

## **PANEL FIVE: FROM DARK TO LIGHT - A CENTRE FOR TRUTH-TELLING**

The Carrolup artworks were produced by Aboriginal children stolen from their families and detained at the Western Australian Carrolup Native Settlement in the 1940's. The power of their artworks to illuminate a dark history and help us understand the impact of intergenerational trauma is enormous.

We convened a conversation about how Curtin University is catalysing the artworks into a Centre that will become a focal point for understanding the history and consequences of dispossession.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

**Michelle Broun** is a proud Yindjibarndi woman living and working on Whadjuk Nyoongar Boodja. She grew up between the Pilbara and the Southwest-studying and working in Perth, Roebourne, Broome and Margaret River. Michelle has worked at many levels and across many platforms to produce, promote and present Aboriginal arts and culture. She is a curator, cultural planner and creative producer-engaging with community and collaborating with artists to create thought-provoking and moving experiences for audiences, to build bridges between cultures and find common ground on which to move forward. She was the lead curator of the Ngalang Koort Boodja Wirn exhibition at the Museum of Western Australia which opened in 2020. She is currently the Curator of Australian First Nations Art at John Curtin Gallery, focusing on the research, presentation and community engagement related to the collection of artworks produced by the child inmates of the Carrolup Native Settlement.

**Chris Malcolm** is the Director of John Curtin Gallery. He has worked with some of the most influential contemporary artists from around the world, curating and designing exhibitions over the last 25 years. Moving from a career as a practising artist represented in the collections of the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the City of Fremantle, he commenced working with Curtin University's Art Collection in 1989. He was involved in the development of the John Curtin Gallery which opened at Curtin University in 1998 as Australia's largest University Art Museum and following a decade as its Curator and Curatorial Manager, has been Director since 2009.

Chris has curated over 15 major international exhibitions for the Perth Festival and was a Founding Curator of BEAP the Biennale of Electronic Arts Perth – a major international festival project launched in 2002 showcasing innovative new media arts practise. He has received the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in 2002 and 2019 and has developed many exhibitions in collaboration with leading researchers across a range of disciplines from nanotechnology to radio astronomy – including Shared Sky, which has been touring internationally since 2014. As Director, he has overseen the convergence of the John Curtin Gallery's collection development with its exhibition programming to focus on issues of diversity, equity and social justice.

**Anthony (Tonji) Hansen** was born in Katanning and in the 1970's forcibly removed from his mother and grandparent's care as a toddler. He has worked within the Government sector for the last 30 years, working in the field as a member of the Western Australia Police Department, the Department for Child Protection and the

Department of Human Services. With this depth of experience has come a deep understanding of the complex needs of Stolen Generations people and their families and the complexity of these needs.

Anthony also is a hard-working member of the Bringing Them Home Committee and the Carrolup Elders Reference Group. He is a Working Party Member for the South West Boojarah Group of the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. Tonji currently works with Communicare and sees gains in the current and future investments made by mainstream Australia in compensating Aboriginal people for the wrongs inflicted in the past and continuing now as achievable only if services are directed by strengthened Aboriginal communities – our problems – our solutions.

## **EDITED TRANSCRIPT**

Michelle: Chris, if you don't mind, just a one-minute intro to the film to provide context.

Chris: This film, 18-minute film, was commissioned in 2011, leading up to an exhibition that was held in 2015, which celebrated or commemorated, not really celebrated but commemorated the centenary of the establishment of the Carrolup native settlement. It was an exhibition that we held at the Katanning Art Gallery, and this film was shown at the prelude to the launch of the project. It's introductory to the whole idea of the collection and history. There will be some references to that specific exhibition, so it will seem a little bit dated in one sense, but it's a very rounded encapsulation of the history, which I will then touch on a little bit, but we're here to talk a little bit more about the Carrolup Centre for Truth Telling, which when this exhibition was mounted in 2015, was just a dream.

### **(video plays)**

*Kaya, kaya wanjoo. Hello and welcome to exhibition of the Carrolup artworks. Spiritual return home. The title is given to this exhibition because they are actually coming home to the place where they were created. This place here in Noongar Boodja. This exhibition is being shown this year in 2015 to mark 100 years since the establishment of the Carrolup native settlement. The artworks were done by Noongar children of the stolen generation, who were removed from their families, and taken to places such as the Carrolup native settlement. They produced artworks about our worldview, our place, and it came from their heart, their souls and their mind. These artworks that you're about to see are something very, very special.*

*The government of the day decided it would be a good thing to bring these children from the bush camps into a central place. They were between the ages of about six to about 13 or 14, they were a very mixed group, came from all over the place. We were living on a farm out of Kojanup. One afternoon, a truck pulled up where we were living. My granddad asked him what he wanted. He said, I come to pick up a violent miss and her children. He said, Well, you can't have them. He said that's my daughter, you can't take them. And they said, well, we are going to take them because she didn't send her kids to school. Which wasn't true because we used to go to school all the time. And he just got hold of the two little ones. My siblings were smaller than me, and he put them on the truck. Then they lifted me onto the back of the truck and put my mum on there. And then it just took off. The idea being that they would be educated and looked after. But it fell far from the mark. It was very frightening. You know, we never mixed with a lot of Aboriginal people. We were sort of a family by ourselves to*

*come here and see all these little Aboriginal kids. We asked some of them what they were doing here. And they said they were taken away from their parents and brought here to live. They said, are you living here with us? And we said, yes, we're going to live here. But we don't want to live here. And they tell us they didn't want to live here either.*

*Dad was incarcerated in Carrolup in 1970. Him and his three brothers. They didn't like the place because it was almost like a prison.*

*It was a very harsh place. It was bitterly cold. Those children had no warm clothing, they had no shoes. And in the dormitories where they're locked up at night, there was mattresses on the floor, but there was no bed linen. They had one blanket each, there were no cupboard or place that you could call your own to have anything. Nothing. They had nothing.*

*The children were in a dormitory setting in Carrolup with a large ablution block. The kitchen, the school, they got away from Carrolup, Andy, Henry, Dad. I think they were the three that that escaped, they just walked out of Carrolup, and hid.*

*We had the work in the kitchen, wash dishes and things like that. And then we'd go off to school, everybody loved Mr And Mrs White, because they were so kind and good to us.*

*My dad had great compassion for them. To begin with, he couldn't get any response from the children at all. Until one day, he said, come on, we'll go for a bushwalk. And he took the children out. And he said to them, we're just gonna have a stroll through the bush and tell me what you see. And then he said, when he got back to the classroom, you must draw what you saw. And of course, to his amazement, they would start to draw this magnificent perspective of what they could see.*

