



Gen Anderson Sorry 2013 (detail) drypoint and archival pigment print 520 x 400 mm

Mapping spiritual journeys; a collaborative print project from Indigenous and Non-Indigenous printmakers



Inside Out

Artists

Twenty-six printmakers from Inkmasters Cairns

Curated by

Marion Wolfs



artslinkqld.com.au/exhibitions



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Exhibition Statement

Inside / Out: Mapping spiritual journeys is a curated exhibition of original prints by Inkmasters Cairns Inc. members – Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous artists. The prints were all created as a response to the bi-horn shape of the metal breast plates, or "king plates", introduced in Australia by Sydney colonial Governor (Gub'á) Lachlan Macquarie (1815 - 1832) and awarded to indigenous leaders (in this and other colonial societies) to facilitate cooperation and assuage the social effects of exploiting the land.

The journey to reconciliation, how it might be accomplished and what results can be expected, remains a current and vexed topic for all Australians. These newly created "king plates" reflect the wide range of contemporary views of this fraught passage. They range from personal narratives to historical perspectives, critical views and humour – all of which seek to embody a 'journey' as a necessary process of discovering mutual understanding. The collection of prints addresses the theme of reconciliation and shared history in an innovative manner. The artists embrace a '*transit of the spirit*' as a necessary process of discovering mutual understanding.

The prints include old and new technologies and combinations of both. They also include collaborations between indigenous and non-indigenous artists and printers. The collection demonstrates the depth of printmaking talent in Far North Queensland.



Inside Out

an exhibition by Inkmasters Cairns Inc.



This program is proudly supported by:



Journey towards an artifact

Margaret Genever

Polyester plate lithograph and aquarelle
2013 52 x 40 cm framed

This work refers to the long and arduous journey towards an accommodation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.



Within

Steve Royster

Intaglio, hand coloured variable edition
2013 52 x 40 cm framed



King Billy Crescent

Theo Tremblay

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Ocean views >New Release Subdivision > Water Frontage > Investment Property You Can Trust > Buy Now, Play Later > Reduced to Sell > Views > Easy Terms Available > Last Chance Paradise > Going Fast > Accessible To All Amenities > Beach Frontage > Security Assured > Fantastic Nature And Recreation Parks >Act Now- Lots Going Fast!

-Why Wait?



Reef Eclipse Spawning

Sid Bruce Short Joe

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

My design comes from a series I started in November 2012, when there was a solar eclipse in Pormpuraaw. We believe a huge serpent devours the sun, then spits it back out. Some scientists visiting our community told me they were studying the ocean reef system, watching to see if the coral would spawn during the event. I imagined what the sun would look like from the ocean floor, looking up - the coral, the stars and the crescent shadow on the sun - repeated in the shape of the breast-plate. Maybe, like eclipsing ourselves, we get distressed, get devoured in grief and get a second chance - spit back into life again.



Kulba Mabaigan Moegaw

Sharon Phineasa

Etching
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Long ago amongst the islands of the Torres Strait, during time of warfare, sacred songs, dances and ceremonial rites were performed before the commencement of battles. The observance of such rituals was a way of preserving customs and traditions. Another integral aspect of war preparation was the act of summoning the spirits belonging to the ancestors, in order to draw upon their power for spiritual and physical strength and guidance. It was strongly believed that these spirits would watch over the warriors securing good fortune upon them. In this piece I have merged the elements above in my own intricate design.



The main *gudan* breastplate, made from pearl shell, when worn by the warrior, sits on the chest, protecting the heart. As the two unite, the past merges, so too, with the present. To the warriors who reflect on the sacrifices made by their ancestors before them, it brings to those following a renewal of purpose and ignites a deep sense of duty and pride – honouring their memory, fuelling warriors to fight with more determination and tenacity.

The life of the trees is the life of our own people

Anna Eglitis

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

My plate is worn on a heavy chain around our collective necks. It depicts the environment methodically being destroyed – from colonization onward. What, on earth, are we leaving for our children, our children’s children, and their children’s children? Here, we flood the valleys to create more water storage and hydro-electricity, killing trees, displacing and destroying the habitats of birds and animals. Elsewhere, we deforest the land for cattle grazing, farming and mining –MOSTLY FOR EXPORT!!! Our family tree is being ring-barked and poisoned at the roots.



Impermanence

Louisa Ennis-Thomas

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Exploring narratives of creation versus decay, preservation versus destruction, I investigate the fragile symbiotic relationships underpinning our existence. Playing upon visual ambiguity, central to my creative enquiry, *Impermanence* delves into the visceral, the earthly, the organic.

