



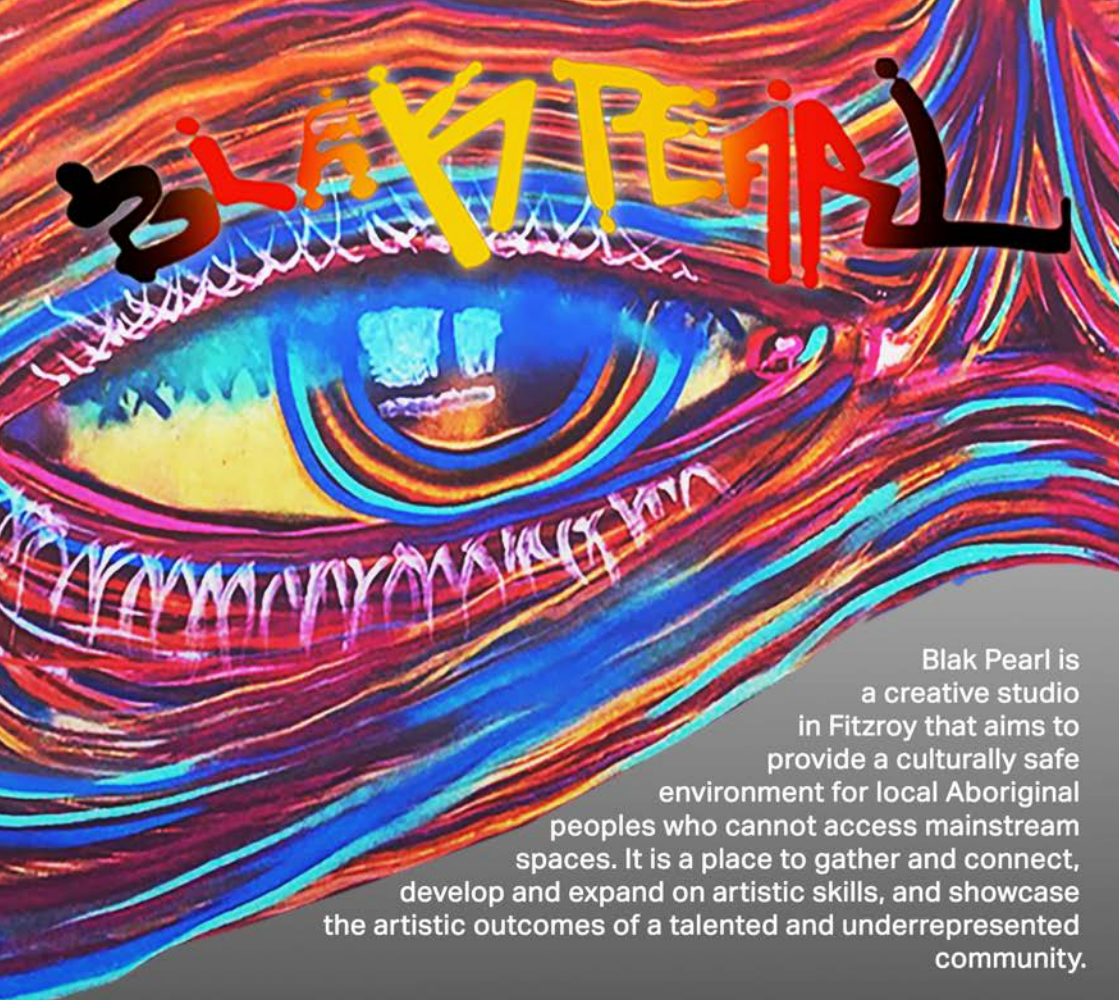
BLAK PEARL

EXHIBITION 2024



CONNECT:
blakpearlfitzroy@gmail.com
[@blakpearlstudiofitzroy](https://www.instagram.com/blakpearlstudiofitzroy)

www.blakpearlstudio.com



Blak Pearl is a creative studio in Fitzroy that aims to provide a culturally safe environment for local Aboriginal peoples who cannot access mainstream spaces. It is a place to gather and connect, develop and expand on artistic skills, and showcase the artistic outcomes of a talented and underrepresented community.

