



TARRAWARRA MUSEUM OF ART
INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



JULY 2023–JULY 2025

FRONT COVER

Judy Watson

Waanyi

mt riddell 2016

pencil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas

240.0 x 148.0 cm

TarraWarra Museum of Art collection

Gift of the artist. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program 2021

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Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO performing a Welcome to Country at the opening of the TarraWarra Biennial 2021: *Slow Moving Waters*
Photo: Redfish Bluefish

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

TarraWarra Museum of Art acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the original Custodians and Traditional Owners of the land on which the Museum stands and we extend our deepest respect to their community, their Ancestors, and their Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise the Wurundjeri people as the First Artists and cultural practitioners of this land and, more broadly, we acknowledge the vital role that the creative and custodial practices of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to play across Australia.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MR MARC BESEN AC



We are thrilled to present TarraWarra Museum of Art's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). In developing our Innovate RAP we have taken the opportunity to reflect on our reconciliation journey and its integral place in the Museum's ethos since its inception.

At the opening of TarraWarra Museum of Art in December 2003, Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO presented myself and my late wife, Eva Besen AO with a Bunjil (wedge-tailed eagle) feather. Now proudly displayed in the entrance to the Museum, this generous gift, an expression of friendship and mutual appreciation, represents the foundation of a highly important relationship between the Museum and the Wurundjeri community. This connection has continued to be strengthened by an ongoing reciprocal engagement, one that is central to TarraWarra's understanding and appreciation of Wurundjeri culture and custodianship and with that, the significance of the site on which the Museum is located.

Tarrawarra is the name given to the area of Wurundjeri Country in which the Museum is located. We are proud to be able to honour the landscape through this name. We value our natural surroundings, which provide a retreat for the imagination, and the inspiration for so many artists in our program. This fusion of art and nature is the bedrock of First Nations cultures, and one which we continue to respect through our exhibitions and public programs.



Tarrawarra is the name given to the area of Wurundjeri Country in which the Museum is located. We are proud to be able to honour the landscape through this name.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR, DR VICTORIA LYNN



TarraWarra Museum of Art actively engages with art, place and ideas, often presenting unexpected links between 20th and 21st century art within global, national and First Peoples contexts. Integral to this approach has been our commitment to representing and sharing with our audiences, the cultural values, historical experiences and contemporary perspectives of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples through a range of stimulating, innovative and challenging commissions, exhibitions and public programs.

We are both proud and excited that through this RAP, we will implement a series of actions that will deepen our relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists and communities. Moreover, we intend to further our commitment to understanding and sharing their unique perspectives, stories and cultural practices, and generate new creative and identified employment opportunities for the First Peoples of Australia.

We are grateful to our Reconciliation Working Group (Anthony Fitzpatrick, Nicole Haverfield, Sandra Jacobs, Sarah Metzner, Kali Michailidis) for their commitment and contributions and our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (Brooke Wandin and Jenine Godwin-Thompson) for their cultural knowledge and input into our RAP, which has the full support and commitment of all management and staff.

By integrating and implementing our RAP throughout all of our operations and activities over the next two years, we humbly look forward to contributing to a more equitable, just and reconciled future.

... we will implement a series of actions that will deepen our relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists and communities.



Daniel Boyd
Kudjala, Ghungalu, Wangerriburra, Wakka Wakka,
Gubbi Gubbi, Kuku Yalanji, Bundjalung and Yuggera
Untitled 2014
oil, charcoal and archival glue on canvas
213 x 274 cm
TarraWarra Museum of Art collection
Purchased 2014
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia
Photo: Joseph Mayers

Reconciliation Australia commends TarraWarra Museum of Art on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for TarraWarra Museum of Art to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, TarraWarra Museum of Art will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. TarraWarra Museum of Art is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals TarraWarra Museum of Art's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations TarraWarra Museum of Art on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision is a community that proudly recognises and respects the creative expressions, living traditions, deep knowledge systems, diverse talents, and abiding connection to Country of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Grounded in Wurundjeri Country in the Yarra Valley of Victoria, TarraWarra Museum of Art is committed to promoting and celebrating the continuing cultures and custodianship of the First Peoples of Australia. We believe that art has a vital role to play in bringing people together to share a diversity of perspectives. Through our exhibitions, commissions, public programs, and learning and engagement activities, we are committed to collaborating and engaging with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Elders, artists, curators, writers, performers, organisations, communities and cultural practitioners in order to share with our audiences their unique perspectives and expertise, diverse voices, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and historical experiences.

By creating opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to make and present their creative works, undertake training and gain employment, we are committed to working towards a reconciled, equitable and just future in which everyone feels included, culturally safe, valued, and respected.



