

TARRAWARRA  
MUSEUM  
OF ART  
BIENNIAL 2014

W H I S P E R  
— IN MY —  
M A S K

CURATORS:  
NATALIE KING AND DJON MUNDINE

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# FOREWORD

The TarraWarra Museum of Art was established as a company limited by guarantee in October 2000 and was the first privately funded public visual arts museum to be set up under the Australian Government’s philanthropic measures announced in March 1999. The Museum opened in Healesville, Victoria, in 2003 as a not-for-profit institution, with a charter to display Australian and international art from the second half of the twentieth century to the present day.

Founders Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AO have been passionate collectors of Australian art since the 1950s, when they purchased significant works by the artists of their time. Not only did they gift the building that houses the museum, and 10 acres of land on a 99 year lease, they also donated a significant proportion of their private collection for the enjoyment of the public.

TarraWarra Museum of Art is committed to promote, develop and exhibit the collection, and generate and host exhibitions of modern and contemporary art from both Australia and abroad. Our aim is to promote access to and encourage participation in the Museum in order to foster knowledgeable, passionate and critically aware audiences; and to stimulate innovative and creative activities by providing exhibitions and public programs that make an original contribution to the fields of modern and contemporary art.

In 2006, the inaugural director Maudie Palmer AO, initiated the TarraWarra Biennial as a signature exhibition to identify new developments in contemporary art. I have had the good fortune to curate two of these exhibitions *Parallel Lives: Australian Painting Today* in 2006 and *Sonic Spheres* 2012. In 2008 the Museum presented *Lost & Found: An Archeology of the Present* curated by Charlotte Day; in 2010 *TWMA Contemporary* showcased contemporary art through the eyes of a diverse group of individuals; and this year, guest curators Natalie King and Djon Mundine have curated *Whisper in My Mask*.

Each of these exhibitions has focused on a particular idea, theme or tendency. The biennial series is not intended to be a survey nor does it focus on the global market place. Rather it establishes refined connections and re-readings of contemporary art practice in Australia today. Taking a line from the evocative song ‘Art Groupie’ (1981) by singer, actress and model Grace Jones, the title of this year’s TarraWarra Biennial, *Whisper in My Mask*, signals an exploration of masking, secrets and hidden narratives as psychological states. Indeed we live in an era where masking has multiple expressions: as the political cover-up, as an adopted persona and as a cultural expression. From the tattoo to the clown, from the sacred and secret to the layers of misinformation that conceal significant Australian stories, this exhibition provides a wide array of engagement with the notion of the mask and masking.

We are indebted to our principal sponsor, the Besen Family Foundation, for their support of the Museum. We acknowledge the generous support of Paoli Smith Creative Agency and RACV Healesville Country Club. The TarraWarra Biennial 2014 is also an official partner with the 2014 Melbourne Art Fair, 13 – 17 of August, held at the Royal Exhibition Building. On Sunday 19 October 2014, specially timed to take place as a part of the Melbourne Festival, 10 – 26 October 2014, the TarraWarra Biennial will feature a day of live performances, artists’ talks, curators’ talks and innovative and unexpected actions.

The *TarraWarra Biennial 2014: Whisper in My Mask* has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and the State Government of Victoria through Arts Victoria. We are also indebted to the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development who have assisted with the Tjanpi Desert Weavers, and the Healesville Hotel who have supported The Telepathy Project.

On behalf of the Museum, I extend my gratitude to Natalie King and Djon Mundine for their vision, and to the artists and authors for sharing their work with us. I wish to thank Eva and Marc Besen and the Board of TarraWarra Museum of Art for their continued support of the TarraWarra Biennial. Finally, our sincere gratitude is also extended to the highly motivated and committed staff and volunteers of the Museum.

Victoria Lynn – Director



# WHISPER IN MY MASK

Djon Mundine and Natalie King

**Touch Me in a Picture,  
Wrap Me in a Cast,  
Kiss Me in a Sculpture,  
Whisper in My Mask.**

Grace Jones, 'Art Groupie' (1981)

Taking a line from the evocative song 'Art Groupie' (1981) by singer, actress and model Grace Jones, the title of this year's biennial *Whisper in my Mask* signals an exploration of masking, secrets and hidden narratives as psychological states. Three years later Jones' body became a painted surface for graffiti artist Keith Haring emblazoned with concentric circles, his characteristic pictograms and decorative motifs. Subsequently, Robert Mapplethorpe photographed Jones concealed and gesticulating with an elaborate headdress thereby ushering in ideas of masquerade and transformative personas. The biennial commences with this song, like a soundtrack alongside two key works from the TarraWarra Museum of Art collection that invoke bodily inscriptions while referencing masks worn for fun and frivolity. Howard Arkley's *Tattooed head* (1983) and Robert Dickerson's *The clown* (1958) are a prelude at the museum entrance or threshold: a playful deceit to invoke those social masks tattooed onto our psyche.

The etymology of the word 'mask' derives from the Latin word for image, *imago*, which can refer to the death mask but also phantom and transformation. The mask in its multifarious forms and functions can both reveal and conceal personalities; it can protect, beautify, frighten or pacify, universalise or eternalise, intensifying and amplifying expression. In a selection of works that elicit an emotional and sensory response, the biennial will return

us to human senses and the Djambarrpuyngu (of Arnhem land in the Northern Territory) people's palate, experienced on a scale from monuk (salt) to rapine (sweet), a range that encompasses both bitterness and pleasure at one and the same time both physiologically and emotionally. Moreover, masking suggests altered states of reverie and otherworldliness intertwined with local mysteries and parapsychology.

Disguise manifests as trace, inscription, erasure, secrets, camouflage, veiling, whisperings, 'dreamings' and subterfuge. These ideas infiltrate the biennial as a series of trigger points by incorporating a range of artworks that include sound, video, performance and participatory installations by cross-generational Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists. The biennial has been extended beyond the museum confines, whispering into other locations. In order to mobilise the local community, projects will be presented in the Healesville Hotel and in the verdant grounds surrounding the museum during the Melbourne Festival. We want the biennial to be transformative and iterative, an active platform encompassing new works and ideas taking up residence throughout the three-month duration of the exhibition. Happenings, performances and events have been specially conceived to punctuate the exhibition as a participatory and volatile format.

**LEFT:**  
Fiona Hall  
Work in progress from  
*Tjukurrpa Kumpilitja (Hidden Stories)* 2014  
Tjanpi grass, raffia, emu feathers, sardine tins,  
paint, military camouflage fabric  
dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

American artist Fred Wilson’s Venice Biennale exhibition *Speak of me as I am* (2003) pointed to the long and continuing presence of black Africans in Venice and, by inference, in wider European society and culture. It was no accident that Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* (c.1603) was set in the city that relishes an annual masked carnival dating back to the thirteenth century. Masks may be intentional or accidental – worn voluntarily or imposed upon us. We have any number of masks forced on us by society such as the mask of make-up in Naomi Wolfe’s *The Beauty Myth* (1990); the timely quip from feminist Gloria Steinem: ‘We are all trained to be female impersonators’; or Alexandre Dumas’ *The Man in the Iron Mask* (1847) about the mysterious prisoner held incognito in the French penal system and forced to wear a mask. Ironically Dumas himself was locked in his own mask of sorts; although famous as the essential French European, he was actually of African descent.

The mask is often criminal despite the proliferation of masked heroes fighting for truth and justice: Batman & Robin, the Lone Ranger and Zorro. In 2013, Canada joined a number of other western nations (USA, France, Germany, Spain, UK, and others) specifically banning the wearing of masks by participants attending riots and ‘unlawful’ assemblies or demonstrations with penalties under terrorist legislation of up to ten years imprisonment.

Is masking an attribute of the powerful? In his research for *The Last Man, A British Genocide in Tasmania* (2014), Professor Tom Lawson concluded that genocide could be said to be an integral feature of the British Empire.

In the macabre ‘black face’ portraits of presidents, political leaders and, in his new series *Bloodline* (2014), depicting British royalty, Tony Garifalakis reveals the mask of crime associated with all power. Behind every fortune there is a crime, and the old truism, that all power ultimately corrupts. Ambiguously charging those in authority while poking fun, like a clown’s ‘pie in the face’, an evil cold glare still chillingly fixes you in its sights. Garifalakis’ other work, *Declassified Documents # 4* (2014), comprises declassified documents obliterated by layers of enamel paint. This cover-up pronounces the overpowering thought that in a time of an overburdening mass of information, we are still deprived of ‘the truth’. In fact, information is used as a bait to bring us under constant observation in all aspects of our lives. Garifalakis’ camouflage wall hangings with ominous eyes peering from these fabric banners furthers ideas of military and governmental surveillance.

In ancient Greek theatre, masks were worn to allow the all male performers to act both male and female roles as well as signal tragedy or comedy (and satire). In the theatre of the 1950s and 60s, especially Jean Genet and Jean Cocteau, performers returned to using

this basic tool. In the first Aboriginal, black theatre productions in Sydney of the 1970s, some actors from the all black casts wore white masks to play white people. There are a myriad of masks and disguises that sneak up on us, to whisper to us seductively. Whispering is an intimate act of uttering in hushed tones, suggesting secrets, coded speech and quiet murmurings. Alternative forms of communication from the Austrian yodeling of Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser’s video projection *Misdirection* (2014) to Nasim Nasr’s Persian clicking with both hands in *Beshkan (Breakdown)* (2013), heightens other sonic modes of communication.

*The mirror will only lie when you look at it through a mask.*  
**Anthony Liccione, American poet**

There is the story of the Medusa with snakes for hair who turned to stone all that met her eyes. The hero Perseus was able to approach and behead her by assuming an invisible form, and observing her in his mirrored shield. Gabriella Mangano and Silvana Mangano have filmed at the grounds of TarraWarra Estate exploring the abstract and experiential qualities of light: ‘In the landscape you have a particular nuance or perspective on that landscape. The reality of the landscape is often less, not what it’s presented as – in our new work we’re colouring the landscape – masking the landscape.

Going into the country “masks” you. You’re a different person, you can sense something in a landscape, you metamorphose into something else.’<sup>1</sup> We are reminded of the stereoscopic photographic image where you are required to wear a masklike lens apparatus to blend two identical figures viewed from slightly different positions to create a three dimensional optical or colour image. In their recent work, the Manganos manipulate classic geometric forms, simple sounds in action, hidden within the human body and the landscape.

According to A.W. Reed’s *Place Names of Australia* (1973), Tarrawarra means ‘slow moving water’ and it is translated as Honeysuckle (Banksia) tree in Aldo Massola’s *Aboriginal Place Names of South-east Australia and their meanings* (1968).<sup>2</sup> Masking of the landscape – the land of the Yarra Valley has been draped with a commercialised overlay. The exhibition allows us to peek under the commercial masked curtain to view the spiritual vitality and to see the personal interiority of this locale. ‘Remote’ and ‘Regional’ are such contested terms and refer to ideas of masking involved in the centre and periphery debate. Tarrawarra itself could possibly be considered as regional or remote. Filmmaker John Pilger once described the ‘remote’ Aboriginal communities as ‘Gulags’: places where ‘nonpersons’ are held, ‘masked’, quarantined from contaminating the rest of society. Contaminating Australian society with the truth of the crimes inflicted in the colonising of Australia.

Of course from an Aboriginal perspective these places are homes and regarded very highly spiritually, as essential historic sites, and definitely not thought of as remote. Ironically, government and church at times argued the need to protect Aboriginal people from the depredations of the Europeans and their sullyng influence.

The exhibition’s most ambitious conversations are concerned with the visible and the invisible, masked presences and memories. Firstly through the haptic work of Adelaide-based Fiona Hall who collaborated with twelve fibre artists of the Tjanpi Desert Weavers collective from the N.P.Y. Lands<sup>3</sup> during an artists’ camp held in the bush near Wingellina in Western Australia. Conversations at camp coalesced around the notion of camouflage, a term with no literal translation into Pitjantjatjara or Ngaanyatjarra that was conceptualised as to disguise, hide or deceive. What transpired was two separate but interrelated bodies of work collectively titled *Tjukurrpa Kumpilitja (Hidden Stories)* (2014). Sharing materials, including fabric from military garments Fiona had brought to camp, and the ubiquitous materials of the Tjanpi artists, native grasses and emu feathers, the collaborators have woven sculptures of Australian animal species threatened with extinction. Kuka nganampa wiyaringu or disappearing animals, is a concept familiar to desert women through the ongoing land management work in their homelands and a long term concern of Hall’s practice.

Displayed on upturned billy tins, *Kuka Iritija (Animals from other times)* (2014) comprises a cluster of animals including mala (rufous hare wallaby), ninu (bilby), walpurti (numbat), parrtjarta (western quoll), mitika (greater stick nest rat), patupiri (ghost bat), wintaru (long haired rat), nyirri (mountain devil), tjirilya (echidna) as well as introduced species ngaya (feral cats), a camel and a horse made by the Tjanpi artists alongside Fiona’s imaginatively hybridised and playfully menacing works combining military hardware and endangered animals.

These sculptural species are counterpointed with a work *Alkawari* (2014) inspired by a tjukurrpa story about a well-known mamu figure from the Lands. Mamu are spirit figures that may appear benign yet can harbour the potential for harmful trickery and monstrous behaviour. Alkawari is portrayed seated inside her wiltja (bush hut) while her crippled lover lies hidden in a piti (carrying dish). He is badly burnt with charred stumps for legs. Nearby her grandson is looking on from his hiding place behind some bushes. Alkawari is a complex tjukurrpa story of covert activities underpinned by the uncanny notion that all is not as it seems.

Secondly, The Telepathy Project (Veronica Kent and Sean Peoples) attempts collaboratively to join in conversation the spirit of the Yarra Valley region surrounding Tarrawarra and the Wurundjeri creation story of the Great Moorool, with Stanislaw Lem’s Polish science fiction novel *Solaris* (1961). Their inclusive artwork *Reading Solaris to the Great Moorool* (2014) is a process



of engagement examining two systems of knowledge – one Western and visible and the other invisible and intangible. Here is a complex story of masking and attempts at some form of communication across the colonial divide.

***Boldness is a mask for fear, however great. John Dryden, poet, (1631-1700)***

In 2007, on being elected Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd strove to bring attention to Australia’s growing number of largely unnoticed ‘homeless’ people. A third intervention is the result of a Northern Rivers Performing Arts (NORPA) initiated collaborative workshop by artist Karla Dickens with a homeless, socially challenged outsider group invisible to most of society. The workshop, *You Winsome, You Lose Some* (2013) (after Lismore’s Winsome Hotel) in Lismore on the north coast of New South Wales, utilised found objects from the local recycling centre producing a bittersweet portraiture of veiled but optimistic lives in sepia-toned masked portraits. For Karla Dickens, masking is about fear, fear of the ‘truth’ and fear of the reaction of the viewer, of people’s perceptions, doubts and judgments. The viewer often mirrors the mask in response. The work of Dickens unveils a face of pathos, a ‘saudade’, the trauma of histories that scars people’s lives and psyche. John von Sturmer commented: ‘A scar (or scars) is the opposite of a mask, it’s life (history) marking you, transforming and fixing you’.<sup>4</sup>

***Who knows what true loneliness is – not the conventional word but the naked terror. To the lonely themselves it wears a mask. The most miserable outcast hugs some memory or some illusion. Joseph Conrad, Under Western Eyes (1911)***

The series of delicate works on paper *I listen for you* (2014) by Sangeeta Sandrasegar allude to the mask of the emigrant in Conrad’s quote. Memories of past lives infiltrate your new life and hover through your thoughts. Can you ever leave them? Her paper cutouts are haunted with the spectre of past lives, continuing her exploration of a female ghost from Malaysian folklore and the *Ubume*, a ghost from Japanese literature, art and worship. Both are ghosts of women who have died in childbirth and who are always depicted with long, trailing hair. The Pontianak is said to haunt banana plantations as a beautiful young woman who will lure men to their ultimate death. Sandrasegar explores these liminal ideas of female forces conflated with the passing on of life, narratives and traditions. As Avery Gordon has written in *Ghostly Matters* (2008): ‘The ghost is not simply a dead or missing person, but a social figure, and investigating [that social figure] can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life ... The way of the ghost is haunting, and haunting is a very particular way of knowing what has happened or is happening’.<sup>5</sup>

The first people hanged in Melbourne were in fact two Aboriginal men: Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheener in 1842. Those condemned to hang are offered a type of mask, a hood possibly to calm them but more likely to remove their personality from the sight of those about to kill them. In *Muffled Protest* (2010), members of the activist collective boat-people wear hoods or masks made from the Australian flag which cover their heads, inferring that the refugees arriving here in Australia are already like people condemned. At the same time, this provocative gesture illustrates how the Australian population wraps themselves in the flag to turn a blind eye to the plight of refugees. In considering the work of both Sandrasegar and boat-people the following insight from Julian Holloway and James Kneale resonates strongly: ‘The disinterring of the colonial past in countries like Australia is a good example of a kind of productive encounter with the spectres of the past traumas, making the taken-for-granted world uncanny. The refugee or exile remembering home, or returning only to find it changed forever is similarly haunted’.<sup>6</sup>

In the *Misdirection* (2014) projections of Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser, in which two people from countries with concealed histories sing across a room to each other, the word refers to the sleight of hand that is played by magicians: ‘One way of thinking about a mask, certain masks, is as “misdirection”, a term used in stage

magic about theatrical ways of distracting the audience from the mechanics of a trick and what is really going on’.<sup>7</sup> The ‘trick’ in these lives however is salt-bitter both personally and nationally in their singing. Wearing a white straitjacket, footage of a woman yodeling in Austria while kneeling on a bed of salt, hints at the unspoken atrocities uncovered in Austria’s history of participation in the Holocaust.

