

- 38 *Straits Times*, 22 November 1998.
- 39 *Social Studies For Primary Schools, 4B*, Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore, Singapore, 1994.
- 40 *The Dark Years 4B Discovering Our World*, Curriculum Planning and Development Division, Singapore, 1999.
- 41 The author's notes from the Singapore Tourism Board Meeting on Changi Chapel Museum, 1 August 2000.
- 42 *Understanding Our Past: Singapore from Colony to Nation*, Curriculum Planning and Development Division, Singapore, 1999, p93.
- 43 Ismail bin Zain, A 000601/05 Reel 01, Oral History Department, National Archives of Singapore.

ON NOT BELONGING. MEMORIALS AND MEMORY IN SYDNEY

Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton

INTRODUCTION

There is a memorial plaque on a seat—one of many—at the Sydney Harbourside suburb of Manly looking out to sea. It says: 'In memory of Mary Kalezic who loved this place'. This message speaks about an individual's bond with a physical site that is direct and moving. You know it has been cemented by years of that everyday activity of visiting and reflection that stills the desperation and heals the wounds within us. It may also be about reconnection from one country to another across the ocean. We are not suggesting here that an individual's sense of belonging is simple, but we do want to contrast the way this memorial communicates a sense of place with the emergence of a common trend in commemoration since the 1970s—that of memorialising as a mode of expression for legitimating the identities of communities or groups.

This practice, and its study, is located in the field that some have termed the 'history of the present' which examines how the past is understood and remembered within contemporary consciousness. But while there has been an explosion of work which examines '*lieux de memoire*'—places or sites of memory—in many countries, we are interested in linking this concept with the practice of public historians.

We have chosen to examine memorials and monuments to groups that do not quite work in the sense that they are 'out of place' or for a variety of reasons, seem odd, jarring our sense of expectation or failing to communicate their message. This may be said of many memorials that seem irrelevant to the years through which they endure, but those which we consider here are all in fact of much more recent origin. Their very existence owes something to the Australian State: as part of the public space they have either been initiated, sanctioned or latterly endorsed by local authorities. They reveal much about the changing nature of memorial practices in contemporary society that we are unable to address here in any substantial way, except that they bear witness to the power of identity politics: to the claims of recognition by and for groups on the basis of ethnicity and race.

We want to explore what they communicate and why, in our view, these particular ones fail to illuminate a sense of connection or belonging.

We know that all artefacts can be 'read' in multiple ways and that some may find a sense of connection to the memorials under discussion. Our aim is rather to ask the question: how far can public monuments and memorials that represent a group be seen as an expression of 'community' and its attachment to place, and to whom do they speak? To do this we explore the complex interplay between local and national 'communities' through three memorials of very different origins and purpose.

The effects of the massive displacements of the post-war world—the diasporas fuelled by ethnic persecution and the many indigenous peoples dispossessed through colonisation—has been reflected in the extensive theory that has emerged in the last twenty or thirty years on ethnicity, race and multiculturalism, as countries attempt to come to terms with cultural diversity and its implications for the traditional nation state.

Over this time the concept of community itself has changed. Once it was understood largely in terms of place or geography or the loss of a place, hence the nineteenth century poet Rilke's notion that to live in a place where one was born is a kind of heaven. Now it can be imagined as an attribute of identity—gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality. Proximity or even personal knowledge is not necessary. But the process by which these identities are reconfigured or made anew after dispossession or migration usually involves place—a physical site of identification.

The sociologist George Reville has argued that 'the value of community as a concept ... is that it throws into prominence the tensions between the sense of belonging which forms ties between individuals and groups and that between peoples and places'.¹ For others, like Peter Read, community is 'a journey that can take place on the ground or in the mind'—or both.² In this view, different understandings of community and attachment can and do co-exist at the one time.

During this time professional public history work that involves the recreation of a group's identity as a 'community', or erasing the experience of loss and destruction, has also expanded. This is particularly the case with oral history, heritage, material culture and local history museums. Many working in this field have long viewed the aim of recreating community or the ideal of community as a form of emancipatory politics or empowerment, due not only to the collaborative nature of sharing their authority with groups involved but also the process of reconnection which such work entails.

