

MICHAEL COOK ENCULTURATION



THIS IS NO FANTASY
dianne tanzer + nicola stein

MICHAEL COOK

ENCULTURATION

18 August - 10 September 2022

Michael Cook's new series *Enculturation* opens with babies from a variety of ethnic origins, accompanied by camp dogs, who follow Aboriginal women down a dirt track into a flat dry landscape. Its stillness, and the babies' compulsion to crawl after the women as they disappear into the scrub, imbues the elders at the heart of *Enculturation* with an eerie sense of magnetism. It evokes the potential for Indigenous cultures, and their learnings over millennia, to shift the technologies and often surface concerns of white society toward the balance and harmony integral to the sustainability at the heart of First Nations traditions.

Photographed on Country with senior women painted up for ceremony, the narrative traces a journey through the landscape under an opaque and nebulous sky. Children sit amongst the women as they absorb the nuances of Country, and learn to move comfortably within its embrace. Old newspapers lie on the ground, subtle allusions to the historical search for homes in which to place Aboriginal children removed from their families. Yet in this reversal there is the sense that, via observation and influence, the children's young minds may absorb the immense wisdom and knowledge of Aboriginal culture, which spans over 60,000 years in this place.

While there is a clear reverse reference to Australia's Stolen Generations (1910-1970s, and ongoing), Cook's *Enculturation* explores this difficult territory with a nurturing gentleness drawn from the beauty of its aesthetic. The missions' segregated dormitory systems are referred to in the iron-framed beds that sit amongst yellow wildflowers in the landscape, with these historical ideas put to rest; equally a gate similar to one used at a notorious boys' home lies on the ground with flowers growing through its grave-like appearance, evoking memories.

Enculturation acknowledges the wisdom of the women, painted up in their traditional way, within the realities of community: wandering dogs, a remote landscape, and strong relationships. There are palpable connections amongst these people, despite the vulnerabilities inherent in broken furniture and toys, the feral camels and wild brumbies that litter an otherwise pristine landscape. Much can be learned from a past during which Indigenous cultures lived in harmony with the land, at odds with the degradation of the natural environment since industrialisation.

The concept behind *Enculturation* has stayed in Cook's psyche for some years, with his own interest in learning as much as he can from the vast Indigenous knowledge systems that are disappearing with its elders. Through the exploration of this historical concept, his imaginative aesthetic innovates, opening the conundrums of our age to an audience for art and culture all over the world.

Louise Martin-Chew, 2022

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BIO

Michael Cook is a Brisbane-based photomedia artist of Bidjara heritage. Cook's photographs restage colonial-focused histories and re-image the contemporary reality of indigenous populations. Touching on the discriminatory nature of society, his images muddle racial and social roles 'painting' a picture of a societal structure reversed. Cook invites viewers to speculate Indigenous cultures living at the forefront, even a majority, rather than manipulated to live within the confines of a white man's world. Cook's images challenge our ingrained belief systems yet do not offer judgement – they are observational, asking questions without proffering neat prescriptive conclusions.

Significant career highlights include The British Museum, London, UK; MOPA, San Francisco, USA; the Musee d'ethnographie de Geneve, Switzerland; National Gallery of Singapore; AAMU Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, The Netherlands; Musee de la Civilisation, Quebec, Canada; Fukiyama Museum of Art, Japan; Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Art and History Museum Brussels, Belgium; 13th Dong Gang International Photo Festival, South Korea; Oceanographic Museum of Monaco. Cook's work was included in Personal Structures – Crossing Borders at Palazzo Mora during the 56th Venice Biennale.

Cook's work has been acquired by institutions including the British Museum; AAMU Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, The Netherlands; Fondation Opale, Switzerland; Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, USA; McMaster Museum of Art, Canada; Musee d'ethnographie de Geneve, Switzerland; National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of New South Wales, and Art Gallery of Western Australia.





MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #1, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed



Michael Cook
Enculturation #1 (detail)



MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #2, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed



Michael Cook
Enculturation #2 (detail)



MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #3, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed



Michael Cook
Enculturation #3 (detail)





MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #4, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed



Michael Cook
Enculturation #4 (detail)



MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #5, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed
FINALIST - BOWNESS PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE 2022



Michael Cook
Enculturation #5 (detail)



MICHAEL COOK
Enculturation #6, 2022
Hahnemühle Photo Rag with Archival Ink
180 x 100 cm
Edition of 10 + 3AP
\$8,800, unframed



Michael Cook
Enculturation #6 (detail)