The artist Polixeni Papapetrou flexes the camera’s hold on her subjects: her children dressed in vintage clown costumes and props. As the child of immigrant parents, Papapetrou grew up in a Greek-speaking household in Melbourne in the 1960s. With no English when she started school, she felt like an outsider. Her photographs are a form of the seven stages of grieving. *Decrepitude, Despondency, Grief, Melancholia, Pathos, Somberness, and Sorrow* (2013–14) have a haunting, otherworldly quality but sparkle with saturated colour and a mask of dolefulness. Tautly composed against densely black backgrounds, Papapetrou is preoccupied with the clown as jester or fool, the ultimate outsider figure that is either comical or grotesque: ‘My interest in the clown is in the clown’s status as other – the clown as mask. I am intrigued by how the masked face can reveal emotion rather than conceal it, how the clown can express feelings that are universal through that masked exterior’.<sup>8</sup>

Influenced by Diane Arbus and Cindy Sherman’s photographs of circus clowns, Papapetrou casts her children in the tawdry, glittering oasis of magic and childhood.

***Stars, hide your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires. William Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act I, Scene IV***

Stenopeic lens glasses for people with myopia have opaque lenses of many pinhole perforations so that each emits only a narrow beam of light, reducing the ‘circle of confusion’ on the retina to focus the image and lengthen the depth of field. In the work of Daniel Boyd, the 2014 Bvlgari Art Award recipient, masking is about the unknown – the inconceivable – the incomprehensible. It’s acknowledging the incomprehensible – not talking about god exactly but about that which is not visible, the intangible. Boyd’s large paintings are overlaid with a veil of tiny black dots, pointing to the invisible, the dark matter of the universe, the unseen. By reinterpreting German photographer Fred Kruger’s detailed images of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station of the 1880s, Boyd navigates the social, intellectual, and spiritual ‘invisible’ landscape and not the obvious visible vista of colonial landscape painting.

***We will draw the veil to show you the picture. William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night, Act I, Scene V***

The roots of the word ‘mascara’ have meanings including darkening, but also ‘buffoon’, and mask. Nasim Nasr is an emerging artist of Iranian background now based in Adelaide. She explores repressive conventions relating to gender, especially the chador, in a poetic and hypnotic way. Her film *Unveiling the Veil* (2010) comprises close-up black and white footage of her rubbing her eyes so they weep, making her mascara run. This emotionally intense gesture is filled with sorrow and remorse. A whispering of chalk by a woman silently writing a Persian poem in the two-channel moving image *Erasure* (2010), holds your attention as another gestures quickly and quietly to remove the words from the right. Here, hidden meanings are ritualistically and rapturously revealed and concealed.

***Portraits offer an inscrutable face that masks the complexities of a personality, and perhaps even invents an entirely new personality.*<sup>9</sup>**

The children’s fairytale *Cinderella* is really the story of a ‘blackness’ concealed within her name, ‘cinders’, and as such, of the self-consciousness of an outsider at public social events. Social customs, mannered gestures, and ‘niceness’ just as often mask viciousness, jealousies and contempt. Sandra Hill is a Nyoongar Western Australian artist of Aboriginal and Chinese descent, a descendant of Mei Long the Dragon and Waugal the Rainbow Serpent.

Her maternal grandfather called William Ah Sing was taken into a Christian orphanage. Both paths to her present existence appear like a shadow on the official histories. In her lifetime, government ‘race’ policies attempted brutally, and then seductively, to jam a square peg in a round hole of ‘assimilation’ and then ‘integration’. Hill’s mother was taken from her own mother in 1933 and placed in Sister Kate’s Home for Half Caste Children, Fremantle, and at fifteen she assumed a form of Cinderella persona as a domestic servant for ‘white’ family homes. Hill would also end up in this home in 1958. The paintings in her *Home-maker* series (2012–14) talk directly to the restrictions of life’s chances for all women, waiting to be a ‘little homemaker’ for their prince to come.

Comedy, caricature, distortion, exaggeration, sendup, skit, and cartoon could all be seen as systems or rituals of masking or unmasking: The Emperor’s clothes. Wherever possible, we have attempted to include the local community in various projects such as Danish artist Søren Dahlgaard’s *Dough Portraits* (2014) whereby a mass of bread dough is placed on the head of the sitter as both a gesture of obliteration and a sculptural cast that is completely absurd, nonsensical, and just plain fun. Dahlgaard is influenced by the Japanese Gutai Group of the 1950s that was preoccupied with transformational materials in multimedia

environments, performances and theatrical events. Moreover, dough is derived from wheat and connects to fields in Denmark and extends by association to Land Art. Concerned with the history of painting and classic portrait photography, Dahlgaard’s capacious enterprise is inclusive and participatory, involving any and many sitters who wish to be part of the covering up of individual identity.

One of the most successfully interactive but little known Australian public artworks is *Eliza* (2007): a bronze female figure by artist Tony Jones in Matilda Bay on the Swan River in Western Australia. Although set in water fifteen meters from the shoreline it, to the amusement of all, is regularly ‘dressed’ by anonymous locals in an ever-changing wardrobe of personas and characters that the resident passing traffic now look out for in daily expectation. *Ragtag* (2014), a film by poet and filmmaker Dr. Romaine Moreton, is comedic along a similar theme but deals with more serious issues concerning the national relationship to land, history and memory. The popular tourist site The Three Sisters in the Blue Mountains, with its nearby public artwork (fountain), has for decades fraudulently used a ‘dreaming’ story that was actually created and promoted by a non-Aboriginal source. When Romaine Moreton and friends clothed the nude life size Aboriginal figures of the fountain, they were confronted by tourists and locals for vandalising a serious

work of art. The resultant exchange captured in her film is witty, amusing and thought provoking in its exposure of the mask prevalent in attitudes to Aboriginal histories.

*Your Bible talk is a smokescreen for personal bigoted views.*<sup>10</sup>

One of the most embarrassing disasters of the 1970s was to puncture your beanbag, releasing a flood of small polystyrene balls that were impossible to control and reassemble. In *Smokescreen* (2013–14), Elizabeth Pedler constructs a snowstorm of approximately 3500 litres of tiny polystyrene beads fanned in a playful room. The interactive exuberance belies the smokescreen as used by the military to release smoke to mask the movement or location of infantry, tanks, aircraft and ships. Like a white billowing cloud, Pedler deftly creates a space removed from our mundane everyday existence, a space of otherworldly exhilaration and pure visual pleasure.

*How is it that our minds are not satisfied? ... What means this whispering in the bottom of our hearts?*<sup>11</sup>

This issue is embodied in a number of artists’ work as well as the play by Professor Diane Bell, published in this catalogue, on the gender and race history ‘masking’ contested in the 1990s Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal people’s Hindmarsh Island Bridge controversy in South Australia.

Further, a panel discussion on the masking of Australian history will be held in October at the museum, with artist Fiona Foley and Professor Henry Reynolds. The masking of history is also made evident in the works of Fiona Foley. Taking the words of Germaine Greer, ‘there would have been no stolen generations if the white man had kept his hands off Aboriginal women,’<sup>12</sup> Foley’s moving image tale *Vexed* (2013) depicts various cross generational characters in the Australian landscape. Foley’s large floor sculpture of the words *BLACK VELVET* (2014) confronts audiences with this jarring racist and sexist term. Karla Dickens’ *Hush-a-Bye* (2014) black babies’ heads speak to two historical masks: that of the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal children on the one hand, and on the other, preserved in their limbo-like glass bell jars, the scientific research on bodies of Aboriginal people in the Institute of Anatomy in Canberra until the 1960s.

*You wear a mask for so long, you forget who you were beneath it.*  
*Gordon Deitrich, V for Vendetta* (2005)

What is Australia’s national face? What is Australia’s national mask? Around the time of Federation, we find the formation of a national school of art in Australian colonial society. But where is Aboriginal expression in this establishment? One of the most contested debates in Australia over the last twenty years is what has come to be called the ‘culture wars’

or history wars. This has concerned the ‘masked’ view of Australian history centred on the dispossession and mass killings of Aboriginal people from our lands across the Australian continent, including the Wurundjeri of the Tarrawarra district and beyond. To a lesser extent, this discourse intersected with the gains under the feminism and multi-culturalism movements.

Our paired, gender-balanced curatorial team’s conversation, although nuanced through sophisticated art practice reading, is curiously joined through a social history consciousness of holocaust experience – Aboriginal and Jewish. The relationality of curating individual artists, community, society, inside and outside the gallery, and creating a conversation between objects and community through a number of devices and on a number of levels, is something we unconsciously just thought was our normal practice, and what we aimed for from the start. Our discursive modality of walking around a concept allowed the opportunity for each of us to work with both new and familiar artists working across various mediums. This enabled us to connect differing perspectives and sites. An exhibition is not just an assemblage of objects but creates the possibility of social and conversational exchange and engagement around ideas with some sense of reciprocity. It’s about removing the mask or reveling in it, re-reading the archive while creating new archives and memories of the now.

1 Gabriella Mangano in conversation with the authors, 2014

2 Aldo Massola, *Aboriginal Place Names of South-east Australia and their meanings*, Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1968.

3 Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women’s Council, land across southwest Northern Territory into Western Australia and the upper northwest of South Australia.

4 Private conversation between Djon Mundine and John von Sturmer, 2014.

5 Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008, p. 8.

6 Julian Holloway and James Kneale, ‘Locating haunting: A ghost-hunter’s guide’, *Cultural Geographies*, 15(3), pp. 297–312.

7 ‘One way of thinking about a mask, certain masks, is as “misdirection”, a term used in stage magic about theatrical ways of distracting the audience from the mechanics of a trick. The instruction book *Our Magic*, by Nevil Maskely and David Devant, first published in 1911, said “misdirection” consists of misleading spectator’s senses in order to screen from detecting certain details for which secrecy is required’. Virginia Fraser, in conversation with the authors, 2014.

8 Polixeni Papapetrou interviewed by Natalie King, *Eyeline*, No. 80, 2014, pp. 44–56.

9 Richard Neville, *Faces of Australia, Image, Reality and the Portrait*, Sydney: State Library of New South Wales Press, 1992.

10 [http://www.salon.com/2014/01/19/transgender\\_woman\\_to\\_right\\_wing\\_councilman\\_your\\_bible\\_talk\\_is\\_a\\_smoke\\_screen\\_for\\_personal\\_prejudice/](http://www.salon.com/2014/01/19/transgender_woman_to_right_wing_councilman_your_bible_talk_is_a_smoke_screen_for_personal_prejudice/)

11 Henry Reynolds, *This Whispering in Our Hearts*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1998, p. 21.

12 Germaine Greer, *On Rage*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008, p. 38.

# WEAVING AND WHISPERS: MIWI WISDOM

A One Act Play by Diane Bell

**Scene 1:**  
**Camp Coorong, South Australia. A group of Ngarrindjeri women has just returned from a day of collecting fresh water rushes and are settling in for an evening of weaving and story-telling.**

**GRANDMOTHER:** Weaving time is story-telling time. (Looks up from her weaving, chuckles, and mimics a Scots accent of the early missionaries.): ‘The Devil finds work for idle hands’ you know. Remember how those missionaries encouraged us? Better we were collecting rushes than teaching young girls the business of being a woman, our way of being a woman.

**AUNTY:** Little did they know! My Nana would tell the White Christians they’d be gone for a few days. Mum would go with her. All the white fellas knew was that they’d gone away from the mission to do some weaving, pick more rushes, all of which was true. The only ones to know anything more about it were the ones they trusted. Nana knew that country: it was her *ruwi*.

**GRANDMOTHER:** I was afraid to go there without your Nana, but then she told me some of the stories and showed me where I could walk, where I could collect rushes, how to collect the rushes, even so I knew to always ask her before we were going there. We had to respect our Old People.

**AUNTY:** Goolwa, near where we were today, was a trading place, a meeting place, where the Murray flows into the Ocean. Those old Nanas told the missionary they were getting rushes but they were trading too. What the missionaries didn’t know couldn’t hurt them. Silence is golden, eh? Kept our places safe.

**DAUGHTER:** I didn’t know anything about Hindmarsh Island, but when I first came across onto the island, I came down to the Murray Mouth, and we stood there, all of us, in a circle. And then when I went home to my husband, I was saying, I felt it. I really felt it, in my tummy. I felt it, you know, it really touched me. That island means a lot and I don’t know all the stories as yet and I just said to my husband, there’s definitely something here, there’s definitely something. Because I feel it, and I felt it so much that day that I cried and I cried.

**AUNTY:** I’ve felt it. And it’s when I go to places and feel that in my stomach, you know, and it’s telling me about something of this area. I can go to other places and feel nothing. You know what I mean? And that’s how it works. Not through your eyes, or ears, or nose, or taste, or touch, but through your stomach.

**GRANDMOTHER:** *Miwi* wisdom. That’s where you feel it, in your stomach, behind the navel. Where you know it. It will tell you when you are at those special places.

**AUNTY:** I can see it when the *miwi* is speaking to others, even some white fellas get it, but others, even some of our rellies, don’t get it. Those women who said we made up our stories, my cousins, they weren’t listening to their *miwi*. And it wasn’t up to me to tell them about it. I know what I feel. Everyone doesn’t need to know everything for it to be true.

**DAUGHTER:** I looked in that big book about us. My old Nana was in it but she didn’t tell those old anthropologists everything. They thought *miwi* was just superstition, not religion at all.

**GRANDMOTHER:** (Smooths her skirt, folds her hands in her lap, speaks softly and resolutely.) *Miwi* is my wisdom that I grew up with. *Miwi* is part of life and it’s also a part of the women’s business, but the feeling of *miwi* within oneself, it’s there down reaching our soul. Everything that we do throughout the day, throughout each day, whatever we do, is all wrapped up in weaving and each stitch in weaving meant the part of our lives through the *miwi* wisdom.

My *miwi* is telling me to speak now. My daughter here is old enough now to know. (Draws her daughter close.) You’re a grandmother yourself now. I’ll tell you the stories about our *ruwi*, our country, our *ngatji*, our totems. But my *miwi* is telling me it’s not for everyone. When we’re weaving, with our loved ones, their lives are part of the weave, it’s then I can speak.

Did those anthropologists who wrote that big book ever sit and weave with us? Respect. That’s what these stories need. That’s what our Old People deserve. The stories are not for shouting about. (She whispers in her daughter’s ear). She knows.

**Scene 2: The Museum. A curator, the ‘Prof’, an Indigenous female researcher and an oral historian are sorting a collection of papers and artifacts of a bequest from a recently deceased associate of the Museum.**

**CURATOR:** (Picking up a number of baskets of the type the women had been weaving.) More weaving. Into the ‘craft box’. Now be careful with those male sacred items. (Turning to the Indigenous researcher.) You’d better leave us now. Nothing here for women. It’s all sacred. Men’s knowledge.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (Turning to the aged anthropologist.) Prof, I have looked at those genealogies in your book and I was shocked. My old Aunty explained kinship to me and taught me who could marry but in your draft, there are nieces married to uncles and children with the wrong parents.

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** I’ll have a look.

(The Indigenous researcher walks purposefully to the exhibit room of the Museum where a DVD with stories of her Old People is playing.

*It is just audible to the men who continue sorting and boxing the items.)*

**VOICE OVER:** As a weaver I have to pick and dry the rushes, and when I go out for rushes, I go with my children and my sister’s children and friends. Through this sharing, teaching, and learning, when they get to an age, they’ll know. They’re learning about the land, about the best places for rushes and how to pick them, about the different species, *kukando* and pinkie, from the southeast, and *mungado* from the Coorong. All my children are weavers, and now, my granny [grandchild], she’s five, said to me the other day, ‘Nana, it’s my turn now.’

**ORAL HISTORIAN:** (Nodding towards the exhibit.) We could add a soundtrack about the impact of fencing and farming on access to fresh water rushes. Maybe a note from Ngarrindjeri writer David Unaipon who wrote about a crippled woman who kept up her mat making; that was around 1913. And the local farmers and supervisors who said, ‘Let those Old People go in for basket-making and other things that they are capable of doing’.

**CURATOR:** (Aside to Prof.) Better stick with the collections. We have the papers of the first missionaries, their diaries, the field notes of the early anthropologists, your work. We know what those people were doing before they lost their culture. This generation only

knows it from books. Like you said in the 1940s, it’s ‘memory culture’ now.

**ORAL HISTORIAN:** (In a barely audible but emphatic tone.) Stories have been passed down. There *are* families along the River and Coorong who have continuous contact with their country, who *know* the stories.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (Visibly upset, returns from the exhibit.) In that display you have of a woman sitting in the camp. It’s wrong. That is not how women sit. It needs to be fixed. It is disrespectful.

**CURATOR:** Nothing in the sources about that. How do I know you’re right?

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** My Aunty told me one day when we were weaving. She showed me the right way.

**Scene 3: The weaving women are packing up, getting ready for bed. They are smoothing out the fresh water rushes they’ve collected and wrapping them in damp towels to keep them supple for another day.**

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (Arriving in a flurry of activity and agitation.) Still up weaving?

**DAUGHTER:** Join us aunty. All *miminar* [women] here.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (*Picks up one of her niece’s ‘sister baskets’.*) Lovely. You’ve made seven of these sister baskets? Seven Sisters, that’s our story from the waters at Goolwa around the island.

**DAUGHTER:** They’re being photographed in Sydney this weekend to go to the exhibit in Japan. Part of me goes with it.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (*Still fuming.*) I’m finished with the Museum. No respect for our stories. They want it all in neat boxes but that’s not how our culture works. It’s all connected, like the weaving.

