



KALDOR  
PUBLIC  
ART  
PROJECTS

# Spot Fire 2

**Jonathan Jones**  
**barrangal dyara (skin and bones)**

**Spectacle, manifestation,  
performance**

Art Gallery of New South Wales  
#spotfire

Symposia Partners



# Spot Fire 2

**Spectacle, manifestation, performance**

**Art Gallery of New South Wales**

**Saturday 16 July 2016**

**10am – 4.45pm**

Welcome to the second of three Spot Fire Symposia, curated by Jonathan Jones and Ross Gibson, Centenary Professor of Creative and Cultural Research, University of Canberra, in anticipation of the 32nd Kaldor Public Art Project, Jonathan Jones' *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)*. This first Kaldor Project by an Australian Aboriginal artist will transform the site of the historic Garden Palace in Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden over 17 September – 3 October 2016.

Housing the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879–80, the ostentatious Garden Palace completed the Chief Colonial Architect of New South Wales, James Barnet's, vision for Sydney. Gesturing out to Middle Harbour and the Heads, it was the city's way to boast of its burgeoning colonial enterprise. But the Garden Palace's magnificence was fleeting, lasting only three years. In 1882, in an ultimate spectacular display, the palace and all its contents were destroyed by an intense fire that took only a few hours to obliterate everything except the gates at the south-west entrance to the grounds.

Spot fires were ignited throughout the city, some reaching as far as Woolloomooloo and Balmain. The Spot Fire Symposia series raises themes that have emerged from the ashes of the historic fire, and is presented in partnership with three cultural institutions with profound historic connections to the Garden Palace and International Exhibition – the State Library of NSW, the Art Gallery of NSW and the Australian Museum.

**Spot Fire 2: Spectacle, manifestation, performance** considers the history of spectacle in Sydney and interrogates the grandiose cultural vision that promoted the Australian colonies to the world.

**The Spot Fire Symposia will be livestreamed on the Kaldor Public Art Projects website.**

**[kaldorartprojects.org.au](http://kaldorartprojects.org.au)  
#spotfire**

# Spot Fire 2

**Jonathan Jones**  
**barrangal dyara (skin and bones)**

**Spectacle, manifestation, performance**

Art Gallery of New South Wales  
Domain Theatre, 10am – 4.45pm

**Registration**  
9.30am

**Welcomes**  
10am

**Uncle Charles Madden and  
Uncle Allen Madden, Gadigal Elders**

**John Kaldor, Director,  
Kaldor Public Art Projects**

**Michael Brand, Director,  
Art Gallery of New South Wales**

**Jonathan Jones,  
Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist**

**A gateway to the city:  
James Barnet's design for  
Sydney's Garden Palace**  
10.40am

**Peter Kohane, Senior Lecturer in  
Architectural Studies, Architecture and  
Urban Typologies, University of NSW**



As colonial architect from 1862 to 1890, James Barnet defined the character of many towns in NSW with his impressive courthouses and post offices; but his greatest achievement was a unified scheme for the centre of Sydney. More than any other architect, Barnet was committed to implementing a consistent urban vision for Sydney – one that was both theatrical and keyed to topography. This was achieved through the construction of headquarters of the colony's principal institutions, including the General Post Office (1864–91), the Colonial Secretary's Office (1873–93), the Lands Department (1876–92), and Customs House (1885). In addition, Barnet designed the Sydney International Exhibition pavilion, known as the Garden Palace, a building erected in 1879 and sadly destroyed within three years. This remarkable edifice was composed to be both seen and to be seen from; it was a landmark and lookout.

**The Sydney International  
Exhibition**  
11.05am

**Dr Linda Young,  
Senior Lecturer in Cultural Heritage  
and Museum Studies, Deakin University**



The international exhibition movement that began in London in 1851 generated an entirely novel manifestation of national spectacle, taken up throughout the world. In 1879, NSW became the first British colony to claim a place in this new sphere of international show, followed fast by the other Australian colonies.

On the model of the Great Exhibition, the Sydney International Exhibition displayed the proto-nation's raw materials and manufactured goods to advertise its resources; welcomed the industrial products of the old world to demonstrate its advanced markets; and clothed the displays in art, music, botany and ceremonial to prove its cultivated taste. The rhetoric of the exhibition invoked the object lessons of display to educate the working class and improve the consuming class. It avoided reference to the fairground traditions of popular entertainment to sustain an image of modernity and world power. And then it burned down and disappeared from memory...

**Political performance:  
competing agendas at the 1879  
Sydney International Exhibition**  
11.30am

**Steven Miller, Head of Library Services,  
Art Gallery of New South Wales**



For the trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Sydney International Exhibition provided an opportunity to secure their first purpose-built gallery. At the time, the Gallery's collection was split between the Australian Museum and a temporary location in the city. When the trustees objected to the space originally allocated to them in the Garden Palace, the Government provided £5,000 for the construction of a separate 'Fine Arts Annexe'. The fire that destroyed the Garden Palace later became the catalyst for the Gallery's move to its present site in the Domain.

**Lunch**  
12.30pm

Guests are invited to purchase lunch in the Yiribana foyer, and to view artworks and ephemera from the Sydney International Exhibition and artworks from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection on display in the Edmund and Joanna Capon Research Library.

**Performing Sydney**  
1.30pm

**Wesley Enoch, Festival Director  
2017–2019, Sydney Festival**



Sydney has long been the site of first conversations, the place where Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia started to think about how to live together; a place where narratives of colonial power were formed; a place from which we project what it is to be Australian. After 228 years these conversations still occur, addressing unresolved business, revealing untold stories and reminding us where we belong. Sydney and its stories, like the Garden Palace, can tell us much about how we see and portray ourselves.

