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# BARBARA McGRADY

NGIYANINGY MARAN YALIWAUNGA NGAARA-LI  
(OUR ANCESTORS ARE ALWAYS WATCHING)

6 July – 13 October 2024



We pay our respects to the Dharawal people who are the traditional custodians of the land, whose deepening connection to culture and customs have cared for this country for over 60,000 years.

We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging for their immense spiritual connection to place which was never ceded.

Dharawal land has always been recognised as a meeting place for people from other lands, and in this spirit we respectfully continue this tradition through the bringing together of our communities through arts and culture.

This Always Was and Always Will Be Aboriginal Land.



We advise that there are some confronting topics addressed in this exhibition, including deaths in custody and experiences of racism.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that the exhibition includes images of people who have passed away.



Barbara McGrady, 'Kicking Up Dust', 2017.  
Courtesy the artist, copyright Barbara McGrady.







# **NGIYANINGY MARAN YALIWAUNGA NGAARA-LI (OUR ANCESTORS ARE ALWAYS WATCHING)**

Campbelltown Arts Centre presents 'Barbara McGrady: Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)', a major solo exhibition of Barbara McGrady's compelling photographs.

McGrady is a highly respected Gomeroi / Gamilaraay Murri Yinnah Elder and one of Australia's leading photographers. Inspired by her deep spiritual connection to Country, she has celebrated Blak beauty, strength, resilience, and excellence for more than five decades. At the heart of her artistic practice is a commitment to recognising the contributions of individuals to change society and their gifts to the future for generations to come.

The exhibition 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)' invites visitors to experience what McGrady describes as "a kaleidoscopic compendium of Aboriginal contemporary history". Deadly moments come to life through her powerful studies in movement, portraiture, and tender observations of Elders, leaders, families, youth, creatives, activists, and cultural warriors. Each photograph is grounded in McGrady's deep connections to community.

At the centre of this powerful assembly of photographic works from the past decade is the large-scale film installation 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)', 2020. Of the same title, the exhibition is inspired by this work and is an expression of McGrady's artistic career to date and has been acquired for the Campbelltown City Council Art Collection on the occasion of the present exhibition. Originally commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney for 'NIRIN', the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, and presented at Campbelltown Arts Centre in 2020, 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li' was created in collaboration with artist John Janson-Moore.

The acquisition of 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)', 2020 to the Campbelltown City Council Art Collection is made possible through the generous support of Jo-Anne Birnie-Danzker and Maryrose and Michael Morgan.

The exhibition is presented by Campbelltown Arts Centre with support from the Australian Museum and with photographic reproduction permissions from the State Library of New South Wales.

## **PROJECT PARTNER, FIRST NATIONS DIVISION AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM**

A proud Gomeroi / Gamilaraay Murri Yinnah (woman) and a leading First Nations photojournalist, Aunty Barb McGrady has documented significant and pivotal moments in Australian social, political, and cultural history over more than three decades.

Aunty Barb's images celebrate our people – by photographing through a “Black lens”, she creates an important visual record showing contemporary representations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mobs, and expressions of a strong, staunch, and proud First Nations identity.

This impressive body of work documents Aunty Barb's journey following the triumphs on the sports fields, activism on the streets, celebrations of culture, and cherishing the contributions and achievements of our Elders and community members.

