

## **Madi Mercer (Ghostgum), Artist of ‘Symphony of Colour’**

I would firstly like to acknowledge that Wurundjeri Country is not my ancestral homeland, and it is a unique privilege to live and work here on these lands. I would like to acknowledge the Ancestors, Traditional Owners and Elders of this beautiful Country, that continue to fight for the health of their lands, skies and waterways. Although this commission was to reference a specific site on Wurundjeri Country, I aimed to ensure that at the core of this work, it represented Indigenous lands that have had Colonial impact across the ‘Continent’.

This artwork is deeply meaningful to me as it marks what I consider to be the proudest point of my career so far. This is the largest and most public display of my work to date, but more importantly, has been an opportunity to recontextualise a site that has a complex history, and represent Country in its loving, nurturing truth. Flagstaff Gardens - like most places on Indigenous Lands - carries the ongoing impacts of Colonisation, and it feels extremely important to create this work that acknowledges the enduring Cultural and natural significance in the past, the present, and future.

Through this work, I wanted to channel the feeling of Country, overlaying the two truths or eras it has lived; what it was, and what it is today. I wanted to acknowledge the changes that have occurred, pay homage to what we have lost, while also recognising the enduring spirit of the Land that continues to ebb just beneath the surface. I hope the people that experience this work feel a sense of calm and connection to the natural world we exist within. If the work encourages someone to step outside, spend time on Country, and build a deeper relationship with the lands, waters and skies we exist within, then it has achieved what I hoped.

As the station is a place of movement, migration and transition, the artwork reflects the continual cycles that shape the natural world - from the migration of native wildlife, to seasonal markers that we see in our native flora, or the often unnoticed changes (both good and bad) that take place over long periods of time. These journeys, changes and movements all come together to create a “Symphony of Country”, and it is more important than ever that we exist in harmony with this symphony, adding to the collaboration, connection and reciprocity of the natural world.