Opposite page

Bunjil (wedge-tailed eagle) feather presented to Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC by Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO on the occasion of the opening of TarraWarra Museum of Art, December 2003

OUR BUSINESS

Established in 2003, TarraWarra Museum of Art is a not-for-profit public art gallery located on Wurundjeri Country in the Yarra Valley, Victoria. In Woiwurrung—the language of the Wurundjeri people—Tarrawarra translates approximately as ‘slow moving waters’ and is the name given to the area in which the Museum is located.

Not only did the founding patrons Marc Besen AC and the late Eva Besen AO gift the Museum building, they also donated over 600 artworks from their private collection of 20th and 21st century Australian art. Building on the Eva and Marc Besen gift, the Museum actively engages with art, place and ideas, often presenting unexpected links between contemporary art and modernism within global, national and First Peoples contexts. The worlds artists create are a feature of our programs, providing challenging experiences that encourage visitor engagement. The Museum intends to continue in the spirit of Eva and Marc Besen’s ground-breaking vision by providing artists, thinkers and visitors with opportunities to actively participate in the world around them.

We value the Museum’s non-urban environment and immersive atmosphere which provides a retreat for the imagination and allows for engagement with the rich Wurundjeri community and culture of the Yarra Valley. We have explored this context through special exhibitions and commissions, forums and performances, screenings and lectures. As such, we have sought to understand and communicate the complexity of our site, focussing on the broader intersections between art and place. Central to this aim is the recognition of the Wurundjeri people as the First Artists and original Custodians of this Country, and we proudly commission works which explore the Wurundjeri culture of the Yarra Valley. From this grounding in place, we seek to foster a culture and a community that proudly recognises, respects, and celebrates the living traditions, deep knowledge systems, compelling artistry, and abiding connection to Country of First Peoples across Australia.

The Museum attracts a diverse public, demonstrably contributing to the economic and public value of the Yarra Ranges, and across the national arts sector. We are committed to excellence by promoting, developing and exhibiting an outstanding collection of modern and contemporary Australian art, and producing adventurous, unexpected and inventive exhibitions. The Museum is committed to expanding its exceptional collection— which includes important works by leading First Peoples artists—maintaining its integrity and facilitating collaboration and partnerships through outward loans and touring exhibitions.

TarraWarra Museum of Art has a national and international reputation for curating significant exhibitions and programs with Australian and international contemporary artists and curators. Under the creative leadership of Director Dr Victoria Lynn and curator Anthony Fitzpatrick, the Museum presents 3–4 major exhibitions per year featuring Australian and international artists and guest curators. The Museum works with a range of independent curators, which have included Arrernte and Kalkadoon curator Hetti Perkins, Emily Cormack, Nina Miall and Kirsty Grant. The Museum has a strong history of commissioning and presenting new work by contemporary Australian artists, through its signature Biennial—established in 2006 to champion Australian artists—and major solo exhibitions such as Waanyi artist Judy Watson, Kokatha and Nukunu artist Yhonnie Scarce, Peter Booth, Heather B. Swann, Rosemary Laing, David Noonan and many more.

With the imprimatur of Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO, who joined the Museum’s Board in 2022, we continually seek First Peoples consultations and collaborations through significant and innovative projects such as *WILAM BIIK* (2021), curated by Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Ngurai Illum Wurrung curator Stacie Piper, in partnership with ACCA and Creative Victoria for the Yalingwa initiative. The Museum has also partnered with institutions nationally and in the UK and Europe to develop exhibitions, projects and public programs. Throughout 2022–2023, we are partnering with NETS Victoria on a national tour of an exhibition by two leading contemporary Aboriginal artists, *Looking Glass: Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce*, and a Victorian tour of the exhibition *WILAM BIIK*, a major exhibition focused on the Home Country of First Peoples artists from South East Australia.

With a commitment to life-long learning, we present a suite of learning and engagement programs for students, children, families and adults alongside each exhibition. The Museum regularly engages artists and educators to facilitate these workshops and programs. Exhibitions are accompanied by dedicated publications which feature original research and scholarship alongside illustrations of the exhibited works. In the first half of 2024, the Eva and Marc Besen Centre (EMBC), a purpose-built education and open storage centre, will open. The EMBC will enable us to significantly expand upon our public programs and learning and engagement activities. With space for educational activities and visible storage of over 300 artworks, the Centre will facilitate over 100 public and educational programs annually. The EMBC will attract outer metropolitan and metropolitan schools and visitors and we anticipate a significant increase of people per annum participating in the programs, designed for children, families, students, teachers, artists, arts workers and adults. The pioneering concept of Open Storage will be unique in Australia, enabling the Museum’s important collection of Australian art to be more widely accessible.

Many Australian artists, artisans, authors, businesses and organisations are supported through retail sales in our Museum gift shop and online, including a large range of products produced by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Museum has a strong social media following and engagement, with consistently positive reviews, and our online audience continues to grow each year. Over the past two years, digital content has been developed for diverse audiences, including interactive children’s workshops, narrated virtual tours, learning resources, and public webinars. We also commissioned 18 artists to create digital artworks for the Victoria Together website. These initiatives expanded audience reach, resulting in a 150% increase in web traffic. We will continue to develop digital content strategies for the Museum’s activities into the future including the digitisation of the collection to make it accessible online.