This exhibition is a collection of visionary works that celebrate the culture and creativity from First Nations Artists who gather at Blak Pearl Studio to share their culture and creativity. The Studio is governed by Elders and leaders of the local Aboriginal Community and provides free access to artistic materials, tools, resources, technical support and guidance. Blak Pearl is operated by Future Tense with the incredible support of Pay The Rent, the City of Yarra and Yarra Arts, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, the Inner North Community Foundation, Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House Inc, and the Australian Cultural Fund.

This exhibition is sponsored by Yarra Arts and Pacific Blue and presented by SEVENTH Gallery



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BLAK SPRING

Falling in Poorneet Season

This exhibition is a celebration of the beginning of a cyclical transition toward change signalled by the cold weather coming to an end.

And the awakening of all that was dormant in colder times

In traditional times, true spring—September and October—was a season of abundance.

Lilies, orchids, and Murnong (Yam Daisy) blossomed, providing both beauty and sustenance with their edible roots.

The landscape came alive with vibrant flowers like wattles, hop goodenia, burgan, and kangaroo apple, while tuberous orchids and small lilies emerged after winter.

Season change is also visible in the skies

During Guling Orchid Season the star Arcturus is seen on the northwestern horizon soon after sunset - signalling a time for harvest

Wildlife also flourished, with snakes and lizards becoming active and young kangaroos venturing out of their pouches.

Bulen-bulen (Superb Lyrebird, *Menura novaehollandiae*) males perform the last of their courtship displays.

Migratory birds like the Sacred Kingfisher returned from the north, tadpoles filled ponds,

And the rivers, fed by melting mountain snows, flooded into the plains, rejuvenating the billabongs — flooding that, today, is largely controlled.

The silver wattles earned the name of 'Barak's Wattle', the last traditional ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-willam clan; because when he died at Coranderrk on August 15th 1903, MUYAN was in full golden bloom.

This year - 2024 - is the year that Barak turns 200 years old.

His presence has endured in his kin, in his country

It is a time of joy and anticipation of new growth to come - a theme that echoes the journey of Blak Pearl and a lot of the artists who gather at the Studio to create.

Blak Pearl Studio and Seventh Gallery warmly invite you to celebrate the arrival of spring, and the culture and creativity of this remarkable group of artists.



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THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

Aunty Tracy Briggs

Aunty Tracey Briggs, a Yorta Yorta and Gunditjmara woman. She has lived in Yarra for over 15 years. She is responsible for creating and maintaining the memorial pole on Smith St - a reminder of those who have passed from the community. She also sits on the Elder Council of the Blak Pearl Studio.

Work on display:

- Carved and burnt wooden snake



Uncle Frank Wandin

Uncle Frank 'Dootrule' Wandin is a proud Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Gunai and Wotjobaluk man. He is an avid carver and skilled wood burner and musician. He also sits on the Elder Council of the Blak Pearl Studio.

Work on display:

- TBC



THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

AUNTY MINELLE CREED

Minelle Creed is an award-winning journalist who began her career in the 1990s, reporting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander news and current affairs with ABC Radio and Speaking Out, and most recently with SBS Radio Living Black. Now based in Naarm, Minelle is a strong human and environmental rights advocate. She is a talented creator and artist - through her small business Creed Custom Designs, she produces unique hand-made jewelry with native seeds, emu feathers, crystals, and hand-painted fabric and shoes.

Work on display:

- Emu Feather Skirt
- Honey Ant and Aboriginal Flag themed painted discs with emu feathers



TIANNA PARKINSON

Work on display: Saltwater People Dreaming

A journey of a young Indigenous woman from the saltwater tribe YUIN into Naarm. Drawing inspiration from Wurumpi band, this art piece juxtaposes the journey of saltwater woman living on a land that is different to the birth area she come from and connection to the land which overall is shared by all. It details the question of: will a place different to that of the birth place ever bring satisfaction to me, a young saltwater woman. Living in a city which is so different and a land so different. It raises the question of where home is? Is this all one Island home? And will this place ever satisfy me? (The bigger question all of us have).



THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

AUNTY COLLEEN BEETON

Colleen Beeton is a Palawa woman from Tasmania. Born in "lutruwita" in 1959 in Hobart "nipaluna". Aunty Colleen Beeton came to live in Victoria when she was a baby at 6 months of age, and grew up in Melbourne. At the age of 22 years she moved to Geelong where she had her own family of 3 boys who are all grown up young adults. She now has 3 grandchildren

Work on display:

Hats

1. some of our native food *kipli*
2. The Lace monitor lizard *priyamina* running free
3. This is about meeting place and water holes *lurumili*



Painted Jackets

1. Jack Cassowarie - is the most dangerous bird *muta* in Australia
2. Jacket Eagle - the eagle *kurina* is Australia's largest raptor flying bird *muta*



Painted T-shirts

1. The tassie tiger *kaparunina* is lost from his bushscrub *pungkatina* and is looking at all the buildings thinking where is my bush scrub *punghatina* that is gone
2. Spirits *pallti* lost in the sky

Painted Jeans and White Top

1. Jeans - family *takarinya* walk *takara* across land *tina* looking for food *kipli* and water *muka*
2. Top - Spirits *pallti* looking for family *takarillga*



Belts

1. land *milaythina* animals *tina* and sea *muka* animals *tina*
2. waterholes *luyumili* running water *layna rrala* people and animals *tina* go to drink *lukana*
3. The tiger snake *plantina* is an animal *tina* you should stay away from they can bite *liyana* at anytime

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

Thelma Beeton

Thelma is a strong, proud Palawa-Trinvana-Djilang-Wadawurrung woman with kinship to Taungurung and is a direct descendant of Mannalargenna the Lutruwitan leader and warrior.

Thelma was born on Djilang-Wadawurrung country but grew up on Wamba Wamba, LatjiLatji, Tatti Tatti, Wadi Wadi and Barapa Barapa country (Swan Hill/Murray River, Victoria),

Most of Thelma's work is inspired by her totem, the Lutruitan (Tas) Emu. She first started creating work with The Torch in 2016 and has developed a unique and contemporary painting style using bold and colorful backgrounds with depictions of emu totem.

Thelma has exhibited in many group exhibitions since 2016. She was the recipient of The Torch's Dennis Thorpe Award in 2020 and in 2021 exhibited at Dark Mofo, in The Tench curated by Theia Connell.

Work on display: Sargeant at South Melbourne Police Station.

There was a day when everything shifted.
The cops came, and I felt it—the weight pressing me down, in my body and in my spirit.
What they did—it wasn't right. I feel that truth deep in my bones.
Then, they tried to shut me up, telling me I couldn't talk about it.
But this painting? It holds my story—
the one I'm not allowed to speak, even though it's burning to be told.
It shows the fear, the helplessness I felt that day. Sure, the bruises healed.
But the anger, the pain, the crushing injustice?



Those are still with me, sharp as ever.
My painting's not just about pain—
it's about my strength,
about fighting to be heard.
This isn't just my story.
It's all of us—our sisters, beaten down
by a system that wasn't made for us,
that doesn't even want us. My painting
carries the weight of my ancestors,
and through it, I speak loud and clear.
My painting is my truth.

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

Robert Wolfe and Julie Coleman

Robert Wolf (Pitjantjatjara) and Julie Coleman (Wirangu and Kokatha) are an artist couple based in Yarra. They credit both their mothers who taught them how to paint using dirt in the ground and their strong sense of cultural identity and connection with the land and spirit. They have been collaborating since 2017 and hope that the people who view their art see themselves as Gods children, and would see a God whom they believe to be full of love, grace, and mercy.

Work on display:

- Emu Feather Foot
- Dreamtime Warrior



LUKE DE NITTIS

Luke's work is mostly configurations of his dreams. Suffering from sleep paralysis he draws his energy from these experiences into his work. From these experiences, Luka can mould images from reoccurring silhouettes.



Work on display:

- The Divine Dumuzl (The True Son)
- 064096

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

BENJAMIN FLETCHER

Benjamin (beno) Fletcher is a Kamilaroi man living in narm who specialises in graff and spray paint based work that is highly detailed and layered. His techniques aim to find ways to represent the logic of the fabric of space and time

Work on display:

- Untitled
- The Current of Souls



CLINTON EARNEST LINGARD

Clinton Earnest Lingard (Jongaragee Mata) is mostly a monochromatic painter but has more recently been exploring wood burning and metal work. A Murri man from far north Queensland of Ewamian and Kuku Yalanji nations

Work on display:

1. Possum Skin Burning
- showing a section of the artist's tribal country of Ewamion Nation location and geographical markings and his and his family members' journey markings
2. Wooden Clapstick set - with burning with geographical markings



THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

DEN

Rooted in themes of abandonment and rebirth, Den's artistry blossoms like spring's first light, evolving from the shedding of old layers to embrace new beginnings. Once perceiving abandonment as death, she now sees it as a path to freedom. Guided by her yangooroo (Dreaming) and a profound spiritual connection to her cultures, her work unfolds as a poetic exploration of abandonment's dual nature. Created beneath the full moon's watchful gaze, Den reimagines abandonment not as an end but as a season of renewal.

