

# Koorie perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin: January- February 2023

This edition of the Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin features:

- Australia Day & The Great Debate
- The Aboriginal Tent Embassy
- The 1939 Cummeragunja Walk-off & *Dhungala* – the Murray River
- Charles Perkins & the 1967 Freedom Rides
- Anniversary of the National Apology
- International Mother Language Day
- What's on: Tune into the Arts

Welcome to the first Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin for 2023. Focused on Aboriginal Histories and Cultures, we aim to highlight Victorian Koorie voices, stories, achievements, leadership and connections, and suggest a range of activities and resources around key dates for starters. Of course any of these topics can be taught at any time throughout the school year and we encourage you to use these bulletins and VAEAI's [Koorie Education Calendar](#) for ongoing planning and ideas.

*In this Bulletin, you will find Victorian Curriculum links to Content Descriptions. Select the code and it will take you directly to the Victorian Curriculum site with additional elaborations.*

For a summary of key **Learning Areas and Content Descriptions** directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within the Victorian Curriculum F-10, view or download the VCAA's curriculum guide: [Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.](#)

We know that Aboriginal people are the best equipped and the most appropriate people to teach Indigenous knowledge. Therefore, wherever and whenever possible you should seek to involve your local Koorie community in education programs that involve Aboriginal perspectives. For some guidance about working with your local Koorie community to enrich your teaching program, see VAEAI's [Protocols for Koorie Education in Primary and Secondary Schools](#); and for the younger ones, [Walking Together](#) and [Aboriginal Early Childhood Cultural Protocols](#). These resources will help educators create Koorie-inclusive learning environments that respect and reflect Aboriginal people, content and perspectives – benefitting the experiences of all children.

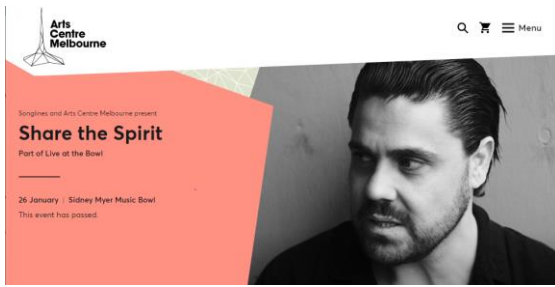
## January

### Australia Day, Survival Day and The Great Debate

A day off, a barbecue and fireworks? A celebration of who we are as a nation? A day of mourning and invasion? A celebration of survival? Australians hold many different views on what the 26th of January means to them. In 2017 a number of councils controversially decided to no longer celebrate Australia Day on this day, and since then *Change the Date* debates have raged across the country in homes, schools, on the streets and elsewhere.

See our online resource [Australia Day, Survival Day and The Great Debate](#) for great discussion ideas to start the school year.





Presented by [Songlines Aboriginal Music Corporation](#), the Melbourne-based **Share the Spirit Festival** is back on this year at the Sydney Myer Music Bowl, celebrating 20 years.

The annual **Share the Spirit Festival** celebrates the survival of Australia's First Nations people with live music and art from the Aboriginal arts community and is on at the Sydney Myer Music Bowl in Melbourne, on Thursday January 26, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Share the Spirit, or Balit Narrun, is Victoria's longest-running Aboriginal music festival and an all-inclusive celebration of the culture of Indigenous people from all over the country. The stellar line-up is led by multi ARIA Award-winner Dan Sultan, and includes Bumpy, Charlie Campbell, Jess Hitchcock, Djirri Djirri Dancers, Doe Eyes, Gavin Somers, Jayden Lillyst & Aaron Morgan, Kaylani, Kool Mist, Maylene Yinarr, Meriki Hood, Monica Karo, Stray Blacks, The Yappera Kids and Yambra. There will also be market stalls selling Indigenous-made arts, crafts and handmade goods. The event is free and not ticketed. Vaccination status provision is a must for this event and checking in at the point of entry will be required. [Read more.](#)



### Held annually on January 26, are the Australian of the Year Awards.

In 1968, celebrated Kurnai-Gunditjmara world champion boxer [Lionel Rose](#) was the first Aboriginal person to be named *Australian of the Year*.



*"I have interviewed champs from the 1920s ... all the way up to the current world heavyweight king, Wladimir Klitschko. But few fighters I have known were as inspiring as Lionel Rose: humble, gracious, funny and so unaffected by his success ... Boxing gave him a platform and a status he might otherwise never have known and his 1968 victory over the great Japanese bantamweight, Fighting Harada, was a milestone for the embracing of Indigenous Australians."*

Read more in [Lionel Rose and the Fight Game](#), by leading boxing journalist and cornerman Grantlee Kieza from his book, *Boxing in Australia* (2015).

In 2022, there were four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander finalists in the Australian of the Year Awards, including ACT Australian of the Year recipient and NBA superstar Patty Mills, NT Australian Of The Year recipient, Central Arrernte woman Leanne Liddle, QLD Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Colin Dillon, and Tasmania's Young Australian of the Year, Palawa woman Kaytlyn Johnson. [Read more here.](#)

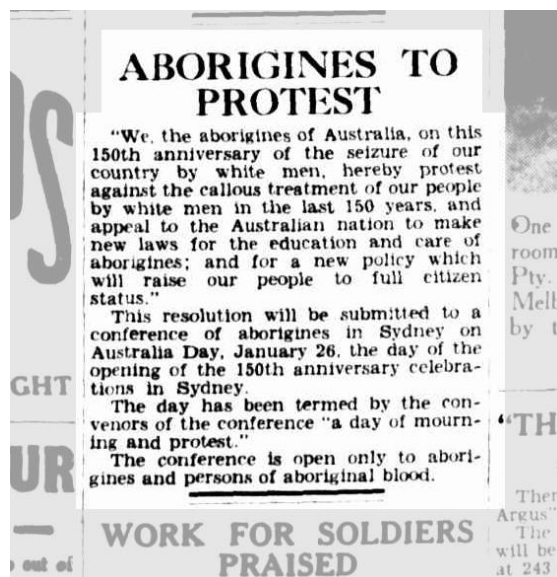
In 2023, the ACT's Professor Tom Calma AO, one of Australia's most respected human rights and social justice campaigners was named the 2023 Senior Australian of the Year.

## Aborigines Day of Mourning 26 January 1938

*"The Day of Mourning was not the first protest by Aboriginal people in the face of injustice, but it was the one that became a catalyst for future generations ... It is, in my thinking, the most critical juncture in Aboriginal political history and laid the platform for all future efforts at both civil and overall human rights."*

*John Patten, great grandson of Jack Patten*

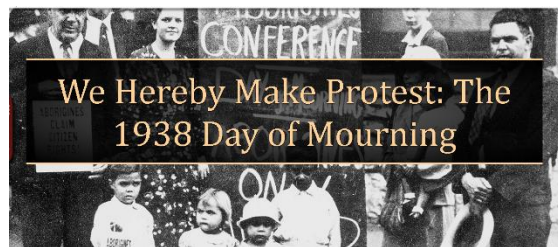
January 26, 1938 marked the 150th anniversary of the landing of the First Fleet in Australia. For some this was a day to celebrate, for many a day to mourn.



