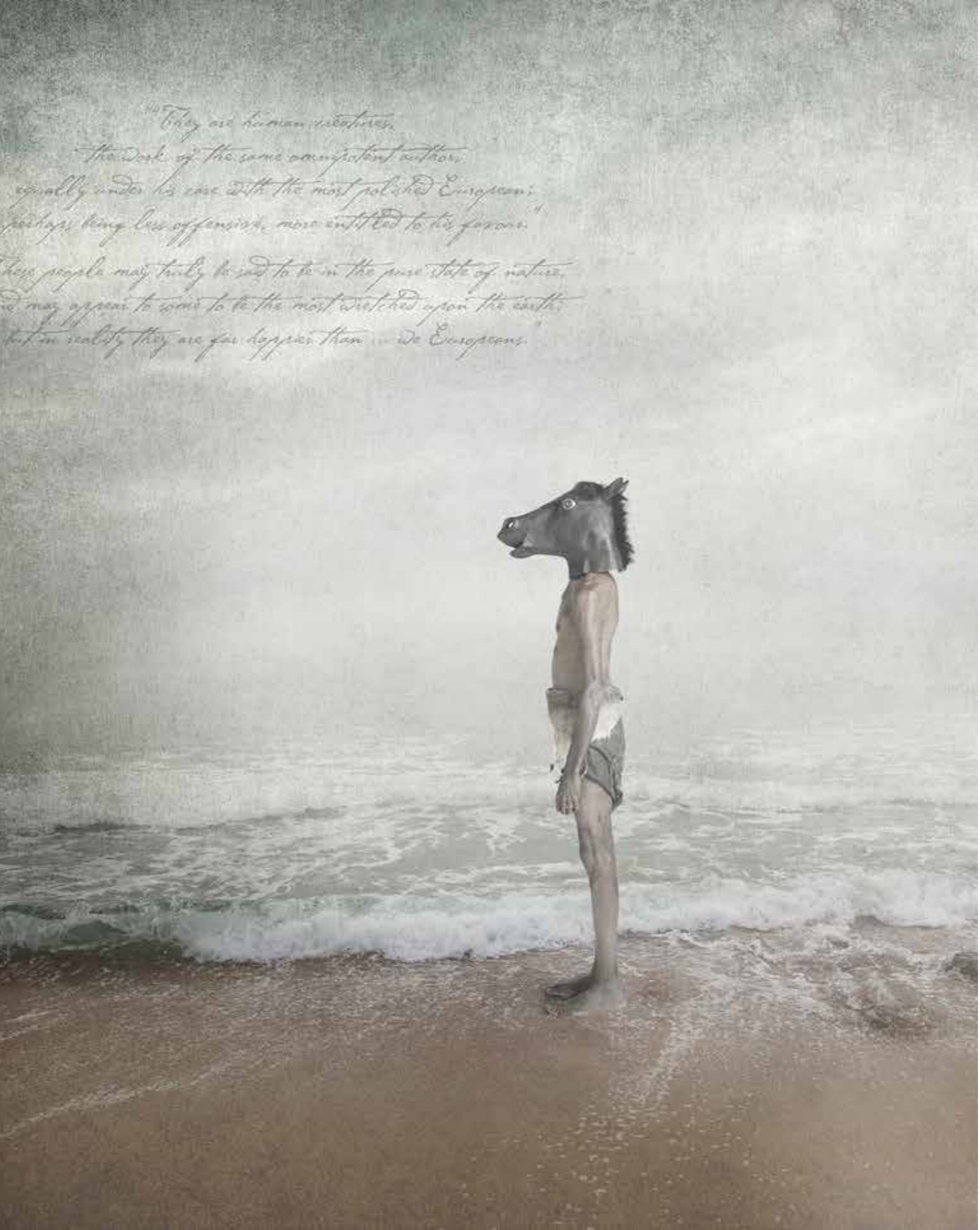
My project *Civilised* came from when I first saw a quote from a book of Captain Cook's journals and how he saw Aboriginal people for the first time. I started doing some research on the different explorers that came to Australia – the Dutch, the Spanish, Portuguese and French, and how they wrote about seeing Aboriginal people for the first time.

I start with an idea and I start with a blank canvas and I build the images up. Kind of like a painter but I use photographs to do that. I build the images in layers, which means shooting the people separately and all the elements get added in.

My idea for *Civilised*, and the style of how I presented *Civilised*, came from going through the National Gallery in London and looking at all the 1600 and 1700 era paintings. They used to keep the people quite sharp and would really dull down and soften the backgrounds in the paintings. What I have done with the series is that I have kept the people sharp and the foreground quite sharp and the background drops off.

I have used the beach scene, because that is where white people and Aboriginal people first saw each other. I wanted this mysterious soft feel as to where these people have come from. I have lost the horizon altogether to kind of give you a soft depth into the image to make it look a little mysterious in the background.

**Michael Cook**  
Moffatt Beach, 16 April 2014





IAN WALDRON  
Yungaburra QLD



Ian Waldron / Photography: Michael Aird

This painting is about Kurtjar country in the far north of Queensland, and our country runs from the Normanton River up to the Stanton River, and there is about a million acres of land there that is our country known as Delta Downs.

At the top of the painting you see the blue coming into the land, but there is no coastline as such because the land is so flat. There are no mountains in our country – the water melds right into the land across big massive plains and mudflats that flood in the wet season, and so the water comes in quite a way.

It is my mother's family country, and the words in the painting describe the places and things found there. I do not speak the language but I think it is very important to know of these things. This language gives me a greater feeling for the country and what's been happening there. My clan totem is the bloodwood tree... it is hard timber with a sap that seeps out like blood, and it grows all over our country from the mudflats on the coast to the savannah lands.

I am in two places – because fishing and going out in the boat and all that has been, and still is, a major part of my life. I still do it as much as I can... fishing and hunting food. Then I go back to the cattle country and that is my country too.

**Ian Waldron**  
Yungaburra, 18 March 2013

Images

Page 57  
Ian WALDRON  
*The Norman River, Kurtjar Country (Gulf of Carpentaria)* 2014 (details)  
Acrylic and oil on canvas board  
Dimensions: 100 x 240 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards

Pages 58–59  
Ian WALDRON  
*The Norman River, Kurtjar Country (Gulf of Carpentaria)* 2014  
Acrylic and oil on canvas board  
Dimensions: 100 x 240 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards





ALICK TIPOTI

Cairns QLD



Alick Tipoti, 2014 / Photography: Mick Richards

Personally I really connect with the whole theme of ‘saltwater country’ because I am a person of the saltwater. It’s different when I am swimming in the lake or creek in the freshwater; it’s different from the sea because we believe that is our medicine, that is our supermarket, that’s who we are. So all my works are all connected in many ways to the sea – it’s basically all about the sea.

My understanding of sacred is that there are sacred performances and actions only for men at sacred places. To me the masks that I make, they are almost like flirting with sacred, but they are not sacred – simply because they are fibreglass; they are not made out of turtle–shell. The masks that are in the museums, they are sacred because they have been touched by sacred hands. I am not a sacred person. I revive those songs, but I don’t expose the deeper stuff.

Every time I go to Sydney I visit Professor Jeremy Beckett. He did field work in the Torres Strait in the late ‘50s and early 1960s. We actually use some of the chants that he recorded from Badu Island and I just choreographed the introductions. I compose and choreograph my own songs and I know ancient ones from my Dad. They are the exact songs that Jeremy recorded. Dad was born around 1935, so Jeremy was recording songs from Dad’s uncles in the late ‘50s. I got obsessed with ancient songs a long time ago. So the aim of my dancing is to revive those ancient songs.

It is not just about dancing for the sake of dancing. It is not just because it is an ancient culture that I want to share. I don’t know if I want to share that much. Not because it is sacred, but because it is my culture. But then again, people would like to see this, so you share some of your culture and practices. It is very protocol based. No women or children to touch the mask or get involved in singing. I always flag things with elders back home.

