



... in Trouble

inmate art and mental health at Long Bay

acknowledgements

Traditional owners custodians of the land.....

... in Trouble

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at Long Bay

... in Trouble, inmate art and mental health at Long Bay
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Exhibition developed and curated by Elizabeth Day, Damian Moss and Philipa Veitch at the
Boom Gate Gallery
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Front cover artwork: Tom T., *Entropy*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 500 x 750 mm. Collection of Robert Lake.
Back cover artwork: Farden Fazah, *Kites of Afghanistan*, 2019, acrylic on board, 380 x 530 mm



The Boom Gate Gallery

The Boom Gate Gallery was established in 1992 by the Department of Corrections with the support of Assistant Commissioner Luke Grant. It is a professional gallery exhibiting the artwork produced by inmates at Long Bay. Work is exhibited throughout the year with regular projects held offsite. Past exhibitions have been held at the University of Sydney as well as Convictions held at the University of New South Wales, Paddington Campus in 2005 curated by Sue Paull and Nick Waterlow. During NAIDOC Week we frequently exhibit at the Downing Centre.

The Boom Gate Gallery attracts local and international visitors, staff of the Department of Corrective Services and Justice Health as well as educators, lawyers, welfare workers, relatives and friends of inmates and members of the arts community.



The Big Anxiety Festival

The Big Anxiety Festival is a cultural platform for direct engagement with mental health. Embracing diverse experiences across the vast spectrum of mental health, it examines what makes us anxious as individuals and social groups – from fears about the future to concerns about ourselves, other people and belonging, to the question of how people are cared for.

Our 2019 program focusses on a central challenge: how do we cultivate empathy in place of stigma, fear and discrimination? Raising awareness is not enough. Information about mental health is not enough. We need new ways of thinking, feeling and acting – and resources that are both practical and inspiring. The arts are the best means we have for sharing complex experience. They show us what we don't know about ourselves and others. They shine light on the relationships and social settings that help or hinder mental health, and they are a means to renew those relationships. (The Big Anxiety Festival website)

... in Trouble

The Boom Gate Gallery is proud to participate in The Big Anxiety Festival, an initiative of the University of New South Wales, Art and Design Department led by Professor Jill Bennett. The exhibition *...in Trouble* represents a development of partnerships in the community by the Gallery. It continues the Gallery's tradition of bringing inmate art to public attention with special projects alongside the ongoing gallery exhibits. This exhibition has grown out of an understanding of the impact that mental health has in the lives of offenders.

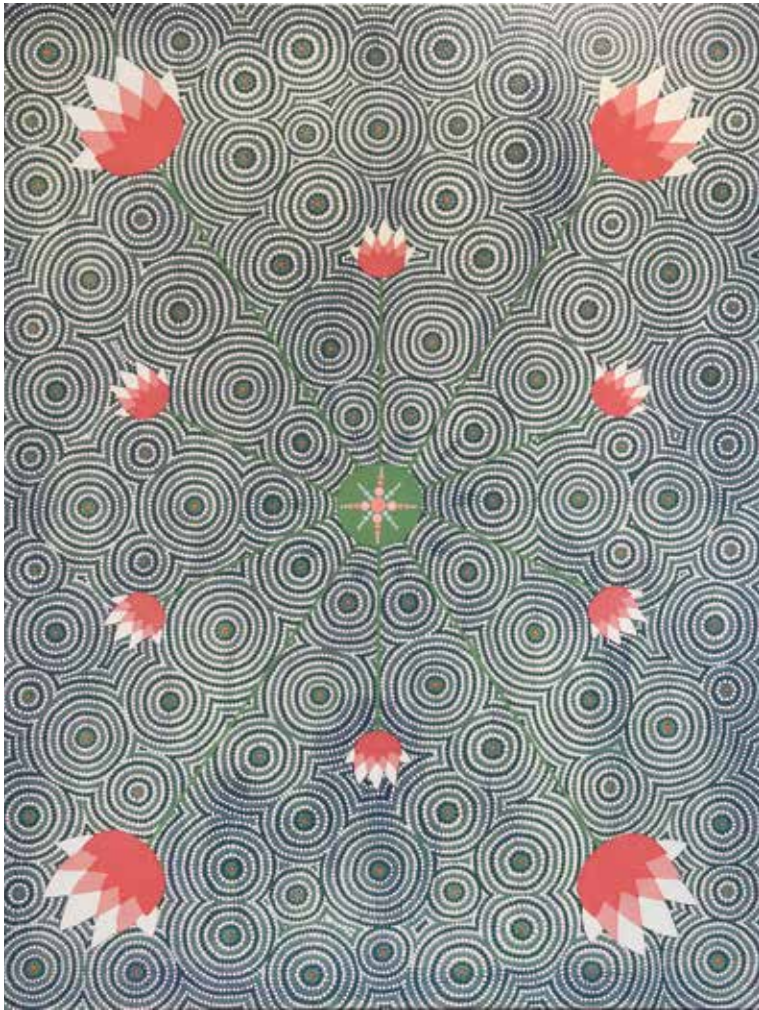
Art is not an easily quantifiable area of enquiry and engagement, though its value to health and mental health are being given more and more support by current research and by the wider community. For those of us who have been involved with art in prisons, there is no doubt that art functions effectively in the lives of those who spend many hours per day either alone or with another cell mate. Very few of the artists that we have sampled here have ever produced art prior to coming to prison. The inmates in this exhibition have stumbled upon this means of creative expression usually because they have seen someone else painting, or possibly because they have a memory of enjoying art in high school or some other chancy reason.