TarraWarra Museum of Art’s key stakeholders include its audience—both gallery visitors and online—along with, artists, Museum Members, local community, the Wurundjeri community and broader Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, schools and tertiary institutions, private donors, corporate sponsors, the Australian arts sector and affiliated public galleries, cultural tourism bodies and government funding agencies. The Museum maintains strong affiliations with significant arts organisations including the Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV), the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMAGA), CIMAM – International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art, and the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA).

TarraWarra Museum of Art has one workplace and currently employs 14 permanent staff. As required, the Museum also employs casual staff to assist with events, front of house, and invigilation of exhibitions. The Museum does not currently employ any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff however, through the implementation of this Reconciliation Action Plan, we intend to create an ongoing identified Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Curator/Producer role and improve First Peoples representation and engagement across the Museum’s staff and Board.



OUR RAP

TarraWarra Museum of Art understands the vital role that art can play in fostering a culture and a community that proudly recognises and respects the creative expressions, living traditions, deep knowledge systems, diverse talents, and abiding connection to Country of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Through the presentation of a range of stimulating, innovative and challenging commissions, exhibitions, public programs, and learning and engagement activities we have provided opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to share with our audiences their diverse artistic and cultural practices, express their historical experiences and convey their unique contemporary perspectives and insights.

Since 2008, TarraWarra Museum of Art has presented over twenty exhibitions and affiliated public programs featuring First Nations artists, curators, performers and writers from around the country, with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists represented in at least one solo or group exhibition every year. Some of the artists, curators, writers, performers, and speakers we have worked with include: Paola Balla, Tony Birch, Daniel Boyd, Destiny Deacon, the Djirri Djirri Wurundjeri Women's Dance Group, Jonathan Jones, John Mawurndjul, Kent Morris, Tracey Moffatt, Djon Mundine, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Hetti Perkins, Yhonnie Scarce, Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Brooke Wandin, Kim Wandin, Judy Watson, Arika Waulu, Katie West, Gulumbu Yunupingu, and many more. Through the implementation of our Innovate RAP we will strengthen our commitment to collaborating with and supporting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to present significant and impactful artworks and encounters for a broad audience. By bringing people together to experience and understand a diversity of First Peoples perspectives, we resolve to support the journey to reconciliation.

Central to the Museum's First Peoples engagement has been the development of an important relationship with the Wurundjeri community, including the Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation (WEAC) which manages the nationally significant site Coranderrk Aboriginal Station. Over the years we have consulted and collaborated with Wurundjeri Elders and WEAC on several exhibitions and public programs at the Museum and this close engagement has significantly informed the development of our RAP. Recently, this engagement has resulted in the realisation of a major permanent public artwork commission, *untitled (seven monuments)* by Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist Jonathan Jones and Celtic-Australian artist Tom Nicholson, which marks the boundaries of Coranderrk when it was at its largest at some 4,850 acres. Our Innovate RAP has been developed to provide guidelines by which our Museum will engage with and represent First Peoples artists and communities and through its implementation we look forward to developing and strengthening our reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples both locally and nationally.

Our Innovate RAP is informed by the three core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities which provide the framework that will enable us to embed our reconciliation objectives within our organisational culture and in our strategic planning. By integrating and implementing our RAP throughout our operations and activities over the next two years, we look forward to building on and contributing to a more equitable, just and reconciled future for all Australians.

The Director of the Museum, Victoria Lynn, is our RAP champion. Since joining TarraWarra as Director in 2012, Victoria has been responsible for driving and championing the Museum's engagement with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists and communities both locally and nationally. With the support of her fellow members of the RAP Working Group (RWG)—Board Member, Sandra Jacobs; Curator and RWG Chair, Anthony Fitzpatrick; Manager of External Relations, Kali Michailidis; Learning and Engagement Manager, Sarah Metzner; and Office Coordinator, Nicole Haverfield—Victoria will ensure that our team are engaged and committed to realising our vision for reconciliation through the development and implementation of our RAP. The RWG will meet four times a year, sharing outcomes with all staff and formally reporting to the Museum's Board.

