

Y

ESTERDAY
TODAY
TOMORROW



ARTS NORTH WEST ACKNOWLEDGES ABORIGINAL
PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS
OF THE LANDS WE WORK ON; WE RECOGNISE
THE STRENGTH, RESILIENCE AND CAPACITY OF
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND RESPECT THE ABORIGINAL
ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT.



INTRODUCTION

Yesterday Today Tomorrow, an Arts North West initiated project, draws its inspiration from Kamilaroi country, from the traditional songs and stories surrounding the significant Aboriginal Cultural Sites in the New England North West.

Six emerging Kamilaroi artists have been mentored to develop works inspired by Country, working on three significant sites near Inverell, Moree and Manilla. Kamilaroi/Tongan film-maker Tim Leha developed a series of short documentaries which have captured the stories and artist's relationship with their Country.

Our Elders have been an integral part of the knowledge transfer and we thank Liza Duncan, Len Waters and Noeline Briggs-Smith for their participation and support. I would also like to acknowledge artists Brent Emerson, Vicky Duncan, Paris Knox, Quarralia Knox, Elizabeth Munro and Paul Spearim for their participation in this project.

Yesterday Today Tomorrow was funded by the Australian Government through its Indigenous Languages and Arts Program.

On a personal note, I have enjoyed working on this project as I love to learn about my culture, you can never learn too much. This project is particularly special to me as it is about my Country, and where I grew up.

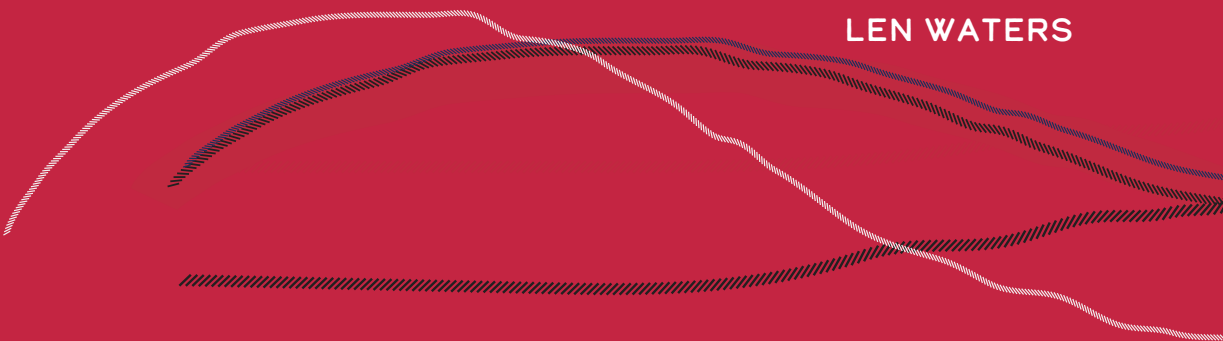
Pene Riggs



WARRABAH NATIONAL PARK

WARRABAH MEANS SHORT-NECKED TURTLE...
IT'S A VERY PEACEFUL SPOT HERE. IT'S CALLED
"YABBABANAL", THAT'S PEACEFUL OR QUIET. IT
TALKS ABOUT THE MOOD OF PEOPLE. ...IT'S A REAL
HEALING PLACE.

LEN WATERS







PARIS KNOX

Paris Knox is a 19 year old proud Gomeri yinarr (woman) from Tamworth NSW. Paris is a descendant of the Knox, McGrady and Orcher family who mostly lived on Toomelah Mission outside of Boggabilla. Paris enjoys learning more and more about her culture and is a strong cultural activist.

She is employed at the Gomeri gaaynggal Centre working with Indigenous women and children. She is a multi-art form artist but predominately works with weaving and finds that weaving is therapeutic. Paris is a talented singer and is further developing her artistic skills through Bumbira Arts and Culture where she has begun painting on canvas and other forms of traditional and contemporary art practices. Through Paris' artwork she is inspired by the connection of her family and culture and shares her stories and cultural knowledge through her art.



bulaan (time of creation)

Whilst out at Warraba I had sat down with a respected local Gomeroi man Uncle Len Waters. He spoke about how all the animals, plants and people have a purpose and that everything is a repeated circle of life. He then explained how the clouds collect the water and then the mountains gather the water. The mountains then bring the water to down through our rivers and at the bottom of the mountains the water meets where our fish creates life.

