

—‘O LE ŪA
NA FUA MAI
MAINU‘A

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UNSW Galleries

'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a brings fresh international perspectives to current endeavours to embody and awaken Indigenous sensual and spoken languages. The exhibition takes its title from a Sāmoan proverb that describes the incoming rain from the Sāmoan island of Manu'a (currently within the unincorporated territory of the US) and bittersweet or melancholic moments leading to much-needed change.

This archipelago of Indigenous moving image works moves away from Western thinking of 'the Pacific' as an untethered region at the periphery of the action (Australia, Australasia, Asia), from a place somewhere over the horizon from where we find ourselves on Eora Nation shores and where contemporary culture is made in Australia. Instead, Indigenous concepts of relational space-time, kinships and responsibilities spanning the Great Ocean ground this project.

Works that span the intellectual and material territories of Yirrkala to Santiago, from Sydney to Kuujjuaq, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a* invites consideration of chosen genealogies and bloodlines meeting through language, movement, body and kinship. The works deepen understandings of complex Indigenous life today: focusing on language, memory, desire and pleasure (from sensitivity/care to queer, trans, feminist and matriarchal forms of belonging and kinship without being prescriptive).

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Curator
Dr Léuli Eshrāghi



Shannon Te Ao, *my life as a tunnel* 2018. Two-channel video with sound, 9:48 minutes.
Image courtesy: the artist and Mossman, Wellington

— E PALLA MA'A, 'AE LĒ PALLA 'UPU

Dr Léuli Eshrāghi

Fa'atālofa atu ma fa'afeiloa'i atu le pa'ia ma le mamalu le asō.

As I stand along the ocean shoreline of Garrmalang, the tropical region of Larrakia Country known to settlers as Darwin, I think about the communities I belong to in the Sāmoan archipelago and the Iranian plateau. Both the urban centres of Montreal, known as Tiohtià:ke in Kanien'kéha and Mooniyang in Anishinaabemowin, and Melbourne, known as Narrm in Woi Wurrung and Birrarangga in Boon Wurrung, are territories of Indigenous multilingualism where I and many others have been supported in growing creatively and intellectually in chosen kinship.

Writing and thinking these lines in English, a language imposed on my ancestors and those of you who read this with ease, it becomes clear that to use this cultural, philosophical, economic framework to consider the wealth of endeavours currently underway to awaken and embody Indigenous languages is ineffectual. Nevertheless, in discussing a few of the moving image works exhibited in *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, let us examine the dynamics of language, relationality, borders and communications in this age of climate transformation.

Anishnaabe artist Faye Mullen offers a complex and layered multilingual lecture and performance gestural work, *AASAMISAG*. 2019. Within it, moving deftly between Anishinaabemowin, French and English, between a visual constellation of artworks, films, militarised lines and borders, DIY videos and voicing quotes from major thinkers, Mullen honours lifeforce. Lifeforce is present through Mullen's visual territory, dissecting the bifurcations through lands and waters, though they, like animals and plants, do not abide by them. She asks us to pinpoint when we became locked into a logic of containment. Can this be attributed to the so-called Enlightenment when western Europeans forgot their landed responsibilities and cultural pluralism to the detriment of all peoples they colonised and exploited from then onwards? Mullen recalls that 'le premier

objectif des colonisateurs était d'éjecter, carrément éjecter, les femmes de la Terre, les femmes de notre Mère première.¹

Imaginary lines have come to divide oceans, lands, skies according to Euro-American design, yet the fluid expanses beaming with living beings known and unknown to us defy and have always defied these arbitrary rules. Mullen reminds us that the devastating genocide of 49 million Indigenous peoples since 1492 in North America remains in the air circulating over that landmass. What about the attendant mass deaths in animal, plant and bird species and habitats? What of the unprecedented fires raging across Australia since winter 2019, their smoke haze that has blanketed major cities and large swathes of territory in southeastern and eastern Australia, northern Aotearoa New Zealand and Kanaky New Caledonia? The airborne remains of billions of animals, plants, insects and birds lost forever in the hundreds of years since the colonial incursion began in 1788 in Australia and adjacent dates in neighbouring landmasses haunt us yet. With the just attention given to the colossal losses now, it bears remembering the ecological, linguistic and demographic devastation that has accumulated with numerous First Nations murdered and/or removed from their millennial roles in adept land stewardship, within which visual, sensual and spoken languages are keystone organising frameworks.

Mullen offers further counsel in considering the ways that surfaces on which contemporary culture is accessed and consumed can be understood as the 'skin of an image', further to the surface of a wall, conceptual as it is physical. The doctrines of discovery, manifest destiny and racial hierarchy that underpin Euro-American settler colonialism in the Americas and southwestern Oceania do not account for survival, for affirmative refusal, for Indigenous renaissance. The porous nature of online social activism that enables global Indigenous solidarity and artistic networks is also the latest tentacular manifestation of state and corporate surveillance control mechanisms. There is hope in dealing with these lines

and algorithm-fed echo chambers: images pile up as cultural memory, walls give into fiction, silence precedes creation.

Profound knowledges reside within the ceremonial-political structures and territory-centred kinship systems that Indigenous visual, sensual and spoken languages hold, care and make. The core of yak tit^ʻu tit^ʻu yak tihihi artist Sarah Biscarra Dilley's Indigenous futurity-directed practice, as demonstrated in *kʻimitipitʻʻi* 2019, motions and moves, breathes and sings, within the language-territory of tʻinismu? tihihinktit^ʻu. For Kanaka ʻŌiwi scholar and educator Noelani Goodyear-Kaʻōpua,

Indigenous futurities are enactments of radical relationalities that transcend settler geographies and maps, temporalities and calendars, and/or other settler measures of time and space. (...) As styles of thinking, practices of living and logics of ordering knowledge, Indigenous futurities tend away from controlling and possessive modes of knowing. Instead, they frequently include ways of relating that involve putting our bodies in motion with various kinds of non-human rhythms that engage multiple senses.²

Biscarra Dilley's research fellowship in 2019 at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Davis, drew out compelling frameworks of colonial extraction and geocultural mapping. She became fascinated with the settler imaginary in its profound belief in ink lines on paper transforming physical territory with new barriers, enclosing and exploiting Indigenous peoples in the territories currently assembled as California. What Goodyear-Kaʻōpua describes as a 'multiplicity of land-centred literacies' is what we glimpse in the steadfast imagery and sonority of yak tit^ʻu tit^ʻu yak tihihi territoriality and materiality. Biscarra Dilley sees these Euro-American mapping practices, in service of occupying miners, ranchers, settlers, as drawings belonging to an imagined, disordering world. In their stead, she positions this work, and her body in the ancestral territory surrounding the camera and the post-

production computer, as a simple act of 'making relations known'. It is an affirming living practice of being on the land, knowing and singing the land, that asserts a much older and still emerging history.

