

The Kircher Collection

MAJOR WORKS FROM THE CLASS OF 2024



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The Kircher Collection

MAJOR WORKS FROM THE HSC CLASS OF 2024

The Kircher Collection

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Saint Ignatius' College Riverview

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Saint Ignatius' College Riverview acknowledges the Cammeraigal people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land upon which we are privileged to live and educate. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations people who dwell on this land.

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DR PAUL A HINE, PRINCIPAL

Foreword

John O’Malley SJ, one of the foremost authorities on Jesuit history, asserts that “Ignatius and his companions from the very beginning advocated and exemplified a learned ministry”¹. Because of this, the Society of Jesus grew from its foundational days to embrace reason and scholarship of all forms with a reflective and constructively critical impulse to learn. Indeed, the earliest Jesuits such as Matteo Ricci, who travelled to the Far East in the mid 16th century, were among the finest scholars of their day, schooled in cartography, astronomy, mathematics and linguistics. A brief glance at Jesuit history across the centuries will reveal that it is enamoured with those who have made great discoveries and explored contemporary fields of research, from telescope and physics, to art, philosophy and literature.

The tradition of scholarship and the desire to learn remain deeply embedded in Jesuit education. Four hundred years after Ricci, at a major international conference that foregrounded the 21st century, the Congregation asserted that “In all of its endeavours, Jesuit education is distinguished by intellectual excellence and academic rigour”², and because of this, “the schools set demanding standards for both students and faculty”³. It is this ethic that drives the education program at Saint Ignatius’ College Riverview and generates the quality of work contained in this publication.

Named after Athanasius Kircher SJ, a Jesuit of prodigious intellect in the 17th century, *The Kircher Collection* is testament to the aspirational scholarship that is alive and well at the College. It profiles key fields of academic pursuit and endeavour—Literature, Visual Arts, History, Drama, Music and Science. More than just a compendium of student work, it is a manifestation of the desire to enquire, to experience, to comprehend, to analyse, to interpret, to explore—all corollaries of creative cognition in the quotient of learning.

As you read this publication, it is my hope that you will enjoy the sophistication of the work, remembering that these young men are still of a tender age with so much potential in their chosen fields. Who knows, they may reach some of the lofty heights of illustrious alumni such as Robert Hughes, Alex Seton and the seven Rhodes scholars who have given so much to academic pursuit and artistic expression in their personal and professional lives. These are early days in disciplines still seminal to the contributors, but a discerning appreciation of their work augurs well for all that lies ahead.

Special thanks are extended to the many staff who contribute with great generosity and professionalism to this publication.

1 John O’Malley SJ. (1993). *The First Jesuits*. In Traub, George, W. (Ed). *A Jesuit Education Reader*. p 7

2 *Communal Reflection on the Jesuit Mission. A Way of Proceeding. From the Jesuit Conference, 2002*. In Traub, George, W. (Ed) op. cit. p 179

3 Mitchell, Robert, A. (1988). *Five Traits of Jesuit Education*. In Traub, George, W. (Ed) op. cit. p 111

FR TOM RENSHAW SJ, RECTOR

Introduction

In the middle of 2021, the second global colloquium on Jesuit education was held virtually. In responding to Father General's question of **"How do we accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future in our education apostolic ministry?"**, the response was the following,

**We ought to educate for a hope-filled future
by educating for depth and global citizenship
in faith and in reconciliation
in the context of our Education integrated (Holistic) Perspective.**

Jesuit education seeks to do this through four interrelated strands:

- 1 Educating for faith;
2. Educating for depth;
3. Educating for reconciliation; and
4. Educating for global citizenship.

The goal of Jesuit education today "is to educate for human excellence that leads to a hope-filled future: persons who are compassionate, competent, conscious of God in themselves and in the world around them, and committed to seeing all things new in Christ"¹.

This collection is named after a 17th century Jesuit, Fr Athanasius Kircher SJ, who is the embodiment of depth and the *magis*. I congratulate the students whose works appear in this collection and for the differing ways in which they have used their God-given talents to respond creatively in producing outstanding works of scholarship as part of their Higher School Certificate. Each work is an inspiring expression of human excellence. In the next section, one of my predecessors, Fr Ross Jones SJ (College Rector 2011-2017), outlines most eloquently the life of Fr Athanasius and his extraordinary contribution, as a polymath, to many different fields of learning.

¹ Vision Statement, Second Colloquium JESEDU-Global 2021, <https://www.educatemagis.org/jesedu-global2021/colloquium-hub/>, accessed 27 November 2021.

FR ROSS JONES SJ

Athanasius Kircher SJ

“The last man who knew everything”

“
It was because
of Kircher's
work that
scientists
knew what to
look for when
interpreting the
Rosetta Stone.
”

Athanasius Kircher;
The Kircher Museum in Rome



magnetic machines, which he displayed to visitors to his famous public museum (the first such institution), housed in the Jesuit Collegio Romano. His books, lavishly illustrated volumes, were destined for Baroque princes with a love of the curious and exotic explorations of their time.

Kircher invented the lantern slide (the forerunner of projectors). He accurately estimated the speed of a swallow at 100 feet per second (without a stopwatch). He was a volcanologist (even climbed into the volcano Vesuvius) and wrote the first book on volcanology. Kircher and others like him taught in the Colleges and encouraged the appropriation of the sciences into the school curriculum.

Kircher invented calculators, wrote on symbolic logic, and devised mathematical tables. He understood the evolutionary process and hinted at the germ theory of disease—he attributed the plague to tiny animals which he had observed under a microscope.

His first publication concerned magnetism. Then he wrote of sundials, next on the Egyptian language, then on calendars. He proposed a map of the city of Atlantis. He knew twenty ancient and modern languages. He studied hieroglyphics and it was because of Kircher's work that scientists knew what to look for when interpreting the Rosetta stone. He has been called the real founder of Egyptology.

Kircher always wanted to be a missionary in China, but the importance of his teaching saw this dream never realised. However, that did not prevent him writing a huge treatise on China, *China Illustrata*, which included mythology, accurate cartography and Chinese characters.

While traveling through Italy writing his book on magnetism, he came to the town of Taranto, which gives its name to the poisonous tarantula spider. The region of Taranto was known for the prevalence of a disease called 'tarantism', which induced an hysterical condition in the sufferer, with one characteristic feature being the sudden desire to dance, in a wild and rapid whirling motion. It was commonly supposed that the illness was a result of the bite of a tarantula. Accordingly, it was believed that the cure for the bite of the tarantula was to perform the dance, to work out the toxin. In his book on magnetism, Kircher helpfully depicts the region populated by the spider, and gives drawings of the animal and of its victims being bitten. Finally, should one be unfortunate enough to get bitten, Kircher, composed a piece of music—*Antidotum Tarantulæ*—for the victim to dance to, to cure the bite!

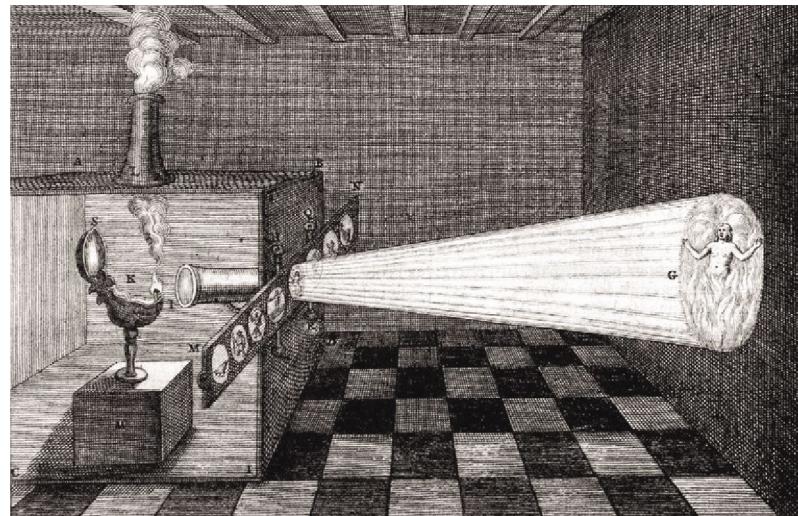
Kircher practised a unique brand of science before the lines had been drawn between it and art and religion. He covered herbs, astrology, mining, dragons, demons, weather, eclipses, fossils, gravity, bioluminescence, the sun and moon, and other topics. For example, spanning scriptures and science, he calculated that the height required for the Tower of Babel merely to reach the moon would catapult the earth out of its orbit.

“

He understood the evolutionary process and hinted at the germ theory of disease.

”

The precursor of the slide,
overhead and digital projector



Visitors to Kircher's impressive museum heard his disembodied voice, fed to them through a hidden metal tube he spoke through from his bedroom. He engineered megaphones with which one of his friends used to bray at wolves and set them to howling. He launched dragon-shaped hot-air balloons with "Flee the wrath of God" painted on their underbellies.

In the Jesuit Archives in Rome there are more than 2,000 items of his correspondence with the most eminent scientists of his time, including Leibniz, Torricelli and Gassendi. In addition, Kircher harnessed the network of Jesuit missionaries in far-flung places to carry out natural observations and experiments on a global scale.

Towards the end of his life, Kircher's stocks fell as the rationalist era emerged. Descartes (himself a Jesuit alumnus) described Kircher as "more quacksalver than savant". Because of his stature and high regard he was also the victim of a number of hoaxes where his enemies attempted to set him up, and occasionally did so.

However, in this postmodern era, many are being drawn again to his eclecticism, transcendence of academic boundaries, taste for trivia and technomania. In recent years his life and works have interested many biographers and authors revealing his myriad areas of interest. There is an Athanasius Kircher Society in Manhattan. Stanford University hosts an Athanasius Kircher Correspondence Project.

Perhaps Athanasius Kircher was not really "the last man who knew everything". But he might have come closer than most.

FR ROSS JONES SJ
COLLEGE RECTOR 2011-2017

DRAMA: GROUP DEVISED PERFORMANCE

Eddie Dunstan, Isaac Ford, Wilson Frith, Xavier Hynes, Edward Roach & Patrick Short



Watch *The Literary Country Club* performance here

The Literary Country Club

(Nominated for OnSTAGE)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

George Orwell, Edgar Allan Poe, Oscar Wilde, William Shakespeare, Samuel Beckett, Plato. All they want to do is play golf. But upon receiving a letter from the audience threatening their existence by sieging the club, they (as the board of the Literary Country Club) are on the clock to satisfy them. They squabble, deflect and blame, before coming together to write a piece of contemporary, progressive literature to re-earn their relevance as authors, poets and playwrights.

Our GDP performance, *The Literary Country Club*, is a critique of the ‘dead white males’ who have been seemingly unchallenged as the embodiment of the world’s greatest literature. In creating such a performance, we targeted issues with the ‘canon’ such as the representation of women, contemporary texts, post-modern styles, diverse characters and discriminatory narratives.

We began by researching the omission of female philosophers from the canon, discovering novels such as *How to Think Like Women* by Regan Penaluna that shared a similar interest into the omnipotence of the ‘canon’. This platformed further research into issues with Shakespeare and Orwell as frequently studied authors, inspired intensely by the emergence of novels such as *Wifedom* by Anna Funder.

Throughout this process we enjoyed the our rehearsal times the most, experimenting with transformational props, styles and jokes to satirise the ‘canon’ as each of us became more engrossed in our respective characters.

CAST

Edward Dunstan - William Shakespeare

Isaac Ford - George Orwell

Wilson Frith - Edgar Allan Poe

Xavier Hynes - Oscar Wilde

Edward Roach - Samuel Beckett

Patrick Short - Plato

SCRIPT

(Lights up)

(The cast stand atop their lined-up ladders facing stage-left in a golf-club-swinging position looking down to the floor.)

Orwell: Far-stage right

Poe: Stage right

Wilde: Centre-stage right

Shakespeare: Centre-stage left

Beckett: Stage left

Plato: Far-stage left

(The cast perform a three-timed synchronised butt-shake before Orwell takes his first swing)

Orwell: *(swings)* George Orwell.

(Followed by Poe's swing)

Poe: *(swings)* Edgar Allan Poe.

(Followed by Wilde's swing)

Wilde: (swings) Oscar Wilde~

(Followed by Shakespeare's swing)

Shakespeare: (swings) William Shakespeare!

(Followed by Beckett's swing)

Beckett: (swings) Samuel Beckett.

(Finally followed by Plato's swing)

Plato: (swings) Plato!

All (in unison): The Literary Country Club.

(The cast jump off their ladders, landing in front still holding their mimed golf clubs)

Orwell: Effeminate as always Oz.

Wilde: Well, my drive was only 5 yards short of the great William Shakespeare!

Shakespeare: Thou wast using his putter.

(Orwell and Poe let out a single laugh)

Plato: Any club is a worthy club nonetheless!

Poe: Ha! Until it withers away old man...

Beckett: I'm still waiting...

All (except Beckett): Waiting for what?

Beckett: Waiting... for my ball to land.

(All look up and follow the dropping ball with their hand, whistling until it hits the ground)

Orwell: Did you play from the lady's tee this round, Oscar?

(Orwell picks up his ladder and places it directly to the stage-right side of Shakespeare's ladder, setting the foundation for the bar-table)

Wilde: I actually played a round next to William Shakespeare~

(Wilde picks up his own ladder placing it directly to the stage-left side of Shakespeare's ladder)

Shakespeare: Thoust round was awful.

Beckett: I've come around to this sport.

(Beckett picks up his ladder and puts it behind Shakespeare's ladder with both Plato and Poe picking up their ladders and placing them horizontally along the lined-up ladders. The resulting shape is a bar with three ladders beneath and two on top, Orwell stands behind the bar and picks up a mimed-glass)

Orwell: And how about a round on me!

(all pick up their mimed drinks)

All (in unison): Huzzah!

(Drink eloquently)

Wilde: The Literary Country Club is an ageless AND timeless golf society

(Wilde picks up the ladder behind the bar and places it furthest downstage in the centre)

All (in unison): Huzzah!

Poe: Whereby all the members are writers from the literary canon.

(Poe picks up his horizontally placed ladder and places it behind Wilde's newly placed ladder)

All (in unison): Huzzah!

Plato: And we, the most esteemed members are..

(Plato picks up the last horizontally placed ladder and places it behind Poe's ladder)

(Upon Plato's placement him as well as Wilde and Poe sit on the sides of their ladders with the remaining Orwell, Beckett, and Shakespeare stand atop the three unmoved ladders)

All (in unison): The board!

Beckett: And we are infallible.

Orwell: *(jumping off his ladder along with Beckett)* The Literary Country Club takes its membership VERY SERIOUSLY.

(Both Orwell and Beckett pick up and close their opposing ladders horizontally, using them as scanners walking downstage scanning Plato, Wilde, and Poe looking on in suspense)

Beckett: Nothing contemporary.

Orwell: No diversity.

Beckett: No female protagonists.

(As the two reach the furthest downstage, they inspect their horizontal scanners and look to the audience in synchronised satisfaction.)

Orwell: Perfect.

Beckett: As always.

(The both of them place their closed ladders next to the furthest downstage ladder on opposing sides)

Shakespeare: *(Stomp stomp)* Ta ta! Enough of thy tomfoolery! (he walks down the trail of ladders stopping at the furthest downstage) For I have... a letter!

All (in unison): Oooooh...Fan Mail!

(The cast huddles in on Shakespeare as he sits on the furthest downstage ladder looking at his mimed letter as he opens it.)

Shakespeare: *(reading)* Dearest Literary Country Club

All (in unison): Literary Country Club!

Plato: *(reading)* We regret to inform you-

Beckett: *(reading)* That you are all becoming irrelevant!

All (in unison): Irrelevant?!

Oscar Wilde: *(reading)* In the next, 8 to 12 MINUTES!!

Plato: *(looking back towards the audience)* Preferably 10-

Beckett: *(looking back towards the audience)* We wouldn't want to be stopped-

Poe: *(reading)* This Club will go...

Orwell: (looking towards the audience) EXTINCT.

(The rest of the cast look towards the audience in terrified shock)

All (in unison): In 8 to 12 minutes??!!

(The cast are taken aback from their ladders as Orwell takes Shakespeare's place standing on the furthest downstage ladder)

Orwell: I warned you all didn't I? This is all your fault SHAKESPEARE!

(Shakespeare moves stage right with the stage-right ladder as the cast pick up the trail ladders leaving the one Orwell is standing on, beginning to move menacingly towards Shakespeare with their ladders opened like the mouth of a beast. As they move towards him they are making 'Choo-choo chaa-chaa' soundscape each in different pitches over Orwell's monologue.)

Orwell: You are obsolete! You are a taint on this club! We must revolutionise! Gone are the days of old and the new club order shall rise!

(As the cast get closest to Shakespeare, they raise their ladders beneath him sitting on his ladder in desperation)

Orwell: AND NOW I! WILL BECOME THE NEW LEADER OF THE LITERARY COUNTRY CLUB!!!

(The cast immediately slam their ladders back down surrounding Shakespeare. 2 beat silence. The cast look at each other, and then start to hysterically laugh.)

All: Orwell?! (x3)

(The two-way split cast move their ladders on opposing sides of the stage laughing as they do it)

Poe: He thinks he's big brother!

(The laughter continues as Orwell, downtrodden, takes a spot next to Shakespeare)

Shakespeare: I welcome thee to the club.

(The laughter ends)

Orwell: 8 minutes...

All (except Plato): 8 minutes??!! (Screaming as their arms flail)

Plato: (Slamming his hand upon his ladder) Men!

(The rest of the cast freeze silent in their flailing positions slowly turning to see Plato)

Plato: For years our Literary Country Club has flourished, unchallenged in its values, ideas and lack of golf skills.

(The cast move from their ladders picking them up closed and lining them up side by side centre-stage with Plato placing his ladder open stage-right at the end of the trail)

Plato: Our central pillars have stood stoically throughout time but what happens when they are eroded away by the changing world around them. If writers like Orwell and Shakespeare can topple... what will happen to the rest of us?

Orwell: You will all fall...

(Orwell standing stage-left at the start of the trail pushes the first ladder as the rest fall like dominos to Plato's last open ladder)

(After a 2 beat pause, the cast swing their left hands in front of them to mime-check their watches)

All (in unison): 6 minutes!

Wilde: Shakespeare, What are we going to do?! *(hugging Shakespeare in fear)*

Shakespeare: Orwell... *(eyeing him down)*

Orwell: We do what we always do, we critique each other's works!

(The cast grab their own ladders and move swiftly to their positions across the stage holding them as if they were their own children. Left: Isaac, Eddie, Xavier / Right: Pat, Wilson, Ed)

(The cast on opposing sides begin to slowly encroach on one another, as they grow closest to one another they continue stepping backwards from their opposites, then enclosing once more to expand back to their starting positions)

Wilde: Oh Poe~ writing anymore fanfic for 18 year old goths?

Poe: Racist, Bigot, or Sexist. Which will it be today, Shakespeare?

Shakespeare: At least my work isn't 3000 years old, Plato!

Plato: Old Mc Orwell had a farm and Animal Farm SUCKED!

Orwell: What happens on your third day Beckett? Nothing again?

Beckett: Oh... let's go!

(The cast all flip their ladders into the V-shape and slam them to the ground in unison)

Wilde: We can't!

Plato: Why not?!

Shakespeare: Thou art waiting!

Poe: Waiting for what?!

Orwell: Waiting for some dystopic fiction!

(As Orwell speaks the rest of the cast form a military line holding their ladders by their sides like briefcases, saluting in the middle of the stage facing the audience mirroring Orwell's vision.)

Poe: Waiting for some gothic suspense!

(Poe interferes downstage casting his own vision as the rest of the cast place their heads through the ladders mirroring medieval stacks huddling around Poe.)

Shakespeare: Waiting for... Star-Crossed Lovers~

(Shakespeare extends stage-left placing his ladder down and walking on its second step while Orwell walks stage-right and the rest of the cast track upstage holding their ladders in a dance-like stance glancing at Shakespeare in lovelorn expression)

Shakespeare: Orwell~ Orwell~ Where art thou Orwell?~

Orwell: *(Walks towards Shakespeare in open arms)* Arise fair sun and kill thy envious moon~

(Shakespeare jumps into Orwells arms as the rest of the cast droop their ladders with their heels kicked up)

All (except Shakespeare and Orwell): Awww~

Plato: Waiting for some Socratic Discourse!

(The upstage cast close their ladders drawing them into Plato in a petal-like form blooming outwards on "Socratic discourse!" and slamming them down on opposite sides)

Beckett: Waiting for God- *(gets interrupted)*

All (except Beckett): Four minutes!

(The cast disperse screaming into a semi-circle slamming their ladders down into v-shapes)

(Wilde has stepped forward centre downstage)

Wilde: I... have a solution!

(Cast comes forward huddling around Wilde)

Wilde: It involves writing...

All (in unison): Writing!

Wilde: Using all of your favourite techniques...

All (in unison): Literary techniques!

Wilde: It is contemporary...

All (in unison): Eww contemporary?!

Wilde: But it will make us relevant!

All (in unison): RELEVANT!!

(The cast golf clap in succession.)

Wilde: What if we all... wrote something together?

(3 beat pause as the cast slowly stare at one another)

All (in unison): With him???

(pointing to one another)

(2 beat pause as the cast hold their pose)

Wilde: It could work?

Shakespeare: Forget it, Oscar!

All (except Wilde): Ugh!

(The actors now snake around the ladders and Wilde.)

Orwell: Of course, you and your liberal arguments and pompous writing! OZ!

Plato: Why did we even make you a member? Oscar!

Beckett: No wonder the audience hates us! Oscar!

Wilde: IT'S WILDE....

(The cast freezes silent)

Wilde: MY NAME IS OSCAR WILDE. AND IF YOU DON'T LISTEN, The Literary country club will siege the literary country club and...

Orwell: And what?

Shakespeare: Hah!

Poe: I'll tell you what they're going to do! *(Crossing stage-left to intimidate Shakespeare)* They'll flay us with their whips of activism! *(Turning back to cross stage-right to intimidate Plato)* They'll burn our books in the pyre of sensitisation! *(Turning to face the audience centre-stage)* Our names and texts will be cast along the midnight wind where they will be uttered nevermore...

(1 beat after "nevermore", in unison, the cast hit the ground hard with their feet)

(Everyone looks in horror at the audience until a second impact hits 2 beats afterwards)

All (in unison): TAKE COVER!!!

(The cast jump into their upside down ladders from the front, stomping them violently left and right)

Orwell: What is it?!

Poe: It's them!!

All (in unison): WHO?!!

(One beat passes until the shaking stops upon which the cast step outside their ladders through the front as the woke activists outside the club (feminine poses))

All (in unison): It's us...

(Shakespeare, now playing an activist steps violently centre stage, making a peephole with his hand)

Shakespeare (as an Activist): Where are you Shakespeare? You washed up has-been!

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

Poe (as an Activist): Where's Mary Shelley, Poe? You gothic imposter!

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

Wilde (as an Activist): Wilde! You love-eyed romanticist!

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

Orwell (as an Activist): Orwell! I've read 'Wifedom'...

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

Plato (as an Activist): Where are you Plato? You sandal-wearing misogynistic pig!

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

Beckett (as an Activist): Beckett! Come out here you negative nancy!

All (in unison): NYEEHHH!

All (in Unison as Activists): We're coming!

(The activists bang the door transitioning back to the inside of the club with the authors blown back by the impact now trapped inside)

All (in unison back as the Authors): Man the stations!

(The cast grab their ladders huddling in on Orwell who slams his ladder centre-stage and they do the same with Plato and Beckett upstage as well as Poe and Wilde downstage. Shakespeare stands lookout on the top of his ladder far downstage in the centre.)

Orwell: The barricades are up, that (pointing stage-left as the cast of Plato, Beckett, Poe and Wilde huddle over to where Orwell pointed) won't hold them for long!

(The four-man squad slam their ladders down to barricade the left side)

Shakespeare: They've taken thine thirteenth green! *(The four-man squad move on the cue of green to stage-right)* And encroaching on the seventh now! Man that green!

(The four-man squad slam their ladders down to barricade the right side)

Poe: T.S Eliot's troops have been overrun! The men are hollow! I repeat the men are hollow!

Wilde: I've found our white flag!

All (in unison): NO!

(The cast rush to place their ladders in a triangular formation)

Plato: I've booked six one-way tickets to Argentina!

Orwell: We have friends in the Cayman Islands!

Wilde: We have allies in Australia!

All (in unison): The big prison?!

Shakespeare: Pack thy bags!!

(All the cast, except Beckett, stop their private activities and begin rapidly packing all their belongings into suitcases)

Beckett: I'm done waiting! *(the rest of the cast freeze as they stare at Beckett)* I am done waiting. I am done hiding. Don't you all see? The only way for us to survive this is to appease them! *(points to the audience)* Wilde's right. We need to write something.

Shakespeare: I say get thy man a quill!

Beckett: *(grabbing the ladder centre-down-stage)* We need to write a piece that challenges our worldviews!

(Beckett slams the ladder centre stage setting the foundation for the 'Tower of Literature' as the rest of the cast tremble upon its drop)

Shakespeare: Of course, *(grabbing a ladder from stage-left)* Thy story must be captured in its most beauteous form. That of a play... *(goes to place the ladder on Tower)*

(Poe catches the ladder before Shakespeare can place it down)

Poe: Oh of course! Because that's the only thing you know how to write.

(Now with the ladder grasped between both authors, Shakespeare pulls the ladder towards him)

Shakespeare: Maybe it's the only thing worth writing!

(Poe pulls the ladder towards him in retaliation)

Poe: Stories should be told short and poetically!

(Wilde grabs the ladder, from them both)

Wilde: It's postmodern... we'll make it work.

(Wilde places ladder down onto the tower, causing a shockwave with the rest of the authors trembling)

Poe: (Scoffs) Well "postmodern" hybrid should certainly have a superior gothic genre

(Poe moves towards a ladder which he picks up and swiftly moves towards the tower)

(Wilde cuts him off halfway)

Wilde: In your dreams it will be gothic!

Poe: Oh! And I suppose it will be of the romantic piss that you call-

(During this time Plato has moved over to the tower, placing his own ladder on top cutting Poe off)

Plato: With my philosophy we can make our audience think!

(The cast sighs and Poe places his)

(Orwell, Shakespeare and Beckett are standing stage left, Orwell steps forward.)

Orwell: Well considering your tower of literature, thematically will our piece be of Tragic Romance? *(raising his left hand like a scale)*

(Shakespeare steps forward to Orwells left side with intrigue as Wilde approves, however Plato, Poe, and Beckett stand back disgusted)

Orwell: Or existential angst?

(Beckett steps forward to Orwells right side with intrigue as Poe and Plato approve)

(Orwell steps back upstage with a mischievous smile as Shakespeare and Becket turn to face each other in opposition)

Beckett: Oh, you son of a-

(Beckett is cut off by the seething of Wilde crouching down. Shakespeare then proceeds to vault over a crouched Wilde running towards the stage-right ladder with Beckett in hot pursuit behind him)

(Shakespeare picks up the ladder with Beckett blocked by Wilde standing-up)

Shakespeare: This is going on thy 'Tower of Literature' no matter what!

Beckett: Oh give it here ya wee bastard!

(Wilde runs past and grabs the ladder from Shakespeare passing Poe)

Wilde: It's time for the Romanticists to take over the literary canon!

Poe: Ohhh no you don't!

(Wilde runs stage-left pursued by Poe pulling a dramatic roll in front of the romanticist blocked off by a conjoined Plato and Orwell back-to-back)

Wilde: Look! A distraction cliche!!

All (except Wilde): WHERE?! *(turning stage right)*

(Wilde runs up to the stack and begins to place the ladder in slow motion.)

All (except Wilde): Nooooooo!!!! *(in slow-motion)*

(Wilde finally places his ladder on the 'Tower of Literature' with him and Shakespeare golf-clapping victoriously)

Orwell: Shhh...listen. *(the cast freezes silent)* It's stopped...

(Shakespeare creeps downstage to the centre, miming a peep hole looking out the club's door)

Shakespeare: They're gone...

(The letter floats down from the ceiling landing stage-left next to the 'Tower of Literature', Plato comes forward to pick it up and hands it to Shakespeare as Beckett grabs the last remaining ladder from down-stage-right and places it in front of the ladder)

(Together, the cast huddle around Shakespeare as he sits on the ladder in front of the 'Tower' and opens the letter beginning to read)

Shakespeare: *(reading)* Dearest Literary Country Club...

(The cast are relieved by the letter's formal introduction)

All (in unison): Literary Country club!

Plato: *(reading)* We have received your 'Tower of Literature'.

All (in unison): *(pointing to the tower)* Tower of Literature!

Beckett: *(reading)* and we've deemed that the Literary Country Club needs new management!

(The cast pull back in encouragement not yet grasping the message of the letter)

All (in unison): New management!

(Plato interrupts in shock)

Plato: What?!!

(The cast fall silent in dread as they look back to the letter)

Wilde: *(reading)* You have failed to meet our 8 to 12 minute deadline...

Poe: *(reading)* And thus... this club will be...liquidated.

(The cast draw their gaze to the audience in awe)

Orwell: We're extinct...

(3 beats pass)

All (in unison): Extinct?

(the cast drop their gaze to the floor in despair)

(Lights down)





Jaiah Wallace

Mangarrayi

(Selected for the Young Writers Showcase)

“

I aim to disrupt
these colonial
narratives,
offering
revisionist
history that
centres on
the voices and
experiences of
First Nations
peoples.

”

REFLECTION STATEMENT

Mangarrayi is rooted in my commitment to decolonising Australian narratives and advocating for truth-telling in literature. As a First Nations person, I am passionate about challenging the racial biases embedded in works like Jeannie Gunn's 'We Of The Never-Never' and 'The Little Black Princess'. These texts, often romanticised within the Australian literary canon, have long marginalised and silenced First Nations perspectives. I aim to disrupt these colonial narratives, offering revisionist history that centres on the voices and experiences of First Nations peoples.

Inspiration for Mangarrayi arose from my exploration of the intersections between literature, history, and identity in post-colonial Australian society. As a proud First Nations man, my personal and familial experiences through the Stolen Generations, historical injustices, and the intergenerational trauma faced by First Nations communities have been deeply influential. Initially viewing both Gunn's texts, I felt deep aggrievement and hurt to see the racist perspective that has been celebrated for over a century.

The characters encounter elements of The Dreaming, transcending physical boundaries that guide their exploration of self and heritage. They confront the harsh realities of invasion, subsequent colonisation, and the erasure of their history. The narrative interweaves moments of tension and revelation, ultimately revealing a powerful act of reclamation, where Djoodi, Bett-Bett and Ibimel of Mangarrayi Country assert their voices, challenging colonialism's silencing of their truth.

SHORT FICTION

Acknowledgment of Country

This story was written on the lands of the Cammeraigal and Darkinjung peoples. Importantly, I acknowledge the Mangarrayi peoples who are discussed in this story. I acknowledge the importance of their connection to land, waters and sky, and to those who walked before them.

Author's Note

Mangarrayi is the name given to Country, which was stolen and renamed Elsey Station. The people living on Country are known as Mangarrayi. The concept of Country as a living entity is exemplified in the pronoun Yirrkah, meaning we/us. This usage severs Western disrespect for Country, using Yirrkah as a restorative term that celebrates a living, dynamic persona in its own right.

This is dedicated to all those who couldn't share their stories,
the ones who never made it home.

“We are nature and the past, all the old ways. Gone now and scattered.”

— Oodgeroo Noonuccal, *Where Are We Going*

“...the other side of a story over which The Great Australian Silence reigns; the story of the things we were unconsciously resolved not to discuss with them or treat with them about...”