MICHAEL COOK

CV

Heritage: Bidjara people of South-West Queensland

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Enculturation, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Natures Mortes, Noosa Regional Gallery, Sunshine Coast
Invasion, Benalla Art Gallery, Benalla
Natures Mortes, Deletaille Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2021 Natures mortes, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane, !
Michael Cook, Livin' the Dream, Horsham Regional Gallery, Victoria
Undiscovered, Photo 2021, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
- 2020 Michael Cook, Emerging Photographer sector, Paris Photo New York, New York (online)
Livin' the dream, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Michael Cook – Undiscovered, Sunshine Coast University, Sunshine Coast
- 2019 Michael Cook In Focus, Ten Cubed, Melbourne
Michael Cook survey, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, THIS IS NO FANTASY, South Africa
- 2018 The Mission, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
Invasion, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
- 2017 Mother, Coloundra Regional Art Gallery, Queensland
Undiscovered, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory
- 2016 Mother, Art Basel Hong Kong, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Mother, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane
Mother, Tweed Regional Gallery, New South Wales
- 2015 Object, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne
Undiscovered, Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
Through My Eyes, Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery
Through My Eyes, Kick Arts, Cairns
Civilised, Cat Street Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2014 Through My Eyes, Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra
Australian Landscapes, La Trobe University, Melbourne
- 2013 Civilised, dianne tanzer gallery + projects, Melbourne
Hear no... See no... Speak no... Queensland Centre for Photography at Depot Gallery, Sydney
- 2012 Stickman, dianne tanzer gallery + projects, Melbourne
Through My Eyes, La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre, Bendigo
Broken Dreams, October Gallery, London, UK
The Mission, dianne tanzer gallery + projects, Melbourne
- 2010 Through My Eyes, Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Ever Present - first peoples art of Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia
The Dingo Project, Ngununggula Southern Highlands Regional Gallery, Bowral, NSW
Art in Conflict, Shepparton Regional Gallery, Shepparton, VIC
Rockhampton Museum of Art - Opening Exhibition, Rockhampton, QLD
Civilised, Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2021 Before Time Began, Art and History Museum, Brussels, Belgium
Endeavour Voyage, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, ACT
- 2020 First Nations Artwork, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Queensland
The Burning World, Bendigo Regional Gallery, Victoria
Looking Back, Looking Forward, Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
Storylines + Songlines, Justin Art House Museum, Melbourne
How Did I Get Here?, Katanning Library and Gallery, Western Australia and touring statewide
Focus on the Collection, Artspace Mackay, Queensland
Eight days in Kamay, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney

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- 2019 Queens Land Blak Portraiture, Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns
Defining Place/Space, Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego
Art Basel Hong Kong, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Hong Kong
From where I stand, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
From Bark to Neon, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
To Be Continued, Fremantle Arts Centre, Western Australia
While You Were Sleeping, aMBUSH Gallery, Kambri at ANU Cultural Centre, Canberra
Unfolding Time, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales
Expose, Queensland Centre of Photography, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Tweed Regional Gallery, NSW
Seeing Voices, Bathurst Art Gallery, Bathurst
Moon Landing, Giant Leap—Future, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney
Celebrating Culture, Contemporary Indigenous Art, Glen Eira Gallery, Melbourne
Queen's Land Blak Portraiture—Late 19th Century to the Present, Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland
Shared Connections, Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane
How Did I Get Here?, Katanning Library and Gallery, Western Australia and touring statewide
- 2018 Colony Frontier Wars, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Continental Drift, Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns
Maas, Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo
Chaos & Order, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
Art Basel Hong Kong Art Fair, THIS IS NO FANTASY, Hong Kong
Australian Exotica, Monash Gallery of Art (touring exhibition), Redland Gallery
- 2017 FotoFever, Paris
Sydney Contemporary, Sydney
The Boomerang Effect, Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, Switzerland
All Dressed UP!, Hawkesbury Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2016 Australian Exotica, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne
Reframed, Incinerator Gallery, Melbourne
A Conversation about Portraiture, Pine Rivers Art Gallery, Queensland
This Place of Ours, Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Queensland
Impact: New Media Works, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns
Taba Naba Living Waters, Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, Monaco
Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacy, National Gallery of Singapore, Singapore
Mapping Australia - country to cartography, AAMU Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht, Netherlands
Over The Fence, UQ Art Museum, Brisbane
- 2015 Personal Structures: Crossing Borders, Palazzo Mora, Venice
Indigenous Australia: Enduring Civilisation, British Museum, London
Salt Water Country, AAMU Museum for Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
Lifelines, Musée De La Civilisation, Quebec, Canada
Indigenous Art: Moving Backwards Into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Storm in a Teacup, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Mornington
Resistance, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
The Encounters Project, National Museum of Australia
Salt Water Country, Manly Art Museum, Sydney
Sydney Contemporary, THIS IS NO FANTASY + Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Sydney
Photo LA, Queensland Centre for Photography, Los Angeles
Photo Contemporary, Los Angeles
The New Black, Artspace, Mackay
Arcadia, Glen Eira City Council Gallery, Melbourne
East Coast Encounter, Caloundra Regional Gallery
Cross Pose, University of Queensland Art Museum
New Sensation, Artspace, Mackay
Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, THIS IS NO FANTASY + dianne tanzer gallery
- 2014 You Imagine What You Desire, 19th Biennale of Sydney, Art Gallery of NSW

