



WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY



# WESTERN SYDNEY CREATIVE

ARTS AND CULTURE DECADAL STRATEGY

2019 | 2029



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Cover Artwork:

**Justene Williams**

***A wish for a soft revolution, 2019***

Assorted marine carpet, aluminium pop rivets, stainless steel washers, wood.

Courtesy the Artist and Sarah Cottier Gallery Sydney

Commissioned by Western Sydney University

***A wish for a subtle revolution*** is a photograph of soft sculptures placed amongst mangroves, making up the acronym Western Sydney University. These slouched letters are monumental and unmonumental, in spite of their size they are mobile and light. Comprising of marine carpet and pop rivets these are the materials used in the creation of volumetric costumes in my live works, but in this case, they aren't worn by a body, but have a physicality about them that suggest a figurative presence.

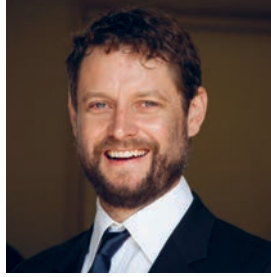
The Factory at Peach Tree was a dynamic studio model, every student had their individual space where they could make work 5 days a week, my wish is that WSU can manifest magic like that again.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Justene Williams is an alumna of Western Sydney University and has been a practising artist for over 25 years. She is well-known for her large-scale live works, video performances, installations and sculptures. Drawing from art history, popular culture, personal narrative transforming the prosaic through material, action, energy and emotion, conjuring invisible forces to reveal a magic of sorts in the real world and a world in art. Williams' performance installations celebrate the avant-garde dream of the 'total artwork,' while deconstructing it with a 21st Century body—domesticating and situating it in the reality and absurdity of now.

Recent exhibitions include:

Bauhaus Now-Mondspiel, Buxton; The National 2017-New Australian Art, Carriageworks, Sydney; Call Of The Avant-Garde Heide MUMA, Victoria; The 20th Sydney Biennale-The future is here it's just unevenly distributed; Dancing Umbrellas Heide Museum; Performa 15 Biennale- Australian Pavilions Without Walls, New York USA; Pleasure & Reality, NGV Melbourne; The Curtain Breathed Deeply, touring Australia; VIDEO FOREVER 19-birds Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature Museum Paris; Behaving Bodies, UP Film Institute Philippines; Contemporary Australia: Women, Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Art Gallery. Her work is held in collections such as TATE Modern UK; Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney, Auckland Art Gallery, National Gallery of Canberra, Monash University Modern Art Melbourne, Art Gallery of New South Wales Sydney. Residencies include Artspace Sydney, 1 Shanthi Road Bangalore India, Tokyo studio Australia Council for the Arts, Stichting B.A.D Rotterdam, Campbelltown Art Centre.



FOREWORD  
**BEN QUILTY**

‘They always say time changes things,  
but you actually have to change them yourself.’

*Andy Warhol*

The benefits of a healthy arts community are difficult to quantify in a world where numbers equate to the perception of financial success. But a healthy arts community means the stories that need to be told are told. Without artists our community loses its ability to examine itself. Without confronting the world, and our place in it, we will be lost to the catastrophic advance of ‘progress’ without the fundamental ability that artists bring to the servicing, the examination, the checks and the balances of our collective soul. Without artists, stories will remain untold and our soul will wither and it will die. We can be a financial powerhouse on our planet but without a soul we are doomed.

Some time ago the University of Western Sydney closed down their art school. At the time, I believe the university was surprised at the backlash their decision engendered. Many alumni had left the art school to go on to great careers as artists, curators and arts administrators. The closure of The Art School was followed by national TAFE art school closures, and several other major national university art school closures. Due in part to government ‘efficiency dividends’ to tertiary education, art education, particularly in NSW, has been decimated over the ensuing 15 years.

There is now a hunger from many Australian tertiary education centres to re-invigorate visual and performing arts education and to engage meaningfully with our creative communities. As the most densely populated region in the country, Western Sydney and its pre-eminent university is best placed to re-light the flame of our collective soul. It is my hope that in years to come the greatest Australian visual story tellers can once again claim Western Sydney University Art School as their alma mater.

**BEN QUILTY,  
ARCHIBALD PRIZE WINNER  
AND WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ALUMNUS**



## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

***Western Sydney Creative* is a comprehensive strategy that details Western Sydney University's long-term commitment to the arts and culture in our region and beyond.**

Western Sydney University embodies the histories, identities and achievements of its students, staff, alumni and the greater community.

We are the most culturally and linguistically diverse university in Australia, with more than 170 cultural and ethnic groups represented across our community.

For Western Sydney, the arts not only provide a voice, but also enable the expression of identity, culture and community. Championing, celebrating and investing in the community in order to see the region's arts and cultural expression flourish is a distinguishing characteristic of this Strategy.

The University has a long tradition of engagement with creative, intellectual and professional life. I particularly acknowledge the significant achievements of the staff and alumni of the University's highly regarded performing arts and fine arts schools. This Strategy recognises and builds on their considerable legacy and their important contribution to the growth and development of arts and culture in Western Sydney.

The Strategy is also an important opportunity to celebrate the University's existing cultural strengths, which are demonstrated across the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, the highly acclaimed Writing and Society Research Centre, the award-winning Giramondo Publishing Company, the Sydney Review of Books, the Whitlam Institute, the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture and the Margot Hardy Gallery.

The University's research expertise in music and health, through the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development, is finding sustainable solutions to issues concerning the interaction of humans with each other and with technology. Western's Institute for Culture and Society researches transformations in culture and society in the context of contemporary global change.

The University's fine art collection and the Sculpture Parks at its Campbelltown and Parramatta campuses are significant cultural assets for the region. Western's external partnerships, such as those with Tropfest and Urban Theatre Projects, enhance and complement the University's priorities and

ambitions. Importantly, these partnerships also provide students with unique industry experience.

