



2022 NAIDOC EXHIBITION



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N A O M I
G R E E N

W E L L B O R N

K A N E
B R U N J E S

S T E V I E
O ' C H I N

B I R R U N G A
W I R A D Y U R I

**JULY 9
2022**

This year's exhibition features 15 artworks from our Indigenous resident artists:

Naomi Green - 1st Year Cultural Development Program

Wellborn - 1st Year Cultural Development Program

Stevie O'Chin - 2nd Year Cultural Development Program & 2021 Brisbane Portrait Prize Finalist

Kane Brunjes - 3rd Year Cultural Development Program & 2021 Brisbane Portrait Prize Finalist

Birrunga Wiradyuri - 2021 Brisbane Portrait Prize Finalist, 2021 Brisbane Portrait Prize Packers Prize winner & 2021 Moran Prize Semifinalist



W E L L B O R N

Between 2 worlds

2022

mixed media on canvas

95 x 120cm

\$4,180

When you look at me, what do you see?

Am I black am I white or something in between?

Is it wrong to ask? Do I Just ignore?

or is it safer to not ask any more?

For many black fellas in my position, it is a very turbulent road to walk. The idea of identity and your place in the world can bewilder even the surest of minds. Our society has developed such a hostile environment around the idea of cultural identity that most will often choose to leave it "for a later date", rather than to face it head on.

Being a black fella in a young colonial environment carries with it several challenges rarely explored amongst our peers.

Such things as your worth amongst established black fellas, your place amongst established white fellas, and even as far as your place amongst your own mob!

For a lot of us the journey is fresh, new, and in a lot of cases hard to even know what path you should even be taking to find the answers you require. The fear of standing strong only to be exposed as a fraud or an Imposter is a very true fear amongst many and for us to ignore that fact is to merely highlight this very real modern reality.

The journey for identity is hard, and comes with it a lot of unanswerable questions, but one way or the other this journey must be taken. As a black fella we must never forget that we are not alone, an no matter how isolating this environment we find ourselves in may be we must not forget that our elders before us have faced greater hardships that we could not possibly comprehend and they are still here for us, which says only one thing.

Our Blood runs true! Our Blood runs true!

Mother my nature

2022

mixed media on canvas

95 x 120cm

\$3,850



“This opulent soil, this fertile land, what a beauty of riches I have laid upon”: Thomas .A. (second fleet)

With an aching soul I sit and wonder, will there ever be a time when we see how it was that we became who we are today?

Or even so will it be in my lifetime?

This continent, this country ‘Australia’ was birthed off the riches exhausted from the land laid before them (settlers). Rich soil, fertile lands, open plans and an ecosystem made for growth.

Nothing was said of how the land came to be so rich and fertile, of how the animals and the ecosystem were so stable, just simply that it was plentiful and easy to obtain.

Cultural practice was never acknowledged during the design of our countries historical narrative, therefore the false narrative which convinces us that the farmer and his land is something he created on his own have become a fundamental part of Australian dialogue. That this continent was harsh and unforgiving, That it was a battle to be fought and won!

This is false, to its core this continent is there for us and always was, a soft and pure entity simply waiting to be nurtured again as it once was for thousands and thousands of years prior to settlers.

Our complete disconnect from the land has forced the network of connection which was a staple in indigenous lifestyle to be almost uninterpretable to most in the modern world. But none the less it is still there.

Mother my nature is a reflection on the very fabric of nature and the false idea that we are in control of the narrative.

Our mother will always be our guide, and the outcome always laid out before us.

Mother my nature, mother I see.

