

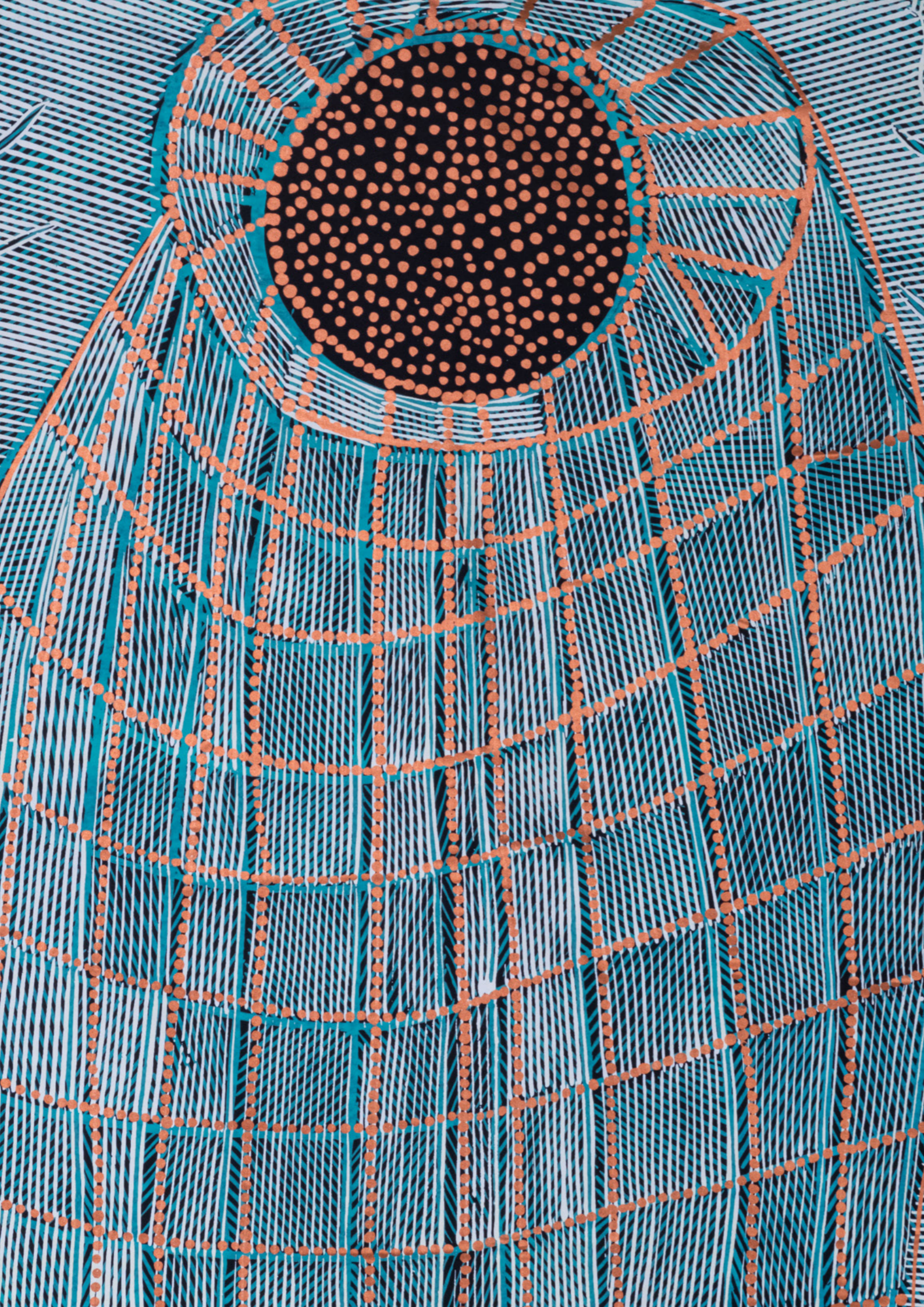
New Exuberance  
Contemporary Australian Textile Design

**EDUCATION RESOURCE**



Jam  
Factory





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Cover: Iordanes Spyridon Gogos, Look 2, Runway AAFW21, 2021, repurposed fabric with painted and printed material and found buttons. Talent Adam Torres. Photo Holly Gibson, courtesy of Jordan Gogos  
Left: Susan Marawarr, Mandjabu (Fish Trap) (detail), designed 2017, hand screen-printed in Maningrida 2022, cotton drill, ink, 140 x 400 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Bábarra Women's Centre. Photo Connor Patterson.



## INTRODUCTION

### The Resource

This resource provides information and activities designed to assist teachers in enhancing student engagement with the ***New Exuberance: Contemporary Australian Textile Design*** exhibition and extending their visual arts learning. Activities are tailored toward secondary students in the middle to senior years age bracket (Years 7-12), however, teachers are encouraged to adapt all content to suit the age and needs of their specific student group. Some suggestions for modification and extension have been provided.

### Curriculum Connections

This resource aligns with the general aims for 'The Arts' learning area of **The Australian Curriculum**<sup>i</sup> and all activities have been developed to address specific content descriptions outlined in The Australian Curriculum: Visual Arts (Version 9.0)<sup>ii</sup>.

\*Although the specific content descriptions referenced in this resource have been selected from the Years 7-8 and Years 9-10 bands, common concepts and themes, such as interpretation and personal response, concept development and experimentation with materials, techniques and styles, are repeated across all bands and are relevant to all age groups.

This resource also addresses the **General Capabilities** and **Cross-curriculum Priorities** outlined by ACARA:

- Opportunities for students to demonstrate and develop *all* **General Capabilities** are embedded throughout this document.
- **Cross-Curriculum Priorities** are primarily addressed through:

### Sustainability:

a) Investigation of how textile production contributes to environmental degradation and the possible solutions.

b) Many of the artists included in this exhibition share a focus on using sustainable textile production practices including, upcycling, using deadstock fabric and biodegradable materials, small batch production, limited edition or one-of-a-kind production and made to order and direct-to-consumer business models.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures:

a) Exploration of the artworks, artistic practices, cultures and connection to Country of the Australian First Nations artists included in this exhibition.

b) The important contributions these artists have made, and continue to make, to the wider Australian and global art, design, fashion and cultural sectors.

c) The diversity of First Nations peoples, cultures and histories represented in this exhibition.

d) The strength, determination and resilience demonstrated through the work of these artists.

### This Exhibition

*New Exuberance: contemporary Australian textile design celebrates the innovation and dynamism currently reinvigorating the contemporary Australian textiles industry. Bringing together artists, textile designers and fashion designers, the exhibition surveys the diversity of expression, technique and invention to be found in textile-based practices. The exhibition highlights progressive approaches that are helping to reshape the industry as sustainable, inclusive and collaborative. New Exuberance will show at the JamFactory Adelaide from 17 February - 16 April 2023 before launching a three-year touring programme across Australia.*

### Coding System used to indicate Curriculum Connections

Content Descriptors:

Years 7/8 band (e.g. **AC9AVA8E01**)

Years 9/10 band (e.g. **AC9AVA10E01**)

General Capabilities:

LIT: Literacy

NUM: Numeracy

DL: Digital Literacy

CCT: Critical & Creative Thinking

PSC: Personal & Social Capability

IU: Intercultural Understanding

EU: Ethical Understanding

Curriculum Priorities:

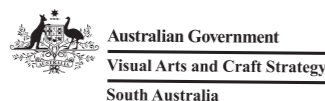
ASIA: Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia

ATSIHC: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Cross-disciplinary Connections:

e.g. History – *brief description of thematic links.*

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS





## SECTION 1 WEAVING STORIES – A NEW EXUBERANCE IN AUSTRALIAN TEXTILES.



New Exuberance: Contemporary Australian Textile Design is an exhibition that highlights the exciting and dynamic work taking place in textile-based art and design in Australia. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, a 'textile' is "...any filament, fibre or yarn that can be made into fabric or cloth, and the resulting fabric itself."<sup>iii</sup> Yet this simple definition does not do justice to the extraordinary range of opportunities that textiles offer as a medium for art, design and fashion design. Textiles can be created from a single fibre (as in netting) or woven from multiple fibres into a plain weave (like a cotton percale bed sheet) or into complex patterns and designs (see for example the 'grasshopper weaving' technique adopted by Grace Lillian Lee in the creation of her wearable sculpture, *Our Branches* (2021)). Textiles can be dyed, printed with designs, patchworked, appliquéd, embroidered or woven together to form other textiles. Textile making processes are often invoked in the English language as metaphors to describe the act of storytelling – we talk of 'weaving a narrative' or of a theme as a 'thread running through a story'. We might refer to a long, detailed narrative as a 'rich tapestry'. Colloquially, we might even speak of someone 'spinning a yarn'. Perhaps the connection between constructing a story and constructing textiles is so strong because textiles, themselves, provide a means of storytelling. Since ancient times, humans have prized textiles for their ability to communicate their owners' social status, wealth, identity and personality. From the simplicity of the pleated white linen robe known as the Tarkan Dress, dated to 3482-3102 BCE<sup>iv</sup>, to the vibrant symbolism of the Four-Cornered Hat (500-900 CE) worn by high-ranking men of the Wari and Tiwanaku Empires of the Andes<sup>v</sup>, ancient garments reveal the complex nuances of taste and meaning expressed by different cultures through woven fabrics. Through pattern, **iconography**, colour, texture and design, these garments carry meanings embedded into them hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years ago. Storytelling through textiles can be even more literal than this – the masterful Bayeux Tapestry, from the 11th century CE, uses wool embroidery on linen fabric to create a 70-metre-long pictorial documentation of the Norman conquest of England<sup>vi</sup>

In contemporary Australia, makers are embracing the potential for storytelling offered by textile-based practices. The works that form part of the New Exuberance exhibition all utilise textiles as a means to communicate stories and ideas in innovative and thought-provoking ways – whether through art, fabric design or fashion design and in many cases through a blending, or challenging, of these categories. Nina Walton's installations utilise textiles in their most basic form – as individual threads of yarn. At first glance, her artworks may appear to be large pieces of woven fabric but, on closer inspection, we discover that we are seeing a composition of individual pieces of thread fixed with absolute precision to create a pattern of lines in space. Her works are a visual representation of Game Theory – a branch of mathematics that investigates how we make choices. Whether we are deciding what move to make in chess or when to sell shares on the stock market, we are weighing up all the potential variables involved and trying to decide what will give us the best outcome. The same is true of all the decisions we make in our lives and those made by decision makers in our society. Walton represents the complexity of decision making by first deciding on the 'rules' of the game (how many colours of thread she will use for example) and then exploring every potential outcome that could exist within the parameters she has imposed. Hanging in space, these threads tell the story of all the invisible futures that are denied by each individual decision we make – in reality we only ever see the thread we chose to follow.

Choice making is a particularly resonant topic at a time when our society is facing so many big decisions about how to move forward into the future. Jemima Wyman's artwork explores social responses to the decisions made by others in her examination of the visual strategies employed by protest or resistance movements around the world. There is an unexpected parallel to the Bayeux Tapestry here – Wyman also uses fabric as a means to document the current historical moment but, here, the battle is waged by the socially discontent. After spending 15 years photographing protest movements around the world, Wyman combines elements of these photographs into collages which are then printed onto fabric – creating works like *Haze 7* (2022), where sheer silk fabric echoes the smoke used by protestors. Her pieces feature extensive titles listing the precise details of each protest included in the collage. Wyman transformed some of these fabrics into surgical style masks in 2020, creating potent symbols of the COVID-19 era. The garments produced through *The Social Studio x Atong Atem x Romance Was Born* collaboration also reflect on the moment of their creation through a combination of photography and fabric. They feature prints of Atong Atem's dark and moody photography of decaying local wildlife that ca

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Left: Paul McCann in *Sovereignty Cloak and Crown*, viewing his *Gumnut, ball gown*, 2021, at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) *Queer* exhibition opening, 2022. Photo Liz Sunshine, courtesy NGV.



the visual strategies employed by protest or resistance movements around the world. There is an unexpected parallel to the Bayeux Tapestry here – Wyman also uses fabric as a means to document the current historical moment but, here, the battle is waged by the socially discontent. After spending 15 years photographing protest movements around the world, Wyman combines elements of these photographs into collages which are then printed onto fabric – creating works like Haze 7 (2022), where sheer silk fabric echoes the smoke used by protestors. Her pieces feature extensive titles listing the precise details of each protest included in the collage. Wyman transformed some of these fabrics into surgical style masks in 2020, creating potent symbols of the COVID-19 era. The garments produced through The Social Studio x Atong Atem x Romance Was Born collaboration also reflect on the moment of their creation through a combination of photography and fabric. They feature prints of Atong Atem's dark and moody photography of decaying local wildlife that captured our collective sense of unease, and awareness of our own fragility, during the COVID-19 pandemic.vii However, they are imbued with a sense of hope arising from the commitment to others that is at the heart of The Social Studio venture – each garment was manufactured into clothing by young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds learning the trade of clothing production.

For First Nations artists working from art centres around Australia, textile printing has offered a new way of communicating stories that are both ancient and timeless – eternal stories that serve as the foundation of the artist's identity and culture<sup>ix</sup> The textiles produced by these artists can be used to make garments, fashion accessories, home furnishings and upholstery. Featured in this exhibition are textiles by Jennifer Kamanj Wurrkidj, Helen Ngarridjdan Lanyinwanga, Susan Belinj Marawarr, Joy Bulanjdjan Garlbin, Jay Belinj Jurrupula Rostron and Raylene Bonson from Bábbarra Women's Centre; Keturah Nangala Zimran, Mavis Nampitjinpa Marks, Roseranna Larry, **Kumuntjai** Napanangka Jack and Anmanari Napanangka Nolan from Ikuntji Artists; and Natalie Tungatalum, Maria Josette Orsto, Angelo John Munkara and Roslyn Orsto from Tiwi Designs. Some of these artists' textile designs have been used to upholster furniture commissioned by the JamFactory in collaboration with local furniture designers. The furniture designers worked to create pieces that would complement and enhance the story of the textile covering it. The stories shared by these First Nations artists hold emotional and cultural importance for them – they are an intrinsic aspect of the artist's connection to their **Country** and their ancestors. As the women of Bábbarra Women's Centre explain “...for us they are more than designs: these designs tell the stories of our lives.”<sup>x</sup> (For a detailed description of the themes each artist explores in their textile designs please see the individual artist profiles below). Sharing these stories is an important part of maintaining culture and passing it on to the next generation – through the use of textile printing as a medium, these artists embrace the future while respecting the past.xi These commercially available textiles are also an act of generosity as they allow those of us outside of the artist's culture to connect with these stories and bring some of their beauty into our daily lives. Shannon Brett has noted that the development of these thriving textile practices based on cultural knowledges that were subject to suppression and attempted destruction in the past tells a larger story of pride, resistance and incredible resilience.<sup>xii</sup>

While printing patterns onto fabric is a relatively new medium in the artistic practices of First Nations people, which stretch back many thousands of years, the practice of creating body adornments has always been a part of First Nations cultures<sup>xiii</sup> Today, the design and creation of garments offers makers a way to honour, explore and extend these meaningful practices while exploring their personal history. Grace Lilian Lee is a multicultural Australian artist who draws on her Meriam Mer heritage to create “body sculptures” like Our Branches (2021)<sup>xiv</sup> Lee combines traditional Torres Strait Island weaving techniques, particularly the ‘grasshopper weaving’ technique she learnt from her elder, and renowned Erub artist, Uncle Ken Thaiday with contemporary materials such as cotton webbing.<sup>xv</sup> This results in pieces that she has, quite literally, woven the story of her own diverse cultural heritage into – exploring and celebrating it.<sup>xvi</sup> At the heart of Paul McCann's fashion creations is the story of his grandmother Elizabeth, a woman he describes as “my queen”, and their shared Marrithiyel culture.<sup>xvii</sup> The gowns he has become famous for, including Bush Amethyst Gown (2021), combine the European **couture** silhouettes of the 1950s that Elizabeth (a talented seamstress) made and wore with hand painted designs inspired by his culture and ‘bush bling’ – such as gumnuts that have been painted gold. These gowns fulfil McCann's desire to “...portray us [mob] in a real opulent, sovereign way in fashion”<sup>xviii</sup>, in part via the subliminal connection they draw to the British monarchy, under whose rule the colonisation of Australia occurred, through their similarity to the gowns worn by Queen Elizabeth II (a descendant of this family) during her early reign.xix The regal nature of these silk gowns gently asks us to reflect on which Elizabeth is more authentically described as an Australian queen. For Lisa

The saturated colours and bold pop imagery of Frida Las Vegas (FLV) designs may appear very different to those of Lisa Waup but the desire to celebrate individual identity is at the heart of both. FLV garments tell a tale of designer Stavroula Adameitis' childhood in suburban Australia, during the 1980s and 1990s, by **appropriating** mainstream commercial motifs to create bright prints on clothing with no prescribed size or gender limitations. Adameitis defies any sense of embarrassment about middle class suburban taste, asserting that it is Australia's history of **colonisation** that should bother people rather than the tastes of its suburbanites. Through FLV's stated mission to “...celebrate the signs and symbols of Australia for the world to see, wear, feel and enjoy”<sup>xxiv</sup>, Adameitis creates a colourful and inclusive world for everyone to share.xxv A similar celebration of both individual and collective cultural affiliations is found in the highly detailed knits produced by WAH-WAH Australia. Each WAH-WAH jumper is founder Kaylene Milner's homage to the work of an artist or musician and is designed in collaboration with them.xxvi Featured in New Exuberance are collaborations with musician and artist Reg Mombassa, artist Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran and the highly successful collaboration with artist Kaylene Whiskey. Like a cherished band t-shirt, these jumpers capture the emotional connection that can be found in music and art and provide a means of asserting the wearer's tastes and values to the world.

