

FOYER GALLERY EXHIBITION

CARCLEW

YOUNG STORYTELLERS

25 September 2017 – 6 December 2017

Curated | Olivia Kubiak

Artworks | Anna Dowling, Lydia Carabetta, Port Lincoln High School Students

Curatorial Statement:

Anna Dowling and Lydia Carabetta are two emerging Aboriginal artists whose work could not be more visually different. Anna is an artist working predominantly in ink on paper and uses traditional symbols from her Yamatji, Badimia heritage to explore the ongoing impacts of colonisation that Aboriginal people continue to face. Through her work, she aims to preserve cultural knowledge and identity. By expressing the memories and stories of her own family, she also reveals the beauty of her Aboriginal heritage through art. Lydia is a photographer whose work focuses on her experiences with the flora and fauna by which she is surrounded. Her fascination with the wild enables her to capture animals at their most unique. She aims to tell stories through her photographs and patiently waits for the perfect moment.

To me, Anna's work is abstract and dream-like as it is easy to get lost in the hypnotising and sometimes otherworldly patterns she creates. The symbols embedded in her work are meaningful and represent a deep connection to nature and family. Some works depict unique stories of the struggles facing Aboriginal woman or reflect on social attitudes towards Aboriginal people, while other pieces take us on journeys through the artist's childhood and ancestral tales. It is inspiring to see a young Aboriginal woman so connected with her culture and, in this exhibition, she takes us on a mesmerising and enlightening journey through her life.

Lydia's photography generates interest and wonder. The lovely moments she captures of plants and animals in their natural environment seem spontaneous even though she might wait up to an hour to take the right shot. These beautiful seconds allow us to understand the natural world and enjoy it for what it is. Such small instants in time may seem insignificant, but when frozen, they captivate and allow us to appreciate the everyday.

Young Storytellers also includes artwork from young Aboriginal students who participated in the Aboriginal Art Program at Port Lincoln High School in 2013. This selection of work evidences cultural explorations within the program.

ARTIST STATEMENT | Anna Dowling

Anna Dowling was born in Adelaide, South Australia. Anna is a descendant of the Badimia people of the Yamatji region in Western Australia. Working in ink on paper, she reflects on her mixed cultural heritage and draws on traditional symbols and patterns.

Anna works to create art that reflects the beauty, diversity and incredible value of Aboriginal culture. She seeks to further her artistic skills and knowledge by learning from artists and community leaders.

At age 21, Anna Dowling was the recipient of the 2014 Don Dunstan “Our Mob” Emerging Artist Prize. In 2015, Anna was a finalist in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (NAATSIA) and in 2016 was awarded the Max Indigenous Art Award (youth category winner) at Parliament House in Sydney. In 2017, Carclew awarded Anna a Project and Development Grant which she used for the development and exhibition of a body of artwork that explores stroke experiences for Aboriginal people in Australia.

For more information please visit Anna’s website:

www.annadowling.net

ARTIST STATEMENT | Lydia Carabetta

During high school Lydia studied photography and digital imaging which gave her the passion to pursue photography as a hobby. She was taught all the right angles, how to use lighting correctly and how to use Adobe Photoshop to enhance images if needed. She now uses photography as an escape from reality and a way to let her mind relax and enjoy what the world has to offer. Her main focuses are fauna and flora as she believes that animals in particular can tell a whole story just by the perfect picture. Her photography focuses on capturing the rare moments of animals in thought, play or at work or the vivid colours of our flora. To get the perfect picture she takes multiple of one subject as every snap will be different and to get the right one takes patience and dedication. Her photographs are mostly taken at local wild life parks or botanical gardens around South Australia and on occasion interstate or overseas. She recently exhibited a small range at the Adelaide Zoo which was quite successful.

PORT LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL ABORIGINAL ART PROGRAM (2013)

The voluntary program is offered to our year 8, 9 and 10 students to enhance engagement in learning and empowers our students to improve and retain their attendance. The dynamic Aboriginal Art Program was designed to address this and seek community involvement and cultural awareness. It provides an alternative educational and vocational pathway for our Aboriginal students. Students develop their own artist profiles and portfolios. The student’s artworks now form collections in most states of Australia, Japan, China and Africa.

