



SHOALHAVEN STORIES

Anna Glynn

“Anna Glynn is an artist of great integrity and quality ... lively, inventive, creative and original ... her works are derived from a physical and mental excursion into the Australian landscape and its myths. The characters that capture her imagination represent ordinary people, sometimes caught in extraordinary circumstances ... a passionate approach to her subject matter is the essence of Anna Glynn’s work.”

Arthur Boyd 1997

SHOALHAVEN STORIES

Anna Glynn

contemporary Australian artist

‘A regional artist working with an international perspective’

Paintings, video, writing & sound works

Shoalhaven Stories’ is an ongoing project developed by Australian artist Anna Glynn based on local stories, events and myths.

www.annaglynn.com

MAIN GALLERY

SHOALHAVEN CITY ARTS CENTRE

16 August – 12 September 2012



Shoalhaven Stories is supported through funding from the Australian Government's Your Community Heritage Program. This recent funding provides an opportunity to have Glynn work with the Shoalhaven City Arts Centre and a small team to gather and record more stories, working also with digital media and creating an online accessible presence. Our thanks go to all who supported this project application.



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities

Front cover image: *Avian Lovers* (detail)

Images above from left: *Single Man Dancing by the Light of the Moon* (detail);

Prawn Juggling on Sussex Inlet (detail); *Drowning Bundanon* (detail)

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FOREWORD

This retrospective body of work by Anna Glynn is at times beautiful, strange, playful, politically incorrect, dark and humorous. During the past twenty five years, living and working in the Shoalhaven, Glynn has been researching and painting stories gathered from the local area as well as telling her own stories. She collects and records these through painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, writing, music, sound, installation, film, animation and theatre. This important exhibition is the culmination of many years work by the artist and shows artworks which have never been seen by the public.

Glynn's work reflects a strong and powerful relationship to the Australian land and its nature. Her inspiration comes from an intimate, deeply emotional connection, which developed from her childhood on a rural property and continues in her arts practice today. She uses this substance and spirit as her foundation to create visually poetic artwork. Aspects of her art delve into the association between land, memories and stories that resonate within a place.

The exhibition includes her painting the 'Brave Hunter', which was chosen as the archetypal Australian image for the cover of the most recent edition of *A Concise History Australia* by Cambridge University Press. This work is from her Bundanon series, where she spent extensive time working with Arthur Boyd and researching stories from the historic property. The previous edition of this important publication featured a cover image of Ned Kelly by another painter who worked and lived in the

Shoalhaven, Sidney Nolan. The selection of Glynn's work continues in this tradition of using images that interpret Australian stories within our iconic landscapes.

This exhibition also draws attention to Glynn's 'Shoalhaven Stories' sculptural installation located in the gallery courtyard, a public art project commissioned by the Shoalhaven Arts Board in 2000. It depicts many local stories collected by the artist over an extensive time. She developed programs working with the community in a celebration of the stories, characters and local myths of the Shoalhaven.

The Shoalhaven City Arts Centre, in presenting Glynn's retrospective body of work, is inviting the audience into this artist's world – a world we can share with her as they are our stories told here too. The exhibition is a starting point for a journey through time and personal experiences for viewers and gives them the unique opportunity to contribute their own 'Shoalhaven Story' to the steadily growing body of work based on the website as a portal. This mix of traditional exhibition space and the virtual forum of the website allows our Shoalhaven Stories to continue to be developed and showcased long after the exhibition has come off the gallery walls. Shoalhaven Stories is a special project with real opportunities for the audience to be intrinsically involved in the artistic process and for us to capture the wonderful history and heritage of our region through its people.

Tracey Glenn, Shoalhaven City Arts Centre Manager



Above: *Kangaroo Valley Myth* (detail)
Opposite page: *Shoalhaven Paw Play* (detail)

“The pattern of human life is composed of threads leading from the past, interwoven with others formed by the present. Strwn between these – still invisible to us – lie those of the future.”