The Argus, 24 December 1937



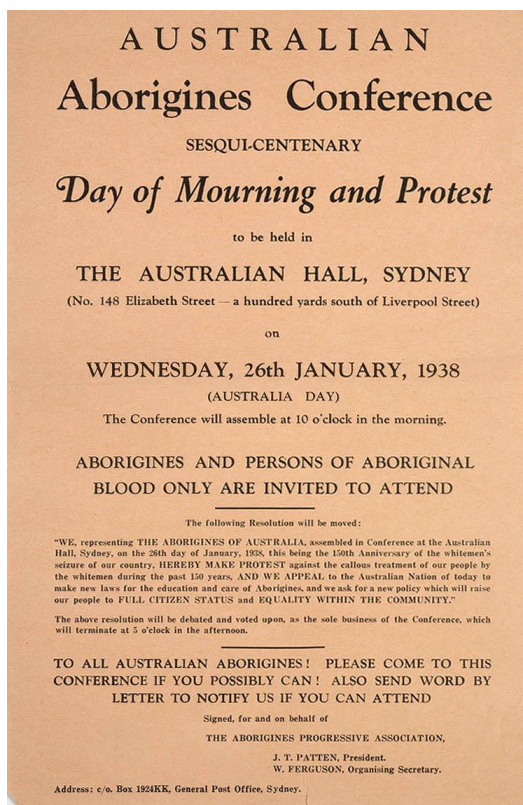
On that day a group of Aboriginal men and women, including Victorian civil-rights leader Sir [Doug Nicholls](#) gathered at Australia Hall in Sydney and moved a major resolution proclaiming the day as a day of national mourning (pictured above with President Jack Patten). To learn more, explore our [Australia Day Feature](#) and explore the AIATSIS online exhibition.



In the words of John Patten, great grandson of Jack Patten, "The Day of Mourning was not the first protest by Aboriginal people in the face of injustice, but it was the one that became a catalyst for future generations, and

it was made possible by those who came before. It is, in my thinking, the most critical juncture in Aboriginal political history and laid the platform for all future efforts at both civil and overall human rights ... As a community, we owe every opportunity we have to those pioneers, just as we do to all those who fought for us before them, after them, and who continue to fight for justice today."

The descendants of Jack Patten, William Cooper and Bert Groves, key figures of the 1938 Day of Mourning, each reflect on their family legacy [here](#).



From the State library NSW collection [[a928402 / ML POSTERS 1612](#)]



## ABORIGINAL TENT EMBASSY - 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

On 26 January 1972 four Aboriginal men, Michael Anderson, Billy Craigie, Tony Coorey and Bertie Williams set up a beach umbrella on the lawns opposite Parliament House in Canberra. Describing the umbrella as the Aboriginal Embassy, the men were protesting the McMahon government's approach to Aboriginal land rights. This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this historical event. It is also thought to be the longest protest site for Indigenous land rights, sovereignty and self-determination in the world.



The embassy operated in a number of locations and took many forms before its permanent establishment on those same lawns of Old Parliament House in 1992. Demonstrating its significance to Australian history, the Tent Embassy gained Commonwealth Heritage listing in 2015.

The goals of protesters have also changed over time, and now include not only land rights but also Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

To learn more, visit the [NMA website](#).

For a deeper understanding, read ‘Ours will be a tent’: The meaning and symbolism of the early Aboriginal Tent Embassy” by Tobias Campbell (2019, ANU).

For an Indigenous perspective, read also the Conversation’s [A short history of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy](#) by Professor Bronwyn Carlson and Wiradjuri-Badu Island PHD candidate Lynda-June Coe, from Macquarie University.



Activist and actor Bob Maza addresses a protest at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in front of Parliament House on July 30, 1972. Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA



Image: National Archives

### Revisiting the Aboriginal tent embassy

Share [f](#) [t](#) [m](#)

[Download 74.31 MB](#)

Listen to Radio National’s Away! podcast - Fire in the Belly: [Revisiting the Aboriginal Tent Embassy](#) (2020)

### Victorian Curriculum:

**VCHHK076** Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: *History 3-4, Historical Knowledge, Community, remembrance and celebrations.*

**VCELY367** Participate in formal and informal debates and plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for defined audiences and purposes, making appropriate choices for modality and emphasis: *English 6, Literacy, Interacting with others.*

**VCELT406** Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts: *English 8, Reading and Viewing, Literature.*

**VCHHC101** Explain different historical interpretations and contested debates about the past: *History 7- 8, Historical Concepts and Skills, Historical sources as evidence.*

**VCHHC125** Evaluate different historical interpretations and contested debates: *History 9-10, Historical Concepts and Skills, Historical sources as evidence.*

**VCHHK160** The perspectives of people and different historical interpretations and debates from the period: *History / Levels 9 and 10 / Historical Knowledge / The modern world and Australia / The globalising world.*

## February

The 4<sup>th</sup> February marks the anniversary of the famous **Cummeragunja Walk-off**.

On that historic day in 1939, over 200 residents of the Cummeragunja Mission walked off the mission station in protest against conditions at the station, and crossed the Murray River into Victoria, leaving the state of NSW. At the time, this was in contravention of rules set by the NSW Aboriginal Protection Board restricting the movement of Aboriginal people. Many settled in Barmah, Echuca, Shepparton, Mooroopna and Fitzroy (Melbourne). [Deadly Story](#) tells more.



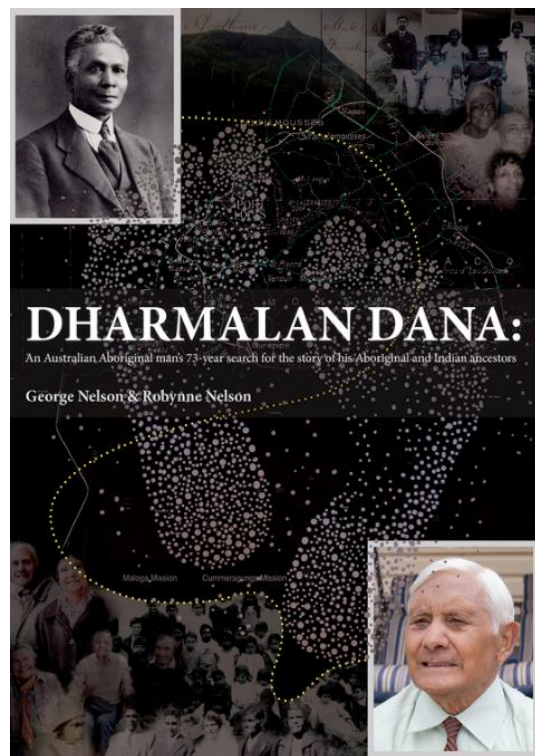
Cummeragunja lies on the NSW side of Dhungala, the Murray River, on the traditional lands of the Bangerang and Yorta Yorta peoples which also cross into Victoria. The river is hugely important to our people and has sustained us for thousands of years.

The now archived **Mission Voices** website developed by the Koorie Heritage Trust is a great multimedia resource. [Listen](#) to the late Bangerang Elder Uncle Sandy Atkinson and other descendants of Cummeragunja discuss life in the day, belonging and connection to place. ('Real Player' free software may need to be downloaded').