For these makers, textiles offer a vehicle for communication – they are able to manipulate and pattern fabrics in ways that allow them to share their thoughts and feelings with us. For others, there is a story already embedded within the fabric itself that they seek to draw out and reveal. Hannah Gartside creates installations and sculptural works from items of second-hand clothing and fabrics. For Gartside, these fabrics have a “...crude lived experience; they have their own memories through their usage or context or their methods of production”.<sup>xxvii</sup> Through **recontextualisation**, she seeks to draw out the innate qualities of these materials and reveal their story to us. In Book of Hands (2022), old, well-worn gloves are arranged in a circle so that their fingers gently touch and interlace with each other as if they are alive. The way in which hand contours have been moulded into the leather by past owners, who are now absent, evokes both the human need for connection and the **pathos** of a worn out and discarded object. The life a fabric has already lived is also central to the quilts made by Kate Just. Each quilt is a portrait of an individual, composed by piecing together fabrics from clothing worn by the subject. Through the **juxtaposition** of pattern, texture and colour, the patchwork pieces of each quilt create an abstract portrait of the personality of the wearer whose life they have shared. Both Gartside and Just's artworks comment on the traditional view of textile-based making as ‘feminine’ and therefore meaningless decoration rather than ‘fine’ art. This outdated view is also central to Vita Cochrane's practice – she draws on the work of pioneering female **modernists** Sonia Delaunay and Sophie Taeuber-Arp, whose work blurred the lines between art and craft practices, to create objects that defy easy categorisation. Her woven bags explore the tension between form and function – they are useful objects but their form is determined by the designs patterned on them rather than their **pragmatic** purpose. Does this make them art? Craft? Does it matter? For Cochrane, “[t]he bag is like the start the of the story...” which continues to be written as it enters the world of its purchaser<sup>xxviii</sup>

The stunning garments created by fashion label Romance Was Born (RWB) present a similar smudging of the conceptual lines between design and art. In this special collection titled “RWB Forever”, presented in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, RWB showcased these one-of-a-kind pieces handmade from pre-existing scraps of fabrics. Their intention was to capture and evoke the joy of both new and lasting love – like the people who will wear them, the fabrics that make up these garments bring their past stories with them into a new chapter in their lives. The collection highlighted the beauty that can be created using materials that would normally be seen as scraps and discarded, offering an example of sustainable making that results in something precious and extremely desirable. If these RWB pieces blur the line between art and fashion design, the ones produced by Iordanes Spyridon Gogos have been described as having “exploded” it.<sup>xxix</sup> These pieces, described by the brand as “wearables for the imaginative”<sup>xxx</sup>, were created by a group of collaborators working together to weave their individual ideas into something bigger than any one of them alone. Jordan Gogos, the founder of the brand, is determined to destroy the myth of the ‘lone genius designer’ through this ensemble approach and to demonstrate different possibilities for the future of fashion.<sup>xxxi</sup> Changing how we engage with fashion is at the heart of Nixi Killick's practice – she seeks to transform the way we relate to and experience fashion. Her garments embody the story of the machination of weaving during the industrial revolution and its connection to the first concepts of computer programming.<sup>xxxii</sup> In her designs, we not only interact with the tactile and visual elements of the fabric that is physically present but, also, with virtual reality projections generated by her garments – adding another entire

'dimension' to her work.

From art works composed of individual threads to fabric encoded with the ability to create virtual reality, the textile works in New Exuberance encompass a broad range of techniques and individual tales told. Yet, despite this immense variety, some themes emerge through the interplay between them – concerns with the issues of sustainability, collaboration, diversity and inclusivity. These works reflect on the past – both individual and collective – taking it apart and piecing it together again in ways that tell stories about what the future could look like. They reject outdated conventions and replace them with new ways of seeing and being seen. The title New Exuberance was chosen because of the outpouring of exciting and creative work happening in Australian textiles at the moment but it just as readily applies to the way in which these makers are embracing today's challenges and proposing alternative means of moving forward into the future. Brought together in this exhibition, these works, with their own individual stories, weave a bigger story about where we have been and where we should be going.

## ARTIST PROFILES

BÁBBARRA WOMEN'S CENTRE – Maningrida, West Arnhem Land, Northern Territory.

*The Maningrida community lies on the Country of the Kunibíjji people. In the Kunibíjji people's language, Ndjébbana, the word 'Bábbarra' is the name of a sacred billabong found on the land of the Dukúrrdji clan. Bábbarra also means young girls or women. Three female ancestral spirits live in the billabong – sisters Djómi and Bábbarra and their mother. Djómi and Bábbarra are 'mermaids', one freshwater and the other saltwater, and their mother is the crocodile who lives in the billabong.*

Originally established as a women's refuge in 1987, Bábbarra Women's Centre is run by women for women. Bábbarra advocates for improved learning and economic opportunities for First Nations women and assists them to develop enterprises that will facilitate healthy and sustainable livelihoods. Bábbarra Designs is the centre's main social enterprise. It is a textile studio that designs, prints and sews all of their products onsite. The studio undertakes a range of textile design techniques including drawing, **lino block printing**, bush dye and **screen printing**. Bábbarra designs represent the knowledge and experiences of multiple generations of women artists, from more than twelve different language groups. They feature imagery and motifs related to the artists' experiences of living on **Country**, the landscape, the types of food that is hunted and collected, personal stories and djang/wangarr (ancestral stories).

This exhibition features two capes from the Bábbarra Women's Centre's archive. The designs were originally created by Jennifer Kamanj Wurrkidj and Helen Ngarridjjan Lanyinwanga, for the 2018 Commonwealth Games fashion parade, and they were sewn by Lennie Goya Airra and Phyllis Dunggudja in Maningrida:

JENNIFER KAMANJ WURRKIDJ, Kuninjku peoples, comes from a family of respected artists. Her sister, Deborah Wurrkidj, also works at Bábbarra Women's Centre, as did her late mother, Helen Lanyinwanga, and her father is the highly acclaimed bark painter, John Mawurndjul. Wurrkidj works in textiles, bark painting and sculpture and has been practicing from Bábbarra Women's Centre since 2007. Bush foods, food collecting practices, the activities of ancestor beings and the ceremonial sites of her homeland, Mumeka, are recurring motifs in Wurrkidj's work. Her design, Kukurlk Kare (Going Underground) (2017), represents what she sees when kukurlk kare (going underground) to dig for manme (food) such as man-kurndalh (black plum), wayuk (water lily) roots, worms and beetles.

HELEN NGARRIDJDJAN LANYINWANGA was a senior Kuninjku textile artist and mentor to younger and emerging artists. She worked at Bábbarra Designs from 2008 and was known for her textile prints, prints on paper and basket weaving. Her designs represent important themes of Kunwarrde (stone country) and kunbad (rocks). Ngarduk Kured (My Country) (2017), represents the Kunwarrde near Yikarrakkal – Lanyinwanga's mother's traditional Country. Yikarrakkal holds many important sacred sites and living spirits. Lanyinwanga and her daughters used to cross the Mangabo river when travelling to Manmoyi outstation during the wet season. During this journey, they would observe the kunronj (fresh water) as it flowed over the kunbad and enjoy its sweet and fresh taste.

Three new textile lengths are also on exhibit:

SUSAN BELINJ MARAWARR comes from an artistic family (her brothers are celebrated bark painters James Iyuna and John Mawurndjul) and is a senior Kuninjku artist. She works across printmaking, sculpture, weaving and bark painting. Marawarr's designs often represent djang of wak wak, ngalyod and yawkyawk mythologies as well as items used in everyday life such as dillybags, fish traps, mats and baskets. Her works create a sense of movement and energy through the use of a striking black and white colour palette and deep perspective. Mandjabu (*Fish Trap*) (2017), depicts Kuninjku people using milil (burney vine, *Malaisia scandens*) and manylik (a type of grass) to make traditional tapered fish traps.

JOY BULANJDJAN GARLBIN, Kunibidji peoples, is a traditional owner of Maningrida and leading member of Bábbarra Women's Centre. In addition to being a senior textile artist, Garlbin is a respected bark painter, weaver and maker of mimih spirits. Djomi (Freshwater spirit) (2019), represents Garlbin's ancestral story about the Djomi – a mermaid like spirit that lives in the fresh water

stream that flows near Maningrida and is a powerful symbol of fertility. This design features the fresh waterlily leaves and seaweed from the sea floor.

JAY BELINJ JURRUPULA ROSTRON is a Kune/Dalabon/Rembarrnga woman from the Barappa clan. She works across a number of mediums including drawing, painting, pandanus coiling, sculpture and linocut fabric design. Rostron often references two of her ancestral stories, Namurre Boko (two brother's story) and Modjarrkki, in her textile works and captures daily life on her father's freshwater Country through detailed illustrations of figures and plants. Mimih Dancing and Bolung (*Rainbow Serpent*) (2022), is based on a **songline** from the Korlobididah outstation in West Arnhem Land.

RAYLENE NGARRIDJDJAN BONSON is a Ndjébbana/Kuninjku textile artist who has been working at Bábbarra Designs since 2012. Bonson represents the second generation of textile artists at Bábbarra Women's Centre. She was mentored by her late mother, Nancy Gununwanga, who was a senior textile artist at Bábbarra Designs and one of the founding members of the Bábbarra Women's Centre. Bonson specialises in lino block printing and is well-known for her depictions of ancestral stories and ceremonial objects – in particular the lorrkkon (a hollow log used in burial ceremonies), kunmadj (dillybag) and mandjabu (conical fish trap). Her design, Wubbunj (paperbark canoe) (2017), was used in a collaboration with the JamFactory and industrial design studio, DANIEL EMMA. This design was inspired by the story of how people came to live in Maningrida, which also happens to be the story of her late partner's father – two men were living in the Nalarrambarr area, on the other side of the river to modern day Maningrida. After spotting a large Makassan (Indonesian) boat approaching, the two men decided to cross the river, in their wubbunj, to Djomi. When they tasted the freshwater from the Djomi spring, they decided to settle on this land that later became known as Maningrida.

<https://babbarra.com/>

@babbarradesigns

#### DANIEL EMMA

DANIEL EMMA is an Adelaide-based industrial design studio, established by Daniel To and Emma Aiston in 2008. To and Aiston work on a variety of products including furniture, desk objects, lighting, watches and installations. Taking inspiration from Australia's diverse culture, they use simple objects and forms to create unexpected designs that are 'just nice'. In 2021, To and Aiston were commissioned by the JamFactory to collaborate with Raylene Ngarridjdan Bonson, from Bábbarra Designs, on a pair of loveseats – *Love Bench with Back* and *Love Bench without Back* (2021).

<https://daniel-emma-store.com>

@daniel\_emma

#### FRIDA LAS VEGAS

Stavroula Adameitis is the artist behind the bright, bold and beautiful world of Frida Las Vegas (FLV). Working from her Sydney-based studio, the 'Glamour Garage', FLV produces art, fashion, homewares and interiors that celebrate everyday Australian **iconography**. FLV garments are made using **direct-to-fabric** and **sublimation** printing techniques. Adameitis hand cuts each item before they are then structured and hand-sewn by a freelance maker. The entire manufacture process is completed in Sydney and customers can either receive their order by mail, in a small pink pizza box, or collect it in person from the Glamour Garage.

<https://www.fridalavasvegas.com/>

@fridalavasvegas

#### GRACE LILLIAN LEE

Grace Lillian Lee is a fashion designer, artist, curator and mentor. A descendant of the Meriam Mer people of the Eastern Islands of the Torres Strait, Lee's work combines traditional weaving techniques with modern textiles materials in an exploration and expression of her diverse cultural heritage. In addition to her artistic practice, Lee has also spearheaded the movement to bring First Nations perspectives and creatives into the Australian fashion and design industries.

<https://gracelillianlee.com/>

@gracelillianlee

#### HANNAH GARTSIDE

Hannah Gartside is a Melbourne-based **multidisciplinary** artist who uses found fabrics and clothing to create sculptures, installations and video art. Working with fabric that she finds on the street and in second-hand stores or that is gifted to her by friends and, sometimes, strangers, Gartside uses an **intuitive** approach to creating her artworks. Through handling the material, she tries to 'listen' to its properties and its past in order to conceptualise something full of sensuality, poetry and symbolism that honours the past life of her medium. She then uses sewing, dyeing and dress-making techniques to bring her ideas to life in three-dimensional forms.

<http://www.hannahgartside.com/>

@hannahgartsidestudio

#### IKUNTJI ARTISTS – Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), Northern Territory.

Originally established as a women's centre in 1992, a screen printing on T-shirts workshop ignited the women's passion for art making. After their acrylic paintings gained Australian and international attention, the centre was incorporated as the Ikuntji Artists Aboriginal Corporation in 2005.

In 2012, some of the Ikuntji artists expressed an interest in reviving the t-shirt printing workshops, which led to later expansion into general fabric design. The artists have embraced the screen printing on fabric technique and create a range of bold, colourful designs. Each artist has developed their own signature style and create designs inspired by their ngurra (Country) and **Tjukurrpa** (ancestral stories or 'Dreaming'). The art centre remains a cultural hub within the community and a place where cultural practices are shared and celebrated.

New Exuberance features designs by the following artists:

KETURAH NANGALA ZIMRAN is an Arrernte/Luritja/Pintupi artist. She comes from a family of established artists – her grandmother, Narputta Nangala Jugadia, was a founding member of Ikuntji Artists and one of the original artists from the **Central Desert Painting Movement** of the 1970's and her father, Smithy Zimran, painted with the **Papunya Tula** Artists. Zimran has a very bold style that often uses contrasting colours. She represents the puli puli (rocks) which are her grandmother's story and tali tali (sandhills) which are her own story. Zimran's Puli Puli (2017) design has been used in a collaboration with the JamFactory and furniture designer Caren Elliss.

MAVIS NAMPITJINPA MARKS, Luritja/Pintubi peoples, comes from a family of accomplished artists – her brothers, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa and Smithy Zimran Tjampitjinpa, are both renowned **Western Desert** artists. Marks is known for both her painting and textile designs. Marks' design *Women's Business* (2018) represents women's business at Mount Liebig (where she lived for many years with her husband). For Marks, women's business symbolises women working together. Her designs capture moments that women spend together doing things such as collecting bush foods and performing ceremonies. Her bold brush strokes evoke the mark-making qualities of the finger drawing method



(using fingers to draw stories in the sand) that were practiced at Mount Liebig.

ROSERANNA LARRY, Warlpiri/Luritja peoples, works across painting, textile design and photography. Larry grew up watching her grandmothers paint. Before the art centre was established at Ikuntji, she would watch her grandmother, Esther Napaltjarri Jugadai (Arrernte/Luritja/Warlpiri peoples), as she painted at home and they would go and collect the native **ininti seeds** that are used for ceremonies. Larry would also travel to Willowra to visit Old Lady Morton – her father’s auntie. Morton (Anmatyerre/Warlpiri peoples), was the one who taught Larry to paint, however, it was not until after Morton’s passing that Larry began to paint at Ikuntji Artists. *Wirliyajarrayi* (2018), depicts the Tjukurrpa that was passed down to Larry by Old Lady Morton. Wirliyajarrayi is the story of Janyanpartinya creek (Mount Campbell). It represents the kingki/tjanpa and milarrpa watinki/ukurrukurru Tjuta, the boogey men and women, who live near the creek.

**KUMUNTJAI NAPANANGKA JACK**, Luritja/Ngaanyatjarra peoples, was a highly respected Elder in the Western Desert and founding member of Ikuntji Artists. However, Jack had already been making art with her late husband, Papunya Tula painter Gideon Tjupurrula, before the Ikuntji art centre was established. She often represented her father’s Tjukurrpa and the landscape of Kuruyultu, near Tjukurrula, in Western Australia. Jack’s father, Tutuma Tjapangarti, was one of the first men to paint at Papunya Tula. *Kuruyultu* (2018) evokes Jack’s interpretation of the landscape. Using layers of colour, she evokes the bush flowers and grasses that grow on her Country, near Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay).

ANMANARI NAPANANGKA NOLAN was an Arrernte/Luritja/Pintupi artist and very important law women in her community. She became involved in art making through her late husband, Papunya Tula artist, Lionel Kantawarra Tjupurrula. Nolan was a highly regarded member of Ikuntji Artists for many years. Nolan painted her Mulpu (bush mushroom) Tjukurrpa and Kungkayunti. *Kungkayunti* (2018), represents women dancing at Kungka Yunti, located south of Haasts Bluff. It is a significant Tjukurrpa for the vast Western Desert region.

<https://ikuntji.com.au/>  
@ikuntjiartists

#### CAREN ELLISS DESIGN

Caren Elliss is an industrial designer and furniture designer based in Adelaide. The studio, Caren Elliss Design, was established in 2013 with a focus on creating simple and fun furniture. In 2021, Ellis was commissioned by the JamFactory to collaborate with Keturah Nangala Zimran, from Ikuntji Artists, to create the *Boulder Chair* and *Boulder Footrest* (2021).

A new series of the *Boulder Footrest*, upholstered in the textile designs of other Ikuntji artists, has been created for this exhibition. In the context of the exhibition space, these footrests have been reimagined as sitting stones or ‘pods’ and are designed to be both functional and **aesthetically** pleasing – providing audience members a place to rest while viewing the film components of this exhibition.

<http://www.carenelliss.com>  
@carenellissdesign

#### JORDANES SPYRIDON GOGOS

Jordan Gogos is a Sydney-based artist / designer who uses fabric as a vehicle to tell stories and explore relationships. Working from his studio in the Powerhouse Museum (as part of a creative industries residency programme), he creates a range of products including wearables, furniture, photography, performance, set design, film and art, often using repurposed fabric that is then painted and printed on. Characterised by an abundance of colour and pattern, Gogos’ practice focusses on collaboration as a new way of working within the fashion, art and design industries.

