

Gurabain

where the saltwater meets the freshwater

JASON WING

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are advised that this resource contains images of deceased persons.

Georges River Council acknowledges the Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation, who are the Traditional Custodians of all lands, waters and sky in the Georges River area.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live work and meet on these lands.

Guraban is presented in collaboration with the Gujaga Foundation and supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

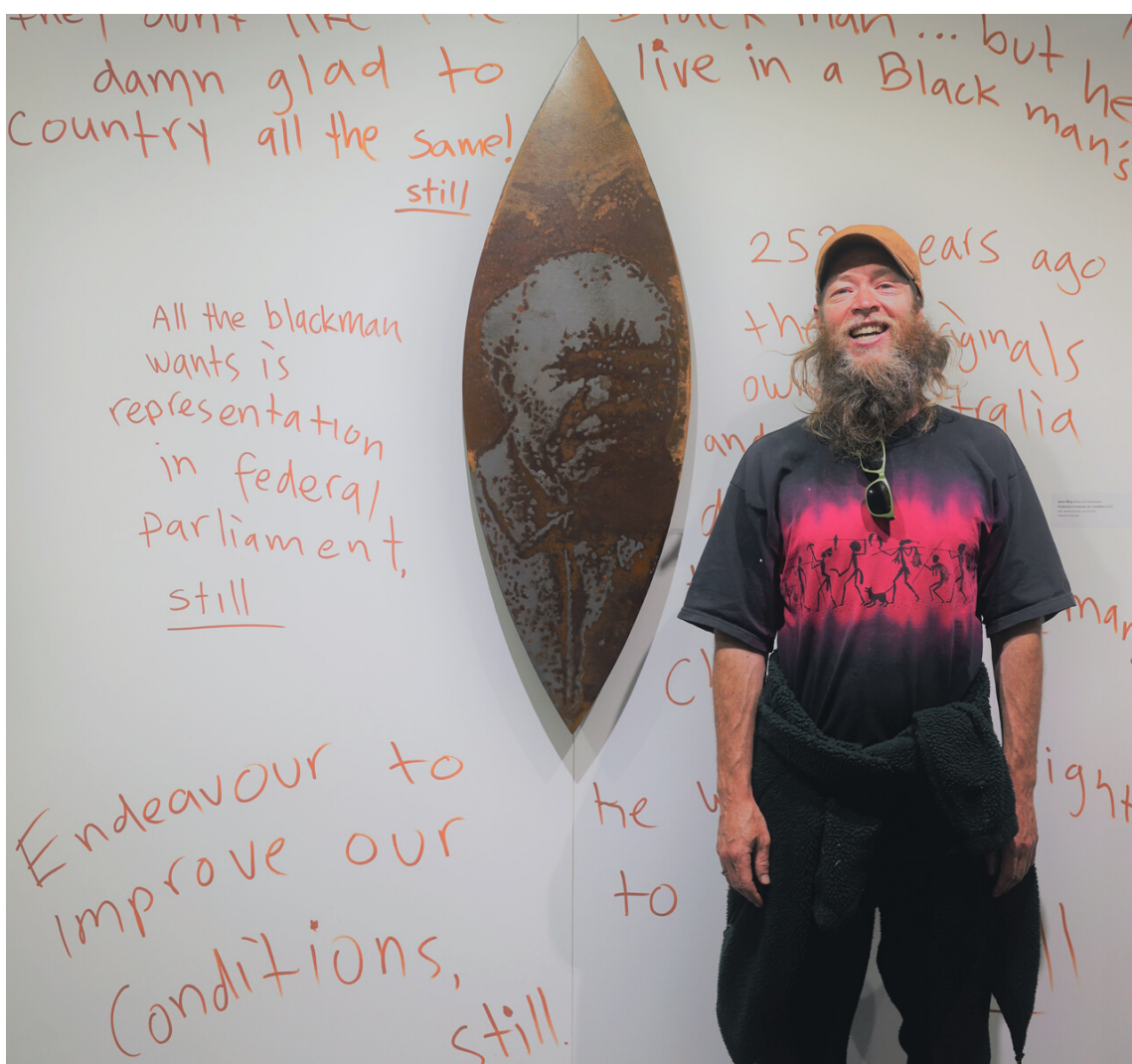


Front page images: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions* 2022, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist (detail). Photography: Hurstville Museum & Gallery.