From ‘The Beginning of Art’ by S.Giedion from the
A.W Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 1957



For me, the threads from the past have always intersected with the present and the future. My work embraces the landscape as the setting for various performances that occur ... the ephemeral, fleeting layers of time, past and present overlapping and resonating with memories. I am intrigued by the natural world and the accompanying underlying narrative. The echo of all stories embedded in the landscape where we are mere small performers on a grand stage. My ideal creation, if it was possible, would be to make a cross section through time at different geographic locations ... see the forests, oceans, people and animals ... hear the sounds of the ancient birds echo through the trees and reverberate down the valleys...a glimpse of the many stories that accompanied these past worlds.

As an artist, I have always been captivated by stories and storytelling. The Shoalhaven Stories series is a continuation of this passion. During my time living here I have been quietly observing and gathering stories – both my own and those from other people in the community. In this exhibition, I call upon this rich collection of unusual and everyday events and express them through a variety of media.

My works are based on local stories, events and myths. In some cases it is almost like the game ‘chinese whispers’ – by the time the story has passed along from person to person it is almost unrecognizable from the original. The layers of history build up and erode and the stories that are told can take a similar path...aspects are worn away... others are polished and refined like gems to be repeated again and again.

A lifetime of constant curiosity led me to the Shoalhaven when I took a turn off the highway and instantly fell in love with the landscape. I am grateful to live in this community that is so willing to share its stories. Thank you.

