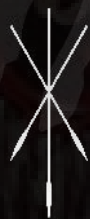




BIRRUNGA



GALLERY



Showcasing our CCDP Archibald, Wynne
and Sulman entries for 2024

Cultural creative development program (CCDP)



My focus for these pieces is to explore the stories of our ancestors, family, and express the weight of societal expectations on young people. Through these works I aim to shed light on these narratives, to honour our roots, challenge norms, and inspire reflection.



This is my first time in the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman prize. I really enjoyed painting for this prize. Each piece holds a significant meaning to me and are all connected to my country (Bundjalung). In each piece I wanted to talk about our connection to country, law/lore, rights for our people and the history our country holds. I am so happy to have also include my mother into this exhibition, a lot of the things I have learnt have been through her teachings and she has been the person that has pushed me to stay connected all these years. I am really proud of this collection of artworks and hope they can educate people more on the history of our people and how proud people should be to have such a deadly culture in Australia.



In my artistic journey, the exploration of the Archibald, Wynne, and Sulman artworks has propelled me beyond the boundaries of my comfort zone like never before. Previously uncharted territories of portraiture and landscape beckoned, challenging me to push my creative boundaries. Now, having completed these three pieces, I am proud to affirm that this endeavor has not only fostered profound creative growth but also imbued my artistic expression with newfound depth and richness.

I am grateful for the support of Birrunnga and his knowledge in assisting me with technique suggestions and reassurance in trusting myself throughout this process.



These series of works reveal intricate and deeply personal narratives. They also mark a turning point in my artistic journey, signifying a newfound trust in the creative process, my abilities, and the guiding wisdom of my ancestors. They embody a spirit of experimentation, blending new and diverse media to push my artistic boundaries.

These pieces were painted during my maternity leave, while also caring for my now 7-month-old son who was often attached to me in his harness while I worked. Even now, he is clambering over me trying to 'help' me asl typekjk. The creative process of these artworks thereby reflects the societal challenges faced by women-to nurture and raise children, care for the home and to work and create simultaneously.

The profound experiences and challenges of pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and motherhood resonate deeply in two of these works. The third piece, a portrait of Birrunnga, serves as my expression of gratitude, to a mentor who has shaped not just my artistic development, but also my spiritual and cultural journey. Each of these works is a heartfelt expression of gratitude, growth, love and the enduring bonds of mentorship and motherhood.



The approach to creating these works saw me divide intervals where the time spent painting would be narrowed into one piece rather than spending a day where I'd move from canvas to canvas.

The main focus was on the Archibald portrait so a lot of time was spent working on that piece while I'd think about the possibilities of the other two often in moments between being in the studio. The Sulman work was the first started although it sat aside and I'd wander back every so often and work towards an idea until it seemed it didn't need the attention again. While the artwork for the Wynne came about from spending time in the space of the studio and having that time to mentally see design aspects and think of painting techniques that would help to visually bring the story to the canvas.

Working with Acrylic on canvas a main focus throughout all the works was the consideration of where I wanted the viewer to look. This gave direction to the process of creating the paintings, and has given ideas on how I might alter the focus of works to come through colour, shadow, and linework.