*Yeah, we used to go down to the bush. He'd take about six or seven girls with the boys as well, especially on the nature walks. When we went out with the boys on their walks, they weren't allowed to take paper, because when they went to the bush, they had to memorise what they saw. And then bring it back to the classroom and put it on paper. That was a way that Mr White got them to do the paintings they did. They had to sketch it in their mind and bring it back to the classroom.*

*When Mr White was the schoolteacher, he actually wanted the government to acknowledge what the kids were doing here. So, he actually went down to Albany to see the Chief Protector with some artworks. And he actually showed it to him and the other government officials, and they didn't believe that these kids out here could actually do hard work in that style. He actually came back here in this Model T Ford all the way back up to Carrolup, picked up a couple of boys to come back down to Albany with paper, and brush and paint, and got them to do some artworks in front of the other officials. They absolutely blew the Chief Protector and the other officials away. When they actually came up here, there were artworks all over this wall that had been covered, you couldn't see the paint. They took a photo in that corner with Mr White standing up in that corner. And all the kids were down the front in front of him. It actually showed the government officials that the kids were doing good at school here in regard to the artwork and their education.*

*The local people were absolutely astounded at first, they used to say oh, but come on, Mr White. You're touching this all up. You're doing this. He said No, I'm not. And that's how it all started.*

*Florence Rutter was a British businesswoman who was in Perth to establish Soroptimist international chapters across Australia. She visited the offices a local journal, who had published the month before an article about the Carrolup artworks. Upon seeing the colour plates in the article she was immediately interested in visiting the site. She made her way out to the settlement, completely unannounced. She introduced herself to Noel and Lily White who then gave her a tour of the settlement and showed her the artworks in the classroom.*

*When Mrs Rutter was there, as she was leaving to go back to England, my dad said to her well, look, Mrs Rutter, take this collection of paintings. There was no more room on the school wall to hang them. And she said, look, I'll give you five pounds.*

*And she became the self-appointed ambassador for the child artists of Carrolup. She bought some of the works at that time, and she took them with her when she travelled around the rest of Australasia.*

*She took them around the world on exhibitions. She already created those ripples around the pond and these artworks are still creating those ripples.*

*The extra money that she raised, she sent back to Carrolup up directly to Mr White, to use it to buy materials for the kids, and also to buy shoes and clothing for the kids, because the kids were very scruffy, if not pretty bad way.*

*Florence Rutter kept her journal, but she also kept all her incoming correspondence. It's very clear from the content of those letters that they were very affectionate towards Mrs Rutter, the children who were wards of state, as well as being minors, understood that they were engaged in a commercial activity even as children, and they were very, very proud of that. And you've only got to read some of those letters to see that. She was a divorced woman. She'd been by herself for many, many years and she met this man, but he was a swindler, and he took all the money out of the Children's Trust account, but he also took all of her money as well. So, she was destitute. Florence was in failing health and regrettably, posted some advertisements in the printed press in London to sell the collection. Herbert Mayer was a Manhattan based gallerist, an art collector who heard about the possible sale of the collection and offered to buy the entire collection on the spot. He was a graduate of Colgate University, and in the mid 1960s Colgate were establishing their own art gallery on campus. Mr. Mayer decided to donate several thousand works from his own collection. And within that collection of worth 122 Carolyn drawings.*

*Florence was brokenhearted that she had to sell her own private collection.*

*It probably would have broke her heart to, you know, to let them go. And in fact, she died seven months later, basically of a broken heart, according to her daughter.*

*The collection of Carrolup drawings set quite anonymously within the storeroom for many, many years. Purely by accident in 2004 Professor Howard Morphy from the ANU in Canberra was in Colgate University in New York giving a lecture and the curator invited him down to their storeroom to show him a few objects they had in their collection that had connections to Australia. And one of these was obviously a box of drawings. It was labelled I think it was Australian children's drawings. Subsequently, within a number of weeks, there was a delegation raised from Perth who travelled to Colgate University to officially verify the works as being Carrolup artworks. That's when the story hit the headlines around the world and the very beginning of the idea of the collection returning to Australia was seeded at that moment upon seeing just how strong the impact of seeing these artworks were to the two Noongar men in particular.*

*John, myself and Ethel had no idea how these artworks were going to be in regards to all those years in those boxes. When we seen them on the table and in the boxes, and still in their coverings. They look like they were only done an hour ago. That's how vibrant and bright the colours were on these pieces of paper and even the paper was in good condition.*

*And that all really led towards the moment when Colgate were able to offer to transfer the custodianship of the collection to Curtin University in 2013.*

*So hired a car drove to Wagin, you know, contacted Ezard and we sat on Uncle Anguses porch in I said, we believe it's time to come home. I kind of would be expecting this. I thought he knew this was happening. He told me later he thought never in his lifetime, would he see the artwork come home. That was actually a very touching surprise.*

*When Ellen came out and told us that Colgate was gifting these artworks back and she asked us if it was okay to go through Curtin because Curtin is one of the major universities in WA you know, that has Noongar students go to and we were pleased to acknowledge all those artworks.*

*I discussed with them our opinion, that Curtin was the right institution because of its emphasis on community outreach. The numbers of Noongar and Indigenous students at the University and the fact that Curtin is the first and only institution of higher education in Australia that has established and implemented a strategic plan for reconciliation.*

*All of those things were very meaningful for us at Colgate and were part of my proposal.*

*I feel a very huge responsibility towards, we are simply custodians of what is a very precious collection, a very precious collection to Noongar country and to Western Australia and to Australia as a whole. I think as a university, we're privileged to have that role. Curtin has established a Carrolup elders reference group who advise us in terms of cultural matters related to the collection. We sit as an advisory group to give Curtin cultural advice in regards to what our prospective visions are based around these artworks, these artworks in particular, is connected to Noongar people right through our country, in one form or another.*

*Essentially, what we want to do with the collection is to ensure that as many people as possible see the collection, understand the story, understand the history of the collection, that as many people as possible, Noongar people have access to the collection, and also that researchers have access to it.*

*And that we can understand more about the histories of the people involved. The oral histories project which has been supported by Lotterywest is so very important to that work. There was an initial exhibition here, Heart Coming Home in 2013 at our John Curtin Gallery, and that was very well received. Last year, we held our first Great Southern Regional exhibition in Albany that was very well received as well. The second major exhibition of the Great Southern Regional exhibitions will take place this year in September in Katanning that will be very important because the artworks will actually be returning home, returning to country; it's also 100 years since the establishment of the Carrolup mission.*