My artwork represents the man river and the women river coming together to create life in our children, plants and animals and identifies that we are all connected and that we all must take care of each other to continue the circle of life and that our bulaan is happening every day.



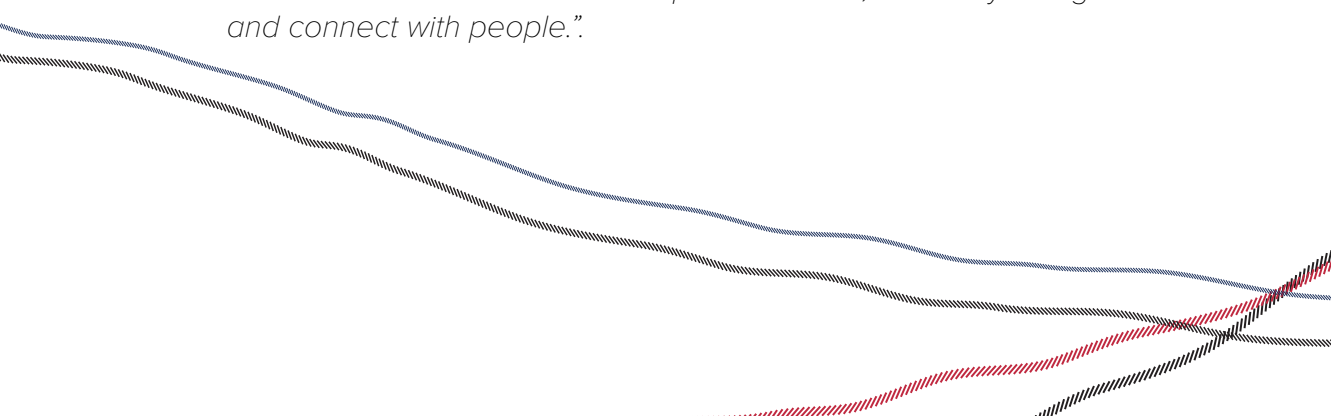
QUARRALIA KNOX

Quarralia Knox is a third generation singer songwriter from Tamworth, NSW and a proud Gomeri woman. Music has always been a part of Quarralia's life; growing up, there was always music equipment set up in the house. Etched in her memory is the smell of the open guitar cases, and the boxes the microphones were stored in.

"I stopped playing when I was 20 for about 8 years, then Dad introduced me to Dave Leha who developed the Yanaya program, David is such a powerful man as a singer and song writer, and to know that he truly believed in me and my craft made the biggest difference to my life and encouraged me to write more, to sing more and to explore different genres. I really believe that I wouldn't be as deeply focused on and embedded in music right now if it wasn't for Dave and the support he offered."

As part of the Yesterday Today Tomorrow project Quarralia wrote and recorded three new songs inspired by Country and the struggles faced by her ancestors and the creators of the land to protect and nurture mother earth. A catalyst for change, Quarralia recognises this project for pushing her out of her normal chosen genre of rock, pop and RnB to explore song writing from a cultural aspect and finding ways to relate to the land and her Aboriginal community through lyrics and sound.

"Growing up, music was such a normal thing for us, I didn't understand how people didn't have guitars in their lounge room and how there wasn't always music being created. We were surrounded by music, by writing and by family. Music is a part of us, it's a part of me and it makes me who I am. It's how I explore emotion, share my thoughts and connect with people."







Dhurrawu-li ngay wanda walaaybaa (Return My Spirit Home)

I sing about Country and I write about Country and to do that it's good to come out and be a part of Country - to be able to look at the water; even to hear the trees and listen to the nature... to be inspired and to be able to write about it.