ARTIST

Jason Wing is an Aboriginal artist who creates artworks which explore the social and political history of colonisation through an Aboriginal perspective. He explores the loss of cultural heritage and poses questions about the position of Aboriginal People in Australia today.

Jason Wing is a Sydney based artist. He was born in the suburb of Blacktown and identifies strongly with the culture of his mother, an Aboriginal woman from the Biripi People from the Hunter region of NSW. He also identifies with the cultural traditions of his father who is Chinese (Cantonese).



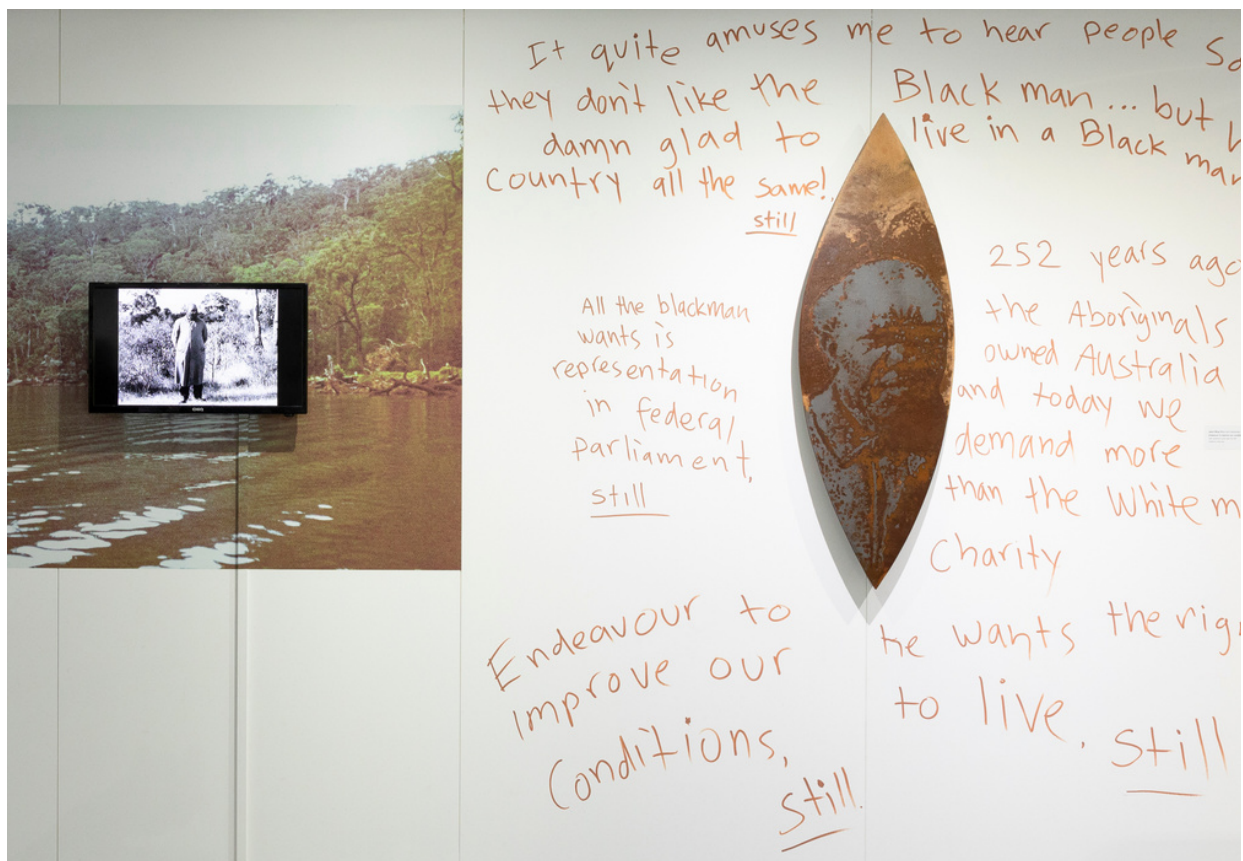
Images: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions 2022*, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist. Photography: Georges River Council.

In his installation *Endeavour to improve our conditions*, Wing has responded to a film from the National Film and Sound Archive of an Aboriginal man, Joe Anderson. Anderson, who identifies himself as King Burranga after his grandfather Paddy Burragalang, was one of the first Aboriginal men to use film as a political tool.

He was filmed standing on the banks of Salt Pan Creek, a tributary of the Georges River, on the freehold property of his mother and step-father Ellen and Hugh Anderson, speaking directly to the camera. He makes an appeal to all Aboriginal People to send a petition to the King (King George V) to improve the living conditions of Aboriginal People.