**DAUGHTER:** (*Calmly passes her aunty a starter centre piece and several longer rushes.*) Here, this will make you feel better. Let’s sit a while. For me, this is a meditation. (*She settles her grandchild into her lap and starts.*) From here, where we actually start, this centre part of the piece, we’re creating loops to weave into, then we move into the circle, keep going round and round creating the loops and once you little ones do these stages, you’ll be talking, actually having a conversation, just like our Old People. It’s sharing time. And that’s when the stories are told.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (*Begins to weave and holds it up to show the child in her niece’s lap who is now also reaching for a starter piece.*) When you keep pulling through the rushes and adding in the fillers, you’re adding another member of your family and you don’t put them all in together, they’re at different stages, just like with the family. The family is all different ages, from the tall ones down. And when you finish you’re on the last strand of the rush, that is the filling, and when we do it that way, you can’t even see where it ends. And that is like the *miwi*, because there is no end to the *miwi*. It’s joined on at either end to the placenta and the baby. It’s the lifeline.

**DAUGHTER:** *Miwi*. It’s a really powerful thing and when you really feel it, you’ll know what it’s all about, you know. My husband used to say ‘*Wurruwarrin*: knowing and believing in it is, you know, that’s the secret.’

**GRANDMOTHER:** It’s all connected. No little boxes. The Old People, the stories, the places. The weaving is about our history, all the Ngarrindjeri pasts. As we weave from the centre out, we weave the Ngarrindjeri world, like our *miwi*. It is not cut into little boxes.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** Everyone has a *miwi*. They just need to learn to listen but shush, don’t let the Museum *kringkari*! know, they’ll put it on a tea towel in a little box.

**Scene Four: Fieldwork feedback. (I join the women and am handed a piece of weaving.)**

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** Ah story-telling time. I’ve written mine down. OK?

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** You read; we’ll weave.

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** It’s been quite a story from the 1995 South Australian Royal Commission that found you’d engaged in a deliberate fabrication to thwart the building of a bridge from Goolwa to Hindmarsh Island.<sup>2</sup> Everyone had an opinion from the media to museums, anthropologists, lawyers and politicians. Few thought it necessary to read all the sources. That 22 December 1995 *Adelaide Advertiser* caught the mood of the moment with the ‘Lies, lies, lies’ headline.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** And they never apologised.

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** I get angry just thinking about it: a shameful moment in Australian history. My piece is short, just information for people who are not familiar with the matter.

**WEAVERS:** Read it.

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** Just the facts: A group of Ngarrindjeri women and men brought an application under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act* 1984 to protect their sacred sites that would be desecrated if developers were permitted to build a bridge to Kumarangk (Hindmarsh Island) to facilitate access to their marina. A further group of Ngarrindjeri women, who became known as the ‘dissident women’, disputed the claims of gender-restricted knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

**GRANDMOTHER:** It was a bitter time for us: families divided, people getting sick, our leaders dying young. There’s been some healing.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** Especially after Judge von Doussa vindicated us. Made it clear we were not liars. That was a great day.<sup>4</sup> And then the South Australian government registered the site and recognised our stories: the ones that weren’t written down.<sup>5</sup>

**ANTHROPOLOGIST:** And in 2010, the South Australian government formally acknowledged that decision and noted that ‘great pain and hurt’ had been caused to the community.<sup>6</sup> Fine words, but what will follow? The story is not finished.

**INDIGENOUS RESEARCHER:** (*Picks up the written text and places it with the rushes.*) Let’s weave.

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The premiere performance of this play will take place at TarraWarra Museum of Art on 16 August 2014.

1 Ngarrindjeri term for white fellas from the name for a corpse when the layer scarfskin is removed in the traditional burial process and the body is a pink-reddish colour.

2 Iris Stevens, *Report of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Royal Commission*, Adelaide: South Australian Government Printer, 1995.

3 Diane Bell, *Ngarrindjeri Wurruwarrin: A world that is, was, and will be*, (New edition with new Preface), Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 2014.

4 John von Doussa, ‘Reasons for Decision’, *Thomas Lincoln Chapman and Ors v Luminis Pty Ltd, 088 127 085 and Ors, Federal Court of Australia*, No. SG 33 of 1, 2001.

5 Bell, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

6 Bell, *op. cit.*, p. xxii.



# PLOT LINES: A MASQUERADE

John Von Sturmer

*The oddity of the art object is that left to its own devices it disappears into itself. We might talk about this as a process of self-masking. We no longer ‘see’ the work, we only recognise it. Recognition is a function of memory. Memory perceives badly; almost any ‘signal’ will do. Memory is a bad proof-reader – for it is apt to see what it expects to see. It allows the same error over and over again. This repetition may represent a form of unresolved desire – like the Mona Lisa’s smile. It repeats itself over and over – and is never resolved. Shall we say that all irresolution takes the form of an enigma? The mask has this same quality – yet we may say that what it offers us is the appearance of resolution: an unchanging, therefore immobile constancy. Insistence, however, is not truth.*

1

In the middle of the 16th century, so they say, Fernando, Duke of Alba, pledged himself to a holy quest: to rid the world of masks. Did he know then that it would be a futile exercise? The mask, he is reported as saying, is the excuse for all things unholy. The righteous are unafraid to appear in their own guise. All deceit is deceit and nothing more to be said. He was convinced that until people appeared in their own appearance vanity and deviousness would rule the world. Deceit is the original temptation,

said the Duke. It is this that has cast us from the Garden of Eden. Knowledge is nothing more than the knowledge of deceit. Unguarded we came into the world; unguarded we must return to our original condition. Under his regime all forms of mockery and imitation were banned. New edicts were issued daily: a ban against make-up of any kind, a ban against acting and any form of what was termed simulation. Masks when and where they were seized were put on trial. The ‘crimes’ of the mask were enumerated in detail. In all cases it was the mask that was held guilty, not the possessor – so that those in possession or ownership of the mask could forfeit it without fear of penalty or reproach. There were those who continued to lust after their masks and their apparels, as it was called. On them the law descended with its fullest force. The penalty that was imposed required them to forfeit everything. This attracted a special term: it was called The Delivery. Once masks and the tools of the masquerade were seized they were not destroyed but stored in a special stronghold: a set of tunnels and shafts left over from the long history of salt mining. There was a fear that if the paraphernalia of the mask were destroyed their spirit would spread everywhere. Thus they were retained but put under lock and key: the most rigorous security. To transport them to the stronghold the most strict observances were followed. For example,

they could only be transported at night, in special heavily draped carriages. Even the horses were cloaked and the guards themselves, those charged with transporting the suspect cargo, carefully cloaked as well. There were heretics who pointed to the apparent contradictions at work in the application of these rules and procedures – for was cloaking itself not a form of masking, indeed, the wearing of any sort of apparel? After all concealment is concealment no matter what the intention or purpose.

2

What the event was I don’t remember: a special occasion at the Peabody. The famous Whiffenpoofs were there – like a cage full of twittering birds. As for that other bird, the Dodo, there it was in the corner, stuffed. Poor thing, we thought. There was as I recall even an egg. After we went to a little bar in West Haven: an excellent trio of musicians from New York. We needed petrol – gas – so we went into the Esso service station. It may have been in Hampden; it may even have been that service station that became the prototype of all Esso service stations. No matter, it was being held up. Nothing new or exciting about that. We minded out own business in the approved fashion. The cops soon arrived. They quizzed us: ‘Black, white?’ ‘No’, we said. ‘They were wearing Menomini masks’, I offered,

having seen the same masks just a short time before at the museum. Wonderful things these masks with their ‘skewed’ faces. ‘Menomini then’, said the cop, putting his notebook away. He seemed satisfied. I’m not sure why. Maybe he was suspicious of college people. Not that I would blame him. And not as if he gave any real indication of harbouring anything like a negative attitude. But he wasn’t beholden either, not impressed, let us say. No, not impressed at all.

3

The sailors – at least the captain and his officer sidekicks – were most taken by the masks of Fukuhokahoka. ‘Primitive yet striking’, was the general verdict, ‘impressive in their fashion’. The ordinary matelots had a more dismissive, down-to-earth view. ‘Rubbish’ they said. Both groups were aware that the masks were somehow aimed at them – to ward them off, a form of defence and defiance, an advance force field, if you like. But they were unaware that it was their own image they were confronting! What they didn’t know is that the masks were them. It’s an old principle – use the foe to ward off the foe, a sort of social homeopathy, like against like.

Did Caravaggio get it or not? His Medusa shield, the mirror held up to Medusa herself, don’t you have to look at it through a mirror? How can you confront the Medusa’s head head on? Surely it has to go through its own mirror phase. In any case which way is up? What is the real, what the reflexion?

They decided on a national competition – to devise the national mask, the *masque d’état*. This was predicated on the idea that a proper democracy required a real – in actuality an actual – equality of appearance. The notion

that the society should favour the beautiful people, how crass and undemocratic was that! Yes, to rid themselves of the beauty trap, the favouring of the beautiful, the comely, the oppression of the homely the nondescript the downright ugly. Let us rid ourselves of these ridiculous ‘dividing’ categories, the curse of separation. On billboards and in buses new posters appeared: ‘Equality before the State, equality in appearance’. This was a society that truly understood the power – and the oppressiveness – of the visual. The crims were already masked so no loss there. You didn’t need that ‘singularity’ – the singularity of the look – to guarantee recognition. There was more to the look than the look, let us say. We were reminded in discussion of the trick of the ventriloquist – needing to be more inert than the dummy. The dummy could always assume a pose – a knowing smirk or bemusement. The price for this was for the ventriloquist to disappear, as it were, to slink into a visual no-man’s land. Meanwhile the dummy could grin its nasty knowing grin: ‘Ha ha ha, got you there buddy!’ Anyway we were amused by the prospect of electioneering posters in which all the candidates looked just the same. To the extent that no posters would be necessary the face would be erased – and then and only then we might attend to the message, being something other than the message of the appearance. Yes, the citizenship mask – the mask of citizen, comrade! – would no doubt catch on. Think of all the newsreaders who could sink into a pleasing anonymity. Their voices of course would give them away but the false and misleading attraction of the visual – the *imperium* of appearance would disappear. Like back to radio. Yet we know in our heart of hearts that smarty pants would soon come up

with a scheme to make the masks themselves expressive: blush for shame, turn wan for shock or horror, yellow for cowardice, spotted for infectious, bland for bland. But what was the neutral colour to be? Did it matter? There was considerable debate on this topic. At the end of the day they settled on the good old green: green face, golden shoulder-length hair and no need for sunscreen. Concessions were made for sporting teams who were permitted to wear masks in the team colours (but no logos on their foreheads. But the basic physiognomy remained that of the national estate. In drought years the faces tended to end up dry and dusty with a tendency to peel and the hair listless. But when the rains came! Ah, what rejoicing was there then!

4

The mask refuses time; it demands fixity. It halts proceedings dead in their tracks. It has all the subtlety of a clock face. At any moment now it might boom out. Big Ben booms out its unnecessary verities, as if Parliament itself is in charge of time. The angels of the cemetery are already committed to decay. The mildewed mask is a thing of beauty. It stains its cheeks with its own tears.

Today on the 439 to Mortlake: a tiger’s head nursed in a young woman’s lap. Mask or outfit? Chinese New Year and the dragon dance: mask or outfit? What noise does a mask make? The sound of a fan opening and shutting? Can it clap its hands? Can we reverse the mask so it shows its other face? There is nothing behind the mask: it effaces absolutely. What is it to say ‘efface’? We play Picabia and deface the Mona Lisa or any beautiful woman on a

billboard. Is it to bring sad beauty back to life, a kiss like the surgeon's knife? Or does it mark an offence of some kind, an obscure insult staring you in the face? The unbearable insult of beauty, perfection's cruel blow? Picabia, Duchamp, the look of a Spanish grandee. Dali does not own his own moustache, it owns him. When he twirls his moustache it's like changing the station on the radio: tune in for the next painful episode. Some dreadful professional Frenchman called Maurice<sup>2</sup> plays out his own dreadful self-parody. We ache for the mask present to be removed, sent into exile: Take it away, take it away, hide it. Meanwhile Duchamp goes on with his schoolboy L.H.O.O.C. It's so dumb it's not worth repeating. Such is art.

Art when it has a mask has a face. This morning I ordered my special breakfast: two sausages, two poached eggs, two pieces of toast and a scattering of potato pieces. It arrived in the form of a face: the two sausages made up the mouth, the two pieces of toast and the poached eggs made up the eyes. The nose was fabricated from the potato pieces. A sprig of parsley did for the hair. The tomato sauce was served in a special side dish – presumably so the arrangement would not be spoilt. Sanju the cook is Nepalese, it is a good joke. We know without knowing it that the mask is a Nepalese mask

The face is an elementary form. It can incorporate disparate elements and make sense of them – like Arcimboldo's grotesque assemblages. Once it is a face that is all that matters. After that it doesn't even need to be clever. In fact the less clever the better. Likeness is unnecessary for we have already seen the face. The 'face' makes sense of itself rapidly, effortlessly, carelessly even ...

Today's exercise: strip down the engine and make a face from the parts. Easy! The automobile already has a mask, its own face. It wears its own mask. We can tell a VW from a thousand paces. Other vehicles need to be closer up. The auto wears the mask that the passengers also wear – but without their really knowing it. In reality of course they know it intimately. We are what contains us. We're not merely proximate, we're contained.

The made-up face, the cosmetic face is already behind the mask. This is called 'keeping up appearances'. Do we know how much money is spent each year in the US on cosmetics – and on cosmetic surgery? What is the outlay on mascara alone? Can the mask compete with the masked face?

Defacement, effacement.

5

What mask will we adopt today? Does each occasion require a special mask, its own appearance (apparition)? Consider the matter. The basic requirements here, at the clinic, are a conscientious display of good manners, a willingness to remain compliant, and a ready competence in what we shall call 'necessary matters': the production of the right pieces of paper, cards, identification, referrals. The big no-no is impatience. Any question about time (the length of wait), no matter how deferential, is apt to end in a reassignment further down the queue: 'You mate go to the back of the class'. Note that your identity is more vested in the cards you carry than in your actual person. Don't ask if you are present, ask what you are present as. Largely you are more or less in

attendance – like a child at school. Attendance is not presence. Presence in the full possibility of the self is what is required for personhood. To be present as a person requires more than to be ticked off. The moment you are on the roll you are done for. You are already an administered body under the full weight of the administrative apparatus. You are not just reduced to your self but to a self that is less than the self and ruthlessly divorced from it.

One of the crimes of the Holocaust was precisely the deprivation of personhood at the hands of the official order: tattoos that assign a number not a name, shorn hair, nakedness, being stripped of attire (and all defences). The obliteration of all singularity – and thus meaning. Erasure. Yet this nakedness – this being stripped bare – may and commonly is interpreted as serving to inaugurate 'the new self', the self reborn. What cruel hoax is this! What price this form of 'freedom'? Forced anonymity – non-being – permits no comeback or recourse. The anonymous may be exempted, in a profound existential sense, from the terrible condition in which they find themselves – but again at such a price! Some existential choice – between the obliteration of namelessness, the deprivation of history or independence of thought, and obliteration itself, death. Those deaths that fall short of death itself I call the Silent Massacre. Such silent massacres are everywhere. To enter the shame of the body and to have no elsewhere ...

6

The label is close to the mask – for it stands in the place of the visible thing. It creates a hole, an empty thing. A cosmic cloud that disguises its own identity, even presence. The tomato

is not the tomato. Tomato is a label assigned to something that has already escaped in the direction of oblivion. We can make a choice: we can look towards tomato the thing or we can look towards tomato the word. It is only habitude that makes this association (linkage, coupling) anything more than arbitrary. Somewhere along the line a concatenation – an error, a happy accident in fact – has occurred that becomes fixed in reality – as reality itself! The more we focus on the word – the visual sign or the acoustic sign (let us use these phonetic renderings to signify this: /tə'meɪtoʊ/ /tə'mɑːtoʊ/) – the more the tomato as tomato disappears. We cannot repeat the tomato – tomato as thing – in our head. It has already gone. We may for a moment think we can smell it; we may for a moment 'see' it alive and well in the garden, swelling into ripeness and the supporting stake nearby; we may fondle it already in our hand; we may have the politician already within our sights; we may for a moment see Tomato Man, full blood brother to Bibendum, The Michelin Man.<sup>3</sup>

Disguise is not quite the same thing as masking or vice versa. Of course the mask can serve as a disguise. They both represent a distortion of appearance – but the disguise is meant to mislead; that is not the automatic intention of the mask. It may be to reveal – or to fix. In the village of O'Gog there are four fixed disguises: Og, Gog and Magog, being the best known, but also the somewhat aloof and haughty Zadog. The first three are of course linked with directions: north, south, and east. There is no west for this direction is associated with death. Zadog for its part is associated with the sky: with the cosmos, the starry night, and the prospect of alien visitations. Zadog is clearly associated

with the idea of redemption. But as for ideas and innovation, Gog rules supreme. Magog is the sector of bodily excretions and understanding: true knowledge. Og is earthy: the sector of human and other reproduction, the secular, administration and event organisation. The west you will note is ignored. It is considered barren and is avoided. There is an unofficial rule that people avoid looking westward – which means that the Easterners, the Og, have no direct counterpart. The Zadog might be thought of as all-encompassing but the Magog must always turn to one side or the other. They have no clear antithesis. Maybe for this reason they have learnt the somewhat ambiguous epithet The Off-siders – as easily friend as foe, rival as ally. Their speech is apt to be indirect and off to one side. This doesn't make them elusive though it may give them the appearance of being so. Adoption into this or that 'disguise' – or marker (*obvwa*) – group is entirely voluntary and occurs at the onset of puberty. Once thus identified a person's disguise or identity is fixed for life. *Obvwa* are strictly exogamous; sexual relations within the marker group are strictly forbidden. The situation, let us note, is complicated by the fact that sexual identity is free-ranging and intensely variable. At last count the society recognised (and condoned) 37 different sexual identities. There was an expectation that a person's sexual identity would vary many times during a lifetime. As for the disguise itself this could take the form of a full mask or a tattoo or a more or less careful application of face paint or raised cicatrices. An attempt to impose *obvwa*-restricted hairstyling did not succeed though people claim to be able to recognise the future *obvwa* of young children by skin colour and certain characteristics of gait, even speech.