— W.E.H. Stanner, *After The Dreaming*

“The Blackfellow may grow up a good Blackfellow instead of a bad White”

— Jeannie Gunn

To The Public,

It is with the full consent of the Mangarrayi that the story of Jeannie Gunn and ours is given to the world in its entirety. What you know as “We of The Never-Never”, we know as our truth, the full truth, “Mangarrayi”.

Jeannie Gunn wrote that the bushfolk said that she could “Tell them anything she liked”. This we have done. And in the telling, we strive to represent this time as we found it.

At every turn Mangarrayi has helped us; verifying most statements and furnishing nearly all the details required with minute exactness. We are indebted to Yirrkah, *our* people, and Djoodi for the memory which illustrates this book.

Dolly ‘Bett-Bett’ Bonson & Mangarrayi

May 1967,

Larrakia Country, (Darwin)

Before

Yirrkah are the lungs that speak to ourselves.

There is no foreground, Mangarrayi is the foreground:

Mangarrayi is the rain on Mangarrayi's sand-skin. Mangarrayi is breath of the trees on mirthful blue. Mangarrayi is visitor and host. Mangarrayi is the moment the lirrawi (eekatoo), scattered into the veins, lined with the marks of impressions that scurry like flashes, before Mangarrayi shouts in electric records, fleeting as everything since Gurrwandan (Olive Pythons) came from the water and left words for Mangarrayi; a skein of scales discarded.

Mangarrayi paused, and consider these undiscovered parts of everything. In the ever-moving company, little weights become apparent to Yirrkah, sound that loops. Yirrkah are nothing but bright memories.

Mangarrayi

Gaynwarr (Spring), 1855

1

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Mangarrayi was always watching...

Mangarrayi was renewed. The strange creatures conjured from cloud dust, made little ripples of pressure. Sounds emanated were new, as though from beyond Yirrkah; as though there were any other.

Waters returned to the pebble scales of the jadbar (river) and rose in tune with dreamt-dewfall. The creatures arrayed like sunset-embers, those fleeting moments between the roiling of stone and the words that came from Gurrwandan (olive pythons). The moment dissipated like wiligwilig (galah) into the panic of dawn.

New creatures arrived; wrapped in thick garment secrets, as though tethering themselves to the sand-skin. Walked toward Yirrkah. Smothered. Eccentric tribal costume. Big noses, the colour of a blood-filled wound, similar to the unrestrained manifestations of Mangarrayi's own forms. Their undisturbed skins gleamed like jadbar (river) in the moonlight.

These great spirits, these devil-men, bleached by Ganjwar (the sun), Amuriabija (grandfather) to the day.

As they approached, Mangarrayi shifted beneath the visitors' feet, unsure of their purpose.

Their movements were hesitant.

One paused, casting a glance back across Mangarrayi, confused by the heat. His gaze met Yirrkah briefly in shared unease. Sweat seeped into the thirst of Mangarrayi in Gaynwarr (hot and dry season). With each step forward, the sand-skin grew warmer, and more fragile. Another pause, silent with unspoken questions and suspicions. Only the distant cry of birds dared to break it.

He spoke.

Yirrkah ignored him.

His gestures became wild and frantic. Was he beckoning? Accusing? What was he, outside of everything?

We are Mangarrayi.

His name was Augustus and his associate, another cloud person, was called Elsey. He said *This is now Elsey Country*.

Since Warrwiyan (*The Dreaming*), this was always Mangarrayi.

We retreated into the trees.

One amongst them emerged and lifted a stick, with raiment atop its glinting peak, dressed in the colours of dawn, sky, and cloud-like spider legs perverted. The creakings of timber in Yirrkah's trees were a lamentation of something unknown to the sand-skin.

Fear.

Yirrkah shuddered as the metal tip was thrust into the sand-skin, a grotesque defiance and violation of dignity. No one could conceive the variety of feelings that Yirrkah carried. Yirrkah was punctured, and life was stripped: feeling the coldness of the metal that was within. Withdrawn, raised again, stones shuddered and shied away from the second horrid movement, driven into a centre of Yirrkah unknown before that moment. The world was revealed to have an axis here at that point where pain was found, brought from an outside that had not existed before. Mangarrayi was no longer everything, everywhere, always.

Pain.

Guranjin (blood).

Guranjin (blood) and metal splinters impregnated the shattered roots beneath the sand-skin. Part of Yirrkah was lost. Mangarrayi was fated to endure the pain inflicted from beyond the foreground. Yirrkah turned cold and lay dormant, melted away into the dust, shorn of identity.

Gaynwarr (Spring), 1882

2

Ngarrimirngan (Red Lily Lagoon)

Djoodi was born among the rocky cliffs of Mangarrayi There were no white people then She had everything the Ganjar (sun) above-provided warmth allowing the grasses to grow to blow slowly against the wind carrying whispers of songs singing to her How wind wrapped and curved around her body encompassing everything She slept without blankets fire kept her warm wearing no clothes she was free A moth riding light They used to travel by foot hunting on foot feeling the grain against their feet they would eat together and laugh and tell stories her family would go hunting whilst she stayed by the camp When she first saw white people she thought they had come from clouds above Sometimes she still thought they were going to kill her They didn't They killed the others instead

Djoodi's barraj (clan/moity) were resting when the bururran (wasp) stings of the white men fell her old people fell down into a torn sleep suffused with black blood that turned the sand into mud and the screaming broke out and they were falling not into sleep and she heard a brief moment of strange voices raised in song and laughter and she felt her legs become like water and a baby was buried under mother and barragarl (spear) thrown and became empty as though it was made of clouds and leaves and sound became the entire world and she watched men advancing and firing and the little water cradled her parents cloaked in a veil of sunset watching arms grasping at air that resonated with hateful cacophony and then nothing but fists and feet cloaked in hateful skins kicking and she was turned onto her belly and pain within and the rifle butt afterwards that pushed her vision into decay and ruin and then laughter as they left and only unbroken sounds of a rattling breath that was like crying that never stopped until the sun fell from the world and the night came and everything was over

Gaynwarr (Spring), 1902

3

Larrakia (Palmerston)

Djoodi was feeling the pulse of Mangarrayi through her bare feet when the telegraph station burst into a yarrban-flow (ant-flow) of people scurrying in strange patterns.

Outside, all she heard was the commotion from within the building. A constant flow of angry men had been coming in and out. All of this over one woman – one *white* woman. Their distaste and misplaced lust became trails through the sand-skin, manifesting as a virulent hum in Djoodi's mouth. She watched their clumsy attempts to dissuade Jeannie from coming: pathetic excuses rejected and ignored.

As they came down the dry, Aeneas and Jeannie had set their sights on the horizon. The railways had demonstrated their fealty to the landscape's ravages, a rusted spine that threatened Mangarrayi's throat, stretched perpetually. The others came and went, constructed, repaired, abandoned.

The train snaked its way along the scar on Mangarrayi, Jeannie commenting on the magnificence of the animals and trees, and her amazement at 'the blacks'. They arrived in Waigman Country, (Pine Creek). Camp was set up, Aeneas, Jeannie and the men gathered around the fire, stories were shared and memories recalled. Djoodi and the others set up *their* camp, away from the others, with their own fire and food. The ground was still warm where the sun slapped it, leaving it blushing in its wake. This blush was dry, with only Mangarrayi to cry water, they waited for the garnan (rain) to deliver its tender kiss.

Come morning, Djoodi and the other women were made to repack Jeannie's luggage. Packed once again amongst her heap of things, Jeannie was set. So many things, things for everything, or things for nothing.

The Country was alive and dead, all at once. They waited in between seasons, Gaynwarr (the dry) and Garnan (the wet), with a moment in between, bringing about a magnificence unlike any other. Deep and full, it expressed the scope of what could be achieved with Garnan (the wet), while gaynwarr (the dry) offered solace and fruition.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Djoodi and the others unpacked Jeannie's belongings. It was *expected*. Scurried like murrurru (termites) for their queen. Hands deft at a thousand subtle chores; hoist bags, sweep floorboards, darn garments, soak bedding. Where her movements had once been imbued with the songvoice that flowed through Mangarrayi, now arrogant commands barked into the spaces. Djoodi hated them almost as much as herself for scurrying to their whims. This frippery is what she had been taught by the nuns who sought to fill the aching void of time and distance.

Djoodi recalled the Sisters' grim love, the way they would observe every infraction with a lash, or worse yet, their acid tones dripping with disappointment. Disappointment in their misplaced faith in Djoodi, not her blackness. And yet gentle ministrations and clear affection they had for their charges. When one girl in The Mission had been taken with fevers, the sisters had worked ceaselessly to care for her. The same hands that struck her could become a salve for a child in delirium, soft as tears of the sky. Those teachings echoed here in the dust and noise as Jeannie's things were unloaded and sorted. Djoodi lays everything neatly, with exactness to her instruction.

Djoodi's niece Bett-Bett was outside watering the gardens with the women, her face alive with laughter and rippling like splashes on the rose bushes. Each was laden with flower buds, glowering like sunset clouds that swayed in the movement of the air.

"What are these plants, Malam (tnele)?" the girl piped up, looking to Ibimel.

"Roses."

"They make a lot of fruit. I hope they taste good. Will they share some with us?"

Djoodi glanced at her brother, who gazed implacably but said nothing.

The silence shared was the coldness of a sharp rock on her feet during Gaynwarr (the dry), like the times when they frolicked in the coolness and laved themselves with the caress of a world that brought fruit to be eaten, water to soften the cloud-dust, voices to sing of past.

Day yielded to night and the warm air swept across the sand like the breath of sleeping children, carrying its wisps of grains, creating a soughing the trees danced to. Djoodi returned, past the homestead, past the stockmen's quarters, and to her place in the embrace of Mangarrayi.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

It became clear to Bett-Bett that Jeannie had adapted to life on the land, longing for the rain to come, to quench the sand-skin, to wash away the inescapable dust that Gaynwarr (*The Dry*) had held so long. Her muted senses had begun to decipher whispers of the steady pulse of Mangarrayi in its rudest forms, the cycles of day, the silence of birds. Oppressive dryness made her long for the rain's approach that hovered in the suggestions clouds massed to the north. Overly flamboyant dresses were exchanged for simpler garb, her hair - once held by many pins - was now simply fashioned. She had begun to sew clothes for herself, Bett-Bett, and Djoodi - unappreciative of their stylistic choices, replaced with simple, prudent dresses.

Bett-Bett's new dress's clean white contrasted her skin the way that stars contrast the night sky. She often sat in it, weaving her wangī (*dilly bag*), with patterns that reflected fish scales glistening in the sunlight.

Djoodi and Bett-Bett were tasked with furnishing and maintaining the homestead. Jeannie had ordered cans of paint, which turned to poison. Milky, like the cloud-dust, it infected everything, from her lungs to drippings along the skirting boards. Bett-Bett was scared of it. It leapt on her skin, carried its coldness along her soft stygian arm, parallel to her veins, moved closer to her heart, diluted her blood. She recoiled and it spilled, seeping deep into the floorboards, into Mangarrayi beneath, the sand-skin drawn into twitching flakes.

Jeannie had grimly grabbed a cane.

"Bett-Bett, hold out your hand."

The little girl had done so, puzzled at the trembling fear in Jeannie's face. The blows fell as aimlessly as a rose petal, three on each proffered hand, as soft as a kiss.

Tremulously, "Don't do it again, or I shall have to whip you even harder."

Bett-Bett nodded, straining not to let her mirth escape and risk the more potent wrath of Ibimel and Djoodi.

To Sr Carmichael,

I am writing to you from my new home, Elsey Station, three hundred miles southeast of Palmerston, on the Roper. In my black stock, I have a young gin, of around nine years of age, that may be of use to you, and the State's cause, to protect these helpless fellows. She is fit, able, and willing to do what is required of her. I will endeavour to keep you informed of the latest developments of the young lubra.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Gunn

6

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Jeannie's eye hovered; always attending Bett-Bett, always in the homestead, always beside her when sewing, always following her like a shadow. She moved with frailty, her eyes widened like the fading *gij* (moon) above. She primly guided the girl in all endeavours, never again using violence to reinforce those lessons, which had felt like grasping a rose bush until the thorns claimed blood.

Bett-Bett was buffeted about the homestead like a swirl of dust, following Jeannie much of the day. No space for pause, just frantic footprints to rooms, garden, and other minutiae: reflections of higher expectations than before Jeannie's arrival on Mangarrayi (Elsey Station). Bett-Bett found herself hearing tones beneath the pattering of movement that drew her eyes to the trees. What would life look like without any of them? What if there was no station? What if they never came all those years ago? What if Yirrkah came to them?

Washing clothes in the creek was refreshing, they scrubbed, rinsed, and wrung the clothes, whilst splashing each other and laughing. Djoodi showed her how to take

leaves from the birliwirli (soap tree), to crush the leaves, leaving the seed pods to curl in echo of the laundered fabric, swirling like torpid water as it chuckled over stones and sand.

“We don’t disturb the seed pods, Mangarrayi will claim a share with the wind,” Djoodi said.

It offered a moment’s repose in Mangarrayi’s constant song: knowledge and solace in silence. The air was thick and sweet like bush honey collected from the gunjird (bloodwood), drawing out the dragonflies, begging a dance to jordowgmin (honeyeater’s) song. Yirrgah are like the dragonfly, chasing without beginning or end, borne from larvae in the water, crawling to the danybayi (bull rush), emerging in flight.

Djoodi and Bett-Bett’s work was completed to Jeannie’s standard. They used the time left to weave various wangti (dilly bags) and fishing nets. Patterns like garab (spider’s) web, and ripples within the water they played in. Jeannie focused on her chores and was initially dismissive of Djoodi’s inventions, but became inured to their oddity.

To The Aboriginal Protectorate,

Dr Fredrick Goldsmith, I have received word from one Jeannie Gunn, of Elsey Station, of an Aborigine girl of nine years of age ‘Bett-Bett’, who will shortly come under my jurisdiction. I will train her to be a servant girl in preparation for her employment with a family in Palmerston or elsewhere.

Regards and God bless,

Sr Carmichael

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

The gathering of the stationhands was mostly the antagonism of sound, sudden laughter, and singing that owed as much to volume as ability. It was the King's Birthday, and in deference to this occasion, there was a huge gathering for the white people.

Bett-Bett sat in the cool sand that played upon her skin in the clearing near the creek, gazing at their fire, presided not by Kings, but by the grace of Mangarrayi's grasp. In her dress pocket, she held a secret – rose petals liberated from the garden. Like the clothes she made with Jeannie, they were soft, delicate and too beautiful to seem entirely real, like chastened stars. She sat and listened to her Malam (tunel) speak after the echoes of the third rendition of 'God Save the King' died away.

"They are only smoke and fire, like Garrajaj (owl)," said Ibimel.

"But they are together for their ceremony," Djoodi said softly.

"When Garrajaj does not go properly to gather the people to meet on the sand at Jirrgijaji, it is Galbarn (barramundi) who has to do this," Ibimel replied. "He is told 'Only smoke, only fire, only swag and hair belt hanging up' by lazy Garrajaj, so Galbarn goes out to the camps. He brings together not only Mangarrayi people but Yarrarg, Yangman, Ngalakan, Ritharrngu and Ngandi. Now at Jirrgijaji, they have their ceremony."

Bett-Bett felt a deep, becoming voice calling her upwards. The red-bellied fire shifted, releasing embers upwards, painting the night with ephemeral stars that took their place in the sky. Her hand stole to her pocket, and felt the sweet-scented petals, and how they had degraded into brittle hollowness.

"Yirrkah," she said to the sand in the sky, the words first resonating then throwing silence upon the world, as though Mangarrayi had found themselves again.

"Our little black princess," said Djoodi.

That distant gathering of the embers in the sky was more than the gathering of light and heat. It belonged to the voice of Mangarrayi singing endlessly for the healing from the straight line that carved a dreadful awareness that sundered the circle years before. The only real movement for a time was rippling smoke and fire.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Bett-Bett and Jeannie grew closer. She held her as if she were her own. Djoodi sensed the tendrils of jealousy and distrust seeping into the spaces between them. Her hands were calloused from lifting her from the fierce love of Mangarrayi, yet so soft when she rubbed her cheek, and too frail to grasp anything without tearing it like the pink blooms that fell in the garden.

Who was she, the rose or gumgub (red lily)?

Djoodi could not decide that for her. Mothers and daughters existed as voices and echo in the hills. Bett-Bett was all Djoodi could have been, and Djoodi was all Bett-Bett might be.

“Tuck the corners the way I taught you,” Jeannie said. “The way your Aunt does it. She does it very well – she was taught well.”

“Hold your hand flat, the way we do when we make string for the wangī (dilly bags),” Djoodi said.

“Oh, we are lucky to have you Djoodi. You are a great asset – it’s as nice as being in Palmerston here!”

Djoodi focused her mind elsewhere and went outside to find that Ibimel had left pails of whitewash on the verandah. Presently, Jeannie, Bett-Bett and Djoodi painted again, they continued to lather the homestead in whiteness, again it was spread everywhere, on her hands, her skirt, seeping into her skin, her blackness cracked through. Bett-Bett had been splattered all over, the smoothness of her skin didn’t allow for her blackness to crack through, she looked lost, and broken. Djoodi comforted her, from the strange realisation of her white-stained skin becoming a fear like a forgotten dream.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Ibimel and Jeannie liked to spend time with one another. Jeannie was curious about Mangarrayi ways of life, and our different customs and protocols. Ibimel happily accepted this korok (companionship) and explained things to her, or at least what she was allowed to know.

One morning, Jeannie went out to the garden where Ibimel and Djoodi were tending the rose bushes and asked him about yarrayg (water yams) they ate. Ibimel lowered his shears, kicked off his worn shoes, and with skin becoming the sand, explained.

“Our people have been gardeners for yarrayg, (the water yam). We cared for it, at a place called Yarraygal’ma wa-niyn, (where the river lily goes up). There’s a partially submerged rock, the Warrwiyan (The Dreaming) of the river lily. If that place was your Warrwiyan you’d chip away bits of the rock and wrap them in grass. They dive those grass wang (dilly bags) down to the bottom of the river, and the rock will slowly come out and renew gumgub (river lily). Two men who were responsible for this were Galburdu or Old Nym, and his son Birrmaj, helped by people we called junggayi. Their mothers regarded gumgub as their own paternal Warrwiyan; connected through ingamanyoo (matriarchal line). My people Mrs Gunn, they’ve been here forever, tending yarrayg, as precious to us as your roses are for you.”

“And down at the lagoon – do you pick the yams there as well?” Jeannie asked.

Ibimel said nothing, gazing at Jeannie a while, then put on his shoes again and resumed tending the garden.

As the water soaked into the ground at her feet and the feet of the roses, Djoodi felt the sand-skin of Mangarrayi exhale slowly, like the track marks of Gurrwandan (olive pythons), or the rippled footprints of Ngarrmirngan (red lily lagoon) during Gaynwarr. Folds of Country, the ministrations of a hand on a crisp white sheet, a warning flash of maran (lightning) before garnan (rain), held time between her loss and the flexion of forced knowledge. Bett-Bett was not there to feel the hesitation of rising air, but Djoodi decided to find her and ensure she was doing as she should.

That evening, Bett-Bett went to the homestead and hesitantly approached the table where Jeannie was bent over her journal, scratching ink into the pages like patterns in the sand.

“What is it, Bett-Bett?”

“This is the yarrayg (yam). Ibimel told me you were interested in it. I thought maybe you’d like to eat some.”

The little girl held out a mardu (eoolamon) heaped with cooked yam.

“Oh, well, no thank you Bett-Bett. No, I couldn’t.”

“It’s really good. It’s something we eat all the time, and it’s very healthy.”

Jeannie shook her head. “No, it’s not for me to try. I think you’re correct – that it is very good food for you and your people. But myself and the others aren’t made to eat these bush foods.”

Rejecting the act of communion, Bett-Bett withdrew into the night’s arms, heading down the narrow path towards the servant’s quarters. Djoodi saw her enter the firelight, noting the thoughtful expression on Bett-Bett’s face.

“Did she try it?”

“No...do you think that I could learn to write? Words on paper like Jeannie does?”

“What do you want to write? What stories of ours would need more than voice and memory?”

In the light of the fire, Ibimel opened his eyes and glanced at his sister and niece.

A momentary movement stirred the grass, leaving the sand-skin untouched. A handful of wayward sparks leapt to temporarily fill the voids in the night sky, the fire’s crackle an echo of the chuckling river’s voice before Gaynwarz (dry season) had borrowed it to build clouds that hid in unending sky. Mangarrayi was the glowing embers, hands slaked with ash and garnjalawurru (kangaroo) tallow, the breath and the hesitant song of the lirrawi (black-cockatoo) as everything cycled to sleep and waking.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

The mad old man, Beelay, returned to Mangarrayi, with his two most prized possessions; a small Bible and his battered mambad (billy-can). His hair, dry and parched as winja (grass) rose in a shock, a halo cultivated in the hope of attaining holiness as much through impersonation as by deed. The rags of his suit, gifted by the Sisters to be rid of him, hung in ash-stained tatters. Soundlessly, he made his way into the homestead gate, and seeing the roses in the predawn pale, offered the blooms a benediction before taking one of the stems, breaking it clean from the bush and wrapping it around his brow in a grotesque parody of his Lord. Eyes alive and flashing he made his way to the fire pit area, and after a few economical movements he was soon sitting in Mangarrayi's embrace, waiting for his mambad (billy) to boil.

Jeannie, alone in the homestead while Aeneas and the men were attending to work on the further reaches of the station, approached.

"I say. Excuse me, my good fellow. Can I help you?"

"Here's an angel, come to share a camp with me!" said Beelay, rising to his feet. "Tea! Let's take our communion together and welcome each other into the arms of Mangarrayi!"

"I have no cup," Jeannie replied. "I didn't expect a high tea party at dawn, I'm afraid."

"You can share from my cup. Just like we do in the church. You know what I'm talking about? With communion we all drink together, all from one cup."

"I know what you're talking about, thank you very much. My father was a minister. But today is not Sunday, and this is *not* communion, because you have not blessed the offering."

"I am a holy man and spread the word of our Lord! Drink now with me, and don't be sinful," Beelay said, rising to his feet.

"*Don't you be sinful!*" Jeannie replied.

Their eyes met, a moment of tension hanging heavy in the air. Without another word, Jeannie raised her revolver, her hand steady despite the fear that had coursed through her veins. Beelay's expression remained impassive as he took a step back, his eyes

betrayed by a flicker of sadness. The gunshot shamed the stillness of the new day. Beelay flinched at the sound, his gaze dropping to the ground before he turned and disappeared into the rising light, back towards the river down the little trail. Alone once more, Jeannie stood in the yard, the wake of the sound lingering in the air like a ghost of regret.

Gaynwarr, Coming of Dowo'min (Stormbird), 1902

To Mrs Jeannie Gunn,

I have received word from the Aboriginal Protectorate. One of his officers will arrive within a month to collect your gin and place her in my home.

God Bless,

Sr Carmichael

11

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

Jeannie continued her close education of Bett-Bett, despite all of its failures. She kept Djoodi and the women working outside, the gardens had become her focus now, as the bushes became friable in the oppressive wetness in the air, as though unable to absorb the moisture of the gathering clouds. Meanwhile, Jeannie focused Bett-Bett's intentions inside, on domestic work – polishing the silver, tending to the floors, tidying the house.

The inevitable had been set into motion, Garnan (*wet season*) was waking, evident even to Jeannie's, dulled sense of Mangarrayi's breath. She mourned silently and unknowingly, in concert with her servants, unable to give shape to the fear that bled from them like barnarr (*hemp*) from bunbunba (*acacia trees*). All clung to the knowledge that the cycle would renew itself, and with it perhaps the return of innocence and joy. It was a fragile thread, frayed and worn from the passage of time – all they had to hold.

Jeannie redoubled her efforts with Bett-Bett, who was often absent in conversation with Djoodi, or in spirit tending to chores. Anticipation hovered like the clouds that throbbed with the suppressed anxiety of thunder that would not break. She yearned for the arrival of the Welfare officer as much as she dreaded the loss of her charge, her little black princess.

She was approached by Djoodi as the first stars were making their tremulous arrival into the night.

“My niece is growing up.”

“Yes,” Jeannie replied. “She is getting quite tall! She’ll be a woman soon.”

“She cannot become a woman just by growing tall. You may not understand, but we have a responsibility to Bett-Bett, to help her grow in culture. Ibimel and I have arranged for her to go on Country for a woman’s ceremony.”

“When?”

“Soon. I cannot say for certain, but Mangarrayi will show us.”

“Yes, well, I really do think that Bett-Bett could use guidance. There are many things she needs to learn and understand. There’s only so much we can teach her here, but it will be to her benefit. She could improve her position and prospects in life tremendously with time.”

Jeannie watched as Djoodi stared deferentially at the brittle ground of the garden. The main carriageway to the west glowed in the last twilight, unburdened with the salvation of the Protectorate’s officer. Perhaps he could arrive in time to prevent the ignorant destruction of the little girl’s future.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

“Ibimel, they want to turn her into a rose.”

“No, they don’t, sister. They don’t want more roses. What they want is fewer gumgub (red lilies). When you take Bett-Bett, they will not understand, because they have never wanted to.”

Djoodi spoke with Bett-Bett, sitting side by side gazing into the breathing fire, listening to the firewood’s hiss that slowly resolved itself into pools of embers on the sand-skin. The tension was reflected in Ibimel’s methodical weaving, seeming to extend its tendrils into the hearts of those gathered around the fire. Bett-Bett said little in response to Djoodi’s explanations, Ibimel and the others said nothing at all.

Finally, Bett-Bett said, “I was never going to be just a rose.”

Ibimel looked up.

“The two Gurrwandan (Olive Pythons) who shaped Mangarrayi in Warrwiyan (The Dreaming), were speaking to each other in language. They got to Jambarlin, and there the ground was so steep that they had to travel slowly. They said to each other ‘Let’s you and I go quickly.’ East of that place the language and Country became Alawa. We are the children of the Gurrwandan (Olive Pythons), we are never roses. We are the gumgub (red lily), we honour Mangarrayi, and become Yirrkah.”

Djoodi added “You will come with me soon to that place where our Warrwiyan (The Dreaming) was silenced. You will never need to become a rose. Let’s you and I go quickly.”

Ngarrmirngan (Red Lily Lagoon)

At the place where the trees opened up and revealed Ngarrmirngan (red lily lagoon), Djoodi found her feet cemented to the sand-skin of Mangarrayi. She felt the wind, how it wrapped and curved around her body encompassing everything. Here she had slept without blankets with fire to keep her warm, wearing no clothes. She had been free; a moth riding light. She and her lirrag (family) used to travel and hunt, feeling the grain against their feet. They ate together, laughed, told stories.

Sorrow gripped Djoodi around the waist. Mangarrayi was the weight of air holding words to the trees.

Here are the stories of Warrwiyan (The Dreaming), where yarrayg (yams) were tended. This is the place where they would weave wangti (dilly bags) and wind rocks to renew gumbug (red lily's) bounty. Here birliwirli (soap tree) gave shade, and the creatures came to slake their thirst; lirrawi (eekatoo), gulbiny (emu), garnjalawurru (kangaroos) and gorlomomo (erectiles). Here Gurrwandan (Olive Pythons) travelled to Jambarlin and found the words in Alawa.

Two women emerged across the sand-skin of Mangarrayi and made their way to the transfixed Djoodi and Bett-Bett. They looked only at the little black princess and in unison, their voices mended the silence.

"Let's you and Yirrkah go quickly."

Djoodi watched as Bett-Bett walked towards the two figures, without looking back. On an unheard directive, the girl knelt at the far edge of Ngarrmirngan (red lily lagoon), took two stones and placed them in the mardu (oolamon). She was handed a bandarrwi (knife) and cut a handful of grass to place atop the stones. Djoodi, her legs trembling uncontrollably, watched as they slipped away across Ngarrmirngan (red lily lagoon), and before the haze of gathering clouds and sun took them from her sight she watched them ascend the steep hill, climbing slowly.

Mangarrayi (Elsey Station)

A week later a horse and buggy were driven into the station, and driving it, the devil, in his garb of dark heavy cloth and cloud-white shirtsleeves. He made his way to the homestead and Djoodi and Ibimel noted the echo of disturbance that emanated. They continued their work until Jeannie appeared.

“Djoodi, Ibimel...I need you to tell us about Bett-Bett. This gentleman is here to collect her, when will she return?”

The welfare man, his duty impeded, his bones aching approached them, with an ill-favoured expression.

“Have you hidden the lubra?” he said. “Mrs Gunn has requested that she be put into our care, and now she says she is somewhere in the bush?”

“She’s not here,” Ibimel says.

“I am aware of that – but *where* is she?”

“We don’t know. She is away on Ceremony. We’re not told where that is. We’re not told when she will return,” Djoodi said.

“This is your doing,” said the Welfare man to Jeannie. “You failed in your efforts to guide these people yet now you failed to produce the girl. This weakness stops us from saving them from themselves.”

He turned abruptly and stalked back to the homestead. Jeannie gathered her hands together and looked at Ibimel and then Djoodi, but said nothing. Mangarrayi gave breath to the trees and drew the shimmering heat of clouds into a thrum that resonated in Yirrkah. The end of Gaynwarr’s cycle was drawing close and gumgub (red lily) was in bloom.

After

In the quiet whispers of the wind and the gentle rustle of gulu (gums), Mangarrayi is more than just a backdrop. Mangarrayi speaks through every blade of grass, every towering tree, every whispering stream. Mangarrayi is the silent witness to all that unfolds, holding secrets of the past and hopes for the future within Mangarrayi's unbroken embrace. Mangarrayi finds Yirrkah's voice, speaking the truths of a deeper connection that transcends here and now.

Mangarrayi and Bett-Bett have heard one another. They have spoken with one another. They have breathed with one another. They have felt one another.

And Yirrkah, and garnan (rain), sand-skin, breath of the trees, visitor and host, last moments of lirrawi (eucatoo) are an instant and eternity. Beyond Mangarrayi are ideas too elusive to be more than bittersweet imaginings, rescinded until Yirrkah feels sweetness fall from the bitter wubam (eucalypt) leaves, to return to the trees in due course. From Mangarrayi to Yirrkah in a circle: it is not possible to return from where Yirrkah cannot leave. The idea of leaving belongs to Yirrkah and will swirl as the ripples left in little pressures of Mangarrayi's story.

I have listened to Mangarrayi and Mangarrayi has listened to me.



Watch *The Case of the Yellow Dress* here

Joshua Yap

The Case of the Yellow Dress

REFLECTION STATEMENT

“There is no terror in the bang, only in the anticipation of it.”

- Sir Alfred Hitchcock

My short film *The Case of the Yellow Dress* is a homage to and accumulation of my research into Alfred Hitchcock, the Master of Suspense. I utilised filmmaking techniques that he invented and popularised concerning audience reception through the anticipation of a “bang.”

The film was shot at Cockatoo Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and previously one of Australia’s largest shipyards with rustic and abandoned infrastructure. This was the perfect setting for my homage, giving it an urban decay aesthetic from the 1930s.

I was particularly drawn to Hitchcock’s advice to create moments of tension. The briefcase acts as a MacGuffin, similar to that in *North by Northwest*, to catalyse the characters’ actions. In addition, the cinematography of back-and-forth movements and close-ups with the camera was inspired by the iconic shower scene in *Psycho*. This characterised the fight scene in my film to exemplify the struggle and conflict over the briefcase.

Elevating my homage in post-production, the score was a curated mix of Bernard Herrmann’s *Psycho* soundtrack and modern remixes of Al Bowlly’s ‘Heartaches’. The sound medium assisted in the emotional build of suspense with the dominant colour of green—similar to that of *Vertigo*—symbolising the eeriness and superstition of the setting. I correspondingly subverted the motif of yellow used by Hitchcock to represent dullness as an indicator of the build-up of tension. These escalations during moments of tension suspend the audience, creating a sense of curiosity and anxiety about the outcome that will unfold. Ultimately, the audience is guided through a series of unravelling anticipations where suspense is suffused by my film ensuring that *The Case of the Yellow Dress* would be instilled as a “burning memory” of tension ready to explode.