In the case of many of our Aboriginal artists, art is a crucial cultural connector. It might be the first time someone has declared themselves to be Aboriginal. Discovery of painting can sometimes lead into deep personal and political revelation. Art in prison can be and frequently is a life saver and becomes a new way to 'live in one's skin'. We aim to provide some glimpses in this catalogue, how art enables restitution of what is referred to as 'mental health'. We have included the handwritten testimonies of the artists.

For anyone who is forced onto their own resources once they find that their entire life circumstances are transformed, there may be a discovery of the need to produce art. In a few cases art becomes a central factor in determining a new life direction after release, Even if there is the just a passing moment in the individual's life where they have the time and opportunity to create, it can contribute to improved well-being, even a new starting point.

Visitors to the Boom Gate Gallery are often surprised at the quality of the work they see. The art can be raw and authentic. Sometimes it manifests high level visual skills that were previously applied to some other activity, now directed to painting.

Dr Elizabeth Day
Co-Curator, Boom Gate Gallery
September 2019



Shane Rez

Spring Dreaming
2019
acrylic on canvas
1200 x 900 mm

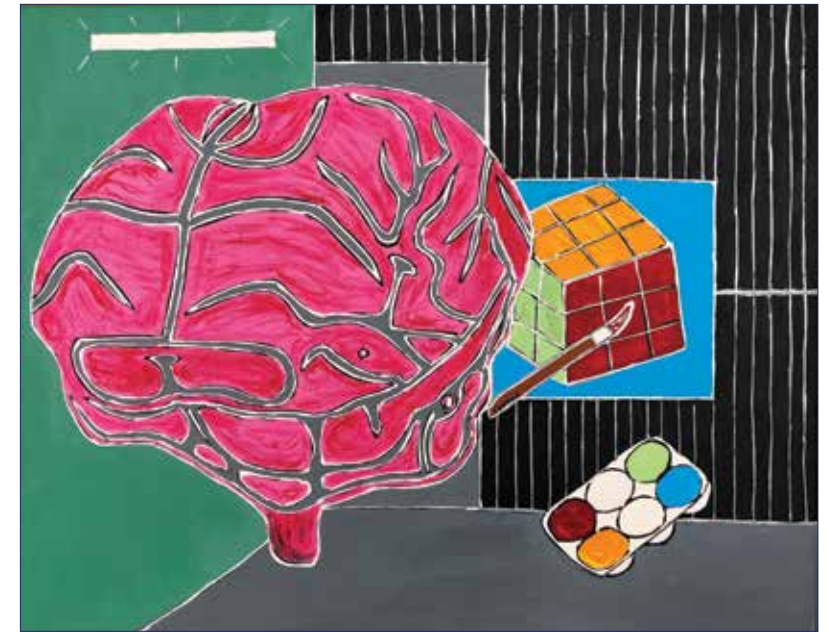
my name is Shane Rez im an inmate at longbay
goal im also doing the VOTP program to help adress
my offending history. I suffer Bad depression + find it
hard to trust people. Since being here iv started to
paint i find it helps me Relax + make friends with
paint as well it i didnt start to paint i probly wouldnt
leave my cell. it keeps me calm and helps me sleep
at night. also my family says my mental health has
improved since i started to paint. the more i paint
the better i get with makes me proud i have created
something + made it my own. I have works of art down at
the beamgate with i have painted with shows i like to use Bright
colors because it makes me feel good + happy.

