

She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not...

In 1995 I was fortunate to be invited to exhibit, my first solo exhibition, at Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, in Melbourne. By 1996 I had created about ten new artworks, most were included in that exhibition: *Dark Secrets/Home Truths*, and one of which was this artwork: *She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not...*

During that period of art ideas development, while living in Hobart and undertaking postgraduate art studies at the University of Tasmania I visited family in Sydney, and there researched the collections in the State Library of NSW (SLNSW) to find several extensive, disturbing sets of photographs of Aboriginal people produced by Government agencies in NSW. One of these sets was of 'Aborigines Day' at George Place, Sydney, dated c.1966. It documented in detail a large gathering, an event at which a number of Aboriginal children were being held by non Aboriginal woman, and both women and children didn't look happy. At the time in the SLNSW the photographic collection was eminently accessible. The catalogue computer system connected directly to a printer which for, I think 20 cents, printed individual images on a type of fax paper. I obsessively printed the pictures of the unhappy children and 'mother'/guardians, and wondered about them, as I still do.

I was born in 1965, and at the time of making this art response piece I was trying to understand what had happened in Australia to Aboriginal people in my own lifetime, and beyond my immediate family. The enormity of what has and still impacts on First Peoples in Australia and globally from colonial invader peoples/Governments is so cross generationally destructive and genocidal, that our resilience is beyond remarkable.

These children's experience, being held by cultural/relational strangers in that public square in 1966, impressed upon me how very lucky I was, born in 1965, to not have also suffered directly under government policies by, for example, my removal from family, as happened in my own lifetime to so many other Aboriginal children.

At the same time as I found these images I located a second series of photographs in the library also documenting Aboriginal children. From about the same year it depicted Aboriginal children in hundreds of frames/images supposedly having 'fun' at Luna Park, Sydney. They were so over recorded on so many rides at the amusement park that sinister Official intent is also obvious. These images appear a premeditated means to document good Government policy and 'care' of children who were so obviously also not with any Aboriginal adults, but held by the State. I made a second artwork with some of those images: 'Pedagogical (inner soul) pressure', that still lives with me.

Subsequently, in a rural petrol station during a car trip out of Sydney, I came upon, on near empty shelves, strange sets of blue and pink slippers, and purchased them all. At that moment I knew they would hold the (images of) the children held by the non Aboriginal women, and later decided that magnifying lens sheets could entrap the images within the slippers. I also purchased plastic roses from an op shop to then 'see' the artwork complete, representing the horrific uncertainty of the lives and future of these children trapped,

powerless, constrained in lives as artificial as the flowers and slippers. Would the women and families they were subjected to love them, or not?

Soon after I made *She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not...* Mildura Arts Centre expressed interest, and purchased it, and in the years since I have questioned my judgement in capturing these people within my artwork, people whose identity I don't know or have rights to, who are not my family (to my knowledge), who may be alive or dead, who may approve or not, of my representation.

She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not... is an artwork from the earliest times of my public presentation exhibitions, and at that time I didn't think through about what it means to sell one's work, to be held outside of an artist's control. Although I don't regret making *She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not...* then in 1996, from what I have learnt since on my culture/art/life journey I would not now in 2020 make that same artwork. Critiquing Government policy can be undertaken in other ways that doesn't rely on openly exhibiting lives so rawly suffering, and interminably stuck, both in this artwork, and in Official processes of personal cultural devastation.

Today I mostly make art about colonial times in Lutruwita (Tasmania) and how my Trawlwoolway family were impacted then to now. I am focused on a more personal journey, respecting and honouring my Ancestors and Country, Tebrikunna, in far north east Lutruwita, along with the Paranapple Country (River Mersey) where since the 1840s my family have mostly lived. We are the Briggs Johnson Gower family whose ancestral matriarch was Woretemoetyenner, the daughter of Mannalargenna.

Aboriginal people have come so close to being eradicated and our fractured memories erased, that I now better focus on what I have the right and responsibility to pass on into the future. My stories.

—Julie Gough, Hobart, January 2020.

Lacy Bits

The word D'Oyley originated from the time of William the Conqueror, when one of the knights, Robert D'Oyley, was granted land in Oxfordshire and in return had to give his king a linen cloth each year. These pieces of cloth were known as D'Oyleys. The name gave over to small pieces of cloth, and eventually to the lacy mats with embroidered or crocheted details, known today.