Return My Spirit Home

Return all my people
Return to the land
Listen and you'll hear the sound
Calling back to sacred ground

Dance in the firelight
Dance the stories of our dreamtime
Sing into the moonlight above
Return the love for what this land has given us

Dhurrawu-li ngay wanda walaaybaa
Dhurrawu-li ngay wanda walaaybaa

Listen closely
The trees they whisper
Oh how we need them to stand
The water is barely flowing
What has become of our land
I'm crying inside
No, no connection
Mother I don't want you to die
I need you to keep my blood Alive

Dhurrawu-li ngay wanda walaaybaa
Dhurrawu-li ngay wanda walaaybaa

Bring me back, care for me
I will be stronger
For now for tomorrow, forever, for even longer
how much more of this destruction
Can you bear to take
In my heart I need to hold you closer

Gaa-gi ngay wanda walaaybaa
Garrawu-li ngurunga guway murrun





KWIAMBAL NATIONAL PARK

WE ALWAYS ROAMED AROUND THIS AREA HERE. WE GOT INTO TROUBLE MANY A TIME FOR GOING OUT ONTO THIS COUNTRY. HOW COULD YOU GET LOST IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD? THIS WAS HOME.

LIZA DUNCAN, ELDER





BRENT EMERSON

Brent's creative work comes directly from what he observes in the world around him, especially when he is on Country for cultural activities, sites work, bushwalking and fishing. He is greatly influenced by his family and community, and his Gamilaraay and Australian heritage, connection to Country and language.

He started as a printmaker (linoleum prints and serigraphs) after completing a Cert III Aboriginal cultural arts at Moree TAFE. Following this, he expanded his practice to use standard acrylic, and then impasto gel and spray acrylic. He now works with soft pastels, and is an Associate Artist of Unison Colour and promotes the wonderful medium of soft pastels.

He has had solo exhibition at Gawura Gallery Glen Innes, and group exhibitions in Moree, Inverell, Armidale and Warialda.



BRENT EMERSON



Bagay (river)

Unison Colour soft pastel on Sennelier la Carte pastel card, 73 x 60 cm

This landscape records my experience on Country at the Severn river. The site is not far from where I camped. It is a really peaceful and relaxing place, with the exception of when the murray (sulphur crested cockatoo) get going with their antics. This is a really special place. When I am here I don't dwell on yesterday and I don't worry about tomorrow; I am just in the moment.

Gagan.Gagan (many coloured)

Unison Colour soft pastel on Sennelier la Carte pastel card, 73 x 60 cm

There were very few callistemon in flower during our time on Country so this meant that when I did see flowers the rainbow lorikeets were fighting over them. If you sit and be patient and observe them you can see that each and every one of them are different in character. Creating has made me even more observant when I am out on Country.

Muraay (sulphur crested cockatoo)

Unison Colour soft pastel on Sennelier la Carte pastel card, 73 x 60 cm

There are a lot of old gum trees with hollows at Lemon Tree Flat on the Severn river. This means that there are a lot of muraay that nest there. They are especially noisy in the late afternoon and early morning when you are trying to sleep. You don't need an alarm clock when camping in Kwiambal national park.

Yundiyundi (blue fairy wren)

Unison Colour soft pastel on Sennelier la Carte pastel card, 73 x 60 cm

I had a great time watching the yundiyundi in Kwiambal national park. They are such fast and playful birds. I always smile when I see them. To me they are 'happy' birds. I always listen for them, as I can usually hear them before seeing them because they are so small. Yundiyundi are one of my favourite subjects to paint.





VICKY DUNCAN

Born in Texas, Queensland, Vicky started drawing at a young age. She is a self-taught artist who is inspired by her family, the environment and her cultural identity. She enjoys using mediums such as ochre, acrylics and natural fibres. She believes that connecting with cultural spirituality creates ideas and meaningful works which can affect everyone.



VICKY DUNCAN

My art is compiled of materials that are from the environment collected in Kwiambal traditional lands. The set of four art pieces are based on sites in the area that have spiritual connection to the Aboriginal people from this place.