*In 2015 it turns 100 and what better present to give it then to actually take these artworks back on site, where they were created in the first place.*

*When the artwork came back, it was really exciting. That was a real positive because most of the artists had passed. And this was something for the family, all the remaining family of these artists to have.*

*The artworks themselves are profoundly important cultural artefacts to the Noongar community of Western Australia. They have an incredible power to communicate to their audience, Noongar and non-Aboriginal people alike. Understanding the story of the situation where these words were created at Carrolup, during the stolen generations period in the 1940s just makes the works even more compelling. It's such an important body of work to enable healing to occur within the community locally, just seeing the deep emotional impact the artworks have on people is profoundly satisfying.*

*Some of the art shows lifestyle of a traditional life. You know, Aboriginal people, families, some of the art shows families by the river. And this is depicted by the Aboriginal artists. It's to me important for non-Aboriginal students here at Curtin to see that that was the lifestyle of Aboriginal people. And they can actually see it in the art.*

*The two principal pillars of the agreement with Colgate when the works were transferred to Curtin were access and preservation. Access we're dealing with by trying to make the works accessible to as broad an audience as possible. And the other key component is preservation, we're obliged, through the agreement and just ethically to preserve these artworks for as long as possible for future generations. They're a lot more fragile than we ever thought they would be.*

*Well, I'm glad I come back to see Carrolup, I am really glad. Even though it brings back some memories of when I was here, not a lot, but some, some were good, some were bad.*

*It's healing you know, if you talk about it, you are going through your healing process.*

*This is something that Noongar people related to these artists or even having a connection to the family can be proud of. So, there's that pride. And it's something to be very proud of.*

*These children produced that works that linked them emotionally, physically and spiritually to their land. Noongar Boodja. All Noongar people should be proud as we acknowledge and celebrate their spiritual return home.*

Chris: As I said that film was a little bit dated in that in that it was created specifically for that exhibition in Katanning. While I'm speaking, there is a series of slides that will just be scrolling through of artworks from the collection, as well as a few images, both of the John Curtin Gallery as well as a couple of what's referred to as artists impressions, I suppose, of what the Carrolup Centre for Truth Telling might look like. For the next little while, I'm going to be speaking for about 10 minutes and then I'm going to hand over to Mr Hansen is going to speak for about 10 minutes, and then Ms Broun is gonna interrogate both of us. Is that right? Okay.

Michelle: I'll be drawing out some truth. Yes!

Chris: So, kaya. I acknowledge this place Boola Bardip, the WA Museum is on Wadjuk Noongar lands from the past, today and in the future. And I pay my respects to elder's past, present and emerging. The word Carrolup means different things to many people. It evokes striking images of Noongar Boodja, landscape drawings from Aboriginal children of the stolen generations at the Carrolup state school, and this little school hidden away within the Carrolup native settlement was a crucible from which a distinctive landscape art tradition emerged in the middle of last century that has captured the evocative atmosphere of Noongar Boodja.

This tradition lives on generations later, as you can see from the work that's in the gallery over the way that Michelle kindly spoke to us about earlier by Uncle Lance Chad.

But these original artworks from the 1940s have become a powerful catalyst for bringing people together to confront and address past injustice, as well as acknowledge and celebrate cultural resilience and explore how the artworks and their existence can contribute to reconciliation and healing.

After first leaving Noongar Boodja over 70 years ago, as you've just seen in the film, these artworks have now returned full circle to come home to become the foundation for the Carrolup Centre for Truth Telling, that is being developed over the next two years within John Curtin Gallery at Curtin University.

And I'm just sort going to cast back a little bit and just a little potted history of the last 193 years. Since 1826 Noongar people's access to traditional country has steadily declined until by the turn of the 20th century, most lived sadly on the outskirts of regional towns in segregated native reserves, often in terrible conditions without reliable access to water and surviving on rudimentary government rations. Now in January 1915, to quell growing unrest amongst the townspeople of Katanning, the Noongar population on the overcrowded reserve there were forcibly marched 30 kilometres to a secluded site near the confluence of the Carrolup River. From its beginnings as a makeshift camp site the Carrolup river native settlement as it was known then was administered

by a succession of government departments all empowered to exercise increasing control over Noongar people through the provisions of the Aborigines Act of 1905.

Carrolup settlement broadly operated in two phases. The first was a period of segregation from 1915 to 1922, when it was suddenly closed and the population forcibly removed and taken to the Moore River native settlement, which had opened in 1918. And the second more focused, industrialised phase of assimilation, which is the period that the artworks were created, which occupied the full decade of the 1940s when the settlements aims and impacts were greatly expanded.

In 1951, Carrolup was then transformed briefly into the Maribank agricultural school before being taken over by the Baptist union to become the Maribank mission in 1952. Now the aim of the settlement during its darkest phase in the 1940s was to effectively produce a labour force. You could almost describe it as an indentured labour force, with the boys being trained to become farmhands and the girls destined to leave the settlement at the age of 14, forced into largely unpaid labour as trained domestic servants.

Just after the Second World War, the newly appointed Carrolup state school headmaster, Noel White, and you saw his daughter talking in the film a little while ago, and his wife and their three children arrived at Carrolup in 1946. Now, when he arrives, he was not able to communicate with the children at all. They had been told that they were going to be having a male teacher arrive, and that his intent was to discipline them. Now to an Aboriginal child in 1940s, being told that a non-Aboriginal man is going to discipline you would mean one thing. So, they were terrified of this fellow.

Now, after he's there for a couple of weeks, none of the children had made eye contact with him and answered a question. There had been no engagement, no communication at all. He was on the brink of resigning his post when he happened to come across Parnell Dempster on a Sunday afternoon, literally drawing a tree, as an artist would sitting in front of a tree doing this drawing. Now this encounter prompted the first direct connection between teacher and any of these students. He asked Parnell whether he'd be interested in doing more drawings, and Parnell looked up and answered. And then the following morning in the classroom, the teacher announced to the entire classroom, now again, remembering that none of these children have ever looked at him before.

All of a sudden, he suggests to them that afternoon, they're gonna go for a walk out under a bush. And all of a sudden, he's got all of their attention. And then the following morning on the Tuesday, they all set about doing these drawings, and to everyone's astonishment, the children produced artworks that captured the spirit and atmosphere of the landscape with incredible visual acuity, with great skill, and the teacher had never taught them anything about any art making, any drawing. Earlier teachers had never done that, we put examples of drawings that these children had done from 1942 right through to 1945, and none of them look anything like this. So, some bizarre thing happened that day when they were allowed.

