

JUST NOT AUSTRALIAN



EDUCATION RESOURCE

INTRODUCTION

This Education Resource has been produced by Artspace, Sydney, in conjunction with Museums & Galleries of NSW to support the touring exhibition *Just Not Australian*.

It is intended to assist school students and teachers. While these activities have been written with late primary and secondary students in mind, the concepts they address are intended to be accessible and adaptable to learners of all ages and abilities. We also encourage community groups, as well as gallery staff, to use the information and activities in this resource.

THIS RESOURCE OFFERS:

- insight into the conception of *Just Not Australian* and the practice of participating artists
- an introduction for teachers
- a timeline and conceptual framework
- a glossary of terms
- worksheets and back-in-the-classroom activities for primary and secondary school students
- creative activity suggestions for galleries

PRE-VIEWING PLANNING

Before you visit *Just Not Australian* it is suggested that you contact gallery staff to determine the suitability of the exhibition content and subject matter for the intended student year level. Works address themes

of discrimination and representation and may be distressing to some visitors. Works contain sexual references, strong language and references to strong violence.

HOW TO USE THIS EDUCATION KIT

FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The information in this resource is designed to provide enrichment and promote deeper understanding of key learning areas including Visual Arts and History (HASS). There is scope to build this resource into existing programs with particular relevance to the Australian Curriculum cross curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures as well as develop it as a standalone program. We have included some suggestions for pre-visit preparation and post-visit activities. Teachers are free to adapt these learning activities to suit their students and particular contexts.

Please note the content of the exhibition and this resource contains strong language and references to violence.

FOR GALLERY STAFF, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

This resource can be used to assist or enhance a self-directed visit to *Just Not Australian*. You can build on your experience by enjoying creative activities inside the gallery or back in your community setting. We have provided suggested materials and activities.



Gordon Hookey, *First Stolen Then Stolen Land*, 1998, oil on masonite with timber frame, 134.5 x 196 cm. University of Wollongong Art Collection. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Tess Allas. Photo: University of Wollongong Art Collection

cover: Hoda Afshar, *If You Don't Love it, Live it*, 2011, archival inkjet print, 60.96 x 88.9 cm. Courtesy the artist



ABOUT ARTSPACE

Ever changing, ever challenging, Artspace is where audiences engage with the artists and the ideas of our times.

Established in 1983, Artspace is an independent, not-for-profit contemporary art space. It is an institution in permanent transformation, with a radically progressive vision to support artists and different modes of cultural production through risk, experimentation and innovation.

As one of the leading institutions for the production and presentation of contemporary art in the Asia-Pacific region, Artspace's curatorial vision is to commission and produce contemporary art, supporting Australian and international artists of all generations, from emerging through to established, to pursue new directions and make their most ambitious work to date. Artspace presents exhibitions and hosts a rent-free studio residency program and is a site of critical thinking and dialogue, in which

contemporary art and culture is contextualised within current socio-political conditions. It has also spearheaded innumerable educational and outreach initiatives through its inter-relational and complementary public programming.

As a public institution, Artspace understands its role as a citizen and a community resource. We are partners for soft diplomacy, education and social service and will continue to develop initiatives that enable the organisation to look outward and build social capital in our communities. Artspace has a sustained focus on local, regional, national and international partnerships, which provides the bedrock for the organisation's artistic program and offers a diversified and generous approach to connecting with audiences. By situating partnerships at the centre of all Artspace's activities, its ambitious collaborations amplify the organisation's capacity to present a collaborative, civic and creative platform from Woolloomooloo to the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

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ABOUT MUSEUMS & GALLERIES OF NSW

Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) helps museums, galleries and Aboriginal cultural centres of NSW create exciting and inspiring experiences for visitors and strong, thriving local communities. We develop their skills, connect them with others in the industry, provide funding, point visitors their way, and give them access to ground-breaking exhibitions.

M&G NSW runs the largest regional touring program in NSW, delivering the very best contemporary Australian art to regional, remote and metropolitan audiences through the comprehensive network of public galleries Australia wide. We partner with artists, curators, regional galleries, contemporary art spaces, university galleries and other producing organisations to develop innovative exhibitions for tour nationally. We work directly with artists and commission new work for the benefit of Australian regional audiences. Our exhibitions and associated programs balance the programming needs of regional galleries and support their staff, facilitate skill sharing and professional development, foster collaboration and build connections, capacity and networks for artists, curators and arts workers across distance.

Our program reflects the capacity and diversity of the sector with a focus on access and engagement. We present the full spectrum of contemporary art practice by leading artists, both emerging and established including Richard Bell, Shaun Gladwell, Claire Healy & Sean Cordeiro, Joyce Hinterding, Angelica Mesiti, Deborah Kelly, Jason Wing, Fiona Hall and Ken + Julia Yonetani. Each of our exhibitions engage diverse audiences through a range of public and educational programs, interpretative material, digital resources and scholarly publications written by curators, academics and experts.

In the last five years, we have reached over 875,000 visitors nationwide through 24 exhibitions of contemporary art and craft that toured to 131 galleries, art centres, museums and contemporary art organisations across six states and territories. With all our exhibitions, we provide quality publications, interpretation, educational material, public program opportunities and activities.

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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Just Not Australian brings together 20 artists across generations and diverse cultural backgrounds to deal broadly with the origins and implications of contemporary Australian nationhood. With works ranging from the late 1990s right through to newly commissioned pieces, they are united by their desire to take Australia's 'official' history to task, making space for people and events that have, often wilfully, been sidelined or omitted.

The artists explore the politics of images, their construction and circulation, as well as their connection to legacies of racial and cultural misrepresentation. They utilise familiar nationalistic symbols such as flags, maps and currency to interrogate individual and collective relationships with the nation state. Adopting text in various forms from song lyrics to parliamentary records they reveal the use of language in cultural alienation, subjugation and liberation alike. With creative invention and fortitude they address historical and contemporary mistruths and injustices.

Just Not Australian engages with the moral and ethical undertones of the loaded rejoinder 'un-Australian' – a pejorative now embedded in our national vocabulary that continues to be wheeled out for certain political agendas and propagate

nationalistic fantasies of what it means to be Australian. Over the years the phrase has been pitched against striking workers, communists, anti-war protesters, monarchists, migrants, asylum seekers and just about anyone seen to be violating Australian cultural 'norms'. Its 2020 incarnation, according to current Prime Minister Scott Morrison, is the 'un-Australian' panic buying in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

Predicated on an Us-versus-Them dichotomy, at its core the term is intended to exclude: what's at stake is a sense of belonging. Yet far from a simple equation, a consideration of what's not Australian ultimately leads to questions of what is, and it's here that many of the artists in *Just Not Australian* weigh in. Consciously enlisting tactics of larrikinism, satire and resistance, they present a multifarious nation divided across numerous issues, from immigration and border protection to land rights and Indigenous sovereignty, bigotry and xenophobia to resource exploitation and climate change. And as its title suggests, *Just Not Australian* also acknowledges that these matters do not just affect Australia but are indeed being addressed the world over. If recent events have taught us anything it is our place in an interconnected world that desperately needs more solidarity and understanding.



Jon Campbell, *I'm not racist, but ...*, 2013, enamel and spray paint on plywood, 35 x 45 cm. Collection of Harry Hobbs and Annabel Johnson, Sydney

ABDUL ABDULLAH

born 1986, Perth, WA
lives and works in Sydney

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Abdul Abdullah

Richard Lewer

Hoda Afshar

Archie Moore

Tony Albert

Vincent Namatjira

Cigdem Aydemir

Nell

Liam Benson

Raquel Ormella

Eric Bridgeman

Ryan Presley

Jon Campbell

Joan Ross

Karla Dickens

Tony Schwensen

Fiona Foley

Soda Jerk

Gordon Hookey



FUCK OFF WE'RE FULL, 2011/2019, (rendering), lightbox, 106 x 111 cm.
Courtesy the artist and Yavuz Gallery, Sydney and Singapore

Working across painting, photography, video, installation and performance, Abdul Abdullah's practice is primarily concerned with the experience of the 'other'. *FUCK OFF WE'RE FULL* appropriates a brash statement of cultural othering and xenophobia used by some Australians who perceive so-called outsiders as a threat. Playing into the Australian Government's ongoing exploitation of anti-immigrant and anti-refugee propaganda, Abdullah's work renders this slogan across an outline of the Australian continent. Yet both text and image are out of focus, downplaying the

potency of this hateful dogma – or at least inviting it to be questioned – and blurring the definition of the national borders both literally and metaphorically.