Through the extensive consultation process undertaken to shape this Strategy, we were reminded of the University's critical mass, reputation and embedded network across Western Sydney. This equips us to influence the creative and cultural economy in the region and beyond. Given this influence, the University must continually strive to optimise its leadership role in the education of arts and cultural professionals.

By placing creativity at the heart of what we do, the University provides time and space for meaningful and purposeful engagement in the arts and culture. Through this we enhance the student experience through building professional pathways, fostering social capital, and enabling creative thinking. Critical here too, is ensuring we provide opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to learn and succeed in an environment that promotes excellence and builds cultural knowledge.

Our consultation identified key challenges facing the arts sector that need to be met with imagination, bold action, scaled commitment, investment and long-term vision. This Strategy addresses these challenges, but we cannot do this alone.

As our University reaches its 30-year anniversary in 2019, we celebrate our significant achievements to date. Equally, we commit to meaningfully collaborating and substantially supporting the future of one of the most vibrant, innovative and creative arts and culture sectors in the world.

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink, consisting of a large, looping 'B' followed by a horizontal line.

**PROFESSOR BARNEY GLOVER AO  
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT  
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY**



Tropfest 2019. Photo: Billy Zammit

‘The arts are not a luxury  
for a privileged elite.  
They belong to the whole  
community. They belong  
to the whole world’.

*Gough Whitlam, 1975*

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal), and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands (Greater Western Sydney and beyond).

Western Sydney University would like to express its gratitude to all those who generously gave their time to be part of the consultation process for this strategy. Their insights and considered responses greatly informed and enhanced the University’s strategic orientation.

# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Western Sydney has a vibrant network of independent creative practitioners who live, produce and operate across the region. In particular, Western Sydney plays host to a growing small to medium arts sector. This sector is often the laboratory, or the research and development arm, of the arts industry. It is typically described as dynamic, risk-taking, inventive, self-reliant, independent, multi-skilled, diverse, innovative, and experimental.<sup>1</sup> It is also very vulnerable, due to inequitable state and federal resource expenditure,<sup>2</sup> as well as the absence of long-term strategic vision and policy frameworks by successive governments. These policy and funding foundations are critical to supporting independent artists and small to medium companies. Consequently, this has a detrimental impact on arts and cultural industries.

*Culture, Value and Place*, a 2018 report commissioned by the New South Wales Government's Department of Planning and Environment, noted that the Greater Sydney region performs well in benchmarks that measure culture in terms of visitor perception, lifestyle and education, but performs less well in relation to its international counterparts in measures of cultural quality, cultural production, cultural economy and regular cultural access and attendance. The report also notes that cultural vibrancy, heritage, preservation and a strong local identity are important, as cities seek to attract and retain people and activities.<sup>3</sup>

As universities contend with an increasingly competitive higher education environment, their focus on the student experience is intensified. As a distinctly student-centred university it is essential that we enable connections between young people and the arts through immersive online and curated experiences. Access to a vibrant cultural sector reflective of the ambitions and aspirations of our students and the community, and responsive to the distinctive identity, cultural legacies and traditions of the region is pivotal.

Critical here is the recognition of arts and culture priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There is an unquestionable need for deeper engagement with these communities. Western Sydney now hosts Greater Sydney's

largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. As such, the University's priorities include:

- building Indigenous cultural viability and knowledge across the university
- promoting and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic intellectual property
- developing the breadth and depth of Indigenous research with a vision to promote research that empowers Indigenous Australians
- working with local networks and partners to develop and support practices to support Indigenous employment
- developing cross-disciplinary opportunities for students through cadetships, mentoring and placement programs
- investing in community engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative leadership.<sup>4</sup>

Also crucial is the importance of visual identity and how the University addresses Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities, ancestors and places through placemaking, wayfinding, architecture, language and artistic commissions. This necessitates a rethinking of how we give voice to narratives of Aboriginal culture; and how we give expression and create specific spaces for cultural activities across all campuses of the University.

Western Sydney is a region in transition and the University is proud to be contributing to this change. Our Western Growth initiative is contributing to the transformation of the region's CBDs into vibrant, connected and more accessible cities. University-led initiatives combined with government projects, such as the relocation of the Museum of Applied Arts and Science's Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta, present significant opportunities for new and strengthened engagement of the University in arts and culture.

<sup>1</sup> Miller, S, 2010, *The Small to Medium Performing Arts Sector*, University of Wollongong Australia.

<sup>2</sup> Deloitte. 2015. *Building Western Sydney's Cultural Arts Economy: A Key to Sydney's Success*.

<sup>3</sup> Clark, G, Moir, E, Moonen, T, Morrissey, C & Nunley, T 2018, *Culture, Value and Place 2018: A Report for NSW Department of Planning and Environment. The Business of Cities Ltd*.

<sup>4</sup> Trudgett, M. 2019. *2020-2023 Indigenous Strategy*, Western Sydney University.





Chris Edwards  
*Swimmy Creek*, 2010  
 Mixed media on Latvian linen  
 100 cm x 145 cm  
 Western Sydney University Art Collection  
 Image reproduced courtesy of the artist

## STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

As a research-led university, Western Sydney University understands the vital contribution and impact arts and culture have on the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of our local, national and international communities. The University recognises the value and contribution of creative and arts-based research methodologies to problem solving, pushing boundaries and critical thinking. The establishment of interdisciplinary creative hubs that bring together expertise, skills and disciplines across the arts and sciences will generate long-term partnerships and drive creative collaboration.

Creative skills are crucial to driving employment and economic growth, according to new research by the Australian Government's Bureau of Communications and Arts Research (BCAR). BCAR's recently released research paper, *Creative Skills for the Future Economy*, found the growth of those employed in creative occupations was accelerating, at almost double the rate of other occupations between 2011 and 2016.<sup>5</sup> Estimates based on Australian Bureau of Statistics data show that cultural and creative activity contributed approximately \$106 billion (equivalent to over 6 percent) to Australia's gross domestic product in 2014–15.<sup>6</sup> Many artists now juggle multiple careers combined with a focus on interdisciplinary practice, while cultural organisations are looking for a flexible, multi-skilled, digitally savvy and culturally competent workforce.