The popularity of women's domestic needlework resulted in the production and making of doilies which were used as decorative placemats, tray covers, scone cloths, runners for the table, jug covers and antimacassars. Homecrafts with detailed fancywork transformed and embellished the home. It is clear from the quantity of crocheted doilies that remain in household collections or in op-shop shelves that the use of them in Australian homes was widespread. These items are a resource of women's domestic history. Common motifs included geometric patterns, such as crescents, spirals, wheels, suns, stars and crosses.

These oversized forms based on doily designs retain a charm and beauty in their cyclical and repetitive patterns, almost with a mandala effect. But now the once delicate and soft is hard and rigid in monotone colours of black and white, adding further contrast. The fabrics I've chosen are fashion camouflage prints, a floral paisley print and a check, like gingham; fabrics all used for the domestic market.

—Annabelle Collett, 2007.

Garden Story I

In 1891 a garden was built here in honour of remembering. The memory was a dream of places far away, where the grass was always green.

Despite naming the house to honour its owner's view from the balcony, a predominantly European garden was built to... 'blot out all that might be ugly in the distant view...', and to '...transform this wilderness into a garden.'¹

Here, on Latje Latje land, a garden bed is rewritten, in honour of Indigenous culture and memory, and of this land, and the women of all cultures who are part of it. Here, this garden will grow.

—Antonia Chaffey, 1998.

Created for the first Mildura Palimpsest event held in March 1998, *Garden Story I* is a site specific response to Rio Vista and its original garden.

¹Newspaper reports: The Argus 1886 and Unknown, 1920.

Black Sun

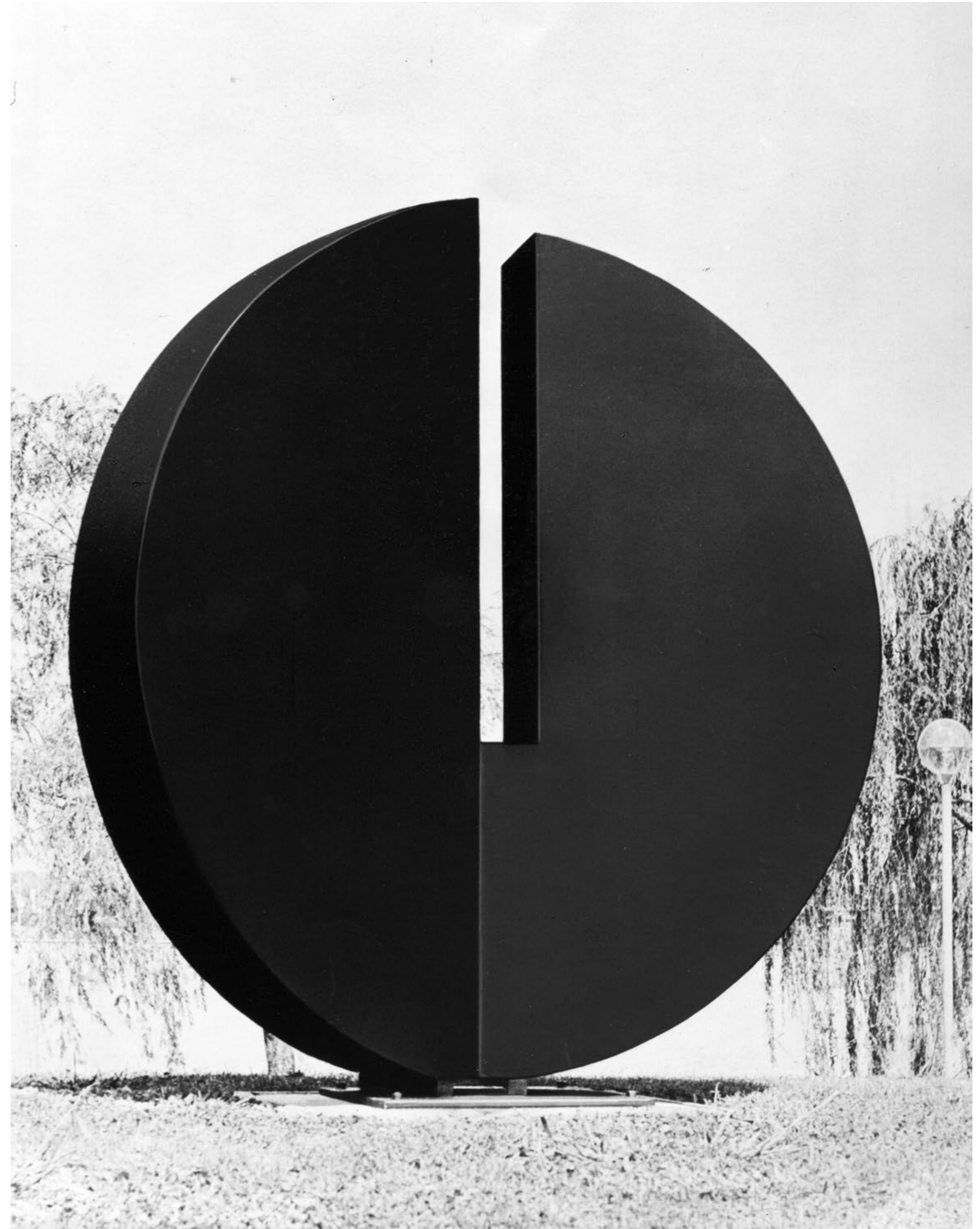
Black Sun was conceived in early 1974, the first maquette being four inches high. Two more maquettes were made, before the final sculpture could be started. Inge King has said of *Black Sun*:

