

**CAIRNS
INDIGENOUS
ART FAIR
2014**

Teacher Resource

Dale Harding



Dale Harding *bright eyed little dormitory girls, sweet dreams*, 2014

Courtesy the artist and Cairns Regional Gallery



Dale Harding
*white collared,
confinement
and control*

2013

Courtesy the artist and
Cairns Regional Gallery



Dale Harding



Born: 1982, Moranbah
People: Bidjara, Garingbal and
Ghungalu peoples.
Lives and works: Brisbane

In 2013 Dale Harding completed his Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art with Honours. Still in the early stages of his career, Harding's work has received critical attention and has been included in a number of high profile exhibitions, including String Theory: Focus

on Contemporary Australian Art at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and My Country, I still call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane.

Dale Harding says "my work at the moment is addressing the oral histories that I'm collecting and coming to know as my family and my inherited history... I'm addressing these histories but doing it through a poetic means of expression by giving people an entry point into some history and hopefully finding some inquiry there to maybe ask some questions and maybe find out a bit more.

"In the writing and knowing of Australian history, words on paper and published words in books – (... I've experienced this so I can speak from experience) that regularly the written word by an outsider is taken with more "authority and more validity" ... than the words of the people who experienced it themselves. I've encountered questioning and interrogation of the oral histories that I present and so in a sense it's the oral histories of elderly people and the oral histories of elderly black people. So there is a discounting process that goes on that devalues the validity of these oral histories. The fact is that they're not written in history books and published books and that they're not written by anthropologists and that they remain within the aboriginal community. I've actually had to argue my case, and with the support of other senior artists and members of the aboriginal community, work to reinforce and to stake my claim to the validity of these oral histories – yes they did happen because they are lived experiences.

"Quite a few years ago I was charged with the responsibility of taking these oral histories and turning them into a book, writing a book and stringing together a story, using the narrative of words on pages. But my most effective and natural way of communicating is through the visual. I've developed and worked with objects and worked particularly with materials and historical references through materiality to try to, in a way, form representations of these histories so that people will engage with them."

transcript of Dale Harding on the validity of oral history String Theory exhibition.

<https://www.mca.com.au/news/2013/08/21/mca-insight-string-theory/>

In an interview with Jo Gilbert Harding says of the themes in his work "History – and rewriting or revising history – is a large influence in my creative process, and the motivation behind many of my works. The content of the work influences and shapes the conceptual materials and approach I use to articulate the content.

On the mediums he works with "I do a lot of textile and embroidery work, also with carved timber. I work backwards really; I use materiality in a conceptual sense. The properties and histories of the material I use, feed into my concept. I sway away from clean manufactured materials as they have no authenticity."

"I hope to raise awareness. When people are exposed, it poses the question of: now you know, what are you going to do? I'm passing over the knowledge and sharing histories that people may not know. The audience is integral to bringing a work to life as they can create an ongoing discussion."

<http://www.backyardopera.com/dale-harding.html#.UGZByBaZbnc>

Images and text courtesy of the artist

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at the colours in his work. What are some words we could use to describe those colours?

DISCUSSION

Who were the pillows for? Would you like to sleep with one of these pillows?

ACTIVITY

Ask your grandparents or elders to tell a story about when they were a child. Paint or draw a picture of their story.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the materials that Dale Harding uses. Think about where you would find these materials.

DISCUSSION

Discuss what is different from your oral story, your pictorial story and your written story. Which do you prefer?

ACTIVITY

Find an object or photo that holds a story for your grandparents or elders. If possible record them telling the story (or yourself) and then write the story out in your own words. Do a painting telling the same story. You now have 3 versions. Refer to the discussion activity.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at the simplicity of Harding's sculptures and the way he uses space. Is less more?

DISCUSSION

Discuss implications for Indigenous oral histories against European methods of recording history and the role that art can play in giving voice.

ACTIVITY

Experiment with an object significant to you or your family by recreating it a number of times or photographing it in different contexts or placements.

Segar Passi



Segar Passi *Atwer trying to spear Gelam with her pointed stick, 1972* Watercolour on paper



Segar Passi *Turtles, 2013* Acrylic on paper

Segar Passi



image courtesy of Lee Wilkes

Born: Mer 1942

Heritage: Torres Strait

Lives and works: Mer (Murray Island)

Mer (Murray Island), located some two hundred kilometres north-east of Cape York, is the most easterly island in the Torres Strait. Surrounded by crystal-clear waters and abundant sea life, it is a place where migrating birds stop to rest and turtles nest on the shore. Mer is the home of the senior Torres Strait artist Segar Passi.