The artworks they produce explore connections with culture, identity, family and place. The artworks connect the students with their learning in other curriculum areas, including literacy and numeracy.

The program celebrates local culture and there has been increased Aboriginal community involvement in the school fostering positive relationships with young Aboriginal people as mentors and positive role models.

Engagement, reengagement and empowerment are key factors in the continuation of the program. Messages include healthy lifestyles, protective behaviours, local environment and enterprise are embedded in the sessions. The program aims to be sustainable.

Artwork list:

1. Anna Dowling, *Mareeba*, 2017, ink on paper, 21cm x 29cm, **\$270**
2. Anna Dowling, *Snake Skin*, 2017, ink on paper, 21cm x 29cm, **\$270**
3. Sarah Saunders (Pt Lincoln High school student), *Turtles*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 20cm x 60cm, **\$180**

I began to develop ideas for this painting quite a long time ago. I have produced other paintings of Cable Beach, areas around Broome and turtles as my knowledge of connection to country has deepened.

The sea surrounding the turtles also shows my cultural knowledge and journey to understanding my family. The colours of the water on the left are light and the lines are thin but as the eye moves to the right the colours are more vibrant and the movement in the water is bigger. That's how I feel as I am more connected with this side of the family.

- Sarah Saunders (16 years old)

4. Chariman Richards (Pt Lincoln High school student), *Life*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 35cm x 45cm, **\$120**

This painting is a further exploration of the styles I experimented with last year in my paintings 'Calm' and 'Purple Circles'. I have painted two layers; underneath there are blue and green circles overlaid with dots in blues and greens.

The orange dots organically flowing through the canvas represent the life that grows in our communities and in Port Lincoln, our surrounding oceans.

- Charmain Richards (16 years old)

5. Anna Dowling, *Family Ties*, 2017, ink on paper, 85cm x 80cm, **\$790**

This drawing explores the ripple effect in the lives of Aboriginal people and the way that past events cause widening and spreading consequences. The circular, repeating patterns represent ripples in water, reflecting how thoughts and actions cause chains of events that flow into the future.

One of the major challenges that still faces the Aboriginal community today are negative social attitudes. The artwork responds to judgments that are sometimes made about Aboriginal people without consideration or recognition being given to how past events and policies have shaped and influenced people and have impacted on their current circumstances. The patterns symbolise the intricate and interconnected relationship between the past, the present and the future.

The lacelike design represents the past by reflecting a history of Aboriginal women's subjugation into domestic service. The patterns reflect the elaborate designs sewn by young Aboriginal girls who were educated in missions to sew and perform other domestic duties. Traditional cultural practices were replaced with the skills of domestic servants.

While making this drawing, I was reflecting on how members of my own family and many others have been forced to fit into a society at the cost of losing their identity and culture. Through assimilation, traditional skills, knowledge, language and stories have been lost and the impact of this is felt in current generations and will continue to impact generations into the future

6. Anna Dowling, *Beneath the Surface* (part 1), 2017, ink on paper, 42cm x 29cm, **\$250**

7. Anna Dowling, *Beneath the Surface* (part 2), 2017, ink on paper, 42cm x 29cm, \$250

A profound spiritual connection to land exists for Aboriginal people. Spirituality and wellbeing are interconnected with the land, the people and creatures of the land. These connections run deep through time and across great distances. These drawings explore the layers of history, stories and the unknown that lies beneath the surface of the landscape and what we see today. The black voids of space represent the unknown and what we can't see. The tree roots going far beyond the surface represents a deep connection to the land that goes far beyond what we know or understand.

8. Year 8 Boys: N'ky Cabrine, Malachi Coaby, Zion Sambo, Luke Stewart, (Pt Lincoln High school students), *Land Circle Map*, 2017, mixed media, 65cm diameter, \$300

This collaborative work signifies the history of Aboriginal people and our connection to place over time and in our present day.

The pattern and painting style that we painted on the background board and over the faces shows the movement of our people and animals over the land in Australia.