**Alick Tipoti**  
Cairns, 2014

Image

Page 61  
Alick TIPOTI  
*Kulba Wakay (ancient voice – songs and chants to acknowledge the spiritual ancestors)* 2014 (detail)  
Video performance art work featuring sculptures made by the artist  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards



Image

Pages 62–63  
Alick TIPOTI  
*Kulba Wakay (ancient voice – songs and chants to acknowledge the spiritual ancestors)* 2014 (detail)  
Video performance art work featuring sculptures made by the artist  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards

62.



63.



BRIAN ROBINSON  
Cairns QLD



Brian Robinson, 2014 / Photography: Mick Richards

I have Indigenous cultural heritage that stems back through many ancestral generations from two regions in Australia – one to the western islands of the Torres Strait, to Moa (Banks Island) the Maluyligal [people on the passageway], and the other to the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula<sup>(9)</sup> to a place known as Shelburne Bay [white sand country] where the Wuthathi people have resided for thousands of years. I also have Asian heritage that goes back to Malaysian Borneo to the Dayak people and also to the Philippines to the Villafior family [Villafior translates as ‘Village of the Flowers’].

The Torres Strait is a thin narrow strait squeezed between PNG (Papua New Guinea) and the tip of Australia. The width is about 130 by about 150 kms across, so quite a narrow little waterway. So there is a lot of water that runs through that particular area, and that water itself is not just there to carry seafood – it’s one of the main connections to all TI (Torres Strait Islander) people to everyone globally. So the waters themselves don’t just carry seafood and nutrition, but also carry a lot of cultural connections back to the islands themselves.

Being on the wharf was a big part of my growing up on Thursday Island. In the *Woven Waters* work there are these two figures sitting on the wharf, and while it looks as though they are fishing, they could also be contemplating life or other possibilities, so it is really up to the viewer what they see these figures actually doing.

The etching *August 23 1898* looks at a lot of cultural material that was taken from the Torres Strait back to be housed in institutions in Europe. That collection of objects collected by Haddon<sup>(10)</sup> went back to Cambridge. For me, there has always been a strong interest in the history of my people – pulling apart the history of the Torres Strait and seeing how it fits nationally and internationally.

**Brian Robinson**  
Cairns, July 2014

Image

Page 65  
Brian ROBINSON  
*August 23 1898 – Today I collected with much zeal, through the barter and exchange of gifts, ancient artefacts belonging to a race of Indigenous Australians known as Torres Strait Islanders. Wooden masks, pearl shell pendants, smoking pipes, dance objects, and a strange device called a USB flash drive, were among the items obtained. A.C. Haddon 2012 (detail)*  
Etching printed in three colours from one plate. Edition of 10, on Hahnemuhle paper. Editioning printers: Elizabeth Hunter.  
Published by Djumbunji Press KickArts Fine Arts Printmaking  
Dimensions: 93 x 131 cm (framed)  
Collection Gold Coast City Gallery  
Photography: Mick Richards

Notes

(9) Cape York Peninsula is located at the northern tip of Queensland.

(10) Anthropologist and ethnologist A.C. Haddon headed an expedition from Cambridge University, UK, to the Torres Strait Islands in 1898.





#### Image

Pages 66–67  
 Brian ROBINSON  
*Woven Waters* 2014  
 Sculptural relief wall work: palight plastic, timber (dowel), enamel  
 spray paint, raffia, feathers, shells and metal ornament  
 Dimensions: (Panel A) 175 x 145 x 25 cm (Panel B) 123 x 245 x 30cm  
 Courtesy of the artist, Mossenson Galleries, Perth WA and  
 Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney  
 Collection Gold Coast City Gallery  
 Photography: Mick Richards



ROSELLA NAMOK  
Cairns QLD



Rosella Namok, 2014 / Photography: Mick Richards

Every day when you jump in a boat and you go to this spot or that spot, then when you come back home, you yarn with family about these places. It makes you think about what you saw on the way to this reef or whatever. Like the little waves on milky water, saltwater mixed up with freshwater.

When I am doing a painting, I think about that day we went up the river or to a reef and crossed deep channels or big waves out there. I paint the stories from those days.

**Rosella Namok**  
Cairns, 15 August 2013

Images

Page 69  
Rosella NAMOK  
*Sunset Rain 1* 2014 (detail)  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 110 x 228 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks  
Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 70  
Rosella NAMOK  
*Stinging Rain...in Yorkey Knob* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 110 x 228 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks  
Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 71  
Rosella NAMOK  
*Sunset Rain 1* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 110 x 228 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks  
Gallery, Brisbane  
Photography: Mick Richards





70.



71.

KEN THAIDAY SNR.  
Cairns QLD



Ken Thaiday Snr, 2014 / Photography: Michael Aird

This artwork tells about the olden days and they are going to row this boat. It is all about the sea, before time. The boat used to come to Torres Strait; we would carry cargo on our shoulder, from the saltwater, the rock wharf. Then we had to pick up everything before the tide comes in. If you don't have people to pick up the cargo, then everything gets wet.

We had a boat like this, take the cargo in, then row back and pick up some more. All about the sea and nothing about the land. I can tell a story about what I do, but nothing else.

My work is all about fishing. If you look at my artwork, it is all about fishing. I love fishing. Even in Cairns, I fish all the time here too. I know how to catch fish. I had to shift my dinghy; I keep it at my brother-in-law's place 'cause if I touch that dinghy I would never do artwork. If I got a dinghy in my backyard, you would not see me here, the artwork would stay and I would be on the saltwater.

I went to museums all around America. They showed me all around Washington DC. All the museums, they are huge. I have to make myself strong when looking at artefacts like that. It is better they stay and they look after them. I am happy for that. I say if somebody brought this here to be looked after, then it should stay here. Nothing spoiled with these things. The rope is very old; I suppose if you touched and tried to bend it, it would snap. So I wear gloves and I just pick it up and put it back down. I saw a very old bow and arrow, old spears and everything. I went into this room to look around and I said, wow, look at all these artefacts, been there for years – many, many years. I am thinking way back when I see that old artwork. The different ways they did it, the different materials. I can do it now with different material that looks exactly the same as they had then.

I like to work with bamboo. I love bamboo, 'cause I know what to do. I can bend, I can cut and I can clean it. If you don't know how to work with bamboo, don't work with bamboo, 'cause you are going to end having to buy ten packets of Band-Aids. You need to watch the edge of the bamboo when you split it. If you slip, it will cut your fingers. You have to hold it tight. If your knife is not sharp, you will drag the bamboo. The bamboo has sharp edges, both sides.

**Ken Thaiday**  
Cairns, 19 March 2013



**Images**  
Page 73\*  
Ken THAIDAY  
*Frigat Bird with Darnley Island (Erub) 2014*  
Head dress: black painted timber on metal head piece, nylon thread, elastic  
Dimensions: 52 x 89 x 40 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards

Page 74\*  
Ken THAIDAY  
*Erub Darnley Island Hibiscus (or Kowam) 2014*  
Dance machine: painted timber, poly pipe, nylon thread, cable ties  
Dimensions: (open) 27 x 94 x 36 cm (closed) 13 x 94 x 36 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards

\* This project is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body



#### Image

Page 75  
 Ken THAIDAY  
*Whaleboat* 2014  
 Painted timber, twine, cloth, metal hooks  
 Dimensions: 30 x 64 x 25 cm  
 Courtesy of the artist  
 Photography: Mick Richards  
 This project is assisted by the Australian Government  
 through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts  
 funding and advisory body

NAPOLEAN OUI  
Cairns QLD



Napolean Oui, 2014 / Photography: Jo-Anne Driessens

I am a rainforest man of the Tjapukai tribe, and I made these paintings of fish traps for *Saltwater Country*. I'd seen it when I was little; they used to make fish traps out of stone at the ocean and when I was young, my cousin and I had a go at making one. So they used to make stone dams and they would build the rocks up and, while the women went into the mangroves to look for shellfish, the men would wait for the tide to go out and the men would stand in the water with spears and they would see if there were any fish caught in the traps – that's what my painting is all about.