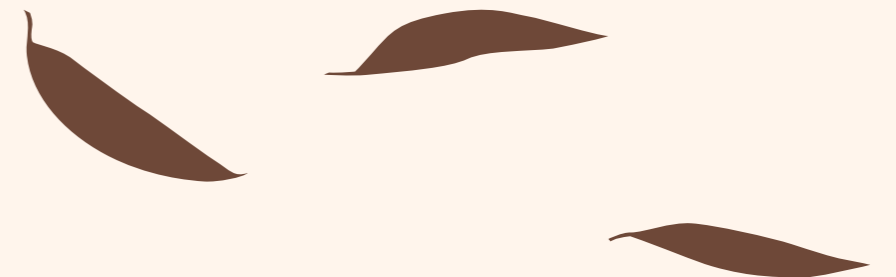
The Museum has also ensured that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Advisory perspectives are incorporated into the development of our RAP and all of our reconciliation activities. In the beginning phase of our reconciliation journey, our RWG was co-chaired by Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Ngurai Illum Wurrung curator, Stacie Piper during her two-year contract with TarraWarra Museum of Art to deliver the Yalingwa initiative from 2019–2021, a landmark exhibition, curatorial position and artist fellowship established in partnership with Creative Victoria and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

In May 2022 we established an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (ATSIAC). The Committee is working alongside the RWG to ensure ongoing input from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Museum's RAP. The two members of our ATSIAC are Brooke Wandin and Jenine Godwin-Thompson.

Brooke Wandin is a Wurundjeri educator, language worker and artist. She has developed and facilitated a range of cultural educational programs, providing Wurundjeri cultural and historical education for pre-school to tertiary students. Brooke is also one of the Directors of Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation and was a recent Indigenous Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Research Fellow at the State Library of Victoria where she examined materials relating to Woiwurrung language to assist in the development of a Woiwurrung language database.

Jenine Godwin-Thompson is a Yaggerah woman from the South East Queensland (Moreton Bay), the southern part of the area known as Meeanjin (Brisbane). Jenine is currently Manager, Transitioning Aboriginal Children to ACCOs Aboriginal Initiatives, Children and Families Division, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Jenine is also the Chair of the Board of Oonah Health & Community Services Aboriginal Corporation in Healesville.

Under the Terms of Reference that have been established for the ATSIAC they will meet with the RWG every quarter to provide advice and guidance for the RWG on matters including (but not limited to): reviewing and providing feedback on the RAP development and implementation, endorsement of locally appropriate reconciliation initiatives and partners, advising on and/or facilitating opportunities to support/collaborate with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations and providing advice on ways to increase community engagement. The Museum intends to embed further First Nations representation in our RWG through future identified roles, in addition to the support and guidance provided by ATSIAC.



CASE STUDY: PUBLIC ARTWORK COMMISSION

untitled (seven monuments) 2019

untitled (seven monuments) is an art project by Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin (Wurundjeri), Jonathan Jones (Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi) and Tom Nicholson (Celtic-Australian). Seven monuments mark the historical boundary of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, one of Australia's most significant sites.

Established by Wurundjeri people and other displaced Aboriginal people in 1863, Coranderrk Aboriginal Station quickly became both a thriving economic community and a powerful base for Aboriginal self-organisation and political advocacy. Coranderrk was subsequently reduced and undermined by the Victorian Colonial Government, ultimately leading to the dispersal and forced removal of the community to Lake Tyers in 1924, leaving only a handful of determined elders. Today Coranderrk continues to be an important living place for Wurundjeri and for the wider Aboriginal community.

Launched at Coranderrk Aboriginal Station in April 2019, *untitled (seven monuments)* is a permanent public artwork installed throughout the region of present day Healesville and surrounds to delineate the boundaries of Coranderrk when it was at its largest, in 1866, at some 4,850 acres. Each marker is an upturned flagpole and brick footing, with a plaque on each face, surrounded by Coranderrk (Christmas bush).

One of the plaques on each of the monuments is dedicated to the Wurundjeri seasonal calendar, which vividly describes seven annual seasons, each distinguished by acute observations of natural rhythms—the movement of the stars, changes in the weather and the life cycles of plants and animals. The inclusion of these seasonal texts grounds the deep knowledge systems of the Wurundjeri and their intrinsic and abiding connection to Country at the centre of the project.

Another of the four plaques on each monument features a series of different maps of Coranderrk. The Wurundjeri conception of Country is represented by a squiggly line marking the contours of the Birrarung as it meanders along what would become the western boundary of Coranderrk. The maps rendered on the

other monuments outline the straight lines that were imposed on these traditional lands and chart the successive excisions of large portions of the Station for European occupation and industry.

Each monument also features a plaque inscribed with quotes pertaining to the history of Coranderrk. These inscriptions include a number of firsthand accounts which provide powerful insights into the extraordinary courage and integrity of the community at Coranderrk in the face of unimaginable hardship and upheaval. The inclusion of the words of the leaders and residents at Coranderrk gives voice to their remarkable stories of self-determination and resilience amidst the overwhelming colonial forces that continually sought to undermine them.