If non-translation of a minoritised, Indigenous language into a major colonial language is read as refusal to engage or share in the common native English speakers' reaction, it is a misguided, superficial reading of a complex series of entanglements. Visual territories that abide instead by a commitment to Indigenous connectedness, completeness, require a negation of settler colonial entitlement to Indigenous lands, peoples and cultural practices. Kanaka ʻŌiwi scholar and writer Brandy Nālani-McDougall defines settler colonial entitlement as "a correlative for native repression, by recognising that settlers become entitled not only to land and natural resources, but also to Indigenous intellectual, cultural, and creative property."³ We see this demonstrated in the field of visual culture in indignation over non-translation, over unashamed sensual and epistemic difference, over withholding outsider access to Indigenous art histories and ceremonial-political practices. Of course, settler colonial entitlement extends from the assumed rights to pillage, collect and own Ancestral belongings and remains in Euro-American archives, museums and libraries, to the assumed rights to know, contain, possess and explain Indigenous practices, in opposition to those who are initiated into and inheritors of these forms, traditions and territories fulfilling their purposes.

Through regular visits to lands and waters dispossessed in the successive Mexican and American colonial regimes, Biscarra Dilley walks the country, alongside industrial and national parks that monumentalise their suppression of long relationships to place maintained across generations of her family. The grounding images come from tissimassu, a village site whose name means true north, near San Simeon, California, obscured by barbed wire fences and eroded coastlines. The chevrons on the wall below this moving image work draw us closer without divulging the secrets of this sacred shore of the

Great Ocean. Belonging to an Indigenous nation rendered a diaspora in their own homelands, bodies, and life ways, Biscarra Dilley enacts kinship as a citation – kinship that is lived and practised in negotiations for moving through neighbouring ranches, peoples, and industries. To return yak tit^ʻu tit^ʻu yak tihihi territoriality, materiality, and bodies to the places they are made for, she sings a working song, conceptually undoing the settler colonial presences in her territory, physically undoing in a future yet to come: *tsimiyi? tsimiyi? tsimiyi?, it is true, it is true, it is true.*

With *my life as a tunnel* 2018, Ngāti Tūwharetoa artist Shannon Te Ao offers a moving, intimate depiction of two Māori men in a long orbit. The black and white two-channel work brings a closer perspective on expressions of care, melancholy, loss. Tūhoe actor Tola Newberry and Tainui-i-Taukei Viti actor Scott Cotter make performative gestures, languid, long, deliberate and focused. They occupy a relational space imbued with ruminations and reflections on language loss and revival, un/translatability and resolutely Māori ways of knowing through whakapapa, the genealogical kinship-centred relational ordering of the world and all living things within it. Te Ao commissioned numerous translations of the 1960 song *This Bitter Earth*, based on Dinah Washington's performance in Charles Burnett's film *Killer of Sheep* 1977. These went back and forth between English and reo Māori into the deeply poetic musical form mōteatea. Newberry and Cotter sing this version in the soundscape enveloping the embrace we see on screen.

For Tūhoe, Ngāti Hauiti, Taranaki, Ngāti Whakaue curator and writer Matariki Williams, who wrote an in-depth analysis of this work by Te Ao and the multiplicity of close visual and linguistic readings available through reo Māori prisms, the use of reo Māori in his work is 'pointed', demonstrative of language loss, particularly as most viewers will not understand the emotional, aural value to this state of being.⁴ Indeed, "if people were able to access the richness of mōteatea, they would have a great insight into the Māori world and ways of thinking. Mōteatea are written to respond to particular

¹ Artist Faye Mullen's translation: The first objective of the colonisers was to eject, outright eject, womxn from the Land, women from our first Mother.

² Noelani Goodyear-Koʻōpua, 'Indigenous Oceanic Futures: Challenging Settler Colonialisms and Militarization', in Tuhiwai Smith, Linda, et al., ed., *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, Routledge, London, 2018, pp. 86-87

³ Brandy Nālani McDougall, 'Mo'okū'auhau versus Colonial Entitlement in English Translations of the Kumulipo', *American Quarterly*, Volume 67, Issue 3, September 2015, p. 750

⁴ Matariki Williams, 'The Singing Word: On Shannon Te Ao's my life as a tunnel', *The Pantograph Punch*, 22 June 2018, <https://www.pantograph-punch.com/post/singing-word> [Accessed 15 November 2019]

moments, but the ways in which they are performed, through chanting, singing, lamentations, transcend the circumstances in which they were written.”⁵ Williams continues on to share the complexities of word choice by the various translators as dependent on belonging to specific clan or nation estates. Each hold their own territory-based genealogies and ceremonial-political structures, though much of this knowledge and epistemic diversity is dormant due to centuries of assimilationist policies.

The vulnerability and relational space navigated by the two Māori figures in this work are apt allusions to the vulnerability of Indigenous knowledges, with their own logics, economies and purposes. Dark figures against the interior of a glass greenhouse, shadows and light refract, sounds and rhythms of reo Māori bounce off surfaces, relating to and through each other, despite all the disruptions. Indigenous languages continue to draw on richly layered, haunting repositories of meanings through oratory expressions and artforms that attest to times and rhythms past. “As I was drawn around the room by the work, this swirl, the physical and metaphorical taiāwhio of time, was made tangible. The grief of losing a loved one, the heartache in broken relationships, the desperation for equilibrium – these feelings are cavernous, and Shannon has created a work that allows you to sit with them, to sit with pain.”⁶ I wonder what rich possibilities to understand territoriality and corporality are entering my body in sung waves that I may one day understand, or not.