7

And thus our symposium proceeded. Philibert fancied himself as something of a philosopher – though if you had asked him to explain what a philosopher was he'd probably respond that he did not know but it was how he was known. So that was one of the challenges he had to face: how could he be something he explicitly denied being – like someone being interrogated by the police and feeling themselves steadily and remorselessly converted into something they didn't know that they were. Institutions are apt to demand identities. In fact they demand a particular institutional identity. The free-floating or the vague – let us call it the wistful – are prone to assault and in very particular ways. Best to adopt a mask or style (modus operandi) in advance – so one becomes an unreliable dummy of the self, unreliable in terms of being a reliable representation of the self but reliable in offering something like a metal headpiece you can clamp down over your visage like a knight of old in preparation for battle or a joust. 'The most complete – and misleading – mask is reality, the notion of the real', says Philibert in his habitual fashion. 'The real is the most invisible construction and self-naturalising phenomenon – until you begin to examine it and subject it to a sort of questioning. There are moments when we fall down the steps of life.' He stopped to savour this expression – which he thought was rather good. 'How do you know I am here? This you you construct – this he you observe more or less as an object, a fickle object maybe – what is it, and to what degree does it coincide with the I of myself? I might address myself as he or even it, on occasion, to create something of an objective field about myself, to create an

objective companion, as it were. We are not, in my experience apt to do this. Among the Alto Parlato I was always struck at how uninhibited children were. Later these same uninhibited, lively, boisterous, affectionate youngsters would turn into rather dour expressionless adults, given to self revelation – unmasking we might say – only in the heat of passion – and during certain ritual observances when trance states or what we might call ecstatic dancing overtook the normal reticence of their daily self-presentation. I have always attributed this reticence of the adult as a protective barrier acquired in the face of endless provocation: what I call the poke and prod of social life. As children they slowly learn to acquire this protective mask which may have a functional value in circumstances where everyone is armed and provocative behaviour can lead to dire consequences. This is not to say that people lose the capacity to self-assert – but this requires what we might call ‘attitude’. Boldness has value in trigger-happy societies – but then so too do invisibility, restraint, a certain impassivity. The mask we might say is always a sign of anxiety. The tension that anxiety produces in one’s physiognomy can be transferred to the mask itself – a certain objectification of what already appears, that borrows from it and renders it oddly neutral. The mask is a rendering of a pre-existent mask – and can substitute for it. In societies in which one is required to appear in one’s own person, as it were, in one’s own name, the mask will not appear. Maybe it cannot be condoned. Be that as it may the bearer of the non-mask is already masked – but is willing or has no alternative but to take the mask into the self. We might suggest that where there is appearance there is the mask. For all situations in which the mask extends beyond the face there may

be other situations in which the mask retreats behind the surface of the face and lurks hidden or half-hidden beneath the skin. We might ask then whether all forms of identification represent an anxiety – whether it is the bank robber or the sports fan who dons the ‘appearance’ of his favourite sporting hero ... To this I might add the idea that we all, all of us, exist within an ecology of ideas, values, knowledges, clichés, the cognitive and normative air and compost of our day-to-day lives. To the extent and the degree that they consolidate and congeal we live with dirty faces. We may need, from time to time, to chip away at the hardened layer of customary lard. Custom we might say is mask. And a mask a sort of fatty deposit.’

‘Now’, says Dr Roseanne Heatley, our next speaker, ‘why is it that the masked ball has figured so prominently in western thought and performance? Need I mention Maestro Verdi’s *Il Ballo in Maschera* – or how the plot involves an assassination, an act of (double) betrayal, can we say? What shall we say of mistaken identities as a motif in the operatic canon? My question for today is this: in courtly versions of the masked ball is everyone to be in on the know of who the chief royal is – or is there a real concealment or, failing that, a pretence that the real identity of the royal or royals remains unknown? Is there a further pretence that, given that there could be a royal among the dancers, you will act as if everyone you encounter is a possible royal? Does this elevate you to the level of royal decorum? Or can an argument be made that this is a sort of exotic peacock game of idealised democracy – where everyone is equal if garbed as peacocks and exotic wonderments? Does this constitute the real circumstances of democracy

– or the democratic spirit – that everyone can be Cinderella and make it to the ball?

And next up the eminent Dr Stanislas Petri: 'The burial practices of the mountain-dwelling Ganhapadh involve masks for the deceased. These are strapped on tightly. Various explanations are offered for their use: so that the deceased will not be recognised in the afterlife; so that those already in occupation of the underworld will be fooled and will allow the deceased entry – 'as one of them'; to keep the dirt from the deceased's face and therefore to do with respecting the dead (a theme often expressed). The mask is referred to as the gift. Yes, I understand your question: when can the deceased remove their mask? An interesting question. I do not have an answer. My suspicion is that when the flesh has decayed and there is bone only then the deceased is prepared to remove the mask. Which suggests another reason for the mask: to mask the process of decomposition, to keep it under wraps as it were. The theme of trickery is important and prevalent in this society. Certainly it suggests a dimension that we have not hitherto considered: the need to protect the deceased from knowledge of their own decay. No, I will not suggest that that is the reason for cosmetics in general. You can make up your own mind on that question'.

The celebrated pioneer of space, Major Yadbar, spoke briefly about life inside the astronaut suit: the total outfit, the total mask. He noted how advances in space suits had an impact on civilian use and in warfare: he mentioned firemen and safety officers having to handle chemical spills and the like. The critical difference is that the space outfit is intended to keep things in;

these others – firemen, soldiers – aim to keep things out: heat, poisonous gases, the whole issue of chemical warfare. An odd side issue is that such outfits create anonymity. 'How', he says, 'do we know who is inside the suit? What we have to consider is that alien forces might appropriate the suit and take over the body. How do we guarantee the integrity of the suited body? We might argue that we have sufficient monitoring devices and techniques to guarantee the contents, as it were, of the outfit – but this is not so easily guaranteed when the alien force is capable of simulating all the relevant life and identity signs. How, inside the total outfit, do we know whether or not we have been seized, taken over, commandeered without our knowing? It is a question that often puzzled me'.

At which point the Convenor thanked the participants and invited them to trial the new gallery suits: outfits specially designed for attending art events. As the Convenor said, 'In the era of the bland we might not be surprised that artists will increasingly create new genres of art. The pornographic is dead but the hazardous is not. The hazardous is not dead – it promulgates the idea and the experience of dread. Art that kills, 'killer art', let us say, that creates an edge to art practices which are otherwise close to moribund. We have a duty of care to our art lovers – and also to our institutions. Art galleries are not normally thought of as sites of terror – but this cannot be guaranteed into the future. So, yes, we need to protect our visitation, but we also need to protect ourselves from let us call them 'the wayward'. Monitoring is here to stay. We have been considering masks or something similar in

order to track our visitors – as well as to save costs on security. Security is a boring job. Let us remove the tedium by creating new means of monitoring. Our special helmets – we call them that rather than headpieces – allow easy tracking – but also the transmission of necessary information and interpretative guides. We no longer need headphones for sound pieces or long explanatory wall texts ...’

**May 2014**

John von Sturmer is a Sydney based writer and art/performance practitioner. He taught at the University of Queensland and the University of NSW. From 1979-1984 he directed the project to monitor the impact of uranium mining on the Aborigines of the Northern Territory.

1 I take inspiration here from a performance  
by Bando Tamasaburo of 'Orochi'.  
2 Maurice Chevalier (1888-1972)  
3 One of the earliest trademarks (1898)  
from a design by Marius Rossillon,  
known professionally as O'Galop.



## BOAT-PEOPLE







**OPPOSITE:**  
Documentation of *Muffled Protest*,  
Sydney Opera House, 2010

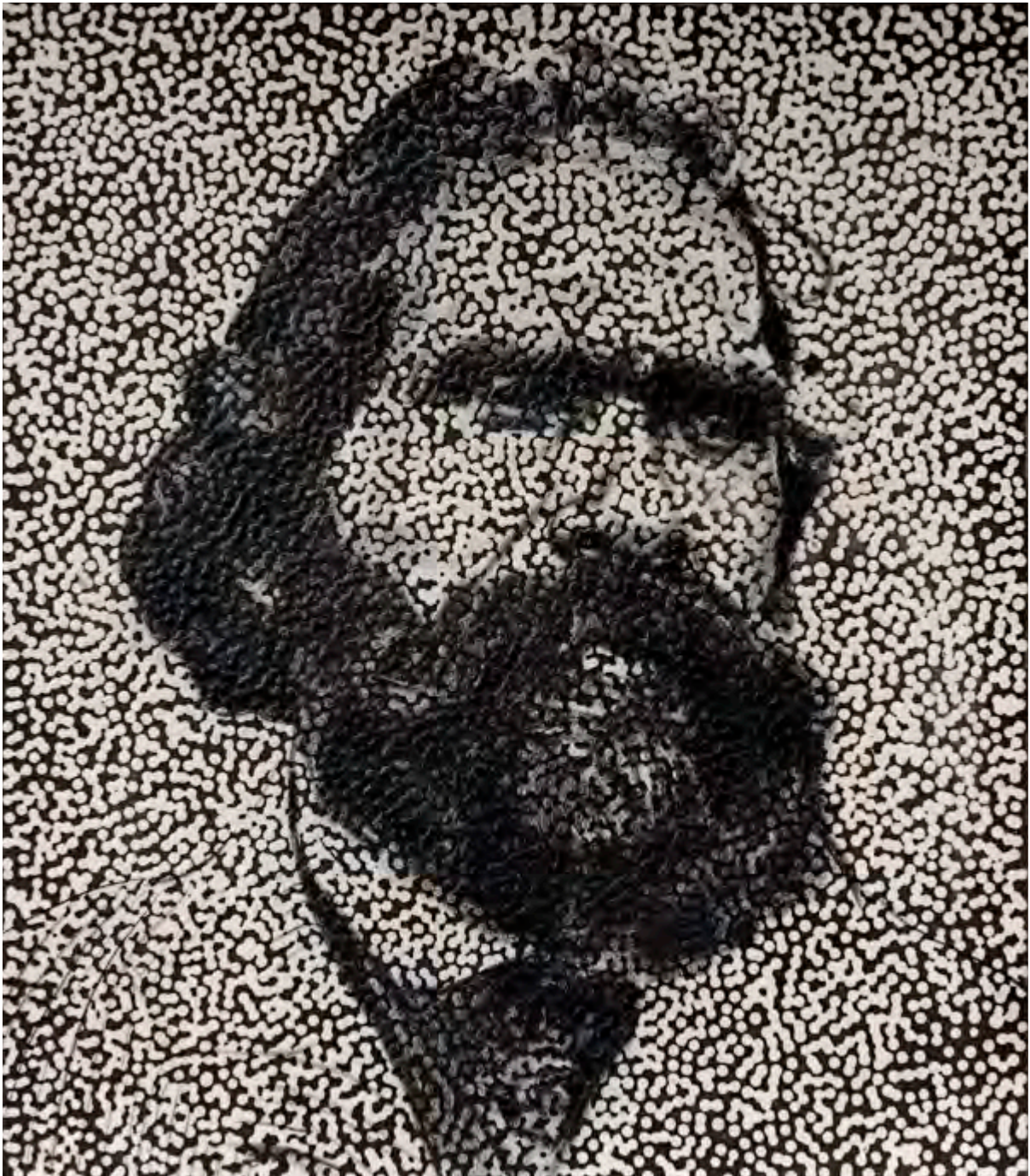
**BELOW:**  
Documentation of *Muffled Protest*,  
Federation Square, 2010





DANIEL BOYD

*Untitled 2014*







**OPPOSITE:**  
*Untitled* 2013  
 oil and archival glue on linen  
 153 x 122 cm

**BELOW:**  
*Untitled* 2012  
 oil and archival glue on linen  
 162.5 x 256.5 cm

Images courtesy of the artist and  
 Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney





# SØREN DAHLGAARD



ABOVE:  
Documentation of  
*Jack Charles, Dough Portrait 2014*

OPPOSITE:  
*Jack Charles, Dough Portrait 2014*



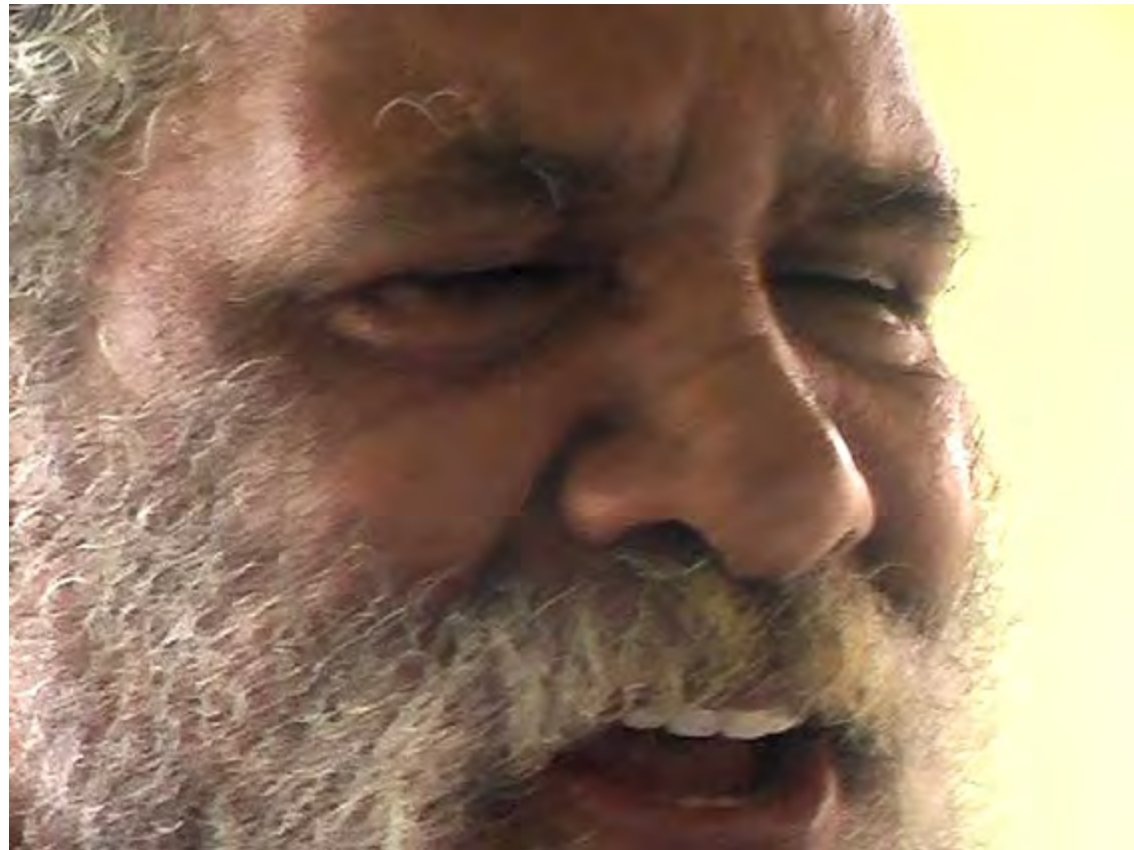
**BELOW (L to R):**  
*Luke, Dough Portrait 2014*  
*Helen, Dough Portrait 2014*

