

# MEDIA RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2016



## CONNECTING TO SALTWATER COUNTRY

We are delighted to announce the beginning of our Summer Program with the major international touring exhibition **Saltwater Country** alongside our own exhibition, **Lake Macquarie: Living Cultures**. Both exhibitions make links to culture and place, with a strong connection to 'saltwater' country.



After touring Washington D.C., The Netherlands, and regional centres across Australia, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery is the final destination for the acclaimed **Saltwater Country**. This extraordinary exhibition features celebrated Indigenous artists such as Vernon Ah Kee, Fiona Foley, Michael Cook, Judy Watson, and Daniel Boyd. Together the works highlight historical, environmental and personal concerns, while utilising these artists' strong cultural connections to their saltwater country – Queensland's coastline, sea and waterways. *Saltwater Country* is a partnership between Museums & Galleries Queensland and Gold Coast City Gallery, curated by Michael Aird and Virginia Rigney.

**Lake Macquarie: Living Cultures** is the first of an ongoing series that will explore stories related to the original Aboriginal people and the people who have joined them here since the late 1770s from cultures and countries all over the world. It will not present definitive historical research, but rather the possibilities of a 'museum with a difference' – a space where history, memory and culture intersect with contemporary art and artists to convey a broader picture of Lake Macquarie.

The first exhibition focuses on 'working watercraft' on the Lake – cargo vessels, ferries and a traditional canoe made by the Aboriginal community as part of cultural revival. Stories will be told through objects, photographs, maps and works from the gallery's collection and commissioned artworks by Luke Beezley and Maggie Hensel-Brown, responding to 'ship building' and 'bathers for hire', respectively. This exhibition is a gallery project coordinated by Debbie Abraham and Joanna O'Toole with the Aboriginal Reference Group and researcher Marianne Rogers.



**Exhibition Dates: 11 November 2016 – 29 January 2017**

**OPENING CELEBRATION: Sunday 20 November (Free event, all welcome)**

**Join us for a great afternoon of activities:** from 12 noon Acknowledgement of Country, Aboriginal dancers, free kids' activities and a community barbecue; then at 1.30pm the **official opening** by Gallery Director **Debbie Abraham** with *Saltwater Country* artist **Judy Watson**, members of the ARG **Doug Archibald** and **Scott Luschwitz** with the gallery's acting Curatorial Assistant **Joanna O'Toole**. Refreshments from 2.30pm.

For further information and images please contact Laura Wilson or Debbie Abraham on (02) 49210382 or [lwilson@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lwilson@lakemac.nsw.gov.au)



Left: **Michael Cook**, *Civilised #13* 2012  
Inkjet print on paper, 123 x 109 cm (framed)  
Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker  
Art Dealer, Brisbane

Right: Aboriginal Reference Group,  
*model canoes* 2016, courtesy the makers