A plethora of research expounds the benefits of an arts-rich education and we acknowledge that our current educational paradigm does not reflect this as strongly as it should<sup>7</sup>. As a university, our role is to provide opportunities for the creative development of our students, as well as to develop the resilience and capacity of creative individuals and cultural organisations to ensure that Western Sydney's current and future workforce is appropriately skilled to enable the creative economy to thrive. One part of this role includes developing and stewarding collaborative partnerships with institutions, to provide new pathways to skills, training and qualifications in the creative arts. It also involves supporting students to build social capital, by facilitating and brokering connections, networks and industry experience through mentoring, placements and internships that enable our graduates to become resilient, entrepreneurial creative leaders.

The unique and distinctive stories of Western Sydney are of increasing interest to audiences. Continuing to improve the breadth and depth of student and public engagement through an established program of events and activities will stimulate demand for high-quality cultural experiences. The digitisation of the University's Art Collection will enable increased access, research and engagement with this significant asset. Providing access to our state-of-the-art purpose-built facilities, such as our high definition television studio, our photographic and recording studios with the latest digital audio technologies, alongside residency opportunities for creative practitioners and ensembles, will facilitate exposure of our students to creative skills and practices, as well as contribute to the rich tapestry of campus life.

Smart, successful and connected cities invest in culture to expand and cultivate their advantage and appeal. Embracing, championing and supporting the local, empowering a diversity of voices, and celebrating distinctiveness are cornerstones of this Strategy. Western Sydney's cultural sector is ambitious for its future and seeks to reimagine and reshape the contemporary narrative to tell a story of a rich, culturally sophisticated, creative, innovative and resourceful community. The artistic voice gives expression to this, providing a genuine platform to reflect, explore, debate and interpret Western Sydney's complex, layered and diverse society.

Through its soft and hard infrastructure, Western Sydney University is investing in creating opportunities for its students, staff and the wider community to realise their creative potential and to flourish and thrive into the future with confidence.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Government. Bureau of Communications and Arts Research. Department of Communication and the Arts. 23 January 2019. *Creative skills for the future economy*.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Government. Department of Communication and the Arts, *Comms and Arts Annual Report 2017-18*.

<sup>7</sup> Hunt, C, 2016, *A Future-Driven Arts Education*, 21st Century Learning International



## CASE STUDY

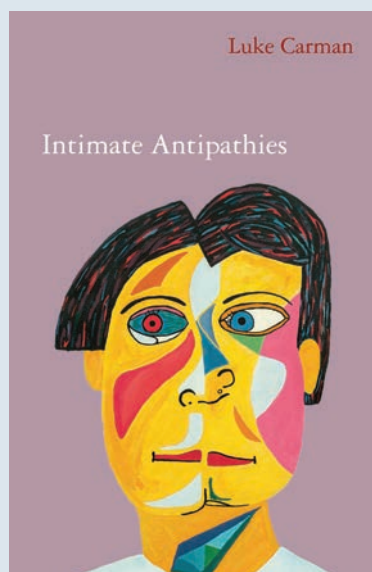
### WRITING AND SOCIETY RESEARCH CENTRE

Supported by Western Sydney University since 2006, the Writing and Society Research Centre focuses on scholarship, creative writing, and publishing and has become one of the most important and innovative centres for research and engagement in literature and creative writing in Australia.

The Centre is home to the Giramondo Publishing Company, a collaboration which has led to the emergence of a Western Sydney literary movement. Writers trained at the Centre are becoming recognised as major new voices in Australian literature, including Felicity Castagna, Michael Mohammed Ahmad, Luke Carman, Kate Middleton and Fiona Wright. Giramondo Publishing has achieved significant success, having won major literary awards including the Miles Franklin and Stella Prizes. Giramondo publishes some of Australia's most distinguished writers, including prominent Aboriginal novelist, Alexis Wright; Gerald Murnane, who was recently acknowledged in the *New York Times* as a possible future Nobel Prize winner; and Aboriginal poet and winner of the Windham-Campbell Prize, Ali Cobby Eckermann. The Centre's alumni have also published over 30 works with major Australian publishers in the last seven years.

The *Sydney Review of Books*, situated within the Centre, was recognised as a 'key arts organisation' by the Australia Council for the Arts in 2017. It has stepped into a gap opened by the shrinking of print media coverage of Australian arts and cultural activity.

Furthermore, the Centre is a major teaching hub, with 40-50 students undertaking postgraduate Doctorate of Creative



Luke Carman *Intimate Antipathies*  
Published June 2019. Giramondo Publishing

Arts degrees or Doctor of Philosophy in literature at any given time. It also offers a Master of Arts in Literature and Creative Writing and teaches into undergraduate programs offered by the University. As such, it has established a virtuous circle, engaging with young writers in Western Sydney and providing pathways through which they may develop into writers of national and international prominence.

## CASE STUDY

### INDIGENOUS STORYTELLING PROJECT

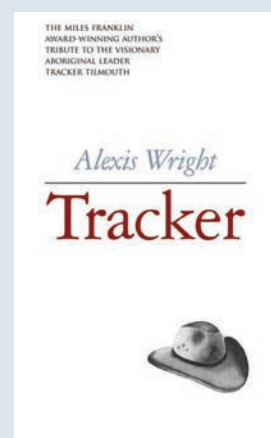
In 2013, having developed a grant application with the Western research office and Writing and Society Research Centre, Alexis Wright (Lead Chief Investigator) and Ivor Indyk (Chief Investigator) were awarded an ARC Indigenous Discovery Award for the project *Australian Indigenous Storytelling: A critical study of the way Aboriginal Stories are Being Told in Australia Today*. The project allowed Alexis Wright to conduct a complex series of interviews illuminating the life and work of one of Australia's most important Aboriginal leaders, Tracker Tilmouth. Tracker was a visionary, a strategist and a projector of ideas, renowned for his irreverent humour and his determination to tell things the way he saw them. Having known and worked with him over many years, Alexis Wright was able to do extensive interviews with Tracker, along with family, friends, colleagues and the politicians he influenced.