Accompanying the work is a DL leaflet and dedicated website which are purposefully designed and written to guide visitors to the locations of each of the seven markers and encourage engagement with the work, as this sense of participation is key to its activation: '*untitled (seven monuments)* invites you to learn about Coranderrk's extraordinary history, and to traverse Wurundjeri Country. While on Country take your time to enjoy the queep-queep (birds) and the animals, the views and the stories ... When visiting the artwork please take some time to look after the monuments: clear any weeds, water the Coranderrk bush ...' By extending this invitation and permission for others to travel across, learn about and help care for Country, the seven monuments provide an opportunity to not only learn about Coranderrk's history, but to also understand the deep sense of belonging that is so central to Aboriginal identity.

This major public artwork was commissioned by TarraWarra Museum of Art, as part of the exhibition *Future Memorials*, 2013–14, curated by Victoria Lynn, and was realised in 2019 with the support of Yarra Ranges Council, the artwork's custodian.



Jonathan Jones, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin and Tom Nicholson at the launch of *untitled (seven monuments)* at Coranderrk, April 2019
Photo: Christian Capurro

Overleaf:
Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Jonathan Jones and Tom Nicholson
untitled (seven monuments) 2019
site specific installations marking the historical boundary of Coranderrk Aboriginal Station
flagpoles, bricks, bronze plaques, Coranderrk plants, off-set printed leaflet, website: www.untitledsevenmonuments.com.au
Courtesy of the artists
Photo: Christian Capurro
Commissioned by TarraWarra Museum of Art and realised in 2019 with the support of Yarra Ranges Council

Each monument also features a plaque inscribed with quotes pertaining to the history of Coranderrk. These inscriptions include a number of firsthand accounts which provide powerful insights into the extraordinary courage and integrity of the community at Coranderrk in the face of unimaginable hardship and upheaval.



BY METHOD OF MANUALO
THE BLACKS IS TO ALLOW THEM
TO HAVE THE RESERVE AS GREAT
POSSIBLE, WHILE THERE IS ANY
TERRITORY LEFT TO BE TAKEN
BY THEM AT A KIND OF TREATY
WHICH IS TO BE MADE.

THEY ARE VERY PROUD AND
SEEM TO ENJOY THE WORLD AS
GREATLY AS POSSIBLE. IT IS
IN THAT WAY YOU CAN MAKE THEM
SEE THAT IT IS UNWISDOM TO
TAKE WHAT THEY HAVE NOT EARNED.

IT WOULD BE CRUEL ON THE PART OF
THE GOVERNMENT TO MOVE THE
RESERVE TO THE MOUNTAINS
AND THAT IS WHY I RECOMMEND
TO BE A FAVORITE.

1871

CASE STUDY: TOURING EXHIBITION

Looking Glass: Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce

Curated by Hetti Perkins

In the summer of 2020–21, TarraWarra Museum of Art presented *Looking Glass*, an important and timely exhibition which brought together two of Australia's most acclaimed contemporary artists—Waanyi artist, Judy Watson and Kokatha and Nukunu artist, Yhonnie Scarce.

As the Arrernte and Kalkadoon curator Hetti Perkins describes: 'At its heart, the exhibition is both a love song and a lament for Country; a fantastical alchemy of the elemental forces of earth, water, fire and air. Watson's ochres, charcoal and pigments, pooled and washed upon flayed canvases, have a natural affinity and synergy with Scarce's fusion of fire, earth and air. Watson and Scarce express the inseparable oneness of Aboriginal people with Country, a familial relationship established for millennia.'

Together these artists offer a far-ranging and holistic portrait of Country where the creation and experience of art recalls the lived, remembered and inherited history of Aboriginal people. Yet, while their works may refer to specific events, their enigmatic and often intimate forms, gestures and marks also imply an immersive timelessness outside of a linear chronology; an existence today that is more than the 'now'. Colloquially, this is often referred to as the Dreaming, an extraordinary perception of the connection of Country, community and culture.

Watson and Scarce, like all Indigenous Australians, share recent and personally painful histories of the destruction, exploitation and degradation of not only the land, but the people of the land. Essentially, this exhibition is about Australia's secret and dirty war—a battle fought on many fronts from colonial massacres to Stolen Generations, from the Maralinga bomb tests to the climate emergency. In their works, the artists poignantly remind us how the pursuit of the Great Australian Dream is not what it seems. It is, in reality, a nightmare, a shimmering mirage, a candle in the coming storm.'

Organised by Ikon gallery in Birmingham, UK and TarraWarra Museum of Art this important exhibition is touring with NETS Victoria from 2021–2023 to museums and galleries across Australia, including Flinders University Art Museum & City Gallery, Adelaide; Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane; Plimsoll Gallery, School of Creative Arts, University of Tasmania, Hobart; Latrobe Regional Gallery, Morwell, Victoria; Mildura Arts Centre, Victoria; and Wangaratta Art Gallery, Victoria.



