

Between Waves

EDUCATION KIT

acca

NETS
VICTORIA.

Between Waves is an exhibition developed by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) curated by Jessica Clark and is touring nationally through a partnership with NETS Victoria.

Cover: Mandy Quadrio, *Not gone!* 2023 (detail), wire mesh, rotating mechanism dimensions variable. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Acknowledgment of Country

***Between Waves* was developed and first presented on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung peoples of the south-eastern Kulin Nation. The exhibition tours to the lands of many Indigenous nations. The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and NETS Victoria, and the artists and curator of *Between Waves* respectfully acknowledge and celebrate the continuing culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across Australia.**

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About this Resource

This Education Kit has been developed to support learning alongside the exhibition *Between Waves 2023-2026*. The content of this Education Kit is aimed at students in levels/years 7-10 and is designed as an adaptable toolkit for teachers to use selectively in devising their own units of classroom learning for all learning contexts (primary, secondary, tertiary). Key sections are designed to be easily extractable as handouts for direct distribution to students.

Exhibition Overview

Between Waves amplifies concepts related to light, time and vision – and the idea of shining a light on our times – expressed by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung word ‘Yalingwa’. Through a range of contemporary artforms including video, installation, poetry, projection, photography, painting, sculpture, sound, printmaking, and a digital commission, the invited artists have developed reflective and site-responsive projects which explore and experiment with the intersection of material and immaterial realms of knowledge and knowing.

Between Waves is an exhibition developed by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) curated by Jessica Clark and is touring nationally through a partnership with NETS Victoria.

This project has been supported by Creative Victoria through the Yalingwa Visual Arts Initiative, the NETS Victoria Exhibition Development Fund, and the Australian Government’s Visions of Australia program.

Yalingwa

Yalingwa is a Victorian visual arts initiative supporting the development of outstanding contemporary First Nations art and curatorial practice, with a primary focus on South East Australian First Nations artists within a national context.

Established by Creative Victoria in partnership with the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art and the TarraWarra Museum of Art, the initiative has been designed to provide a platform for First Nations artists and curators to develop their work at a senior professional level within the context of a high-profile, leading public gallery/museum, as well as offering a substantial Fellowship for an artist who has made a significant contribution to contemporary First Nations art and cultural practice.

The inaugural Yalingwa series from 2017–2023 comprises:

- Three two-year curatorial positions for First Nations curators to work with ACCA and TarraWarra to develop major exhibitions and within leading contemporary art institutions
- Three major exhibitions held in 2018, 2021, and 2023 alternating between ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art, focused on new commissions by contemporary First Nations artists.
- Three Artist Fellowships of \$60,000 awarded to established, senior South East Australian First Nations artists who have made an important contribution to the development of Indigenous cultural expression.

Between Waves 2023-2026 curated by Jessica Clark is the third exhibition to be presented as part of Yalingwa, a Victorian Government initiative.

Australian Curriculum Links

This kit supports the Cross-curriculum Priority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures' of the Australian Curriculum, and its Learning Area Statement of the Arts:

Students' exploration of traditional and contemporary artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples provides insight into the way the relationships between People, Culture and Country/Place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples can be conveyed through the arts, their expression in living communities, and the way these build Identity.

This kit is also relevant for a majority of the years 7 to 10 content descriptions in the Australian Curriculum for Visual Art, and specifically highlights the following content:

Visual Arts / Years 7-8

Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent a theme, concept or idea in their artwork ([ACAVAM118 - Scootle](#))

Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes ([ACAVAM119 - Scootle](#))

Identify and connect specific features and purposes of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their art-making, starting with Australian artworks including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples ([ACAVAR124 - Scootle](#))

Visual Arts / Years 9-10

Conceptualise and develop representations of themes, concepts or subject matter to experiment with their developing personal style, reflecting on the styles of artists, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists ([ACAVAM125 - Scootle](#))

Manipulate materials, techniques, technologies and processes to develop and represent their own artistic intentions ([ACAVAM126 - Scootle](#))

Analyse a range of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their visual art-making, starting with Australian artworks, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider international artworks ([ACAVAR131 - Scootle](#))

Exhibition Introduction

Between Waves amplifies concepts related to light, time and vision – and the idea of shining a light on our times – expressed by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung word Yalingwa. The exhibition presents ten new commissions that variously explore the visible and invisible energy fields and flows set in motion by these ideas. Through a range of contemporary artforms – including video, installation, poetry, projection, photography, painting, sculpture, sound, printmaking, and a digital commission – participating artists have developed reflective and site-responsive projects that explore and experiment with the intersections of material and immaterial realms of knowledge and knowing. Collectively, works of art by Maree Clarke, Brad Darkson, Dean Cross, Matthew Harris, James Howard, Hayley Millar Baker, Jazz Money, Cassie Sullivan, this mob, and Mandy Quadrio, illuminate an interconnected web of shapeshifting ecologies within, beyond, and between what can be seen.

The exhibition has evolved alongside conversations with artists through the development of their new commissions, that centred ideas and reflections on lived experiences and materiality in relation to the exhibition's key themes of light, time, and vision. These conversations revealed the interrelationships and interactions between the articulation of these things...

Light, a natural agent and element that stimulates sight and makes things visible/provides light or lighting to illuminate or ignite; start burning.

Time, the indefinite, non-linear and multidimensional durational progress of existence and events in the past, present and future.

Vision, the faculty or state of seeing, and the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.

Between Waves navigates ideas of presence and absence, the known and unknown, and transgenerational and collective consciousness. The ten ambitious new commissions traverse internal and external worlds, embracing the sensory and cyclical rhythms of light and sound, thinking and feeling, listening and seeing, alongside ideas of material memory, and forms of meaning that influence encounters with self, each other and the world. Participating artists employ a range of technologies to reflect on life cycles and shifts, to emphasise cultural, personal and social histories, which are invariably entwined with acts of remembering, rehabilitation, regeneration, and reclamation. Together, their new commissions resound a collective call for relational accountability and ethical responsibility that locates individual experience not at the centre of the world, but as an inherent part of its fabric. By embracing the push and pull dynamics that build beneath the surface, *Between Waves* reflects on the interrelationship between life, materiality, people and place, and resounds a need to find balance.

ADDITIONAL READING:

- Read the full curatorial text and watch the *Between Waves* exhibition video [here](#).
- [As above, so below: Reflections on Between Waves](#) in *Art + Australia* (online)
- *A collective undertaking* by Jessica Clark in *Art Monthly Australasia* (print).

About the Curator

Jessica Clark is a proud pallawah/palawa woman with English, Irish, Turkish and French ancestry. She is an independent curator living and working on Wurundjeri Country in Naarm (Melbourne). Jessica currently holds the position of Yalingwa Curator at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (2022-24) during which she has recently curated *Between Waves* (2023) – a major exhibition that highlights the significance and breadth of contemporary Aboriginal art practice in Southeast Australia. Her background in art history and art

education has informed the development of an independent curatorial practice that is guided by conversation and collaboration and grounded in an understanding of the interrelationship between life, materiality, and place. Jessica holds a PhD Fine Arts and Music, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne having undertaken curatorial practice-led research that investigated how intercultural curatorial models reframe and redefine narratives, understandings, and experiences of Aboriginal art.



Between Waves 2023, installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artists. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

THEME 1:

Beyond the scope

Maree Clarke, Brad Darkson

There is so much going on in this world that lies beyond our scope of vision.



Maree Clarke, *now you see me: seeing the invisible #1*, 2023, photographic microscopy prints on acetate 30 x 30cm each. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Maree Clarke

born 1960, Swan Hill
lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Victoria

Maree Clarke is a Yorta Yorta, Wamba Wamba, Mutti Mutti, and Boonwurrung woman from North-West Victoria. Clarke is a pivotal figure in the reclamation of southeast Australian Aboriginal art practices, reviving elements of Aboriginal culture that were lost – or lying dormant – over the period of colonisation.

www.vivienandersongallery.com/artists/maree-clarke/

About the artwork:

The site on which the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) now stands was once host to an expansive wetland ecosystem filled with **Phragmites australis**, more commonly known as river reeds. This environment has since been replaced by an urban landscape, though the river reeds that once stood here are still deeply embedded within the sedimentary layers beneath the surface. Informed by recent research in collaboration with The University of Melbourne **Histology** Platform, Clarke has collected thousands of microscopic images – 297 of which feature in *Between Waves* – that reveal the internal worlds of river reeds, ‘the extraordinary complexity of the micro realm’. Assembled as a collection of acetate prints en masse, Clarke’s microscopic views of river reeds generate a multi-coloured pattern across the gallery wall in a gridded formation that shifts and changes depending on viewpoint. *now you see me: seeing the invisible #1* has also been transformed into an animated projection *now you see me: seeing the invisible #2* 2023. Featured at Federation Square, the pavement of which rests on a significant sacred ceremonial site for the five clans of the Kulin Nation, *now you see me: seeing the invisible #2* expands the exhibition beyond the gallery walls.¹ In situ, the work overlooks the ancient rock remnants of the once free-flowing Yarra Falls that were blown-up in 1883 by colonists to create a turning circle for ships.²

Artist statement:

Traditionally, river reed necklaces were gifted to people passing through Country as a sign of safe passage and friendship. I have been working with river reeds on this sized scale since 2014, making supersized necklaces to talk about the enormous loss of land, language and cultural practices.