<https://www.gogos.online>

@iordanesspyridongogos

#### JEMIMA WYMAN

Jemima Wyman is a multi-disciplinary artist who works and lives between Brisbane and Los Angeles, U.S.A. She works across the mediums of installation, sculpture, video, performance, photography, painting and collage. Wyman has compiled an extensive archive (called the MAS-archive) of photographs that capture protest or resistance movements from around the world. Drawing on this archive to make her art, Wyman carefully selects and hand-cuts photographs which are then arranged into a pattern on paper. The final composition is scanned and digitally edited into large repeat patterns that can be printed onto bolts of fabric. Wyman hopes her work will help people to learn from the past so we can create a better future.

<https://www.jemimawyman.com/>

@jemimawyman

#### KATE JUST

Kate Just works with traditionally domestic, craft practices such as sewing, quilting and knitting to create artworks that explore social and political issues relating to female and queer experiences and representations. In addition to her independent practice, Melbourne-based Just also collaborates with the community to create public art projects addressing important social issues such as feminism, violence against women, sexual harassment and assault, LGBTQIA pride and discrimination, racism, sexism, transphobia and the ecological crisis. By translating these important issues into textile artworks, Just creates soft, tactile and familiar objects for the viewer to engage with, inviting them into a more intimate relationship with the message she is trying to convey.

<https://www.katejust.com>

@katejustknits

#### LISA WAUP

Lisa Waup is a mixed-cultural First Nations artist who works across mediums including weaving, printmaking, photography, sculpture, fashion and digital art. Based in Melbourne, she explores symbols and materials to express her personal experiences of being a First Nations woman growing up in Australia and the stories of her family, Country and culture. Waup’s drawings have been transformed into large scale prints adorning a range of garment designs for Melbourne fashion label VERNER.

<https://www.lisa-waup.com>

@lisa.waup

#### VERNER

VERNER is a Melbourne-based fashion label created by designer Ingrid VERNER. VERNER explores everyday lifestyle, culture and landscape to create a contemporary Australian aesthetic that is stylish, practical and comfortable. The label also has a strong focus on ethical and sustainable production.

<https://verner.co>

@thisisverner



## NINA WALTON

Nina Walton's artistic practice is a manifestation of her two passions – mathematics and art. Walton began her career as an Associate Professor of Law and Economics at the University of Southern California from 2008-2014. Upon returning to Australia, she decided to pursue her interest in painting and drawing as a way of expressing her fascination with patterns, systems, games and rules in a more approachable and accessible form. After completing a Master of Fine Arts in 2021, Walton now creates textiles, abstract painting, drawing, artist books, performance works and wall-based installations.

<https://www.ninawalton.com>

@ninawalton\_\_

## NIXI KILLICK

Nixi Killick is a Melbourne-based fashion designer who merges textiles and technology to create futuristic streetwear that blurs the boundaries between tactile fashion and the digital world. Having grown up in the circus, performance and art worlds, Killick has a fascination with the bizarre and the idea of **cosmic dimensions**. Killick embeds augmented reality targets (images that function in a similar way to a QR code) into her fashion designs. Using the Eyejack app, wearers or observers can focus their smartphone camera onto the target and see the image come to life on their phone screen.

<https://www.nixikillick.com>

@nixikillick

## PAUL MCCANN

Paul McCann is Marrithiyel man born in Darwin and traditional landowner of his Country Delye, located about 350 kilometres south west of Darwin, Northern Territory. McCann's love of art and design was fostered by the artistic practices of his family members. As a child, McCann would sit and watch his father, uncles and aunties as they painted and made woodcarvings and didgeridoos. His glamorous and glitzy sense of style was inspired by his grandmother, Elizabeth, who made her own clothes based on the fashionable silhouettes of the 1950s – typically cinched-waists and full-skirts – and a childhood watching old movies on television. McCann now lives in Melbourne where he designs and constructs his opulent gowns. Many of his gowns are made from hand painted organza fabric, embellished with intricate sequin and bead detailing. McCann completes his looks with handmade jewellery, or 'bush bling', that feature native plants such as gumnuts and eucalyptus leaves.

@paul.mccann\_art

## ROMANCE WAS BORN

Romance Was Born (RWB) is a Sydney-based fashion label created by design duo Anna Plunkett and Luke Sales. Plunkett and Sales met while studying at East Sydney Technical College (now TAFE NSW) in the early 2000s. Their shared passion for extravagance, romance, whimsy and wonder, folly and fantasy led to the creation of RWB in 2005. The label combines hand worked appliqué and embroidery, unconventional silhouettes, vintage **kitsch**, vibrant colour and pattern and intricate bead and sequin detailing into one riotous expression of joy.

<https://www.romancewasborn.com>

@romancewasborn

## THE SOCIAL STUDIO

Established in 2009, The Social Studio is a non-for-profit social enterprise that provides education pathways, training and work opportunities in the fashion, design and arts sectors for people from refugee and new migrant backgrounds. Located in Collingwood, Melbourne (Victoria), The Social Studio houses a fashion school, ethical manufacturing studio, retail space and a community arts practice. The Social Studio funds its education and training programmes through the sale of fashion and homewares made both in-house and by like-minded designers and collaborates with established artists and designers to produce collections of limited-edition items. In 2021, The Social Studio collaborated with artist Atong Atem and fashion label Romance Was Born to design a dress, two t-shirts and a bag. All items were then manufactured in The Social Studio workshop.

<https://thesocialstudio.org>

@thesocialstudio

## ATONG ATEM

Atong Atem's family emigrated to Australia after fleeing the civil war in South Sudan. Now based in Melbourne, she creates highly stylised photographs and video artworks, full of colour, pattern and texture, that comment on the way that African people were visually represented by Western **ethnographers** in the past. Her artmaking is an act of reclaiming and **decolonising** the depiction of African people.

<https://www.atongatem.com>

@atongatem

## TIWI DESIGN – Wurrumiyanga (formerly Nguiu), Bathurst Island, Northern Territory.

Tiwi Design is one of Australia's oldest art centres. It grew out of the printmaking practice of two young men, Bede Tungatalum and Giovanni Tipungwuti. In 1968, Tungatalum and Tipungwuti began working with art teacher, Madeline Clear, to create wood block prints in the small room underneath the Catholic Presbytery on Bathurst Island. They slowly built up their repertoire, including screen printing and textile printing. The partnership formed by Tungatalum and Tipungwuti was then transformed into an association in 1980, with the aim to promote, preserve and enrich Tiwi culture. Tiwi Design is now a busy community of artists who work across a diverse range of mediums including painting, wood sculptures, textiles, ceramics, pandanus weaving and printmaking.

Textile printing has been a central part of Tiwi Designs since the early 1980s. They now have a purpose-built textile printing workshop run by master printer, Osmond Kantilla, and his assistant, Alan Kerinauia. The centre has two 13-metre-long tables on which Kantilla manages the production of hand-printed fabrics using silkscreens. In addition to designing his own screens, Kantilla transforms original artworks on canvas, bark and ironwood into silk screen designs, carefully mixing ink colours and matching them to different fabrics and designs. The printed textiles are then cooked in a commercial oven to set the water-based inks. Approximately 500 metres of fabric is produced by the centre each week during the dry season.

This exhibition features three new textile lengths of designs taken from Tiwi Designs's archive:

NATALIE TUNGATALUM'S design, *Tuninga (Blue Tongue Lizard)* (c. 1980), was inspired by an experience she had when hunting for possums and wallabies with her husband at Tarntipi. On their way home, her husband caught two blue tongue lizards which they later cooked by campfire. Tungatalum did not eat the lizards, as they make the texture of her skin become dry and scaly, like a snakeskin. When painting this design, Tungatalum vividly recalls the colour of the blue tongue lizard's skin.



MARIA JOSETTE ORSTO was the first female artist to become an official member of Tiwi Design and the first Tiwi artist to create designs specifically to be used in screen printing. *Parmajini Armband* (c. 1980s), was inspired by the Parmajini (ceremonial arm bands) worn for the Pukamani (funeral) and Kulama (yam) ceremonies. These armbands are believed to ward off bad spirits. Orsto's father taught her how to make parmajini when she was a young girl. They used bark and pandanas and decorated them with red seeds and feathers.

ANGELO JOHN MUNKARA'S designs feature bold lines and figurative motifs. *Muputi* (Fish) (c. 1970s), designed in collaboration with studio print coordinator Ray Young, represents the variety of fish usually found around the Tiwi Islands. Tiwi people use throw nets to catch small fish that they then use as live bait to attract barramundi and salmon. Bream, catfish, rock cod, sawfish, jewfish, trevally, snapper and mangrove jack and mackerel are also commonly found in the area.

ROSLYN ORSTO is a Tiwi artist renowned for her use of the wooden comb technique when painting with ochre on canvas and paper. Her textile design, *Punarika* (Waterlily) (2014), represents the waterlilies that grow in the lakes, ponds, rivers and running streams of her Country and celebrates the important role they play as food and bush medicine. This design has been used in a collaboration with the JamFactory and designer Dean Toepfer.

<https://tiwidesigns.com>

@#tiwidesigns

#### DEAN TOEPFER

Dean Toepfer is an Adelaide-based multidisciplinary designer who works across furniture, lighting and object design. His practice focuses on the exploration of different materials – how they lend themselves to particular shapes, forms and processes – and how they interact with each other. In 2021, the JamFactory commissioned Toepfer to work with Roslyn Orsto, from Tiwi Design, on the creation of two armchairs, Pupuni Punarika (Good Waterlily).

<https://www.deantoepfer.com>

<https://bio.site/deantoepfer>

@deantoepfer

#### VITA COCHRAN

Vita Cochran is a Sydney-based textile artist with an interest in the connections between art, craft, fashion and design. Cochran employs traditional, domestic craft practices such as sewing, embroidery and weaving, to create artworks that defy easy categorisation as either visual art or **applied art**. By playing with the form and function of textiles alongside the meanings we attach to them, Cochran celebrates both the practical and conceptual elements of her medium.

<https://annamilesgallery.com/artists/vita-cochran>  
@vitacochran

#### WAH-WAH AUSTRALIA

WAH-WAH Australia is the brainchild of designer Kaylene Milner. Founded in 2015, WAH-WAH is based on the principles of responsible design and production. An independent, Sydney-based knitwear label, WAH-WAH collaborates with artists and musicians to create original designs that are

produced in limited runs and small batches using high quality biodegradable Australian merino wool. Made to last a lifetime, each design celebrates elements of the pop culture that inspired Milner as a teenager.

<https://www.wahwahaustralia.com>

@wah\_wah\_australia

#### KAYLENE WHISKEY

Kaylene Whiskey is a highly celebrated Yankunytjatjara artist from the Iwantja Arts centre in Indulkana, APY Lands (South Australia). Whiskey is known for her joyful celebrations of kungka ku pu (strong women) using motifs taken from both pop culture and **A angu** culture. Her collaboration with WAH-WAH features music icons Cher and David Bowie, Whoopi Goldberg in her Sister Act costume, Wonder kungka (Blak Wonder Woman), the Indulkana Tigers football team, cockatoos, boomerangs, the Aboriginal flag and some of Whiskey's friends from Indulkana.

<https://www.iwantjaarts.com.au/artists/kaylene-whiskey>

#### REG MOMBASSA

Reg Mombassa (born Christopher O'Doherty) is a New Zealand-born, Australian musician and artist. As a musician, he is best known as one of the founding members of new wave and pop rock band, Mental as Anything. As an artist, he is celebrated for his graphic illustrations for Australian surf wear brand, Mambo. Released in 2020, the REG MOMBASSA X WAH-WAH sweater, 'Sweater Enthusiasts for Climate Action,' raises money for the Climate Council and the Firesticks Alliance Indigenous Corporation.

<https://www.regmombassa.com>

@regmombassaofficial

#### RAMESH MARIO NITHIYENDRAN

Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran is a Sri Lankan-born, Sydney-based contemporary artist. Although widely known for his experimental approach to ceramics, Nithiyendran works across a wide range of media. Nithiyendran plays with the symbols and imagery used by different cultures, particularly South Asian cultures, in order to explore global histories and politics of gender, race, religion, **idolatry** and **the monument**. This collaboration with WAH-WAH features his characteristically bright, multi-coloured and dynamic mark making and the rough, abstracted figures from his sculptural works.

<https://www.ramesh-nithiyendran.com>

@rams\_deep69





Above: Smokes And Snacks Glamour. Maxi Dress. Creative Direction Stavroula, Adameitis. Photo Eamon Donnelly.

## SECTION 2 EXPLORING THE EXHIBITION THROUGH FOUR THEMES





## THEME 1 - Valuing Our Clothing, Valuing Our Planet.

The relationship we have with our clothing is one of the most intimate we have with any of the items we own. Clothing is worn on our body, against our skin, and shapes itself to our contours. It absorbs the smell of our bodies and the perfumes we wear. In a way, our clothing forms a second skin that both shields us from the world while communicating who we are, or who we would like to be, to it – but, like a snake’s skin, we can shed clothes when we outgrow them physically or emotionally and leave them behind. The garments we wore at a precise moment in our lives can become a potent reminder, whether positive or negative, of the time, the experience, or the people we were with. It is this particular quality, what Rosalind Jana has described as clothing’s ability to “haunt” us, that makes items of used clothing so capable of expressing loss or absence in visual art.<sup>xxxii</sup> When we see an installation like Louise Bourgeois’ *Cell VII* (1998), in which her deceased mother’s clothing is suspended within a small chamber filled with symbolic objects, the aged garments floating in the air convey that the person who once wore them is no longer present. We see the same effect in Hannah Gartside’s *Book of Hands* (2022), where discarded gloves remind us of the unknown people whose hands they once clothed – what kind of lives did they live and have their stories, like these gloves, been forgotten? Today though, outside of the world of visual art, clothing has found a new way to haunt us – not through the expression of symbolic emotion we attach to it but as mounds of meaningless waste discarded to become landfill and pollute our environment.

According to a recent report by the Monash University’s Sustainable Development Institute, Australians are the second largest consumers of textiles in the world (the largest being the United States).<sup>xxxiii</sup> We buy an average of 14.8kg of clothing each year per person (about 56 items) and it is estimated that 92% of these items will be discarded in some way within the same year.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Textiles, including those used to make clothing, were originally a precious, handmade luxury item. Today, they have undergone a dramatic change in value to become goods that are easily disposed of and replaced when trends change – leading to the problem of textile overconsumption. The origins of this change lie in the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th century during which textile production went from a slow process, carried out by hand, to a mechanised process that could produce great quantities of textiles at a much faster speed. The industrial production of textiles, as well as the development of sewing machines, reduced the costs of fabric and garment production and gave greater access to these products to a larger proportion of the community. However, until relatively recently the average person did not have access to a huge wardrobe of clothing. Most garments were still made for the individual (to fit the measurements of their body) in the early 1900s – the very wealthy had their clothes made for them by **couture** houses while small dressmaking businesses produced clothing for the middle classes – and these items were still quite expensive. Many of the female population made their own clothing, as well as that of their family. It was only during the huge social upheavals of the 1960s that pret-a-porter (ready-to-wear) clothing – and what we would now recognise as the fashion industry – became the dominant model for clothing consumption. By producing clothing in a small variety of standard sizes (rather than cutting a new pattern for each individual person’s garment) a wider range of clothing designs were able to be offered at cheaper prices. The idea of democratising fashion – that access to a large variety of clothing would no longer be reserved for the very wealthy – was a reflection of the spirit of the era and of young people’s desire to live in a different way to their parents. While ready-to-wear clothing increased the range of garments available to consumers, the quality of these garments was generally higher than we would expect to find in an average clothing store today. Many of these pieces still exist in wearable condition and are sold through luxury vintage stores to customers who collect clothing from certain designers or eras – they may not have been handmade to measure but neither were they considered disposable. Over the next sixty years, as clothing brands increasingly adopted cheaper synthetic fabrics and moved to manufacture their products in countries with minimal regulations regarding workers’ conditions and pay, the speed with which trends in fashion were able to change increased while the cost of garments decreased. With this came bigger profits and the rise of what we know as ‘fast fashion’.