Passi has spent his life painting what he knows and is close to his heart. That is his island home and his culture: the stories, traditions and lifestyle of the Meriam people; Mer's flora and fauna; and the waters of the Torres Strait. Passi describes himself as a self-taught artist:

Commercially prepared art materials were not readily available when Passi was a child on Mer, but determined to paint, he crushed different-coloured stones to produce pigments and then mixed these with sea water. Carrying his colours in clamshells, and using dried pandanus fruit to make brushes, he would go in search of large, flat rocks that he could use as painting surfaces.

When Passi was in his twenties, Margaret Lawrie, a teacher who became an advocate for the Torres Strait Islands and their culture, discovered his talent. In the early 1960s, Lawrie started to record the Islanders stories and genealogies. Her project, *Myths and Legends of the Torres Strait* would take nine years to complete.

With Lawrie guiding him in what to paint and draw, Segar Passi took to the task of depicting Mer's birds and marine life and giving visual form to stories that had been passed down to him. The result was a body of work comprising a large number of watercolours, together with several pencil drawings. The watercolours were primarily studies of fish and birds, characterised by exquisite colouration and finely observed details, documenting more than 135 individual species.

One of Passi's watercolours (left) shows a scene from a narrative that has great significance for the people of Mer: the story of Gelam, creator of dugong. Gelam was a young man from the island of Moa. To escape his mother, Atwer, who had been playing tricks on him, Gelam carved a dugong from the wood of a bloodwood tree and then put to sea in the dugong, travelling from Moa to Mer. Alongside Mer, Gelam lay down, facing south-west; he then dispersed the plants, seeds and soil that he had brought with him from his home island, and he turned himself into a hill. The fertility of the soil on Mer is attributed to Gelam.

Passi's passion for making art has never dissipated. Now in his seventies, Passi continues to paint; however, today he works mainly with acrylics, on paper or canvas. In 2010 he was commissioned by the Queensland Art Gallery to produce ten paintings for the Gallery's *Land, Sea and Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands* exhibition. The resulting series of works was themed around cloud formations – referencing knowledge traditionally used by Torres Strait Islanders in reading and predicting weather.

These works were indirectly inspired by an incident in 2006 where three Islander men, whose dinghy had been blown off course by Cyclone Monica, were stranded at sea for twenty-two days. Although the three were found alive, Passi believes that the whole incident could have been avoided through the teaching of cultural knowledge relating to the reading of cloud patterns. As an elder in his community, he teaches art and cultural lore to students at Mer's primary school, and for some years he has been using small 'cloud paintings' as a means of communicating knowledge about clouds to the children. He wants to instil in the younger generation of Islanders the cultural tradition of turning to the sky and reading the clouds prior to any trip to sea, in order to ensure a safe return and, for fishermen, a successful catch.

The most recent works in the exhibition show aspects of everyday life on Mer. The subjects of these pictures, in which clouds, the beach and the sea remain key compositional elements, range from the passing of cultural knowledge from older Islanders to the young, to activities such as food preparation, traditional basket weaving, and play.

Although Passi's visual style has changed quite dramatically over the years, it has always been distinctive. The watercolours that Passi contributed to Margaret Lawrie's project are unlike any of the other watercolours in the Margaret Lawrie Collection, and his recent paintings are unlike those of any other present-day Torres Strait artist. Highly regarded as contemporary artworks, Passi's paintings can be seen to represent a generational link between the carved and incised sculptures of pre-contact Torres Strait Islander artists and the works being made today by Torres Strait artists.

Segar Passi is an artist whose practice reflects a deep engagement with the history, cultural traditions and flora and fauna of the Torres Strait Islands, while also identifying him as a significant contemporary Australian painter with a unique and important voice. His works reveal not only a truly original artistic vision but also the beauty that is Mer, and the richness and vitality of the living culture of Passi's island home.

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at each painting. Point to all the animals you can see.

DISCUSSION

What are the turtles doing?

ACTIVITY

Paint an animal that is important to you like your dog or cat or favourite bird.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the difference between the water colour paintings and the acrylic paintings.

DISCUSSION

What is different and what is similar with each of these artworks.

ACTIVITY

Go outside and find the horizon. Do a painting with the horizon in the middle of the painting.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at all the information contained in each image. Look at how that information is carried visually.

DISCUSSION

Are images able to carry information better than text? Discuss.

ACTIVITY

Take a section from a scientific text book and try to impart the same knowledge using only images and considering colour choices.

Images courtesy of Cairns Regional Gallery



R.E.A.C.H. Teacher Resource

Text courtesy of Cairns Regional Gallery



R.E.A.C.H. Teacher Resource

Paul Bong (Bindur Bullin)



Paul Bong *Dispersed - Fragments 3 & 4* (from *Murrifactive Shield Study series*) 2014

Intaglio etching and aquatint with hand wiping from shaped zinc

Paul Bong (Bindur Bullin)



Born: 1963, Cairns

Tribe: Yidinyji - Gimuy

Language: Yidinyji

Lives and works: Mirriwinni,
Queensland

My given tribal name is Bindur Bullin, after a great warrior. I am a descendant of the Yidinyji tribe who occupied the fertile rainforest lands from Cairns in the north to Babinda in the south and west into the Atherton Tablelands as far as Kairi.

