



DOONTANBORO KURA

Melville Waters Dreaming

PLACE NAMES MELVILLE

EXHIBITION LAUNCH

4 October 2024

EXHIBITION RUNS

4 October – 27 October • Wednesday – Sunday 10:00AM – 4:00PM

FIRESIDE FRIDAY YARNING WITH ELDERS

11 October • 6:00 - 8:00PM

MAPPING BOODJA LEARN ABOUT THE ANCIENT NOONGAR NAMES

24 October • 6:45 - 8:00PM

CLOSING CELEBRATION AND ARTIST TALK

26 October • 6:00 - 8:00PM

LOCATION

Yagan Mia - Wireless Hill Museum



Truth telling and healing, through deep engagement with Noongar kaartdijin bidi (knowledge trail), to decode, express and celebrate the ancient Noongar placenames in Melville with the community.

Shared community vision for Place Names Melville

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CAN, City of Melville and Moodjar acknowledge the Noongar people of the Bibbulmun nation as the traditional custodians of the land and waters on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and honour all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the First People of this nation.

We are proud to work with people from all cultures, but we do so on the understanding of First Peoples, first.

**Kalyakoorl Kwadja Be, Kalyakoorl Boorda Be
Always Was, Always Will Be**

WARNING

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication may contain images and names of people who are deceased.

SPELLING

We acknowledge that the spelling and interpretation of Indigenous language can vary greatly from community to community.

We honour differences in individuals' preferred spellings of the word *Noongar* and consequently its spelling varies within this program.

Doontanboro Kura

Melville Waters Dreaming

Kaya and welcome to *Doontanboro Kura - Melville Waters Dreaming*, an exhibition that will lead you on a journey, into the ancient language and culture of this Noongar boodja.

For the many Elders, Traditional Owners, community members and artists who have contributed to this exhibition, *Doontanboro Kura* is also the culmination of a journey that began in 2022. The artworks you see on display at Yagan Mia – Wireless Hill Museum are the result of Place Names Melville, a two year, Noongar-led project exploring and celebrating the meanings of ancient Noongar placenames found in the Melville area and the stories embedded in that boodja.

Inspired by the seminal research of Moodjar director and Whadjuk Nyungar Elder and Traditional Owner, Emeritus Professor Dr Len Collard, Community Arts Network and Moodjar developed a community-led, creative model for decoding Noongar placenames. This model is based on the knowledge that these placenames can be broken down into a series of words that make a sentence, revealing the significance of that place.

An advisory group of Noongar Elders and Traditional Owners decoded 17 placenames, breaking them down into their composite words to reveal their meanings.

This collection of Noongar knowledge and stories became the basis of a cultural mapping process. Cultural mapping is used by First Nations communities all over the world to create a record of landscape, imbued with activity, including law, language, culture and ethics.

Members of the broader First Nations community in Melville were invited to work alongside artist and CAN Creative Producer Natalie Scholtz, supported by emerging Whadjuk, Ballardong and Wilman Noongar artist Zali Morgan, to create collaborative community-led artworks that map and celebrate the language, knowledge, stories and culture embedded in the 17 decoded placenames.

Steeped in Noongar culture and knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years, these artworks offer all of us – First Nations and non-Indigenous people – the opportunity to form a deeper connection with, and understanding of, this boodja.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the rich and layered stories of this Noongar boodja.



PLACE NAMES MELVILLE

COMMUNITY ARTS NETWORK

CAN creates positive social change through the arts, building inclusion and understanding between people.

CAN has a longstanding, 40-year relationship with Noongar communities, built on trust, collaboration, and cultural respect. Over the decades, CAN has worked closely with Noongar Elders, Traditional Owners, and community members to honour, preserve and celebrate Noongar language, heritage, and stories.

Through Place Names projects in Albany, Langford, Moora, Katanning, Walyalup, Korijekup, and Bayswater, CAN has fostered deep connections, using art and storytelling to bring Noongar culture to the forefront. These projects have paved the way for the larger Place Names Melville project.

can.org.au

MOODJAR

Moodjar is a Nyungar family-owned company, sharing Nyungar knowledge and culture to produce an overall positive impact on Australian society. Moodjar's core business is: smoking ceremonies, Welcome to Country ceremonies, cultural awareness training, renaming/dual naming of places and Country, cultural heritage assessments, research, Nyungar culture, interpretive works, on-Country tours and guidance.

moodjar.com.au

CITY OF MELVILLE

Place Names Melville is a long-term project that recognises traditional Noongar place names in the City of Melville and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to reconciliation and truth-telling.