To do this, I have gone through a process of learning how to harvest and dye them, how to leech the salt content within the reeds to effect strong colour uptake. Through the process, the learnings and what is revealed provokes material memory, place and space.

The site where ACCA stands was once expansive wetlands that would have been filled with river reeds. For this new commission, in response to place, I started wondering about the **micro systems** in what is now a built environment. The ecosystems of wetland areas, seen and unseen.

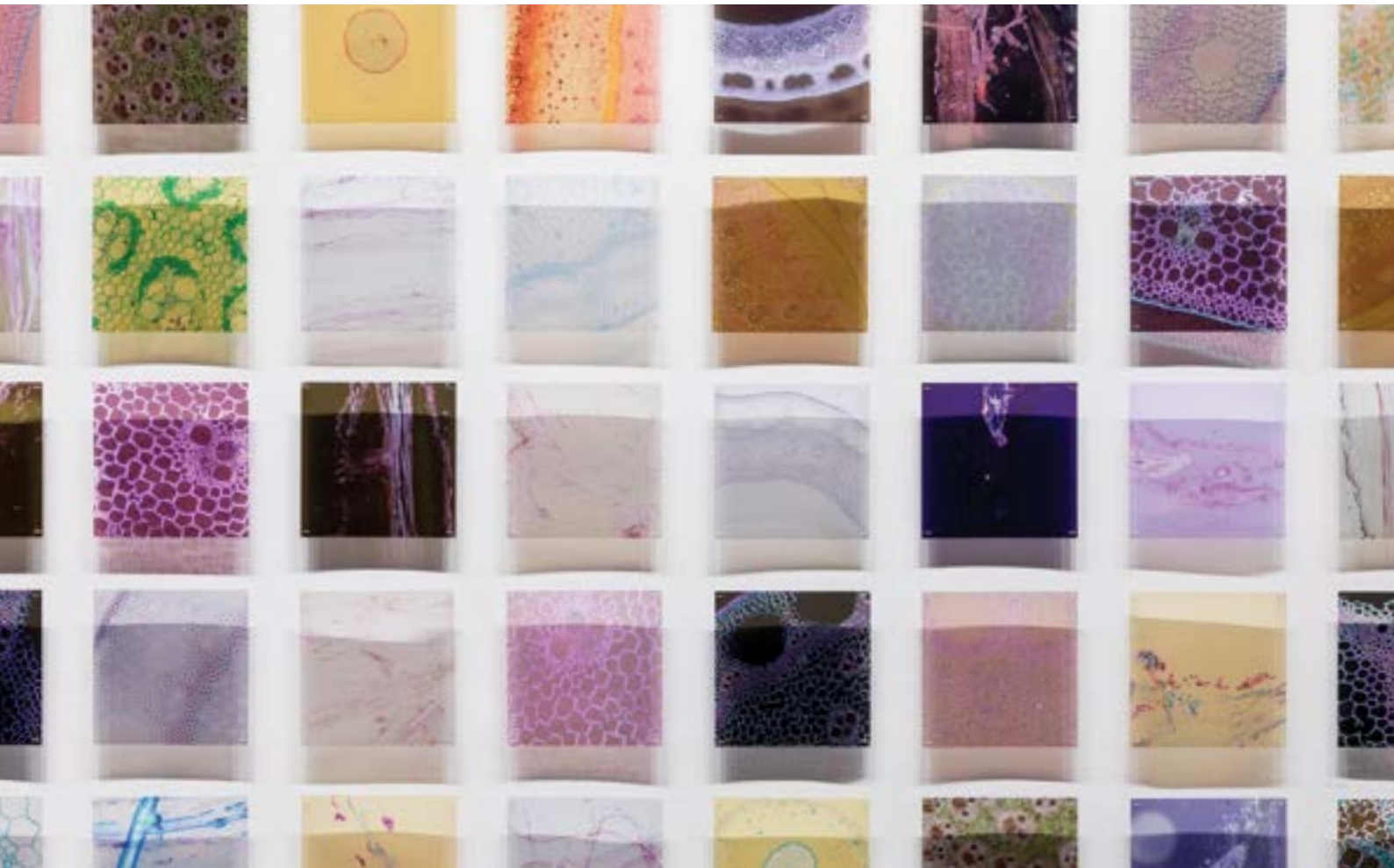
Once I collected the river reeds I consulted and collaborated with the University of Melbourne’s Histology Platform with Chris Freelance, Laura Leone and Paul McMillan. Histology is part of biology, the study of microscopic structure of tissues and cells for research and study. The science can identify cells, and cell structures, using microscopes. These microscopes showed the river reeds at another level altogether.

1 The Kulin Nation consists of five language groups who are the true custodians of Naarm, what is known as the Port Phillip Region of Victoria. Kulin Nation territories extend around Port Phillip and Western Port bays, up into the Great Dividing Range and the Loddon and Goulburn River valleys. See: ‘Traditional Owners & Languages of our Campuses’, *Victoria University, Melbourne Australia*, <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/university-profile/moondani-balluk-indigenous-academic-unit/acknowledging-country/traditional-owners-languages-of-our-campuses>.

2 The Yarra Falls used to stretch across the Birrarung (Yarra River) where Queen Street is located today. It was demolished through the use of dynamite by colonists in 1883 to make way for ships to turn. See: Museum of Lost Things, The Yarra Waterfall, <https://www.museumoflost.com/the-yarra-waterfall/>.

The process involves a rehydrated river reed specimen that is encased in wax, and cut by a machine, to 200th of a millimetre. It then falls into water and is picked-up by a glass slide to then view through the microscope. A camera is connected to the microscope, that is connected to the computer, and a large screen, so you can immediately see the extraordinary complexity of this micro realm.

I prepared natural specimens, and also others by adding different dyes that create a whole range of colours (such as red and blue) that I can then see interacting at a cellular level – viewing the specimen using the **polariser** and five different lenses (the polariser changes the colour, and the lenses change the image again). Navigating worlds through the process, zooming in and out, the slightest movement changes everything. Making the invisible, visible.



Maree Clarke, *now you see me: seeing the invisible #1*, 2023, (detail), photographic microscopy prints on acetate 30 x 30cm each. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Inquiry questions

- > Read Maree Clarke's artist statement, discuss what you learned about Naarm. Does this knowledge help you see the landscape in a different way? Discuss how/why as a class.
- > In her artist statement Maree explains that traditionally river reed necklaces were made and gifted as a sign of friendship and for safe passage across Country. How do you welcome new people into your class and/or home? Discuss hospitality/hosting rituals.
- > Think about what the landscape of your school and home environment might have looked like before colonisation. Research the local area and share findings and evidence with the class.

Making activity

- > Work in pairs to investigate the natural environment at your school. Collect a plant specimen that has meaning to you, and view under the microscope. In response, produce a series of 3 photographic images that reveal the microscopic realm of activity. Print on acetate and display as a triptych.

Glossary:

Phragmites australis – Common reed, a species of flowering plant in the grass family Poaceae. It is a wetland grass that can grow up to 20 feet tall and has a cosmopolitan distribution worldwide.

Microsystems – A microsystem is a self-contained subsystem located within a larger system. It generally constitutes the smallest unit of analysis in systems theory.

Polariser – Is an optical filter that lets light waves of a specific polarization pass through while blocking light waves of other polarizations.

Brad Darkson

born 1987, Kurna Country/Adelaide
lives and works on Kurna Country, South Australia

Brad Darkson is a Narungga man and South Australian visual artist who works across various media including carving, sound, sculpture, multimedia installation and painting. His creative and cultural practice is regularly focused on site specific works, and connections between contemporary and traditional cultural practice, language, and lore.

www.darkson.art

About the artwork

Brad Darkson's *waiting for kakirra* 2023 is a motion-sensor two-channel work that unfolds across two large screens. Projected on the wall is a geographically mapped and 3D animated render of Kangkarratinga (also Congeratinga),¹ a site of Kurna Country that is host to evidence of an ancient fish trap, now in pieces scattered along the shoreline; because of the recent development of a marina at this site, the fish trap has been destroyed. The physical presence of the audience triggers the work into action; the floor projection re-builds this trap, animating and retrieving one rock at a time to bring them together again in their intended formation. *waiting for kakirra* begins and/or continues to build only when people are present because 'you need bodies, you need many hands to build a fish trap'. *waiting for kakirra* foregrounds the community work that continues to rehabilitate important cultural sites like Kangkarratinga. Central to this work is the intention to highlight the significance, complexity, and legacy of First Nations **aquaculture** infrastructure.² Alongside this is a critique on ideas of progress, ignorance around ecological catastrophe and humanity's search for 'technological collaborations' to 'extend our survival'.