MUSIC 2

Tom Doyle

Performance (Voice)

(Nominated for ENCORE)

“

...'Nature Boy'
was no doubt
the most
technically
challenging
piece I have
performed,
traversing the
whole span of
my register
(and more)!

”

MUSIC 2

"Happy Sad" by Andrew Lippa (Core Performance)

"Nature Boy" by Nat King Cole (Orig, 1946), Kurt Elling (arrangement, 1997) (Elective, 1)

"Our Lady of the Underground" by Anaïs Mitchell (Elective, 2)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

The most difficult part of the Music 2 course – past all the melodic dictations, the essay responses, and the sight singing – is picking suitable pieces for performance. After all, it doesn't matter if you pick the most virtuosic piece possible if you are unable to properly present it. And it doesn't matter if you can sing 'Hot Crossed Buns' to full technical capacity, as it is not complex enough. So, along with my singing teacher Linda Lombardo, who I owe a large debt of gratitude to, and my classroom teachers, James Walder and Sue Thomas, I embarked upon choosing pieces.

The first piece 'Happy Sad' holds particular sentimental meaning for me, first hearing it in Year 8 during the College's 2019 production of *The Addams Family Musical*, then finally being able to perform it in early 2024 as Gomez Addams in the Pymble Ladies' College production. Changing the melody to make the piece more intriguing and less repetitive was a key struggle but made the performance more 'my own'.

The second piece 'Nature Boy' was no doubt the most technically challenging piece I have performed, traversing the whole span of my register (and more)! Taking this jazz classic, I departed from my usual musical theatre roots, having a unique change

in style for my programme. This heightened my ability to show off my range of style to the markers. Performing this piece with the wonderful band; Michael Bellemore on keys, Justin Dileo on bass, and James Hauptmann on drums, was a huge privilege and intensely enjoyable.

My final and most enjoyable piece was 'Our Lady of the Underground', a jazzy musical theatre piece from hit musical Hadestown, which allowed me to reach into some of my acting background to truly 'perform' it.

I hope you enjoy!



Watch Tom's performances here







Harry Madigan

Display Cabinet

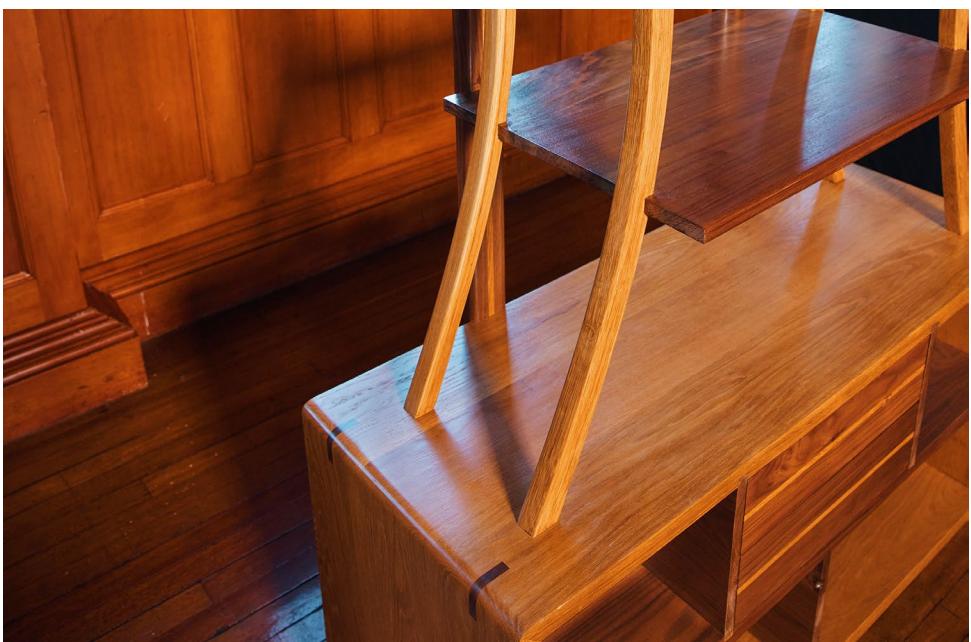
REFLECTION STATEMENT

Throughout my education at Riverview, Industrial Technology Timber has been a passion over my other subjects. I hoped to reflect this in my major work. By combining the two contrasting colours of American walnut and American oak, I aimed to create a flow from the inlays on the posts to the inlays on the drawers, in addition to including bending where I could. I built on skills I acknowledged needed to be worked on from my preliminary project like hand tool skills and the utilisation of specific joinery, however, I also utilised my strengths such as designing.

This project brought out joy and motivation over the course, but it also challenged me, evoking stress and panic in certain moments. The utilising of my study periods became a statement of my dedication, the construction of my project was incredibly challenging but satisfying. This project also allowed me to build relationships with my teachers and other students, providing a level of support that helped me through the project. I'm incredibly grateful for the help from teachers, students and my mum and am excited to see where this newfound passion will take me.



Watch Harry's
process video
here





George Gaha

Meditations on Conflict: Asceticism and Hedonism

(Selected for ARTEXPRESS)

“

...I hope to underline the dissonances that push us to act in conflicting ways in our contemporary society.

”

REFLECTION STATEMENT

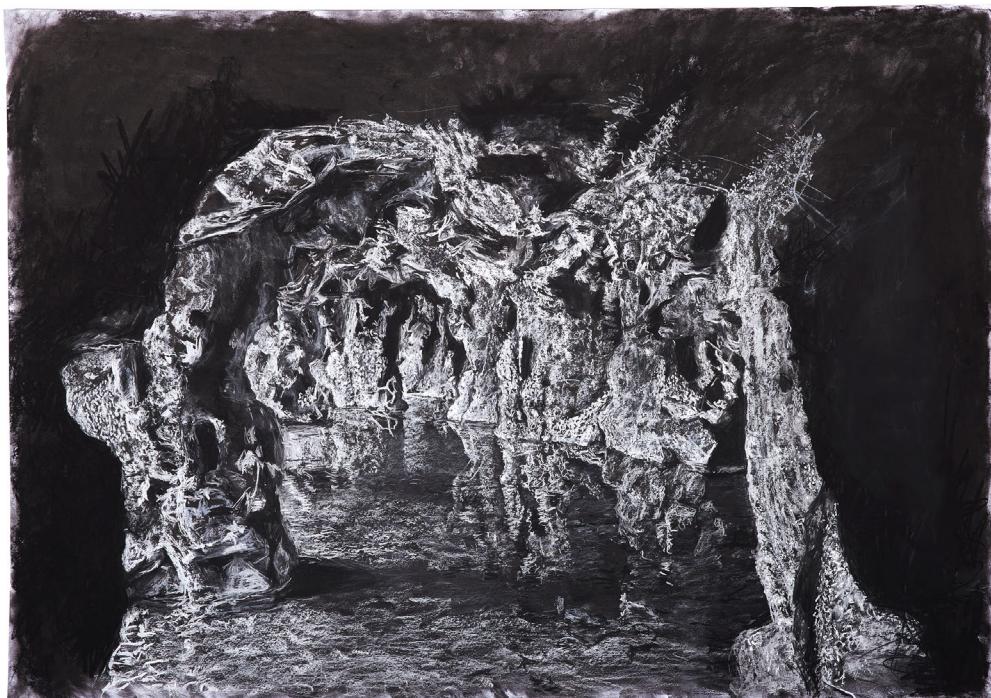
My work explores the modern dissociation between ascetic and hedonistic worldviews presenting the antithetical nature of these philosophies to challenge the paradoxical way many people engage with their day to day lives.

On one hand, many world philosophies suggest that the erasure of desire and the self allows humans to become more present in their environment and lives. This philosophy is represented through the cave scenes, where the negative space and ephemerality of unsprayed charcoal allows for moments of clarity and respite in the present moment.

Counter to that, western narratives present more hedonistic lifestyles, delighting in individuality, materiality and production as a mechanism to construct meaning. Through the appropriated historical and contemporary drawings, I attempt to emulate art that delights in the grandiose and constructed, referencing the intentions and history of artmaking to explore the power of desires and achievements in meaning-making. Moreover, the complex compositions and forms juxtapose the simplicity of the 'cave scenes' delighting in the technical and intentional qualities of traditional artistic practice.

Presenting these philosophies together, I hope to underline the dissonances that push us to act in conflicting ways in our contemporary society, noting how we are often pushed to succeed in material scenes and non-material senses, which each undermine the other.







THE KIRCHER COLLECTION
HSC MAJOR WORKS FROM
THE CLASS OF 2024

VISUAL ARTS
CHARCOAL, WHITE PASTEL,
GRAPHITE ON PAPER





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VISUAL ARTS
CHARCOAL, WHITE PASTEL,
GRAPHITE ON PAPER

Lachlan Mauleon

An Investigation of Quantum Bell-State Fidelity with Respect to an Increasing Number of Entangled Qubits

REFLECTION STATEMENT

For millennia, science has been the cornerstone of human knowledge, a key foundation of most technological advancements. In the realm of computing, gone are the days where a computer could take up the size of a room, whilst packing less computing power than the calculator we hold in our hands. But, what if we wanted to go smaller? What if we wanted to redefine the transistor and Bit - smallest unit of data? What if we scaled all the way down to a single electron? Or even a single unit of light?... This is the “quantum” race.

The race to go “quantum” has captured the attention of scientists for decades, and mine for the past year. Scientists have now developed a mechanism to isolate and observe a singular electron, and by some magic, use it to perform calculations. What intrigues me is, how far can we take it?

When dealing with the smallest of the small, significant complications arise, and that is what my report aims to investigate. For any quantum computer to work, every condition must be meticulously monitored and controlled, where temperatures a fraction of a degree above absolute zero are required. With current technologies, maintaining these conditions has been a limiting factor, reducing the scalability of quantum computers. Regardless of this limiting factor, I chose to investigate just how scalable our modern day quantum computers are, testing how complex a calculation on these computers can get before the limits of modern day technology fail to maintain the integrity of a quantum system.

By doing this project I was given the opportunity to design numerous quantum algorithms and run these algorithms on IBM’s quantum computer in Osaka, Japan. I was thus able to analyse the results from the Osaka computer to gauge the level of accuracy of modern quantum computers.

ABSTRACT

This investigation focused on the fidelity of quantum computers, measuring the impact of the number of qubits in an entangled state and the fidelity of the state. The research for this experiment was conducted on the 'ibm_osaka' computer. The fidelity of the circuits was calculated using quantum state tomography. The analysis conducted identified that an increase in the number of qubits in the Bell-State correlated to a decrease in the fidelity of the state. This relationship is demonstrated by a strong negative linear correlation across the range of experimental tests, achieving a Pearson's correlation coefficient of $r = -0.94837$. The rate of the negative regression was calculated to be $m = -0.1504$ when fidelity was graphed against the number of qubits in the form $y = mx + b$. The statistical significance was tested using the Chi-squared test, confirming that there is a statistically significant difference in the expected values compared to the experimental values. The results support a causal relationship between the number of qubits and the fidelity of an entangled Bell-State, however, does not conclusively prove the relationship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quantum Computers and Bell-States

Quantum computers are powerful computers with capabilities exponentially exceeding their classical counterparts, specifically excelling in efficiency and computing power. Integral to the functionality of quantum computers are the principles of quantum mechanics (Feynman, 1986), giving these computers quantum mechanical properties (Gyongyosi & Imre, 2018). Quantum computers specifically utilise the principle of quantum entanglement (Dependence of two quantum systems) and superposition (A quantum system existing as a probability between various states) (Jozsa, 1997), to achieve supremacy over classical computers. Instead of being made of bits such as classical computers, quantum computers are made of qubits (Quantum bit) that exhibit these quantum properties (Kanamori & Yoo, 2020). The property of entanglement specifically allows for non-local interactions (instantaneous interactions of quantum states across separable distances) between these qubits (Nenashev et. al, 2023), leading to the manipulation of numerous qubits within a single operation. A specific type of entangled state for qubits is the Bell-State (Bell, 1964), involving equal probabilities of a quantum system existing as only zeros or only ones.

However, in order for Quantum Computers to become a feasible, reliable technology, quantum decoherence (deterioration of quantum states) of qubit states must be

minimised to error rates more comparable with that of their classical counterparts. Mitigation of quantum decoherence can be achieved by error correction algorithms (Coles et. al. 2018) and isolation from environmental interference.

Superconducting Quantum Computers

There are various types of quantum computers that explore a range of means to produce quantum states in superposition and to produce entangled states. The particular type of Quantum computer utilised in this investigation is a Superconducting Quantum computer, manufactured by IBM. Superconducting quantum computers utilise solid state superconducting circuits (circuits that operate with no loss of electrical energy below a critical temperature; Huang et. al, 2020) to act as a quantum state that can be controlled through the application of quantum logic gates (discrete logical controls that induce the evolution of the quantum state of a qubit; Kwon et. al, 2021).

IBM's quantum computers use Josephson junction qubits controlled by microwave photon bursts which apply various quantum logic gates. Josephson junctions consist of two superconducting materials weakly coupled between a non-conducting material, serving as a non-linear inductor (non-ohmic; Kwon et al, 2021). In a Josephson junction, the flow of electrons (current) experience tunnelling through the non-conductive material separating the weak coupled superconductors (Josephson, 1962). The conductance of the non-conducting material as a result of tunnelling can be measured to be in a superposition of macroscopically distinct states (Il'ichev, 2012), allowing them to act as macroscopic quantum states utilised as qubits in quantum computers.

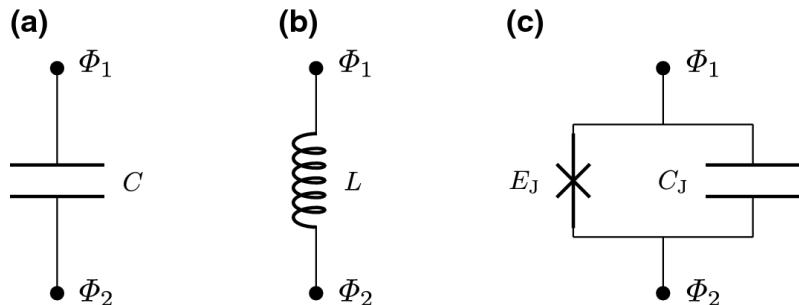


Figure 1: Circuit diagram of various Josephson junctions (Kockum, Nori. 2019).

Bell-State

The Bell-State is an entangled quantum state between n qubits ($n \geq 2$) in which each entangled qubit, upon measurement has the same state (0 or 1), with equal probabilities of either state appearing. The Bell-State is mathematically represented by the equation: $(|00\dots0\rangle + |11\dots1\rangle)$. The Bell-state is created following the application of a Hadamard (H) gate, placing a qubit in equal superposition between states $|0\rangle$ and $|1\rangle$. Additionally, a controlled Z gate (Cz) is applied to subsequent qubits, acting as a CNOT logic gate. It was found that the single qubit gate fidelity was at 99.98 (Roy, et al, 2024) as measured on IBM's Osaka computer whilst a two-qubit CNOT gate fidelity was measured at 99.41.

Quantum State Decoherence

Quantum state decoherence is the deterioration of the quantum state of a system, causing a change to the quantum properties of a system (Cywinski et. al, 2013). The decoherence time of a quantum system is denoted as T_2 , being more simply the time for a single quantum system, such as an individual qubit, to lose its state of superposition (Youssef & Lyon, 2020). T_2^* , however, is given as the time taken for multiple qubits to lose their state of superposition. As the addition of qubits increases, the complexity of a quantum system and the number of defining quantum values of the system increases, hence $T_2^* < T_2$, where instead T_2^* considers the inhomogeneities between qubits. The T_2 value takes into account both the energy relaxation time of a quantum system and the quantum dephasing time of the system (Youssef & Lyon, 2020).

Quantum state decoherence is the limiting factor in the scalability and reliability of modern quantum computers. The current T_2 time for qubits in modern quantum computers requires the incorporation of error correction algorithms that require the encoding of the singular quantum state of a qubit across numerous highly entangled qubits (Preskill, 1998). The inclusion of such error correction algorithms reduce the capacity for the scalability of modern quantum computers as the addition of a singular functioning qubit requires the addition of numerous other qubits required for the error correction of the new singular, functioning qubit.

Summary

Through the surveying of relevant literature, it has been identified that the main cause for quantum computer infidelity, relevant to this report, is quantum state decoherence. However, there is limited research regarding the scalability of quantum state decoherence within large entangled quantum systems, thus requiring further research into the decay of fidelity as a result of the size of an entangled system.

SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY QUESTION

How does the number of qubits in an entangled Bell-State affect the fidelity of the state?

SCIENTIFIC HYPOTHESIS

It is hypothesised that there will be a strong negative linear correlation between the number of qubits in an entangled Bell-State with respect to the fidelity of the state (Fidelity \propto Number of qubits). This is due to the positive correlation between the complexity of the Bell-State and computation, through the increasing application of quantum logic gates, with respect to the number of qubits as found through the review of literature.

METHODOLOGY

For this experiment, the selected independent variable was the number of qubits entangled into a quantum Bell-State through the application of CNOT and Hadamard logic gates, whilst the dependent variable was the fidelity of computations. This experiment was conducted on IBM Quantum Learning Composer in which the circuits were constructed and ran remotely using Qiskit code on IBM's Quantum Lab.

Entangled Bell-States were constructed for varying numbers of qubits, specifically integer numbers of qubits from 2 to 6. This was achieved through the application of a Hadamard gate on the first qubit in series and Controlled NOT gates applied to the subsequent qubits in series. The application and sequence of a Hadamard and Controlled NOT gate entangled n -qubits ($n \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $2 \leq n \leq 6$) into a Bell quantum state. The circuits with varying numbers of entangled qubits were constructed using the same pattern, minimising variations in the types of errors experienced by the circuit during the experiment.

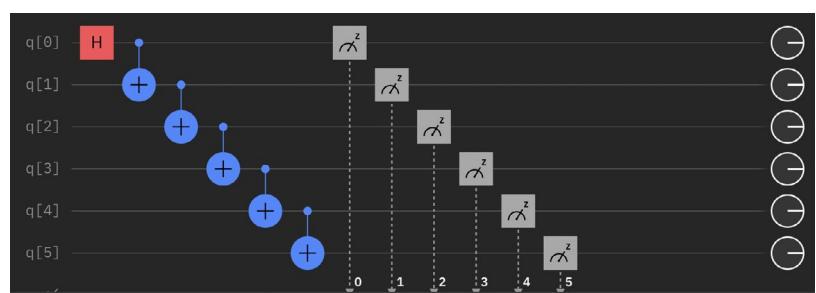


Figure 2: Quantum lab circuit diagram of a Bell-State with 6 entangled qubits

Following the construction of the five circuits with varying number of qubits, additional code was written on IBM's Quantum Lab to perform the circuits on a remote quantum computer. The code was written in Qiskit which allowed for the observation of the pure results obtained by the completion of the circuit, bypassing IBM's classical error correction algorithm and achieving the raw results from the circuit on the quantum computer. Data was collected from the six separate circuits, with 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 qubits in the Bell-State in order to assess the decay of fidelity as a result of increasing complexity through the size of circuit entanglement. Each circuit was run six times with 1024 shots per run on the 'ibm_osaka' computer.

Statistical analysis was then conducted on the results to confirm the presence of a statistically significant trend relating to the number of sizes of Bell-State entanglement and the fidelity of the quantum state. Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the strength and direction of the relationship was measured in addition to calculating the least squares regression line to find the experimental proportionality constant. The raw results across the four runs of each circuit were averaged to minimise the effect of outliers and increase the precision of the results. In addition, the Chi-squared test was conducted to confirm whether there is a statistically significant disparity between the observed results and the theoretical results.

RESULTS

Following the above methodology, the following results were obtained regarding the average number of successful "shots" out of 1024 shots for the entangled Bell-States with varying number of qubits, where successful is defined as the states of all qubits being zeros or all being ones.

Number of Qubits	Ave. Successful shots	Ave. Fidelity	SD. Fidelity
2	977	0.9535	0.008496
3	919	0.8976	0.008295
4	883	0.8622	0.009924
5	625	0.6102	0.016731
6	586	0.5701	0.010012

Table 1: Successful shots and fidelity for all numbers of qubits

In each of the data sets, the standard deviation (SD) of the calculated fidelity of the computation, when compared to the average value of fidelity, is significantly low. Additionally, it is observed that an increase in the number of qubits in a quantum Bell-State coincides with a decrease in the calculated fidelity and with a decrease in the average number of successful shots.

To test the correlation between the number of qubits in the entangled Bell-State and the fidelity of the entangled state, the number of qubits in the entangled state was graphed on the x-axis against the average fidelity of the computation on the y-axis. Using the data obtained in table 1, the least squares regression line was calculated in the form $y = mx + b$ in addition to r , Pearson's correlation coefficient, which was squared to find a more accurate measure of the relation between the size of the entangled state and variances in the computer fidelity.

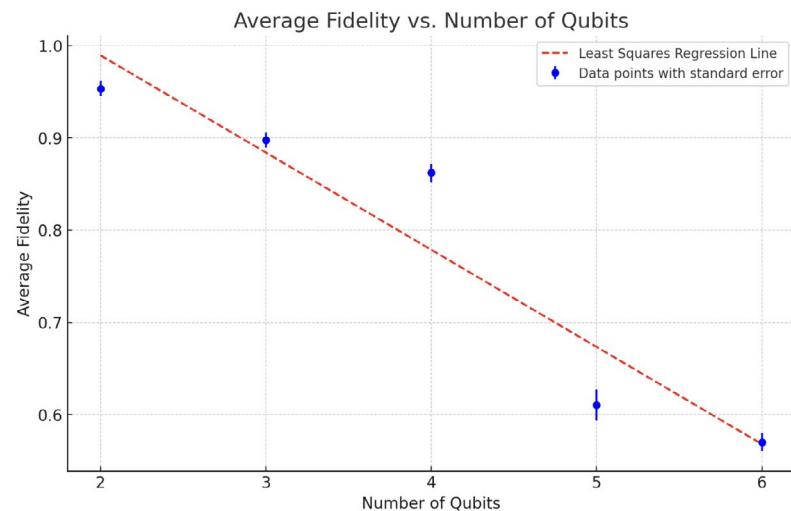


Figure 3: Least squares regression line ($y = mx + b$) between the number of qubits, ranging from 2-6, and the average fidelity

r	-0.94837
r²	0.8994
m	-0.1054
b value	1.2004

Table 2: calculation of Pearson's correlation coefficient and the least squares regression line of results in Figure 3

From this data it is shown that there could be a strong negative correlation between the number of qubits in an entangled state and the calculated fidelity of said state. This is indicated by the Pearson's squared coefficient being 0.8994, indicative of the number of qubits explaining an expected 89.94% of the variation in computer fidelity. This however does not specifically prove a causality between the dependent and independent variable.

The population distribution of each of the data sets had an expected value of $|12|00...0\rangle$ and $|12|11...1\rangle$, such that every individual shot of the quantum state should measure all qubits in the $|0\rangle$ state of the $|1\rangle$ state. Figure 4 depicts the measured population distribution of each computation.

In each data set, it was found that the population distribution of all results favoured the expected result, however the outcomes in which variations in the state of qubits occurred favoured the variance of the state of an individual qubit, as opposed to variances in the state of numerous qubits. Figure 5 depicts the average population distribution of a 6 qubit entangled state.

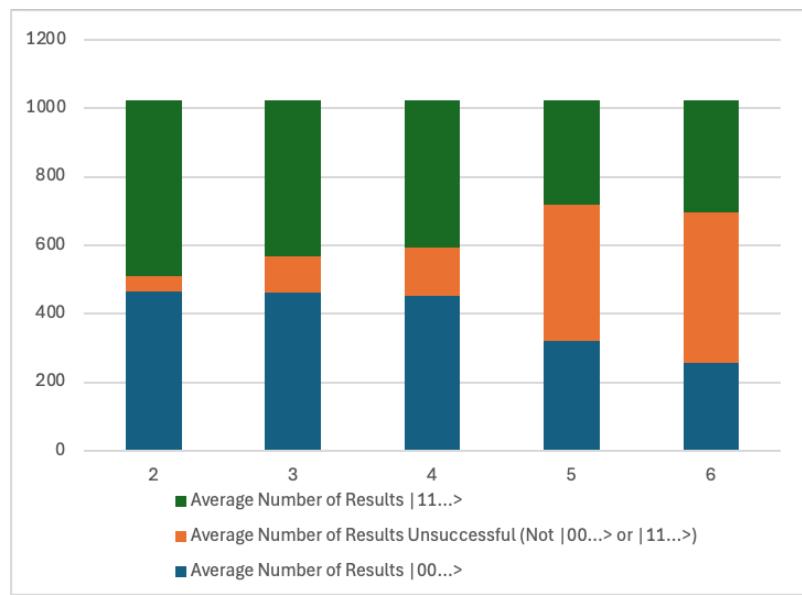


Figure 4: Graph depicting the population distribution of results across all sizes of entangled states. Comparing number of shots that obtained a result of all zeros, denoted by $|00\dots\rangle$, and all ones, denoted by $|11\dots\rangle$, with the number of unsuccessful results, ie not all qubits in state $|0\rangle$ or not all qubits in state $|1\rangle$

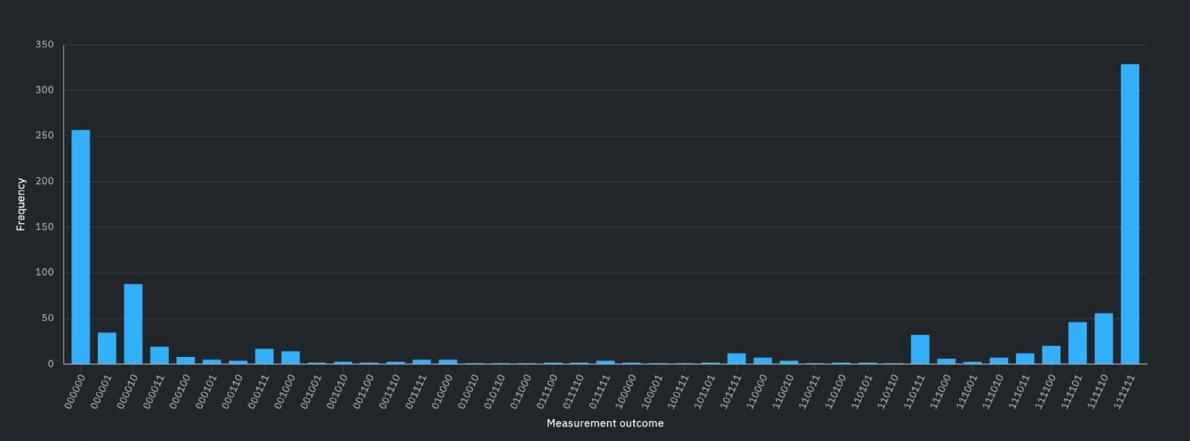


Figure 5: Graph depicting the specific population distribution of a 6 qubit entangled state, specifically showing the population distribution favouring results more similar to $|000000\rangle$ and $|111111\rangle$ as opposed to favouring results with more than once variance in qubit, indicative of the skew towards the central result from both modal states.

Given the significant decrease in fidelity as the number of qubits increased, the Chi-squared test was conducted to measure the statistical significance of the variation in obtained results when compared to expected result for each data set.

Number of Qubits	Chi-squared value for successful results
2	4.5020
3	10.7910
4	19.7676
5	155.7520
6	192.4102

Right Table 3: Chi-squared values of each data set obtained in Table 1.

By taking the critical P-value of 0.05 (3.841), it is clear that the null hypothesis can thus be rejected, meaning there is a statistically significant difference in the expected and observed results as the number of qubits increase.

DISCUSSION

As seen through the results gained from the experiment, there is a clear correlation between the size of an entangled Bell-State and the computational fidelity of the state, evident in Figure 3. The use of Figures 3 and 4, and Tables 1, 2 and 3 demonstrate the relationship between the fidelity of the circuit and the experimental trends observed. In completing statistical analysis of these results which are found in Table 1, the correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variable, as supported by the calculation of 'r' and 'r²' seen in Table 2, demonstrates a strong negative correlation, specifically obtaining an r value of -0.94837. The strength of the correlation, indicated by the r value, supports the hypothesis that there is a strong linear negative correlation between the dependent and the independent variables. Within the range of experimental data, the results were consistent with a linear regression model, leading to the calculation of the least squares regression line, finding a proportionality constant of -0.1054 (Table 2).

By completing the Chi-squared test, it was further confirmed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the experimental value and the expected value, when compared against a P-value of 0.05 with a critical value of 3.841. However, despite this, there are numerous other factors that may have affected the obtained results, beyond the number of qubits. In superconducting computers, qubit decoherence can cause a loss of an entangled state (Cywinski et al., 2013), collapsing the Bell-State and thus being responsible for a portion of the unsuccessful results obtained. This additionally explains the greater variance in fidelity that was observed between the 5 and 6 qubit circuits and the lower qubit circuits. In introducing greater numbers of qubits, the probability of entanglement being lost due to the intrinsic nature of superconducting computers increases, further affecting circuit fidelity.

In obtaining these results, it can be considered that the fidelity of the circuits could be modelled as a Bernoulli distribution in which the probability of a successful result (where success is defined by the fidelity calculation of the circuit), p , is represented as the fidelity of a 2 qubit entanglement. The imposition of the Bernoulli distribution model onto the population distribution of results obtained is such that $n=1$ is assigned to a 2 qubit entanglement and $n=2$ is given as a 3 qubit entangled circuit and so on. By taking a p value of 0.9535 (fidelity of a 2-qubit Bell-state entanglement, seen in table 2), the fidelities of subsequent larger entanglements can be predicted, with relatively high experimental accuracy. Using the model, the predicted fidelity of the subsequent circuits are given by $(0.9535)^{n-1}$ such that 'n' is the number of qubits in the circuit:

Number of qubits	Theoretical fidelity using Bernoulli model	% error of experimental fidelity
2	0.9535	0
3	5	1.288
4	0.86689	0.5440
5	6	42.067
6	0.78812	38.242

Table 4: The expected fidelity of computation using the Bernoulli distribution model and the % error of the experimental value compared to the model's prediction

It is evident that this model is successful in predicting the fidelity of the circuits up to a 4 qubit entangled state, however the model is invalid for circuits with greater than 5 qubits. This invalidity of the model can, however, be attributed to possible outliers in the experimental results, thus highlighting a limitation of the experiment, being the number of repetitions of each circuit, which was only 6. Further explicit limitations of this experiment lie in the number of qubits for which the fidelity of circuits was measured, with the limiting range being from 2 qubits to 6 qubits.

Overall, this experiment holds experimental validity and reliability as it allows for the specific observation of variances in the fidelity of entangled Bell-States as the number of qubits increases. Specifically, the single independent variable, being the number of qubits in a Bell-State, and the dependent variable, being the fidelity of the computation, was chosen such that the analysis of results showed a direct trend in the change of fidelity as a result of a change in the independent variable. However, to ensure the reliability of the results, each circuit was repeated six times, consisting of 1024 shots each, mitigating the effect of outliers on the analysis of results, thus improving the accuracy of the obtained data.