‘Simplicity of form is the basic idea; movement is created by angling the two halves of the circle, lightness is achieved by a slit in the centre. The sculpture was visualised for an outdoor setting, preferably on a slight rise on a lawn, where the black geometric shape animates the space and creates its own environment.’¹

The work was completed in 1975 and exhibited in Canberra’s Commonwealth Gardens for *Australia 75*, before being installed and purchased by Mildura Arts Centre for the 6th *Mildura Sculpture Exhibition* (the 1975 Mildura sculpture triennial, an opening feature for *Arts Victoria 75*).

—exhibition catalogue entry, *The Kings*, Mildura Arts Centre, Friday 19 September – Sunday 19 October 1975.

¹Comment made to T McCullough while *The Kings* was in preparation.



Inge King, *Black Sun*, 1975. Photo by Sutcliffe Illustrative Photographers, Carlton.

One Sun, One Earth, One Peace

A World Community Project

For the past twelve years all of my works have been interactional experience sculptural projects. The work is meant to be directly experienced by touching, walking through, climbing on, sitting in, driving around or by celebrating a special event or date. These projects have dealt with current issues and the cycles of time while providing new and exciting images for experiencing, perceiving and expressing our complex environment. These images not only expand the visual vocabulary but also provide something with which one can identify.

—Judy Sutton Kracke [Judy Sutton Moore], 1992.

One Sun, One Earth, One Peace is a global public art project to celebrate the similarities of the world's people through a greater understanding and recognition of the variety of cultures, religions and races and to bring an awareness of the fragility of the earth's environment.

The project will consist of ten sculptures, in nine different countries on six continents. Each sculpture will be unique, symbolic and reflective of the land, the culture and the people of its site.

As the light of the sun, on a specifically selected day, moves around the earth, the sculpture sites will be sequentially aligned creating a conceptual line of light around the world.

....

The human is the only known life form that communicates through visual images. Designs and symbols from cultures thousands of miles and centuries apart are closely related, and concepts are often identical. Throughout history and without knowledge of previous works, people have repeated over and over similar designs and symbols. The art of humans demonstrates that the collective needs and emotions of people crosses all times and all cultures. The art of this project will cross time and cultures to communicate, demonstrate and celebrate a commitment to the world's people.

As the people of one earth, under one sun, we must protect, repair and maintain our home. To save the only known habitat of life, involvement in the environment has to be accomplished at local, national and global levels. These alignments will focus attention and increase an awareness of the environment.

The sun alignment of each sculpture represents our relationship to the environment and the linking of the alignments illustrates that we are all people of *One Sun, One Earth, One Peace*.

—project statement, 1992.



11:42–11:51 EST, Spring equinox, Monday 23 September 1996. Images: Mildura Arts Centre archives.



11:44 EST, Spring equinox, Tuesday 24 September 1996. Image: Mildura Arts Centre archives.

