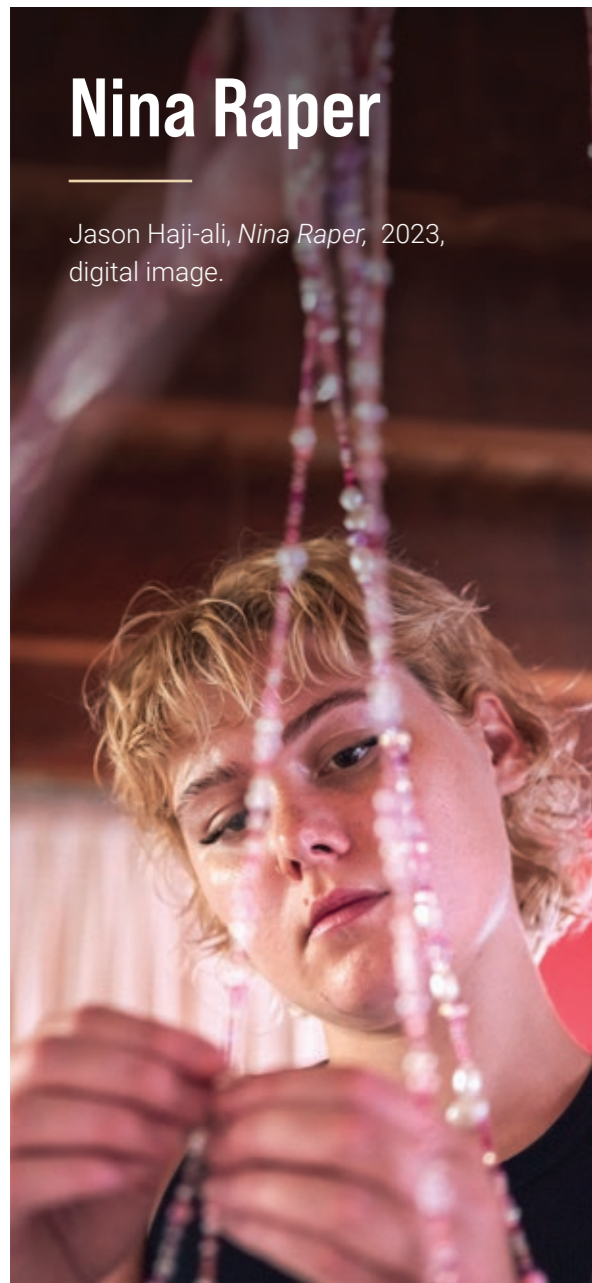


# Nina Raper

Jason Haji-ali, *Nina Raper*, 2023,  
digital image.



## About the Artist

Nina Raper is an emerging artist based in Boorloo (Perth). Having completed their Bachelor of Fine Art at Curtin University in 2021. Raper's practice unpacks the multifaceted nature of misogyny in the current digital age. They interrogate the archetypes of woman and girlhood that is demonstrated in popular culture and the Western art cannon, it also informs their understanding of their own identity. Raper's process based and autobiographical practice takes the form of textiles, video, performance and sculpture.

## Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk, Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders past and present.



Rockingham Arts Centre  
11 Kent Street,  
Rockingham

### Gallery opening times:

Wednesday – Sunday  
10am – 4pm

### Contact:

9527 0734  
artscentre@rockingham.wa.gov.au  
rockingham.wa.gov.au/exhibitions



rockingham.wa.gov.au



# Coming Home

**Nina Raper**  
23 August - 17 September 2023

Nina Raper, *strung*, 2023, digital image.  
Image credit: courtesy the artist



Nina Raper, *knotted & bound*, 2023, digital image.  
Image credit: courtesy the artist

This artist statement discusses themes including mental health and sexual assault. If you, or anyone you know, needs support, please contact the follow services:

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14 | visit [lifeline.org.au](https://www.lifeline.org.au)

**Sexual Assault Resource Centre 24 Hour Emergency Line:** (08) 9340 1828

## Coming Home

by Nina Raper

When I was a kid I used to have trouble sleeping. Some nights I used to imagine my brain tied up and tangled in little red threads. I would imagine my hands picking at the strings. With a large pair of imaginary scissors I would snip away at the threads.

One by one, they would slip into the crevices of my brain. Last year I was diagnosed with Complex PTSD. A diagnosis that I was, and am still, unsure how to navigate. I have since devoted my art practice to exploring, understanding and repairing different aspects of trauma. *Coming Home* is an autobiographical exploration of the bodily experiences of reliving trauma. Persistent intrusive flashbacks trigger bodily reactions that cannot be escaped. Through photography, performance, textiles and sculpture, the body is used as a material of creation and as a site of repair.

Continuous motions and marks are acts of persistence in search of a conclusion or resolution. Tactile textures, scrunches and

foldings are there when words fail to articulate the place those loose red strings sit in. That unnameable space that lurks, itching at the peripheries both unseen and unsaid.

Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection is something that I have explored to be able to connect me more to my body. The abject is the "other" and to be without humanity. Trauma itself is abject, an experience so repulsive. It cannot be rationalised. It suspends us above our bodies. The experience of viewing abjection is strong, gut wrenching thus grounding us inside our own bodies. Through EMDR therapy I have learnt the importance of processing the bodily sensations associated with trauma. In artistic practice, I like to think of abjection as a way of returning to the self after the event has occurred. This processing can help to ground us in the present reminding us that the threat has passed. It is safe now, we can unclench our throats and loosen our jaws.

*Coming Home* is a way of returning to the self, becoming attuned to the present while also acknowledging the emotional weight of the past. Art as an action of reclamation of the body.



Nina Raper, *GRINDING TEETH*, 2023, digital image.  
Image credit: courtesy the artist