

Basic Detail Report



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Title

Heroes of Colonial Encounters - Gooseberry

Date

2017

Primary Maker

Helen S Tiernan

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

Overall: 362 × 510 × 20 mm

Name

Painting

History

This painting is part of a series of portraits that make up 'Heroes of Colonial Encounters'. Helen Tiernan explores 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 equal to 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. "Bungaree's wife, Cora Gooseberry, was known as 'Queen of Sydney to South Head' or 'Queen of Sydney and Botany' and was a Sydney identity for 20 years after Bungaree's death. Cora was often seen wrapped in a government issued blanket, her head covered with a scarf and a clay pipe in her mouth, sitting with her family and other Aboriginal people camped on the footpath outside the Cricketers' Arms, a hotel on the corner of Pitt and Market streets in Sydney. She befriended the owner of the hotel Edward Borton who later owned the Sydney Arms Hotel in Castlereagh Street where he allowed Gooseberry to sleep at nights. Here she was eventually found dead at the age of 75, in July 1852. Borton paid for a gravestone and her burial in the Presbyterian section of the Devonshire Street Cemetery (also known as the Sandhills cemetery, it was on the site of Central Railway). At the time she was thought to be the last of the Guringai (Kuring-gai) clan to survive, but it later became evident that the descendants of the Guringai people had joined remnants of other Aboriginal language groups to ensure their survival. Cora Gooseberry's gravestone is now in the Pioneers cemetery at Botany." - Barani, Sydney's Aboriginal History <http://www.sydneybarani.com.au>