The Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub Newsletter

Voice, Treaty, Truth: the 2019 NAIDOC theme underpins the cultural fabric and livelihoods of Aboriginal people. Generations have fought for change, which moves forward as Victoria pushes a Treaty agenda and other truths emerge. Our voice grows stronger with communities across the country expressing ideas beyond the limits of colonial language as they reclaim their traditional spoken tongue.

This edition of Urban Beat shares stories of Aboriginal people pushing new agendas and truths with uncompromised precision. From architect Kevin O’Brien, to author and academic Dr. Jeanine Leane, theatre maker and artistic director of Yirra Yaakin Theater Company Eva Grace Mullaley and writer and radio presenter Angelina Hurley, Their voices critically engage with colonial legacies while promising new ways forward. Featured artist Josh Muir challenges settler norms by creating lively self-portraits, which present a layered identity beaming with hope for the future. The work of CAUL also responds to these themes and attitudes, evident in the 3 Category Approach to collaboration and co-design and The Living Pavilion, which transformed an institution into a lively space of conversation and environmental regrowth as Zena Cumpston provided an Indigenous perspective. Urban Beat highlights the crucial work occurring across platforms as we create change together this NAIDOC.

JOSH MUIR ON HIS ARTWORK FROG

I hold my culture strong to my heart and it gives me a voice and great sense of my identity. I look around and see empires built on Aboriginal land, I cannot physically change or shift this, though I can make the most of my culture in a contemporary setting and my art projects reflect my journey.

Frog is similar in style to a series of self-portraits I exhibited at the Koorie Heritage Trust last year and was part of work that I developed on a residency in Oaxaca, Mexico. The residency was a real eye opener. Mexico was so vast and full of action, it made me really aware of how lucky I am but was also an amazing opportunity to learn and grow.

Josh is a proud Yorta Yorta/Gunditjmara man and award winning multi-media artist. His work has been acquired by the Koorie Heritage Trust, the National Gallery of Australia, and the National Gallery of Victoria.

IN THE 2019 NAIDOC WEEK EDITION:

The new 3 Category Workbook
Kevin O’Brien on limits, hope and imagination
Theatre’s role in amplifying Aboriginal voices
Using comedy to connect and critique

Editor: Timmah Ball
Assistant Editor: Isabel Kimpton
Illustrations: Josh Muir
Design: Lily Sawenko
Raising voices and sharing truths: how Aboriginal people are reshaping cities

Timmah Ball, Editor

Red river gums are replaced by plane trees from England and still the survivors watch.

Lisa Bellear, 1999

The lines from Lisa Bellear’s poem BEAUTIFUL YUROKE RED RIVER GUM reflect her politics, her work and her inalienable connection to this place. Although she wasn’t Koori, as a Goernpil woman of the Noonuccal people of Minjerribah, Queensland she relocated to Melbourne to become a tireless activist, academic and artist working for Victoria’s Aboriginal communities. As Celeste Liddle stated in an essay for the exhibition catalogue The Lisa Bellear Picture Show: ‘she worked almost entirely in a grassroots capacity, focused on community and the need to empower at that level.’

Like Lisa’s poem describes I have also watched how the environment has changed, something that is becoming more severe where extreme weather, floods and fires ravage country while we struggle to find the right solutions. Being born in the urban environment of Melbourne (still known by the survivors as Narm/ Birrarung-ga), a place that often feels more English in appearance than bush, it’s hard to imagine what the Red River Gums she refers to in her poem would have looked like.

In the suburbs where I grew up I lived amongst lavender and elm trees, seeking opportunities to go on country outside of cities to understand what this place is and could be. And while it is easy to think that it’s too late to change our cities, I remain dedicated to the work needed to improve urban environments, knowing that they need protection too.

In 2015, Rueben Burg showed me this city from another view, exposing the deep cultural history beyond the towering buildings within the CBD. Parliament House was just around the corner, The Institute of Australian Architects across the road. But there was more hidden beneath these authoritarian structures that I was unaware of as he edged us down Sargood lane. It was a tiny laneway off Exhibition Street and the wind stung our faces. We reached a roller car door; as he turned and pointed to the last siltstone left in the CBD.

