

THE WALLS

ARCHIE MOORE
FOUNDING FATHERS

1 - 15 July, 2017

You may assume that the diminished statues of the Founding Fathers represent a re-interpretation of Australia's historical record, where the hero explorers, good guy pioneers, or the positive social force of christianity have *become* villain invaders, bad guy aliens and a negative force of proselytism - but to the Aboriginal people who stood in the way of the revered forebears' colonialist agenda, they were always seen that way.

Founding Fathers explores monuments and questions the truth of these 'messengers from the past'. It ruminates on the way objects emulate culturally-specific narratives and contribute to memory-making. This exhibition presents 10 renovated monuments that consider the possibility of incommensurable historical and human realities; that idealisation and demonisation are not so far apart, and the faults, gaps and blemishes that 'our' narratives encompass, particularly to Indigenous Australians, are as old as the monument itself. It overwrites the already overwritten, inscribing a new narrative on what was the erasure of indigenous memorials through the imposition of colonialist monuments on a space that was construed as empty. Once they were on pedestals high above you; now they are looked down upon, reassessed with stories they thought they could bury forever. That primary function of a monument, to perpetuate and consolidate political power through large-scale, indestructible structures, is re-examined here. These figurines are made from porcelain and sit upon a lightweight, plastic Roman column - easy to topple over and smash into many pieces. Both figurine and column, in this way, are frauds: although they appear strong and robust, as though made from bronze and stone, they are in fact as fragile as the myths they wish to convey. Their counterparts that reside in city parks can't even avoid the indignity of being defecated upon.

Archie Moore works across media in portrayals of self and divulged national histories. He questions key signifiers of identity – skin, language, smell, food, dwelling, politics, religion, flags – and points to errors in foundational intercultural knowledge, asking, what are the outcomes of misinformation? His practice is embedded in Aboriginal politics and the wider concerns of racism. Uncertainty is a recurrent theme pertaining to his paternal Kamilaroi heritage. A motif in his work is the problem of knowing a shared experience - can we ever know and understand another?- this being a comment on the failure of reconciliation.

Archie completed his Bachelor of Visual Arts at Queensland University of Technology in 1998. In 2001, he was awarded the Millennial Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship which enabled him to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. Since then he has exhibited nationally and internationally including 20th Biennale of Sydney in 2016, The National at Carriageworks 2017, Light From Light in Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou and currently *Defying Empire: 3rd National Indigenous Art Triennial* at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. With works in the collections of the Gilbert and Tobin Collection, Sydney, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, UTS, Sydney, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, the Owen and Wagner collection, North Carolina, the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, the Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane, the University of Queensland Art Museum, and the University of Technology, Sydney.

(Clockwise from entrance)

CAPTAIN SHITHEAD [2017]

Concrete, paint and patina

LIEUTENANT SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

GOVERNOR SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

REVEREND SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

PREMIER SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

COLONEL SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

JUDGE ADVOCATE SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

OFFICER SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

LORD SHITHEAD [2017]

Porcelain, paint, patina and plastic

THE WALLS ART SPACE

[Contemporary art on the GC since 2013]
4/18 Mountain View Avenue MIAMI 4220
GOLD COAST QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA
www.thewalls.org.au | mail@thewalls.org.au

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