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The 5th Aichi Triennale Is a Reminder to Keep Living

By Suijn Jung – August 10, 2022



Kaylene Whiskey, Ngura Pukulpa-Happy Place (2022) (still). Courtesy the artist and Iwantja Arts. Photo: Max Mackinnon.

Within such dichotomous conditions, living otherwise becomes an act of vital resistance, as reflected in Kaylene Whiskey's single-channel video *Ngura Pukulpa-Happy Place (2022)*, exhibited at the former Ichinomiya Central Nursing School.

In the video, the artist juxtaposes her traditional Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal culture and knowledge with Western pop culture. She appears alongside sisters from her community, Indulkana, on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in South Australia. Dressed for a party, these kungka kunpu (strong women) chant 'She looks so good/ She got the moves/ All of the ladies/ Nothing to lose' to music as they walk down a road dancing and singing.

As the chanting continues, illustrations pop up on screen of icons like Wonder Woman, superstars like Dolly Parton, plus colourful heart shapes, flowers, and animals. The artist draws these images on a canvas before they fly out over the scene, including depictions of the artist and her sisters as superheroes.

Recalling writer and activist Emma Goldman's famous declaration, 'If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution,' Whiskey's work represents life as a dynamic and joyful celebration that is rooted in community.