With younger students (years 5-8) explore the [Voices of Cummerangunja](#) links and read or

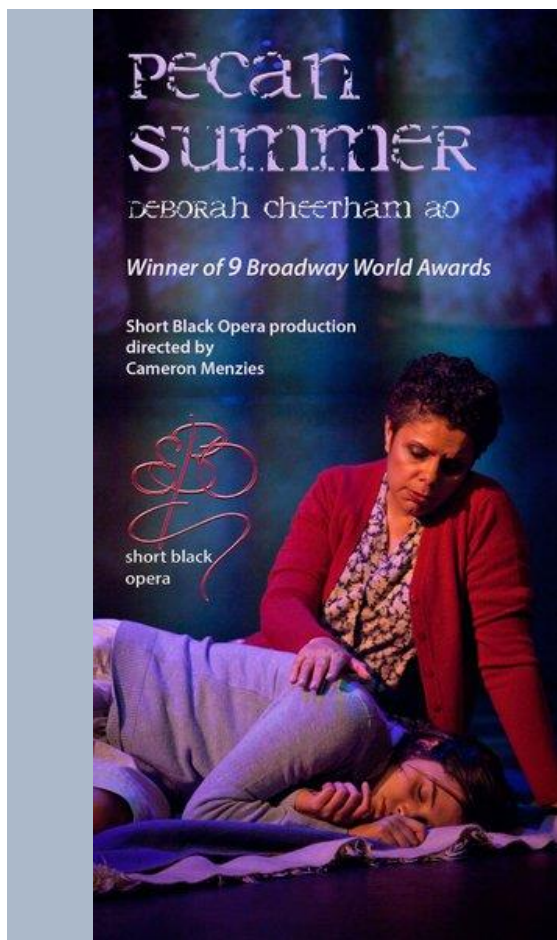
listen to the late Bangerang Elder Uncle Sandy Atkinson talk about [conservation practices](#). What evidence is there that people lived in harmony with their land? Provide at least one specific example of their conservation practices. ('Real Player free software may need to be downloaded').

[Dharmalan Dhana](#) (ANU, 2014) by George and Robynne Nelson and available in many formats tells the story of a man's 73-year search for the story of his Aboriginal and Indian ancestors and contains a lot of deeply personal and historical information about Maloga and Cummeragunja Missions both before and after the walk-off.



*Try to embed real life stories and perspectives from your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across your curriculum throughout the year.*

**Pecan Summer** is Australia's first Indigenous opera, written by Yorta Yorta soprano, Deborah Cheetham. The opera is based on the events surrounding the walk-off from Cummeragunja mission in 1939. Deborah Cheetham began writing Pecan Summer in 2008, and the opera premiered on country in Mooroopna (VIC) in 2010. The success of Pecan Summer led to the formation of **Short Black Opera Company**, a national not-for-profit opera company devoted to the development of Indigenous opera singers.



With students research the opera **Pecan Summer** by Yorta Yorta composer Deborah Cheetham. A **filmed version** of the opera Pecan Summer is available through **SBS On Demand** and quite a number of video clips and news reports have been uploaded to **youtube**. Further explore the life of Deborah Cheetham and her journey to be an opera singer and author.

For a Murray River feature, focus some learning activities around Koorie peoples, languages and stories of the Murray River region, such as the **Bangerang Dreaming story**\* retold by Narjiic Day Burns about the creation of **Dungala** (Tongala), the Murray River, and the famous **Bunyip** stories.

Significantly in 2016, rock art featuring four bunyips was rediscovered in a sandstone shelter in Victoria's *Gariwerd* region - or the Grampians as they have been also called since colonisation. **The Age** recently reported that this find shines 'new light on an age-old story – that of a cosmic struggle between creator spirit and his monstrous enemy,' possibly explaining mother and son-in-law avoidance customs and double rainbows!

Did you know that the legendary **Bunyip** is said to get its name from the Wemba Wemba and Wergaia languages of the Murray River Region?

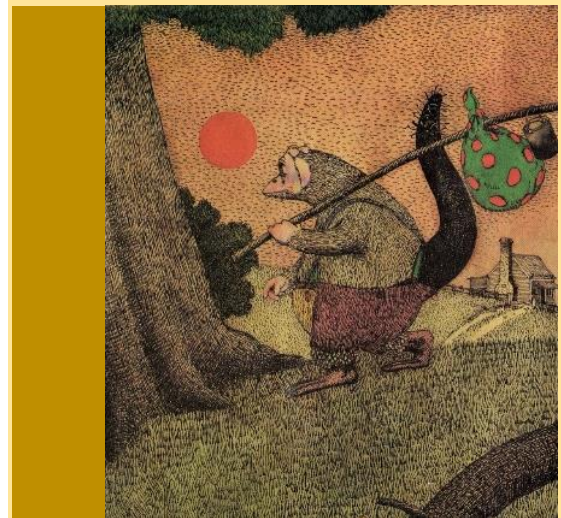
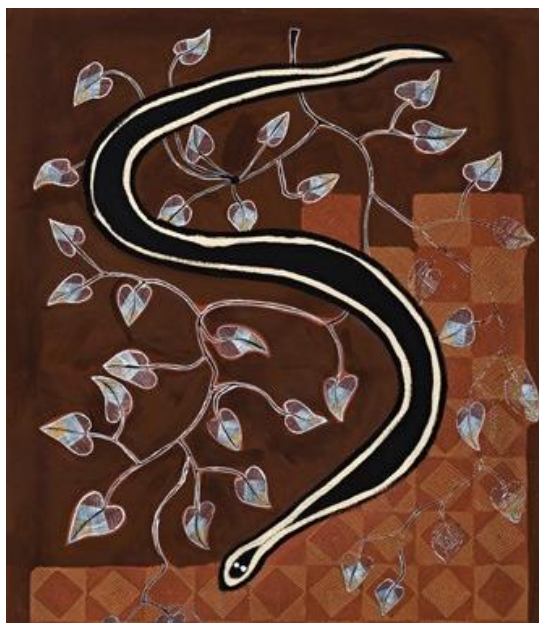


Illustration from *The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek* Written by Jenny Wagner and illustrated by Ron Brooks First edition: Longman Young Books, Melbourne, 1973.

**Behind the News (BTN)** looks at life along Australia's largest river system, the Murray River in **River Kids**, narrated by Tyrone, a young SA Ngarrindjeri boy, who introduces us to people who depend on it – well worth exploring!

**With older students**, explore the ecological, spiritual, economic and aesthetic significance of the Murray-Darling basin and approaches to custodial responsibility, environmental management and sustainability.



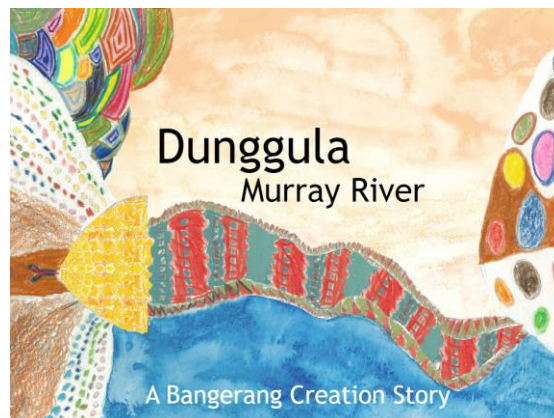
*Snake and Water-lillies by Ralph Nicholls (Koorie Heritage Trust AH2527)*

**Murray River Country: An ecological dialogue with traditional owners** by geographer Jessica Weir comes with [teaching notes](#) and discusses the water crisis from a unique perspective – ‘intimate stories of love and loss from the viewpoints of Aboriginal peoples who know the inland rivers as their traditional country.’

The AIATSIS [Living off our Waters](#) collection tells the history and value of fishing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with three community case studies. Australian Curriculum - aligned [Indigenous Knowledge: Living Waters](#), suggests learning activities targeted to year 4, which could be adapted for other levels, linked to the AIATSIS site.

Consider the ecological, spiritual, economic and aesthetic significance of the Murray-Darling; and approaches to custodial responsibility, environmental management and sustainability.

*\*Depending on the region or the language group, there are a number of Creation Stories about the Murray River. For good background material see: [Ponde the Murray Cod – River Creator](#).*



**SharingStories Foundation** is a non-profit organisation working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia to protect, maintain and grow language, stories and cultural heritage through digital technologies and vibrant artistic art forms. In Victoria, four communities have worked with Sharing Stories Foundation.

