

A new lens: Emerging researcher perspectives on the University of Melbourne's Grimwade Collection

Presentations by the 2026 Miegunyah Student Project Awardees

PROGRAM

6:00pm

Welcome and introduction

6:10 — 6:16pm

Presentation 1

Jack Norris

Faculty of Arts | Doctor of Philosophy (Indigenous Studies)

Reinterpreting John Skinner Prout's *Melbourne from Collingwood* 1847

In his Miegunyah Student Award project, Jack reassesses John Skinner Prout's lithograph *Melbourne From Collingwood* 1847, reframing the First Nations figures in the foreground as a scene of Woi-wurrung and Kulin politics and government. Prout's Kulin figures are derived from Henry Godfrey's earlier and nearly identical sketch of the same subject, also called *Melbourne from Collingwood*, from December 30, 1843, and now held at the State Library Victoria. The Kulin figures depict what is possibly Elders in council, a governing practice documented by European observers and described by renowned Wurundjeri Elder and artist William Barak to anthropologist Alfred Howitt. Senior men would gather around a fire, away from the camp, as seen in Prout's image, to discuss and debate matters. At times decisions in these councils were reached through lengthy and animated speeches. The standing figure in Prout's image appears to be addressing the group in this form of oratory.



Scan the QR code to see Henry Godfrey's original

Melbourne from Collingwood, 1843

Jack Norris is a non-Indigenous PhD researcher in the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Studies program, working on a Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder led project on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung museum collections and histories of male political lives.

6:18 — 6:24pm

Presentation 2

Teeb Arallel

Faculty of Fine Arts and Music | VCA Animation

&

Zofia Witkowski-Blake

Faculty of Science | Master of Science

Mythograph

As a modern person looking at lithograph prints from the Grimwade Collection, you might think you are looking at art meant for appreciation. In fact, these prints were more akin to real-estate images, meant to herald the success of the colony. One small element played an oversized role in this endeavour: staffage, the tiny figures of people placed in the foreground of landscapes and streetscapes to create story and show scale. Staffage figures were often redeployed across time and space, as stock photos are today. In this way, disparate locations were joined by this tiny tourism. In our video work, *Mythograph*, we use stop-motion photography to animate *Pride of place – Exploring the Grimwade Collection*; Russell and Mab Grimwade themselves become staffage in their own collection.

Teeb and Zofia are mother and daughter. Teeb is a multidisciplinary artist with experience across circus, theatre, music and visual arts. Their film *PrePartum Paradise* was selected for the Melbourne International Animation Festival this year. Zofia is a science communicator and 2025 Wattle Fellow. Her Master of Science (Bioinformatics) research project is on using machine learning to study RNA structure.

6:26 — 6:32pm

Presentation 3

Wawe Ransfield

Faculty of Arts | Mater of Cultural Materials Conservation

Mapping Te Moana Nui a Kiwa: Understanding Colonial Cartographical Legacies Within the Pacific Ocean

Wawe's research looks to articulate the relationships between *Cary's New Terrestrial Globe* 1831, and the cartographical narratives it represents. She contextualises the object within a legacy of European expansionism and offers an alternative mode of spatial visualisation based on the navigational histories shared throughout Te Moana Nui a Kiwa, the Pacific Ocean.

Wawe Ransfield (Ngāti Tukorehe, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Te Atihaunui-a-Pāpārangi) is a maker and arts worker from Aotearoa, currently pursuing a Masters in Cultural Materials Conservation at The University of Melbourne. She has a strong interest in the material histories of Te Moana Nui a Kiwa, the Pacific Ocean.

6:34 — 6:40pm

Presentation 4

San Clifford & Kleo Guthrie

Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning | Master of Architecture

The Melbourne Club and the Architectural Performance of Colonial Order

This project examines the Melbourne Club, an exclusive gentleman's club at 36 Collins Street, as a case study in the architectural production of colonial legitimacy. Designed by Leonard Terry and completed in 1859, the clubhouse assembles borrowed architectural references to project permanence and authority within a nascent colony. Focusing on Arthur Willmore's 1862 steel engraving from the Russell and Mab Grimwade collection, the project traces how architecture and its images operate as a pastiche that helps stage an exclusive and enduring social order.

Kleo Guthrie and San Clifford are architecture students practicing in Naarm/Melbourne. They are interested in how buildings participate in organising exclusivity and authority, and how these arrangements persist in the city's built and social fabric.

6:42 — 6:48pm

Presentation 5

Hugh Magnus

Faculty of Arts | Art History Honours

Dobell among the Demimonde: the story of *sketch for 'the yellow glove'*

William Dobell was one of the most famous Australian artists of the twentieth century. Despite the artist's high regard during his lifetime, this significance has not lasted as it has for his contemporaries. This project uses the artist's *Sketch for 'The yellow glove'* to decipher a formative, yet little-examined time in Dobell's life, the years he spent in London. Far from the Sydney society portraits that would make his name, this work reveals a different side to the artist, a bohemian figure enmeshed in the city's gritty working class of the 1930s.

Hugh Magnus is an early-career art historian and critic working in Naarm/Melbourne. He is interested in desire, repair and unruly histories. Hugh is an editor of *Memo* magazine.

6:50 — 6:56pm

Presentation 6

Peter Spring

Faculty of Fine Arts and Music | Master of Dance

An Embodied response to the Trophy won by Bronze Fuze and the events of the Tirranna Picnic Race Meeting in 1929 through Dance and Movement

Two objects sit in the Grimwade Collection: a painting of a summer race day, and a gold cup engraved with a winner's name. Between them is a story neither can fully hold. Seven days after the win, a newspaper reported that someone had tried to interfere with the horse before its next race. No name was ever recorded. The record simply stops.

What the Trophy Holds moves into that gap through improvisation, searching what the archive could not keep: a witness who could not name what he saw, a body given something it could not question, a silence that closes as incomplete report.

The audience only watches, echoing the original crowd, present at something significant, carried forward without full knowledge of it. The performer's gaze refuses to look away, even as the movement searches and never fully arrives. Not a reenactment. A live, embodied inquiry into an archive that refuses to close.

Peter Spring is a Khmer-Krom-Australian Naarm/Melbourne-based artist-researcher and Master of Dance candidate at the University of Melbourne, working across visual art, choreography, and performance, his practice explore the everyday and the possibilities of human connection. Through the body, movement, and performance, Peter investigates how ordinary actions and encounters can be a site for connection and reflection.

7:00 — 7:05pm

Performance by Peter Spring in the Project Gallery

7:05 — 8:00pm

Exhibition viewing and informal discussion with student awardees.
Light refreshments in the Primrose Potter Studio.

8:00pm

Close