Island Cultures
Will Stackhouse and Rex Greeno
Curated by Lola Greeno
@Sawtooth 28 June – 13 July 2013

This exhibition brings together a body of work created by Will Stackhouse and Rex Greeno both men from Flinders Island. Rex and Will are cousins and both men have direct links to their Aboriginal Cultural heritage.

Rex grew up in the south end of Flinders Island being involved with his grandfather Silas Mansell teaching him how to set kangaroo snares, how to fish and hunt and how to catch and process mutton birds as an extended family. Once Rex finished school he went cray fishing with his brother and his father during this time also help build a boat. Rex’s experience in fishing has influenced him to build traditional bark canoes. The Ten Canoes were made to display during the 2013 Ten Days on the Island Festival.

Will Stackhouse grew up at Killiecrankie on Flinders Island as part of large family with a long line of Elders of cultural knowledge. Will’s mother held positions on a number of Aboriginal organisations especially in Education. Will has a keen eye for carving which are directly relation to his Island Cultures such as mutton birding. Will has also extended his work into drawing showing his “old man” as Will calls him Alfie Stackhouse. Will is keen to extend and develop his drawing style by the use of quality tools.

Lola Greeno
June 2013

This exhibition is in celebration of NAIDOC week 7-14th July 2013

NAIDOC stands for National Aboriginies and Islanders Day Observance Committee. Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920’s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians.

NAIDOC is a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions of Indigenous Australians in various fields.

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ARTIST TALK: Rex Greeno
3pm, 13 July 2013

Rex Greeno’s paperbark canoes contribute to the revival of a delicate, traditional cultural practice; a wise and timely reminder of the resilience of his own culture. Innovation and craftsmanship are innate in the work of this most interesting contemporary Tasmanian artist.

Born on Flinders Island in 1942 of Italian and Aboriginal origin and raised in the Aboriginal community of the Furneaux Islands, Rex’s grandfather (a direct descendent of the Straits-men sealers and whalers) involved young Rex in the community’s cultural life, teaching him the skills and traditional practices that sustained their community.

Greeno says: “My original large canoes are constructed by building a core of small pieces of bark to form a rough shape, or backbone. The core is covered in hundreds of layers of stripped Melaleuca bark which I collect with my son and grandson – it’s like using a papier-mâché technique then meticulously binding each layer. After reading research journals and part of Robinson’s early encounters with bark canoes, I decided to build a canoe.

I studied X-rays of the small models in the TMAG collection in Hobart. My canoes are based on a traditional concept but are made in a contemporary style using modern techniques and materials.’