Upon the analysis of such obtained data, it was made evident that both reliability and precision could have been improved by increasing the number of times each circuit was run, decreasing the standard deviation and thus decreasing the standard error of results. This would have further reduced the impact of outliers and ultimately increased statistical confidence in the analysis of results. Furthermore, the size of entangled states that were tested has the capacity to be increased beyond 6 qubit which was the limiting factor in the confidence of analysis for this study. By increasing the size of entangled states run, the validity of the experiment will be improved as the correlation between the variance in fidelity and the increase in number of qubits can be tested and analysed more confidently. Thus further research can address the limitations of this study by specifically increasing the number of results obtained for each circuit and expanding the range of data available by increasing the number and size of each circuit.

The research conducted in the experiment provides significant information on the scalability of modern quantum computers, specifically the 'ibm_osaka' computer. This outlines the direct limitations of modern quantum computers in their ability to successfully perform calculations with acceptable error rates.

CONCLUSION

From the results obtained within this experiment, there is clear evidence for a strong negative linear correlation between the fidelity of an entangled Bell-State and the number of qubits in the entangled state. This is evident through the r value being -0.94837 with $r^2 = 0.8994$, additionally supported by the conduction of the Chi-squared test which confirms a statistically significant variance in the fidelity of the circuit as the size of the circuit increases. However, due to the limited range of the data obtained, there is uncertainty in the linear regression model that was calculated to be given by the equation $y = -0.1504x + 1.2004$, when fidelity (y) is graphed against the number of qubits (x). However, it is clear that the fidelity of quantum computers is not sufficient for circuits with higher complexities (greater number of qubits), outlined by the significant decrease in fidelity as the number of qubits increases.

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TECHNOLOGICAL & APPLIED STUDIES

Oliver Woodburn

Retro Entertainment Cabinet

REFLECTION STATEMENT

My major work is a retro entertainment unit with intricate designs and a record player. I used walnut which has rich warm tones and American white oak, as these timbers go very well together. I embarked on a journey of intricate joinery and creative design. This process involved mastering kerf joints, mitre joints, and housing joints, each presenting its own unique challenges. Among these, the kerf joints proved to be particularly demanding, testing my skills and patience to their limits. Despite these hurdles, the creation of an organic wavy feature panel became a highlight, embodying both artistic expression and technical precision. This project was deeply influenced by the support and guidance of my teacher Mr Comino, and it wouldn't have been possible without him. My major work is not just a piece of craftsmanship, it is a tribute to dedication, collaboration, and the beauty of timber.



Watch Oliver's
process video [here](#)





Jack Caine

Performance (Saxophone)

“

These pieces have allowed me to express my love of music in my own personal style ...

”

MUSIC 2

- "Fox Hat Blues" by Andrew Robson (Core Performance)
- "Just the Two of Us" by Bill Withers / Grover Washington Jr. (Elective, 1)
- "Cantaloupe Island" by Herbie Hancock (Elective, 2)

MUSIC EXTENSION

- "Donna Lee" by Charlie Parker (Ensemble Piece)
- "Moanin" by Charles Mingus (Solo, Piece 1)
- "Chips 'n Salsa" by Phil Collins (Solo, Piece 2)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

My major works for Music 2 and Music Extension consisted of six performance pieces, all in my favourite genre of Jazz, performed on the saxophone. These pieces have allowed me to express my love of music in my own personal style by performing my own take on the composer's original ideas.

Beginning with my Music 2 repertoire: 'Fox Hat Blues' is my 'music of the last 25 years' piece, and exhibits these qualities mostly in its obscure time signatures that change almost every bar! This made it difficult to find the groove, and in the beginning, I wasn't really sure if this was the right piece, but once I worked on it and made my own backing track, I fell in love with it and is still one of my favourites.

'Just the Two of Us' was a choice inspired by one of my good mates who showed me the song one day, and I immediately knew that I had to learn Grover Washington Jr's two epic sax solos for my HSC. I had to adjust the structure of the song to highlight the saxophone which was good fun. I performed this arrangement, as well as Cantaloupe Island and Chips 'n Salsa in the Year 12 Play which was an amazing experience as I'd wanted to go in a play for many years.

Herbie Hancock's 'Cantaloupe Island' was a piece suggested to me by my teacher, Ms Thomas, as an arrangement we found had one of the best sax solos I had ever heard, for such a simple tune.

Onto Music Extension. At the end of Year 11, I was debating whether I should do Music Extension or Maths Extension 2, but I ended up choosing Music Extension, and I'm so glad I did because I never would have gotten the chance to play some of my favourite pieces of all time.

'Chip's 'n Salsa' and 'Moanin"' were two pieces inspired by mate Lachie Easdown (OR2022) as he played both (on tenor sax) for his Music Extension. These two are my favourite pieces as they both are technically difficult and the most impressive, and they took me the longest to learn. I played 'Chips 'n Salsa' on tenor sax (an adaption from Gerald Albright's alto solo with the Phil Collins Big Band) and 'Moanin"' on baritone sax, an adaption of Leo P's baritone sax solo.

Finally, 'Donna Lee' was a suggestion from Mr Dileo, but we had to make a few adjustments, add an alto sax part (thanks Tony) and slow it down a bit. In the end, it was almost a complete reinterpretation of the song, and one that I enjoyed playing much more.

All of my pieces were accompanied by Mr Bellemore on piano/electric keyboard, Mr Dileo on bass guitar, and Mr Hauptmann on the drum kit, as I felt this would allow me to connect with the music and the band better than if I played with a backing track. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to play with these amazing musicians and this experience has consolidated in my mind that this is the kind of music I want to keep playing beyond the gates.



Watch Jack's performances [here](#)







Tom Kalogerou

From Chaos to Hope: An Odyssey

REFLECTION STATEMENT

My artwork, 'From Chaos to Hope – An Odyssey', explores humanity's resilience in the face of destruction, inspired by how civilisations grapple with conflict and continuity. Drawing from the Greco-Roman aesthetic, I sought to juxtapose the enduring strength of classical forms with the fragile remains of modern ruins, capturing the tension between stability and chaos. This dynamic interplay embodies the cyclical nature of human experience—a journey through devastation and renewal.

The column, a symbol of heritage and endurance, stands firmly amidst the fractured landscape, crowned with a ship representing the ever-present journey through time. This central motif flows into a landscape marred by ruin, as cascading blues and greens represent a stream of hope carving its path through the rubble.

As I crafted this piece, I worked with layers and textures to convey a sense of history embedded in decay, drawing influence from artists like J. M. W. Turner and Ivan Aivazovsky, who use textured landscapes to evoke the scars of past conflicts. The smaller pieces surrounding the main work serve as fragmented memories, mirroring the incomplete yet powerful echoes of the past within our present.

In line with Alec Nevala-Lee's insight that "art is a theory about the way the world looks" (2015), this work embraces the raw, unfiltered essence of human struggle and endurance. The clash between ancient forms and modern decay in my work urges viewers to contemplate not only the scars of history but also the resilience and hope that persist. Ultimately, this piece is a reflection on the tension between ruin and rebirth, a visual odyssey that invites the audience to see humanity's potential for renewal amidst inevitable chaos.







THE KIRCHER COLLECTION
HSC MAJOR WORKS FROM
THE CLASS OF 2024

VISUAL ARTS
COLLAGE ON PAPER &
MIXED MEDIA: ACRYLICS,
COLLAGE, GRAPHITE, PASTELS,
CHARCOAL ON PAPER





THE KIRCHER COLLECTION
HSC MAJOR WORKS FROM
THE CLASS OF 2024

VISUAL ARTS
COLLAGE ON PAPER &
MIXED MEDIA: ACRYLICS,
COLLAGE, GRAPHITE, PASTELS,
CHARCOAL ON PAPER

Xavier Hynes

An Eye Indifferent

“

I had an itch to
write a body
of work that
epitomises
what makes
English special,
why I spend
so much time
entrenched
in characters,
stories and
theory.

”

REFLECTION STATEMENT

During my first English Extension 2 class, I was asked by my mentor why I wanted to create a major work. Upon reflecting on years of reading and writing, I realised how unsatisfied I was with what I had achieved. I had an itch to write a body of work that epitomises what makes English special, why I spend so much time entrenched in characters, stories and theory.

Over 11 months I researched, edited and drafted a critical essay regarding characters in magic realism. I loved working with my peers, reading and discussing our favourite magic realist texts, an enjoyable process which helped me answer that question from my first class.

An Eye Indifferent is a ficto-critical essay that examines the use of characterisation in magic realism to challenge new ways of thinking about individualism and human-exceptionalism in climate discourse, by forcing readers to abandon their biases and preconceptions through the ambiguity and unreliability of the narrative presented to them.

However, upon reflecting on the major work process I am profoundly unsatisfied. That itch from that first class remains as I have more to do. Instead, I savour the valuable insights and cherished memories from my incredible mentors, friends and family who have guided me.

I hope to push myself as a writer, and never stop creating.

Introduce the Real World of the Text

Alice left her hometown in silence, clutching a small notepad. As she walked, the buildings blended into a long strand of blank, rigid windows, with barely noticeable beginnings and ends of streets.

She fiddled with the lacy strings of her now grey hair, trying to ignore the dog-breath late summer air as she took her first step outside of Mystvale. The town made no attempt to stop her.

She followed a road that chased after the horizon, encompassed by the calmness of the bush.

Alice yearned to start writing, to find a new town. One with skyscrapers escaping the bush, radiant colours and edgeless suburbs. She saw herself writing epics, and trilogies, as fountains of inspiration flooded the streets.

Now all that was left was the journey ahead of her.

She knew the hero always returned home enlightened.

'The detached observer's view of life... the only view that one can take if one is to see anything at all, an eye indifferent and yet alert to the march of things.'

Virginia Woolf (The Lighthouse)

Whilst magic realism has traditionally been used to challenge colonial and neo-colonial trends, the post-modern audience is witness to the increasing scope and significance of the style through its engagement in other socio-political discourses. The form has moved beyond challenging imperialism, evident in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, and British colonialism, for instance in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. An example of the style's evolution is clear in Australian magic realism which, following its colonial origins, has widened the form's boundaries through its specific fusion of narratological conventions and ecological issues. Magic realism was adopted in Australia through its universally recognised 'postcolonial projects of cultural renewal' (Takolander, Magic Realism and Indigenous Survivance, 2020, p. 1), emerging most successfully from Indigenous writers such as Alexis Wright as 'instrict postcolonial politics' (p. 1). As the form developed, contemporary authors such as Robbie Arnott appropriated Australian animals, myths and Dreamtime narratives into diverse characters and allegories, responding to increasing climate anxiety and preservation concerns. Arnott's body of work emulates these fears as he specifically privileges the animal kingdom over humanity as a response to 'dominant individualist attitudes' (Robson, 2017, p. 1).

A review of criticism about magic realism reveals insight into the function of characters and space in this style of writing. Seminal literary thinkers such as Angela Carter, Rose Rainer and significantly, Wendy Faris, have evaluated how narrative techniques in magic realism including the '*irreducible element*' (Faris, 2004, p. 3), a defocalised '*time, space and identity*' (p. 3) and '*hybrid-human animality*' (p. 3), compel the reader to authentically engage with new ways of thinking and being. Faris celebrates the combination of *defamiliarisation, illusion and de-focalisation* to create an intense liminality within literary worlds that acts as an 'in-between space' inhabited by characters. This notion creates characters that are ambiguous and abstract, directly contrasting the dominance of realistic characters foregrounded in the 'assumptions of empirical thinking' (Alhassen, 2022, p. 2). Faris argues that characters in realism cannot 'challenge ways of thinking and being, they are trapped by the supposed truths of their time' (Faris, 2004, p. 1). Contrastingly, magic realist characters act in direct conflict with the world of the reader, often engaging with embargoed, unpopular or counter-cultural ideology thus enabling new ideas to emerge.

Using Faris' aforementioned theory, I posit that Australian writer Robbie Arnott purposefully utilises magic realism's narratological functions as 'a gift to his reader' (Text Publishing, 2024) in the novels *Flames* (2018) and *The Rain Heron* (2020) to create ambiguous and abstract characters that further the meaning-making process, positioning readers to engage authentically with contextual concerns such as land and animal preservation. Magic realism has always been the gift of freedom, provoking seemingly limitless interpretations that free the reader to discern and imagine within the confines of a realistic framework, epitomised through Arnott's production of these texts to 'create something new and insightful to today' (Heyward, 2018). Whilst Arnott may provide a literary nod to postcolonialism through his fascination with Tasmanian history, his use of Australian magic realism has evolved to 'force readers to look inward' (Schwalm, 2009, p. 1), prompting a unique, introspective evaluation of the ways human-exceptionalism¹, individualism and Speciesism², stagnate climate action. Using magic realism, Arnott targets these harmful attitudes that 'happen now and are often uncontroversial' (Singer, Animal Liberation Now, 2004, p. 2).

Introduce a small instance of magic

The road was confusing. Alice felt lost and alone on the sticky black of the tar, and its dull black sheen that somehow reflected the blue and white of the sky. Beneath the bush's scattered ceiling, a benevolent shade rejuvenated Alice as she sat alongside the serpentine road.

As Alice twiddled her pen, she noticed a man leaning against a tree stump. He was every shade of grey, a burly man covered in thin streams of hair. His mouth perched out slightly, escaping his labyrinthine beard. Alice thought of leaving, but her body seemed to disconnect. The man pursed his lips, releasing a soft whistle that echoed between the surrounding trees. The melody began to dance, moving between irritating highs and resonant lows, almost harmonising with itself. Alice turned to the man. His mouth was closed.

She stilled, listening to the melody rise and fall, still and fasten, as the man did nothing but fiddle with the thickness of his beard. His lips were still pressed together. Alice

1 Human-exceptionalism refers to the belief that humans are uniquely important or superior to other beings.

2 The practice of treating members of one species as morally more important than members of other species

hesitated, before allowing herself to dissolve into the melody again. Sounds emerged. The whispers of the forest. The chatter of anthills. The rough shifting of soil.

Alice woke. At this moment, a story bleeding from within her, she looked to note the man's outstanding features. But he was gone.

Faris defines 'the irreducible element' in magic realism as the most prominent mystical component of the text or character that clearly differentiates itself from the realistic narrative plane, directly influencing the story and development of characters. In *Flames* (2018) and *The Rain Heron* (2020), the irreducible element is clear within specific characters who promote humanity's relationship with the life and death of the animal kingdom. The irreducible element of Flame's core protagonist, Charlotte, and the exchanging of life force in the South Tasmanian fishing community (*The Rain Heron*), become believable aspects of the realistic narrative plane which 'cannot be explained by the natural laws of the universe' (Faris, 2004, p. 2).

Arnott's use of fire, culturally associated with First Nations Australian survivalism, becomes an aspect of Charlotte that advances the exploration of ecological concerns through its function as an *irreducible element*. Charlotte discovers her destiny is to briefly resurrect after cremation, and when she learns her brother is building a coffin to prevent the process, she escapes. While fleeing, she discovers, and then attempts to control, her magical fire abilities that symbolise her internal conflict and fragmented familial relationships. Charlotte's magical response to the depraved actions of a local farmer, creates an '*irreducible element of magic*' (Faris, 2004, p. 1), a moment that cannot be explained by the natural laws of the universe. For example:

'Charlotte yelled, something violent and wordless. And as she yelled... as she panicked she shook her arms, spreading the fire further. Flames were sprinting past her, nipping at my feet. The fire caught me, and I burned hotter' (p. 114)

Arnott attaches Charlotte's flames to a sense of authentic emotion and human errancy as she 'panicked... spreading the fire further' (p. 144) and 'yelled something violent and wordless', creating an abstract, liminal space where this 'can happen as a consequence of reality' (Faris, 2004, p. 23). This is reiterated through Nicola, Charlotte's acquaintance, who can quell her destruction as 'Nicola grabbed her... Her touch had travelled through Charlotte's heat. She had quenched the rage; she had stopped the

fire.' (p. 137). The audience is 'willing to believe the mysticism, yet do not completely understand it' (Faris, 2004, p. 150), allowing the flames to symbolise Charlotte's angst-riddled state without losing the reader's engagement due to implausibility. Arnott positions the reader to understand that Charlotte's flames represent the confrontation of humanity towards climate destruction, as her voice 'mixed with more fury than fear' (p. 114) as she sprinted after Allen Gibson, her fury matching our hatred towards the man responsible for the poaching and molestation of the local wombat population. The previous chapters' grotesque imagery of 'violet holes in their fur' and 'eyes plucked clean from their sockets' (p. 94), acts as a kind of unnatural molestation that is retributed by Charlotte's flames 'nipping at my feet' and 'making me burn hotter' (p. 115), symbolically critiquing Allen Gibson's motivation following his violent retching of animal life.

However, Arnott also embeds tension within Charlotte's actions and her magical abilities, forcing the audience to identify empathy for the animal kingdom and the ways we too, like Charlotte, destroy the natural world. Despite remaining ambiguous, Charlotte's flames continually emerge from realistic aspects of the text, creating an 'even more tethered connection to the real world' (Faris, 2004, p.134). This is observed as Charlotte's magic resembles the violent destruction of Australian bushfires, which must be controlled to be fruitful. When Charlotte confronts her brother Levi, who is possessed by the spirit of a murdered water rat known as the 'Esk God', her flames 'fly beneath her nails... an exquisite relief' (p. 211), the resulting 'towering walls of flames' (p. 212) begin to destroy the Edenic imagery of the river and forest of a 'green, deep green' (p. 137) to protect Levi from harm. Whilst Charlotte is seemingly innocent in this incidental destruction of the natural world, the excessive destruction of the fertile Australian landscape provokes the audience to recognise how individuals can be implicitly guilty by 'ignoring the devastation of emerging climate issues' (Donaldson, 2020). This relates to the trend in climate discourse to act with an 'arrogance that disregards the implications of human errancy' (Rave, 2003, p. 1). Through the increased engagement of the audience because of the tension in Charlotte's irreducible element, magic realism 'removes the influence of previous attitudes and counter-cultural stigma' (Rivera-Fuentes, 2000, p.1). This refers to how Charlotte's flames must be contained, just as society's abilities and power over the animal kingdom must be contained to avoid disasters. This is exemplified when the mystical Cloud God (The Esk God's paramour) narrates her flames as a 'sorrow that came to the island', comparing the remaining forest to 'When mountains crack and forests flood. When rivers surge and oceans bloat' (p. 216). Thus, Arnott critiques individualistic attitudes, resonating with the origins of magic realism as a counter-narrative to colonial oppression only with a contemporary ecological perspective.

In *The Rain Heron*, the symbolic exchange of life force between the squid and the fishing community, in one of the intersecting plotlines, acts as an *irreducible element* that challenges human exceptionalism. The small fishing community offers human blood in exchange for magical squid ink, which allows the allegorical Tasmanian town, which is never named or specified, to prosper. Unlike the realistic narrative plane in *Flames*, the liminality produced in the interpretation of the fishing community uses the irreducible element to 'create a glowing allure from the realistic narrative, often highlighting central issues within the text' (Faris, 2004, p. 133). The plotline focuses on a young girl's (Zoe) initiation into the life-exchange process by her aunty. Together they witness the squid's 'eyes dim behind a clouded membrane' (p. 82) before returning it as 'her aunt loosened her grip' (p. 85). This is contrasted to the former, strategically placed realistic plotline, that focuses on a soldier (adult Zoe) hunting and harassing an older rainforest-dwelling woman through the destruction of the rainforest, as she believes the elderly woman can lead her to the mythological rain heron. A comparison of these chapters subsequently reveals the allegorical function of the fishing community, as those who don't 'prioritise conservation and privilege the animal kingdom' (Rivera, 2000, p. 1) will only lose touch with their humanity, like Zoe. Within the fishing village plotline, Arnott then broadens his criticism by introducing a villainous character, 'the northerner', who exploits the traditionally peaceful transaction between the squid and the fishermen for financial gain and leverage. Arnott alludes to a political and ecological decay beyond the confines of the fishing village as the northerner quips 'You don't know what's happening in the rest of the country, do you?' (p. 102), establishing a rationale to modernise the fishing community's ink farming practices. The northerner's inability to connect to the natural world leads to his violent descent after collecting 'a long row of squid corpses' (p. 119) as he carried 'the misshapen, colourless hulk of a dead squid' (p. 111), epitomising the 'destructive and often violent nature of human-exceptionalism' (Wilson, *Animals and Ethics*, 2002, p. 11) in Australia. Arnott ultimately uses the disintegration of the fishing village, the accidental death of Zoe's aunt at the hands of the northerner, and the carnivorous destruction of the northerner as he is 'dragged, under the surface, a mass of tentacles slapping and ripping at him' (p. 139) to create a parable for the destruction of animal life.

Therefore, the irreducible element of Charlotte's flames and the mystical South Tasmanian community demonstrate humanity's relationship with the life and death of the animal kingdom. Thus, Arnott's purpose emerges through the critique of human exceptionalism towards animals and individualistic attitudes towards climate issues.

Expand that magic to the broader world

Alice felt the silence return. On the road. A road. Maybe the same road. Her ears tightened, as the street curled up into a tight ball, making her still. So still. She knew she was moving, as the landscape's voices began to slowly rise.

There's no money here

You think we owe you

You've forgotten the trees

What will you take?

How much more can you take?

You've forgotten the trees

Come back

You've forgotten the trees

the trees

the trees

The voices stopped. Alice became aware of the black tar latching onto her grimy shoes. The bush felt a bit further from the road. She wondered if the road had changed.

The silence was broken by a chorus of blackbirds, dancing in the night sky before disappearing into the bush. Alice turned, a blackbird rested at her feet. It looked up with a stern gaze, turned and began to walk.

Another narratological function of magic realism is the ability of writers to defocalise their 'Time, space, identity and voice' (Faris, 2004, p. 1) to create tension and confusion. This involves creating confusion through either multiple, contradicting or undefined perspectives and voices. Arnott uses this element to extend characters, making them deliberately ambiguous which catalyses rich climate discourse through exposure of anthropocentrism in the characters and by suggestion, society. Throughout this process, the characters act as a 'remystification of solely empirical and individualist ways of thinking' (Faris, 2004, p. 6), thus propelling Arnott's discussion about the harmful outcomes of anthropocentrism on the Australian outback and its animals.

To defocalise the narrative, or remove objectivity and clarity from the reader, Arnott manipulates voice when writing about or from Levi's perspective to expose human exceptionalism and individualism which compromise the animal world. Levi's transformation after adopting The Esk God's corruptive fur coat repositions the reader to interpret Levi through this narratological function of magic realism, as his character transforms from a benevolent brother who 'will spare no expense in making sure that her final resting place fits as comfortably as her own skin' (p. 49) to the violent delirium of 'methodically heaving his axe into the trunk' (p. 203). Thereby, 'introducing confusion to what exists outside the magical subject and what only exists as a function of it' (Faris, 2004, p. 2). The confusion arises as the audience is unsure if Levi is a vessel for the Esk God's revenge or if appropriating the coat simply exposes his inner inhibitions. The shift to third-person omniscient perspective from first-person narration intensifies the ambiguity of Levi's voice, as the narration 'Levi is not well. Levi is not realising' (p. 164) conveys both his corruption and disembodiment, deliberately blurring the voice's origin to provoke the audience to wonder what Levi needs to realise. This is revealed as 'Levi not realising' how the escalation of anthropocentric attitudes impedes his decision making. Arnott also questions society's desensitisation to animal cruelty, as Levi quickly disregards the Esk God's state, 'The stench becomes bearable; the horrifying corpse becomes mundane' (p. 158). His abrupt dismissal of the grotesque mutilation of water rats alludes to the 'disregard for the personal suffrage of animals' (Donaldson, 2020, p. 2). This is reaffirmed as the magical pelt 'slides snugly into his palm, and suddenly he no longer feels ill' (p. 159). This instance symbolises the overwhelming prioritisation of 'greater self-esteem and the pursuit of personal happiness in contemporary western discourse' (Robson, 2017, p. 1) which, ironically, also compromises Levi's - and by extension society's - sanity. The fusion of The Esk God and Levi reveals the abstractness of magic realism's characterisation when 'Levi is filled with confidence and a renewed sense of purpose' (p. 160). The reader can subsequently interpret this third-person omniscient voice as The Esk God's challenge to the 'expendable nature of Australian wild populations' (Harris, *A Theory of Animal Characters*, 2009, p. 2), avenging his unlawful poaching.

Just as Arnott challenges anthropocentrism by utilising magic and mystery affiliated with the Australian outback in *Flames*, he also imbues characters in *The Rain Heron* with ambiguity, experimenting with time, space and identity. Zoe is both a curious child and a cruel and calculating adult soldier, willing to obey orders no matter the cost. Adult Zoe, as a symbol of government control and human exceptionalism, ‘disregards the Tasmanian wilderness through her ‘destruction of the surrounding forest, the killing of the trees and loss of their shade and scent’ (p. 49), directly encompassing the egotism and power associated with anthropocentrism when threatening Ren in ‘this ends when you let it’ (p. 48). By the end of the novel’s first section, Zoe’s complete disregard for the ‘fresh, pine-thick air’ (p. 47) and ‘rocky fields’ (p. 25) resembles Levi’s tainted individualism and mistreatment of animal life after procuring the fur pelt. However, by shifting voice and perspective and magical images, Arnott reduces the audience’s certainty that she is a villainous character. Arnott develops empathy for Zoe when, as a child, her aunty is murdered ‘as the northerner shoved her off the pier’ (p. 129), and she ‘clenches the remaining jars of ink’ (p. 120) as tokens of her childhood home. When Zoe symbolically carries the northerner’s gun after her aunty dies she emulates his malevolence and negligence, most noticeable in an earlier chapter when as an adult she is hunting Ren (the elderly woman) and destroying her rainforest habitat, ‘the full rings of bark cut from trees’ (p. 50). It seems Arnott uses the gun to symbolically transfer power and human malevolence from the northerner to Zoe. Yet, this development is obscured by the mystical squid ink that adult-Zoe carries with her, the ‘purple euphoric mist’ (p. 245) providing solace and strength which Zoe uses to calm her soldiers, ‘I’d just wanted to cheer them up, calm them down’ (p. 245). The confusion and deliberate obfuscation of Zoe’s true character creates ‘doubt in the development or journey of magic realist characters’ (Wechsler, 2014, p. 2), thus ‘extending the narrative hands to the readers’ (Faris, 2004, p. 139) by inviting them to ‘weave their own interpretations’ (p. 139) out of the loose narrative ends of Zoe’s characterisation. Zoe’s development from traditional Australian climate practices to previously outlined modern ecological malpractice subsequently targets ‘personal attitudes that manifest arrogance and overconfidence’ (Garner, Animals and Democracy, 2022 p. 1). Ren observes Zoe’s languid movement throughout the forest as she looks as if ‘the world held no interest to her’ (p. 26) yet seemingly makes ‘smooth and elegant’ (p. 26) movements across the Tasmanian country, suggesting to the reader that perhaps Zoe is at one with the landscape but now permeates anthropocentric attitudes because of the ‘dominant imperialist attitudes’ (Robson, 2017, p. 1) from her time as a soldier.

Therefore, Arnott’s intersecting, non-linear plotlines create a playful ‘Time, space, identity and voice’ in Levi and Zoe’s to confuse and deliberately obfuscate clearly delineated character functions, leaving Arnott’s audience with ‘oxymoronic and

metaphorical tools' (Alhassen, 2022, p. 13), to understand of the implications of anthropocentrism within climate discourse.

Give the magic uncontestable tension

The blackbird followed Alice as she journeyed home, but unlike the birds of fiction, it didn't fly in spiritual patterns and was instead reduced to a humorous waddle. As if it was attached to the road. Alice was patient. She waited for the moment something would happen. The moment the bird would make her crawling skin still, and twitching muscles soften.

So Alice spoke first, softly at first, her words floated like daggers in the breeze.

'Did you hear the voices...?'

The bird nodded.

'And did you see the man...?'

The bird nodded.

Alice was patient now. Perhaps reserved. She waited for a few minutes, before asking again.

'The sounds. Where do the sounds come from?'

The bird stopped, looking up to Alice as its beak slowly opened. Alice turned, witnessing the bird push out a single, firm word.

'Me'

A shadow ensnared the bird, as it disappeared from the surface of the road. Sounds emerged.

The flapping of wings. A melody. The bending trees.

The inclusion of hybrid-human characterisation in magic realism, or non-human characters with tangible attributes and functions, provides 'vocalised and explicit literary agency to minorities' (Donaldson, 2020, p. 2). Arnott extends this notion in both novels using characters based upon native Australian animals, *The Esk God* and *The Rain Heron*. The plot and thematic trajectory of each character critique ecological practices such as animal poaching and detainment.

In *Flames* *The Esk God* provides literary agency to the voiceless through his abstract characterisation, challenging the disparagement of the animal kingdom by acting as an 'esthetic of opposition' (Faris, 2004, p. 1). Although he is a diminutive-looking water rat, *The Esk God* is an omnipotent being, superior to humanity, as 'With his blunt nose he could smell their foul industries... their intrusions' (p. 43). Using the *Esk God*, Arnott challenges and complies with the reader's expectations as the anthropomorphised water rat exhibits animalistic and human characteristics. Rivera-Fuentes in the article 'Gender and Hybridity: the Significance of Human/Animal Characters in Magic Realist Fiction, (2000)' reinforces the role of 'hybrid-human characterisation of Australian animals' in magic realism to challenge non-human characters that tend to become symbols and 'dead metaphors'. This is because magic realism 'constitutes a narrative space of the ineffable in-between' (Faris, 2004, p. 88), allowing non-human characters such as the *Esk God* to 'take lives of their own' (p.89) and exist as realistic components of the literary world. When the *Esk God* is poached for his pelt, this is articulated directly from their perspective, For instance:

"Carrying the iron contraption was the fleshy hand of a male pale ape... a moronic, yellow-toothed smile appeared on the ape's face and he hoisted the God into the air" (p. 46- 47)

While literary agency enables the *Esk God* to experience 'othering' which is also observed in human characters within realism, his anthropomorphic perspective creates ambiguity. His comment on man as a 'male pale ape' (p. 46) with a 'morbid yellow-toothed smile' (p. 47) indicates a critique of humanity's egotism and the 'glorification' of having an 'ecological dominance' (Schwalm, 2009, p. 3) over the animal kingdom. The wildness of the *Esk God* depicted through 'gurgling, floppy noises' (p. 47) ensures the character does not become 'human', with a tokenistic sense of animality. Instead, Arnott creates a 'very tangible element of unpredictability' (Donaldson, 2020, p. 2) through the character's wildness, which like other magic realistic non-human characters seems in need of 'control, containment, domestication or training' (Schwalm, Animal Writing: Magic Realism, 2009, p. 4). The character hence exists in an abstract existence, using his agency to dualistically represent and differentiate itself

from animality. This distortion of ‘psychological and social reality’ (Faris, 2004, p. 1) transforms the Esk God from an allegorical to a sympathetic character, using this in-between space of reality and mysticism to make his perspective authentic and inviting. The ‘completeness’ (Hayot, 2012, p. 1) of the Esk God’s world, involving ‘the manner and intensity with which a fictional world exists’ (p. 1), is disjointed and artificial to allow for the previously stated dichotomy of the Esk God’s characterisation. The audience is invited to contemplate the morality of animal poaching in Australia through the symbolic ‘iron fences’, outlining the subjugation of animals during the climate crisis as animal poachers are narrated, ‘hoisting the God into the air’.