Blazoned across bumper stickers, hoodies and other merchandise, this refrain reveals a warped sense of patriotism and national pride. Through self-deprecating humour, Abdullah references his own experiences as a self-described 'outsider amongst outsiders', navigating Australia's contemporary multicultural context as a seventh-generation Australian Muslim.

HODA AFSHAR

born 1983, Tehran, Iran
lives and works in Melbourne



Dog's Breakfast, 2011, archival inkjet print, 60.9 x 88.9 cm. Courtesy the artist

Beginning her career as a documentary photographer, Hoda Afshar now employs processes that disrupt traditional image-making. Merging aspects of conceptual, staged and documentary photography, her work specifically considers the representation of gender, marginality and displacement in a world both homogenised by a global economy and unsettled by mass migration.

Dog's Breakfast and *If You Don't Love it, Live It* are part of her series *The In-Between Spaces* that illustrates social parodies based on performative

masquerade. Her figures occupy a social space in which the pre-existing cultures of the host community are juxtaposed alongside their attempts to maintain their own history and identity. The characters explore identities that exist in-between clearly defined cultural norms as they undergo transition through migration. Based on the artist's personal encounters as a migrant, these photographs critique nationalistic fantasies that enforce clichéd imaginings of what it means to be an Australian.

TONY ALBERT

born 1981, Townsville, QLD
lives and works in Brisbane and Sydney
Girramay, Yidinji and Kuku-Yalanji



exotic OTHER, 2009, found vintage ephemera and vinyl, 3.3 x 5.8 m. Courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and Singapore. Collection of Tom Snow, courtesy of Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney. Installation view, *Just Not Australian*, Artspace, Sydney, 2019. Photo: Zan Wimberley

In his work that combines text, video, drawing, painting and three-dimensional objects, Tony Albert examines legacies of racial and cultural misrepresentation, particularly of Australia's Indigenous peoples. Central to his practice is the use of text as a provocative device. By taking control of language and using it to interrogate cultural alienation, Albert addresses historical mistruths and injustices, shifting power balances reinforced by language and its proclivity for categorisation.

exotic OTHER continues Albert's process of integrating re-worked 'Aboriginalia' – a term used by the artist to describe kitsch objects from the twentieth century that naively depict Australian

Aboriginality. The artist has been collecting these objects – which include ashtrays, spoons, small mirrors and salt-shakers – for years; items that still appear in op-shops and some households as everyday pieces or 'souvenirs' and reflect an insidious heritage of colonialism. By gathering and reworking this material, *exotic OTHER* brings attention to the stereotypical representation, commodification and exoticisation of First Nations peoples. Albert consciously plays with the tension arising from the ubiquity and visibility of these kitsch objects versus the systemic invisibility of Indigenous people and histories.

CIGDEM AYDEMIR

born 1983, Sydney
lives and works in Sydney



Cigdem Aydemir, *The Ride*, 2017, HD video, 10–13 mins. Installation view, *Just Not Australian*, Artspace, Sydney, 2019. Commissioned by Proximity Festival, Perth. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Zan Wimberley

Strongly influenced by her identity as an Australian Muslim woman with Turkish heritage, Cigdem Aydemir's installation, performance and video practice questions established relations of power, while producing work that is driven equally by research, play, criticism and humour. Her performative works expand on the veil as a culturally constructed site and as a material realisation, while exploring the veiled woman cipher as resistant female other and as lived experience.

The Ride originally took place as a performance piece in which the artist invited participants to sit with her on a Harley Davidson motorcycle and simulate a ride through an archetypal Australian landscape. At the end of the ride, each participant was given a polaroid taken along the journey with the handwritten caption '#illridewithyou xo'. The piece is a subversion of the #illridewithyou campaign that originally emerged in

the aftermath of the 2014 Lindt Café siege in Sydney. As the artist writes:

This work examines the discourse surrounding the trend, which although came from a will to express solidarity and support, could also be seen as revealing undertones of patriarchal protectionism and the white saviour complex. It borrows from the aesthetics of Australian art and cinema, specifically Tracey Moffatt's series *Up in the Sky* (1997) and *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*, both set near Broken Hill.¹

¹ Cigdem Aydemir, artist statement, *Up in the Sky | Landing Points: Race, place and identity*, exh. cat., Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, Sydney, 2017, p.47.

LIAM BENSON

born 1980, Sydney
lives and works in Sydney



Red Flag, 2017, sequins, seed beads, cotton thread, cotton poplin, 30 x 59 cm;
Black Flag, 2016, sequins, seed beads, cotton thread, cotton poplin, 30 x 59 cm.
Courtesy the artist and Arterial Gallery, Sydney. Photos: Zan Wimberley

The use of sequins and beads has been crucial to the development of Liam Benson's personal visual language, which he uses to explore themes such as liberty, celebration, acceptance and unconditional love. Growing up in the 1980s, the artist associated delicate and intricate beaded and sequined clothing with his mother, who encouraged making from an early age. His artistic practice was later informed by his immersion within the drag culture of Sydney's queer nightlife, which fostered his ongoing interest in contemporary Australian identity politics.

White Australia, *Black Flag* and *Red Flag* are the products of the artist's contemplative making which facilitates his thinking through issues of identity and place, not only for himself personally but more broadly as part of a community of diverse nations, abilities and cultures. These works respond to maps and flags as deeply complex and problematic cultural artefacts but also invest in an optimistic view of Australia's future as an interconnected nation brimming with rich cultural history, exuberance and synergy.

ERIC BRIDGEMAN

born 1986, Redcliffe
lives and works in Brisbane and Wahgi Valley,
Jiwaka Province, Papua New Guinea
Yuri Clan of Chimbu Province, Papua New Guinea



I Waz 'Ere (with Heath Ledger), 2012, type-c prints on metallic paper mounted on aluminium, 9 panels, each 83 x 64 cm. Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

With a punk, sometimes camp and frequently provocative aesthetic, Eric Bridgeman's multifaceted practice often involves the artist literally or symbolically embodying characters to explore ideas around race, gender, tribalism, sexuality and masculinity. His confrontation of racist stereotypes and representations is informed by his dual heritage and critical observations of the cultures that define both places.

Wilma Jr (Blacky) belongs to Bridgeman's photographic and performative video series *The Sport and Fair Play of Aussie Rules*, 2008–9, which involves a motley crew of fans and players. While carnivalesque and playful in appearance, these characters embody darker tropes familiar to Australian sporting and drinking culture and the blind adoration of sporting heroes, including systemic racism, sexism and violence.

I Waz 'Ere (with Heath Ledger) was developed during a residency in Blairmore in Alberta, Canada, the small town that is the setting for Ang Lee's film adaptation of *Brokeback Mountain*. Originally studying parallels between Canadian Ice Hockey and masculine sporting culture in Australia, Bridgeman shifted to internal reflection during two months spent in the isolated location with only a toy golliwog – baptised after Ledger – for company. As he describes:

My tribe in the highlands of Papua New Guinea would understand the strong use of black paint as a symbol of war and defence; something I was unaware of at the time, but somehow channelling, while fighting Western visual languages associated with the golliwog, a symbol designed to weaken and further enslave black cultures.¹

¹Eric Bridgeman, email to author, 3 July 2020.

JON CAMPBELL

born 1961, Belfast, Ireland
lives and works in Melbourne



Pure Bewdy (Black), 2011, acrylic and enamel paint on plywood 40 x 30 cm. Courtesy the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

My art and politics are influenced by where I grew up in Melbourne's Western suburbs. I've always been interested in things around me: the local, Australian, language and rock 'n' roll. I try to represent the overlooked and undervalued. It's a questioning and celebration of who we are, constructed with a laidback lyricism, an engaging lo-fi aesthetic and a sense of humour.¹

Jon Campbell's practice combines text with abstracted and geometric elements to playfully explore ciphers of colloquial language and culture in contemporary society. His work is an ongoing exploration of the visual potential of language, embedding meaning in negative space by hiding words within the surface of the image for us to decipher.