My ancestral history is rooted in this region. My great-grandparents were both tribal elders when all the lands were Yidinyji. My father, George, also knew the traditional ways of living. He spoke the Yidinyji language, though he wasn't allowed to speak it when he went to school. He was forced to reject the traditional ways and to assimilate to the white society. This broke the continuity of our culture, language and heritage that has been passed down through many generations.

It has been up to me to research my cultural background and to rediscover my heritage. My grandmother, who spoke Yidinyji, taught me stories and legends about the rainforest – its bush food, animals, young warriors and special places such as Babinda Boulders and the Gordonvale Pyramid. These stories are the inspirations to many of my paintings.

I incorporate traditional designs with modern techniques in my art, and each design has a spiritual meaning. Take, for example, the fighting shield: it was used for fighting and played an important role in young men's initiation. After receiving his final initiation marks, each man was given a shield to paint. Every design had a different meaning associated with totems or inspired by legends.

My people, the Yidinyji - Gimuy, have lived in the region south of Cairns since pre-contact times. Our families fought vigorously against intruding pastoralists and government-sanctioned pioneers with little more than spears and wooden shields. Some of these artefacts are now in museums. Still, others have been handed down from one generation to the next, stored under houses and in sheds. So many memories - silent testimonials - so many hands these objects have passed through!

The title *Murrifactive* is a fictional title, implying northern Queensland Aboriginal or Murri people as fact-finding and pro-active. The current generation of young Murri people is distanced from the lives of our forebears, but that doesn't stop us from being curious and respectful. So, we look at our culture in museums and books. I am trying to see the truth in our situation and be honest about our future direction.

Many of our people are resigned to a fate of compliance and have adopted the British/ European ways - and similar means of survival. Christianity has replaced many of our customs. English is now our dominant language. Consumerism has replaced bush life. Today our families are fragmenting from internal fighting. We treasure the objects of our ancestors, often found in paddocks and jungle caves, and keep on looking. Even the smallest fragments carry deep meaningful stories. I am currently in discussion with the Cairns Historical Society to share information about the retrieval of a number of cultural objects, including the whereabouts of a long-discarded 'king plate'.

Images and text courtesy of the artist, Editions Tremblay NFP and Canopy Art Centre

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at shapes Paul Bong has used. What shapes can you see?

DISCUSSION

Why were the Yidinyji - Gimuy fighting against the pastoralist and pioneers?

ACTIVITY

Do frottages (rubblings) of interesting trees and rocks. Cut them into the shapes of shields and highlight marks by redrawing over the top.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the detail on the shields. What images can you make out.

DISCUSSION

Discuss Paul Bong's statement that "even the smallest fragments carry deep meaningful stories."

ACTIVITY

Using acetate create an etching based on an object of historical meaning for you, such as an old chair or jewellery box or mat.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at the sense of aging and the careful way the artist has depicted deterioration.

