



KALDOR
PUBLIC
ART
PROJECTS

Spot Fire 3

Jonathan Jones
barrangal dyara (skin and bones)

Loss and resilience

Australian Museum
#spotfire

Symposia Partners



Spot Fire 3

Loss and resilience

Australian Museum

Saturday 6 August 2016

10am – 4.30pm

Welcome to the final 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.

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 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 3: Loss and resilience

celebrates the resilience of the many cultures impacted by the Garden Palace fire, showing how communities can heal and then find ways to thrive after catastrophe.

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

kaldorartprojects.org.au

#spotfire

Spot Fire 3

Jonathan Jones
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Loss and resilience

Australian Museum
Hallstrom Theatre, 10am – 4.30pm

Registration
9.30am

Welcomes
10am

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

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

**Kim McKay, Director,
Australian Museum**

**Laura McBride, Creative Producer,
Australian Museum**

**Jonathan Jones,
Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist**

**Reading from historical texts
on the Garden Palace**
10.40am

Russell Smith, Ngarrindjeri actor



Rising from the ashes
10.55am

**Tasha Lamb, Project Officer,
Cultural Programs, Australian Museum**



Collecting institutions such as museums have to deal with a complex legacy of colonial collections which arose out of particular social, cultural and emotional engagements between missionaries, government officials, and settlers with Aboriginal people.

This presentation discusses how the Australian Museum is effectively re-engaging with historical collections, resulting in the creation of greater access and representation of the collections for Aboriginal communities through its public programs, exhibitions and other initiatives.

The questions of the rights and responsibilities involved in the care and custodianship of collections for museums and communities will be explored, along with how the Museum is re-imagining their ongoing relationships with community.

**All that is solid melts into air:
Landscapes of loss at
Sydney's edges**
11.20am

**Associate Professor Grace Karskens,
School of Humanities and Languages,
University of NSW**



As cities expand they devour their own edges. City edges are constantly moving outwards, dynamic zones of loss and transformation. The Botanic Garden was once at the 'skirts' of the town: now it is the city's green heart, and the city's edge is 60 kilometres away. In this talk, I want to shift the focus from the centre to Sydney's modern periphery, to Castlereagh, on the Nepean River, an ancient landscape, destroyed by mining to build the global city. This is what cities do. But what happens to community, history and memory when a landscape is lost, when all that solid ground becomes air?

**The forgotten collections of the
Garden Palace: a case study of
colonial political art patronage**
11.45am

**Ann Toy, independent curator
and art historian**



From 1878 to 1882, the Colonial Secretary Sir Henry Parkes was instrumental in securing the Sydney International Exhibition for the colony, and used the event as a platform for the realisation of his broader political and social agenda for Sydney.

One of his most intriguing legacies was the acquisition of an extraordinary collection of Australian, British and European art from the 1879 Sydney International Exhibition and the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition for display at the Garden Palace, the Botanic Garden, the Art Gallery of NSW and the Chief Secretary's Building in Macquarie Street.

Although much of this material was lost in the Palace fire, research has uncovered a wealth of pictures, sculpture and decorative arts, acquired by Parkes, which survives in collections of the Art Gallery of NSW, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and the Chief Secretary's Building. The latter collection is unique and fascinating, and has been held in trust for almost 135 years, often hidden from public view. This talk discusses the significance of Parkes' collecting and art patronage, and the cultural legacies of the Sydney International Exhibition.

Lunch
12.30pm

Guests are invited to purchase lunch at the Rooftop or Atrium Café, and to view rare objects from the Museum's collection in the First Australians galleries located on the ground floor.

**The revival of the badhang:
possum-skin cloak making**
1.30pm

**Professor Michael McDaniel, Director,
Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning,
University of Technology Sydney**



Professor Michael McDaniel is a recognised Wiradjuri leader working in education. McDaniel holds various positions on boards including the Bangarra Dance Theatre board and the Museum of Contemporary Art Indigenous Advisory Committee. McDaniel has been instrumental in the revival of possum-skin cloak making in New South Wales and one of his cloaks is held in the National Gallery of Australia collection. He will present on the process and cultural concepts behind the revival of the badhang, or possum-skin cloak, as part of the wider south-east revival.