Wedge between apartment buildings, the rock face revealed the ecology embedded beneath the concrete metropolis. Nature, small but still standing, amidst the towering buildings; it was a reminder of what used to be here and our responsibility to protect what is left. Clustered within the grey surrounds, the discovery of the siltstone wall shifted my relationship to this place. Born in Melbourne away from my own ancestral country, the rock exposed a side of the city grounded in its pre-colonial state. Connecting to country in a city laneway, even as the busy office workers and tourists cruised bars and expensive cafes. The rock hidden amongst the city buildings told the truth about the land we walk on and Aboriginal people have the voice to carry these stories.

More and more the way we perceive and live in cities is shifting and most likely always will; black fellas are not the only people aware of the detrimental impact modern cities have had on the environment. Research hubs like CAUL are creating pathways for change, guided by Indigenous Knowledge systems. Programs like The Living Pavilion and work by Aboriginal artists and designers in the public realm ensure that blak culture tells the truth of our country.

From Footscray to Oakleigh public art by Maree Clarke and Vicki Couzens pierces the colonial landscape, creating tranquil moments to reimagine another existence, even as the traffic blares down the Princess Highway. Along Swanston Street, murals by Josh Muir remind us of who we are and that our culture continues to thrive even as maps and western surveying tools tame our land.

Through this year’s Urban Beat NAIDOC edition, you will read what others are doing to share truths and raise voices. Kevin O’Brien thoughtfully draws connection between ongoing Indigenous struggles with the structural power of architecture which evolved in ancient Greece and Rome. While radio host and writer Angelina Hurley uses comedy to address issues of racism and misogyny. Theatre maker Eva Grace Mullaely is driving social change through the arts and Dr Jeanine Leanne uses poetry to provocatively ask the reader to consider the voices and truth still hidden beneath the urban landscape. While these words may unsettle some, they are powerful reminders of the history we cannot afford to forget.

Collectively, these artists, writers and architects allow us to see ourselves reinserted into an environment that was changed without consent – creating moments for both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians to contemplate a history and identity that is confronting, but vital to engage with. We need to keep pushing the momentum growing in Aboriginal design, architecture and art to ensure that it speaks the truth and shares Aboriginal voices, which are still marginalized and ignored. As we move towards a Treaty, listening closer, shifting traditional power structures and increasing collaboration will enable us to all to work together effectively for change.

A siltstone wall, wedged between apartment buildings in a Melbourne laneway. Credit: Tom Ross (courtesy of Assemble Papers)

Josh Muir’s mural Journey to Liberty features in the Metro Tunnel Project’s new State Library Station. Credit: Metro Tunnel Creative Program, photographer Charlie Kinross.

Aboriginal peoples. maintained the importance of recognising the agency and sovereignty of advocated for Aboriginal voice and Aboriginal truths in research and Torres Strait Islander knowledge holders. The IAG research by entering respectful and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal The past year has highlighted the opportunities for enriching urban research. The strengths of Aboriginal led research, and research that is informed by Aboriginal knowledges continues to grow.

The Living Pavilion was an opportunity to listen to Aboriginal voices and to learn from Aboriginal truths. From the voices of the Djirri Djirri dance group playing under the Lilly Pilly tree, to the truths told across the programming, the space held the deep knowledge of our cultures. The Living Pavilion became a portal in which we could imagine the Kulin landscape of Bouverie Creek. It became a cultural stage for art and song, it was a living lab filled with Kulin plants, it was a forum for truth telling on sovereign land. We shared stories of the interconnectedness of nature, art and culture.

Thank you to all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who generously gave their time and voices, and shared their truths including: Aunty Di Kerr, Mandy Nicholson, Ky-ya Nicholson Ward, Stacie Piper, Dave Johnston, Zena Cumpston, Steph Beaupark, Katie West, Dixon Patten, Rueben Berg, Mark Nannup, Jefa Greenaway, Marley Holloway-Clarke, Charles Solomon, Cassie Leatham, Dean Stewart, The Merindas, Pierra Van Sparkes, Rheeann Port, Kalyni Mumtaz, Mitch Tambo, Chelsea Davies, and the CAUL Indigenous Advisory Group Jason Barrow, Kirstine Wallis, Jade Kennedy, Luke Briscoe and Lauren Arabena. The past year has highlighted the opportunities for enriching urban research by entering respectful and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge holders. The IAG has consistently advocated for Aboriginal voice and Aboriginal truths in research and maintained the importance of recognising the agency and sovereignty of Aboriginal peoples.