Since 1997, the City of Melville has worked with local Elders to research significant Noongar sites and understand their history. This early work identified the potential for further research and engagement and a longer-term project, hence the establishment of Place Names Melville.

This project shares the meanings and Noongar location names for relevant sites, throughout the City of Melville and will be acknowledged for future generations.

melvillecity.com.au



Decoding the ancient meanings of Place Names Melville

PHASE TWO

The Place Names Melville project entered Phase II in 2023 after a successful initial phase in 2022. This second phase included a series of workshops led by Professor Len Collard (Moodjar) in which the Decoding Advisory Group worked to uncover the meanings of Noongar placenames across the City of Melville. Sixteen Noongar placenames were selected from research by Dr. Dave Palmer, and by the end of the workshops, 14 of the names were fully decoded and translated.

The Decoding Advisory Group is comprised of Noongar Elders and burdiyars (knowledge holders), who scrutinised colonial records, questioning the absence of Noongar perspectives in these documents.

Noongar placenames were originally written down by wadjellas (non-Aboriginal people), so over time many of the words have been misinterpreted and their meanings misunderstood.

The advisory group's primary focus was to reinterpret these colonial records through their memories and the lens of Noongar knowledge passed down to them for generations and ask, "What do Noongars have to say about this?"

Through their collective Kaartdijin (knowledge) and as a Noongar moort (family), they sought to confirm what their ancestors had said about their boodja (land).

The decoding process followed the Darbakarn, Darbakarn model, a consensus-driven approach with three stages:

Woort Koorliny (Green - All Go!)
Full agreement on the placename.

Share Multiple perspectives are accepted, and all are documented.

Darbakarn Darbakarn (Go Gently):
Uncertainty or disagreement exists, so the group decides to revisit the name later.

If consensus wasn't reached by the end of a session, the group acknowledged that further work and research was needed.

Riso prints

For each decoded Noongar placename, the contributing artists voted to select a symbol representing the meaning of the place, as uncovered during the decoding process. These symbols are derived from clay stamps and illustrations produced by the community during the cultural mapping workshops. These were then turned into riso prints to visually capture the essence of each placename.





Credit Robyn Jean Templeton & Naomi Ugle

DOONTANBORO

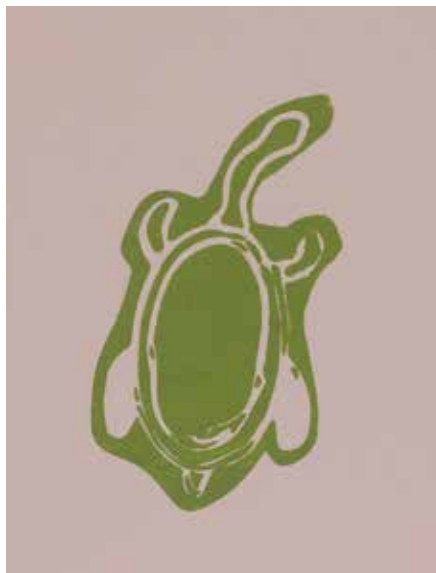
MELVILLE WATER

The totem of the osprey

DONDARN – BOORANG

DONDARN Brown fish hawk/Osprey

BOORANG Totem



Credit Marlene Warrell

YAGAN MIA / YAGAN GENINNY

WIRELESS HILL

**Home of the long-necked turtle
/ The long-necked turtle looking**

YAGAN - MIA - GENNINNY

YAGAN Long-necked turtle

MIA Home

GENNINNY Looking



Credit Robyn Jean Templeton



Credit Geraldine Metcalf

DYOONDALUP

POINT WALTER & BURKE DRIVE

The place of the white sand

DYOONDA - AL - UP

| | |
|---------|----------|
| DYOONDA | White |
| AL | Location |
| UP | Place of |

NIERGARUP

POINT PRESTON

Place of the salmon

NI - NGARREE - UP

| | |
|--------|----------------|
| NI | Pay attention! |
| NGAREE | Salmon |
| UP | Place of |