My breast plate, as a symbol of social and cultural reconciliation within Australia, is a timely reminder of our need to further reconcile ourselves with the natural environment. Traditional owners and long term stewards of the land, Australia’s indigenous peoples have the potential to play a significant role in this on-going process.



Sheela

Christine Eyres

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Sheela na Gig (pronounced *gioch*) is The Divine Hag: the Celtic archetype that was lost in history to the collective consciousness. In recent times this image has been unearthed in the ruins of churches and other buildings, mainly in Ireland, but also in other sites in the UK and Europe. Some believe this long repressed aspect of collective consciousness has returned to redress the imbalance that has led to the nightmare of interminable strife, and that humanity is now ready to integrate the feminine principle. The figure is, most likely, in the birthing position ready to catch the new born. The meaning of the Celtic spiral has been largely lost on time, but to me it represents new life and growth. I have also used the fish, a universal symbol of the feminine. The Kingplate is in the shape of a boat on a journey to Australia; towards the new beginning for our family, ravished by the severe privations experienced by working class people in Scotland and Ireland, before, during and after the Second World War.

Like the Divine Hag my great-grandmother was lost in history. She suffered severe deprivation including being in the poorhouses of Glasgow and Edinburgh on several occasions. She was then relegated to the closet, where I found her, and recognised that she was part of my spiritual journey.



Babinda Story

Paul Bong

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

My people, the *Yidinji-Gamoi Mulaburra*, south of Cairns, inhabited a very special tropical forest where two rivers emerge from the deep forest, joining together in a big opening with towering fig trees casting long their aerial roots and vines. Bush turkeys roam everywhere. Big fat eels, the width of a man's arm swim in the deep water. The river then cascades down amongst huge boulders to the Russell River, then meanders to the open sea. This place, always foggy and damp, we call Babinda Boulders. It is the wettest part of Australia, averaging 3-4 meters of rainfall a year. Deep pools of crystal clear water attract tourists – but beware, these pools are dangerous. We believe Babinda falls is inhabited by the guardian spirit *Waluna*, who appears to young men in the forest and sings them towards falls. There, amongst the huge smooth boulders, shaped by the floodwaters of millions of years, the still pools of slow moving water entices one to dive in. Pulled down between the crevices by fast-moving currents, the victim is doomed. These days there are warning signs to prevent tourists from going into those waters.

My etching shows how breast shields and pendants were worn together. The round pendant, engraved in shell, depicts the junction of the rivers with respect to our traditional spiked saw-tooth design. The crescent-shaped breast plate is done European way, with *Waluna* keeping watch over her land.



Kurrs

Glen Mackie (Kei Kalak)

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Hammerhead shark is my totem. My language is *Kulkagal* and I am from Yam (*Iyam*) Island in the Torres Strait. Warriors wore *dibadib* as protection in war. Usually, totems and protective magic symbols were engraved to give more power to the wearer. The *minar* (traditional island carved patterns) are based on waves and water currents and are my own designs. Also, in the old days, pearl shell breast plates were traded as money, up the coast into Papua New Guinea. Trading was very important in those days – still is! Islanders always needed to trade to survive; working, always with outsiders. This is why *Kulkagal* are so friendly...very strong, very friendly.



To shine out from the inside and synthesise

Judith Corrighan

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

To know the dance
That to dance is Love
The Dance is All.

Who will dance with me?
Come dance with me
And it shall be ours!

O the Joy of Us:
The Joy of Us All!
Joy is to dance:
The Dance is All.



Tokenism

Sasi Victoire

Woodcut and chine collé
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

The political implications of colonialism, awarding a token recognition without respect and power entitlements have to be questioned. As a strategy to divide and rule a race of people whose power structure was altered from that which was strongly based on familial ties and knowledge base to one based on false hierarchy.



Sorry

Gen Anderson

Drypoint and archival pigment print
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

This drypoint over digitally printed image is titled *Sorry*. It represents my personal response to the demeaning way some of the First Australians were manipulated, against their own people's interests, into cooperation with the new settlers.

In a journey towards reconciliation, it has been established that recognition of wrongdoing is a necessary prerequisite. The acknowledgement, by the offending party, of this wrong-doing and a sincere apology would be the first tentative steps towards mutual respect and eventual reconciliation.



Burnum Burnum's Declaration

Carmen Ky

Digital and solar plate etching
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

This print celebrates my collaboration with Burnum Burnum on Australia Day, 1988 when he planted the Aboriginal flag at Folkstone, Dover and claimed England for the Aboriginal people as the Bi-centenary First Fleet Re-enactment sailed into Sydney Harbour. This year is the 25th Anniversary of that historic event.

Burnum was one of the stolen generation, he studied law, was an author, actor and activist. This theatrical, poignant statement was part of his personal spiritual journey towards wholeness and reconciliation and one of the many thoughtful, playful ways he pointed out his people's situation.