Those drawing on histories of groups not only bounded by place but an interaction between place, race, and ethnicity, and assumed to be oppositional to the state, have tended to document a continuous history of struggle. These community histories affirm identity in the present on a particular site. But such a position as advocate is fraught with dangers if the historians themselves are eliding other forms of difference through this

process, as well as endorsing the 'forgetting' of those other ruptured, difficult and divisive pasts in order to celebrate survival. Some might argue that the public historian becomes enlisted *de facto* in the state's 'management' of cultural difference. If we are to continue practicing what Dolores Hayden calls 'community-based public history'³ then it may be important to ask tougher questions about how communities are constituted and their sense of 'belonging'.

During the first weekend in September 1991, a bronze statue of two soldiers, one Vietnamese, one Australian, was unveiled by the Governor of New South Wales, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, in Cabravale Park, Cabramatta. Cabramatta is a Sydney municipality with the highest proportion of Vietnamese migrants in Australia. Designed and constructed by Paris-trained Vietnamese sculptor Nhon Do, who had been imprisoned in Vietnam for a while after the Communist victory,⁴ the statue was an addition to a rotunda which had been earlier erected as a memorial to soldiers who had died in the First World War. The figures in the new memorial are just larger than life size, and are set at the back of a small pond with a pink granite-like wall behind them. The memorial is a traditional form, echoing the more common stone sculptures of the pre-war period.

According to its inscription, the new memorial had been donated by the 'Community of Cabramatta to commemorate the comradeship shared by Australian and [South] Vietnamese soldiers during the Vietnam War'. An article in the *Fairfield Champion* at the time of the unveiling, however, noted that the statue, which cost \$150,000, had been funded by the local Cabramatta Vietnamese community. Phuong Ngo, a Fairfield City Council Alderman and chair of the memorial committee, was reported to have said that

The Vietnamese community of the Cabramatta area have always wanted to give recognition to the Australian servicemen who gave their lives fighting on behalf of the Vietnamese people. And to Australians who supported the Vietnamese struggle for freedom and democracy ... It is of course tragic that the struggle for a free Vietnam was lost. But the very fact that Australia then welcomed Vietnamese refugees into the community after 1975 only makes the Vietnamese people appreciate Australia's efforts even more.⁵

In assimilationist times before the 1960s, migration signified public forgetting. Migrants were supposed to blend in. In 1991 in Cabramatta, however, some Vietnamese migrants were trying to blend into an Australian identity not by forgetting their past but by striving for incorporation via revisionism: a memorial to locals who died in the Great War and to the legend of Anzac—that cast a suntanned, loyal and laconic white Australian male as the Australian national type—has been revised. The unknown warrior citizen of the old nation state has been joined by latter-day freedom fighters. In this representation all of the men in Australia become 'diggers'.



Vietnam War Memorial, Cabravale Park, Cabramatta, 2001 (Photograph Paul Ashton)

While the nation state remains the dominant geo-political form—which will continue to be the case into the foreseeable future—nationalism will remain a dominant ideology. We can identify two sorts of nationalism or neo-nationalism. The first is a reactionary nationalism. This is based on traditional forms and at an extreme can be aggressively racist. A recent expression of this in Australia can be seen in the One Nation Party. The other, which relates to the Cabramatta memorial, is a multicultural nationalism. One could indeed argue that multiculturalism in Australia is the new Australian nationalism. Multicultural nationalism is most apparent in cultural arenas.

From the early 1980s, public debate over multiculturalism became increasingly heated and populist. In 1982, for example, the 'Living Together' and 'The Australian Achievement' pluralist themes for the Bicentenary sparked huge debates.⁶ Conservatives argued that 'Living Together' ignored traditional values and an Anglo-Celtic inheritance. Controversy indicated shifts in the basis of nationalism but not its demise. It also reflected demographic and cultural realities. Some also argued that ignoring the multicultural nature of Australian society in terms of the national identity would be exclusionary and lead to even greater social disharmony. Despite the debates, multiculturalism—which in Australia primarily relates to the social position and interests of ethnic groups⁷—was to become the cornerstone of official policy.

Institutionally, this produced a number of cultural responses. These included, at federal and state levels, devolving responsibility for the identification, preservation and interpretation of sites and objects of cultural significance to local government.⁸ Localities have thus become the site for frontiers that ebb and flow as cultures struggle for a place in the sun.