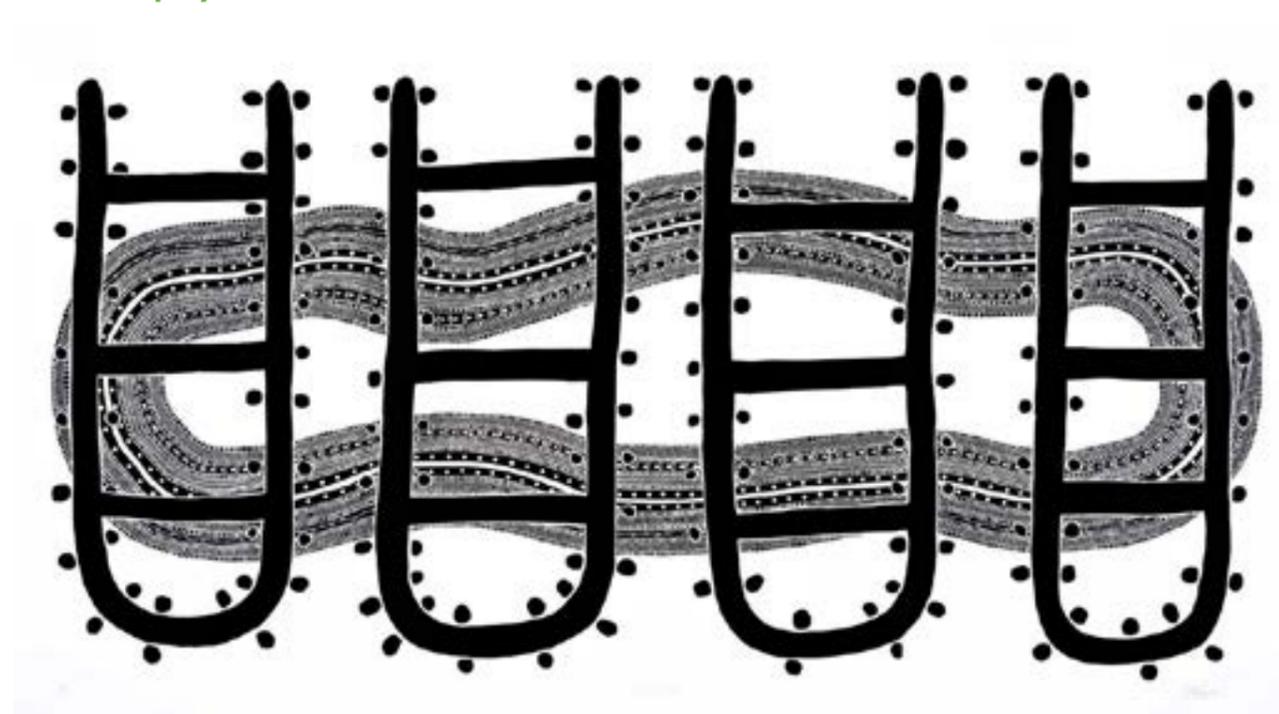
DISCUSSION

Why is it important for Paul Bong to include the title and stamps. Consider his artistic actions and compare them with Dale Harding's work.

ACTIVITY

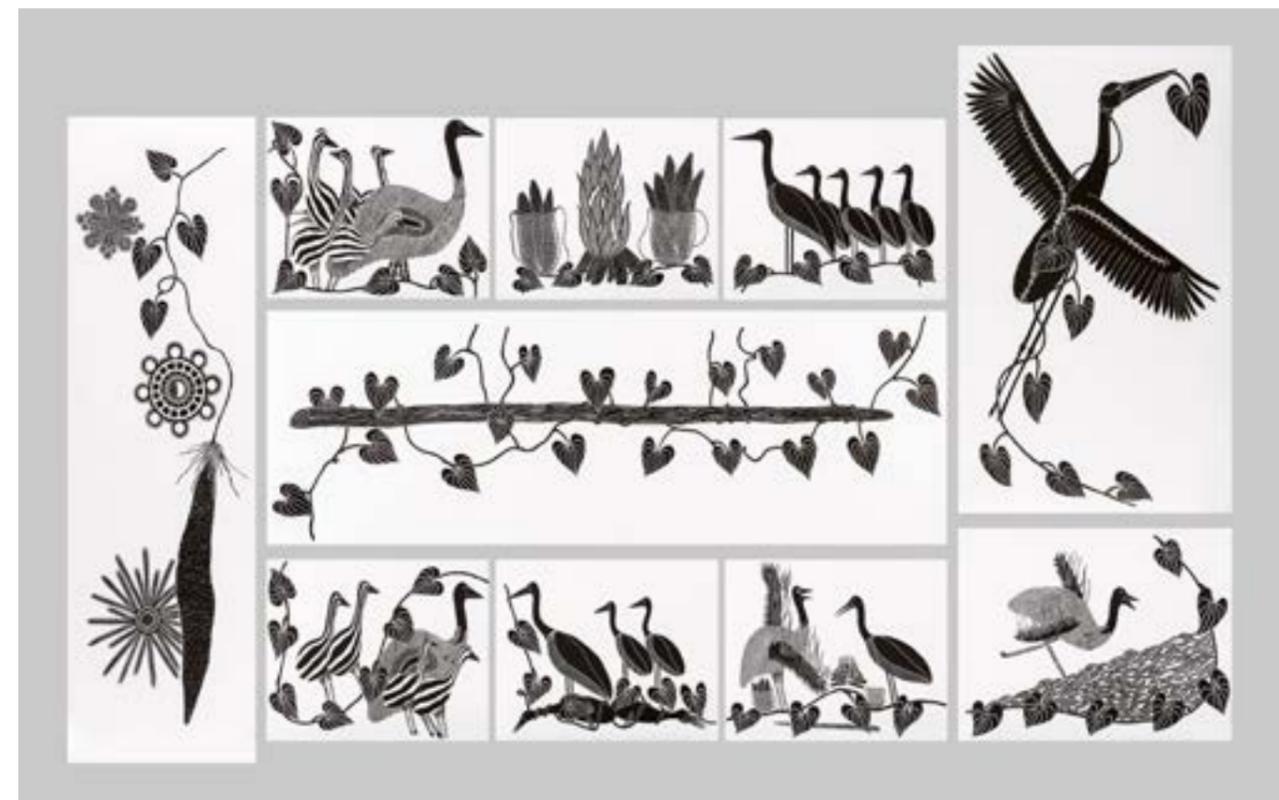
Create multi coloured etchings (on acetate, card or plate) that explores the term artefact.