Credit Narelle Ogilvie & Clinton Anderson



Credit Trevor Walley & Narelle Ogilvie

QUAADA GABEE

BICTON FORESHORE

Access to good water

QUOP - DA - GABEE

| | |
|-------|--------------|
| QUOP | Good |
| DA | Mouth/Access |
| GABEE | Water |

MARRADUNGUP

ALFRED COVE

The place where the hands are connected to the water

MARRA - DA - UNG - UP

| | |
|-------|--------------|
| MARRA | Hands |
| DA | Mouth/Access |
| UNG | Connected to |
| UP | Place of |



Credit Geri Hayden & Vickie Zani



Credit Trevor Walley, John Hart & Naomi Ugle

KOOYAGOORDUP

WAYLEN BAY FORESHORE

Place of the frog's heart

KOOYA - GOORD - UP

| | |
|-------|----------|
| KOOYA | Frog |
| GOORD | Heart |
| UP | Place of |

MARGAMANGUP

LUCKY BAY

Place where they catch fish
by hand from a fish trap

MARGA - MANGA - UP

| | |
|-------|-----------|
| MARGA | Lower arm |
| MANGA | Fish trap |
| UP | Place of |



Credit Tamara Ugle

MOONDAAP

POINT DUNDAS OR POINT HEATHCOTE

Place of the sharks

MOONDA - AP

MOONDA Shark
AP Place of



Credit Shakisha Donaldson

WAGOORJUP

CANNING BRIDGE

Place of the Rainbow Serpent

WAUGAL - UP

WAUGAL Rainbow serpent
UP Place of



Credit Ashley Donaldson Jnr & Christine Reich



Credit Gerrard Shaw & Kym Dykman

DYARLGARRO

BOORAGOON / CANNING RIVER

Many jarrahs

DJARRALY - GARO

DJARRALY Jarrah tree

GARO More/again

GABBI KOWANGULUP

CANNING RIVER MOUTH

The happy place near the water
where the women are digging
and singing

GAB - BI - KOWA - WAN - GA - AL - UP

GAB Water

BI Fish

KOWA Laughing

WAN Women's digging stick

GA Hole/below

AL Location

UP Place of



Credit Dulcie Donaldson & Clinton Anderson

GABBILJEE

BULLCREEK

Fresh river water

GAB - BIL - DJI

GAB Water

BIL River

DJI Fresh



Credit Narelle Ogilvie & Christine Reich

BIDI KATITIJINY

ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S TRAIL PINEY LAKES

Pathway of knowledge

BIDI KATITIJINY

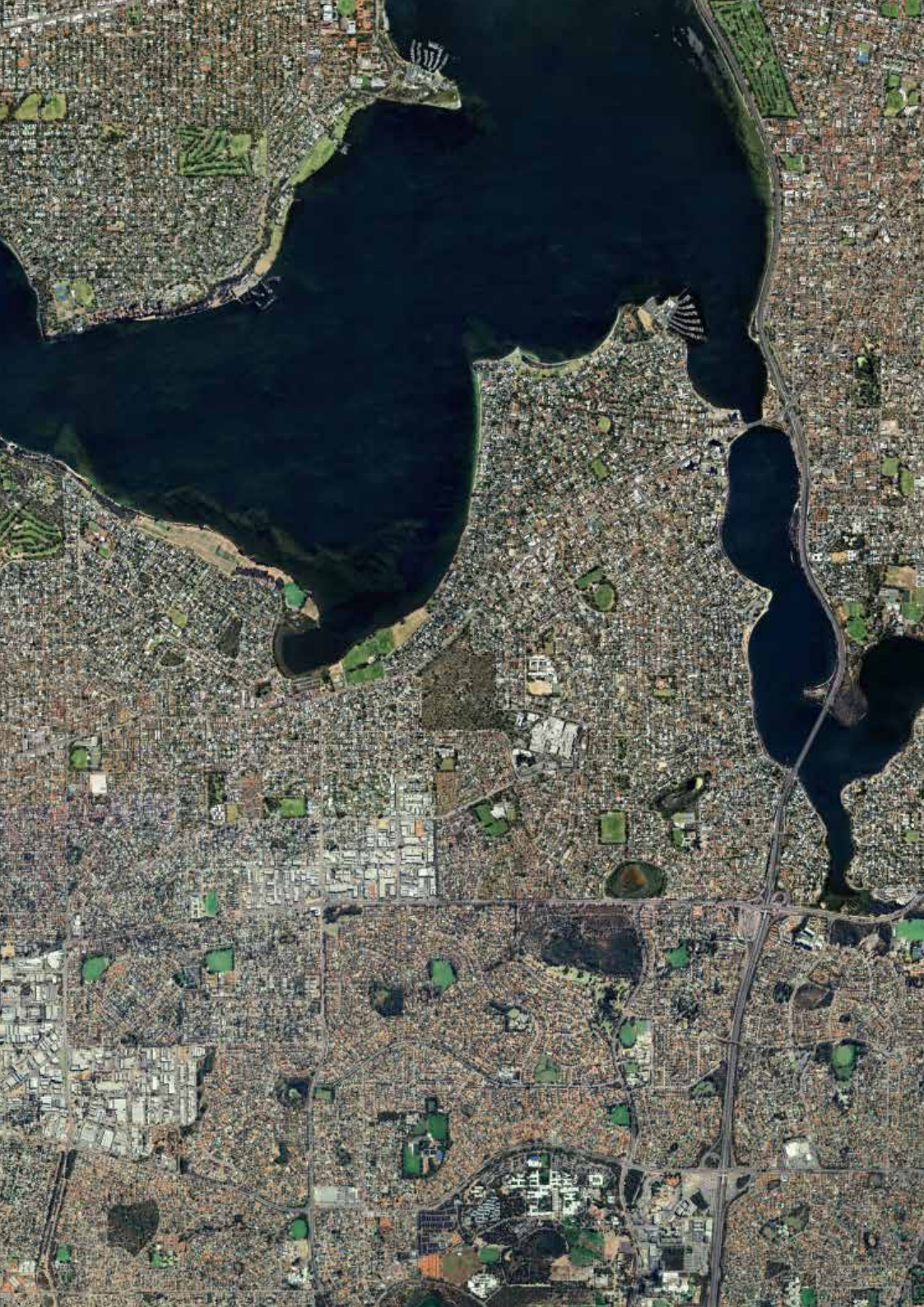
BIDI Pathway

KATITIJINY Knowledge











Linen Map

The large linen map featured in the exhibition showcases the locations of three Noongar placenames decoded during Phase I of the Place Names Melville project, and the 14 names decoded in Phase II.