The resulting book, *Tracker* (2017), is as much a testament to the powerful role played by storytelling in contemporary Aboriginal life as it is to the legacy of an extraordinary man. It examines the role Aboriginal stories have played socially, politically and economically in decision-making

and communal processes, and it makes a pioneering contribution to the genre of 'collective biography', a form that Wright argues is distinctive to Aboriginal storytelling.

Ivor Indyk worked with Alexis Wright as her editor, and developed the book for publication with Giramondo Publishing. It was published in November 2017 to universal critical acclaim. In 2018 it was awarded the Stella Prize, the Magarey Medal, and the Queensland Literary Award for Non-Fiction, and shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Literary Award and the Colin Roderick Award. It has sold over 10,000 copies.

Pictured: Alexis Wright *Tracker*  
Published November 2017. Giramondo Publishing



## CASE STUDY

### URBAN RESEARCH PROGRAM, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PSYCHOLOGY

#### *Revaluing graffiti and street art in Western Sydney.*

For over ten years, through a number of funded research projects, Western Sydney University's researchers in the Urban Research Program have been investigating the shifting valuations of graffiti and street art, and the challenges this poses for local governments, communities and artists living and working in Western Sydney.

Collaborating with Western Sydney stakeholders, including the City of Blacktown, Blacktown Arts Centre, and the Street University, funded by the Ted Noffs Foundation, Western Sydney University's researchers have helped to uncover the challenges facing young creatives, as they seek to transition into the creative economy. This research has been recognised for its deep, local impact, and emphasises the increasing importance of strategic cultural planning for the future of Western Sydney.

As part of a broader program of research aligned with the University's research theme, *Urban Living Futures and Society*, this work continues to deploy an analytical lens on the social, cultural, political and economic processes that tie informal arts practices (like graffiti and street art) into local, metropolitan and global networks of meaning and opportunity.



## CASE STUDY

### WHITLAM INSTITUTE

The Whitlam Institute within Western Sydney University is a leading national centre for dialogue and debate on public policy. An independent think tank for the people, it works to ignite debate, strengthen discussion and enrich policy development in Australia. In addition to its policy work the Institute is committed to empowering young Australians to participate in their democracy, through a civics education program and its annual national What Matters? writing competition.

The Whitlam Institute is the custodian of the Whitlam Prime Ministerial Collection – a rich collection of treasures gifted by the Hon Gough Whitlam AC QC when the Institute was established in 2000.

The Whitlam Institute's home is the historic Female Orphan School (1813) located on the Parramatta campus of the University. The institute works to offer cultural and other opportunities to open this significant historical site to the public and the community – including tours of the building, special events and, in particular, our exhibition program. Visitors to the Female Orphan School can also visit the Institute's permanent exhibition *A Changing Australia: the time of Gough Whitlam*.

Each year the Margaret Whitlam Galleries, a public gallery located in the Female Orphan School hosts a number of art and social history exhibitions, many of which tour from national institutions such as the Museum of Australian Democracy and the National Archives of Australia, and in 2020 and 2021, in partnership with the University's Art Collection, the Whitlam Institute will also host *Art Express*, an exhibition of outstanding works by Higher School Certificate Visual Arts students from schools in NSW.





Gallery view of the exhibition  
*Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression*,  
an exhibition celebrating the Yirrkala Print  
Space presented by Artback NT in association  
with Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre,  
exhibited in Margaret Whitlam Galleries  
by Whitlam Institute

Below:  
**John Olsen**  
*Tao*, 1979  
The Whitlam's Folio  
Whitlam Prime Ministerial Collection



All images reproduced courtesy of the artists

Below:  
**Arthur Boyd**  
*Adam and Eve*, n.d  
The Whitlam's Folio  
Whitlam Prime Ministerial Collection



Left:  
**What Matters?**  
Publication, 2018



# PRINCIPLES

The four principles that have emerged during the consultation process to inform Western Sydney Creative are:

- Primacy of the student experience
- Drawing on our research expertise
- Recognition of arts and culture priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Enriching our cultural environment

We will achieve this by:

- A commitment to accessibility and participation
- Collaboration and connection
- Unlocking resources and potential

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# DEFINITIONS

*“We call creativity the activity (both mental and physical) that occurs in a specific time-space, social and cultural framework and leads to a tangible or intangible outcome(s) that is original, useful, ethical and desirable, at least to the creator(s).”*

**In-Service and Prospective Teachers’ Conceptions of Creativity.<sup>8</sup>**

For the purposes of the strategy arts and culture is defined as embracing all forms of creative expression.<sup>9</sup>

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| → Community Arts, Cultural Development        | → Music, Visual, Performing Arts, Crafts |
| → Screen, Radio                               | → Marketing, Advertising                 |
| → Architecture, Design, Fashion, Graphic Arts | → Software, Gaming, Digital Content      |
| → Grassroots Cultural Activities, Festivals   | → Research, Development                  |
| → Writing, Publishing                         | → Museums, Galleries and Libraries       |

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# PLACEMAKING

*“Acknowledge, support, elevate and embrace the local.”*

**Marcus Hughes**, Head of Indigenous, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

Western Sydney University has a significant role to play in the development of smart and connected cities. Creative Placemaking is internationally recognised as an evolving field of practice that leverages the power of the arts, culture and creativity to serve the community’s interests, while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation.<sup>10</sup> We recognise that we need to articulate and develop a set of architectural principles and values to inform and support the way we build character, quality of place and foster civic pride, as well as the importance of embedding artists and creatives

in the architectural and design process, to ensure that art is meaningfully integrated into the overall project.

