



Inside Pages, Left to Right
Bruce Partland
*Scar tree and
embellished pole*, 2008
Digital photograph

Yillull Barney
Bar-Coded Tree, 2008
Digital photograph



Top
Sharon West
The Big Stump of Bundoora,
2009
Digital photograph

Bottom
Alisha Leon
Night Corroboree, 2008
Acrylic on canvas

Back cover, Left to Right
Esther-Grace Hanigan
Scrub, 2009
Foam print

Aunty Gwen Garoni
Taungerong Landscape,
2009
Gouache on paper bark

Front Cover
Joe Geia
Motif, 2009
Acrylic on gumleaf

Aunty Frances Gallagher
Magpies in Gum tree, 2009
Acrylic on canvas

 **SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY**
BUILDING 2: BOWEN STREET, MELBOURNE

This exhibition has been kindly supported
by RMIT University Events.

Managed by the RMIT School of Art
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TELEPHONE +61 3 9925 4971 **GALLERY OPENING HOURS** Monday - Friday 10.00am to 5.00pm



SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY
BUILDING 2: BOWEN STREET, MELBOURNE



In observation of Naidoc Week 2009 **Spirit Tree: A visual celebration of the scarred trees of Bundoora**

Curated by SHARON WEST and
AUNTY BUNTA PATTEN
Welcome to country and opening by
UNCLE HERB PATTEN



THURSDAY 9 TO FRIDAY 17 JULY 2009
OPENING THURSDAY 9 JULY 5-7PM

Gum trees are like our church. The spirit of the tree is around all us as a reminder to our people of the importance of their place in our lives. They gave our culture mias, canoes, shields and medicine. It is wonderful talking about these trees as they were used by woman to give birth, to mark our tribal boundaries and they provide shelter and food for the birds and insects.

Aunty Bunta Patten

Spirit Tree is inspired by the heritage-listed scarred trees of the Bundoora West campus. Representing a cross-cultural project, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists explore notions of the physical and spiritual attributes of the tree. These include metaphysical constructions that acknowledge the importance of the tree in Koori culture, as Aunty Bunta Patten suggests in her opening remarks.

A variety of mix-media applications have been employed including gumleaf and bark supports complemented by traditional and introduced paint mediums such as ochres and acrylics. Many of the Indigenous artists, including Elders, have re-worked the concept of gumleaf and bark art which were also part of Australian settler folk art tradition, while Indigenous culture used the gum leaf

for music, as practiced by Indigenous Arts Unit artist in residence, Uncle Herb Patten. This exhibition also forms part of the ongoing RMIT University *Keelbundoora Scarred Tree and Heritage Trail Project*, supported by the Friends of the Bundoora Red Gums and the City of Whittlesea. This trail features carved and embellished poles created by the Visual Arts and Land Management students. *Spirit Tree: A visual celebration of the scarred trees of Bundoora* includes documentary material from this project.

Sharon West

