

Confronting our brutal and bloody past



Confronting our bloody past: *The Missing*, by artist Julie Gough, Bett Gallery, Hobart.

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

I wasn't planning a post tonight, but today I saw an exhibition by Tasmanian-based artist Julie Gough about the attempted annihilation of Aboriginal Tasmanians/Palawa – an attempt which, as we know, was carried across Bass Strait to the colonial invasion of south-west Victoria, our home.

The murders. The kidnaps. The thefts. The near annihilation. Julie's work is sobering and absolutely heartbreaking.

And I came away with one repetitive thought: what can I do?

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One thing I can do is to use what I know best – words – to tell indigenous stories from south-west Victoria and to help illuminate our real history, not the white-washed version I grew up with.

South-west Victoria is saturated with rich indigenous stories, both contemporary and past.

I recently applied for some funding to help me do this by bringing others into The Terrier to help tell these stories.

I am still waiting to hear how my application has gone – fingers crossed – but with or without this support, this is one path The Terrier will be taking as it heads into its second year.

On we go.