



AIATSIS
Australian Institute of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

MEDIA RELEASE

Worldwide knowledge and understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present

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National Indigenous ‘family album’ revealed in *Vivid* AIATSIS

A “family album” photo series of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians forms the heart of a new exhibition to be launched this Saturday at AIATSIS in Canberra as part of the *Vivid: National Photography Festival*.

After 200 years: 20 years after is the Institute’s contribution to *Vivid*, marking the 20th anniversary of the publication of *After 200 Years: photographic essays of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia today* (Aboriginal Studies Press, 1988). The book was the result of a project that sent 20 Indigenous and non-Indigenous photographers into Indigenous communities between 1985 and 1988 to document the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life in Australia 200 years after European colonisation.

Launching the exhibition as part of *NAIDOC on the Peninsula 2008*, Penny Taylor – who coordinated the Project from 1985 to 1988 – said it was a great honour to contribute to the production of the first “national family album of Indigenous Australia”.

“The 1980s was a period of significant social, political and intellectual change and questions of representation were central to many of the burning issues of the day,” Ms Taylor said.

“In representing the diversity of Indigenous life, the Project sought to shift away from a photographic obsession with ‘the exotic’, ‘the authentic’ and ‘the traditional’ and move into everyday worlds of Indigenous work, play, home and neighbourhood.

“At the same time, the Project aimed to engage the maximum involvement of Indigenous people in making statements about their lifestyle, in their own terms.”

The exhibition focuses on the remote community of Yaruman in WA, where the photographer, Jon Rhodes, worked with a group of young people who enthusiastically participated in photographing their home: Kundat Jaru.

Over the past two years, AIATSIS staff visited three communities featured in the *After 200 Years* book to return images to them that were taken during the original project. Some photos of these recent visits to Brewarrina (NSW), Cherbourg (QLD), and Fitzroy Crossing (WA) will also be on display as part of the exhibition.

The exhibition launch forms part of *NAIDOC on the Peninsula 2008* at AIATSIS from 10.30am to 3pm in conjunction with the National Museum of Australia where Golden Guitar winner and renowned Aboriginal country music performer Troy Cassar-Daley will perform.

The AIATSIS After 200 Years: 20 years after exhibition is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday until 25 July. The *Vivid: National Photography Festival* is being held for the first time in Canberra from 11 July to 12 October.

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