

## ● Portfolio - Gabi Briggs



TENYA, 2025

Liquid Architecture x Substation Listening to Country Commission

Gabi Briggs

Film, Projection & Spatial Sound Design

TENYA, meaning 'Us' in Anaiwan, acts as an archive of cultural revitalisation. This sonic-visual work by Anaiwan and Gumbayngirr artist Gabi Briggs builds on her 2024 film ARKAN & IRBELA. Preparing for a walk on Country, Briggs layers field recordings of ancestral land with dialogues where voices surface and recede. Textures of Anaiwan Country and language renewal unsettle colonial assumptions of Indigeneity, their echoes threaded with violent geographies and resonant absence.

Anchored by a singular figure, TENYA is a rich sonic archive of cultural revitalisation and emotional release told through field recordings on country, the female voice through the power of screams, string instrumentation, guns, and thoughtful creative spatial sound design. It asks: what does 'Us' mean when survival depends on solidarity, sovereignty, and return to place.

Through sound and the unspoken, the work maps deep continuities of identity and resistance.

TENYA is commissioned by The Substation and Liquid Architecture as part of the Listening to Country — The First Nations Experimental Sound Commission. This presentation forms part of Gabi Briggs' ongoing project as part of her West Space Commission ARKAN & IRBELA.



GEDYURA 2024

These Arms Hold Exhibition

Gabi Briggs

Lomandra, wood, wire, film

80 x 15cm

GEDYURA, the Anaiwan word for woman, honours an unnamed Aboriginal gedyura's act of frontier resistance on Anaiwan Country. This work, a rifle woven from lomandra with an accompanying video, centres on a historical fragment: a newspaper clipping describing an armed Aboriginal gedyura leading men blamed for raiding stations in New England.

The weaving process connects me to her legacy, challenging the erasure of Aboriginal women's resistance in colonial narratives. This meditative practice transforms a symbol of colonial violence into a testament to Indigenous survivance, the conjunction between resistance and survival.

Strong kinship, a powerful weapon passed down by my matriarchs, is woven into this work. My family witness to the making process and my sibling's presence in the video - my mother's sister's child who shares my skin - embody this kinship. It's evident in the collaborative process: weaving the rifle in the homes of my irbelas (mother, mother's sisters) and bawas (sisters), their participation ensures this story's preservation extends beyond me to our entire family, reflecting the communal nature of our cultural knowledge.

The video doesn't simply retell the gedyura's story, but rather engages with it in a non-linear dialogue, subverting the colonial gaze to offer intimacy and authenticity that colonial accounts lack. By emulating the unnamed gedyura's movements, as described in the newspaper clipping, I invite the audience to see the duality at play: past and present, violence and creation, colonial narratives and Indigenous knowing.

As an Anaiwan gedyura raised by matriarchs, I see our reflection in her. This work honours her resistance, connecting past and present in a testament to our enduring strength.



IRBELA: turn into transcendence

BUS Projects

Collingwood

2023

If the virtual realm is land-based, can it return us to country? Can we transcend the limits of all physical experience and knowledge to seek sovereignty within the virtual?

IRBELA, the Anaiwan word for mother and mother's sister, is the physical manifestation of a metaverse that holds, protects and tells stories of blak womxn who have been relegated to anonymity by the white witness.

IRBELA was created by artist Gabi Briggs who invited Nayuka Gorrie, Dtarneen Onus-Browne and Meriki Onus to consider what she could hold, protect and share. Given the land-based nature of the virtual realm, could IRBELA create a space where sovereignty can exist and, in turn, provide safety and healing to our communities from colonial harm?





.. and in response I urge you to read (our data)

500 prints stacked, sovereign data collated and interpreted.

Barreeng Yirramboi Exhibition

MADA Gallery

Monash University (Caulfield Campus)

2022

.. and in response, I urge you to read (our data) is the second iteration of a series I created after Mugun & Gun: Resisting New England Frontier Wars - Edition One, a zine collaboration between myself and my cousin Callum Clayton-Dixon, published in 2018. The zine documented the conflict and violence on Anaiwan country during the frontier. I pulled the data from the zine to map out these sites and drew out correlations obscured from plain view. This second iteration circles once again back to sovereign data collection to make visible the Black Witness(1).

1. Amy McQuire, 'Black and White Witness', Meanjin, Winter 2019.



### QWE3NZ

Large video projection, 4 minutes 23 seconds, looped.

The work QWE3NZ, is in tribute to all Indigenous women who were photographed by the colonial administration, forced to be interpreted by the male gaze. In the video, I become the subject and also the image-maker, as I video myself transitioning into different poses copied from archival photographs of Indigenous women from so-called Australia. I create a counter-fiction to the colonial narrative created by the Australian archive by using my body to author my own narrative as an Indigenous woman, I challenge the male colonial gaze to regain my autonomy.



## MURRA BURN

Closed performance, public installation of objects left from the closed performance.

First Draft, Sydney

MAV X FUSE Festival, Melbourne

Murra Burn aims to renegotiate what self-love might look like as an Anaiwan woman. I reclaim the violent incursions enacted on my very essence. This work required the breakdown of vapid and commodified notions of self-care that are extensions of colonial notions of womanhood-which also lends itself to the domination of Indigenous womanhood.

The final manifestation of MURRA was of objects left after a closed performance. All that now act collectively as an installation, act as indexical evidence of the extinguishment of the artist's hair, accompanied by an immersive sound piece that uses the act as its score.