Teho Ropeyarn



Teho Ropeyarn *Apudthama* 2013, vinyl cut print on paper

30th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award -Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, Darwin NT
Winning Work – Work On Paper Category Award Image courtesy of the artist.



Teho Ropeyarn *Utku an Alarrakudhi – anbachama ikya (Emu and Brolga - beforetime story)* 2014, vinyl cut print on paper Image courtesy of the artist.

Teho Ropeyarn



Born: Mount Isa, 1988

Community: Injinoo, Northern Cape York Peninsula, Queensland

Clan: Angkamuthi- North West Cape

York, Yadhaykana- North East Cape York

Blood Ties: Woppaburra – Great Keppel Is., Butchulla – Fraser Is., Murray

Is., Badu Is. and Moa Is.

Lives & works: Cairns

Artist Statement

My printmaking journey began in 2010 on my return to my home community of Injinoo after four years of study in Sydney. I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of New South Wales – College Of Fine Arts in Sydney. Although my major studies were in painting and drawing, I participated in elective classes such as printmaking and ceramics and since then, have been heavily involved in printmaking.

I work with medium to large-scale intricate, yet, bold lino and vinyl relief prints depicting my culture; stories, totems, clans, country, environment and my home community of Injinoo. My passion is to restore and preserve old stories passed down from Injinoo Elders.

"It's about keeping culture alive, it's about being the ikamba (crocodile) and the strength it has to stay alive and survive".

My rhythm and carving techniques and design is not a representation of the style of art of my people (Injinoo people). There are symbols that belong to my people seen throughout my work and the stories are the intellectual property of my ancestors, present and past elders of Injinoo. I've been permitted by my Elder Ama Mary Eseli (Cultural and Language keeper and teacher) to use stories and language of my people told to us using my own style and imagination. My style reflects my heritage as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and it influences my work as a contemporary Indigenous artist from Injinoo.

My contemporary style of designs and patterning includes traditional symbolism that connects me to the spirit of my clans. My work is recognised through my unique carving techniques, which emphasises the rhythm, composition and overall aesthetic of my works.

"My artwork reflects the continuation of cultural knowledge passed down from generations long ago, onto our Elders, who are now passing on all aspect of culture; language, tribal stories, significant land marks and rituals, dancing and beliefs to the next generation. It is important that cultural knowledge is passed down from our Elders and that they teach language, tribal stories, art, dancing and cultural beliefs to the next generation to carry on the 40000+ year old ancient culture we breathe today".

"We are in a day and age where culture and grass root knowledge is slowly deteriorating due to Elders passing, our ever-changing lifestyle and social disadvantages in our communities, practicing art is one way of maintaining and developing culture and has always been a part of Aboriginal culture. Through this tradition, it will preserve my culture in one way for years to come".

Recreating old stories belonging to my people is my first priority as I would like to have them documented through my arts practice and kept alive through my pieces for years to come.

My successful journey so far includes winning the Museum of Contemporary Art - Primavera Acquisitive Art Prize in 2013, two-time finalist in the 29th and 30th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award at the Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, winning the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award - work on paper award in 2013, one of seven artists in the Primavera 2012 exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Sydney, 11th Nationwide Academies of Fine Arts Printmaking Biennial, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, Guangzhou, China 2012, Queensland Regional Art Award 2012 – Xstrata young artist development award winner with his work featuring in 'The Essential Character of Queensland' – Queensland Regional Art Award touring exhibition 2013, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2012 exhibition – 'Where the art leads: new exploration by Queensland Indigenous Artists' curated by Avril Quail, Naissance 2013 – Far North Queensland Emerging artists at the Cairns Regional Gallery, Story Boat exhibition at Cairns Regional Gallery and the InkMasters Print exhibition at the Tanks Arts Centre in 2012. Teho was successful in Australia Council's JUMP Mentoring Program and ArtStart Grant 2012.

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at the repetitive patterns in the background shape of the work *Apudthama*.

DISCUSSION

Name all the things can you see in the work, *Utku an Alarrakudhi – anbachama ikya* (Emu and Brolga - beforetime story). What do you think is happening in the story?

ACTIVITY

Draw a large shape and then using only black paint, pen or pencil create repetitive patterns to fill that shape.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the way Teho is telling a story in *Utku an Alarrakudhi – anbachama ikya* (Emu and Brolga - beforetime story). Where does your story start?

