

# VISUAL ARTS

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## Artistic installation takes no prisoners

More viewing enjoyment and more hard work await at Turner Galleries.

Julie Gough's **INTERRUPTED**: Renditions of *Unresolved Accounts* is in the front gallery while Lorraine Biggs' *Resilience* is in the back gallery. Gough is a tough artist who takes no prisoners. Biggs' work is more poetic and gives you some breathing space.

Biggs' work is based on the destruction and re-growth that fire has brought recently to the landscape around her. The works identify the cyclical nature of the subject matter and this is done through a number of series.

In the artist's statement, Biggs writes that she is exploring the intensity of fire but these works aren't intense; indeed, they feel calm and detached. The subtle beginnings of regrowth suit Biggs' fine use of paint and pastel better and the miniseries *After the Fire* is probably the pick of these — they feel hopeful. The pastel banner-like large series *Resilience* doesn't work for me, feeling decorative rather than physically responsive.

Gough's work engages the gallery space in a pseudo-museum manner. *Interrupted*, like most of her work, is based on her indigenous family history and responds to memory cues in found objects and text.

What I really like about Gough's work is her ability to incriminate art and artefact alike in Australia's contentious history and she does this through an interesting interaction between object and documentation. Her art shows an understanding of the objects that surround us well beyond their functionality or design, taking a

good hard look at what they signify culturally and how they reflect our intentions and desires.

We are greeted at the gallery door by a tent which Gough cleverly uses as a canvas to discuss incursion and encroachment. With recent interventions with regard to child abuse, *Uninvited Interventions* is a very topical piece.

The other standout piece is *Sentence (ancestor)* and this work perfectly exemplifies Gough's

understanding of cross-signifiers. An old chair is broken up and sentences telling the story of an Aboriginal mother and child are scripted on it. The sentence in this case represents both the method of presentation of the artwork and the life that awaited these ancestors.

**INTERRUPTED** and *Resilience* are at Turner Galleries, Northbridge, until September 8.



**Intent:** Julie Gough's *Uninvited Interventions* uses a tent as a canvas.