The methodology is a three-stepped approach, including communicate, collaborate and codesign. "Building relationships takes time and should be centred on reciprocity and respect. My colleagues in the IAG have been strong in their integrity when providing advice and have advocated strongly for meaningful relationship building and deep listening."

Embedding Indigenous knowledge systems in urban research and practice is an important way to improve cities for people and for biodiversity. Cross-cultural work and two-way sharing in an urban context is new to many of us, and often complex to deliver. To overcome these barriers the 3 Category Approach and Workbook has been created by Indigenous researchers, communicators and designers. It aims to guide non-Indigenous researchers and practitioners in their work, helping support Indigenous led projects and making space for co-design.

The new 3 Category Workbook discusses Indigenous engagement in research in three categories: communicate, collaborate and codesign. Users are guided through each category, given suggested actions to take and prompted to reflect on their work and research approach.

This has been a collaborative project from its inception. In 2016, Torres Strait Islander researcher, scientist and consultant Stan Lui developed The 3 Category Approach with members of the Indigenous Advisory Committee of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy. According to Stan, this methodology was a way to help foster positive and respectful relationships between researchers and Indigenous people.

"The connection between land, sea and people is at the heart of Indigenous culture and an important part of the past, present and future of their estates," explains Stan. "Empowering Indigenous people in land and sea management helps keep culture strong and ensures a future that is guided by people who live in the area and understand and promote its unique biodiversity and characteristics."

Under the guidance of CAUL Hub’s Indigenous Advisory Group (IAG), the 3 Category Approach has been incorporated into the Hub’s research plans, with all projects now assessed using this methodology.

"Over the course of the NESP, the IAG have had the privilege to advise and collaborate with researchers on ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and voices have been respected,” says IAG co-chair Maddison Miller.

In order to share and transfer learnings from CAUL Hub’s Indigenous engagement, Jirra Lulla-Harvey from Kalinya Communications was brought on board. A suggested output from Jirra’s research (available on the CAUL Hub website) was an interactive workbook/tool kit. With guidance from Cathy Oke and Libby Porter, Jirra worked together with graphic designer Lily Sawenko and illustrations from Dixon Patten to breathe life into the 3 Category methodology – making it accessible and transferrable to other organisations and research bodies.

"It was the first time myself and Lily had worked together on visual communication,” explains Jirra. “Normally I write things and she makes them beautiful, but this time we sat together to figure out how to visually communicate quite a complex methodology.”

We are excited to be launching the 80-page workbook later this year. For more details and to order a copy, visit nespurban.edu.au.
Limits, imagination & the power of hope

Professor Kevin O’Brien, Founder of Kevin O’Brien Architects

Kevin O’Brien is an architect and academic of Kaurareg and Meriam heritage. In 2006 he established the Brisbane based firm Kevin O’Brien Architects whose projects have been recognised through numerous awards from The Australian Institute of Architects. In 2012 he curated the Venice Architecture Biennale exhibition called Finding Country. The exhibition interrogated the idea of Brisbane through a speculative exercise in extracting something that had been lost since European settlement. Fifty designers and architects were asked to take a piece of the Brisbane city grid and remove 50 percent of its built environment. In this article, he continues to unpack the politics of architecture and the impact that the built form has on societies by comparing ancient Greek and Roman civilisations with his own mother’s journey.

LIMITS

In the 2011 book The Possibility of an absolute architecture, Pier Vittorio Aurelli reveals an understanding of the political and formal impact of architecture by examining the difference between ancient Greek and Roman cities.

The Greek city is defined by its walls, and as a result, much thought was placed into the spaces and settings within. On the other hand, the Roman city is defined by the horizon, an insatiable network in which the Empire’s diversity is embraced.

Kevin O’Brien was involved in a recent collaboration with Daniel Browning, Karen Norris and Urban Theatre Projects, titled Blak Box. Blak Box is a temporary sound pavilion designed to share First Peoples stories, operating on the Barangaroo Reserve in Sydney. Credit: Barton Taylor

In Greek cities only Greek citizens could participate in Greek political life – foreigners were excluded. Always. By contrast in the Roman city, people from different origins could coexist under the same law. In Rome it was possible to start as a foreigner but end as a Roman citizen.

These architectural differences and their political consequences highlight the much larger notion of ‘limits’. It shows us how to recognise limits, how to become aware that the architectural form such as ‘walls’ in ancient Greek cities is guided by an accompanying philosophy, the exclusion of foreigners.

