

THE COMMERCIAL

ARCHIE MOORE



**heptaconkai
henaroon**

To be considered Aboriginal by white commentators like Andrew Bolt, how much of one's ancestry must be indigenous? Do you have to be 'full blood' and living in 'the bush' traditionally, align yourself with the 'flora and fauna' and not live in the city with a full-time job? Being black or blak, as ascertained by urban Aboriginal people, is to have a single drop of Aboriginal blood, what was known in the Southern States of America as the 'One-drop rule'. Like the observation that it doesn't matter how much milk you add to your tea, it's still considered tea. It is the position of hyperdescent that Aboriginal people ascribe to as opposed to some white hypodescentists who prefer an assignment to what they think is the inferior or subordinate group. My real self is somewhere in the 70s in my work, maybe it is heptaconkaihenaroon. I first realised what position I was in due to schoolyard racial slurs, I didn't realise I was 'black' before then or if it was even a desired thing to be. Some of my friends would then console me with "you're not a real boong". When I was at the end of my teens I would get told I was black and asked by others, "Why you ashamed to be a Murri?" I would sometimes be questioned by Aboriginal activists if I was black enough due to a noncommittal political stance. I see my work as some kind of sliding scale where I shift up and down depending on where I am at historically, psychologically and geographically, or it could be parallel worlds that I exist in right now and how asocial it is to quantify race at all.

Archie Moore

It is with great pleasure that The Commercial presents its third solo exhibition by Archie Moore. *Blood Fraction* comprises a one hundred part self-portrait of the artist around the question of quantification of race. An essay to accompany the exhibition is being commissioned from Jasmine Valadian.

Archie Moore's (b. 1970) conceptual practice includes painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, photography, video and aromas embedded in Aboriginal politics as well as the broader concerns of racism, language and identity. Language in particular plays a constant role, as do the concepts of dwelling and dwellings. Being in one's skin and the question of whether or not it is possible to experience someone else's experiences is an ongoing theme.

Since 2012, Moore has produced two major bodies of work around the concept of flags (*Flag* and *14 Queensland Nations (Nations imagined by RH Mathews)*), a series of portraits in perfume based on memories (*Les Eaux d'Amoore*) and compelling sculptural works that employ altered readymades or assemblages (*Snowdome*, *Black Dog*).

Two solo exhibitions of Moore's work are being presented in public institutions in 2015: *14 Queensland Nations (Nations imagined by RH Mathews)* at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, and *Les Eaux d'Amoore* at the Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art at the University of South Australia as part of *Tarnanthi*, the inaugural Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art held in conjunction with the Art Gallery of

South Australia. Moore was shortlisted for the 2015 Western Australian Indigenous Art Award at the Art Gallery of Western Australia where his *14 Queensland Nations* flags are currently on display.

Moore completed his Bachelor of Visual Arts at Queensland University of Technology in 1998. In 2001, he was awarded the Millennial Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship which enabled him to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague.

In June 2015, Moore presented an ambitious installation in a two-person exhibition with Matt Calder, *Re-locating the Land*, at System Gallery in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Further solo exhibitions include *A Circum/Intro/Extro/Retrospective* at Bus Projects, Melbourne (2015); *14 Queensland Nations (Nations imagined by RH Matthews)*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra; *False Friends*, Northern Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin; *Les Eaux d'Amoore*, The Commercial Gallery, Sydney (all 2014); *Flag*, The Commercial Gallery, Sydney; *Clover*, Boxcopy, Brisbane; *Mussel*, Higure Gallery, Tokyo; *10 Missions from God*, Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Brisbane (all 2012); *Dwelling*, Accidentally Annie Street, Brisbane (2010); *Depth of Field*, Ryan Renshaw Gallery, Brisbane (2006); *The Archie Comic Book Series*, Fireworks Gallery, Brisbane (2005); *Words I Learnt From The English Class*, Black Peppers Gallery, Brisbane (2002).

Group exhibitions include *Buruwi Burra (Three Skies)* at The Commercial Gallery, Sydney (2015); *The Subtropic Complex*, curated by Tess Maunder, Art on James Street for Resort in collaboration with the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; *Courting Blakness: Recalibrating knowledge in the Sandstone University*, curated by Fiona Foley, The University of Queensland, Brisbane; *SOUTH: Contemporary Art from Australia, Mexico and South Africa*, curated by David Corbet, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, Sydney (all 2014); *My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane and Auckland Art Gallery (2013 & 2014); *Mémoires Vives: Une Histoire de l'Art Aborigène*, Le musée d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux (2013-2014); *Experimenta – Speak to Me, 5th International Biennale of Media Art* at RMIT Gallery, Melbourne and the University of Queensland (2013 & 2014); *Transmission*, curated by Carrie Miller and Dr Matthew Hindson, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney, *Contemporary Australian Drawing 2: Drawing as notation, text and discovery* at the University of the Arts, London and *Lie of the Land: New Australian Landscape* at the Australian Embassy, Washington D.C. (all 2012); *Reality Check – Watching Sylvania Waters*, curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre, Sydney and *Making it New: Focus on Australian Contemporary Art* curated by Glenn Barkley, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (both 2009).

In 2011, Moore began a musical collaboration, *Σγγγελν*, with fellow artist, David M. Thomas, which continues to be active in an expanded form today.

Archie Moore is shortlisted for the 2015 John Fries Award at UNSW Galleries. He was shortlisted for the 2015 Western Australian Indigenous Art Award at the Art Gallery of Western Australia. He

has six times been shortlisted for the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, [2013](#)). In 2013, he was commissioned by Newcastle Region Art Gallery to create the sculpture, *[General Sanders vs Colonel Saunders](#)*; Also in 2013 he was invited to participate in the University of Queensland's National Artists' Self-Portrait Prize. His work for this exhibition, *[Black Dog](#)*, was acquired by the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. In 2010, Moore was the winner of the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize.

Moore's work is in the collections of the Gilbert and Tobin Collection, Sydney; Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, UTS, Sydney; Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Newcastle; the Owen and Wagner collection, North Carolina; Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; the Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane and the University of Technology, Sydney.

Archie Moore has been invited to participate in several major group exhibitions in public institutions in 2016 and 2017. Further details to be announced shortly.



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