Campbell's works are emblazoned with laconic Australian catchphrases and cheeky swear words that yell out to each other across the gallery wall – a mischievous joke shared between friends, or a crowd becoming more and more rowdy. Yet nestled among these familiar remarks and convivial expressions lie subtle and often not-so-subtle reminders of the potential for other, sometimes more sinister, meanings lurking beneath. These references can light-heartedly strike at casual racism or sexism for example, highlighting the ease with which these loaded words or phrases can pass unchecked into everyday jargon.

¹Jon Campbell. joncampbell.info/about, accessed 3 January 2020.

KARLA DICKENS

born 1967, Sydney
lives and works in Lismore, NSW
Wiradjuri



The Queens Road, 2017, (still), single-channel video, 8 mins. Commissioned by Transport for NSW for Wynscreen, produced by Cultural Capital. Courtesy the artist and Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

Karla Dickens is inspired by her personal experiences, with many of her works centring on issues of gender politics, sexuality, marginalisation, resistance and her Indigenous heritage. Often commemorating dark periods in Australia's history of race relations and the brutal legacies of colonialism, the artist builds monuments to the intergenerational trauma that lives on in Australian cultural memory.

In her video work *The Queen's Road*, Dickens spotlights the invisible Indigenous Australians touched by Queen Elizabeth II's Royal Tour of Australia in 1954 and, more broadly, speaks to the violence and trauma inflicted by her empire. Two women, regal in their own ways yet from different worlds, are shown side by side – one Queen steeped in grandeur and fanfare from adoring crowds, the other a young Aboriginal 'bush queen' moving through Bundjalung country in northern New South Wales. Here, these two narratives are

given an equal stage. This symbolic young woman moves through the landscape with captivating strength and beauty despite her vulnerability. As the artist writes:

Aboriginal women run from injustice systems.
Systems the Queen's Empire introduced to their country.
They run from the men who rape them.
From the police who stalk them.
They run from the services that removed them ...
Her old people are close by.
The spirits that guide her.
The country talks to her.
The country her feet connect to.
She is a collective memory.
Interconnectedness.
Her great grandmother's memory.
My grandmother's and my own.¹

¹ Karla Dickens, artist statement, 2017.

FIONA FOLEY

born 1964, Maryborough, QLD
lives and works in Brisbane
Badtjala



Hunted II, 2019, (detail), calico, pearl shell buttons, mixed media and vinyl, 9 parts. Courtesy the artist, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne. Photo: Mick Richards

With humour, sadness and resilience, Fiona Foley puts the crimes of colonialism and ongoing racial injustice front and centre, reasserting Indigenous culture, truth telling and sovereignty. Her practice brings forgotten or hidden histories to light to consider the pervasive legacies of invasion, power relations and inequalities among races and genders in particular.

Foley's work is marked by imagery that speaks to practices in racial superiority, including the symbol of the hood, employed by the artist to evoke and subvert histories of animosity and racially motivated violence. Her bold and confronting 2004 *HHH* series plays with the commonly identifiable Ku Klux Klan habits, presenting a kind of racial inversion where people of colour are the ones behind the masks.

A number of Foley's works, including this new piece created for *Just Not Australian*, deal with

the treatment of Aboriginal people in Queensland during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A descendant of the Badtjala people who were forcibly removed from K'gari (Fraser Island) at the turn of the twentieth century, Foley engages fearlessly with the reclaiming of historical narratives and of the land itself.

Hunted II references the widespread abduction and sexual abuse of Aboriginal women by fisherman of the beche-de-mer and pearl shell industries in the 1880s. 'Badtjala women', Foley writes, 'would have been hunted and kidnapped for their services in this industry. It is another hidden history in the state of Queensland never discussed or taught in university curricula. The use of pearl shell buttons on the hoods is a reflection of this history'.¹

¹ Fiona Foley, artist statement, 7 January 2019.

GORDON HOOKEY

born 1961, Cloncurry
lives and works in Brisbane
Waanyi



Inside the Circle, 2003, oil on canvas, 213 x 198 cm. Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Photo: Charlie Hillhouse

Gordon Hookey's paintings layer visual puns and linguistic wit to highlight the continuing oppression of Indigenous Australians in a style that is urgently political and often darkly humorous.

First Stolen Then Stolen Land and *Outside the Square*, *Inside the Circle* were painted during John Howard's term as prime minister in response to his brand of conservatism and racism, one that Hookey notes is still prevalent today. *First Stolen* speaks to inherited trauma and dispossession, connecting present-day Aboriginal people in chains with ancestors Arabanoo, Bennelong and Colebee who were abducted by Governor Phillip – the First Stolen.

Both paintings utilise zoomorphism, taking inspiration from the dictatorial pig in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. In *Outside the Square* we have pig-nosed and hooved Pauline Hanson and John Howard (cosying up to George W Bush)

alongside the High Court Chief Justice and the Queen in key chess positions. The work was painted in 2003, the same year that a United States-led coalition, including Australia, invaded Iraq and began a decade-long conflict.

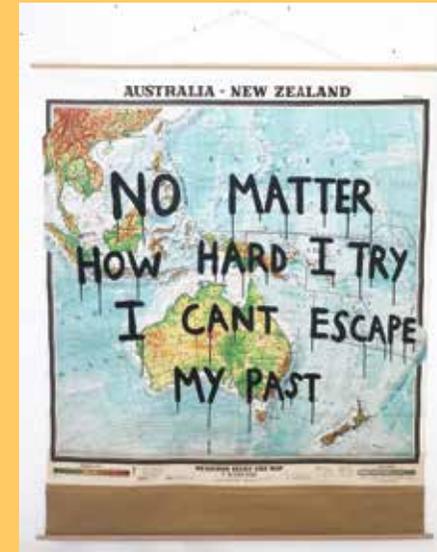
Critical to Hookey's practice is his illustration of Indigenous strength, determination and resilience. As Hookey says:

I don't like to look at my work and feel like a victim, or like all I'm doing is making us feel sad and sorry. I want to feel powerful about what I do, and I want my people to look at my work and feel the same strength.¹

¹Gordon Hookey, conversation with author, 19 June 2020.

RICHARD LEWER

born 1970, Hamilton, New Zealand
lives and works in Melbourne



Richard Lewer, *No Matter how hard I try I can't escape my past*, 2019, acrylic on found map, 195 x 160 cm, courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and Singapore. Photo: Andrew Curtis

Inscribed across a vintage mid-century map of Australia and New Zealand, Richard Lewer's *No Matter how hard I try I can't escape my past* has both personal and political dimensions. New Zealand-born but having lived in various locations across Australia for the last 20 years, Lewer's self-deprecating humour reveals his first-hand experience of establishing a life in a new country and the ever-present shadow of the past in the present. More broadly, the work references Australia's ongoing wrestling with its own complex history, calling into question the capacity of this nation for self-knowing.

Maps and flags are motifs found throughout Lewer's practice. Many, such as the one seen here, were originally used as classroom teaching aids and are

now sought-after collectibles. In his hands these once indisputable tools of imperialist education become the ground for social observations that invite participation and projection from audiences.

Lewer's unique brand of haikus often start plastered across the walls of his studio as self-motivating tools to encourage himself to get on with making work. As they migrate into his work they accrue layers and varied, often darker, potentials of meaning. Lewer's hand-scrawled open-ended phrases are simultaneously assertions and doubts. They evoke sentiments that lie at the very heart of being human: vulnerability, hope, failure, mortality.

ARCHIE MOORE

born 1970, Toowoomba, QLD
lives and works in Brisbane
Kamilaroi



Swamped by Asians, 2020, inkjet print on paper (Hansard parliamentary record of maiden speech by Senator Hanson, 10 September 1996, Australian House of Representatives), edition of 10, 5 x 6 x 6 cm. Courtesy the artist and The Commercial, Sydney. Photo: Zan Wimberley

Language, skin, smell, flags and the home are key signifiers of identity underpinning Archie Moore's enigmatic practice. His exploration of cultural identity, racism, transgenerational memory and intercultural (mis)understanding is imbued with a sense of uncertainty that pertains to the ongoing exploration of his largely lost ancestral history.

