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Sharing Pacific Lives in Australia: Oceania Working Party Workshop Namba 1

by Oceania Working Party of the Australian Dictionary of Biography

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Date And Time

Thu, 11 February 2021

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM AEDT

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Location

Online Event

**Sharing Pacific Lives in Australia: Oceania Working Party Workshop Namba 1**

About this Event

The Oceania Working Party's first workshop for 2021 will focus on "Sharing Pacific Lives in Australia". The 3-hour session will begin with a keynote from Tolai artist Lisa Hilli with moderation by Papua New Guinean actress and writer Wendy Mocke. The talk will outline her critical and creative work in telling the stories of Melanesian women during World War II through her Australian War Memorial Commission (2018-2020) on the [F.M.I. Sisters of Vunapope](#). Following this will be two workshops around the questions "What are the different ways to tell and share Pacific lives?" and "What is the significance of this process of telling/sharing Pacific-Australian lives?".



From Lisa Hilli's [website](#):

"At the risk of their own lives, the F.M.I. Sisters dedicated themselves to providing locally grown produce to Australian, European and Unserdeutsch children who were held captive at Ramale prisoner of war camp for almost three years. As an Australian War Memorial commissioned artist, I chose to highlight war histories that relate to women, in particular Papua New Guinean women. Photographed inside the liberated camp in 1945, twelve F.M.I. Sisters are veiled and adorned with flowers that reference some of the seventeen nationalities

among the 300 civilians whom they helped keep alive at Ramale during the Second World War. Forty-five black cinctures honour the efforts and make visible the names of the F.M.I. Sisters."

Speakers

Lisa Hilli is passionate about sharing Melanesian histories through storytelling experiences. As a contemporary artist Lisa uses her practice to creatively research gender and body politics, adornment, matrilineality, and indigenous and colonial history interpreted through art. Lisa is a descendant of the Gunantuna (Tolai) people of Papua New Guinea. She holds an MFA by Research from RMIT University. She is a member of the PowerhouseGalang, an international indigenous think tank for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, an advisor for the School of Art, RMIT University and fellow member of the Oceania Working Party for the Australian Dictionary of Biography. Lisa is an incoming PhD researcher at the ANU.

Wendy Mocke is a Papua New Guinean inter-disciplinary storyteller. She is a NIDA Acting graduate and currently an emerging writer at Sydney Theatre Company. Wendy has performed on stages across Sydney and last year her play 'Jelbu Meri', who she co-wrote with Pheobe Grainer, was featured in Darlinghurst Theatre Company's development program 'Next In Line'. Wendy previously undertook a residency at Rex Cramphorn Studio for a verbatim theatre piece she devised called 'Voices of West Papua'. Wendy's visual art's project called 'm e r i', a collection of photographs and stories that focuses on the re-contextualising contemporary PNG women, will be exhibited later this year at North Site Contemporary Arts Gallery in Cairns, Far north Queensland. One of Wendy's quests as a writer and artist is to make alive what is quiet and asleep in Melanesian stories and unpack the myriad of layers that is Black Pacific Islander identity.

Organisers

The [Oceania Working Party](#) is chaired by Katerina Teaiwa and funded since 2020 by [CHL](#), the Oceania Working Party is one of ten specialised working parties at the [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#) (ADB) tasked with drawing up lists of individuals for inclusion in the ADB and giving advice on appropriate authors. The working party consists of 22 experts in the fields of Pacific History and Pacific Studies and uses [Pacific Biography in Australia](#) as its platform for disseminating news, research and other findings.

SCHEDULE:

Part 1 (9:30am-10:30am):

Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome by Katerina Teaiwa

Introduction of Wendy Mocke by Katerina Teaiwa

Introduction of Lisa Hilli by Wendy Mocke

Keynote by Lisa Hilli on the F.M.I. Vunapope Project for the Australian War Memorial

Q&A discussion facilitated by Wendy Mocke

Part 2 (10:30am-11:30am):

Workshop facilitated by Katerina Teaiwa on "What are the different ways to tell and share Pacific lives? "

Part 3 (11:30am-12:30pm):

Workshop facilitated by Katerina Teaiwa on "What is the significance of this process of telling/ sharing Pacific-Australian lives? For the families/descendants and communities of those whose stories are told? For contemporary Pacific - Australian communities? For Australia-Pacific relations?"

* Please note all times are in Canberra/Sydney time (GMT+11)

* Please direct questions to OceaniaWorkingParty@gmail.com

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Oceania Working Party Of The Australian Dictionary Of Biography

Organiser of Sharing Pacific Lives in Australia: Oceania Working Party Workshop Namba 1

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