**OPPOSITE:**  
*Bobby Bunnungurr, Dough Portrait 2014*





## DESTINY DEACON AND VIRGINIA FRASER









# KARLA DICKENS



**OPPOSITE:**  
*Vision Man* (from the series  
*You Winsome, You Lose Some*) (detail) 2013

**TOP RIGHT:**  
*Guardian 1* 2013

**BOTTOM RIGHT:**  
*Guardian 2* 2013





**BELOW (L to R):**  
*Dream Woman* (from the series  
*You Winsome, You Lose Some*) 2013

*Father Man* (from the series  
*You Winsome, You Lose Some*) (detail) 2013

**OPPOSITE:**  
*Hush-a-Bye* 2014

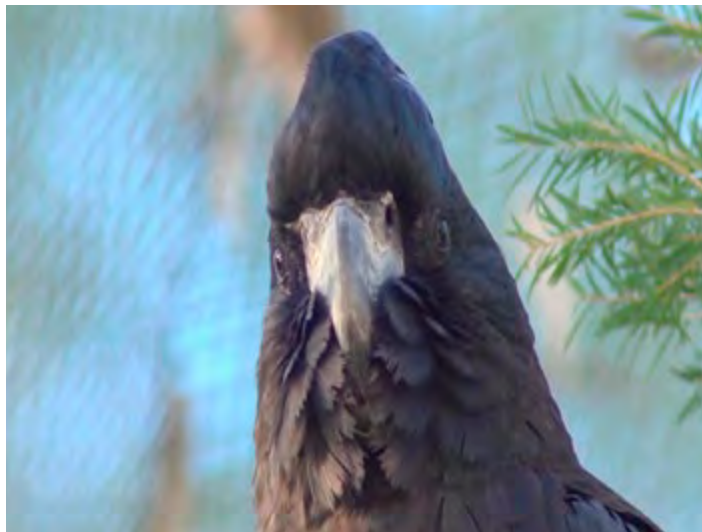




FIONA FOLEY









TONY GARIFALAKIS



OPPOSITE:  
*The Hills Have Eyes* (detail) 2012

RIGHT:  
*The Hills Have Eyes* 2012









# SANDRA HILL



OPPOSITE:  
*Home-maker #5 - The Bedroom* 2012

BELOW:  
*Home-maker #7 - Cake Making* 2012





OPPOSITE:  
*Home-maker #8 - The Flip-side* 2012

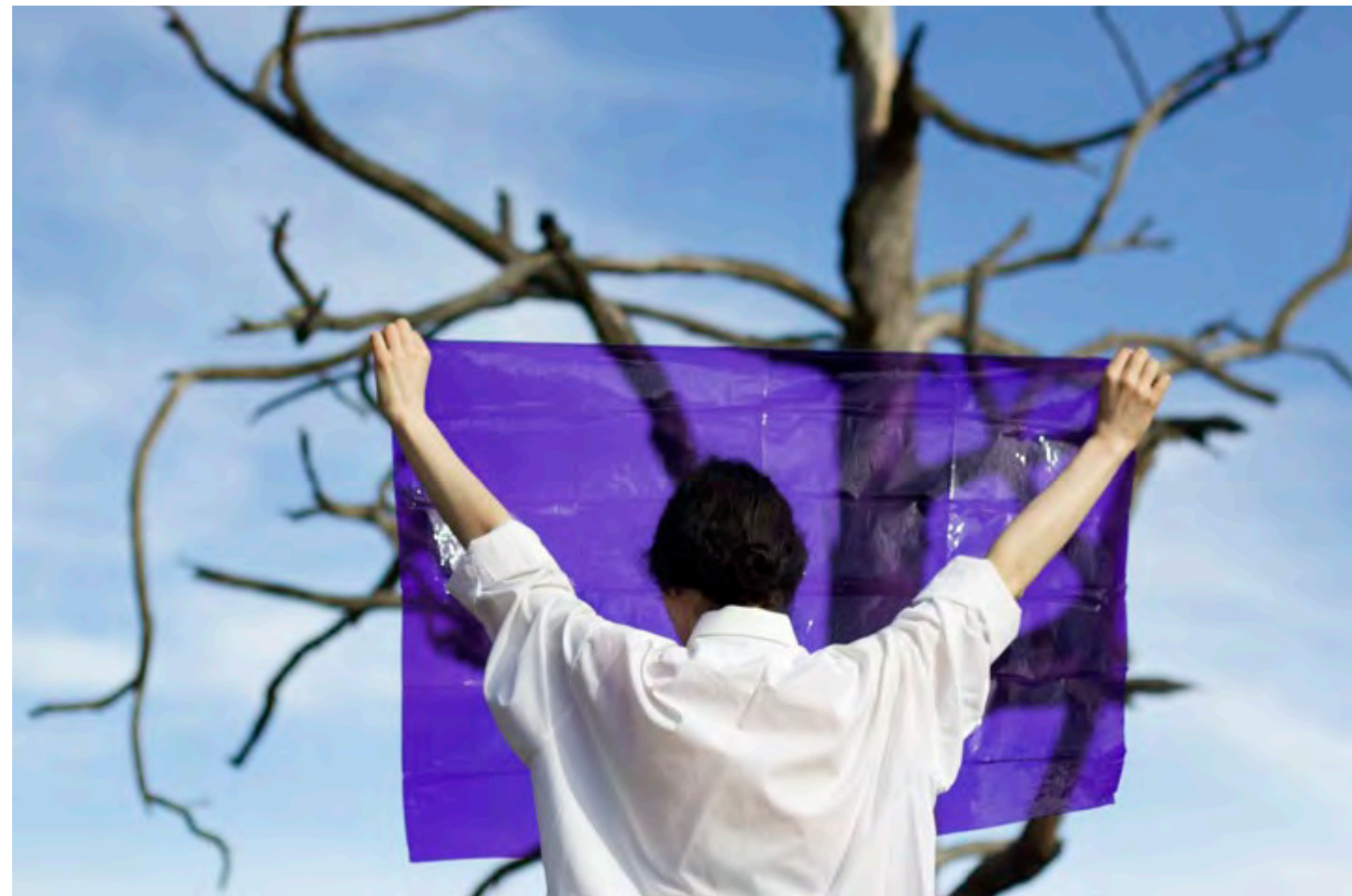
BELOW:  
*Home-maker #9 - The Hairdresser* 2014



## GABRIELLA MANGANO AND SILVANA MANGANO









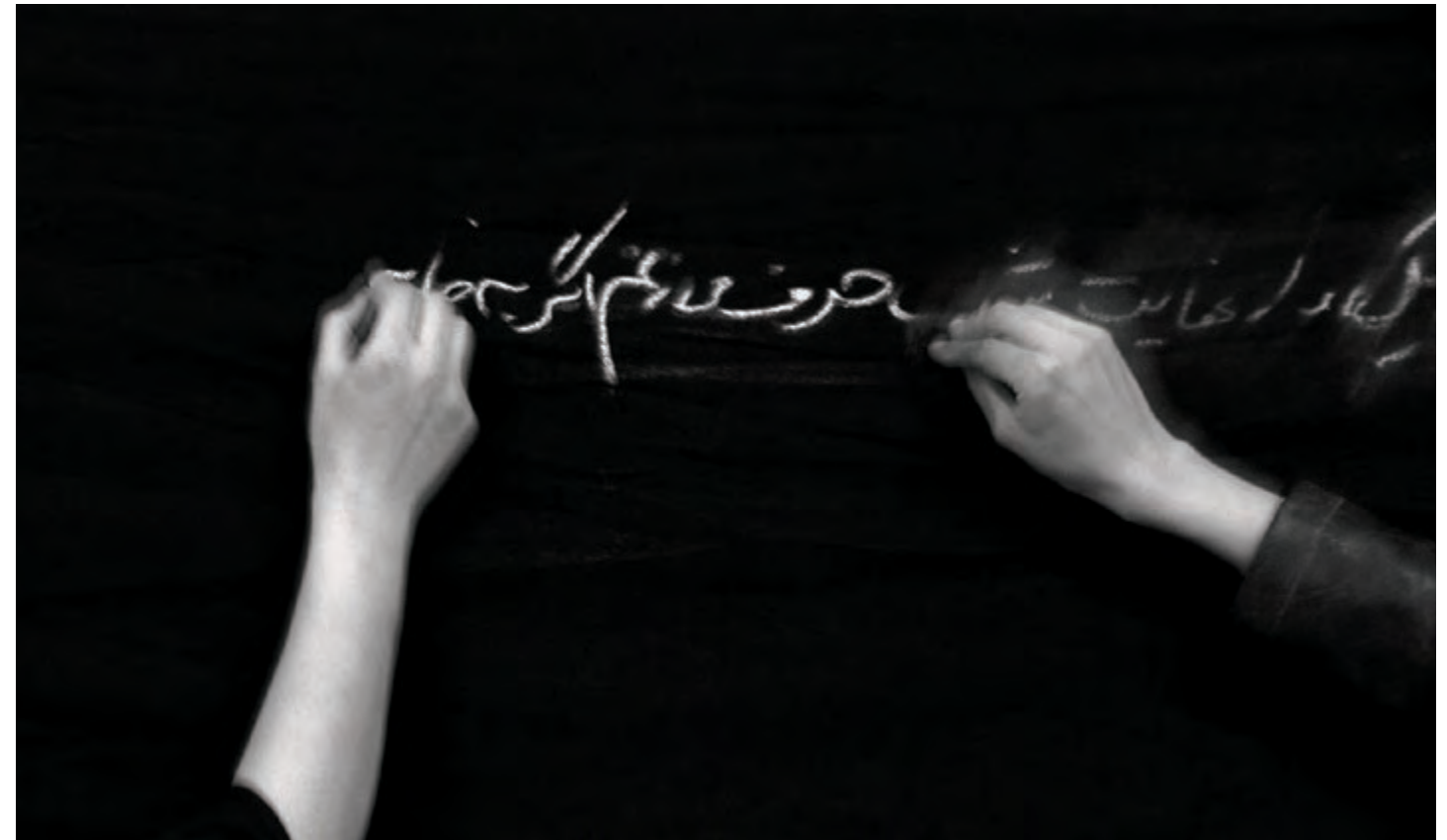
## ROMAINE MORETON



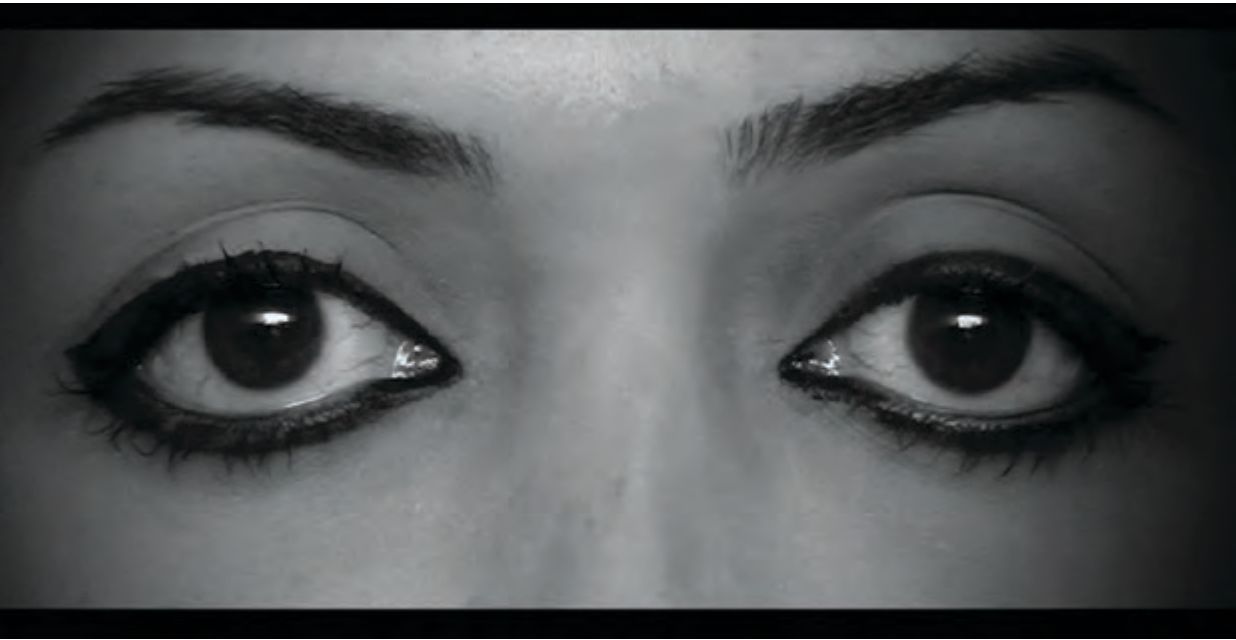




## NASIM NASR









# POLIXENI PAPAPETROU



OPPOSITE:  
*Grief* 2013

BELOW (L to R):  
*Despondency* 2014  
*Pathos* 2014





BELOW AND OPPOSITE (L to R):  
*Melancholia* 2014  
*Somberness* 2014  
*Sorrow* 2013  
*Decrepitude* 2014





## ELIZABETH PEDLER





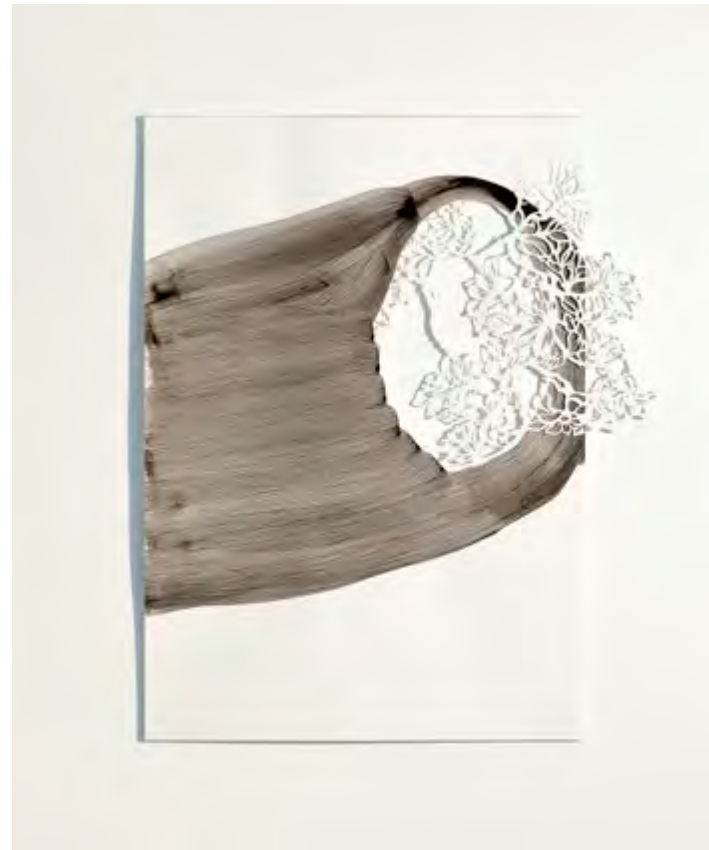




## SANGEETA SANDRASEGAR









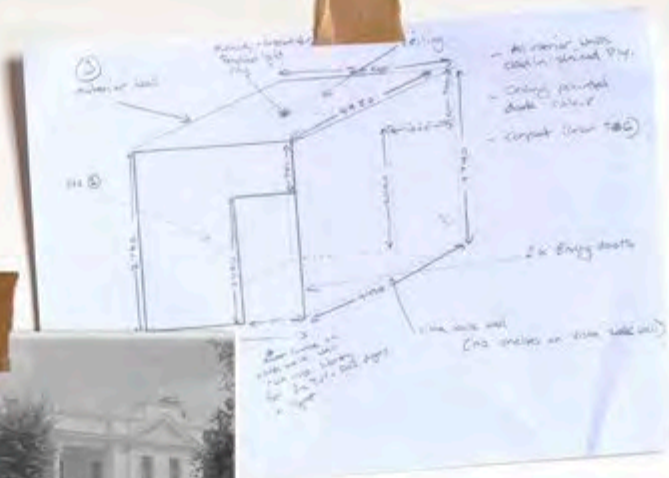
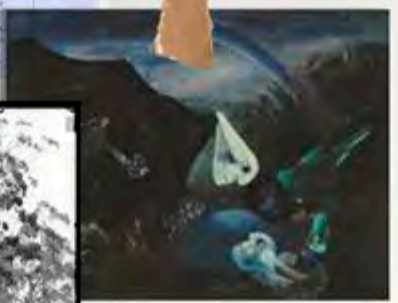
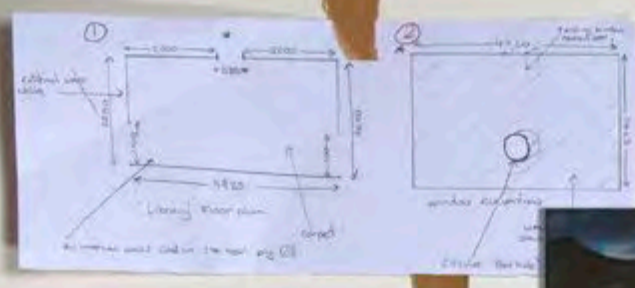
# THE TELEPATHY PROJECT (VERONICA KENT AND SEAN PEOPLES)

PAGES 79-81:  
*Reading Solaris to the Great Moorool* 2014

TARRAWARRA BIENNIAL 2014









# THE TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS PROJECT WITH FIONA HALL



**OPPOSITE:**  
Artists with their work at the end of camp  
© Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council

**BELOW:**  
Rene Kulitja, Mary Pan, Angkaliya Nelson and Niningka Lewis  
making *Kuka Iritija (Animals from other times)* during artists' camp  
© Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council





**BELOW:**  
*Kuka Iritja (Animals from other times) pieces*  
© Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council

**OPPOSITE:**  
*Alkawari piece in country*  
© Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council





LIST OF WORKS

**boat-people**  
*Muffled Protest* 2010  
single channel video installation,  
monitor, light boxes  
7:30 min  
Courtesy of the artists

**Daniel Boyd**  
*Untitled* 2014  
oil, charcoal and archival glue on canvas  
81.5 x 71 cm

*Untitled* 2014  
oil, charcoal and archival glue on linen  
213 x 274 cm

*Untitled* 2014  
oil, charcoal and archival glue on linen  
213 x 274 cm

All works courtesy of STATION, Melbourne

**Søren Dahlgaard**  
*Dough Portraits* 2014  
type C photograph  
30 parts, 29.7 x 21 cm each

*Jack Charles, Dough Portrait* 2014  
type C photograph  
400 x 300 cm

All works courtesy of the artist

**Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser**  
*Misdirection* 2014  
2-channel video installation with sound

Courtesy of the artists and  
Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

**Karla Dickens**  
*Guardians* 2013  
mixed medium  
5 parts, dimensions variable

*Silenced* 2013  
vintage dog muzzles and  
mixed media  
dimensions variable

*You Winsome, You Lose Some* 2013  
ink jet print on archival paper  
5 parts, 60 x 90 cm each

This series of photographs was created  
through the HOME project, a research and  
creative development initiative by NORPA,  
in partnership with Southern Cross  
University, The Lismore Soup Kitchen and  
The Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation.