DISCUSSION

Read Teho's artist statement and discuss why art important to him? How is art an important part of your life?

ACTIVITY

Teho Ropeyarn's work is very symmetrical and stylised. Create an artwork using symmetrical and repetitive patterns based on nature.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at the composition and the way the artist has used symmetrical and non symmetrical elements.

DISCUSSION

Do you need to understand the title name or what the work is referring to be able to have an opinion about this work. How important is it for the audience to know the stories behind Indigenous art?

ACTIVITY

Design a lino print highlighting the contrast of detail against simplicity, foreground against background and black against white.

Ailan Pasin



Ellarose Savage *Mother of the Sand* 2014

"Weapu is the traditional name for mother of the sand which is an insect that lives in the sand. In before time, designs taken from this small insect were used in body decorations and necklaces. Through my research I have found many such references to sand lions and so I have chosen to bring it to life once more.." Ellarose Savage

All images and text courtesy of Lynnette Griffiths and Erub Arts

Ailan Pasin



Ellarose Savage



Maryann Bourne



Florence Gutchen



Racy Dui-Pitt

Florence Gutchen

I was born on Poruma and I am from the Samu Clan, this is also my totem. When I was young my favourite hobbies were crochet, bead making and sewing. As a member of the Art Centre I enjoy learning new things and sharing knowledge with others.

Racy Dui-Pitt

I am from the Meuram Tribe and my totem is Beuger. My art reflects my culture and my mixed heritage from the Torres Strait and the Pacific islands. I enjoy making art, and want to share what I do with others.

Erub Arts

Erub (Darnley Island) Torres Strait

The Artists at Erub Arts want to share their unique island style and culture with the world by creating comfortable eminently wearable garments and accessories for women of all ages.

Ailan Pasin translates as island or islander fashion however in the Torres Strait the word 'pasin' also means style, ways, custom, tradition. Ailan Pasin is therefore an assertion of independence and identity by a minority group of islander people who form one of two indigenous Australian groups.

Ailan Pasin - Body Language

Started as a project that researched women's identity, family totems and stories. The original large scale charcoal drawings formed a large part of an exhibition called Sea Journeys.

Inspired by traditional Torres Strait Island dresses, Ailan Pasin's first collection of free flowing resort wear features digitally printed silks and cottons. These fabrics highlight the subtleties of the velvety charcoal drawings that unite feminine form and story, revealing the artist's deep connections to their people, their sea and their tribal totems.

Erub (Darnley Island)

Erub is a tropical volcanic island 160 km North East of Cape York on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef. Surrounded by fringing reef and traditional stone fish traps it is home to approx 400 Erubam le (people) from four tribal groups. Our seafaring heritage has traditions in elaborately carved and decorated canoes, carved stone and intricately made dance costumes and weaponry. Stories of creation and events are passed down through song and dance keeping cultural traditions vibrantly alive.

Ellarose Savage

My tribe is Meuram and my totem is Nam. I enjoy expressing my relationship to the sea and the link between people's surroundings, objects and our culture. I love the beauty of our environment and as a small girl my father taught me many things. Often my work revolves around the stories from my father and the things he taught me as a child.

Maryann Bourne

I am from the Meuram tribe and my totems are Gainau and Nam. I have always enjoyed making things with my hands and have always crocheted and sewed, I want to make things that represent myself, my family and surroundings. I am presently enjoying weaving and making ghost net bags.

Emma Gela

I am from the Saisarem tribe and my totems are Tabo and Karr. When I was younger I had many family commitments but now I can enjoy coming together with other women to make things. We share stories, experiences and learn and make things together.

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at the shapes Ellarose has used. What words could you use to describe those shapes?

DISCUSSION

Why are animals important to Ellarose and the people of Erub?

ACTIVITY

Fill a container with water or sand and then drop small objects such as beads in. Draw the shapes and patterns you see on the top of the water or sand.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the movement of the outside patterns and how they are different to the insect patterns.

DISCUSSION

Is the work 'Mother of the Sand' realistic or abstract or representational? What do these terms mean?

ACTIVITY

Look in the school yard for evidence of animals or insects such as tracks. Look for marks that repeat themselves. Draw using charcoal the tracks you can see and emphasise the patterns they make.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at how the artists have taken their designs to the very edge and then beyond

DISCUSSION

Why is it important to tell and retell stories and to find new ways to represent those stories. How could this apply to your life?

ACTIVITY

Do a repetitive line drawing inspired by animals. Consider taking your designs beyond the page edge. Turn these drawings into a screen or lino print for either material or paper.

