

## MEDIA RELEASE

*women of Brisbane: Judy Watson*

### Hidden stories of Brisbane's influential women unveiled for International Women's Day

Launching Monday 8 March (International Women's Day), highly acclaimed multi-media artist Judy Watson's limited edition book *women of brisbane* shares the unheard stories of resilience and determination in Brisbane's history from more than 180 significant female lives, published by Museum of Brisbane.

Featuring stories of influential Brisbane women, including Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920-1993) and writer and community elder Maureen Watson, this new publication draws from the inspiring stories shared with Watson by the community when she was developing and installing one of Brisbane's newest public artworks along the Lores Bonney Riverwalk, titled *bandarra-gan chidna: strong woman track / track of strong women*, which features a suite of images sand-blasted and imprinted on signage into the walkway.

Watson sees this project as an extension of her lifelong interest in women's stories and is really proud to share so many stories of Brisbane's truly remarkable women.

"The stories of women's lives and contribution are such an unknown, not only in Brisbane but in places all around the world. Women have been silenced and unrepresented in our public spaces and in our consciousness. This project is about raising the level of awareness of women and their significant contributions. It is about documenting their histories so that everybody will know the names of some of these women and understand their stories," said Watson.

Stories included in *women of brisbane* include that of Gwai-a Catchpenny (c.1810-c.1894), who busked and danced, catching pennies in her mouth, and enduring taunts in order to feed her family during the early years of the colony. Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920-1993) served in the Australian Women's Army Service (1942-44), and as a single mother worked as a domestic (including for the Cilento family) and a secretary, before she became a published author and a political activist. Maureen Watson (1931-2009) was a writer, community elder and performer. She received the inaugural United Nations Association Global Leadership Prize for her contribution to cross-cultural understanding and harmony.

Museum of Brisbane Director Renai Grace said that collaborations of this type with artists allowed important documentation of Brisbane's public and private histories and captured rare community insights.

"Monuments and public sculpture all over the world have so rarely featured women. This public artwork, created by Judy Watson for Brisbane, and the book to be published on International Women's Day which documents the research behind it, for the first time details the stories of Brisbane's women," said Ms Grace.

Designed by Michael Phillips, *women of brisbane: Judy Watson* will be available at the Museum of Brisbane Shop in three editions with special design features for the Artist's Edition (RRP \$185) and the Artist's Poster Edition (RRP \$88), with a commercial edition at RRP \$33.

Published by Museum of Brisbane, purchase a special edition signed by Watson at the Museum of Brisbane Shop from Tuesday 9 March 2021.

ENDS

**Interview, photography and filming opportunities are available** with Museum of Brisbane Director Renai Grace and artist Judy Watson.

### **About Judy Watson**

<https://www.milanigallery.com.au/artist/judy-watson?do=cv>

### **About Museum of Brisbane**

Museum of Brisbane brings our city's vibrant art, culture and history to life through our exhibitions, workshops, tours, talks and children's activities.

Located in City Hall, the Museum is part of the living history of the city, examining how Brisbane and its people change over time and how our individual and collective stories reveal our character and create our identity. We are also the keeper of City Hall's rich heritage, and visitors can experience a bird's eye view of Brisbane from the top of the iconic Clock Tower on one of our popular tours, as well as learn the stories behind City Hall during an insider's tour of the 90-year-old building.

Museum of Brisbane is an avid supporter of the city's artists, designers and artisans. We are dedicated to transforming their artistic vision into a stunning reality through our exhibitions and Artist-in-Residence programs. The work of Brisbane's artists, designers and chefs can also be found at MoB Shop which stocks a bespoke range of jewellery, accessories, homewares, design objects, books, artworks and gourmet food.

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