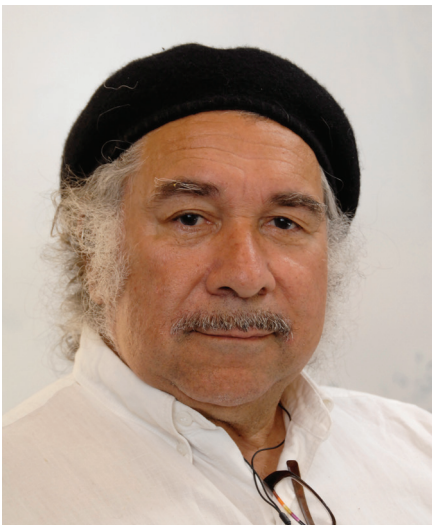




# DJON MUNDINE

## THREE VIEWS Three Visions

*It's human to lie. Most of the time we can't even be honest with ourselves.*  
Commoner, Rashomon, 1950.

The nation state of Australia was born on a lie – ‘Terra Nullius’, the unoccupied land. The area now called Sydney is an Aboriginal place; historically, conceptually, and spiritually. I'm informed by Wikipedia that memory develops quickly and then slow and reflectively, in three stages in our minds; encoding, storage and retrieval. Three contemporary Aboriginal artists (Karla Dickens, Adam Hill, aka Blak Douglas, and Jason Wing) and my humble narrator self, have put themselves in the belly of the Rainbow and attempted to open the door to the house of memory and stimulate your emotions. To allow you to cry, to laugh, and relate but to lead you to reflect, think, and feel.

My name is Djon Mundine and I am a Bandjalung man from the northern rivers region of NSW. The area of Sydney is spiritually my grandmother's dreaming. The year before I was born (1951) the Japanese film Rashomon (1950) was released. Rashomon is the name of a main gateway to the city now called Kyoto; a metaphor for a gateway to truth, and the film, explores how a single event can be seen in completely contradictory versions, complicating the truth of memory and justice; a discursive discourse to reach the light.

Wikipedia further divides memory into three forms, sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. In academia, there is a three-part progression or development towards a truth; thesis, anti-thesis, and conclusion. Memory, denial, resolution. Three views or lines of historical debate; left-right-middle, black-white, and now, possibly for Australia, the middle path of truth and justice.

History can be thought of in three ways; long past natural events, people, and actions, institutional developments, and, the personal details of the lives of individual human beings. There are numerous Aboriginal stories of how the supreme creative spirit, the Rainbow Serpent, swallowed human beings (death) and traveled under the earth only to return to the surface and regurgitate these people as reborn and revitalized from the revelatory experience.

The sunken armored casemate bunkers cut into the bed rock walls of George's Head, could also be referencing the 'western' trope of 'Plato's cave' where those imprisoned within can only see shadows of the reality outside, and speculate on what is the truth from the shadow moves and power plays of the brutal colonialism we Aboriginal people have endured. Colonised, disempowered, but made conscious of our sovereignty in this encounter, and led to our reclaiming of it.

Djon Mundine OAM

Artwork: *Cubba-Cubba*, Raked Red Ochre sand-field in enclosed area

Curator / Artist's Biography:

Bandjalung man Djon Mundine OAM is a curator, writer, artist and activist. He has held prominent curatorial positions in many national and international institutions, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and Queensland Art Gallery. He received the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1993 for service to the promotion and development of Aboriginal arts, crafts and culture.