The Commonwealth of Australia's *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, published in 1989, defines multiculturalism in the following way:

As a public policy multiculturalism encompasses government measures designed to respond to ... diversity. It plays no part in migrant selection. It is a policy for *managing* the consequences of cultural diversity in the interests of the individual and society as a whole. (our emphasis)

It went on to say that there 'are also limits to Australian multiculturalism' and these were defined in the context of an assumed nation state and a broad nationalist project.

As a part of this process, 'Community' has become a principal focus for renegotiating histories and collective memories. The 'local' is also the most flexible arena in which to accommodate differences—thus devolution of heritage responsibilities—and to manage conflict. The broad range of cultures in Australia makes it extremely difficult to manage such conflicts at regional, let alone state or national, levels. There are over 100 nationalities represented in Australia.

At the local level, indigenous or migrant voices have to speak in appropriate dialects if they are to be incorporated into local myths and traditions.

Minorities need to fit in with the local historical narrative which situates place in nation—that is, placing themselves into a collective memory or received tradition—or else they are marginalised or rejected. In this sense, the democratisation of history in the past few decades has also meant that at the local level white Anglo majorities can assert their cultural dominance. Alternatively, indigenous or migrant groups can attempt to assert a counter voice against the dominant dialogue. These are few in number. Despite the proliferation of monuments and memorials to indigeneous and ethnic groups, most are both 'politically correct' and non-confrontational.

At Cabramatta the successful business people of the Vietnamese community attempted to identify its struggle during the Vietnam war—a particular part of their migrant story of identity—with what Ken Inglis has called one of White Australia's 'sacred places'. Such cultural activity is also as much about hope as it is history. By materially inscribing their story on the landscape, these people have expressed a collective desire to be part of the 'Public [or official] Culture', that 'great drama, endlessly playing', as Donald Horne put it, that maintains 'definitions of the nation and its social orders'.⁹

Such a monument provides a place and space in which marginal 'communities' can define and locate themselves in terms of broader social groupings or the nation state. These people would agree with conservative historian Sheldon Hackney that 'there is an inclusive historical narrative in which we all recognise not only the stories of our kith and kin but in which we acknowledge that we are playing roles in a common story'.¹⁰ In the local context, the erection of such a monument aims to foster civic legitimacy. Vying for official recognition can be seen by implication to signify displacement or marginality.

One indicator of legitimacy is numerical strength. Thus it should not be surprising that the Cabramatta Committee claimed broad popular support from their community. Their voice was portrayed as the 'voice of the people'. This is a continuance of a nineteenth-century practice regarding monumental subscriptions. Many of these projects, which were initiated privately, were supposedly paid for by 'popular subscription' from a broad cross section of society. They were in fact heavily supported by relatively small numbers of well-to-do individuals. One Sydney example is the statue of Captain James Cook, 'discoverer' of Australia, in Hyde Park.¹¹

The very act of trying to fit in belies the reality of not belonging or at best being on the margins. One is reminded of the controversy over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC. Tom Carhart, Vietnam veteran and one of the initiators of the memorial, said during the debate over the memorial's design that: 'We wanted something that will make us part of America'.¹² Bodnar maintains that by 'the latter part of the twentieth century public memory remains a product of elite manipulation, symbolic interaction, and contested discourse'. Stressing the 'tension between official and vernacular memory' and how it was resolved, his analysis

meshes with Kirk Savage's notion of public space as a representational battle ground, though Savage ignores collaboration with official culture and history.¹³

In his article 'Identity, Authenticity, Survival', K. Anthony Appiah argues that in a constitutional democracy, recognition and respect is granted to a relatively broad range of cultures and cultural identities. But none, he notes, are guaranteed survival.¹⁴ Groups that wish to perpetuate themselves and their heritage have to engage in cultural work of social reproduction. While Appiah is dealing with collective social identities and the dangers of essentialism, the same can be said of ethnic groups that want to engage with and claim a place in the national public culture in a nation state, such as Australia, that has multiculturalism as a foundation of official government policy to ensure the inclusion of ethnic groups within the national culture.