His new work for *Just Not Australian* is part of a larger series which transforms decommissioned Hansard parliamentary records, including the 1996 maiden speech of anti-immigration politician Pauline Hanson, into delicate sculptural objects. *Swamped by Asians* sees this text scrunched in a tight ball that still reveals snippets of Hanson's speech, including the provocative line: 'I believe we

are in danger of being swamped by Asians'.

While perusing hundreds of Hansard documents Moore noticed the repeated use of the phrase 'swamped by'. Over the years this expression has been deployed by Australian politicians to refer to communists, Asians, students, the Japanese, migrant communities and 'the more articulate Aboriginals', as well as other perceived threats to the nation. Most recently used as an exclusionary tactic against asylum seekers, this sensationalist politics of fear is brought to light as an enduring part of Australia's political history. Folded, singed and crumpled, Moore's works lay bare and simultaneously undermine the vitriol of these texts.

VINCENT NAMATJIRA

born 1983, Alice Springs, NT
lives and works in Indulkana, APY Lands, SA
Western Arrernte



Gina Rinehart and Anthony Pratt from *The Richest*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 7 panels, each 91 x 67 cm. Courtesy the artist; Iwantja Arts, Indulkana, APY Lands, SA and THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne.

If a painting is making me laugh while I'm working on it, then I know there is something there, like a spark that's going to get people interested. Humour can disarm, and in my paintings, I use humour as an equaliser, to put everyone on the same level. If I start out painting someone powerful, usually I can't help but exaggerate some of their features or give them a strange expression or pose to make them seem a little less comfortable – I sort of chip away at their power.¹

Playful and bold, Vincent Namatjira's works mix the personal with the public and political in their navigation of Australian colonial history and global power relations. Great-grandson to Albert Namatjira – the renowned watercolourist known for his iconic images of Central Australia and the first Aboriginal person to gain citizenship – the younger Namatjira has broken from the artistic approach so frequently associated with his family name. In a distinctive style – part-portraiture, part-caricature,

and often including cameos of the artist himself – he amplifies the features and flaws of the rich, famous and personally familiar to comic effect as they act out the artist's imagined narratives.

The Richest is one of three groups of portraits collectively dealing with structures of power and different concepts of leadership and influence. The first series documents the seven prime ministers who have governed the country during the artist's lifetime, while the second features seven senior Anangu men, artists and cultural leaders from the APY Lands. This third suite of portraits portrays the seven wealthiest Australians at the time of painting – Blair Parry-Okeden, Gina Rinehart, Harry Triguboff, Frank Lowy, Anthony Pratt, James Packer and John Gandel. Together they represent a larger body of work that contains the same themes from different perspectives.

¹ Vincent Namatjira in Conversation with Natalie King, 24 November 2018, *Ocula*, ocula.com/magazine/conversations/vincent-namatjira, accessed 3 January 2019.

NELL

born 1975, Maitland, NSW
lives and works in Sydney



Fly on the Robe, 2012, from *Chanting to Amps*, Zen robe, vintage AC/DC t-shirt, safety pins. Courtesy the artist and STATION, Melbourne

Traversing performance, sculpture, music, painting and multimedia installation, Nell's practice embodies an ongoing interest in contemporary manifestations of spiritual traditions; life, death and rebirth; the history and magic of materials; and rock 'n' roll's transcendental potential. She grew up in the rural town of Maitland where music and religion were integral to her childhood, and many of her works explore the nexus between these seemingly disparate arenas. 'I find it quite interesting that the aesthetics of rock 'n' roll are so similar to a lot of Christian iconography and symbolism ... The cross, the gothic fonts, the rose and thorn, the skull. There's actually quite a lot of overlap.'¹

The robe, altar cloth and wooden Zen han exhibited in *Just Not Australian* were used by the artist in her 2012 performance work *Chanting to Amps* – a meditative, music-driven ritual of worship for Australian rock gods. Engaging with the religious fervour surrounding her beloved AC/DC as well as her own spirituality as a practising Buddhist, Nell highlights how the band and their iconic music have penetrated the psyche of a generation and defined Australian culture.

¹ Katherine Gillespie, 'Australian Artist Nell Proves AC/DC Can Be Deeply Spiritual', 8 November 2016, *Vice*, [vice.com/en_au/article/bm58w5/australian-artist-nell-loves-meditation-retreats-and-acdc](https://www.vice.com/en_au/article/bm58w5/australian-artist-nell-loves-meditation-retreats-and-acdc), accessed 3 January 2019.

RAQUEL ORMELLA

born 1969, Sydney
lives and works in Canberra



Settler Economies no.3-5, 2019, acrylic on used work clothes, cotton. This work was made on Gadigal Land with the support of Frontyard Projects. Installation view, *Just Not Australian*, Artspace, Sydney, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Photo: Zan Wimberley

Raquel Ormella's works employ text and symbolism to deconstructed national references. She frames her practice as a consideration of social and political action; working with textiles, drawing and sewing, she mines contemporary national identity, environmentalism and human relations with the natural world. In particular, Ormella speaks to the individual and collective relationship with the State, and so the Australian flag appears in a number of her works – but not in the form we recognise. Sliced, torn, shredded and singed, the artist literally and metaphorically hollows out this patriotic symbol while injecting it with new life and meaning.

Imperative sees the national flag laboriously deconstructed to make specific reference to philosopher Immanuel Kant's notion of the 'categorical imperative' – in simple terms, something that must be done

(imperative) to distinguish right from wrong at all times and in all situations (categorical).

Ormella's later work *Settler Economies* includes references to flax, breadfruit and Norfolk pine – three resources Captain Cook and Joseph Banks identified on their first trip to the Pacific. Flax and pine were important in building the British military fleet, while breadfruit was proposed as cheap food for slaves in the British colonies in Jamaica. The claiming and extracting of these resources displaced Indigenous peoples and caused environmental destruction. Stencilled across used work clothes, they are juxtaposed against current natural resources – uranium, coal and bauxite – the mining and use of which continues to displace Indigenous people and cause environmental destruction and climate change.

RYAN PRESLEY

born 1987, Alice Springs, NT
lives and works in Brisbane
Marri Ngarr



Ten Dollar Note – Woloa Commemorative, 2010, watercolour on Arches paper, 40.2 x 88.5 cm (image), 75.5 x 105.5 cm (sheet). The University of Queensland Collection, purchased 2011. © Ryan Presley/Copyright Agency, 2020. Photo: Carl Warner

Working across drawing, printmaking, painting and installation, Ryan Presley reflects on his Indigenous and Scandinavian heritage to mount a larger enquiry into the ideologies and systems of power that have shaped Australian history. By re-examining and subverting ideas surrounding value, currency and authority, Presley addresses how segments of humanity strive for, maintain and enact control and dominance over others.

His richly layered watercolour series *Blood Money* re-imagines Australian banknotes – bearing colonial ships, buildings and largely white personalities – with representations of Indigenous Australians valued for their courage and dignity. Presley's *Ten Dollar Note – Oodgeroo Commemorative* portrays pioneering poet, educator and political activist Oodgeroo Noonuccal (formerly Kath Walker) from North Stradbroke Island. Noonuccal was, and continues

to be, recognised as one of Australia's leading literary figures, who used her pen to give voice to the Indigenous struggle for rights and justice.

Along with archival research and guidance from relatives of those depicted, Presley's works are marked by stories read and oral histories absorbed by the artist growing up. By honouring Indigenous acts of resistance and defiance, *Blood Money* highlights the extent to which First Nations narratives are overlooked or silenced in colonial historical accounts and western structures of trade and capitalist social progress. The series celebrates and circulates alternate histories; indeed, the name 'Australia' has been replaced with the language or cultural group of the central figure on each note: Gurindji, Noonuccal, Bunuba, Tommeginne, Bidjigal, Noongar, Dalla-Djindari, Wik.