Bangerang people of the Murray Goulburn region have collaborated with SharingStories since 2015 and projects have been developed together to support community goals, the development of language resources and the cultural practices of oral storytelling. In 2015-2016, SharingStories facilitated a digital storytelling program between Elders from three family groups of the region and St Georges Road Primary School students. Students produced creative interpretations of the knowledge shared, including a [multi-touch book and animation](#) freely available online. Australian Curriculum-linked materials have continued to be developed and are available on the [Jajoo Warrngara: The Cultural Classroom](#) for subscribers.

#### Victorian Curriculum: History

**VCHHK094** *The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: History 5-6*

**VCHHK134** *Intended and unintended causes and effects of contact and extension of settlement of European power(s), including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: History 9-10*

**VCHHK152** *Causes of the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for rights and freedoms before 1965: History 9-10*



**VCHHK156** Continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia: History 9-10

**VCHHC121** Sequence significant events in chronological order to support analysis of the causes and effects of these events and identify the changes they brought about: History 9-10

**VCHHC123** Analyse and corroborate sources and evaluate their accuracy, usefulness and reliability: History 9-10

**VCHHC127** Analyse the long-term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and developments: History 9-10

**VCHHC124** Analyse the different perspectives of people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values: History 9-10

**VCHHC126** Identify and evaluate patterns of continuity and change in the development of the modern world and Australia: History 9-10

**VCHHC128** Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place: History 9-10

#### **Victorian Curriculum: Civics & Citizenship**

**VCCCG028** Discuss the role of political parties and independent representatives in Australia's system of government, including the formation of governments, and explain the process through which government policy is shaped and developed: Civics & Citizenship 9-10

**VCCCG030** Analyse how citizens' political choices are shaped, including the influence of the media: Civics & Citizenship 9-10

**VCCCG036** Discuss challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society: Civics & Citizenship 9-10

**VCCCG038** Examine the influence of a range of media, including social media, in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity and how ideas about Australian identity may be influenced by global events: Civics & Citizenship 9-10

#### **Victorian Curriculum: The Arts - Music**

**VCAMUR039** Identify and connect specific features and purposes of music from contemporary and past times including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to explore viewpoints and enrich their music making: Music 7-8

**VCAMUM043** Plan, develop and notate compositions with an understanding of style and convention: Music 9-10

**VCAMUR046** Analyse a range of music from contemporary and past times, including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to explore differing viewpoints, enrich their music making, and develop understanding of music practice in local, national and international contexts: Music 9-10

#### **Victorian Curriculum: The Arts - Drama**

**VCADRR032** Explain how the elements of drama and production elements communicate meaning by comparing drama from different social, cultural and historical contexts including in the drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples: Drama 7-8

**VCADRE033** Combine the elements of drama in devised and scripted drama to explore and develop issues, ideas and themes: Drama 7-8

**VCADRR039** Identify and connect specific features and purposes of drama from contemporary and past times, including the drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to explore viewpoints and enrich their drama making: Drama 7-8

**VCADRE041** Manipulate combinations of the elements of drama to develop and convey the physical and psychological aspects of roles and characters consistent with intentions in dramatic forms and performance styles: Drama 9-10

**VCADRD042** Practise and refine the expressive capacity of voice and movement to communicate ideas and dramatic action in a range of forms, styles and performances spaces: Drama 9-10

**VCECU015** Investigate why ethical principles may differ between people and groups, considering the influence of cultural norms, religion, world views and philosophical thought: Ethical Capabilities 7-8

#### **Victorian Curriculum: Geography**

**VCGGK109** The spiritual, economic, cultural and aesthetic value of water for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and peoples of the Asia region, that influence the significance of places: Geography 7-8

**VCGGK111** Factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live and their perceptions of the liveability of places: Geography 7-8

#### **Victorian Curriculum: English**

**VCELA164** Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community: English F

**VCELA234** Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background: English 2

**VCELT240** Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created: English 2

**VCELY220** Discuss different texts on a similar topic, identifying similarities and differences between the texts: English 2

**VCELA303** Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages: English 4

**VCELA362** Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English: English 6

**VCELT393** Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts: English 7

**VCELT404** Explore the interconnectedness of Country and Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors: English 8

# The 1965 Freedom Rides

*One lesson we can all draw from the Freedom Ride is the importance of speaking out against injustice, challenging oppression and discrimination, and doing it now.*

Ann Curthoys, honorary professor, author, and original freedom-rider.



On February 12th, 1965, a group of Sydney University students called Students for Aboriginal Rights (SAFA), led by **Aboriginal students Charles Perkins and Gary Williams**, began a trip that would change Australian history. Their journey was both an attempt to emulate the US Civil Rights Movement action in the early 1960s and designed to expose the racist underbelly of Australian society in rural NSW. The book "Freedom Ride: a freedom rider remembers" by Ann Curthoys, relives the experience of the Freedom Ride, drawing largely upon a diary written during the journey and the recollections of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who were involved. Contemporary media reports as well as secondary accounts supplement the story, drawing attention to the impact of the ride and highlighting the ways in which the events have been remembered.

Learn about the **1965 Freedom Rides** against prejudice and racial discrimination by exploring the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' (AIATSIS). [AIATSIS' site](#) includes the diaries of freedom-rider Ann Curthoys, a photographic exhibition and a great reading list which includes a list of sources, news articles and external websites about the 1965 Freedom Ride. Your first stop for information could be the curated online exhibition, *The 1965 Freedom Ride*, which brings together primary sources from students that took part in this landmark event with newspaper coverage from the time.

Amongst the Freedom Riders was Darce Cassidy, an arts student who was also a part-time reporter for the ABC. His [vivid recordings of the 1965 Freedom Ride](#) weren't broadcast until 1978. In this excerpt, we're taken right to the centre of the confrontation at the Moree swimming pool, where tempers run high in this encounter, revealing the extent of racial segregation that prevailed in country towns at the time.



The Daily Mirror's full-page coverage of the demonstration at Moree pool, 22 February 1965. (Photo courtesy of Newspix)

Image from The Daily Mirror, February 22 1965 found at: <http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/images/history/1960s/freedom/fr13.html>

Previously unpublished photographs of the 1965 Freedom rides discovered in the NSW State Library of NSW archives were first exhibited in 2015. Encourage students to [explore](#) these photographs useful for discussions and presentations.



Watch the 2015 anniversary of the Freedom Rides film on [Living Black](#) about the Freedom Rides. Discuss how things were then and how the freedom riders feel about that time, and their historic action.

Alternatively, students, especially primary school students might prefer to watch the [BTN](#) program on the Freedom Rides 50th anniversary and discuss similarly.



Why were students compelled to take this action? What do these types of actions achieve?

VAEI has produced a brief feature, [The 1965 Freedom Rides](#).

#### Victorian Curriculum: History

**VCHHK094** The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: *History 5-6: Australia as a nation*

**VCHHK155** Effects of methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the role of one individual or group in the struggle.

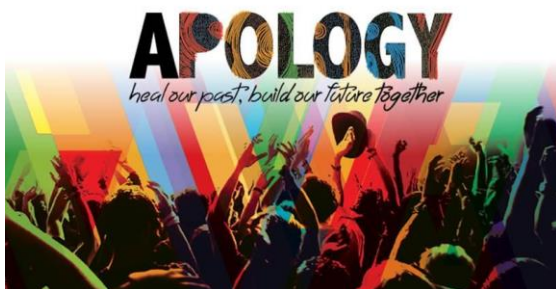
*Elaborations: investigating the role of Charles Perkins in the Freedom Ride of 1965 and the efficacy of television in bringing the struggle: History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

**VCHHK153** Effects of the US civil rights movement and its influence on Australia for rights and freedoms to national attention: *History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

**VCHHK156** Continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia: *History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*



Excerpt of Unidentified boys in wood shack, February 1965 / from The Tribune archived collection. At: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/statelibraryofnsw/20829135935/in/album-72157654250887374/>



## Anniversary of the National Apology

On February 13, 2008, a long-awaited National Apology to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples was delivered by the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd which acknowledged in particular the Stolen Generations. Last year significantly marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this historic occasion.

