

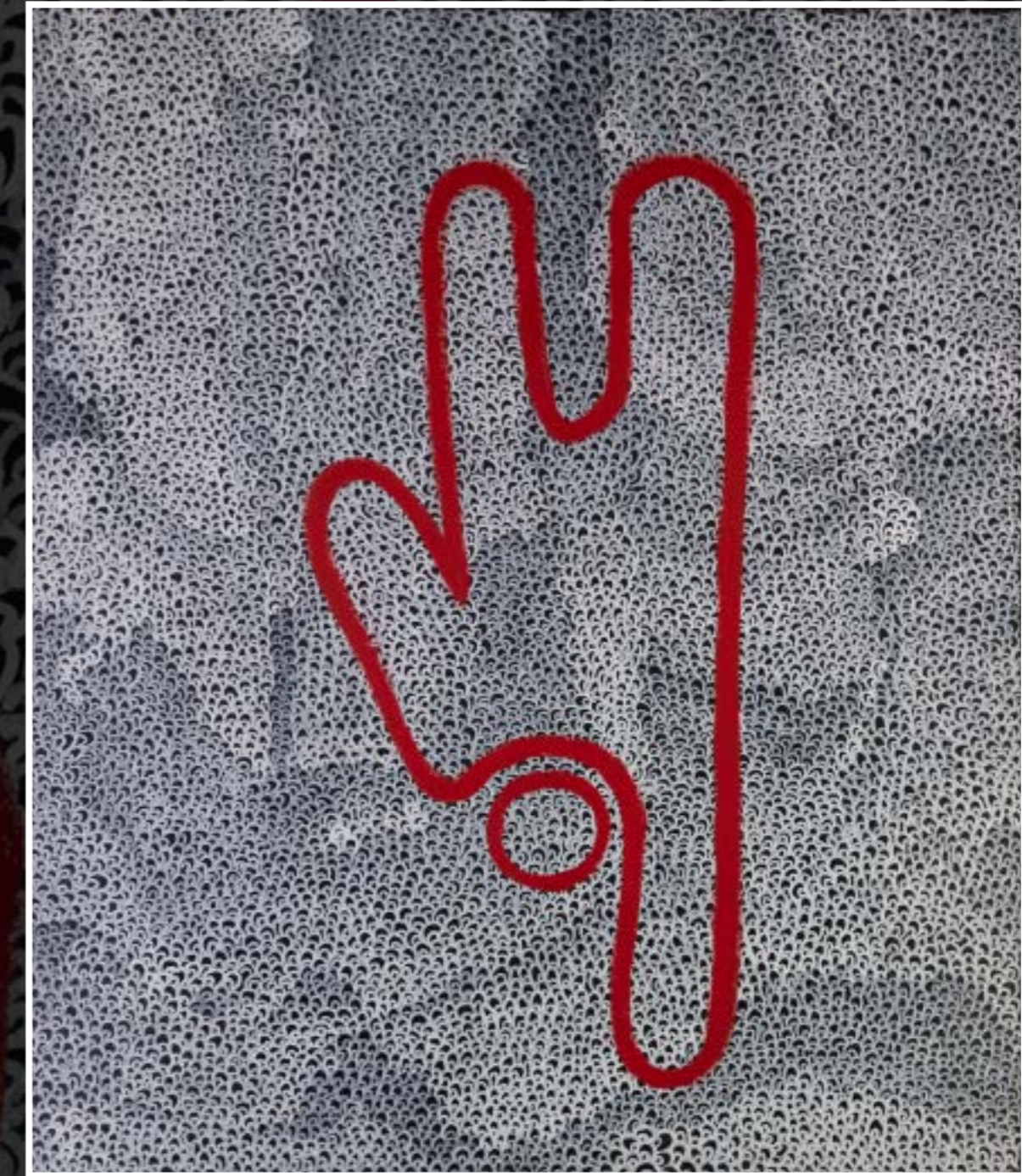


Grace Naveikata is an artist who lives and works out of Brisbane, Queensland. She is a 2024 inductee of Birrungga Gallery's 3-year Cultural Creative Development Program (CCDP). Being from a culturally diverse background, much of her work is heavily influenced by the social and cultural environment of contemporary Australia – as well as the development of her own cultural and spiritual background. Across her practice, Grace uses a variety of mediums including, charcoal, graphite, ink, acrylic and spray paint on anything from cotton canvas to wood. Her practice also often involves combining traditional motifs with contemporary elements in order to communicate the existence of traditional practices in modern Australian spaces. With a strong sense of justice and encouraging cultural connections, Grace aims to create works that can evoke a response from a broad audience and resonate with those who may share similar experiences.