This film was distributed to movie theatres across Australia in 1933 as a part of a Cinesound newsreel which would be shown before the main feature film. It reached a broad audience of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

More information about this can be found at www.burranga.org/about



Images: 'Guraban: where the saltwater meets the freshwater' exhibition view, 2022. Photography: Silversalt.

Endeavour to improve our conditions comprises a steel shield created in the shape of a traditional Aboriginal shield. This shield references the loss of cultural artefacts and traditions, as many shields of this type were taken by colonial collectors for museums and private collections as early as the first interactions between Aboriginal Nations and the crew of HMS *Endeavour*. A portrait of Joe Anderson is etched on the surface of the shield, using saltwater and freshwater in reference to his role as a political warrior for his People. Surrounding the shield are a series of quotes from Joe Anderson's 1933 speech.



Image: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions* 2022, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist (installation detail). Photography: Hurstville Museum & Gallery.

Wing has written the word 'still' after each quote. This is a pun on the word 'still' which is used to describe a photograph taken during the filming of a movie and to imply that Aboriginal People are still waiting for their rights to be recognized. By adding the word 'still', Wing has recontextualized Joe Anderson's words as continuing to be relevant to the social and political landscape within Australia today.

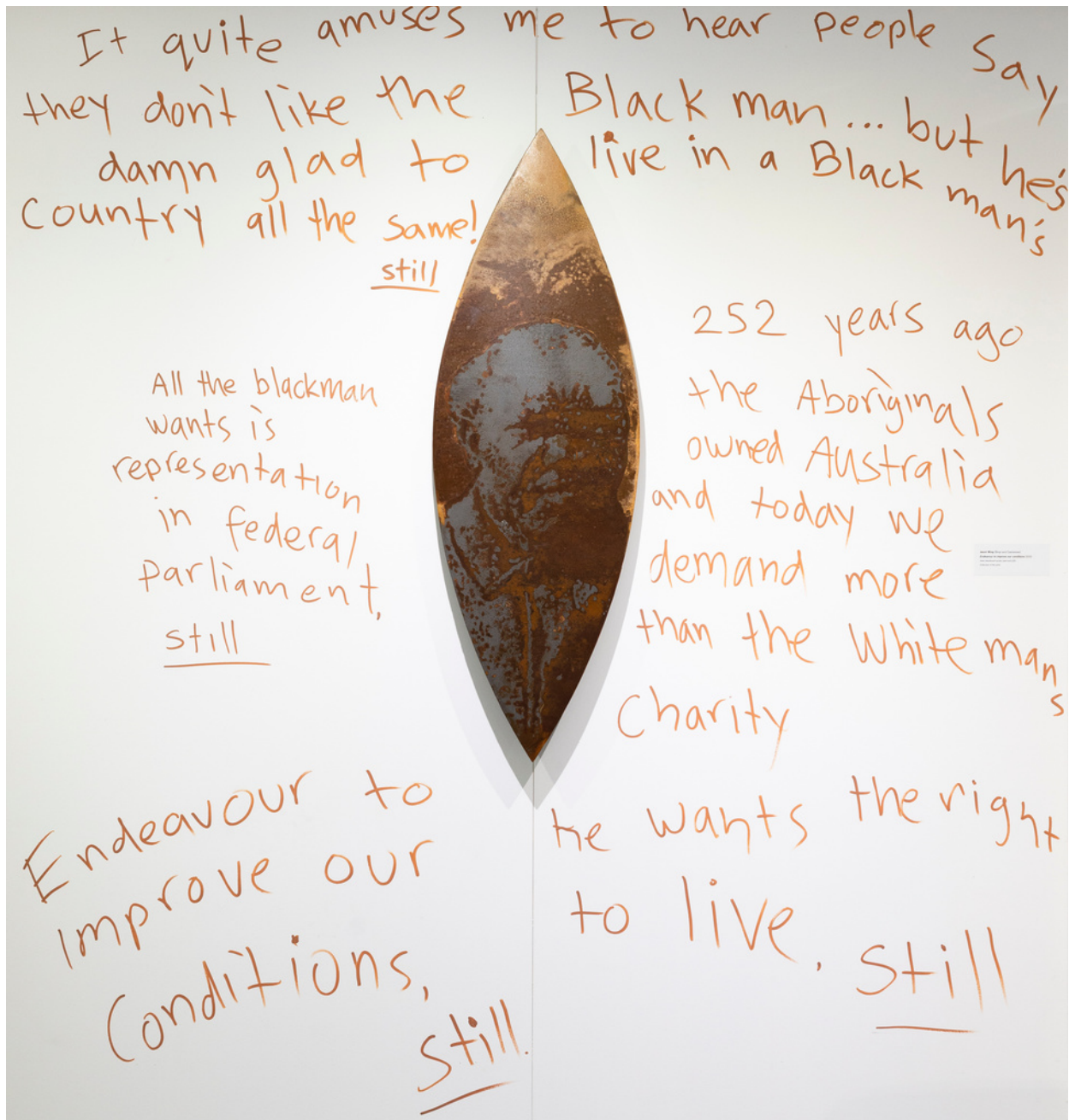


Image: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions* 2022, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist (detail). Photography: Silversalt.



Image: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions* 2022, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist (installation detail). Photography: Hurstville Museum & Gallery.

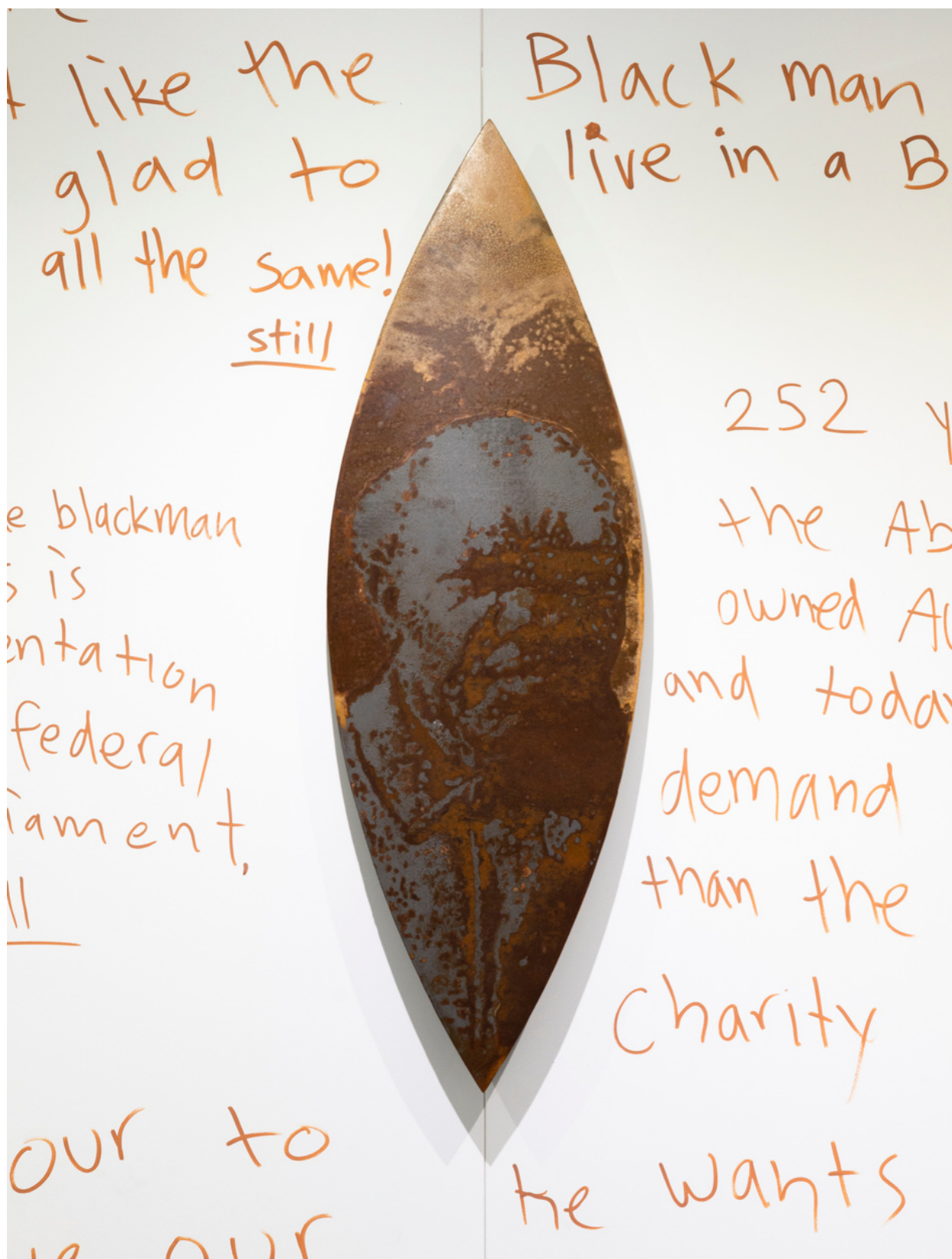


Image: Jason Wing (Biripi / Cantonese), *Endeavour to improve our conditions* 2022, steel, saltwater, freshwater, ink marker, collection of the artist (detail). Photography: Hurstville Museum & Gallery.

