

media release

Monday, 12 September 2016

CREATE! Campaign thank you & *Country* dedication ceremony

Thursday 15 September 2016 4:30PM - 6:00PM Mosman Art Gallery, Cnr Art Gallery Way & Myahgah Rd, Mosman

This event has been organised to thank supporters for their generosity in supporting Mosman Art Gallery's CREATE! Campaign and the installation of 24 Aboriginal carved trees in the Gallery Forecourt. As part of the campaign, twenty-four supporters gave \$2,000 each and their contributions were matched dollar-for-dollar by the Federal Government under Creative Partnerships Australia's Plus 1 Program. As part of the event, a plaque listing the names of supporters will be unveiled by former NSW Governor, Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO.

The inspirational artwork *Country* by award winning artist Warwick Keen has been installed in Mosman Art Gallery's forecourt as part of a stunning new Sculpture Garden. *Country* was developed as part of the *Bungaree: the First Australian* exhibition in 2012, and was included in *Bungaree's Farm* exhibition in 2015. *Bungaree's Farm* was the recipient of the Museums and Galleries Australia National Award in 2015.

Country has been inspired by the dendroglyphs or carved trees that were part of the traditional art and culture of the Aboriginal people of New South Wales. Dendroglyphs were most commonly used to signify important places such as initiation or burial sites. While most commonly taking on geometric forms, dendroglyphs sometimes featured the carved shapes of animals and people.

Keen has taken his inspiration from this traditional practice of carving trees and from his own heritage, always being mindful of the sensitivities associated with traditional designs and their uses. Encouraged and guided by noted Aboriginal curator, Djon Mundine, the artist has created a series of contemporary works that are reflective of, but distinct from, traditional images and practices. The works are inspired by sacred practices, but are not sacred objects in their own right, and are able to be displayed openly in public.

Warwick Keen was born in Newcastle, New South Wales, and belongs to the Gomeroi (Gamilaraay) language group. He has practised and taught art for 40 years.

Warwick uses a wide range of mediums in his art practice, including wood-carving, drawing, painting, construction, photography and digital manipulation. He has also been involved in numerous community-based art programs and projects. Warwick creates both digital and mainstream Indigenous imagery and likes to experiment and explore with a range of different mediums to express his different 'stories'.

Media contact

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