The large amount of clothing that ends up in landfill is only one aspect of the negative social and environmental impact of textiles. Each stage in the lifespan of a textile – from the farming of natural fibres (like wool or cotton) or production of synthetics, to the manufacturing of fabric and then

clothing, all the way to its destruction as waste – brings its own environmental challenges. It is estimated by the United Nations Sustainable Fashion Alliance (UNSFA) that the fashion and textiles industry is responsible of 2-8% of global greenhouse gas emissions<sup>xxxv</sup> The poor working conditions in clothing production factories is also a major issue – for many people, it was the 2013 Rana Plaza Disaster in Bangladesh that first brought the underlying costs of fashion to their awareness. Dealing with the environmental and social costs of fashion production is a complex problem. We want to protect the planet, and the people who make our clothes, and make sure that future generations do not pay the price for our obsession with ‘newness’ – especially since ‘fashion’, as opposed to basic utilitarian clothing, is not actually necessary. At the same time, the UNSFA also estimates that the fashion and textile industries employ around 300 million people worldwide – many of whom are women.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The potential impact of a slowing textile market on these people is enormous, especially for those in economically insecure environments. We also want people to have choice. There is a reason why depictions of **dystopian** futures in film and literature often represent everyone dressed uniformly – people express themselves through both the creation, and wearing, of clothing and body adornments. It is a difficult situation to which there is no easy answer. At all levels of textile production, design and manufacturing stakeholders will need to consider the impacts of their actions and how these can be improved. To some extent, this is already happening with a variety of possible approaches being proposed ranging from the obvious, such as regulating the activities of fashion companies who manufacture their products overseas to ensure transparency, to the slightly more unexpected – feeding sheep seaweed rather than grass so that their digestive systems produce less carbon dioxide, for instance.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

The garments on display as part of the New Exuberance exhibition reveal a range of different approaches to reconciling artistic expression with an awareness of the environmental impacts of clothing production. Paul McCann focuses on creating his one-of-a-kind gowns from deadstock fabric - which would otherwise go to waste.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Deadstock is fabric that has already been produced for other clothing manufacturers but which has not been used and would normally end up being destroyed. McCann avoids expending further resources on more fabric production by seeing the value in this already existing material. The pieces created by Romance Was Born are entirely made from scraps of fabric and garments that already existed – showing the potential for trash to become treasure in the hands of the truly creative. This is also the approach of Jordon Gogos and the Iordanes Spyridon Gogos (ISG) brand. The ISG pieces featured in New Exuberance (ISG 2021 Afterpay Australian Fashion Week) were created from repurposed fabric pieced together on a domestic sewing machine.<sup>xxxix</sup> For ISG 2022 Afterpay Australian Fashion Week Gogos and his collaborators were able to develop this concept further using technology provided by the Powerhouse Museum to layer scraps of fabric together to create new and innovative fabrications<sup>xl</sup> For Gogos, transparency is key and “... discarded and unused materials, threads need to be shared, not thrown away or put in storage”.<sup>xli</sup> Belying the bold, non-gendered modernism of her designs, Frida Las Vegas garments are produced in a very traditional model – each item is custom made for an individual customer meaning that only the amount of product needed is manufactured<sup>xlii</sup> Overproduction is a serious issue – the Australian Fashion Council estimates that about one third of new clothing produced does not get sold.<sup>xliii</sup> Unless they are donated to a charitable organisation for distribution to those who need them, these garments will usually end up as landfill resulting in a complete waste of the resources used in their manufacture. Preventing over production is also a focus for The Social Studio and VERNER – both labels produce their garments in small batches and regard them as ‘limited editions’. In the case of The Social Studio, the production of the garments occurs inhouse and operates as a training operation providing the skills young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds need to gain employment. VERNER works only with accredited factories to produce their garments to avoid issues of unfair work conditions and child labour, as well as focusing on the use of fabrics and dyes that are non-toxic to both people and environment. The pure Australian merino wool used by WAH WAH Australia means that their jumpers are fully biodegradable and will not pollute the earth as they decompose.

As consumers, it is important that we consider our role in tackling this problem as well. A Monash University report on the transitioning of the Australian fashion and textiles industry to a more sustainable model indicates that most the important contribution of consumers will be reducing waste. Once again, it will be young people who decide on the kind of society they want to live



in and use their power as consumers to drive the changes needed to make it reality. Rather than throw away garments we no longer want, we can give them to charity (and be aware of the fact that there are many of us who do not have the luxury of wastefulness) or recirculate them through resale platforms. We can learn how to take care of our garments and repair them if they become damaged. Vita Cochran's practice reminds us of a time when most people knew how to repair clothing or, when it was beyond repair, to use it creatively to make other items. We can look to our older generations to acquire these skills and empower ourselves with the knowledge we need to make our clothing last. Most importantly, we need to develop our relationship with our clothing - to think about why we buy things, what we really find meaning in and will treasure. As both artists and consumers, we need to cultivate and refine our own visual tastes and not just respond to the ever-present cycles of fashion and influencers telling us that this is the *one* thing we absolutely *must* have (until next week when it will be something else). As Kate Just's quilt portraits made of patchworked pieces of clothing show us, the garments we purchase and wear tell the story of our lives and personalities. As consumers, we can start to restore the value of textiles and clothing and give them back the significance they deserve - to allow them to haunt us with emotional meaning rather than the physical degradation of the planet. It is here that all of our makers are showing us the way. From beautiful, expressive designs printed onto individual pieces of fabric to intricate items of clothing and thought-provoking art works, all of the work in *New Exuberance* highlights the precious nature of textiles. As conveyors of stories, things of beauty or a way of expressing identity - these textiles are things to be cherished rather than end up as landfill. Each piece in *New Exuberance* carries with it the emotional resonance of its maker. They remind us of the work that goes into creating clothing and textiles, and of the individuals who make them, and that none of these should never be seen as disposable - whether the result is a simple t-shirt or a work of art.



Nixi Killick, Cryptic Frequency Augmented Reality Activated Biker Jacket and Biker Skirt, 2019, scuba knit; Cryptic Frequency Augmented Reality Activated Leotard, 2022, polyester spandex. Courtesy of Nixi Killick. Photo Emily-Rose Hyde-Page.



## THEME 2 - Come As You Are.

Australia is an incredibly diverse nation composed of people from many cultural backgrounds, of different gender identities, sexualities, body sizes and abilities. However, the undoubted diversity of our society has never been something that is reflected in the fields of textile or fashion design and in the advertising and promotion of these in the mainstream media. Only as recently as 2018, the head of IMG Models Australia revealed her shock upon discovering that “diverse” simply meant “not blond” [sic] to one of her clients.<sup>xiv</sup> Yet clothing is something that is common to us all – we all wear it – and, therefore, we all participate in the world of fashion even when we do not see it reflect us or our lives. It is slowly becoming apparent that we all benefit when fashion and design more fully reflects our community – when it invites us all to join in rather than excluding all but those who conform to a narrow set of characteristics. The *New Exuberance* exhibition illustrates the incredible richness to be found when fashion and design embraces a wider diversity of voices and stories – from those keeping thousands of years of culture alive to those trying to change the culture of the fashion industry itself.

One of the most exciting developments in Australian fashion has been the increasing visibility of First Nations textile and fashion designers over the last few years. From Kaylene Whiskey’s bold jumper design (made in collaboration with WAH WAH Australia) to the introspective and harmonious textile designs by Lisa Waup (for her collaboration with VERNER), *New Exuberance* showcases the engaging results of First Nations artists applying their unique perspectives to the world of fashion. The talent of First Nations painters working from art centres around Australia has been celebrated, both locally and internationally, for some time but more recently their equally impressive textile designs have come to the fore. For artists working in this medium, textile design presents another opportunity to keep important cultural knowledge alive through storytelling. In *New Exuberance* we find a diverse range of First Nations textile designs – including a collaboration in which a fabric by Ikuntji artist **Kumuntjai** Napanangka Jack is used to cover a stool designed by Caren Elliss. This fabric design, titled *Kuruyultu* (2018), tells the story of Jack’s father’s **Tjukurrpa** – a sacred ancestral story (sometimes referred to as a ‘Dreaming’) that combines spiritual, geographical, social and ecological knowledge into one narrative that connects individuals to their ancestors and Country. Of course, not all First Nations textile designers represent their ancestral stories through their designs. Other designers explore elements of the natural world or the activities of daily life in their community. We find this approach in the *Muputi*



Above: WAH-WAH x KAYLENE WHISKEY, 2021, Australian merino wool. Reproduced courtesy of Kaylene Whiskey and Iwantja Arts. Photo Simon Eeles.

(c. 1970s) fabric where Tiwi Designs artist Angelo Munkara depicts the various fish found around the Tiwi Islands that provide an important source of food for his people. It is also important to remember, especially when discussing diversity, that First Nations people are not a **monoculture** but comprise a large number of different peoples with different languages, histories and stories – within the group of artists working from Bábbarra Women’s Centre alone there are artists from more than twelve different language groups.<sup>xvi</sup>

The use of these textiles to make clothing and soft furnishings allows others to bring the beauty of First Nations cultures and ways of seeing the world into their daily life – to engage with them in a dynamic way by adorning themselves or their environment with them, rather than observing a painting on a wall. Successful collaborations with well-established brands, like Bábbarra’s collaboration with homewares and lifestyle brand *Kip & Co*, have contributed to bringing the work of these artists out of galleries and into people’s homes. It is hoped that a wider awareness of, and demand for, First Nations textiles will be achieved through these partnerships, leading to the development of independent First Nations design businesses. We cannot discuss the increasing prominence of the work of First Nations designers without highlighting the powerful advocacy of Grace Lilian Lee. As a maker, Lee has a multifaceted practice that bridges the worlds of art and design, producing work that ranges from the wearable sculpture *Our Branches* (2021), featured in *New Exuberance*, to handmade fashion accessories like her woven neckpieces made with the grasshopper weaving technique. Alongside her own practice, Lee has championed the work of other First Nations creatives through the activities of First Nations Fashion + Design – an organisation that she co-founded with Tegan Jan Cowlshaw to promote and create pathways into the world of fashion for First Nations designers. For Lee, fashion and design offers a way of preserving culture and stories by bringing them into a contemporary space.<sup>xvii</sup> First Nations Fashion + Design defines its purpose as “...working towards a self-sustaining ecosystem of Aboriginal Fashion Designers, Textile Artists, Jewellery Designers, Photographers, Models, Hair + Makeup Artists, Stylists, Curators and Fashion Industry Professionals.”<sup>xviii</sup> In 2021, they produced the spectacular First Nations fashion showcase at Afterpay Australian Fashion Week (AAFW) – the first time that an entire runway had ever been dedicated to First Nations designers in the 25-year history of the event. This high-profile display of dazzling work was celebrated as the highlight of the week and was the first introduction, for many in the broader community, to a group of talented designers – including Paul McCann whose gown *Bush Amethyst* (2022), is featured in *New Exuberance*.

Bringing First Nations perspectives into everyday life – as things to be worn and used rather than as art works to be viewed in a gallery or hung on a wall (which are automatically treated with the reverence Western culture attaches to ‘art’) immediately raises the issue of **appropriation**. Appropriation involves taking from a culture that you do not belong to and using it as your own – for example, it is now well-established that a non-Aboriginal person using the Aboriginal artistic technique known as ‘dot painting’ is appropriation. Is a non-First Nations person wearing one of Grace Lilian Lee’s grasshopper-weaving necklaces appropriate or appropriation? By sitting on a stool covered in a fabric that represents a Tjukurrpa are we embracing a First Nations’ cultural perspective as something living, and making it part of our lives, or reducing it to furniture? These questions will gain in importance as First Nations designers continue to assume their rightful position at the centre of a truly reflective Australian fashion and textiles industry. Ultimately, they are questions that only the makers themselves can answer – based on the meaning they attach to their work and who they intend it for. It is important that those sharing their culture remain in charge of their vision and share only what they feel is appropriate with whom they feel it is appropriate to share it. Grace Lilian Lee sees potential for healing through the act of non-First Nations individuals being able “...to invest [in] and learn about our culture through wearing our textiles and storylines.”<sup>xlix</sup> The point Lee is making is exemplified by the example of Kumuntjai Napanangka Jack. Born in 1940, Jack grew up in time when (in most places in Australia) the policy of Church missions and of government authorities was still to eradicate First Nations culture and **assimilate** First Nations people into the culture and society that had been created by British colonists. As a senior woman at Ikuntji Artists, Jack’s textile designs drew on her extensive cultural knowledge and are worn and used in furnishings by people around Australia. When we consider that Jack saw her culture embraced by the same society that attempted to destroy it, we understand more fully the sense of pride at having her designs on fabrics that she expressed after winning the 2021 National Indigenous Fashion Award for Textile Design.<sup>l</sup> For Kaylene Whiskey, her jumper design created in collaboration with WAH WAH Australia is an invitation to us all to share



in her unique way of seeing the world: “My art is for everyone – I want to share love, happiness, laughter and togetherness with everybody”, she says.<sup>li</sup> Lisa Waup does not feel that the meaning of her designs is devalued by transferring them from an art context to a wearable garment, as she sees clothing as simply another medium through which she can express her stories and ideas. However, the limited production run of each piece (only 15-20 items of each garment are ever offered) from her Lisa Waup x VERNER collaboration is particularly important to Waup – she sees these garments as limited editions akin to wearable artworks.<sup>lii</sup> Given that Paul McCann’s stunning gowns are intended to “...portray us [mob] in a real opulent, sovereign way in fashion” it is understandable that he receives messages asking about the appropriateness of non-First Nations people wearing his work.<sup>liii</sup> The adoption of one of these powerful gowns by a person who does not share McCann’s cultural heritage could easily be seen as distorting his message. McCann, however, shares Lee’s approach to the matter, saying “...I’d love to see that! It just shows that...you’re an ally of ours, and that you’re embracing part of our culture, or our stories, or the message that we are trying to convey.”<sup>liv</sup>

Paul McCann’s inclusive approach offers an invitation to non-First Nations people to join in the celebration of First Nation’s identities that occurs whenever someone dons one of his gowns. He is similarly inclusive when it comes to ideas of gender identity – he chose Gamilaroi and Dunghutti drag queen Felicia Foxx to model his *Gumnut Ball Gown* (2021) on the First Nations runway at 2021 AAFW. Foxx has spoken about the isolation of never seeing First Nations people of a similar gender identity while growing up.<sup>lv</sup> By choosing Foxx to represent his work at such an important and meaningful event, McCann made a powerful statement about who was welcome in the world he creates through fashion. The ‘glamour sacks’ created by Frida Las Vegas (FLV) offer a similar embrace of all who want to be part of the FLV world. These simple, unstructured tunics are not gender specific and can be worn by anyone, of any size. Paul McCann and Frida Las Vegas are, on the surface, completely contrasting designers. One works with a silhouette that is structured and traditionally feminine (emphasising the female body) and the other a loose silhouette that does not reference any type of physique. McCann’s work refers to, and reshapes the identity of, a very specific group of people while Frida Las Vegas draws motifs from everyday life – a Vegemite jar or a Chiko Roll – that belong to everyone. Yet, beneath these differences, they both seek to include those who do not conform to traditional gender identities and to create worlds that are not exclusive to certain cultures or classes. Their differences show us that embracing diversity is not about one way of doing things, or suppressing one’s personality in order to accommodate all kinds of tastes. Rather, these designers express their unique viewpoint and open it up to anyone who wants to share it.

At Iordanes Spyridon Gogos (ISG) the idea of diversity is woven into the creation process itself through extensive collaboration. Jordan Gogos created the ISG brand as a way of bringing change to the way fashion is created – central to his concept is the weaving together of the unique visions of multiple collaborators to create an outcome more complex and expressive than any one person could achieve alone. For his 2021 AAFW debut, Gogos collaborated with 25 different artists to create the pieces he presented (several of which are featured in *New Exuberance*). In 2022, 69 individuals and institutions collaborated on the work presented by ISG in a spectacular runway show at the Powerhouse Museum. For Gogos, it is the combination of many people, who would not normally work together, sharing ideas and merging their styles and viewpoints together in a creative dialogue that creates the world of ISG.<sup>lvi</sup> Embracing individuality and creating a safe space for all is at the heart of this world – Gogos has stated that his motivation is “...the idea of facilitating differentiating perceptions of people”.<sup>lvii</sup> ISG describe their creations as “wearables for the imaginative” – rather than as clothing for any particular gender.<sup>lviii</sup> Each piece is developed directly onto the body of the person who will wear it, from the early stages of design, so that the wearer’s needs and personality can be incorporated into it.<sup>lix</sup> The models who represent Iordanes Spyridon Gogos in runway shows are an important way of cementing this focus on individualism and inclusivity. For the epic runway at 2022 AAFW, Gogos invited Basjia Almaanon, a model and member of the **House of Silky**, to take on the role of casting director and seek out a cast of dynamic personalities who would embody the ISG world on the catwalk.<sup>lx</sup> Almaanon’s work led to a show that was praised for the diversity of bodies, genders and ethnicities it represented in an authentic celebration of individuals.<sup>lxi</sup>

*New Exuberance* highlights the way in which embracing makers from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences helps to lead to authentic change in the world of fashion. The worlds they create open new opportunities for everyone to be seen – helping to build a fashion industry that fully reflects our society today and invites everyone to express themselves through fashion. For some people,

traditional modes of clothing (or the manipulation of them) are central to their identities, while for others, the search for new ways of expressing identity, unlimited by traditional concepts of gender, is critical. As we see in the work of Paul McCann, the ball gown, a marker of traditional concepts of femininity, can challenge notions of both ethnicity and gender while forging connections between people. For McCann, this is why fashion is so powerful, “...because it really can create conversations, like why are you wearing that? Or who? What’s that mean? Or that design?”<sup>lxii</sup> By asking these questions, we begin to engage, and connect, with others while expanding our own worldview. Too often conformity is at the heart of our understanding of fashion and of the world in general – as if there can only ever be one correct way of being and anything different automatically challenges our own sense of identity. Yet it is difference and variety that adds dimension and interest to the world. These designers and makers are producing clothing and textiles that tell personal stories and invite others to do the same – they express who they are and support others to do the same regardless of similarity or difference. By engaging with others and learning about their stories, whether through the contemplation of an art work or of a person’s self-expression through the making, or wearing, of clothing, we gain a richer understanding of others and ourselves. Come and join in – you are all invited! As Kaylene Whiskey says: “Uwangkara tjungu mulapa rikina! (Everyone together, looking so good!)”.<sup>lxiii</sup>



### THEME 3 – Bridging Worlds.

The works featured in *New Exuberance* vary widely in style and concept and **traverse** the worlds of art, design and fashion design – their common feature is the use of textiles in creative, innovative and challenging ways. Given their diversity, it is interesting how often the concept of collaboration arises amongst them. Perhaps it is a reflection of the times we live in. The increasing reality of global climate change, bushfires, floods, ongoing political conflict between nations and the **spectre** (or reality in Ukraine) of war and the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the need for co-operation between people and communities both nationally and internationally. There is a sense that change will be possible only if we work together for the sake of our collective futures. We find the idea of working together – of collaborating – discussed and explored in *New Exuberance* in a variety of ways that offer us insights into how connectivity and collaboration can be a force for creativity and change.

