

*This piece is about how our community's sanctuary is currency subject to reproducing white Australia ideology and bureaucracy. How we become coopted as extensions of ongoing colonial, genocidal violence. We refuse to subscribe to such lies. We acknowledge indigenous sovereignty and seek sanctuary under this sovereignty.*

*First performed at Sovereignty + Sanctuary, a First Nations and Refugee Solidarity Event (RISE and WAR- Warriors of Aboriginal Resistance)*

### **The Idea of Australia**

I learnt about a sunburnt country,

A land that sweeps and hides its pain

Of rugged mountain rangers,

Of droughts and flooding rains,

I was told to love the racism

to accept the colonial gaze.

Her beauty and her terror

You see, I *meet* Australia, through the imperial frame.

I learnt about a federated country,

a land with boundless plains to share

Of the rugged aussie battler but not all the battles

Of droughts and flooding rains,

Of green and gold for the wattle

I learnt to come Waltzing Matilda

was taught just English, just enough for the factory or to clean

of Edward Barton, Author Phillip and of course the British queen

to praise historical criminals

see the beauty, not the terror

and see the terror as beauty

as if were one and the same.

You see, I *saw* Australia, through the imperial frame.

I was told to celebrate, forget, assimilate

Especially on Australia day

“We’ll treat you as one of us, as white”- but only just for that day.

To think using settler logic

Of droughts and flooding rains,

“but don’t go against the grain”

Ascribed an imperial identity, and expected to portray

You see I learnt to *perform* Australia, through the imperial frame.

Groomed to the tune of *Advance Australia Fair*

We are here today because we refuse to be used to advance the white Australia affair.