I was there in England as the photographer and I have used photoshop to montage and manipulate my photos as well as printing and hand drawing and rescanning the image and incorporating Burnum Burnum's statement. The result is a combination of digital process and solar plate etching.



Boab lovers kiss

Arone Meeks

Etching
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Aboriginal people endured successive waves of intruders and fought valiantly to retain their country, receiving little recognition for their efforts. *Boab lovers kiss* represents a personal connection to country based on observations of sensual forms found in the mangroves and my connection to salt water. The notion of the breast-plate appeals to me because of its bodily orientation nearest the heart. Originally a device for protection, identification and decoration, I wanted to reflect a sense of inner pride, identity and ownership.



Endangered Species

Magda Palmer Cordingly

Drypoint and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

In the beginning Earth lay sleeping nothing moved or grew because there was nothing. All living things were underground in a deep sleep. The Rainbow Serpent woke from slumber and came to the surface where she saw and felt sunlight for the first time. She rejoiced and looked around, leaving tracks where she'd wandered and holes where she'd slept. Upon returning to where she'd begun her journey she called to the frogs that came out slowly because their bodies were heavy from water they'd drunk before the big sleep. An ancestor worm wriggled against their bodies and they laughed so hard the waters rolled out of their mouths and filled the serpent's tracks which became rivers, waterholes, lakes and billabongs. The rushing noise woke all creatures who came to the surface and inhabited the land.

Because we speak of reconciliation my gorget features the exploratory journey of the Rainbow Serpent intertwined with a few of Australia's endangered species. The five hands in the centre represent all peoples working and living together in harmony. But as reconciliation is a two-way street, we could begin with a common cause-healing by cessation of farming and mining industries killing fauna and flora and hunting for gluttony and tradition. Adding shame to animal genocide Australians are the only peoples who eat their national emblems. Food outlets feature kangaroo, wombat, crocodile and emu flesh while indigenous folk bind ant eaters, roll them in hot embers

to burn their quills, tear the stubs out and cook them alive, large lizards are immobilized by limb amputation giving the captor a continuous supply of fresh meat, dugongs and turtles are vulnerable to extinction yet are mortally injured in fishing nets and mutilated by pleasure craft.

It is time for all to respect the land and its remaining, original beings.



Better to enter the house of mourning

Rose Rigley

Etching and aquatint
2013 52 x 40 cm framed

Better to enter the house of mourning takes the form of a man-made machine part, replicating a vital, life-sustaining internal organ, yet holding only the trapped and fossilized remains of a potential life. The remnants of this life could be modern or prehistoric, giving a sense of timelessness, preserved in the final stages of struggle. From the artist's perspective, the divisions, struggles and machinations of our present circumstances appear irrelevant in light of the fact that all creatures are united in their final destiny - death.

When this project began, I spoke to my adopted indigenous sister to get her understanding of the colonial breast plate. She spoke of the plate negatively, as a 'white man's dog collar'. From this conversation, I also found that she was a descendant of the *Yugara/Yugarapul* people from south-east Queensland and a direct descendant of 'King Sandy' or *Gairballie*. This deserved further investigation.

There is not much information about 'King Sandy' but he was instrumental in the naming of one Brisbane landmark - *Mt Coo-tha* or as it was once called, One Tree Hill. When the Acting Clerk of Parliament came to *Gairballie* in the late 1800s for the indigenous name of the site, he was given a rude name 'Coo-tha' instead of the real name *Gootcha* because *Gairballie* was angered by all the broken promises of the government. While the original men of struggle, like 'King Sandy', have passed from this earth, I find humour and poignancy in the fact that the city of Brisbane has grown around a landmark that is basically a lasting reminder of an indigenous 'up-yours'.



Body Painting (three ways)

Stephen Anderson, Maria Josette Orsto

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

The image is a collaborative work between Maria Josette Orsto and Stephen Anderson. Individually the images represent each artist's body painting design. However together they create a unified work indicative of the process of reconciliation. With open and transparent communications harmonious outcomes can be achieved and not be understood as Gary Jones would posit, 'Indigenous self-determination is the white man's dream'. Together, we can work toward a sustainable and prosperous future, respectful of difference and leaning into the difficult aspects of relationship where indifference resides.



'Kurunkal' – Mangrove

Susan Plos

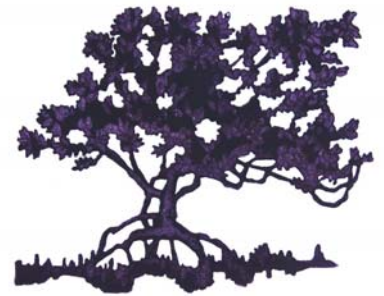
Shaped plate etching
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

The premise of this exhibition was to create a shaped plate reminiscent of those given to the local Aboriginal leaders in the early 1800's. I have adapted this idea to my art practice by creating a plate in the shape of a mangrove tree.

