



Teaching Artist Statement

Tyrown Waigana**Who am I?**

My name is **Tyrown Waigana**. I am a Wandandi Noongar and Ait Koedha Torres Strait islander. I was born in East Fremantle and grew up in the surrounding suburbs, which is on Perth south side.

I ended up going to university and studying creative advertising and illustration. This allowed me to pick up a whole range of professional skills I use today.

I love being an artist and designer. This allows me to be creative for a living.

What does art mean to you?

Art is important to me because it feels like I am connecting to my culture. It's a way to deal with things around me which I can put into my artwork and express myself.

Often many of the things I think about are out of my control and putting it into my art helps to digest these big ideas.

I also grew up with the mentality that men aren't allowed to have feeling, which is not something I believe anymore but putting these feeling into my artwork was a way to express myself without judgment.





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My influences

I've been drawing from a very early age. Seeing my Nan and her little brother, draw, paint and decorate digeridoos.

My Nan's decorations were a mix of traditional and semi-traditional symbols. My Nan spent a lot of time up and down the west coast of Australia and gained knowledge from many different Aboriginal communities.

My Nan's little brother did a lot of dot painting with a mix of illustrations. He was very meticulous in his practice and made a special dot brush. He would get a paint brush, cut it to a nub and slowly cut it into a cone shape. He would then paint with water and get the consistency just right.

How I learned my art skills

Some of the skills I started to develop from a very young age like drawing, painting and sculpture. I just watched family members paint and I really liked cartoons that I wanted to recreate.

The others I learnt at university, this provided me the technical skillset that aligned with industry standards. I'm interested in what comes out in different mediums and how that is expressed.

Culture

I think it is a cultural thing creating art. I think it comes from the idea that it's an oral culture and a visual culture. A lot of things are passed down and a lot of knowledge comes with these pictures.

Cultural art is meant to connect people by working on it together, sharing knowledge and by being there for generations. It connects people through time and place.

Indigenous culture is visually based and a lot of our traditional stories, teaching and learning fit into a western standard of art. Because of this, many of our people look to create as a way of connecting to culture.

Country

It's very hard to connect to Country where there are major cities like here in Perth. In a way, it severs the connection because knowledge becomes past tense. It's what used to happen here not what currently happens here.

That's why the six seasons are so important, we can't build over it or destroy that idea.

I connect to country by gaining more traditional knowledge and putting it back into my practice.