W E L L B O R N

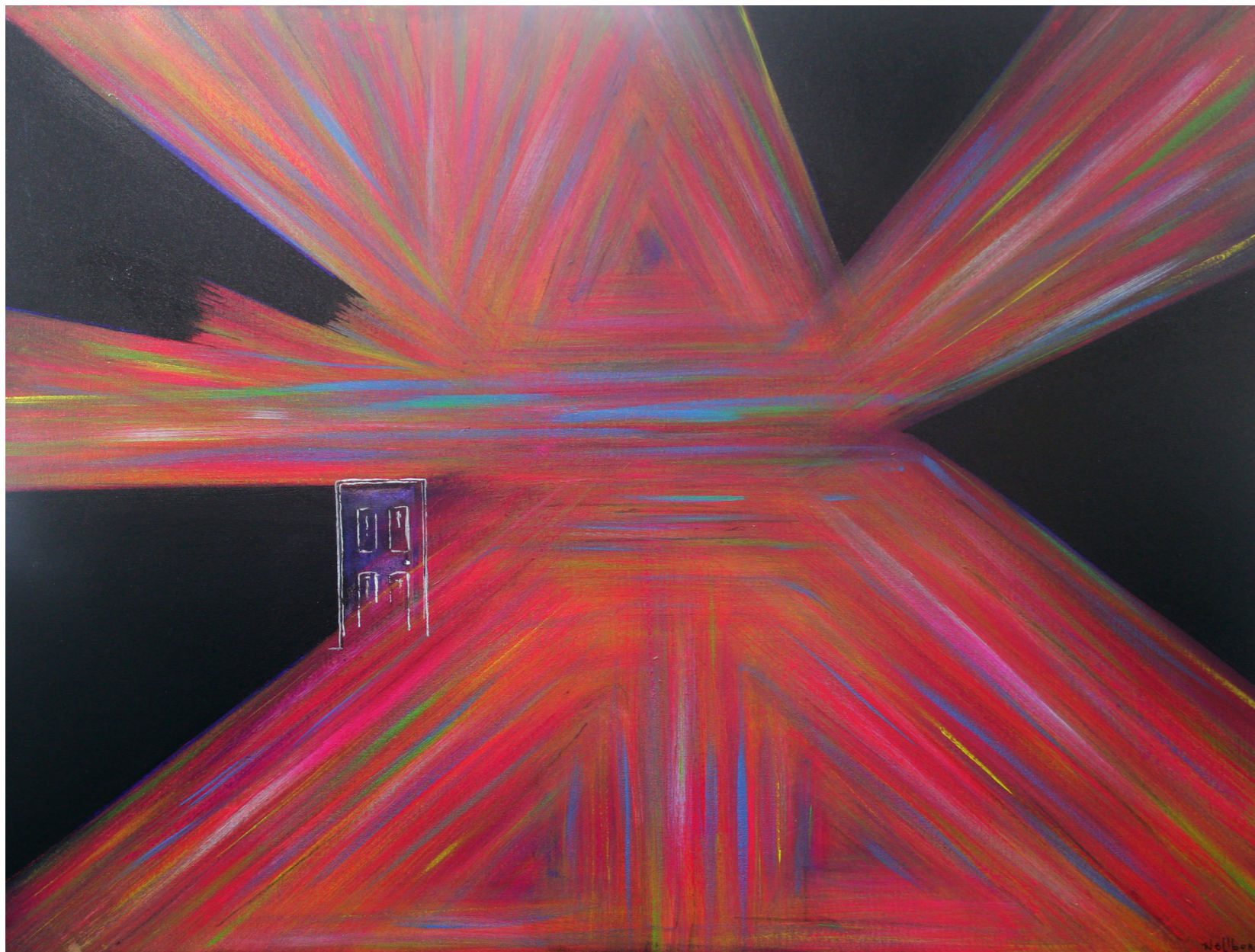
Release

2022

mixed media on canvas

95 x 120cm

\$3,080



In a single moment I did not know whether to be emphatic or scared.

Was the moment a sign? Or was I tragically falling into a deep stated psychosis to which I may never return?

The very moment escapes me. The overpowering and 'o so heavy weight of the moment, I could do nothing but weep uncontrollably.

