

Artist: Bronwyn Bancroft

Acknowledgement of artwork



Artwork by Bronwyn Bancroft, Aboriginal artist and designer, of Bundjalung descent www.bronwynbancroft.com

Bronwyn interprets her painting as follows:

‘This painting represents the vitality of learning and the glory in the attainment of knowledge, and through that wisdom. Collaboration and cooperation are the basic tenets on which we as humans survive, and how we learn to respect’.

**Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching
University of Melbourne 11-12-09**



The Power and the Passion: Can Indigenous teachers change the world?

Associate Professor Susan Page,
Warawara Department of Indigenous Studies
Macquarie University



Our research background



Research projects :

- Indigenous Academic Voices: Stories from the tertiary education frontline (Page & Asmar)
 - Qualitative projects
 - 23 participants, 11 universities, 7 states/territories
 - Data analysis using NVivo #2
- 2010 - Indigenous academics in the disciplines: Productive, peripheral or pioneering? (Asmar & Page)



Can Indigenous academics change the world?



Case example



I teach anatomy and I thought Aboriginal people were meant to be really good visually, visual learners, so why don't **they** do better in anatomy? And I looked at him and ...what runs through my head is how do I now have a discussion with you about, one, the stereotyping of learning cultures, two, individual approaches...

I was gobsmacked,

So now I'm thinking **I actually need to run a lecture** ... about Indigenous learning styles, what that really means, what our knowledges are of that,... introduce to them the concept that you will have Indigenous Australians who come from everything from middle class private schools through to no school.

What issues connect with teaching, for Indigenous academics?



Difference	20	(87%)
Stress	14	(61%)
Workload	13	(57%)
Satisfaction	13	(57%)
Career	12	(52%)
Identity	11	(48%)

(N=23)

Power and Passion

Teaching Indigenous Students



We want to empower our own people and teach the knowledge that we've gained through our studies (Int # 11)

As far as I'm concerned my commitment to this position is about all Indigenous students accessing university (Int # 15)

...I enjoy my role as an Indigenous person teaching Indigenous students, ...I see it as a very significant ...role for me as an Indigenous person teaching Indigenous students ...if they take me on as a role model ...that's something to be proud of. (Int # 17)

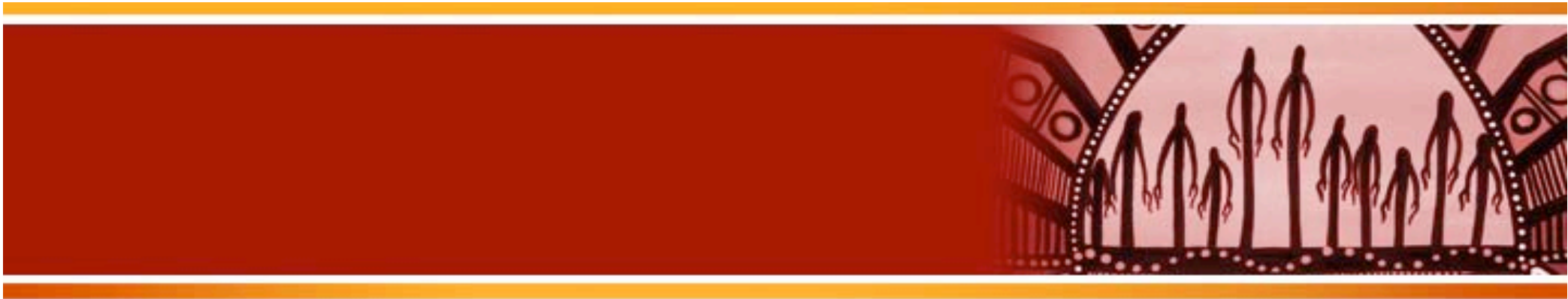
But I love what I do, I love the students... I mean, yeah, you see the lights come on and its great, you know. (Int # 18)

Power and Passion

Teaching Non-Indigenous Students



- like thinking about non-Indigenous students, like I really want them to have complex understanding so, and people who are able to create a safe, open space because they won't necessarily find that in the Aboriginal community, (Int # 15)
- ...the first few weeks we deal with guilt, and so we acknowledge that guilt, but we say that doesn't make change for us, if you're here to be in education for social justice, your guilt won't give my community change. So get over your guilt and start to make change. (In # 11)



Changing the World??



Teaching

Student support

‘Student support is integral to what we do.’

‘Our number one priority has been Indigenous students.’

‘How do we legitimise the time we spend per person per week?’

Cultural awareness work

...‘if you don’t do it no one else will’ and sometimes it’s ‘you should do it because you really need to tell everyone else’. And these aren’t just for the benefit of us ... its for the benefit of the community ... You can’t not do it. You really need to do it. ... (#21)

Final word to an Indigenous academic who wants to change the world (and why)



And I said, yes, my social justice agenda cannot be met by the boundaries of the position that you're asking me to apply for. ...I don't want to be a black white academic. If I just came into the school and started teaching in the subjects that exist now, then I would die, you know. And it would just not meet any of the requirements of my family or my community in this role at the university.

