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Noosa Council
Media Release

Gallery celebrates First Nations artists in new exhibition program

Noosa Regional Gallery will be the first of seven regional galleries in South East Queensland (north) to showcase work from the First Nations *Connecting Stories* exhibition program.

Three new First Nations exhibitions open March 27, with a free, family-friendly community event featuring the local Gubbi Gubbi Dance Troupe.

Melbourne-based Barkindji contemporary artist Kent Morris reveals the world through Barkindji eyes in his exhibition, *Unvanished*.

Through a series of digitally constructed photographs layered with symbolism, the artist evokes the spirits and cultural practices of his ancestors.

Juxtaposing the built and natural environment, Morris pays particular attention to native birds saying, "Birds are very spiritual, they carry a lot of stories, they're symbolic; they're resilient and adaptable, as Aboriginal people have had to be."

Noosa Regional Gallery Director Michael Brennan says Morris creates a First Peoples' visibility within the built environment.

"Reminding audiences that the continuum of culture does not stop when the land changes, *Unvanished* contends that Aboriginal culture remains present and ongoing," Brennan says.

Bangerang descendent, contemporary artist Peta Clancy also utilises manipulated photographs in her exploration of historic colonization, *Undercurrent*.

"Through my photographs I seek to challenge the viewer to focus on what may have been missed, denied or hidden," says Clancy.

Events that threatened Clancy's ancestors' survival feature heavily.

"I aim to reconstruct and bring to light these hidden histories in a contemporary setting," she says.

Tom Mosby, CEO of the Koorie Heritage Trust in Melbourne says Clancy collaborated with Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners to research, develop and create an exhibition that explores the frontier violence and massacre sites that occurred on Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

"Using cutting and layering techniques, Clancy's work references the emotional and cultural scars left in the landscape by this frontier violence," Mosby says.

Throughout May, regional galleries in South East Queensland will headline First Nations artists in their exhibition programs, following the concept that every region has its own stories to share.

Noosa-based artist, Sara Moore's exhibition *Ochre Energetic Activation!* features as part of Noosa Regional Gallery's *Connecting Stories* line-up.

Moore, also known as Ochre Bee, is a Reiki Master and describes herself as a proud indigenous woman working in connection with Gubbi Gubbi or Kabi Kabi Country since 1984.

Moore describes her installation as one of spiritual awakening and guidance, purposed to “connect us all as one through Earth, Energy and Story”.

Kent Morris: *Unvanished*; Peta Clancy: *Undercurrent*, and Sara Moore, aka Ochre Bee: *Ochre Energetic Activation!* will open on March 27 2021 and run until May 16 2021.

Visit www.noosaregionalgallery.com.au for full details about the official family opening event on Saturday March 27, and all additional public programming information in relation to these exciting new indigenous exhibitions.

Image: Peta Clancy, Undercurrent 2018-2019, 150 x 106cm, ink jet pigment print. Image courtesy the artist and Dominik Mersch Gallery.

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