*Hush-a-Bye* 2014  
vintage Bakelite doll heads,  
copper, feathers, glass bell jars  
20 parts, dimensions variable

All works courtesy of the artist

**Fiona Foley**  
*Vexed* 2013  
digital video  
13:00 min

*Black Velvet* 2014  
wood and metal  
1200 x 8235 cm

All works courtesy of the artist,  
Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane  
and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

**Tony Garifalakis**  
*The Hills Have Eyes* 2012  
fabric collage  
170 cm x 130 cm

*Bloodline* 2014  
enamel on C type prints  
60 cm x 40 cm each

*Declassified Documents # 4* 2014  
enamel on various publications  
dimensions variable

*Woodlands* 2014  
fabric collage  
170 cm x 130 cm

All works courtesy of the artist

**Sandra Hill**  
*Home-maker #5 – The Bedroom* 2012  
oil on linen  
76 x 91 cm

Courtesy of the artist and  
Mossenson Galleries, Perth

*Home-maker #7 – Cake Making* 2012  
oil on linen  
76 x 91 cm

Murdoch University Art Collection

*Home-maker #8 – The Flip-side* 2012  
oil on linen  
91 x 76 cm

Private collection

*Home-maker #9 – The Hairdresser* 2014  
oil on linen  
76 x 91 cm

Courtesy of the artist and  
Mossenson Galleries, Perth

**Gabriella Mangano and Silvana Mangano**  
*Lux* 2014  
2-channel High Definition digital video, 16:9,  
colour and black & white, sound  
time variable

Courtesy of the artists and  
Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, Melbourne

**Romaine Moreton**  
*Ragtag* 2014  
High Definition video  
8:00 min

Courtesy of the artist  
© Amanda James

**Nasim Nasr**  
*Erasure* 2010  
2-channel video installation  
10:00 min

*Unveiling the Veil* 2010  
High Definition video, silent  
6:21 min

*Beshkan (Breakdown)* 2013  
single channel video  
1:00 min

All works courtesy of the artist and  
Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide

**Polixeni Papapetrou**  
*Grief* 2013  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Sorrow* 2013  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Decrepitude* 2014  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Despondency* 2014  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Melancholia* 2014  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Pathos* 2014  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

*Somberness* 2014  
pigment ink print  
150 x 100 cm

All works courtesy of the artist,  
Stills Gallery, Sydney and  
Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York

**Elizabeth Pedler**  
*Smokescreen* 2013-14  
Styrofoam beans, fans, paint, electricity,  
wood, PVC plastic, construction materials  
dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

**Sangeeta Sandrasegar**  
*I listen for you 1-6* 2014  
cut paper and watercolour  
approx. 40 x 30 cm each

*I listen for you 7-10* 2014  
cut paper and watercolour  
approx. 150 x 100 cm each

All works courtesy of the artist and  
Murray White Room, Melbourne

**The Telepathy Project  
(Veronica Kent and Sean Peoples)**  
*Reading Solaris to the Great Moorool* 2014  
mixed media installation and performances  
dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artists

**The Tjanpi Desert Weavers Project  
with Fiona Hall**  
**About the project:**  
From 3 – 13 June 2014, twelve Anangu  
artists from six central desert communities  
plus visiting artist Fiona Hall participated in  
an artists’ camp to make new work for the  
TarraWarra Biennial. The camp was held in  
country close to Pilakatilyuru about 30kms  
from Wingellina Community in Western  
Australia, close to the tri-state border.

The following Tjanpi artists and staff attended  
the artists camp held for the *TarraWarra  
Biennial 2014: Whisper in My Mask*:

**Wingellina Community (WA):** Roma Butler,  
Stacia Lewis, Rene Nelson, Tjawina Roberts

**Pipalyatjara Community (SA):**  
Angkaliya Nelson, Sandra Peterman

**Kalka Community (SA):** Yangi Yangi Fox,  
Molly Miller, Nyanu Watson

**Mutijulu Community (NT):** Rene Kulitja

**Ernabella Community (SA):** Niningka Lewis

**Amata Community (SA):** Mary Pan  
Technical Assistance provided by Jo Foster  
(Tjanpi Project Manager) and Claire Freer  
(Tjanpi Artsworker)

This project was supported by a partnership  
with the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and  
Cultural Development, Faculty of the Victorian  
College of the Arts and the Melbourne  
Conservatorium of Music, University of  
Melbourne.

*Tjukurrpa Kumpilitja (Hidden Stories)* 2014  
*Alkawari* 2014

Roma Butler, Yangi Yangi Fox, Rene Kulitja,  
Niningka Lewis, Stacia Lewis, Molly Miller,  
Angkaliya Nelson, Mary Pan

Minarri grass, acrylic wool, jute string,  
cotton yarn, raffia, emu feathers, sheep wool,  
ininti seed, tartu seed, found wire netting,  
found fencing wire, wire, camouflage military  
garments and sound

dimensions variable

Commissioned by TarraWarra Museum of Art for  
the *TarraWarra Biennial 2014: Whisper in My Mask*

Courtesy the artists, NPY Women’s Council  
and Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Lands –  
South Australia, Western Australia and the  
Northern Territory

*Tjukurrpa Kumpilitja (Hidden Stories)* 2014  
*Kuka Iritija (Animals from other times)* 2014

Roma Butler, Yangi Yangi Fox, Rene Kulitja,  
Niningka Lewis, Stacia Lewis, Molly Miller,  
Angkaliya Nelson, Rene Nelson, Mary Pan,  
Sandra Peterman, Tjawina Roberts,  
Nyanu Watson and Fiona Hall

Minarri grass, acrylic wool, raffia, found wire  
netting, wire, camouflage military garments,  
linen thread, buttons, ininti seed, emu feathers,  
turkey feathers, aluminium, glass, metal,  
found tins and cooking pots

dimensions variable

Commissioned by TarraWarra Museum of Art for  
the *TarraWarra Biennial 2014: Whisper in My Mask*

Courtesy the artists, NPY Women’s Council  
and Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Lands –  
South Australia, Western Australia and  
the Northern Territory

Fiona Hall is represented by  
Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

All measurements are height before  
width before depth.



boat-people

Born Sydney, 2001.  
Live and work in Sydney and online.

Members: Safdar Ahmed, Zehra Ahmed, Stephanie Carrick, Dave Gravina, Katie Hepworth, Jiann Hughes, Deborah Kelly, Enda Murray, Pip Shea, Sumugan Sivanesan, Jamil Yamani.

boat-people (formerly boat-people.org) is an Australian art gang which has been making work about race, nation, borders and history since 2001.

The group has been involved in numerous exhibitions and events including *Blak Xmas: new performance quiz*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2013; *I WANT CHANGE: Two decades of artistic defiance, disapproval and dissent*, La Trobe University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2013; *Making Mileau: the nourishing conversations*, ongoing encounters convened by Zehra Ahmed, 2011–2013; *What Do You Mean, We?*, Te Tuhi Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand, 2012; *Manifestations of Now*, Federation Square, Melbourne, 2012; Artists in residence, Cockatoo Island, Sydney Harbour, developing MUFFLED PROTEST, public protest work, performed in cities and towns around Australia, 2010; *AIR exhibition*, Cockatoo Island, Sydney Harbour, 2010; *The Sea Is History*, Duke University Gallery, North Carolina, USA, 2009; New work commission for Terra Nullius, ACC Galerie Weimar and Halle 14 Leipzig, Germany, 2009; *Lines in the Sand*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, NSW, 2008; *Iraq War Fifth Anniversary Commemoration Projection Event* with Performance Space and Museum of Contemporary Art,

Sydney, 2008; *The Independence Project*, Galleri Petronas, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2007; *Australia Day Commissioned Tram Performance*: history quiz and prize-giving ceremony, Melbourne, 2007; *Our Media Conference*: commissioned beer drinking ceremony and history quiz, UTS, Sydney, 2007; *BEST WE FORGET*, collaborative experimental wiki collating online lost, forgotten and inconvenient histories, 2006; *BLACK GST*: Poster collection and newspaper produced by Breakdown Press, 2006; *Martin Place Action*, Giant group chalk drawing for Tampa Day, Sydney, 2006; *This is Not Art (TiNA) Festival*, beer and history project launch event, Newcastle; Screenings at *Transit Lounge*, Berlin, *Motherland Project*, Kunstvlaai6 Festival Amsterdam, *Year Of the Dog*, Chinatown, Sydney, 2006; *The Sediton Show*, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney, 2005; *2004, AUSTRALIAN CULTURE NOW*, National Gallery of Victoria/Australian Centre for the Moving Image, 2004, Melbourne; Federal Election Art Campaign including: *DIRTY LAUNDRY ACTION*, Pitt Street Mall, Sydney, Howard’s dirty laundry was hung out to dry: Video /sound projection with rat-tailed interlocutors, extremely large underwear (as custom projection screen); *BALLOON EVENTS*: Helium balloons featuring the PM with his pants on fire were handed to delighted children by large rats, Thursday evenings in shopping centres, 2004; *First Fleet Projection*, Federation Square, Melbourne, Palm Sunday, 2003; *Siev-X Mourning Projection: Art of Dissent*, Melbourne Festival, 2002; *BORDERPANIC*, Performance Space, Sydney, 2002; *BOAT-PEOPLE DAY*: 3031 hand-folded paper boats (one for each person in detention) staged an invasion of the Immigration department in Sydney, followed by projections from a harbour ferry, 2001; *Sydney Opera House Projection*, inaugural boat-people.org event, Sydney, 2001.

www.weaustralians.org/artists/boat-people-org

Daniel Boyd

Born Cairns, 1982.  
Kudjla/Gangalu peoples.  
Lives and works in Sydney.

Daniel Boyd’s work challenges the Eurocentric view of Australian history in order to open up a dialogue between opposing ideas and cultures.

Boyd has been exhibiting his work nationally and internationally since 2005. Recent solo exhibitions include *Pineapples in the Pacific*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2014; *New Hebrides*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2013; *Daniel Boyd: History is Made at Night*, Artspace, Sydney, 2013; *Daniel Boyd: A Darker Shade of Dark*, Glasshouse Port Macquarie Regional Gallery, Port Macquarie, 2013; *Daniel Boyd*, KALIMANRAWLINS, Melbourne, 2012; *The Transit of Venus – An exhibition with Daniel Boyd*, Tin Sheds Gallery, The University of Sydney, 2012; *A Darker Shade of Dark*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2012; *Up In Smoke Tour*, Natural History Museum, London, 2012; *Revised Filters*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne, 2010; *Freetown*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2009; *Let’s stay together*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne, 2008; *I’m Still in Love With You*, Mori Gallery, Sydney, 2008.

Boyd’s work has been included in a number of significant group exhibitions including *Post Picasso Contemporary Reactions*, Museu Picasso, Barcelona, 2014; *Bungaree: The First Australian*, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, Lake Macquarie, 2013; *Debil Debil*, curated by Marcia Langton, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2013; *Under the sun: the Kate Challis RAKA Award*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2013; *Future Primitive*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2013; *The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), Brisbane, 2012;

*Bungaree: The First Australian*, curated by Djon Mundine, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, 2012; *Crossing Cultures: The Owen and Wagner Collection of Contemporary Aboriginal Australian Art*, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth, New Hampshire, 2012; *One Caption Hides Another*, betonsalon, Paris, France, 2011; *National Artists’ Self-Portrait Prize 2011: Life is risk / Art is risk*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2011; *Places We Know, People We Know*, Goulburn Regional Gallery, NSW, 2011; *We Call Them Pirates Out Here*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2010; *Nyah-bunyar (Temple)*, The Arts Centre, Melbourne, 2010; *Wilderness: Balnaves contemporary painting*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2010; *Octopus 9: I forget to forget*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne, 2009, *Contemporary Australia: Optimism*, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Queensland, 2008; *Culture warriors*, National Indigenous Art Triennial, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2007, toured to the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2008, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 2008, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane and the Katzen Arts Center, Washington DC, 2009; *Man– Depicting Contemporary Masculinity*, Penrith Regional Gallery, Penrith; *Lines in the Sand– Botany Bay Stories From 1770*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, GyMEA; *Right Here Right Now*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2006.

Boyd was the recipient of the 2014 BVLGARI ART AWARD and his work is held in numerous public, corporate and private collections in Australia.

Daniel Boyd is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney and STATION, Melbourne.

www.roslynoxley9.com.au  
stationgallery.com.au



# Søren Dahlgaard

**Born Copenhagen, Denmark, 1973.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

Søren Dahlgaard is a Danish performance and conceptual artist who experiments with artistic forms of expression and materials to challenge accepted notions of identity.

He has exhibited widely and recent solo exhibitions and performances include Photographers Gallery London, 2013; Viborg Contemporary Art Center, Denmark, 2012; National Art Gallery, Maldives, 2012; Asbæk Gallery, Copenhagen, 2011; ECCO – Art Center, Brasilia, Brazil, 2011; *Growing Vegetables On a Coral Island*, Aarhus Art Building, Aarhus, Denmark, 2011; *Hibalhidhoo*, Galleri Image, Aarhus, Denmark, 2011; *Dough portraits*, NAG – National Art Gallery, Maldives, 2010; *Søren Dahlgaard – The Dough Show*, The National Art Gallery, Kosovo, 2010; *The Breathing Room*, Rohde Contemporary, Copenhagen, 2010; *The Breathing Corridor*, The Corridor gallery, Reykjavik, Iceland, 2009; *THE KABOOM! PROCESS*, Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen, 2009; *The Dough Warrior landscape painting*, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark, 2008; *Dough Portraits*, The National Art Gallery, Denmark, 2008.

Selected group exhibitions include *The Maldives Exodus Caravan Show*, Te Tuhi Art Centre, Auckland, New Zealand, 2014; Vancouver Biennale, Canada, 2014; Lianzhou International Photo Festival, China, 2013; Oceanic Performance Biennale, Auckland, 2013; Northern Photographic Centre, Finland, 2013; New Garden City, Trane exhibition, Denmark, 2013; 55th Venice Biennale, Italy, 2013; KIASMA Museum of Contemporary Art, Finland, 2012; Gwangju Biennale, South Korea, 2012; Tbilisi Triennial, Georgia, 2012; Digital Art Center Holon, Israel, 2012; Te Tuhi Arts Center, New Zealand, 2012; CCA Andratx Contemporary Art Center, Mallorca, 2012; Esbjerg Art museum, Denmark, 2012; Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, Estonia, 2012;

AEROPLASTICS Contemporary, Brussels, 2012; Digital Art Center Holon, Israel, 2011; CCBB Centro Cultural Banco Brasilia, Brazil, 2011; Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw, 2011; JCCAC – Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre, Hong Kong, 2011; Cracker#1 International Performance Festival, Dialekt Kunstverein, Stuttgart, 2010; *BE-HEAD*, Andipa Gallery, London, 2010; *Live Action*, Scandinavian House, New York, 2010; Vancouver Biennale, Vancouver, 2010; Blurrr 7 – International Performance Art Biennial, Center for Contemporary Art, Tel-Aviv, Israel, 2009; Foto Triennale, Brandts, Odense, Denmark, 2009; 10th OPEN International Performance Art Festival, Beijing, China, 2009; PAN, Palazzo delle Arti Napoli, Italy, 2009; *Sequences 2009* Art festival, Reykjavik, Iceland, 2009; *THE KABOOM! PROCESS* Overgaden Institute for Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, 2009; *ONE Copenhagen*, Stalke Copenhagen; *Wonder*, Singapore Biennale 2008, Singapore, 2008; *Dreams*, The National Art Gallery, Denmark, 2008; Galleria Civica Museum of contemporary art, Trento, Italy, 2007; Ileana Tounta Contemporary Arts Center, Athens, 2007; *Emergency Room*, MoMA P.S.1, New York, 2007.

Dahlgaard is currently undertaking a Gertrude Contemporary studio residency program, Melbourne 2014-15. His work is held in numerous public collections internationally.

Søren Dahlgaard is represented by Galerie Asbaek, Copenhagen

**sorendahlgaard.com**  
**www.asbaek.dk**

# Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser

**Destiny Deacon: Born Maryborough, Queensland, 1957.**  
**K’ua K’ua and Erub/Mer peoples.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

**Virginia Fraser: Born Melbourne.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser have independent practices as well as numerous jointly produced installations that are disturbing and disarmingly humorous.

Deacon and Fraser’s collaborative works have been included in *Melbourne Now*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2013-14; *Shadowlife*, curated by Djon Mundine and Natalie King, Bendigo Art Gallery, Bangkok Arts and Cultural Centre, Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan, Nanyang Academy of Fine Art, Singapore, 2012-13; *Shadowlife* (video program,) Studio 2, ACMI, Melbourne and 4th Edition of Indian Art Fair, New Delhi, 2012; *Going Strait*, Roslyn Oxley Gallery, 2012; *The Phantasm*, Foxy Productions Gallery, New York, 2011; *Land Sea and Sky*, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2011; *Change*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2011; *It’s playblak time + Schoolroom*, 24HR Art – Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, 2011; *It’s playblak time: A neighbourhood watch in several acts*, Kunstraum Pro Arte, Hallein, Austria, 2009; *Clemenger Award*, National Gallery of Victoria, 2009; *Culture Warriors*, American University Museum, Katzen Arts Center, Washington DC, 2009; *Latitudes: Terres du Monde*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Panama City, Panama, 2009; *Rising Tide: Film and Video Works from the MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2009; *10th Havana Biennial*, Havana, Cuba, 2009; *Terra Nullius: Contemporary Art from Australia*, ACC, Weimar and Leipzig Cotton Spinning Mill, Leipzig, Germany, 2009; *Revolutions – Forms that turn*, Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, 2008;

*Clandestine*, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, 2008; *Latitudes: Terres du Monde*, L’Hotel de Ville, Paris; Tjibaou Cultural Centre, New Caledonia, 2007; *Culture Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial 07*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra and Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 2007; *Dolls*, Galleria Raffaele Cortese, Milan, 2007; *Whacked*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2007; *Yours, Mine and Ours: 50 Years of ABC TV*, Penrith Regional Art Gallery, Penrith, NSW, 2006; *High Tide: new currents in art from Australia and New Zealand*, Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw and the Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, 2006; *Latitudes 2005*, L’Hotel de Ville, Paris, 2005; *New 05*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2005; *Faces in the Crowd*, Whitechapel Gallery, London and Castello Di Rivoli, Turin; 2005; *Colour blinded*, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 2005; *Walk & Don’t Look Blak* (Destiny Deacon survey exhibition), Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand; Tjiboau Cultural Centre, Noumea, New Caledonia; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo; and the Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2004-06; *I Thought I Knew, But I Was Wrong*, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne; Ssamzie Space, Seoul, South Korea; Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore; Jamjuree Gallery, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok; and Beijing Millenium Monument, China, 2004-06; *Destiny Deacon/Lisl Ponger*, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, Austria, 2004; *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2004; *Minority report*, Århus Festival for Samtidskunst, Århus unstbygning, Århus, Denmark, 2004; *D-coy*, 24HR Art – Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, 2004; *Screen Life*, Museo Nacional Centro De Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; Govett Brewster Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand; Gus Fisher Gallery, University of Auckland, New Zealand; 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, 2002-03; *dOCUMENTA (11)*, Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, 2002; *Yokohama Triennial: MEGA WAVE – Towards a New Synthesis*, Pacifico Yokohama Exhibition Hall, Japan, 2001; *Signs of Life*, Melbourne International Biennial, Melbourne, 1999.