Was something happening? Was I ok? Was this normal? Was I going to come out the other end? Not one of these questions stripped me of the magic of the moment. Although very present in my mind during, they never pulled me away from it.

I chose to fall into it, and let the heavy weight of my Ancestors flow through me naturally.

The colors lit up my entire consciousness, my body warmed in a way I had not experienced before and I felt safe!

Images continued to flash through my mind and phrases continually blew past me saying "yes" and "it is time, let go".

30 minutes later once the moment finally ended I felt an overwhelming amount of mental energy, of almost complete certainty that I was on the right path and that it was true, my Ancestors were with me, I simply had to open the door to let them in.

We are often all faced with such moments in life, whether they be cultural or otherwise. One way or another we are often faced with the choice, of whether we open the door to the unknown or we spiral around in uncertainty for the remainder of our time. My journey is just at its beginning, and these moments will be plentiful, but I have chosen to open the door to this journey and due to such a decision, I can now see the beauty that lies beyond.



S T E V I E
O ' C H I N

Wildflower

2022

acrylic on canvas

61 x 91cm

\$4,950

I chose to paint these Wildflowers to celebrate and acknowledge the many who have driven and led change in our communities.

I admire their strength and courage, for generations they have fought for equal rights and even basic human rights. Like wildflowers, our communities have survived the harshest of conditions, yet we have continually adapted and continue to Get up! Stand up and show up!



S T E V I E
O ' C H I N

Pride

2022

acrylic on canvas

46 x 61cm

\$2,530

Our history and the word resilience are often spoken about with great pride. I am one of many that feel this immense pride in my people's history, survival, resilience and our cultural and spiritual identity; and celebrating NAIDOC Week amplifies all these feelings not only for me, but all Indigenous people.

We reflect with great pride.