Anna Glynn June 2012





Prawn Juggling on Sussex Inlet

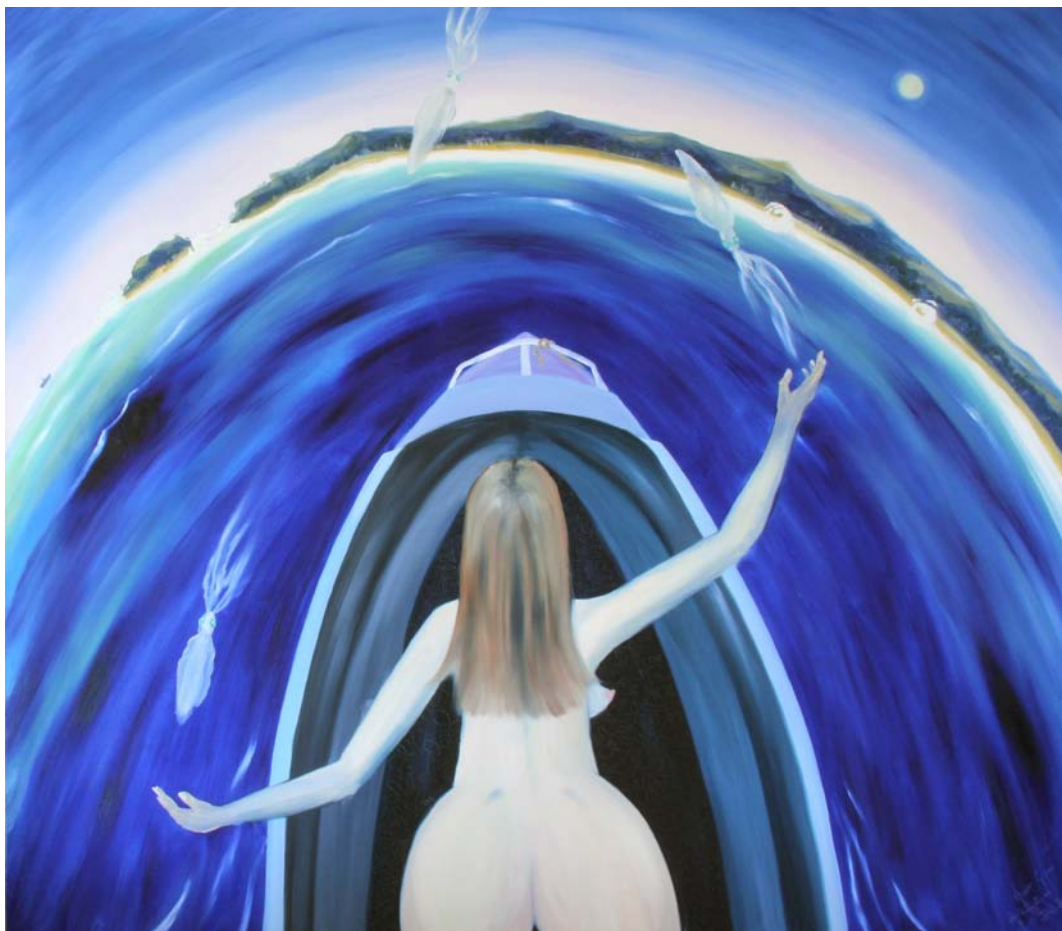
Oil on canvas

183cm x 160cm

*Penguins barking,
dolphins diving
and the clear deep blue Jervis Bay
the spinning sky so big I am almost
crushed by it*

*skill and balance in a small craft
duck and weave the sepia fountain
buxom and brazen
a wayward breast peeking out
like the snout of a curious puppy*





Squid Juggling on Jervis Bay

Oil on canvas

183cm x 160cm





*floating in the Shoalhaven River ... looking skyward
... an image burnt into the retina*

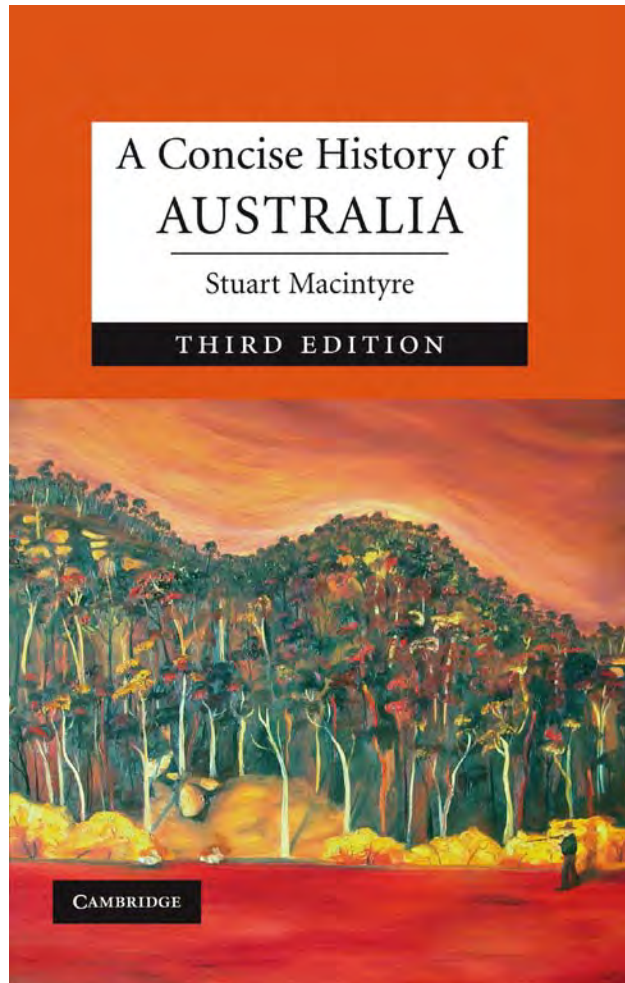
Shoalhaven Drowning

Oil on canvas

306cm x 228cm

In “Shoalhaven Drowning” we see the surroundings from the viewpoint of a young girl drowning. The image is drawn from an incident which occurred earlier last century on the Bundanon property.

'The Brave Hunter' a painting by Shoalhaven artist Anna Glynn is the cover image for the latest edition of 'A Concise History of Australia' (Third Edition) by Stuart Macintyre – Cambridge University Press 2009.





Brave Hunter

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm

'The Brave Hunter' is based on real characters in a photograph from the Bundanon archives.





Night Vigil

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm

Night Vigil shows the shadow of Dr McKenzie the founder of the historic Shoalhaven property, Bundanon. In the foreground are the Bunya Pines that he planted which are still growing there today. In the distance is a hermit in his cave. This hermit reference continually reoccurs in local stories of this area.