In particular, we must strive to create places that reflect and celebrate Aboriginal identities, values and cultures. We will work to transform our campuses to better reflect the rich and diverse contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, through meaningful consultation, engagement and co-design processes.

## *Priority One:*

Develop an overall concept masterplan appropriate to each campus that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and placemaking through wayfinding, landscape, visual identity, art, language and voice, together with longer-term plans for an iconic ‘meeting place’.

8 Kampylis, P, Berki, E & Saariluoma, P 2009. *In-Service and Prospective Teachers’ Conceptions of Creativity*, vol 4, no. 1, pp. 15-29.

9 Government of the United Kingdom. Department for Culture, Media and Sport. 2001. *Creative Industries Mapping Document 2001* (2 ed.).

10 Nicodemus, A.G 2012, *Creative Placemaking*, GIA Reader. Vol 23. No 2



*“Culture arises from the community, even when the community may not be fully aware of it. It encompasses our entire mode of life, our ethics, our institutions, our manners and our routines, not only interpreting our world but shaping it. The most highly developed and imaginative aspects of our culture are the arts and sciences which are fed back to the community by the most talented individuals.”*

Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy, October 1994



Micheal Le Grand

*Inara*, 2004

Painted Steel

240 cm X 285 cm X 190 cm

Western Sydney University

Art Collection

Image reproduced courtesy of the artist





## CASE STUDY

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ART COLLECTION

The University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Collection is comprised of 254 artworks and cultural objects. It focuses on collecting contemporary Indigenous art practice from Greater Western Sydney and throughout Australia, reflecting an inclusive national collection.

The Collection began with a gift to Milperra College of Advanced Education from the Aboriginal Arts Board in the early 1980s, which consisted of bark paintings, acrylic paintings on board and hunting artefacts that had been collected in the 1970s from the Papunya and Oenpelli regions of the Northern Territory. During the 1980s, the Collection grew through purchases by the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education of a number of bark paintings from Arnhem Land by Dorothy Djukulul, Charles Djurritjini and George Milpururru.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the collection of print media works began, including screen prints, etchings and lithographs. This component of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Collection now consists of 101 limited edition fine art prints. A total of 94 paintings by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists have also been collected, with significant works by Ian Waldron, Sally Gabori, Fiona Foley, Ningura Naparrula Gibson, Shane Pickett, Brian Robinson, and the University's alumnus Adam Hill (Blak Douglas). The Collection also contains photographs by Michael Cook, Rea Saunders (r e a) and Michael Riley. Major sculptural installations by Chris Edwards and Jason Wing have been commissioned.



Top left:  
**Janice Bruny**  
*Freshwater Mermaid Young Girls Spirit Sisters*, 2013  
Pencil, acrylic paint, acid free gel-pen, on Canson paper Mi-Teintes coloured paper  
75 cm x 55 cm  
Western Sydney University Art Collection

Above:  
**Kumanjayi Downs (the late Purita Maryanne Downs)**  
*Mana and Yuka in the Jilla (Trees and grass in the sandhills)*, 2008  
Acrylic on canvas  
120 cm x 60 cm  
Western Sydney University Art Collection



**Adam Hill (aka Blak Douglas).** *Wrong Address, Please Return*, 2009  
Collage and synthetic polymer on canvas, 40 cm x 70 cm  
Western Sydney University Art Collection





**Betty Bundamurra**  
*Ungurr over the River*  
*Chindi*, c 2013

Natural Ochres and  
pigments on canvas  
45 cm x 45 cm  
Western Sydney University  
Art Collection



**Renaid Purdie**  
*Gallurung*, c 2012

Ochre on canvas  
90 cm x 120 cm  
Western Sydney University  
Art Collection

All images reproduced  
courtesy of the artists





Michael Purdy  
*Monument to the Long Term Perils  
of Short Term Politics*, 2016  
Sydney sandstone and steel  
240 cm x 120 cm x 120 cm  
Western Sydney University Art Collection  
Photograph by Olga Nebot  
Image reproduced courtesy of the artist





Mitchell Cox  
*Untitled*, 2015/16  
Photograph  
69.5 cm x 49.5 cm

Exhibited in the exhibition, *Between the Village and the Metropolis* in ACIAC Galleries  
Image reproduced courtesy of the artist

# EDUCATION

*"We need a 21st century approach to cultural production, to teaching cultural fluency where students can develop a rich 'creative tool-box' and a flexible, experimental and interdisciplinary approach that aligns with the needs of the cultural sector. Partnerships are key to the delivery of this."*

**Patrick McIntyre**, Executive Director, Sydney Theatre Company

We recognise that the arts are not only a key part of our cultural lives, but also an integral component of the University's educational mission. Collaboration with external partner institutions will allow us to combine our skills and expertise to create new and enhanced learning opportunities and experiences for students.

Access to thought leaders and prominent practitioners in arts and culture enhances the ability of our students to think creatively and to contribute to the generation of new, innovative ideas, as well as cultivating in students confidence that they can be significant contributors to the arts sector.

There is a growing expectation that workers will need more '21st century skills', including skills in creativity, higher-order cognition, and systems-thinking skills as well as interpersonal, emotional intelligence, and collaborative skills in order to meet the future needs of innovative and high-growth industries<sup>11</sup>. Our challenge as a university is to work collaboratively across academic disciplines to rethink how we approach arts education at all levels in order to support students as they become proficient at multiple literacies. The University also needs to develop and contribute to the continual learning of a workforce that is resilient, imaginative and flexible.