S T E V I E
O ' C H I N

Endless Cycle

2022

acrylic on canvas

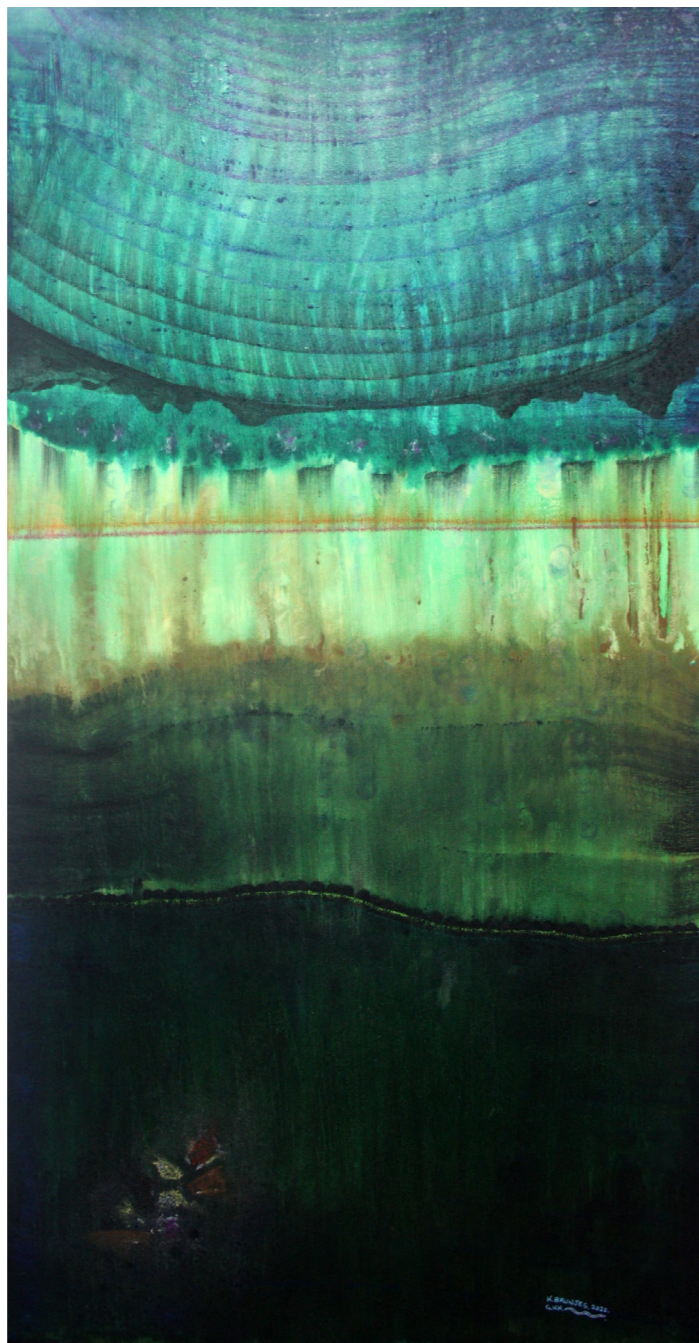
92 x 122cm

\$9,350

Racism is much more than words, beliefs and actions. It embraces all obstacles that prevent our people from enjoying dignity and equality because of our Culture.

My Family, friends and I have all experienced being discriminated against.

It's hurts to continue to see and hear about our communities still having to deal with racism.



K A N E
B R U N J E S

Stones

2022

acrylic on canvas

122 x 61cm

\$9,900

This is a place in country where Ancestors are strong in their presence alongside stone artifacts. Worked stones lay towards the bottom of the canvas, with Ancestors seen in the center and a stone axe positioned at the top. These stones are also seen as seeds, a time of new beginnings and renewal.

Spirit is with these stones and Country. The caution is to respect these places, as disturbing/taking artifacts without proper blessings could result in you taking on other issues/challenges. The dark green is associated with ambition and greed; a warning for claiming things not rightfully yours.

Waves of different feelings flow throughout, like waves crashing on ocean sands with the piece in a state of harmony.

K A N E
B R U N J E S

Show Up

2022

acrylic on canvas

152 x 91cm

\$16,500



The clubs with boomerangs on either side are birds taking flight deep into the sky. The one above has flown so high it can see what's beyond the worlds; the three circles and the landscape, but not too far as to not lose sight of who you are and where you come from. A reminder to visit home.

The face of a Woman and the moon right of the canvas represent the cycles of Earth/Women, with the direction of the birds bringing this into play. The turquoise and shades of blue link the ocean to the moon, bringing calmness into chaos with protection and healing, seen also in the mountains/ridges/trees taking the shape of a pointed-edged club. This provokes thinking, being mindful of what you're doing, and showing up for the right reasons.



K A N E
B R U N J E S

Doorway

2022

acrylic on canvas

105 x 167cm

\$8,250

The doorway gives access to places of different learning. There are various directions someone might travel depending on where they're meant to be. This is guided and with the blessing of the Ancestors. From behind the doorway, through to the stairs, and past the tombstone are areas people/spirits might travel.

The tombstone is a symbol and place to remember the Old People and all that they've taught/continue to teach us. The stairs also represent the reflections we see in ourselves, and the paths we've traveled with consideration of what we wish to learn and share with others.



N A O M I
G R E E N

What was once, will be again

Soundscape: Kaden Green

2022

acrylic on canvas

77 x 102cm

\$2,090

Country is as old as time and Worimi country (which is now covered in towns, bushland and sand dunes) was once underwater. Here, this ancient ocean world and the contemporary bushland, exist together to convey the Aboriginal sense of time as non-linear, as something which we can “swim up or down”. Worimi are saltwater and freshwater people and our dreaming stories say that the first Worimi came from the ocean, so the whale and shark represent my spirit guides. This connection to the ocean is something I felt long before I understood where it come from.

Unfortunately, the Stockton sand dunes, which are so important both culturally and historically to my people, are eroding away. That, combined with the rising sea levels, mean that Worimi land may again one day be underwater.