Yhonnie Scarce
Kokatha and Nukunu
Cloud Chamber 2020
hand blown glass, wire and steel
dimensions variable
TarraWarra Museum of Art collection
Purchased 2021
installation view, *Looking Glass: Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce*,
TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2020
Courtesy of the artist and THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Photo: Andrew Curtis

Overleaf:
Looking Glass: Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce,
installation view, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2020
Photo: Andrew Curtis
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane
Courtesy of the artist and THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne

Together these artists offer a far-ranging and holistic portrait of Country where the creation and experience of art recalls the lived, remembered and inherited history of Aboriginal people.



CASE STUDY: PARTNERSHIP

Yalingwa

Yalingwa is a partnership between the Victorian Government, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and TarraWarra Museum of Art, designed to support the development of outstanding contemporary Indigenous art and curatorial practice. It includes three new curatorial positions and three major exhibitions alternating between ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art, focused on new commissions by contemporary Indigenous artists. Another significant part of this initiative is the Yalingwa Fellowship, a \$60,000 award for First Nations artists currently living and working in Victoria who have made an outstanding contribution to creative practice in the First Peoples arts community and are at a critical moment in their career. Kokatha and Nukunu artist Yhonnie Scarce was awarded the 2020 Fellowship by the Yalingwa Advisory Group, which includes members of the Indigenous arts and wider community as well as representatives from Creative Victoria, ACCA and TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Following the first iteration of Yalingwa at ACCA, TarraWarra Museum of Art appointed Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Ngurai Illum-Wurrung woman Stacie Piper to the role of First Nations Curator from 2019–2021. In this role, Piper developed *WILAM BIIK*, an exhibition arising from the unsevered connection between First Peoples of South East Australia, their Country, and their Ancestors. As Piper explains: 'In the Woiwurrung language of the Wurundjeri people, Wilam Biik means "Home Country". Wilam Biik is the Soil, the Land, the Water, the Air, the Sky and the Animals that reside within. It is the only home we know, and we revere it for its sacred exchange. A home where custodial rights and responsibilities have never been ceded. The First Nations peoples of the South East Australian region are a part of Communities and Ancestral stories which extend through deep time. Wilam Biik is a place we connect to when we need to go within ourselves, when we seek our truth'.

The original exhibition at TarraWarra opened with a group of highly significant Ancestral personal tools, adornments and paintings on loan from Museums Victoria, Koorie Heritage Trust, State Library of Victoria, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, and an anonymous private collection. As Piper observes: 'Our Ancestors passed on knowledge through storytelling, ceremony, dance and song, and always adorned themselves with pieces crafted from Country. We continue this practice today as their descendants. These Ancestral personal tools and adornments acknowledge those who have come before us, who cared for Country, and led the way for future generations.'

***WILAM BIIK* features ten new commissions by contemporary Aboriginal artists from the South East of Australia. Each of their works link together a story of extended familial connections. The honouring of family and Ancestors, the sharing of traditional knowledge, and the continuance of cultural practices, are integral to the transgenerational installations woven within *WILAM BIIK*. Ranging across different Countries, generations, language groups, media and aesthetic styles, these works provide us with an inspiring opportunity to understand and gain deeper insights into the artists' own perceptions of 'Home Country'.**

WILAM BIIK is touring with NETS Victoria from 2022–2023 to museums and galleries across Victoria including, Wangaratta Art Gallery, Wyndham Art Gallery, Latrobe Regional Gallery and Walker Street Gallery.



Stacie Piper with the work:

Paola Balla

Wemba Wemba and Gunditjmara

Murrup (Ghost) Weaving in Rosie Kuka Lar (Grandmother's Camp) 2021

with Rosie Tang, *Untitled Wallpaper 2021*

installation view, *WILAM BIIK*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2021

Courtesy of Paola Balla

Photo: T. J. Garvie

Overleaf:

Djirri Djirri Wurundjeri Women's Dance Group

Wominjeka 2018–20 (video projection still)

installation view, *WILAM BIIK*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2021

Courtesy of the artists

Photo: Andrew Curtis

The honouring of family and Ancestors, the sharing of traditional knowledge, and the continuance of cultural practices, are integral to the transgenerational installations woven within *WILAM BIIK*.



RELATIONSHIPS

One of TarraWarra Museum of Art’s overarching objectives is to actively engage our audiences with art, place and ideas, by presenting unexpected links between contemporary art and modernism within global, national and First Peoples contexts.

Central to this aim, is building and maintaining strong relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and artists. The Museum will continue to work respectfully and inclusively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to lead, support and provide opportunities for mutually beneficial reconciliation outcomes.