Thanking you *Shane Rez*

Troy Cameron

Free Mind (right)
2019
acrylic on canvas
400 x 500 mm

Dragon Eye (below)
2019
acrylic on canvas
760 x 600 mm



in Trouble

Inmates Require A strong mind
in THE First Place to Deal with THE Issues and
Challenges They Face Day to Day.
How to Cope with loss of Freedom and The Diversity
of Personality or Even The Isolation Lock within
a cell for 18+ hours.
Has A massive impression on everyone's Mental Health
THE Stress and Boredom within These walls Takes
its Toll on The Best of them.
This becomes even more Difficult to cope with and to
understand when The inmate suffers From Any kind of
Mental Health issues.
The Ability to have Anything to Takes one mind into
a Different Place even for just a moment can Bring
Happiness to ones mind and give memories That last
a lifetime
Having The opportunity to Paint in Prison Has The Ability
to Stop Anyone suffering with Mental Health Issues From
Violent Behavior or Becoming institutionalised
THE Ability should have greater funding so Its Easy
for any Inmate without cost The access to the Materials
needed to have The opportunitys to Improve Everyone's
Mental Health.

Painting Name * FREEMIND

My Painting shows what you can Accomplish with
complete Brain Power in just one nights work.

THE Brain is using Its mind to Paint The Puzzle while
Locked in Cell. This is the kind of Thing That Takes
your mind to A Different Place.

Troy Cameron



Richard Edwards

Fish Kill Darling
2019
acrylic on canvas
dimensions

My Name is Richard Edwards I come from a small Country Town, some 800 Kilometres from Sydney called Bourke NSW I've been in Jail some 6 years and from going crazy I Paint, it hell to keep my mind off other things - Home & Family and Stress, its very Helpfull to me Lets of Time I get stress out, after lock in Watching TV dont do much for me, the only Time I Relax is when the Fectie is on, or a good Movie, Most times I get my Paint out and Beard and Paint, this keeps me Busy I Paint all Night, till I get sleepy, I like to see the end, when I start I try to look forward to what its going to look like Stress + Boredom - Restless all play a Part in my days, without my art work - which keep me sane, this is what I go through the People from the Gallery Help me a lot they collect my work and sell it for me provide me with more canvas & Paint so with out their help and art work alot of us get very uptight - Angry Frustrated and unable to cope.

ART WORK IN Here is A MUST, to me and other inmates Black & White its very importa it helps to clear our Minds its enjoyab, Fun and Relaxing

Sign R Edwards
23/8/19

Andrew Griffiths

Wlaking
2019
acrylic on canvas
dimensions



Troy Peters

title
date
acrylic on canvas
dimensions





Antney Brian

What a Waste of Time
 2019
 acrylic on canvas
 xx mm



XX

xx
 2019
 xx
 xx mm

Peter Magnuson

Hut In The Snow (right)
 2019
 acrylic on canvas
 450 x 650 mm

Portrait of Robin Williams
 (below right)
 2019
 acrylic on canvas
 xx mm



REHABILITATION THROUGH ART.
 DURING REHABILITATION FOR POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) CAUSED BY MY WAR SERVICE IN VIETNAM, I TOOK UP PAINTING AND FOUND IT RELAXING AND BENEFICIAL TO THE HEALING PROCESS.
 AFTER FALLING FOUL OF THE LAW, I SOUGHT OUT FACILITIES FOR ART IN THE PRISON SYSTEM. I FOUND THAT ART GAVE PURPOSE TO MY TIME IN PRISON AND GIVES ME A SENSE OF DIRECTION FOR WHEN I AM RELEASED. I AM RETIRED FROM THE WORKFORCE AND INTEND TO SET UP A STUDIO AND SPEND A LOT OF MY TIME CREATING ART. I HAVE NO INTENTIONS OF IMPRESSING OTHERS, AND ALTHOUGH SOME OF MY WORK HAS BEEN SOLD, I PAINT FOR THE LOVE OF IT.
 MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT IS PORTRAITURE WHICH IS DIFFICULT TO MASTER, BUT I AM HAPPY WITH MY PROGRESS IN USING LIGHT TO SHOW FACIAL CONTOURS AND PUTTING LIFE INTO THE SUBJECTS EYES.
 I HAVE SEEN MANY INMATES IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THE THERAPEUTIC QUALITY OF ART AND BELIEVE MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON PROVIDING ACCESS TO ART BY THE AUTHORITIES OF THE PRISON SYSTEM.
 P.A. MAGNUSON 46625
 1 WING MRPC 2.