JOAN ROSS

born 1961, Glasgow, Scotland
lives and works in Sydney



I Give You a Mountain, 2018, (still), HD video, 6 mins, 30 secs. Animator: Josh Raymond. Courtesy the artist, Michael Reid, Sydney and Bett Gallery, Hobart

Dystopian and speculative, Joan Ross's practice traverses drawing, painting, installation, photography, sculpture and video to present Australian landscapes marred by the impacts of climate change, ecological devastation and violent colonial legacies. A signature fluorescent yellow punctuates many of her works to symbolically mark colonialism's hazards. This modern hi-vis colour of emergency both acts as a warning and gives Ross's worlds a vibrant, seductive allure.

While fantastical in appearance, the animated narrative of *I Give You a Mountain* is deeply grounded in history. The work re-envisioned Sarah Stone's eighteenth-century watercolours of Sir Ashton Lever's natural history and ethnographic museum that opened in 1775 in Leicester Square, London. With signature archways between rooms

and thousands of exhibits, the museum became a fashionable attraction for the wealthy to peruse a variety of artefacts, ornaments and animals, many of which were taken by Captain Cook during his voyages to Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere.

Ross moves viewers through room after room of oddities, some escaping from their jars, and now accompanied by a wild assortment of beheaded colonialists, balloons, swinging slabs of meat and advertisements for canine happiness pills.

By the conclusion of the film the museum has completely disappeared, revealing a bare mountain and a pair of colonial figures. They too eventually turn to dust, leaving nothing but their decapitated heads lying on the cracked earth, sucked dry and left to crumble.

TONY SCHWENSEN

born 1970, Sydney
lives Jamaica Plains, United States



Border Protection Assistance Proposed Monument for the Torres Strait (Am I ever going to see your face again?), 2002, road barriers, buckets, floaties, water, 113.5 x 350 x 310.5 cm. Installation view, *Just Not Australian*, Artspace, Sydney, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney. Photo: Zan Wimberley

Originally created as a satirical response to the Howard government's policies and legislation implemented in response to the 2001 Tampa Affair, Tony Schwensen's *Border Protection Assistance Proposed Monument for the Torres Strait (Am I ever going to see your face again?)* is of continuing relevance today.

In August 2001 the Norwegian ship MV *Tampa* rescued hundreds of asylum seekers, many of whom were in poor health, from a stranded Indonesian fishing boat in international waters and attempted to bring them to Australia. Military forces were swiftly dispatched to prevent the ship moving closer to Australian territories. Legislation was promptly passed to retrospectively authorise these legally tenuous actions before a string of new laws were enacted to solidify this approach to asylum seeker policy which endures today.

In an era of unprecedented human displacement, Schwensen's work presents a clear delineation of boundaries and borders within the gallery context to recall airports, roadblocks and crowd-control barricades and their implicit methodologies of inclusion, exclusion, protection and paranoia. His black-and-yellow barriers have been emblazoned with 'No Way', 'Get Fucked', and 'Fuck Off' from the unexpected but now iconic audience response to The Angels' rock song 'Am I Ever Gonna See Your Face Again'. Just as the Australian Government has warped Australian values to justify its immigration policies, Schwensen too has turned this expletive-laden catchphrase into a barrier against those deemed unwanted and undesirable, marking audiences as complicit.

SODA JERK

formed 2002, Sydney
live and work in New York, United States



TERROR NULLIUS, 2018, (still), HD video, 54 mins. Commissioned by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne. Courtesy the artists

Sometimes when you feel powerless to effect change it can be a powerful thing to see it. So this was really the idea with *TERROR NULLIUS*, to create a vigilante fable of social justice that radically inverts the dominant relations of power, privilege and oppression¹

Soda Jerk is a two-person art collective who work at the intersection of documentary and speculative fiction. They are fundamentally interested in the politics of images: how they circulate, whom they benefit, and how they can be undone.

Part political satire, eco-horror and road movie, *TERROR NULLIUS* is a political revenge fable that offers an unwriting of Australian national mythologies. Binding together a documentary impulse with the bent plotlines of Australian

film texts, Soda Jerk's revisionist history opens a wilful narrative space where cinema fictions and historical facts permeate each other in new ways. The apocalyptic desert camps of *Mad Max 2* become the site of refugee detention, flesh-eating sheep are recast as anti-colonial insurgents and a feminist motorcycle gang goes vigilante on Mel Gibson. In the artists' words:

As a form of political critique satire will always lack nuance, that's not its strength; but as a cultural strategy that is stark and positional it offers a formidable means of building solidarity and humiliating the enemy.²

¹ & ² Soda Jerk, interview with Artspace, 12 June 2020.

FOR TEACHERS

This education kit offers a unique teaching resource that will enable teachers and students to develop a deep engagement with the artistic themes explored within *Just Not Australian*. Included are stimulating experiential programs within the exhibition space and activities designed for the classroom aimed to inspire creative and abstract thinking techniques.

CONNECTING TO THE CURRICULUM

This program is aimed at students of all ages and abilities engaging with Visual Arts, English, History and Geography, in addition to Critical and Creative Thinking. Key talking points include resilience and resistance as well as expanding historical and cultural perspectives through creative practice.

As part of a national touring program, this education kit includes activities and discussion points with a broad focus, covering the framework of EXPLORE, DISCUSS & CREATE in order to offer maximum adaptability to specific state-based and national curricula. The activities have a broad primary and secondary school focus.

Students will gain skills to critically and historically interpret the landscape of contemporary video and installation art through artistic practice and conceptual frameworks. Exploration of the exhibition will include examining the roles and relationships between concepts of the artist, artwork, world and audience through analytical and historical lenses. Students will also be asked for subjective responses in order to form their own ideas and interpretations of the artworks.

Students will learn how the moving image offers new forms of expression and interpretation that are critical to the way we share stories and perspectives. Further to this, key focus points include national history and the contemporary experience of diverse groups, including the ongoing impact of colonisation for First Nations peoples.

This kit provides teachers and students with information and activities to allow a meaningful and significant visit to *Just Not Australian* that is continued afterwards in the classroom through related discussion and activities.



Eric Bridgeman, *Wilma Jr (Blacky)*, 2009, from *The Sport and Fair Play of Aussie Rules*, 2008–9, inkjet print on photo rag, 113.5 x 94 cm (framed). Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

VIDEO ART: A SHORT INTRODUCTION

Contemporary artworks that include video, film, slide, audio or computer technologies are referred to as time-based media works because they have duration as a dimension and unfold to the viewer over time.

The first works widely labelled as video art can be sourced back to the 1960s as portable video technology became more accessible and affordable to the general public. Pioneered by artists including Nam June Paik, Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, Martha Rosler and Joan Jonas, video art originated as a profoundly political movement shifting away from the dominant modernist aesthetic that valued so-called 'high art' such as painting and sculpture. Artists aimed to push available technology to its limits and avant-garde practitioners were drawn to the medium for its capacity to mix art forms, bringing together video and performance, sound and installation. The medium offered both grassroots affordability and broad distribution capabilities.

The development of video art as a medium can be traced alongside new technologies such as portable cameras, recording equipment, projectors, monitors and home editing software. In recent years the advancement of mobile phone cameras and video sharing platforms such as YouTube and Instagram TV have made this type of technology even more accessible. Artist Arthur Jafa collages original and found internet footage to represent a vernacular perspective on racism and discrimination, while artists including Hannah Black, Rachel Rose and Ryan Trecartin employ moving image to comment on the nature of hyper-connectedness in contemporary life.

The advent of digital editing has also meant that artists have expanded experimentation in creating fractured, non-linear narratives, or extending and compressing time. Christian Marclay, Daniel Crooks and Shaun Gladwell, for example, look to

alter the experience of watching film through their manipulation of time and motion. Pipilotti Rist, Tony Oursler, Jenny Holzer, William Kentridge and Bill Viola create large, often site-specific video installations and projections that immerse viewers in vivid, physical and psychological experiences.

Other artists have used video to make us think more critically about Hollywood film conventions and forms of misrepresentation by dissecting the typical templates of formulaic narration. For example, artists Tracey Moffatt and Gary Hillberg, and Dara Birnbaum, draw on cinematic tropes and manipulate footage from popular culture to address ideas of gender, race, appropriation and genre. While artists including Shirin Neshat and Lisa Reihana play with forms of narrative to give voice to those who have historically been silenced.