Furthermore, the Esk God and Rain Heron represent the ‘collective voice’ (Donaldson, 2020, p. 4) of the animal kingdom whilst maintaining their individual agency to encapsulate ecological issues. In this way, Arnott targets human exceptionalism as a dominant and damaging Australian paradigm. This expression of ‘human-centric perspectives of climate change’ (Mencher, 1957, p. 32), exposes the marginalisation of Tasmanian ecosystems in the 21st century. The Esk God vocalises the destruction of the animal kingdom through his narration of ‘iron sunk into rivers’, enough to learn ‘their intrusions into the water’ (p. 43). Likewise, his hostility towards Charlotte denotes his hostile relationship with humanity, as he thought of ‘jumping at her throat’ upon meeting her. This directly resists the ‘entrenched human-exceptionalism in contemporary Australian climate discourse’ (Stephen, 2016, p. 3). This can be interpreted as a collective voice, largely because the Esk God ‘disrupts the subject-object relationship of the world’ (Faris, 2004, p. 102). This means that it is unclear whether the Esk God has an individual connection with those issues, or rather if he acts as a vehicle for the audience’s evaluation of them. Similarly, The Rain Heron remains ‘authentic to the world’ (p. 103) through its Tasmanian heritage, yet is disjointed because of the mythical expressions of revenge and autonomy. The lack of a physical ‘voice’ results in the manipulation of weather as an indication of The Rain Heron’s psychological expression, as the subtle interjections of ‘A crack of thunder joined the storm’ (p. 73) and ‘the odd burst of sparks’ (p. 167) respond to the actions of human characters. In particular, The Rain Heron torments animal poachers as Arnott’s subtle attack on historical Tasmanian imperialism as, when captured and restrained in a cage and in transit, ‘they turned up the heat, blasting stale warmth from the vents, but the bird responded by instead puffing clouds of steam’ (p. 154). This is most notably observed in the opening frame narrative, as Arnott repeats his use of a violent flood as ‘thunder crashed through walls, lightning licked trees’ (p. 2) to critique individualism through The Rain Heron’s celebration of the ‘modest’ (p. 3), nameless farmer. Importantly, this ensures that The Rain Heron expresses a holistic response to climate issues, whilst maintaining a sense of agency because of his ‘inextricable claim to the real world’ (Rainer, 2009, p. 2). These components of magic realism implicitly

align with Foucault's dissemination of 'episteme', as a formation of knowledge that 'imposes on each one the same norms and postulates of their worldview' (Foucault, 1969, p. 190). This achieves Arnott's purpose of advocating for the animal kingdom, using The Rain Heron's representation of the entire animal kingdom as an attack on Arnott's socio-cultural episteme.

The Esk God and The Rain Heron exemplify how magic realistic characters challenge those from alternate literature to achieve Arnott's climate discussion, through his unique construction as a hybrid-human animal character. They act as more than symbols through their agency to evoke empathy towards climate change, utilising their ambiguity to vocalise marginalised groups whilst asserting an autonomous existence.

The 'fantastical' elements lead to a resolution

Alice reached a small country town. It was warmer than home, with bright colours littered over the walls of the buildings. The trees conversed with the sun, negotiating an early spring. A thick eucalyptus scent brought her to ease, to comfort. She noticed verdure escaping concrete cracks, leading an army of ants on a quest for food. Alice noticed every detail, every beautiful intricacy of the town.

Nothing like home.

Alice passed the buildings and looked kindly on them as they blended into a long strand of blank, rigid windows, with barely noticeable beginnings and ends of streets. She sighed, tapping her notepad as she left the oddly familiar town.

But as she felt the dog-breath air fill her lungs once again, she turned back to the town, speechless as she looked at what she couldn't believe was Mystavle.

Sounds emerged...

Magic realism can create uniquely abstract and antithetical characters, that much is certain. This essay argues that this component of magic realism transforms the

meaning-making process, through a focus on these characters in achieving Arnott's purpose in critiquing harmful attitudes such as humanism, human-exceptionalism and individualism. Arnott's purpose largely derives from manipulating the reader, defocussing the narrative, forcing them to interrogate both narrative planes, removing the security of previous ideology and understanding and ultimately succeeding in the prospect of encouraging reinterpretation. In short, the reader is free. The world is opened up for the audience in a way that is never truly achieved by realistic characters. In understanding a magic realist text, the reader becomes entrenched in new versions of themselves, they're acknowledged and appreciated by the end. That is magic realism. Arnott makes this clear through the increasing ambiguity of his characters - Charlotte, Zoe, Levi, the fishing community and The Esk God - sustaining argumentation about humanity's response to ecological concerns, the perspective of animals and our future response to emerging instances of individualism and Western imperialism.

We need magic realism.

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Edward Roach

My Stories in Living Colour

“

...I let it form
properly there
on the canvas in
front of me as I
work. I find this
creates work
that's far more
truthful to me.

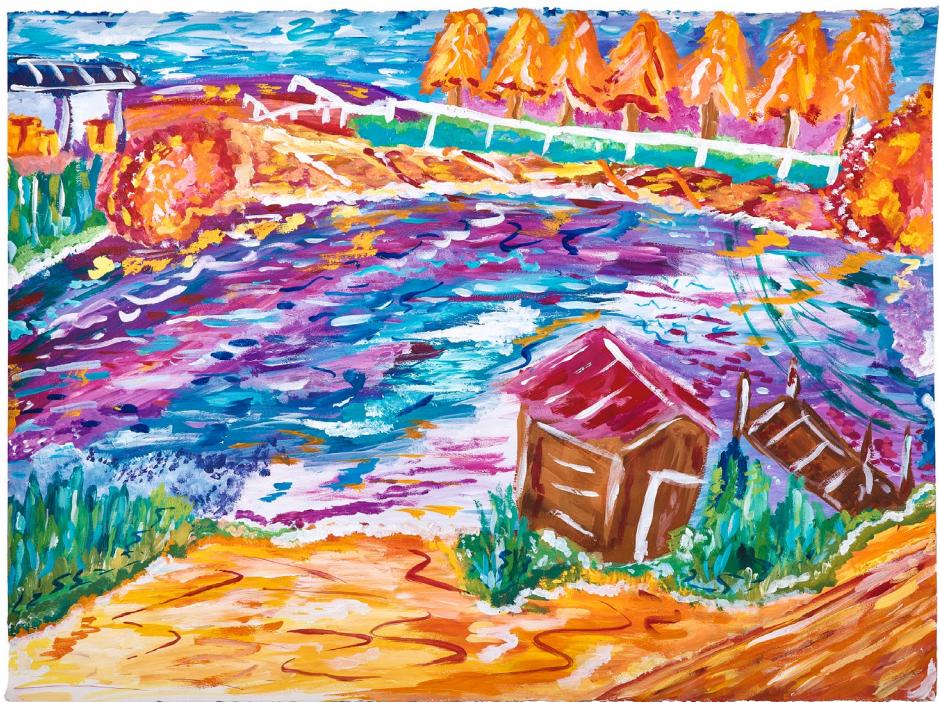
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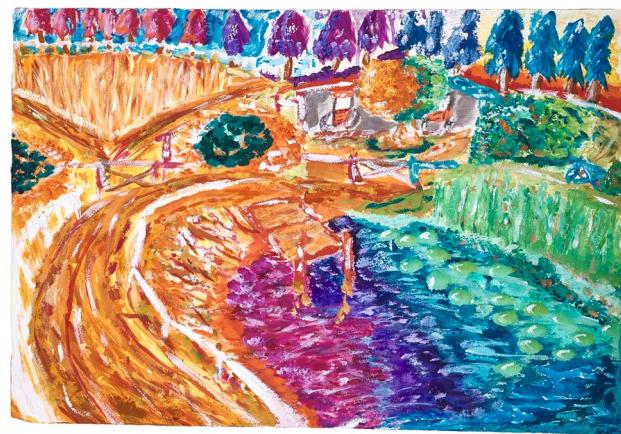
REFLECTION STATEMENT

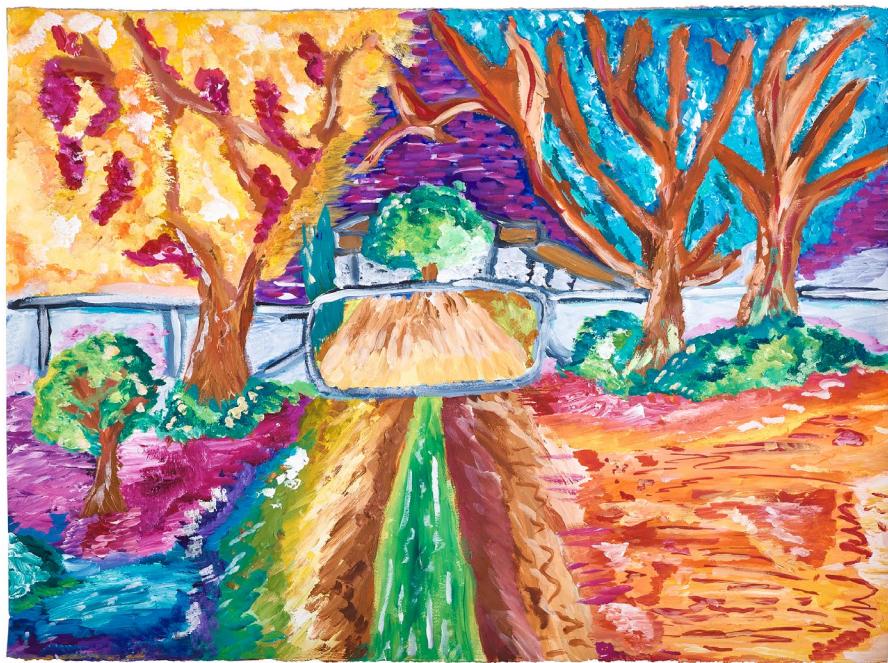
My major work, “My Stories in Living Colour” is a collection of landscape paintings I produced over the course of 2024. Each painting is unique in its own way; some are of predefined locations while others are less tangible as they’re simply locations I created specifically for that painting. Some of these locations have sentimental value to me, with three of the paintings depicting various locations from my grandparents’ farm, where I spent a lot of time as a kid.

My inspirations include famous impressionist painters like Cezanne, Cignac, Monet, and other painters in that field. My process is difficult to describe, as I work intuitively, trusting my instincts and placing colour where I believe it should go. It’s not often I go into a new painting with a solid idea; I let it form properly there on the canvas in front of me as I work. I find this creates work that’s far more truthful to me, instead of overthinking the minute details.

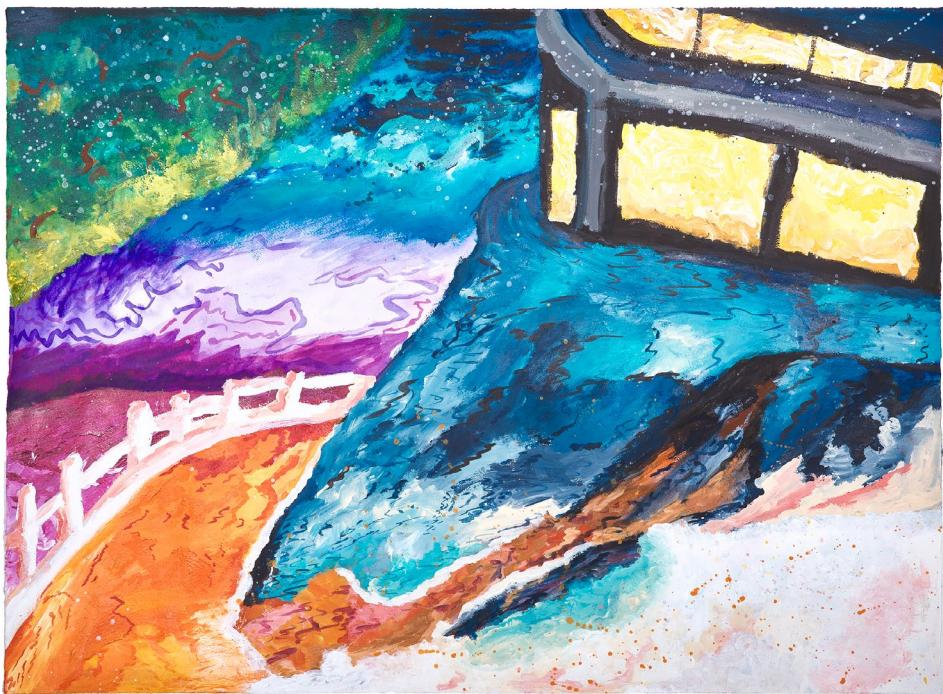
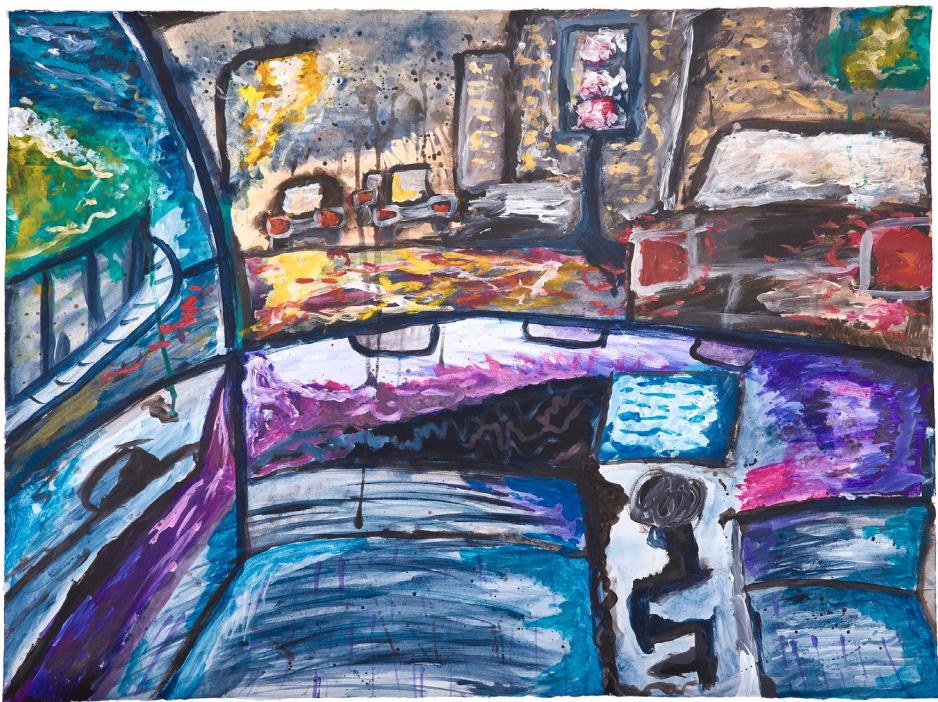
This collection of paintings is one of my favourites, as not only was creating them some of the most fun I’ve had in a creative process, but the end result is something I feel truly proud of – a living testament of my accomplishments as an artist.











DRAMA: INDIVIDUAL PROJECT

Hugo Wrightson

Stories in the Dark

(Nominated for OnStage)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

Stories in the Dark (SitD), written by Debra Oswald and first performed in the Riverside Theatre, Parramatta, follows the intertwined journeys of Anna and Tomas, two protagonists navigating the complexities of life in a war-torn city. As they grapple with loss, trauma, and uncertainty, they form unexpected bonds and find solace in moments of connection amidst the darkness. Through the escape of storytelling, Anna and Tomas confront their pasts, seek hope for the future, and ultimately discover the power of empathy and human connection to overcome adversity.

From the beginning of the preliminary Drama Course, my mind was set on doing Lighting Design for my Individual Project. This design was not without its challenges, the first of which was picking a play. After reading countless texts, I kept feeling myself being pulled back to the dual worlds of SitD. Oswald's juxtaposition of the power of hope in a hopeless world called to me, and I couldn't wait to start designing. From my first reading to programming my final cue, my passion has never faltered. I was indeed challenged by both the technical and the vision aspects of lighting, but what I have learnt because of my persistence is invaluable.



View Hugo's
full Lighting Plan
here

Directorial Vision (Act 1 Scene 7)

Vision Statement

I see Anna and Thomas sheltering together in the upstage right abandoned living room sharing comradery on what is a normal day in their life. I want to light this room in deep shades of purple throughout the scene to signify both the nighttime aspect of the scene, but also, to signify the safety both Anna and Thomas find in their home.

When Anna begins telling the story, the king will be seated on his throne upstage centre between my two set pieces, washed by only profile light. When the fantasy characters Peter and Serge first enter the forest, they will be washed only in different shades of green from the LEDs and by the movers using a gobo that emulates foliage. But then, when Peter engages with the silver bird, a soft downlight appears and brings with it a very slight front light to draw focus to Peter's lines. When Serge drowns Peter, there will be four cast members who have been in previous stories Anna has told, in their previous costume, centre stage holding a blue and white piece of fabric roughly 2 square metres. The four cast members will be waving it at waist height rapidly, which in combination with a mover using a fast moving gobo, will give the effect of rapid water currents.

When Serge returns home and is crowned king, I will increase the intensity of the profiles on the living room to draw focus back to Thomas' disappointment when he thinks the story has ended prematurely.

When Anna resumes telling the story, I will return to the same forest green and the same water rapids for the musicians to find Peter's bone. I will replicate the lighting state to ensure clarity and understanding for the audience so it makes sense when the instruments play Peter's voice. When returning to the throne room upstage centre, I will again replicate the original throne room lighting from this scene to ensure continuity for the audience. I will not draw attention to Serge's taking of his own life through lighting as despite this play having darker themes, I am ensuring this showing of the play doesn't go as dark as promoting suicide. I want the audience to imagine what they see fit be the outcome for Serge. When the doctor goes to the end of the

river to collect the feather and Peter's remains, I will light the same forest green with LEDs and foliage with movers, but this time the water will be calm so the cast waving the fabric will do so slower and the mover displaying a water gobo will rotate slower, reinforcing the theme of tranquillity at the end of the river.

Ending the story telling, the stage fades to black bar the living room. Anna turns on the battery to help Thomas write a letter to post at the railway station so simultaneously as the fairy lights will snap on as a visual cue from the battery being turned on, the profiles washing the living room will ever so slightly increase in intensity as the fairylights do nothing to light faces or what Anna and Thomas are writing. The scene ends with Anna turning the fairy lights back out, and the two wishing each other goodnight before the living room fades to black.

Patch and Fixture Schedule (Hard Patch)

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
1	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	17	1	1	1.001	This fixture is hung on catwalk 4, focused towards stage right. It is positioned above the moving lights. It is not in focus and is a very large wash. It works with fixtures #2 and #3 to evenly wash the entire stage.	This fixture will be used to wash the stage with a warm light to light cast member's faces. This fixture will primarily be used on a lower intensity during the storytelling so as not to over power the LEDs washing the stage in colour.
2	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	11	1	2	1.002	This fixture is hung on catwalk 4, focused towards centre stage. It is positioned above the moving lights. It is not in focus and is a very large wash. It works with fixtures #1 and #3 to evenly wash the entire stage.	This fixture will be used to wash the stage with a warm light to light cast member's faces. This fixture will primarily be used on a lower intensity during the storytelling so as not to over power the LEDs washing the stage in colour.
3	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	4	1	3	1.003	This fixture is hung on catwalk 4, focused towards stage left. It is positioned above the moving lights. It is not in focus and is a very large wash. It works with fixtures #1 and #2 to evenly wash the entire stage.	This fixture will be used to wash the stage with a warm light to light cast member's faces. This fixture will primarily be used on a lower intensity during the storytelling so as not to over power the LEDs washing the stage in colour.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
11	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	48	1	4	1.004	It is positioned stage right (house left), focused towards the upstage right living room. It is hung on catwalk 3 on the lower railing.	This profile is used primarily on a sub-max intensity to brighten faces and contrast the dimness of the LEDs and the fairy lights in the upstage right abandoned living room.
12	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	47	1	5	1.005	It is positioned stage right (house left), focused towards the upstage right living room. It is hung on catwalk 3 on the lower railing.	It is used primarily on a sub-max intensity to brighten faces and contrast and the dimness of the LEDs and the fairy lights in the upstage right abandoned living room.
14	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	46	1	6	1.006	It is hung on the lower railing of catwalk 3 and is focused directly down.	It is used as a downlight for the silver bird to increase tension when it befriends Peter by casting deep shadows on its face. These shadows further dehumanise it and make it more bird-like.
15	Fresnel	500 W	O/W	40	1	7	1.007	It is focused towards stage right as a general wash light. It is positioned towards house left on catwalk 3. Its barn doors are open allowing it to wash freely with the only caveat that it doesn't light the upstage right abandoned living room.	Is used primarily as a bright, warm wash light for use during daytime scenes on the street and railway station.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
16	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	43	2	1	1.009	It is focused towards centre stage as a general wash light. It is positioned just stage right of centre stage on catwalk 3. It creates a corridor of light that is moderately sharply focused on upstage centre through downstage centre in combination with fixture 18.	This profile light is used to wash the up and down centre-stage corridor in the story telling scenes. By using profile lights primarily for the story telling scenes, it becomes a motif that reinforces whether we are in reality or a story for the audience. The softness of this profile in comparison to a fresnel also means it won't wash out the LEDs covering the stage in colour during the stories.
18	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	36	2	2	1.010	It is focused towards centre stage as a general wash light. It is positioned just stage left of centre stage on catwalk 3. It creates a corridor of light that is moderately sharply focused on upstage centre through downstage centre in combination with fixture 16.	This profile light is used to wash the up and down centre-stage corridor in the story telling scenes. By using profile lights primarily for the story telling scenes, it becomes a motif that reinforces whether we are in reality or a story for the audience. The softness of this profile in comparison to a fresnel also means it won't wash out the LEDs covering the stage in colour during the stories.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
19	Fresnel	500 W	O/W	33	1	8	1.008	It is focused towards stage left as a general wash light. It is positioned towards house right on catwalk 3. Its barn doors are open allowing it to wash freely.	Is used primarily as a bright, warm wash light for use during daytime scenes on the street and railway station.
20	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	35	2	3	1.011	It is hung on the lower railing of catwalk 3. It is focused as a tight spot with soft, out of focus edges on the furthest SR edge of the upstage left abandoned shopfront.	This fixture lights a pivotal moment where Anna believes her mum survived her death. This tight spot reflects Anna's feelings in the scene of vulnerability and insecurity, a contrast of the in-control persona she usually portrays.
22	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	26	2	4	1.012	This fixture is hung stage left (house right) on the lower railing of catwalk 3. It is focused as a high angle, small area of effect wash to be used with fixture 23 to wash the stage left area directly in front of the upstage left abandoned shop front.	This profile light is used as a special to wash Anna's conversation during a shelling. By using a profile light, the audience's attention is subtly shifted to whatever is being washed without the audience being aware of their attention even being altered.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
23	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	25	2	5	1.013	This fixture is hung stage left (house right) on the lower railing of catwalk 3. It is focused as a high angle, small area of effect wash to be used with fixture 22 to wash the stage left area directly in front of the upstage left abandoned shop front.	This profile light is used as a special to wash Anna's conversation during a shelling. By using a profile light, the audience's attention is subtly shifted to whatever is being washed without the audience being aware of their attention even being altered.
26	Fresnel	500 W	O/W	103	2	6	1.014	It is hung on the lower rail on the adjoining catwalk of catwalks 1 and 2. It is focused to backwash from downstage right to centre stage using its barn doors.	This fresnel is used to light the interior of the railway station in bright fluorescent light. The railway station has been setup as an aid station of sorts as it is used as a message board so this bright incandescent lighting reinforces this notion.
28	Profile Light	300 W	O/W	59	2	7	1.015	It is positioned centre right, focused towards the upstage right living room. It is hung on catwalk 2 on the lower railing.	This profile is used primarily on a sub-max intensity to brighten faces and contrast the dimness of the LEDs and the fairy lights in the upstage right abandoned living room.

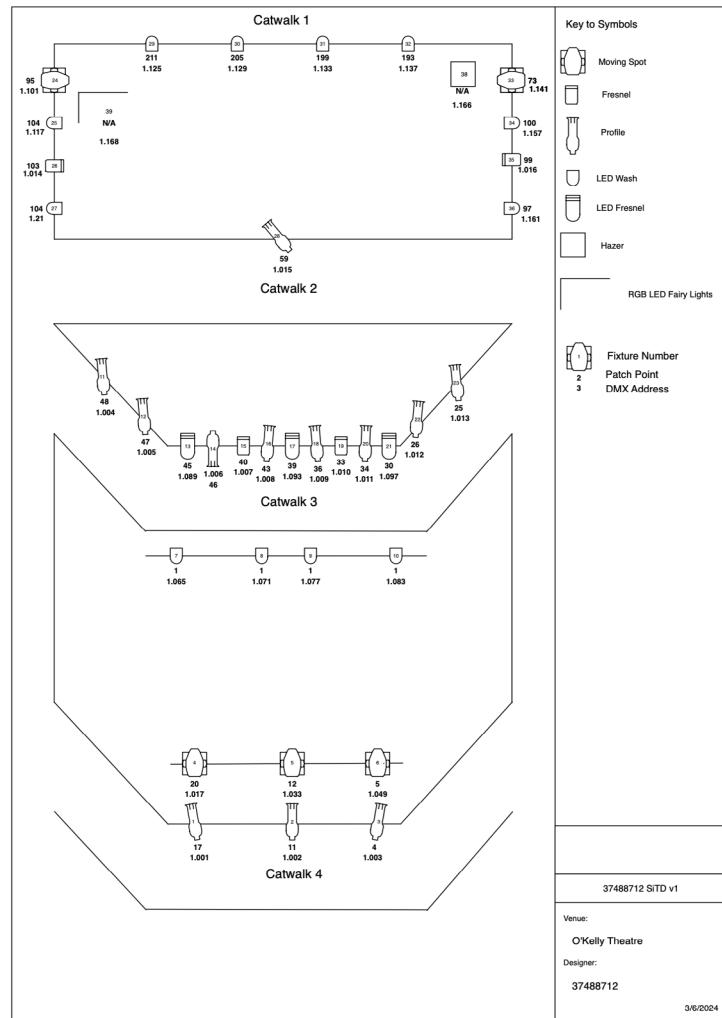
#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Patch #	Address	Chanel Count	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
29	LED Wash	48 W	87	1.125	4	It is hung on catwalk 1 on the higher railing to backlight the upstage right abandoned living room.	Full RGBW light used to wash the set in playful, vivid colours during the moments of storytelling. High brightness fixture that allows me to take full advantage of the spectrum of colour to suit a particular scene's needs.
30	LED Wash	48 W	85	1.129	4	It is hung on catwalk 1 on the higher railing to backlight. It is focused towards upstage centre, evenly washing all of centre stage in combination with fixtures 8, 9, 31, and 32.	Full RGBW light used to wash the set in playful, vivid colours during the moments of storytelling. High brightness fixture that allows me to take full advantage of the spectrum of colour to suit a particular scene's needs.
31	LED Wash	48 W	84	1.133	4	It is hung on catwalk 1 on the higher railing to backlight. It is focused towards upstage centre, evenly washing all of centre stage in combination with fixtures 8, 9, 30, and 32.	Full RGBW light used to wash the set in playful, vivid colours during the moments of storytelling. High brightness fixture that allows me to take full advantage of the spectrum of colour to suit a particular scene's needs.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Patch #	Address	Chanel Count	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
32	LED Wash	48 W	82	1.137	4	It is hung on catwalk 1 on the higher railing to backlight. It is focused towards upstage centre, evenly washing all of centre stage in combination with fixtures 8, 9, 30, and 31.	Full RGBW light used to wash the set in playful, vivid colours during the moments of storytelling. High brightness fixture that allows me to take full advantage of the spectrum of colour to suit a particular scene's needs.
33	Moving Head	200 W	73	1.141	16	Is hung USL in the back corner of the theatre. Moving head so no particular focus notes.	Colour-wheel moving head with adjustable intensity and gobos. Used for visual effects. Common use case is running water, tree foliage and harsh, focused spots. Used primarily for the stories.
34	LED Wash	48 W	100	1.157	4	Is hung between catwalks 1 and 2 and on the higher railing. Is focused as an LED wash light side lighting stage left.	Full RGBW light used to wash the set in playful, vivid colours during the moments of storytelling. High brightness fixture that allows me to take full advantage of the spectrum of colour to suit a particular scene's needs.

#	Fixture Type	Wattage	Gel	Patch #	Dimmer	Channel	DMX Address	Focus Notes	Description/Impact
35	Fresnel	500 W	O/W	99	2	8	1.016	It is hung on the lower rail on the adjoining catwalk of catwalks 1 and 2. It is focused to backwash from downstage left to centre stage using its barn doors.	This fresnel is used to light the interior of the railway station in bright fluorescent light. The railway station has been set up as an aid station of sorts as it is used as a message board so this bright incandescent lighting reinforces this notion.

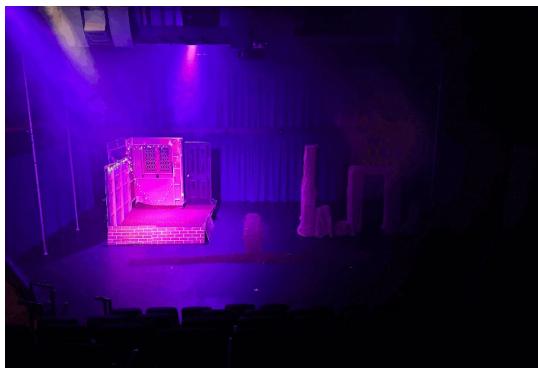
Lighting Plot

Upstage

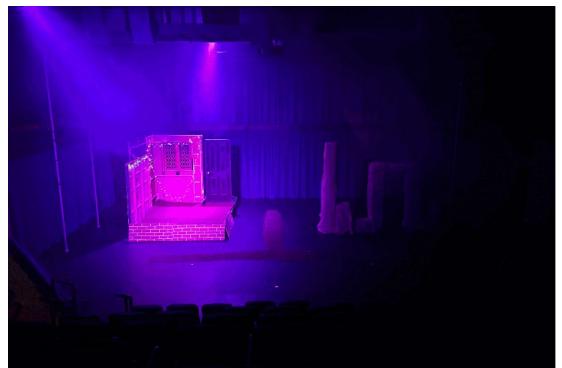


Downstage

Examples of Lighting Cues



LX Cue 2



LX Cue 3



LX Cue 8



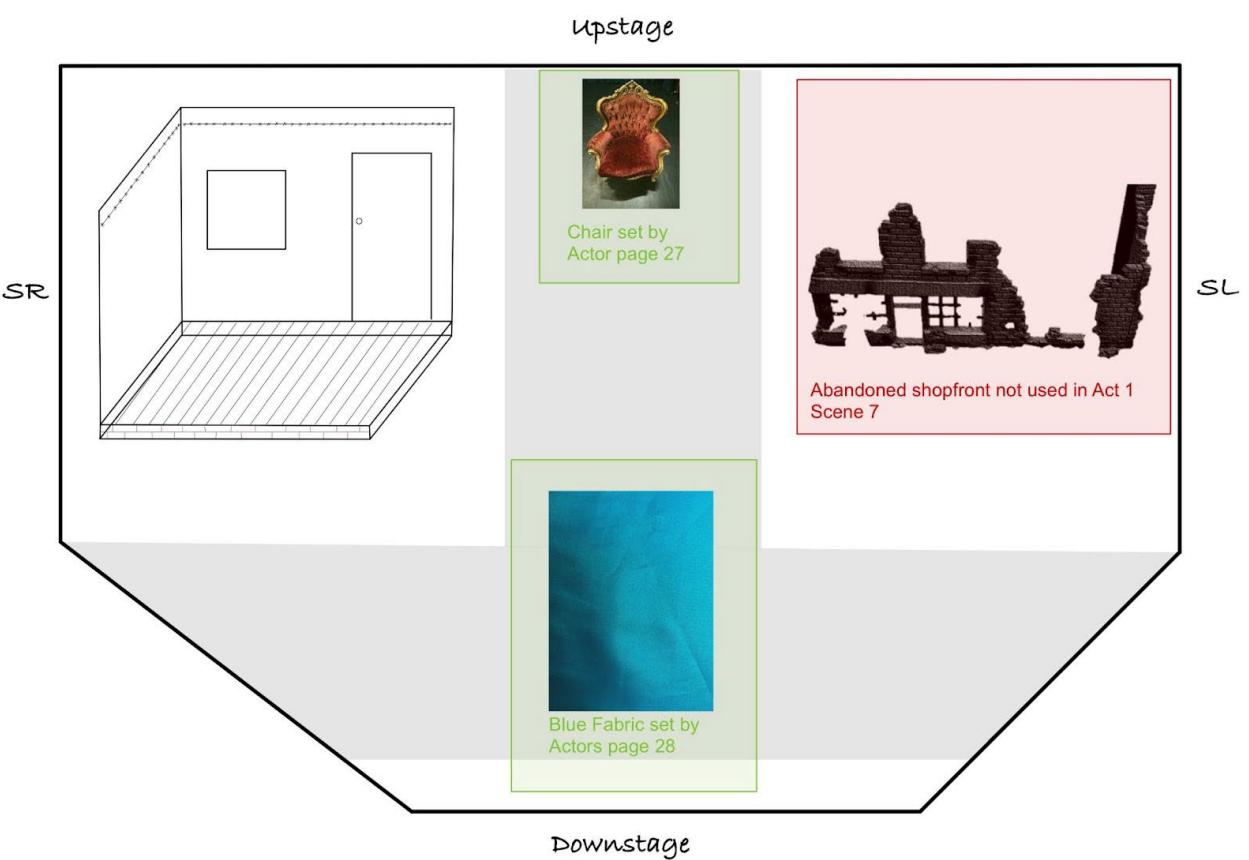
LX Cue 9



LX Cue 15



LX Cue 16



Set Design Explained

I have designed three main areas within my set to allow audiences to begin feeling familiarity towards each location due to their cyclical nature.