If you think teachers that had been there before, would never dared take the children out into the bush during the day, I mean, the bush was a place that they would escape from. A lot of these children were trying to escape this place all the time, they had trackers there that would go and capture the kids in a bush and bring them back



and put them in cells. So, for a teacher to suddenly suggest that the whole class, get up, go outside and get together out in the bush was a kind of pivot point, where the children seemed to have some different sense of relationship with their teacher.

So, from the first public showing in Katanning in October 1946 the artworks consistently encountered a blend of acclaim and scepticism regarding their authorship. And the success of these young artists, and the positive shift in their own learning overall, was actually considered, sadly, a vindication of state policies, notably the willful removal of children from their families. So, in many ways, the sad irony of the children's success was that it became part of the state's propaganda instrument. The more successful the children were, the more it reinforced the state's attitude that what they were doing was right, and they should actually take more children from their families.

Now as the years as quickly passed, and the state's intentions of limiting children's prospects in adult life became more apparent to the headmaster Noel White, this concord of purpose between the departments of native affairs and education would soon shift. Noel White was actually considered a troublemaker, by nurturing the children's curiosity and intervening in the training trajectories of native affairs, which again, were just wanting to train them to become indentured labour, that would effectively deny these children opportunities that non-Aboriginal children always took for granted.

The superintendent of the settlement reacted by disrupting their education, typified by taking children out of class to undertake manual labour tasks during school hours. Now, the world of the children of Carrolup was transformed when in 1949, Florence Rutter turned up and you saw her in the film. Now that foundation that she constituted within a few days of visiting Carrolup did enable her to set up these exhibitions right across the UK in 1950, where there were many hundreds of works sold. Back here in WA, while that was all going on the Department of Native Affairs maintained that the children should only be trained to according to the settlements purpose. The fact that no one was trying to give the children a sense of an alternative future became a huge problem, and really came to a head towards the end of late 1950, when the school was suddenly closed.

Now the 122 words that are in the collection work, actually what remained in Florence Rutter's personal position at the end of her life as John Stanton described there. After the American Herbert Mayer had acquired the collection in 1956, as I said in the film, he donated it to Colgate in 1966.

Now, Tony, and I were fortunate enough to travel to New York in April 2019. And we actually went to the gallery where these artworks were found. And we spoke to the woman who showed the box of drawings to Howard Morphy. And it was really quite a miracle that that even happened because he was on his way out of the room. And she said, oh, hold on a minute, before you go, what about this box over here, and she showed us exactly where the box was. Now, if she hadn't have said that to him on that day, that box would probably still be sitting on the shelf here at the Picker Art Gallery in Hamilton, New York. And nobody would know anything about the existence of these things. This whole story is full of these amazing coincidences of people being in the right place at the right time, including the teacher.

Now, after the works were discovered in 2004, Colgate University started sending people out here, they wanted to know what this was all about. They wanted to learn about Noongar culture, they wanted to learn about the stolen generations. Unbeknownst to everybody here, they had intended from the very get go to repatriate the collection, but they did not want to mention it to anybody here in Australia until they knew what could happen.

And it took them seven years of legal wrangling and changing the law of the state of New York, for them to have the opportunity to repatriate the collection in late 2012. Which, from our perspective, is a very generous act and one that Colgate themselves are very proud of. And in fact, when Tony and I were there in 2019, it was a great part of the university's 200th anniversary celebrations, the fact that they've been able to repatriate this collection of Noongar artwork back to Noongar Boodja.

The artworks were soon received here in 2013, at the exhibition that you saw there, as well as Albany in 2014, and then then again in Katanning in 2015, and all of this was really building up towards a sense of well, what is Curtin going to do with this collection? You know, this collection needs a home it needs to, it's done this kind of regional tour. It's been shared with the community out on the road, but it needed a home that would see its future being able to enact and enshrine the principles of the agreement between Colgate and Curtin University.

One thing that happened a few years later was that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs here discovered in a storeroom, a whole collection of Carrolup artworks, letters, photographs and artefacts that have been there since the 1960s. They decided that it was important to bring all this material together and donated the entire collection to Curtin University so it could be together with the artworks.

Colgate University continued to bring their staff and students every year out to Noongar Boodja, they spent months at a time working with us and working with Noongar elders on country for sort of episodes of deep cultural immersion. There's hundreds of students who graduated from Colgate University of New York who've gone away with a really deep understanding of this history and this culture, much deeper than their counterparts who are studying here at Curtin.

And throughout Perth, we've worked with local Indigenous organisations Yokai and the Bringing them Home committee to host to successful Carrolup Maribank reunions at the John Curtin gallery. And as I mentioned in 2019, we took the collection to New York.

But since the work has been on campus, it's really galvanised activity within the university, supporting the university's ambitions for reconciliation. And in many ways, the collection itself has become the foundation of the development of the Carrolup Centre for Truth Telling, which I'm very happy to report was formally established by the governor on the 10th of November last year at a very moving ceremony at the John Curtin gallery.

Now the Centre will not only become the new physical home for the Carrolup artworks, but it will also enable us to build upon the collection to provide comprehensive opportunities for community engagement, education, research, as well as all the hard work that needs to needs to happen to enable pathways to healing for people, survivors and their descendants.

Aboriginal experiences of dispossession and disempowerment resonate with experiences of Indigenous populations across the world and as embodied in the Uluru Statement from the Heart in 2017, which was the call from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for constitutional reform in Australia for acknowledgement of continued sovereignty and for a process of truth telling of past injustices to assist in moving towards genuine reconciliation.

So, Colgate University's vision and generosity returning these artworks to Noongar Boodja has provided Curtin University with the unprecedented opportunity to reach out to all Australians but especially to Noongar people, to promote truth telling and work together to share research and preserve these important artworks for future generations.

Michelle: Thanks, Chris. Tonji's going to provide, I guess, a little bit of a different perspective from Chris's background and history and knowledge of the collection, which is actually quite astounding. I'm very impressed, Chris, of the depth of knowledge around that collection. And I'm still learning lots. I thought I'd be here today, so these guys can share their stories, and then I can ask them difficult questions.

Tonji: Thanks, Michelle. I just want to also acknowledge the elders past and present and also emerging, also acknowledge that we are on Whadjuk country of the Noongar Nation and acknowledge all the elder's past, present in this community as well. I would also like to acknowledge and pay my respects to all the stolen generation people. Right across this country, acknowledge those that have already gone before us, because they've set the pathway for us in this journey.