Video work is multifaceted and complex, exploring the relationship between reality and fiction, popular culture and the imagination. It can be displayed with single or multiple channels in cinematic-style darkened gallery spaces; as highly immersive, large-scale installations; with projectors directly onto the wall, floor or ceiling; on TV monitors, computers, the internet and mobile phones.

Several works in *Just Not Australian* draw on these techniques, mining film and photography archives to shed light on underrepresented narratives or to re-create histories. In particular, Soda Jerk's *TERROR NULLIUS* examines Australian national mythology through our film history. Artspace asked the artists to talk about the conception of *TERROR NULLIUS* and its development.

INTERVIEW: SODA JERK



TERROR NULLIUS, 2018, (still), HD video, 54 mins. Commissioned by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne. Courtesy the artists

Artspace: Was there a particular character or landscape that started the process and informed how *TERROR NULLIUS* evolved?

Soda Jerk: We'd been developing the idea of an Australian political revenge film since 2006 when we made a short work called *Picnic at Wolf Creek*. And by 2016 we were feeling a growing sense of urgency to respond to the sinister conservatism in Australian politics – the deepening crisis of asylum seekers, the devastating legacy of colonial history, the erosion of minority rights, and a political circus more than happy to propagate hate when it polls well.

We consider *TERROR NULLIUS* to be a kind of rogue documentary, and our earliest treatments for the film were maps of historical vectors that we used as touchstones for shaping the narrative. Things like Gough Whitlam's dismissal, the Tampa crisis, the rise of Pauline Hanson, Mel Gibson's rant tape, the same-sex postal vote, and the Mabo decision. Once these were established, we began drawing connections between these events and resonant moments within Australian cinema. Then it all gets thrashed out in the edit. There's an incredible amount of waste built into the way that we work – rampant variations of the same narrative and endless scenes that never make the cut. For *TERROR NULLIUS* these included a Kung Fu fight with Pauline Hanson, an outback pub wedding for Muriel and Rhonda [of *Muriel's Wedding*], and a mining blockade where Gina Rinehart gets turned into a cane toad.

Sometimes when you feel powerless to effect change it can be a powerful thing to see it. So, this was really the idea with *TERROR NULLIUS*, to create a vigilante fable of social justice that radically inverts the dominant relations of power, privilege and oppression. It might be a small win in the scheme of things, but sometimes you just need to be able to enjoy a misogynist getting devoured by a crocodile, or see a bicentennial celebration ravaged by flesh-eating sheep.

AS: Has political commentary always been an integral part of your practice and how do you use satire in conveying and critiquing political ideas?

SJ: When we turned to satire in 2016 it was because we had this feeling that the form itself was in crisis. Trump had just won the [United States] election, and every day in the news it felt more and more as though reality itself was spinning out into ... hyperbole and clickbait. Faced with these government-sanctioned contortions of fact and logic, we began to wonder whether satire could continue to function as an effective counter-cultural strategy. So, it felt compelling to inhabit satire at the exact moment that the bottom fell out of it. Part of the swerving tonality of *TERROR NULLIUS* was an attempt to conjoin a satirical impulse with other sensibilities including earnestness, shame and melancholy.

TEXT-BASED ART: A SHORT INTRODUCTION

Often co-opting visual culture outside of contemporary art – such as advertising, political slogans and graphic design – text has been a key subject and material for twentieth and twenty-first century artists. Subversion of language, political activism and appropriation of form are some common characteristics of text-based art.

In the early twentieth century, artists associated with avant-garde movements including Dadaism and Cubism began to reject traditional art materials, processes and understandings of art itself. Marcel Duchamp's seminal work *Fountain*, 1917, used text to question the role of the artist and the object, while Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque altered the pictorial field, adding textual elements like newspaper clippings to their multi-perspective, anti-mimetic works. René Magritte later employed playful juxtapositions of lexical and visual information to question the power of semantics in such works as *The Treachery of Images (Ceci n'est pas une pipe)*, 1929.

Text was a hallmark of Conceptual and Pop Art of the 1960s and 1970s, as artists such as Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner and Ed Ruscha examined the false imagery of advertising and the philosophy of language and knowledge. The 1990s later saw

the politically charged practices of Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer interrogate the vocabularies of consumer capitalism and systems of power including patriarchy. Using direct language and juxtaposing candid phrases these contemporary artists' works served to emphasise how language shapes our daily lives and cultural norms.

From installation to street art, artists today continue to explore contemporary currents in politics, society and culture to interrogate the relationships between language, symbolism and meaning.

Several works in *Just Not Australian* demonstrate the visual potency of language – from song lyrics to parliamentary records, visual puns, catchphrases, slang and jargon. Artist Tony Albert spoke to Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) about his work *exotic OTHER*, 2009.

INTERVIEW: TONY ALBERT

M&G NSW: How would you describe your work *exotic OTHER*?

Tony Albert: *Exotic OTHER* is based on a series of text-based works I've done over the years, which include the use of what I call 'Aboriginalia' – which is kitsch Australiana with images and representations of Aboriginal people emblazed upon them.

M&G: Can you remember your earliest memory of coming into contact with these kitsch objects

and when did you first start collecting them?

TA: I think I was around six or seven years old. My family would frequent second-hand shops – we didn't have much money at all – and that is where I first came across these objects and fell in love with them. I was really curious about why these images were placed upon these objects, and actually from an innocent childhood perspective I assumed they were faces of famous, or quite integral, Aboriginal people from within the community. I thought

that to be emblazed upon these objects meant that that person had some kind of clout attached to them. So, it wasn't until much later in life, as a teenager, that I uncovered more sinister notions behind them. But the collection really started quite innocently as a child.

The collection didn't really start to get used in my work until it became so big that it couldn't be kept where I lived anymore and I brought it into my studio to be stored. There I was surrounded by the objects and they made this evolutionary leap into my artwork. It started with me just categorising things and putting all plates and cups together. I might put everything that was orange together. The first piece I did was actually a floor-based piece, I just made the motif of a giant love heart on the floor. When I started to categorise them and look at the individual objects and the links that they had to each other, that was when the Aboriginality came into my work. The very first piece I did was called *Headhunter* and is in the Art Gallery of NSW collection. That was a moment where I pulled out anything that was just a head – maybe on a plate or a plaster mould – and I spelled out the word 'hunter'. I was really looking at these objects and what it means in that work in particular to just use the head. What does it mean to hang an Aboriginal head on your wall? What does that symbolise and how did a nation of Australians understand Aboriginal people through these objects?

M&G: Has the meaning of *exotic OTHER* changed since its creation with everything that has happened in Australia and all over the world in regards to race relations and Indigenous sovereignty?

TA: It's been amazing to think that this work is in a show ten years after its initial execution. *Exotic OTHER* alludes to the images within it that exotify; that place Aboriginal people in a category as less than human. Over the past decade, unfortunately I think that society, government and politics in Australia have almost become more conservative rather than less. It's very interesting to watch a work evolve over time and see how it goes in and

out of vogue, or of political status or statement. So, ten years on it's amazing to see how relevant this work is sitting in a show like *Just Not Australian*.