*“After this I kept on beholding,
and, see there! another beast,
one like a leopard ...”*

Daniel Daniel 7:6



Kangaroo Valley Myth

Acrylic on canvas

304cm x 102cm

A creature of the imagination...a creature of reality?

There are regular sightings of a panther-like animal throughout the Shoalhaven and beyond.





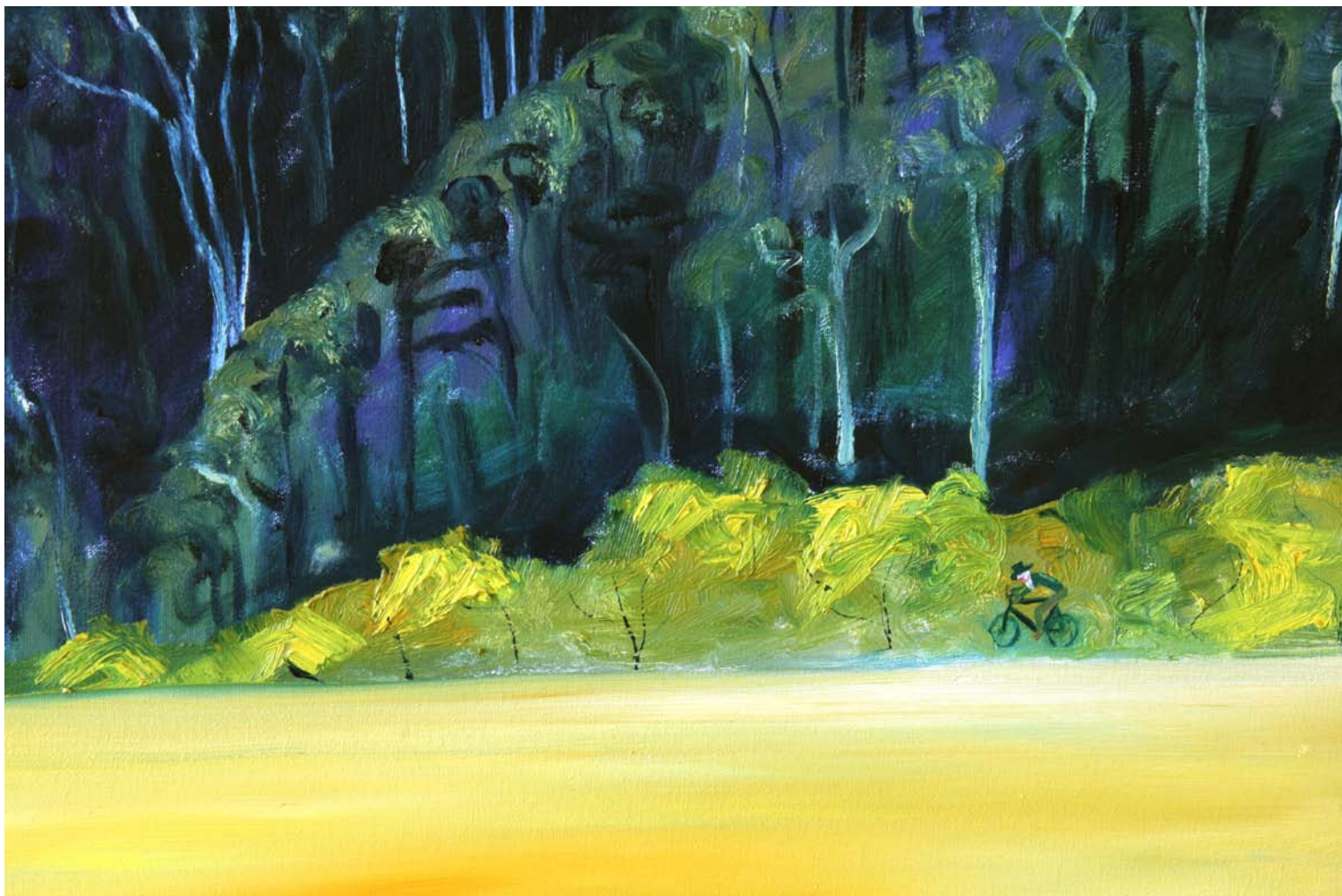
Woodcutter Love

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm

Two woodcutters lived in a shack together by the Shoalhaven River in the 1800s. It is said that they are buried on top of each other under an ancient gum tree.