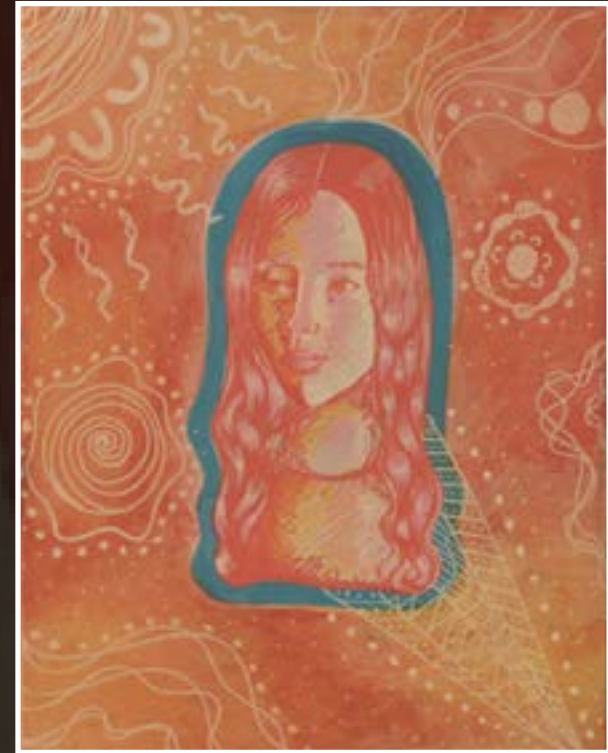


I've been producing works for these prizes since 2014 when I entered my portrait of the late, great Archie Roach. Whilst I didn't make the finals that year (and my record remains intact) my work received some media attention through the NSW Gallery Society's LOOK Magazine (Sept. 2014 edition) who published a 3 page feature which included Archie, his portrait and myself. That experience was the beginning of a friendship with one of the best, most generous, humble humans I've encountered. That experience and that friendship changed things for me forever, very much for the better. Nowadays when I produce works for the 3 prizes I have the absolute pleasure of being in the company a cohort of some of the most talented young story tellers I've ever had the privilege to not just know, but to work with in my family Lore of Story Telling. Each one of the CCDP artists to me hold the responsibility of developing their own path of walking in their Lore, responsibly and with care. They are all the very best examples to me, they challenge me and my practice by virtue of the overwhelming quality of their work and of how they carry themselves in community and in the industry. They are the examples that others will be and are currently inspired by. I am included in that cohort. Producing works for these 3 prizes with the CCDP cohort is my complete pleasure and honour to be included with them in the show each year as is delivering them in person to the loading dock of the NSW Gallery each year.

J E M M A
S T E W A R T

This portrait depicts my sister, Pheobe and her caring, uplifting nature. I have depicted her personality through bright colours and symbols that work together to capture her essence and spirit. The vibrant hues and meaningful symbols in the portrait reflect her positive energy and compassionate soul. Overall, this portrait serves as a beautiful tribute to my sister's loving and nurturing presence in my life.

Pheobe Stewart



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
YOUNG ARCHIE PRIZE

J E M M A
S T E W A R T

Natures Connection

This scene depicts a landscape that I used to watch every morning, where I would find images of various faces or objects in the leaves of the trees. I would frequently sit and think about the shapes and patterns that manifested, and I now realise that my ancestors were communicating to me through these images. The blue circles in this painting represent these ancestors, and how they can appear in nature to guide us.



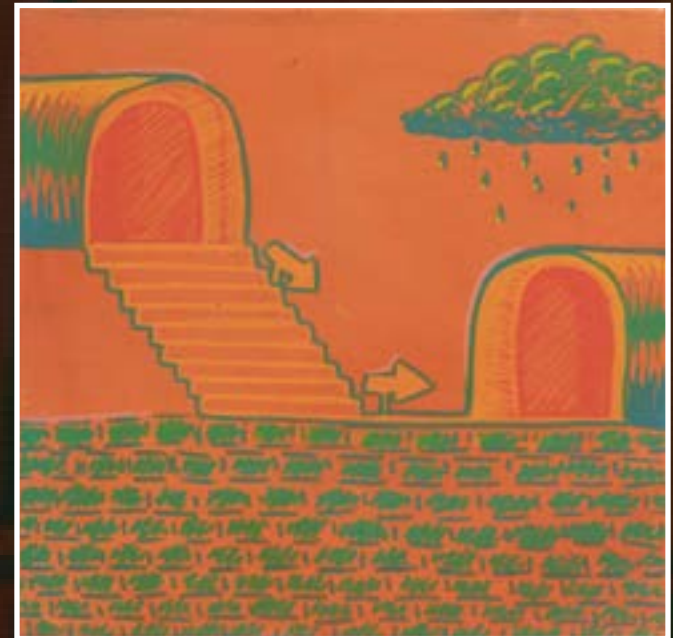
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2024
WYNNE PRIZE

J E M M A
S T E W A R T

This artwork depicts the expectations of teenagers in society to all be uniform. The shapes and imagery in this artwork work together to create a sense of conformity and pressure to fit a certain mould. The stairs leading to an open archway represent the path we are expected to follow, and the brick wall represents the barrier this creates between us and who we truly are. The raincloud represents sorrow and the effects of societies expectations to dress, act, and be a certain way.

