Media Release

30th April 2023 *For immediate release*

TRUTH TELLING IN YUIN COUNTRY
Arawarra's story

The launch of the Yuin Healing Trail this Friday 5 May will include a reading of a new poem by Gammēya-Ḏarrawal Ngundah man Jacob Morris that calls for the redress of historical wrongs.

Jacob's poem tells the story of an unrecognised Yuin warrior who, faced with the desecration of the sacred Red Cedar trees, acted bravely and fiercely to defend Country.

Jacob wrote *Arawarra and Cararura* as part of a collaborative project with artist Dr Rebecca Mayo, Head of Printmedia and Drawing at ANU School of Art and Design.

Working with Jacob and revered local Elder Aunty Deidre Martin, Rebecca established *The Plant Sensibilia Machine* project as part of Siteworks 2022 at Bundanon. This resulted in the production of a spectacular 12 metre drop of naturally dyed material exhibiting Jacob's poem that will be hung on the night of the launch.

The reading of this poem at the launch of the Healing Trail is particularly significant as it is taking place at Coolangatta Estate, a site of historical wrongs inflicted upon local Aboriginal people.

Settler Alexander Berry established the homestead using a grant of lands issued by the colony and an allocation of convicts at the base of Cullunghutti Mountain, now known as Coolangatta Estate.

While Berry relied on Aboriginal labour, historians have shown he also disrespected and made little effort to understand the local culture and community, and there was reported abuse of Aboriginal people as a labour force.

This history parallels the story of Arrawarra, which culminates in the desecration of gravesites and removal of bones and artefacts from traditional burial grounds around the sacred mountain of Cullunghutti for so-called ethnographic purposes.

Through this poetry reading, truth will be told and the call will be made to bring home Arawarra's skull.

Truth telling is essential to healing, big and small. The Yuin Healing Trail contributes to healing through re-connecting with the complex and often uncomfortable history of Australia. Only by

understanding where we have been and where we currently are, can we know where we need to be and go there together.

Background
Following the success of their 6 month Yuin Country Activation Program, Ngungwulah Aboriginal Corporation want Yuin Country to be known across Australia and internationally as a place of reciprocal healing, with their inaugural Yuin Healing Trail in 2023 as the next natural step.

This launch and the Yuin Healing Trail is proudly funded as part of a $222,500 grant from the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5, as well as Bendigo Bank's Community Enterprise Foundation Grant.

Ngungwulah Aboriginal Corporation's primary objective is to advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people's culture within the Australian wellness community and beyond to heal Country and all of us living on Country. Through respectful introduction of conversation, learning opportunities and communications they assist in integrating First Nations' ways of being, doing and knowing.

You are warmly welcome to join the Yuin Healing Trail and all associated upcoming events to be part of this unfolding journey. We all play a vital role in reciprocal healing. Please stay in touch.

For all enquiries please contact :
Cate Peterson, Director Nugungwulah Aboriginal Corporation,0419 609 991, admin@ngungwulah.org.au

Please find attached to the email 5 photos that can be utilised with the following attributions :

(Bundanon Siteworks 137 and RMAYO Plant Sensibilia Machine)
Rebecca Mayo, Aunty Deidre Martin & Jacob Morris
The Plant Sensibilia Machine, Bundanon 2023
Photo: Zan Wimberley

(Rebecca Mayo_The plant sensibilia machine_photo-sammy hawker and Rebecca Mayo_The plant sensibilia machine_photo-sammy hawker2)
Rebecca Mayo, Aunty Deidre Martin & Jacob Morris
The Plant Sensibilia Machine, Bundanon 2023
Photo: Sammy Hawker

(Jacob & poem Bundanon- small.jpg)
Photo: Rebecca Mayo