



Our stories  
and designs





Sally Terare (Butchulla, K'gari, Bundjalung), *The gift of colour*,  
2019, acrylic on canvas

## Introduction:

The City of Logan has a rich Aboriginal history that was dramatically impacted by colonisation from the early 1800s, with Traditional Owner groups dispersed and many being displaced from their Country. Over time, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families from near and far have come to call Logan home, creating a diverse yet strong and proud First Nations suburban community.

*Our stories and designs* feature seven female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists currently residing in Logan and surrounding areas. Each artist brings their own unique stories and artistic practices that reflect personal and cultural expression.

Introspection is integral to the creative progress. Every mark, brush stroke, lino cut, or woven fibre is deliberate and contributes to a holistic narrative that communicates connection to Country, family and community.

This exhibition celebrates First Nations designs that collectively epitomise a refined contemporary urban aesthetic and the continuation of storytelling through artistic practices.

Amanda Hayman  
Curator, Blaklash Projects

Image front and back cover: Kyra Mancktelow, (Quandamooka, Mardigan, South Sea Islander), *Through our journey* (detail), 2018, acrylic on canvas. Logan Art Collection, acquired 2018



# Casey Coolwell

(Quandamooka)

As a Quandamooka artist, I create my artwork to share our stories through the ripples of the water, gatherings of the sands and markings made throughout our lands. This art piece reflects on our achievements in life. We conquer our achievements personally, for family and also for our communities.

The image pictured is one of three large circular pieces which depict our personal, family and community achievements. They are on a spinning wheel to allow us to continuously

rethink how we have achieved and are achieving our goals. There are also four smaller circular pieces in the series, which tell the story of our journey in making these achievements commendable.

The two pairs of rectangle pieces symbolise where we started and where we are going. They also resemble our footprints and legacies being left behind for our future generations to look back on.





Casey Coolwell (Quandamooka), *Achievements*, 2019, acrylic on wood



Kyra Mancktelow, (Quandamooka, Mardigan, South Sea Islander), *Carving for recognition*, 2019, lino print

# Kyra Mancktelow

(Quandamooka, Mardigan, South Sea Islander)

As a Quandamooka woman with links to Mardigan of Cunnamulla and Vanuatu, South Sea Islander people, heritage and family is central to my practice. Printmaking is a prominent method used in my creative practice, through which I like to explore my cultural history, traditions and identity.

A few Australians are being told how their own sugar industry was created by the sweat of our enslaved ancestors. This lino cut explores the Blackbirding slave trade of South Sea Islanders. With my ancestor being taken from Vanuatu and brought to Far North Queensland, I share a common story with many other descendants whose ancestors were taken,

kidnapped, tricked and forced off the South Pacific Islands. Throughout the making process I engaged with some of the South Sea Islander community allowing them to make their mark by carving into the lino and by doing so we are revealing an image of our ancestors working in the cane fields. Revealing this image to the viewer recognises what was endured starting from the 1860s. This is Australia's past that needs to be recognised for a future of healing for our people.

The abiding theme of my art practice is bringing forth the untold histories of Australia, allowing for a greater recognition of the truth.



# Sylvia Nakachi

(Miriam Mir Egrew/Morgor Village Erub Island, Torres Strait)



Sylvia Nakachi (Miriam Mir Egrew/Morgor Village Erub Island, Torres Strait), *Weaving series, Welcome to my world*, 2019, banana fibre, fabric and coloured string





For many years I have specialised in banana fibre weaving, creating different size and shape baskets, objects and circle pieces. I have never really thought of putting any meaning into my work, however after my recent encounter at South Stradbroke Island, I had an awakening in my spirit. A rebirth to create my weaving with meaning, telling my stories, from my childhood, my memories, my identity, my life, my own thoughts, my feelings, my connection to Island and Country.

In May this year, I had the opportunity to attend an all First Nations artist camp on South Stradbroke Island. It was during my time on camp, I had a personal experience, an encounter within myself, as thoughts, questions and emotions flooded my mind, about myself and how lost and displaced I had become in this world. Sitting alone on the back of the beach all by myself, starring into the crashing waves and watching the white stretched beach go on for miles, it was in these quiet moments, I began to speak out aloud to myself, about my feelings, about my thoughts, as I captured them on my voice recorder.

*Weaving series, 2019, banana fibre, fabric and coloured string; (Top left) Raping the land, (Top right) Wolf children, single mother, (Centre left) Healing, (Centre right) Identity*

*(Bottom) Turning point, 2019, digital video still*

# Cara Shields

(Wiradjuri, Kaimilaroi)

As a Wiradjuri/Kaimilaroi woman, I create my artwork because I want to express my cultural connection to my heritage and create a new sense of artistic expression with linework.

This artwork reflects my cultural identity by having the design represent patterns and elements of

dendroglyphs carved trees but with a modern twist.

The ochres are sourced from the Dubbo/Narromine area, they represent my connection to the Country. Unfortunately the site I originally collected ochre from no longer exists, but has had a lasting effect on me. This ochre comes



from a different site but within the Dubbo/Narromine area.

