

GALLERY4A

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MEDIA RELEASE

SPEAKEASY

Vernon Ah Kee, Fiona Foley, Gordon Hookey, Daniel Boyd, Gary Lee, Zhou Xiaoping, Jason Wing and Mark Brown, and Ginger Riley Munduwalawala

Curated by Vernon Ah Kee and Aaron Seeto

Exhibition dates: 26 September – 31 October 2009
Opening: Friday 25 September 2009, 6 – 8pm
Free admission



Vernon Ah Kee, *Annie Ah Sam (A)*, 2008, charcoal, crayon and acrylic on canvas, 180 x 240cm. The James C. Sourris Collection, Brisbane. Image courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

Gallery 4A's upcoming group exhibition profiles Asian-Australian history entangled with an Aboriginal history of Australia.

Recently returned from representing Australia at the Venice Biennale, Brisbane-based artist Vernon Ah Kee will present work and curate an exhibition with Gallery 4A's Director, Aaron Seeto.

SPEAKEASY draws its title from the illegal and underground bars which operated during the prohibition period in 1920s America – out of sight, below the radar, yet part of a vital cultural dialogue. In this exhibition, the title refers to the longstanding contribution of Indigenous and Asian history, often overlooked in Australia's colonial history. This exhibition delves into previously untold stories in Australia and marks a fundamental shift in thinking about intercultural relationships, politics and geography.

In 2008, Gallery 4A hosted a symposium in which the artist and co-curator of this exhibition, Vernon Ah Kee presented a paper where he saw his own Chinese-heritage belonging within a 'Black History' of Australia. Following this trajectory, Ah Kee reverses a history of Australia which assumes all cultural difference in relation to a European (or white) imperative, making this exhibition potentially confronting.

The exhibition charts a range of relationships between Indigenous artists and Asian people and culture, through the familial, the political, the pre-colonial and periods of trade. Included are several key indigenous artists: Fiona Foley, Gordon Hookey, Daniel Boyd, Gary Lee, Zhou Xiaoping, Jason Wing and Mark Brown, Ginger Riley Munduwalawala and Vernon Ah Kee.

Contact Aaron Seeto on (02) 9212 0380 or email info@4a.com.au for more information, hi-res images, or media interview