Sorry place

Kwiambal lands and other First Nation lands are suffering from no rain and they are sick. The work represents an illusion like a mirage; the four squares are the song lines of the bird tribe that follow the creation story where creator dwelled under the ground and surfaced for air which left behind small mountains for the bird tribe to use resourcefully.

Grass trees

This is a beautiful place where there are Grass trees that are over 200 years old. it consists of a camp site with scarred trees and artefacts and a creek that winds its way through the landscape.

Ochre site

This place is where I get natural pigment to crush and use in my art. Using it connects me to my ancestors knowing that they gathered it for various reasons.

Yellow man art site

I have a deep respect for this place as it holds a store that will forever be sacred and mysterious as its meaning and purpose will never be known.

Lemon tree camp site

Lemon trees campsite is a Kwiambal gathering site with plenty of resources for many mobs. I felt uncomfortable at this spot it has a scary sensation but beautiful strange place.

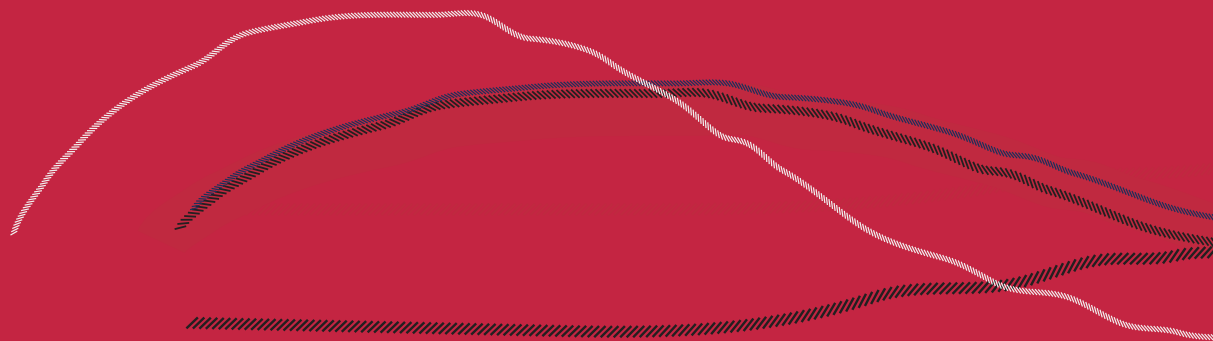


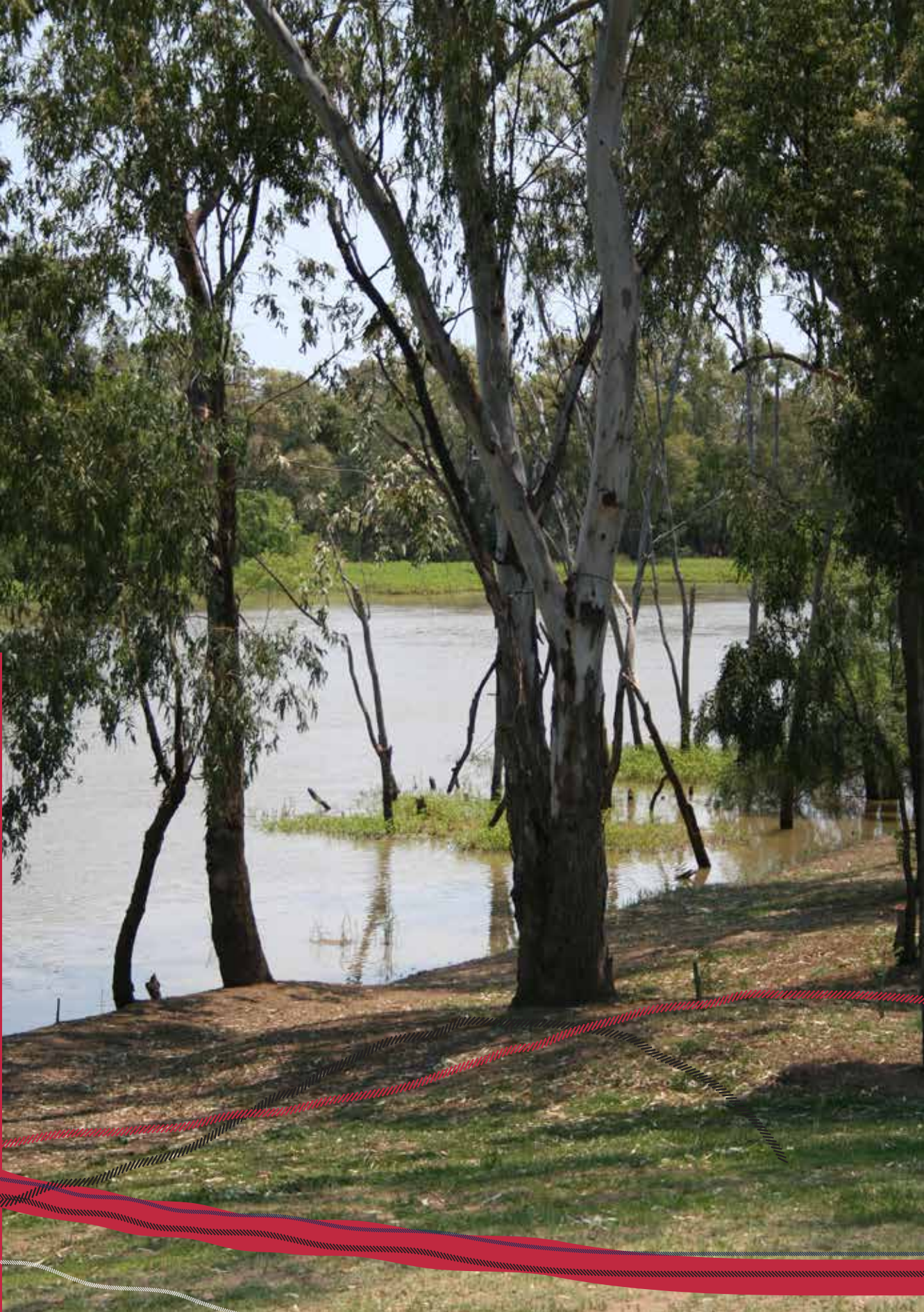


MEHI RIVER

I ALWAYS GET A SENSE OF BELONGING... BECAUSE
THIS IS WHERE I WAS BORN - THE ABORIGINAL CAMP
ON THE MEHI RIVER