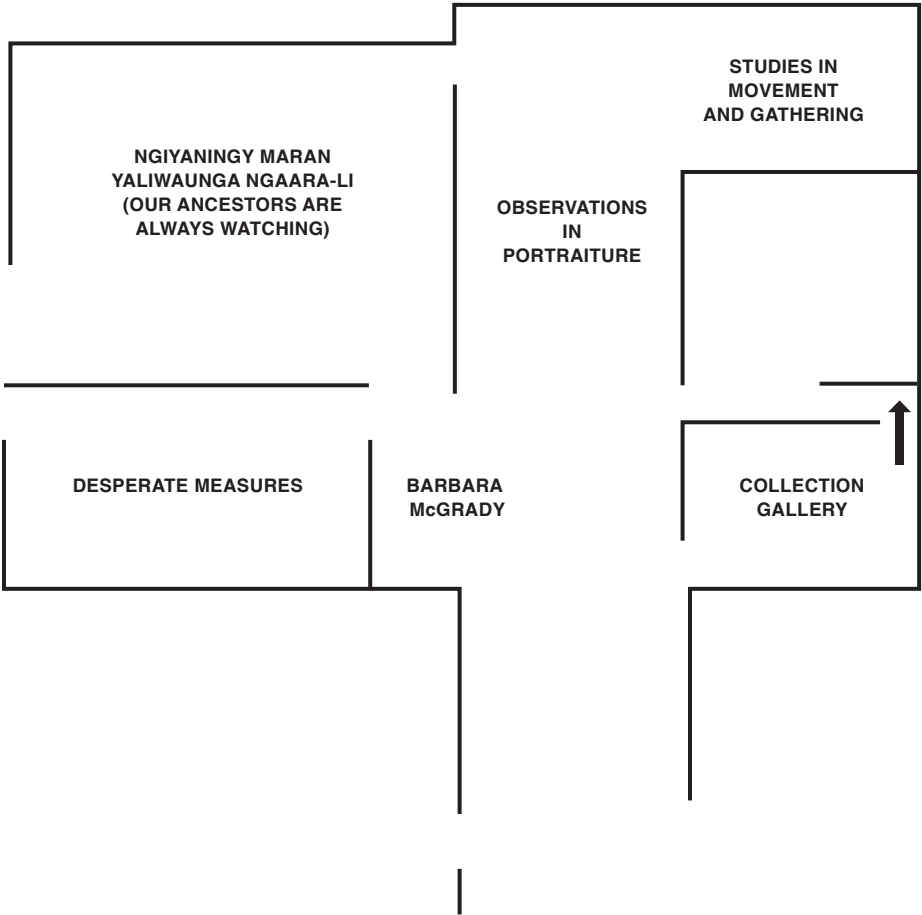
The selection of Aunty Barb's iconic photographs presented in this exhibition vividly demonstrates her expert eye in subject composition and astute ability to capture key moments in perfect timing during often dynamic blink-and-you-miss-it scenes. These are powerful and empowering images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples against backdrops of major historical, social, political, and cultural change in Australian society. Aunty Barb's images have been recognised as nationally significant and have been acquired by the Australian Museum and featured in the award-winning truth-telling exhibition 'Unsettled'.

The First Nations leadership team at the Australian Museum have had the privilege of long-term relationships and guidance from Aunty Barb McGrady and she has been highly influential in the development of self-determining, best practice, cultural operations at the Museum.

### **Laura McBride, Director, First Nations and Dr Mariko Smith, Head of First Nations Collections & Research, Australian Museum**

Co-curators of the 2019 compilation of selected photographs from Aunty Barb McGrady's prolific collection for the Australian Museum's digital collection acquired through a grant from the Patricia Porritt Collection Acquisition Fund.

MAP





John Janson-Moore, 'Barbara McGrady', 2022.  
Courtesy the artist, copyright John Janson-Moore.

# BARBARA McGRADY

Barbara McGrady is a Gomeroi / Gamilaraay Murri Yinnah artist who was born in 1950 in Mungindi on the border of New South Wales and Queensland. From a young age, Barbara was an avid reader of publications including Time, Life, Paris Review, Punch, Esquire, and Playboy brought home by her father. They featured Blak writers such as James Baldwin, Alex Haley, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston. Barbara states, “at a very young age, I saw the power of the image.” She recounts taking photos with a camera which her mother bought for her aged fifteen.

Moving to Glebe in 1972, Barbara played an integral role in the Blak power movement of Koori and Murri people from all over the country who came together in self-determination towards the common goal of making change for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Trained as a sociologist, Barbara brings a Blak lens to her practice. She has been described by Gumbaynggirr activist and academic Professor Gary Foley as a “true historian” and “National Living Treasure”. In 2017, Barbara presented her solo exhibition ‘Always Will Be’ at the Australian Centre for Photography. In 2020, she was selected to participate in the landmark First Nations and artist led 22nd Biennale of Sydney, ‘NIRIN’, presenting major works at Campbelltown Arts Centre and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. In 2014, Barbara was awarded the Anthony Mundine Award for Courage at the inaugural National Indigenous Human Rights Awards, and in 2015, she won the Solid Screen International Award for Indigenous Women in Film and Photography. Her works are held in the collections of several national, state, and regional institutions including the Australian Museum, Sydney, State Library of New South Wales, and Campbelltown City Council Art Collection.