Saltwater Jack died in the late 1990s after living alone for many years in a rudimentary dwelling. He used to be seen riding his rusty old bicycle into town for his supplies.






Saltwater Jack

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm

A painting depicting a man in a dark suit leaping through a forest at night. The scene is illuminated by a bright, ethereal light source, likely the moon, which casts a long, dark shadow of the man onto the ground. The man is in mid-air, with his arms outstretched and legs bent, suggesting a leap or a dance. The forest is composed of tall, slender trees with dark trunks and foliage. The ground is a mix of light and dark patches, possibly representing moonlight and shadows. The overall mood is mysterious and magical.

A story from Bundanon of the cottage called the single man's hut. One of the workers that lived there was renowned for his kindness and generosity. He would paint pictures of birds for the children.

This is his secret night life – leaping by the light of a fabulous moonlit night.



Single Man Dancing by the Light of the Moon

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm





Corn for Kellogg's

oil on canvas

91cm x 91cm

The point paddock at Bundanon in past history grew the corn for the Kellogg's factory. In the fore ground there is a small bullock team fully loaded.





Drowning Bundanon

oil on canvas

102cm 76cm

Dr McKenzie built Bundanon beside the Shoalhaven River in the 1800s. His descendent was preparing her horse for the Nowra show when she went under the water. This image shows her drowning but also shows her in a boat of dreams – taking her horse with her.

We are driving on a back road ...

We are cautious ...

We are watchful ...

We are vigilant ...

We clutch the steering wheel ...

We are poised on the edge ...

What happens next?

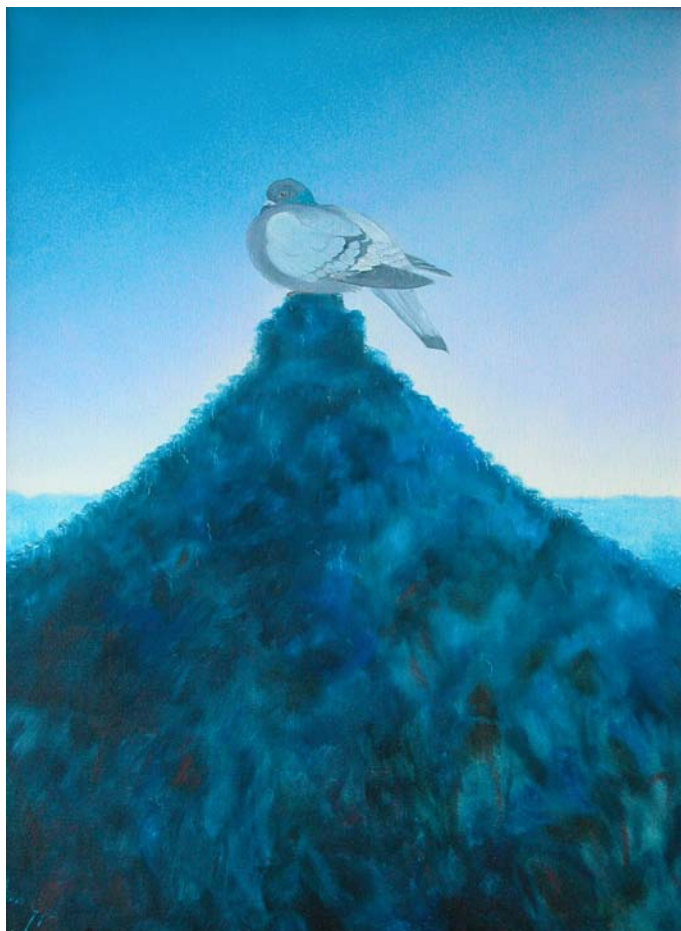
Country Road Nightmare Shoalhaven

oil on canvas

180cm x 160cm







Pigeon House Mountain

oil on canvas

76cm x 102cm

A plump pigeon is nestled to roost on the summit of the mountain





Captain Cook trying to think of a name for the distant mountain...

oil on canvas

102cm 76cm





Industrial Poetry
Manildra at Night
Acrylic on canvas
76cm x 123cm

A night spent painting plein air at the Manildra plant. When I arrived there was a bounty of bunnies looking at me expectantly.





