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MEDIA RELEASE

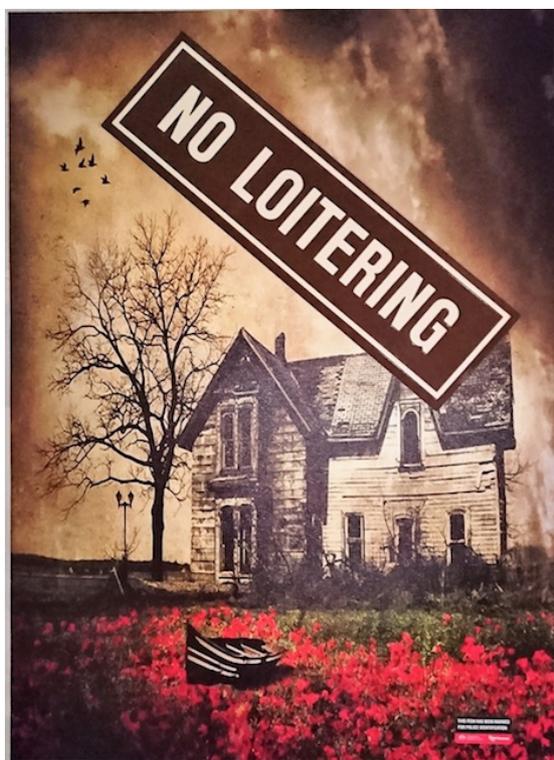
Miriam Stannage: *TERRITORIES*

27 May – 17 June 2017

The works in *Territories*, produced between 1999 and 2016, reveal the extent to which Miriam Stannage continued to contravene the 'rules' of art throughout her practice.

This exhibition, the second of her work at [Art Collective WA](http://artcollectivewa.com.au), recognises the important contribution made by Stannage to Australian art. *Territories* celebrates both the transgressive nature of her art, and her engagement with the relationship between place and identity. The works speak of borders and of the transition from one state to another.

The exhibition has been organised with the support of the artist's estate and curated by Lee Kinsella.



The 'combine paintings' in *Territories* demonstrate Miriam's desire to rail against standards of painting, as she chose to add objects to the canvas surface. In choosing to include a fragment of a marble gravestone, or photo frames that are devoid of photos, Stannage wrenched objects from their usual context to blur the boundary between the known and unknown.

Miriam Stannage was a relentless innovator; an artist who was determined to defy what was expected of her. Over her 50-year practice, Miriam Stannage produced works across the genres of installation, photography, painting, video, prints and drawings, and artist's books.

Born in 1939 in Northam, Western Australia, Miriam Stannage became one of Australia's most significant contemporary artists. Honoured as a State Living Treasure in 2015, she sadly passed away in September 2016, while the 'Miriam Stannage: Survey 2006-2016'

exhibition poignantly continued at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.

Curator Lee Kinsella will discuss Miriam's work with Professor Christopher Wortham on Thursday 15 June at 1pm in the gallery

MIRIAM STANNAGE 'Territories' is open at Art Collective WA's gallery in Perth from 27 May – 17 June 2017.

All works are for sale.

Gallery opening hours: Wednesday-Friday 11am – 4pm, Saturday 12-4pm.

See more information attached.

For further information and images contact:

Felicity Johnston, art@artcollectivewa.com.au, 0418 945 011

More about Miriam Stannage and the works selected for *Territories*

Miriam Stannage's picket work titled *Australian History*, 1999, is an example of how the works in *Territories* serve to delineate geographical borders or trace the movement from one state to another. Wooden pickets stand in formation, alert like sentries guarding a border. In their usual context, picket fences divide the public realm of the suburban street from our private domains. However, in Miriam's iteration, when distinguished by shape and colour that infer certain allegiances and identities, they speak of the conflict and retribution that have stained Australia's many histories; particularly pertinent today as President Trump plans a border wall between the USA and Mexico, in his words "to get the bad ones out."¹



Miriam Stannage (1939-2016), *Australian history* 1999, household paint on wood installation, approx. 150 x 300 cm.
Copyright and courtesy of the artist's estate.

The triptych form, a derivation of the religious altarpiece paintings of the Renaissance and medieval periods, features regularly in Miriam's work. In one untitled work, created in 2014, Stannage uses mass-produced, printed canvases in triplicate. Specifically chosen objects augment the repeated image – essentially segmenting and slowing 'time' - a clock face is frozen, the double photo frame remains vacant and the repetition of the iconic image by Alfred Eisenstaedt documents a life-changing moment in history. The triptych is populated by very human figures, rather than the religious deities of golden altarpieces.



Miriam Stannage (1939-2016), *[Untitled triptych]* 2014 from Security series, mixed media, 70.5 x 51 cm each.
Copyright and courtesy of the artist's estate.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/us/politics/refugees-immigrants-wall-trump.html>

Stannage's Christian beliefs are expressed through this art and she uses particular iconography to evoke consideration of realms that may exist beyond our current understanding. In a 2015 work from her *Security* series, Stannage has placed a fragment of a marble gravestone into an empty picture-frame, and then placed them upon a blank canvas. The blank spaces remain open as if histories have been omitted or, perhaps, never recorded. The gravestone formally marks the cessation of a life, and the heft of the marble fragment contrasts with the fragile glass and canvas to allude to the transition from a mortal life to, in Christian understandings, a return to life with God.

Miriam Stannage

After travelling to Europe and USA in the 1960s Miriam Stannage returned to Perth and studied with William Boissevain and Henry Froudish and at the Claremont Technical College. Stannage was a founding member of the Contemporary Art Society (CAS) and her first solo exhibition was in 1969. She travelled extensively through remote areas of Western Australia, and taught art therapy, painting and drawing. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Curtin University in 1998 and in 2015, she was honoured as a 'State Living Treasure' by the Department of Culture and the Arts for her contribution to our society as an artist and mentor.

Miriam Stannage's work is held in Australian state and national institutions including the National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of South Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia and Queensland Art Gallery, and numerous corporate and private collections.

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