Appiah reminds us that

Hobbes spoke of the desire for glory as one of the dominating impulses of human beings, one that was bound to make trouble for social life. But glory can consist in fitting and being seen to fit into a collective history, and so, in the name of glory, one can end up doing the most social things of all.¹⁵

National unity can only be 'represented by suppression and repression, symbolic or otherwise, of difference'¹⁶ or by incorporation. This is why multiculturalism has been so controversial for the past decade or so. The cultural attempt by Vietnamese people in Cabramatta to fit into mainstream Australian society represents an attempt to reconstruct or re-imagine the local community in terms of the national identity.

Ken Inglis has claimed that this memorial is a 'novelty in the landscape'.¹⁷ If by novelty Inglis means strange and out of place, this is indeed an apt description. The monument rests—symbolically—on the periphery of a scruffy, suburban syringe-littered park that is in an out-of-the-way place. Two blocks away, in the centre of the town, a pedestrian mall reminiscent of an Asian market sits like a floating world in a classic 1920s bungalow suburb. The long-term presence of Vietnamese gangs and drug trafficking led the state government in 2000 to launch in Cabramatta a public campaign around the extension of police powers for search and arrest in relations to narcotics. Graffiti and neglect—expressions of 'vernacular culture'¹⁸—indicate that this memorial is out of place. Ultimately, it could be read as either an expression of a group of expatriate Southern Vietnamese capitalists and their hatred of communism or the desire of local ethnic leaders to gain social standing, civic legitimacy and access to power.

The other two memorials diverge from the traditional three dimensional stone artefact. They are memorial murals with wide variation in meaning and purpose.

The first is painted on a wall in Newtown, an inner suburb of Sydney. It is at the less salubrious end of the area on a main traffic thoroughfare in one of the most congested streets in the city. Adorning a whole wall in bold colours, it is impossible to miss. It bears the classic realism of the spraycan artist. There are two images: the Earth, and the face of Martin Luther King, both stark against a black background. Underneath are the words 'I have a dream'. Across the bottom third of the wall is the Aboriginal flag and the injunction: 'Please show respect, post no bills here.' But despite this mural's visual accessibility and prominence it is often viewed 'in a state of distraction'—as opposed, for example, to the intense focus when in a museum—because it is part of the public streetscape of buildings, shops, people and cars. It is arresting, but becomes part of the urban visual wallpaper. Memories embedded in buildings like this one acquire meanings different from those the architect intended, and the mural obscures any sense of the three storey building underneath it.

Before investigating the history of this mural, we were completely mistaken about who made it and what it was designed to do (as were many others consulted anecdotally). To most it presents as though it was painted in the 1960s and represents the dispossessed indigenous Australians seeking a link with African Americans—a kind of pan-black nationalism, most importantly, with its history of civil rights struggle and Martin Luther King's vision for black equality in a multiracial future. Unlike the Cabramatta example, one does not perceive the mural as an identification with the Australian or American understandings of nation. But the juxtapositions on the wall of the Koori flag and the painting of Martin Luther King conceal an important difference between these groups. Australian Aborigines are indigenous peoples while African Americans are immigrants. So these two groups are now positioned very differently in both national and international discourses on race, and the message seems old-fashioned.

When Martin Luther King gave his original speech in 1963 it was a moment in time specifically addressed to Americans to make their nation 'whole'—pluralist yet united—and overcome the divisive heritage of slavery. While it became a broader symbol in the 1970s of a diffuse black nationalism, King also spoke to whites in the USA and garnered their support, as is the intention of the Newtown mural.

This monument communicates a longing (though not necessarily the one intended) for a sense of being part of something larger than oneself. It was in fact designed and spray painted by Andrew Aitken, Juilee Pryor and other members of Unmitigated Audacity Productions in 1991. Andrew Aitken, now serving a life sentence for murder in England, was the chief creator. It was completed over a period of twenty-seven hours using a cherrypicker donated by a local businessman and \$1000 worth of paint. In its original form, there was no Aboriginal flag on the bottom, but a group of people looking up at King. The flag was painted sometime later



'I have a dream' mural, Newtown, Sydney, by Andrew Aitken and others, 2001 (Photograph Paul Ashton)

(accounts vary between several weeks and years); it is not known who made the link between these groups by painting it. Once the indigenous flag was painted on the bottom, the message became ostensibly linked to a particular community within Australia, where previously it imagined the world at large as a 'community'. In fact, the graffiti artists claimed it was designed to counteract the ubiquitous commercial imagery in the city and to foster Christian and humanist values. Though erected without council permission, the police called to the site during the night endorsed the painting and the council has let it remain, despite subsequent campaigns by them in conjunction with commercial groups to get rid of it.