James Scotman

Camp (left)
2019
acrylic on cardboard
300 x 500 mm

title (below)
2019
acrylic on cardboard
450 x 620 mm

My name is James Scotman. I started to paint when I came to gaol. It has helped me with my depression and ~~and~~ anxiety as it gets me to focus on painting and not on where I am and why I am here. I find it good therapy and get a sense of accomplishment when I have finished a painting which lifts my spirits. I know that I will keep on painting when I get out of gaol as it has shown me that it helps me in my everyday life.



Jamie Woodruffe

Iron Mask (right)
2019
acrylic on canvas
400 x 550 mm

Gallows (below)
2019
acrylic on canvas
400 x 500 mm





Bexz

Wilay Dreaming
2019
acrylic on canvas
1200 x 900 mm

Troy Currie

Ant Dreaming
2019
acrylic on canvas
300 x 400 mm

Around the Sun
2019
acrylic on canvas 600 x
900



BEXZ.

ART IS AN ESCAPE, AN ESCAPE FROM THE DAY TO DAY ROUTINES OF PERSON.
IT EASES THE BURDEN OF BEING LOCKED IN FOR 18 HOURS OF THE DAY, BY
KEEPING ME BUSY AND HAVING A FOCUS AND A PURPOSE. WITH EACH PIECE I AM
ABLE TO EXPRESS MYSELF IN A PLACE WHERE IT IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO SELF-EXPRESS!
I AM ALSO GIVEN THE FEELING OF ACCOMPLISHMENT WITH EACH PIECE THAT I PAINT.
BEING ABLE TO SHOW AND SELL MY WORK GIVES ME A SENSE OF WORTH, BEING THAT:
PEOPLE APPRECIATE WHAT I CAN OFFER, AND THAT I CAN SHARE MY PIECES WITH OTHERS,
AND FINANCIALLY I CAN SUPPORT MYSELF AND IN GOAL.
SHARING MY PAINTINGS ALSO GIVE MY FAMILY PRIDE IN ME AND WHAT I AM ABLE TO
ACHIEVE.



Craig Ryan

Alien In The House
2018
acrylic on masonite
400 x 650 mm



Grant Colb

Mental Health Assessment Unit (below)
2019
acrylic on canvas
600 x 900 mm

Under Surveillance (below far left)
2019
acrylic on canvas
1200 x 900 mm

On Observation (below left)
2019
acrylic on canvas
600 x 760 mm

My name is Grant Colb, A Participant of... "In Trouble", have been asked to produce a piece of writing that describes how Art-making helps my Mental health.

I too would like to Thank the "Anxiety Festival" for this wonderful opportunity to show the value of Artwork that I am able to produce, whilst I manage my Mental health.

This would not be possible without A wonderful Lady who is A staff member of the "Boom Gate Gaucery," ELIZABETH DAY, who has encouraged me to use my Artwork as a way to express my feelings and opinions through out. I have been able to grow with my Art, I can express my True feelings Through Drawing and Painting, which is a lot easier than I could face to face.

I am able to bring real feelings out into my Art, which enables other people to also feel what I have put into my Art piece. I have found that when I do my Artwork, I am able to remove my anxious reality that I've put myself into, and mentally escape into a much more relaxing environment.

Art is a voice that I have learnt, and it is a language known to almost everyone.

Emotions are Brand within each Artwork which is able to bring the piece to life. Emotions that someone's feelings who has laid eyes on, finds his or hers sense of understanding, or just brings a smile to your face.

Art makes me smile within, and this is when I am in a happy place.