Free Fall

2024
acrylic on canvas
60 x 76cm

In the piece Free Fall, Grace Naveikata focuses on her personal reflection of navigating through her Cultural heritage. Drawing inspiration from traditional and contemporary backgrounds, this piece is a combination of both her aim to gain a better understanding of her Indigenous heritage and also her previous reluctance due to outside influences and her own complex feelings. Within the piece there is a figure falling forward towards the traditional pattern covering the canvas. This symbolises the difficult but rewarding experience that comes with understanding and gathering your own comprehension of where you come from. The figure is motivated, even excited with an outreaching arm towards more than just the surface. However, it's still reluctant, staggered or stuck in the middle. Although the piece is personal in inspiration for the artist, the audience is invited to gather their own understanding when observing the piece. The work is an encouragement to look for more than just what you may know and to continue to understand yourself and where you come from more as your life progresses.



Surface

2024
acrylic on canvas
60 x 91cm

Surface is a piece created by Grace Naveikata that focuses on the strength that comes from adversity. When initially viewing the piece, it looks like a simple portrait with intersecting yellow and red lines across the canvas. However, upon closer inspection, the "skin" on the face of the portrait is raised, spiked even. This is symbolic of the protective and "thicker skin" that comes from being a person of colour in Australia. The red and yellow lines are symbolic of outside influences such as racism and discrimination, being the painful reasons as to why most people of colour often have to create a metaphorical shield in the form of internal strength and resilience when experiencing adversity. This piece aims to portray that subject matter externally.



The Inspiration

2024
acrylic on canvas
60 x 91cm

The Inspiration is a contemporary piece that explores the question, "Why do you make what you make?". Inspired by the statement "Knowing Your Why", Grace Naveikata reflected on what personally motivates her to create the work that she does; this primarily being an influence from ancestors and an appreciation for the importance of storytelling through art. The piece consists of a black background and silhouette with a glowing orange halo adorned on the top of its head. The figure itself resembles the artist, leaning towards the glowing light of influence and meaning, with a desire to create and communicate. When making this piece Naveikata drew inspiration from both traditional and contemporary influences to communicate her message to the audience. Although the context is personal, the viewer is invited to gather their own understanding of the work and ask the question "Why do I do what I do?".



The Snake

2024
acrylic on canvas
60 x 91cm

The Snake is a piece created by Grace Naveikata and is reflective of the inspiration that comes from living in Meanjin/Brisbane. When reflecting on the word "resource", Naveikata realised that the river that runs through the city of Brisbane has always been a form of inspiration. The winding line across the piece is representative of the Brisbane River, a place that has personally been the fuel for creative inspiration for the artist. Historically, Maiwar, the Brisbane River is highly significant to the social and Cultural background of the identity of the city of Brisbane and has been a subject for many artists creatively over the years. Audiences are invited to view the work and reflect on what inspires them creatively and observe how their surroundings are influential in their own personal or creative lives.



Talkers

2024
acrylic on canvas
61 x 90cm

Talkers is a piece based on the artist's understanding of communication and connection between people. Using the word "beautiful" as inspiration, Grace Naveikata reflected on the real beauty in the simplicity of connection and conversation through the medium of painting. When creating this piece, the artist wanted to ensure that the two heads depicted would lack identity to express to audiences that communication and connection between any two people regardless of gender, race, ethnicity or age can be beautiful. The black and white lines intersecting in the background provides a serious contrast between the heads, symbolising the pathways in which communication is founded between intersecting communities. The harsh red lines highlight the heads from the background drawing attention to them and making them both the focal point of the artwork. The floral designs surrounding them, symbolises the beauty in their connection.



Livestock

2024
acrylic on canvas
61 x 91cm

Livestock is a piece created by Grace Naveikata that explores how the introduction of farming by British invaders deeply impacted and reinforced the dispossession of Aboriginal Australian communities. She's done this through using a contemporary take on the portrait, using the head of a sheep instead of a person. After the invasion of Australia in 1788, colonialists began using stolen land to farm and produce livestock, leading to the continued dispossession of Aboriginal people from their land and the desecrating of natural resources that had existed for centuries prior. The sheep's head depicted in the centre of the piece is painted to resemble a mugshot, representative of criminal injustices that lead to Indigenous dispossession. This work aims to draw recognition to an element of Australia's dark colonial past and encourages the audience to understand and reflect on this.