I guess for me, Carrolup is a place where many, many of the Aboriginal people, the local Noongar people of the days were, you know, sadly moved and forcibly moved to these locations because of ongoing issues or complaints from the wider community in the location of Katanning as well.

You're probably asking yourself, what's Carrolup mean to me, I guess, Carrolup is. The site itself has two names. So, the first part of the journey is it's known as Carrolup native settlement. And then later on, it became known as the Maribank Baptist mission.

And that's where my journey starts. If you look at all the people that went before us, there were placed into this place, you know, sadly, that they were isolated and segregated from their loved ones and their family and country in placed in a location that was unknown to them. Throughout the engagement of Mr White and Mrs White, we saw the beauty, the rose from the darkness and the evilness of AO Neville, in terms of what he was trying to do with the Aboriginal people in this state.

And I guess, you know, when you look at it, a lot of the Aboriginal kids that were placed in institutions like this, it very similar story, it was for their own good. And we know today that it's not for their own good. And it hasn't been, and we still see the ripple effect of that today, in terms of Aboriginal children still entering the system. And if it's not the institution of the Department of Child Protection, it's the institution of the prisons. So, it's, you

know, it's sad, because you look at it; loss of country, loss of identity in placing these institutions wasn't a good thing for anybody, and especially for the First Nations, people of this country.

I guess, when I look back at the journey of Carrolup, you know, I'm grateful that my mother's sister was a part of that journey, sadly, but she was an artist that we didn't know about, she was doing her own artworks with the boys during this period, which was amazing, because she'd never ever spoken about her artwork or shared those stories with the wider family of our family network, she didn't even share that with her own children. And I guess, you know, just on that it's exciting that Chris has come across some of her artworks that we are hoping to get our hands on so that we could show her children that are a part of the Carrolup elders reference group. So, they can have a look at what their mother did in this place as well.

I guess for me as a young boy growing up back in 1970, which wasn't long ago, it was the first time I entered that place, and I sadly spent the next 15 years of my life in this institution. And I guess some of the things about growing up as boys, we always taught the other boys, the younger boys, what was important around the cultural significance of the location and a lot of that stuff was knowing where the old people used to be, where the old people's stories were. And also, the importance of knowing where the old people were buried on this location, because a lot of the local Noongar people didn't know that, a lot of the local Noongar people used to come out there to the property itself, because it was 10,000 acres, people used to come out there hunting. And it was knowing those locations, like the cemeteries, and it was important for us to respect the old people that have gone before us.

Being involved with the Carrolup elders reference group has been a real blessing. We've just been so humbled to be involved, to be part of this journey and to reflect and always look back in the rear vision mirror to think about the brothers and sisters that did these amazing artworks, and knowing that the most important thing that they were only kids doing this work, it weren't adults, they didn't go teaching schools, it was just naturally what they did and they had the spirit the Wirin stuck in them you know, they carried that with them.

And it was so important when you look back today, the artworks have travelled all across the world. It's a bit like us as Aboriginal people, we travel and we go to different places, but when we die, we come back home to our Boodja, in our country, where we come from.

And the artworks I look at that as the same, they've been to the UK to the US, and now the lifetime expectancy of that is over and they're back on country now resting and the timing couldn't be any better, because I think it's a wonderful celebration to know that, you know, there's only there was only a few left of the artists and now we only have Aunty Elma, that's the last living artist of the collection that's still with us today. I think in terms of that journey for her, and I guess for us as other young boys and girls growing up in the institution in a different era it's amazing to know that Aunty Elma can still see and had the opportunity to see the artworks and the works that she did as a child as well.

I guess it's just about advocating and speaking and sharing the knowledge of our Noongar people in the wider community so that the wider community gets the opportunity, just like we do, to see the artworks, to see the beauty. And in terms of what these kids have done over their, you know, the most difficult times of their life

being placed in these places in Carrolup - it was a place that, you know, in wintertime, it was very, very cold, we had no shoes. I don't know what these kids had when they were growing up there. And I was growing up in the 70s, you know, cold weather, it was freezing, hot weather was very hot.

But for me, it's a place of significance. To me, I always say it's my home. It's the kids that I grew up with, they come first in my life. And then my mother's family and my father's family. And I always relate to these kids as my brothers and sisters because we grew up and, we spent so many years together in this place and you know, it breaks one's heart, when you see the mission kids slowly one at a time dying, you know, they never had any healing or no opportunities to have counselling to address all those issues that they've been faced with.

And you know, just to know that even just in the last few days, we've had another couple of members of the mission, kids from that place who have passed away, that have left us and it's sad, it's people like myself, I'm lucky for whatever the reason is. And I just say the resilience of moving through all those challenges of my early childhood and growing up in this place that allowed me to be in this position.

Sadly, I guess, if you look at many of those kids that grew up with us, they didn't have the capacity, they didn't have the skills, the strength, they became part of that ripple effect of being institutionalised again and moving from one swinging door into another institution swinging door.

And I guess when I look at the artworks, you know, speaking to members of the families that have descendants of these artists, you know, it just means so much for them to know that they're back on country, you know, I've been visiting so many of the descendants in, you know, you're sitting in the comfort of their home, and they go, you know, I got a piece of that artwork, and I have it in my house. And they're just so humbled and blessed to know that their Uncles and Aunties and their grandparents have led the way, opened a pathway for them to be excited about the artworks, remember, when Chris and I did a tour with children of the department that are in care, one of the little kids heard the artists name and she looked at her carer and said, that's my name. And you can see the joy, the excitement, knowing that this is her descendant who's one of these artists, and she'd made that connection.

But it's, you know, sharing the stories, it's working closely with Curtin, working closely with the elders reference group to ensure that we maintain the artworks and preserve them as best as we can and continue to share the story around truth telling.

And I think for me, personally, truth telling, if you're not going to tell the truth, it's not worth having a conversation. I work for an organisation that is an institution, you know, Parkerville has got a history of 117 years, and the matriarch of Parkerville was a lady by the name of Sister Kate. And Sister Kate's later on, formed their own institution dealing with only fair skinned Aboriginal children over in Queen's Park.

It's difficult for some institutions have those conversations. But you know, I'm so pleased in my space where I work, that one of our core values is truth telling, and we need to tell the truth before we can start moving forward. And being able to challenge each other and being brave about it as well. Because, you know, not a lot of people like to hear the truth and talk about the truth.

