
Craig Walsh: Embedded
12 September – 24 November 2013



Craig Walsh, *In Country – Lawrence Kerr* 2012, type C photograph, image courtesy the artist and Lawrence Kerr © the artist

The Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA) presents a new installation by Australian artist Craig Walsh.

Walsh is renowned for site-responsive artworks using digital video, projection, sculpture, photography and sound developed collaboratively with local people and communities. His works incorporate stories and perspectives and connect with communities in a meaningful and empowering process of self-portraiture in relation to environment.

Building on the MCA project *Craig Walsh: Digital Odyssey* (2010–11), an 18-month tour and artist residency to 11 regional and remote locations around Australia, the MCA and Rio Tinto commissioned Walsh to undertake a four-week residency in the Burrup Peninsula, near Karratha in north west Western Australia. The brief was to explore the unique rock art set within the site's compelling natural beauty and open ruggedness and to realise a new body of work from the experience.



Craig Walsh, *Standing stone site* (still) 2012, single-channel digital video, image courtesy the artist and Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation © the artist

Walsh's response, titled *Craig Walsh: Embedded*, is presented in the Level 1 South Galleries. It reflects on contrasting forms of engagement with the landscape evident through the extreme contrasts on the Burrup Peninsula and includes the collaboration with the region's traditional custodians, Elders of Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation, as well as Murujuga National Park rangers and staff from Rio Tinto.

The installation features moving imagery, photography and industrial containers filled with iron ore.

Craig Walsh explains: 'I see the Pilbara as a place which uniquely presents a concentration of extremes... The contrast between the 'land' as commodity and 'Land' as spiritual and cultural guidance are co-existing in the installation, and the audience will be physically positioned somewhere between the two'.

In Country (2012) is a multi-screen digital video work. Each screen is synchronised so that one after the other, the faces of Murujuga Elders emerge from the darkness and speak, describing elements of the significance of Murujuga for thousands of generations of original inhabitants. The Elders' images are juxtaposed onto the rock formations of Murujuga, literally embedded into the landscape.

Standing stone site (2012) is a wide-screen digital video depicting nature's shifting light on a significant sacred site featuring 96 standing stones, the largest concentration of standing stones in one area in Australia. Co-Curator Judith Blackall comments: 'The physical profile of the horizon remains fixed and monumental, unmoved as it has been for thousands of years, while the spectacular transformation of colour from deep purple to orange red is rendered visible through a technique of high-resolution interval photography.'

The MCA Australia and IMA Brisbane are preparing a major new monograph on Craig Walsh's practice. Richly illustrated, the publication features essays by Michael Fitzgerald, Robert Leonard, Judith Blackall and an interview with the artist by Annemarie Kohn.

Craig Walsh: Embedded is organised in partnership with the Institute of Modern Art and co-curated by Judith Blackall and Robert Leonard (Director of the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane).

Major Partner

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