The women would make this bark cloth from a certain tree – stringybark tree – soak it and pound it. What I'm trying to do in the 2000s is to take that traditional design but to make it contemporary.

Through art I explore my connection to the rainforest and my culture in an authentic rainforest style. The paintings evoke the essence of the almost abstract art found on the ancient traditional rainforest shields. These are the largest found in Australia and traditionally provided a wonderful 'canvas' for this unique art form.

The art incorporates bold stylised designs and strong ochre colours highlighted by black outlines, creating a style that is truly unique – found only in the rainforest region of far north Queensland and is unlike any other Aboriginal art. It is these designs that inspire my contemporary interpretation onto bark cloth and canvas.

A father will make his son a shield and the father will sit up one end and the son will sit up the other end. Whatever the father would paint on his side, the son would paint the same on the other side. But the son will add something. It is like a father-and-son diary and he will cherish that shield for his life. Only certain men knew how to make shields and paint them, not everybody could do it.

**Napolean Oui**  
Cairns, 15 August 2013, and Artist statement

Images

Page 77  
Napolean OUI  
*Shield Design* 2014 (detail)  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries, Perth

Page 78 (left)  
Napolean OUI  
*Fish Trap* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries, Perth

Page 78 (right)  
Napolean OUI  
*Guyu Muyal* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries, Perth

Page 79 (left)  
Napolean OUI  
*Rainforest, Saltwater* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries, Perth

Page 79 (right)  
Napolean OUI  
*Shield Design* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries, Perth





MAVIS NGALLAMETTA
Aurukun QLD



Mavis Ngallametta, 2012 / Photography: Gina Allain

I live in Aurukun<sup>(11)</sup> in the community and it is a good place for me to stay. I used to weave all the time, but since 2008 I've been doing painting.

This painting is about this place, Ikalath. It is a nice place but it's not my place, but I have an adopted son and I have to ask him if it's alright for me to go there. So I can go out with my son and I can go out to get this special white (ochre) – just also like Europeans, you have to ask permission to go.

I am always thinking about painting, maybe from a dream or a memory of where I have been. I also make weaving from pandanus and ghost net<sup>(12)</sup> – now I am never doing nothing.

First of all, there is the blue acrylic paint of the water. Then the painting is made from the country. That yellow is from Yalgamunken – I always go there to collect that yellow. It's the clay – you have to dig it from the ground, you lay it out till it is dry, then I take a special sifter to take the lumps out... so just like making a cake or bread. And after that, mix it up, then make a fire and when it is really hot I put that yellow so it cooks, and out of that yellow it turns red. I make the black charcoal from burning this special wood.

You see in the painting the oil drums. Now when you walk along the beach you find these things like old nets and rubbish that were not there before. You also see those red rocks, and under the water there are oyster beds.

I think it is important to share the stories and to teach the young people.

Mavis Ngallametta
In conversation, Gold Coast City Gallery, July 2014,
and Interview, Cairns, June 2014

Images

Page 81
Mavis NGALLAMETTA
Ikalath #6 2012 (detail)
Ochres and charcoal with acrylic
binder on stretched linen
Dimensions: 267 x 199 cm
The Corrigan Collection
Photography: Jenni Carter, courtesy
Martin Browne Contemporary

Page 82
Cliffs of Ikalath, Gulf of Carpentaria
Photography: Kerry Trapnell

Page 83
Mavis NGALLAMETTA
Ikalath #6 2012
Ochres and charcoal with acrylic
binder on stretched linen
Dimensions: 267 x 199 cm
The Corrigan Collection
Photography: Jenni Carter, courtesy
Martin Browne Contemporary

Notes
(11) Aurukun is located on the north–west coast of Cape York Peninsula.
(12) 'Ghost nets' are long nets cast adrift by fishing vessels throughout Cape York and the Torres Strait, which catch marine life in their path, and are eventually deposited as piles of tangled rubbish onto the beaches.







Erub Artists, 2014 / Photography: Jo-Anne Driessens

*Weres* (2014) is constructed from derelict and abandoned fishing nets known as 'ghost nets'. These fishing nets drift the ocean's currents, indiscriminately catching and killing marine life, delivering a devastating impact on coastlines and reefs along the north of Australia.

Using a cross-cultural and collaborative model, Erub Arts is leading the way in large sculptural forms constructed using this medium, producing woven, wrapped and twined statements about traditional and contemporary island life.

*Weres* is a traditional fishing tool used to scoop schooling sardines. Men would wade into the water holding the epi (handle) and with the beating of werir (sardine directors) the sardines would be chased through the opening (kerem pek) into the bamboo scoop.

The supersized scoop speaks not only of traditional practices, but how with the upsizing of boats, fishing gear and nets, the world's oceans are being scoured by super-trawlers taking everything in their path – this *Weres* is a stark reminder that the mandate for sustainable, responsible fishing belongs to all people.

The vision of this work highlights the transparent qualities of the ocean as the sardines school, bringing movement to a static display. The *Weres* has a welded steel frame, wrapped in net. The pek (bamboo slats) which create the sides are remodelled rope.

The colourful cloth drape has been screen-printed with images of tidelines and traditional stone fish traps which surround Erub. The words from a traditional weres song, which is danced at celebrations, sits alongside a circling mass of sardines.

**Erub Arts**  
Statement, July 2014

**Weres Dance**

(sung as dancers enter)

**Adar Wed**

*Kara kebeli e – e eat aba naba kauare ge*  
(my small boy come to go around the back)  
*Koki apekem tup areme*  
(North West side to scoop sardines)  
*Nawarinoko au megipelie*  
(while they're there close to the beach)

(sung during dance)

**Kab Wed**

*Weres were – o – o*  
*Tupmi akemlare ami damelare*  
(Scoop the sardines and fill the basket)  
*Tupmi akemlare ami damelare – e – e*  
*Aisare nabakaure wehge – e paitare*  
(Grab everything and bring to the sandbeach and tip the weres over)