And, you know, the opportunities that children had in the institutions in those days were very limited, very limited. You know, you never saw your family, you never had those community engagements with participating in activities within your communities like our children do today.

Michelle: Thanks, Tonji. And Chris.

I guess before we throw it out to you guys to ask some questions, I'd like to just throw a few questions to Tonji and Chris which will throw some more, I guess, different dimensions on this story. For me, there are so many layers to this story. And the story is only a tiny glimpse of the bigger story. And what we know about the children interned at Carrolup and later Maribank.

There's also stories about what happened to those artists once they left. And we haven't got time to go into that today. But a lot of it wasn't very good. And so, we have to remind ourselves that this, the children are called, or the grownups like Tonji and my mum, they're called survivors for a reason. Lots of children and babies died in those institutions.

And the kids that survived, were pretty tough to even get through the first few years of their lives. And even after they left those institutions, as they were literally thrown into the community without any life skills or support. This is just one part of that very complex history, which we're coming to terms with and unpacking and coming to terms with within our own community.

But that conversation needs to be broadened so that we can talk openly and honestly about the history of our state and our country.

So Tonji, I don't want to make your life more complicated, but I thought you are well placed to answer this question. Because it seems like there's generally a level of awareness out in the community about the stolen generations. From your perspective, why do we need to continue this conversation? And what's not so well known about this story?

Tonji: I guess, Michelle, I don't know if most of you guys and ladies have seen the Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing report that was done in 2018. What it really clearly highlights is that this state is the worst state in this country. And as a kid growing up, I never knew that. I always thought, Queensland and New South Wales might be worse off in terms of stolen gen. But when you look at this state, we had 100 more institutions, 100 more. You got to think about what's the purpose of that? What is what is AO Neville's vision? What is he trying to do? Is he trying to breed out the Aboriginal race, or is he trying to make the Aboriginal people be like white people, because white people are deemed in the community as, this is the way of living, this is a better life for you.

What also really stood out in that report is that 47 per cent of Aboriginal people in this state are connected to the stolen gen. So, that's nearly one in two and when you look at their graph, there's a huge gap between the next one.

And it's just so sad when you look at it, you think, wow, why aren't we teaching this stuff in schools? Why? Why isn't every young person learning about this in schools, from a young age, it's not about the blame game, but it's just about educating our systems and educating our wider communities so that we get a better understanding. And we know what a large portion of Aboriginal people have been through this state.

You know, the work that I'm doing with the Healing Foundation at a national level is that we've just rolled out an educational kit for all schools in the country. So, teachers, kids at all different grades, using the appropriate language, so the children and teachers get a better understanding around the stolen generation people, and the journey, and the impact that it had on those people in their families.

I think it's, you know, talking about it. It just really aligns with me that, you know, we got to talk about it, because these practices were still happening in the late 1980s. You know, even though the policies change, this state was still doing the same practice the, and people will say today that, you know, we've got another stolen generation happening. And it's a lot more children coming into care, which is, you know, which is true, you know, since the Bringing them Home report, which had 50-54 recommendations, only about five of those recommendations have been implemented. And that's 20 years on.

We had a royal commission, we got over 100 and something recommendations, and every time I see these royal commissions and recommendations, in the back of my mind, I just think you couldn't implement 54, how you going to implement a 100 and something? I guess, if we worked tirelessly and hard to implement those 54, we wouldn't have the problems that we have today with the over representation of Aboriginal children in care.

But in my opinion, and I always say this, there is only one stolen generation. And that's the one that I grew up in, Michelle's mum grew up in, and the other 100,000 children, right across this country grew up in. The thing that's happening today is, families do have an opportunity to come in, sit at the table and talk with the department around ensuring the best outcome for their children. I guess, also, you look at some of the practices of the system, the system hasn't changed much.

You know, when I first walked into the department to work, I said, why would I want to work here, you know, you took me away from my mother, my family, my grandparents. But then I looked at the bright side of it and thought, I could be that person that can change people and make the system change a bit. You know, you can change the name on as many times as you like. But to us Aboriginal people it will still be known as native welfare. Because you still have people that are still got that DNA in their system, and they still are part of the system. And they're hidden away in the system and still make those decisions today on children.

But I think it's you know, it's important that we continue to talk about it. And that's what it's about, if we don't talk about it, how is the wider community going to learn? How's the Aboriginal people going to learn, how's the Aboriginal people in the wider community going to walk together, having a positive relationship and partnership, so that we become one.

And we have that reconciliation, love and respect for each other, and we walk this journey together, and we advocate, and we fight the fight, to ensure that we continue to speak up about these policies.

You know, I heard the Premier the other day talking about a new Cultural Centre. And I mean, like I said, this state's the worst state, we don't even have a Healing Centre. Wouldn't it be nice if we had a number of healing centres where stolen generation people could come share their stories, talk about it, or even just come and sit and listen to others. And you know that they'll find that space in their comfort, that they'll be empowered to start to talk and share their stories. We're doing a little bit of that work in the in Bringing them Home space, we're bringing elders together to talk about their stories and share their story. Because husbands and wives are saying, you got to tell your story. We don't know your story. You die tomorrow, your story is lost. Your children, your grandchildren need to know your story. And, you know, credit to those elders, they're coming to the table. They're sharing their stories, because they want their children and grandchildren to have those stories when they leave this world. And, you know, that the stories are not lost, very similar to the artworks.

Michelle: Thanks, Tonji. And I might just quickly add to that. I mean, I'm still learning about my own family's story and my mum's family, her story and her brother's story, who was stolen on the same day, but placed in a different institution based on the difference in colour between me and Tonji. I would have been sent to Sister Kate's and Tonji would probably be sent to Roelands or Mogumber. And we were given different names.

And so, you know, I think it's all the details that you, unless you really understand what happened, I've got a copy of my mother's form for arrest, she was six years old. So that was a form to arrest a six-year-old child to be kept at her majesty's pleasure. So basically, that was the form that the police were issued, to take to the station, to legally grab the kids.

We still need these conversations to happen.

The film that we made with mum, the oral history, fantastic philanthropists came on board to support that film programme, who even after showing the film, only just understood at that point, that there was legislation around stolen generation. Now these were very rich, very kind, very well-educated people from Perth, quite a bit younger than me, that didn't understand that the stolen generation actually was legally enforced through legislation.

So, you know, we don't have that level of awareness yet. And even for our own families, learning the impact... the first time I went to Roeland's mission was only a couple of years ago, where my mum's brother was sent. And I learned a story there that I'd never heard before, which freaked me out. And that was, you know, on his 16th birthday, he was basically told to leave with the clothes that he was standing in, with no money, no shoes, nowhere to go, no job.