## *Priority Two:*

Identify, develop and nurture collaborative partnerships with the arts and cultural sector that are built on raising our ambitions, a shared commitment to excellence, strengthening skills development and delivering high-quality education and training in the arts and creative sectors.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Government. Bureau of Communications and Arts Research. Department of Communication and the Arts. 23 January 2019.  
*Creative skills for the future economy.*

# MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY AND THE AUSTRALIAN FILM TELEVISION AND RADIO SCHOOL (AFTRS)

*"It is a great time to be a creative: exciting new forms of practice, audience interaction and technology are transforming the way we work and creative jobs are growing at twice the rate of other sectors. These transformations also bring disruption and the need for a high level of adaptiveness and a collaborative approach. The ability to build meaningful partnerships in training and research such as with Western Sydney University will help build industry-relevant skills in practitioners from a range of lived experiences. We are really excited to see what outcomes we will collectively help produce for our next generation of skilled content makers."*

**Dr Georgie McClean, Acting CEO, AFTRS**

The Memorandum of Understanding establishes the foundation for a cooperative and productive relationship between Western Sydney University and the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS), for the purpose of generating new career pathways into the Screen and Broadcast industry, through the development of relevant education and training opportunities.

Western Sydney University and AFTRS will work together to explore the feasibility of joint projects and other initiatives, particularly in relation to creating a Graduate Certificate program based on AFTRS curriculum and engaging with a more diverse student profile to be developed with the intent of creative career outcomes.







Award winning dance artist, Vicki Van Hout, in her solo 'plenty serious TALK TALK'. FORM Dance Projects, Riverside Theatres, Dance Bites 2018. Photo: Heidrun Löhr.

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY AND FORM DANCE PROJECTS

FORM Dance Projects is an innovative cultural service provider based in Parramatta, that fosters and develops contemporary dance culture in Western Sydney. Partnering with the School of Education, this new initiative will provide an industry-led, responsive program of professional learning for practitioners engaged in full or part-time work settings which promote and deliver dance education, including digital dance production,

dance pedagogy and practice, Indigenous dance, and dance history and aesthetics.

The aim of the program is to provide valuable professional development opportunities for schools, community-based organisations, private dance and choreographic businesses, to further develop the Australian dance sector.

# RESEARCH

*“Artists can make significant contributions to the visualisation and prototyping of science.”*

**Michael Rose AM**, Chair, Committee for Sydney

With our focus on interdisciplinary research, creative output and innovation, we recognise that art-science collaborations can help us tackle some of the most challenging global and societal issues, such as education and work, environment and sustainability, health and wellbeing, and urban living futures and society, as well as fostering effective public engagement and promoting discussion and debate.

Our alliance with three of Australia’s leading universities, to build Australia’s first ‘multiversity’ at the Western Sydney Aerotropolis with a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, gives us a unique opportunity to commission cross-disciplinary research that explores new ideas, generates conversation and activates the creative interface of science and the arts.

## CASE STUDY

### ART THERAPY AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Western Sydney University delivers one of only three accredited Masters-level visual art therapy training courses in Australia. The program provides research-led, arts-based practitioner training, from a state-of-the-art studio teaching space on the Parramatta South campus. Students engage in art-making as a process of enquiry and as a way of integrating scholarly, experiential and clinical learning. They develop a critical understanding of the historical and current influences that have shaped the diversity of art therapy practice across studio and community-based settings, clinical contexts and the arts in health.

The program provides opportunities for students to exhibit and to collaborate with staff on arts-based research. It brings together arts and health disciplines, with partners such as Liverpool Hospital. Art Therapy at Western Sydney University also has links with local and regional galleries and community partners, where our alumni are employed and our students undertake placements, including Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Penrith Regional Gallery, KidsXpress and Flourish Australia.

Western Sydney University Art Therapy academics are also active researchers and collaborate locally and internationally, with partners including the Institute for Koorie Education, Deakin University and Goldsmiths College, London.



## Priority Three:

Develop a new gallery and social space with an art-science focus, to spearhead public engagement with a range of disciplines. This includes launching an annual art-science speed dating event as part of National Science Week, to enable practitioners to find common ground and develop new professional relationships and research collaborations.





## CASE STUDY

### MARCS INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN, BEHAVIOUR AND DEVELOPMENT

#### ***Maintaining active minds and bodies through older adult music education.***

The MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development is leading an Australian Research Council Discovery Project, maintaining active minds and bodies through older adult music education, collaborating with researchers at University College London. The project is investigating how elements of instructional design can enhance learning and, ultimately, how learning a musical instrument contributes to wellbeing for older adults. Music is a highly valued cultural activity in this age group, yet teaching strategies are seldom modified from that designed to benefit young learners.

Using an interdisciplinary method, the project is expected to generate fundamental knowledge regarding the effects of various elements in music learning. The research outputs will include the creation of innovative designs for older adult music education programs. The subsequent uptake of these designs, by music professionals and older adult education and aged care services, will promote significant benefits to the social, cultural and physical health and wellbeing of this growing population within Australia.

#### ***Music can speak for you: making music with a deep net partner.***

MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development is participating in an Australian Research Council Linkage Project, *Music can speak for you: making music with a deep net partner*. Through the project, the Institute is collaborating with researchers from the CSIRO Data 61, Australian Music Centre, and the International Centre for Critical Studies in Improvisation at the Guelph University, Canada, to develop tools that will enable individually personalised music.

This project aims to develop and evaluate software that will provide a novel computational partner to aid composers and non-musicians in creating personal music that is uniquely tailored to an individual listener's preferences. The technology will feature one computational component that will learn to output musical structures, whilst another component moulds music towards user-desired features. Although uniquely tailoring music to an individual's preferences, the technology will also encourage innovation and exploration. Listeners' evaluation of the musical outputs in terms of affect will be analysed, potentially allowing for current music generation software to be extended considerably.

## *Priority Four:*

Responding to growth and development in Western Sydney and the unique opportunities created by the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, the University will partner with key Western Sydney cultural organisations to identify, develop and support four transformational projects aligned with the University's interdisciplinary research themes of education and work, environment and sustainability, health and wellbeing, and urban living futures and society.

# CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*“The small to medium arts sector is rich with ideas, alternative approaches, innovation and risk taking. Small to medium’s are leading the way in how we embrace community to create new work via a process of inclusion and empowerment. The ultimate win-win situation that creates unique place-based work that can be exported around the world, like the Western Sydney Sound.”*

**Richard Petkovic**, Director, Cultural Arts Collective & Sydney Sacred Music Festival

Creative skills and a creative workforce are essential to innovation and the knowledge economy. Investing and supporting the development of Western Sydney’s creative and cultural industries is critical to enabling them to thrive, to innovate, to take risks and to push the boundaries of cultural programming, production and engagement.

We will facilitate the development of a high level of creative, digital and technical skills to meet current and future demand, to build capacity, and to support the development of the next generation of creative and cultural entrepreneurs.

## *Priority Five:*

We will support the small to medium arts sector by establishing creative/tech hubs and incubators, as an extension of LaunchPad or in parallel with LaunchPad. This will provide space and support for networking, business development, collaboration, co-production and community engagement, and further embodies our ambition to create links between our academic work, industry partners, and the cultural and creative sector.

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# CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

*“We believe that Western Sydney University can again be a strong advocate and champion for arts and culture across the region politically and in the private sector as it was in the past.”*

**Michael Dagostino**, Director, Campbelltown Arts Centre

We need to tell our story better, amplifying what we do in a coherent, powerful way, championing excellence and raising the profile of arts and culture in Western Sydney locally, nationally and internationally, to facilitate its success and build reputation.

We will communicate and champion the distinctiveness, excellence and expertise of Western Sydney’s arts and cultural sector by explicitly foregrounding arts, culture and creativity as a key part of the University’s strategic agenda and public profile.

## *Priority Six:*

We will appoint a Director – Western Sydney Creative, who will lead the arts and culture at Western Sydney University, including the implementation of this strategy, external relations, audience and community development, partnerships and relationships management, collections development, as well as an ongoing program of cultural events and activities.





**Michael Cook**

***Broken Dreams #2*, 2010**

Inkjet print on paper, Edition of 8

124 cm x 100 cm

Western Sydney University Art Collection

Image reproduced courtesy of the artist

# CREATIVE PROGRAMMING

We will create rich cultural experiences to increase access, engagement and participation in creative and artistic activities for our students, staff and the community. In particular, we recognise the cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity of our community; our programs and events will explore and celebrate the creative traditions of these cultural groups, boosting ties between students and the greater community.

We will develop an expanded and contemporary annual calendar of cultural events and activities to be delivered across

the network of University campuses that meets the highest standards of excellence, enhancing the student experience as well as developing our audiences.

Increasing access to the University's distinctive Art Collection reflects our ambition to enhance public access, research and engagement with this significant resource. We will also prioritise the acquisition of Western Sydney and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contemporary artistic practice, as well as reflecting the region's rich cultural and artistic traditions.

## CASE STUDY

### AUSTRALIA-CHINA INSTITUTE FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

The University's Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture (ACIAC), established in 2016, has become an inspiring home to some of the most daring and innovative Chinese artists, curators, gallery managers and art researchers, who engage with the Institute through workshops, seminars and exhibitions.

Since its establishment, the Institute has presented 13 exhibitions, which have featured over 30 photographers, portraitists, calligraphers and ceramic sculptors from both Australia and China. The Institute's exhibitions have included:

- *Missing* by Dr Tianli Zu, featuring large-scale paper cuttings, paintings, site-specific installations and cinematic projection presented in partnership with the University Art Collection
- Jiawei Shen's Archibald paintings
- *Pandas and Treasures* by Archibald Prize finalist, Adam Chang

Zu, Shen and Chang were all born in China and moved to Australia in the late 1980s. Their exhibitions reflect artistic transformations resulting from the meeting of Chinese and Australian cultures.

ACIAC is also a hub for teaching and research, offering a Master of Chinese Cultural Relations and hosting a number of PhD candidates.



**Tianli Zu**  
***Not for Sale!* 2017**

Ink, hand cut paper and site-specific light projection installation  
Various sizes

Exhibited in "Missing", Margaret Whitlam Galleries,  
Western Sydney University.

Photograph by Tianli Zu, Image reproduced courtesy of the artist

## *Priority Seven:*

We will develop a digital information resource that encompasses the entire Art Collection, including the development of transmedia resources and imaginative interfaces to enable engagement with a wide range of audiences.





## CASE STUDY

### WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION

The Western Sydney University Art Collection comprises approximately 1,370 objects, consisting of paintings, sculptures, ceramics, photographs and works on paper. Among the collection are the works of the University's students, alumni and staff; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists; a range of local, national and international artists, such as Suzanne Archer, Sally Morgan, Aida Tomescu, Fiona Hall, Tim Storrier, Justene Williams, Savanhday Vongpoothorn and Guan Wei; as well as others of historical significance, such as Judy Cassab, Margot Lewers, Jeffery Smart, Fred Williams, Lloyd Rees and Sidney Nolan.

Through its highly respected *Sculpture Awards*, established in 2004 and held biennially at the University's Campbelltown campus, the University has commissioned and acquired major installations by significant Australian and international artists. Transmedia resources and imaginative interfaces have enabled public engagement with the Campbelltown campus, as well as serving as a significant cultural asset for Western Sydney and its community.

