

Basic Detail Report



00054527

Title

Man and Woman in Canoe

Date

2011

Primary Maker

Garth Lena

Medium

Steel

Dimensions

Overall: 240 × 340 × 140 mm Overall (Stand): 40 × 80 × 135 mm

Name

Sculpture

History

This work by Garth Lena was produced for East Coast Encounter, a multi-arts initiative involving Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, writers and songwriters to re-imagine the encounter by Lieutenant James Cook and his crew with Indigenous people in 1770. Cook's voyage along the Australian east coast has become central to national historical narratives. The East Coast Encounter project asked artists to re-envisage this seminal journey by imaginatively exploring moments of contact between two world views during these encounters. It also brought these events into the present by incorporating artists' reflections on their relevance today, and their responses to visits to significant contact locations. Topics such as encounter, impact, differing perspectives, nature and culture and views of country are investigated. In 'Man and Woman in Canoe' and 'Arrival 2011', Garth Lena focuses on the role of fish and watercraft in the daily life of coastal Indigenous peoples. Fish and watercraft also feature in the encounter story. When Cook and his crew reached Botany Bay they observed Indigenous people fishing from canoes but were surprised when the local inhabitants continued their activities, ignoring the strange visitors. In Cooktown it took time before Bama approached the ENDEAVOUR in their canoes and when the Europeans offered gifts, it was only fish which attracted their interest. Fish then became a currency of exchange and communication, because the locals returned the next day with a reciprocal gift of fish for the Europeans.