MICHAEL COOK

CV

- Mother and Child, McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Canada
New Passports, New Photography, Art Gallery of Western Australia
Episodes: Australia Photography Now, 13th Dong Gang International Photo Festival, South Korea
Fukyama Museum of Art, Japan
Kyota Hanga: International Print Exhibition, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, Japan
My Country: Contemporary Art from Black Australia, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland
Photo LA, Queensland Centre for Photography, Los Angeles
East Coast Encounter, Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
Private Assembly: A Contemporary Collection, Tweed Regional Gallery, Tweed
Saltwater Country, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Surfers Paradise
- 2013 Debil Debil, curated by Marcia Langton AM, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney
My Country, I Still Call Australia Home: Contemporary Art from Black Australia, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
UnDisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial, Cairns Regional Gallery, Anne & Gordon Samstag
Museum of Art, University of South Australia; Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo
Photo LA: The 22nd International Los Angeles Photographic Art Exposition, Los Angeles
- 2012 The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art – APT7, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
UnDisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
29th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum & Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, Darwin
O'Mission, Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts, Melbourne
Where the Art Leads – CIAF, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns
My Country, University of Western Sydney Art Gallery, Sydney
Sunshine Coast Art Prize 2012, Caloundra Regional Galleries, Sunshine Coast
All I Need Is Everything, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Rockhampton
Pairs, dianne tanzer gallery + projects, Melbourne
Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Cairns
- 2011 Face Up: A look at portraits from the collection, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Surfers Paradise
Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
- 2010 15th Redlands Westpac Art Prize, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

AWARDS AND GRANTS

- 2022 Finalist, Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne
2021 Finalist, Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne
2020 Finalist, Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne
2018 Finalist, Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne
2016 Winner, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Galleries, Sunshine Coast
Finalist, National Photography Prize, Murray Art Museum, Albury
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Prize, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
- 2014 Australia Council for the Arts Greene Street Residency, New York
- 2013 Recipient, ACCELERATE, British Council, London, UK
Finalist, Olive Cotton Award, Tweed River Art Gallery
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
- 2012 Finalist, 29th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum & Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Galleries, Sunshine Coast
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
- 2011 Winner, People's Choice Award, Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, 2011, Art Gallery of Western Australia
Winner, Deadly Visual Artist of the year, 17th Annual Deadly Awards—the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards, Sydney
Finalist, Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Finalist, Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast

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CV

- 2011 Winner, People's Choice Award, Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
2010 Finalist, 15th Redlands Westpac Art Prize, Mossman Art Gallery, Sydney
2008 Winner, 'Visual Artist of the Year', 14th Annual Deadly Awards—the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards

COLLECTIONS

The British Museum, United Kingdom
AAMU Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, NL
Fondation Opale, Lens, Switzerland
The Owen & Wagner Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art, USA
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, VA, USA
McMaster Museum of Art, McMaster University, ON Canada
Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, Switzerland
Stichting National Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden, NL
Alan Conder & Alan Pigot Collection, Hong Kong
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
QAGOMA, Brisbane
Art Gallery of Western Australia, WA
National Museum of Australia, Canberra
National Library of Australia, Canberra
Australian War Memorial, Canberra
Parliament House, Canberra
Artbank, Sydney
Ten Cubed, Melbourne
RMIT University, Melbourne
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
Newcastle Art Gallery, New South Wales
Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD
Bendigo Art Gallery, VIC
Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD
Ipswich Art Gallery, QLD
Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, NSW
Rockhampton Art Gallery, QLD
Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, QLD
Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra
La Trobe University, Melbourne
Monash Gallery of Art, VIC
Artspace, Mackay
Redland Art Gallery
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
University of Western Sydney, New South Wales
University of Wollongong, NSW
University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, TAS
City of Yarra Collection, VIC
The Macquarie Group Collection, Sydney
Westpac Corporate Art Collection, Sydney
The Gene and Brian Sherman Collection, Sydney
Brisbane Grammar School, Brisbane
Alex Mackay Collection, Brisbane
Alstonville Art Collective, NSW
The Bowerman Collection, Brisbane
Corrigan Collection, Sydney
Daryl Hewson Collection, Brisbane
The M Collection, Melbourne
Dr Clinton Ng Collection, Sydney
TEWRR Collection, Brisbane
Supreme Court of Queensland Library, Brisbane
Griffith University, QLD
MAMA Murray Art Museum, Albury
Tweed Regional Gallery, Murwillumbah
Murray Art Museum, Albury
Redlands, Sydney Church of England Grammar School, Sydney
City of Sydney Civic Collection, Sydney
Sunshine Coast Regional Gallery, Caloundra
University of Sunshine Coast, Sunshine Coast
Wyndham Cultural Centre, VIC
The Art Group, Melbourne
Port Phillip City Collection, VIC
Mather Collection, Brisbane
Yarra City Arts, Melbourne

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