**Reading from historical texts  
on the Garden Palace**  
2.10pm

**Russell Smith, Ngarrindjeri actor**



**Afternoon tea**  
2.30pm

**Escape from the Garden Palace:  
objects, performance and the  
Ethnological Court**  
3pm

**Ilaria Vanni, Senior Lecturer,  
International Studies Program,  
University of Technology Sydney**



One of the star attractions of the Garden Palace was a novelty exhibition known as The Ethnological Court. Here, for the first time in the history of world's fairs, objects from Indigenous Australia, the Pacific and the Americas were exhibited together with material culture from prehistoric Europe. Public narratives in official records and popular press around the Ethnological Court contributed to represent it as a counterpoint and backdrop to the idea of progress embodied by the display of imperial technologies and artefacts. Displays and texts made possible to visualise history as a spatial representation and as a spectacle to be enjoyed at glance. This talk wants to challenge these narratives and consider how objects escaped the frame, and generated their own spectacle, entanglements and disjunctions.

**Remaining relevant:  
the changing roles of collections**  
3.25pm

**Cara Pinchbeck, Curator of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Art,  
Art Gallery of New South Wales**

The way we approach and consider collections changes over time. This talk considers the foundational works in the Art Gallery of New South Wales' collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and their current role for the communities from which they are drawn.

**Crossing borders: performative  
work in Indigenous art**  
3.50pm

**Clothilde Bullen, Assistant Producer,  
Yirra Yaakin Theatre**



There is a long and sustained tradition of performative work across many Indigenous artforms. The idea that 'culture' can somehow be compartmentalised into genres is foreign to Indigenous cultural practice, and thus performative work sits naturally within an idea of culture embedded across all facets of life and artforms. Indigenous performative work explores ideas that are often too complex to be contained within one artform; an enacting of storytelling, memory and place where the performer has enormous power and agency to embody subversive content. This talk also explores protocols around Indigenous performative work and questions whether traditional performative work can, or should be, divorced from its customary contexts and geography.

**Conclusion**  
4.40pm

# Spot Fire 3

**Loss and resilience**  
Australian Museum  
Saturday 6 August 2016

When the grand Garden Palace burned down in 1882, vast stores of archival and cultural material were lost, including an ethnological collection assembled by the Australian Museum – a loss that is felt to this day. But out of the void, new modes of display and public cultural engagement developed and Sydney began to recover. The burning palace was generative too, causing the growth of several fledgling organisations that may well have failed to emerge if the great centralised vision of the post-exhibition Palace had prevailed.

**Spot Fire 3: Loss and resilience** will celebrate the resilience of the many cultures impacted by the Garden Palace fire, showing how communities can heal and find ways to thrive after catastrophe.



Remains of the Garden Palace after the fire in 1882, detail  
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney

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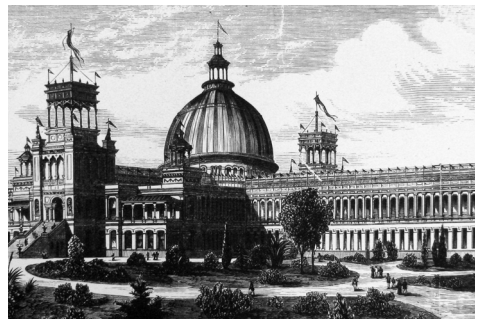
# Spot Fires online

**Kaldor Public Art Project 32**  
Videos and documentation

The first in our series of Symposia, **Spot Fire 1: Landscape and language** gathered writers, performers and cultural leaders to reveal the cultural landscape and built environment that led to the Garden Palace and to ask, what configurations of country are still active in this site on the edge of the city?

Featuring Bruce Pascoe, winner of the NSW Premier's Literary Award, on Aboriginal agriculture, Dr Stan Grant Sr AM on the revitalisation of Indigenous languages, and captivating storyteller Aunty Julie Freeman, the full day of talks, discussions and performances can be viewed online.

Visit our website to follow the development of *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*), with interviews, blog posts and documentary video episodes in the lead-up to the Project.



The Garden Palace, Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, c. 1879, detail  
City of Sydney Archives

Symposium  
Partner



# About Kaldor Public Art Projects

Jonathan Jones' *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)* marks the 32nd Kaldor Public Art Project in Australia and the first by an Australian Aboriginal artist.

For more than 45 years, we have worked with some of the world's most esteemed and iconic international artists. Our temporary projects have had a lasting impact on the cultural landscape and have changed the way the Australian public sees and experiences the art of today.

We continue to commission groundbreaking new works from both overseas and Australian artists. Our projects explore the shifting boundaries between artforms, artists and audiences, and generate innovation through new creative formats for discussion and debate. We recognise the importance of education to a creative culture and pioneer new ways to connect with diverse audiences and to bring art into a range of learning contexts.

**Visit Project 32: Jonathan Jones *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)* from 17 September – 3 October 2016 in the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.**



Project 1: Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Wrapped Coast – One Million Square Feet*, 1968–69, Little Bay, Sydney  
Photo: Harry Shunk



Project 10: Jeff Koons, *Puppy*, 1995, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney  
Photo: Peter Nuchtern



Project 32: Jonathan Jones, Shields from *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)*, 2016, Sydney  
Photo: Richard Mortimer

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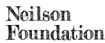
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