

# Basic Detail Report

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**Title**

Heroes of Colonial Encounters - Bennelong

**Date**

2017

**Primary Maker**

Helen S Tiernan

**Medium**

Oil on canvas

**Dimensions**

Overall: 305 × 305 × 40 mm

**Name**

Painting

**History**

Woollarawarre Bennelong and Colebee were at Manly Cove in November 1789 when the two men were captured by Lieutenant William Bradley. Bradley was under orders from Governor Phillip to imprison two local men with the aim of learning what they could about the language and people of the area. If the prisoners were able to learn English then they could also act as facilitators between the two groups. Colbee escaped English captivity 17 days later but Bennelong remained prisoner for six months before he too escaped. Despite this beginning, Bennelong would go on to have a life of interaction with the English colonists. He and Yemmerrawanne accompanied Governor Phillip to England aboard the convict transport HMS ATLANTIC on 10 December 1792 and did not return to Sydney until December 1795. From that time on Bennelong remained in the Sydney region with his people and there are also references to him being in Sydney and at Governor Hunter's home on occasions. Bennelong died around 1813 and was buried in or near the farm of the ex-convict brewer James Squire with whom he was friendly. As part of a series of portraits that make up 'Heroes of Colonial Encounters', this portrait of Bennelong is part of Helen Tiernan's exploration of the singular European view of colonial history and the way Indigenous peoples are depicted as the 'primitive' or 'other'. The portraits she paints of Bennelong, Bungaree, Colby, Bidgee Bidgee, Ballodere and Tommy sees them treated equally as their European contemporaries such as Cook, Joseph Banks, William Bligh, Arthur Philip and Matthew Flinders. All portraits are to hang together on the same wall, equally ornate, equal in style and equal in history.