

**REDRAFT by [Bill.Standish@anu.edu.au](mailto:Bill.Standish@anu.edu.au) 15 Dec 2016**

### **PNG art on campus**

This letter is hoping to find out what examples of recent Papua New Guinea art are held by the ANU community, with the aim of organizing an exhibition in 2017.

Some of us at the ANU have been fortunate to see the energy, skill and beauty of contemporary visual art in the Pacific Islands. The range of work being done in PNG, in particular, can be both serious and satirical. It covers not just celebrations of cultural symbols, people's multiple identities and the glorious environmental diversity but also social and political commentary, including works on gender issues. Such art is barely known in Australia and rarely displayed in Canberra.

The ANU's Pacific Institute at its November AGM set up a working group\* to explore the possibility of holding an exhibition. The group has decided to focus on PNG works. We want to find out whether Institute members (and friends) have pieces of contemporary PNG art which they would offer to show on campus, to see if it is feasible to hold an exhibition next year. If an exhibition does go ahead, it should be able to attract visitors from across the wider campus and Canberra communities and help promote Pacific studies.

Given the amount of 'traditional' PNG art already displayed in museums, the working group decided the project would be confined to recent (post 2000) works with contemporary themes, styles and symbols. Most would be works on paper and canvas, but probably also some sculptures. Insurance and any costs for mounting or framing would have to be carried by the owners.

To get started, we ask members to email JPEG photos of available works to the Institute. The working group would then need to work step by step in examining what has been offered, deciding if an exhibition is appropriate, find a curator, define the scope and find ways to fund the display of selected pieces with minimal expense.

Obviously pre-Christmas is a busy time of year, but we hope you can think about it through January. If you wish to consider sharing any pieces for this exercise could you please send JPEG photos (with basic information: artist, date, size and your contacts) by the end of January 2017 to Sam Bashfield [samuel.bashfield@anu.edu.au](mailto:samuel.bashfield@anu.edu.au) who is Project Officer for Strategic Partnerships at the Regional Institutes Boardroom, 1.12 Coombs Extension 6125 1169.

An exhibition like this requires a large amount of work, skill and funding. Hopefully a decision on whether to proceed can be made in February.

With thanks for your attention,

Bill Standish  
Culture, History, Languages

\*The working group at present comprises, Deveni Temu, Margaret Jolly, Vanessa Robins and Bill Standish, and has initiated contact with School of Art people.