The work of Jemima Wyman explores one of the most visible forms of collaboration in modern society – the protest movement. Wyman is particularly interested in the way these groups utilise masking to disguise individual identities while asserting a collective one. It is through the active collaboration of protestors coming together in large groups that they create this identity – transforming their anger and dissatisfaction into a visible expression of their cause and capturing the attention others. The garments that form part of The Social Studio x Atong Atem x Romance Was Born collection arise out of a similar use of collaboration in pursuit of change – but rather than drawing attention to a social issue that needs to be addressed, as protest movements do, this collaboration is aimed at providing a solution. The Social Studio is a social enterprise that provides training in clothing production to young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds – experience that will facilitate employment opportunities for the young trainees. They achieve this with the collaboration of high-profile artists and designers (here with photography by artist Atong Atem and design by fashion label Romance Was Born) who lend their talents to design desirable pieces of fashion which the trainees produce. The funds raised from the sale of these garments allows the work of The Social Studio to continue. By combining their talents and working together in a spirit of generosity, these different creatives are able to impact others in a direct and positive way – helping the trainees to pursue the future they want for themselves.



Above: The Social Studio x Atong Atem x Romance Was Born, *Merri Dress*, 2021, silk cotton, as modelled by Otillo and Atong Atem. Photos Atong Atem.

At Iordanes Spyridon Gogos (ISG), the notion of collaborative fashion design and construction arises again but, here, it operates as a means of deconstructing and reconstructing traditional ways of working within the fashion industry. The label was created by Jordan Gogos as a way to challenge the conventions that underpin the fashion industry – particularly its focus on the individual designer as a lone creative genius. At a traditional fashion house, a head designer determines the overall concept for each collection and expresses it through drawings (either by hand or on computer), mood boards, draping fabric on mannequins, etc. Other designers and makers work behind the scenes converting these ideas into reality – lending their creativity and ideas to the development of a collection that is ultimately presented to the public under the name of the head designer only. These designers may be responsible for a range of products (such as handbags or shoes) or for entire collections (such as pre-collections or diffusion ranges). These people are usually only known within the fashion world unless they get promoted to head designer at that, or another, house or start their own brand. Then there are the makers who make and adjust patterns, create complex embroidery or devise new shapes or materials for constructing shoes – it is very rare that these experts are ever credited for the work they contribute towards the final looks seen on a catwalk. At Iordanes Spyridon Gogos, Gogos turns this system on its head by being absolutely transparent about who has worked on each collection – right down to documenting the precise individuals responsible for each look presented on the Instagram account [@iordanesspyridongogos](https://www.instagram.com/iordanesspyridongogos).

The Iordanes Spyridon Gogos pieces featured in *New Exuberance* were created for 2021 Afterpay Australian Fashion Week (AAFW) by Gogos and 25 collaborators. For the 2022 presentation, Gogos worked with 69 collaborators, including print designers, weavers, cobblers, sculptors and the Powerhouse Museum where ISG was undertaking a residency (a full list of collaborators can be found on the Powerhouse Museum website). It is this combining of a diverse range of talents that is key for Gogos. He makes the point that many of the established designers who worked on the 2022 collection would not normally be involved in the same project – for instance, the minimalist approach of Marina Afonina (of the brand Albus Lumen) and Jenny Kee's love of bold pattern and vivid colour. The Trojan Horse motif that forms the Iordanes Spyridon Gogos logo symbolises the idea of breaking new people into the, often restrictive and exclusionary, world of fashion. An important element of this is bringing these experienced designers together with young talents, as part of the collaborative process, to facilitate the growth and development of the industry. As Gogos asks "...outside of the brand [ISG], where does someone fresh out of uni [sic] work with an icon like Jenny Kee?" It is the "dialogue" between creatives with different practices, backgrounds and levels of experience and the "bridging of all those worlds together" that creates an Iordanes Spyridon Gogos world that is unlike anything else. It is a world where collaboration fosters individual and collective creativity as well as the future of Australian fashion.

In recent times, collaborations between designers, or artists and designers, have become increasingly popular and commercially successful within mainstream fashion. However, they do not always embody the concept of 'collaboration' with the same commitment demonstrated by Iordanes Spyridon Gogos. Ingrid Verner is an experienced fashion designer who previously designed for her own label TV, as well as for the Australian brand Easton Pearson, before founding the VERNER label. She has discussed how 'collaboration' in the world of fashion often simply refers to an artist designing a print which is then used by designers in a collection. Verner's collaboration with artist Lisa Waup, on their Lisa Waup x VERNER pieces, presents a similar example of true collaboration to Iordanes Spyridon Gogos but on a more intimate scale – rather than the combined inspirations of twenty-five (or more) people working together, here we have the fusing of two. The Lisa Waup x VERNER collection is the result of long discussion and exchange of ideas focused on creating garments that support Waup's drawings – in which she explores family connections and her First Nations heritage. From their expression of the relationship between structure and patterning (which fascinates Verner) to the red stitching that echoes Waup's sculptural practice where it symbolises bloodlines, each piece is a true reflection of both women's practices and of the respect and admiration they share for each other.



Respect is important for any collaboration to be successful but it is crucial in collaborations between First Nations and non-First Nations people, due to the exploitation and degradation that First Nations cultures have been subjected to. From the attempted destruction of First Nations cultures, through the policy of **assimilation**, to the **appropriation** of First Nations' symbols and material culture to produce souvenirs for tourists (such as mass-produced fake boomerangs or tea towels with fake 'Aboriginal' designs) there has been a long history of disrespect towards the cultures of First Nations peoples. Particularly controversial is the concept of 'Aboriginalia' - the creation of **kitsch** mementos (such as paintings, figurines, toys, porcelain plates or cups) by non-First Nations people that represent First Nations people in sentimental, stylised or other stereotypical ways. These pieces were a popular form of decoration in Australia, until around the mid-20th century, and their objectification of First Nations peoples for European consumption remains problematic. For artists like Destiny Deacon, Kuku and Erub/Mer peoples, and Tony Albert, Gurramay, Kuku Yalanji and Yidinji peoples, the **recontextualisation** of 'Aboriginalia' provides a powerful means of commenting on the history of First Nations people since **colonisation**. Reflecting on this history, it obvious why particular care and sensitivity must be taken in situations where non-First Nations people are involved in the use of any representation of First Nations cultures.

In the pieces from the Lisa Waup x VERNER collaboration, we see the results of a collaboration between First Nations and non-First Nations creatives that is motivated by respect, admiration and a real desire to listen and connect to the experiences and stories of others. Three furniture collaborations, commissioned by the JamFactory and featured in *New Exuberance*, provide further illustration of this context of respectful collaboration.



Above: Iordanes Spyridon Gogos, *Look 2* (left), *Look 25* (right), 2023, repurposed fabric with painted and printed material and found buttons, on display at JamFactory Gallery One, Photo Connor Patterson.

*Boulder Chair* and *Boulder Footrest* (2021) were created by artist Keturah Nangala Zimran, from Ikuntji Artists, and designer Caren Elliss. The resulting two pieces of furniture are upholstered in Zimran's *Puli Puli* (rocks) design, in which she expresses significant stories passed to her by her grandmother. The furniture design enhances the meaning of the fabric - its curved forms echo the shapes of the rocks and the way in which the sitter is enveloped by the chair evokes the comfort and safety Zimran feels when she is on **Country**. The pair of loveseats created by Bábbarra Designs artist Raylene Ngarridjjan Bonson and South Australian design studio Daniel Emma are similarly successful. *The Love Bench with Back* and *Love Bench without Back* (2021), are upholstered in a fabric screen printed with Bonson's Wubbunj (paperbark canoe) design. This design was inspired by the story of how people came to live in Maningrida. It tells of two men living in the Narlarrambarr area on the other side of the river to modern day Maningrida. After spotting a large Makassar (Indonesian) boat approaching, the two men decided to cross the river, in their wubbunj, to Djomi. After tasting the freshwater from the Djomi spring they decided to settle on this land - it later became known as Maningrida. Drawing on this story, the foldable and utilitarian structures of the loveseats were designed to reflect daily camp life in Maningrida and the transportable nature of wubbunj. Artist Roslyn Orsto, of Tiwi Designs, and South Australian furniture and lighting designer Dean Toepfer collaborated on two armchairs titled *Pupuni Punarika* (*Good Waterlily*) (2021). The chairs are made from individual planes of Tasmanian oak and create a simple form on which to display Orsto's *Punarika* (Waterlily) print. The print explores the punarika story that is part of Tiwi lore and the chairs reflect different elements of this story - the blue chair represents the calm and nurturing aspect of the lakes, ponds and waterlilies and the black chair represents the Rainbow Serpent that protects the punarika and the fire used by elders to calm it. The balance of simple form and graphic print seeks to convey the way in which traditional custodians have existed in harmony with nature for thousands of years. In these collaborations, as in the Lisa Waup x VERNER pieces, the design and construction are intended to support and enhance storytelling - providing another medium of expression for the artist involved.

For First Nations, people the idea of working collaboratively is nothing new - it was the structure of daily life in First Nations communities for thousands of years prior to colonisation. It is still an important part of keeping culture strong for many contemporary First Nations people. Collaboration between women is the theme of Ikuntji Artists artist Mavis Nampitjinpa Marks' *Women's Business* (2018) design, featured in *New Exuberance*. Chrishona Schmidt and Carly Tarkari Dodd explain that, for Marks, the concept of women's business incorporates "...women working together, women collecting bush food together and women being in ceremony together. They are all interwoven and interconnected for her." Her design is a celebration of the camaraderie between women. We see this same spirit of collaboration between the women who practice from Bábbarra Designs. For these artists, Bábbarra Women's Centre is not just a space to work from but a place where "[w]e come together...to share our knowledge and ideas". This collaboration is not just intellectual as the artmaking process also requires women to physically work together - the process of screen printing, for example, requires at least two women working on each print run. Arts centres like Bábbarra Designs, Tiwi Designs and Ikuntji Artists provide a means of coming together to transmit knowledge to the younger generations and strengthen culture - they are often the heart of their communities. As social enterprises, they advocate for their artists and communities - ensuring artists receive appropriate fees for their work and creating meaningful and viable sources of income. Like the protest groups that Jemima Wyman explores in her work, these social enterprises work on the principle that there is strength in collaboration. As Lennie Goya-Airra, former head of sewing at Bábbarra says "Us Bábbarra Women's Centre mob, we are not afraid to speak up. We know we are stronger together."

The idea of strengthening communities and culture through collaborative artistic practice is central to the multifaceted work of Grace Lilian Lee. Lee's practice brings art, design and mentoring together with a passion for supporting the expression of First Nations culture through fashion and body adornment. Featured in *New Exuberance* is Lee's wearable sculptural work *Our Branches* (2021) in which she combines contemporary materials and a traditional Torres Straight weaving technique to explore her personal history and Meriam Mer culture.



Lee also creates woven necklaces, using the same 'grasshopper weaving' technique, that function as both fashion accessories and cultural expression. Driven by the possibilities that fashion design offers as a medium for the expression and transmission of culture, Lee collaborates directly with First Nations communities to explore ways of transferring their arts practices into a fashion context. These collaborations result in the staging of a 'fashion performance' in which the fashion and accessories that have been created are modelled by people from the community in a show that also involves dance and music – drawing on the culture and interests of the particular community involved. These performances also help to ignite the interest of the younger generation who had previously been disengaged from the activities of the art centre. Lee's method of integrating artistic expression with the worlds of fashion and modelling brings older and younger generations together in a celebration of their culture. These collaborations feature a strong focus on the continued mentoring of young people and seek to expose them to a world of opportunities they may never have considered before. A successful collaboration with Mornington Island Art (MIArt), a part of the Mirndiyan Gununa Aboriginal Corporation, on Mornington Island led to the creation of a small business MiArt Designs – which produced garments and bags in the brilliantly coloured style for which Mornington Island painters are famous. Four young women from the community then accompanied art centre manager Grace Barnes on a trip to Melbourne to model MiArts Designs pieces at the Melbourne Fashion Festival 2016 – for most, it was their first trip to the mainland and a chance to be exposed to a range of new experiences (including plane travel) and opportunities. Bridging young and old, art and fashion, these collaborations work to preserve cultural knowledge while embracing the future through a celebration of community.

It is perhaps unsurprising that so many of these collaborations involve fashion – collaboration is about sharing ideas and fashion is one of the most direct ways of achieving this. As Jordan Gogos comments "I think that people respond to fashion because they can see themselves in it. Fashion can catapult ideas into the mainstream...". Fashion is also inherently collaborative by nature. Unless a garment is worn by the same individual who designed and made it, there are always at least two people involved in its ultimate manifestation – maker and wearer. Designer Nixi Killick takes this concept one step further – her work features augmented reality elements encoded into garments which are only visible when activated through an app. A whole new relationship between designer, wearer and viewer is brought into existence – the designer's concept is given life by the wearer but only with the collaboration of the viewer, and their digital device, is the full expression of the garment realised. Chloé Wolifson explains that "Killick sees garments as 'wearable tools' which enable the wearer to project themselves to the world and connect with others". Connecting with others is what collaboration is all about. Whether its aim is social change, creative expression or (as in many of the works discussed here) a combination of both, collaboration involves bringing people together – learning from each other, seeing a world outside the one we know, supporting others and co-operating to achieve something bigger than we could achieve alone. The works in *New Exuberance* offer us a dynamic vision of the power and magic that can result from working collaboratively.

#### THEME 4 – A Woman's Work.

*New Exuberance* includes works by four artists – Kate Just, Hannah Gartside, Vita Cochran and Nina Walton – who comment on issues of gender politics and female experience through the use of textiles. While this may not seem surprising to us today, the idea of works of art composed of textiles would once have been unthinkable within Western visual arts theory. It was only in late in the 20th century, after it was challenged by feminist artists, that this convention gave way and textiles began to be accepted as a form of art making. The historical imposition of hierarchies that determined what was, and was not, art and the way these interacted with concepts of gender remains relevant to our understanding of textile-based art work today. In order to fully appreciate the way our artists use textiles in their work, it is important to understand the historical relationship between textiles and art and how they came to be embraced as a means of representing female experience. It is important to remember that this discussion is specifically concerned with the concept of textiles as an art form in European or Western culture – other cultures have different understandings of art and traditions about how it is made and what it should look like. The artists we are discussing are working within a European cultural tradition inherited in Australia (and in Canada and the United States of America) through our history as a colony of Britain. Other Australian artists with different cultural backgrounds would not necessarily bring these same cultural implications to the medium of textiles.

In ancient and medieval times, in the cultures we would now describe collectively as European, all forms of making were considered the work of craftsmen – there was no particular distinction between painters, weavers, stonemasons and so on. The idea that one type of handicraft had some intrinsically special quality that made it different to the others was simply not a part of these cultures<sup>lxxvi</sup>. Some forms of craftsmanship may be more prized and expensive than others – due to technical difficulty, the use of rare materials, or fashion – but they were not seen as being fundamentally different practices in the way that we might see a difference between an artist and an interior decorator today. The fact that the Bayeux Tapestry was commissioned to commemorate an immensely important victory in war – the conquest of England by the Normans – is evidence of just how important embroidery was considered in the 11th century. It also illustrates to us how expressive work in textiles is capable of being – its 70-metre-long narrative captures details of weapons, particular types of clothing and the characters of its protagonists. The exact identities of the makers responsible for this epic work are unknown but it is considered likely that they were English nuns who were known for their mastery of this form of craftsmanship<sup>lxxvii</sup>. Contemplating the Bayeux Tapestry, we can be in no doubt that we are looking at something that we would consider a work of art. Yet, the idea of 'art', as we know it, and the distinction between 'art' and 'craft' that would shape hundreds of years of art theory and criticism did not exist yet.

It was during the **Renaissance** that the idea of 'visual arts' began to emerge as a means of differentiating painting, sculpting and architecture from the other handicrafts. During this period, particularly in Florence (now part of modern-day Italy), there was a renewed appreciation for the values of classical Greek societies and the importance they attached to philosophy, mathematics, dialectics (a process of attempting to discover the truth of a matter by considering and questioning a range of different viewpoints), grammar and rhetoric (effective and persuasive speaking and writing) – particularly in Athens. These fields of knowledge and inquiry were known as the liberal arts and were seen as the foundation of knowledge that every gentleman must have in order to create a civilised society (we still refer to literature, philosophy, politics, history and other related fields as the liberal arts today). Previously, all forms of making were seen as different to these fields of study because they involved practical techniques rather than intellectual theory. Renaissance intellectuals saw a connection between some forms of craftsmanship and the liberal arts – that painting and sculpture in particular were capable of expressing visually what poetry and drama expressed through language while also requiring knowledge of mathematics and science to achieve the increasingly realistic three-dimensional representations that were being produced since the development of the technique of **perspective** in the early 15th century. The work of these makers was now seen to have a theoretical basis, similar to that of the liberal arts, and the new category of 'visual arts' was created to elevate the practitioners of painting, sculpture and architecture from tradesman to the new intellectual role of 'artist'.<sup>lxxviii</sup>



This dramatic change in the way making was understood created a conceptual division that lasted for hundreds of years in Western art theory and still shapes the way we think about visual art today. 'Art' (or fine art) was now an intellectual, as much as practical, pursuit while 'craft' (or the decorative, mechanical or **applied arts**) served practical purposes (even if the result was also decorative). This focus on intellectualism would ultimately result in art which was divorced from making altogether. In the world of contemporary art, today, an artist does not necessarily need to physically create their work – it is the concept which is the important element. We can see the beginnings of this model in the creation of a series of woven tapestries, known as the Raphael Tapestries, or The Lives of the Apostles, for the Sistine Chapel that were commissioned by Pope Leo X after his election in 1513. The Pope commissioned the artist Raphael (1483-1520) to produce a series of paintings on paper (known in tapestry making as cartoons – taken from the Italian word 'cartone' that means 'large paper') illustrating key episodes from the biblical stories of Saint Peter and Saint Paul – these paintings are now known as the Raphael Cartoons. The cartoons were then translated and woven into tapestry by master weavers in the workshop of Pieter Van Aelst in Brussels (in modern day Belgium).<sup>lxxxix</sup> Whereas once this would simply have been a tapestry created by craftspeople, we now have cartoons created by an artist (which makes them works of art) and a series of tapestries designed by an artist and made by craftspeople. What made this new system problematic was not necessarily that it saw a difference between making things that were decorative and making things that were expressive but that it established a hierarchy between them. They were not just different types of skills – the intellectualism, and expression of individual creativity ascribed to an artist was intrinsically superior to any skill that a craftspeople could possess.