The lines, shapes, colours and patterns are significant because they represent my interpretation of the ochre deep in the earth. They also represent my connection to first seeing and collecting ochre from a cave in 2002.

The cave was not your typical cave as its top was blown off to make way for a railway track a long time ago.

So many trains would have gone by and nobody would have noticed thick and thin lines of yellow and white chunks of earth surrounding the railway line.

The thick lines are five layers of ochre to bring out a rich earthy natural feel. The thinner lines are mixed with a sparkly acrylic paint (antique gold and white mother of pearl) to bring a modern effect to the line work that I have not used before.



Cara Shields (Wiradjuri, Kaimilaroi), *Ochre earth lines*, 2019, acrylic and ochre on canvas





Muralappi (Jessica Skeen-McKinnon) (Widi, Biri, and Kuku Thaypan), *Our journey through this world*, 2019, acrylic on canvas



# Muralappi (Jessica Skeen-McKinnon)

(Widi, Biri, and Kuku Thaypan)

Reflecting on where we are in our lives at times can seem overwhelming. We see the years fly by and ask ourselves: "Where have the years gone?"

We may often use statements like 'it only seemed like yesterday' as we remember when we were kids, when we finished school, our children when they were babies and now off on their own. How quickly time can pass us by. Many times we forget to enjoy the moment. Our lives can be so full of 'things to do' that we miss the little things that are right in front of us. This world has us so focused on what they say will make us happy but we still have a society that seems empty and always looking for more.

I find myself now reflecting on the present, and learning to be present in the moment. Enjoying the now and being happy with that. At the end of the day our family relationships and the beautiful memories we create together are a treasure that each of us can have, if we make time for it.

See that value is not in material things. Form strong bonds with the people in your life who you love. Value what is truly important. We all experience how quickly life can change. Be sure to make wise use of your time for it can never be brought back.



# Sally Terare

(Butchulla, Bundjalung)

This original piece features some of the significant events in my life that I have come to know as being an integral part in shaping my personal identity. This contemporary Dreamtime vision of mine sees my Ancestors from the past gathering watchfully. My Ancestors surround the Guardian Spirit supportively as her hand delicately and calmly rests upon my back. Violet flames here represent healing as they firmly strike the strong astral foundation in which I stand. Her light energy pulses and radiates through me and then shifts outwards, powerfully charging my spirit and soul in a united forcefield. These events, significant to me, depict the 'beginning phase' of my infancy at the bottom left.

I was fostered at an infant age to a white Australian family who loved me as their own and always encouraged my learning of my cultural heritage and family background. Once I was 15, I ran away from my foster family home

as I felt emptiness and curiosity in seeking out a closer connection with my biological family but also, to achieve a strong sense of self-identity as an Indigenous young adult.

Frame four at the top right shows two baby feet with both my foster and biological families surrounded in celebration of one of life's greatest gifts. For me, this is my daughter Harmony who brings exactly that into my life. The white feather depicted in the fifth frame is symbolic of my foster father's death and the white feather came to me at a time in my life in overcoming this deep loss.

The final frame expresses my continued belief in embracing these events as part of my growth personally. It is a reminder also that I can take the opportunity of growth from these significant events that are uniquely experienced by each and every one of us. This is the story of *My Becoming*.





Sally Terare, *My becoming*, 2019, acrylic on canvas



Kim Williams (Kulilli, Wakka Wakka), *New light*, 2019, Piccabeen and natural fibres on lamp stand



# Kim Williams

(Kulilli, Wakka Wakka)

I am a proud Aboriginal descendant of the Kulilli and Wakka Wakka clan, I've been painting for 40 years. In 2016 I completed a degree in Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at Griffith University. I've achieved 20 art exhibitions around Australia and overseas.

My artwork has been a part of three set designs for movies *Dora the Explorer*, *Pirates of the Caribbean* and the television show *Grace Beside Me*. My practice includes sculpture, intricate cultural weaving, traditional and contemporary Indigenous painting and printmaking. My style reflects my heritage as an Indigenous woman.

My current work *New light* is about our next generation of woman. I've woven these lampshades out of the Piccabeen flower and when the light is turned on the reflections of the patterns and symbols on the wall tells its own stories. The painting on the base is about women and young girls coming together to weave and talk about traditional and contemporary stories that our Elders have told us.



# Acknowledgements

Logan City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands across the City of Logan. We extend that respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging. They hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Australia's First Peoples. Logan City Council would also like to thank Blaklash Projects and *Our stories and designs* exhibiting artists for their participation in this exhibition.

## Our stories ..... and designs

25 October to 30 November 2019  
at Logan Art Gallery



Cara Shields, *My journey part two*, 2019, ochre and acrylic on canvas





**Logan Art Gallery**

Cnr Wembley Rd and Jacaranda Ave, Logan Central, Queensland  
Open 10am to 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday

[logan.qld.gov.au/artgallery](http://logan.qld.gov.au/artgallery)

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