



Program information

Working with Indigenous collections in Canberra's national institutions: a behind the scenes look at their value, curation and use

A 5 day advanced professional development short course providing an update of professional practice in working with communities, planning, development and use of Indigenous collections, benefiting from the experience of Australia's national cultural institutions.

Date: 14-18 July 2014

Venue: ANU and Canberra's national cultural institutions

Time: 9.30 am - 5.30 pm (approx.) each day

Cost: AUD \$2,200.00 (GST incl.). This includes participation in the course and some catering and transport provided as part of the course.

Details: This advanced professional development short course focuses on the theory and practice of valuing, curating and presenting Indigenous collections and exhibitions. Taking advantage of the unique opportunity to visit the varied and important Indigenous collections held in Canberra, the course will encourage participants to develop a critical understanding of key issues in the representation of cultures in museum displays and public venues, drawing on interdisciplinary approaches and methodologies from relevant fields such as anthropology and history to inform museum studies.

The specific emphasis in the program will be on collections and exhibitions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that are held or displayed in Australia or overseas, but specific attention is also given to other ethnographic and historical collections and displays. Issues examined during the course include the history of collecting and exhibitions, community representation, ownership and intellectual property, repatriation, negotiation, preservation, and modes of display.

The course will be convened by Professor Howard Morphy, recognised as a leading international expert on Aboriginal art, who has many years of experience as museum curator working with collections and generating exhibitions.

Enquiries: Sandy Blair **Email:** Sandy.blair@anu.edu.au **Ph:** 6125 5887

Registration: To enroll and pay go to: <http://ippha.anu.edu.au/events/working-indigenous-collections-canberras-national-institutions-behind-scenes-look-their-value->

Course details

Course Description

This course focuses on theoretical and practical issues relating to indigenous collections and exhibitions, drawing its interdisciplinary approach and methodology from the fields of anthropology as well as museum studies. This allows participants to develop a critical understanding of the creation, function, histories, politics and contemporary meanings of objects; the representation of cultures in museum displays and other public venues; shifting relations between source communities and museum; art and aesthetics; visual anthropology; and issues of representation, including photographic representation.

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Participants will be given the opportunity to visit and evaluate Canberra's national cultural institutions with holdings of Aboriginal material and to hear first-hand from curators, exhibition developers and collections staff their views on indigenous exhibitions and collections with a major focus on work from Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Key course topics

- The History of Indigenous Museum collections
- Indigenous Collections as a research resource
- Exhibiting Cultures
- The logistics and ethics of Indigenous collection research and management
- Indigenous engagement with museum collections

Course aims

1. To create awareness of the diversity and distribution of Indigenous collections
2. To understand the nature of collections as a source of knowledge about Indigenous cultures and histories
3. To provide a background to the theories and methodologies of researching Indigenous collections
4. To provide insights into the process of exhibition development
5. To understand the collaborative orientation of Indigenous collection management in Australia

6. To provide a context for discussing the role of protocols in the management of Indigenous collections

Learning outcomes

On completing this course, participants will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Better understand the potential of Indigenous collections as a resource for advancing knowledge about Indigenous cultural production and the historical and contemporary contexts of collecting
2. Understand the range of different methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives that can be applied to Indigenous collections research
3. Appreciate the logistical and cultural issues involved in engaging source communities in the research and curation of distributed museum collections
4. Be able to apply a critical and informed perspective to the complex ethical issues involved in the curation and exhibition of museum collections

Travel, food and accommodation

Participants will need to make their own accommodation, evening meal and lunch arrangements. On most days morning and afternoon tea will be provided as a part of the program. Advice on accommodation options can be provided if needed. A closing event will be held at the Sir Roland Wilson Building for the event participants to network with each other.

Course program

ANU Sessions are located at the Sir Roland Wilson Building, Seminar Room 1: transport will be needed for participants to travel to other venues as scheduled.

Session details	Topic	Presenter	Venue
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Day 1 Monday 14 July

9:00-10:30	Introduction to Indigenous Collections and Exhibitions	Howard Morphy	Sir Roland Wilson Building, Seminar Room 1
10:30-11:15	<i>Morning Tea</i>		
11:15-12:30	Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection	Lauren Maupin	Sir Roland Wilson Building, Seminar Room 1
12:30-1:45	<i>Short walk to National Museum of Australia's Cuiseum café for lunch then to AIATSIS</i>		
1:45-3:30	Introduction to AIATSIS and its collections	John Paul Janke	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
3:30-4:00	<i>Short walk back to ANU</i>		
4:00-5:30	The British Museum Project	Ian Coates & John Carty	Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1

Day 2 Tuesday 15 July

9:00-10:00	Lecture and discussion: Beyond 'fine art' and the 'ethnographic': exploring the dualism in Australian exhibitions	John Carty	Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1
10:00-10:30	<i>Morning Tea and short walk to National Film and Sound Archives</i>		
10:30-12:00	Tour and discussion of collection management, ICIP protocols and knowledge repatriation	Peter White	National Film and Sound Archives
12:00-1:30	<i>Short walk to National Museum of Australia and lunch in Cuiseum Cafe</i>		
1:30 – 3:30	Tour of Old Masters: Australia's Great Bark Artists	Joe Gumbula & Howard Morphy	National Museum of Australia
3:30 – 4:00	<i>Short walk back to ANU</i>		
4:00 – 5:00	Review of day	Howard Morphy	Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1