## 1

John Janson-Moore

'Barbara McGrady Glebe 2022'

2022

558 x 841 mm (image); 658 x 941 mm (sheet)

shot on 35mm film, digital pigment on cotton rag

Courtesy the artist. Copyright John Janson-Moore

## 2

Unknown photographer

'[Portrait of] Barbara McGrady (Miss Mungindi)'

1970

280 x 420 mm (image); 380 x 520 mm (sheet)

original photograph from 'New Dawn' magazine, 1970. Reprinted as digital pigment on cotton rag, 2024. Permission to reproduce provided by Aboriginal Affairs NSW. Courtesy AIATSIS, New Dawn Collection, item NEW\_DAWN.020. BW-N08127\_08A

## 3

Unknown photographer

'Contestants [of the Miss NADOC contest] are presented to the official guests and the public', 1970

280 x 420 mm (image); 380 x 520 mm (sheet)

original photograph from 'New Dawn' magazine, 1970. Reprinted as digital pigment on cotton rag, 2024. Permission to reproduce provided by Aboriginal Affairs NSW. Courtesy AIATSIS, New Dawn Collection, item NEW\_DAWN.020. BW-N08130\_19A

# DESPERATE MEASURES

4

'Through the Eye of the Lens with Barbara McGrady'

from the series 'Desperate Measures'

2013

digital video with sound

14:07 minutes

Produced by Goodidja Films and Postbox Sydney.

'Desperate Measures' was an NITV Initiatives project funded by NITV

Director	Aaron Petersen
Producer	Alec Doomadgee
Director of Photography	Martin Taylor
Production Management	Gemma Raymond
Editor	Josh Groom
Online Editor	Aaron Petersen
Audio, Assistant Editor	Ben Hardie
Motion Graphics	Kelsey Shanahan
Post Production	PostBox Sydney

'Through the Eye of the Lens with Barbara McGrady' is a film created by renowned Waanyi, Garawa and Gangalidda Director and Actor, Alec Domadgee. The film is part of the series 'Desperate Measures' which was aired on National Indigenous Television (NITV) between 2013-18.

Featuring influential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, 'Desperate Measures' tells the stories of Elders, leaders, activists and creatives whose courage and actions have transformed society through unwavering commitment to and advocacy for Aboriginal rights.

In the film, Barbara McGrady speaks about her life growing up at Wongwie, a property outside Mungindi in North Western New South Wales. She talks about the early inspiration she took from international publications brought home by her father and from her mother who gifted McGrady her first camera. This exposure and encouragement from her parents drove her to produce images which she describes as photos "people from all walks of life, but especially Aboriginal people can identify with". They can look and say "yeah, that's us, that's how I see it".

# NGIYANINGY MARAN YALIWAUNGA NGAARA-LI (OUR ANCESTORS ARE ALWAYS WATCHING)

5

Barbara McGrady with John Janson-Moore

'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li

(Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)'

2020

multi-channel digital video with sound

dimensions variable, 8:38 minutes

Courtesy the artists. Copyright Barbara McGrady and John Janson-Moore. Music:

'My Pelopolees' by Tasman Keith and William Jarrett, produced by Nooky, James Mangohig; 'Pukulpa' by Electric Fields

Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with generous support from the

Australia Council for the Arts. Campbelltown City Council Art Collection,

purchased 2024 through the generous support of Jo-Anne Birnie-Danzker and

Maryrose and Michael Morgan

'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors are Always Watching)' is a landmark installation created by Barbara McGrady together with artist John Janson-Moore in 2020. The artwork was commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney for the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, 'NIRIN', a First Nations and artist led exhibition curated by Wiradjuri contemporary artist Brook Andrew.