Featuring a chandelier suspended from a lush, nocturnal forest, the lines and rays in *Dark Light 2017* by Sāmoan artist Angela Tiatia are evidence of many things besides ubiquitous tropical humidity and colonial plantation estates. Clothed in the malu tattoo, though perceived as naked by Western mores, the artist engages with Sāmoan and neighbouring Indigenous peoples’ ways of being and knowing in these continuing capitalist times. As a potent symbol of Euro-American domination, the chandelier stands in this work for the missionary zeal that belittles

and subjugates. The ‘coming of the light’ is celebrated under settler and missionary colonial duress. Above all, the feminine and multigendered Indigenous subjects of the Great Ocean are held within the confines of heteropatriarchal control from Europe, and the economy of consumption kept in place by militourism. I-Banaba, I-Tungaru and African American theorist and scholar Teresia Teaiwa defined the militourist industrial complex in multiple contexts across the region as being rooted in Fernão de Magalhães’ 1521 encounters with Chamorro in Guãhan and as expanded by various empires emboldened by settler colonial entitlement. “Militourism is a phenomenon by which military or paramilitary force ensures the smooth running of a tourist industry, and that same tourist industry masks the military force behind it.”⁷ As iTaukei Viti, Sāmoan and Sicilian writer and researcher Talei Luscía Mangioni asserts, the visual culture representing this region is dominated by “a vulnerability and an acceptance of a demise of an Oceania pushed to the brink of habitability.”⁸

Operating on a wholly different symbolic plane, Tiatia instead offers an invitation to restore our rights to knowledge through place, what colonisation attempted to remove and destroy. A reading of her work as situated in ‘darkness’ would remain part of Eurocentric epistemic violence, furthering the introduced binaries of light/dark, good/evil, civilised/savage, hard-working/lazy, all maintained by Judeo-Christian militourist fantasy. Instead, this is a real site of genealogical, intellectual orature, where the forest and the body are entwined in relational space, enacting mutual citations of Indigenous spirituality, territoriality and balance. Everything seen and unseen in this frame is animate and has agency through a Sāmoan epistemic prism as in countless other Indigenous worlds. There is then, no such thing as inanimate or matter not deserving of consideration. Mangioni is adamant that across the Great Ocean, “Instilled was an environmental literacy of ourselves in relation to our surroundings. Such artforms conveyed stories of the human genesis from the environment, cross-species relationships and lessons on proper

stewardship of the land.”⁹ Euro-American societies long used the discourses of ‘civilising the savages’ and ‘freeing the savages from sin’ to alter peoples, knowledges and ecologies, but Tiatia suggests here that the biggest ensuing threat to this status quo is Indigenous renaissance when coupled with the restoration of Indigenous sovereignty and ecological balance. *Dark Light* brings back suppressed cultural memory of ceremonial-political structures the likes of which the Sāmoan archipelago has not known since the mid-1800s. Tiatia pushes this present moment as pivotal in redressing the ‘religious pathology’ that buttresses Western stereotypes of sexually available Indigenous peoples of the Great Ocean in media, sports, cinema and advertising.

This is a form of fa’amalama, enlightened veneration of lands, waters, pleasures, kin, echoed in the centre of the all-knowing forest. The work deploys the double binds of the absence-presence of accumulated energy and power, and the skies-nights of genealogical time, as strategies to resist heteropatriarchal capitalism, to push back on structures of time, space and the individual emanating out of Europe. The collective marking, tā, of moments in service to the ancestors, into tau, was forcibly shifted to linear ‘time’, taimi. Never allowed to access complete humanity and fully express our sexual desires and pleasures based in ‘heathen’ forms of kinship, or worse, to honour our ancestors, goddesses and spirits in everyday expressions and forested temples. The conjuncture of Christian control in spirituality, racist hierarchy in society, and heteropatriarchal capitalism in the home means that sovereign Indigenous resistance and confrontation becomes necessary and affirmative of world-making outside a Euro-American purview. In part produced in response to settler artist Max Dupain’s 1937 photograph *Sunbaker* where he symbolically, and perhaps unknowingly, claims the beach for Queen and Country, Tiatia’s work instead holds space for Indigenous art histories and futurities. Like the beach, our bodies are inhabited, haunted, by ideas, images, smells and traumas lived and worn by ancestors past, manifest in our genetic and spiritual memory whether we fully know or not,

particularly through continuing forms of settler colonial entitlement and containment. Mangioni is unequivocal on this phenomenon: “Given the legacy of unconsensual colonial impositions on our islands and waterways, climate change represents just another chapter in a continuation of apocalyptic dispossession and violence upon Oceanic people.”¹⁰

Beings from beyond European linearity and Gregorian temporality yet currently bound to them, instead many Indigenous languages in the Great Ocean directionally place the future ‘behind’ and the past ‘ahead’ of us – portents for networked knowledges that are centred and derived from the Earth. Ae ‘o fea e ala mai ai so tātou fa’alumaina? Where does our shame come from? I ask this question to understand the framework of internal and external struggles for we who are learning or deepening capacities in Indigenous languages of the Great Ocean and its shores across the vast expanses grouped together by European design as continents. Tongues belonging to ancestral land and water territories with which our forebears lived, governed, loved, speculated and created. And particularly those visual, sensual and spoken languages belonging to territories where we make temporary and longer-term homes due to settler, militourist and extractive colonial displacements and dispossessions.

I returned from a summer break in Boorloo in Whadjuk Country to find my body enveloped in the tropical humidity and sweet languid air as we wait for the monsoon’s tardy arrival, and the onward rains to soothe the scorched expanses across southern and eastern Australia. The gagana Sāmoa word sui and its semantic extension suiga denote ever shifting, flowing existence, changes, shifts, dissimilar to Western fixed positionalities and knowledges. This sui/ga then enables us to see each other over the horizon, through the haze of fake news, climate inaction, political and corporate collusion, to a place where the alagā‘upu at the beginning of this essay rings true. Even stones erode away, but words will never decay. Such is the affirmative, world-making

⁵ Matariki Williams, *ibid.*

⁶ Matariki Williams, *ibid.*

⁷ Teresia Teaiwa, ‘Reading Paul Gauguin’s Noa Noa with Epeli Hau’ofa’s Kisses in the Nederends: Militourism, Feminism, and the “Polynesian” Body’, in Hereniko, Vilsoni, and Wilson, Rob, eds., *Inside Out: Literature, Cultural Politics, and Identity in the New Pacific*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, New York, 1999, p. 251

⁸ Talei Luscía Mangioni, ‘Oceanic Sovereignty, Climate Justice and Art-Story’, *Runway Journal*, Issue 39: Oceans, September 2019, <http://runway.org.au/oceanic-sovereignty-climate-justice-and-art-story> [Accessed 16 November 2019]