The map's creation began in 2022, with the Beeliar (river) painted and the first three placenames – Goolugatup, Jenalup, and Willagee – riso-printed on the canvas. In Phase II, a backdrop of symbols representing the tangible and intangible elements of Country in the Melville area were added. These symbols were printed using tiny Basque clay stamps created by the contributing artists, guided by lead artist Natalie Scholtz.

A symbol for each of the decoded placenames was chosen by popular vote, enlarged, and riso-printed onto the map with the support of emerging Noongar artist Zali Morgan. While the visible layers include the Beeliar, clay stamp symbols, and placename icons, the map also holds many invisible layers – conversations and stories shared throughout the project, connecting to the millennia-long presence of Noongar people on this boodja (land).



Wagoorjup Animation

This three-minute animation, in Noongar with English subtitles, transports the viewer back in time. It tells the story of the creation of Wagoorjup, the place of the Waugal, and the two rivers, the Derbal Yaragan (Swan River) and the Dyarlgarro (Canning River), that meet there. You'll find out how the Noongar people lived in the place, and how to pay your respects to the land and show the Waugal that you come here in good spirit.

The idea for including this story in the exhibition was raised by community members early in the project.

Wagoorjup's riso, which is the Waugal, was the last to be printed on the linen map. This ignited conversation about how to honour the Waugal and include

the story of the creation of Wagoorjup in the project. It was decided that an animation would tell this important story.

Yamatji/Native American writer Bruce Denny was commissioned to write the script for the animation. He met with members of the Decoding Advisory Group in a series of four intensive workshops to gather the elements of the story.

Artwork was created by Nimunburr/Yawaru and Ballardong Noongar artist Kambarni working with contributing artists from the cultural mapping workshops to fuse their illustrations with his own, which were then animated by Alexander Hare.