Upstage Right:

The Upstage Right “living room” is Anna and Thomas’ hide away where they sleep at night and tell stories from. I raised this set by 300mm to suggest that whilst the two are telling the stories, they are also the puppet masters watching and controlling them.

Upstage Left:

This is an abandoned shopfront with shattered windows. This is used, in combination with the T Shape during the real scenes, particularly prominent in Anna’s experiences of the harsh reality of war as an orphan.

This section of stage is not used in Act I Scene 7 and is accordingly not lit during this scene.

T Shape:

Downstage, in combination with Upstage Centre, form a T shape, which I used throughout all storytelling scenes. This shape provided me with unrivalled creativity as it allowed me to place the staging of my characters in a way which suited the lighting.

SEE THE FULL LIGHTING DESIGN BY SCANNING QR CODE

MUSIC 2 & MUSIC EXTENSION

Elijah Wehrhahn

Performance (Violin)

MUSIC 2

"Now I will dance" (Core Performance)

"Violin Concerto in A Minor, BWV 1041 III. Allegro assai" by JS Bach
(Elective 1, performance)

"Violin Sonata in D Major Op. 1 No. 4 HWV371: IV" by George Frideric
Händel (Elective 2, performance)

MUSIC EXTENSION

"Piano Trio, No. 1, Op 35" by Joaquin Turina (Ensemble Piece)

"Violin Rhapsody No.1, Sz. 86" by Bela Bartok (Solo Piece 1)

"Romance for violin and piano, Op. 23" by Amy Beach (Solo Piece 2)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

Bach's 'Concerto No. 1' and Handel's 'Affetuoso' work hand in hand to balance my Music 2 program, with the Bach Allegro being a fast and lyrical triplet melody while the Handel is a calmer, more melodic work. I found the Bach a rewardingly challenging piece to learn as my violin part has barely any room to breathe and accuracy is key to conveying confidence and musical coherence. Handel's 'Affetuoso' came more naturally to me musically, and I really enjoyed navigating the simple yet beautiful harmonies in an authentic yet still personal interpretation.

The Charody dance piece is an exciting and energetic piece that satisfies Music 2's "music of the last 25 years' requirement. It's tricky, yet very exhilarating and enjoyable - especially when accompanied by Ms Waddington. Large jumps up and down in register made this a fun challenge for me to learn, and sustaining an engaging spirit of 'dance' was particularly enjoyable.

Bartok's 'Violin Rhapsody No. 1' effectively contrasts Beach's expressive 'Romance', which in my case contributed to my program's interesting and dynamic nature. Bartok's 'Violin Rhapsody no 1' style of Eastern-European fiddle played in the Western concert context generated an upbeat forward moving feel, while Beach's 'Romance' provided a counterbalance to this somewhat intense and unconventional work through its melody, which grows and develops taking the listener on a journey. I was drawn to the potential of the simple opening transforming into a soaring passionate melody, and maturely communicating its journey.

Finally, experiencing the joy of collaborating with others to produce an authentic and engaging interpretation of a piece has been highly rewarding. Turina's 'Piano Trio No. 2' features a romantically youthful melody which teems with energy and eagerness. Understanding the role of projection on the violin in a piano trio setting was a particularly rewarding learning experience. Timing, phrasing, and nuanced dynamic-related decisions were important in preparing this piece, resulting in what I hope is an acceptable attempt in authentically and creatively interpreting a relatively undiscovered or underrated piece.



Watch Elijah's performances here









Watch *The Reaper* here

Wilson Frith

The Reaper

REFLECTION STATEMENT

My Hitchcockian suspense short film *The Reaper* follows the tale of a world ravaged by an incurable plague. The story is told from the perspective of a single surviving plague doctor seeking to aid the afflicted in atonement for his greatest mistake. However, it is revealed that no matter how many people he tries to help and no matter how much he tries to forget, he can never escape the consequences of his impulsive actions.

“As ye sow, so shall ye reap”.

This quote – a simplified version of St Paul’s message in his Epistle to the Galatians: “For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap” (6:7-8) – became the thematic centre-point of my film in dealing with the consequences of actions; and not only how they impact you but how they impact the world around you. Thus, with the additional inspiration of the Playstation video game ‘Bloodborne’, I envisioned a world plagued by an incurable pestilence in which the ideas kept flooding in up until the day of production. As of now, I feel satisfied with the work that I have accomplished.

The process of editing proved that despite my self-doubts, I can just about do anything. All the soundscapes, sound-effects, text frames, and shot edits have proven to me that even though I may have thought that post-production was my worst area, it was in fact my strongest.

My experience in making my Hitchcockian suspense work has been nothing short of inspiring as I have had the chance to pour all of my creative potential into this work and even though I may regret my decisions, I have reaped what I have sown.

“The only way to get rid of my fears is to make films about them.”
- Sir Alfred Hitchcock













Listen to *Episode 13, Grimy Scraps* here

Tom Doyle

Queer Coded: Episode 13, Grimy Scraps

REFLECTION STATEMENT

There's a quote I kept returning to, through all conceptual and formal shifts inevitable with the English Extension 2 course. It's one by filmmaker Leo Herrera,

"[Queer people] are tired of decades-old scraps. Scraps are for famine. We are not starving. Queers have feasts in our history and banquets in our closet. Keep your... scraps".

This formed the basis for the rest of my work, as my podcast, 'Queer Coded', uncovers the motivations and impacts of homoerotic subtext and Queerbaiting through a comparative analysis of Anthony Minghella's 1999 *The Talented Mr Ripley* and Emerald Fennell's 2023 *Saltburn*.

Delving into Queer subtext, I use a range of devices to rejoice in the joyous covert messaging imparted by Anthony Minghella, but despair at the corporate exploits of Queer Capitalism, through which *Saltburn* promises Queer Representation before failing to deliver. Immersing the listener in interviews and imagined scenes with Emerald Fennell and Joseph Brennan (I am forever grateful to Natalie Baines and Timothy Lee for voicing these), I provide an evocative and moving 'narrative arc' to follow.

The English Extension 2 course provided me with a chance to introspect, exhuming parts of myself and placing them in front of a marker. Although daunting, it has provided me with an end product I couldn't be prouder of. Even though so much progress has been made in representation of Queer people, there is still so much more to be done. I hope that my podcast can aid, even a little.



PODCAST

ABOUT:

A podcast for Queer people, and enthusiastic allies,
Deconstructing two films per week, both of the same genre,
revealing hidden subtext, all while discussing disguised
meaning behind it.

Disclaimer: this episode contains the use of 'Queer' in a reclaimed manner. This episode also contains the use of a different slur in a derogatory manner.

TRANSCRIPT

Excerpt: Cassette tape SFX¹

Excerpt: 'I loved him / Oliver Quick'²

Welcome back to 'Queer Coded'; A Queer Film Podcast where each episode I tackle two films from the same genre, unearthing embedded LGBTQ subtext. Join me this episode as we focus on the psychological thrillers, examining the joys of queer subtext in Anthony Minghella's 1999 'The Talented Mr Ripley' and the hollow shell of promised representation in Emerald Fennell's 2023 'Saltburn'.

The films *initially* appear to have a lot in common. I mean, they both examine characters of nebulous sexualities trying to infiltrate the ranks of the modern nobility,

1 Sound Beats. (2021)

2 Anthony Willis. (2023). I Loved Him / Oliver Quick.

before lying, murdering and stealing their way to the top. So, why does one provide joy, and the other one steals? Let's find out.

Episode 13: Grimy Scraps.

*Excerpt: Timpani Roll*³

Let us go then, you and I, into the wonderful world of Queerbaiting.

*Excerpt: 'Italia'*⁴

Meet Tom Ripley, the titular character in *The Talented Mr Ripley*. He's a con artist, a murderer, and a bisexual... maybe. For those who aren't acquainted with the plot; Ripley travels to Italy to retrieve the charismatic, and gorgeous Dickie Greenleaf, played by Jude Law. The two become extremely close... 'friends'... but when Tom confesses his feelings, and the engaged Dickie doesn't reciprocate, Tom beats him over the head with an oar.

*Excerpt: Accidental Murder*⁵

Shouts as Tom plunges an oar into Dickie's head repeatedly.

*Excerpt: 'Italia'*⁶

Minghella continually uses music as the motif of the clashing of Tom and Dickie's identities; the smooth cadences and soaring melodies of Tom's classical affinities.

*Excerpt: Vinyl Crackle SFX*⁷

*Excerpt: Beethoven's Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, Op. 16*⁸

Against the angular, unpredictable sound world of Dickie's Jazz.

*Excerpt: Cassette tape SFX*⁹

3 Firth, V. (2012).

4 Yared, G. (1999).

5 Hoberg, W. Sternberg T. (Producer) & Minghella, A. (Director). (1999)

6 Yared, G. (1999).

7 Noise, Vinyl Crackle | Record Player White (2022)

8 Beethoven, LV (Composer), Slávka Vernerová (Piano), Štěpán Pražák (Violin), Petr Verner (Viola), & Jan Žďánský (Cello). (1796).

9 Sound Beats. (Producer). (2021).

*Excerpt: 'Giant Steps'*¹⁰

But, despite his hate for jazz, Tom immerses himself in it, colliding himself with Dickie's world in an attempt to rise to the same level of privilege. So, this implies that he *tolerates* what Dickie likes, he tolerates what Dickie *is*, in order to gain the wealth and the status that comes from *being* Dickie.

Admittedly, Tom does become close friends with another man- Peter- in the third act of the film who is *implied* to be his lover.

*Excerpt: 'Italia'*¹¹

But crucially, nothing ever eventuates between them. In fact, Tom betrays Peter, kissing one of his friends, Meredith, on screen. But he also *kills* Peter off screen out of fear and guilt. So, quite clearly this film is not 'Queer text'.

But so what?

*Excerpt: 'My Funny Valentine'*¹²

There's this list of four stages of representation, given to us by scholar Cedrick Clark, which discusses the stages that a minority goes through in media, from:

1. Non-representation; to
2. Ridicule; to
3. Regulation; and finally to
4. Respect.

And Ripley is somewhere in the middle of 1 and 2; going from not discussing Queerness openly at all to shunning it. But, there is *something* to be said about the Queer joy that comes from watching this film; perhaps the scene which excites the biggest queer response is the bathtub scene, where Dickie lies naked in the bath, playing a game of chess with Tom who sits just outside the tub. Extreme closeups show Dickie's wet, naked chest, with the occasional cut to Tom's face showing it growing increasingly red, and eyes flickering between a chess board and Dickie's body.

10 Coltrane, J. (1960).

11 Yared, G. (1999).

12 Hart, L. (1999).

Excerpt: Bathtub Scene, The Talented Mr Ripley¹³

“It means we’ve never shared a bath... I’m cold, can I get in?”

So clearly, this *feels* queer; I mean, the request to join a bath with another man is pretty easily interpreted as queer, which is only compounded by the sultry jazz music playing over it. But, how are we left to interpret this? What does this mean?

Well, to help us answer that, it gives me a great pleasure to introduce the University of Sydney’s Joseph Brennan to the podcast. He’s a PhD holder, the author of “Queerbaiting and Fandom”, and my favourite writer on queer issues! Welcome to the Podcast!

Excerpt: Rachmanninof’s ‘Prelude in E minor’, Op. 28 No. 4¹⁴

JB: Thanks for having me!

So, we’ve just seen the huge queerness that emits itself on close reads of Talented Mr Ripley, what would you call this?

JB: Well, that essentially sounds like Hoyay- or “Homoerotism, Yay!”. Which is the discovery and entertainment of Queer subtext in a piece of media. This one can be a *little* abstract, but it’s like applying a certain reading to a book... For instance, applying a feminist reading to Frankenstein, revealing, perhaps intentional, perhaps not, information about gender dynamics and the alienation and abandonment of the maternal figure by outsourcing their gift of the creation of life.

Sure, so Hoyay acts as uncovering queer readings of a text; like the queer overtones of the bathtub scene?

JB: Sure!

But why?

JB: Well, just like how feminist readings of seminal texts can provide progression and empowerment for the movement, Hoyay can do the same. They essentially act not *only* as a resistance to the hegemonic, heteronormativity, but are also often about finding spaces in the text where you can be legible.

13 Hoberg, W. Sternberg T. (Producer) & Minghella, A. (Director). (1999).

14 Chopin. (1839).

Sure. So, bringing this back to Ripley, if Minghella wanted to encode positive queer messages, why couldn't he just include explicit representation? Like, let us see Matt Damon and Jude Law make out! Give the people what they want!

JB: Well, the 90s *were* an era of progress but the community was still largely taboo, with a large swath of policies limiting expression of Queer people, like the criminalisation of Gay Male acts still existing, even in places like Tasmania, or John Howard's refusal to support the Mardi Gras. So, perhaps it is understandable that a director wouldn't create an openly queer film, scared of social and political ostracism.

Sure... so Minghella essentially encodes queer *subtext* into the film, echoing signals and cues that queer people have trained to pick up on in real life...

Excerpt: Rumbling SFX¹⁵

Excerpt: 'Spit Roast'¹⁶

JB: Exactly, but it's still important to remember times *have* changed. Perhaps scraps are a gift, but only when one is starving. When one is feasting they are an insult.

Excerpt: Vinyl crackle SFX¹⁷

Excerpt: Cassette tape SFX¹⁸

Excerpt: Elspeth's Death, Saltburn¹⁹

"But it's been a privilege to look after you. Just as it will be a privilege to look after Saltburn. So thank you, for trusting me."

Excerpt: Cassette eject SFX²⁰

Meet Oliver, the main character in Saltburn. He's a con artist, a murderer, and a bisexual... maybe.

Excerpt: 'Journey to Saltburn'²¹

15 Rumbling Sound Effect. (2018).

16 Anthony Willis. (2023).

17 Noise, Vinyl Cracke | Record Player White (2022).

18 Sound Beats. (Producer). (2021).

19 McNamara, J., & Margot, R. (Producers & Directors) & Fennell, E. (Ed.). (2023)

20 Sound Beats. (Producer). (2021).

21 Willis, A. (2023).

Saltburn takes Ripley's infiltration of the upper class and transplants it into the modern world, where class, power, and sexuality collide. For those that aren't familiar with the plot; Oliver meets Felix Catton at university, and Felix quickly takes pity on Oliver's *ostensibly* woeful life; an addict mother, a drunkard dead father, and so he invites him to his Manor 'Saltburn' for the summer. While there, Oliver wins the favour of the aristocratic Catton family, however soon enough, Felix finds out that Oliver was lying about who he was. Oliver then kills Felix, his sister and years later, his mother, who had trusted Oliver enough to leave the Saltburn estate to him.

Looking briefly, this film seems to be bathed in queerness, with 'Bi lighting' everywhere, that is, pink and blue lighting mixing to make the colours of the bi flag, Felix saying, "I'm so fucking hot" and Oliver looking at Felix's sweaty, shirtless body, replying "I know", practically slobbering! But, on closer inspection, even more parallels to Ripley begin to emerge.

There's a common trope that Hollywood is pale, stale and male... so let's imagine what that conversation with Emerald Fenell pitching the script to the producers would have looked like.

Excerpt: Fax machine SFX²²

Excerpt: Background chatter SFX²³

Excerpt: Phone calls SFX²⁴

Emerald Fennell: Gentlemen, you've all got your scripts. What do we think?

Executive 1: Emerald, isn't it, kind of (*Whispering*) queer? I mean... I know these days we're meant to be all for that...

Executive 2: Yeah, do what you like with any consenting adult in your own bedroom—but... the reality is our market for this film is much smaller if we buy into this...

Emerald Fennell: Gentlemen, carefully read the script. The film isn't queer. I open and close the script with "I wasn't in love with him".

Executive 1: But- when Felix and Oliver meet, Felix literally kisses Oliver on the head, saying "I love you, I love you, I love you"

22 Fax machine sound effect. (2024, June 21)

23 Crowd Chatter Background Ambience Sound Effect. (2023, May 23)

24 Phone Ringing Sounds Effect. (2020, November 26).

Emerald Fennell: Have you all read the script? Page 119.

“Oliver punctures Felix’s bicycle with a pin”, “In his wallet we see a stack of twenties, untouched”, “Oliver pours a vial of drugs into the champagne bottle and swills it around, giving it to Felix”. I mean, I can’t be more clear. He doesn’t get close to them for love, but for power. For status. The foundation of their relationship is a lie! It isn’t queer. It’s for power!

Executive 1: Okay... Good. But, why not cut it completely then? We don’t have to go to the trouble!

Emerald Fennell: Trailers, gentlemen. Trailers. Posters. Marketing!

Executive 2: What?

EF: Think about it. You’re queer and you see a TikTok of the bathtub scene. “Oli looks through a crack in the bathroom door as we see an extreme close-up of Felix’s wet body in the bath, clearly masturbating. And after Felix leaves the bath, another close up shows Oli rubbing his face through the leftover bathwater, drinking some as he does.” I mean, you’re *really* gonna come see the film.

*Excerpt: ‘NFI’D*²⁵

Executive 1: Why?

Emerald Fennell: It couldn’t be clearer, we promise them representation, so they come see the movie! But we get to keep our conservative base, because we don’t actualise that representation.

Executive 2: Ah, I should have thought of that earlier.

Excerpt: ‘A Shared Bathroom / Inconsistent Stories’²⁶

Emerald Fennell: So, do we have the go for production?

‘Okay’, you might be thinking, ‘Maybe Felix and Oliver aren’t a ‘thing’, but what about Farleigh? I mean, Oliver actually engages in a sexual act with Felix’s cousin, while at the house.’

25 Willis, A. (2023).

26 Willis, A. (2023).

But even this is motivated by other factors, not by love but because Oliver wants to take Farleigh's phone and discover blackmail on him, which he *does*. But the fact is; Queer subtext *does* exist in this piece, and even more overtly in the promotional material. For instance, Fennell using a shirtless, dimly lit picture, taken from a low perspective of Felix, as he smokes a cigarette as a poster. Just, *so* queer. Even the trailer features scenes where Felix holds a champagne bottle at waist height as Oliver bends down onto his knees and drinks from it.

So, through this, Fennell promises respect. Remember back to that list: non-representation, ridicule, regulation, and respect. Fennell *promises* us the last; the hope of seeing someone *like us* on screen. But what does she give us? Non-representation. She delivers nothing! It's like, she's like Australia Post all over again. And as we've just heard, this is marketing genius. She gets all the Queers to come along to her little film, because of this promise, this vow. But she keeps all the homophobes watching her film, because she never gives a portrayal of a Queer character. All the pink dollar, and none of the pink joy.

So, on a surface level, Ripley and Saltburn seem to be operating in quite a similar manner; having some semblance of representation in their films; implying that queer action might eventuate, but never actually deliver. But what separates the two films is intent. Ripley intends to smuggle hints, to bring some amount of hope in a time of neglect and hunger. Saltburn does the same, but in a time where Queer acceptance is much higher, and representation is on the uptick. And this is what we call: Queerbaiting.

But, "Dear host, what does it matter? I mean, I'm sure some people are pissy that they can't see two boys kiss on screen, but they *know* they exist and they that know they're valid, so who cares?"

To that, I would say: you're missing the point. The point is... not only is there the fact that someone is out there profiting off Queer people without giving back; but it's also that it robs actual chances of representation.

But what does that matter?

*Excerpt: 'Felix's Tour'*²⁷

27 Willis, A. (2023).

The Parasocial Contact Hypothesis²⁸, which sounds a lot more convoluted than it really is; claims that seeing positive, likeable and explicit representations of members of minority groups leads to a decrease in prejudice over time.

Why?

Well essentially, the authors from the University of Minnesota argue, when consuming media, the brain processes experiences in much the same way as “direct experience” or, real life, so people often react to TV and Movie characters as they would with real people. Obviously, we are capable of making a distinction between the real and the fake, they argue, it’s just that, when consuming media we tend not to make an effort to do so, it’s just not immersive!

And so we’re left with this result; the more positive queer representations the broader population sees, the less prejudiced they are against them.

So, this leaves a rather sinister colouring to a lot of our previous analysis. Fennell is directly contributing to the prevention of decreasing prejudice. But still, it’s more than that.

Excerpt: Cassette tape SFX²⁹

Excerpt: Shostakovich’s ‘String Quartet No. 8’, Mvt 1 & 2³⁰

A lot of Heterosexual people interpret Queer people reading into subtext as them being desperate. Like, when people read into the BBC’s Sherlock saying:

VA1: “So, is Sherlock Gay? Yes, I think so”,³¹

And then they provide a page of *quite convincing* evidence as to why; like how Sherlock always corrects people when they assume he likes a woman, but never does that when they assume he likes a man, or- okay, I digress, let’s save it for another episode. But when people do that, others respond online with;

VA2: “He’s not gay. Get the fuck over it fag”.³²

Or when one commenter said about BBC’s Merlin;

28 Schiappa, E., Gregg, P. B., & Hewes, D. E. (2005)

29 Sound Beats. (Producer). (2021).

30 Shostakovich, D. (1960).

31 Uluviel. (2016).

32 Colorsplit. (2016).

VA3: "If really you don't see any queer characters or themes in the show, that's fine; but to deny the reality of queer themes there doesn't make sense when so many queer people see that there's clearly something there"³³

And one person responds with questioning;

VA2: "Wouldn't you say that a group of fags could be looking for things to call queer?"³⁴

Queerbaiting makes Queer people curious, it makes them dig, it makes them inquire. And that makes a lot of Cishet³⁵ people uncomfortable, like queer people are desperate savages trying to infringe on the next straight show and *make* it queer. Like a gay vampire! Or... just a vampire. So, Fennell gives us a light at the end of the tunnel, with the possibility of representation, but as it turns out, it is just another train coming towards us.

Excerpt: Satie's 'Gnossienne' No. 1³⁶

Queerbaiting is even more painful than erasure, because it dangles fair and equal representation in front of our eyes, then snatches it away. And then it tells us that the whole thing was in our imagination all along.

Ripley provides hope in a time of scarcity while Saltburn exploits queer people in a time of growing acceptance but provides none. So please, remember; representation isn't just a promise, it's a responsibility.

I'll see you next episode.

33 Sirius-orion. (2023).

34 Ffrr10000. (2023).

35 That being, Cisgendered Heterosexuals

36 Satie, E. (1890).

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Evan Dransfield

Modblock

“

My solution aims to innovate the adjustability, sustainability and portability of starting blocks through incorporating modular features.

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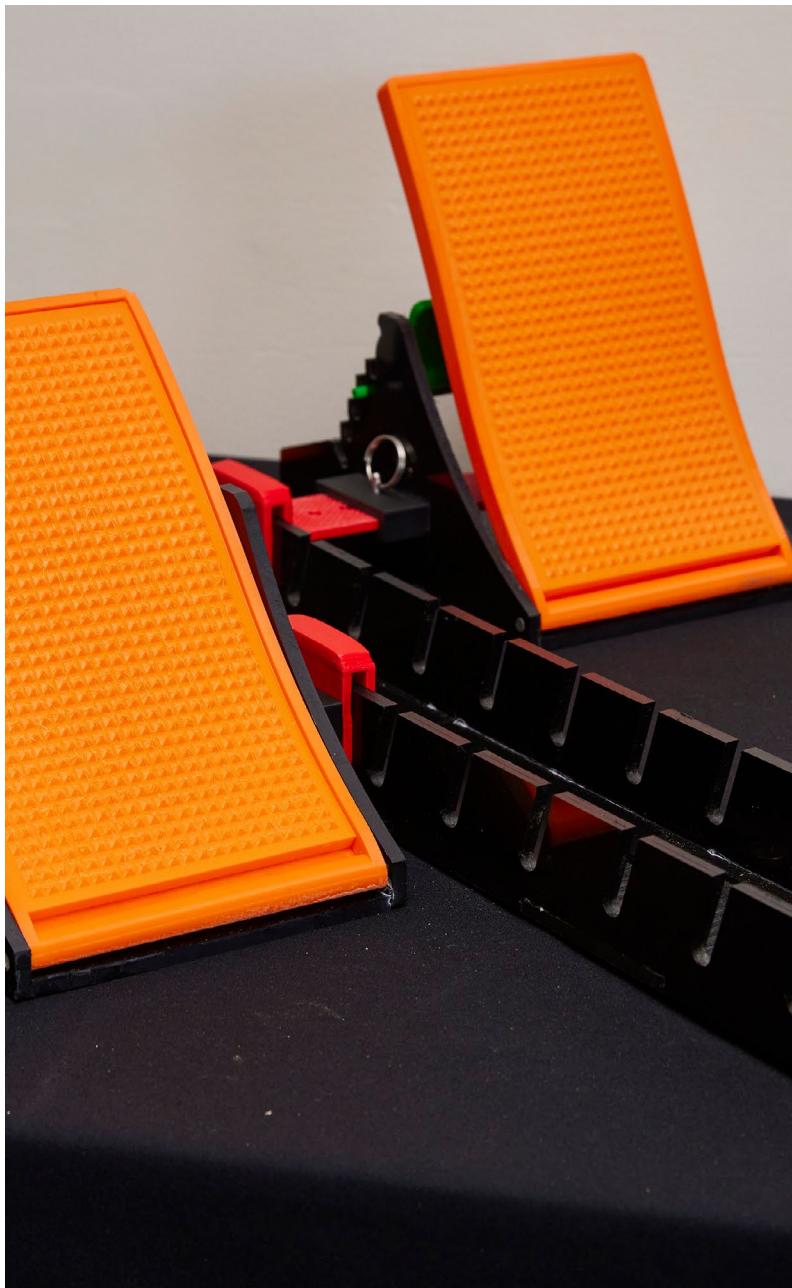
REFLECTION STATEMENT

In response to an evolving and expanding demographic within the sport of Track & Field, my Major Design Project aims to enhance athletic performance and equipment through modular innovation - a design principle that is redefining the way sports equipment is utilised, manufactured and transported. With this, my solution aims to innovate the adjustability, sustainability and portability of starting blocks through incorporating modular features which offer a solution to the increasing need for inclusive, eco-conscious, cost-effective and versatile sporting equipment for athletes at every level.

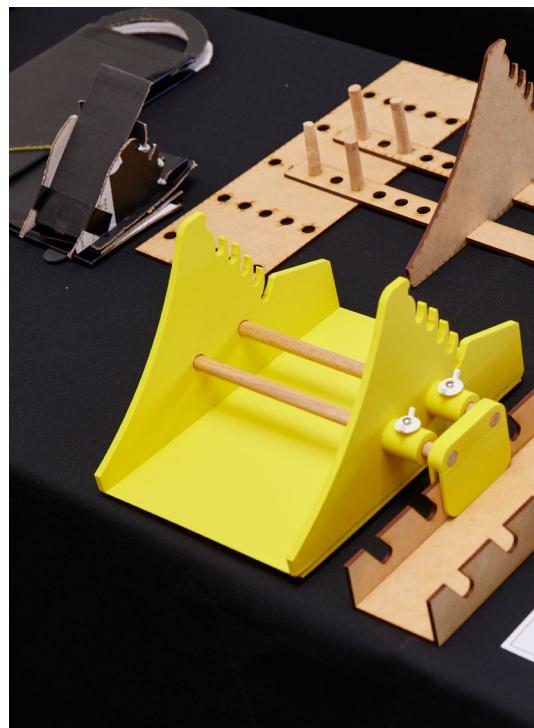
This has been achieved through designing a starting block that features intuitive and efficient width adjustment catering for athletes with broader frames, base rail collapsing hook-lock portability system to enable user-friendly transportation and storage, and utilising eco-friendly materials and processes throughout all stages of my major design project that reduce environmental impact and support a shift towards sustainable practices in sports equipment manufacturing.

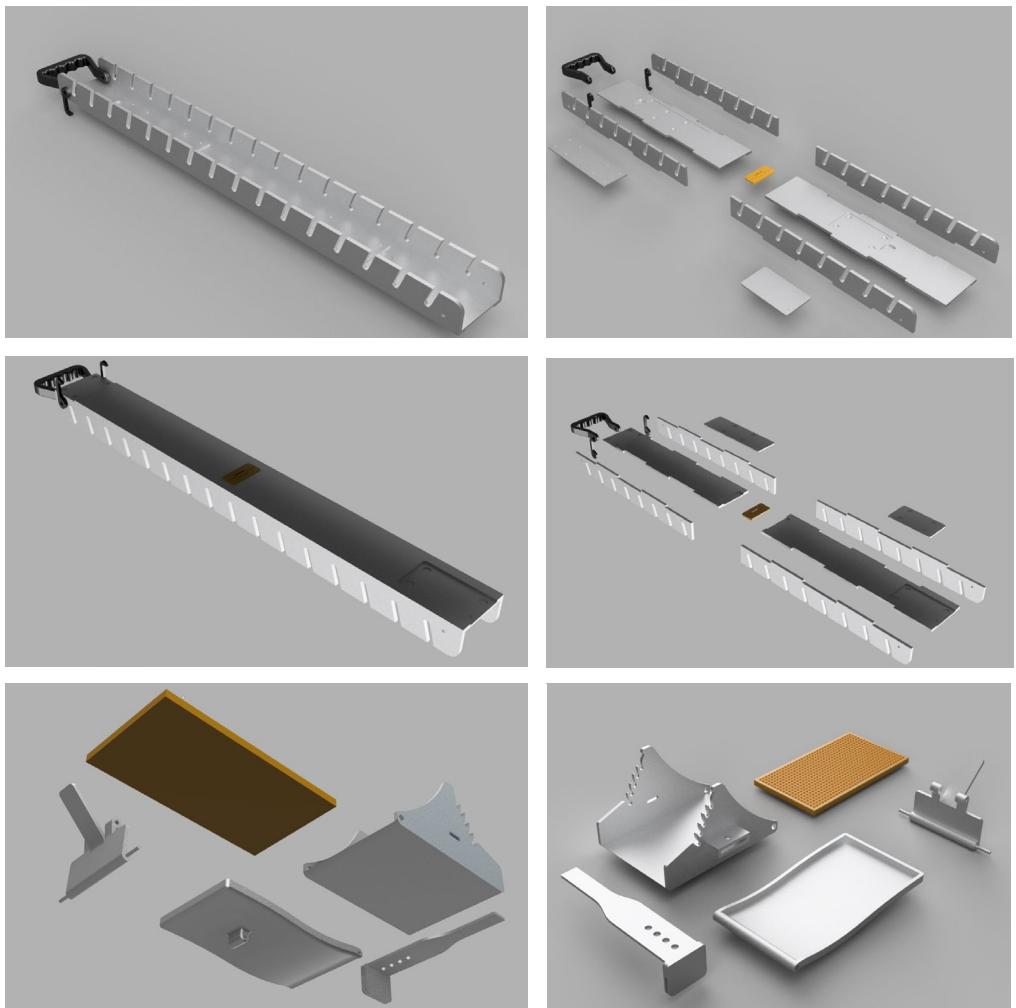
For the development of the final design, I have created a full-scale simulative model using Fusion360 CAD software. My final model utilises 3D-printed TPU filament for comfortable and anti-slip foot-padding slotted within a rigid frame made of 3D printed PLA filament. This process was further applied in the magnetic attachable and detachable anti-slip spike plates at either end of the rail. Further, the CNC machine was used to accurately cut HDPE sheets which were glued together to create a strong, durable rail and footplate frame.