AUNTY NOELINE BRIGGS-SMITH, ELDER





ELIZABETH MUNRO

Elizabeth Munro (Moree) is a proud Goomeroi woman. She grew up on the Mehi Mission, which were some of the best days of her life. She started her new journey in life through art by attending art classes at Moree TAFE. This is a healing process for her because of the losses that she has been through. Her art is very important to her and she loves to create artwork around her life, stories she has been told, and Mother Earth.



ELIZABETH MUNRO

My painting shows the Aboriginal camps along the Mehi River. There were three major camps known as Top Camp, Middle Camp and Bottom Camp that stretched along the river. The first was Top Camp at the top end of the Mehi, then Middle Camp near the town dump over from the hospital near to what is now the Golf Course, and Bottom Camp on the Cemetery side of the Mehi where the town kiln for making bricks was situated.

Many families came from Terry Hie Hie, often to save their children from being taken by the Aborigines Protection Board. Terry Hie Hie was the first Aboriginal Reserve which was closed in 1924.

These are the camps I have painted:

- *Top Camp Stanley Village*
- *Thompsons Ave Soapy Rowe now Made Street 1930*
- *Steel Railway Bridge camp 1920*
- *Middle Camp 1920*
- *Moree Aboriginal Reserve then Wiradjri 1969*
- *Brick Hill 1929*