⁹ Talei Luscía Mangioni, *ibid.*

¹⁰ Talei Luscía Mangioni, *ibid.*

potential that can be actualised by speaking Indigenous renaissance into being, in making Indigenous art histories centred on lands, waters and skies once more, in realising Indigenous sovereignty in gesture and movement. We can remember that making room for dissent, for difference, for care and kin creatures and habitats are important ways to manifest our consideration of this, the second climate apocalypse for Indigenous peoples. On every shoreline of the Great Ocean, of all oceans, when next we meet and gather, let us hear and speak our languages, in turn rendering us bound together in futurities from the depth of genealogical time and ancestral knowledges. Talei Luscia Mangioni sums the stakes perfectly because:

In Oceania, the arts are the calyx, or vital channel for resistance, critique and mobilisation of regionalism in times of ecological crisis. Articulations of planetary stewardship and fierce environmental attachments are core and omnipresent themes imparted by ancestors to their children.¹¹

Mālō le soifua ma le lagi e mamā.

¹¹ Talei Luscia Mangioni, *ibid.*



Gutiŋarra Yunupinŋu, *Garrutu'mi Mala (My Connections)* 2019. Two-channel HD video. Image courtesy: the artist and Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre

— EMBODIED PRACTICES AND ACTS OF EXCHANGE

Dr Julie Nagam

Race matters in the lives of all peoples; for some people it confers unearned privileges, and for others it is a mark of inferiority.

Aileen Moreton-Robinson¹

There is a magnetic pull that draws people over the vast distance of the Pacific Ocean. This could be the fire that rests deep below the water, sparking a connection to our sacred fires on Turtle Island (North America). Like a moth, we are drawn to the light of the fire in distant locations, forging bonds between knowledges and embodied practices. The physical distances between the many smaller islands scattered throughout the ocean and the larger ones such as Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have resulted in distinct cultures. Though the global shift that grants total access to media has begun to break down some of these differences, much local knowledge remains embodied and practiced in lifeways that are specific to place. Each location has its local histories and cultural practices, which become more transparent with each recurring visit I make.

Colonialism is often bounded by the geopolitics of particular spaces. These can dictate settler, newcomer, and refugee relations with Indigenous peoples, whose actual and imagined relationships to the places they are from are shaped by the local histories and stories of those particular places. These relationships might be further complicated by a disconnect between the home nation and where a person currently lives, for example, as a guest in another Indigenous territory. Building on my previous scholarship of Indigenous stories of place, which I argue form relationships tied to land and water, and the localities of bodies and bones within a specific space, each artist in this exhibition reminds us of their own stories from their place. Throughout this essay, I will explore concepts of embodied practices, connection to land/water, movement and migration of bodies. Racialized and Indigenous bodies move through space differently depending on their local and national historical

relationships with enslavement, sexism and colonisation.

The exhibition 'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a includes moving image works from artists living in or from Australia, Sāmoa, Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, Chile, and the United States, thus covering several territories connected by the Pacific. Witnessing each work, I am drawn to gather them through references to place, embodiment, language, and the body. When watching each work, there is a strong connection to Indigenous scholar Audra Simpson's concept of creating scholarship and art practices that are "declarative and practice-oriented acts of independence."² The place and practice-based images and videos in this exhibition are therefore part of a larger project by Indigenous scholars, critics, and artists to locate racialized/gendered bodies and the concealed geographies of colonised and enslaved subjects. Scholar Katherine McKittrick understands geography as space, place, and location in physical materiality and imaginative configurations and regards the concealing of non-white/non-European geographies as "rational spatial colonisation and domination: the profitable erasure and objectification of subaltern subjectivities, stories, and lands".³

The conquest and control of Indigenous peoples and their lands are part of the social production of space. Practices of subjugation are spatial acts, and how Indigenous and Black people have been bound by colonialism and conquest confines their histories and relations to place. For example, enslaved bodies are bound to colonial spaces through forced/indentured labour. As French theorist Henri Lefebvre states, "if space is a product, our knowledge of it must be expected to reproduce and expound the process of production. The 'object' of interest must be expected to shift from things in space to the actual production of space".⁴ Lefebvre continues: "Social space subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder".⁵ Our everyday actions are part of the land that surrounds us; it is the physical and metaphysical

space that impacts our relationship to the land/water we occupy. McKittrick argues, "geography is not, however, secure and unwavering; we produce space, we produce its meanings, and we work very hard to make geography what it is".⁶ Each of the artists take up how these meanings are produced. This is evident in the placement of their bodies within the frame that reveals and exposes their relationships to people, language and place.

The works in this exhibition focus on Indigenous stories of place – their histories and politics – within socially-produced colonial spaces. Each of the artists focus on the production of social space and postulates the material realities of concealed geographies and their stories of place. Many of the works concentrate on ideas of place through interventions into the political geographies of the artists' home territories. There is a strong theme of embodied practice and gender through the racialized body and we are witness to different bodies that move outside of the heterogender norms marked by race. For example, in Shannon Te Ao's *my life as a tunnel* 2018, the viewer is witness to compassion and love. This soundtrack evokes feelings of connection, haunting loss, and sadness, with beautiful moments of light even for the untrained ear of the non-Māori speaker, allowing the viewer into a personal and intimate video. In this tender embodied exchange, their gender is operating outside of heterosexist binary and is more ambiguous. You witness compassion between humans. In Amrita Hepi's portrait of dancer Waangenga Blanco, depicting acts of engagement through movement and intimacy but with no landscape to geographically place the video, the viewer is informed by fabrics, patterns, sound, and the racialized body in the video. This exchange is created by thoughtful intention with each prop placed in specific locations and the acts of movement deliberate. The conscious decision of multiple images of the racialized male body to be present and seen in the work of Gutinjara Yunupijū. Each body is wearing the same baller outfit and moves through different barrkuṅu waṅu or Yolṅu sign language gestural actions with the body. It marks his body as a visible, racialized body that flows through the screen.

¹ Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2015, p. 10

² Audra Simpson, 'Faculty Profile: Audra Simpson', Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, New York, n.d. <https://undergrad.admissions.columbia.edu/explore/faculty/audra-simpson>

³ Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*,

University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2006, pp. 10; 12

⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 1974, pp. 36–37

⁵ Henri Lefebvre, p. 73

⁶ Katherine McKittrick, p. 11

It reminds the viewer the colonial stranglehold still in place in Australia.

