



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BOOMERANG – A NATIONAL SYMBOL

8 February - 27 June 2020 | Berndt Museum of Anthropology

The **Berndt Museum of Anthropology** at **The University of Western Australia** is pleased to announce its newest exhibition, *Boomerang – A National Symbol*, which opens on Saturday 8 February 2020.

The exhibition features 90 boomerangs from the Berndt Museum’s collection of more than 200, to explore the national symbol’s depth and complexity.

As curator **Dr Vanessa Russ** explains, the exhibition focuses on celebrating the boomerang’s often under-recognised diversity, shifting its positioned narrative from an emblematised icon to explore the object’s many forms, uses and meanings.

Dr Russ said, “This wide variety reflects the skills, cultural knowledge and agencies of the makers embedded in their localised contexts of community and Country.”

“The exhibition teases out the incredible variety of function and contextual understanding associated with boomerangs, from utilitarian tools and percussive instruments to trade commodities and story-telling vehicles.”

The exhibition is also a critical response to past institutional displays, in which boomerangs were often positioned as static relics within an evolutionary series that was increasingly racialised.

Boomerang – A National Symbol offers audiences the opportunity to reflect on the different meanings surrounding the boomerang and compare them with how it was historically framed by museums and cultural institutions as a static object.

UWA Chief Cultural Officer, Professor Ted Snell said the exhibition showed the real power that art and material objects held in helping us understand our history and ourselves.

“We are delighted to offer our audiences the opportunity to re-engage with this powerful symbol of Aboriginal culture,” Professor Snell said.

The Berndt Museum’s *Boomerang – A National Symbol* will be on view at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery until 27 June 2020. The gallery is open Tuesdays to Sundays, 11am to 5pm, and admission is free. The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of free programs, including a talk on **Friday 3 April, 1pm to 2pm**, with the **Berndt Museum’s Collections Manager, Natalie Hewlett**, on the exhibition’s design. For more information visit the [Berndt Museum website](#).

Opening night is on Friday 7 February 6pm at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.

Additional Information

Images: [High resolution images available here](#)

Curator: Dr Vanessa Russ

Website: lwgallery.uwa.edu.au/exhibitions/boomerang

Media Enquires

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