Each year the National Sorry Day Committee encourages all schools, community groups, workplaces and individuals to commemorate the anniversary of this important event in Australia's history.

With sensitivity, honouring the Apology Anniversary and National Sorry Day builds understanding and respect between school and community, teachers and students.

If possible, invite a Stolen Generations member or another Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander parent, Elder or community member to speak with your students about the Stolen Generations and the importance of celebrating the Apology Anniversary. Discuss with your guest speaker prior to the lesson what they are willing to talk about, especially relating to potentially sensitive issues. Remember that across Victoria and the rest of the nation almost every, if not all Aboriginal families have been negatively affected by the policies and practices that have led to dispossession and what we now call the Stolen Generations. For some, this is still very difficult to reconcile and talk about.



Reaction to the Prime Minister's apology in Canberra and Sydney today.  
Photos: Peter Rae, Jan Reid and Mark Graham., Sydney Morning Herald.

Download the National Sorry Day Committee's excellent resource [Learning about the Stolen Generation: the NSDC's school resource](#) for great classroom and whole-of-school activities.

For the speech that stopped the Nation, listen to or play [footage](#) from the Apology.

To hear personal stories from members of the Stolen Generations, go to the dedicated website: [Stolen Generations' Testimonies](#).

Some questions you might want to consider with your students as part of a lesson:

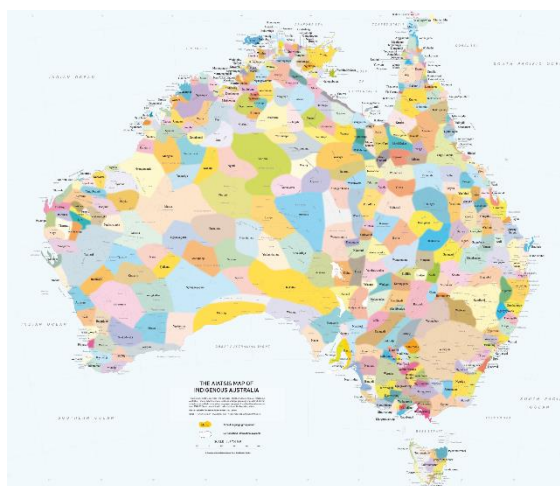
1. *When might we apologise and say sorry for something, and how important is it? Any personal stories to share? How did you feel when someone apologised?*
2. *How did your family members feel when the Australian Parliament said 'sorry' in 2008?*
3. *Why was it so important for Parliament to make an Apology?*

VAEAI has produced a separate publication to commemorate the anniversary of the National Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People which includes a transcript of Prime minister Kevin Rudd's National Apology, downloadable [here](#).

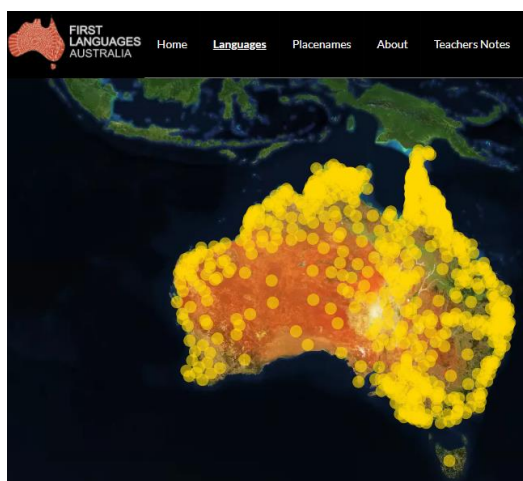


Explore the online [Australian Languages map](#) and zoom into Country, making connections between languages and places where students and teachers were born. Large, printed maps can be purchased from [AIATSIS](#), the [Koorie Heritage Trust](#) and other outlets.

With your students identify the language group or country associated with your school and research the language and its traditional speakers. Clicking the map below will take you to a high-resolution image where sections can be easily enlarged.



Especially worth exploring because of the continuing community input and embedded multimedia resources, is the interactive [Gambay Map](#), developed by [First Languages Australia](#) which is [helping kids understand Australia](#). FLA is working with regional language centres nationally, to develop a map Australian languages, that reflects the names and groupings favoured by community.



#### Victorian Curriculum:

There are a great many content descriptors in the Victorian Curriculum related to understanding the diversity of languages and cultures represented in the classroom, and the multilingual and multicultural character of Australian society.

Entering **Australian Languages** in the Vic Curriculum search engine for example generates a possible 2,345 hits, across all learning areas and many within the study of other languages. This is no surprise in a country like Australia and therefore well worth acknowledging on the day!



Thelma Beeton (Palawa) - Galivanting Around (2020)



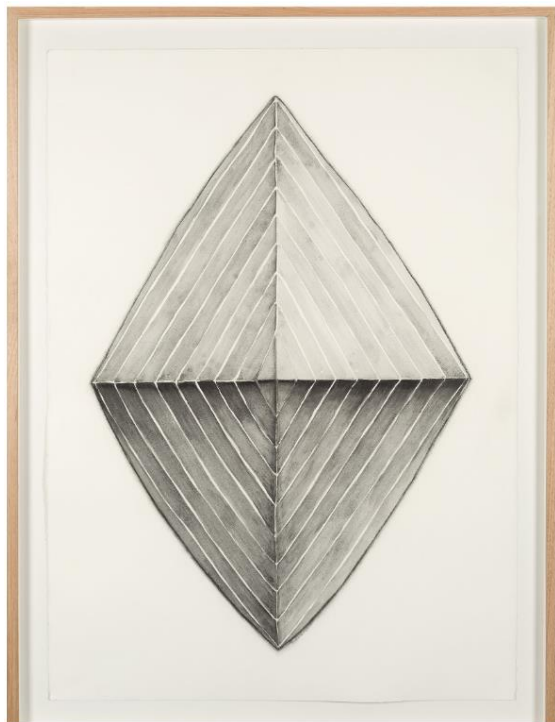
# Tune in to the ARTS: What's on – around and online...

🌀 The Koorie Heritage Trust

## The 10th Koorie Art Show 2023

Until 19 February 2023

Ground Floor, Yarra Building, Federation  
Square



Lorraine BRIGDALE (Yorta Yorta), Monda (shield).  
Creative Victoria Award for Excellence in any Media  
award winner.

The Koorie Art Show is an annual event showcasing the diverse talent of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in one inclusive space.

This year the Koorie Heritage Trust is presenting the [10th Koorie Art Show](#) - an open-entry, non-acquisitive award exhibition, presenting the works of Koorie and Victorian based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists (new and emerging, mid-career and senior) aged 17 years and above.

A new award, the Josh Muir Digital Art Award as part of the 10th Koorie Art Show, in memory of the late Josh Muir (Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta, Barkindji). Josh was a passionate supporter and friend of the KHT having exhibited at the KHT in group shows, held his first solo exhibition with us in 2018, and was an entrant in the Koorie Art Show from the very 1st Koorie Art Show in 2013 and subsequent years until 2018. Josh was also the recipient of the Creative Victoria Award for Excellence in Any Media for his entry in the 2nd Koorie Art Show in 2014, and the Lendlease Reconciliation Award in the 6th Koorie Art Show in 2018.

