

James Dodd and Jessica Turner
Artist Statement
Crystal Brook Mural, September 2020

We have taken a little more time than proposed to deliberate over the nature of the mural. There are many elements that we are sensitive to, all of which influence one another. This is the first mural experience for Crystal Brook.

The primary discussions have been led by a sense of wanting to continue to celebrate the region's agricultural and colonial history. It is also critical that we celebrate the region's Indigenous cultures and history. This mural attempts to bring together these two histories in a way that can be positively and constructively unpacked.

We have been fortunate to be able to invite emerging Nukunu artist Jessica Taylor to join the team. She has made a fabulous contribution to the design of the mural and this represents a great opportunity for her to grow her profile and experience.

In representing the traditional owners of the land, Jessica Taylor has developed a design that shows their connection and culture to Crystal Brook and the surrounding area. Jessica states-

“Our land is our lifeblood and our connection to our ancestors who held custodianship over it for millennia. It is a link between all aspects of my people's existence – spirituality, culture, language, family, law and identity. Each circle represents part of the communities and towns that fill our land and connection between them all. The colours I have chosen represent the ever-changing seasons; the warm earthy colours of summer and autumn and splashes of blues and purples for the welcoming of winter and spring.”

We have had some pragmatic restrictions in terms of guidelines for painting on the architecture we are working on – we have been directed to use lime wash paint – of which only a limited colour palette is available.

The tractor element and peacock element were the standout favourites from prior rounds of consultation. Ears of wheat are included as reference to the dominant agricultural industry of the region. We have added an image of a pink flowering yellow gum as an expression of native flora and a way to tie the wall together across the tricky junction of each different surface. There were many requests for more colour which we feel we have been able to achieve (within the bounds of the available lime wash palette)

We hope that the Crystal Brook community can continue to grow its relationship with public art and look for further opportunities to incorporate artworks into the fabric of the town.

Please note that the refinement of the mock-ups is to the point of best communicating the overall content and colour scheme. There are many smaller refinements and balances that occur when on site. Some marks and lines need to be adapted to the specific surface – this is especially the case with a stone wall such as this.

Colours shown in mock-ups are indicative to the best of our ability. There will always be variations in screen and printing calibration. Exact placement and proportion of elements may also vary in response to the physical surface.