In summary, my Major Design Project redefines starting blocks with modular, sustainable, and portable features that cater to diverse athletes. By integrating eco-friendly materials and innovative technology, this design offers a practical, adaptable, and responsible solution for the future of sports equipment.



Watch *Evan's*
process video
here

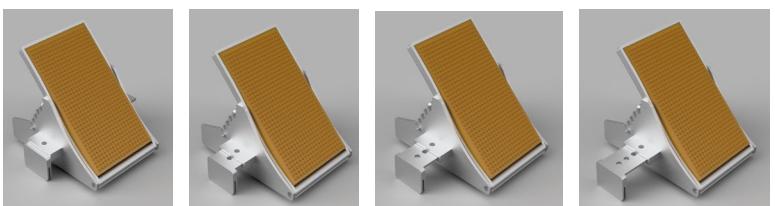




Back View



Four Width Adjustment Options



Jaiah Wallace

Shouting & Silencing: The Anzac Legend and Australia's Forgotten Histories

~

How do the contrasting narratives of the Anzac Legend and the marginalised histories of Australia's First Nations peoples shape the nation's collective memory and understanding of its past?

REFLECTION STATEMENT

Engaging with my major work has been nothing short of transformative. As a First Nations person, this journey has reshaped not just my understanding of Australia's history but also my appreciation for the incredible resilience of my people.

Growing up, the Anzac Legend dominated every corner of my education. It became the story of Australia—heroic and unchallenged. Yet, the glorified tales of the Anzac felt distant, a narrative that seemed to cast my heritage into the shadows. My ancestors' contributions were largely untold, hidden beneath the weight of mainstream history. Delving into the marginalised histories of First Nations peoples has been both profoundly painful and equally empowering. Confronting the hard truths of invasion, colonisation and the Frontier Wars brought me closer to the strength and enduring spirit of my community.

Creating this work meant confronting and challenging these dominant narratives. Reconciling the celebrated Anzac legacy with these silenced stories is no small task, but it's essential if we are to hold a fuller understanding of our shared past. This tension underscores the urgent need for a broader, more inclusive historical lens.

This journey has strengthened my commitment to truth-telling and reconciliation. History shapes our collective memory, and by amplifying the voices of all First Nations peoples, we can pave a path toward understanding and justice. Through this work, I've come to see that history isn't only about triumphs; it's about facing the difficult truths that ultimately define us, deepening my commitment to fight for social justice.

Additionally, I extend my sincere appreciation to Mrs Jo Keeling-Lowe and Mr Stefan Pulpitel for their enduring support and guidance in the journey that was.

Finally, I quote Rachel Perkins and summarise my work,

"The history of Australia is a history of black and white; our stories are intertwined and must be told together."

ESSAY

Australia's historical narrative is a tapestry woven with contrasting threads: the celebrated Anzac Legend and the silenced histories of its First Nations peoples. The Anzac Legend, revered for its valour and sacrifice, stands as a symbol of national pride. Yet, alongside this narrative lies the marginalised voices of Australia's First Peoples, whose histories have been engaged in a perpetuation of silencing for generations. Through exploring these overlooked perspectives, cast by the Anzac Legend, a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of the nation's past will be revealed, by reclaiming and amplifying the voices that have been silenced over time. Through reclaiming and amplifying the voices that have been suppressed over time, an inclusive understanding of Australia's history will honour the diverse experiences and contributions that have shaped the nation's shared identity, or indeed identities. The stark dichotomy between these narratives encapsulates a tension between remembrance and neglect, shouting and silencing; the light and dark within the historical antecedent of Australia.

Shouting

The Anzac Legend, emerging from the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps' participation in the Gallipoli campaign during World War I, has become a fundamental cornerstone of Australian national identity. Originating from military achievements and depictions of soldiers' resilience and camaraderie under challenging circumstances, it has been deeply ingrained in the national consciousness. This perception, as articulated by Kerby and Baguley (2021)¹, solidifies the Anzac as a symbol of Australian virtues, beyond mere military victory. This significance is evident in its annual celebration on Anzac Day, which has experienced a resurgence within Australia's evolving societal and political landscape. The Anzac Legend, celebrated annually on April 25th, Anzac Day, symbolises courage, sacrifice, and national pride. This narrative, reinforced through state-sanctioned education, media representation, and political discourse, shapes the collective memory of Australians, romanticising themes of heroism and national unity.² Consequently, the Anzac Legend has become deeply ingrained in the national consciousness, perpetuating a narrative of Australian identity that prioritises militarism and patriotism, and to question it suggests being 'un-Australian'.³ In contrast, the marginalised histories of Australia's First Nations peoples challenge this dominant narrative, urging a reckoning with the darker aspects of Australia's past. These histories highlight the blight of colonisation, dispossession, and systemic discrimination experienced by First Nations communities. The silencing surrounding these histories in mainstream narratives has contributed to a collective amnesia⁴ regarding the injustices faced by First Nations peoples throughout Australia's history. The coexistence of these contrasting narratives underscores the complexities of Australia's collective memory and historical understanding. While the Anzac Legend celebrates a narrative of heroism and national unity, the marginalised histories of Australia's First Nations people remain stagnant, despite increasing efforts to revisit this particular aspect. Moreover, the perpetuation of the Anzac Legend has been facilitated by institutional support, including state-sanctioned education,

- 1 Kerby, M., & Baguley, M. (2021). *The year in between: 1917, Passchendaele, and the Queensland press. Media, War & Conflict*, 14(1), 114-130.
- 2 McKenna, M. (2016, April 21) An Anzac myth - *The creative memorialisation of Gallipoli*. The University of Sydney <https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2016/04/21/an-anzac-myth.html>
- 3 Sheedy, C., Offner, S. (2015, April 24). *Busting the Anzac myth - Has a national obsession hijacked centenary commemorations of the Great War?* The University of New South Wales. <https://www.unsw.edu.au/newsroom/news/2015/04/busting-the-anzac-myth>
- 4 Stanner, W. (2011). *The Dreaming & Other Essays*. Schwartz Publishing Pty. Ltd. <https://www.perlego.com/book/969325/the-dreaming-other-essays-pdf>

media representation, and political discourse such as John Howard's tenure and his government's policies of the era, and neo-colonial responses to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US. These contexts aroused debates about the appropriateness of invoking historical military sacrifices to justify and reframe contemporary conflicts. As Kilmister (2017)⁵ observes, a highly nationalistic interpretation of Anzac is often propagated through various channels such as the media and education ensuring its continuity within the national consciousness. The performative script for Anzac commemoration was established in 1916 and reinforced by loyalist elites,⁶ further cementing its prominence in public memory. Despite opposition from dissenting groups, the carefully crafted rhetoric surrounding the Anzac Legend has endured, shaping Australian identity across generations. Transitioning to the reinvigoration of Anzac Day from the 1990s onwards has been a focal point of official promotion and commemoration efforts. The celebration of military history, particularly centred on the Anzac Legend, has been pivotal in reshaping national identity narratives since this point. This has been complemented by significant investments in education and memorialisation programs by the government, symbolising a deliberate effort to embed military history into the fabric of Australian identity. However, this nationalistic narrative has often overlooked complex aspects of Australian history, such as Frontier Conflicts and Indigenous dispossession, as highlighted by the 'history wars' of the 1990s. Most importantly, mythology serves to comfort and console, simplifying complexity and smoothing historical contradictions, silencing important chapters in history, such as the Frontier Conflicts.⁷ Through this, the Anzac Legend has both built a distinct identity, whilst hiding a troubling truth about the impacts of invasion.

Silencing

Silenced histories of First Nations Peoples persist as a testament to the enduring impact of colonisation on Australia's First Nations communities. The legacy of Frontier Conflict, marked by violence, displacement, and cultural subjugation, casts

5 Kilmister, Michael & Bennett, James & Ford, Margot & Debenham, Jennifer. (2017). *Treading on sacred ground? Confronting the Anzac myth in higher education*. History Compass. 15. e12395. 10.1111/hic3.12395. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318831882_Treading_on_sacred_ground_Confronting_the_Anzac_myth_in_higher_education

6 Cryle, M. (2014). "Natural Enemies"? Anzac and the Left to 1919. *Labour History*, 106, 143-162. <https://doi.org/10.5263/labourhistory.106.0143>

7 Lake, M. (2018, April 23). *Beyond Anzac: what really shaped our nation?* The University of Melbourne. <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/beyond-anzac-what-really-shaped-our-nation>

a long shadow over the marginalised voices and obscured histories of the First Peoples. As highlighted by Krieg (2009),⁸ colonisation is not a singular event but an ongoing trauma, with contemporary repercussions echoing through Aboriginal peoples. Colonial disruptions to familial, spiritual, and cultural domains, as outlined by Dudgeon and Walker (2015),⁹ engender profound grief and a yearning to reclaim ancestral connections severed by the colonial project. Systemic erasure further compounds this trauma, as First Nations histories are sidelined from mainstream narratives, perpetuating a cycle of silencing and marginalisation. Truth-telling initiatives, like those advocated by Martin Nakata (2007)¹⁰, are crucial for reclaiming First Nations voices and perspectives. By centering First Nations experiences and acknowledging the complexities of contested knowledge spaces, truth-telling offers a pathway towards reclaiming agency and fostering understanding across Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. This approach aligns with the concept of bricolage proposed by Joe Kincheloe (2005)¹¹, which advocates for a multidimensional inquiry into the social, cultural, and political dimensions of First Nations histories. Embracing bricolage allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive historiography that challenges the power dynamics inherent in traditional knowledge production. As a result, it is important to note that history is an apparatus as well as a product of colonisation.

Eclipsing

Australia's collective memory and understanding of its past are profoundly shaped by tensions between the Anzac Legend and the marginalised histories of its First Nations peoples. Anzac has become a cornerstone of national identity, however, its hegemony eclipses the brutal realities of the Frontier Wars and the massacres perpetrated against Aboriginal peoples—events that must be recognised as crimes against humanity and blatant war crimes, equal to atrocities seen in international conflicts. The extensive and systematic nature of these massacres underscores the need for healing, and

- 8 Krieg, A. (2009). *The experience of collective trauma in Australian Indigenous communities*. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 17, 28-32. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10398560902948621>
- 9 Dudgeon, P., & Walker, R. (2015). *Decolonising Australian Psychology: Discourses, Strategies, and Practice*. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 276-297. <https://doi.org/10.5964/j spp.v3i1.126>
- 10 Nakata, M. (2007). *The cultural interface*. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 36, 7-14.
- 11 Nakata, M. (2007). *The cultural interface*. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 36, 7-14.

Allam (2019)¹² notes this must occur as a comprehensive and national process to demonstrate accountability. The organised and deliberate attacks on First Nations communities were not mere skirmishes but calculated acts of extermination and dispossession, deserving the same scrutiny and condemnation as any war crime committed on foreign soil, numbering at least 421 recorded individual massacres, killing at least a recorded 11,257 people as a direct result with force.¹³ These numbers reveal the scale of the atrocities and the deliberate intent behind them, challenging the sanitised narratives that have often dominated mainstream historical accounts. As such, these killings alongside other actions can and should be considered state-sanctioned genocide. The Queensland Government's (2023)¹⁴ archival project on the Frontier Wars meticulously documents these significant conflicts between European settlers and Aboriginal communities, providing a counter-narrative to the sanitised Anzac tradition from a government level. The Colonial Massacres Map¹⁵ further illustrates the widespread and ignored violence inflicted upon Indigenous populations, mapping out numerous acts of brutality that directly challenge the monolithic, heroic narrative of Australia's past. Additionally, First Nations service people who served in both World Wars lacked recognition of their humanity and later service, yet these people still served, fought and died for a nation that didn't recognise them as citizens. Furthermore, this dichotomy extends to the actions of the Anzacs themselves. While celebrated for their courage and comradeship, there are documented acts of Anzac soldiers committing war crimes during both World Wars, for example, the execution of prisoners of war and the mistreatment of civilians in the 21st century conflicts in the Middle East¹⁶. These actions starkly contrast with the valorised image of the Anzacs and highlight the complexities of heroism and morality in war. As the historical toll of Australia's frontier brutality continues to be revealed, increasing calls for a more inclusive and accurate historical narrative that acknowledges these

12 Allam, L. Evershed, N. (2019, March 04). *The killing times: the massacres of Aboriginal people Australia must confront*. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/mar/04/the-killing-times-the-massacres-of-aboriginal-people-australia-must-confront>

13 Ryan, L. (2019). Centre for 21st Century Humanities.
<https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/colonialmassacres/introduction.php>

14 State Of Queensland. (2023, September 01). Frontier wars.
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15 Ryan, L. (2019). Centre for 21st Century Humanities.
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16 Commonwealth Parliament. (2022, September 27). *War crimes in Afghanistan: The Brereton Report* and the Office of the Special Investigator. Parliament of Australia.
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BriefingBook47p/BreretonReport

marginalised histories are heard from a range of demographics. Allam (2019)¹⁷ argues that recognising the Frontier Wars and their devastating impact on Aboriginal communities is essential for a comprehensive understanding of Australia's history. This process of truth-telling is not only about addressing historical inaccuracies but also about rectifying the erasure of First Nations experiences and contributions from the national narrative. The juxtaposition of the Anzac Legend with the violent history of the Frontier Wars underscores the complexities of national memory. On one hand, the Anzac Legend unifies and inspires national pride through its celebration of military valour. On the other, the recognition of the Frontier Wars and the associated massacres demands a confrontation with the darker aspects of Australia's ongoing colonial past. This duality in the nation's collective memory necessitates a nuanced approach to historical understanding, one that acknowledges the valour of the Anzacs while equally recognising the resilience and suffering of First Nations peoples in the face of invasion and systemic violence.

Confronting

The tension between the Anzac Legend and the silenced histories of First Nations peoples reflects a complex struggle within Australia's collective memory and identity. The glorification of the Anzac Legend, rooted in military valour and national unity, has long overshadowed the marginalised narratives of Indigenous communities, highlighting colonisation and dispossession. Prioritising one narrative over another significantly shapes national memory and identity. The Anzac Legend symbolises heroism and patriotism, but its dominance perpetuates a skewed understanding of Australia's past and the ongoing injustices faced by First Nations peoples. Historical revisionism plays a crucial role in uncovering and confronting suppressed voices, fostering a more inclusive understanding of history. Acknowledging these contrasting narratives is essential for a comprehensive understanding of Australia's history, promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and equitable representation of diverse experiences within the national narrative. When certain narratives are elevated, they become the dominant lens through which historical events and national values are interpreted.¹⁸

17 Allam, L. Evershed, N. (2019, March 04). *The killing times: the massacres of Aboriginal people Australia must confront*. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/mar/04/the-killing-times-the-massacres-of-aboriginal-people-australia-must-confront>

18 Clark, A. (2022). *Making Australian History*. Vintage Books, North Sydney Nsw.

The prevailing focus has often been on settler colonial histories, exemplified by the Anzac Legend, promoting themes of bravery, mateship, and nation-building. However, this selective memory marginalises the equally significant histories of Australia's First Nations peoples, including their experiences of colonisation, dispossession, and resistance. These Indigenous histories, often excluded from the mainstream narrative, offer a crucial counter-perspective that challenges and enriches the dominant understanding of Australia's past. This selective memory can perpetuate systemic injustices and hinder efforts towards reconciliation and social justice. Incorporating the marginalised histories of Indigenous Australians into the national narrative is essential for fostering a more inclusive and accurate representation of the past. Doing so honours the experiences and contributions of First Nations peoples and enriches the nation's understanding of its identity. This balanced approach is crucial for building a collective memory that is inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the diverse experiences that have shaped the nation.¹⁹ Historical revisionism involves re-evaluating and reinterpreting established narratives to include the experiences and perspectives of marginalised groups, particularly Australia's First Nations peoples. Traditional accounts of Australian history have often prioritised settler colonial narratives, exemplified by the Anzac Legend, while downplaying or ignoring the histories of Indigenous Australians. This selective memory has resulted in a national identity that reflects only a portion of the country's diverse historical experiences. Historical revisionism aims to correct these omissions by bringing to light the stories of colonisation, dispossession, and resistance that have long been marginalised. This process involves critically examining historical sources, questioning entrenched narratives, and amplifying the voices of those who have been historically silenced. By doing so, historical revisionism provides a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the past and challenges the dominant narratives that have shaped national identity. In the Australian context, this means recognising the impact of colonisation on First Nations peoples and valuing their historical narratives as integral to the national story. Historical revisionism helps create a more inclusive collective memory, fostering a sense of shared identity that reflects Australia's true diversity and complexity, ultimately enriching the nation's understanding of itself and promoting a more equitable future.

19 Rowse, T. (2022, March 21). *Distance, dispassion and the remaking of Australian History*. The Conversation.
<https://theconversation.com/distance-dispassion-and-the-remaking-of-australian-history-177552>

Echoing

The contrasting narratives of the Anzac Legend and the marginalised histories of Australia's First Nations peoples significantly shape the nation's collective memory and understanding of its past. The narrative of Anzac often centres on themes of heroism and unity among Australian soldiers, reinforcing a sense of national pride and collective identity. However, this dominant narrative frequently sidelines the histories and experiences of Australia's First Nations peoples. The historical contributions and sacrifices of First Nations Australians in various conflicts, as well as their broader cultural and social histories, are overlooked or minimised. This marginalisation is compounded by the ongoing presence of monuments and statues that celebrate colonial figures and events, which many First Nations people and allies argue perpetuate a one-sided and often glorified account of history that ignores the violence and dispossession experienced by Indigenous communities.²⁰ The public commemoration of colonial figures often serves to reinforce a narrative that omits the significant suffering and resilience of Indigenous Australians. The debate around these monuments has intensified in recent years, reflecting a growing recognition of the need to address historical injustices and include diverse perspectives in the national narrative.²¹ Efforts to recontextualise or remove certain statues, and to erect new monuments that honour First Nations histories, are part of a broader movement to create a more inclusive and accurate representation of Australia's past. This process involves not only physical changes to public spaces but also a cultural and educational shift towards acknowledging and valuing the histories and contributions of First Nations peoples.²² The conversation about these statues is emblematic of a broader struggle to reckon with and rectify the erasure of First Nations histories and voices from the national consciousness. Thus, the interplay between the Anzac Legend and marginalised Indigenous histories highlights the complexities of national memory in Australia. It underscores the importance of re-examining and expanding historical narratives to foster a more inclusive understanding of the nation's past, one that honours all its peoples and their contributions. By integrating the stories of First Nations peoples into the national narrative, Australia can move towards a

20 Stephens, D. (2022, August 07). *Australian War Memorial needs to own Australian frontier wars - Pearls and Irritations*. John Menadue's Public Policy Journal. <https://johnmenadue.com/australian-war-memorial-needs-to-own-australian-frontier-wars/>

21 Sentance, N. (2022, July 12). *Whose history: the role of statues and monuments in Australia*. Australian Museum. <https://australian.museum/learn/first-nations/statues/>

22 Bongiorno, F. (2017, September 04). *The statue wars*. Inside Story. <https://insidestory.org.au/the-statue-wars/>

more comprehensive and just commemoration of its history, promoting healing and understanding across its diverse communities.

To conclude, the contrasting narratives of the Anzac Legend and the marginalised histories of Australia's First Nations peoples significantly shape the nation's collective memory and understanding of its past. The Anzac Legend, central to national identity, emphasises heroism and unity but often overshadows the brutal realities of invasion, its perpetuating effects and systemic injustices faced by First Nations communities. This act of silencing perpetuates a skewed historical understanding, masking ongoing traumas experienced by First Nations Australians. Ultimately, valuing First Nations perspectives can lead to a more comprehensive and just national memory, promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and a balanced national identity that honours all contributions to Australia's history.

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MUSIC 1

Joseph Graves

Performance (Drums)

MUSIC 1

"Island Magic" by Dave Weckl (Core Performance)

"19 Days" by Gavin Harrison (Elective 1, Performance)

"Home" by Matt Garstka/Josh De La Victoria (Elective 2, Performance)

"At 6's and 7's" by Gordon Rytmeister (Elective 3, Performance)

REFLECTION STATEMENT

'Island Magic' has been one of my staples in my musical journey, first shown to me by my mentor Luke Thatcher in late Year 10 when I was picking pieces for my later achieved Licentiate from Trinity College in London. That piece alone gifted me with so much knowledge that it really divided my drumming journey into two parts.

The most personal of these four songs would be 'Home' by Josh De La Victoria, as it features my all-time favourite drummer, Matt Garstka, which ultimately led me to apply for the Berklee School of Music. My third piece, '19 Days', was chosen to demonstrate a more delicate and orchestral take on my usual style (and to give the marker's ears a break). This piece was also on the repertoire list of my Licentiate, and grew on me the more I practised it, as it showed me another—less exhausting—way to play my instrument, which to me was almost a practice of high functioning meditation. Lastly, the drum solo 'At 6s and 7s' was a piece which fulfilled the 'creativity and improvisation' part of the syllabus, but also was a lot of fun for me to play. There was sheet music, however, during the HSC I made quite a crucial mistake, which forced me to integrate it into the solo, which went completely off script, and I had to improvise until safely landing in the outro section.

While these four pieces do not completely exemplify my experience as a musician and lack the emotional outpour which I seem to achieve in other styles – like Metal, a good old Batucada Samba, or the torso-twisting grooves of the Red Hot Chilli Peppers – I enjoyed them greatly and they helped fulfil the requirements of NESA.



Watch Joseph's performances here







Joe Rooney

Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers:

Critically analyse the roles of the British Museum and their complicity in the politicisation of history, and what this reveals about the nature and purpose of history.

“
It is said history is written by the victors – in a postmodern world, my project asks us who these victors really are.

”

REFLECTION STATEMENT

As a discipline, the study of history forces us as a society to hold a mirror to ourselves and contemplate why we construct the past, what we value, and who we really are.

Throughout my project, ‘Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers’, I aimed to interrogate the shifting roles of museums in our society as focal points for historiographical inquiry. In studying museums, we come to better understand the contextual values that shape one’s methodology when constructing history. Specifically, I chose to study the British Museum for the continuous social criticism it draws to itself (particularly within the advent of the digital revolution and ‘cancel culture’) in refusing to abdicate to the postcolonial zeitgeist of apologies and revisionism.

I was largely influenced by the contemporary Australian landscape that surrounds us – in a nation built upon foundations of such a rich past, how is it that so many pieces of our historical puzzle lie locked away overseas? I remember stumbling upon an episode of ‘Stuff the British Stole’ – a critical reconstruction of colonial narratives by Marc Fennell – which opened my eyes to the innate hypocrisy present in the self-aggrandising nature of museum culture. It is said history is written by the victors – in a postmodern world, my project asks us who these victors really are.

Yet, despite the various influences that led me to write this project, it is the influences that surround me that truly formed it. Through the History Extension course, I learnt to think critically in the manner required to raise my voice among a din of historical discourse which I could not have done without my teacher. To Mrs. Keeling-Lowe, thank you so much for your endless patience and expert guidance, both of which were integral to the process and ensuring I could relate, not narrate. I’d also like to thank

my class: without all of you I would not have been lucky enough to have this incredible experience. However, it is critical we recognise Herodotus, Von Ranke, and all those who came before us, for inspiring the path of inquiry a historian treads - reflecting the past “*wie est eigentlich gewesen*”, as it essentially was.

As previously stated, history is a chance to take a good, hard look at ourselves. Let us start with this.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The role of museums in shaping historical narratives and the politicisation of history is a complex and contentious issue, exemplified by the internationally renowned and historically prestigious British Museum. The British Museum is facing mounting criticism in the postcolonial era, as illustrated by David Van Wyk's 2021 tweet, “*The only reason there are pyramids in Egypt is because they are too heavy to carry to the British Museum.*” (Van Wyk, 2021). This statement forms part of a larger revaluation of the “finders keepers” mentality popular among historical institutions due to emerging ethical concerns about cultural ownership and preservation. As history unfolds, it defies confinement to a singular narrative or geographical location. Yet, museum approaches to collecting and curating artefacts attempt to do just that, often disregarding the origins and cultural significance of these objects. Curatorship is an integral part of this debate, as a single person's attempt to connect a narrative between artefacts is their interpretation of historical expression. This raises profound ethical questions about ownership, representation, and the role of museums in shaping historical narratives. Moreover, in the context of postcolonialism and the rise of revisionist historiography, scholars are increasingly scrutinising the power dynamics inherent in historical representation. The “finders keepers” mentality is not simply a matter of museum policy; it reflects broader issues of imperialism, colonialism, and cultural hegemony that have been passed down since the Renaissance. In examining museum culture around the world, one can consider the complexities of historical interpretation and the contested nature of heritage preservation. These institutions serve as focal points for historiographical inquiry, illuminating the ways in which historical narratives are constructed, contested, and reconstructed over time. By interrogating the ethics behind the practices of the British Museums and the politics of representation within its walls, insight can be gained into the ongoing debates surrounding cultural heritage and the responsibilities of historians and institutions in shaping our understanding of the past.

In crafting exhibitions, museums are guided by their explicit and implicit purposes, which in turn are skewed by political and historical prejudice. The first national museum to cover all fields of human knowledge and be open to an international public, the British Museum, was founded in 1753 amidst a broader context of British imperialism. Currently, the museum states its purpose is to house a globally representative collection that is safely stored, conserved, curated, researched and exhibited (Trustees of the British Museum, 2024). Accordingly, the British Museum, like many similar institutions, wishes to construct itself as fulfilling a social role. As Philippe de Montebello, former director of the MET Museum effectively encapsulates, the purpose and role of museums is to serve *“as the memory of mankind”* (de Montebello, 2019). Therefore the role of museums can be viewed as a tool to capture collective consciousness and reflect society’s self perceptions. This has given rise to mounting debates surrounding diversity and the question of who should be represented in the history we construct and display. From this perspective, it can be understood that museums, as habitats of history, play a significant societal role in commemorating past cultures and celebrating the diversity of the modern world. Contemporary museums intend to serve as homes for history that allow the public to explore and understand diverse cultural heritage through the conservation and respectful display of artefacts, though various debates among the historical community question the validity of claims of equal representation. Museums themselves have engaged in this debate, taking polarising positions towards their role in a postcolonialist society. The Art Institute of Chicago (AIC) criticises themselves in their admission that *“Museums like ours have long centred certain stories while marginalising and suppressing others ... Firmly rooted in Eurocentric tradition, the founding objectives of our institutional history did not consider gender, ethnic, and racial equity.”* (Art Institute of Chicago, 2022). When one examines the contents of a museum such as the AIC, the prominence of artefacts such as their copy of the Marble Fragments of the Great Eleusinian Relief (Figure 1) highlights the preferential treatment of the museum community towards classical items compared to the diverse cultural histories available to be displayed. Of particular note is the ‘whitewashing’ of ancient individuals in this display, presenting a jarring lack of representation for people of colour. By adhering to these values, museums become beacons of Eurocentrist, classicist and imperialist historical dogma and are thus complicit in the prevalence of these views in society. As a preserved image of the past, museums are what many turn to for an image of humanity as it was in what they consider an ideal time.

Despite claiming that they aim to hold a collection representative of world cultures, the actions and exhibitions of the British Museum, similar to the AIC, reveal an implicit role in upholding and maintaining an antiquated cultural hierarchy which values Eurocentrism and classicism. As seen in their map available on their website (Figure 2), the number of rooms on the ground floor dedicated to solely Ancient

Greek and Roman artefacts outnumbers all other displayed cultures from Asian, Middle Eastern to Egyptian artefacts combined. While historical institutions have been attempting to rectify this cultural miasma of Western dominance, figures such as conservative polemicist Heather MacDonald controversially reinterpret the issue, accusing the AIC of “*redefining their primary purpose as antiracism and abandoning their core mission of preserving history's treasures and instructing future generations.*” (MacDonald, 2020). MacDonald's twist on the consequences museums face in the increasingly “woke” global consciousness sparks an interesting inquiry into the position of history in this modern and diverse world. MacDonald is trying to push for a fact based, E.H Carr-esque modernist ideal of history, suggesting that there is an objective truth that once found should remain static. While a valid approach, a postmodern interpretation of history suggests that representations of the past should shift to reflect ideals of the present despite potentially betraying the values of the artefacts they hold. The didactic purpose of museums, which the AIC is attempting to adhere to, is to simultaneously portray the dominant myth while giving voice to contemporary and silenced groups. Postcolonialism, in a revisionist context, requires the history maker to reevaluate and to question the true purpose of history and museums altogether: ultimately and undeniably the preservation of cultural heritage. In turn, this raises the question: whose cultural heritage should museums preserve and portray?

Museum's modern purposes are important in shedding light on their role in contemporary society, however, it is also essential to consider how museums have evolved through various contextual influences throughout history, shaping their content and display methods. These societal shifts have profoundly impacted the cultural artefacts, heritage, and history that museums choose to highlight and construct narratives around. The practices and intentions of the British Museum, which shape the institution's role in society, were informed by the historical cabinet of curiosities archetype, the Renaissance, and the postcolonial view, each continuing to influence museums. Consequently, the question of which cultural heritage a museum should portray is fluid and changes to reflect the political and social values of the time.

The cabinet of curiosities, derived from the German *kunstkammer*, emerged in the 16th century as exhibitions reflecting collectors' worldviews, knowledge, and wealth. These early museums allowed affluent citizens to showcase their exotic acquisitions often obtained through treasure hunters, with collectors donating their acquisitions to institutions such as Elias Ashmole's donations to the University of Oxford. R. J. W. Evans describes two archetypes: the princely cabinet, focused on aesthetics and exotic items, and the humanist scholar's collection, aimed at practical and scientific purposes. The truth behind his statement is clearly present through the specialties of museums such as the MET Museum's focus on celebrating aesthetics compared to the display of practical artefacts in the National Museum of Australia. These contrasting

approaches resonate with modern museums' missions, such as displaying artefacts for entertainment or educational purposes. Giovanni Alois of Sotheby's Art Institute connects Frans Francken's 1636 painting Chamber of Art and Curiosities (Figure 3) to the foundations of institutions like the British Museum, highlighting the lasting impact of historical artefact displays on contemporary museum practices. Alois's discussion of the continued presence of Francken-esque displays reveals that there is a significant portion of museums that still curate to entertain, instead of accurately and respectfully portraying cultural heritage. This motivation then bleeds into the broader issues of cultural hegemony, representation and ownership, only challenged by museums who partake in repatriation. Through their propagation of the collector ideal combined with their imperialist context of England, the British Museum serves as a temple to colonialism and a present-day echo of the 'cabinet of curiosities' archetype.