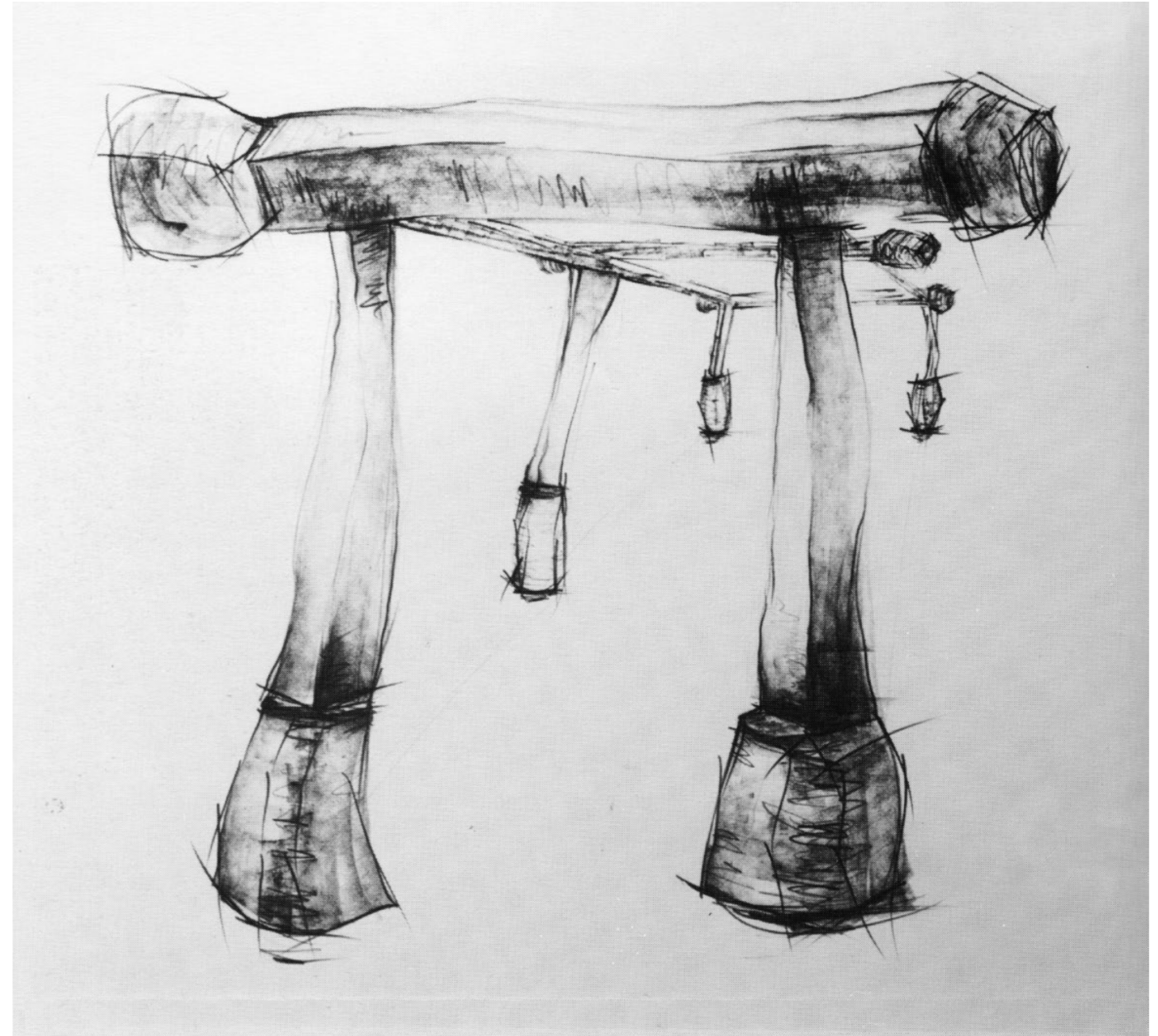
Hut

Fragments – ruins in the landscape give new possibilities ... lead the imagination to reconstruct. Shacks, huts, woolsheds, outhouses of past occupation become states of mind – fertile.

—Jill Peck, January 1988.

Peck's site specific work, *Hut*, was a major acquisition from the Tenth Mildura Sculpture Triennial event, 1988. Formed out of reclaimed Iron Bark, the sculpture has gently weathered and aged, just as Peck intended.

However, with the passing of time comes the inevitable need to ensure the work retains its aesthetic and structural integrity, and to safeguard it into the future as an important feature on our region's public art landscape. For this reason, *Hut* is currently undergoing conservation assessment and treatment, but can still be viewed on site during this process.



Jill Peck, sketch for *Hut*, c.1988. Exhibition catalogue image, *Tenth Mildura Sculpture Triennial*, Mildura Arts Centre, Saturday 2 April – Tuesday 31 May 1988.

May Barrie: Sculptor

Cinematography and interviews: Claire Donoghue

Editor: Joe Bolza

Interviews recorded 2005, production 2009.

Duration: 28 minutes 53 seconds

Standard definition (SD) video, stereo soundtrack.