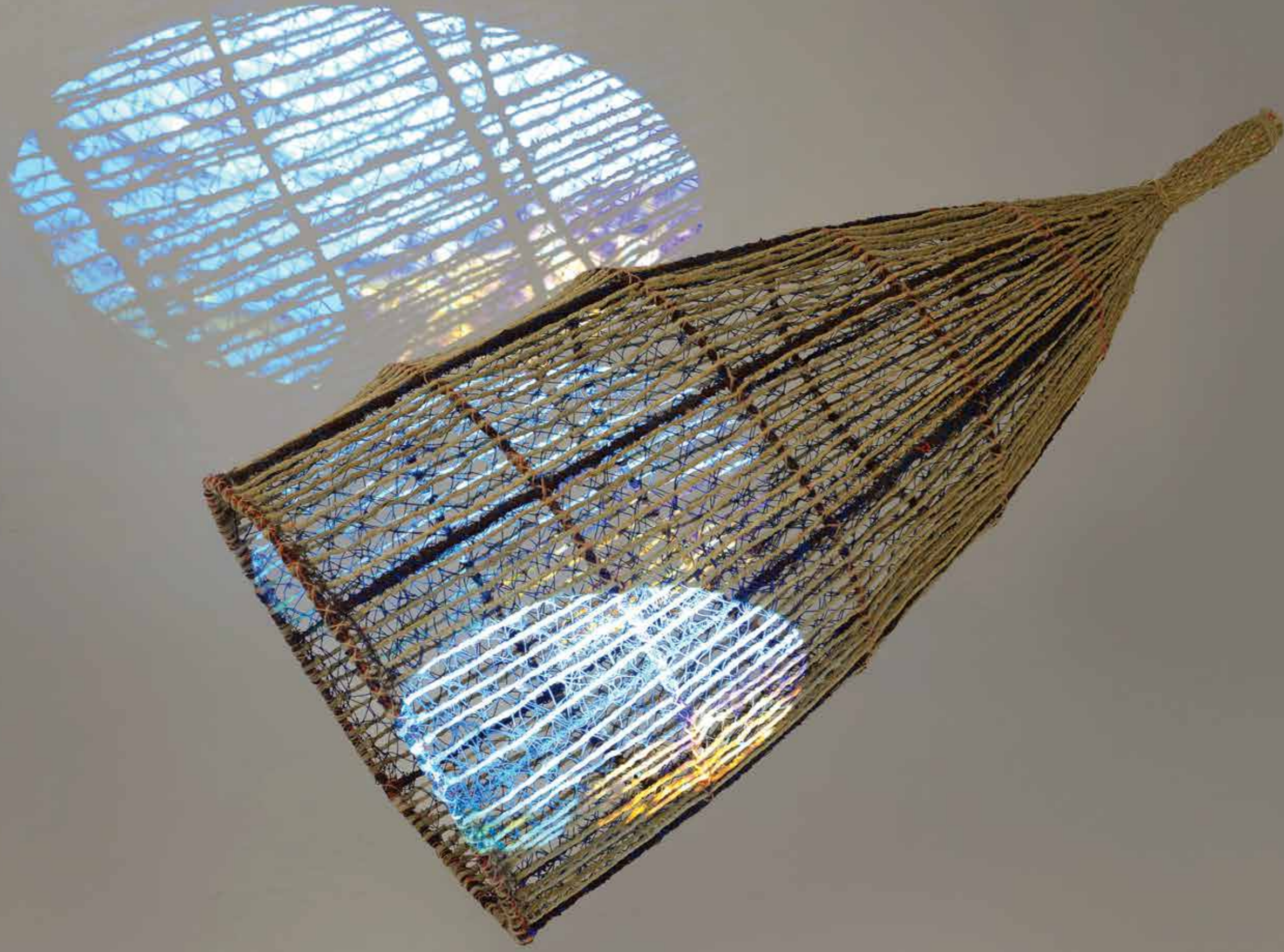
**Images**

Page 85  
ERUB ARTS  
*Weres* 2014 (detail of video projection )  
Mixed media installation: Ghost net made from found fishing nets; screen printed fabric; and video projection  
Size variable  
For full artwork credits, see page 84.

Page 86–87  
ERUB ARTS  
*Weres* 2014  
Mixed media installation: Ghost net made from found fishing nets; screen printed fabric; and video projection  
Dimensions: 128 x 295 x 115 cm  
Fabric: 410 x 102 cm  
For full artwork credits, see page 84.  
Photography: Murray Waite

Erub Artists:  
Milla Anson  
Emma Gela  
Florence Gutchen  
Lavinia Ketchell  
Nancy Kiwat  
Nancy Naawi  
Racy Oui–Pitt  
Alma Sailor  
Ellarose Savage  
Jimmy Thaiday  
Vision:  
Louisa Anson  
Cultural and Logistic Liaison:  
Kapua Gutchen Snr.  
Walter Lui  
Moa Sailor  
Collaborating Artist:  
Ceferino Sabatino

Facilitating Artist:  
Lynnette Griffiths  
Mentor Artist:  
Judy Watson  
Support Staff:  
Solomon Charlie  
Community:  
Lieu Anson  
Robert Mye  
Joshua Thaiday  
Kathleen Ketchell  
Documentation: Jo-Anne Driessens  
Courtesy of Erub Arts, Darnley Island Arts Centre  
This project has received financial assistance from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland's Backing Indigenous Arts program.





In memory of Ceferino Sabatino  
of Kiriri (Hammond Island), Torres Strait.  
(1975 — 2014)

Artist, community leader, teacher, and  
collaborator with Erub Arts on the making  
of the *Weres* for *Saltwater Country*.


Image  
Erub (Darnley Island), 2014  
Photography: Jo-Anne Driesens



### Vernon Ah Kee

Vernon Ah Kee was born in 1967 in Innisfail, north Queensland. He lives and works in Brisbane. Vernon completed a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in 2000 at Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane. His solo & group exhibitions include:


*My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013; *Sakahàn: 1st International Quinquennial of New Indigenous Art*, National Gallery of Canada, 2013; *Transforming Tindale*, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, 2012; *Tall Man*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne / Milani Gallery, Brisbane, 2011; *Once Removed: 53rd Venice Biennale*, Venice, Italy, 2009; *cantchant*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2007.

Vernon's works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; National Gallery of Victoria; Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art; Art Gallery of Western Australia; as well as public collections throughout Australia and in Hong Kong, Canada and the USA. Vernon Ah Kee is represented by Milani Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland. 

### Daniel Boyd

Daniel Boyd was born in 1982 in Cairns, north Queensland. He is from the Gangalu and Kudjla people and currently lives and works in Sydney, New South Wales. Daniel completed a Bachelor of Arts (Visual) at Canberra School of Art, Australian National University in 2005. His solo & group exhibitions include:

*Kochi Biennale*, 2014–2015; *Moscow Biennale for Young Art*, 2014; *TarraWarra Biennale*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2014; *Bungaree: The First Australian*, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, which toured nationally 2012/13; *The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012; *One Caption Hides Another*, Betonsalon, Paris, France, 2011/12; *Up in Smoke Tour*, Natural History Museum, London, 2011; *Culture Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery Australia, which toured 2007/09; *CHECKPOINT*, Mori Gallery, Sydney, 2005.

Daniel is the winner of the 2014 Bulgari Art Award. His works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; and the BHP Billiton Art Collection. Daniel Boyd is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, New South Wales. 

### Megan Cope

Megan Cope was born in 1982 in Brisbane, Queensland. Megan is from the Quandamooka people of the Moreton Bay region. She lives and works in both Melbourne and Brisbane. Megan completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Visual Communication) at Deakin University, Victoria in 2006. Her solo & group exhibitions include:


Next Wave Festival, 2014; *The Blaktism*, Milan, Italy; *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*,

Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013; *The Tide is High*, Fehily Contemporary, Melbourne, 2013; *Deep Water*, Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Brisbane, 2012; *Touchy Fearly proppaNOW*, Fehily Contemporary, Melbourne, 2012; *Lie of the Land*, Embassy of Australia, Washington DC, USA, 2012; *Pay Attention: Tony Albert*, City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand, 2010/11; *Dhagun ya Borrogura Land and Sea*, Gold Coast, 2008. Megan's commissions include: *The River*, Museum of Brisbane; Public Art, Charlish Park, Moreton Bay Regional Council; *Vicissitude*, NEWflames, Annie Gamble Myer Collection. 

### Michael Cook

Michael Cook was born in 1968 in Brisbane, Queensland, and currently lives and works on the Sunshine Coast. His solo & group exhibitions include:

*You Imagine What You Desire*, 19th Biennale of Sydney, 2014; *Mother and Child*, McMaster Museum of Art, Canada, 2014; *Majority Rule*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane 2014; *Through My Eyes*, Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra, 2014; *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013; *Undisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, 2012; *The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012; *Broken Dreams*, October Gallery, London, 2012; *Civilised*, 2012; *Uninhabited*, 2011. Michael was the recipient of the Australia Council Greene Street Studio Residency in New York in 2014. He was the winner of the People's Choice Award at the Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 2011; and Visual Artist of the Year at the 14th and 17th Annual Deadly Awards – the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards, 2008 and 2011.

Michael's works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; National Museum of Australia; the Australian National Maritime Museum; Parliament House; in numerous State, public and private collections throughout Australia; and in Canada and the USA. Michael Cook is represented by Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Queensland. 

### Erub Arts

Erub Arts (Erub Ewer Meta – Darnley Island Arts Centre) is on Erub (also known as Darnley Island) and is one of the twenty–two inhabited islands within the Torres Strait in north Queensland. The Erub artists work in a variety of media out of the Arts Centre, which opened in December 2009. Group exhibitions include:

*Sea Journeys – New Caledonia, Return Voyage*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, 2013; *Sculpture by the Sea*, Sydney, 2012; *The Long Tide: Contemporary Ghost Net Art*, artisan, Brisbane, 2012; *Float*, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2012; *Sea Journeys – Our Home Our People*, Langford 120, Melbourne, 2012; *Land Sea and Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2011;

*Erub Erwer Meta Exhibition*, Gab Titui Cultural Centre, Thursday Island, 2009.

