

# Shackled Excellence

**Carly  
Tarkari  
Dodd**

*1 October*

*10 December 2019*

*The Mill Exhibition  
Space Residency*

Curated by  
Adele Stuzars

*The Mill Adelaide  
154 Angas Street,  
Adelaide SA 5000*



# Carly Tarkari Dodd's 'Shackled Excellence', is presented as part of Tarnanthi Festival of Contemporary Art



## Carly Dodd

Carly Dodd is a Kurna\Narungga and Ngarrindjeri artist. She has been mentored by Indigenous Tasmanian artist Max Mansell and was taught traditional weaving by Ngarrindjeri artist Ellen Trevorrow. In 2013 she took part in a cultural camp to Coober Pedy, learning traditional methods of painting.

Within her practice Carly mixes traditional and contemporary techniques, to produce works that are conceptually and culturally driven. In 2018 she was the recipient of the Carclew Emerging Curator Residency. Her works were exhibited during SALA 2018 at Adelaide Town Hall.

Carly won the South Australian NAIDOC Young Aboriginal of the Year in 2018. Carly has facilitated art workshops at WOMAD, Spirit Festival, The Art Gallery of South Australia and the Adelaide Fringe.

## The Mill

The Mill's Exhibition Space Residency program is presented in partnership with the City of Adelaide. The program positions artistic process to the fore, allowing audiences direct access to creative research and making. During this residency The Exhibition Space operates with a studio-like mentality where knowledge arises through participation and experimentation. The Exhibition Space opens the creative process to the public, connecting people to cultural experience, insights, understanding and meaning.

## Jack Buckskin

Jack Buckskin is a Kurna, Narungga and Wirangu man, born in the Adelaide Plains region, who has dedicated himself to learning and sharing the Kurna language and culture. He has been heavily involved in the Kurna language revitalisation movement for more than ten years and continues to contribute to the development and teaching of the Kurna language. Jack also shares his culture and stories through dance and other cultural workshops through his cultural services and dance group,

Kuma Kaaru, which translates to 'one blood'. Jack and Kuma Kaaru have also been given the opportunity to showcase dance, language and culture internationally, having been invited to perform and speak in a number of countries, including India, Nauru, Canada and Austria.

## About



Usually if we go to places, sites of significance, walking around it allows us to get a perspective of where we are at. Probably you're are unconsciously thinking about that in your work. Its more than just 'seeing' it, it's about helping others to see what you are doing by actually moving.

A: The time element is a significant part of these works, it is time spent with the object building it up but also knowing that there are lots of parts. Even though its very simple and rhythmic, its also very complex.

C: People don't seem to understand how long it actually takes to make a basket. I usually give them as gifts, as they are more appreciated. If you see a basket in a store you might think, oh yeah, its \$20 or whatever. When you see one that has been hand made by someone you might have that same mentality, a cheap basket. But, it takes so much time to hand make a basket. I want to make my weaving to be appreciated as artworks, rather than just something that you put things in.

From then I started making weaving pieces and putting them on a canvas, so that they were being looked at rather than being used. I think it's another way to look at weaving as an art form, not just as a vessel or container. It's so detailed and there are so many different styles of weaving as well. I love looking at weaving and at the stitches.

J: I like what you're doing with the weaving, it definitely is something to look at. Culturally when we see things we usually there's a black side, a white side and you can't understand one without the other.

**"...another way to look at weaving as an art form, not just as a vessel or container. It's so detailed and there are so many different styles of weaving"**

C: I learnt to weave when I was about 10, I made baskets to put things in because that's what you do. When I got back into weaving two years ago, I started experimenting with the gold threads. I thought, wow this is so beautiful, I don't want to make it where you are weaving to tell a personal story with a three dimensional, sculptural work. Can you talk about how why you want to move from the pragmatic into the conceptual.

Learning from the older fella's and the traditional weaving, and then incorporating the ribbon is showing change. We do it with language, we do it with culture, we do it with the way we live our lives and connection to family. Through your art piece you're saying, okay I've learnt from tradition, I'm holding on to my heritage with the style of weaving, but I'm incorporating my flavour because this is the society I've grown up in and its not just keeping it as the old. It's the evolution of change, and I think that's pretty cool!

A: We've spoken about the relationship between pragmatic, traditional craft, and moving that into a space where you are weaving to tell a personal story with a three dimensional, sculptural work. Can you talk about how why you want to move from the pragmatic into the conceptual.

J: What I see is that your technique shows the evolution of culture.

C: The way I got taught how to weave is quite different to how I do it now. Aunty Ellen Trevor uses traditional materials like reeds, where I use raffia and ribbon, which gives a more contemporary vibe. While I appreciate traditional art, I like to put my own spin on it, not to make it more relevant, but just to make it mine, shift it into my own space and also so that I don't get put into the 'traditional' box.

J: The dollar value doesn't resonate with the time spent. I don't weave, but I make shields, boomerangs, coolamons and everything else.

**"with the younger generation there are more opportunities, more doors open. And that's because we're getting to a society that is changing. Sometimes for the better, sometimes not so much. But people have to take it with their own interpretation. You're being presented with an opportunity, that unfortunately your father never got offered. It wasn't his fault. So, speaking about sports, speaking about opportunities, it brings in the social justice issues in a more subtle way."**

They take a long time, and the process is involved. So, I'm the same, I just give them as gifts because its more meaningful.

Its about relationship building, keeping connected with people. The trade value is more significant when you can give other people the understanding that it is time and effort. And when people admire and understand the effort, that is better than the dollar value.