The idea for this painting came from a conversation with my brother, a musician who lives on country. From this discussion we decided to collaborate for this work- I would produce the visual depiction and he would produce a musical soundscape, primarily recorded on country. This work is personally valuable to me because it connects me to him and to Worimi country, both 600km away.

To listen to his soundscape while you look at the work, please use the QR code below.





N A O M I
G R E E N

Tree Rings

2022

acrylic on canvas

61 x 51cm

\$1,320

I didn't grow up learning about our culture. I think that was my grandparent's way of protecting us and keeping us all together. Here, this severance from our culture is represented by two cut tree trunks – one for my mother's family and one for my father's, with the tree rings representing the endless generations of ancestors who came before us.

N A O M I
G R E E N

Worimi Dreaming

2022

acrylic on canvas

92 x 61cm

\$1,430



I grew up disconnected from culture and only exposed to Western religions and spirituality. None of which made sense to me. Now as an adult, Aboriginal culture and spirituality give me words for things I felt were true but didn't have the words for.

Country is more than just soil, plants and animals; it has spirit. Our country is our mother and the land, animals, plants and even rocks have spirit and deserve respect. It is that spirituality, rather than the visual appearance of Worimi country which I aimed to depict here. The huge Tasmanian Tiger and kookaburras and waratahs are the spirits of my ancestors. Tasmanian tigers once roamed our entire continent so I used this extinct animal in a contemporary setting to convey the Aboriginal sense of non linear time and the agelessness of Worimi country and our connection to it.



B I R R U N G A
W I R A D Y U R I

bulangumbaay mulan ngumbaay girlang (3 parts 1 story)

2022

acrylic on canvas

101 x 152cm

POA

1 of 3

When the time was right, Wiradyuri boys of initiation age, for whom it was Lore to train to become an elite warrior were brought from across Wiradyuri ngurambang to a particular place of gathering on the base of our sacred mountain Wahluu.

They came from the north, west, south and east of Country along specific paths converging at the gathering area. This area holds many sacred trees including scarred trees and is a place of great energy.

