

RESEARCH STATEMENT

Original Creative Work

Citation: Randell, M 2015, Bunya: Whip Roots, audio-visual artwork, in Cream of the Crop: Touring exhibition for the 2015 Queensland Regional Art Awards, Qld., Australia.

Research Background

- During the 1970s and 1980s, government funding encouraged cinematic narratives that developed notions of non-indigenous Australian identity based on Australia's unique non-European landscape. These landscape myths have performed an important role in the binary struggles that established and maintain Australian social norms. These remain influential and highly contested today, especially since the 1992 High Court of Australia's landmark decision that recognised Eddie Koiki Mabo's indigenous sovereign rights. Australian cinematic narratives often express a desire for union between non-indigenous Australians and the land and it is widely accepted that the source of non-indigenous Australians' estrangement with the landscape, as expressed in these cinematic narratives, is based on guilt caused by past transgressions and illegal claims of sovereignty.

Research Contribution

- This creative practice research project presents audiences with abject cinematic landscapes where binaries, such as colonialism and post-colonialism, and plant and animal, co-exist to promote what Kristeva describes as "the place where meaning collapses" (1982, 2), providing an opportunity for transformation of audience perceptions to encourage wider acceptance of difference rather than assimilation as a strategy for balance and reconciliation.

Research Significance

- The measures for significance of this project are geographic reach and peer validation which includes recognition as a finalist for prestigious national (5) and regional (2) art awards, inclusion in local, national and internationally curated exhibitions (15) and residencies (4), and commissions from public funding bodies such as Arts Queensland (2). A range of publicity has promoted the research displayed at these public events, which has also been published in a peer-reviewed journal and presented at 5 national and international conferences.

References

Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (L. Roudiez, Trans.) New York: Columbia University Press.

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Date: 10 August 2017

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