

Ms Brenda Louise Croft

The degree of Doctor of Visual Arts (*honoris causa*) was conferred upon Brenda Louise Croft at the Sydney College of the Arts graduation ceremony held at 11.30am on 6 April 2009.



The Pro-Chancellor Mr John McCarthy QC conferring the degree of Doctor of Visual Arts (*honoris causa*) upon Brenda Louise Croft, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*



Brenda Louise Croft, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Presented by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Don Nutbeam

Pro Chancellor, I have the honour to present Brenda Louise Croft for admission to the degree of Doctor of Visual Arts (*honoris causa*).

Brenda Croft has made an outstanding contribution to the visual arts, both as practitioner and curator. Active

since the mid-1980s, she embodies the engaged artist, producing work of great aesthetic subtlety and strength that also contains strong messages about social justice and indigenous culture and history.

Born in Perth in 1964, Brenda Croft is of the Gurindji people, from Daguragu/Limbunya in the Northern Territory. She completed a year of study in the Bachelor of Visual Arts in Photography, at the Sydney College of the Arts in 1985 and has been exhibiting since 1986. Her work ranges across photography, mixed media installation and performance. Croft uses the camera to take control of her self-image and representation of Aboriginals. In 1988, her work was included in the touring exhibitions, 'Inside Black Australia' and 'Photography: Recent Acquisitions' at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.

Along with nine other indigenous artists, she was a founding member of the Boomali Aboriginal Artists' Co-operative in Sydney. She was employed as the General Manager of Boomali, from 1990 to 1996 and was a member of the National Museum of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee. Croft's work is held in major state and federal collections in Australia, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Artbank and the National Gallery.

Brenda Croft's work has been displayed in major art institutions, including the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; Performance Space, Sydney; the National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; AFRICUS: The Johannesburg Biennale; the Museum of Sydney; the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Perth; the Niagara Galleries, Richmond, Victoria; the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth; and the 48th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. Her work was included in the Aboriginal Women's Exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney and Kudjeris at Boomali Aboriginal Artists' Co-operative, in the early 90's. Since the mid 1990's her work has regularly appeared in the Art Gallery of New South Wales, including the 2007 Boomali exhibition.

Croft's work has featured in international exhibitions, including the 1996 international touring exhibition 'Abstracts: New Aboriginalities'. She has contributed to the community through various capacities through Radio Redfern and Radio Skid Row. In 1998 she was awarded the Indigenous Arts Fellowship from the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

Croft also publishes widely on the arts, and is a freelance artist, curator, writer and lecturer. She has been Curator of Indigenous Art at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, and until last year was Senior Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the National Gallery of Australia. She is currently Lecturer at the Unaipon School, which offers programs in Aboriginal Studies and Australian Studies and a range of double degrees, at the University of South Australia.

Brenda Croft is an extraordinary individual who is widely respected among the art and broader community. She has left a significant mark on Australian art and the indigenous community.

Pro Chancellor, I present Brenda Louise Croft for admission to the degree of Doctor of Visual Arts (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.