Some have argued that when art remains accessible, it can be an important counterforce to official memory or monolithic public myths. Art, it is argued, can be more effective in 'embodying' historically specific ideas than history-writing." We are not convinced that this is the case with the Newtown monument. To many in their twenties and thirties who live in Newtown, the face of Martin Luther King is not instantly recognisable, and it may speak more to a generalised history of protest identified with Newtown than any specific message about indigenous rights.

Art murals of this type are usually an expression of protest, but not necessarily so. Political murals in Northern Ireland, for instance, tradition-

ally operated as a quasi-state activity because, from the early twentieth century, they reflected the values of the Union government. It was only in the 1970s, when this form was appropriated by Republicans, that they became oppositional. The Newtown monument owes more, though, to the emergent memorial murals in central urban New York where Andrew Aitken, a Canadian, spent much of the 1980s. Though these Manhattan and Brooklyn memorials commemorate the death of individuals in the violence of the drug wars on New York streets, to focus concerted action and help the relatives come to terms with the death, the Newtown one functions to express a collective experience of 'oppression'. It is one of many painted by Aitken and others during the last few years.

Not all indigenous peoples would support its defining the 'community' in a way that cannot take account of the particularities of indigenous people's dispossession. As Frances Peters, an Aboriginal activist, has commented, 'the term community refers to boundaries that have been created by non-Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people'.²⁰

The second mural is located in a completely different environment, in the Sydney botanical gardens near the sea wall—a place of leisure and contemplation. It is also in a space that people use for exercise. It was painted as part of a sculpture walk set up for the Olympics, with a number of painters. Artists' creative work decorated the Olympic torch relay route. Though initiated by local authorities, councils and statutory bodies, Brenda Croft, the artist, has ensured that the purpose of the memorial is clear, though the meaning of the sculpture leaves more to the imagination. A commemorative plaque explains its purpose as clearly as a label in a museum.²¹

Croft's own ambivalence to the state was demonstrated at the official opening when she refers to the way her mother would embarrass her at school by scribbling in the margins of her (white) Australian history book 'This is not the truth'. Croft uses this metaphor first to describe the installation as perhaps her own way of 'scribbling in the margins' but then changes her mind: 'or perhaps its part of the frontline of indigenous history'.²² She is referring here to the way some indigenous artists such as herself, Gordon Bennett, Leah King and others, use their creative visual medium to subvert the traditional written historiography, and also to document their own histories, while creating an interaction between the past and the present.

This is an ambivalent memorial on a number of levels. Though an 'authentic' indigenous artist, Croft comes from the Northern Territory and was probably unfamiliar with the intimacies of the 'local'. She consulted with the local Cultural Heritage Officer, also an employee of the state. One is tempted to draw comparisons with the previous attempts at pan-Aborig-

inality in Newtown. But here the aim is to create sanctioned black 'sites of origin' that reflect a community bound principally by colour and race—a 'community' equally created by non-indigenous peoples for political purposes that calls for 'black and white' reconciliation at the national level. It aims to overcome the problems of earlier memorials (and histories) to indigenous people that assume they are 'of the past' and not a dynamic, creative society in the present. This is done by drawing a link between the meaning of the site to the traditional local tribe and its role as the focus for Aboriginal contestation of the Bicentenary celebrations two hundred years after the European invasion. In the process we move from a group imagined into the past as having ties to place, to a group today who are imagined as a community bounded by race.

Although ostensibly place-centred, this is also a memorial without anchoring. It represents a history that cannot bridge the gulf between traditional localised cultural practices and late twentieth-century genealogies of the struggle for survival. This fracturing is so profound that it cannot be grafted onto western understandings of the past and made whole. Like almost all recent memorials to indigenous peoples, this one is about loss, but it is determined not to be an elegy. Angelika Bammer raises the issue of 'the relationship between the experience of cultural displacement and the construction of cultural identity.' She says 'it is thus marked by the tension of the historically vital double move between marking and recording absence and loss, and inscribing presence'.²³ Croft is attempting to overcome that break here with only limited success.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of reasons that might explain the failure of these memorials and monuments to communicate a sense of belonging. The first is the problem of 'identity politics' as a means of community legitimation within the pluralist national framework. The second is the ambiguous interrelationship between the identities of these groups—including the issue of who is defining the 'community'—and the 'sites of memory', the literal and metaphorical places chosen. The third is the limitation of the form. Even the less traditional murals seem inadequate to the task of expressing complexity in commemoration.