All submitted entries are included in the exhibition and were eligible for one of several cash awards.

*All works in the 10th Koorie Art Show are available for sale at the Koorie Art Show Online Shop.*

Running simultaneously is the 5th Koorie Art Show Young Mob, showcasing the diverse talent of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, designed for our aspiring young artists aged between 5 and 16 years, [found here](#).

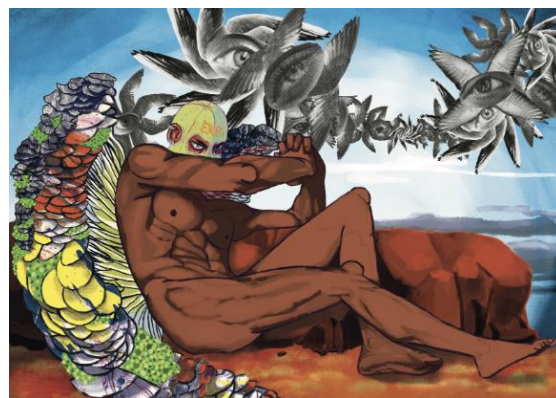


Teena MOFFATT (Yorta Yorta, Gunaikurnia, Gunditjmara), Boorai Carrier

‘Laid bare in ochre that connects me to the spirit of my ancestors, looking straight into the years that have moulded me. I can only grow stronger. This is my self-portrait, my self-reflection, me.’ Teena MOFFATT



Tammy GILSON (Wadawurrung), Getjawil karrap karrap – many flowers. Medium: murmbal baa mongarrk (flax and echidna quill)



ENOKi (Dja Dja Wurrung, Yorta Yorta), Fallen from Grace. Josh Muir Digital Art Award recipient.

## Layers of Blak

**Koorie Heritage Trust, Ground Floor, Yarra Building, Fed Square**

Until 19 February 2022

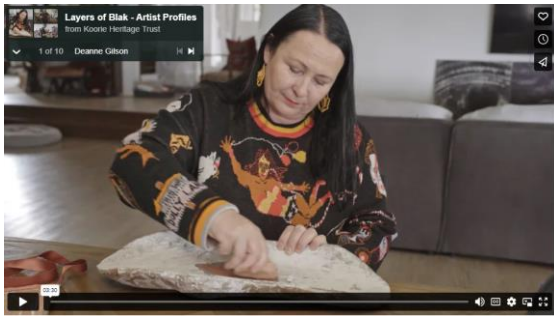
Layers of Blak presents the outcome of 11 Victorian First Nations designers who have participated in the 2nd year of the KHT’s Blak Design Program.

In Layers of Blak, each designer presents a collection of jewellery reflecting their personal stories, layered with meaning – of healing, resilience, collaboration and empowerment. This is powerful storytelling through exquisite contemporary jewellery.



Thelma ASTIN (Gunditjmara) Blak Queens – The journey of an Aboriginal woman connecting with the journey of a gumtree Matriarch crown – Fertilisation and seed release 2022 sterling silver, copper, brass Collection of the artist Photograph: Fred Kroh





Layers of Blak artist Deanne GILSON

Now in its second year, the KHT's Blak Design Program is about supporting, promoting and celebrating First Nations cultural innovation within the Victorian design sector while providing a platform for nurturing sustainable, First Nations design practices. The Blak Design Program involved four weeks of an intensive jewellery making course created and delivered by established contemporary jewellers Blanche Tilden and Laura Deakin, with technical assistance from Lindy McSwan..

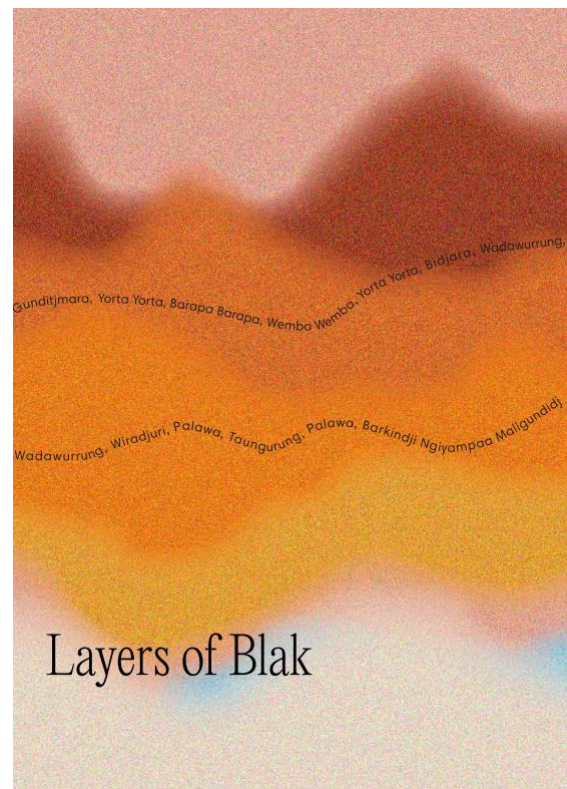
View more at the [KHT](#).

Click on the image below to view the Exhibition Catalogue.



Mandi BARTON (Yorta Yorta/Barapa Barapa/Wemba; Left: Danin (Float) Necklace 2 Photograph: Fred Kroh Wemba).

Participating First Nations designers are: Thelma Austin (Gunditjmara), Mandi Barton (Yorta Yorta, Barapa Barapa, Wemba Wemba), Lorraine Brigdale (Yorta Yorta), Nikki Browne (Bidjara), Deanne Gilson (Wadawurrung), Tammy Gilson (Wadawurrung), Elijah Money (Wiradjuri), Yasmin Silveira (Palawa), Sammy Trist (Taungurung), Dominic White (Palawa) and Tracy Wise (Barkindji Ngiyampaa Maligundidj).



## ∞ Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre



### *First Peoples Exhibition*

Ongoing

Through the voices and languages of our Koorie community, *First Peoples* tells the story of Aboriginal Victoria from the time of Creation to today.

This major exhibition celebrates the history, culture, achievements and survival of Victoria's Aboriginal people.

Meet members of the community aged 8 to 72, and hear them speak about identity, community and culture in the Deep Listening Space.

Enter the nest of Bundjil, the wedge-tailed eagle and ancestral spirit, and hear how he sang the Country, Law and people of the Kulin nation into being. Hear the 38 distinct languages of Victoria. Walk awhile with the Messenger, your virtual guide through the customs of Koorie people and how life changed after European settlement.

With more than 600 historic and contemporary artworks and objects made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, *First Peoples* was co-curated by the Yulendj Group of Elders, community representatives from across Victoria, and Museum Victoria staff. Yulendj is a Kulin word for knowledge, which describes the deep cultural and historical knowledge that the Yulendj group brought to the exhibition.

Visit Bunjilaka to find out more about [First Peoples](#).



Bouruns canoe on display in 'Our Story' section of the First Peoples exhibition. Photo: Dianna Snape

### *Naadohbii: To Draw Water*

Until 26 March 2023



Elisa Jane Carmichael, *Yarabin (sea)*, 2021

*Naadohbii: To Draw Water* brings together contemporary First Peoples artwork from Turtle Island (Canada), Aotearoa (New Zealand), and Australia on the topic of water. The exhibition is a curatorial partnership project between Museums Victoria, Pātaka Art + Museum and Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG-Qaumajuq).