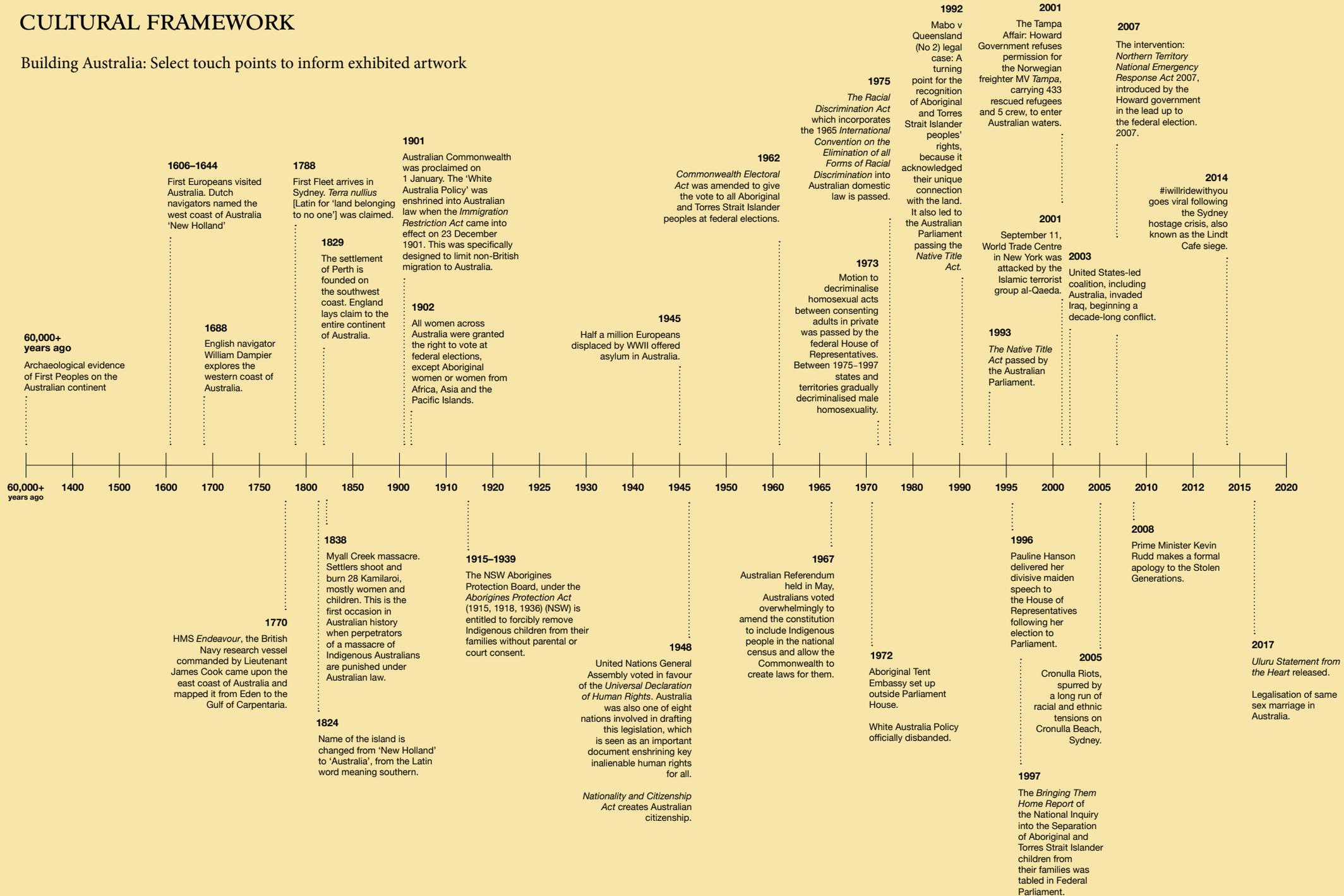
M&G: How has your practice evolved since *exotic OTHER* was created?

TA: For me, my practice has evolved in a number of different ways. I come in and out of working with the ephemera in my work, but it's not necessarily just what I do. My art practice spans a number of different media and techniques in executing what I believe to be critical content or the conceptual development of my work, which means I do work in painting, in photography, in video and I tend not to limit myself with the media I use either. I think it's really important to understand what I'm trying to say and pick the best medium to be able to say that.

At the moment I'm using less and less of the ephemera and looking at more of the images emblazed on it. I've also in recent years looked at my work in a more international context, which means it's not solely focused on the Aboriginal. While that is at the core, the more I've researched and travelled it is evident that these are issues affecting people in the minority and on the periphery of society worldwide. That's been an important evolutionary leap for me within my work and the way I talk about it.

CULTURAL FRAMEWORK

Building Australia: Select touch points to inform exhibited artwork



KEY CONCEPTS

SATIRE | HUMOUR | NARRATIVE | POSTMODERNISM | APPROPRIATION | MONTAGE POST-COLONIALISM | IDENTITY | STEREOTYPE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Appropriation: In the visual arts, appropriation is the intentional borrowing, copying and alteration of pre-existing images and objects to create new meanings.

Bricolage: An improvised construction often made from 'low-art' materials that may be sourced from whatever is at hand or from a range of diverse sources.

Canon: A group of artistic, literary, or musical works that are generally accepted as representing a field. The canon often sets a standard for the fundamental principles of a specific art period or movement.

Collage: The technique of composing different fragmented materials or images that are arranged to form a new pictorial surface.

Colonialism: Refers to the policy, system and practices whereby one country exerts systematic domination or occupation over another country or peoples for economic and political gain.

Composition: The arrangement of the individual elements within a work of art so as to form a unified whole; also used to refer to a work of art, music, or literature, or its structure or organisation.

Context: The set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation or text which usually shapes or informs the reader's understanding.

Diversity: The broad range of differences that exist across peoples, identities, cultures and perspectives.

Genre: A category of artistic practice having a particular form, content, technique or style.

Identity politics: Political positions based on features of identity that characterise a group, such as cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious or social commonalities. Oftentimes addressing themes of repression, inequality and injustice.

Installation: Large-scale, mixed-media constructions, often designed for a specific place or for a temporary period of time.

Juxtaposition: An act of placing things close together or side by side for comparison or contrast.

Montage: The technique of editing multiple sections of film into one continuous film that combine associated ideas to create a new composition.

Narrative: A story or tale that accounts a sequence of connected events.

Parody: A form of humorous or satirical imitation, where a particular subject is mocked or trivialised.

Popular culture: Cultural activities, ideas, or products that reflect or target the tastes of the general population of any society.

Post-Colonial Art: Art produced in response to the aftermath of colonial rule, frequently addressing issues of national and cultural identity, race and ethnicity.

Postmodernism: An artistic period in the late twentieth century that signalled a departure from modernism. Artists typically incorporated a mixture of styles and media to comment on mass consumerism and communication.

Recontextualisation: The process of extracting something from its original context to give it a new meaning.

Satire: A genre of visual art that uses humour, irony, sarcasm, ridicule or caricature to expose or criticise someone or something.

Social construct: A concept or practice that doesn't exist innately in the world but is instead created by society.

Stereotype: Standardised and oversimplified assumptions about specific social groups.

The Other: In anthropological, psychoanalytic and colonial theory terms, 'The Other' refers to the dichotomy of self and other. The construction of the Other defines the self.

Xenophobia: Dislike of or prejudice toward people from other countries often resulting in critical and hostile behaviour such as discrimination.

Definitions sourced from MOMA Learning moma.org/learn/moma_learning/glossary/ and TATE tate.org.uk/art/art-terms

PRIMARY STUDENTS

This primary program encourages cross-curriculum connections and experimental artmaking. Activities have been designed to involve students in creative thinking, appreciation of visual art concepts and artists, as well as making their own work. Activities can be carried out individually and online to adapt to current teaching and learning contexts.

IN THE GALLERY: EXPLORE & DISCUSS

Let's look at Joan Ross's work, *I Give You a Mountain*. Outside of the exhibition, the work is available to view on the artist's website here: joanross.com.au/I-give-you-a-mountain-video-animation-2018

Describe what objects, characters, landscapes and colours you can see.

A mood is a feeling that can be created by an artwork. Close your eyes and listen to the music in the video. How does the music make you feel?



I Give You a Mountain, 2018, (still), HD video, 6 mins 30 secs. Animator: Josh Raymond. Courtesy the artist, Michael Reid, Sydney and Bett Gallery, Hobart

Imagine that you are a character inside the video. Which places would you like to explore? Which characters do you want to talk to? What would you be doing if you were a character in the video?

Imagine that you are making a time capsule for someone to find in 200 years. What sort of things would you include to represent you and the country you live in and why?

PRIMARY STUDENTS

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

This program is designed to be delivered over several sessions and to cover the broader creative arts curriculum.