I like Art because a piece of Art like a Drawing or Painting is never finished and even though a few people look at one piece of Art, Their opinions may all be different.

My name is Grant Colb, Thank you for your time, and I wish for you to enjoy the exhibition.





Michael Boxsell

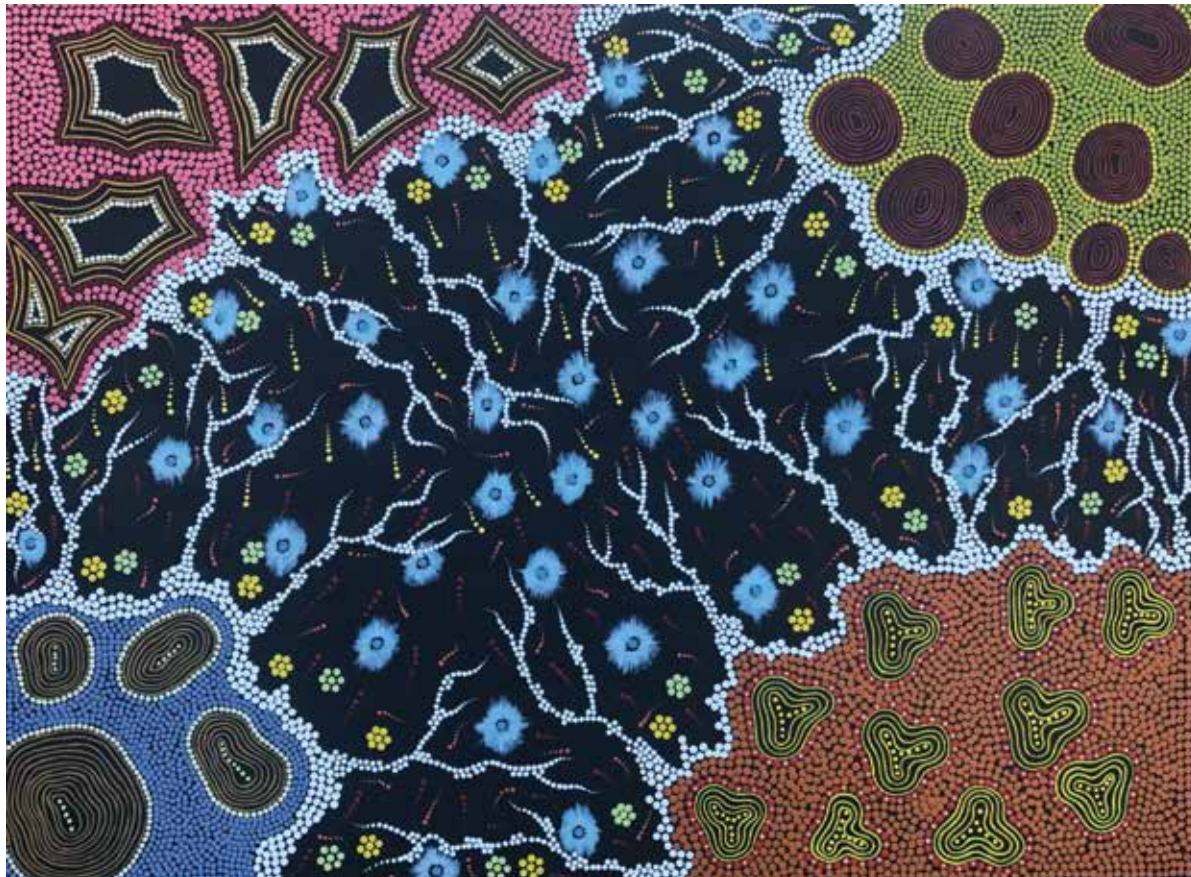
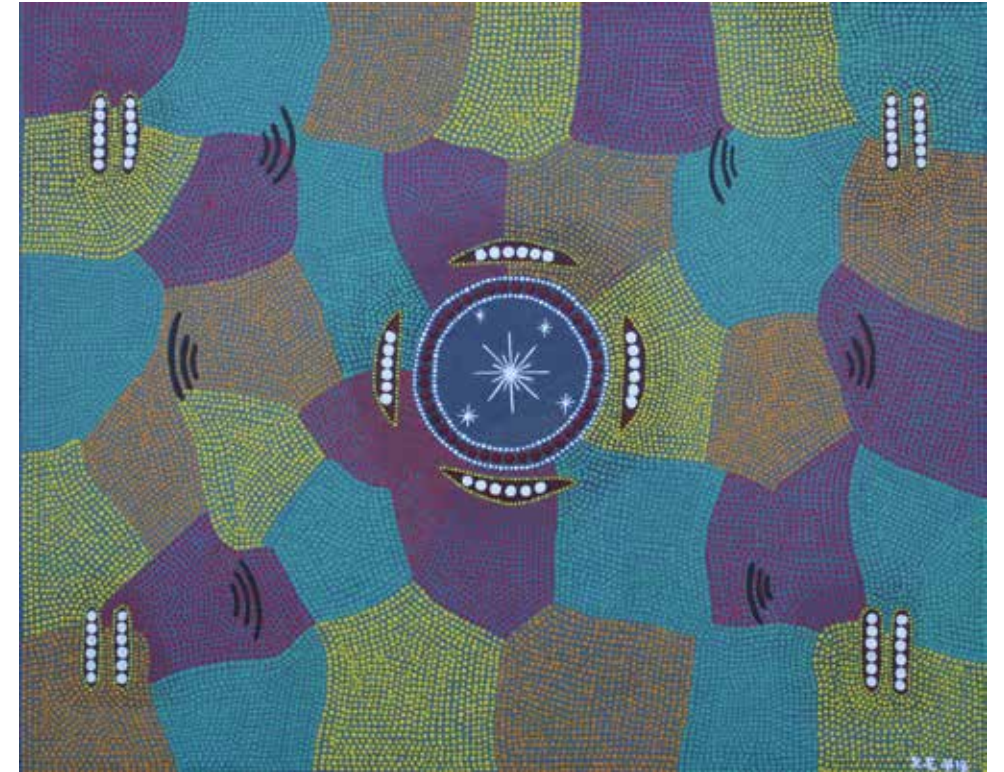
Red Centre Storm
2019
acrylic on canvas
900 x 1200 mm