Destiny Deacon is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney and Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan, Italy.

**www.roslynoxley9.com.au**



# Karla Dickens

**Born Sydney, 1967.**  
**Wiradjuri people.**  
**Lives and works in Lismore, New South Wales.**

Karla Dickens artworks are the result of a continuing dialogue between past and the present; conversations grounded in her Aboriginality and sexuality, social, political and spiritual life informing her practice and the materials used.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Field and Game*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney, 2012; *Home is Where the Rabbit Live*, Firstdraft, Sydney, 2011; *Mother of All* (collaboration with Ishta Wilson), Tweed River Art Gallery, Murwillumbah, 2011; *The Black Madonna*, Casula Power House, Sydney and Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton, 2010; *In Loving memory I found the Black Madonna*, Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane, 2009; *Loving Memory*, Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW, 2008; *Home*, Next Contemporary Art Space, Southern Cross University, Lismore, 2005.

Dickens’ work has been included in numerous group exhibitions including the Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize, Sydney, 2013; *The Art of Sound*, Grafton Regional Gallery, NSW, 2013; *The Native Institute*, Blacktown Arts Centre, Blacktown, NSW; *Bungaree*, The Glasshouse, Port Macquarie; Mosman Art Gallery; and Lake Macquarie Art Centre, NSW, 2012–13; *People We Know–Places We’ve Been*, Goulburn Regional Gallery, NSW, 2011; *My Teenage Years*, Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW; *Fairytales in Fairyland*, Grafton Regional Gallery, NSW; *Safari*, MOP, Sydney, 2010; Parliament of NSW Art Award, Sydney, 2010; *Articles of Interest*, SCI Next Art Gallery, Lismore, 2010; *Lest We Forget*, Dacou, Alstonville, 2010; Parliament of NSW Indigenous Art Award touring Regional Galleries, 2009; *Connections*, NPWS Art Northern Rivers Community Gallery, Ballina, NSW, 2009; *Messages of Peace*, Gallery XX, Italy, 2008; *Fishers Ghost Award*, Campbelltown City Art Centre, 2008; *Confidential Business Project*,

Casula Power House, 2008; *Australian Values*, Southern Cross University, Next Art Gallery, 2008; *Premier State*, Campbelltown City Art Centre, 2008; *Identity*, Grafton Regional Gallery, NSW, 2008; *The Year of the Apology*, Northern Rivers Community Gallery, Ballina, NSW; *Past Present Future*, Grafton Regional Gallery, NSW, 2007; *Chrysalis*, Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW, 2006; *Nice Coloured Dolls*, 24HR Art NT Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, 2004; *Hung, Drawn & Quartered*, Tin Sheds, Sydney, 2003; *Aboriginal Ways of Knowing*, Macy Gallery, New York, 2001.

In 2013 Dickens was the recipient of the Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize and in 2010 she received an Arts NSW Fellowship. She has undertaken several artist residencies including Grafton Regional Gallery, 2010; Outback Arts, Brewarrina, NSW, 2008; Guardella, Italy, 1998; University of Technology, Sydney, 1997; Jowalbinna, Cape York, QLD, 1997; and Brewarrina Aboriginal Community, NSW, 1995.

[www.karladickens.com.au](http://www.karladickens.com.au)

# Fiona Foley

**Born Maryborough, Queensland, 1964.**  
**Badtjala people.**  
**Lives and works in Brisbane.**

Fiona Foley is an influential artist, curator, writer and academic. Throughout her career she has taken an active role promoting Indigenous identity and was co-founder of the Boomali Aboriginal Artists Co-operative, Sydney in 1987.

In 2009 the survey exhibition, *Fiona Foley: Forbidden* was held at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and the University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane. Other solo exhibitions include *Retro-active: A 25 year survey*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2013; *Obsession*,

Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania (CAST), Hobart, 2013; *The Oyster Fishermen*, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 2012; *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, 2012; *Fiona Foley*, Glasshouse Regional Gallery, Port Macquarie, NSW, 2010; *No Shades of White*, The Kluge–Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, USA, 2007; *Strange Fruit*, October Gallery, London, 2006; *Red Ochre Me*, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney, 2006; *Bring It On (a.k.a. H.H.H.)*, International Studio and Curatorial Programme, New York, 2004; *Pir’ri – Mangrove*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2001.

Foley has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Australia*, Royal Academy of Arts, London; *Shadowlife*, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria; *Controversy: The power of art*, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria, 2012; *Convergent Worlds: Drill Hall Gallery 20th Anniversary Exhibition*, Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2012; *unDisclosed – 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2012; *Tracking/Tracing: Contemporary Art from Australia*, Stiftelsen 3,14, Bergen, Norway, 2012; *Shadowlife: Moving Image*, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne and India Art Fair, Delhi, India, 2012; *Shadowlife*, Bangkok Arts & Cultural Centre, Thailand; Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan; Nanyang Academy of Fine Art, Singapore; Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria, 2012; *Saying No: Reconciling Spirituality and Resistance in Indigenous Australian Art*, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, New York, 2011; *Hard Sleeper*, Red Gate Gallery, Dongbienen Watchtower, Beijing, 2010; *The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age*, 17th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, 2010; *Floating Life: Contemporary Aboriginal Fibre Art*, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2009; *Kate Challis RAKA Award 2008 Finalists*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2008; *Power and Beauty: Indigenous Art Now*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne; *No Laughing Matter*, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, HaNover, New Hampshire, USA, 2007; *Global Feminisms*, Brooklyn Museum, New York, 2007; *Prism: Australian Contemporary Art*, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo, 2006; *Out There*, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich, UK, 2005; *Spirit and Vision: Aboriginal Art*, Kunst der Gegenwart, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg/Wien, Austria, 2004; *The American Effect*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2003.

In 2012 Foley was the recipient of the Australian Council Visual Arts Award and in 2010 she was the winner of the 2010 Redlands Westpac Art Prize. She has completed numerous commissions and undertaken residencies in Australia, China, Canada and the USA. Her work is held in all major state galleries in Australia as well as numerous public and private collections nationally and internationally.

Fiona Foley is represented by Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

[www.andrew-baker.com](http://www.andrew-baker.com)  
[niagaragalleries.com.au](http://niagaragalleries.com.au)

# Tony Garifalakis

**Born 1964, Melbourne.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

Working across painting, drawing, sculpture and installation, Tony Garifalakis draws on imagery from advertising, film and popular media to investigate the shadowy side of contemporary culture and systems of belief.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Mob Rule*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2014; *Angels of the Bottomless Pit*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2014; *Department of Misanthropic Affairs*, db Projects, Sydney, 2012; *Affirmations*, Daine Singer, Melbourne, 2012; *Mutually Assured Destruction*, Ryan Renshaw Gallery, Brisbane, 2011; *The Misery of Philosophy*, Curro Y Poncho, Guadalajara, Mexico, 2011; *The Philosophy of Misery*, Yautepec, Mexico City, Mexico, 2011; *Bad Scene*, Uplands Gallery, Melbourne, 2010; *New Work*, ISCP, New York, 2008; *Infinity Land*, Hell Gallery, Melbourne, 2008; *Detritus*, Dudespace Gallery, Melbourne, 2006; *The Spectre Smitten*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2003; *Dirt*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne, 2003.



Selected group exhibitions include *Dark Heart: Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2014; *Melbourne Now*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2013–14; *Theatre of the World*, La Maison Rouge, Paris, 2013; *Pigeon Auction*, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney, 2013; *A Million Bucks*, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne, 2013; *Negotiating This World: Contemporary Australian Art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2012; *A Postcard from Afar: North Korea at a Distance*, Apex Art, New York, 2012; *Theatre of the World*, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, 2012; *Things Fall Apart*, Artspace, Sydney, 2012; *Trust Me*, Galerie Charlotte Desaga, Cologne, Germany, 2011; *The Devil Had A Daughter*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2012; *Monanism*, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, 2011; *Omega*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, 2010; *Bad Moon Rising 4*, Galerie Sans Titre, Brussels, Belgium, 2009; *Uncle Chop Chop*, EMBASSY, Edinburgh, UK, 2009; *Life Death Afterlife*, Silvershot Gallery, Melbourne, 2008; *Bad Moon Rising (special)*, ISCP, New York, 2008; *Neo Goth – Back in Black*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2008; *Relentless Optimism*, Carlton Hotel, Melbourne, 2007.

In 2013 Garifalakis received a New Work Grant from the Australia Council for the Arts. He has undertaken several international studio residencies including The SOMA, Mexico City, 2011 and the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), New York, 2008. His work is held in many public collections in Australia as well as private collections across Europe, UK, Australia and the USA.

Tony Garifalakis is represented by Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide.

[www.tonygarifalakis.com](http://www.tonygarifalakis.com)  
[hugomichellgallery.com](http://hugomichellgallery.com)

## Fiona Hall

**Born 1953, Sydney.**  
**Lives and works in Adelaide.**

Fiona Hall AO creates artworks which often address the relationship between nature and culture. Her practice includes major public commissions and projects that have increasingly engaged with themes of ecology, history and the effects of globalisation.

In 2015 Hall will represent Australia at the Venice Biennale. Her recent solo exhibitions include the major survey exhibition *Big Game Hunting*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2013; *Fiona Hall: Force Field*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2008, in partnership with City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand which toured to Christchurch Art Gallery, New Zealand and Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle; the retrospective exhibition, *The Art of Fiona Hall*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane which toured to the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2005.

Group exhibitions and Biennale exhibitions include *Dark Heart: 2014 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2014; *Australia*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2013; *DOCUMENTA (13)*, Kassel, Germany, 2012; *Contemporary Australia: Women*, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012; The Third Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow, 2009; *17th Biennale of Sydney, Beauty of Distance, songs of survival in a precarious age*, Sydney, 2010; *DeOverkant/Downunder*, Den Haag Sculpture 2007, Netherlands, 2007; *Auckland Triennial*, Auckland, New Zealand, 2007; *Prism: Contemporary Australian Art*, Bridgestone Museum, Tokyo, 2006; *Fieldwork: Australian Art 1968–2002*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2002; *The 12th Biennale of Sydney*, Sydney, 2000; *Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1997.

Hall was the recipient of the prestigious Contempora 5 Art Prize in 1997 and in 1999 she won the Clemenger Art Award at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Hall’s work has been collected by all the major Australian public galleries. She has also completed a number of important public commissions including *Folly for Mrs Macquarie*, Sydney Sculpture Walk, Botanic Gardens, 2000; *Fern Garden*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1998; and *Occupied Territory*, commission for the opening of the Museum of Sydney, 1995.

Fiona Hall is represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

[www.roslynoxley9.com.au](http://www.roslynoxley9.com.au)

## Sandra Hill

**Born 1951, South Perth, Western Australia.**  
**Language Group: Nyoongar.**  
**Lives and works in Balingup, Western Australia.**

Sandra Hill works across various media, including painting, printing, mixed-media collage, sculpture, installation and public art. Her recent work refers to the Government’s attempts to superimpose ‘white’ domestic values over South–West Nyoongar culture and onto Aboriginal women in the late 1950s and 60s.

Solo exhibitions include *Moordidjabininy (becoming strong) – Celebrating Identity*, Gomboc Gallery, Middle Swan, 2008; *Triumph of Spirit – An Aboriginal Experience*, Artist in Residence Gallery, Kings Park, Perth, 1997; *Footprints in Time – A Childhood Experience*, Artist in Residence Gallery, Hay Street, Perth, 1995; *Sandra Hill*, West Week, Guildford Hotel, Guildford, WA, 1993.

Selected group exhibitions include *Yuanyang*, Art Atrium, Sydney, 2013; Art Stage Singapore, Marina Bay Sands Convention and Exhibition centre, Singapore, 2013; *Nyoongar Country*, Bunbury Regional Art Gallery, Bunbury, WA, 2012; *Omission*, Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts, Melbourne, 2012; *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 2012; *Cause & Effect*, Indigenart – Mossenson Galleries, Perth, 2012; *Sulman Art Prize*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2011; *My Country*, Bankwest Tower, Perth, 2011; *City of Joondalup Invitation Art Award*, Joondalup, WA, 2011; *Longyear Museum of Anthropolgy*, Colgate University, New York, 2010; *Survey 2010*, Bunbury Regional Art Gallery, Bunbury, WA, 2010; *Koort Boodja – Noongar Heartland*, University of Western Australia, Perth, 2009; *The Legacy of Koorah Coolingah*, Brisbane Powerhouse Museum, Brisbane, 2009; *Gomboc Gallery’s 25th Anniversary*, Gomboc Gallery, Swanview, WA, 2007; *Moorditch Mar-Daa Art Award*, Naidoc Week Art Exhibition, Armadale, WA, 2005; *Mine Own Executioner* Mundaring Art Centre, Mundaring, WA, 2004; *Nii’kso’kowa*, The Other Gallery, The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada, 2004; *Turtle Island*, The Other Gallery, The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada, 2004; *South–West Central: Indigenous Art from South Western Australia 1833–2002*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 2003.

In 2012 Hill was the winner of the *Mandjar Art Award*, Alcoa Mandurah Art Gallery, Mandurah, WA.

Her work is held in numerous public, corporate and private Australian and international collections.

Sandra Hill is represented by Mossenson Galleries, Perth.

[mossensongalleries.com.au](http://mossensongalleries.com.au)



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## Gabriella Mangano and Silvana Mangano

**Born 1972, Stanthorpe, Queensland.**  
**Live and work in Melbourne.**

Gabriella Mangano and Silvana Mangano explore spatial aesthetics through their performance in a variety of architectural and landscape contexts.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Of Objects or Sound*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2014; *Shapes for open spaces*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne, 2012; *Neon*, Studio 12, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 2010; *In the stillness of shadows*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2009, *Gabriella Mangano, Silvana Mangano*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2009.

Selected recent group exhibitions include *More Light*, The Fifth Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art; *All Our Relations, 18th Biennale of Sydney*, Sydney, 2012; *Basil Sellers Art Prize*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2012; *Contemporary art: women*, Queensland Art Gallery/GOMA, Brisbane, 2012; *IdentityV111*, Nichido Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan, 2012; *21st Century: art in the first decade*, Queensland Art Gallery/GOMA, Brisbane, 2011; *Before and after science: the 2010 Adelaide Biennial of Australian art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2010; *The trickster*, The Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art, Seoul, 2010; *Love, loss and intimacy*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2010.

Their work is held in collections such as Chartwell Collection, Auckland, The Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, The University of Wollongong, and The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane.

Gabriella Mangano and Silvana Mangano are represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney.

[www.annaschwartzgallery.com](http://www.annaschwartzgallery.com)

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## Romaine Moreton

**Goenpul Jagara and Bundjulong peoples.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

Dr Romaine Moreton is from the Goenpul Jagara people of Stradbroke Island and the Bundjulong people of northern New South Wales. She is a celebrated poet and filmmaker and has published over 100 poems, prose and short stories and three anthologies of her poetry, *Poems from a Homeland* (2012), *Post Me to the Prime Minister* (2004) and *The Callused Stick of Wanting* (1996). Her films *Redreaming the Dark* (1998) and *Cherish* (1998) were both selected for the fringe program at the Cannes Film Festival in 1998. A third film, *A Walk With Words* (2000), won the award for Best International Short Film at the World of Women Film Festival. She also wrote and directed the award-winning *The Farm* (2009), screened on ABC-TV in the “New Blak” series and *The Oysterman* (2012) to be broadcast in 2014 as part of the “Flashblack” series. Her transmedia work has been the subject of 14 works of criticism and a PhD thesis. In addition to performance work, she has been an invited speaker in university research seminars and conferences in Norway, New Zealand, Canada, UK, Italy and France.

Morteon was awarded a PhD in philosophy from the University of Western Sydney in 2007. Her thesis, “The Right to Dream” proposes an Indigenous philosophy of storytelling and embodied knowledge. She was recently appointed to the position of Research Fellow/Filmmaker in Residence in the School of Media, Film and Journalism at Monash University where she is investigating the historical and international dimensions of Australian Indigenous filmmaking. She is also currently working on a large scale, trans-media exhibition *One Billion Beats*, in collaboration with Campbelltown Arts Centre. This work reframes ethnographic material, and, through audience engagement, explores issues of contemporary transmedia storytelling and Indigenous cultural heritage preservation.