Featuring over 20 artists, including some newly commissioned pieces, *Naadohbii: To Draw Water* illustrates an axis of solidarity between First Peoples nations across the globe around environmental, political, and cultural connections and relationships to water. The artists are William Noah, Jessie Oonark, Christi Belcourt, Rebecca Belmore, Lindsay Dawn Dobbin, Maria Hupfield, Marianne Nicolson, Onaman Collective (Christi Belcourt and Isaac Murdoch), Dr. Vicki Couzens, Ishmael Marika, James Tylor, Elisa Jane Carmichael, Nici Cumpston, Regina Pilawuk Wilson, Rex Greeno, Israel Birch, Nikau Hindin, Jeremy Leatinu'u, Nova Paul, Rachael Rakena, Keri Whaitiri. [More here.](#)



Onaman Collective: Christi Belcourt & Isaac Murdoch, Water is sacred, banner n.d.



Image credit: Nici Cumpston. Oh my Murray Darling, 2019. Adelaide, Kaurna Country, South Australia. Pigment inkjet print on vinyl.

## ➤ Museum Victoria



Contemporary Gunditjmara cloak, made in 2019, skin side up.



A group of Aboriginal men in possum skin cloaks and blankets, some holding weapons c. 1858 possibly at Peshurst, in Victoria's western districts. Photo: Richard Daintree, 1832-1878, and Antoine Fauchery 1823-1861; from the *Sun pictures of Victoria* collection. [Select image to see enlarged copy.](#)

## *The timeless and living art of possum skin cloaks*

Online, & Museum Victoria

The First Peoples of south-eastern Australia have been making possum skin cloaks since time immemorial—today the practice is flourishing.

Fishing, birdwatching, parenthood, commutes—these are among the stories told by two new objects in a Melbourne Museum which continue a custom practiced in south-eastern Australia since time immemorial.

For tens of thousands of years, possum skin cloaks protected First Peoples from cold and rain, mapped Country, told, and held, stories. They still do—possum skin cloak making has undergone a revival. Today, the practice is flourishing. And while it is a tradition which connects people to their Ancestors, 21st century community tell stories both timeless and contemporary through their designs.

'The markings were not just pretty patterns, they were deep, meaningful, iconography of Country, of totem and of place.'

Kimberley Moulton

Melbourne Museum is the custodian of two cloaks from the 19th century. South-eastern Australia Aboriginal Collections senior curator Kimberley Moulton says there may only be three others from the period anywhere in the world. Because, prior to European colonisation, a person's possum skin cloak was intimately entwined with their life story. From the moment of their birth to their death—and into the afterlife. And if possum pelt was the first material object an infant might touch, the luscious fur would also be their last.

Traditionally, people were buried in their cloaks. 'Traditionally ... we would have possum skin cloaks from when we were a baby,' the curator and Yorta Yorta woman

says. 'They might've been four or five pelts big and then, as you grew, you would add on to that.'

Explore the [Museum Victoria site](#) and collection of videos to learn more about the multiple uses of cloaks, design methods and cultural significance.



Gunditjmara cloak-maker Vicki Couzens draws Lake Condah on the new cloak with a wire-nib burner.



The contemporary Gunditjmara cloak, made in 2019, fur side up.

From an article by JOE HINCHLIFFE,  
MUSEUMS VICTORIA  
<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/article/the-timeless-and-living-art-of-possum-skin-cloaks/>

at The NGV



## Marking Time guided exhibition tour:

### A MOMENTOUS CHANGE IN INDIGENOUS ART

Online

THE NVG has a series of online guided exhibitions, from their **Marking Time** exhibition. Explore Marking Time: Indigenous Art from the NGV with NGV Senior Curator of Indigenous Art, Judith Ryan AM as she shares that change that occurred in Indigenous Art in 1971 at Papunya in the Western Desert as a group of senior men began to transfer sacred designs to composition board using acrylic paint and dots; in [Part 3: A Momentous Change In Indigenous Art](#).



## Ancestral Memories

Online

*"To make a 63-pelt possum skin cloak, probably one of the biggest cloaks you'll see is also to represent all of the Countries I am connected to. And two of those Countries on the cloak also have green ochre embedded in them mixed with wattle resin ..."* Maree Clarke

How do you make a 63-pelt possum-skin cloak? With help from family and friends. Hear about the symbology and community effort that went into making this possum-skin cloak by Yorta Yorta / Wamba Wamba / Mutti Mutti / Boonwurrung artist Maree Clarke.

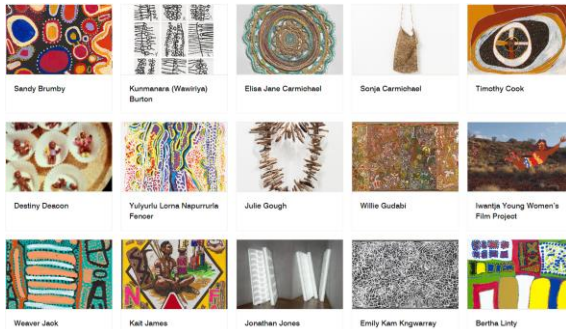
Learn more in this video with Maree Clarke. Click on the link for [NGV multi-media school resources](#).



# INDIGENOUS ART FROM THE NGV COLLECTION

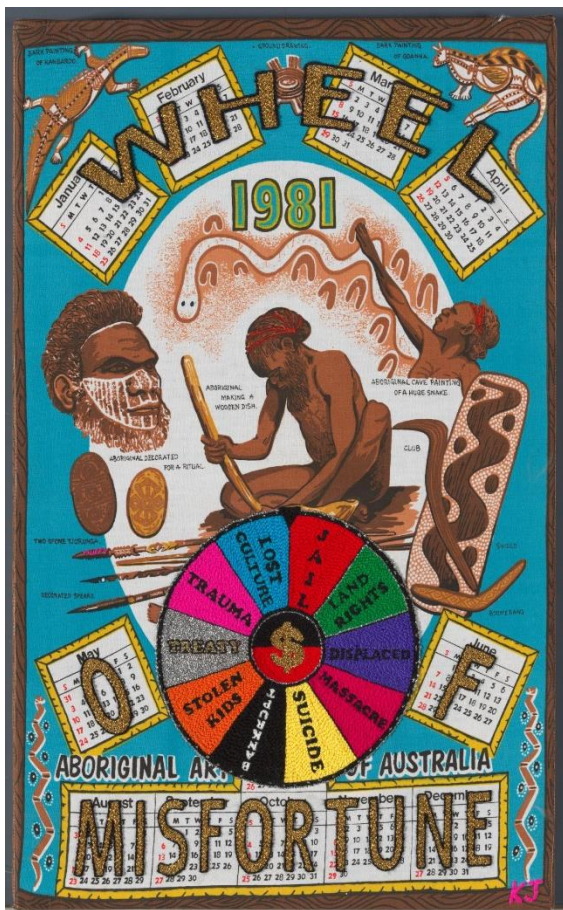
The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Fed Square

Until 29 January



“Indigenous art exists as part of a continuum where old meets new, where materialities clash, and perspectives collide. Since long before the invention of the written word, First Nations people have passed down important cultural knowledge through a combination of art, song, dance and story. The works here offer a series of visual dialogues, in order to explore how parallel innovations and continuities can continue to inspire new ways of thinking about art... Each of the artists presented has produced works that both build on, and challenge tradition...Familiar masterpieces sit alongside inquisitive works and exciting new acquisitions, positioning the NGV Collection as one of immense possibility.”

NGV, <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/indigenous-art-from-the-ngv-collection/>



Kait James, Wadawurrung, Wheel of misfortune (2019). Medium: wool, cotton and metallic yarn on printed cotton. <https://kaitjames.com/index.html>

∞ The Aborigines  
Advancement League,  
Thornbury



## Performance Workshop

16 Feb

Cheeky and loud, black and proud, Deadly Funny is Melbourne International Comedy Festival’s national comedy competition unearthing the freshest and funniest First Nations talent from across the country.