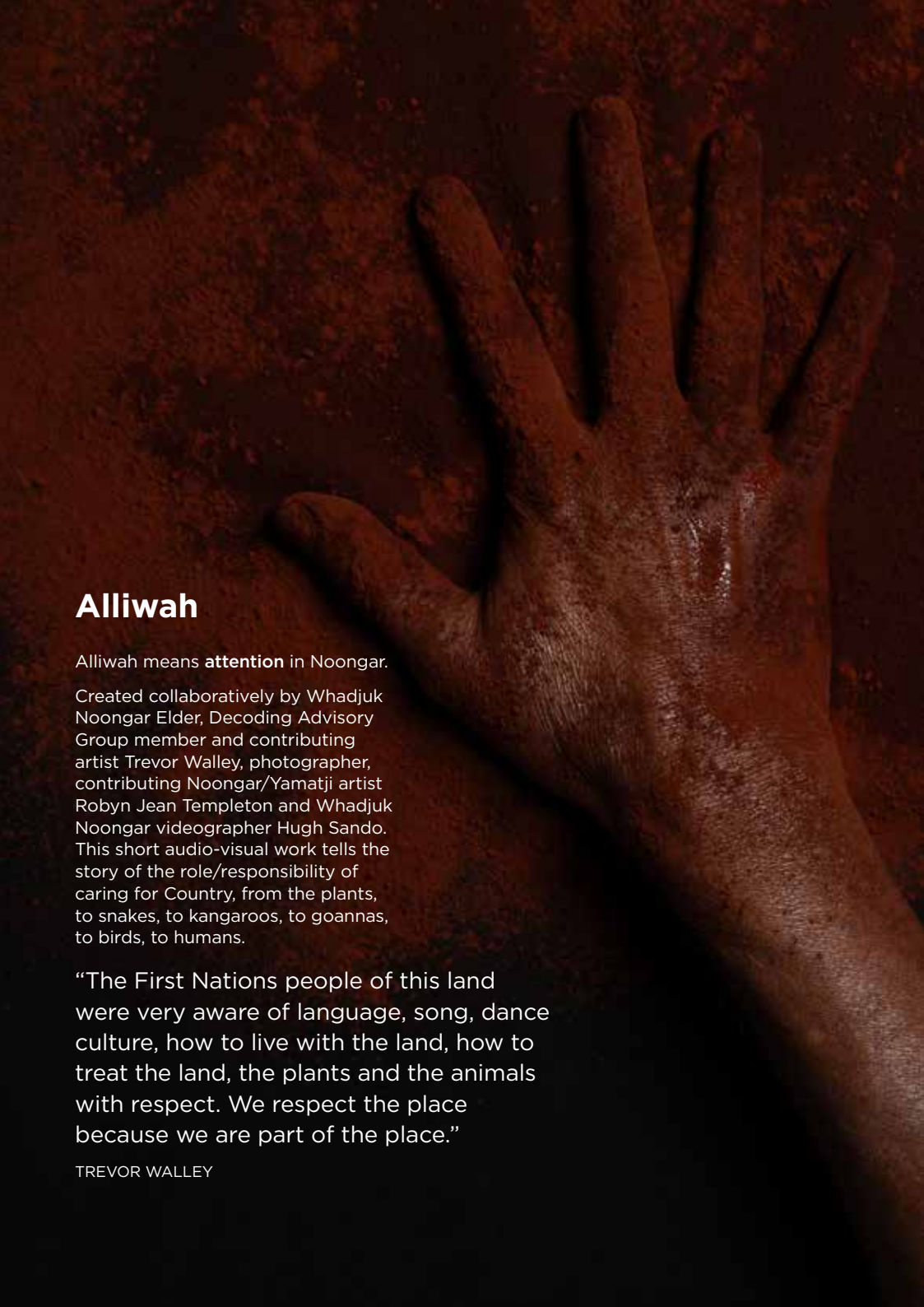
Clay Stamps

These handheld Basque clay stamps were created by the contributing artists. The symbols depicted on the stamps are drawn from the geographical land mass around Melville, where the locations of the decoded placenames are found.

The symbols are used to depict tangible and intangible elements of Country before colonisation.

“We talk about wirrin, kwop wirrin or good spirit, and warra wirrin, bad spirit ... This water mapping, this clay-making – that’s soul stuff, that’s wirrin stuff.”

CHARNE HAYDEN



Alliwah

Alliwah means **attention** in Noongar.