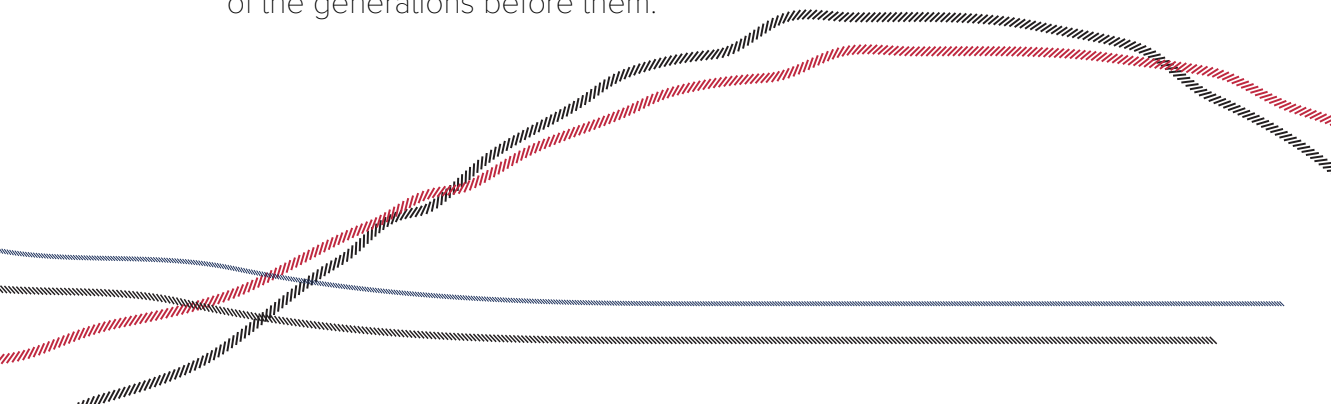
PAUL SPEARIM

A proud Murrawarri and Gamilaroi man, Paul Skullthorpe-Spearim was born in Queanbeyan and raised in the Western Suburbs until he was 12 years old when he moved to live with his Dad in Brisbane. Paul now calls Moree home, it is his father's country, it is where he was born and raised. His Dad, Paul Spearim, was instrumental in his journey through culture, it was through his dance troupe that Paul began learning and sharing culture through song and dance.

Paul has danced at a number of festivals including 1997 Woodford Folk Festival, and 1999 Australian Youth Dance Festival in Townsville. He organised 'Nation Dance' in Moree in 2019 with over 70 dancers. *"The significance of this event was that this is the first time we have ever come together across the nation for cultural reason, not political reasons, but to share the culture across the nation, the magic made in community, four generations all painted up and danced that had never danced before".*

Not limited to just dancing, Paul is an experienced Event Manager and is focused on organising cultural events, sporting events and talent quests such as Murri Vibrations. He has travelled to remote areas in QLD including Cape York where he worked in 11 communities running holiday and wet season programs sharing his love of culture and sport.

Paul credits his partner Tash for his success, she has been by his side for over 10 years supporting his cultural journey and expression. He is most proud of his two young sons who are following in the footsteps of the generations before them.

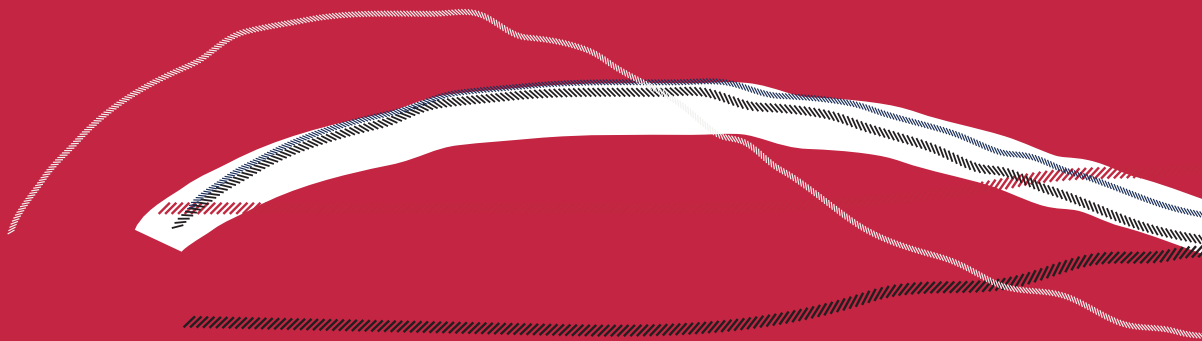




PAUL SPEARIM







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