

AUDIO DESCRIPTION | CLINTON NAINA

This audio file describes the artwork *a e i o u - have a sniff of this*, created by Clinton Naina.

Clinton Naina is a Meriam Mir and Kuku artist, born in 1971.

Made in 2006, *a e i o u - have a sniff of this* is a large vertical painting measuring nearly 180 centimetres high by 122 centimetres wide.

Created using black bitumen and muted chrome spray paint, the artwork has a dark appearance. There is no single focal point. Instead, it features handprints; layers of vowels from the English alphabet; aerosol dots and a plastic bag attached to the bottom edge.

Black bitumen forms the base layer. Applied in varying thicknesses, it has a smooth, syrupy finish that ranges from faintly translucent to dense and opaque, with an overall low sheen.

The next layer features softly sprayed aerosol. Used to define the negative space of overlapping handprints, these markings resemble early Aboriginal rock art. The handprints are oriented in different directions.

Slightly left of centre, a large capital O emerges from the aerosol haze. In the lower left corner is a large capital A. To its right and above appears a capital E, and just right of centre is a lowercase i. These letters are painted in loose, gestural spray paint.

The bitumen and aerosol have been scratched into with hand-drawn vowels. Arranged in rough rows across the canvas, the letters catch the light, revealing traces between the layers of the painting.

The uppermost layer features pairs of chrome spray-painted dots. Many have downward drips and have been mixed into the bitumen below using a circular hand motion. Their varying size and spacing create an irregular pattern across the canvas.

A crumpled plastic bag, also spray-painted chrome, is tied closed and fixed to the bottom edge of the canvas. Its reflective, wrinkled surface contrasts with the flat painting and extends beyond the picture plane.