Artist statement

One person picks up a rock with the help of another and places it down in a circular formation, a cool sensation up to the knee, waiting for the tide...

How did we get here? Rewind to the beginning.

Munaintyarlu – curl up that sea, on the crest of a wave. Creation is in the now.

Kakirra, the Moon, physically pulls the ocean upwards as she passes overhead in a planetary collaboration. Saltwater moves against rock, slowly eroding minerals to form our oceans. Yarta, the Earth, inhales. Oceans rise. An ancient fault line slowly folds a layer of rock over an eternity. Glacial mudstone deposited from a time defined by cold, formed through eons of immense pressure and elevated temperature. Exhale as oceans recede.

Fungi digest rocks to provide soil for plants. Bacteria provide oxygen to create atmosphere. Each new multispecies community assembled in the process of collaborative world-making and survival.

Tending. **Listening to Country**. Kurna bring kardla, fire, to yarta, collaborating with grasslands, trees and other living things that overlap in these ecologies. Kakirra passes overhead.

1 Kangkarratinga or Congeratinga is a Kurna word that means, where the river meets the ocean. Brad Darkson in conversation with author, 29 June 2023.

2 The process of making Brad Darkson's new commission has been informed by Community consultation with Narungga and local Kurna community members including ngangki burka senior Kurna woman Aunty Lynette Crocker, Aunty Merle Simpson and Uncle Jeffrey Newchurch.



Brad Darkson, *waiting for kakirra*, 2023, motion activated animation and HD video with sound dimensions and duration variable. Created on Kaurua yarta. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Kauwi, water, rises to the heat. The silence of young shoots underfoot. Freshwater drains from deep rooted grasslands into a gently flowing stream, yawning to meet saltwater, and new collaborations take place. Ceremony. Sing to the ocean. A spring nearby guides the path of the stones into a circular formation. World-making continues.

Enter the economy > oeconomia > oikonomia > oikos (house) + nemein (manage). Ideas of progress and looking to a better future for humanity. One full of promise and ease powered by economic advancement and capital. Humans external to the environment. Industrial progress. Move forward. Forget the present. Kakirra passes overhead.

Humanist and rationalist ideas that centre science and reason over the spiritual and the non-human place emphasis on the individual – consciousness, agency. Our attention drifts further from the collaborative nature of survival in world-making. Survival becomes about the individual.

The human species in a growth economy. Humans external to the environment. A new identity of place formed through modernity and progress, and ownership of Country. Enormous rock structures take the place of smaller ones for the sake of profit.

Ignore the present. Forget the past. The rocks remain unmoved. Waiting, as kakirra passes overhead.

Today we ask ourselves what lead us to the precipice of ecological catastrophe. Still we push on. Forward. Disconnected from the present. Searching for technological collaborations that might extend our survival in the wreckage of a global economy. A virtual ghost of a time that was present and is now past.

One person picks up a rock with the help of another and places it down in a circular formation, a cool sensation up to the knee, *waiting for kakirra*.



Brad Darkson, *waiting for kakirra*, 2023, (detail), motion activated animation and HD video with sound dimensions and duration variable. Created on Kaurna yarta. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Inquiry questions

- > In his artist statement Brad Darkson talks about interplanetary collaboration – for example, how the cycle of the moon effects the tide. What other unseen forces/energies can you think of that influence us and our experience of the world?
- > The climate is currently in crisis, and a sixth mass extinction is underway. Discuss the idea of ‘progress’ and reflect on the dramatic changes to the environment since colonisation. Discuss how we can better take care of Country, and the role of First Nations knowledges in this.
- > What Country do you live and go to school on? Research and discuss significant cultural sites in your area. For example, in Victoria on Gunditjmarra Country there is a significant and unique First Nations aquaculture system called **Budj Bim**.

Making activity

- > Consider the significant cultural sites you uncovered through research and think about the most pressing environmental issues the site is facing, and the threats to its future. Using an image of the site/structure, create a short stop-motion-animation using an app such as Cloud Stop Motion to highlight the importance of this cultural site and prompt action.

Glossary:

Aquaculture – In Australia, aquaculture has been practiced for approximately 40,000 years by Aboriginal peoples, who used sophisticated fish traps to capture and hold fish.

Listening to Country – Country goes beyond the physical, and includes things that cannot be seen or touched, like knowledge. Observing and listening to Country can teach us important lessons about how to protect Country. Lessons about the past, present and future.

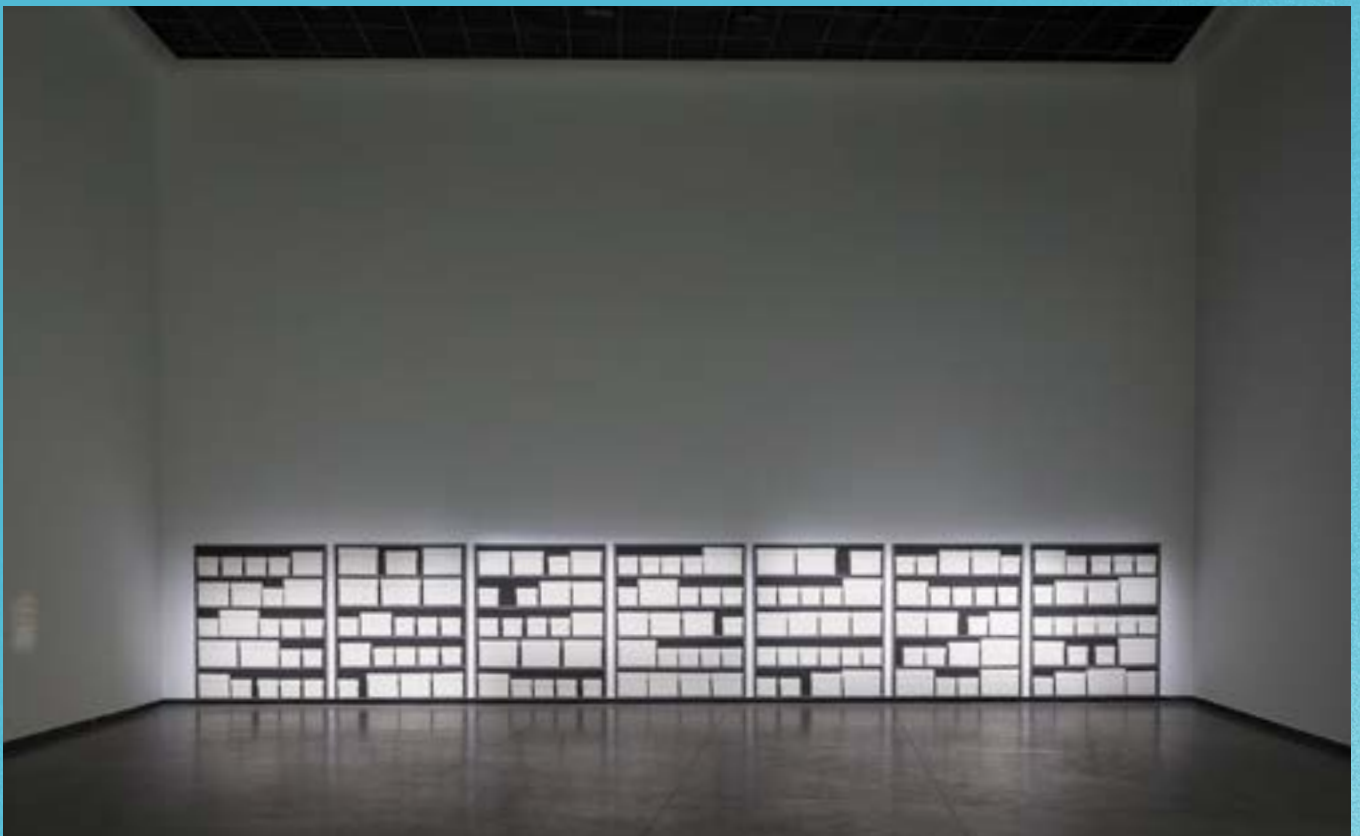
Budj Bim – Is a Gunditjmarra name for Mount Eccles, a volcano located within the Western Victorian Volcanic Plains. The volcano is inactive. The Gunditjmarra call the area ‘Tungatt Mirring’ or Stone Country.

THEME 2:

Beneath the surface

Matthew Harris, Mandy Quadrio

It is often necessary to go deeper than what is at the surface to find the truth.