Created collaboratively by Whadjuk Noongar Elder, Decoding Advisory Group member and contributing artist Trevor Walley, photographer, contributing Noongar/Yamatji artist Robyn Jean Templeton and Whadjuk Noongar videographer Hugh Sando. This short audio-visual work tells the story of the role/responsibility of caring for Country, from the plants, to snakes, to kangaroos, to goannas, to birds, to humans.

“The First Nations people of this land were very aware of language, song, dance culture, how to live with the land, how to treat the land, the plants and the animals with respect. We respect the place because we are part of the place.”

TREVOR WALLEY

Documentary

This soon-to-be-released documentary directed by Whadjuk Noongar cinematographer, Hugh Sando, takes viewers on a unique exploration of Noongar placenames, decoding their ancient meanings and fostering a cultural revival.

The documentary captures the essence of this artistic endeavour, demonstrating the profound impact on individuals and the broader community.

Through personal interviews and reflections, the film explores the contributions and impact of why Place Names, celebrating its key achievements and articulating how revitalising Noongar language contributes to a global push for honouring tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Soundscape

The soundscapes in the exhibition were inspired by conversations during cultural mapping workshops, which explored how the Noongar language was phonetically recorded by colonisers.

There was much discussion around whether spelling is important, considering that the words were recorded phonetically. The group noticed, too, that there are variations in the ways that they pronounce these words – the disruption to Noongar language and culture caused by the Stolen Generation is one reason for these differences.

Voice recordings were made by the contributing artists, saying the decoded placenames. Videographer Hugh Sando used these recordings, in which you can hear the different vocal tones and inflections, to create a layered and evocative collage of this ancient and beautiful language.





Eco-dye

Over a ten-week period, students from Brentwood Primary School were guided by Noongar Traditional Owner Geri Hayden and Noongar artist Zali Morgan to create eco-dyed textiles combined with lino prints.

Centred on the placename Dyarlgarro, meaning Many Jarrahs, the students immersed themselves in Blue Gum Reserve, gathering plants for eco-dyeing and sketching the natural surroundings. These sketches were later transformed into intricate linocut designs and printed onto silk.

The residency culminated in a collaborative artwork, with every student contributing. This cross-cultural project weaves together art, Noongar knowledge, and a deep connection to Country, offering the students a rich, hands-on exploration of culture and nature.

Participants



Ashley Donaldson Jnr
Cultural Mapping Group
Tree Stamp



Ashley Donaldson Snr
Cultural Mapping Group
Karli Stamp
Wetj Djooroot Stamp



Christine Reich
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Boodjari Stamp
Yandi Stamp
Ngaama Stamp
Djena Stamp
Marda Stamp
Djena Stamp
Nyinalanginy Bidi Stamp



Azayliah Donaldson
Cultural Mapping Group



Ben Ugle
Cultural Mapping Group

Cliff Stack
Cultural Mapping Group



Betty Garlett
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Kooya Stamp



Charne Hayden
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Bindjel Stamp



Diana Ponton
Decoding Advisory Group



Clinton Anderson
Cultural Mapping Group
Karliil Stamp



Dulcie Donaldson
Cultural Mapping Group
Yandjet Stamp
Boolkaala Stamp



Geraldine Rose Metcalf
Cultural Mapping Group



Dorothy Henry
Cultural Mapping Group
Wetj Stamp

Dylan Collard
Cultural Mapping Group



Geri Hayden
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Brentwood Residency
Djena Stamp



Dr. Gerrard Shaw
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Ngard-midi Boorn-ool Stamp
Bubbles Stamp



Dorothy Winmar
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Dilbi Stamp
Bilara Stamp
Wild Cabbage Stamp
Karli Stamp

Glenys Kathleen Yarran
Decoding Advisory Group

Jarrad Curley
Cultural Mapping Group

Jazmia Dykman
Cultural Mapping Group
Booyi Stamp



John Hart

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Djildjit Mangka Stamp

John McGuire

Decoding Advisory Group



Joseph Sean Collard

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Bubbles Stamp

Joshua Stevens

Cultural Mapping Group

Kim Dykman

Cultural Mapping Group
Karli Stamp
Nyinalang Miya Stamp



Karen Morich

Cultural Mapping Group
Maaman Maar Koorl Stamp
Djidi Djidi Stamp



Marlene Warrell

Cultural Mapping Group
Booyi Stamp



Melba Bodney

Cultural Mapping Group



Naomi Ugle

Cultural Mapping Group
Balka Stamp
Ngari Stamp
Djildjit Stamp



Narelle Ogilvie

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Balka Stamp
Kobori Stamp
Kep Koorliny Stamp

