

YEDI



SONGS from Patrick William Carter

Patrick William Carter

Patrick William Carter is a Noongar man whose art is centred around his family and his experiences of life. His songs are made from many forms: dance and painting and film-making, as well as his tremolo-infused vocals.

His digital works have been screened and exhibited in WA, SA, VIC and the ACT and include *No more cryin'* which has been exhibited as part of the group exhibitions *Beyond the Western Edge*, Regional Art Summit Australia: Arts & Edges, Kalgoorlie (2014) and *HERE&NOW13*, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia (2013).

Carter's digital work, *Dance*, was exhibited in *Revealed*, Fremantle Arts Centre (2016), and as a re-commission from ANAT for Adelaide's Tarnanthi Festival's *New Light* (2017). This edit was subsequently screened at Enlighten Festival in Canberra (2018).

Carter began his collaboration with Sam Fox on *Dance* and in 2014 participated in the Australia Council funded projects, *Room and Digital Dialogues* (2015-16), creating over ten short digital works.

In 2018 and 2019 Carter was a cast member and contributor on *You Know We Belong Together*, a Perth Festival, Black Swan State Theatre Company and DADAA co-production.

In 2017-18 Carter began development of his three-part work, *Bloom*, creating a journey out of hospital and back to culture and Country. *Bloom* was screened in *Revealed 2019* at the Fremantle Arts Centre.

In 2019, he collaborated with Sam Fox and Sam Price creating *Fireworks* for the Yagan Square tower and continues this collaboration to create his Perth Festival 2021 commissioned work, *Wind*.

Sam Fox

Sam Fox is a director, writer and choreographer working across contemporary performance, literary fiction and community based collaborations.

Fox is currently working as a creative Ph.D. candidate at the University of Western Australia where he is writing a novel that explores stories of collectivisation and radical alliances.

He has recently worked as artistic director of DADAA and Circus WA's *Experience Collider* project bringing young people with high support needs together with their peers in a performance project that premiered at the State Theatre Centre in October 2019; as a peer collaborator with Patrick Carter on his digital artwork, *Fireworks*, for the Yagan Square 360 screen; and as an independent producer with robotic sculpture artists ololo, and choreographer Rachel Arianne Ogle.

As director of interdisciplinary company Hydra Poesis, his performance and media works have been presented in a wide range of national and international contexts. Fox is an alum' of the Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship program, a former artistic director of STEPS Youth Dance Company, a former associate producer of ARTRAGE, and has served as a panellist with the Department of Culture and the Arts, the Australia Council for the Arts, Committee for Perth, and as a board member of Contact Inc (Qld) and Hold Your Horses (WA).

Simone Flavelle

Simone Flavelle is an independent Producer and Consultant to artists with disability and the arts, film and disability sectors. She is currently developing the My Studio service with My Place, focused on supporting artists with access to studio space, arts and film mentors, materials and pathways to training and the mainstream arts/film sectors.

Flavelle has recently completed three years as Screenwest's Diversity and Inclusion Manager, developing WA screen industry knowledge and practice around diversity and supporting practitioners identifying as diverse to be included in industry.

Previously a Founding Member and Digital Producer at DADAA (Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia), between 1994 and 2019, Simone designed and implemented arts and cultural projects, workshops and digital mentoring programs with hundreds of Western Australians identifying as disability diverse. Initiatives included The Lost Generation Project, the Mixed Reality Project, and Experience Collider.

Led by artists with disability, Flavelle has supported performers, artists and filmmakers to create works for screen, exhibition, theatre, online and in and around specific sites.

Flavelle is currently a member of Perth Festival's DAIP committee and has recently served as an Australia Council for the Arts peer assessor. She is also a parent to two young artists living with disability.

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February
- April 2021

Images Top to Bottom:
Patrick Carter, *Wind* (still), 2021. *No More Cryin'* (still), 2013.
Bloom #3 (still), 2018. *Fireworks* (still), 2018.

A reflection on the artist's practice by mentor and collaborator, Sam Fox.

Patrick William Carter is a Noongar man whose art is centred around his family and his experiences of life. His songs are made from many forms: dance and painting and film-making, as well as his tremolo-infused vocals. In the language of contemporary art, Pat's work is interdisciplinary, hybrid, mixed, but he doesn't draw lines between media at all. Across the diverse material and shape of his songs, Pat weaves meaning.

His process is deeply social. It is driven by relationships and peer-to-peer exchanges in the studio. As one of his mentors and collaborators, I have had the privilege of sharing this process. Other key mentors and collaborators who have contributed to the works in this exhibition include Laura Boynes, Lincoln McKinnon, Rocky Eades, producer Simone Flavell, Deborah May, Sohan Ariel Hayes, Sam Price, Roly Skender and Rachel Arianne Ogle. If Pat is the solo song-maker, we are his band, his studio technicians, his instrumentalists.

