

## ***Jenny Fraser***

**Language: Yugambeh**

Although Jenny Fraser was born in north Queensland, her Aboriginal “country” is the border district between Queensland and New South Wales, the land of the YugambehBundjalung people. After studying and practising as a teacher, she moved to working in cyber art, creating the important cyberTribe website to encourage and exhibit Indigenous art of many forms, although favouring digital work. She was a member of the ill-fated Digital Media Board of the Australia Council, disbanded during the time of the Howard Government.

Fraser has said that given the nature of the art form it is difficult to sell her work so she creates much of it in both digital online form and as prints on paper that can be acquired by galleries, institutions and collectors. Her digital prints here concern a particular physical site her people's country on the Tweed River. Her forebears were moved from this place under government dispersal policies of the day to north Queensland, nearly a thousand kilometres away. The bunya pine nut image refers to a five-yearly intertribal festival where the Bandjalung people to the south travelled north to enjoy the nut harvest festival.

Historically Aboriginal people used ritual ceremonies to bend space and time to join people together in discussion and exchange. Aboriginal art itself has often been described in digital media terms: each Aboriginal artwork is like a website where one can move in a multitude of levels and directions. The Internet and digital technology should allow a modern version of this ritual meeting to continue, and it does to some extent.

Her collaged projection piece is an examination of how colonialist racism is both made apparent and explained and/or subtly ingrained into popular culture: blatant and yet almost invisible.

Technological and practical problems keep many Aboriginal people from utilising the medium to the full extent of its possibilities. At the extreme, many marginalised people can never own a computer or may not have a reliable electricity supply to begin with. It is in her curatorial role, particularly opening the possibilities of digital technology to Australian Aboriginal artists and the promotion of such artists' work, that Fraser excels as much as she does in her own practice. She has expended considerable energy and time with Canadian Native American and Pacific artists who work in similar art forms, in the process drawing their attention to Aboriginal art.

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