

## PAST MEETS PRESENT – AN AUDIENCE WITH A CARROLUP CHILD WITH MANY TALES TO TELL

Brisbane Powerhouse presents

### *The Legacy of Koorah Coolingah (The Legacy of Children Long Ago)*

Witness the joy, the sorrow, the beauty and the tales behind the art work as well as one man's first hand experience as a child in the Carrolup Native Settlement. Thrilled to be hosting a stunning collection of art works titled **The Legacy of Koorah Coolingah (The Legacy of Children Long Ago)** opening **Tuesday 28 April – Sunday 17 May 2009**, Brisbane Powerhouse also welcomes Alan Kelly as a very special guest, an original Carrolup child artist.

The Carrolup Native Settlement was established in 1915, situated 25 kilometres from Katanning, Western Australia. In 1945 the school headmaster at Carrolup engaged the children in an educational programme which fostered their creativity and imagination. The result is a remarkable collection of paintings produced by the boys at the school.

Brisbane Powerhouse is borrowing 24 original paintings created between 1945 and 1951 by 10-14 year old artists from Carrolup Native Settlement. These precious works are coming from the Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia. Mr Kelly will join artists Ezzard Flowers, Chair of the Board at the Mungart Boodja Art Centre, and Dr John E Stanton, Director of Berndt Museum of Anthropology, as special guests at the official opening of the exhibition on **Tuesday 28 April** at Brisbane Powerhouse. The artists will be leading talks and sharing their stories and knowledge of Carrolup traditional painting during their visit to Brisbane.

There are also 25 – 30 new paintings that will complete the exhibition, exploring past and present Aboriginal history as the tradition lives on. **The Legacy of Koorah Coolingah** is a rare and unique opportunity to journey through a tradition that maintains a strong connection with the Nyoongar culture, a culture that lives on through the continued support of Mungart Boodja Art Centre in Katanning Western Australia.

The Carrolup settlement may have closed down in 1951, but Alan Kelly, and contemporary Charlie Colbung and Lance Chadd, whose paintings are among the new works featured in the exhibition, remain an inspiration and fantastic insight into the emotion and spirit behind the fine collection of paintings. Predominantly landscapes, the paintings of Carrolup were inspired by the bush walks the children took with their teacher. Native animals and traditional ceremonies and dances are frequently depicted in the landscapes which have very independent styles.

Brisbane Powerhouse Visual Arts Coordinator Jody Haines is honoured to be hosting guests Alan Kelly, Ezzard Flower and Dr John E Stanton. "I am thrilled to have these three inspirational artists visiting for the opening of the exhibition," she says. "Each these gentlemen hold an interesting and individual view point of Carrolup. Alan will share stories about his time growing up as a Carrolup child artists and how the experience has shaped his artistic career. Ezzard Flowers was also a child at Carrolup, but by this time the site had had a name change to Marribank. Dr John Stanton the Director of the Berndt Museum of Anthropology will deliver a theoretical point of view and deliver a talk on the original works on loan."

**The Legacy of Koorah Coolingah** FREE Artists Talks will be held on Thursday 30 April at 11am and 2pm beginning on the Turbine Platform at Brisbane Powerhouse.

-ENDS-

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 28 April – Sunday 17 May, 2009
<b>Venue</b>	Brisbane Powerhouse
<b>Tickets</b>	FREE
<b>More Info</b>	07 3358 8600 or <a href="http://brisbanepowerhouse.org">brisbanepowerhouse.org</a>

**For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact  
Brisbane Powerhouse PR Manager, Olivia Guglielmino  
p 07 3358 8671 m 0409 187 289 f 07 3358 8611 e [oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org)  
or Brisbane Powerhouse Publicity Coordinator, Rachael Morgan  
p 07 3358 8670 m 0404 775 377 f 07 3358 8611 e [rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org)**



## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

### Alan Kelly

Alan is a Noongar man from the South West of Western Australia. He lived in a tent in the bush at Brunswick Junction with his parents. At the age of eight he was taken out of school by the police and sent by train to Katanning, from there on the back of a truck out to Carrolup Mission.

Alan spent eight years at the mission during the late 1940's and early 50's. All of the Carrolup child artists were friends including Parnell Dempster and Reynold Hart. Life was extremely hard at the mission, with overcrowded conditions and no contact with family whatsoever.

The children at the mission would use anything available to paint and draw like pieces of cardboard and charcoal from the fire.

Art has always been Alan's way to shut off his mind from the hurt and brings him much joy. Mungart Boodja now supplies Alan with materials to use for his works. This way, Alan continues to paint landscapes, sunsets and moonlight scenes in the traditional Carrolup style.

### Dr John E. Stanton

Dr John Stanton is the Director of the Berndt Museum of Anthropology.

John Stanton has extensive experience and involvement in the area of Aboriginal arts, which he has developed primarily since his appointment in 1978 as Curator of the Anthropology Research Museum (renamed the Berndt Museum of Anthropology in 1992 in honour of Ronald and Catherine Berndt).

His research background includes fieldwork among fringe-dwelling Aboriginal groups in south-western New South Wales in 1971 resulting in a MA in Social Anthropology. In 1974 he transferred to Perth to commence a PhD programme focussing on aspects of social change in a small Aboriginal community (Mt Margaret Mission) on the fringe of the Western Desert bloc, W.A. He has published a number of articles deriving from this research.

Since his Museum appointment, he has collaborated in several publications with Ronald and Catherine Berndt and mounted five major exhibitions.

He has also maintained ongoing research programmes in the Kimberley region of North-West Western Australia and the South-West of the State, both of which commenced in 1985 and have focussed on assisting Aboriginal communities to establish local Keeping Places and Cultural Centres. These projects, initiated at the request of local communities, have involved the training of Aboriginal people in curatorial and exhibition techniques, oral history recording, etc. and complement the Museum's focus on contemporary arts: they are central to the Museum's outreach programme to Western Australian Aboriginal communities.

Several other projects are being developed in collaboration with members of other Aboriginal communities, involving both urban and remote groups, as part of the long-term research, teaching and public relations activities of the Berndt Museum of Anthropology at the University of Western Australia.

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