Mangroves have always been important to indigenous people as the habitat they create provides so much food for the coastal tribes. In researching this project I spoke to elders of the Eastern Torres Strait and the local *Kuku Yalangi* people in an attempt to understand the deep connection they have with the mangroves and spiritual significance these trees have to their culture.

Just as mangroves have had a spiritual significance to the indigenous people of this area so do they resonate with the inhabitants of Cairns today with many people active in preserving our unique coastal environment.

Mangroves embody the essence of the coastal landscape, nurturing many species of aquatic life and holding the fragile landscape together with their all-encompassing roots.



Wa-ii

Romena Edwards

Intaglio and relief print
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

Jellyfish, one of my totems. Magpie – another one. I was invited to be in this project and began looking for things on the beach to use for a necklace. 'Kingplates' didn't reach western Cape York that I know of, but my people wore lots of things 'round their neck – handmade string for ceremony, engraved and painted pearl shell mostly. My daughter found this object on the beach (outboard engine gasket), which carries a design very similar to the traditional *Wa-ii* design my people used for the jellyfish totem long time ago. Long ago, if we found such a thing, we would wear it, because *Kugu-Minha* and *Thiorre* people are very resourceful. Also, in the picture, I made a realistic *Wa-ii* showing another way we adapt new ideas – painting European style.



Finding a common thread

Ian Horn

Linocut print
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

My usual medium is acrylic painting, but for years I worked with textiles and batik and related techniques, and naturally ventured into screen-printing. I exhibited etchings in my first exhibition shortly after graduating from art school but I have only in the last few years begun to experiment with traditional printmaking methods. Recently, with the encouragement of Anna Eglitis, I have attempted to bully the linocut process into doing what I want it to do.



Onya Peiyo (bailer shell spirits)

Christine Holroyd

Etching and aquatint
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

The bailer shell has great meaning for us *Kugu* people. It is used for practical purposes such as digging and carrying food and water. People of *Pormpuraaw* shape it into round and oblong pendants, grinding and polishing the edges on stone. They used it for decorating the handles of spear-thrower – a specialty here – real museum pieces. In my print, I show the spirits of my people, moving to and from the spirit world. Even though old life retires, goes back to the dreamtime; new life is created. I show hope, encourage life and that this life cycle continues for my people, *Wik, Kugu, Mungken, Tyorre* and all Aboriginal people.



Night and Dusk on the flip-side of the earth

Laurel McKenzie

Archival pigment print
2013 40 x 52 cm framed

In Western art history there is a tradition of depicting women as allegorical signifiers of something else. Night and Dusk were personified in marble by Michelangelo, the figures draped over the arched pediments of the Medici tombs in the Basilica of San Lorenzo, Florence (male figures represent Day and Dawn). I have slumped the Night and Dusk figures here into the opposite, lunette shape of the breast plate, linking the astral shape with the notion of an antipodean inversion – the wonderment expressed by some Europeans during the time of exploration and colonization of the 'new world'; they pondered how things could stand upright in the southern hemisphere – the 'underneath side' of the planet.

The colour of the maps that make up the background is a reference to the 'pink bits' on the map of the classrooms of my childhood – previously colonized (and by then Commonwealth) countries were literally mapped in pink. The maps contribute to the 'wallpaper' of memory.



Silent Witness

Ross Bannister

Etching and aquatint
2013 52 x 42 cm framed

A shaped plate, based on the abalone shell, traded for its meat and mother of pearl. The story is in the open spiral design on the shell, suggesting time lines that bear silent witness to its journey of being handled, traded and gifted, leaving a memory imprint. Within its design you will find symbolic objects of beauty and fascination such as shell necklaces, shells and pearls, all used in effect for trading



Manolk (neck-worn objects)

Joel Ngallametta

Etching, drypoint and relief print
2013 52 x 40 cm framed

I was born in 1966 in Aurukun. My language is *Kugu Owehn* - saltwater people. My totem is eagle (mother), kookaburra (father). I am a law man - come from a long line of song men. Salt water design (broad stripes) comes from the reflection of the sun on the waves in the early morning and early evening when we fish. Saltwater pattern is used on neck ornaments and mostly worn in ceremony. Men wear small hand-woven bags around the neck with similar designs- keep fishing hooks, bait, tucker, knife, tobacco, *puri-puri*, anything!





A community cultural initiative of the Gladstone Regional Council

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