We will continue to listen to and learn from First Peoples artists, communities, and organisations to create a culturally safe and enriching environment in which important conversations and outcomes that enhance reconciliation can take place.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Meet with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Review annually August 2023 August 2024	Director and RWG Chair
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	January 2024	RWG Chair, Office Coordinator
	Investigate/further opportunities to support/ collaborate with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations and institutions Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Oonah Belonging Place, and Worawa Aboriginal College.	Commence July 2023	Director and RWG Chair
	Continue to identify opportunities to collaborate with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, communities and cultural practitioners in the development and presentation of exhibitions, publications, public programs and maintain and expand the delivery of educational workshops and outreach programs, e.g. Community Voices.	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	Director, Curator, Learning and Engagement Manager, Marketing Manager

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
2. Build and foster relationships and communities that value First Peoples’ histories, values and futures through celebrating and participating in National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May, 2024, 2025	RWG, Office Coordinator
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	RWG
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	RWG Chair, Office Coordinator
	Organise at least one internal NRW event each year.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	Learning and Engagement Manager, Marketing & Events Manager
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s website.	May 2024, 2025	Marketing & Events Manager
	Promote NRW through our social media channels with focus on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artworks or projects.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	Marketing & Events Manager
	Investigate opportunities to build relationships with First Nations peoples by celebrating and participating in dates of significance that foster reconciliation.	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair, Office Manager
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	Commence July 2023	Office Manager
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, e.g. publications, e-newsletter, media releases, public programs, openings, social media.	Commence July 2023	Marketing & Events Manager
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Commence July 2023	Director, Manager of External Relations
	Collaborate with RAP organisations in the RAP network and/or other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Review annually May 2024 and May 2025	Director, Curator, Marketing & Events Manager
	Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.	Commence July 2023	Manager of External Relations, Marketing & Events Manager
	Include RAP goals in the ethical screen when considering sponsorships, partnerships and investments	Review annually December 2023 December 2024	Director, Manager of External Relations, Treasurer, Sponsorship and Investments sub-committees of the Board
	Distribute RAP to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and potential partners.	Commence July 2023	Manager of External Relations

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Review annually January 2024 January 2025	General Manager, People and Culture committee
	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	Review March 2024	Office Coordinator
	Engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	February 2024	RWG Chair
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	May 2024	Office Coordinator
	All staff as part of their induction/employment to undertake regular cultural awareness and cultural safety training	May 2024 and May 2025	General Manager, People and Culture committee
5. Strengthen First Nations participation in our exhibitions and activities.	Develop strategies to increase attendance and participation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities in our exhibition and public programs and learning and engagement activities	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	Learning and Engagement Manager, Marketing & Events Manager
	Develop opportunities to engage Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander educators, artists and cultural practitioners to facilitate learning and engagement activities	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	Learning and Engagement Manager
	Investigate viability of free Museum entry for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander visitors, in consultation and partnership with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations that TarraWarra Museum of Art holds existing relationships with.	Commence July 2023	General Manager, Marketing & Events Manager, FOH
	Support AMAGA's <i>First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries</i> and the critical pathways outlined in the document	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	RWG Chair



Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Jonathan Jones and Tom Nicholson
untitled (seven monuments) 2019
 site specific installations marking the historical boundary of
 Coranderrk Aboriginal Station
 flagpoles, bricks, bronze plaques, Coranderrk plants, off-set
 printed leaflet, website: www.untitledsevenmonuments.com.au
 Courtesy of the artists
 Photo: Christian Capurro
 Commissioned by TarraWarra Museum of Art and realised in 2019
 with the support of Yarra Ranges Council

RESPECT

TarraWarra Museum of Art recognises and values Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the original Custodians and the First Artists and cultural practitioners of this land and we acknowledge the vital role that their creative and custodial practices continue to play across Australia.

Through our exhibitions, public programs, learning and engagement activities, external relations and internal operations, we seek to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories in order to foster a culture and a community that proudly recognises, respects, and celebrates the living traditions, deep knowledge systems, compelling artistry, and abiding connection to Country of First Peoples across Australia.

TarraWarra is committed to providing a culturally safe place for artists and First Peoples communities by observing cultural protocols and permissions and engaging staff with ongoing cultural training and learning opportunities.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Commence February 2024	Director, Office Coordinator
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	Commence March 2024	RWG Chair, ATSIAC
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	Commence June 2024	RWG Chair, Office Coordinator
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members and all staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	May 2024 and May 2025	RWG Chair, General Manager, Office Coordinator
	Include RAP in induction material for all new staff and Board members	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair, General Manager
	Develop cultural competency questions to be used during recruitment processes and investigate how the RAP can be mentioned in job descriptions to ensure new staff are aware of our commitment to the RAP.	Commence July 2023	General Manager, HR consultant
All staff to attend at least one First Peoples exhibition, symposium, festival, performance or other event per year beyond the Museum	Review annually	May 2024 and May 2025	RWG Chair, Office Coordinator