Philomena Yeatman



Philomena Yeatman *Bulgarra* 2014 Yagal (Pandanas leaves)



Images and text courtesy the artist and Yarrabah Arts Precinct

Philomena Yeatman



Photos courtesy of the artist and Yarrabah Arts Precinct

Language Group: Gunggannji
Born: 1960 Yarrabah
Lives and works: Yarrabah

Philomena Yeatman was born and raised in the Yarrabah community which was an Anglican Mission until 1962. Philomena's grandmother handed down the coiled technique she uses which has similarities in form to English sewing baskets.

Philomena began her career in the arts in 1991 as a screen printer and jewelry maker, later developing her skills as a weaver producing table mats, fans and baskets. In recent years she has also discovered her talent for painting.

The baskets produced by the women of Yarrabah are made from the leaves of the Pandanus Palm and the cabbage Palm. The leaves are collected from the palm when green then dried, curled and rolled ready for use. Some of the palm leaves are dyed and then used for the intricate designs incorporated into the woven baskets.

"The art of weaving and basket making has been passed on through the generations and depicts the skills and patience that has been part of the aboriginal culture for centuries. Philomena continues to carry on the tradition of basket making working with a group of woman dedicated to keeping alive the art of basketry as well as spending most days at the Yarrabah Arts Centre painting and producing exhibition ready works.

'In 1908 a Saibai Islander named Jiga came to Yarrabah and taught the girls how to use yagal (pandanus palm) to make mats. Then an old lady named Mary Connolly taught some girls how to collect yagal and make baskets. They had a big flattie by the name of Pearl Maiden. They used to go over to a place called Balburu for a day to cut the yagal because it was plentiful there. You need to have a cane knife for cutting off the leaf and to clean off the prickles, and old clothes because the thorns are also sharp. You also have to have a sunny day because if it rains it will spoil the yagal. When it is dry the yagal is curled then rolled ready for mura mura (basket) and bundu (dilly bag). When I was a child we used to go there every weekend by boat to eat mangoes, catch fish, drag the net and eat oysters from the rocks. Old people used to make the mura mura to put their fruit and vegies in and the bundu they used it to catch fish and eel by crushing up berries and leaving it under the water. Today old ladies use the mura mura when they go shopping or to church with their bibles in them. Today it's hard to get to Balburu because it's all overgrown with mangroves and bush. But this place is special to me because it's where the old ladies long ago would pick yagal for their mura mura.'

Philomena Yeatman

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at this basket. What is different about this basket?

DISCUSSION

What could you use this basket for?

ACTIVITY

Do a coloured pencil drawing of this basket. Try to draw all the lines that you can see.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

What do you notice about the different types of weaving used in this basket? What purpose could that have?

DISCUSSION

How did Philomena learn to make this basket? Does she still collect yagal to make her baskets?

ACTIVITY

Weave a basket out of rolled up magazine strips. Before you start write down what you want to use your basket for and design what shape it will be.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look at the image of this basket. If the basket is on a wall is it an art work? If the basket is being used is it an artwork? If it stills looks the same what is different?

DISCUSSION

These skills have been handed down from various women such as Jiga and Philomena's grandmother. How important are these skills today? Are we loosing skills or do they transform?

ACTIVITY

Research and document your own cultural background and try a skill that your grandparents did when they were younger such as tapestry or leather work or lure making.

Sheryl Burchill



Sheryl Burchill *Dilly I, Dilly III, Dilly IV* 2014; grogged sculptural clay fired to stoneware temperature



Vanessa Cannon *Vessel* 2014; monprint

Text courtesy of the artist and Yalanji Arts
Images are courtesy of Lynnette Griffiths

Sheryl Burchill



Bama Name: Walbul Walbul (meaning butterfly)
Language Group: Kuku Yalanji/Kuku Nyungkal
Lives and works: Mossman

Artist Statement

"I come from an artistic family which includes one brother and two sisters. We were raised by a strong mother who, herself, received ongoing support and guidance from our grandparents.

The stories from my mother and grandparents, the landscape and the environment are inspiration for my artwork. Connection with my culture and the sense of knowing where I come from, keeps me grounded as a person. It also gives

me the strength and courage to take on the challenges in life. Being able to share all I have learnt about my culture through my art, is a blessing.

I have completed Certificates 3 & 4 in ATSI Cultural Arts and a Diploma in ATSI Cultural Visual Arts and for nearly three years was employed as an Art Coordinator at Yalanji Arts, Mossman Gorge. During that time I took part in many workshops learning new skills in print making, ceramics, wood carving and textiles printing and jewellery.

I always aim to use my understanding of Yalanji culture - traditional stories and life style - to inform my art work and to express my ideas in a contemporary style."

As Yalanji people, the Mossman Gorge artists have grown up with the stories of their ancestors and are the 'holders' of cultural and traditional knowledge. It is the stories from this background that informs their artwork as does the rainforest, which, being their place, has a strong presence in their work.