You know, and you wonder why our mob ended up in prison, it was actually safer in prison than being out of prison, for some people. Those personal stories are really important, because then you can put yourself in people's shoes and understand that level of degradation, I guess, and disempowerment. No wonder we got, you know, our mob needs some healing. But the whole country needs healing. Because we, you know, we're all part



of this story. This is all part of our story. You know, my Dad was a Wadjela, he also feared his children being stolen.

Tonji: You know, there was just such an indictment on Aboriginal people, as kids, they had a criminal record. When they were taken away, you know, sharing with one of the guys tonight, I grew up in an institution knowing my surname was one name, and when I went to get my birth certificate, they say that's not your real name.

And these men that are still alive today, in New South Wales, when they entered an institution, they lost their identity, were given a number, never to speak their name again. And can you imagine if they slipped their name out accidentally, what the punishment would be. And these are people that are still alive today.

But part of that truth telling is, you know, it's about going to these locations, having memorials, so that people in the community and as we travel, we see these stories and we learn more about them. And that was when one, I guess one positive thing in New South Wales, their final destination was a train station and on their train station today they have a big memorial to acknowledge all those children that left that station to go to these institutions.

Michelle: Thanks, Tony, you're gonna make me cry soon. Chris. Okay. Do I have a question for you? Why do you think it's important that Australia's institutions facilitate truth telling?

Chris: I personally think that every institution has a responsibility to build their business upon truth telling. Now, again, having worked at Curtin for the number of decades I have, having the kind of joy of working within an art gallery, working with artists who, many of whom I have specifically sought out to work with because their practices are built around intervening with social convention and a commitment to truth telling.

So, in my own situation at Curtin University, it has taken a long time, and there's still a lot of people within the institution who are kind of nervous about the truth.

But I've seen with my own eyes in the last 10 years, the kind of transformation when people are willing to let go of that fear of what the truth may reveal or how it may impact upon them personally. And that's why this collection, the Carrolup collection, has enabled many people to be confronted with a series of horrific truths in a way that I mean, as you walked around your gallery before, the way that space is designed, you kind of bring people in, you're not, you know, throwing a bucket of hot water in their face at the entrance.

You bring people in, and you enable people to feel comfortable with where they are, and then you just slowly reveal these really difficult realities that people find confronting.

But getting back to your question, I think it's a moral responsibility of any institution that is dealing with disseminating information and knowledge and educating, as universities do, where I work, I personally cannot imagine them building their business around anything other than a foundation of truth telling.

And yet, it really is very recently something that's been discussed and talked about. I'm glad it's finally happening, but I just can't imagine a future without it.

Michelle: And this could be to both of you all, or one. Once the truth is out there, what do you think the next steps are? Possibly, Tonji, if you want to respond to that one first. And then I think we'll put it out. Once we cover this one, we'll invite a couple of questions.

Tonji: I think what you hear quite often as an Aboriginal person is, get over it. Move on. That happened years ago. But I guess when you look at trauma, and that trauma is embedded in people's lives, it goes through people's DNA and into generations. I think the truth is, I hope that one day, and look I honestly believe that most Australians are walking with Aboriginal people on this journey. You know, it's like an apple tree, there's a few rotten apples. But we get that.

We just need to encourage you guys and ladies here tonight that you need to be brave, you need to stand up against any of this stuff that you hear. In your networks, in your families, in your communities. I mean, I run training at my workplace, and we've got about 170 staff. And there's an elderly gentleman there, he said to me, so I thought I knew it all, but once I've done your training, I was so empowered that I wanted to fight the fight and walk the walk with you.

And I always put on my Aboriginal shirt, he said, the one that you designed for our organisation. So, when I go and have barbecues, with all my mates, my white mates, he goes, they all look at me funny way with this shirt. He said, that's when the fight starts, is because I just get stuck in them. But then I start, I change their minds and their views, they start to think about what he is sharing with them. And I think that's what it's about, is that we become brave.

And that's what reconciliation is, the mission and the voices for this, be brave. You know, along the way, we're going to challenge friends, family, we're gonna lose a few of those people too. But that's what it's about. It's about being brave and saying, we've had enough. We want to walk together in unity and harmony, we want to have the truth being taught in our schools, why are our kids learning different languages at school, when we should be learning the Aboriginal language. We're the oldest living cultural group in the world.

Chris and I went to America and I must admit, in that symposium, you could cut the air with a knife, it was just so powerful. The respect from the First Nations people there, they made a big fuss of us and I'm looking at myself as the Aboriginal man, but I'm only an Aboriginal man, you know, it's, it's okay, I'm on your country, but the way they valued us and respected us, as a community in Hamilton that evening, it was just amazing.

And I think that's, you know, that's how we got to do it, truth telling is putting it out there sharing it with your mates and, and bringing friends with you, you're gonna lose a few along the way and that's okay. And they're the conversations I have to have with my own family members, and have those truths told and sometimes, you know, you're not going to like it.

Most Aboriginal people, quite a few Aboriginal people if I told them that the most disadvantaged people in this country today are the stolen gen, they'd come back at me and so, but all Aboriginal are disadvantaged. Okay. Yeah, they are. But the most disadvantaged people are the stolen gen. And the report says that.

## QUESTIONS

Q: When I look at the artwork. I can see, this is done by children. And you said they weren't taught. But there's a very, it looks Western perspective. Looking at things from side on. What was going on? How come these kids were drawing in a western style?

Chris: I mean, their task was, when they did these drawings, to be in the landscape and observe and come back into the classroom, as Aunty Edith mentioned in the film, with a memory of what they saw and to draw what they saw. Now, these children are growing up and attending this school, like any other child in the state, I mean, the Carrolup State School was just a school like Doubleview primary school that I went to in the 60s. But this one just happened to be within a prison camp in Carrolup native settlement. So, everything else that they've been taught in the school is just the same as every other child is being taught, now, when they're in the landscape being asked to observe the landscape and then depict the landscape, I mean, this is exactly what they saw.

So, in a way, what we refer to as the Carrolup School of Art or, a kind of a genre, or movement, it's a school of realism. The visual acuity that these children had as a natural attribute sets them apart from most other children, particularly non-Aboriginal children of a similar age, when you compare these drawings to other children from any school in the state, none of them look anything like this.

Q: I guess what I'm trying to say is I know that Noongar art was decimated, their more traditional style, so you know, these kids, if they're painting in a western style, does that mean that their traditional style was more realism based or have they lost their original traditional style, what was going on?