Storm
2019
acrylic on canvas
900 x 1200 mm

Ronald Eatts

My Family
2019
acrylic on canvas
600 x 700 mm

Snake Hunter
2019
acrylic on canvas
dimensions



Deon Edwards

Crabs and Fish
2019
acrylic on canvas
900 x 600 mm





Farden Fazah

Kites in the sky
2018
acrylic on canvas
400 x 500 mm

When I first started to paint, I didn't like it, didn't like art, found it too hard, I didn't like drawing and didn't think I was good at anything ever anyway, especially drawing or painting. I listened to staff helping and tried it a couple of times. I found straight away that I liked it, it helped me with my memory, just to think of one thing very closely, it helped me learn how to talk to others, to learn how to be confident to talk to others, I had my painting to show people, I had my painting as the one thing I could use to talk to show to others without my painting I would not have the confidence to speak to others or even try.

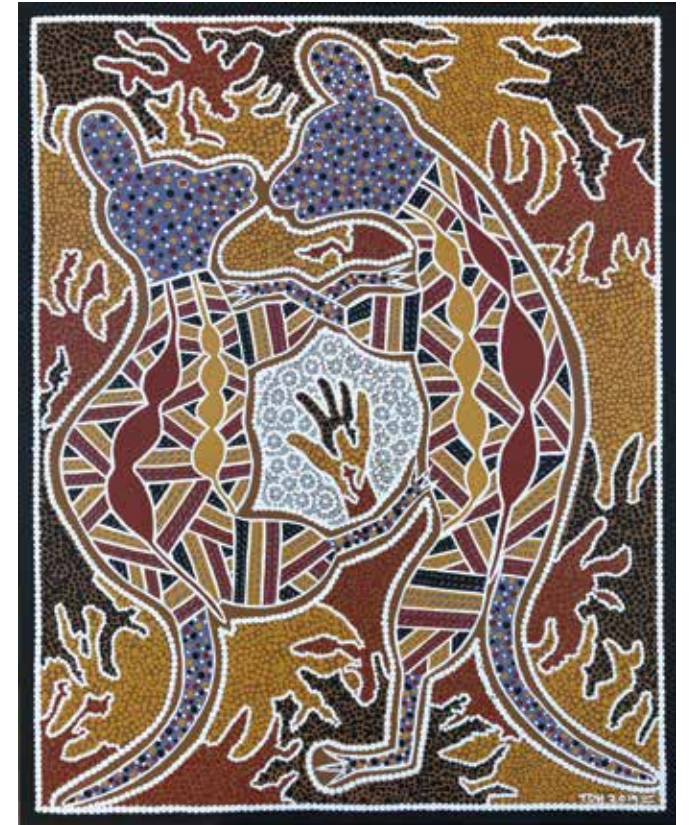
I wouldn't even speak aloud to anyone before, I was in a shell. I can't believe I can do this now, I can paint and make what I am making, I feel it is too hard sometimes but then I push myself and I find I can, I then see I can do more and more, I feel relaxed when I paint, when I create my picture, it makes my mind quiet, everything else disappears when I paint, it is just me and the painting, the picture in my head and the story I am trying to tell.