Works are held in the collections of the Australian Museum; Parliament House; National Museum of Australia; National Gallery of Victoria; Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art; Cairns Regional Gallery; and the State Library of Queensland. 

### Fiona Foley

Fiona Foley was born in 1964 in Maryborough, south–east Queensland. She is from the Wondunna clan of the Badjala people and lives and works in Hervey Bay. Fiona completed a Certificate of Arts, East Sydney Technical College in 1983; Bachelor of Visual Arts, Sydney College of the Arts in 1986; and a Diploma of Education, Sydney Institute of Education, Sydney University in 1987. She is a founding member of Boomalli Aboriginal Artists' Co–operative. Fiona was appointed Adjunct Professor at The University of Queensland in 2011 and Adjunct Professor at Queensland College of Art, Griffith University from 2003–2009. Fiona's solo & group exhibitions include:

*My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013; *Australia*, Royal Academy of the Arts, London, 2013; *retro–active: 25 year survey*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2013; *Moving Change*, National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China, 2012; *Strange Fruit*, October Gallery, London, 2006; *By Land and Sea I Leave Ephemeral Spirit*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 1991. Fiona was awarded the Australia Council for the Arts' 2013 Visual Arts Award; and the 2010 Redlands Westpac Art Prize, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney.

Fiona's major public sculptures include: *Black Opium*, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane, 2009; *Sugar Cubes*, Mackay Regional Council, Mackay, 2009; *Bible and Bullets*, Redfern Park, Sydney, 2008; *Witnessing to Silence*, Brisbane Magistrates Court, Brisbane, 2004; *Tribute to A'vang*, Parliament House, Canberra, 2001; *Winged Harvest*, The Australian National University, Canberra, 2001; *The Lie of the Land*, Melbourne Museum, Melbourne, 1997; *The Edge of Trees*, Museum of Sydney, Sydney, 1995. Fiona Foley is represented by Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, Queensland, and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, Victoria. 

### Rosella Namok

Rosella Namok was born in 1979 in Lockhart River, north Queensland, and is of the Aangkung people. She lives and works in Cairns, north Queensland. Rosella began her career as part of the Lockhart River Art Gang from 1997. Her solo & group exhibitions include:

*New Moon in the City*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2014; *Yangkuyi...Wet Season*, Coo–ee Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney, 2012; *On the Edge: Visions of a tropical coastline Jawahar Kala Kendra*, Jaipur State Academy of Fine Arts, Jaipur, India, 2009; *Ngaachi Bla Mepla (Our Country)*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2007; *'nother side*, October Gallery, London, 2004; *Wild Nature in Contemporary Australian*

*Art and Craft*, Jam Factory, Adelaide, which toured 2002/04; *'bout here...Lockhart River*, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, 1999. In 2003, Rosella was winner of The High Court of Australia Centenary Art Prize, The Australian Bar Association / The High Court of Australia, Canberra; and winner of The Redlands Westpac Art Prize, Sydney. Rosella was commissioned for the set design of *The Rite of Spring* for the Houston Ballet, Texas, USA in 2013.

Rosella's works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Art Gallery of South Australia; Art Gallery of Western Australia; Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art; National Gallery of Victoria; in numerous public and private collections throughout Australia, and in the USA. Rosella Namok is represented by FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland. 

### Mavis Ngallametta

Mavis Ngallametta was born in 1944 in the Aurukun region of western Cape York, north Queensland, where she lives and works. Her solo & group exhibitions include:

*Mavis Ngallametta*, Martin Browne Contemporary at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, 2014; *New Paintings*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, 2014; *Four Paintings*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, 2013; *Ikalath*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, 2012; *Echo of the Land*, Aptos Cruz Gallery, Stirling, 2012; *The Long Tide: Contemporary Ghost Net Art*, artisan, Brisbane, 2012; *Aurukun Sculptures*, Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery, Melbourne, 2009; *From Cape to Cove*, The Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth, 2008. In 2013, Mavis was awarded the Telstra General Painting Award in the *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*; in 2004, she received a Community Arts Achievement Award for her contribution to the community, teaching traditional crafts.


Mavis' works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art; Art Gallery of South Australia; Art Gallery of New South Wales; The University of Queensland, Brisbane; Griffith University, Brisbane; and numerous private collections including the Holmes à Court Collection and The Corrigan Collection. Mavis Ngallametta is represented by Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, New South Wales. 

### Laurie Nilsen

Laurie Nilsen was born in 1953 in Roma, south–west Queensland. He is from the Mandandanji people and lives and works in Brisbane. Laurie completed a Certificate in Commercial Illustration at Queensland College of Art, Brisbane, in 1975 and a Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts) at Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education, Victoria in 1989. He held the position of Lecturer in Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at Griffith University, Brisbane, 1995–2006. Laurie's solo & group exhibitions include:

*Firebrand*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2013; *String Theory*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2013; *existence resistance*, Bega Valley


Regional Gallery, Bega, New South Wales, 2012; *From the Bush III*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2011; *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, Object Gallery, Sydney, 2009; *Undungallo (Bungil Creek)*, Dreamtime Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA, 1999. Laurie was the winner of the 24th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award Wandjuk Marika Three–Dimensional Memorial Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, Darwin in 2007. Laurie's commissions include: Concrete and Timber Relief, State Library of Queensland (north wall, Indigenous Knowledge Centre), South Brisbane, 2006; Political Piranha (aluminium fish/water feature), Brisbane Convention Centre, 2003; Bungil Creek Mural, Dogwood Crossing, Murrilla Shire Council, Miles, 2002.

Laurie's works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; National Museum of Australia; Museum of Victoria; the Baillieu Myer Sculpture Garden, Victoria; and various private collections in Australia and the USA. Laurie Nilsen is represented by FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland. 

### Napolean Oui

Napolean Oui was born in 1972 in north Queensland and is from the Djabuganydji, Djabugay and Erub groups. He lives and works in Cairns, north Queensland. Napolean's solo & group exhibitions include:

*Gurrabana*, Mossenson Galleries, Melbourne, 2013; *Rainforest ID (past future)*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, 2012; *CIAF Directors Exhibition*, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns, 2011; *NEWflames Grant Thornton Exhibition*, Brisbane, 2010; *Echoes from the Rainforest*, KickArts foyer, Cairns, 2009; UMI Arts, Cairns, 2008. Napolean undertook a collaborative print residency with Paul Machnik, Montreal, Canada in 2012; and workshops in bark cloth printing, textile printing, and etching in Cairns.

Napolean has received numerous public and private commissions for his works. Napolean Oui is represented by Mossenson Galleries, Perth, Western Australia. 

### Ryan Presley

Ryan Presley was born in 1987 in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, and identifies with his father's family who are from the Moyle River region (Peppimenarti/Port Keats). He currently lives and works in Brisbane and is completing a Doctor of Philosophy with an Australian Postgraduate Award Scholarship at Queensland College of Art. Ryan's academic qualifications include First Class Honours for a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2010, and a Bachelor of Visual Arts – Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art in 2009. Ryan's solo & group exhibitions include:


*SOLID! Queensland Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns, 2014; *Lesser Gods*, Metro Arts, Brisbane, 2014; *National Artists' Self Portrait Prize*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2013; *In the Red: on the vibrancy of things*, The University of Queensland Anthropology Museum, Brisbane, 2012; *The*

*Good Earth*, Jan Manton Art, Brisbane, 2012; *Prosperity*, Jan Manton Art, Brisbane, 2011. 

