

Canal to Creek

WestConnex

Transurban

THE WESTCONNEX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VADEA
NSW

VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

JASON WING

BUTU WARGUN | STAGE 4 WORKSHEET



Jason Wing
Butu Wargun



CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

VOCABULARY - large-scale, mural, surreal, fluorescent, dynamic, representational, semi-abstract, abstract expressionism, multi-disciplinary, stenciling, graffiti, street art, colonialism, motif, public art, poly-cultural, reconciliation

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTWORK

Butu Wargun is a significantly large-scale, outdoor mural work that incorporates surreal, fluorescent colours that are bold and dynamic. Subject matter is both representational and semi-abstract against the highly abstract expressive nature of the background. Bird figures are transparent and ghostlike, flying in chaotic formations that evoke a battle. The sheer scale of the work and the fact that it spills out over other buildings and the foot-path make it an unavoidable and immersive artwork.

Butu Wargun is an historical narrative work that connects to the site. It celebrates Pemulwuy the Rainbow Warrior and his war of resistance against colonial settlers. Pemulwuy is represented by the dominant birdman motif and he was a very important Bidjigal man of the Eora nation in the late 18th century because he led the Aboriginal campaign of resistance against the colonising forces. He did this by using the Cooks River as a major artery for connecting clans and transporting warriors - an incredibly important site-specific history showing this Bidjigal hero in context. The concept is of Pemulwuy 'popping up' unexpectedly and being everywhere at once.

Who was Pemulwuy?

Why is he important to Aboriginal History?



ARTWORK / STRUCTURAL FRAME

Butu Wargun wraps around the large concrete retaining wall of the motorway in vibrant colours of green, pink, yellow, hues of blue and tones of black and white. The birds are stencilled across the background in a range of colours and tones themselves. These vibrant colours, shapes and forms are scattered strategically to create movement. These elements are supported by principles of unity, repetition and balance within the composition to create discussion on the display of symbolism dominated by a motif of a bird/warrior - Pemulwuy, who is symbolically represented as a leader in battle. His links to the crow symbolise his escape from colonial forces.

The competing colours and forms contribute to a sense of chaos that alludes to a war or battle setting. The birds appear to be like planes in battle and the part human figure appears astride a horse like soldiers of the past astride their horses.

Hollow in design, to allow the background to dominate the composition, the birds are positioned and featured in flight representing a movement through the area. The repetition of these images has been created through the stencilling method and creates a sense of unity.

Explain the symbolism of the Pemulwuy motif.

Describe the features of *Butu Wargun* that give it a battle quality.



ARTIST

Jason Wing is a Sydney based artist of both Chinese and Aboriginal heritage. Born in 1977, Wing's formative years were spent immersed in Asian cultures in the western Sydney suburb of Cabramatta. Wing began as a street artist and has since expanded his practice to incorporate photo media, installation and painting.

What aspects of Wings work remind you of street art

ARTMAKING TASK

Students will be creating their own painting using the stencilling and spray-paint technique employed by Jason Wing. While the task suggests birds, students can use any theme and be given a variety of objects to create a large-scale group painting.

1. Collect the following items to create your own stencil design: paper, pencil, scissors or stencil knife, acrylic paint, paint brush, non-toxic spray paint (minimum 2 colours), tape, canvas board, face mask
2. Paint the canvas board a bright colour (or colours) with acrylic paint using the brush
3. Collect images of birds and print them out
4. Cut out the birds and create your stencil. Keep both pieces (if you can) because they can both be stencils
5. Watch this video clip - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSNvXI-wVdw>
6. Tape your stencil into place on the canvas board
7. Ensure you are in a well-ventilated area and cover the surface you will be painting on
8. When you are ready, put on your face mask
9. Spray the stencil - allow to dry
10. Repeat as many times as you want with different colours and different shapes
11. Experiment with light coats and more opaque coats
12. Consider not completing the whole object