Etched in history

THREE contemporary Aboriginal artists consider and represent the (in)famous “king plates” issued by the British to Indigenous allies. Treahna Hamm works conventional imagery in non-conventional materials, as in her way-oversized, fire-patterned, galvanised gorgot. Brian McKinnon does his familiar schtick of rough parallel lines with aggro-comic polemical text. West is more polite in technique, but savage in attack, with portraits of colonists wearing inscribed king plates: Governor Lachlan Macquarie is “a New South Wales White befriended by Bungaree”, the syphilitic John Batman “Johnny Pox King of Port Phillip”. David Hansen

For King and Country: Re-contextualising Aboriginal King Plates (Treahna Hamm, Brian McKinnon, Sharon West), RMIT School of Art Gallery, Bewen Street, City, until May 25. www.rmit.edu.au/adc/projectspace

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2007 • THE AGE

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