

Mapping UNSW Impact Global Development

Primary SDG	10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES
Broad theme	Design exhibitions
Research	Collaborating with Indigenous artists in remote communities to tell untold stories and promote more equitable relationships in exhibited work
Impact region	Indigenous Australia
Faculty	Art & Design
School/Institute	Art & Design
Academic	Trent Jansen
Project partners	Fremantle Arts Centre, Mangkaja Arts
Related SDGs	9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Elevator pitch

Trent is working on design projects that tell untold stories from Indigenous Australian culture. These projects involve collaborations with Indigenous artists and story-tellers, promoting reconciliation and understanding.

The Challenge: Lack of Indigenous stories and power in design and society

There is a lack of awareness among the Australian population about the heritage of Indigenous Australia and Indigenous culture. Some stories that could help remain untold. Non-Indigenous Australians tend to hold more power than Indigenous Australians in deciding who tells these stories, but that is steadily changing.

In the design world, much of the focus is on the latest innovations from developed countries like the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia. But design is happening all over the world in exciting and unique ways that are not adequately represented in the design community. The design community is missing out on the full breadth of human creativity.

UNSW's solution: Tell untold Indigenous stories, collaborate with Indigenous artists

Trent has been fascinated by Indigenous Australia since high school. He undertook his PhD on the mythology of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inhabitants during the early years of colonisation, and later, exhibited designs based on the story of the Hairy Wild Man from Botany Bay and Pankalangu.

In 2016, Trent was invited by Mangkaja Arts in Fitzroy Crossing (remote Kimberley region of Western Australia) to spend six weeks over 18 months collaborating with local artists to develop new work. The invitation was part of the Fremantle Arts Centre's *In Cahoots* project, which saw six Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists invited to arts centres across remote and regional Australia. Together with local artists, Trent helped create an arm chair that looks like a giant ant hill, furniture out of abandoned car panels found in the surrounding area, and other works. Trent continues to work with one of the Fitzroy Crossing artists, Johnny Nargoodah, on new work. The two have made four new pieces of limited edition furniture that are inspired by Fitzroy Crossing and its surrounding country. Further funding would provide an opportunity for

Trent and Johnny to produce collaborative work for exhibitions in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Trent has also collaborated with local artisans in Mumbai, India. In 2016 he worked with a potter living in a slum north of Mumbai named Abbas Galwani. Together they produced large vessels and furniture that were exhibited in Mumbai, Canberra and Sydney. While there Trent also partnered with Parsons University and Columbia University on an exhibition featuring design works made from used car panels collected from Mumbai's Thieves' Market (Chor Bazaar). The exhibition was inspired by the Indian Jugaad philosophy where you 'make do' with what you have.

The Impact: Promote Indigenous culture and reconciliation, disrupt design world

Trent's work highlights Indigenous stories that remain untold within the larger community, promoting further understanding and respect among non-Indigenous Australians. His collaborative work with Indigenous artists is a practical demonstration of reconciliation, of two equals meeting and working together to produce something innovative and exciting.

The collaborations in India were inspired by a desire to reconcile the disadvantaged with the privileged, a mirror of his work with Indigenous Australians. By bringing new ideas and techniques from parts of the world the design community usually ignores, Trent's work is also disrupting the design field.

Researcher

Trent Jansen is a designer with a studio in Thirroul, Australia, and he is a Lecturer at Art & Design. He applies his method of design anthropology to the design of products and furniture for manufacturers including Moooi, DesignByThem and Tait, and for clients like the Molonglo Group, Broached Commissions, Criteria and Gallery All. He fell in love with Indigenous culture and storytelling at an early age and was fortunate to pursue this passion while completing his PhD at the University of Wollongong. His PhD work is slated for an exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2018.

Ben Falkenmire 22.02.18