### Brian Robinson

Brian Robinson was born in 1973 on Waiben (Thursday Island) in the Torres Strait. He lives and works in Cairns, north Queensland. Brian has completed an Associate Diploma of Visual Arts [ATSI], TNQ Institute of TAFE, Cairns, 1994; Survival Skills for Visual Artists Certificate, TNQ Institute of TAFE, Cairns; Advanced Certificate in Visual Arts [ATSI], TNQ Institute of TAFE, Cairns, 1995. He commenced work with Cairns Regional Gallery in 1997 as an intern curator and spent the next fourteen years working as the gallery's curator, exhibitions manager and deputy director. His solo & group exhibitions include:

*Strait Protean: The Art of Brian Robinson*, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne, 2014; *Everywhere at all times: Bringing the archive into the contemporary*, Michael Reid Gallery, Berlin, Germany, 2013; *Performative Prints from the Torres Strait*, Arts Centre, Melbourne, 2013; *men + GODS*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, 2012; *24th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, Darwin, 2011; *Malu Minar – Sea Pattern, Art of the Torres Strait*, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea, 2010; *The Shape of Things*, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns, 2009; *Out of Country*, QIAMEA, Washington DC, USA, 2004; *Islands in the Sun*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2000; *Ilan Pasin: Torres Strait Art*, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns, 1998; *From Papunya to Now*, Berlin, Germany, 1994. Brian was awarded the Western Australian Indigenous Artists Award, Western Australian Art Gallery in 2013. His major commissions include: *Spinning Tops*, Children's Play Park, Wickham, Western Australia; *Land, Sea and Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2011; *Woven fish*, Cairns City Council, Cairns Esplanade Project (five stainless steel fish sculptures with fountain), 2003; *Taba Naba Norem II*, sculptured artwork, Art Coordinates, Perth 2002.

Brian's work has been widely collected both privately and through major institutions in Australia and overseas. Brian Robinson is represented by Mossenson Galleries, Perth, Western Australia; Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney and Murrurundi, New South Wales, and Berlin, Germany; and creativeMOVE, Brisbane [public art], Queensland. 

### Ken Thaiday

Ken Thaiday was born in 1950 on Erub (Darnley Island) and is from the Meriam Mer group of the Torres Strait Islands. Ken was educated on Waiben (Thursday Island), Torres Strait and now lives and works in Cairns, north Queensland. His first major survey exhibition was *Ken Thaiday Snr: Erub Kebe Le*, Cairns Regional Gallery, 2013 and Ken presented a major solo show at Carriageworks, Sydney, 2014.

Ken's group exhibitions include: *CIAF Exhibition*, Cairns Regional Gallery, 2012; *Land, Sea and*



Image

Judy WATSON, *dead littoral*, 2014 (detail).  
Cast bronze installation: group of ten elements.  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.  
Casting by UAP and Perides Art Foundry.  
Acknowledgements: Jerko Starcevic, Mary Stuart.  
Photography: Murray Waite

*Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2011; *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, Object Gallery, Sydney, 2009; *Parcours des Mondes Arts d'Australie*, Stephané Jacob, Paris, France, 2008; *Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, The Mollie Gowing Acquisition Fund, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2006/07; *23rd Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 2006; *St-art: European Art Fair*, November Arts d'Australie, Stephané Jacob, Strasbourg, France, 2005; *20th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 2003; *Tactility: two centuries of Indigenous objects, textiles and fibre*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2003.

Ken's works are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia; National Museum of Australia; Parliament House; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art; Queensland Museum; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory; Embassy of Australia, Washington DC, USA; Musée de Confluences, Lyon, France; Cambridge University Museum of Anthropology, UK. ○

Alick Tipoti

Alick Tipoti was born in 1975 on Waiben (Thursday Island) and grew up on Badu Island, Torres Strait. Alick is from the Kala Lagaw Ya language group of the mid-western Island of the Torres Strait. He now lives and works in Cairns, north Queensland. Alick completed an Associate Diploma (Arts), Thursday Island TAFE College, 1993; Advanced Diploma (Arts), Cairns TAFE, 1995; and Bachelor of Visual Arts (Printmaking), Australian National University, Canberra in 1998. Alick's solo & group exhibitions include:

*Malu Minar*, Te Manawa Art Gallery, Palmerston North, New Zealand, 2013; *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013; *18th Biennale of Sydney: all our relations*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012; *Undisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2012; *Land, Sea and Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2011; *Malu Minar – Sea Pattern, Art of the Torres Strait*, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea, 2010; *Malangu – From the Sea*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2007; *GROSSE KUNST*, Museum Kunst Palast, Dusseldorf, Germany, 2003. Alick was the winner of the 2014 *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award* in the 3D Category, as well as the People's Choice Award in 2008, Works on Paper in 2007, and Works on Paper in 2003. He was awarded the NAIDOC Torres Strait Artist of the Year in 2012 and the NAIDOC Torres Strait Senior Cultural Award in 2009. He was the recipient of a British Council's Accelerate Indigenous Leadership Award in 2011.

Alick's major commissions include: Tile Design for the Cairns Airport, 2010; Design for the Tilt Train, Brisbane/Cairns, 2010; Design for the Thursday Island Chronic Disease Centre, 2013. ○

Ian Waldron

Ian Waldron was born in 1950 in Normanton in the Gulf of Carpentaria, north Queensland, of the Kurtjar people. He now lives and works in Yungaburra on the Atherton Tablelands in north Queensland. Ian completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Northern Territory University in 1995 and a Certificate of Education, Northern Territory University in 1998. His solo & group exhibitions include:

*Into the Woods*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2013; *Celebrations*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2012; *Bloodwood Totems: Paintings & Sculptures by Ian Waldron*, Coo-ee Aboriginal Art Gallery, Sydney, 2011/12; *On the Land*, FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, 2010. Glover Prize, Evandale, Tasmania, 2010; Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2007; Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2006-08; Spirit & Vision, Sammlung Essl, Vienna, Austria, 2004; Great Art Exhibition, Dusseldorf, Germany, 2003; Sydney Olympic SOCOG Exhibition, Australian Museum at Customs House Gallery, Sydney, 2000; National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 1995-2010; Dobell Drawing Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1995.

Ian's works are held in private and public collections both nationally and internationally. Ian Waldron is represented by FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland. ○

Judy Watson

Judy Watson was born in 1959 in Mundubbera, southern Queensland and is a descendant of the Waanyi people of north-west Queensland. She lives and works in Brisbane. Judy completed a Diploma of Creative Arts, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba in 1979; a Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Tasmania, Hobart in 1982; and a Graduate Diploma in Visual Arts, Monash University, Gippsland in 1986. Her solo & group exhibitions include:

*Conflict, contemporary responses to war*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2014; *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2013, and Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand, 2014; *Making Change*, National Art Museum of China, Beijing, 2012; *Taboo*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012; *Arte Indigena Contemporáneo*, IVAM, Valencia d'Art Modern, Spain, 2012; *Contemporary Women*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012; *18th Biennale of Sydney: all our relations*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012; *waterline*, Embassy of Australia, Washington DC, USA, 2011; *Asylum*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2011; *Art + Soul*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2010; *National Artists' Self Portrait Prize*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2009; *Terra Nullius*, ACC Galerie, Weimar, Germany, 2009; *heron island*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, 2009; *Culture Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial 07*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, and Katzen American University, Washington DC, USA. Judy was

awarded the Clemenger Contemporary Art Award, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne in 2006; the 23rd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Works on Paper, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin in 2006; and the Moet and Chandon Fellowship in 1995.

Judy's major commissions include: *water memory*, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Brisbane; *fire and water*, Reconciliation Place, Canberra, 2007; *museum piece and two halves with baler shell*, Musee du Quai Branly, Paris, France, 2005; *heart/land/river*, Brisbane Magistrate's Court, 2004; *walama*, forecourt, Sydney International Airport, 2000.