A: Lets talk about some of your conceptual and cultural research, you have pointed towards an interest in some political aspects and social justice issues within your work. Can you both speak about how looking at sports can interrogate some of the complexities of being an Aboriginal person and the struggles that sit side by side with the triumphs.

J: I can see the political aspect within what you're talking about. Now with the younger generation there are more opportunities, more doors open. And that's because we're getting to a society that is changing. Sometimes for the better, sometimes not so much. But people have to take it with their own interpretation. You're being presented with an opportunity, that unfortunately your father never got offered. It wasn't his fault. So, speaking about sports, speaking about opportunities, it brings in the social justice issues in a more subtle way.



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## Transcribed audio file

### Adele Sliuzas, Carly Dodd & Jack Buckskin

Carly: I've started weaving a trophy, which is going well. I've never made a shape like that before. I've been talking to my dad about sports. I feel like there is a lot of political Aboriginal art about history, but there's not much on sport.

I want to look at achievements in sport, so that is what I am working towards now. My dad grew up in Naracoorte, and did a lot of sport when he was younger. Playing football throughout primary school and high school and he still plays golf. A few years ago he went to his high school reunion. I love looking at old photos, but I noticed that there weren't many of him.

They just didn't take photos of Aboriginal people back then, in the 70's. I thought it was so weird, Dad was one of the top players in his footy team, but he didn't get acknowledged for that really, he wasn't recognised. So, I want to showcase his achievements.

Jack: I'm the opposite to your Dad, I'm not quiet about being the best at everything. I play a lot of sport, my mum plays golf too. I've been involved in sports my whole life, a lot of Aboriginal people are. It sort of became a new religion, pretty much from the 70's. What a lot of people don't realise is that Aboriginal people have only been citizens of this country from 1970 and part of the mainstream society.

My Brother as well, Travis Dodd, has achieved a lot in soccer in Australia. So, this exhibition/work is a way of showcasing their achievements. Dad is a quite reserved person, he is humble about his achievements in sports.

**"...thought it was so weird, Dad was one of the top players in his footy team, but he didn't get acknowledged for that really, he wasn't recognised."**

So, people in your Dad's generation were the transition from mission life to what we have today. What you're seeing, over the multiple generations is the change from your Dad's generation to your brother Travis, and yourself as a younger person, and it will change again.

On the field there's a lot more opportunity, more recognition. So I think its fits well with this exhibition and what you want to portray. The opportunity to showcase your individual family perspective of what culture means and the growth of that, the opportunity to be recognised and the changes that have happened over time. Your family story makes it unique.

**"What a lot of people don't realise is that Aboriginal people have only been citizens of this country from 1970"**

This residency comes down to opportunity, and you have the opportunity to tell a story and that's one thing that you can use to speak about who has had opportunities and who hasn't within your family.

Adele: I think other really nice aspect to this residency is the opportunity to develop your skill in weaving. Carly can you tell me about how you learnt traditional weaving, and how you're planning on taking the skills you learnt into your own space.

- 1. Trophy
- 2. Medals
- 3. Winmar

- 4. Dodd
- 5. Paris
- 6. Duncan

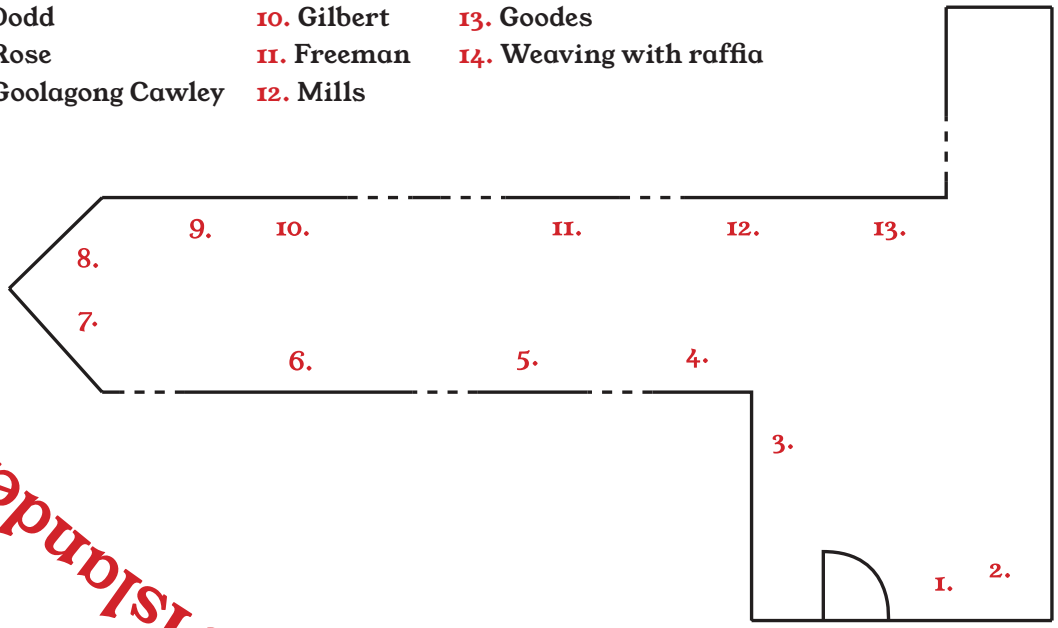
- 7. Dodd
- 8. Rose
- 9. Goolagong Cawley

- 10. Gilbert
- 11. Freeman
- 12. Mills

- 13. Goodes
- 14. Weaving with raffia

Photography by Morgan Sette

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art.*



AGSA tarpananthi BHP

