
A Visual and Social History of South Sydney



In 1980, a group of tutors and artists from the Art Workshop (Tin Sheds) at Sydney University expressed a common interest in engaging themselves in an arts project which would involve residents and workers from the inner-city suburbs immediately surrounding Sydney University, i.e. Redfern, Chippendale and Waterloo.

From this was born the *Pictures for Cities Project*, an ambitious attempt to record a visual history of South Sydney, incorporating both historical documentation and community participation (via a series of workshops).

The project workers set themselves the difficult task of capturing the seemingly disparate range of experiences of both Aboriginal and European Australians in South Sydney.

PICTURE CITIES A

Funding for the project was received in 1982 from the Crafts Community and Visual Arts Boards of the Australian Council. It was then decided to divide the research and presentation into two strands: Aboriginal History and Industrial History.

Tracey Moffat, an Aboriginal artist, was invited to join the project to research the Aboriginal strand while Geoff Weary, assisted by Leonie Lane and Susan Ostling, undertook the industrial strand.

The finished product, which was first exhibited in a local High School last year (and more recently in Artspace -- March 1985), consists of over sixty panels, 23 for the Aboriginal strand and 38 for the industrial strand.



Rita, 17, doesn't mind living in Redfern because 'there's much more going on, than in country towns.'



Documenting an Aboriginal and Working Class Community in Transition

S FOR PROJECT

The Aboriginal strand relates the tragic demise of the Cadigal people who once inhabited South Sydney region through to the formation of an increasingly strong black community in the area from the 1930s up until the present.

The industrial strand records the establishment of the local working-class communities surrounded by a diversity of places of work and industry. As part of this story, the protracted disputes, poor housing, local entertainments and continuing waves of immigration form an integral part of South Sydney's history.

What is remarkable about this exhibition has been the researchers' ability to utilise an incredible diversity of visual sources to recreate

in an imaginative manner the above themes. Such sources include paintings, sketches, cartoons, photographs and stills from films and video. In conjunction with this are brightly coloured photographs of community murals and printing workshops depicting local scenes.

To ensure that the invaluable work done is not wasted, the team has employed Oceania Media Network to handle distribution of the exhibition. Multiple copies of each panel have been made and are available for purchase or short term hire.

Currently, Oceania Media Network is hoping to circulate the exhibition to trade unions, government bodies, city councils, libraries, museums, educational institutes and community groups. (For further information, contact Oceania Media Network on [02] 264.3529.)



The Eveleigh Workshops.
ca 1945.