As the concept of art was linked to intellectualism it was also inherently linked to masculinity. Women had traditionally been considered by men as not biologically capable of, or well suited to, intellectual inquiry – their natural place was within the domestic sphere. While women had always worked as craftspeople, either through necessity (to support themselves or their family) or through a social position that gave them opportunity to practice their craft (like the English nuns famous for their exquisite needlework), the newly elevated 'artist' was far more likely to be male. Within painting itself, a hierarchy of subject matter existed that ranged from history painting (the most prestigious) to still life (the least prestigious). History painting involved the representation of humans and the realistic depiction of the human form came, increasingly, to rely on the study of life drawing and anatomy. Women were not allowed to participate in the study of these techniques out of fear that they would be morally corrupted (as opposed to men who were considered morally superior in the Christian tradition), making it very difficult for women to pursue the most elite forms of visual arts practice. This is not to say that there were no female painters during this period. There were women in the time of the Renaissance and onwards who were able to practice as artists within the restrictions of this system. Like Lavinia Fontana (1552-1614), who is considered the first female professional artist in Europe, these women had usually been trained by their artist fathers. Some established their own teaching practices and passed their knowledge and skills on to female students, creating opportunity for other women to train as artists. However, as with most other roles in public life until the 20th century, the role of professional artist remained a predominantly male one.

Textile-based making – embroidery, weaving and sewing – had always been considered appropriate practices for women, given their connection to the domestic world, and this had not changed. What had changed was that these practices were now considered *different* from, and *inferior* to, the practices classed as 'visual arts' (as were many male-dominated practices such as stonemasonry and metal work). Crafts could be decorative but they could not achieve the particular qualities of individual expression and intellectualism that the visual arts could. Thus, while these techniques were widely practiced by women, their practitioners were not considered artists. The first challenges to the idea that textiles could not constitute art came in modern era – as artists began to break down the rigid academic rules that defined how art was made and seek new ways of expressing themselves. Abstract artist Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979) explored the way colours interact with each other in a style called **Simultanism** (or Orphism). Delaunay expressed her ideas in painting but also through textiles – a bold move at a time when abstraction itself was still new and controversial. In 1913, at the important modern art gallery Der Sturm, in Berlin, she exhibited a range of pieces that included both paintings and assemblages made from fabric pieces arranged into abstract compositions and stitched

together. Later that year, she created her famous Simultaneous Dress (1913) which she regularly wore in public. For Delaunay, clothing was a way of taking her artwork off a wall and onto the streets – a view that is often echoed by artists today but was radical at the time.<sup>lxxx</sup> Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889-1943) also adopted a multi-faceted approach to artistic expression. Having trained in 'applied arts', as well as modern dance, Taeuber-Arp created an extraordinary body of work that included painting, dance performances, marionette puppets and abstract works in textiles. The weavings of Anni Albers (1899-1994) fundamentally challenged the notion that textiles were not art. Albers trained in weaving at the Bauhaus School, which operated in Germany from 1919 to 1933. Her work used a combination of traditional, natural fibres and newly developed synthetics (like cellophane) to create abstract compositions of texture, line and space in an expressive **modernist** style. In 1936, Albers created Ancient Writing – one of the first works that she referred to as a 'pictorial weaving' as a way of describing her weaving as a form of abstract art.<sup>lxxxi</sup> In 1949, she became the first person working in textiles to have a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Yet, it is telling that the press release for the show never once refers to her as an 'artist' – for example, it declares "[w]hile the artistry of her work places her high among modern weavers, her analytical approach to her craft is an important aspect of the overall movement in modern design".<sup>lxxxii</sup> Although her work contains "artistry", she is a weaver or a designer who practices "her craft", not an artist. Albers did not want to study weaving – it was one of the few fields open to female students at the Bauhaus. She would have rather worked in a more 'masculine' field, like stained glass, and saw weaving as 'feminine' as she described:

"...there was this weaving workshop. I didn't like the idea at all in the beginning because I thought weaving is sissy, just these threads. And there was a very inefficient lady, old lady, sort of the needlework kind of type, who taught it. And I wasn't a bit interested. But the only way of staying at that place was to join that workshop. And I did. And once I got started I got rather intrigued with the possibilities there."<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

This desire to align oneself with traditionally 'masculine' forms of making was shared by many female artists in the early 20th century. Women wanted to assert themselves as equal in talent and creativity to their male peers and establish their right to be treated as "artists" rather than "women artists" (which implied they were a curiosity or somehow inferior). It is not surprising, therefore, that painting and sculpture were the focus for most female artists rather than challenging the distinction between art and craft mediums.

It was in the 1970s, with the rise of **second wave feminism**, that a rigorous re-evaluation of textiles as a visual art medium began. Rather than distancing themselves from their identity as women and seeking acceptance within the masculine rules of the art world, feminist artists and art historians began a radical re-examination and critique of visual art as a construct created by men within a male dominated society. Linda Nolchin published her famous essay "Why Have There Been No Great Female Artists?" (1971) in which she examined the social and cultural conditions that had prevented women from becoming professional artists – just as they had prevented women from pursuing other professions.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Feminists particularly began to challenge the classification of textile-based making as 'craft'. They began to question why something created in textiles (an embroidery or a quilt for instance) could not be considered art, when textile work had long been one of the few creative pursuits that women were encouraged to practice and had provided their predominant means of self-expression. Artist Miriam Shapiro argued that women had been using collage as a form of self-expression through practices like scrapbooking, which was popular amongst Victorian women, or quilting long before the Cubists 'invented' it but that these practices were considered trivial by males. Dubbing these techniques "femme", she made the point that they used the arrangement of images, texture and colour in the same way as **modern art**.<sup>lxxxv</sup> Feminist artists, like Shapiro, began to adopt techniques associated with textile-based crafts and incorporate them into **conceptual art** works that challenged women's position in the world.

A famous example of this kind of work is Judy Chicago's seminal The Dinner Party (1974-1979). *The Dinner Party* is a large installation in the form of a ceremonial banquet. A triangular banquet table holds lavish place settings for the thirty-nine guests of honour – a group of important women from



history and mythology. The names of another 999 women are inscribed in gold on the tiled floor beneath the table. These place settings are composed of chalices, hand painted porcelain plates and intricately embroidered table runners – all objects that would be considered the products of ‘crafts’ in the post-Renaissance tradition. Textiles also feature in the six tapestry banners that welcome guests to the celebration. While the setting evokes the great ceremonial banquets by which men were honoured in medieval times, the name reminds us of the role of hostess that wives were still expected to fill in modern society through the preparing and hosting of elaborate ‘dinner parties’. Works like *The Dinner Party* challenged not just the marginalisation of women in the spheres of art and public life but the underlying assumptions that structured these spheres. By creating a work using craft-based techniques, and the collaboration of many expert makers whose contributions were acknowledged, Chicago challenged the idea that traditional mediums and focus on individual genius were the only way to make art. While these works were originally treated with scorn by some art critics, they ultimately came to be considered highly effective works of conceptual art. Key to their success was the way their medium (textiles) supported their concept (challenging women’s exclusion and marginalisation in the world) through the long-established view of textiles as a lowly craft connected to women and the home. When placed in an art context, textiles carried this meaning with them and became symbolic of the gender constructs that both relegated women to a domestic context and then denigrated the work they did there.

It is this historical relationship between textiles and concepts of art, craft and femininity that informs our artists’ work. Kate Just describes her practice as

“...the deployment of traditional craft forms including knitting, sewing, textiles and photo-media in contemporary art works that question histories of female and queer representation through the lens of subjective experience”.<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

*New Exuberance* features two works from Just’s *Clothes Portraits* series in which she creates abstract portraits of women and queer artists by quilting together pieces of fabric derived from their clothing. The effect of this is to evoke an individual’s personality rather than display their physical attributes. Vita Cochran draws inspiration from Delaunay and Taeuber-Arp and their disregard for the conventions of art. Cochran’s *Groupe des Femmes (after SD)* (2019-2020) is a reproduction of a rug that appears in Delaunay’s painting *Groupe De Femmes* (1921). Cochran’s rug retains evidence of its previous incarnation in paint – a section of colour where a dress obscured the pattern of the rug. The rug has undergone a series of transformations – from a useful three-dimensional object (on the floor of the room Delaunay depicts) into a two-dimensional painting before being restored to three-dimensional form by Cochran. At each stage (original creation, depiction in painting, recreation in textiles) the rug’s appearance is shaped by the vision of its maker. Cochran challenges us to consider when the rug becomes ‘art’. Only when it forms part of a painting? When it is remade as a conceptual object? Or when it was first woven? Hannah Gartside’s work seeks to evoke and explore the experiences of longing, tenderness, care and desire from a feminist perspective, through the use of discarded clothing. These articles of used clothing carry with them an intimate connection to human lives, allowing her to poetically evoke our shared human emotions – like the gloves that appear to gently touch each other in *Book of Hands* (2022). Nina Walton’s installation *Thank You Nanna* (2022) uses cotton thread to illustrate the concepts that underpin Game Theory – a branch of the, traditionally masculine, field of mathematics that examines choice making. Its title links its use of textiles to the representation of the often under-appreciated and usually invisible domestic tasks that were deemed a woman’s work. It reminds us that choice making almost always operates within a limited field – not all options are always equally available to all members of society. With this title, Walton acknowledges the way her grandmother – a woman who worked all her life, supported her daughter through University and provided a stable and loving home for her children and grandchildren – contributed to the opportunities available to Walton today.<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

While all of the artists previously discussed are women, the use of textiles as a conceptual metaphor for the feminine is not limited to works made by females. The American artist Mark Newport is known for his life-size, hand-knitted versions of superhero costumes that combine memories of the sweaters

his mother knitted to protect him from the cold as a child with masculine ideals of protection. Newport uses the feminist (and feminine) associations of knitting to convey the vulnerabilities that traditional concepts of masculinity hide from view. Neither should it be suggested that textiles must always be used in this metaphoric sense within an art context. The bodies of work of Delaunay and Taeuber-Arp, once marginalised but now celebrated for their foresight, relate to the same themes of **modernism** as the work of their male peers – they simply employed textiles as a medium to express them. Likewise, Anni Albers’ weavings were expressions of her modernist viewpoint and interest in **pre-Columbian** cultures. It should be noted that today she is described as a “textile artist” in her biographical entry on the website of the Museum of Modern Art. As the wide-ranging work on display as part of *New Exuberance* illustrates, there is no limit to the ways in which textiles can be used as a form of artistic expression and no limitations on who the appropriate people to use them are.



## SECTION 3 AN OUTLINE FOR TEACHERS PREPARING YOUR EXHIBITION EXPERIENCE



### ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

If you are planning to bring a school group to this exhibition, please book now. Bookings are required to guarantee scheduled entry to the exhibition.

Covid-19 guidelines are determined by the venue. We advise checking these prior to your visit.

Please contact the venue for all bookings and enquiries.

### CONTEXT BUILDING

See **SECTION 4: A BEFORE THE EXHIBITION** for a range of activities designed to provide the context needed to enhance students' experience of the exhibition.

### ON ARRIVAL

On arrival, your group will be met and welcomed by a member of the exhibition venue staff.

Before entering the venue:

- Ensure all Covid-19 guidelines are observed.
- We recommend organising students into smaller groups, or pairs, to facilitate a more manageable viewing experience.
- Distribute any materials students will require to complete on-site activities (see **SECTION 4: B AT THE EXHIBITION**).
- Focus students and review gallery viewing protocols:
  - Quiet talking.
  - Calm and careful movement through the gallery space (walking not running).
  - Do not touch the artworks, unless otherwise informed.
  - Be aware and respectful of other visitors in the space.
- Emphasise the importance of spending quality time viewing and reflecting on the artworks. Encourage students to invest time viewing a couple of their favourite pieces so that they can develop a deeper personal connection with the artwork.

### AFTER THE EXHIBITION

See **SECTION 4: C AFTER THE EXHIBITION** for a series of activities that promote deeper thinking about the exhibition (i.e. themes, materials, techniques and curatorial properties) and provide students with the opportunity to draw on their experience to create a personal response.





## SECTION 4 ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS INTERPRETING AND RESPONDING TO THE EXHIBITION

The following series of activities are designed to support students' engagement with the exhibition in three stages: before, during and after experiencing the exhibition. You may draw on the thematic information provided in **SECTION 1: WEAVING STORIES** and **SECTION 2: EXPLORING THE EXHIBITION** to support the implementation of these activities.

Teachers or students may select any number and combination of the activities to complete.

*All activities can be undertaken as individual, pair, small group or whole class activities, depending on the context (i.e. student age and needs and any time, space or resource limitations).*

### A. BEFORE THE EXHIBITION

- New Exuberance is a celebration of textiles as an art and design medium. WATCH 'Textiles: What are they? where do they come from?' to explore the basics of textile production (see 'Other Resources' in SECTION 5 for the full listing).

READ 'Weaving Stories - A New Exuberance in Australian Textiles' and refer to individual Artist Profiles in SECTION 1 to learn about the makers and themes presented in *New Exuberance*.

AC9AVA8C01

AC9AVA10C02

LIT, ICT, CCT, IU

Design and Technologies - technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production; process and production skills.

- BRAINSTORM different uses of textiles.

*Think about how textiles are used in different contexts - domestic, commercial, artistic...*

CHOOSE categories to group your responses together and create a map of how use textiles in our lives.

*Think about the different place and ways in which we use textiles e.g., in the home, fashion, industry, soft furnishings, sport...*

*REFLECT on other students' responses and how they compare to yours. Are there common themes or ideas across the different maps? Are there different ideas expressed across the maps? Why do you think textiles are used in these ways?*

AC9AVA8E01

AC9AVA10E01

LIT, ICT, CCT

Design and Technologies - technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production.

Left: Iordanes Spyridon Gogos, repurposed fabric with painted and printed material and found buttons, Displayed at JamFactory Gallery One, Photo: Connor Patterson



- CHOOSE a textile item that is special to you.  
*It could be an item of clothing that belongs to you or someone else, a pillow, blanket or soft toy, a scrap of fabric from something you cherished...*

WRITE a short text that explains why this item holds special meaning for you.  
*You could recount the event(s) that made this item special or represent these events in a narrative. You could write a description or poem that expresses the material and emotional qualities of the item.*

\* Possible alternative: students could represent the significance of their item through a visual format, such as collage or drawing.

AC9AVA8E01; AC9AVA8C01  
AC9AVA10E01; AC9AVA10D02

LIT, ICT, CCT, PSC  
English – text structure and organisation; language for expressing and developing ideas; creating texts.

- WATCH some of the videos listed under ‘Videos – Textile Techniques’ in SECTION 5 to learn about some basic techniques when creating and working with textiles.

EXPERIMENT with some of the techniques.

REFLECT on the processes you have experimented with. *Did you enjoy working with these techniques? Why/why not? Did you find them time-consuming or fiddly? Which technique did you enjoy the most? Which technique produced the most aesthetically pleasing result? Would you consider using these techniques in your artistic practice?*

\* Appropriate supervision and instruction will be required for any use of sharp tools such as needles or cutting tools.

AC9AVA8E01; AC9AVA8C01  
AC9AVA10E01; AC9AVA10D02

NUM, ICT, PSC  
Mathematics – measurement; space.  
History – viewpoint: women’s roles, experiences and practices.  
Design and Technologies – technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production.  
Science – chemical sciences.

- New Exuberance features multiple collaborations between First Nations and non-First Nations creatives. It is important to understand the context of these specific collaborations and the issues that these kinds of collaborations can raise.

DISCUSS the problems that are raised when someone is involved in the representation of a culture that is not their own – in Australia, it is particularly important to understand how First Nations cultures have been suppressed, **objectified** and **appropriated** by predominantly European people since **colonisation** and the appropriate and respectful ways in which non-First Nations people can engage with First Nations culture.

\* Note to teachers: you can refer to commentary on these issues in Themes Two (Come As You

Are) and Three (Bridging Worlds) in SECTION 2 to help guide discussion.

AC9AVA8E02  
AC9AVA10E02

LIT, CCT, PSU, EU, IU  
Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.  
History – deep time history of Australia; making and transforming the Australian nation (1750–1914); making and transforming the Australian nation (1750–1914); building modern Australia.  
Languages – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.  
The Arts – First Nations creativity.

- READ ‘Theme Four – A Woman’s Work’ in SECTION 2 to learn about how Feminist artists have reclaimed craft practices once considered to be nothing more than recreational activities for women.