The vastness of land/ocean-scape locates all of the artists' works, drawing connections between places and the knowledge they hold. Cultural and postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha distinguishes the two trajectories of identity in the colonial context: the philosophical tradition or "the process of self-reflection in the mirror of (human) nature; and the anthropological view of the difference of human identity as located in the division of Nature/Culture".⁷ For the colonial subject who is an absent person/being in this discourse of identity construction, however, the "space of representation" is disrupted.⁸ As a result, the invisible or missing colonised person can only be seen through the mirrored reflection of the Other. The works in this exhibition bypass these divisions by encompassing both culture and nature/land/water, thereby rejecting invisibility and rendering the Native visible within their place/space. Hawaiian scholar Noe K Silva explains that genealogies are concepts of time that explore the space around us and teach us the identities of our ancestors.⁹ Many of these works demonstrate an interest in identities and languages and their relationship to stories of place. For many Pacific artists, this understanding of time that Silva references is entrenched in their genealogies, and this can be read throughout their work.

Many of the works in the exhibition envision the body as land, not to lock into the landscape but to complicate the shifts and changes of this relationship. Amrita Hepi's *A Body of Work (At The End of the Earth)* 2017 series, for example, invokes the physical body as land through movement; the land takes over the human presence, the dancer's body blending into stone before returning to form so that the body is again the primary focus and the landscape is pushed to the background. The work demonstrates the push and pull tension between the land and the body, reminding the viewer of the magnitude of the physical landscape compared to the meek human body. In Angela Tiatia's *Dark Light* 2017, the body lies

nude lit under an extravagant light fixture with the rest of the frame embedded in lush flora. It confronts the viewer with the process of self-reflection and is mirroring light and dark. The shades of the colonial gendered body lay below the bright light above it, almost a beacon. Similarly, in asinnajaq's *Rock Piece (Ahuriri)* 2018, the artist embeds herself into the land to breathe through the stones so that a body emerges and then is buried back in the land. This rhythmic cycle locks the body into the physical land, reminding us of the connection to place. Each of these works communicates the importance of water and land in concepts of Native space, marking territories through bodies. These works are part of the artists' embodied practices of telling Indigenous stories of place to critique settler ideologies in the occupation of space. At the same time dealing with the divide between Nature/Culture visually demonstrating that they are intertwined not at odds.

In Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste's *Welu Kumplipe* 2018, the artist stares directly at the viewer while a narrator speaks urgently of territorial autonomy. Even without translation, the viewer knows the work is about land and the struggle for it. Aliste's body contains this urgency with sufficient power for the viewer to experience the importance of the message. Similarly, in Faye Mullen's *AASAMISAG*. 2019 images and words overwhelm the viewers to disorient or displace them. Walls and borders block the migrations and movements of people through space and place. The message in Caroline Monnet's work *Creatura Dada* 2016 is playful, a creation of the beauty of life and the strong female matriarchs who demonstrate this richness. As so much of our media and lived experience as Indigenous women is violence and oppression, Monnet pushes past these experiences in her film by accessing high culture. Monnet asks the viewer to consider Indigenous women in extravagant outfits, drinking champagne, eating oysters, and laughing without any apologies, pushing against spaces of representation and allowing for a more nuanced, complex and playful understanding of Indigenous women. Sarah Biscarra Dille superimposes landscapes and symbols

in her images, attempting to locate place and language through a visual narrative. Each image is grappling with her relationship to her knowledge of these spaces by exploring visual and literal language. All of these works explore their relationships to place, grounded in their own cultural and geographic locations. Each artist places importance on the body and land so that it mirrors our self-reflections and genealogies of time and space.

Curator Dr Léuli Eshrāghi has selected each work to create a cross-ocean dialogue. These artists are drawn together through migrations and movements across the waters. In my past research, I argue that it is a canoe that can metaphorically transport us through place, time, and space to rupture static and lifeless colonial renderings of time and place within the North American context.¹⁰ The canoe as methodology transmits Indigenous knowledge as both object and embodied practice, merging the archive and the repertoire.¹¹ It builds on existing concepts of Native Space, understood as a network of relationships akin to those traditionally navigated over waterways and across land, which is part of Indigenous connections to and stories of place. The canoe methodology relates to the concept of the waka (Māori canoe/boat) as introduced by scholar Hirini Moko Mead, who understands the Māori meeting house as the foundation of Māori world views.¹² The architectural components of the Māori meeting house derive from the up-turned waka, the hull of the canoe, forming the spine of the house, and the painted oars forming the ceiling beams. The meeting house has informed the curatorial practice of elders and the work of Māori critic and director of Pātaka Reuben Friend, who explores the development of the Whare Toi Framework, which is closely aligned with the canoe methodology.¹³ In this curatorial framework, Dr Eshrāghi has invoked each of these meanings, creating a meeting space for these artists and their work that is transported through transmissions of technology and allows for the conditions of this exchange. Each of the artists are in a dialogue through time and space because their moving images hold memory and connect the physical and metaphysical concepts surrounding bodies both in the past and the

present through their stories of place.

Water/land/nature and knowledge of our genealogies, the canoe/waka, and meeting spaces allow us to connect through the multitude of Indigenous stories of place despite the thousands of kilometres that separate us. The works in this exhibition remind us that distance, time, and boundaries are colonial constructs that bind us to linear ways of thinking. They are fluid, experimental, and emotional, pulling at our ability to read visual narratives regardless of geographic location. The show allows for viewers to see the generosity of each of the artists who share their embodied knowledge about their stories of place and the acts of cultural exchanges within the moving image framework. Each exhibition that bridges the Pacific in this way, renders the ocean a space of transportation and transference instead of emptiness, and brings our respective places closer together.