There are two reiterations of the project, the first was in 2016 at First Draft, Sydney and the last was in 2019 at the MAV X FUSE Festival.



MURRA BURN, 2019

CODE SWITCH

Blak Dot Gallery

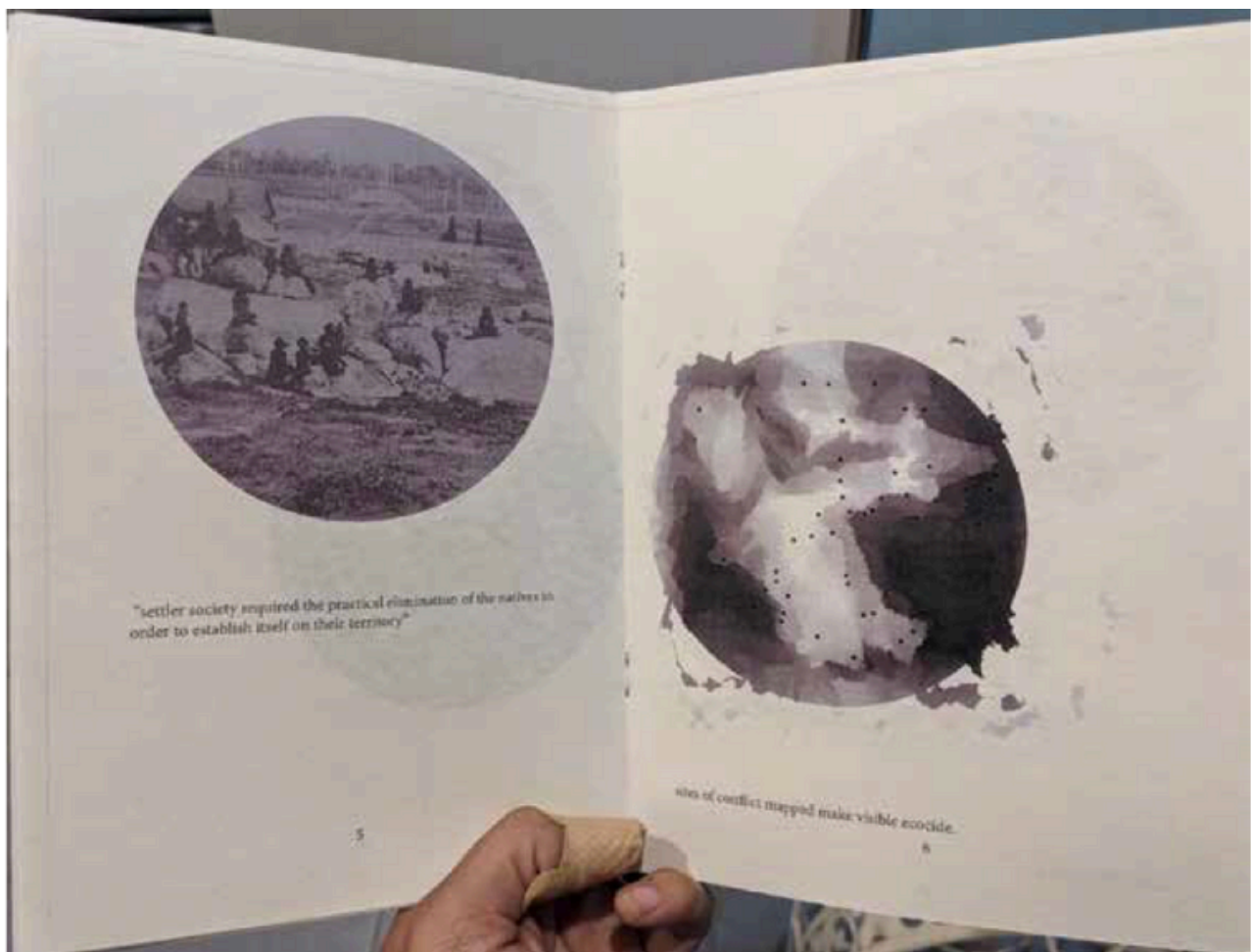
Photograph of the installation of MURRA BURN in the CODE SWITCH exhibition at Blak Dot Gallery.



....And In Response I Urge You To Read  
12 zines, 1 shelves and black velvet fabric backdrop  
Art Word Place  
Tamworth Regional Art Gallery

An installation of a black velvet backdrop with three shelves offered 12 zines for the audience members to read. The zine contained maps that showed the relationship between sites of conflict within the southern part of the New England and areas that were ecologically affected by colonisation. This work also toured as a part of ARTstate.





....And In Response I Urge You To Read  
12 zines, 1 shelves and black velvet fabric backdrop

Excerpts from the zine.



Surviving New England: Our Koori Matriarchs

A series of 10 portraits printed on individual vinyl banners, 1m x 1.94 metres.

Above portrait is of Patsy Cohen.

A series of portraits displayed at the Aboriginal Community Garden at Narwan Village in Armidale, NSW. The intention behind the portraiture was to platform the traditional understanding of matriarchal power within Anaiwan society. The project and its success, was predicated on process and protocol, the work in identifying the matriarchs, then inviting them to be a part of the series, was just as important as the exhibition. It was integral that the identifying of Matriarchs was a collective decision made by community elders and knowledge holders, additionally it was important to invite them by official invitation and to cook for them.