INDIGENOUS ARCHIVES
The Making and Unmaking of Aboriginal Art
Edited by Darren Jorgensen and Ian McLean

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What does it mean for art to turn to The Archive? In what sense is art archival? What is it about The Archive that it can turn art? Towards what in art is The Archive being turned, and what is it about The Archive that art might turn on it?

The archive is a source of power. It takes control of the past, deciding which voices will be heard and which won’t, how they will be heard and for what purposes. Indigenous archivists were at work well before the European Enlightenment arrived and began its own archiving. Sometimes at odds, other times not, these two ways of ordering the world have each learned from, and engaged with, the other. Colonialism has been a struggle over archives and its processes as much as anything else.

The eighteen essays by twenty authors investigate different aspects of this struggle in Australia, from traditional Indigenous archives and their developments in recent times to the deconstruction of European archives by contemporary artists as acts of cultural empowerment. It also examines the use of archives developed for other reasons, such as the use of rainfall records to interpret early Papunya paintings. Indigenous Archives is the first overview of archival research in the production and understanding of Indigenous culture. Wide-ranging in its scope, it reveals the lively state of research into Indigenous histories and culture in Australia.

ABOUT THE EDITORS
Darren Jorgensen lectures in art history at the University of Western Australia. He writes on Australian art for national and international publications. His previous book with UWAP, co-authored with David Brooks, is The Wanarn Travellers of Space and Time: Old Age Travels in the Tjukurpa (2015). He also publishes on the history of rock music in New Zealand, science fiction and surrealism.


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