Conformity



B I R R U N G A
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2024
SULMAN PRIZE

T I E S H A
M A R T I N

Kylie

This portrait is of my mother. My mother has been an inspiration to me. She has taught me kindness, to be caring, how to make hard decisions and just how to be joyful and take in every moment no matter how hard it can be. My mother is a hard worker and has given me guidance every step of the way. She overall is a great mother and deserves the world.



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y
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2024
ARCHIBALD PRIZE

T I E S H A
M A R T I N

Country Town

In this painting I drew a farm that I drove past in Grafton. Grafton is completely cover with cattle farms and sugar cane fields, completely changing the flora and fauna of the area. This painting represents how the land is filled with sacred sites, stories and traditions. We hold a strong connection to this country town and we need to tread lightly and remember where we are standing. The snake in the sky represents creation stories, the black holes in the ground represent burial sites and hiding culture and the waterhole in the background represents a still flourishing land. The white fence represents the boundaries put in place by white peoples against Aboriginal people.



B I R R U N G A
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2024
WYNNE PRIZE

T I E S H A
M A R T I N

This piece is about native title acts and mob regaining land back. The piece symbolises use of land, cultural practises on country, connection to home country, and hunting/gathering. Native titles acts have been properly established since 1993 when Eddie Mabo successfully overturned the legal fiction of 'Terra Nullius or land belonging to no one. Since then Native title acts have been put in place all around the country and have had amazing outcomes to the environment. Recognise where you are standing and care for country.

Native title/land back



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
S U L M A N P R I Z E

J E S S I C A S K E E N

Legacy Keeper is a poignant portrayal of an Aboriginal craftsman, Joseph Skeen, whose life's work embodies a profound dedication to education and cultural preservation.

This portrait captures the essence of a man who stands as a beacon within his family and community, tirelessly working to ensure that his heritage is not only preserved but also shared with future generations.

Joseph Skeen's weathered features reflect a lifetime of wisdom and experience, each line and crease telling a story of resilience and perseverance. His eyes, filled with warmth and knowledge, gaze out from the canvas with a quiet strength, inviting the viewer to delve into the depths of his rich cultural heritage.

Above Skeen's head flies the tool of his trade, a solo boomerang. A symbol of his craftsmanship and tradition that will keep on flying as it's passed down from one generation to the next. This tool serves as a metaphor for the transmission of knowledge from elder to apprentice, a tradition that Skeen holds dear.

The background of the portrait is imbued with symbols and motifs from Skeen's ancestral culture, weaving a tapestry of identity and belonging. Each element is carefully chosen to reflect the interconnectedness of all living things and the importance of honouring the land and ancestors.

Through "Legacy Keeper: Joseph Skeen," the artist seeks to celebrate not only the individual but also the collective spirit of resilience and cultural pride. Joseph Skeen's legacy is not just his own; it is a testament to the enduring strength of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing struggle for recognition and respect.

Legacy Keeper: Joseph Skeen



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
ARCHIBALD PRIZE

J E S S I C A
S K E E N

“Harmony of Heritage” captures the timeless allure of Split Rock, a revered landmark nestled in the heart of Kuku Thaypan country in Laura, North Queensland. Against a backdrop of vibrant landscapes and dynamic cultural expressions, the artist skillfully intertwines the sacred significance of Split Rock with the exuberant spirit of the Laura Dance Festival, creating a captivating tableau of tradition, community, and connection.

The inspiration behind “Harmony of Heritage” emerges from the artist’s profound appreciation for the cultural richness and natural beauty of Kuku Thaypan country. Drawing from personal experiences and interactions with the local community, the artist seeks to celebrate the symbiotic relationship between Split Rock and the 2 year rotation of the Laura Dance Festival, a cornerstone of Kuku Thaypan cultural heritage that has been around for thousands of years.

By integrating elements of the festival into the artwork, the artist highlights the dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation, reinforcing the festival’s role as a catalyst for cultural revitalization and intergenerational transmission of priceless knowledge.

Split Rock is not only a cultural landmark but also a testament to the deep connection between the Kuku Thaypan people and their land. By preserving sites like Split Rock, the Kuku Thaypan community reinforces their commitment to environmental conservation and stewardship, honoring their ancestral connections and responsibilities to the land.

As we conclude our journey through Kuku Thaypan country and the significance of Split Rock, we are reminded of the importance of cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and respect for Indigenous knowledge and traditions.

