



ARTWORK DESIGN: LEAH CUMMINS, BUNYA DESIGNS

WELCOMING THE UNWELCOME: A BLACK RAINBOW HOMECOMING

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PROJECT LEAD & BIO

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Marijke is a Lamalama, Binthi Warra and Bulgun Warra person born and raised on the lands of the Guugu Yimithirr Nation in the Cape York Peninsula of remote far northern Australia. Marijke is also a multilingual international Human Rights Lawyer specialising in human rights relating to Indigeneity, race, gender, sexuality and cultural heritage. Marijke sits on numerous boards, has won a host of international and domestic scholarships and awards, and is a published author.

Marijke is currently completing a cross-border PhD in International Law under the supervision of the Center for Race & Gender at the University of California, Berkeley and Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales, Sydney.





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PROJECT OVERVIEW

This is a 3-4 year combined academic and photography grassroots research project based in the Cape York Peninsula of Australia consisting of a twofold structure split as follows:

1) Academic; and 2) Creative. This multidisciplinary project is scholarly and community building work that aims to cultivate space for First Nations LGBTQIA+ Sistergirl, Brotherboy, 2Spirit & IndigiQueer peoples to challenge our position as the *invisible*, and *hypervisible*, Black Indigenous rainbow 'Other' on our stolen and colonised lands by reclaiming, and taking up, space within our communities.

A space where we are both welcome and safe, rather than excluded and harmed. A space where our vibrancy is celebrated and respected, rather than mocked and shamed. A space where our lands are honoured, our relationships to kin and community are honoured, and the complexity of our bodies are honoured. A space where we are finally able to heal and shift from surviving to thriving.





PROJECT TIMELINE

This project is planned to commence in 2024 and will cease in 2028. However, these dates may be subject to change as the life of the project is largely dependent upon the amount of funding and donations received.

PROJECT STRUCTURE & OBJECTIVES

The first 1-2 years of this project will be dedicated to the 'Creative' component, with the remaining 1-2 years being spent on the project's 'Academic' component.

CREATIVE COMPONENT

This will translate to spending 1-2 years taking portraits and collecting contemporary narratives about community life for First Nations LGBTQIA+ Sistergirl, Brotherboy, 2Spirit & IndigiQueer peoples in Cape York communities. The purpose of collecting these portraits and contemporary narratives is to challenge existing colonial prejudiced discriminatory views about Indigenous gender and sexuality diversity within Cape York Indigenous communities by visually reinforcing the position, and cultural significance of First Nations LGBTQIA+ Sistergirl, Brotherboy, 2Spirit & IndigiQueer peoples within our communities, while *decolonising* and *Indigenising* our diverse gender and sexual identities in ways that are

more meaningful to us and the histories of our people. All portraits and contemporary narratives collected will be collated into a photography book, resulting in an unprecedented repository of imagery and oral histories that accurately portray First Nations LGBTQIA+ Sistergirl, Brotherboy, 2Spirit & IndigiQueer peoples in Cape York communities today. This creative, consciousness-shifting work will be widely distributed through grassroots Cape York community channels, artistic and academic publications, exhibitions, online portals including domestic and international government and non-profit organisational networks. All proceeds generated from the photography book will be returned to the Cape York Peninsula Indigenous communities who supported and participated in the research project.

ACADEMIC COMPONENT

My year taking portraits and collecting contemporary narratives will be followed by spending 1-2 years in a scholarly environment—guided by Indigenous and non-Indigenous LGBTQIA+ leaders in the field—building upon the existing literature and body of work by drafting and disseminating multiple publications focusing on *decolonising* and *Indigenising* gender and sexuality on the international stage. These publications will consist of academic peer reviewed journal articles including a chapter contribution to the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Indigenous Peoples and International Law*.

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PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

First Nations LGBTQIA+ Sistergirl, Brotherboy, 2Spirit & IndigiQueer peoples are currently discriminated against and 'Othered' both within and outside their communities on the basis of their Indigeneity, race, gender and sexuality. This project is integral to global scholarly and community building efforts as it provides a national and international platform for promoting protection of the bodily integrity of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ peoples by way of extending self-determination and sovereignty over our own *bodies, genders and sexualities*, rather than just our *lands*.

This shift in the global contemporary Indigenous-rights discourse and decolonisation movement is critical given the exploitation, dispossession and control of Indigenous *lands* is inextricably connected to the exploitation, dispossession and control of Indigenous *bodies*. Put simply, calling for #Landback while making little to no space for Indigenous bodily expressions of diverse gender and sexual identities on said land is indeed futile. Therefore, I ask you to join me on this journey of not only calling for #Landback but #Bodiesback too!





Strong in
Culture