Matthew Harris, *Consigned to oblivion* 2023, ochre, charcoal, and acrylic binder on linen, 198 x 167 cm. Created on Wurundjeri Country. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and FUTURES, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Matthew Harris

born 1991, Wangaratta
lives and works in Naarm/Melbourne

Matthew Harris is of Koorie and mixed European ancestry, and a contemporary artist known for his brightly coloured paintings, and audacious sculptural assemblages. His work engages a variety of media and often destabilises dominant and normative **hierarchies** using sentimentality, cuteness, queerness, irreverence, vulgarity, and abjection.

www.matthew-harris.com

About the artwork

Consigned to oblivion 2023 by Matthew Harris includes a suite of seven large-scale white ochre and charcoal paintings, representative of and scaled to reflect a standard museum storage shelf. Each painting depicts a series of shelves filled with rows of white archival boxes; their contents unclear. Harris' paintings formally reference notions of **minimalism** and seriality to draw attention to the relentless and repetitive efforts of museums and collecting institutions, and their history of gate-keeping that has denied Aboriginal ancestral remains and cultural objects the right to return to home. This new body of work emphasises the role of contemporary art practice in shedding light on this dark and macabre history that has for years intentionally been shrouded in secrecy. Even though there has been an ongoing inquiry into the repatriation of Aboriginal ancestral remains, still there are tens of thousands of Aboriginal ancestors stuck and stored in museums and collections, public and private, around the world. As an act of reclamation, reflection and care, Harris has gently rendered each archival box individually with layers of white ochre – often reserved for sorry business – framing them with a charcoal void; the remnants of a fire that ignite transformation.

Artist statement

Overseas I encountered an Aboriginal skull in a display about human evolution. Tourists shuffled past barely looking at the objects in the cases, most just trying to find the dinosaurs or a toilet. More interesting than the skull itself was the incorrect institutional framing of the skull as a relic of a bygone species and a brief pitstop on the road to modern human, a missing link. The journeys ancestral remains take to end up in a display case on the other side of the world are often long and needless to say, illegal. Mob have continued to campaign for repatriation since the bone trade began, yet tens of thousands of ancestral remains are still concealed in public and private collections without much hope of ever returning home.

Consigned to Oblivion 2023 is a monumental suite of paintings spanning the width of the gallery wall. From afar they're the type of monochromatic, repetitive, minimalist paintings you might find at a contemporary art museum such as **Dia: Beacon**, up close the lumpy surface reveals the texture of their material - crushed charcoal and white ochre, white ochre being most commonly used for **sorry business**. Far from pure abstraction, the paintings depict a museum storage facility with endless shelves of archival boxes containing bones held in institutional limbo. Blank white facades suspending ancestral remains, sacred objects and cultural heritage behind layers of impenetrable bureaucratic control.



Matthew Harris, *Consigned to oblivion* 2023, (detail), ochre, charcoal, and acrylic binder on linen, 198 x 167 cm. Created on Wurundjeri Country. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and FUTURES, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Key themes and concepts: Minimalism, museum collections, scientific racism

Inquiry questions

- > As a class, discuss how you think museums acquire art objects and materials for their collections.
- > Matthew Harris mentions in his artist statement that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultural material have historically been acquired by museums and collections through violent means – stolen and sent to public and private museums and collections around the world. Research repatriation and come together as a class to discuss what it means and its importance.
- > Discuss the importance of returning things that don't belong to you. Have you ever had anything from you or your family? Consider the removal, sale or theft of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art objects, materials, and ancestral remains without permission for collection and display in museums. How is this situation different from your experience of theft?

Making activity

- > Informed by your research and discussion about repatriation, investigate a significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural object that is currently held by a museum or collection overseas. Create a poster to advocate for its return to community.

Glossary:

Hierarchies – A hierarchy is a Western approach to arranging of items that are understood and represented as being “above”, “below”, or “at the same level as” one another. Often used to describe a system in which members of an organisation or society are ranked according to relative status or authority.

Minimalism – It is characterized by the use of simple geometric shapes, monochromatic colour schemes, and a focus on the basic elements of painting such as line, form, and colour. Minimalist painters often seek to reduce their art to the essentials, creating work that is spare and unadorned.

Dia Beacon – Contemporary Art Gallery dedicated to American Minimalism in New York, USA.

Sorry business – A word used by First Nations and Torres Strait Islander peoples in reference to an important time of mourning that involves responsibilities and obligations to attend funerals and participate in other cultural events, activities, or ceremonies with the community.

Mandy Quadrio

born 1959, Naarm/Melbourne
lives and works in Meanjin/Brisbane

Mandy Quadrio is a Trawlwoolway and Laremairemener woman. She is a contemporary artist who works across sculpture, installation, photography, and mixed media. Quadrio's art practice is driven by materiality and she is recognised for working with industrial materials such as steel wool and steel wire as a tool for reclamation with the intent to foreground culture.

www.mandyquadrio.com.au

About the artwork

Not Gone! 2023 by Mandy Quadrio is a **kinetic** installation that features three suspended **amorphous** sculptural forms that billow outward and upward. Quadrio has stretched, wound, and layered lengths of steel wire-mesh with varying levels of material manipulation. The steel wire-mesh forms are each attached to a rotating mechanism that is set in a subtle and slow-moving circular motion. As both light and movement interact and activate the work, the slow and measured rotation generates an intermittent and ever-evolving shadow-world for the viewer to navigate. Presented as a collective, each sculptural form appears to **levitate** and hold the in-between spaces – between the gallery walls, floor and ceiling. Having been set in a subtle motion *Not Gone!* gives rise to a meditative space that moves in and out of focus.

Quadrio weaves experiences, memories and stories that move and change over time. Despite the lightness of being that is inherent to the materiality, *Not Gone!* conveys the illusion of density and draws focus to the spaces between; weight and weightlessness, shadow and light. These material dualities are also innate within the steel wire mesh; although the steel-wire fibres might first appear smooth and sleek, on physical interaction/connection, they are rough and can pierce the skin. For Quadrio, “the harsh and abrasive nature of the steel-wire mesh”, references the violence inflicted by acts of attempted erasure and unhealed wounds stemming from “mistold and obscured histories” related to her community in lutruwita also known as Tasmania. *Not Gone!* amplifies notions of adaptability and strength and affirms Quadrio's ancestral connections beyond time, place, and space.



Mandy Quadrio, *Not gone!* 2023, wire mesh, rotating mechanism dimensions variable. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.



Mandy Quadrio, *Not gone!* 2023, (detail), wire mesh, rotating mechanism dimensions variable. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Artist statement

As a Trawlwoolway and Laremairemener, Tasmanian Aboriginal woman, I am moving beyond the limitations of controlling aspects of Australian histories that remain shrouded in false and obscured narratives.

Using steel wiry fibres, I seek to weave experiences, memories and stories that move and change through time. I manipulate netted, steel wire-mesh forms, anchoring my stories to demonstrate and assert my Indigeneity, adaptability, strength, and my long-time relationship to Country and culture.

Light and motion work to activate and illuminate the sparkling, wire-mesh material. Suspended, sinuous, and tactile shapes are cast with light to enliven and allow the works to perform — their movements create illusions of density despite their significant lightness of being.

As the shadows from the work move in and out of focus, they provide transitory moments that sometimes evoke bodily forms and other presences. I value my connections to entities – both past and present. I do not step away from my own history and experiences.

Within mutable, shadow-filled spaces, the sculptural forms appear smooth and sleek, belying the sharpness of their steely, abrasive fibres that have the potential to incise and open shared wounds. I use the steel fibres to reference abrasive acts and unhealed traumas that are outcomes of colonisation. I choose to journey through and beyond woundings to carefully enfold the complexities of harsh histories and actions that have been historically and contemporaneously enacted on Australian Indigenous people.

The ongoing mis-telling of Australian history manifests as a cultural **amnesia**. Such disremembering seeks to make Indigenous Australians invisible. I am *Not Gone!*

I invite viewers to position themselves within the shadowy fibres of this work and to cast light on their own knowledge of Australian Indigenous histories.

Key themes and concepts: Ancestors, family, materiality, sculpture

Inquiry questions

- > What is historical and cultural bias? Discuss the importance of considering information from a range of sources.
- > In her artist statement, Mandy Quadrio speaks about how her family's history has been "mistold", meaning there are a lot of mistruths that have been documented about her ancestors in lutruwita (Tasmania) but also for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture across Australia more broadly. Discuss the impact and effect of lies and mistruths on history, and on people and communities; past, present, and future.
- > Have you had the experience of being lied to about something you know is not true? Discuss the importance of truth-telling in relation to history.

Making activity

- > Think about an everyday material that is malleable and that could be used as a metaphor to speak about your family history – think about your family tree, where are your ancestors from, where did they live/move to in Australia, what did they do for work, etc? What does this intergenerational knowledge say about you and your family? Create a hanging mobile sculpture out of your chosen everyday materials or objects. How does the work reflect your family history and story?

Glossary:

Kinetic – Relating to motion/movement, (of a work of art) depending on movement for its effect.

Amorphous – Without a clearly defined shape or form: the amorphous clouds.

Levitate – Rise or cause to rise and hover in the air, typically by means of supposed magical powers.

Mutable – Capable of change or of being changed in form, quality, or nature.

Amnesia – A partial or total loss of memory.

THEME 3:

More than words allow

Dean Cross, Hayley Millar Baker

Sometimes our
feelings are difficult
to express in words.



