

## Sovereign Ideas



### Introduction

**Sovereign Ideas** is a unique event for school students highlighting the careers of iconoclastic young Indigenous Australian thinkers and leaders. **Sovereign Ideas** presents an encouraging narrative of possibilities that counter stereotypes, stigmas and tropes from one of Australia's most iconic locations.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, National NAIDOC Week 2020 celebrations will be held 8-15 November. The theme **Always Was, Always Will Be**, recognises that First Nations Peoples have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were Australia's first explorers, first navigators, first engineers, first farmers, first scientists, first diplomats, first astronomers and first artists. The 2020 theme invites all Australians to embrace the true history of this country and look to the future through **Sovereign Ideas**.

Influential artists and thinkers presenting at **Sovereign Ideas** from the Sydney Opera House include:

**Rhyan Clapham** aka DOBBY is a rapper and drummer of Filipino and Aboriginal heritage. He is a member of the Murrawarri Republic in Weilmoringle, NSW, and the winner of the inaugural Peter Sculthorpe Music Fellowship for an emerging composer.

**Emily Johnson** is the talented young illustrator behind the concept art for the *Blackie Blackie Brown: The Traditional Owner of Death* animation. Emily has recently found fame on TikTok where she unpacks racist stereotypes.

**Corey Tutt** is an Indigenous mentor and STEM champion. He is the founder of DeadlyScience, an initiative that provides science books and resources to remote schools in Australia. Tutt is the 2020 NSW Young Australian of the Year.

**Lille Madden** is a proud Arrernte, Bundjalung and Kalkadoon woman from Gadigal country. After working at Taronga Conservation Society in the Australian Fauna Precinct, Lille was the Natural Areas Aboriginal Heritage Officer with the Sutherland Shire Council. She is currently the Sydney coordinator for Seed Mob, the Indigenous Youth Climate Network.

**Rachael Hocking** is a Warlpiri woman with roots in the Tanami Desert of the Northern Territory. She has been a reporter and presenter for NITV since 2015.



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### Biennale of Sydney

1. Research the First Nations artists, collectives and artworks exhibited across the 47-year history of the Biennale of Sydney.
2. Create a timeline of ideas and images that shows the development and progression of First Nations arts and culture in this context.
3. Select a favourite artist and artwork from this timeline and describe the following:
  - What materials were used in the work?
  - Where was the artwork exhibited?
  - Other than the artist, who might have been involved in its production?
  - What themes was the artist exploring in the artwork?
  - How is the artwork related to the theme of the exhibition it was presented in?

### Activism

Richard Bell's **Embassy project** was exhibited outside the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia for the 20th Biennale of Sydney in 2016.

This project commenced in 2013 and has toured to a range of exhibitions and venues.

- Why was the Aboriginal Tent Embassy established? Who was involved? What impact did it set out to achieve?
- How has Bell continued the original themes and purpose of Aboriginal Tent Embassy in his Embassy project?
- How have audiences engaged with the work in different locations over time?

### Site History and Architecture

Using **Barani: Sydney's Aboriginal History** resource on Bennelong, research and analyse the history of Bennelong Point, the site of today's Sydney Opera House.

Consider Archie Moore's ***A Home Away From Home (Bennelong/Vera's Hut)*** exhibited for the 20th Biennale of Sydney in 2016.

- How does Moore's work create a sense of personal memory and identity?
- How does this challenge traditional ideas of national identity and the aesthetic of other houses, landmarks, and buildings in Australia?

### Curriculum Links

General capabilities

- Literacy
- Creative and Critical Thinking
- Information and Communication Technology Capability
- Personal and Social Capability
- Ethical Understanding
- Intercultural Understanding

Cross-curriculum priorities

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
- Sustainability