

The Kaurna Women's Collective, Sisters of Lartelare, 2024, installation view, Adelaide Contemporary Experimental. Photography by Sam Roberts.

Kaurna Women's Art Collective: *Sisters of Lartelare*

Exhibition Kit

This exhibition kit has been developed by ACE Education to support student learning and engagement with the ACE exhibition *Sisters of Lartelare*. Inside, you'll find a curatorial overview, background information on the artists, and insights into selected artworks.

The kit includes discussion prompts to encourage critical thinking, along with a flexible activity designed for use in the classroom or gallery setting. Educators can adapt the content to suit primary or secondary students, integrating it into broader visual arts, history, or cultural studies learning.

ACE

About the Exhibition

Sisters of Lartelare, led by emerging Kaurna leader Bonny Brodie and the Kaurna Woman's Art Collective, is an intergenerational exhibition grounded in care and cultural continuity. Running from 31 August – 19 October 2024 at ACE, it marks the Collective's first formal institutional presentation, building on workshops, cultural mapping, and public engagement since 2022.

Through storytelling, discussions, and skill-sharing with First Nations women leaders, the exhibition highlights practices such as scent distillation from native Kaurna plants and textile dyeing, connecting deeply with cultural memory, land, and ecological knowledge. At its heart is Lartelare, a Kaurna woman born in 1851 (Bonny Brodie's grandmother's grandmother), whose legacy anchors the project in family, community, and ancestral strength.

Supported by Arts South Australia, the City of Adelaide, and in partnership with Vitalstatistix, Sisters of Lartelare is not only an exhibition but a cultural act of preservation, resistance, and intergenerational knowledge-sharing for future generations.



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About the artists



The Kaurna Women's Collective.

The Kaurna Women's Art Collective, established in 2022 brings together Aboriginal women connected to Yartapuulti-Port Adelaide. Now led by emerging Kaurna Leader Bonnie Brodie, with guidance from Aunty Margaret Brodie, the collective is dedicated to celebrating and preserving Kaurna culture through creative projects.

Selected Artworks

At the heart of the installation is a collection of hand-dyed textiles and weavings created using native Kaurna plants. The Collective engaged in collaborative workshops to extract natural dyes and scents from species such as eucalyptus, acacia, and other local botanicals. These plant-based processes not only create visually striking textiles but also embed ecological and cultural knowledge into the very fabric of the work. The dyed cloths, often suspended or draped within the gallery, recall ceremonial spaces or domestic environments, evoking both sacred and everyday Kaurna life.

Scent plays a vital role in the installation. Hydrols distilled from native plants permeate the space, grounding visitors in the sensory reality of Kaurna Yerta (land). The olfactory experience offers a powerful, non-verbal connection to Country, memory, and intergenerational storytelling.

Video and audio components layer the space with spoken reflection from the artists, soundscapes from Port Adelaide, and stories passed down from Lartelare and her descendants. These elements give voice to both personal and communal histories, placing Kaurna women at the center of the narrative.

Together, the installation resists colonial erasure by making Kaurna presence, knowledge, and creativity visible and visceral. It is not just an art display, but a living expression of sovereignty, cultural survival, and collective strength across generations of First Nations Women.



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Discussion

- How do the artists use native plants to create colour and scent? What might these materials tell us about the environment and Kaurna knowledge of Country?
- The installation uses sight, sound, and smell. How do our senses help us remember, connect, or tell stories?
- This artwork makes Kaurna women's presence and stories visible. How can art be a way to share identity, resist erasure, and celebrate culture?

Gallery Discussion

- Sisters of Lartelare is a multi-sensory exhibition led by emerging Kaurna leader Bonny Brodie, with guidance from Aunty Margaret Brodie, aiming to open new understandings of Kaurna history, stories, and culture connected to Yartapuulti (Port Adelaide). What does "Sisters of Lartelare" mean to you? How does this exhibition challenge or expand your understanding of Indigenous art and culture?
- The exhibition features a range of artworks, including textile installations, scent distillation, and cultural mapping, created through intergenerational collaboration. How do these diverse mediums contribute to the storytelling in the exhibition? Which medium resonated with you the most, and why?
- The project focuses on understanding cultural practices from a range of First Nations female leaders and learning new skills in distilling scent from native plants. Why is it important to learn and preserve traditional knowledge and practices? How can engaging with these practices deepen our connection to the land and culture?

Classroom Activity

- Brainstorm words or images that come to mind when you think about connection to land and culture. These could be related to:
  – Natural elements (plants, animals, water)
  – Cultural practices (storytelling, ceremonies, art)
  – Personal experiences (family, community, heritage)
- Using natural materials (e.g., leaves, clay, fabric, recycled items), create a piece that represents your personal connection to land and culture. Consider incorporating elements that reflect your identity, experiences, or aspirations. Experiment with different materials and techniques to express your ideas.
- Bring the class artworks together in a group display. How do the individual artworks reflect the diverse connections to land and culture among your peers? What common themes or differences emerge when viewing the works collectively?
- Walk around and reflect on the artworks. What new perspectives or ideas have you gained from seeing your classmates' creations? How does this activity deepen your understanding of your own connection to land and culture?

Further Reources

- The Kaurna Womens Art Collective / Lartelare, OSCA, article
- Unearthing layers of Country and Culture, In Daily, article
- Kaurna Women's Art Collective 'Sisters of Lartelare' Entry Wall Text, Youtube, video

Curriculum Links

Australian Curriculum / Visual Art /
Years 11–12 SACE Objectives

- Implement ideas and representations
- Apply literacy skills
- Analyse and interpret visual language, expression and meaning in art
- Evaluate art practices, traditions, cultures, and theories
- Experiment in response to stimulus
- Create meaning through the knowledge and understanding of art materials, techniques, technologies, and processes
- Realise responses to communicate meaning

Australian Curriculum / Visual Arts /
Years F-10

- Use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks (AC9AVAFD01 - AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVAFC02 - AC9AVA10C02)
- Explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations (AC9AVAFE01 - AC9AVA10E01) (AC9AVAFE02 - AC9AVA10E02)
- Respond to art works and consider where and why people make them, including visual art works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (AC9AVAFE01 - AC9AVA10E01) (AC9AVAFE02 - AC9AVA10E02)
- Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how they use materials, techniques, technologies, and processes (AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVA10D02)
- Practice techniques and processes to enhance representation of ideas in their art making (AC9AVAFD01 - AC9AVA10D01) (AC9AVAFC02 - AC9AVA10C02)

Visit Us

Adelaide Contemporary Experiemntal

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Tours

We welcome visits from education groups, primary through to tertiary, and encourage self-guided visits to our exhibitions. For more information about how to book, visit our website or email us.

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Curator: Rayleen Forester

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'Sisters of Lartelare' Project partner: Vitalstatistix

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