IMAGINATION

In Italo Calvino’s novel Invisible Cities, Marco Polo returns from his travels to the court of Kublai Khan. Kublai Khan invites Marco Polo to describe the cities he has seen in great detail. There are 55 poetic stories of 55 different cities. However, towards the end of the novel, Kublai Khan comes to realise that there are not 55 cities. Marco Polo is speaking of only of one city – Venice – through different poetic names such as Cities and Memory, Cities and Desire, Cities and Signs, and my favourite – Cities and Eyes 2.

He writes:

‘It is the mood of the beholder which gives the city its form. You cannot say that one aspect of the city is truer than the other, but you hear of the upper areas chiefly from those who remember it, as they sink into the lower parts, following every day the same stretches of street and finding again each morning the ill-humour of the day before.’

I love this passage because in Calvino’s and therefore Marco Polo’s imagination, there is a way to look not just from top to bottom but also beyond. In this passage, the sense of hope is ever-present in all its wonderful melancholy.

HOPE

These two texts have come to help me understand the incredible journey my mother made as a young woman leaving the Torres Strait immediately after the successful result of the 1967 referendum. As a young woman, she and our extended family was effectively incarcerated on the Catholic mission at Hammond Island in far north Queensland with permission to travel, management of affairs and even income at the sole discretion of the then district Aboriginal Protector in Queensland. A version of the Greek city if you will, except she was not Greek, nor a citizen.

The effect of the 1967 referendum was not unlike the rise of the Roman city. The walls were smashed down, and it became possible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to exist and participate as other Australian citizens. My mother, and her creative imagination, took this opportunity and moved to Melbourne where she met my father and I was born in 1972. As I was raised I came to realise that she embodied the word ‘hope’ and never stopped in her attempt to ensure I had access to those opportunities she did not.

Today there are inspirational architecture graduates who will become leaders, whose innovative ideas and discoveries will benefit societies around the world. The message I would like to leave is that as we move forward in our intellectual trajectories and professional orbits, limits are opportunities for the right frame of mind, and imagination ensures hope and the overcoming of adversity. It is also worth taking a moment to honour those who got us here today, and perhaps to remember down the track how we might enable the next generation of great minds.

For more information on Kevin O’Brien’s work with Kevin O’Brien Architecture, visit: http://koarchitects.com.au/

Inside Blak Box. Credit: Barton Taylor

“Limits are opportunities for the right frame of mind, and imagination ensures hope and the overcoming of adversity.”
It’s theatre’s job to amplify Aboriginal voices
An interview with Eva Grace Mullaley, Artistic Director at Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company

Eva Grace Mullaley is a Widi woman from the Yamaji Nation in the midwest of WA, who has worked in the theatre industry for 15 years as a director, producer, actor, dramaturge, and lecturer. Her recent appointment as Artistic Director of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company was an opportunity to discuss the critical issues which foreground blak theatre, facilitating important conversations that Australia needs.

**Timmah Ball:** We’re witnessing a cultural moment where blak art is making an impact in the wider social consciousness, but it’s often east coast centric. Do you recognise differences in the way work is created in Perth?

**Eva Grace Mullaley:** The industry is smaller over here but at the same time just as vibrant and diverse. When I moved to Hobart then Melbourne I started to understand that we’re not behind. Really innovative stuff was happening here but it’s just hard to get things out of Perth, because of the distance and costs. Aboriginal theater started here and we’re one year younger than Ilbejerri Theatre Company. We’re actually really similar companies but it’s just the size of our cities that is different. Yirra Yaakin began as a youth company but now serves the whole community. We have two main stages, program new work annually, host a blak writers group and develop educational programs.

Perth has also expanded hugely in the last 5 to 10 years, which is great, and Noongar people are so incredibly strong and proud of what they do. So yeah it’s hard to get the work out of Perth but why aren’t we bringing the world here?

**TB:** How do you stay hopeful when you think about how slow change can feel when it comes to issues like this?

**EGM:** Those of us who activate and become activists are slowly starting to be heard now by those on the other side. So while it looks like the world is in dire straits, and it is, we’re just dividing as new voices emerge. The rightwing mentality has always been dominant but that’s changing.