Hayley Millar Baker, *Entr'acte*, 2023, single channel video, 11:20 mins, looped. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Dean Cross

born 1986, Kamberri/Canberra
lives and works on Walbunja Country, New South Wales

Dean Cross is a paratactical artist interested in collisions of materials, ideas and histories. Through a cross-disciplinary practice that spans photography, video, installation, sculpture, painting and choreography, Cross often confronts the legacies of modernism, rebalancing dominant cultural and social histories.

www.stationgallery.com/artist/dean-cross/

About the artwork

On who goes to The Gallows 1997-2023 is a sculptural self-portrait by Dean Cross that draws on his personal and family archive of objects and materials collected since birth. The objects Cross has brought together for his new commission hold deep personal significance. The artist's childhood **Yidaki** rests atop two ceramic bricks that derive from a now demolished hospital building; Cross's birthplace on Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country. These objects have been arranged on a recently acquired three metre long, three-tier aluminium **bleacher**: the heart of the work. *On who goes to The Gallows* reflects on the conflicting waves of memory and meaning ascribed to objects, which are encoded and evolved over time. While the bleacher conveys dual notions of community and competition, reflection, and observation, of hiding-

out and meeting-up, Cross's black hoodie ascends as a symbol of resistance. In this work, Cross reflects on life stages, shifts, and changes; we are all experiencing the same time, we all go to the **gallows** eventually he says.

Artist statement

This is a self-portrait. This is a collection of objects; a sculpture. Some of its materials have been with me since birth, others are brand new, some of its materials hold secrets, others transmit them.

I would like to tell you more, but I can't. It's too sad. I'd tell you if I trusted you or if I thought it really mattered.

And in case you are wondering, we all go to the gallows, eventually.



Dean Cross, *On who goes to The Gallows* 1997-2023, (detail) aluminium, timber, fired ceramic and synthetic polymer paint, 174 cm x 316 cm x 131.9 cm. Installation View, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and STATION, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.



Dean Cross, *On who goes to The Gallows* 1997-2023, aluminium, timber, fired ceramic and synthetic polymer paint, 174 cm x 316 cm x 131.9 cm. Installation View, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and STATION, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Key themes and concepts: Still life, self portrait, symbolism

Inquiry questions

- > Dean Cross's new work can be considered both a still life and a self-portrait. Research these art genres and the term vanitas and discuss their roles in art history. Consider how Cross has expanded on these ideas in the context of *Between Waves*.
- > What is a collection and why do people collect things? Discuss as a group.
- > Do you or your parents have a collection? What objects do you like to collect? What does this collection say about you and your family? Do you have a favourite object? Why? What does it say about you/remind you of?
- > The term 'gallows' refers to a medieval apparatus used for execution by hanging. This term also conjures colloquial sayings and symbols such as 'hanging by a thread', 'meeting your maker', and the 'hanged man'. Discuss why you think Cross has titled the work to reference the 'gallows.'

Making activity

- > Create your own sculptural assemblage that acts as a self-portrait. Think about objects that speak to your identity and life journey; who you are, what you like to do, where you have been/are, where you hope to go and what you want to do. Collect 3-5 objects from around the classroom, outside, or brought in from home. Think carefully about how you will arrange the objects as a collective. Take a photo of your assemblage in a location that speaks to you and what you hope to convey with your work.

Glossary:

Yidaki – A long wooden wind instrument specific to Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, played by men only. While commonly known as a didgeridoo, Yidaki is the correct cultural terminology. With permission, the Yidaki has since been adopted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities across Australia.

Bleacher – Describes a grandstand that is raised, tiered rows of benches found at sports fields and other spectator events.

Gallows – Refers to a medieval apparatus designed and used for execution by hanging.

Hayley Millar Baker

born 1990, Naarm/Melbourne

lives and works on Boonwurrung and Wathaurong Country, Victoria

Hayley Millar Baker is a Gunditjmara and Djabwurrung woman, and multidisciplinary lens-based contemporary artist. Millar-Baker works across photography, collage, and film to interrogate and make abstract the autobiographical narratives and themes relating to her own identity. Her oblique storytelling methods convey the passage of identity, culture, and memory as non-linear, and non-fixed.

www.hayleymillarbaker.com

About the artwork

Entr'acte 2023 is a single-channel video work by Hayley Millar Baker, the title of which refers to an interlude or performance occurring between two acts of a play.¹ The work centres a female **protagonist**, presented in portrait view, and tightly cropped from the shoulders-up and with the frame encroaching at the edges of her face. This figure has been cast as a 'vessel' representative of 'woman' and that channels the physical and mental weight of forced emotional containment, and the subsequent build-up of energy suppressed in the body, over time. By harnessing and **embodying** the in-between internal moments of 'restrained rage turned to grief',² *Entr'acte* provides a powerful and empowering means through which to respond to and release these tensions.

Millar Baker's new commission is at once **autobiographical** and a social commentary. Presented in silence and at a scale larger than life, *Entr'acte* evokes and embraces dual notions of intensity and intimacy to examine lived and felt experiences, navigating the self and the world; and the resulting complex anxieties and expectations that stem from this. Over 11 minutes and 20 seconds, *Entr'acte* holds the moment between an action and a reaction. As the durational performance unfolds, the initial wide-eyed brightness of the protagonist gradually fades as the physical toll begins manifest. By harnessing the strength, power and focus required to navigate these moments with restraint, Millar Baker confronts audiences with an invitation to look and think inward, beneath the surface and beyond oneself.

Artist statement

Entr'acte channels the internal feelings of restrained rage and its transformation into grief, rippling through the body and permeating all levels of the self. Taking its title from the French word 'Entr'acte' – referring to an interlude performed between two acts of a play – the work centres a female protagonist cast as a vessel symbolising 'woman' who is holding the inequitable weight women are forced to carry and contend with daily, across the multitude of experiences, identities, and roles they play. *Entr'acte* simultaneously embraces notions of intimacy and intensity to convey the monumental focus, determination, and power of women, capturing the moment after an action and before a reaction, or external rupture. Neither documentary, nor fiction, *Entr'acte* raises a pertinent social commentary about the expectations forced on women – mourning the loss of free expression in a world of social and cultural **inequity**.

'The pain of women turns them into kittens and rabbits and sunsets and sordid red satin goddesses, pales them and bloodies them and starves them, delivers them to death camps and sends locks of their hair to the stars. Men put them on trains and under them. Violence turns them celestial. Age turns them old. We can't look away. We can't stop imagining new ways for them to hurt.'³

1 *Entr'acte* is a French word: *entre* meaning between and *acte* meaning act.

2 Hayley Millar Baker, Artist Statement, 2023.

3 Leslie Jamison, 'The Grand Unified Theory of Female Pain', *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Spring 2014, Vol. 90, part 2, 2014, viewed 8 June 2023, <https://www.vqronline.org/essays-articles/2014/04/grand-unified-theory-female-pain>.



Hayley Millar Baker, *Entr'acte*, 2023 (still), single channel video 11:20 mins, looped.
Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne.

Key themes and concepts: Film, the gaze, feminism

Inquiry questions

- > Discuss the importance of talking about and sharing our thoughts and feelings rather than internalising them.
- > Discuss how thoughts and feelings are expressed in the body. How do different emotions make you feel?
- > Different emotions are often felt in different ways/places – the body and the mind. As a class create a mind map of different types of feelings and identify where in the body they are felt. How do they make you feel? For example, love may be felt in the heart, nerves in the stomach, confusion in the mind, etc.
- > How do these emotions show-up in facial expressions and body language? Role play examples.

Making activity

- > Work in pairs to create a photographic or video self-portrait (1 minute) that captures a specific emotion. This should relate to how you are feeling today. Think about how to express this emotion to another person/viewer through facial expressions and body language.

Glossary:

Protagonist – The leading character or one of the major characters in a play, film, novel, etc.

Autobiographical – Marked by or dealing with one's own experiences or life history; of or in the manner of an autobiography; autobiographical material; an autobiographical novel.

