

Transcription Chris Barker in collaboration with James Henry (Yalinguth App)
Unfinished Business,

GERTRUDE STREET PROJECTION FESTIVAL

Speaking: Chris Barker [0s - 3.33minutes]

My name is Chris Barker and the artwork I'm presenting is called Unfinished Business. It's a collaboration between James Henry, the Yalinguth working group, Graham BJ Braven, and the Orca collective. And it's presented in the Gertrude Street Projection Festival of 2021. Unfinished Business celebrates the fantastic artwork of BJ in his response to the recording and sharing of stories that's been included in the Yalinguth App, which is a spatial audio tour of Gertrude Street, in Fitzroy. What you see in the work is two great white gums, opposite Atherton Gardens carrying a projection. That's animating BJ's work, drawn up from the landscape being drawn up like water, in a continuous flow from the ground. Uh, that's what the stories are, they're the life and water of culture and of people. So the idea of Unfinished Business is important because there's never an end to stories, they can't be kept or stored away, uh, it's good to remember that. So that work tries to be representative of this never ending flowing thing, which is cleaving to the landscape itself.

I work in the master of animation games and interactivity in the school of design at RMIT and in my own practice has involved a lot of projection, a lot of animation, coding, and I'm particularly interested in the feedback loops that arise from the act of being in and on the landscape. Um, I'm a plein air landscape painter too, but right now it's the Yalinguth project, which is a spatial audio walking tour of Fitzroy, that's so close to my heart, it's been five years or more in the development and has been, and it continues to be the most amazing collaboration with some of the most talented and wonderful people all across the working group. Uh, people who have offered stories, talents, designs, organisation, production, amazing group of people.

Everybody has been working so hard to make the project what it is, and to allow for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to exist right in the place where they arose rather than being tucked away in institutional collections. Um, it's amazing, uh, project and everybody are encouraged to take a walk through Gertrude Street with the app right now.

How will I look in 500 years? Pft -I don't know, I shudder to think that we'll continue to burn and poison ourselves, paving paradise, and then launch the leviathan and then press ourselves off into oblivion. That's scary. Um, if in 500 years there's still frogs, moss, dripping eaves and cold winds that, um, cause moms and dads to pull beanies over their heads of their kids. Then I think that's a good enough portrait for me. My final statement, keep it simple, take a walk and listen.

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Speaking: James Henry [3.33 - minutes]

My name's James Henry and I'm one of the artists involved in the projection *Unfinished Business* presented in the Gertrude Street Projection Festival 2021. Well, I guess my contribution to the artwork is to have faces of some of the local Elders being projected up onto the scrim between a couple of trees and the nature of it and the size of their heads and the positioning. I kind of thought it might be nice to have somewhat of a moving image so that they could represent some of the Elders and Ancestors and the spirit of the area. Having these faces up there. I wanted to make sure that they were seen as being there in the present, and they were watching what was going on and they were engaging with the people walking past. So, sometimes they make eye contact and sometimes they look down the street and look around at the other projections, and hopefully seem like they're enjoying themselves like many of the other people will be when they walk down Gertrude street.

I'm primarily a commercial photographer, so I'm taking photos on behalf of other people being there to tell their story and to be able to interpret what their goals are. There's a little bit of an artistic slant that I contribute to whatever I'm doing. Although I think where I find my experience comes into play, is being able to interpret the different needs of the clients, the community, and also what might be considered acceptable law, appreciated practice on behalf of Aboriginal people that I might be representing, not just the local community, but then also there are certain things that you should do and shouldn't do. And I'd like to think for the most part, I get that right. It's probably worth acknowledging that we filmed all of this via zoom. We had a couple of dates planned that got canceled because of COVID to do the filming. So we had to think of something, a way to be able to make it happen, and we had to make that decision via zoom meeting.

And with that, we just saw all the faces up on the screen and kind of thought, oh well, that's kind of why we're looking to do anyway, but recorded with better quality lights and better quality cameras. But considering that, that was our only option, I thought that it was possible. We just had to teach some of the Elders how to make the most of the technology and the lighting and, and give them some direction. So I really appreciate their patience in trying this out and having a light shown on their face for a few minutes, and doing something a little bit out of the ordinary, not really knowing what to expect with the outcome.

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I reckon personally, in another 500 years, I would be more inclined to look like myself, although maybe I might have a couple of microchips here and there inserted just to make the most of connectivity or just being able to use what I use with technology, but have it a bit more un-intrusive and just be able to walk around and be able to know where I'm going, be able to have certain uncertainties taken care of.

I reckon there would be a lot of people that would look different in regards to the different degrees of technology incorporated into their natural body. I reckon people probably get a lot fatter. They probably won't need to use their bodies as much as we once used to, and other people would still, yeah, go on and appreciate living a natural healthy, happy life. So I think humans will look a lot different to each other in another 500 years than they do now.