Painting and making the images helps me tell my story, my story, my feelings, that I still struggle to share even with people close, the feelings I have the pain I keep inside, the painful memories, I can't share

them, I can't escape from them, I am too ashamed, I can't find words, but I can share my feelings in my painting, I can let them go in my painting, some way look them in the eye, it helps me you know. Painting and creating is my safe place to deal with the pain and share my story. Maybe my story, can be seen and someone else can understand and have a similar story of pain and loss, and one picture one painting can be everyone's story to them! Somehow somehow I can help someone. I feel for the first time in many years happy and my confidence improved when I get a lot of good comments about my work, I love to see how happy other people are in other people's eyes when they see my painting or I if paint something for them, their happiness makes me happy, painting is my way to talk to others, to share, to give and get good comments from others, to build my confidence, to then do other things, learn more skills, push myself to do other things, where I would have never done this in the past without art. I have learned more about me in art and painting then I have even tried to understand before. It has helped me be confident, helped me deal with painful feelings and given me the confidence to now do and try other things. It has made me grow and helps calm me, when nothing else works.

Terrance Honeysett

Under Their Noses
2019
acrylic on canvas
600 x 770 mm



Thousands of years ago there was giant Kangaroos. White Kangaroos. They were violent towards people. Jump on people. Kill people. They were an enemy to my people.