Judy's works are held in an extensive number of collections nationally and internationally including the British Museum; Cambridge Museum, Library of Congress, Washington DC; the Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand; Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany; Macquarie Bank, Sydney and New York; St Louis Art Museum, USA; Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan; Tokyo National University of Technology, Japan; National Gallery of Australia; National Museum of Australia; and major institutions and private collections throughout Australia. Judy Watson is represented by Milani Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland; grahame galleries + editions, Brisbane, Queensland for her prints and artist books; and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, Victoria. ○

List of works

Vernon AH KEE  
*Gavin (Image 1)* 2014  
Charcoal, pastel and acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 184 x 153 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Vernon AH KEE  
*Gavin (Image 2)* 2014  
Charcoal, pastel and acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 184 x 153 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Vernon AH KEE  
*wegrewhere #2* 2009  
Digital print on Fujiflex  
Dimensions: 89 x 127 cm (framed)  
Collection Gold Coast City Gallery QLD

Vernon AH KEE  
*wegrewhere #3* 2009  
Digital print on Fujiflex  
Dimensions: 89 x 127 cm (framed)  
Collection Gold Coast City Gallery QLD

Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2012  
Oil and archival glue on photocopy in Natural  
History Museum skull box  
Dimensions: 25 x 35 x 6 cm (total size,  
comprising two elements)  
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,  
Sydney NSW

Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2013  
Oil and archival glue on polyester  
Dimensions: 198 x 168 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,  
Sydney NSW

Daniel BOYD  
*Untitled* 2014  
Oil and archival glue on linen  
Dimensions: 97 x 84 cm  
Private collection and courtesy of the artist

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #1* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #2* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #6* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #10* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #13* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker Art  
Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Michael COOK  
*Civilised #14* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper  
Dimensions: 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker Art  
Dealer, Brisbane QLD

Megan COPE  
*jumpinpin* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 77 x 77 cm (circular)  
Courtesy of the artist

Megan COPE  
*Toponymic Interventions #3* 2014  
Single channel video (8:39 mins)  
Courtesy of the artist

Megan COPE  
*Toponymic Interventions #3* 2014  
Single channel video projection (8:39 mins)  
Courtesy of the artist

ERUB ARTS  
*Weres* 2014  
Mixed media installation: Ghost net made from  
found fishing nets; screen printed fabric; and  
video projection  
Dimensions: 128 x 295 x 115 cm  
Fabric: 410 x 102 cm  
Erub Artists: Milla ANSON, Emma GELA, Florence  
GUTCHEN, Lavinia KETCHELL, Nancy KIWAT,  
Nancy NAAWI, Racy OUI-PITT, Alma SAILOR,  
Ellarose SAVAGE, Jimmy THAIDAY  
Vision: Louisa ANSON  
Cultural and Logistic Liaison: Kapua GUTCHEN  
SNR, Walter LUI, Moa SAILOR  
Collaborating Artist: Ceferino SABATINO  
Facilitating Artist: Lynnette GRIFFITHS  
Mentor Artist: Judy WATSON  
Support Staff: Solomon CHARLIE  
Community: Lieu ANSON, Robert MYE, Joshua  
THAIDAY, Kathleen KETCHELL  
Documentation: Jo-Anne DRIESSENS  
Courtesy of Erub Arts, Darnley Island Arts Centre  
Acknowledgement: Diann LUI, Art Centre Manager  
This project has received financial assistance  
from the Queensland Government through Arts  
Queensland’s Backing Indigenous Arts program

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #1* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #2* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #4* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 103 x 85 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #5* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #8* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #10* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #11* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #12* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #15* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Fiona FOLEY  
*The Oyster Fishermen #16* 2011  
Inkjet print on Hahnemuhle paper  
Dimensions: 85 x 103 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer,  
Brisbane QLD, and Niagara Galleries,  
Melbourne VIC

Rosella NAMOK  
*Stinging Rain...in Yorkey Knob* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 110 x 228 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Rosella NAMOK  
*Sunset Rain 1* 2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
Dimensions: 110 x 228 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Mavis NGALLAMETTA  
*Ikalath #6* 2012  
Ochres and charcoal with acrylic binder on  
stretched linen  
Dimensions: 267 x 199 cm  
The Corrigan Collection

Laurie NILSEN  
*Once were fishermen* 2014  
Mixed media installation and video projection  
Dimensions: Trap 1: 60 x 230 x 51 cm  
Dimensions: Trap 2: 75 x 119 x 75 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Napolean OUI  
*Fish Trap* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries,  
Perth WA

Napolean OUI  
*Guyu Muyal* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries,  
Perth WA

Napolean OUI  
*Rainforest, Saltwater* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries,  
Perth WA

Napolean OUI  
*Shield Design* 2014  
Oilstick on bark cloth  
Dimensions: 195 x 78 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Mossenson Galleries,  
Perth WA

Ryan PRESLEY  
*Good Co-op, Bad Cop* 2011  
Silk-cut linoleum print on Magnani paper  
Dimensions: 105 x 76 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist

Ryan PRESLEY  
*Maneater* 2012  
Silk-cut linoleum print on Magnani paper  
Dimensions: 55 x 52 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist

Ryan PRESLEY  
*The Good Shepherd* 2014  
Woodcut  
Dimensions: 87 x 132 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist

Brian ROBINSON  
*August 23 1898 – Today I collected with much  
zeal, through the barter and exchange of  
gifts, ancient artefacts belonging to a race of  
Indigenous Australians known as Torres Strait  
Islanders. Wooden masks, pearl shell pendants,  
smoking pipes, dance objects, and a strange  
device called a USB flash drive, were among the  
items obtained. A.C. Haddon* 2012  
Etching printed in three colours from one plate.  
Edition of 10, on Hahnemuhle paper. Editioning  
printers: Elizabeth Hunter. Published by  
Djumbunji Press KickArts Fine Arts Printmaking  
Dimensions: 93 x 131 cm (framed)  
Collection Gold Coast City Gallery QLD

Brian ROBINSON  
*Woven Waters* 2014  
Sculptural relief wall work: palight plastic, timber  
[dowel], enamel spray paint, raffia, feathers, shells  
and metal ornament  
Dimensions: (Panel A) 175 x 145 x 25 cm  
Dimensions: (Panel B) 123 x 245 x 30 cm  
Courtesy of the artist, Mossenson Galleries, Perth  
WA, and Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney NSW.

Ken THAIDAY  
*Erub Darnley Island Hibiscus (or Kowam)* 2014  
Dance machine: painted timber, poly pipe, nylon  
thread, cable ties  
Dimensions:  
27 x 94 x 36 cm (open)  
13 x 94 x 36 cm (closed)  
Courtesy of the artist  
This project is assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for  
the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Ken THAIDAY  
*Erub with the Morning Star* 2014  
Dance machine: painted poly pipe, timber, nylon  
thread, cable ties, beads  
Dimensions:  
40 x 95 x 40 cm (open)  
15 x 78 x 15 cm (closed)  
Courtesy of the artist  
This project is assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for  
the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Ken THAIDAY  
*Frigat Bird with Darnley Island (Erub)* 2014  
Head dress: black painted timber on metal head  
piece, nylon thread, elastic  
Dimensions: 52 x 89 x 40 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
This project is assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for  
the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Ken THAIDAY  
*Frigat Bird with Sunrise/Sunset* 2014  
Painted timber, nylon thread, wire  
Dimensions: 28 x 50 x 28 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
This project is assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for  
the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Ken THAIDAY  
*Whaleboat* 2014  
Painted timber, twine, cloth, metal hooks  
Dimensions: 30 x 64 x 25 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
This project is assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for  
the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

Alick TIPOTI  
*Dhangalaw Kab* 2014  
Linoleum print  
Dimensions: 93 x 132 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist

Alick TIPOTI  
*KULBA WAKAY (ancient voice – songs and chants  
to acknowledge the spiritual ancestors)* 2014  
Video performance art work featuring sculptures  
made by the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards  
Courtesy of the artist

Alick TIPOTI  
*MARIMAWA (spiritual mask dance – calling  
of and communicating with the spiritual  
ancestors)* 2014  
Video performance art work featuring sculptures  
made by the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards  
Courtesy of the artist