Harmony of Heritage: Split Rock and the Laura Dance Festival



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GALLERY



2024
WYNNE PRIZE

J E S S I C A
S K E E N

Coral Trout and the Bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef

The artwork depicts a vibrant coral reef scene, focusing on a coral trout swimming amidst the coral formations of the Great Barrier Reef. The colours are rich and varied, showcasing the beauty of the underwater ecosystem. However, obvious signs of bleaching are woven into the scene, with patches of faded white coral indicating the devastating effects of coral bleaching.

By incorporating subtle Aboriginal motifs, the artwork not only celebrates Indigenous culture but also emphasizes the importance of Indigenous knowledge and stewardship in conservation efforts. It highlights the interconnectedness of cultural heritage and environmental sustainability.

Beyond raising awareness, this artwork serves as a call to action, urging viewers to take responsibility for protecting and preserving fragile ecosystems like the Great Barrier Reef. It encourages reflection on individual and collective actions that can mitigate the impacts of climate change and safeguard biodiversity.



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
SULMAN PRIZE

N A O M I
G R E E N

Birrunga

In this painting I honour the Wiradjuri artist, Birrunga, my mentor and teacher. Birrunga has overcome immense personal adversity but has fought to ensure that the intergenerational pain and trauma he experienced ends with him. Birrunga and Suzie's dedication to their cultural responsibilities, and to creating a better future for Mob, through their work with the Wayne Weaver Foundation; IITOQ; DV connect and the Creative Cultural Development Program is unmatched.

I knew that I wanted to show Birrunga in this pose- strong and tall, and viewed from below, to convey my respect for him and his role as an Indigenous teacher, leader and changemaker. I also knew that I wanted to include the boomerangs as a symbol of his dedication to culture. However, it was only halfway through finishing the background, that I realized I had unintentionally painted Birrunga surrounded by smoke. A few moments later I also understood why I had felt compelled to use charcoal in the artwork- a medium I had never used before in my life- and one that is produced by fire. Fire and smoke are sacred to Mob they are used to heal and cleanse, connect with country and to honour our ancestors. I believe I was guided by our ancestors to include these in this artwork to honour Birrunga's dedication to culture and his profound connection with country and ancestors.



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2024
ARCHIBALD PRIZE

N A O M I E
G R E E N

After my son was born, it was important to me that I buried his placenta on our Ancestral lands. In this way, his placenta would connect him to country in the same way that it bound him to me in the womb.

We walked through bushland toward the sacred Stockton sand dunes and asked for guidance as to where to bury it. As we approached the dunes, my mother spotted this imposing blackbutt which had a large opening at the base. She exclaimed that we should bury it inside the tree, so that it would be cradled and protected by the old ones.

The Blackbutt



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
WYNNE PRIZE

N A O M I
G R E E N

Mother

This painting is a love poem to my children, to my mother and to each of my maternal ancestors. When I painted this, I had recently given birth to my second son and was overwhelmed by love for my children and in awe of women's bodies and their ability to create life. The love and bond between a mother and her child is boundless and incomparable. For nine months we carry that baby inside our own body, it listens to our breath and our heartbeat, and we feel it move, kick, roll and hiccup inside us. Then, when it is born, it continues to be fed, nourished and protected by our body and breasts- as dependent on us after birth as it is from within the womb. Birth is the first sacred ritual, and death- its antithesis, the last. They are the only universal experiences and yet no one can recall either.



BIRRUNGA
GALLERY

2024
SULMAN PRIZE

K A N E
B R U N J E S

Marissa Williamson Pohlman Ngarrindjeri

While chatting with Marissa over a coffee and breakfast a question was asked along the lines of why I wanted to paint her. The answer being that I was inspired by her and was interested in her story. Leaning against the ropes in Australia's oldest gym located in Collingwood, Naarm, Marissa is pictured looking composed, and ready for what's to come, boxing or otherwise. She is the first Aboriginal Woman to qualify for the Olympics in the sport of boxing and heads to compete in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.