Rachel Zani

Wagoorjup Residency



Nita Dykman
Cultural Mapping Group



Sacha Oglvie
Cultural Mapping Group
Yongka Djooroot Stamp



Sheridan Jones
Cultural Mapping Group



Richard Walley
Decoding Advisory Group



Shakisha Donaldson
Cultural Mapping Group
Djinda Stamp
Karli Stamp
Maali Stamp
Noorn Stamp



Tamara Ugle
Cultural Mapping Group
Kwila Stamp

Robyn Jean Templeton
Cultural Mapping Group
Alliwah Artist
Wagoorjup Residency
Maali Stamp
Yoondordoo Stamp
Goorda Stamp



Sharon Calgaret
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Balka Stamp



Terry Morich
Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Yongka Djooroot Stamp
Wetj Djooroot Stamp

Tharren Kickett

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Djena Djooroot Stamp



Tova Calgaret

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group



Trevor Walley

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Alliwah Artist
Maar Stamp



Vickie Zani

Cultural Mapping Group
Wagoorjup Residency
Kaal Stamp
Dilbi Stamp
Wetj Djooroot Stamp
Kooya Stamp
Eyes Stamp

Vickey Hill

Decoding Advisory Group
Cultural Mapping Group



Brentwood Primary Contributing Artists

Aiden Chaingam, Aiesha Eades, Alex Jong, Amber Machein-Schumann, Amelie O'Brien, Arion Neo, Christelle Corbett, Cooper Collie, Elyse Farrell, Ethan Canty, Ethan Collie, Irene Choi, Jaiden Annakin, Joseph Adewuyi, Luka Pratt, Marcus Tan, Nicole Yap, Olive Derada, Olivia Yu, Raiden Chan, Robin Paul, Ruby Canty, Ryan Dong, Samuel Ebrahim Pour, Tarush Jayasekera, Teresa Zhou, Tessa Pelat, Vienna Cheung, Violet Newman, Will Ke, William O'Loughlin.



PROJECT ARTISTS

Natalie Scholtz

Creative Producer

Hugh Sando

Cinematographer, Photographer,
Soundscape Editor, *Alliwah* Editor

Zali Morgan

Cultural Mapping Supporting Artist
Residency Artist - Brentwood
Primary School

Kam Bin Salleh (Kambarni)

Place Names Melville Brand Designer,
Residency Artist - *Wagoorjup*

Bruce Denny

Residency Artist and Voice
Trainer - *Wagoorjup*

Alexander Hare

Animator - *Wagoorjup*

Roly Skender

Projection Artist - *Alliwah*
and *Wagoorjup*

Luisa Mitchell

Creative Writer and Story Editor

Cassandra Edwards

Photographer

Matty Loucas

Photographer

Tace Stevens

Photographer

PROJECT TEAM

Geri Hayden

Cultural Advisor
Community Arts Network

Natalie Scholtz

Creative Producer and Lead Artist
Community Arts Network

Nduta Gathoga

Project Producer
Community Arts Network

Miranda De Baughn

General Manager
Community Arts Network

Luisa Mitchell

Project Coordinator
Community Arts Network

Noelene Mantellato

Project Coordinator
City of Melville

Ebonnie Poletti

Project Support
City of Melville

Marcus Dickson

Project Manager
City of Melville

Len Collard

Moodjar

Dylan Collard

Moodjar

Monica Kane

Moodjar

Niki Davison

Moodjar

Rebecca Lyon Augustus

Design and Marketing Manager
Community Arts Network

Michelle White

Executive Producer
Community Arts Network

Long Nguyen

Arts Administrator
Community Arts Network

Nina Levy

Communications Coordinator
Community Arts Network



To my Elders, whom I have been so lucky to be able to get to know over this journey, thank you for your wisdom, your knowledge, your information and your stories, which I will take away from this to make me a better man, a proud Wadjuk, Ballardong, Yued Man.

To each and everyone of you, thank you very much.

Ben Ugle



CAN COMMUNITY
ARTS
NETWORK

MOODJAR 
Woortbirming kaartidjin Creating knowledge

lotterywest

 Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries
GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

City of
Melville