Furthermore, the Renaissance also had a profound impact on collectors and history makers, shaping the Eurocentric construction of the past and establishing a model that modern museums have adopted. During this period of "rebirth," society revived its interest in Classical Greece, which was viewed as the pinnacle of cultural history. Italian archaeological art historian Elena Vaiani notes, "*The concept of the museum was rediscovered in the Renaissance... becoming a space where objects were stored and knowledge was spread through the activity of scholars and visitors*" (Vaiani, 2022). Vaiani posits that the Renaissance transformed the cabinet of curiosities into a museum space dedicated to classical artefacts, serving as a shrine to what Eurocentric collectors deemed the creative apex of developed society. This shift not only elevated the status of classical antiquities but also established a precedent for the systematic categorisation and scholarly approach that characterise modern museums, embedding Eurocentric values into the fabric of cultural preservation and dissemination. By shifting their practices and purposes to better align with contextual sociocultural environments ranging from imperialism to the Renaissance or actively choosing not to due to political motivations, museums allow history to be coloured by politics - thus demonstrating their continuous complicity in the politicisation of history and simultaneously revealing the fluidity of their purpose and role. Change is an inherently political process, shaped by the division between innovation and traditionalism, and the decision to either go with the flow or stick out like a sore (and old) thumb serves to polarise our history. By either choosing to align themselves with progressive thought or traditional Eurocentric ideology, museums are taking an active political stance and impacting the construction of society as a whole.

This politicisation of history is clear in the emerging postcolonial movement. Postcolonialism is a growing sentiment in museums, with a number of museums attempting to gain a deeper understanding of the cultures they display and treat their artefacts with respect. The impact of this social movement is also visible in the

British Museum, through their 2019 exhibition on Eastern artwork and their efforts to, in the words of journalist Nesrine Malik, “*present orientalist art as a cultural exchange, rather than a plunder*” (Malik, 2019). Exhibitions such as these highlight the influence of postcolonialism on traditionally Eurocentric institutions and how context informs the construction and display of history. Museums hold a powerful role in society to politicise history, with their obvious influence making them complicit in both the use and misuse of history. Beyond shaping what the British Museum seeks to add to their collection, post-colonialism has profoundly shifted the focus of numerous museums from mere intellectual display to a more nuanced and respectful reconstruction of cultures. The global expansion of postcolonialism calls for the repatriation of cultural heritage to native members of that community, and the decolonisation of history in order to allow it to be open to those who were involved. This was evidenced by the significant event of the September 2023 return of Indigenous artefacts from the Manchester Museum to the Anindilyakwa community, highlighting an evolution in ongoing debates surrounding cultural heritage and postcolonialism. This repatriation marked a pivotal moment where museums began to acknowledge and address their historical roles and responsibilities in acquiring and displaying artefacts stolen from marginalised groups. The return of artefacts to the Anindilyakwa community exemplifies a broader global trend where museums and cultural institutions are reassessing their collections and practices through a postcolonial lens. This involves not only acknowledging past injustices but also actively working towards decolonising museum spaces by rethinking acquisition policies, exhibition practices, and community engagement strategies.

The decision of the Manchester Museum reflects the growing prominence of postcolonialism, which Duncan Ivison calls “*the concurrent project to reclaim and rethink the history and agency of people subordinated under various forms of imperialism*” (Ivison, 2023). The rise of postcolonialism has already begun to exert, and is poised to continue exerting, significant impacts on the Eurocentric museums that remain as legacies of colonialism. Clare Molina Sanchez of the Institution of Conservation Scotland, a consortium that specialises in conservation and repatriation, discussed how “*The predicament for western European museums lies in how they can address their colonial history within a post-colonial era*” (Molina Sanchez, 2018), encapsulating the ongoing debate surrounding the challenge of representing the fluidity of history within a confined space. The postcolonialist movement has not only influenced museum methodology but has also empowered cultural activists to assert greater agency in determining what and how artefacts are displayed in a respectful manner. The Manchester Museum’s choice to put aside the all-too-common argument of being the best site to care for an artefact in order to repatriate the spears to their original owners is a symbolic representation of revisionist history and the healing power of history. But what inspired this stray from the traditional museum codex?

However, the British Museum has chosen to reject postcolonialist repatriation, embracing their cultural heritage of the British Empire, the colonialist roots of which can be traced back to 1585 when Queen Elizabeth I allowed Walter Raleigh to start an overseas settlement on Roanoke Island, now part of the USA. This practice has had a significant impact on British society across their history and can still be seen in contemporary museum culture. The British Museum displays a number of artefacts with questionable origins that are under contention from native cultures for repatriation, such as the 'Early shield from New South Wales, Australia' (Figure 4). Artefacts such as the shield are a testament to the use of museums across history as exotic houses of history, used to fetishise and infantilise other cultures from proud societies to a series of items to be examined for public entertainment. The British Museum's lack of conciliatory action in the new age of museum culture sends a message that the wider community is beginning to see. The heightened societal interest in artefact repatriation has compelled museum curators to reevaluate the items they exhibit and their own institutional purposes. In the case of the British Museum, the confirmed decision not to return contested artefacts combined with the condescending offer to "loan" items back to their native cultures has sparked public frustration. By defying the growing zeitgeist of engaging with postcolonial political discourse, the museum has sparked debate and controversy manifesting in events such as the success of Marc Fennell's "Stuff the British Stole", a podcast turned television series that seeks to reveal to the masses how much of the British Museum's attractions are rooted in unethical acts of thievery and manipulation. The turn of public opinion against the British Museum highlights the importance for museums to adapt to the social ideas and movements of the time. Altogether, postcolonialism necessitates a significant revision of museum culture, shaping the atmosphere and purpose visible in many museums today.

Ultimately, the evolution of museums reflects broader societal shifts in understanding and valuing cultural heritage. While museums have historically been complicit in perpetuating colonial biases and politicising artefacts, the influence of movements like postcolonialism is reshaping their practices. Today, museums are increasingly challenged to reconcile their roles as custodians of history with the imperative to represent diverse and often marginalised narratives accurately. The ongoing dialogue surrounding cultural ownership and repatriation underscores the dynamic nature of museum culture and its pivotal role in shaping public perceptions of the past. Moving forward, museums must continue to adapt, ensuring that their exhibitions not only preserve history but also foster inclusivity and dialogue in an ever-changing global landscape. As emphasised, history is fluid and changing, visualised from the classically driven Renaissance to the era of diplomatic intermuseum dialogue and return of artefacts. Museums are challenged by society to simultaneously uphold present values while maintaining the past, and by embracing these challenges, museums can fulfil

their potential as transformative spaces that engage, educate, and inspire generations to come.

APPENDIX

Figure 1: Copy of The Great Marble Eleusinian Relief, located at the Art Institute of Chicago – photographed by Charles Ray

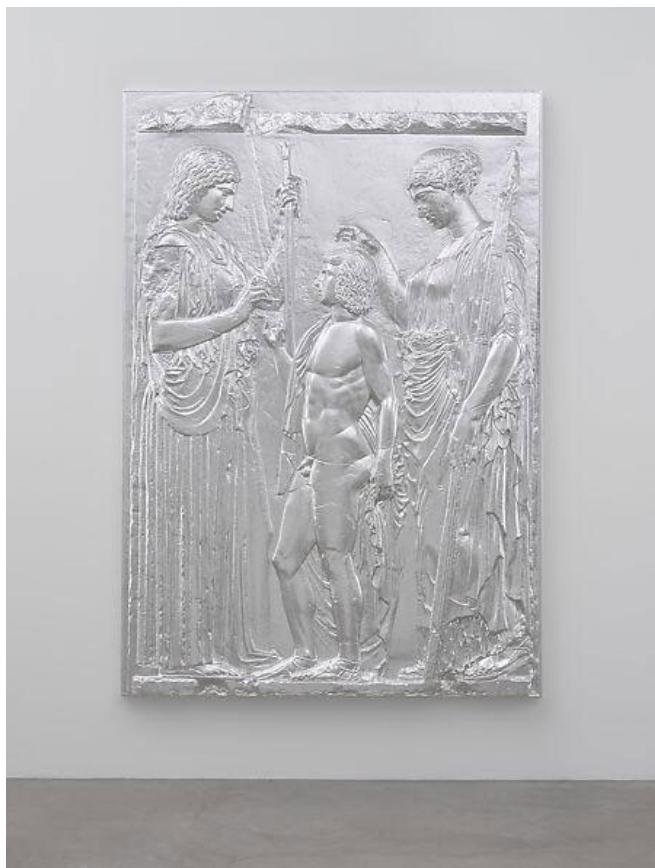


Figure 2: Map of the Ground Floor of the British Museum, provided by the Trustees of the British Museum - dated December 2023

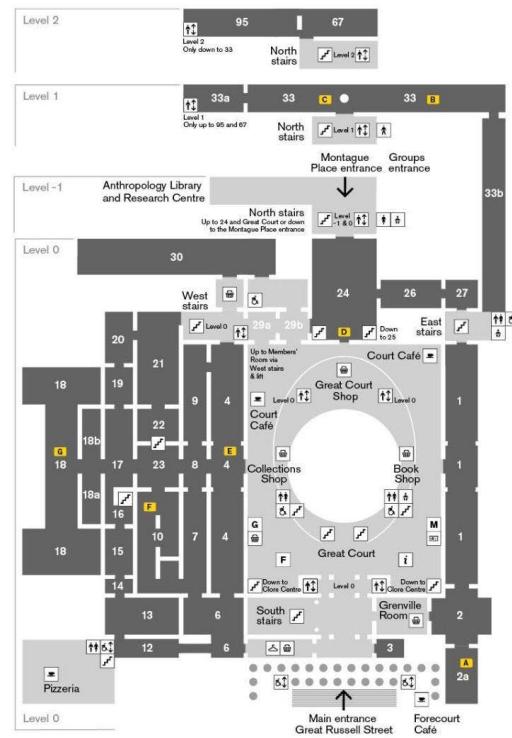
Ground floor

Don't miss

- The Holy Thorn Reliquary, Room 2a
A medieval masterpiece
- Tang dynasty figures, Room 33
From the tomb of a general
- Shiva Nataraja (Lord of the Dance), Room 33
A remarkable bronze sculpture from south India
- Hoa Hakananai'a, Room 24
A colossal ancestor figure from Rapa Nui/Easter Island
- The Rosetta Stone, Room 4
The key to deciphering hieroglyphs
- Assyrian Lion Hunt reliefs, Room 10
An ancient king's triumph over nature
- Parthenon sculptures, Room 18
Iconic sculpture from ancient Greece

Some galleries will close at short notice due to refurbishment or unforeseen circumstances. This may impact on step-free access. Please visit the website for the latest information.

*Rooms 7, 9, 10, 19, and 20 are open 11.00–15.00 each day.



Americas

North America
Room 26
Mexico
Room 27

Ancient Egypt

Egyptian sculpture
Room 4

Ancient Greece and Rome

Early Greece
Room 6
Greece: Minoans and Mycenaeans
The Arthur I Fleischman Gallery
Room 12
Greece 1050–520 BC
Room 13
Greek vases
Room 14
Athens and Lycia
Room 15
Greece: Bassai sculptures
Room 16

Asia

China and South Asia
The Sir Joseph Hotung Gallery
Room 30
India: Amaravati
The Asahi Shimbun Gallery
Room 33a
Chinese jade
The Selwyn and Ellie Alleyne Gallery
Room 33b
Korea
The Korea Foundation Gallery
Room 67
Chinese ceramics – Sir Percival David Collection
The Sir Percival David Collection
Room 2a

Exhibitions

Special exhibitions
The Sainsbury Exhibitions Galleries
Room 30
Free displays
Room 3

Themes

Enlightenment
Room 1
Collecting the world
Room 2
The Waddesdon Bequest
Funded by The Rothschild Foundation
Room 2a

Figure 3: Chamber of Art and Curiosities (1636) by Frans Francken,
located at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria



Figure 4: 'Early shield from New South Wales, Australia', dating to the late 1700s to early 1800s.
Located at the British Museum in London.



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Austin Orsini

Tears of Ayai

(Nominated for ARTEXPRESS)

“

Through my piece, 'Tears of Ayai,' I utilised portraiture as a medium to create a visual verse, with its metre found in tone and its lyrics in marks.

”

REFLECTION STATEMENT

It has been 43 years since the Khmer Rouge swept across Cambodia, killing everyone that stood in their way. Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge overtook the nation with their own brand of communism, believing that Cambodian society should return to an agrarian lifestyle. Citizens were indiscriminately forced out of the city centres and into labour camps. Anyone who opposed the Angkar (the nameless and faceless "Organization") would face certain torture and execution.

A destruction of culture.

Through my piece, 'Tears of Ayai,' I utilised portraiture as a medium to create a visual verse, with its metre found in tone and its lyrics in marks; it is a verse that translates the complex and ever-changing narrative of life for an immeasurable audience. In recording the significant moment of my life in my travels to Cambodia, learning and interacting with the culture, I experienced transformation within myself. My ability to capture the visceral and spiritual recognition of purity and tranquillity aims to offer a medium of introspection.

My piece is inspired by the works of Bill Henson, Jono Dry, Chuck Close, Peter Klashorst and Vann Nath. Working with the medium of Charcoal, through its versatility in capturing intricate details, allowed me to capture movement, and emotion. Its rich, expressive texture enhances depth, contrasts, and creates dynamic compositions, paying tribute to a culture that has shed tears to this very day.







DRAMA: INDIVIDUAL PROJECT

Patrick Short

Theatre Reviews

REFLECTION STATEMENT

A theatre reviewer must hook in the reader from the first line of their review and maintain the reader's interest using wit and flair to the end of the piece. Such was my goal in my individual major work; I aimed to give my reader a greater level of appreciation for the production elements and serve as an advocate for the performing arts.

I saw many theatre productions and picked four that resonated with me most. The first was Sydney Theatre Company's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' in which I stepped the reader through the curtain into a world of flair and flamboyance. My next review was Sydney Theatre Company's 'Are we not drawn onward to new erA' which had a palindrome structure where the first act was in gibberish and in the second act, the same words spoken backwards in English revealed the director's powerful environmental message.

Suzie Miller's 'Jailbaby' performed at Staples Theatre was my third review and the performance was raw and full of anguish. In my review, I wanted to express the profound impact that this play had on the audience and give justice to Miller's powerful message of social injustice in the criminal justice system. My last review was Sydney Theatre Company's 'RBG: OF MANY, ONE' and I aimed in my review to give a deserving tribute to this one woman show of Ruth Bader Ginsburg who chose to change the world rather than let the world change her.

My major work gave me a greater level of appreciation for theatre and I found my voice as a reviewer to hook in my reader and express my thoughts with wit and flair!

The Importance of Seeing Earnest

5 September 2023

The Sydney Morning Herald
INDEPENDENT. ALWAYS.

SYDNEY POLITICS BUSINESS WORLD GOOD FOOD LIFESTYLE CULTURE SPORT

Roslyn Packer Theatre 5 SEP - 14 OCT 2023

Step through the curtains into a world of flair and flamboyance in Sydney Theatre Company's latest triumph 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. Director Sarah Giles' twinkle-eyed examination of Victorian society's superficiality holds a mirror to the predominantly white-collar STC audience, reflecting how relevant 'Earnest's' issues remain today in a fabulous way. In our influencer-obsessed world, the remark by Gwendolen Fairfax (Megan Wilding), "In matters of grave importance, style, not sincerity, is the vital thing" still resonates. Style, rather than authenticity, is paramount in this production with exaggerated costumes, characters and exquisite set design. Notably, Gwendolen and Cecily Cardew (Melissa Kahraman) are more concerned about appearance and whether their paramour's name is Ernest than authenticity. This is comedy with bite, Oscar Wilde's satirical jab at the upper class with a knowing nod to the 21st century.

Our STC audience was primed for laughs and, unsurprisingly, familiar with this enduring Victorian era play. Centred around two English gentlemen, John Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff. Who use the alias "Earnest" to lead double lives and escape social obligations is the plot of Wilde's play. Complications arise when both fall in love with women who are convinced their names are "Earnest". What ensues is comedic chaos resolved through a tangled twist of fate.

Giles has been an STC Director since 2013, and her resume reads like a list of farce's greatest hits including recent renditions of 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist' and 'No pay? No way!'. Like previous productions, Giles has evolutionised rather than revolutionised the 'Importance of Being Earnest'.

As a shock for purists, Giles has integrated an array of contemporary music, notably 'No Scrubs' by TLC and '9 to 5' by Dolly Parton. This modern music captures the ears of the younger audience as well as adds a complementary atmosphere, matching the pace of the action on stage. The music also acts as a nostalgic throwback for older audience members who grew up to the sounds of Parton. Giles weaves Laurel and Hardy-style slapstick and just wait 'til you see the scuffle in the garden between John (Brandon McClelland) and Algernon (Charles Wu)! The issue of finding your perfect match, which is never easy, will appeal to a younger audience in today's swipe-right society. This is Victorian comedy for the selfie generation.

Our 'Earnest' cast is a smorgasbord of Australian talent. Megan Wilding, as Gwendolen and Helen Thomson, as her mother, Lady Bracknell shine in their chemistry of the perfect mix of stereotyped pompous upper class English women, and a believable relationship between strict mother and rebellious daughter. In Act One, the mother

and daughter argue over Worthing's proposal concluding with Gwendolen flicking her hair and wobbling up the stairs to wait outside while her mother interviews John Worthing, to see if he is fit for marriage. Costumes by period costume specialist Renee Mulder are, pardon the pun, Wild! Colour pops to the point of psychedelia contrasting beautifully with the monochrome servants. Seeing Gwendolen struggle up the stairs in an extravagant fish tailed fuschia gown like a guppy on acid was unforgettable!

Charles Davis creates a set that is a character in itself. Act One, we are invited into Algernon's lavishly appointed drawing room. Our eyes are drawn stage left to the stark contrast of servants preparing tea in a dark and dingy room. The versatility of Davis' set is emphasised at the beginning of Act Two. We are now at Worthing's country estate. Windowed backdrops placed in front of the existing furniture cleverly change our perspective. As the curtain rises following intermission, hoisted potted shrubs drop from the fly system above with a resounding comedic 'plop' to complete the set, a gasp followed by a giggle swiftly ensued from the audience.

Perfectly suited to Davis' set is the lighting crafted by Alexander Berlage which highlights the divide between classes. Servants disappear into the darkness in their drab black suits, one so depressed that he continually attempts suicide, only to be comedically foiled by incompetence. Black comedy indeed! Meanwhile, Algernon, flamboyant as a peacock in a velvet suit and pink tie, sticks out like a sore thumb and hints at Oscar Wilde's homosexuality. Giles provides a further nod to Wilde's sexuality when two male servants fall into each other's arms and kiss in the play's final scene.

Giles and her point perfect cast have succeeded in showing Wilde's critique of superficiality is timeless. While aspects of the production might cause traditionalists to wince, this is Oscar Wilde for a new generation. Most of all, Giles' 'Earnest' is simply a great laugh. As Wilde said - 'life is too important to be taken seriously'. The Importance of seeing... I mean, Being Earnest is a must see whether you're a theatre veteran or just sick of scrolling through Instagram.

Jailbaby

Sickening in Nature, Wonderful in Execution



- Theatre
- Published 20/1/24



Stables Theatre 4-21 January

\$35 per ticket

The unmistakable strobe of red and blue lights paints the barren walls of the Stables Theatre. While an urgent rhythmic beat pulsates, the audience is plunged into the midst of a home robbery. Motivated by his dream of becoming a professional athlete and escaping poverty, 18-year-old AJ (Anthony Yangoyan) desperately scrabbles to find valuables. So begins Suzie Miller's play 'Jailbaby', a visceral experience that relentlessly assaults the senses until the moment the lights fade into blackness.

In recent years Suzie Miller has become one of the world's hottest playwrights, with shows including her first smash hit 'Prima Facie' touring the West End and Broadway. Hard to believe then not that long ago Miller was a button-down lawyer. Her former career is an obvious influence on much of her work. In 'Jailbaby', Miller's focus is on a male youth whose socio-economic circumstances combine with the justice system's willingness to let him fall through the cracks. These all-too-common factors leave the teenager a victim of hardened criminals who mercilessly violate his body. The play unapologetically exposes the class injustice that continues to plague our society.

Director, Andrea James, responsible for taking Miller's script from page to the stage, succeeds beyond expectations. The casting of three actors – Anthony Yangoyan, Anthony Taufa, and Lucia Mastrantone – to play multiple characters in the stories that run parallel assists in the realisation of Miller's message. Yangoyan in particular seamlessly switches roles between underprivileged AJ and Seth, a spoiled teenager whose side hustle is selling his ADHD medication. By having Yangoyan play both characters, the inequalities socio-economic background creates in the justice system is shown in stark relief.

Yangoyan's monologue describing his rape is especially hard-hitting, as much felt as heard. It is painfully detailed, visceral, and incredibly uncomfortable to witness. Sudden flashes of white light, crafted by lighting designer Verity Hampson, accompany the monologue's most potent lines. These searing flashes create a pulse-like sensation, adding to the gruesome scene's sheer intensity. The impact was unquestionable, with a visible sense of despair washing over the audience, captivated by the horror unfolding before their eyes. It is little wonder then, that the show is preceded by the Lifeline telephone number being read out. Anthony Taufa takes on juxtaposing roles as AJ's soccer coach and a rapist prisoner. Taufa's ability to transform from AJ's supportive mentor in one scene only to explode into a hardened criminal in the next is breathtaking and disturbing. Lucia Mastrantone also takes on a range of roles. While

having a middle-aged woman portraying a teenager seemed a little incongruous, Mastrandone nailed the naive optimism of youth. Plus, a younger actor may well have struggled to fulfill Mastrandone's other role as AJ's struggling mother.

Adding to the overall sense of unease, 'Jailbaby' is an Australian story that feels uncomfortably close to home. Music designer Phil Downing utilizes Oz Rock, mainly AC/DC, in transitions between scenes. The use of familiar NSW police and nurses' uniforms breaks the metaphysical wall between theatre and the audience's reality. Director James' decision to perform within the confines of the Stables Theatre perfectly suits Jailbaby's confrontational nature. The audience of no more than 100 people sit on two sides of the cramped corner stage. AJ's rawness and anguish is experienced as if we are in the cell with him. Known for her work on AMERICAN PSYCHO the Musical, set designer Isabel Hudson has cleverly implemented two-way mirrors at the back of the stage. These are used for a series of scenes set in different locations. The mirrors are especially effective during AJ's police station line-up where he is identified from the house robbery, and when he receives a prison visit from his lawyer (Mastrandone). The almost empty stage works like a blank canvas, with props effectively used to signify different scenes and locations.

Now you may be reading this and thinking, well sure, it sounds like the performances are exceptional and the production equally impressive... which they are. But more importantly, this brutally confrontational drama challenges the audience to think about how young offenders are treated in our criminal justice system. As Miller puts it, "You need to come to this show to have a conversation about how it's been shaped by us not speaking about it." I couldn't agree more - see this show not for mere diversion, but to start the conversations needed to stop the callous treatment of young offenders and the socio-economic injustice we accept as part of a system designed to reform people. Who said theatre couldn't change the world?!!

Are We Not Drawn Onward To A New Era

A Thought-Provoking Spectacle of Dramatic Excellence



Roslyn Packer Theatre

20 Jan 2024

An apple tree, a woman and a man minus the snake. Only this time, the Old Testament tale is woven into a brain-bending allegory of human civilization's self-destructive behaviour, seemingly more familiar than the Garden of Eden trope. Artistic director of Belgian theatre group Ontroerend Goed, Alexander Devriendt, is known for his provocative works including 'The Smile Off Your Face' (2013) and 'Once And For All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up And Listen' (2009). Never before has his directorial vision been achieved with such precision, as in this case, to create as Devriendt states "an invitation to think differently... to think about the impact we have on the planet." All while delivering a technically dazzling show bound to leave you utterly speechless.

Devriendt has crafted 'ARE WE NOT DRAWN ONWARD TO NEW ERA' for audiences worldwide. Like its title, the play takes the form of a palindrome both structurally and narratively, meaning it is delivered the same backward as forward. As Devriendt justifies "We searched palindromes to find one of the longest in the English language to ask what if we played the human story backward to project it forward". As a consequence, the first half of the play was perplexing with the cast speaking in gibberish. This strange dialogue perplexed the audience to my count, five members of the audience only lasted 20 minutes of the play before taking their own quick 'exit'. How sorely mistaken they were. Indeed, patience is a virtue.

In Act 2, Charlotte De Bruyne's character (none of whom have names) breaks the fourth wall and addresses the audience, all while still speaking in gibberish. Only this time subtitles are projected overhead revealing that she was indeed speaking in English the entire time, only backward! Her message to the audience is one all too real. "That mankind can no longer continue on the path of environmental destruction and instead must go backward to go forward". This was a heartfelt plea to society to change. Following this monologue, the curtains were redrawn revealing a recording of the first half of the performance being played in reverse, now making perfect sense. A concoction of childlike bewilderment washed across the audience, with the word 'WOW!' echoing around the theatre. At last, this theatrical puzzle amalgamated and formed a bigger picture of climate change in an exemplary fashion.

Devriendt minimises the use of props, instead favouring props with meaning. This played a particularly important role in the first half of the play, as the props enabled Devriendt to communicate his vision to the audience without the use of conventional language. An example of this is the bronze statue, which is brought onto the stage in pieces and slowly erected, revealing not a political leader but rather a youth in casual

clothes... ONE OF US! Because in the end, it is just as much our responsibility to care for the environment as it is the leaders of the world.

An empty black stage allows the actors' movements and interactions with props to be the sole focus of attention. The use of generic clothing delivers the message that it is the responsibility for all humans no matter their social status to care for the environment. The entire performance is set to the sound of William Basinski's 2002 "Disintegration Loops", which perfectly couples with the scenes of environmental deterioration on stage. This 'deterioration' is taken to the next level when a sea of plastic bags falls from the ceiling flooding the stage. The climax is delivered by Karolien De Bleser's character, who enters holding a leaf blower filling the stage with dry ice. We are left with a space immersed in a thick smog-covered wasteland oozing into every corner of the theatre until the audience is also immersed in the same wasteland.

The 85 minutes of 'ARE WE NOT DRAWN ONWARD TO NEW ERA' are thought-provoking. The tearing apart of the tree by Jonas Vermeulen's character in Act 1 creates uncomfortable theatre. As each branch of the tree was torn off, I winced in my chair as audience members collectively groaned as the wasteful ordeal dragged on.

Although the show was incredibly impactful and entertaining, it was not without its shortcomings. There were moments in the performance when we saw 'the actors at work' rather than engaging in their characters. This rang a discordant note, breaking the immersive experience and therefore distracting from the play's worthy message on climate change.

Nonetheless, Ontroerend Goed and Alexander Devriendt have succeeded in creating "an invitation to think differently... to think about the impact we have on the planet". Although Devriendt may be correct in the "impossibility of going back into the past", we do have time to change our ways and end the environmental destruction that has gone on for all too long.

RBG: Of Many, One

A Fitting Tribute to a Woman Who Defied All Odds



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Sydney Theatre Company

30 March 2024

As an operatic crescendo soars, a focused beam of light pierces the darkness centre stage. The audience is met with the seemingly anticlimactic image of an impatient elderly woman perched birdlike by her landline phone. Unassuming maybe, but illuminated on stage is a moment that will change the very fabric of judicial history. The year is 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Heather Mitchell) waits anxiously by the phone on an otherwise barren stage. As the minutes tick by we are transported back in time as Ginsburg recalls the trials and triumphs that have led to this defining moment. Finally, the phone rings, confirming her nomination to the US Supreme Court. *RBG: Of Many, One* is a one-woman showcase of theatrical excellence. Honouring the extraordinary life of a woman who defied all odds in a world made for men, this is the story of “the notorious RBG”.

Lawyer turned playwright Suzie Miller has encapsulated RBG’s prolific 87 years of life with profound authenticity into a one-and-a-half-hour show. The playwright’s text has an inviting quality, making the audience feel intimately involved in RBG’s world. The performance is divided into three eras of Ginsburg’s life. The first covers her adolescent years in Brooklyn, New York, along with her first bitter taste of gender inequality while applying for college. In the second, we witness the diminutive legal dynamo’s unwavering efforts to secure greater rights for women case by case. Part three depicts Ginsburg’s impact in full force, with the judge becoming the face of fourth-wave feminism in the midst of the 2016 elections. Miller’s structure does however have consequences. The time shifts occasionally leave us scrambling for context and distract from some of Mitchell’s most climactic scenes. This became especially apparent during one scene in the first era. Mitchell poetically accounts her first experience of opera only for the audience to be abruptly thrown far into the future, landing in the midst of anarchy as she faces a cancer diagnosis.

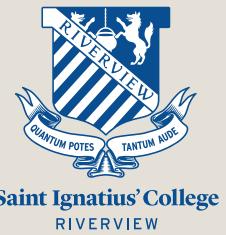
RBG: Of Many, One marks the revival of theatre super couple director Priscilla Jackman and actress Heather Mitchell. From its inception, Mitchell had always been the primary candidate to play the Supreme Court judge, and boy did Jackman get the right woman for the job. The actress’s ability to transcend decades via her physicality and tone while simultaneously capturing RBG’s wit, charisma, bravery, and empathy is a breathtaking revelation. She seamlessly transforms from a determined young lawyer to the stoic Supreme Court judge, RBG is best remembered as. In this dynamic role, Mitchell also demonstrates her range, voicing various presidents from RBG’s life. This allows comedy to permeate the play despite at heart being a serious tale of the struggle for gender equality. Whether it be Bill Clinton’s exaggerated southern drawl or Donald Trump’s easily mockable hand gestures and hyperbole, RBG at times feels more SNL

than STC. Mitchell's remarkable talent for connecting with the audience using just a slight twist of her mouth or a sparkle in her eye also assists in capturing the human aspects of RBG's story despite her ivory tower career as a judge.

The set design is minimalistic yet effective, with only a coffee table, landline phone and upholstered chair on stage for most of the performance. Two-time recipient of best lighting design for an independent production, Alexander Berlage, has worked his magic, with lighting doing much of the heavy lifting in driving the story. Areas around the bare stage are spotlit as Mitchell jumps back and forth between past and present, helping to identify which era of RBG is taking place. The lighting hue transitions from crisp white to mournful gold as Ginsburg faces death towards the end of the play. The lighting induces the audience into an almost dreamlike state as the rich golden hue paints Mitchell to resemble a bronze statue, a metaphor for her monumental life.

The emotional intensity of Mitchell's performance is further bolstered by sound designer and composer Spaul Charlier. His decades of experience in opera production are not wasted. A knowing nod to Ginsburg's lifelong love of opera is made through La Gioconda's sweeping score, used as a refuge of calm throughout the judge's turbulent years. In a fun acknowledgment of Ginsburg's later life pop culture nickname 'the Notorious RBG', Charlier also weaves blasts of rapper the Notorious B.I.G.'s hip hop beats.

RBG: Of Many, One is a fitting tribute to a woman who chose to change the world rather than let the world change her. Miller had done an exemplary job in creating a sincere piece of theatre that captures not only RBG's legal achievements but also her humanity as a wife, mother and grandmother. Even so, one can't help but feel Australia is not Miller's true intended audience, but more of a testing ground before the main event. With the looming US election, the timing of this show feels very strategic indeed. Nonetheless, the messages of this performance and RBG herself remain relevant worldwide, with Mitchell's final line "There's so much more work to be done." ringing true to the legacy left behind by the notorious RBG.

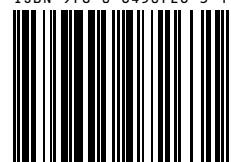


Saint Ignatius' College Riverview acknowledges the Cammeraigal people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land upon which we are privileged to live and educate. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations people who dwell on this land.

First Nations people are respectfully advised that this publication may contain the words, names and images of people who have passed away.

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