**Connecting Aboriginal, Torres
Strait Islander and Pacific young
people with cultural collections**
2.10pm

**Thelma Thomas-Lesianawai,
Youth Project Coordinator,
Australian Museum**



The Australian Museum's Youth Reconnection Project connects Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Pacific young people to their cultural heritage via the Museum's cultural collections. From 2009 until today, the project has directly engaged hundreds of young people both in NSW Juvenile Detention, community centres and at the Australian Museum via cultural workshops, creative and performance workshops and mentoring. This session will look at the development and outcomes of the project, and the ongoing work of connecting new generations to age-old cultures.

Spirit of things; sound of objects
2.50pm

**Stiff Gins (Kaleena Briggs
and Nardi Simpson)**



Stiff Gins (Kaleena Briggs and Nardi Simpson) have recently embarked upon a creative journey inspired by cultural collections in museums. With their unique sound and musical friendship, they have listened to objects and ancestors to form the project *Spirit of Things; Sound of Objects*. In 2013, inspired by wax cylinder recordings made by Tasmanian Aboriginal woman Fanny Cochrane Smith in 1903, Stiff Gins created their own wax cylinder recording, the first time in 80 years this technology had been used in Australia. Through story and song, Stiff Gins will explore the creation of their own museum object and touch on the ability of cultural collections to release stories held deep within.

Our heritage, our future
3.30pm

**Hetti Perkins, independent curator,
and Stephen Gilchrist, independent curator,
in conversation with Jonathan Jones**



Join Eastern Arrernte and Kalkadoon curator Hetti Perkins and Yamatji curator Stephen Gilchrist for a panel discussion with Jonathan Jones to consider the future of Indigenous cultural spaces — what form these spaces might take, their context and their role within our communities. Each speaker has worked in curatorial roles both in public institutions and independently, and together will reflect on their experience to date, while proposing initiatives for the future.

As Australia's premier Aboriginal art curator, Hetti will draw on knowledge gained presenting major national and international survey exhibitions of Indigenous art over the past three decades, including Australia's representation at the 1997 Venice Biennale and, most recently, *Riverland: Yvonne Koolmatrie* at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, in 2015.

With in-depth knowledge of both national and international collections and exhibition spaces developed through his work at organisations such as the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, and National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Stephen will discuss his most recent exhibition, *Everywhen*, which opened in February 2016 at the Harvard Art Museums of Harvard University.

Conclusion
4.10pm

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 of the Garden Palace and to ask what configurations of country are still active in this site on the edge of the city?

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

Featuring Bruce Pascoe, winner of the NSW Premier's Literary Award, on Aboriginal agriculture, Sydney Festival Director Wesley Enoch, and captivating storyteller Auntie Julie Freeman, these two stimulating days of talks, discussions and performances can now be viewed online.



Gibbs, Shallard and Company, *Burning of the Garden Palace, Sydney, 1882*, detail
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney

Jonathan Jones

barrangal dyara (skin and bones)

Royal Botanic Garden Sydney

17 September – 3 October

For the 32nd Kaldor Public Art Project, Jonathan Jones presents *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)*, a vast sculptural installation stretching across 20,000 square-metres of the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.

Thousands of bleached white shields will echo the masses of rubble - the only remnants of the building after the fire - raising the layered history and bones of the Garden Palace across the site. A native kangaroo grass meadow will form the heart of the installation, which will be activated and enlivened by presentations of Aboriginal language, performances, talks, special events and workshops each day.

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.



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

Symposia Partners



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 dynamic relationships between artforms, artists and audiences, and stimulate discussion and debate through exciting, innovative public programs.

We are committed to promoting a creative culture, and to pioneering new models of participation and engagement with contemporary art for diverse audiences.

kaldorartprojects.org.au



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 30: Marina Abramovic, *In Residence*, 2015, Pier 2/3, Walsh Bay
Photo: Peter Greig

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