In reference to our earlier question—to whom do these memorials and monuments speak?—this begs the question of their aim. Are they intended to communicate or simply erected as a permanent show? In all three cases discussed here the principal inscribed audience was outside the group—white Anglophone Australia and non-indigenous tourists. This implies a normative function of 'telling the story'. The secondary audiences were internal: respectable South Vietnamese migrants; black people living in Australia; and to a lesser extent with the Croft memorial, indigenous peoples.

All of these memorials represent attempts at finding ways to reconnect

those groups who have been displaced for one reason or another. Two of them also attempt to 'place' the reconnection—one at the centre where the majority of Vietnamese migrants live and the other at a European site of early settlement and tourist trail. The third imagines the world of the future as a place of community. The memorials to indigenous peoples were attempts to create belonging in places where the relationship of the group to the physical site selected for the memorial or monument has become so attenuated that they are, at best, ambiguous or no longer 'local'. This is one of the main reasons they seem 'out of place'. In Cabramatta, the once well situated site, already commemorating World War I, has now become rather shabby, underlining the marginality of Asian communities in a 'multicultural' society that privileges southern and eastern Europeans. All of these memorials reference a collective memory 'which is both a response to and a symptom of rupture'; an unspoken existing absence in relation to each of the communities; a loss of continuity; and an identity in the local place.

Monuments and memorials are often erected as transgenerational acts in public culture. They attempt to claim the collectivity of experience and fix the memory of it for the future. Though less than a generation old, these memorials effectively operate in opposition to generations. This is a feature of this form of historical consciousness. Their message would not necessarily be endorsed or accepted by either previous or subsequent generations. More importantly, there would not be any consensus within the communities they represent about the value and meaning of the messages expressed through them. Too often people equate community with a commonality that fails to take account of different experiences of the same place. Nowadays, scholars are looking for ways of defining community that is based on varying degrees of difference as well as divergent attitudes to the collective memories that underpin identities. Some have also suggested that 'the ties that bind may some day be seen to constrict, and thus be worthy of cutting'.²⁴ In Zadie Smith's novel *White Teeth*, Samad Iqbal, a Bengali migrant in England, says:

'... it drags you in and suddenly you are unsuitable to return, your children are unrecognizable, you belong nowhere.'

'Oh, that's not true, surely,' says Irie.

'And then you begin to give up the very idea of belonging. Suddenly this thing, this belonging, it seems like some long dirty lie ... and I begin to believe that birthplaces are accidents, that everything is an accident. But if you believe that, where do you go? What do you do? What does anything matter?'

As Samad described this dystopia to her with a look of horror, Irie was ashamed to find that the land of accidents sounded like *paradise* to her. Sounded like freedom.²⁵