**TB:** Lastly, can you tell me about the Noongar Shakespeare project and the resurgence of language?

**EGM:** I’m really excited about it, we are developing Hecate, which is about bringing the old into the new. Kylie Bracknell [whose been working on the Noongar Shakespeare project from its inception] is completely adapting Macbeth with a new focus on the witches, and Hecat the head witch.

We recently staged Cracked, a show about a woman in the justice system who wanted to get back to her kids. One of the lines was ‘how many times do we have to pay for one mistake?’ It was a journey with 6 actors you could really relate to on that stage. And the main person we follow is Frankie who’s made mistakes, so her kids get taken off her and she’s put in the lock up and all she wants is them back. But the hoops she has to jump through in the justice system are just ridiculous and then her kids ostracize her because she’s been away for so long. And she just keeps falling through the cracks and reoffending so in the end she goes back into jail.

What I loved about the ending is that it’s real; there is no immediate happy ending. You’ve made one mistake but you’re stuck in the system. Cracked is about this and telling the world how the justice system is letting us down.

**EGM:** It’s literally our job to amplify Indigenous voice and tell an authentic truth and not allow for misrepresentation. I want people to see how relatable we are as individuals and fight stereotypes. I know how capable everyone is in our communities I just want the rest of the world to see us and understand that we’re not one culture even though we always get lumped together because that’s how white society see us. And I want to create work for wider audiences, not just whiter audiences!

**TB:** The theme of NAIDOC week asks for VOICE, TREATY and TRUTH. To be honest I think these themes resonate in our work and lives everyday but as an artistic director is there a particular way that the arts can enhance Aboriginal peoples’ role in decision making?

**EGM:** These scenes are usually cut out so Kylie wanted to put the focus back on the witches because the mythology relates to Aboriginal people and the matriarchal sense of the head or leader being a woman, which fits our culture. Ultimately the vision is to make it feel Shakespearean by keeping things like iambic pentameter verse through the language but doing it in Noongar. We want to ask what the world would look like if Noongar was the first language. It’s going to be an amazing undertaking, huge in scale, which needs to be done.

A scene from the dress rehearsal of Cracked. Credit: Dana Weeks

To learn more about Cracked, visit https://yirrayaakin.com.au/production/the-noongar-shakespeare-project/

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We want to ask what the world would look like if Noongar was the first language.”
Concrete Amnesia
Jeanine Leane, poet and writer

Jeanine Leane is a Wiradjuri poet and writer from southwest NSW. She has a PhD in Australian literature and Aboriginal representation and teaches creative writing and Aboriginal literature at the University of Melbourne. Her first volume of poetry, Dark Secrets After Dreaming: A.D. 1887-1961 (2010, Presspass) won the Scanlon Prize for Indigenous Poetry, 2010 and her first collection of stories, Purple Threads, won the David Unaipon Award for an unpublished Indigenous writer in 2010. In 2018 she released a collection of poetry called Walk Back Over, with Cordite.

Our Old Ones speak to us in the present through Country – bringing back many sleeping stories that white Australia ignored. Country is speaking now. Country is seething now with stories below the surface of the myth of settlement. Through writing I seek to give some voice back to Aboriginal places that are screaming to be heard under the colonial mythescape of settler buildings, monuments, plaques and signage.

There is unfinished business here. Beneath the concrete our memories are imprisoned. We are hostages.

The kidnapped memories of Aboriginal people are hostages beneath this white settler mythescape.

Hear us now. Release our words.

Set us free.

Beneath the concrete amnesia, voices can still be heard. There is understory rising. Listen.

Melbourne is Naarm her stories are stored in melaleuca etched in eucalypts flowing with the river living over time

Listen Let the stories rise. Guyayu – still and yet.

Reflecting on The Living Pavilion
An interview with Zena Cumpston, lead researcher for The Living Pavilion

Timmah Ball: How did the concept evolve and was it hard to develop?

Zena Cumpston: It was actually the 7th iteration of a project [The Living Stage] that Dr. Tanja Beer, who I worked with, developed. She’d done one in New York and all over Australia but she’d never actually engaged with Indigenous Knowledge. I was on board to create a place-making approach from an Aboriginal perspective by using native plants. I worked with Charles Solomon from Garawal Creative, as I’m not trained in horticulture, which was great. We decided early on that we wanted to create a specificity of place to celebrate Wurundjeri ways but it stretched out to include species from across the Kulin Nations.