Over the course of five moons, she realises that her true promise was not to abandon the one she loved but to confront the reflection of her own soul seen within them. Now, with a heart both heavy and enlightened, she vows with deep self-awareness to never forsake herself again. Upon its completion, Yoolgoo celebrates this cycle of resilience and transformation, inviting viewers to embark on her journey of love, pain, and spiritual metamorphosis.



Work on display:

- Yoolgoo (the heart)



JAI WRIGHT

Jai Wright is a Jinibara, Mununjali, Wanggerriburra man whose main medium is usually film and live theatre.

Jai is currently strongly pursuing storytelling and reflection through painting - his work features bold colours in wild shapes and forms delicately woven together

Work on display:

1. A spell, a happening; seasons change: the Bunyip
2. and 3. The Garden of Everything Being

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

ROWAN EDWARDS

Rowan is a classically trained painter who draws from a surrealist handbook to tell his personal stories in a symbolic way, balancing light and dark, heavy themes through a sinister and sometimes satirical manner. He finds joy in the extreme while portraying these ideas and experiences in a detailed diabolical and otherworldly fashion

Work on display:

- Smile



GERARD POL

My art practice is inspired by what I learn. I started off journaling but found that words only went so far to articulate particular concepts.

Me creating art is my way to better express forms of knowledge that often exist beyond spoken and written language. I like working with natural materials and aim to connect with traditional ways of thinking and doing when it comes to my artistry.

I live in Geelong but I grew up in country WA, only recently making the move to VIC. I love the bush, my family and friends and doing good things. The world can be hellish so I try to bring a bit of light to it.



Collection: these two pieces come from a larger collection that forms a 'hero's' toolkit. I draw inspiration from my childhood idols, Xena Warrior Princess and Sailor Moon. Every great warrior needs a signature outfit and a sword or sceptre to match.

Work on display:

1. "Kambarn-Kuaka" (Booka/Kangaroo-Skin Cloak)
2. "Daatj wer Ngop" (Mir/Spear Thrower)

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

CLAY HOLLAND

Clay was born in Upper Queensland of the Bidjara Emu tribe. He has family ties to the Wurundjeri, Pitjantjatjara and Cooma peoples. His artwork comprises of songlines and maps that shares bush stories to the world. He has been painting for 24 years, creating his own personal style.

Work on display:

1. People of Brunswick St, Fitzroy
2. Woman



orchestra tion

poorly stained lightbulbs burn in
an empty place, spinning plates above instrumentally
a mirror pane reflects judgement without my name
i look on a horse and how to scavenge it

blue, red and yellow
but only in the scope of techno
deers in the winter of post, of ash

a plate whirled off by every rotating loop reverberates a chain
breaking on boundaries, wrapping around an open
wield, over/look, falling, where
i see my own shattered fingers in the cosmic remain
and sigh - how to smooch up attachment again

where did the performer go, as you're here suddenly with
the curves lower off broken bones you know
don't take it personally you can get out by your hands and a bear
but only if you don't touch any piano, or sax, don't interrupt
the paper here and make from trees, and made from people dear

the chosen rush in, smearing through artificial sounds
these people dance with each other along the chain
reminiscently provided, inflated hands stretch to shake
re-assign individual responsibility in my throat

not even putting in my body, couldnt figure out how to take
then these million's function

JAGUAR STEVENSON

Jaguar is an emerging Aboriginal poet living on Euro Yroke country. Her work explores how the myths within individualism, identity and attachment are sold and twisted to uphold violent colonial structures.

Work on display:

- Orchestra tion

THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

CASSIE

Work on display:

- Five clans of Gunaikurnai



MORGZ

Work on display:

- Long Neck Turtle

This exhibition is possible thanks to the guidance of...



Uncle Ronald (Ringo) Terrick

Ringo is a Wurundjeri Gunai/Kurnai Elder. He has vast cultural knowledge of country and is experienced in working with archaeologists mapping out sacred sites and surveying the land for tangible and intangible heritage. During his life, he has experienced severe hardship including institutionalization, addiction, family violence, and homelessness - a part of his journey that has led him to be a strong advocate for the importance of cultural healing practices and for the well-being of his peoples and communities.