We painted over some old cast aluminium faces that showed a stereotypical image of an Aboriginal man that was common in earlier times maybe the 1950's but didn't represent our people in an honest way.

The acrylic and aerosol painting showing the streets of Port Lincoln shows the paths we walk every day to get to school, to visit our friends, our family and places we like to go. We painted this on an acrylic circle so that you can see through all the layers of our history and culture. So many things have changed but connections to our country, sense of place and our culture always remains strong

9. Rikya-Anne Richards (Pt Lincoln High school student), *Yarda Piti (Country)*, 2017, acrylic on plaster and paper maché, 70cm x 30cm, \$90

I am a Barngarla/Adnyamathanha artist.

Barngarla country is located on the eastern side of Eyre Peninsula, north of the Nawu language. It includes the country from Port Lincoln to the head of Spencer Gulf, including the township of Whyalla, and possibly beyond Port Augusta up to Lake Gairdner and Lake Torrens.

The Adnyamathanha people are from the northern Flinders Ranges. Their name means 'Rock People or Language'

A piti is a shallow wooden container used for carrying water, fruits, nuts, seeds and even babies.

Piti's were also used to winnow seed and sometimes as a scoop for digging. They were often carried by balancing on the head (with a head ring), or under an arm.

I viewed an exhibition online by Robyn Latham titled 'Empty Coolamons'. She had made a variety of coolamons/piti using different materials, they symbolised the stolen generation.

The piti I created symbolises the land. The earthy tones and dashes represent the land and places where people meet. There are journey lines that connect the places and bring people together.

- Rikya-Anne Richards (15 years old)

10. Rikya-Anne Richards and Tashara Mundy (Pt Lincoln High school students), *Wardana (Sea) Piti*, 2017, acrylic on plaster and paper maché, 70cm x 30cm, \$150

Rikya-Anne Richards is a Barngarla/Adnyamathanha artist.

Tashara Mundy is a Kokatha artist.

Barngarla country is located on the eastern side of Eyre Peninsula, north of the Nawu language. It includes the country from Port Lincoln to the head of Spencer Gulf, including the township of Whyalla, and possibly beyond Port Augusta up to Lake Gairdner and Lake Torrens. The Adnyamathanha people are from the northern Flinders Ranges. Their name means 'Rock People or Language'.

The Kokatha people are associated with the land to the north of Port Augusta. This area stretches from Lake Torrens in the east to the Gawler Ranges in the west.

A piti is a shallow wooden container used for carrying water, fruits, nuts, seeds and even babies. Piti's were also used to winnow seed and sometimes as a scoop for digging. They were often carried by balancing on the head (with a head ring), or under an arm.

We viewed an exhibition online by Robyn Latham titled 'Empty Coolamons'. She had made a variety of coolamons/piti using different materials, they symbolised the stolen generation. This piti symbolises water and has many circles representing people coming together. The bright coloured dots are symbols of reflecting light mirroring the colours all around us and beneath the sea.

- Rikya-Anne Richards (15 years old) & Tashara Mundy (15 years old)

11. Lydia Carabetta, *Red Macaw* (San Diego Zoo, California), 2014, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
12. Lydia Carabetta, *Flamingo* (San Diego Zoo, California), 2014, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
13. Lydia Carabetta, *Woodland Bunny* (Orlando, Florida), 2014, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
14. Lydia Carabetta, *Meerkat* (Adelaide Zoo), 2015, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
15. Lydia Carabetta, *Wallaby* (Cleland Wildlife Park), 2015, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
16. Lydia Carabetta, *Pink Tulips* (Las Vegas, Nevada), 2014, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
17. Lydia Carabetta, *Purple Tulips* (Las Vegas, Nevada), 2014, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
18. Lydia Carabetta, *Cherry Blossom Bee* (Mount Lofty Botanical Garden), 2016, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
19. Lydia Carabetta, *Pollinator*, (Mount Lofty Botanical Garden), 2016, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**
20. Lydia Carabetta, *Lavender Bee*, (Mount Lofty Botanical Garden), 2016, digital image on canvas, 30cm x 45cm, **\$110**