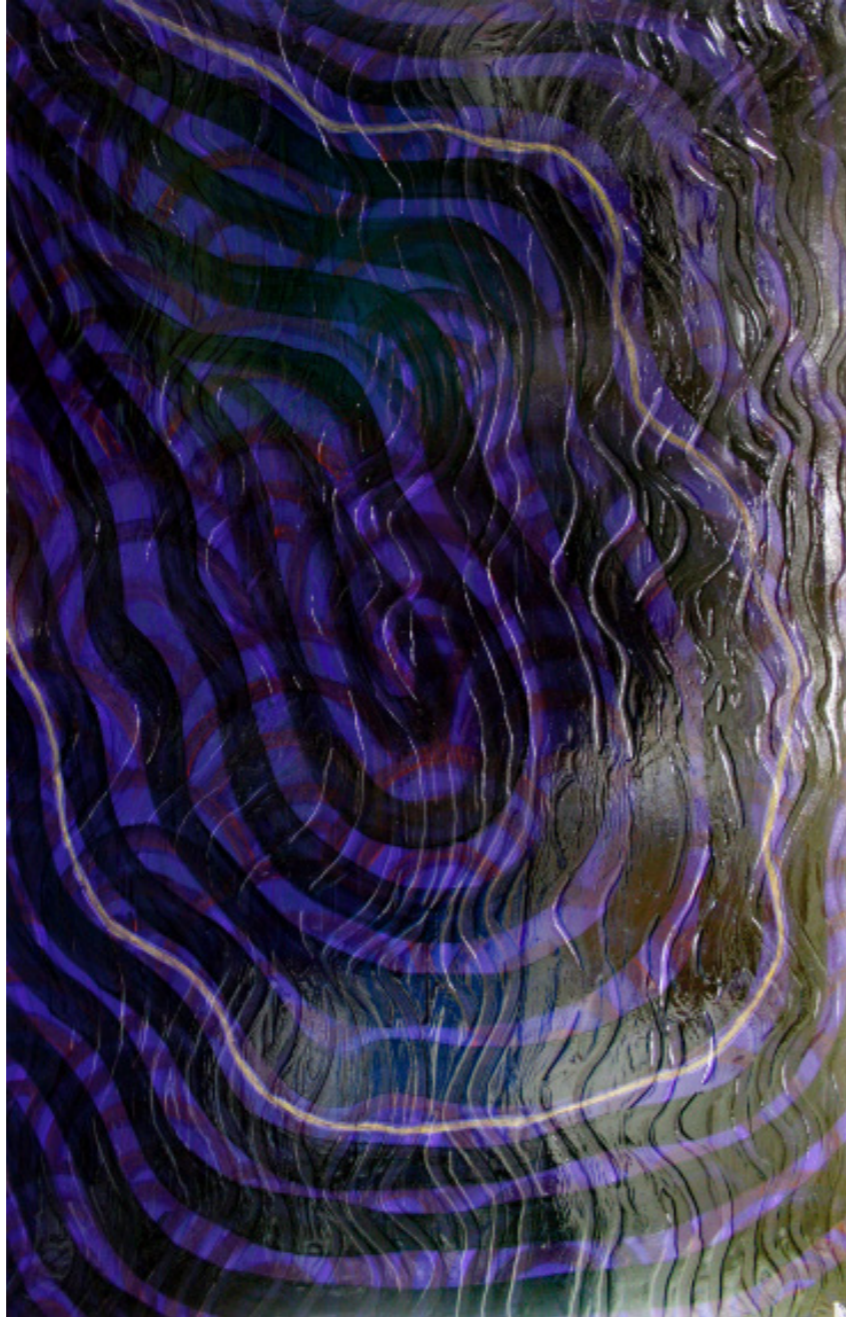
When the time was right, Wiradyuri women who were Knowledge Holders and Lore Women for this ceremony gathered the boys and began the ceremonial journey up Wahluu for the next aspect of the initiation process.

The 4 thin paths denote the escorted travel of the boys from across Wiradyuri Ngurambang converging at the holding place.

The broader path that leads off and down to the right denotes the Women Knowledge Holders and Lore Women beginning the journey into the next part of the ceremony in taking the boys up Wahluu.

The 5 band crosshatch that runs counter-clockwise around the edges of the canvas represent our sacred white ochre, our sacred ceremonial smoke and our Wiradyuri Central Lore of Yindyamarra. The 5 band crosshatch present on the paths represents Yindyamarra.

Red is for the novice boys.



B I R R U N G A
W I R A D Y U R I

bulangumbaay mulan ngumbaay girlang (3 parts 1 story)