'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li' captures Barbara McGrady's compelling photographs and combines them with her language, words and wisdom. The artwork exemplifies a life conducted with courage. The work is described by McGrady as a self-curated expression of her lifetime's work and importantly "a kaleidoscopic compendium of Aboriginal contemporary history within a gallery setting. It is an immersive, multichannel audio-visual black takeover of the white cube: a 'Blackout'. 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li' provides an insight into what it means to be a First Nations person surviving and thriving in a colonial world."

The work includes music tracks by two leading musicians, 'My Pelopolees' by Gumbaynggirr man Tasman Keith and 'Pukulpa' by Electric Fields (vocalist Yankunytjatjara and Torres Strait Islander multidisciplinary artist Zaachariaha Fielding and keyboard player and producer Michael Ross).

The present exhibition celebrates the acquisition of this important artwork to the Campbelltown City Council Art Collection.



# OBSERVATIONS IN PORTRAITURE

For five decades, Barbara McGrady has brought deadly moments to life through her images which are grounded in her connection to Country and strong relationships with community.

Her compelling portraits honour the courage and strength of Elders, leaders, families, youth, creatives, activists, and cultural warriors. McGrady celebrates the achievements and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals to their communities.

**6**

'Steve Williams, Wiradjuri (passed 2018),  
Smoking Ceremony, Black ANZACS'  
2015  
digital pigment on phototex  
3600 x 2400 mm  
Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara  
McGrady

**7**

'Sister Girls stylin' up, Mardi Gras'  
2013  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Collection of the Australian Museum.  
Copyright Barbara McGrady

**8**

'Greg Inglis (Blak Superman)'  
2014  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Collection of the Australian Museum.  
Copyright Barbara McGrady

**9**

'Dancers at UTS'  
2014  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara  
McGrady

**10**

'Djaadjawan Dancer, DanceRites'  
2019  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara  
McGrady

**11**

'Anthony Mundine'  
2014  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara  
McGrady

**12**

'Black Lives Matter, Martin Place'  
2015  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Collection of the Australian Museum.  
Copyright Barbara McGrady

**13**

'La Perouse Group at Lapa'  
2016  
digital pigment on cotton rag  
1000 x 660 mm (image);  
1200 x 860 mm (sheet)  
Courtesy the artist.  
Copyright Barbara McGrady



Barbara McGrady with John Janson-Moore, 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)', 2020. Installation view for the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020), Campbelltown Arts Centre. Commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney with generous support from the Australia Council for the Arts. Courtesy the artist. Photograph: Zan Wimberley.

# STUDIES IN MOVEMENT AND GATHERING

Barbara McGrady's studies in movement are a testament to the strength and power of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

With a focus on Blak excellence, McGrady remarks that her photographs capture "corroboree", the coming together of her people in "one big dance", be this ceremony, performance, game play, or community spirit.

**14**

'Kicking Up Dust'

2017

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**15**

'Djaadjawan Dancers, DanceRites'

2019

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**16**

'Meuram Murray Island Dancers, DanceRites'

2019

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**17**

'Jannawi Dance Clan, DanceRites'

2023

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**18**

'Kulgoodah Dancers, DanceRites'

2019

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**19**

'Giingan Yiliwiyay Girrwa, DanceRites'

2023

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**20**

'Jannawi Dance Clan, DanceRites'

2023

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**21**

'Rob Ryan, Redfern All Blacks v. Combined Countries, Leichhardt Oval, Sydney, 1 October 2017'

2017

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.  
Copyright Barbara McGrady

**22**

'RAB (Redfern All Blacks) Women V Dubbo Googars, Koori Knockout, Caltex Oval, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**23**

'Mungindi V Cabbage Tree Island, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**24**

'Briton Nikora, Andrew Fifita, Reimis Smith and Selwyn Cobbo, Indigenous All-Stars, 12 February 2022'

2022

digital pigment on phototex

1000 x 1500 mm

Courtesy the artist. Copyright Barbara McGrady

**25**

'NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout (Koori Knockout), Tuggerah, New South Wales, 5-7 October 2019'

2019

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**26**

'NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout (Koori Knockout), Tuggerah, New South Wales, 5-7 October 2019'

2019

digital pigment on phototex

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**27**

'Briggs & Moran family, NAB, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**28**

'Koori Knockout crowd, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

**29**

'Miss Brennan, La Perouse, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

### **30**

'Toomelah supporters, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

### **31**

'RAB (Redfern All Blacks) celebration win, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

### **32**

'WAC (Walgett Aboriginal Connection) & Griffith 3 Ways, Koori Knockout, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1 October 2015'

2015

digital pigment on cotton rag

500 x 700 mm

Collection of the State Library of NSW.