FRAMES

- Cultural:** Constructs of identity, race, merging of historical and contemporary experience.
- Structural:** Visual symbols embedded in the material and form. Interpretation is conveyed throughout the artmaking process.
- Subjective:** Works are linked to memory and experience
- Postmodern:** Challenging the interpretation of historical objects, stories, and figures. Recontextualising historical objects by viewing them through a contemporary perspective on racism.

Subject – People, Objects, Places and Spaces

KEY WORDS

- Installation:** A mixed media construction designed for a specific place.
- Recontextualized:** Change the meaning of something by thinking about it from a new point of view.

ACTIVITIES

Stage 4

- Look closely at the portrait of Joe Anderson which Jason Wing has etched on the shield in his artwork. Describe the style that Wing etched this portrait in.
- Read the quotes surrounding the shield in *Endeavour to improve our conditions*. Select 5 words that stand out to you from these quotes. Write each of these words below and explain why you think this word is important.

Stage 5

- How does Jason Wing draw a connection between himself and the experiences of Joe Anderson in *Endeavour to improve our conditions*?
- *Endeavour to improve our conditions* references the experience of Aboriginal People from multiple points in Australian history. Identify three different points in time which are referenced and explain how they are signified in the artwork.

ACTIVITIES

Stage 6

- Traditional Aboriginal shields were made using wood. Wing chose to make his out of steel, a material which is stronger and more durable than wood. What does his choice of materials signify about the loss and resurgence of traditional cultural practices?
- Think about the use of text in *Endeavour to improve our conditions*. Explain how this plays an important role in Jason Wing's practice.

Essay Questions

- Explore ways in which artists challenge their audiences to question traditional or mainstream points of view.
- Discuss ways in which artists use artworks to explore personal experiences.

DISCOVER

Artist Instagram

@jasonwing1

Past exhibitions

Australian Design Centre

<https://australiandesigncentre.com/object-digital/design-isolate/jason-wing/>

'Battleground' 12 June - 11 July 2020, Artreal Gallery

artereal.com.au/exhibition/jason-wing/

Collections

'Captain James Crook' 2013, Art Gallery of NSW

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/25.2019/#places

'Captain James Crook edition 4 of 4' 2013, Australian National Maritime Museum

<http://collections.sea.museum/objects/203146/captain-james-crook-edition-4-of-4;jsessionid=8F64ECD0CC3E3539420D0B3E0B841AC8?ctx=5e558773-1bf0-4a01-b870-e50472d427ab&idx=9>

Articles

'Artist Jason Wing on weaving culture, heritage and community into public spaces'

www.culturescouts.com.au/stomping-ground-blog-source/2018/5/1/artist-jason-wing-on-weaving-culture-heritage-and-community-into-public-spaces

'Jason Wing' 2019, NAVA

visualarts.net.au/artist-files/2019/jason-wing-2019/

Guraban

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29 October 2022 – 29 January 2023
Hurstville Museum & Gallery

Combining historical material and objects, documents and photographs sourced from public and private collections along with the work of leading First Nations visual artists, Jenine Boeree & Nicole Monks, Dennis Golding, Djon Mundine, Marilyn Russell and Jason Wing, the exhibition presents stories associated with the Georges River in the local region, highlighting multiple perspectives on Aboriginal connections to the river, its people and places.

It has been developed in collaboration with local First Nations groups, individuals, artists and the Gujaga Foundation, a peak organisation leading Dharawal language and cultural activities, providing services relating to Aboriginal culture in eastern, southern and southwestern Sydney. The commissioned artworks have been made possible through funding from Create NSW.

A hardcopy and digital catalogue is available for this exhibition.

A virtual tour of this exhibition is available to view online [here](#).

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Back cover image: 'Guraban: where the saltwater meets the freshwater' exhibition view, Hurstville Museum & Gallery, 2022.
(detail) Photography: Silversalt.



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