TB: Built form disciplines, particularly architects, are increasingly grappling with colonialism and how to imbued Indigenous design principles into cities. Do you think that the Living Pavilion is an opportunity to show that we can change cities in ways that are simple and grounded?

ZC: One way to look at the question is, for example, to consider the use of concrete in cities and planning: concrete makes everything look neat and tidy. It creates a fresh palate for an architect to come along and develop their monument. But this can also remove other stories and shut everything down. When you have plants there instead it opens up stories and learning, especially when they’re Indigenous plants. There are no Indigenous plants that we don’t have stories for. Uncle Bruce Pascoe’s work has started to help people recognise this even more but there’s still so much work to be done. Planting as many native plants as possible all over the country is so important; all of our plants carry stories, which opens up new conversation across different disciplines.

TB: Given that universities are founded on western paradigms do you think these opportunities are part of the rise of blak culture and incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge into the academy?

ZC: A lot of places are still really far behind and I think people are starting to become embarrassed that we haven’t started incorporating Indigenous knowledge sooner. Since the Living Pavilion I’ve actually been asked to do a lot of guest lectures because people have never actually included this knowledge in their subjects before. It’s interesting that this knowledge and culture that is so old is suddenly conceived as new. I was quite shocked because I felt that what I was doing wasn’t new. There’s still so much work to be done to share this with wider audiences.

TB: The program ran as part of Climarte, which reflects a trend in using art to engage people around important issues like climate change. Did you have any thoughts on how to convince industries on the impact of these projects and how we remove stigmas in the sciences that these initiatives are ancillary or fluffy engagement, rather than a key to creating change?

ZC: To be honest, I just didn’t expect the pavilion to be so popular with such diverse people. Parents were bringing their kids, and people from all sorts of backgrounds were coming down to check it out as soon as they heard about it. I think most people really want to hear Aboriginal stories and if you get it right for Aboriginal people you get it right for everybody else. I think these projects are vital because you can’t just hammer people with bad news all of the time. The hard science of climate change is just so paralyzing at times. You also have to empower people and show new ways of doing things. So many people who visited asked me how to do this in their own backyards, already people wanted to start making these changes in their own homes. So we need other ways to think about the issues. I want to know that there are things that I can do which make me feel empowered and interested to learn more. I hope The Living Pavilion made people feel positive about the things that we can do by reinstating ecosystems that were once here and need to be here again.

Read Zena’s ‘Cultural and Ecological History’ of The Living Pavilion in the event program here: https://mesurban.edu.au/publications/resources/
Using comedy to connect and critique

An interview with Angelina Hurley, writer and co-presenter of radio show Wild Black Women

Angelina Hurley is a writer and a Doctoral candidate at Griffith University. Her heritage is of Jagera, Gooreng Gooreng, Mununjali, Birriah and Kamlariarri descent. In 2011, Angelina was awarded the Australian-American Fulbright Commission’s Indigenous Scholarship and she is now working on a study about Aboriginal humour. She is also co-presenter of radio show Wild Black Women with Dr. Chelsea Bond on Brisbane’s 98.9 FM Let’s Talk programme and featured on NITV. I spoke to her about the role of comedy to express identity and social issues.

Angelina Hurley: I grew up in an artistic family and I’ve worked in the arts my whole life. When I started writing I did it for the same reason that my dad, Ron Hurley, did through visual art. He told stories through his work. It was about ensuring that our stories and mob are immortalised in history. I dabbled in a few things but once I started writing it was just so satisfying and I loved it. I also realised that I have a knack for telling a good yarn and a funny story.

Comedy was really prevalent in my life and my whole family is funny. All the blak fella’s that I know are funny. We just like having a laugh - it’s part of our everyday existence and communication. It’s just who we are. I don’t think mainstream Australia sees it enough and understands how we are in an everyday way. We are funny people.

**TB:** Why do you think comedy is a vehicle for change?

**AH:** I’ve worked all over the place in education, cultural awareness training, arts management and developing protocols. I felt so much burnout and I thought there has to be an easy way to do this. Humour is a way of addressing serious issues in a less confronting way sometimes, depending on it’s delivery. I don’t think it’s less important for serious issues to be expressed in a funny way, it’s great to share these really big issues humorously and it’s also very cathartic for me.