Some days in the studio, Pat will start working with paint, other times he will dance or sing. Then he will switch media. There will be many long discussions. We will talk about the work he has created – he will weave in family, news of friends and collaborators, aspirations, memories and talk of culture, music, films. In the process of these yarns, Pat will connect the symbols, stories, colours and tones he has been exploring. A clear intention will emerge and he will dive into this work with intense focus.

Some songs will literally be rendered out of the air – in the process of making *Fire Works* (2019), Pat began to dance his drawings and then tease out precise points in space with his body, intuitively reimagining the drawings as three-dimensional sculptures. Other songs are urgent statements or expressions of feeling. In *No More Cryin'* (2012), Pat explores loss and the emotions of living away from his family. In *Bloom* (2016), he creates a journey out of hospital and back to Country and culture.

Pat will often pause in his work and declare, 'I want to say...'. His strong sense of justice simmers beneath the surface in his art and his emotional power rises and falls, seeking outlet. As with his approach to artistic media, Pat fluidly threads his joys and his struggles together. His greatest desire is 'to make people happy', but he doesn't shy away from exploring painful emotions.

SONGS is a retrospective of Pat's media artworks that also features a new commission by Perth Festival entitled *Wind* (2021). In this new work, Pat interweaves themes of family, happiness and love with images of the environment, his pride in his Noongar culture, and his love of music. Over a three-day shoot, Pat sang, painted, danced and jammed, building the raw material for a media tapestry of personal signs, movements and sonic statements.



List of works

Wind (2021)
Single channel HD video
8:12 min.
Collaborators: Sam Fox,
Sam Price, Rachel Arianne
Ogle, Roly Skender

Fireworks (2019)
Single channel HD video
4:00 min.
Collaborators: Sam Fox,
Sam Price, Lincoln McKinnon

Bloom #1 (2017)
Single channel HD video
4:25 min.

Bloom #2 (2018)
Single channel HD video
2:26 min.

Bloom #3 (2018)
Single channel HD video
2:26 min.
Collaborators: Laura Boynes,
Lincoln McKinnon,
Deborah May, Robert Eades

No more cryin' (2013)
Single channel HD video
2:27 min.
Collaborators:
Sohan Ariel Hayes

Producer: Simone Flavell

We prepared for this shoot over a period of months, improvising with video, exploring dance in the studio with Rachel Arianne Ogle, drawing and painting – sometimes in parks and cafés rather than working shut away by ourselves. During NAIDOC week we were hanging out in the WAAPA café and Pat spontaneously painted a version of the Aboriginal flag starting only with black. He then began to mix colours and use the handle of his brush to paint dots into its centre, and these became a unique constellation of meaning. As he painted, Pat talked about how the colours represented aspects of the land and sea. This work became one of the key elements of *Wind* that we brought to the shoot.

A few weeks later, in the film studio, Pat spent four hours painting a wall-sized artwork with the constraint of only using the colour purple. This work began with brushstrokes that became abstract icons, then a snaking line cut across the painting – snakes are a key motif that recurs in Pat's work (connecting with themes of magic, danger and culture), these were followed by a human face, Pat's name, a large section of writing, animal tracks, shapes and winged creatures, and a full-size shadow of himself painted onto the floor.

In these paintings, Pat renders two precise aesthetic visions. When I watch Pat paint, what strikes me is how deliberate and considered he is. It can look as though his art is spontaneously arising but he is constantly reviewing and making bold decisions about the work as it unfolds. This is also true of his dance improvisations and his song making. In *Wind* he dances a world into existence with rhythmic gestures and sweeping movements. In one moment he seeds the ground and embodies the growth of flowers. In his songs he sings of love and family, dedicating 'my heart for you'.

There is a lot of joy in this particular work and, as his friend and collaborator, I think this has something to do with Pat's arrival – of living with his family, of being in a position to make his art, and of being a valued peer within a network of artists and collaborators.

In 2020, Pat became one of the founding members of a new group of local artists: Seven Collective. Seven is a group of independent artists with disability that has grown through collaborative projects dating back to 2016. Amongst this community, Pat is recognised as a senior practitioner. He is currently making a new work that documents his family in collaboration with his mother Sophia Thorne, film-maker Deborah May and visual artist Johanna Keyser. And through new opportunities – such as presenting a workshop to professional dancers at WA Ballet and to peers within this year's Perth Festival – Pat is now sharing his practice and leading among the broader creative community.

SONGS allows viewers to experience Pat's body of work and his creative journey. It is an incredibly important retrospective that marks his place as one of our state's most unique and powerful artistic voices.



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Cover Image: Patrick Carter, *Bloom #2* (still), 2018.