

GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE



PUBLIC MEETING: WEAK SIGNALS/LOW BATTERIES

SCREENING OF THE KARRABING'S 'WHEN THE DOGS TALKED'

FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2014, 10:30AM-1:30PM

Gertrude Contemporary, the Institute of Modern Art, Landings and Discipline co-present 'Public Meeting: Weak Signals/Low Batteries' — a screening of the Karrabing Film Collective's *When the Dogs Talked* (2014) accompanied by a discussion. The meetings will take place at Gertrude Contemporary on the 19th of December, and at the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane on the 20th of December.

The Karrabing Film Collective's short feature film *When the Dogs Talked* blends documentary and fictional modes to track the lives of the people that made it. As the film shows, finding ways to live life can be exhausting — we often run out of batteries. The film offers at least one way in which a group of people might charge these up again. But where can the film itself find a place? Is the rapaciously expansive world of contemporary art such a place? Can the abstract globality of contemporary art be brought back to earth?

Led by Landings and Discipline, these two public meetings, one in Melbourne and one in Brisbane, will bring diverse voices to bear upon the film's semi-fictional account of life across urban dwelling and Aboriginal homeland, questioning how choices can be made amid the incommensurable conditions of settler-colonial politics.

Key invited guests will structure a 'plenum' in which the voices of members of the public will be facilitated to join in. Guests will include: members of the Karrabing Film Collective, including Linda Yarrawin and Trevor Bianamu; Elizabeth Povinelli, Columbia University, New York; Nikos Papastergiadis, University of Melbourne; Denise Ferreira da Silva, Queen Mary University, London; Julieta Aranda, artist and editor, *e-flux* journal; Rachel O'Reilly, critic, poet and editor; Tom Nicholson, artist; and Richard Bell, artist (Brisbane only).

Image: *Robyn Lane and Shannon Yarrawin, GPS Dreaming*, 2009, photo: Liza Johnson.

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BIOGRAPHIES

THE KARRABING FILM COLLECTIVE

Although inspired by the life, knowledge, and world of Ruby Yarowin, Karrabing is not a clan, not a language group, nor a nation. It is an aspiration. In Emiyengal, *karrabing* refers to the point at which the tide has reach it lowest point. Tide out! There it will stay until it turns, making its way back to shore. *Karrabing* does not have the negative connotations of the English phrase, low tide. There is nothing "low" about the tide reaching *karrabing*. All kinds of potentialities spring forward. In the coastal region stretching from Nganthawudi to Milik, a deep *karrabing* opens a shorter passage between mainland and islands. In some places, reefs rise as the water recedes. A road is revealed.

The Karrabing Indigenous Corporation seeks to integrate their parents' and grandparents' ways of life into their contemporary struggles to educate their children, create economically sustainable cultural and environmental businesses, and support their homeland centres. The Karrabing Film Collective makes films that analyse and represent their contemporary lives. But they also believe that in making their films they are keeping the country alive by acting on their country — not merely making a film representing their lives in the country, but paying attention to their country as they make a film in and about it.

KIC has written, acted, and produced two short features and is currently working to develop a mobile app for a GPS based transmedia project.

WHEN THE DOGS TALKED

As a group of Indigenous adults argue about whether to save their government housing or their sacred landscape, their children struggle to decide how the ancestral Dreaming makes sense in their contemporary lives. Listening to music on their iPods, walking through bush lands, and boating across seas, they follow their parents on a journey to reenact the travel of the Dog Dreaming. Along the way individuals run out of stamina and boats out of gas, and the children press their parents and each other about why these stories matter and how they make sense in the context of Western understandings of evolution, the soundscapes of hip hop, and the technologies of land development. *When the Dogs Talked* mixes documentary and fiction to produce a thoughtful yet humorous drama about the everyday obstacles of structural and racialised poverty and the dissonance of cultural narratives and social forms.

LANDINGS

Landings is an ongoing curatorial project founded by Natasha Ginwala and Vivian Ziherl in 2012. In conversation with artists, filmmakers, scholars and archivists, the project engages with histories of land, terrestrial life, extractive industry and constructions of the rural across timescales that are geologic, colonial and cosmological. Exhibitions and events have been presented in partnerships that include Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, David Roberts Art Foundation, NGBK (as part of the Tagore, Pedagogy and Contemporary Visual Cultures Network), Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Tropenmuseum, The Barber Shop and *e-flux*, among others.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a contemporary art journal based in Melbourne. It is edited by Nicholas Croggon, David Homewood and Helen Hughes.