



25 November 2021

NEW Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts exhibition: *Vision of a palawa*

The Tasmanian community is warmly invited to view the new Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts exhibition: *Vision of a palawa* by Launceston-based palawa artist, Rodney Gardner.

Rodney Gardner's collection of portraits was created in response to recently uncovered original drawings of palawa/Tasmanian Aboriginal people by French artist Nicolas-Martin Petit, created during the Baudin voyage of 1802.

As the artist himself has explained: "I have been invited to create a body of work in response to the Allport gallery's Baudin voyage collection. This exhibition is a contemporary Aboriginal artist's response to portraits of Ancestors created by non-Aboriginal persons as an important part of lutruwita's/Tasmania's history."

Caitlin Sutton, Curator, Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, has described the artist's work as: "... taking the viewer deep into his striking, impressionistic vision through watercolour streetscapes and landscapes... the portraits offer a glimpse into the lives and strength of the continuing culture that defines lutruwita's/Tasmania's First People."

The Baudin drawings were collected by the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, through a series of acquisitions and donations, in 2019 and 2020. Five of the drawings were generously donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by John and Jacqui Mullen of the Silentworld Foundation.

As a cultural institution, Libraries Tasmania seeks to start conversations around the collections of which it is a custodian. It aims to present and represent multiple views; to make the collections accessible to all.

For two centuries, the dominant narrative around the Baudin voyage and its published engravings has been through European eyes. This is the first time these original drawings have been observed and critiqued by the community they depict. Libraries Tasmania extends its deep gratitude to those who have contributed their voices.

- *Vision of a palawa* opens to the public on 25 November 2021 and runs until 12 March 2022 at the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, Ground Floor, 91 Murray Street, Hobart.
- For more information, visit: www.libraries.tas.gov.au/palawa