Leading up to the National Grand Final held on April 2023, the Melbourne heat is on at the Aborigines Advancement League, Thornbury on February 16.

Entering its 17th year, Deadly Funny has seen the likes Steph Tisdell, Kevin Kropinyeri, Andy Saunders, Shiralee Hood, Dane Simpson, Elaine Crombie and Sean Choolburra join the program as both participants and mentors. The competition is open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over 18 years of age with [registrations currently open](#).

For more info, or to register as a participant, head to [deadlyfunny.com.au](http://deadlyfunny.com.au).

[Buy Tickets](#). [Register to compete](#).



at The Shepparton Art Museum



17 Dec 2022 – 26 Feb 2023

Until February 26

**The 4th National Indigenous Art Triennial: Ceremony** is the National Gallery's flagship exhibition of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.

Ceremony remains central to the creative practice of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. From the intimate and personal to the collective and collaborative, ceremonies manifest through visual art, film, music



and dance. Featuring a selection of the works of 35 artists from across Australia, this exhibition reveals how ceremony is at the nexus of Country, of culture and of community.

**Shepparton Art Museum** houses a great collection of National and Victorian First Nations art, including Yorta Yorta artists Cynthia Hardie's *Walk Off* and Amy Briggs' *Arrival at the Flats* commemorating the Cummeragunja Walk Off of 1939 – more details in this Bulletin; and the late Gunditjmara artist Les Griggs' *Bracelets and Batons*. Click on images to enlarge.



Les Griggs, *Bracelets and Batons*, 1988. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas Wadawurrung Elder and Gordon resident, Aunty Marlene Gilson



Cynthia Hardie, *Walk Off*, 2019, acrylic and sand on canvas.



Amy Briggs, *Arrival at the Flats*, 2019, acrylic on canvas.

## 📍 The Ballarat Art Gallery



Wadawurrung artist, Marlene Gilson, *Black Swamp-Lake Wendouree*, 2016, acrylic on linen

## NYIRRAM TURT-BARRAM INDIGENOUS PROGRAM

Designed for teachers and students, the NYIRRAM TURT-BARRAM INDIGENOUS PROGRAM resources feature a series of artworks connected to Ballarat, with information about the artists and the work and learning prompts designed around the Victorian curriculum.



Learn about Nyirram turt-barram, the morning star dreaming story with local Wadawurrung artist Deanne Gilson.

Join Deanne and the AGB Education team to explore the culture and stories of the Wadawurrung people and the AGB Indigenous art collection. Students will participate in ochre-painting workshops and learn about Wadawurrung history prior to and post colonisation.

This popular program can be adapted to suit participants from Kinder through to adult education. Dates and times are subject to artist availability. [Read more here.](#)



*at The Old Treasury Building,  
East Melbourne*

## YARRA: STORIES OF MELBOURNE'S RIVER

Ongoing

Melbourne's Yarra River, Birrarung, looks placid most of the time, but it is a river with a turbulent past. A new exhibition at Melbourne's Old Treasury Building explores the chequered history of the stream we call the 'city's river'.

The riverbanks are tranquil now, but 186 years ago they were the site of the first struggles between First Nations people the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung, and invading Europeans. It was all over within five years, with the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung effectively banished from the village of Melbourne by Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe in September 1840. This was to be a story repeated over and over again throughout the catchment areas of the Yarra.

This free exhibition at the Old Treasury Building is rich in stories and illustrations of our river past and present. It was developed in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and in partnership with Public Record Office Victoria. (Content: Old Treasury Building). [Read more here.](#)



Drawing showing the Yarra River in 1837. A line of Aboriginal people cross a stone bridge.

*The Melbourne Theatre Company*

# FIRST PEOPLES YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM



A one-of-a-kind creative learning and engagement initiative for young First Nations people, this program is made possible by the support of the John and Myriam Wylie Foundation and partnered by the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development at VCA and YIRRAMBOI.

The First Peoples Young Artists Program is a free creative learning program for young First Nations people interested in the arts. Previous participants, teaching artists and

new participants all work together to explore ways of telling stories for the stage and discover how theatre is made.

Participants in the program also get to see shows and meet with industry professionals to spark their own creative ideas and connections to the wider industry.

**Dates for 2023 will be announced soon and applications will open in late February.**

For further information regarding the program please contact please contact Karin or Brodi at [education@mtc.com.au](mailto:education@mtc.com.au). [More info here.](#)



## Victorian Curriculum:

**VCAVAR024** Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas. **Visual Arts, Levels 1 and 2, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVAE025** Explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times as inspiration to create visual artworks. **Visual Arts, Levels 3 and 4, Explore and Express Ideas.**

**VCAVAR028** Identify and discuss how ideas are expressed in artworks from a range of places, times and cultures, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. **Visual Arts, Levels 3 and 4, Respond and Interpret**

**VCAVAR032** Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. **Visual Arts, Levels 5 and 6, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVAE034** Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realize their intentions in art works. **Visual Arts, Levels 7 and 8, Explore and Express Ideas.**

**VCAVAR039** Analyse how ideas and viewpoints are expressed in art works and how they are viewed by audiences. **Visual Arts, Levels 7 and 8, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVAR038** Identify and connect specific features of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary times, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. **Visual Arts, Levels 7 and 8, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVCDR005** Identify and describe the use of methods, media, materials, design elements and design principles in visual communications from different historical, social and cultural contexts. **Visual Communication Design, Levels 7 and 8, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMAR032** Explain how the elements of media arts and story principles communicate meaning and viewpoints by comparing media artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. **Media Arts, Levels 5 and 6, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMAR039** Identify specific features and purposes of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peoples. **Media Arts, Levels 7 and 8, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMAR045** Analyse and evaluate how technical and symbolic elements are manipulated in media artworks to challenge representations framed by social beliefs and values in different community and institutional contexts. **Media Arts, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMAR046** Analyse and evaluate a range of media artworks from contemporary and past times, including the media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their media arts making. **Media Arts, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret**

**VCAMUR028** Identify features of the music they listen to, compose and perform, and discuss the purposes it was created for including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, using music terminology. **Music, Levels 3 and 4, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMUR032** Explain how aspects of the elements of music are combined to communicate ideas, concepts and feelings by comparing music from different cultures, times and locations including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. **Music, Levels 5 and 6, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMUR039** Identify and connect specific features and purposes of music from contemporary and past times including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to explore viewpoints and enrich their music making. **Music, Levels 7 and 8, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAMUR046** Analyse a range of music from contemporary and past times, including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to explore differing viewpoints, enrich their music making, and develop

understanding of music practice in local, national and international contexts. **Music, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVAR045** Analyse and interpret artworks to explore the different forms of expression, intentions and viewpoints of artists and how they are viewed by audiences. **Visual Arts, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVAR046** Analyse, interpret and evaluate a range of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to explore differing viewpoints. **Visual Arts, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.**

**VCAVCDR011** Analyse and evaluate the use of methods, media, materials, design elements and design principles in visual communications from different historical, social and cultural contexts, including presentations by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. **Visual Communication Design, Levels 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.**

*And a final word ...*

*We are always seeking to improve our Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletins and to make them useful, relevant and highly readable. You are invited to email through suggestions including how you as educators incorporate Aboriginal perspectives, especially Victorian ones in your teaching and curriculum.*

This edition and previous *Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletins* are available on the [VAEAI website](#).

Produced by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), February 2023.

*Any enquiries, feedback and suggestions are welcomed, by contacting VAEAI on (03) 94810800 or emailing [vaso@vaeai.org.au](mailto:vaso@vaeai.org.au).*