Uncle Robbie Thorpe

Robbie Thorpe is a long-time activist and the presenter of Melbourne community radio station 3CR's 'Fire First' program.

Robbie is from the Krautungalung people of the Gunnai Nation, the traditional owners of Lake Tyers.

Robbie has organised challenges to ongoing genocide, colonisation and assimilation for more than 40 years, always working toward Indigenous economic and political independence.

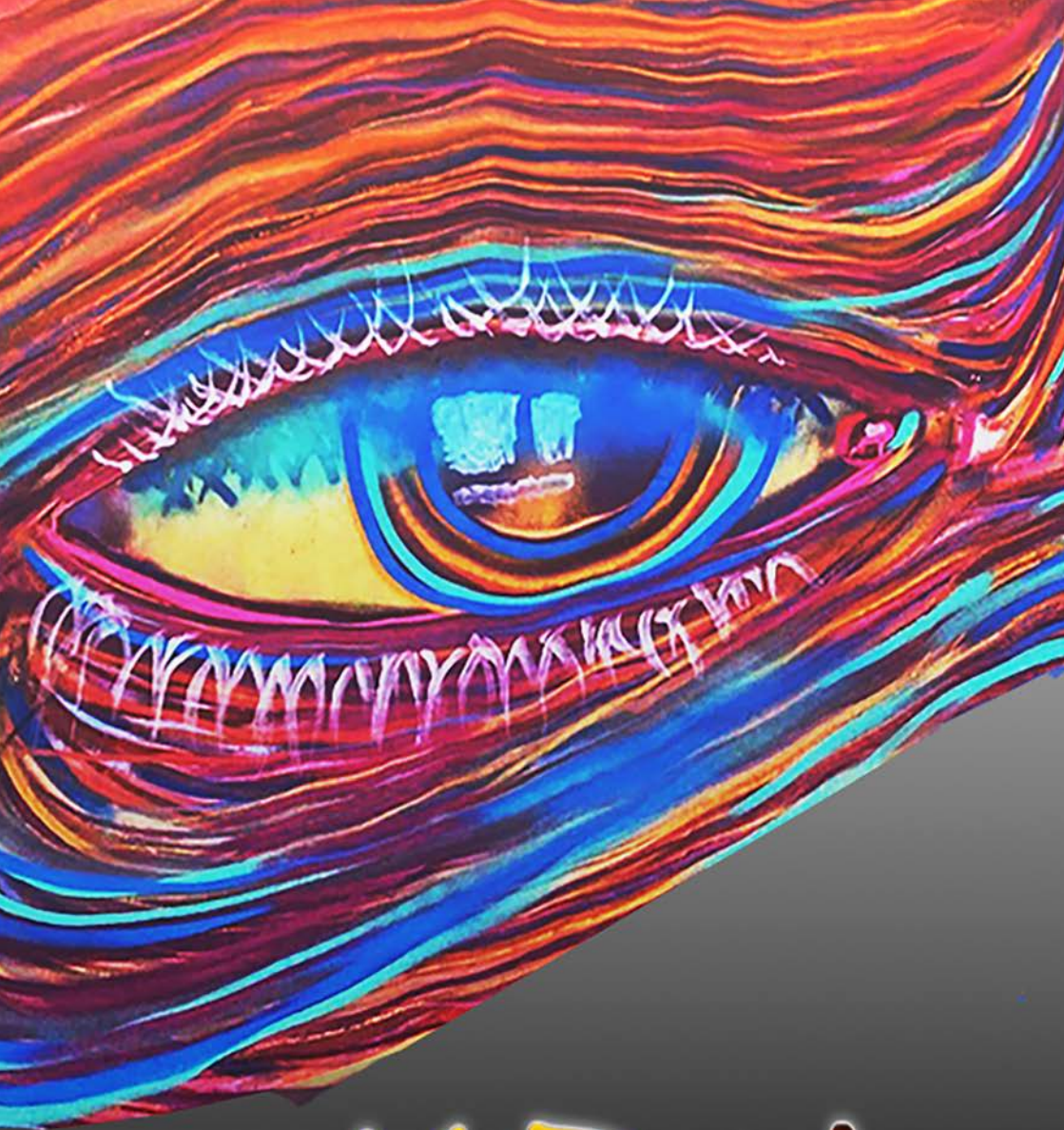


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