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols and permissions.	Increase staff, volunteers and welcome guides understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols and permissions, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	RWG Chair, Office Coordinator
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol and permissions document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country and include in induction for staff, Board and volunteers.	Commence July 2023	Director, RWG Chair
	Invite a member of the Wurundjeri community to provide a Welcome to Country at all exhibition openings and other significant events each year.	Commence July 2023	Director, Exhibitions Manager
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings, functions, guided tours, and workshops.	Commence July 2023	Director, RWG Chair
	EMBC landscaping devised as a Welcome to Country via consultation with Traditional Owners	Commence May 2024	Project Control Group for the Eva and Marc Besen Centre
	Ensure Acknowledgement of Country included in published materials (exhibition catalogue, education resources, website, newsletters, email signature)	Commence July 2023	Curator, Learning and Engagement Manager, Marketing & Events Manager
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols, language and permissions.	Commence July 2023	Learning and Engagement Manager, Curator
	Maintain and grow relationships with artists, art centres and copyright agencies to ensure the appropriate use of images and protect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists' legal and moral rights in line with the Indigenous Art Code.	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	Director, Curator, Exhibitions Manager
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2024, 2025	RWG Chair
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	First week in July, 2024, 2025	Director, General Manager
9. Make TarraWarra Museum of Art a welcoming and culturally safe place for First Peoples visitors, artists and collaborators.	Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.	First week in July, 2024, 2025	General Manager
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2024 and June 2025	RWG Chair
	Ensure cultural warnings are provided in exhibitions, online and in publications, where appropriate.	Commence July 2023	Curator, Marketing & Events Manager
	Seek to include Woiwurrung language where relevant/appropriate.	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair, Curator, Learning and Engagement Manager

OPPORTUNITIES

TarraWarra Museum of Art is committed to working towards a reconciled, equitable and just future in which everyone feels included, culturally safe, valued, and respected. Creating opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to make and present their creative works, undertake training and gain employment, promotes inclusion, understanding and respect which also brings benefits to our entire organisation.

There is a designated position for a Traditional Owner on the Museum's Board and we are committed to increasing employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in our workplace. Our Museum will continue to engage Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander run businesses in our supply chain, in our retail shop and amongst our contractors, acknowledging the benefits that these businesses bring to local communities.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	Director, General Manager
	Engage with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (ATSIAC) to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	February 2024	RWG Chair, Director, General Manager, Office Coordinator
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June 2024	RWG Chair, Director, General Manager, Office Coordinator
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, including use of First Peoples employment agencies (to be investigated).	Review annually December 2023 and December 2024	General Manager
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Review annually August 2023 August 2024	General Manager, Director, Office Coordinator
	Investigate ways to increase the percentage of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce and retaining First Nations staff through the creation of a culturally safe environment for employees.	June 2025	Board – People & Culture Committee
	Improve opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples by including in all job advertisements the statement that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strongly encouraged to apply + people with diverse backgrounds and abilities, etc.	Commence July 2023	Director, General Manager
	Develop a new identified role for a First Peoples Producer/Curator.	June 2025	Board – People & Culture Committee
	Develop identified work experience and internship opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.	November 2024	RWG Chair, Learning and Engagement Manager

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11. Increase Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	Review June 2024	RWG Chair, General Manager
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair, General Manager
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	FOH, General Manager
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Review June 2024	RWG Chair, General Manager, Manager of External Relations
	Commit to ensuring a minimum of 1% procurement from First Peoples businesses, in line with <i>Tharamba Bugheen: Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017–2021</i> .	June 2024 and June 2025	General Manager
	Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business.	June 2024 and June 2025	RWG Chair, General Manager
	Continue to represent Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists, artisans and businesses in our retail shop	Review annually June 2024 and June 2025	General Manager, FOH

GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	Review annually May 2024 and May 2025	RWG Chair
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November 2023, 2024, 2025	RWG Chair
	Maintain an external Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee to provide cultural advice and guidance for the RWG (including through the RAP implementation)	Commence July 2023	RWG Chair
	Facilitate and maintain regular interaction and consultation between RWG and ATSIAC	February, May, August, November 2023, 2024, 2025	RWG Chair
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	May 2023	RWG Chair, General Manager
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 2024 and February 2025	Director, RWG Chair
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Commence July 2023	RWG, Office Coordinator
	Distribute final RAP to the Board and all staff, funders and sponsors (regardless of funded activity)	Commence July 2023	Manager of External Relations
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	July 2023	RWG
	Include RAP deliverables in staff position descriptions	Commence July 2023	Director, General Manager

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	RWG Chair
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August annually	RWG Chair
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia, and submit report to the Board	30 September, 2023, 2024	RWG Chair
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders (incl. the Board) quarterly.	March, June, September, December 2023, 2024, 2025	RWG Chair, Director
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	Review annually in November	RWG Chair, Marketing & Events Manager
	Include RAP section in Annual Report	November 2024 and November 2025	RWG Chair, Manager of External Relations
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	July 2025	RWG Chair
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	RWG Chair
	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	October 2024	RWG Chair



Contact for public enquiries about our RAP

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TARRAWARRA
MUSEUM
OF ART