Michelle: I can't really speak on behalf of Noongar people, because I'm not Noongar. But I would suggest that with every tradition, which has come from so many 1000s of years of history, is ongoing. And our cultures are dynamic, and therefore they change, but they bring along with it, our cultural values, and perspectives, and story. And so for me, I don't see this as different, it might look different in style, but for me, it still holds the beauty, this is an expression from those children at that time.

And you could look around anywhere in Australia, and contemporary Aboriginal artists, you know, their expressions are so diverse. But we're talking about a classroom over several years, where we've got the same teacher, teaching observation, and that's what I'd say about Aboriginal people, is the power of observation from living in the bush, of nature, is phenomenal. You know, this is how we survived, the powers of observation. The behaviours of animals. That was life and death. It was a survival technique to know how animals moved, where they slept, and know their behaviours, and we needed those powers of observations. That's why we survived this long.

But dare I say, you know, we got the greatest footballers and sports people in that similar vein, because you can watch things and know, we had an oral tradition. And part of that tradition was also passing on knowledge through art, and ceremony, but with art as well. And that's all part of this ongoing, dynamic culture that survives still today. And part of our storytelling.

Q: I just wanted to ask a little bit more about the Centre for Truth Telling and the vision for that Centre, it's really incredible to hear that, that that Centre is being planned. And, like you're saying, Tonji really important and necessary that those centres are happening as well as just cultural centres. I just wanted to hear a little bit more about what kinds of things will happen at the centre, if there's practical support services for people, or whether it's focused on sharing ?

Chris: It's very early days, and at this stage is centred around this collection, the Carrolup collection, but Curtin University sees it as the very first step in a much, much broader project that involves the entire university, not just the art gallery, involves all faculties.

And the very first step is the step of truth telling, and it's embraced very much as an instrument that will enable the university to advance his ambitions, in its RAP, reconciliation is the goal. And there are many, many ways to get to that goal. So, in some ways, although we're taking small steps, and I mean, this will be a major facility, and not only being a physical home where people can come see come and see the collection, we're wanting to develop a space as a place that Aboriginal people feel safe in. And if I can talk in more general terms, it's a space where we want exchange to occur. And for people to come from community and feel as though it's their space that they can feel they can come and stay in this space. And one of the things that, although Michelle's only been with us for a little while, talking about cultural safety, and I mean, that's one aspect that we're very keen to tackle. Even before the Centre opens, which we imagine will be at the end of 2023, we have another space, which we have access to for the next couple of years, where we will be experimenting and rolling out different programmes and exhibitions. Just seeing what works and experimenting with different ways of doing things, working with community, working with the Carrolup elders reference group. But eventually, I see this Centre as being a much broader, much more inclusive, and dealing with truth telling, right throughout the university, all aspects of university business. And that's a pretty exciting space, but it's, it's pretty enormous.

Michelle: I just wanted to say something too, about broadening, the value of broadening these conversations into the broader community. Yes, it's really important for our mob to have the opportunity to tell their stories. But what we also see is that we are, and partly with my gallery downstairs, creating safe spaces for difficult conversations in this country is, is really, really important. And we can't underestimate the importance of that.

And I'll just give you a little example of when, again, go back to mum's film, and this little old lady came up to me afterwards, Wadjela lady, she's 75. And she said oh Michelle, how old's your mom? I said, oh, 75, and she said, I'm 75. I've never told anyone this ever. And you're the first person and I thought, oh, here we go. And she said, I connected with your mum's story, because when I was five years old, my parents owned a station in a remote part of the Kimberley and her parents sent her to Perth, to boarding school. And she freaked out. And she said, the longing for her family, so she connected, and for her to hold on to that for 70 years since she was a little girl and telling me as a first person. Well, that puts a lot of responsibility on me. But it's unbelievable, she's held on

to that pain and that hurt. And she hasn't been disadvantaged like our mob, but it allowed her to speak her truth, the fact that this was a conversation and opened up, and we were in that space, and she for the first time, she needed healing. She needed to express that and be at peace with that.

So it's really, really important that we are able to share these stories and for the broader, you know, the country itself, which needs healing, we need decolonization. This country needs decolonization. And something that really impressed me was the Governor of New South Wales a couple of years ago at the Sydney Opera House, when I saw a beautiful show there called Spinifex Gum. And he's no longer Governor, but David Hurley at the time, and it stuck with me and I wrote it down. This was a black fella talking to him who said, "our culture is your culture, but because you don't know our culture, therefore you don't know your own culture."

We've got a lot to share, embrace these incredible, beautiful cultures that Aboriginal people are willing to share with the rest of Australia. Because this is, you know, be proud of, you know, being on a country which can trace its history more than 60,000 years. Incredible. Nowhere else. Nowhere else will that happen.

Tonji: I think also, when you look at the work that's going on at Curtin there's a number of things happening. And I think the Centre itself could be the major hub for these institutions, where you could just have a little section that talks about Sister Kate's, Parkerville, Mogumber, New Norcia. Because I think over the last couple of years, we've seen so many survivors come through from all different institutions, because they feel safe. They see people like myself and others leading the way.

I know that people like Chris, and the former Vice Chancellor, respected them and valued them and really wanted to sit down and listen to their stories. And I think, wouldn't it be great if we can get every institution in Noongar country first, and then we can do right across the state within that new Centre. And just having a small section, we just talked briefly about the key details of each institution. I think that's, for me, that's, that'll just mean so much, because it's so authentic. It's so real, it's so true. It's a hub, you can come and learn straightaway and get all this knowledge. Because we are all we're already doing virtual reality of these institutions. Some of those survivors don't want to go back to these institutions. And that's okay. But we're lucky, we have these. And they can sit in the comfort of their homes, with their grandchildren, and talk about their stories while looking at other survivor stories as well. And really that journey, whether it's good, bad or otherwise, doing that virtual reality stuff is amazing, because Curtin is leading the way with the Noongar people. Were the only group who are doing it in this country.

Adam: I was going to close the session when you're ready. If you're if you're happy for me to do that. Thank you so much, Michelle, Tony, Chris. That was amazing. Thank you, everybody, for coming along tonight. It's my great pleasure to be the chair of the Museum of Freedom and Tolerance, a museum of no walls, but a museum of lots of conversations. It's at the very heart of our DNA to help to make these invisible stories visible within our society and we really thank you for the work that you do, and encourage you to keep doing it, and I look forward to helping you on that journey.