Copyright Barbara McGrady

# PROJECT TEAM

## **Artist**

Barbara McGrady

## **Consultant and Co-Artist**

**‘Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li  
(Our Ancestors are Always Watching)’**

John Janson-Moore

## **Curator**

Isabelle Morgan

## **Arts and Cultural Liaison Officer – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

Sarah Morris

## **Assistant Curator**

Emily Rolfe

## **Exhibition Design**

Donna Vo

## **Communications**

Ellen Formby

## **Production Lead**

Frank Mainoo Boambah

## **Gallery Technicians**

Nicci Bedson, Ju Bayvka, Corrigan Fairbairn, David Langosch, Jamie Manweiler, Jack Poppert, Thomas Sandberg, Lucy Whitelaw

# PROJECT PARTNER

First Nations Division, Australian Museum

## C-A-C TEAM

<b>Director (Acting)</b>	Mouna Zaylah
<b>Business and Engagement Manager</b>	
<b>Head of Curatorial</b>	Adam Porter
<b>Curator, Contemporary Visual Art</b>	Emily Rolfe
<b>Collection and Exhibitions Officer</b>	Isabelle Morgan
<b>Creative Producer</b>	Anthea Doropoulos
<b>Creative Producer</b>	Brittany Green
<b>Creative Producer, Public Art</b>	Timothy George
<b>Assistant Curator, Contemporary Visual Art</b>	Hannah James
<b>Assistant Creative Producer</b>	Anne Cutajar
<b>Exhibitions and Collections Assistant</b>	Sam Spragg
<b>Visitor Experience Coordinator</b>	Rebecca Anderson
<b>Media &amp; Communications Officer</b>	Ellen Formby
<b>Design &amp; Communications Officer</b>	Donna Vo
<b>Education Officer</b>	Celeste Wrona
<b>Assistant Education &amp; Creative Learning Producer</b>	Samantha Relihan
<b>Acting Creative Learning &amp; Engagement Producer</b>	Julia Quinn
<b>Arts &amp; Cultural Liaison Officer – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</b>	Sarah Morris
<b>Production Officer</b>	Frank Mainoo Boamah
<b>Venue Technician</b>	Phu Nguyen
<b>Little Orange Studio Coordinator</b>	David Capra
<b>Little Orange Studio Assistant Facilitator</b>	Julie Finch
<b>Arts Administrator</b>	Sharon McAndrew
<b>Senior Visitor Experience and Retail Officer</b>	Louise Snowdon

### **Visitor Experience Officers**

Mellissa Grierson, Julie Finch, Laura Brunick, Erica Revere, Alexandra Malcolm, Tim Almonte, Mariam Chanaoui, Paige Northwood, Eva Hampel

Campbelltown Arts Centre  
1 Art Gallery Rd Campbelltown  
Open daily, 10am - 4pm  
02 4645 4100  
c-a-c.com.au



Located on Dharawal land, Campbelltown Arts Centre is proudly owned by the people of Campbelltown. A cultural facility of Campbelltown City Council, assisted by the NSW Government through Create NSW. Campbelltown Arts Centre receives support from the Packer Family Foundation and the Neilson Foundation.

The exhibition is presented by Campbelltown Arts Centre with support from the Australian Museum and with photographic reproduction permissions from the State Library of New South Wales.

The acquisition of 'Ngiyaningy Maran Yaliwaunga Ngaara-li (Our Ancestors Are Always Watching)', 2020 to the Campbelltown City Council Art Collection is made possible through the generous support of Jo-Anne Birnie-Danzker and Maryrose and Michael Morgan.