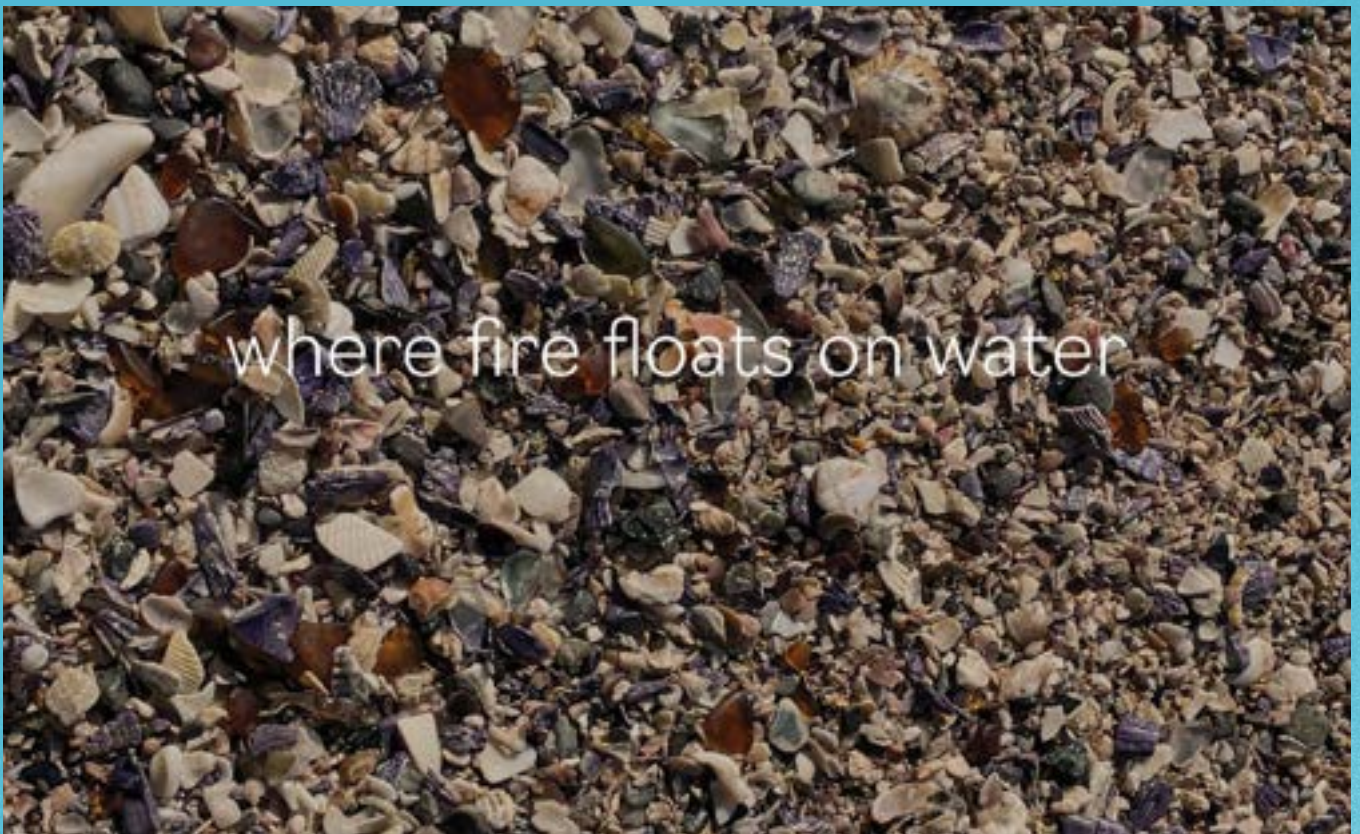
Embody – Be an expression of or give a tangible or visible form to (an idea, quality, or feeling).

THEME 4:

From one state to the next

Jazz Money, James Howard

Change is a constant, prompting shifts in form, one state, subject, place to another.



Jazz Money, *infinite iterative piece*, 2023 (still), three-channel video projection, 16:9, duration variable, audio 9:25 mins looped, Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist.

Jazz Money

born 1992, Cammeraygal Country/Sydney
lives and works on Gadigal Country, New South Wales

Jazz Money is a Wiradjuri woman and poet whose creative and cultural practice encompasses installation, performance, film, and text-based works. Money's practice is centred around questions of narrative and legacy: place, First Nations memory, colonial memory, and the stories that we tell to construct national and personal identity.

www.jazz.money

About the artwork

infinite iterative piece 2023 is presented across three adjoining screens. The work presents an evolving poem with infinite possibilities; what Money describes as a 'digital exquisite corpse'.¹ The three visual portals that Money opens work together to connect a range of land, city, and sea scapes that collectively form an ever-evolving horizon line. Money's imagery and footage is **interwoven** with a series of black voids, each screen overlaid with a line of text, resurfaced from her personal archive of 'lost lines' from previous creative writing projects that hadn't yet found a 'home'. The layers of still and moving imagery with transitioning text appear randomly, 'neither creator nor audience know what will be revealed in any single moment'.² Money's approach reflects on the immense output and overload of information in the everyday, and the human desire to attempt to make sense and meaning out of it all.

Artist statement

infinite iterative piece welcomes you to find what you didn't know you were seeking. A poem created just now, just for you, appearing through chance and hope and randomising software. *infinite iterative piece* is compiled of all the lost lines that didn't become poems, the photos and footage that feel more like poetry, the ideas that shouldn't go together, and the narratives that they tell.

Presented across three screens the words and images chop and change in a randomised **configuration** creating new experiences for each viewer. The screens create something of a digital '**exquisite corpse**' where neither creator nor audience know what will be revealed in any single moment. The work can continue to grow and expand as more lines are added with time, a vessel for infinite questions and answers.

The work brings together two enquiries by the artist – poetry and film – and in particular the synergies between these mediums. Both poetry and film editing in particular take a pre-existing language or set of images and arrange them in complimentary, contrasting or contradictory ways to communicate something to an audience. In that pairing, you create a third space where new knowledges are revealed.

By presenting the work in this randomised way, *infinite iterative piece* reflects both the overload of content and imagery that exists in our world, and the very human desire to make meaning of all that input. The **poetics** of life often reveal themselves to us in surprising ways, and *infinite iterative piece* seeks to be a gift for audiences looking for pause and beauty within the chaos.

1 Jazz Money, Artist Statement, 2023.

2 Jazz Money, Artist Statement, 2023.



Jazz Money, infinite iterative piece, 2023, three-channel video projection, 16:9, duration variable, audio 9:25 mins looped. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Inquiry questions

- > Discuss different types of waves that you cannot see such as light and sound; how do they move, what do they do, how do they influence us and our experience of the world?
- > Has there been a time recently where you felt a sensory overload? Describe the moment/event, the different waves that contributed to this overload, and how it made you feel.
- > Discuss the importance of time and space for reflection. Where do you go to escape – what type of place do you find relaxing, what makes you feel like home?
- > Research automatic writing, find out what it means and as a class practice this skill with teacher prompts.

Making activity

- > Find a quiet place to yourself outside or around the classroom. Get comfortable, close your eyes and pay attention to the sounds and smells around you. What do you know about this place/Country? When ready, spend 10 minutes writing down anything that crosses your mind when you think about the place and space you are in. Often closing your eyes helps to get started. Read the text you have written and choose three short phrases.
- > Collect 3 land, sea and tree-scape images that connect or disconnect from your thoughts and feelings about the place you were writing about.
- > Print the 3 images on A4 paper. Next print your text phrases on acetate and randomly pair word phrases and images to create a Jazz Money inspired poem to Country. Secure acetate over the top of each landscape image and display as a series of three.

Glossary:

Interwoven – Weave or become woven together.

Configuration – An arrangement of parts or elements in a particular form, figure, or combination.

Exquisite corpse – Is a method by which a collection of words or images is collectively assembled, (from the original French term *cadavre exquis*, literally *exquisite cadaver*).

Poetics – Relating to or used in poetry.

James Howard

born 1991, Naarm/Melbourne
lives and works on Boonwurrung Country, Victoria

James Howard is a Jaadwa song-man and composer with a contemporary music practice that investigates the ambient soundscapes of and within place. He approaches the process of composing as a way to reconnect with his Indigenous heritage, often layering personal and family narratives into long-form improvised soundscapes.

About the artwork

James Howard's *Subterranean frequencies* 2023 is a multi-layered sound sculpture that responds to place and explores the intersecting realms of material and immaterial experience. Howard has gathered a series of field recordings from deep within the dark cavernous space that expands beneath the gallery floor; connected to the Grant Street Ventilation Stack located at the back of ACCA's north forecourt. This 'Stack' is a towering bright red structure, linked to the network of tunnels that funnel a continual day-to-night

stream of traffic. By amplifying such spaces, Howard draws attention to the often-unnoticed sights, sounds and structures of the everyday that are hidden in plain sight. By interweaving a mixture of high-pitched noises and subtle sonic resonances that are site-specific, with breaks or 'breaths' of silence occurring between, *Subterranean frequencies* highlights how time is malleable, and ever evolving as part of a continuum. In doing so, Howard emphasises the way that sound can elicit emotion, despite not having a physical form itself.



James Howard, *Subterranean frequencies*, 2023 (detail). Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph, Andrew Curtis.



James Howard, *Subterranean frequencies*, 2023 (detail). Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph, Andrew Curtis.

Artist statement

This is a transmission beamed to you from beyond the borderline. Stories are waiting to be heard. In this room sound is an aesthetic experience. The work is immaterial, yet it takes up space and evokes movement in a way that is immeasurable and illogical.

Subterranean Frequencies 2023 invites you to focus on the fringes. The work exists at the meeting place between waves of the tangible and the **intangible**. It holds a microphone to the hidden places that are passed by each day.

Sounds were captured and composed from a network of tunnels located below the surface of the gallery to tell stories that are always present but rarely heard. Raw audio was recorded in the Mezzanine, a giant underground cavern located beneath ACCA's building. The condenser microphones responded to the **ambience** of the underground space, activated by ventilation shaft

hums and whistles reflecting off of high cement ceilings; the contact microphones were affixed to metal surfaces and machinery, which vibrate with the sympathetic resonance of cars passing through the nearby Burnley Tunnel; and wideband receivers snatched elements of electromagnetic radiation from the air.

