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# Yimbama

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'Yimbama' is the second collection by Indigenous Australian poet Ken Canning, also known as Burraga Gutya. Canning is one of the strongest voices in contemporary Indigenous Australian activism. The poems collected here offer an unflinching examination of the lasting damage done to Indigenous Australia by European colonization and the continuing political struggle. As unflinching and uncompromising these poems are in their protest and dissent, love for country, community and tradition remains central. These poems give witness and insight to the reality of contemporary Aboriginal Australia and demand to be heard. There is wisdom here, hard-won, lived and told true. "In writing I try to cover a diverse range of topics while writing about issues that I have experienced. As an Aboriginal man in my 60's, I have seen a lot of political deception I have suffered imprisonment and having all dignity stripped away. I have seen our Peoples lost forever in institutions and finally because of this, in later years I was diagnosed with a schzio-effective disorder. I have survived this and live a normal life. Some of my poems reflect my feelings of political treachery, oppression and the mental state this leaves. Yet in the text their remains a love of our Culture and Our Mother Earth. A gentleness survives and overcomes the bitterness. It is important to note that while I am writing about my experiences, I am writing about the First Nations Peoples of this country's survival against some horrific experiences. In address mental health issues, I was fortunate to be able to write some of these poems while I was ill. I want ALL peoples to know such an illness is not the end and please do not let it define you. I have learned via my wife Cheryl, love overcomes all adversity." - Burraga Gutya Ken Canning is from the Kunja Clan of the Bidjara Peoples of South West Queensland. His language name is Burraga Gutya. Poet and playwright, he started writing over 40 years ago from a prison cell in the old Boggo Road Jail in Brisbane, learning how to read and write from a fellow inmate. He worked for many years in Aboriginal Education, and was a founder and former Academic and Cultural advisor at the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning.

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