In the exhibition 'Vessel' at TANKS Art Gallery during June & July 2014, Yalanji Artists have used sculptural ceramic form and linear mono print to express the idea of 'vessel' as a traditional and contemporary container of domestic importance.

The ceramic vessels explore the theme using a medium that is traditional to cultures across the world. They reflect the rainforest environment and the flora and fauna of Yalanji country. Sheryl Burchill's 'Dilly I, III and IV' reference woven baskets or dilly bags traditionally important to women for gathering foods and carrying babies. The fine, intricate weave make them strong 'like the Yalanji women who walked this earth before me'

The monoprints in the exhibition are the result of a collaborative project designed to reinforce understanding about composition and the play of tone, line and texture to achieving a strong visual statement.

Sheryl's monprint, *Buda* (empty containers) is a meditation on materials used in contemporary times compared with those used in her grandmother's time.

"I am grateful to have both the modern and traditional in my life. Sometimes modern can feel empty, unused and unloved. I add traditional culture into my life and then I feel whole and my soul is at peace."

The monprint pictured is by Vanessa Cannon. Called 'Vessel', the print has successfully capitalized on the effects possible through this medium creating stark contrast to the tactility of Sheryl Burchill's *Dilly I, III and IV*.

Through their work, Yalanji Artists have the capacity to reflect upon and express ideas about traditional and contemporary life. Their art work reflects and celebrates the strong connection they have with their traditional culture and with the rainforest that is their home. At the same time, however, through the creative development program at Yalanji Arts they are encouraged to push their understanding and technical skills to develop a contemporary and expressive approach to visually articulating their ideas. In this way, both the traditional and the contemporary lend richness and complexity to the works they produce. The mission of Yalanji Arts is to nurture and develop Indigenous artists, to showcase Yalanji culture and to generate growth in individuals and the community as a whole.

EARLY

LOOKING

Look at the texture on the side of the vessels. Think about how Sheryl could have made those marks.

DISCUSSION

What does the word vessel mean? What other words mean something similar?

ACTIVITY

Use clay (or paper clay) to make small pinch pots. Add texture to the outside.

MIDDLE

LOOKING

Look at the difference between each pot and think about the pots and vases you find in a shop.

DISCUSSION

Discuss Sheryl's quote of the traditional and modern and the difference between hand made objects and shop bought objects. What is similar and what is different?

ACTIVITY

Research different types of vessels found in your home. Draw a number of them. Create a series of clay vessels based on these drawings.

SENIOR

LOOKING

Look and think about the names of each vessel and the connections with each pot.

DISCUSSION

Discuss the value of the art centre to communities. Consider the varying roles that they play. Is there an equivalent structure in your community?

ACTIVITY

Research different types of vessels found in your home. Draw a number of them. Create a series of clay vessels and mono prints based on these drawings. Work collaboratively.

What is REACH?

Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs

REACH is an Arts (all strands: Visual Arts, Drama, Dance, Music and Media) strategy being implemented by Education Queensland to connect and bring together people at primary and secondary schools all over FNQ (local, rural and remote) to:

- **Improve** Arts teacher practice by identifying existing strengths and skills and sharing these curriculum and classroom practices
- **Identify** talented Arts students and improve their learning and career pathways
- **Develop** and run school-based excellence courses for students using Artists in Residence
- **Exhibit** and celebrate successful outcomes of Arts students
- **Build** up a range of resources to support practical implementation of Arts in schools throughout FNQ.

The REACH Goal

Focus on improving consistency, balance and excellence in Arts Education delivery to Indigenous students, non-Indigenous students and teachers including all phases of learning in rural and remote contexts.

Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) is a unique three-day event that merges an art market with a celebration of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

The Cairns Indigenous Art Fair is the only art fair in Australia to welcome commercial art galleries and Indigenous art centres to sell and showcase art by Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) is committed to providing an ethical marketplace for the sale and purchase of Queensland Indigenous art and supporting the career development of Queensland Indigenous artists.

Since the birth of CIAF in 2009, the event has grown to be one of the most recognised Art Fairs / Festivals in Australia. Held 24 - 27 July, 2014 it is a unique event on Australia's cultural calendar and an unparalleled celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, dance and music. www.ciaf.com.au

Resource:
and design: Sally Donald
Visual Art Strand Organiser
REACH

Special Thanks:

Amanda Black	Dale Harding
Justin Bishop	Jeannie Heynatz
Paul Bong	Fiona Johnson
Kylie Burke	Janette Laver
Sheryl Burchill	Diann Lui
Alison Copley	Paloma Ramos
Rachel Fairweather	Teho Ropeyarn
Vanessa Gillen	Wanda Weatherall
Lynnette Griffiths	Janelle Williams



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