Alick TIPOTI  
*POEYPIYAM ANGAYK (testing the area/guarding  
the grounds/checking for bad spirits)* 2014  
Video performance art work featuring sculptures  
made by the artist  
Photography: Mick Richards  
Courtesy of the artist

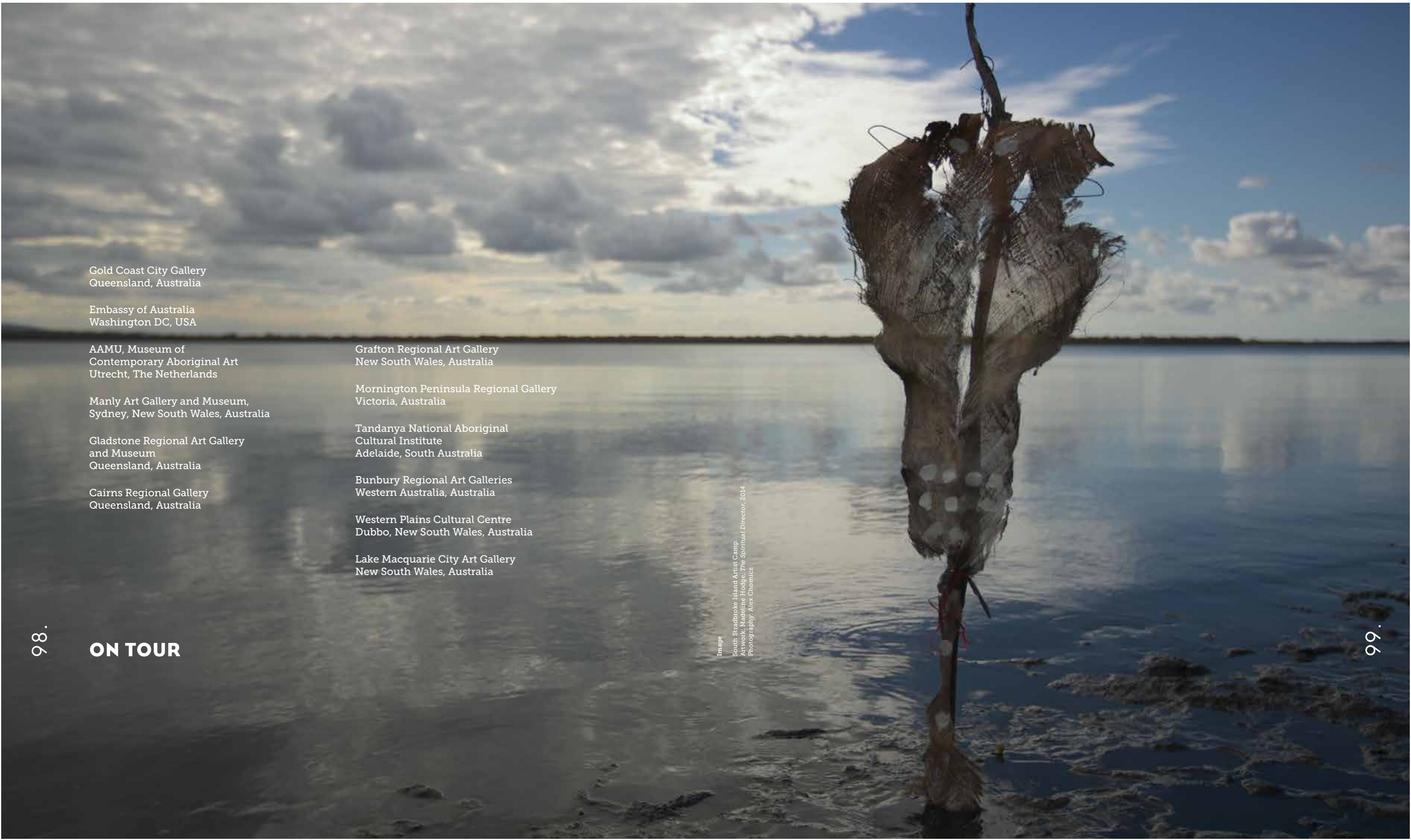
Ian WALDRON  
*The Norman River, Kurtjar Country  
(Gulf of Carpentaria)* 2014  
Acrylic and oil on canvas board  
Dimensions: 100 x 240 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and FireWorks Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Judy WATSON  
*blue float, east coast, flinders chart* 2014  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas  
Dimensions: 179 x 100 cm  
Courtsey of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD

Judy WATSON  
*dead littoral* 2014  
Cast bronze installation: group of ten elements  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD  
Casting by UAP and Perides Art Foundry  
Acknowledgements: Jerko Starcevic, Mary Stuart

Judy WATSON  
*flinders chart, cottonwood leaves* 2014  
Ink on copper shim: group of five elements  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD  
Assisted by David Jones and Carolyn Craig

Judy WATSON  
*stingray hover, burrum heads* 2014  
Cast bronze installation: group of five elements  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery,  
Brisbane QLD  
Casting at Burrum Heads assisted by  
Joyce Watson, Roslyn Robinson, Helen Jones,  
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Bronze casting: UAP  
Acknowledgements: Jerko Starcevic, Mary Stuart



Gold Coast City Gallery  
Queensland, Australia

Embassy of Australia  
Washington DC, USA

AAMU, Museum of  
Contemporary Aboriginal Art  
Utrecht, The Netherlands

Manly Art Gallery and Museum,  
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Gladstone Regional Art Gallery  
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Queensland, Australia

Cairns Regional Gallery  
Queensland, Australia

Grafton Regional Art Gallery  
New South Wales, Australia

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Victoria, Australia

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New South Wales, Australia

Image  
South Stradbroke Island Artist Camp.  
Artwork: Madeline Hodge, *The Spiritual Director*, 2014  
Photography: Alex Chomicz

Saltwater Country  
Acknowledgements

*Saltwater Country* has been developed in partnership between Museums & Galleries Queensland and Gold Coast City Gallery.

Project Team

Curators: Michael Aird / Virginia Rigney  
Assistant Curator: Jo-Anne Driessens  
Project Management: Rebekah Butler / Debra Beattie  
Project Development: Fiona Marshall

Museums & Galleries Queensland  
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Bonnie Melrose  
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Gold Coast City Gallery Project Team

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Wendy Kessell  
Megan Connors  
Jaqi Kair  
Stephen Baxter

Lenders / Artist Representatives

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Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane (Andrew Baker)  
Erub Arts, Darnley Island Arts Centre (Diann Lui)  
FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane (Michael Eather)  
Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney (Martin Browne)  
Milani Gallery, Brisbane (Josh Milani, Tim Walsh)  
Mossenson Galleries, Perth (Dr Diane Mossenson)  
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Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney  
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Alex Chomicz  
Jo-Anne Driessens  
Mick Richards  
Murray Waite

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Eileen Driessens  
Erub Arts  
Volt Studio (design)

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Jo Foster

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Ingrid Hoffmann  
Trade and Investment Queensland (Ken Smith)  
Queensland Museum  
KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns  
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Attendees: Artists Glennys Briggs / Elisa Jane  
Carmichael / Megan Cope / Katina Davidson  
Theresa Davern / Amanda Hayman / Madeline Hodge  
Debbie Presley / Craig Tapp  
Lead Artist: Judy Watson

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Virginia Rigney / Jo-Anne Driessens

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Gold Coast Presenting Partner:  
Gold Coast Waterways Authority

Gina Allain / Chantal Cook / Lynnette Griffiths  
Maureen Newton / Paula Nihot / Jonathan Richards

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Curator Michael Aird was published for the Gold  
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My Country – Swamp Country*, 2011.

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*Saltwater Country* is a travelling exhibition developed in partnership between Museums & Galleries Queensland and Gold Coast City Gallery. Curated by Michael Aird and Virginia Rigney. *Saltwater Country* has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body; and is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory governments. This project has received financial assistance from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland's Backing Indigenous Arts program. The project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia International Cultural Council, an initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; and by the Council of the City of Gold Coast.



