

HERBERT MAYER COLLECTION OF CARROLUP ARTWORKS

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.12 pm]: I would like to inform the house of a significant exhibition from the Herbert Mayer Collection of Carrolup Artworks from the John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, which has recently travelled to Colgate University in Hamilton, upstate New York. On 8 April, I was honoured to attend a reception for the travelling delegation, held by the US Consul General, Rachel Cooke, to celebrate the artists and the artworks that will be exhibited at Colgate University in New York. The delegation includes Noongar elder and member of the Carrolup Elders Reference Group Mr Ezzard Flowers; surviving Carrolup artist Mrs Edith De Giambattista; Curtin University Elder in Residence and chair of the Carrolup Elders Reference Group Professor Simon Forrest; Curtin University Vice-Chancellor Deborah Terry, AO; and Director of the John Curtin Gallery Christopher Malcolm.

The exhibition, *Koolanga Boodja Neh Nidjuuk (Children Listening and Looking on Country)*, marks the bicentenary of Colgate University and reflects the strong relationship and rich cultural exchange that has developed between the two institutions and their broader communities following the return of the Carrolup artworks from Colgate to Noongar boodja in 2013. The Carrolup story reflects the harrowing experiences of stolen generations of Aboriginal children, taken from their families and placed in the government-run Carrolup River Native Settlement located near Katanning.

The artworks that were produced by these children, their rediscovery and their return to Noongar country, has become symbolic of the spiritual journey, the strength and survival of Noongar culture and the importance of these artworks in helping to tell this story. The Carrolup collection of artworks was considered lost for many years before being rediscovered in 2004 at the Picker Gallery, Colgate University, in the US. Following discussions, the artworks were returned to Noongar boodja in 2013 and Curtin University is now the custodian of the collection.

I would like to recognise Curtin University's ongoing work and commitment to preservation and access for the collection: preserving the artworks for future generations and providing access to the collection for all, particularly the Noongar people of Western Australia. I acknowledge Colgate University for its ongoing collaboration and exchange with Curtin University and also I thank the US Consul General, Rachel Cooke, and her team for their support of this important cultural exchange. The Carrolup collection is a reminder of a dark period in our history and of the strength and resilience of Aboriginal culture and the role that art can play in helping to share this story with the world.