Top:  
**Dan Lorrimer**  
*Fault Sector*, 2016  
Rusted weathering steel  
230 cm x 300 cm x 110 cm  
Photograph by Monica Pronk

Above:  
**Liam Benson**  
*The Opal Queen*, 2012  
Pigment in ink on cotton rag  
paper, Edition 2 of 5  
146.5 cm x 146.5 cm

**Robyn Stacey**  
*Mr Macleay's Fruit and Flora*, 2008  
Type C Print, Edition 3 of 5  
120 cm x 120 cm

All Images Western Sydney  
University Art Collection  
All Images reproduced courtesy  
of the artists





# PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION

*“The arts require commitment and long-term strategic partnerships for co-production, skills development and collaboration. Paying respect to location is vital. I went to Western Sydney University because it was innovative and creatively driven.”*

**Dr Melissa Chiu**, Director, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution

*The small to medium arts sector leads in developing, nurturing and championing greater cultural diversity in the arts. Working in partnership, sometimes with major organisations, ensures the entire arts sector is actively engaged in the effort to develop audiences and ensure diversity and inclusivity at every level.”*

**Annette Shun Wah**, Executive Producer, Contemporary Asian Australian Performance

We are committed to building and sustaining partnerships with the cultural sector that promote collaboration, to leverage resources and expertise and to generate the investment necessary for cultural and creative growth. We will support and champion opportunities that enhance teaching and learning, activate research, extend intercultural engagement, as well as facilitate the development of relationships and networks through purposeful, meaningful encounters between students, academics, creative practitioners and cultural organisations.

Our partnerships will help develop and deliver high-quality and distinctive cultural activities that connect and celebrate Western Sydney’s diverse creative communities. They will enable access to high-quality arts and cultural experiences through the University’s network of campuses and build capacity for students and staff to engage in cultural activities, while supporting more robust pathways for participation, cultural literacy and professional development.

Our partnerships will ensure opportunities are in place to enable the next generation of artists, creatives and cultural producers to realise their potential through placements, internships and residencies.

**David Cubby**  
*Untitled*, 2015/16  
Photograph  
69.5 cm x 49.5 cm

Exhibited in the exhibition, *Between the Village and the Metropolis* in ACIAC Galleries  
Image reproduced courtesy of the artist





## MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

### THE MARCS INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN, BEHAVIOUR AND DEVELOPMENT AND THE OMEGA ENSEMBLE

An ensemble-in-residence provides a high-profile opportunity for a collaborative partnership in performance, masterclasses, new commissions, education, student engagement and research. Working with Professor Peter Keller of the MARCS Institute, the Omega Ensemble will participate in and contribute to research that is aimed at understanding the behavioural and brain bases of human interaction in musical contexts, with a particular focus on cognitive and motor processes that enable Ensemble musicians to coordinate with one another, as well as engaging with audiences.



### THE WRITING AND SOCIETY RESEARCH CENTRE AND THE GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY

This partnership will offer rich opportunities for hands-on experience, placements, workshops and tailored mentorships for undergraduate and postgraduate students and for emerging writers in creative writing, with a particular emphasis on storytelling and new writing and developing diverse Australian voices for live performance.

### INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE AND SOCIETY, THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND COMMUNICATION ARTS AND THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY

This Memorandum establishes the foundation for a cooperative and productive collaboration between the Biennale of Sydney and Western Sydney University, primarily through its Institute for Culture and Society and the School of Humanities and Communication Arts. The collaboration seeks to provide students with purposeful and meaningful engagement with international and Australian contemporary artistic practice through research, placements, masterclasses, and artist-in-residencies, as well as exploring innovative creative concepts that explore the relationship between art and science.

## *Priority Eight:*

Establish and sustain new and innovative long-term partnerships that amplify and promote creative practice, enhance student participation and engagement, develop audiences, promote diversity and intercultural exchange, as well as provide avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration and co-creation.

## CASE STUDY

### INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE AND SOCIETY

#### ***Recalibrating Culture: Production, Consumption, Policy***

The purpose of the Australian Research Council Linkage Project Recalibrating Culture: Production, Consumption, Policy was to understand the work practices of artists and cultural practitioners who live and/or practice in Greater Western Sydney. Professors Deborah Stevenson and David Rowe in collaboration with seven industry partners from the City Councils of Auburn, Fairfield, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith and Sydney, the Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) and industry sponsor Arts NSW, documented and analysed changing modes of cultural production and consumption in Australia through a case study of the cultural economy of its most dynamic urban area, Greater Western Sydney. It advanced theoretical-conceptual understanding and empirical knowledge of networks of contemporary cultural employment and activity, exposing and exploring interactions among key agents within diverse, growing cultural practitioner communities. In adding value to 'broad-brush' national cultural statistics, Recalibrating Culture developed and validated a new cultural policy approach to Australian cultural development that, for the first time, effectively aligned with rapidly changing conditions and practices of the 'new' cultural economy.



Above:

**Recalibrating Culture: Production, Consumption, Policy** Report.

Cover art: Khaled Sabsabi, Syria (video still), 2012.

Original image courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery Brisbane.



## CASE STUDY

### PARTNERSHIP WITH URBAN THEATRE PROJECTS



Urban Theatre Projects Blak Box.  
Above photo: Joshua Morris  
Main photo: Barton Taylor

Western Sydney University and Urban Theatre Projects (UTP), a Western Sydney-based theatre company, share a commitment to socially impactful work within the arts. They have been working together as creative partners for five years. Collaboration between the organisations has included a dramatisation of Dr Michael Mohammed Ahmad's novel *The Tribe*, and provision of the University's studio facilities to support the production of UTP projects such as *Blak Box*, which featured a complex soundscape and Indigenous narratives.

Both the University and UTP are aspirational for the region and passionate about investing in and supporting the next generation of Western Sydney creative and cultural leaders. In 2019, the partnership has further developed with the University providing sponsorship support for a number of UTP productions over the next three years. These productions will offer high-level learning opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as professional development opportunities for the University's staff.

The partnership covers three major initiatives: Right Here. Right Now Festival, UTP First Peoples' Program, and UTP Next Gen Program





**Enrico Scotece**  
**#1008, 2016**  
Silver Gelatin Photograph  
30.5 cm x 25 cm  
Image reproduced courtesy of the artist



## APPENDIX – RESOURCES



**Jason Wing  
He Rong, 2017**

Black Polyester, 3D milled high density sculpture foam, finished with polyurethane hard coat and Dulux single pack, Gold Metallic  
800 cm x 800 cm  
Western Sydney University Art Collection, commissioned in 2017  
Image reproduced courtesy of the artist

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Western Sydney Creative  
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