Sound becomes **malleable**. Recordings are stretched and compressed. A single snapshot in time is reworked into an endless drone. A moment can last forever. The heard and the unheard are brought together in a collage — amplified into the industrial soundscapes within which we are constantly immersed.

Just as these hidden spaces dot our lives, so too do the stories of place dot the Country upon which we all walk. Stories that are still waiting to be heard.

Is anyone receiving them?

Key themes and concepts: Sound, time, storytelling

Inquiry questions

- > Research the concept of 'deep listening' from a First Nations perspective and discuss as a class. What is the difference between listening and deep listening?
- > As a class, participate in a deep listening activity led by your teacher.
- > Research/discuss the Country you are on and discuss/speculate about what this landscape might have looked like in the past, what might it look like in the future?
- > James Howard intends to draw attention to the fact that First Nations knowledges are embedded in the landscape, whether they can be seen or are noticed or not. What did your research uncover about the place your school stands that you didn't know before?

Making activity

- > As a group, sit in silence for 5 minutes and write down all the different sounds you hear. Listen deeply, keep writing, what else can you hear? Come together and share the sounds you have in your list. Discuss what we can hear, and what we cannot hear.
- > Using your phone or a recording device, explore the environment in and around the classroom. Investigate the sounds you responded to the most. Interact with the natural and built environment to explore varying sonic resonances. What other sounds can you create through touch/interaction with the environment? Layer your collected sound recording into one track. Arrange and rearrange to create a soundscape in response to the intersection of the natural and built environment.

Glossary:

Intangible – Unable to be touched; not having physical presence.

Ambience – The character and atmosphere of a place.

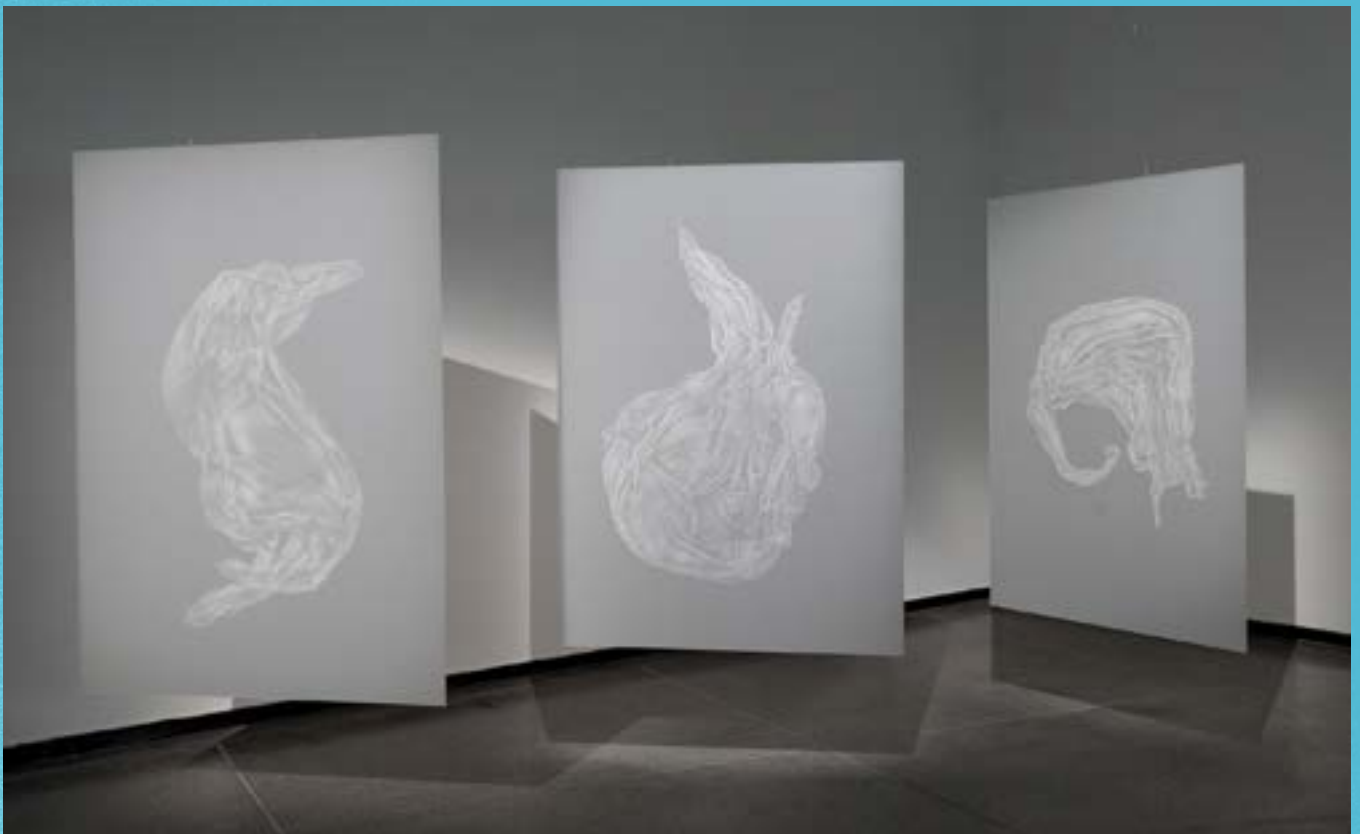
Malleable – Easily influenced; pliable.

THEME 5:

Across time and space

Cassie Sullivan, *this mob*

There are many things in this world that exist beyond physical and temporal boundaries.



Cassie Sullivan, *wayi (to hear)*, 2023 (detail), seven tarlatan monotype prints on frosted acrylic 170 x 122cm each. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Cassie Sullivan

born 1985, nipaluna/Hobart
lives and works on melukerdee Country, lutruwita (Tasmania).

Cassie Sullivan is a palawa woman with a responsive, intimate, and experimental art practice that crosses disciplines of moving image, photography, writing, sound, installation, and printmaking. Sullivan works with a deeply considered process that prioritises a sensory engagement with Country.

www.cassiesullivan.com

About the artwork

Cassie Sullivan's new commission *wayi (to hear)* 2023 includes a series of large-scale monotypes presented as a collective, a family. Each imprint is soft and subtle, having been overlaid on clouded acrylic, the translucency of which conjures the mist that gathers and disperses across Country in lutruwita/trouwerner (Tasmania). The muslin fabric that features, known as **tarlatan**, is an everyday malleable material of care typically used as a gauze, or to swaddle babies. Prior to printing, Sullivan has pushed and pulled large swathes of this fabric across melukerdee and nuenonne Country

(Bruny Island, South East Tasmania), and along the journey, the tarlatan has collected 'knowledge of place'. *wayi (to hear)* conveys a deeply personal **somatic** language that explores the ways in which **transgenerational** communication and trauma moves through and is held in the body and brought into physicality over time. Installed in a panoramic formation, suspended from the ceiling, *wayi (to hear)* invites moments of pause, and slow movement through; to be able to see each impression clearly the viewer must move around the edges of the installation.



Cassie Sullivan, *wayi (to hear)* 2023, seven tarlatan monotype prints on frosted acrylic, 170.0 x 122.0 cm each. Installation view, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne 2023. Commissioned by ACCA. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Andrew Curtis.

Artist statement

i have drowned here
in these waters
of brine
and salt
and preservation

The ancestors hang here. Float, suspended in the
neverwhere and the everywhen.

A succession of experiences, of traumas, of
attempted erasures. Those forced to sacrifice
ceremony for survival.

Country holds a space for them here, will always
know them. And I hold them here, in my sinew
and my skin.

They cried that they needed healing in the only
language I knew how to hear.

I took a piece of tarlatan, a cloth of care, of wound
mending, and I threw it into the sea. The only place
I've ever felt home.

I have pulled and pushed the tarlatan through our
waterways, watched it breathe in the tidal inlets.
Letting in the **tannins** from the mountains, letting
out the brine. Swallowing the language of salt and
blood-stained water.

I meet them here, in the intertidal drifts of the
melukerde and nuenonne. And I listen. Collecting
knowledge of place, relearning a somatic language,
growing a vocabulary of grief.

As I work the ink and salt-soaked tarlatan into
each **monotype**, I embed myself here too, in these
pieces that are the height of me, in this material,
that has been torn to my proportions. My muscles
ache at the work being done. The imprinted
narrative shifts alongside me.

Positive, negative.
Present, missing.
Floating, bound.

I walk amongst the hauntings of transgenerational
communication.

My body remembers them.

Key themes and concepts: Monotype, memory, healing

Inquiry questions

- > Discuss how knowledge is passed on through generations. Begin by considering physical traits passed on from parents.
- > What about similar personality or behavioural traits you and your family members share, what do you have in common?
- > Discuss the importance of acknowledging and respecting the knowledge holders in community – such as Elders, parents, grandparents, senior people in community – and about learning from the experience of others.
- > Discuss how knowledge is held in the landscape, how Country has memory of things that have happened in places – good and bad. What might the landscape you live on or go to school on say if it could?