2024

ARCHIBALD PRIZE

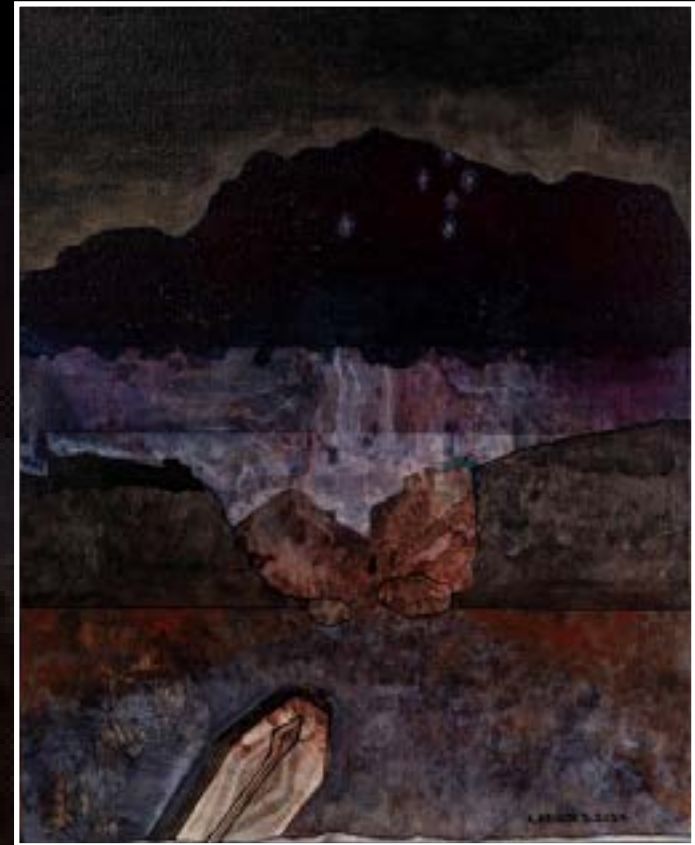
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K A N E
B R U N J E S

While thinking of the history, foundations, and identity of Australia I'm always left with a distaste. A nation built off the bloodshed of First Nations People, where stolen land and dispossession is celebrated, and where we as Black People are amongst the most incarcerated People in the world. You've only got to walk through your town or city to be reminded of this, memorialized by street names, statues, and sculptures. You might even happen to stop on your way and stumble upon a social media comment section where there's no hiding from the racist opinions of Australia.

The southern cross seen in the sky references the Australian flag with the stories of bloodshed flowing through the country below. The stone piece with a Nulla Nulla center rising from the earth is there as a memorial for the First Nations history from across the country, and the stories of continued resistance.

Southern cross



B I R R U N G A
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2024
WYNNE PRIZE

K A N E
B R U N J E S

Painted are the eight Hoop pines seen upon entry to my studio. The lines traveling on an upwards angle represent the branches with the surrounding lines being the number pines. The stunning backdrop of the studio is a landscape I see almost daily, with this piece capturing an insight to a place I spend many hours working in.

Hoop Pine



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2024
SULMAN PRIZE

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

Looking out from deep within

Dave Leha is a man of great talent, deep consideration and extreme experience. I see Dave as almost trapped inside the intense consideration he inhabits between his stunning performances. It strikes me that there is a balance in the process of being struck for Dave between the contemplative aspect of Lore and the delivery as he matures and develops as a Cultural SongMan. Dave is an imposing physical presence but it is the energy of his Lore that is the most striking aspect of being in his presence. Despite Dave's visual intensity I always manage to find a smile in his eyes.



B I R R U N G A
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G A L L E R Y



2024
ARCHIBALD PRIZE

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

In consideration of producing a landscape piece I sat within my personal Lore, Sky Lore, and what occurred to me was that the landscape that has a truly profound influence on all aspects of Country is Giwang, our Moon.

The influences of Giwang comes as cycles and teaches us of the importance of timing, renewal, sensitivity and intimate connection to and awareneses of the changes of season.

I've incorporated Cultural colours into the piece to acknowledge that we Wiradyuri are matriarchal as tribute to our beloved Matriarchy.

I've presented Giwang from the perspective of being in the night sky regardless of whether visible or not as a reminder of the importance of wholistic consideration in matters of Cultural practice.

Giwang



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2024
WYNNE PRIZE

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

Dumbaldhaany
(director, one that shows)

The focus of this work is about offering long established Cultural knowledge in a benign form, a form that is familiar to the colonial construct, with the hope of triggering pause and consideration regarding the long term health of Country by employing the tacit authority that inhabits traffic lights. In essence this is a model of combined Cultural and colonial engagement for the long game we have ahead of us.



B I R R U N G A
GALLERY

2024
SULMAN PRIZE