THINK about the relationship between gender and textiles explored in Theme Four.  
*Do young people today still see textiles as a ‘feminine’ practice, or do you reject this as a stereotype? Would students who do not identify as female be comfortable, or interested in, pursuing textile-based making?*

THINK about the relationship between art and craft discussed in Theme Four. *What you think defines something as being ‘art’? What do you think is the difference between art, design and craft? List the qualities that you think make something an artwork as opposed to craft or design.*

CONSIDER this definition in relation to the works you view in the exhibition.

REFLECT on your definition of ‘art’ after having viewed the exhibition.  
*Has seeing the artworks in this exhibition changed your perceptions of what art can be? Why/why not?*

\* The concepts explored in Theme Four are more challenging and, therefore, may be better suited to older year levels (10–12). Teachers could use the key ideas from this essay to prompt discussion about this topic with younger students.

AC9AVA8E01; AC9AVA8D02  
AC9AVA10E01; AC9AVA10D02

LIT, CCT, PSU, EU  
Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.  
History – deep time history of Australia; making and transforming the Australian nation (1750–1914); making and transforming the Australian nation (1750–1914); building modern Australia.  
The Arts – First Nations creativity.

## B. AT THE EXHIBITION

- The title of this exhibition is New Exuberance. ‘Exuberance’ describes a state of energy, excitement and vigour.

OBSERVE the exhibition as a whole collection of works and think about the atmosphere created



in the gallery space. Next, view each artwork and think about how they make you feel.

CRITIQUE whether or not you feel this exhibition successfully communicates a sense of exuberance.

*Think about the curatorial aspects of the exhibition – the selection of artworks, exhibition layout, how the artworks are grouped, wall colours, how each artwork is presented, plinth size, shape and colour, lighting, wall text fonts ...*

[AC9AVA8PO1](#)

[AC9AVA10PO1](#)

LIT, NUM, CCT, PSC

English – descriptive language; critical review writing; specialist and technical vocabulary; analysing, interpreting and evaluating.

- CHOOSE your favourite artwork from the exhibition.

IDENTIFY the **elements of art/design** used in this piece that appeal to you.

*Think about colour, line, shape, space, texture, contrast, balance, scale, light and shade...*

EXPLAIN why you think these things resonate with you.

*Does the artwork use colours or patterns you like? Does the artwork remind you of something else?... something in nature, from your home or family, in music, fashion, film.... Does it make you feel a certain way? Why do they have this effect on you? Remember to use your visual arts language.*

\* Possible extension: write a short review that describes and evaluates the chosen artwork.

[ACAVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8D01](#); [AC9AVA8D02](#); [AC9AVA8PO1](#)

[AC9AVA10E01](#); [AC9AVA10D01](#); [AC9AVA10D02](#); [AC9AVA10PO1](#)

LIT, CCT, PSC

English – descriptive language; specialist and technical vocabulary; analysing, interpreting and evaluating; poetry writing.

- To create her *Clothes Portraits*, Kate Just collects clothing that has been worn by a particular person and uses different scraps of fabric to create a patchwork quilt that represents this individual's personality.

OBSERVE one of Kate Just's 'Clothes Portraits', paying close attention to the **elements of art/design** used in the artwork.

*Think about line, shape, colour, pattern, texture, contrast, balance, repetition, scale...*

THINK about what feelings or qualities are evoked by the art/design elements you have identified.

*Bright colours could suggest energy or joy. Lots of colours could create a sense of fun or confusion. The predominance of one colour, or tonal variations of the same colour, could feel consistent, calm or boring. The way that colours, shape and pattern are arranged can create a sense of cohesion, variety or disorganisation. Soft textures may feel comforting while sharp textures may feel dangerous...*

WRITE a list of words that you think could describe the subject of this Clothes Portrait. *Who do you think once wore these clothes? What personality traits do you think they have? Think about your interpretation of the artwork's composition for clues.*

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8D02](#)

[AC9AVA10E01](#); [AC9AVA10D02](#)

LIT, NUM, CCT, PSC

English – language for expressing and developing ideas.

History – viewpoint: women's roles, experiences and practices. English – language for expressing and developing ideas.

**[Note to teachers:** if you are undertaking this activity, it is important to have completed the fifth activity in A. BEFORE THE EXHIBITION so that students are understand how to appropriately work with art or design content from a culture that is not their own.]

CHOOSE your favourite printed fabric design created by one of the artists from Bábbarra Women's Centre, Ikuntji Artists or Tiwi Design.

IMAGINE what you would like to make with this length of printed fabric.

*Think about the meaning or story behind this design and the elements of art/design that have been used. Consider how the aesthetic and meaning would inform your design? What would be an appropriate way to use this fabric?*

DRAW a quick plan of what you would make and how you imagine the finished piece would look. Annotate your sketch to show the size of your design and what materials and techniques you would use to make it.

*You could use this fabric to make art, décor or soft furnishings, bed linen, napery, upholstered furniture, clothing and accessories... Be as creative as you like. Think about how the techniques and materials you use would complement or contrast with your chosen printed fabric.*

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8E02](#); [AC9AVA8D01](#); [AC9AVA8D02](#); [AC9AVA8C01](#)

[AC9AVA10E01](#); [AC9AVA10E02](#); [AC9AVA10D01](#); [AC9AVA10D02](#); [AC9AVA10C01](#)

LIT, NUM, CCT, EU, IU

Mathematics – measurement; space.

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

Geography – water in the world; place and liveability; landscapes and landforms; environmental change and management.

History – deep time history of Australia.

Design and Technologies – technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production; process and production skills.

Dance/Drama – costume and set design.

Languages – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.



### C. AFTER THE EXHIBITION

- Weaving is the most widely used means of creating a textile. Using the method below, you can experience the process of designing and making your own textile.

MAKE a cardboard loom following the instructions in the "[Weaving Beginners: DIY Cardboard Loom Tutorial](#)" (see 'Videos - Looms' in SECTION 5 for the full listing).

WATCH some of the tutorials on the Fibers and Design Weaving YouTube channel to learn some basic weaving techniques. Links to the essential videos are listed under 'Loom Videos' in SECTION 5.

CREATE your own woven artwork.

*Think about colour, pattern and texture when designing your composition. Experiment with different weft materials - you could use ribbon, string or raffia, strips of soft plastic (from plastic bags or used cling wrap), paper or fabric or natural materials such as long grasses.*

[AC9AVA8D01](#); [AC9AVA8C02](#)  
[AC9AVA10D01](#); [AC9AVA10C02](#)

NUM, CCT, PSC

Mathematics - measurement; space.

History - The Industrial Revolution and the movement of peoples (1750-1900).

Design and Technologies - technologies and society; engineering principles and systems; materials and technologies.

- Through the blending of textiles and augmented reality technology, Nixi Killick's garments embody the relationship between the automation of weaving processes (for complex patterns) and early concepts of computer programming.

WATCH "[How was it Made? Jacquard Weaving](#)" to discover how a Jacquard loom operates (see 'Jacquard Loom Resources' in SECTION 5 for the full listing).

INVESTIGATE the relationship between the Jacquard loom and early theories of computer programming (see 'Jacquard Loom Resources' in SECTION 5 for some helpful resources to begin your research).

- Joseph-Marie Jacquard (1752-1834)
- Charles Babbage (1791-1871)
- Ada Lovelace (1815-1852)

ATTEMPT explaining this relationship to someone else.

*You can use any form of communication to express this relationship - visual, verbal, written or any combination of the three. You could write an explanation, narrate the story that links these two inventions, draw a diagram or video/physically demonstrate key concepts...*

\* Possible extension: reflect on the positive/negative aspects of the changes caused by the industrial revolution.

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8D02](#) [https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-areas/visual-arts/year-7\\_year-8\\_year-9\\_year-10/content-description?subject-identifier=ARTVISY78&content-description-code=AC9AVA8C02&detailed-content-descriptions=0&hide-ccp=0&hide-gc=0&side-by-side=1&strands-start-index=0&subjects-start-index=0&view=quick](https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-areas/visual-arts/year-7_year-8_year-9_year-10/content-description?subject-identifier=ARTVISY78&content-description-code=AC9AVA8C02&detailed-content-descriptions=0&hide-ccp=0&hide-gc=0&side-by-side=1&strands-start-index=0&subjects-start-index=0&view=quick)

LIT. NUM, ICT, CCT

Mathematics - number; algebra.

History - The Industrial Revolution and the movement of peoples (1750-1900).

Science - physical sciences; science as human endeavour.

Design and Technologies - technologies and society; engineering principles and systems; materials and technologies.

Digital Technologies - data representation; generating and designing.

- READ 'Theme 3 - Bridging Worlds' SECTION 2 to see how the theme of collaboration is explored by the makers featured in New Exuberance.

Artist Kate Just creates patchwork quilt portraits by repurposing items of an individual's worn clothing as the materials to make a quilt that represents their personality. With your classmates, you can apply this concept to collaboratively make an artwork. Just like a class photo represents both the individual class members and the whole class, you will work together to create a class quilt portrait composed of individual patches representing each student. Like the creatives who come together at Jordanes Spyridon Gogos, you will need to collaborate and support each other throughout all of the making stages of this project.

COLLECT materials that can be hand sewn - this doesn't have to be fabric; you can use any material that can have a needle easily pushed through it.

CHOOSE the materials that you are most attracted to.

*Think about **elements of art/design**. Why are you attracted to the specific pattern, colour, texture...?*

DESIGN a single block, for a patchwork quilt, that represents your personality. There are videos on sewing and patchwork quilting in SECTION 5 that will help you to design and make your block. You can also incorporate any of the textile techniques that are included in the 'Videos of Textile Techniques' in SECTION 5 to embellish your block.

*Be as creative as you like. You could use a base piece of material and embellish it by attaching other materials, drawing, painting or printing on it or embroidering a design onto it. Alternatively, you could piece different materials and shapes together to create your block.*

MAKE your block, being sure to leave a **seam allowance**.

COMPOSE your quilt by laying all of the blocks together and arranging them into a design that the whole class is happy with.

STITCH the blocks together to create your class quilt portrait.

\* Alternative: each student could simply make their own block.

\* Appropriate supervision and instruction will be required for the use of sharp needles.



AC9AVA8E01; AC9AVA8D01; AC9AVA8D02; AC9AVA8C01; AC9AVA8C02  
AC9AVA10E01; AC9AVA10D01; AC9AVA10C01; AC9AVA10C02

LIT, NUM, ICT, CCT, PSC

Mathematics – measurement; space.

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

History – viewpoint: women’s roles, experiences and practices.

Design and Technologies – technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production; process and production skills.

READ ‘Theme One – Sustainability’ in SECTION 2 to learn about how the overproduction of fashion textiles contributes to environmental degradation.

Textile waste ending up in landfill is only one element of the expansive issue of environmental sustainability.

READ the articles listed under ‘Sustainability Resources’ in SECTION 5 to get an overview of the many environmental issues raised by the textile production industry.

RESEARCH one of these issues in more depth.

*What causes the problem? How does this problem harm the environment? What are some of the potential solutions? What are the complexities involved in addressing this problem?*

Finding a balance between sustainability and creative expression has become an increasingly important issue for artists to consider.

THINK about the issue you have researched and how this relates to art practices in your school.

*What actions could be taken to address this problem?*

*For example, the use of harmful dyes in textile production relates to the waste and disposal of paints and dyes in art studios. How could you reduce the harm caused by these practices?*

AC9AVA8d02

AC9AVA10D02

LIT, NUM, ICT, CCT, PSC, EU

English – text structure and organisation; texts in context; analysing, interpreting and evaluating.

Mathematics – statistics.

History – The Industrial Revolution and the movement of peoples (1750–1900).

Science – biological sciences; Earth and space sciences; chemical sciences; science as human endeavour; science inquiry.

Geography: water in the world; landscapes and landforms; biomes and food security; place and liveability; environmental change and management; questioning and researching; interpreting and analysing; concluding and decision-making.

- WATCH the interview with First Nations Fashion Design (FNFD) founders, Grace Lillian Lee and Tegan Jan Cowlshaw, on NITV’s The Point – “First Nations Fashion – Episode 26”, August 19, 2020, 53:00 mins. (see ‘Grace Lillian Lee’ in SECTION 5 for the full listing)

DISCUSS the different issues that exist regarding the advancement of Australian First Nations creatives in the Australian fashion industry.

*Why is this movement important? What barriers exist? What are some of the current solutions? Are there problems with any of the current solutions? What is the ultimate goal of this movement? How can we support these creatives?*

AC9AVA8E02

AC9AVA10E02

LIT, ICT, CCT, PSU, EU, IU

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

History – deep time history of Australia; making and transforming the Australian nation (1750–1914); building modern Australia.

Languages – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Dance, Music and Media Arts – First Nations creatives involvement in the fashion industry.

- READ ‘Theme Two – Come As You Are’ in SECTION 2 to explore the ways in which the work of artists and designers featured in New Exuberance helps to increase inclusivity in fashion and design.

*THINK about the groups of people these creatives are embracing through their work and identify any other groups of people who are still being overlooked.*

*Who is being invited to make and, or, wear design and fashion? Who has been left out? Why do you think these people may still be overlooked by the design and, or, fashion communities? Can you find any examples where these people have been acknowledged or embraced by the design or fashion worlds? Are there ways that we could support change in this area?*

*\* Possible extension: explore how this concept relates to the art world.*

*Are there people whose work we do not see represented in galleries? Why do you think this is?*

AC9AVA8D02

AC9AVA10D02

LIT, ICT, CCT, EU, IU

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

Dance, Drama, Music and Media Arts – creative output from minority groups.



- Throughout New Exuberance makers use pattern, colour and symbols to explore and express identity – the jumpers designed by WAH WAH Australia to celebrate the work of artists and musicians are a great example.

THINK about what colours, patterns, shapes, images or symbols you could use to represent your identity.

Remember, while we can be inspired by other people’s methods of self-expression, we must not copy their designs. It is important to develop your own unique visual language.

CREATE a jumper design that expresses one or more facets of your identity.

Think about how you can use the elements of art/design to convey your message or concept. How would you incorporate this design into the jumper – would it be knitted, printed, appliquéd, embroidered...? (Use the videos in SECTION 5 to help you with these techniques). Think about space and scale – how will the design sit within the form of the jumper?

\* Possible extension: depending on available resources, students could apply their designs to pre-existing jumpers or t-shirts by using heat transfer paper, fabric printing techniques, embroidery or applique or painting with acrylic or fabric paint.

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8E02](#)

[AC9AVA10E02](#); [AC9AVA10E02](#)

LIT, NUM, ICT, CCT, PSC, EU

Mathematics – measurement; space.

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

Design and Technologies – technologies and society; materials and technologies; fibre production; process and production skills.

- A key moment in Australian fashion history was the establishment of Linda Jackson and Jenny Kee’s fashion label, Flamingo Park – which operated from the Flamingo Park Frock Salon in Sydney’s Strand Arcade from 1973 to 1992. Jackson and Kee’s work gained international recognition and was highly influential on future generations of Australian textile and fashion designers. Kee has also collaborated on work with two labels featured in New Exuberance – Romance Was Born and lordanes Spyridon Gogos.

WATCH Step Into Paradise to learn about the work of iconic Australian fashion designers Linda Jackson and Jenny Kee.

EXPLORE the **aesthetic** of Flamingo Park designs.

What are the key features of their design aesthetic? Think about the **elements of art/design**.

CONSIDER the Flamingo Park designs in relation to the works you viewed at the exhibition.

*Can you see a relationship between Flamingo Park and the work of these new artists and designers? Can you see any similarities in the use of colour, composition, subject matter...? How do you think Flamingo Park have influenced Australian creatives?*

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVA8D01](#); [AC9AVA8D02](#)

[AC9AVA10E01](#); [AC9AVA10D01](#); [AC9AVA10D02](#)

LIT, ICT, CCT

English – text structure and organisation; language for expressing and developing ideas; analysing, interpreting and evaluating; creating texts.

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.

- CHOOSE one artist from the exhibition whose work **resonated** with you the most.

RESEARCH their life, education, artworks and practice – see SECTION 5 for some helpful resources to begin your research.

REFLECT on the artworks you viewed in the exhibition. Does knowing more about the artist’s background and artistic practice help you to better understand the work you have viewed?

[AC9AVA8E01](#); [AC9AVAD01](#); [AC9AVAD02](#); [AC9AVA8P01](#)

[AC9AVA10E01](#); [AC9AVA10D01](#); [AC9AVA10D02](#); [AC9AVA10P01](#)

LIT, ICT, CCT, PSC, IU

English – text structure and organisation; language for expressing and developing ideas; creating texts.

Civics and Citizenship – citizenship, diversity and identity.



## SECTION 5

### FURTHER RESEARCH

#### FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS



#### FURTHER READING ON THE EXHIBITION

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Left: New Exuberance Exhibition, 2023, Displayed at JamFactory Gallery One, Photo: Connor Patterson



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## SECTION 6 GLOSSARY

### EXPLANATION OF **BOLD** TERMS



Some of these definitions have been informed by the sources listed under '[Terminology Sources](#)' in **SECTION 5**.

**Aesthetic:** relating to the appreciation and critique of beauty or good taste (adjective); a particular taste or style of visual composition (noun).

**Angu:** (Arn-ang-oo) Aboriginal people of the Western Desert region. Literally means 'people' in both Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara language.

**Applied Art:** (often used interchangeably with decorative arts, although decorative arts do not include architecture) a subsection of 'The Arts' that uses the elements of art/design to create everyday practical or utilitarian objects that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Applied arts encompasses a wide range of fields including, industrial design, architecture, crafts, automotive design, fashion design and interior design. Commonly called design in contemporary terminology.

**Appropriation:** the intentional borrowing, copying, and alteration of pre-existing images, objects, and ideas for one's own purposes.