Recent Publications



Asmar, C., Mercier, O. Ripeka, & Page, S. (2009) 'You do it from your core': Priorities, perceptions and practices of research among Indigenous academics in Australian and New Zealand universities. In A. Brew & L. Lucas (Eds.), *Academic Research and Researchers*. McGraw Hill.

Asmar, C. & Page, S. (2009) 'Sources of satisfaction and stress among Indigenous academic teachers: Findings from a national Australian study.' *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*. Vol 29, No. 3, September, pp 387-401.

Page, S. & Asmar, C. 2008 'Beneath the teaching iceberg: Exposing the hidden support dimensions of Indigenous academic work.' *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, Vol 37S, pp. 109-117.

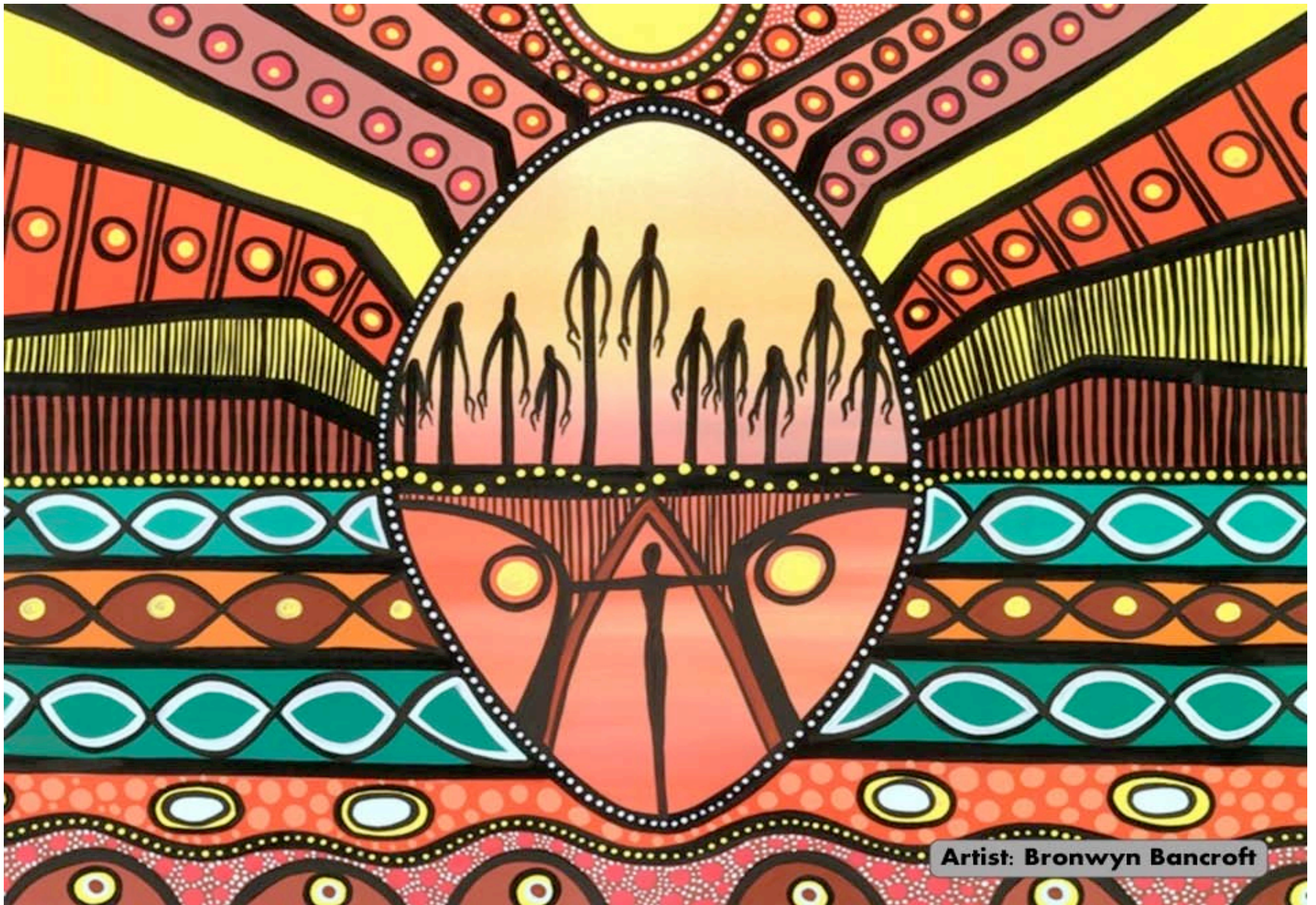
Thank You



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