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## Nasim Nasr

**Born 1984, Tehran, Iran.**  
**Lives and works in Adelaide.**

Through her photographic practice, Iranian-born Nasim Nasr explores and comments on both specific and universal cultural concerns in contemporary society. Her work has dealt with notions of self-censorship, the transience of identity, and issues that face the global community in the context of civil and social unrest.

Nasr has developed a body of work that has been featured in various exhibitions, festivals and publications in Australia and internationally. Selected solo exhibitions include *Untitled*, Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide, 2013; *Art Stage Singapore*, GAG Projects, Singapore, 2013; *Women in Shadow*, Civic Gallery, Kerry Packer Civic Gallery, Adelaide 2012; *What to do?*, The Project Space, Contemporary Art Centre of SA, Adelaide, 2012; *Rebirth*, Nexus Gallery, Adelaide, 2011; *Women in Shadow*, Walker Street Gallery, Melbourne, 2011; Contemporary Iranian Artists, Tehran Art Gallery of Tehran University, Final Presentation, 2008; Laleh Gallery, Tehran, 2007; The Hungarian Embassy, Tehran, Iran, 2007; *Light is on*, Iranian Art Organisation, Tehran, Iran, 2006.

Selected group exhibitions include *Video Arte Australia y Nueva Zelanda*, M100, Santiago, Chile, 2013; *Video Contemporary, Sydney Contemporary*, Artspace, Carriageworks, Sydney, 2013; *Landlocked*, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney, 2013; *Women in Shadow*, Walker Street Gallery, Melbourne, 2013; *CACSA CONTEMPORARY 2012: NEW SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ART*, DuPlessis Building, Adelaide, 2012; *CCP Declares: On The Nature of Things*, Contemporary Centre for Photography, Melbourne; *Human Rights Arts Film Festival*, No Vacancy Gallery, Melbourne, 2012; *CACSA Members Exhibition: The Contemporary*, Centre Art Contemporary of SA, Adelaide; *Boston Biennale Project, Venice Biennale*, Venice, 2011; *CACSA CONTEMPORARY 2010: THE NEW NEW*, The Galerie, Adelaide, 2010;

*Border Crossings: Human Rights Adelaide Art & Film Festival*, Format Artist Space, Adelaide, 2010; *The 4th Festival on the Iranian Sea* Photos, Tehran, 2008; *Design 2008*, Nazar Researching Cultural Institute, Tehran, 2008.

In 2013 Nasr was awarded an Australia Council Emerging Artist professional development grant. Previous awards and grants include Adelaide City Council Public Art Project Award, 2011 and Helpmann Academy Professional Development Grant, 2011.

Nasim Nasr is represented by Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide.

[www.nasimnasr.com](http://www.nasimnasr.com)  
[www.greenaway.com.au](http://www.greenaway.com.au)

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## Polixeni Papapetrou

**Born 1960, Melbourne.**  
**Lives and works Melbourne.**

Polixeni Papapetrou is a photographic artist who explores the relationship between history, contemporary culture and identity in her work. Her subject matter has included Elvis Presley fans, Marilyn Monroe impersonators and body builders. Since 2002 Papapetrou has turned her focus to the subject matter of the cultural positioning of childhood.

She has held over 50 solo exhibitions and participated in over 90 group exhibitions throughout Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States. Recent surveys of her work include *A Performative Paradox*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013 and *Tales from Elsewhere*, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, 2011. Papapetrou has exhibited at major international photographic festivals including the Dong Gang International Photo Festival, South Korea, 2014; Fotográfica Bogotá, Bogota, Columbia, 2013; Photofestival Noorderlicht, The Netherlands, 2012;

3rd Biennale Photoquai, Le musée du quai Branly, Paris, 2011; The Month of Photography Festival, Bratislava, 2010; The Athens Festival of Photography, Greece, 2010; Pingyao International Photography Festival, Pingyao, China, 2010; Seoul International Photography Festival, Seoul, 2008 and 'Le Mois de la Photo', Montreal, 2005. Papapetrou has participated in major exhibitions at The Museum of Photography, Seoul, 2011; The National Arts Center, Tokyo, 2008; De Cordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Massachusetts, 2008; Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, 2007; Aperture Gallery, New York, 2007.

Selected grants and awards include the Australia Council New Work Grant, 2012, 2009, 2007, 2005, 2000; Arts Victoria, International Touring Grant, 2010, 2007; Arts Victoria Professional Development Grant, 2002; Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, 2009. Papapetrou's work is held in numerous public, corporate and private collections in Australia, England, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, USA.

Polixeni Papapetrou is represented by Stills Gallery, Sydney; Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York; and ARTITLED, The Netherlands.

[www.polixenipapapetrou.net](http://www.polixenipapapetrou.net)  
[www.stillsgallery.com.au](http://www.stillsgallery.com.au)  
[www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com](http://www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com)

# Elizabeth Pedler

**Born 1988, Perth.**  
**Lives and works in Perth.**

Interested in the range of participation possible in art, Elizabeth Pedler's practice spans from playful and interactive installations to collaborative relational aesthetics. Perception and sensation are areas of focus, and her works often involve the use of mirrors, sound, light, and colour and movement.

Recent solo or two-person exhibitions include *The Walking Project*, Mailbox 141, Melbourne, 2013; *Survey*, Moana Project Space, Perth, 2013; *The Communication Project*, Top Shelf Gallery, Melbourne, 2013; *Smokescreen*, (with Jeremy Eaton), TCB Art Inc, Melbourne, 2013; *Interventions in the Present Moment*, Blindside, Melbourne, 2012; *Tautology*, Kings Artist Run Initiative, Melbourne, 2012; *Exchange/Play*, (with Markela Panegyres), Freerange Gallery, Perth, 2010.

Selected group exhibitions include *Subject to Ruin*, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Liverpool, 2014; *BYO Show*, Dudespace, Melbourne, 2014; *Mobi Des*, State of Design Festival, Melbourne, 2011; *In Transit Screen Spaces*, Wellington Street Bus Station, Perth, 2010; *Hatched*, Fine Arts National Graduate Exhibition, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth, 2010.

In 2012 Pedler was awarded an ArtStart grant from the Australia Council for the Arts and, in 2014, she will be conducting residencies at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Liverpool, NSW and Central Greenough, Geraldton, WA.

[www.elizabethpedler.com](http://www.elizabethpedler.com)

# Sangeeta Sandrasegar

**Born 1977, Brisbane.**  
**Lives and works in Melbourne.**

Sangeeta Sandrasegar's work concerns itself with the overlap of cultural structures – sexuality, race and identity, in contemporary society – and interpreting and representing these shifts. From installations of paper cutouts, material works and/or sculpture, the constructed shadows of the installation become a motif for themes of self-hood, otherness and in-between spaces.

Sandrasegar has exhibited widely both locally and internationally. Recent solo exhibitions include *The scaffold called the Motherland spews infinite grace*, Murray White Room, Melbourne, 2012; *Trusting that in future more consideration will be given*, Mission to Seafarers Projects, Melbourne, 2012; *Its feet were tied, with a silken thread of my own hands weaving*, Murray White Room, Melbourne, 2010; *On the field of Truth, on the battlefield of life (II)*, West Space, Melbourne, 2009; *White picket fences in the clear light of day cast black lines*, Gallery 4A, Sydney, 2009.

Selected group exhibitions include *Melbourne Now*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2013–14; *Mythopoetic: Women Artists from Australia and India*, QCA Galleries, Brisbane, 2013; *The Basil Sellers Art Prize* (finalist), The Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, 2012; *Volume One: MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012;

*Dangerous and Divine. The Secret of the Serpent*, Afrika Museum, Berg en Dal, Netherlands, 2012; *And the Falchion Passed through his Neck*, Latitude 28, New Delhi, 2011; *Constellations: A large number of small drawings*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne, 2010; *Incheon Women Artists' Biennale*, Incheon, South Korea, 2009; *Slash: Paper under the knife*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York; *The 5th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, 2006–07; *Public/Private – Tumatanui/Tumataiti*, *The 2nd Auckland Triennial*, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland, 2004; *NEW04*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, in 2004; *Primavera*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2004; *Heavenly Creatures*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2004.

Selected grants and awards include an Australian Tapestry Workshop Design Commission, 2014; Australia Council: Tokyo Studio Residency, 2012; Arts Victoria, International Program – Cultural Exchange: Rimbun Dahan Arts Residency, Penang, Malaysia; Australia Council New Work Grant, 2011. She has also held international residencies in India, Spain and Italy. Her work is held in numerous public, corporate and private collections in Australia.

Sangeeta Sandrasegar is represented by Murray White Room, Melbourne.

[www.murraywhiteroom.com](http://www.murraywhiteroom.com)  
[sangeetasandrasegar.blogspot.com](http://sangeetasandrasegar.blogspot.com)





# The Telepathy Project (Veronica Kent and Sean Peoples)

**Veronica Kent: Born 1970, Sydney.**  
**Sean Peoples: Born 1986, Melbourne.**  
**Both live and work in Melbourne.**

The Telepathy Project is a collaboration between Veronica Kent and Sean Peoples engaged in a critical practice based on the possibilities of telepathic communication. Telepathy serves as an extended metaphor and working methodology through which they explore alternate ways of being, communicating and collaborating, and acts as the premise for the setting up of encounters that test and provoke such relationships.

Their projects have been presented in private and public galleries and festivals in Australia and internationally, and their exhibitions include *Motel Dreaming, Dark Mofo*, MONA, Hobart, 2014; *Dream Recital, White Nights*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2014; *Melbourne Now*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2013–14; *Dream Studio*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 2013; *Dreaming the Arabian Sea*, (en)counters, Mumbai, India, 2013; *The Telepathy Project*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, 2012; *Speech Objects*, Musée de l’Objet, Blois, France, 2011;

*Material Conversion*, Grimmuseum, Berlin, Germany, 2011; *Telepathy and Love*, Australia Council for the Arts Studio and Apartment, Barcelona, Spain, 2011; *Once More With Feeling*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, 2009; *The Telepathy Project*, for the *2008 Next Wave Festival*. Forum Theatre, Melbourne, 2008; *You Are Probably My Favourite Person in the Whole World*, The Academy, Long Beach, USA, 2007.

They have also worked collaboratively with other artist collectives and events with A Constructed World include *The Speakeasy Medicine Show*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2012; *Fragments In A Constructed World, Plausible Artworlds*, Basekamp, Philadelphia, USA, 2010; *Speech and What Archive*, Y3K Gallery, Melbourne, 2010; *The Speakeasy Medicine Show*, Belleville Biennale, Paris, France, 2010; and *Explaining Contemporary Art To Live Eels*, in collaboration with ‘Superflou’ as part of the *A Constructed World* exhibition ‘Saisons Increase’, CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, France, 2008.

The Telepathy Project have undertaken residencies in Australia, India and Spain and this year they will participate in *Primavera 2014* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Veronica Kent is represented by Sarah Scout Presents, Melbourne

[www.thetelepathyproject.com](http://www.thetelepathyproject.com)



# Tjanpi Desert Weavers

**Formed in 1995.**

**The 12 artists who have participated in the project for the TarraWarra Biennial 2014: Whisper in My Mask are: Wingellina Community (WA): Roma Butler, Stacia Lewis, Rene Nelson, Tjawina Roberts; Pipalyatjara Community (SA): Angkaliya Nelson, Sandra Peterman; Kalka Community (SA): Yangi Yangi Fox, Molly Miller, Nyanu Watson; Mutijulu Community (NT): Rene Kulitja; Ernabella Community (SA): Niningka Lewis; Amata Community (SA): Mary Pan**

Tjanpi Desert Weavers is the dynamic social enterprise of the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women’s Council. NPY Women’s Council was formed in response to the land rights struggles of the 1970s when women realised that they had no voice and no visibility. Their thought was that as single women they could not be heard but as a strong and collective group they could have a formidable presence. Since that time NPY Women’s Council has grown from an advocacy service into a major indigenous directed and governed organisation delivering a wide range of health, social and cultural services across 28 desert communities on the NPY Lands of Central Australia. The Council’s primary objective is to improve life on the Lands for women and children.

Tjanpi (meaning grass) began in 1995 as a series of basket-making workshops facilitated by NPY Women’s Council in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands of WA. Women wanted meaningful and culturally appropriate employment on their homelands so as to better provide for their families. Building upon a long history of using natural fibres to make objects for ceremonial and daily use, women took quickly to coiled basketry

and were soon sharing their new found skills with relatives and friends on neighbouring communities. It wasn’t long before they began experimenting with producing sculptural forms. Today there are over 400 women across three states making spectacular contemporary fibre art from locally collected grasses and working with fibre in this way has become a fundamental part of Central and Western Desert culture.

At its core, Tjanpi embodies the energies and rhythms of Country, culture and community. Women regularly come together to collect grass for their fibre art, taking the time to hunt, gather food, visit significant sites, perform *inma* (cultural song and dance) and teach their children about Country whilst creating an ever evolving array of fibre artworks. The shared stories, skills and experiences of this wide-reaching network of mothers, daughters, aunties, sisters and grandmothers form the bloodline of the desert weaving phenomenon and have fuelled Tjanpi’s rich history of collaborative practice. Most infamously the *Tjanpi Toyota*, produced by 20 women from Blackstone, won the Telstra NATSI Art Award in 2005 just ten years after the first baskets were made.

More recently a growing tradition of artists camps held in bush locations have proved fertile ground for the realisation of major commissions and projects including *Kuru Alala: Eyes Open*, a national touring exhibition generated in partnership with Gold Coast City Art Gallery 2009–12, *Paarpakani* (Take Flight) commissioned by Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute for the Adelaide Festival 2012, *Tjanpi Punu*, showcased in *Heartland* at Art Gallery of South Australia, 2013 and *Tjanpi Minyma Tjanpi Punu* commissioned for the exhibition *String Theory: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013.

Tjanpi works are represented in major public and private collections in Australia and internationally.

[www.tjanpi.com.au](http://www.tjanpi.com.au)

# CURATORS

## Natalie King

Natalie King is a Melbourne-based curator, writer, editor and Senior Research Fellow, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. Formerly, she was the Director of Utopia, a pan-Asian incubator at Asialink. She has curated exhibitions for numerous museums including the Singapore Art Museum, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, New Caledonia and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. King is co-editor of the anthology *Art in the Asia Pacific: Intimate Publics*, Routledge, 2014 with Larissa Hjorth (RMIT) and Mami Kataoka (Mori Art Museum). She has conducted interviews with Ai Wei Wei, Candice Breitz, Joseph Kosuth, Massimiliano Gioni, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Tacita Dean, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Bill Henson, Jitish Kallat, Hou Hanru, Kathy Temin and Cai Guo-Qiang amongst others. King is on the editorial board of *Art and Australia* and a correspondent for *Flash Art International* as well as a contributor to *Artlink*, *Eyeline*, *LEAP* (China), *Art Monthly* and *Art Asia Pacific*.

She was the curator and editor of *Up Close: Carol Jerrems with Larry Clark, Nan Goldin and William Young* at Heide Museum of Modern Art, 2010, part of the Melbourne Festival, as a recipient of an Australia Council grant. Formerly, she was the visual arts reporter for ABC radio. She is the co-author of a Thames & Hudson monograph on Chinese/Australian painter, Guan Wei, with Hou Hanru. In April 2013, King co-convoked with Victoria Lynn, a Curatorial Lab with renowned biennial curator Hou Hanru, as well as a public “in conversation”. She also conducted a workshop at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi with Raqs Media Collective. In 2014, she will co-curate the 13th International Photo Festival at the Dong Gang Museum of Photography, Korea.

## Djon Mundine

Djon Mundine OAM is a member of Bundjalung people of northern NSW. He has an extensive career as a curator, activist, writer, and occasional artist. Mundine has been involved in the visual arts since the late 1970s, working as Art Advisor at Milingimbi, Maningrida and Ramingining in the Northern Territory from 1979–95, with the majority of this time spent at Ramingining (1983–95), a small community in Central Arnhem Land located around 400 kilometres east of Darwin. While at Ramingining, Mundine initiated *The Aboriginal Memorial* (1987–88), a significant installation of 200 hollow log coffins or poles now held in the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. In 1995, his last year at Ramingining, Mundine was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for his services to the visual arts. Since that time he has worked as a curator and academic while he continues to be involved in collaborative art projects.

In 2005–06 he undertook a residency at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) in Osaka, Japan as a Research Professor in the Department of Social Research, prior to which he was Senior Consultant and Curator of Indigenous Art at the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane. He has taught at the National Art School, Canberra and has held curatorial positions at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. More recently, he was Indigenous Curator – Contemporary Art at the Campbelltown Art Centre where he mounted the *Sunshine State – Smart State and More Than My Skin* exhibitions. He is currently a PhD candidate at College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales.

# CURATORS’ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The curators thank the artists for their remarkable contribution to the biennial and for sharing their world and their work. The curators also thank Professor Diane Bell and Dr John von Sturmer for their insightful texts.

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Djon Mundine wishes to thank Annemaree Dalziel.

## PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Stephanie Carrick pp. 23–24; Andrew Curtis pp. 48–49; Jo Foster pp. 82, 85; Claire Freer p. 84; Fiona Hall p. 83; Ari Hatzis pp. 74–77; Tanja Milbourne p. 25.





## WHISPER IN MY MASK

CURATORS: NATALIE KING AND DJON MUNDINE

16 AUGUST – 16 NOVEMBER 2014

### TarraWarra Museum of Art

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### FRONT COVER:

Tony Garifalakis  
*The Hills Have Eyes* (detail)  
2012

### INSIDE FRONT COVER:

Gabriella Mangano and  
Silvana Mangano  
*Lux* 2014 (detail)

### OPPOSITE:

Polixeni Papapetrou  
*Melancholia* 2014 (detail)

### BACK COVER

Daniel Boyd  
*Untitled* 2014 (detail)

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