**TB:** Your radio show Wild Blak Women with Dr. Chelsea Bond is growing in popularity. How did it evolve?

**AH:** It’s been going for two years and it happened quite spontaneously. Chelsea was already doing the Let’s Talk program. I just came in one day to talk about my Doctoral work. We just started talking about serious issues. We were commenting on the news and sending articles to each other and having a laugh about stuff that was trending on social media and also getting wild about it. It was fun so we continued and called it Wild Black Women, so each week we talk about what made us wild!

We’re now a weekly show on 98.9fm with a segment also on NITV’s The Point program. We’ve attracted wide audiences, focusing on Blak women, but also everybody who is so happy to hear Blak women on the radio. Our inclusion and voices as Blak women is very important and needs to be heard. We are all wild, black, smart and deadly. The non-Indigenous audiences are really learning a lot from us, we get a lot of positive feedback from them, and blak fellas have just been so happy to hear mob telling it like it is and having a laugh about issues in our lives.

“**When I started writing I did it for the same reason that my dad, Ron Hurley, did through visual art. He told stories through his work. It was about ensuring that our stories and mob are immortalised in history.”**

**TB:** Wild Black Women has highlighted some really important issues and addressed misogyny, particularly around the appalling comments made by comedian Trevor Noah about the appearance of Indigenous women. Did you think this would be such a strong focus?

**AH:** It was just a non-brainer, we’re not going to hold back on anyone. I think we pedestal celebrities too much. It doesn’t matter who you are if you’re acting inappropriately you should be called out on your behaviour. I don’t think we should shy away from letting people get away with stuff. We don’t discriminate - it doesn’t matter who they are! Our show is not about policing anyone; it’s about having a discussion to understand that maybe some stuff just isn’t right. It’s just so important to have Blak female voices talking about issues. We invite a lot of sistas on the show, as you don’t hear or see enough of us in the mainstream, in my opinion.

**TB:** What are you working on next?

**AH:** I just got back from a Varuna writers residency to develop my book, it’s a family story I have wanted to write for a long time. Wild Black Women’s dream is to extend, to travel the show, take it out to the mob. It would be great to do something live yarning with different communities. We’d also love a tv show or web series. General I have heaps of stories on the burner that I want to get out - so there’s a lot going on!

Read more of Angelina’s writing on her blog: [http://wombaworld09.blogspot.com/](http://wombaworld09.blogspot.com/)

From the 1st to the 17th of May, The Living Pavilion temporarily transformed the landscape at the future site of Murrup Barak, Melbourne University’s Institute for Indigenous Development. The Indigenous-led project was both an event space and living laboratory that celebrated Indigenous knowledge, ecological science and sustainable design through participatory arts practice. The installation’s 40,000 Kulin Nation plants were a “portal” to understanding Indigenous knowledge systems and a way to demonstrate both the importance of endemic species and the skill of the First Peoples in knowing and caring for the land.

We’ve included some of our favourite images from The Living Pavilion here.

A stencil of the reimagined Bouverie Creek, created by graphic designer Dixon Patten, ran through the centre of the installation. Credit: Isabel Kimpton

There were approximately 100 contributors who helped bring The Living Pavilion together. Pictured here (L-R): Jeff Beavis, Tanja Beer, Randall Wee, Charles Solomon, Zena Cumpston, Jeremy Taylor, Kirsten Parris, Adrian Grey and Cathy Oke. Credit: Isabel Kimpton

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Mandy Nicholson from the Diri Diri Dance Group, Mitch Tambo (True Culture Australia) and his brother Zeke performing at the opening ceremony. Credit: Sarah Fisher

Zena Cumpston hosting one of her river mint workshops. Participants learnt about the species and its uses, as well as how to propagate and take care of it at home. Credit: Isabel Kimpton

People wandering through the Indigenous Community Garden, which featured Indigenous staple foods from around Australia. These plant signs (designed by 226 Strategic with illustrations from graphic designer Dixon Patten) used research conducted by Zena. Credit: Sarah Fisher

The Living Pavilion was a co-production and collaboration with THRIVE Hub (Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning), CAUL Hub, The University of Melbourne's New Student Precinct, and CLIMARTE's ART+CLIMATE=CHANGE 2019 Festival. The Living Pavilion’s major horticultural and design partners were the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) and Ecodynamics.

For more information, visit: https://students.unimelb.edu.au/student-precinct/project-updates/the-living-pavilion

For more information on the research being conducted through The Living Pavilion visit: https://placeagency.org.au/the-living-pavilion/

The Living Pavilion: Photo Gallery