**Assimilate:** (In regards to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) The process by which minority groups are taught the basic attitudes, habits and mode of life of another all-embracing culture and are expected to blend into and become part of the dominant culture.

**Central Desert Painting Movement:** the flourishing of art making (particularly paintings on canvas) by Aboriginal people located throughout the Central Desert region of the Northern Territory following the national and international success of the Papunya Tula Art Movement.

**Colonisation:** The act of creating a colony in a new place; the process of establishing and maintaining authority over other peoples or territories in order to expand the land of an empire or other state power.

**Conceptual art:** an art movement that began in the 1960s and privileged the quality of the concept of an artwork over the quality of its final physical form – the idea was more important than the appearance of the 'art object'. This means that conceptual art can look like anything, be made of anything and be shown anywhere. Conceptual art challenges traditional ideas of what makes something 'art', how art is made and how art is exhibited. Prominent trends within the conceptual art movement include: Fluxus, Land Art, Performance Art, Arte Povera, Video Art, Conceptual Photography and Body Art. Conceptual art also helped to elevate performance art and photography to the same level of importance as traditional artforms such as painting and sculpture.

**Cosmic dimensions:** a level of consciousness or existence beyond the human experience; the vast unknown of the universe compared to human reality on Earth.

**Country:** The term "Country" is all-encompassing, and includes the land, sea, sky and everything contained therein. Artist and curator Nici Cumpston explains: "Country is spoken about in the same way non-Aboriginal people may talk about their living human relatives. Aboriginal peoples cry about Country, they worry about Country, they listen to Country, they visit Country and long for Country." Some artists represent features of the landscape in their artwork to communicate their profound, ongoing relationship with Country. Other artists raise awareness about the dispossession of Country as a result of invasion, using art to assert their rights as traditional owners of land and sea. (Extracted from 'The Essential Introduction to Aboriginal Art (25 Facts): Interpretive Resource')

**Couture:** (also known as haute couture) high-end clothing that has been hand-made by a dressmaking technician, or technicians, with a high level of skill. Couture clothing is custom made to fit a specific person. Due to the time involved in creating a custom-made garment, the quality of the materials used and the exceptional skill of the technicians, couture fashion is very expensive and, therefore, exclusive.

**Emotional register:** (metaphor) in music, a register is the range of notes that an instrument or voice can produce. The sound of each note, or combination of notes, has specific qualities that stimulate different responses in the listener. In this context, we are using this concept as a metaphoric idea of a register of emotions. Like finding the right tone in music, the artist is finding the right combination of visual elements to convey a specific 'tone' of emotion.

**Direct-to-fabric printing:** (also known as direct-to-garment printing) printing technique that uses a specialised, large-format inkjet printer to print directly onto a roll of fabric. The fabric must be pre-treated to ensure the inks successfully bond to the fabric fibres and to improve colour vibrancy and durability. A digital design is then sent to the printer. The roll of fabric is passed through the printer which sprays water-based inks (that are environmentally friendly) directly onto the fabric. The fabric is then post-treated using either a heat press or conveyor dryer to cure the ink. This method can print multiple colours and produces a reasonable quality of detail, but less than that achieved by sublimation printing. This process is quicker, less expensive and less labour intensive than other printing methods and suitable for single or small batch printing. However, the print surface area is limited and print quality will degrade with washing. Works best on natural fibres.

**Decolonising:** (in the context of Atem's work) the challenging and rewriting of assumptions, ideas, values and practices imposed on a group of people by the dominant influence of a colonising power.

**Dystopian:** relating to a dystopia – (the opposite of utopia) an imagined society where people are constantly unhappy and afraid because they are dehumanised and treated unfairly.

**Elements of Art/Design:** visual conventions including (but not limited to) point, line, shape, form, tone, colour, texture and space.

Left: *North Bondi Dream Apartment Glamour Sack*. Creative Direction Stavroula Adameitis. Photo Charles Grant.



**Ethnographer:** the title of someone who practices the profession of ethnography – the scientific study and description of groups of people based on ethnicity and, or, culture.

**House of Silky:** a Sydney 'house' within the Australian Ballroom scene. Ballroom is a QTBIPOC (Queer and Transgender, Black Indigenous and People of Colour) subculture created by Black and Latinx trans women in Harlem, New York, in the 1970s. 'Balls' are events at which people 'walk' (compete) for trophies and prizes in a number of different fashion and beauty categories and voguing competitions (a highly stylised form of dance involving striking model-like poses combined with different dance movements, depending on the style of voguing being performed). 'Houses' are groups of people from the ballroom community who have joined together into a collective. While houses train and walk together, they are more than a 'team'. Houses are considered to be a family who support each other through life's challenges and celebrate each other's success. Each house is usually led by a senior member of the community who is considered the house 'mother' or 'father'. The house system operates as a way to support community members who are often ostracised from society and, in many cases, their blood family, due to their gender identity or sexuality.

Ballroom culture is an off-shoot of the North American drag queen pageant circuit. These pageants evolved over time from the original Hamilton Lodge drag balls that started in Harlem in 1869 as a safe place for gay men and, later, lesbian women and transgender people to congregate. Although multi-cultural and LGBTQI inclusive, racism and transphobia permeated the New York drag pageant and club scene. Ballroom was originally created as safe haven for the QTBIPOC community to gather and celebrate each other. Over the past 50 years, the Ballroom scene has influenced mainstream culture through aesthetics, dance and language, most notably through Madonna's song and film clip, Vogue (1990).

**Iconography:** (in art) imagery that is used for its specific symbolic meaning. It is derived from the Greek word 'ikon' that means image. The term 'icon' originally referred to an image of Christ used in the orthodox Greek Church as an object of devotion. Over time, the term has evolved to denote any image or object that is particularly significant within its context or that holds special symbolic meaning. Any individual or group of people can develop their own iconography. The Sydney Harbour Bridge, Sydney Opera House, a Vegemite bottle, koala or kangaroo are all common iconography used to symbolise Australia.

**Idolatry:** the worship of an inanimate, physical object (or picture) as a god.

**Ininti:** Pitjantjatjara word. Bat's wing coral tree/Bean tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*). Found throughout the Western Desert. Also refers to the red seeds produced by this tree that are used by Aangu women to make necklaces and other decorations, often for ceremonial purposes.

**Intuitive:** the act of making decisions or gaining knowledge or understanding through intuition (a natural ability or feeling that guides behaviour and thought processes without the use of fact, proof, evidence or rational thought).

**Juxtaposition:** (in art) the deliberate placement of images or objects close together in order to evoke meaning through comparison and contrast.

**Kitsch:** German word meaning trash, used in English to describe something as being cheap, vulgar, garish or overly sentimental – usually relating to popular or commercial culture. Although widely considered as poor taste, kitsch has gained popularity amongst some sub-cultures and individuals, most notably the Pop Art movement of the 1960s.

**Kumuntjai:** Term used in the place of the first name of a deceased person in Aangu culture.

**Lino block printing:** (also known as linoleum cut, or linocut printing) relief printmaking technique – a technique that involves cutting away the printing surface so that only the raised areas will pick up ink. A lino block is made of a thin layer of linoleum (solidified linseed oil) on a canvas backing. The linoleum is very soft and easy to cut away using sharp cutting tools. It is much easier to cut than a wood block and, unlike wood, does not have a grain, so can be cut in any direction. The negative space of the design (the space that is not being printed) is cut away from the lino block surface. The surface is then inked and a paper carefully laid on top. Printing can be achieved by manually rubbing over the paper with a spoon (or similar tool) or passing the block and paper through a printing press. A lino print can consist of multiple layers in different colours that have been created by strategically cutting away and printing parts of the design in stages. Lino block printing produces solid, flat areas of colour with clean edges. Linoleum was invented as a floor covering in the nineteenth century and was adopted by artists for printmaking purposes in the twentieth century.

**Modernist:** an individual associated with the Modernism movement. Modernism was a global cultural movement with its beginnings in the late nineteenth century (the era of modern art). The movement was concerned with the development of new cultural and social values, customs, and forms of expression that accurately reflected the modern industrial world. Artists involved in the Modernism movement began using new imagery, materials and techniques in an attempt to create artworks that embodied the realities and aspirations of their modern society. A number of art movements fall under the umbrella term, 'Modernism', often starting with the Realism of the late 1800s through to Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s. Although varying in style and subject matter, what is common to all of these movements is a rejection of history and conservative values, innovation and experimentation, a focus on materials, techniques and processes with an increasing predisposition toward abstraction. Modernism was characterised by a strong belief in progress and ideas regarding the ideal society and individual existence, often motivated by different utopian social and political agendas.

**Monoculture:** a dominant culture characterised by homogeneity or uniformity.

**Multidisciplinary:** (in art) working across two or more mediums. For example, Tracey Emin produces drawings, paintings, sculpture, film, photography, neon texts and sewn applique.

**Papunya Tula Art Movement:** Aboriginal art movement that began in 1971 when a school teacher, Geoffrey Bardon, encouraged some of the men at the government settlement at Papunya (Warumpi) to paint a blank school wall. Bardon was responding to the men's concerns about being separated from their custodial lands and not being able to maintain their cultural responsibilities. The murals sparked tremendous interest in the community and soon many men started painting on canvas. Due to the artist's lack of knowledge and experience regarding the Western concept of 'art' and the 'art world' there were some early controversies due to the portrayal of sacred cultural content. This was a problem that the artists and Australian First Nations peoples have had to reconcile over time. Today, art works made for the wider public only contain content that is considered suitable for this audience. In 1972, the artists successfully established their own company. The company is entirely owned and directed by traditional Aboriginal people from the Western Desert, predominantly of the Luritja/Pintupi language groups.

**Pathos:** a quality (in The Arts, literature, film and general life experience) that elicits a sympathetic or sad emotional response, usually characterised by feelings of pity and compassion.

**Perspective:** the visual technique used to represent, or create the illusion of, three-dimensional space, depth and volume on a two-dimensional surface. While it is thought that the principles of perspective were known in Ancient Greece and Rome, this knowledge was lost over time. It was not until approximately 1415, that Italian Renaissance architect, Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1336), discovered the mathematical laws of linear perspective. Painters experimented with this new technique over many years until the key principles of perspective – orthogonals (parallel lines), the horizon line and vanishing point – were then formalised and written down by Italian Renaissance writer and architect Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) in his 1435 text *Della Pittura* (On Painting). Italian Renaissance artists Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) and Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) and German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) are considered to be some of the earliest masters of the perspective technique.

**Pragmatic:** an approach or mindset that is practical, rather than idealistic; the use of logic and reason when dealing with problems.

**Pre-Columbian:** the civilisations that existed in north and south America prior to the colonisation by the Spanish in the 16th century. It literally means prior to Columbus (Christopher Columbus – explorer and the first European to discover the Americas).

**Recontextualise:** to create new meaning by placing or imagining something in a new and different context.

Renaissance: French term meaning rebirth or revival; applied to a period characterised by the humanistic revival of classical art, architecture, literature and learning, originating in Italy in the fourteenth century and later spreading throughout Europe and lasting through the sixteenth century.

**Resonate:** to connect with someone on a personal or emotional level; to have a particular significance for someone.

**Screen printing:** (also known as silkscreen printing and serigraphy) stencil-based printmaking technique. A fine fabric (originally silk but now more commonly synthetic) is stretched tightly over, and attached to, a frame to create a screen. Areas of the screen that are not going to be printed are blocked out by a stencil – various methods can be used including painting on glue or lacquer, applying tape, using a paper stencil or painting photo emulsion onto the screen (a light-sensitive material that when exposed to light will harden). Paper is placed under the screen and paint or ink is forced through the exposed areas of the screen, using a squeegee (rubber blade), onto the paper. This produces bold, hard-edged areas of flat and even-toned colour. Screen printing was originally used for commercial purposes in the 1920s. Artists first started using screen printing as an artmaking technique in the 1930s and it has been an established art medium since the 1950s. During this time, many artists worked in commercial art/design fields (such as illustration and advertising) as a way to earn money. They applied the term 'serigraph' to their artistic prints in order to differentiate them from their commercial printing work. This medium is most commonly associated with the Pop Art movement and Andy Warhol.

**Seam allowance:** the area between the stitching line (the seam) and the outer edge of the fabric when two pieces of fabric are being sewn together.

**Second wave feminism:** the feminist movement of the 1960s and 70s that advocated for women's equality and liberation from outdated patriarchal (male-controlled) social structures. This movement came after the women's suffrage movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (i.e., first wave feminism). Second wave feminism, commonly known as the women's liberation movement, was spearheaded by young women who had grown up observing the professional and social limitations imposed upon their mothers, despite them having a college education. Key issues of second wave feminism were equal job opportunities, equal pay for equal work, legal equality, reproductive rights, sexual and domestic violence and the need for support services for working women, such as childcare. The second wave was characterised by intense theoretical debate and internal fighting between different groups with different agendas. It has also been heavily criticised for focussing only on the concerns of one group of women – white, heterosexual and middle-class. This homogenous approach did not take into account different experiences based on ethnicity, culture, social class and sexuality. Second wave feminism has been followed by third (1990s) and fourth (2012-today) waves.

**Simultanism:** (also known as Orphism) the term coined by artist Robert Delaunay to describe a style of abstract painting that he and his wife, Sonia Delaunay, had been developing from approximately 1910. This style used overlapping patches of contrasting or complementary colours as a way to intensify the vibrancy of colour and create a sense of dynamic rhythm, movement and depth. This style was influenced by the colour theory of Michel Eugène Chevreul. Chevreul's book, *De la loi du contraste simultanée des couleurs* (On the law of the simultaneous

contrast of colours) (1839) described how the appearance of a colour can be changed by the colours around it. It is from Chevreul's idea of bringing colours together (simultaneously) that the name 'Simultanism' is derived. Although, French poet, writer and critic, Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918), also invented the term Orphism to describe their work. Apollinaire was referencing ancient Greek poet and musician, Orpheus, as a way to express how these paintings created rhythm and harmonies in the same way as music. The Delauney's work became increasingly abstract over time, ultimately resulting in the circular compositions for which they are best known – the Disques and Formes circulaires cosmiques series.

**Songline:** concept from Australian First Nations cultures. Ancestral and contemporary stories containing important cultural, spiritual, geographical, social, ecological and practical knowledge. Each songline traces the journey of an ancestral spirit, or spirits, or other individuals as they moved through the landscape and are, therefore, intimately connected to the land. The events that happened along the way explain how the land, animals and lore were created and provide important information including cultural values, law, family and kinship structures, plant remedies, animal behaviour and how to care for the environment. The locations of these events also provide instruction how to navigate from one place to another and where to find food, water and other precious resources. Songlines provide all of the information needed to successfully navigate both the land and society, while respecting culture and Country. Songlines can be communicated through song, dance and storytelling or by visual methods such as painting. By embedding all of this information into a story, knowledge can be more easily remembered, shared and passed on.

**Spectre:** (in this context) the looming threat, or fear, of something bad happening.

**Sublimation printing:** (also known as All Over Print) printing technique that uses special inks that turn into gas when heated. A digital design is printed onto paper using sublimation ink (using a regular printer that can hold sublimation ink). The paper is then laid on top of the desired textile surface and heat is applied. The heat causes the ink to sublimate, or transition, directly from solid to gas (without a liquid stage in between), and the gas permeates the textile fibres. The item is then left to cool, allowing the gas to convert back into a solid, which leaves an imprint of the design in the fabric. This method produces a more permanent and durable print, as the ink has been forced into the fibres of the fabric, than other printing techniques where it lies on top. Sublimation printing produces high quality detail with sharp edges and unlimited colours. Designs can be printed from edge to edge of any garment. It is also suitable for single or small batch production. Sublimation printing can only be performed on polyester or polyester-blend fabrics and is more expensive than other printing methods. You cannot print the colour white using this technique and it is difficult to effectively print onto dark fabrics.

**The Monument:** the concept of attributing great significance and devotion to a structure due to its symbolism (of an important person or event).

**Tjukurrpa:** (chook-orr-pa) the A angu word for important creation stories of the kind described above under the term Songline.

**Traverse:** to move or travel along, across, over or through (verb).

**Western Desert:** Broad area which includes most of the interior of Western Australia, northern South Australia and the southwest corner of the Northern Territory – stretching northwest to Balgo, west to Port Hedland, south to Kalgoorlie, Yalata, and Oodnadatta, and northeast to Alice Springs. The Aboriginal people from this area are collectively known as the Western Desert Language group and refer to themselves as A angu. Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara are dialects of the Western Desert Language, the largest language group of Aboriginal Australia, however, some A angu speak up to six Aboriginal languages. There are about 4,000 people in this language group.

## INTRODUCTION

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## WEAVING STORIES – A NEW EXUBERANCE IN AUSTRALIAN TEXTILES / ARTIST PROFILES

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<sup>vii</sup> The Social Studio, "The Social Studio x Atong Atem x Romance Was Born", The Social Studio, 2021, accessed November 11, 2022. <https://shop.thesocialstudio.org/collections/the-social-studio-x-atong-atem-x-romance-was-born>.

<sup>viii</sup> Shannon Brett, "A Culture Adorned", in *New Exuberance: Contemporary Australian Textile Design*, ed. Meryl Ryan (Adelaide: JamFactory; Mile End: Wakefield Press, 2023), 38-45.

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<sup>x</sup> Tiwi Designs Aboriginal Corporation Incorporated, Tiwi Design, n.d., accessed November 12, 2023. <https://tiwidesigns.com>; Brett, "A Culture Adorned", 38-45.

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Right: Jay Jurrupula Rostron, *Mimih Dancing and Bolung (Rainbow Serpent) (detail)*, designed 2022, lino-printed in *Maningrida 2022*, silk dupion, ink, 140 x 400 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Bábbarra Women's Centre. Photo Connor Patterson.