NOTES

- George Revill, 'Reading Rosehill: Community, Identity and Inner-City Derby', in Michael Keith and Steve Pile (eds), *Place and the Politics of Identity*, Routledge, London, 1993.
- Peter Read, *Returning to Nothing: The meaning of Lost Places*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1996, p2.
- Delores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass, 1995, pp6-7; 45-46.
- Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1998, p387.
- 4 September 1991.
- Paul Ashton, *Waving the Waratah: Bicentenary New South Wales*, NSW Bicentennial Council, Sydney, 1989, p43.
- See, for example, Jon Stratton and Ien Ang, 'Multicultural imagined communities: Cultural difference and national identity in the USA and Australia', David Bennett (ed), *Multicultural States: Rethinking difference and identity*, Routledge, London, 1998, pp135-62.
- Sheridan Burke, 'The State Heritage Inventory Project', in Terry Kass (ed), *The Role of History in Conservation Work*, PHA NSW Inc, monograph series no 1, Sydney, 1993, p17.
- Donald Horne, *The Public Culture: The Triumph of Industrialism*, Pluto Press, London, 1986, p21.
- Sheldon Hackney, 'The American Identity', *The Public Historian*, vol 19, no 1, Winter 1997, p22.
- See Louella McCarthy and Paul Ashton (eds), *Sydney Open Museum Research Report*, Sydney City Council, Sydney, 1993, item 12.
- John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992, p5.
- Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldier, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1997, Introduction.
- K. Anthony Appiah, 'Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction', in Amy Gutmann (ed), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994, p159.
- ibid, p160.
- Stratton and Ang, p135.
- op cit, p387.
- Bodnar, op cit, p13.
- See, for example, Lyell Davies, 'Republican Murals, identity and communication in Northern Ireland', in *Public Culture*, vol 13, no 1, 2001, pp155-58 and Susanne Kuchler, 'The Place of Memory', in Adrian Forty and Susanne Kuchler (eds), *The Art of Forgetting*, Berg, Oxford, 1999, pp53-72.
- See Peter Read, *Belonging: Australians, Place and Aboriginal Ownership*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2000, Introduction.
- Wuganmagulya (Farm Cove): 'This artwork commemorates the historical and contemporary presence of indigenous people in this part of Australia.'

In two sections of the pathway terrazzo and stained concrete depict figures from Sydney Aboriginal rock carvings, some of which no longer exist, in colours that reference the natural elements of the surrounding environment. The names etched in red along the pathway kerb are of women and men, places, animals, tools and rituals from the many clans and language group of indigenous people in the Sydney area.

Wuganmagulya (Farm Cove) pays homage to the Yura (Eora) clans of the site and to the indigenous clans who travelled great distances to attend ceremonies at Sydney Cove. I also acknowledge contemporary indigenous history such as the 1988 Long March of Peace, Justice and Hope through the city, Domain and gardens in protest of the Bicentennial celebrations and celebrates the survival of indigenous culture.

The artist, a member of the Gurindi nation, consulted with Alan Madden, Cultural Heritage Office, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, to ensure correct cultural protocols were followed.

22. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 September 2000, p14.
23. Angelika Bammer (ed), *Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question*, University of Wisconsin, 1994, p2.
24. 'Introduction', Shirley Fitzgerald and Garry Wotherspoon (eds), *Minorities: Cultural Diversity in Sydney*, State Library of NSW Press, Sydney, 1995, p13.
25. Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*, Penguin Books, 2000, pp349–50.

'A CHEERFUL MORGUE': MODERNISING THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM FOR THE MODERN 1920s VISITOR

Dianne Knott

In days gone by, those good old days we so often hear about but which were really so bad in many things, a museum consisted largely of rows upon rows of stuffed animals, and whole shelves of specimens in bottles of spirit. People wandered in and looked them over in a more or less aimless fashion, and most of them went away again carrying nothing with them but a recollection of many dead things ... But the modern museum must be a place of entertainment and education, the latter presented in a form that is unwittingly assimilated by everybody.

—*The Australian Museum Magazine*, 1922

The Australian Museum was officially established in 1853 as a storehouse for collections of the continent's animals and plants, both rare and exotic, and typical.¹ Founded to collect and preserve specimens in order to serve the requirements of scientists and other specialists, the Museum's mission was to service the needs of science itself.² In the Australian Museum in the nineteenth century, the display of natural history objects was of secondary importance to their collection and preservation.³ Indeed, when the Museum moved into its purpose-built College Street premises in central Sydney there was only one publicly accessible gallery, into which its entire collection of plant, animal, mineral and ethnographic specimens were thrust together.

In the 1920s, however, the Museum shifted the focus of its activities from the collection of specimens to their display. It mobilised new, immersive and inclusive exhibitory techniques to encourage non-scientists and non-specialists to visit the Museum and be educated in the laws of nature. The Museum's shift reflected a realisation amongst a number of staff and trustees that to educate the public it must also entertain them—by constructing exhibitions that were both attractive and instructive. But this transition would be hampered by clashes between Museum personnel over the place of entertainment in a scientific institution.

The most significant and widely implemented of these new methods of display were the group exhibit and the diorama. Group exhibits displayed animals in the groupings they assumed in nature; examples of the time included collections of native Australian cats, platypuses, African lions, and seals and birds of Antarctica. Dioramas were more complex depictions of the animal and its natural surroundings.