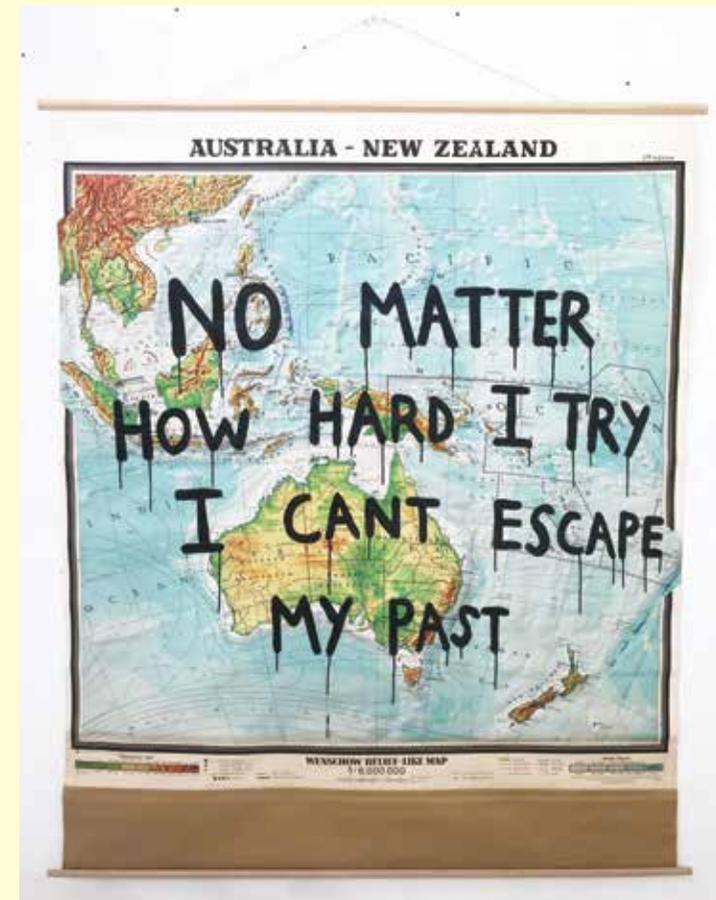
Materials required: magazines, newspapers, coloured paper, cardboard, glue, textas, pencils, crayons, scissors.

THINK

- Think about how you can create a text-based artwork, similar to Richard Lewer's *No Matter how hard I try I can't escape my past* or Raquel Ormella's *Imperative*.
- Choose a word or short phrase you would like to represent.
- List the different emotions that you feel when you think about your chosen words.
- Now, think about how you might visually represent these. What colours, forms and textures could be linked with these emotions?



Raquel Ormella, *Imperative*, 2012, nylon, 183 x 240 cm.
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.
Photo: Carl Warner



Richard Lewer, *No Matter how hard I try I can't escape my past*, 2019, acrylic on found map, 195 x 160 cm, courtesy the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and Singapore. Photo: Andrew Curtis

CREATE

- Collect any materials and images you will need; you could collage found images and text from magazines and newspapers, or draw your own with pencils, textas and crayons.
- Create your background first. Then you can add the details.
- Think about what images, colours and patterns you use and place next to one another and why.
- Consider making different layers to create a sculptural work.



Vincent Namatjira, *The Richest*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 7 panels, each 91 x 67 cm. Courtesy the artist; Iwantja Arts, Indulkana, APY Lands, SA and THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne

THINK & CREATE

- Think about Vincent Namatjira's work. Choose two famous Australian figures.
- Create a portrait of each of these figures, either as a drawing, painting or a composite collage. Think about how to represent each facial feature.
- Display all of the class's portraits as an exhibition in the classroom or make a pinboard online.
- Talk as a group about why you chose each person.

SECONDARY STUDENTS

The secondary activities are designed to develop and broaden students' understanding and ability to critically interpret art concepts, the artists and their practice, as well as design and make artworks using different techniques.

These activities can be initiated in the exhibition through discussion and expanded back in the classroom through individual written work or group discussion. Activities can be carried out in-person and online to adapt to current teaching and learning contexts.

IN THE GALLERY: EXPLORE & DISCUSS

1. How do the artworks included in the exhibition represent ideas of Australian identity? What does being Australian mean to you?
2. Many included works in the exhibition reference national symbols, such as the Australian flag or currency. How is national identity formed in relation to these symbols? How effective do you think they are to you personally in representing 'Australian' identity?
3. Consider some of the references to language, sport or popular music within the exhibition. Think about their symbolism and significance in building national identity and mythmaking.
4. Discuss with a partner what cultural references you might consider including to create your own history of Australia. Add them to the Cultural Framework timeline. You could focus on adding in national events from 2017 till now, or draw on different themes and events from your own life and experience.
5. Can you think of a situation where humour has relieved a serious situation for you? Select two works that use forms of humour in the exhibition. What possible meanings and interpretations do they convey? How might these works undermine or challenge mainstream history?
6. Using the postmodern frame, analyse the use of appropriation and juxtaposition in Joan Ross's *I Give You a Mountain*. How has juxtaposition been used to create meaning in the work?
7. Examine how the artists Karla Dickens, Fiona Foley or Ryan Presley approach Australia's colonial history and acknowledge its impact in present times.
8. Works included in this exhibition challenge official histories and inequalities. Have any of the artworks in the exhibition changed your opinion of the issues represented? Discuss the role of visual arts in social and political commentary.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM: THINK & CREATE

Consider Hoda Afshar's *Dog's Breakfast* and *If You Don't Love it, Live It*.

- Look at the scenes or 'tableaux' that Afshar has created using costume, character, light and composition.
- Direct and photograph your own version or create a collage based on the theme of stereotype and identity. Consider the typecasts that are part of your own contemporary culture and how you might use these in your artwork.
- Write a supporting document to critically analyse the references and conceptual underpinnings of the work. Consider how the arrangement of symbols complement or oppose one another. What mood or commentary does the overall work create?
- Present within your class and discuss each of the different ideas and interpretations that you see.

OR

Consider Vincent Namatjira's *The Richest* and Ryan Presley's *Blood Money* works:

- Compile a list of public Australian figures — historical, political, sporting or cultural icons.
- Consider the power and influence each figure holds and how you might visually represent them through elements of exaggeration, distortion and satire.
- Create a series of quick drawings to illustrate each figure. Consider the attributes most characteristic of each and how and why you might represent these.
- Select one character and create a portrait — either as a painting or a collage. Consider the use of background in your representation.
- Exhibit the works in a small exhibition with all of your class. Explain your choice and invite other classes to comment.

OR

Consider Jon Campbell's works:

- Collect words from conversations you overhear, songs, text messages or advertising that you see or hear as you go about your day.
- Create a series of works. Consider the symbolism of each work.
- Present your collected words/phrases as posters or paintings to the class.
- Discuss the significance of each vernacular reference. What picture do they create of your community or town?

FURTHER INFORMATION

LINKS

thesaturdaypaper.com.au/culture/art/2019/02/23/just-not-australian/15508404007501

visual.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/visual-arts/gina-fairley/just-not-australian-how-artists-are-rethinking-nationhood-in-turbulent-times-257203

abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the-art-show/just-not-australian-artspace-fiona-gruber/10780318

broadsheet.com.au/sydney/event/not-just-australian

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artguide.com.au/artists-cant-help-swearing-in-just-not-australian

mgnsw.org.au/articles/just-not-australian-interviews/

acmi.net.au/events/terror-nullius/

theguardian.com/film/2018/mar/20/terror-nullius-review-dazzling-kinetic-mishmashed-beast-of-an-australian-film

soundcloud.com/artspace-619083596/just-not-australian-artist-talks

MANAGED BY MUSEUMS & GALLERIES OF NSW,
JUST NOT AUSTRALIAN WILL TOUR NATIONALLY
BETWEEN 2020–22 TO THE FOLLOWING GALLERIES
AND ART CENTRES:

Tweed Regional Gallery and The Margaret Olley Arts Centre, NSW

Art Gallery of Ballarat, VIC

Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, NSW

Cairns Art Gallery, QLD

Gladstone Regional Gallery, QLD

Hervey Bay Regional Gallery, QLD

Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, QLD

Port Pirie Regional Art Gallery, SA

Walkway Gallery, Bordertown, SA

Just Not Australian was curated by Artspace and developed in partnership with Sydney Festival and Museums & Galleries of NSW. The exhibition is touring nationally with Museums & Galleries of NSW.