⁷ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, New York, 1994, p. 66

⁸ Homi Bhabha, *ibid.*

⁹ Noe K. Silva, 'The Merrie Monarch: Genealogy, Mele, and Performance Art as Resistance' in *Aloha Betrayed: Native Resistance to American Colonialism*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2004, pp. 87–122

¹⁰ Julie Nagam, 'A Home for Our Migrations: The Canoe as Indigenous Methodology' in Maggie Groat, ed., *The Lake*, Art Metropole, Toronto, 2014

¹¹ Diane Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2003

¹² Sir Hirini Moko Mead, 'Māori Art on the World Scene' in *Māori Art on the World Scene*, Mātau Associates Ltd; Ahua Design & Illustrations Ltd, Wellington, 1997, p. 158

¹³ Reuben Friend, 'He Whare Toi, He Whare Whakaruruhau: Creating Space for Māori Curatorial Practice' in Carly Lane, Julie Nagam, and Megan Tamati-Quennell ed., *Becoming our Futures*, ARP Books, Winnipeg, 2020 (forthcoming)

asinnajaq (b. 1991, lives and works in Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal) is a visual artist, filmmaker and writer. Since childhood, asinnajaq has been immersed in storytelling and the sharing of her cultural heritage. She worked with animator Patrick Defasten to produce the short film *Three Thousand* (2017) which was part of Winnipeg Art Gallery's exhibition *Insurgence/Resurgence* (2018). The film pulled together thousands of hours of historical footage from the National Film Board of Canada's archive as well as original animations to reframe the past and create a vision for the future. On working with the archive, asinnajaq has said: "Our understanding of the past is always evolving, and the representation of Indigenous Peoples has changed dramatically over the decades. You get these government-sponsored films from the '50s, subtly or not so subtly racist, that promote residential schooling. And then you'll find recent footage by Inuit filmmakers that presents a completely different perspective. It's a fantastic resource for an artist". asinnajaq was also part of the curatorial team for the Canadian Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale.

Dr Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste (b. 1991, lives and works in Mapuche territories) is a multi-disciplinary Mapuche artist whose work provides a starting point for critical reflection on the Mapuche subject's social, cultural and political status within contemporary Chilean society. A Visual Arts PhD graduate from the University of Chile, Sebastián is part of the Mapuche feminist collective Rangĩntulewfũ. His practice includes installation, ceramics, performance and video art that explore cultural similarities and differences as well as stereotypes produced in encounters between Indigenous and Western ways of thinking. He aims to make more visible the problems presented by feminism and sexual dissidence movements. Recent exhibitions include solo presentations at Galería 80m2 Livia Benavides, Galería D21, Galería Metropolitana, Parque Cultural de Valparaíso and MAC -Museo de Arte Contemporáneo at the Universidad de Chile. Sebastián has been recognised with the Municipalidad de Santiago Award in 2017, and the Premio Fundación FAVA Award in 2018.

Mariquita 'Micki' Davis (b. 1982, lives and works in Kumeyaay territories) is a Chamorro video artist who produces digital publications, performances, sculptures, and installations. She has exhibited and collaborated on projects with artist collectives, museums, and publishers including *Dashboard* (Atlanta); *The Range* (Saguache); *Oceanside Museum of Art* (Oceanside); and *There Goes the Neighborhood* (San Diego). For the 2017 Honolulu Biennial, Davis's work *Magellan Doesn't Live Here* followed the construction of a replica sakman (ancient Chamorro sailing vessel) in California and its journey to Guåhan/Guam in time for the 2016 Festival of Pacific Arts. Offering insight into personal experiences of the builders involved in its creation, including expressions of celebration and anxieties about returning home, this documentary also draws on the strength of their seafaring traditions and connections to the land and sea that define them.

Sarah Biscarra Dilley (b. 1986, lives and works in xučyun/Oakland) is a multidisciplinary artist, curator, writer, educator and member of the yak tit^yu tit^yu yak tiłhini Northern Chumash people. Her interdisciplinary process is grounded in collaboration across experiences, communities, and place. Relating unceded land throughout nitspu tiłhin ktityu, the State of California, and places joined by shared water, her written and visual texts connect extractive industries, absent treaties, and enclosure to emphasise movement, resilience, sovereignty, and self-determination. Her academic and visual work has been exhibited internationally. Sites of engagement include: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Banff Centre for the Arts and Creativity, California Historical Society, University of California at Santa Barbara, SOMArts Cultural Center, First Peoples House at University of Victoria, Toronto Free Gallery, Open Engagement, Institute of Modern Art, and Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). Sarah is currently pursuing a PhD in Native American Studies with the University of California, Davis.

Amrita Hepi (b. 1989, lives and works in Narrm/Birrarangga/Melbourne) is an award-winning First Nations choreographer and dancer from Bundjulong and Ngā Puhī territories. Her mission as an artist is to push the barriers of intersectionality in form and make work that establishes multiple access points through allegory. Currently, she is interested in forms of hybridity, especially those that arise under empire. Her work takes various forms including film, performance, sculpture, text, lecture, participatory installation, but always begins with the body as a point of archive, memory, dance and resistance. In 2019, she was one of the participating artists in *The National: New Australian Art* commissioned by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, whilst touring work through Australia (PICA, The Lockup Newcastle, Sydney Festival, Cement Fondu, Sydney Opera House), Europe (Theaterformen Germany, Impulstanz, Vienna), and North America (The John F. Kennedy Center of Performing Arts, Washington DC). In 2019, Amrita undertook the Dancweb scholarship as part of Impulstanz in Vienna Austria, and in 2018, was the recipient of the People's Choice Award for the Keir Choreographic Award. She has been an artist-in-residence at Banff Centre for the Arts and Creativity, Ace Open, and PACT.

Caroline Monnet (b. 1985, lives and works in Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal) is a multidisciplinary artist from Outaouais, Quebec. She studied in Sociology and Communication at the University of Ottawa, Canada and the University of Granada, Spain, before pursuing a career in visual arts and films. Her work uses industrial materials, combining the visual vocabulary of traditional cultures with pop culture imagery to create hybrid forms with a unique aesthetic, close to abstract modernism. Her work has been programmed internationally at the Whitney Biennial, Toronto Biennial of Art, National Gallery of Canada, Walter Phillips Gallery (Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity), AXENÉO7 (Gatineau), Winnipeg Art Gallery, McCord Museum (Montreal), Arsenal Contemporary Art (New York), Sundance Film Festival, Cannes Film Festival, Toronto International

Film Festival, Palais de Tokyo (Paris), and Haus der Kulturen (Berlin). Her work is included in several collections including the National Museum of Fine Arts (Quebec), the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), and the Contemporary Art Museum (Montreal). In 2016, she was selected for the Cinéfondation du Festival de Cannes residency in Paris where she was awarded the prize for best screenplay for her first feature film *Bootlegger*. Monnet is represented by Galerie Division.