Making activity

- > Choose a fabric that has material significance to you – a fabric that can act as a metaphor to say something about you, your family history, and the places you are connected to. Select a printing ink colour to layer the fabric with and create a series of monotypes across a sheet of A3 paper. You might like to create a series of monotype prints and arrange/hang them as an installation in a similar way to Cassie Sullivan.

Glossary:

Tarlatan – A soft, textured cloth, similar to gauze or cheesecloth. Can be used to dress wounds.

Somatic – Relating to the body and body memory.

Transgenerational – Passed on from one generation to the next without direct genetic inheritance.

Tannins – Tannins are created as water passes through rotting organic matter or peaty soil in the water table. The tannins in lutruwita come from the button grass oils and give the water in the rivers a rusty or tea like colour.

Monotype – A unique print, typically painterly in effect, made by applying paint or printing ink to a flat sheet of metal, glass, or plastic.

this mob

this mob is a **blak** arts collective based on Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri Country in Naarm/Melbourne with members' ancestral connections in Victoria and across the country. Through their collaborative* and relational process, this mob prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create spaces to come together and to unite emerging blak artists.

this mob contributors include: Moorina Bonini, Kate ten Buuren, Maya Hodge, Jenna Lee, and Jenna Rain Warwick.

Moorina Bonini

born 1996, Wurundjeri Country
lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Victoria

Moorina Bonini is a proud descendant of the Yorta Yorta Dhulunyagen family clan of Ulupna and the Yorta Yorta, Wurundjeri and Wiradjuri Briggs/McCrae family. Her creative and cultural practice disrupts and critiques the **Eurocentric** foundations that centralise Indigenous categorisation within western institutions.

Kate ten Buuren

born 1994, Wurundjeri Country
lives and works on Kulin Country, Victoria.

Kate ten Buuren is a Taungurung curator, artist and writer working on Kulin Country. Ten Buuren's cross-disciplinary practice investigates collective and collaborative ways of working, with her interest in contemporary art, film and oral traditions grounded in self-determination and self-representation.

Maya Hodge

born 1998, Wurundjeri Country
lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Victoria

Maya Hodge is a proud Lardil emerging writer and curator. Her multidisciplinary practice explores the power of disrupting colonial narratives through writing, curatorial and musical project-based work dedicated to uplifting First Nations autonomy and storytelling.

Jenna Rain Warwick

born 1997, Kuku Yalanji Country
lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Victoria

Jenna Rain Warwick is an artist, curator and published writer born in Mossman, Queensland. A proud Luritja Woman, her practice centres her love for film and television. She has curated film programs and screenings, and has a desire to reinvigorate film criticism in so called 'Australia'.

Jenna Lee

born 1992, Ngannawal Country
lives and works on Wurundjeri Country, Victoria.

Jenna Lee is a Gulumerridjin (Larrakia), Wardaman and Karrajarri Saltwater woman with mixed Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Anglo-Australian ancestry. Using art to explore and celebrate her many overlapping identities, Lee works across sculpture, installation, and body adornment.

www.thismob.com

About the artwork

Black Wattle Volume II 2023 highlights the breadth of this mob's – Moorina Bonini, Maya Hodge, Jenna Lee, Jenna Rain Warwick and Kate ten Buuren – individual and **collaborative** practices. Their new digital commission takes form as an online digital **zine** that centres notions of interactivity and connection. *Black Wattle Volume II* establishes a dynamic platform for connection between this mob members, community, and the world beyond the borders of the studio, state, and country.

Creative contributions include a new photographic series by Bonini and Lee, a short horror film by Rain Warwick, collected and collaged photographs and a new series of cyanotypes by ten Buuren, shared recipes and reflections on cook-ups by Hodge, and a crossword puzzle by invited collaborator Alice Skye.

Link to Digital Commission: www.thismob.com



Jenna Lee (this mob), *Black Wattle Volume II 2023* (detail). Digital commission. Commissioned by ACCA and The Ian Potter Foundation. Courtesy the artists.

Artist statement

MB: *Black Wattle Volume II* is a collection of thoughts and reflections on what it means to be connected within a blak collective while also being connected to Country and community. Our threads of connectedness are made evident through making and yarnning amongst ourselves, and across our individual works. Each of us holds a thread that connects us back to our own ancestral lands, to our own histories, our own knowledges, and families. The digital space becomes an interface between ourselves; a space where we can speak to and from. The molwa (shadow) has always been an interest to me. An extension of self onto Country - a presentation of self. This showcases the relationship between our bawu (body), mulana (spirit) and woka (country) - each is entwined and connected. They do not work in separation from each other instead, bawu, mulana, and woka work together to form ourselves.

JRW: Spying on them in the kitchen, listening to them talk. I thought I was the one sneaking and listening until Maya found me by the eel trap. We couldn't decide if we would go back the easy way or the hard way until we realised we didn't know the difference. It's funny as I think about being watched and also onlooking, I wasn't a part of the original volume of *Black Wattle* but I was around... hearing about it, talking about it. I feel like the way we work allows me to swim through.... *Black Wattle Volume II* is just about us, and in a way it allows us to talk and be together. I made a horror style shaky short film, Maya was the protagonist. It's vaguely about a water spirit that watches from the outside, until a certain time at night when the veil between the outside and inside is porous. The more patience, the less we plan and just be. I feel most inspired, it is strange also thinking that others outside of this mob will read, watch and listen to *Black Wattle Volume II* as it feels private, I think that having it online puts me at ease. Not that any of the content is made for our eyes only, just that it seems very personal.

KTB: I wasn't with you all for the fire yarns, and I was trying to look for home in the places I was travelling through while overseas, that were so different (and sometimes familiar) to home. I collected photos of all the red, black and yellow combinations in the changing landscapes. While I was home, I made a work on Country while camping with my family - exposing materials from Country to the sun and washing them in cold Taungurung waters. The works were made while thinking about the ways we connect over space and time, whether we are on Country or very far away. *Black Wattle* is always a time capsule or document of where we are, at the time we're making - sometimes unresolved, and sometimes just an experiment. I invited Alice to make a cryptic crossword just for mob. She made me one for a Kris Kringle gift on Christmas and it was the most special present, it's nice to have something just for us, that you know is handmade, and thought about to make you smile and feel special. Lots of homely vibes.

JL: For me, *Black Wattle Volume II* was a chance to make just for me/us, which I think is why my work is so much more personal than usual. There is so much support within the collective to simply make the works we wanted, it's amazing to have a platform where they can be shared together. My work is really reflective and about moments of connection with people around food and drink. While I was too sick to be away together for our residency, viewing everyone's works really helped me think about what matters to me about being a part of a collective/family. My series *Cures for distance* shows three digital scans of food/drink that comfort me when I am missing people.



Moorina Bonini (this mob), *Black Wattle Volume II 2023* (detail). Digital commission. Commissioned by ACCA and The Ian Potter Foundation. Courtesy the artists.

MH: Creating this second iteration of *Black Wattle* has been full of restful moments. Sitting together with Moorina and Jenna Rain up on Wurundjeri Country in front of the fire until the early hours felt like I could breathe deeply again. Being in the city for such a prolonged period of time impacts my ability to create and think up new ideas. Slowing down and cooking everyone a chicken curry from a recipe my mum emailed me made my heart full. This time away allowed me to reflect on my childhood and how coming together to share a meal is more than the nourishment from the food, its nourishment from the people you share it with too.

Key themes and concepts: Collective, zine, collaboration

Inquiry questions

- > Discuss the importance of community. What communities are you a part of – sport, school, extracurricular? Reflect on the importance of coming together and sharing experiences.
- > Discuss the importance of creating safe spaces to live, work and play. Where do you feel most supported, safe, and heard?
- > Discuss the importance and role of collaborative and collective making, particularly in First Nations contemporary art practice. For example, this mob gather in their collective studio often, and with community for important events such as the Invasion Day March on January 26 to facilitate collective making activities. Why do you think it is important to gather and support one another at events such as this, and for opportunities to make together?
- > Explore this mob's digital commission in pairs. Share with the class about your favourite element of *Black Wattle Volume II*; what you enjoyed most, and why?

Making activity

- > As a class create a mind map about the most pressing social and cultural concerns from your perspective that you are most worried about and would like to see change. Choose one topic of concern you feel strongly about and design and make a protest banner in response.

Glossary:

Blak – The provenance of this term goes back to 1994 and Aboriginal artist Destiny Deacon (KuKu Yalanji and Erub/Mer) who urged art curators Hetti Perkins and Claire Williamson to use Blak instead of Black for an exhibition. It ended up being titled *Blakness: Blak City Culture*. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have since adopted this term; more specifically, as Blak (or Blackfullas).

Eurocentric – Centered on Europe or the Europeans; especially: reflecting a tendency to interpret the world in terms of European or Anglo-American values and experiences.

Zine – A noncommercial often homemade or online publication usually devoted to specialized and often unconventional subject matter.

Collaborative – Produced by or involving two or more parties working together.

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