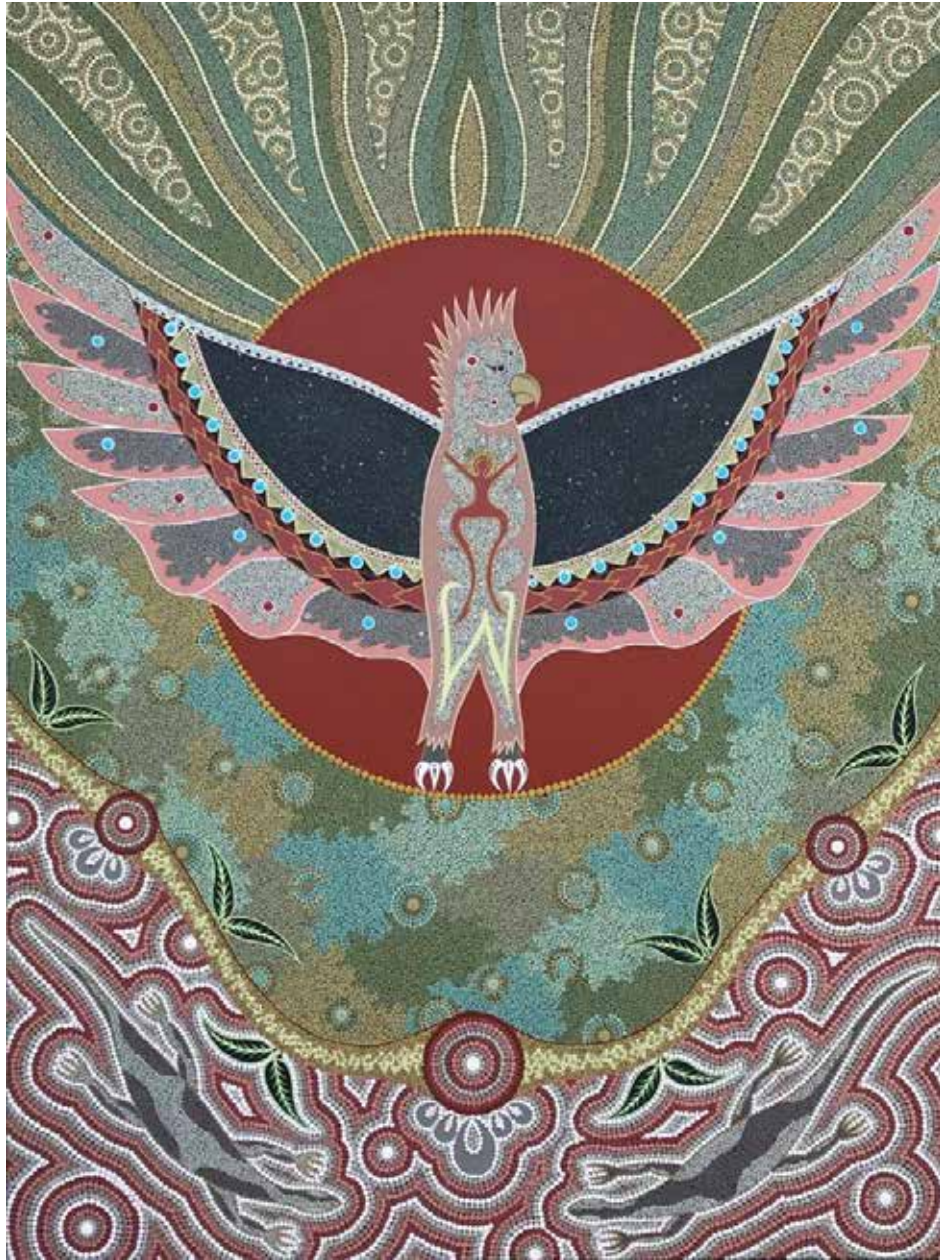
Around the same time there was a warrior called 'Woorana'. He was a leader in the tribe. People complained to him about the White Kangaroos. They complained to him about eating meat with blood in it. Raw meat. So he took the case to 'Bayami' the god of the Wiradjuri. He was the creator spirit. When they met, Woorana voiced his complaint. Bayami said "If you do something for me. I'll do something for you." And Woorana agreed. "You have to get me some white ochre. The only place you find it is in the middle of the White Kangaroo camp." Woorana thought of a way he could do it. He got the fat off an emu and rubbed it all over his body, even in his hair. Then he covered himself in dirt. The dirt stuck to the fat and the fat covered his smell. When he crawled across the ground he looked like the dirt.

He crawled into the middle of the White Kangaroo camp and filled a pouch with white ochre. Then he crawled out and took it to Bayami. Bayami was very pleased and said "Whenever you dance for me paint yourselves in this white ochre." There were some dead branches near the trees. Bayami pointed to them and told Woorana to look. He made a strong wind come. The branches rubbed together, faster and faster until it ignited and caused a fire. The fire killed the giant Kangaroos and by watching the sticks rub together that's how the Wiradjuri learnt how to make fire.

That's how white became a sacred colour for Wiradjuri.

When you look at this painting you will see dots around the White Kangaroos. They represent the earth. That's why the hands are done with the same dots. The white dots in the middle represent the white ochre. The hand represents grabbing the white ochre.

Terrance Honeysett



Tiny

Freepirit
2019
acrylic on canvas
1200 x 900 mm

THIS PAINTING REPRESENTS ME, BECAUSE NO MATTER
WHAT STRUGGLE OR HARDSHIP I GO THROUGH I AM
ALWAYS FREE IN SPIRIT. I ALSO LOVE PAINTING BECAUSE
IT PROVIDES FOR MY FAMILY.

Toorarcle

Shark Meeting Area
2019
acrylic on canvas
600 x 770 mm

Since coming to jail in 2013 I found
my jail was going very slow. Then I
came across a fellow aboriginal that
helped me reconnect with my aboriginality.
Since around 2015-2016 I learnt to
paint my dreamtime. Also I have learnt
many knew dreamtime stories, although
painting has been my main focus. This has
made my family, from Dharrug (Blacktown)
and my partner whom is Kamilaroi very
proud. I do believe this may be my chance
to make my connection to country and
stay out of jail. I intend to continue
painting and telling more stories. I also
intend on learning traditional language
and teaching my kids and anyone I
can share my story with.

Toorarcle



Kites of Afghanistan



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