Faye Mullen (b. 1987, lives and works in Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal) is informed by a sculptural sensitivity, working through the performative gesture in a variety of media including publications, site-specific interventions, sound installations, and image-making – both moving and still. Through a mixed Anishinaabekwe perspective, her practice is rooted in horizontality worlding queer imaginings and decolonial ways of being. Faye carries a Bachelor of Fine Arts from OCAD University (Toronto) and École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts (Paris), and Master degrees from the Universities of Toronto and Le Fresnoy (Tourcoing). Her work has been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions in Asia, Australia, Europe and across Turtle Island. Currently, Faye is pursuing doctoral research-creation at Université du Québec à Montréal, where her practice is also situated.

Shannon Te Ao (b. 1978, lives and works in Te Whanganui ā Tara/Wellington) is an artist, writer and curator whose current research interests include performance and video art practices. The majority of Te Ao's recent artistic output has seen him investigating and responding to material drawn from Māori paradigms, testing the implications of alternative creative, social and linguistic models in relation to contemporary video art and other performative practices. He teaches in the undergraduate program at Whiti o Rehua School of Art, Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University. Te Ao is represented by Mossman.

Angela Tiatia (b. 1973, lives and works in Sydney) explores contemporary culture, drawing attention to its relationship to representation, gender, neo-colonialism and the commodification of the body and place, often through the lenses of history and popular culture. Born in Auckland, New Zealand, Angela Tiatia is of Sāmoan and Australian heritage. Her work is held in numerous public collections across Australia and New Zealand. Her major solo exhibitions include *Narcissus*, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney (2019), *Soft Power*, Alaska Projects, Sydney (2016); *Survey / Fā'aliga*, Māngere Arts Centre - Ngā Tohu o Uenuku, Auckland (2016); *Edging and Seaming*, City Gallery, Wellington (2013); and *Neo-Colonial Extracts*, Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts, Auckland (2011), and was awarded the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize in 2018. Tiatia is represented by Sullivan+Strumpf.

Gutiñarra Yunupinu (b. 1997, lives and works in Yirrkala) is an emerging Indigenous artist working with film and digital media to capture the stories of his kin. Gutiñarra recently won the 2019 NATSIAA Multimedia Award for his digital self-portrait *Gurrutu'mi Mala — My Connections* which explores the connections and kinship that Yolŋu share with one another. Born hearing-impaired, Gutiñarra is seen in the video demonstrating ten signs from the Yolŋu Sign Language (YSL). Gutiñarra says, "I was born hearing impaired, so my family and friends communicated with me using YSL. Where I live, Yolŋu teach all children YSL from a young age, so I can communicate with all Yolŋu from my community easily... Without Yolŋu Sign Language I would have found it hard to communicate with my community – it has helped me make my way in this world."

Dr Léuli Eshrāghi (b. 1986, lives and works in Garrmalang/Darwin and Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal) is a Sāmoan artist, curator and researcher, who intervenes in display territories to centre Indigenous presence and power, sensual and spoken languages, and ceremonial-political practices. Ia contributes to growing international critical practice across the Great Ocean and North America through residencies, exhibitions, publications, teaching and rights advocacy. Recent writing has been published in *Permanent Recession: a Handbook on Art, Labour and Circumstance* (2019), *Sovereign Words: Indigenous Art, Curation and Criticism* (2018), and *Associations: Creative Practice and Research* (2018). Eshrāghi holds a PhD in Curatorial Practice (2019) from Monash University, a Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Arts Management (2012) and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Indigenous and Francophone Studies (2009) from University of Melbourne. Ia serves on the board of directors of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective/Collectif des commissaires autochtones (Canada) and advisory boards of the PHOTO2020 biennial and Melbourne Museum's Pacific Gallery Redevelopment.

Dr Julie Nagam (Metis/German/Syrian) is a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts, Collaboration and Digital Media and is an Associate Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Winnipeg. She is the inaugural Artistic Director for 2020/21 for Nuit Blanche Toronto, the largest public exhibition in North America. Dr Nagam's SSHRC research includes digital maker spaces + incubators, mentorship, digital media + design, international collaborations and place-based knowledge. She is a collective member of GLAM, which works on curatorial activism, Indigenous methodologies, public art, digital technologies, and engagement with place. As a scholar and artist, she is interested in revealing the ontology of land, which contains memory, knowledge and living histories. Dr Nagam's scholarship, curatorial and artistic practice has been featured nationally and internationally. She is building an Indigenous Research Centre of Collaborative and Digital Media Labs in Winnipeg, Canada.

asinnajaq
Rock Piece (Ahuriri) 2018
HD video, 4:02 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Biscarra Dilley
k?imitipity?i 2019
HD video, 13:01 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste
Welu Kumplipe 2018
HD video, 2:04 minutes
Installation: resin text in Mapudungun and soil from Bidjigal lands
Courtesy of the artist

Mariquita 'Micki' Davis
Udai (Means of Transport) 2019
HD video, 6:45 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

Amrita Hepi
A Body of Work (At The End Of The Earth) (Waangenga Blanco) 2017
HD video, 2:56 minutes
Soloist: Waangenga Blanco
Soundtrack: Lavurn Lee
Courtesy of the artist

A Body of Work (At The End Of The Earth) (Jahra Rager) 2017
HD video, 2:19 minutes
Soloist: Jahra Rage
Soundtrack: Lavurn Lee
Courtesy of the artist

Caroline Monnet
Creatura Dada 2016
HD video, 3:03 minutes
Director/writer: Caroline Monnet
Cinematographer: Eric Cinq-Mars
Editors: Sébastien Aubin, Caroline Monnet
Produced in association with Festival du Nouveau Cinéma & Desc images
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Division, Montreal

Faye Mullen
AASAMISAG. 2019
HD video, 23:17 minutes
Collaboration on soundscape with Mich Cota
Courtesy of the artist

Shannon Te Ao
my life as a tunnel 2018
Two-channel HD video with sound, 9:48 minutes
Cinematographer: Iain Frengley
Courtesy of the artist and Mossman, Wellington

Angela Tiatia
Dark Light 2017
HD video, 4:00 minutes
Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

Gutiñarra Yunupinu
Garrutu'mi Mala (My Connections) 2019
Two-channel HD video
Purchased 2019. Telstra Collection, MAGNT
Courtesy of the artist and Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala



Caroline Monnet, *Creatura Dada*, 2016.
HD video, 3:03 minutes.
Installation view, *O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



Sarah Biscarra Dilley, *kāmitipityāi*, 2019.
HD video, 13:01 minutes.
Installation view, 'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley

WELU KUMPLIPE



Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste, *Welu Kumplipe*, 2018.
HD video performance, 2:04 minutes; resin text in Mapudungun
and soil from Bidjigal lands.
Installation view, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



Faye Mullen, *AASAMISAG*. 2019.
HD video, 23:17 minutes.
Installation view, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



Gutiŋarra Yunupinŋu, *Garrutu'mi Mala (My Connections)*, 2019.
Two-channel HD video.
Installation view, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



Amrita Hepi, *A Body of Work (At The End Of The Earth)* 2017.
HD video, 2:19 minutes. Soloist: Jahra Rage.
Installation view, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



asinnajaq, *Rock Piece (Ahuriri)*, 2018.
HD video, 4:02 minutes.
Installation view, *'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a*, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley



Shannon Te Ao, *my life as a tunnel*, 2018.
Two-channel HD video with sound, 9:48 minutes.
Installation view, 'O le ūa na fua mai Manu'a, UNSW Galleries, 2020.
Photo: Zan Wimberley

‘O le ūa na fua mai Manu‘a

17 January – 18 April 2020

asinnajaq (Inuk, Montreal)
Sarah Biscarra Dilley (yak tit^yu tit^yu yak ti^hini, Oakland)
Sebastián Calfuqueo Aliste (Mapuche, Santiago)
Mariquita ‘Micki’ Davis (Chamorro, San Diego)
Amrita Hepi (Ngā Puhī/Bundjalung, Melbourne)
Caroline Monnet (Anishinaabe/French, Montreal)
Faye Mullen (Anishinaabe, Montreal),
Shannon Te Ao (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Wellington)
Angela Tiatia (Sāmoan, Sydney)
Gutiñarra Yunupinū (Dhuwalandja/barrkunū
wāṇa, Yirrkala)

CURATOR

Dr Léuli Eshraghi (Sāmoan, Darwin/Montreal)

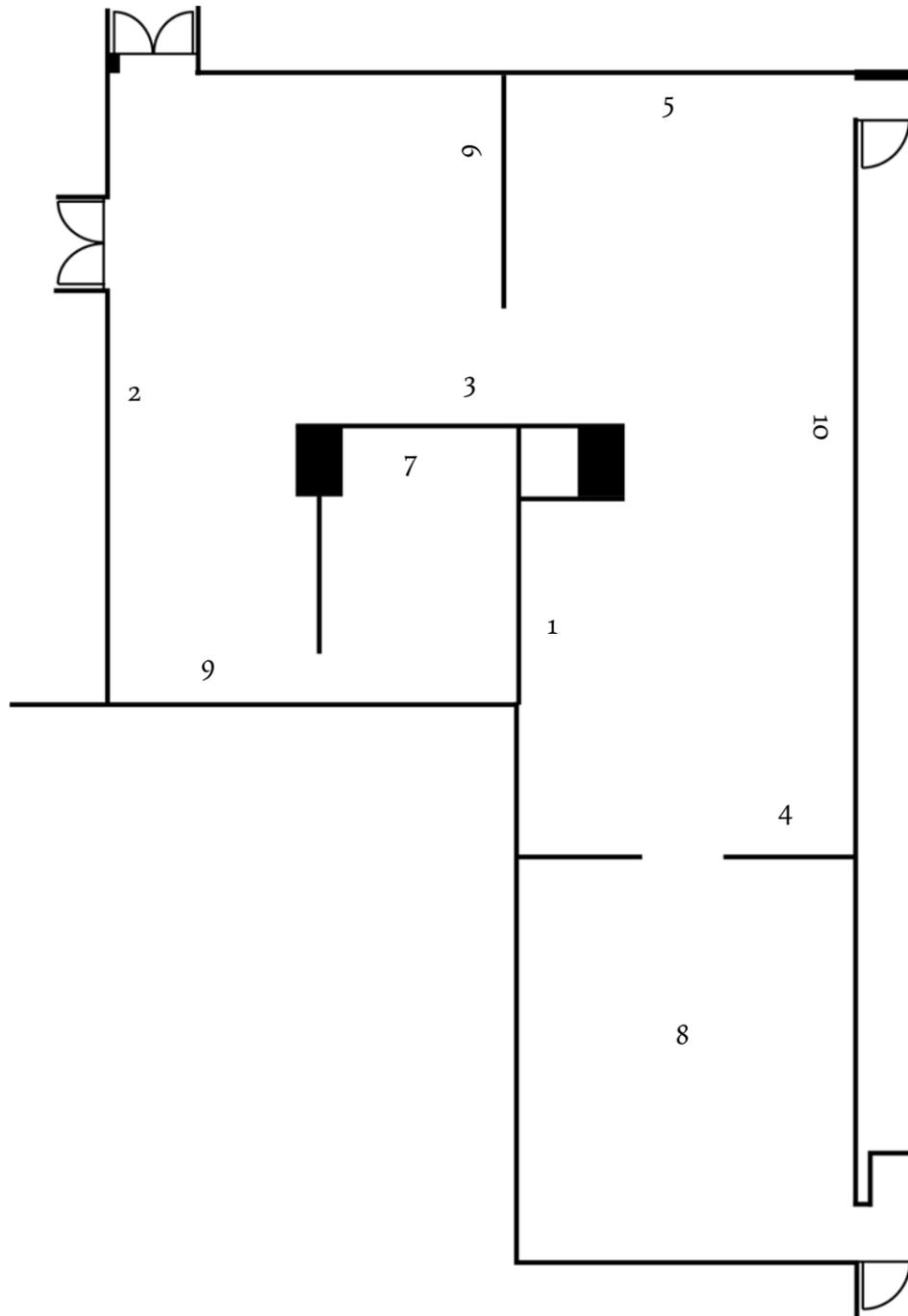
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Presented as part of the exhibition project 'Wansolwara: One Salt Water'. Wansolwara – a pidgin word from the Solomon Islands meaning 'one-salt-water' or 'one ocean, one people' – reflects not a single ocean, but rather a connected waterscape that holds distinct and diverse cultures and communities.



Presented in partnership with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art and in association with Sydney Festival 2020.



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