Avian Lovers

Oil on canvas

91cm x 122cm

A painting that foretold of the future? This work was done plein air on a friend's property in the 1990s. Years later I have this escarpment cliff face as my backyard.





Shoalhaven Paw Play

oil on canvas

50cm x 61cm

Another day on the farm at Numbaa.



Numbaa Night Garden

oil on canvas

61cm x 61cm

The building called the Chinaman's Hut is on the floodplain by the river at Numbaa. A Chinese market gardener lived there. It is said that he suicided and a message from him can still be seen written on the wall of his hut.

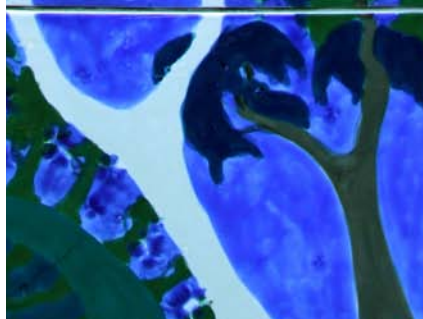
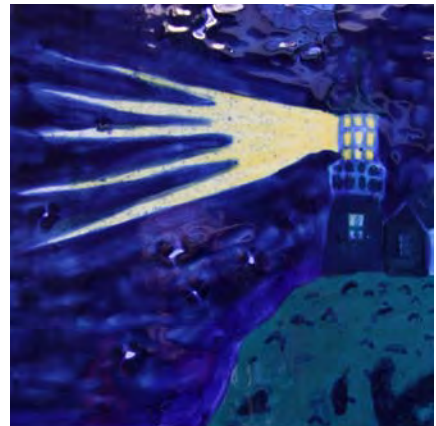
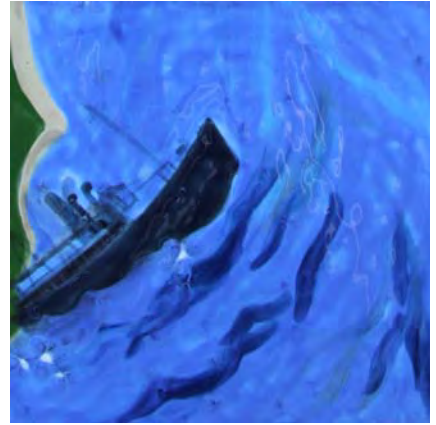
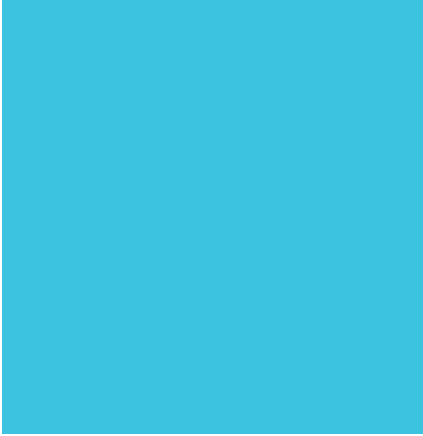


Kangaroo Valley Nights

oil on canvas

50cm x 61cm

When we sleep at night another strange nocturnal world awakes.



Shoalhaven Stories

Sculpture detail:

Left: Lake Wollumboola swan collector

Centre: Ostrich farm

Right from top: Captain's ship;
Lighthouse



Shoalhaven Stories Sculptural Installation

Glazed ceramic tile obelisks

Commissioned by the Shoalhaven Arts Board as a year
2000 project celebrating the millennium.

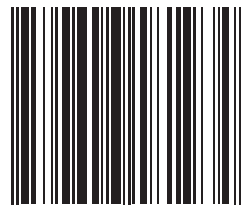


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