

MEDIA RELEASE

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HANDHELD II – AN EXHIBITION BUILT TO TRAVEL

Curators: Eleanor Scicchitano and Coby Edgar

FIVE Aboriginal artists, commissioned by Country Arts SA in partnership with TARNANTHI, have created artworks designed to fit inside a suitcase responding to themes of home, travel and place in *Handheld II*.

The artists from across South Australia – Karumapuli Jacob Stengle (Adelaide), Debra Rankine (Coorong/Meningie), Sandra Saunders (Wangary), Christopher Burthummarr Crebbin (Adelaide) and Peter Sharrock (Adelaide) have each been challenged to fit their pieces within a vintage suitcase, which will then be used to transport the works of art from Prospect Gallery, where the show launched during TARNANTHI Festival, to various venues throughout regional South Australia.

Each of these works tells the artists' stories, capturing their unique experiences and personal histories, as well as their own connection to land and home. Working across a diverse range of mediums, *Handheld II* will showcase contemporary concerns that are central to the lives of these artists.

Stengle speaks to his experiences as a stolen-generation child through nostalgic paintings and a heart-felt installation, while Saunders packs a punch in her suitcase with satirist humour. Rankine tells the story of her family's historic traditions through weaving, creating a traditional story mat.

Two artists have used this opportunity to experiment in new mediums; Sharrock, traditionally a ceramicist, focuses on painting with ochres and Crebbin departs from his painting practice to create a sculptural piece.

Accompanying the works on tour will be a set of installation instructions written by the artists. There will be a measure of freedom for gallery staff when installing the artworks, a feature that allows each gallery to take ownership over the works and effectively take part in their creation.

Country Arts SA Visual Arts Coordinator Eleanor Scicchitano, who curated the exhibition alongside Coby Edgar, wanted an exhibition that could travel with ease.

"These artworks will look unique in every place they tour to as they're installed by gallery staff with different spaces and creative flair," said Ms Scicchitano.

This is the second iteration of *Handheld*; the first was successfully launched in 2014 and will continue its tour of the state until early 2017. The artworks in *Handheld II* will complement the four pieces in the original exhibition by examining the same themes and ideas from a uniquely Aboriginal perspective.

Handheld II: 29 February – 3 April

Civic Hall Galleries: 62 Tasman Tce, Pt Lincoln

Handheld II is supported by TARNANTHI | Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia in partnership with BHP Billiton and supported by the Government of South Australia.

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