Day 3	Wednesday 16 July		
9.00-10.00	Respecting Indigenous IP in museum exhibitions	Diana James	Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1
10.00-10.30	<i>Morning Tea and travel to National Gallery of Australia</i>		
10.30-12.00	Tour of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Gallery	Francesca Cubillo	National Gallery of Australia
12.30-1.30	<i>Lunch at National Gallery of Australia café</i>		
1.30-3.00	Pacific Collections	Michael Gunn	National Gallery of Australia
3.00-3.30	<i>Afternoon tea NGA café</i>		
3.30-5.00	Indigenous people at the National Portrait Gallery	Joanna Gilmore	National Portrait Gallery
Day 4	Thursday 17 July		
9.00-10.00	Researching fibre arts	Louise Hamby	Sir Roland Wilson Seminar Room 1
10.00-10.30	<i>Morning Tea</i>		
10.30-12.00	Milingimbi collections: from museums and archives to community web resource	Louise Hamby & Joe Gumbula	Sir Roland Wilson Seminar Room 1
12.00-1.30	<i>Walk to NMA and lunch (Cuiseum Café)</i>		
1.30-3.00	Indigenous collections	David Kaus, Barbara Paulson & Howard Morphy	National Museum of Australia
3.00-4.30	Whose identity crisis? Not ours. Indigenous art between the art gallery and the museum	Margo Neale	National Museum of Australia

Day 5	Friday 18 July		
9.00-10.30	The string figures of Yirrkala in the Australian Museum: looking at a unique collection	Robyn McKenzie	Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1
10.30-11.00	<i>Morning Tea</i>		
11.00-12.30	Review and reflections	Howard Morphy	Sir Roland Wilson Seminar Room 1
12.30-1.30	<i>Lunch</i>		
1.30-4.30	Student Presentations		Sir Roland Wilson, Seminar Room 1
4.30	<i>Closing networking drinks</i>		<i>Sir Roland Wilson</i>

Course convenor



Howard Morphy

Professor Howard Morphy (BSc, M Phil London, PhD, ANU) is recognised as a leading international expert on Aboriginal art, and the social and visual anthropology of Australian Aboriginal communities. He is also honorary Curator of Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and Adjunct Curator of the Kluge-Ruhe Research Centre, University of Virginia. Morphy is member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Fellow and member of Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute and member of the American Anthropological Association and the Association of Social Anthropologists.

Howard Morphy's areas of research and interest entail the Anthropology of Art and Aesthetics, material culture, landscape, Visual Anthropology and ethnographic film, globalisation and museums as well as performance. He further engages in cross-cultural categories, aboriginal religion, kinship, human adaptation and the evolution of culture and the History of Anthropology. His involvement as curator of major exhibitions and the making of ethnographic films reflects the importance he places on alternative forms of disseminating research results to use the potentialities of different media (including new media) and to engage with wider audiences.

Other ANU presenters



John Carty is an anthropologist and curator who has worked extensively with Aboriginal artists and custodians throughout the Western Desert, Pilbara and Kimberley region. He was the principal researcher for the Canning Stock Route project, and co-curator of the exhibition *Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route*. He has collaborated with Martu and Ngaanyatjarra artists on several books and exhibitions exploring the Aboriginal history and art history of specific regions. *Purnu, Tjanpi Canvas: Art of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands* was launched at the Perth International Arts Festival in 2012. Based at the ANU, John manages a cross-cultural collaborative research project entitled *Engaging Objects: Indigenous communities, museum collections and the representation of*

Indigenous histories. Working with the British Museum and the National Museum of Australia, the project is exploring the processes of making of an exhibition based on the British Museum's collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material culture



Louise Hamby is a Research Fellow in the Digital Humanities Hub. She has been co-granted an ARC Discovery Grant: *Contexts of Collection- a dialogic approach to understanding the making of the material record of Yolngu cultures (2008-2011)*. Her last position was a Postdoctoral Fellow - Industry working with Museum Victoria on the project, *Anthropological and Aboriginal perspectives on the Donald Thomson Collection: material culture, collecting and identity*. She took up this position at the CCR in 2003. From 2001 she was a Visiting Fellow. She received her PhD in Anthropology from the ANU in 2001. She also holds an MFA in Fabric Design from the University of Georgia.

Louise has a strong interest in historic and contemporary material culture from Arnhem Land. Her involvement with eastern Arnhem Land women lead to the development of the exhibition that she co-curated with Diana Young, *Art on a String*. Her most recent involvement in curation, research and writing is about Gapuwiyak in eastern Arnhem Land fibre. This resulted in the exhibition *Women with Clever Hands: Gapuwiyak Miyalkurrwurr Gong Djambatjmala* and the book *Containers of Power: Women with Clever Hands*. Her previous exhibition and book was *Twined Together: Kunmadj Njalehnjaleken* from western Arnhem Land.



Diana James, PhD ANU 2006, Senior Research Associate and co-ordinator
Alive with the Dreaming! Songlines of the Western Desert ARC Linkage Project

My research focus is on the dynamic visual and auditory performance space of cultural heritage communication. My approach is informed by many years of working with Anangu peoples of the APY Lands who generously share their art, song, story and cultural performance. Increasingly the multi-media tools of recording available to ethnographic and visual anthropological research have enabled a more dynamic exploration of the many cultural expressions of

Indigenous kinship to country and holistic sense of place. The current ARC Linkage Project *Songlines of the Western Desert* with the elders, artists, dancers and singers of the APY, Ngaanyatjarra and Martu Lands is investigating the important cultural heritage of their vibrant oral song cycle tradition.

Websites:

<http://ippha.songlines-western-desert>

<http://sevensisterssongline.com>



Robyn McKenzie is an art historian and writer on contemporary art. She has taught Art History at various Universities and Art Schools. From 1995-97 she was visual arts critic on The Age newspaper in Melbourne, and from 1996-2002, she was editor of LIKE, Art Magazine. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Research at the ANU, looking at a collection of string figures made in Yirrkala in Arnhem Land in 1948.