2022

acrylic on canvas

101 x 152cm

POA

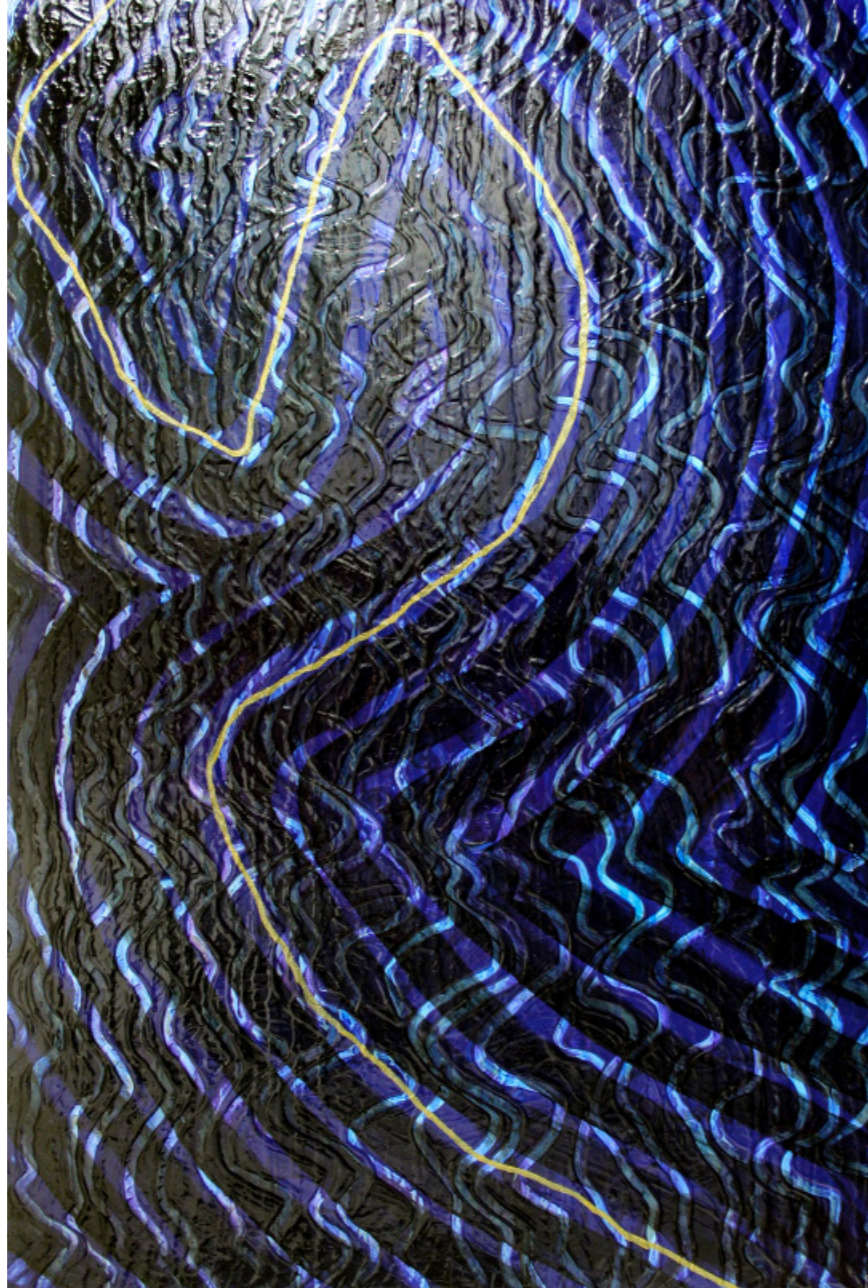
2 of 3

The Wiradyuri women who were knowledge holders for this ceremony took the boys along a specific path, along a creek around and upward onto Wahluu to their Sacred Womens' site adjacent to where the elite Warriors would meet them.

The thin path denotes the journey around, along and up to Wahluu.

The 5 band crosshatch that runs counter-clockwise around the edges of the canvas represent our Wiradyuri Central Lore of Yindyamarra as well as the gold ochre of ceremony. The 5 band crosshatch present on the path represents Yindyamarra.

Purple is for the Wiradyuri women who were Knowledge Holders and Lore Women



B I R R U N G A
W I R A D Y U R I

bulangumbaay mulan ngumbaay girlang (3 parts 1 story)

2022

acrylic on canvas

101 x 152cm

POA

3 of 3

The Wiradyuri Women who were Knowledge Holder and Lore Women for this ceremony handed the boys across to the Elite Warriors and Lore Men who then began the next part of the ceremony which marked the beginning of the transition from boyhood to manhood and of Cultural Knowledge and Lore development.

The 5 band crosshatch that runs counter-clockwise around the edges of the canvas represent our Wiradyuri Central Lore of Yindyamarra as well as the blue ochre of ceremony. The 5 band straight crosshatch present on the paths represents Yindyamarra and Wiradyuri Diamond Lore..

Blue is for the Wiradyuri men who were Elite Warriors and Lore Men.