

*'Bumping Some Bloody Heads Together'*

*A Qualitative Study of German-Speaking Readers of Ruby Langford  
Ginibi's Texts*

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**Abstract:** The writing of Ruby Langford Ginibi has been read, not only within Australia, but also overseas. Often, Indigenous literature is regarded as a primarily national literature, addressed to first and foremost white Australian readers. This article places Ginibi's writing in an overseas context and examines the reactions that German-speaking readers have shown to her texts. Drawing on qualitative interviews with readers in Germany and Austria, this study explores the individual techniques of German-speaking readers to connect to the cultural foreign contexts of Ginibi's texts and make sense of them. It also reflects on the author's personal connections to Ginibi's texts and how her writing relates to his own racial contexts in Central Europe.

**Key Words:** Ruby Langford Ginibi; German-speaking readers; German reception of Indigenous literature; self-reflection

**I**

When I told about the passing of Ruby Langford Ginibi, a close friend from Germany exclaimed on the phone, 'oh no, not the cool old lady from Australia'. Having read most of her books, Ronald became a true fan of *My Bundjalung People* and *Don't Take Your Love to Town*. It took me as a surprise, and I could not evade a smile, to hear Ginibi designated as a 'cool lady'. In German, the English expression 'cool' is part of a youth slang, with the phrasing *eine coole alte Dame* ('a cool old lady') denoting, despite a seemingly high age, a particularly groovy person. I asked Ronald, a German teacher by profession, what he particularly liked about Ginibi's writing and why he thought Ginibi was so 'cool'.

He said it was her unconventional style of writing as well as the attitude of not mincing her words. I knew instantly what Ronald meant; Ginibi was so cheeky and vigorous that nothing, it seemed, could let her down. It was the very mix of humour and resilience that made me—then a history student in Vienna—interested in Ginibi's writing. Although she lived on the other side of my world, Ginibi had something to say to me. Then in my mid-twenties, raised as a German-speaking child of Romany heritage, her writing was something I longed for, a story of power and pride. When I first read *Don't Take Your Love to Town* in 2003 I was mesmerised by Ginibi's writing and wished my Romany grandmother would have been more like her: standing up for herself and her people.

This fascination has even increased when I first met and interviewed Ginibi in her Eagle Vale home in New South Wales; while writing these lines I have been re-listening to the tape with Ginibi speaking. Her loud and strong voice predominate my rather hoarse and clumsy remark that her writing was important. I was so nervous that I even refused the sandwich and tea she had offered me (which left me pondering for hours over the possible impoliteness of having refused her offer). Yet I felt way too nervous to even eat a bite or take a sip. And I can remember vividly the clumsiness of my remark—I wanted to say that her writing was important *to me*. That's why I boarded a plane from Europe and came to see her. But instead, I just said, 'your writing is important'. Ginibi had a ready and poignant answer:

I will write until my backside points to the ground and that's forever. Do you know what I mean? [Laughing]. And you can quote me on that. I often tell the students where I lecture and I am still bumping my gums, lecturing people about our culture in universities and colleges and I tell the students sometimes that I wish I was 20 or 30 years younger, I'd bump some bloody heads together, I'm telling them. [Laughing]. This is just the way I am. My kids say, just wind her up and let her go. [Laughing]. But that's basically what I am giving you in what I am just telling them about our dispossession and how, it is a root of every evil that's been beset my people (Personal interview).

It is difficult to describe the grip this person had on me when merely reading and not listening to these lines. It is the style of presentation, the humour and cheekiness that fascinated me the most. Today, I regret that I did not disclose to Ginibi my inner fascination with her writing and why it mattered *to me*. I was fascinated by her books, so I told her. But why exactly was I fascinated?

This disclosure of my personal interest, hence the interest of one of Ginibi's *overseas* readers, marks not merely a tribute to Ginibi as an Indigenous woman writer, but also reveals an insight into some of the mechanisms of how Australian Indigenous literature has been received by German-speaking readers. Despite the increasing scholarship on the reception of Indigenous literature in Europe, the responses of European readers to Indigenous literature have not been studied so far (Ballyn; Brewster; Cerce and Haag; Di Blasio; Haag "European Contexts"; Haag "German"; Haag "Audiobooks"; Karanfilović). Reflecting on my personal approach and drawing on qualitative interviews with three of Ginibi's German-speaking readers, this tribute article explores the influence of Ginibi's writing on German-speaking audiences and examines the ways

German-speaking readers relate to and connect with Ginibi's texts. Given the qualitative character of the interviews, the objective of this article is not to generalise the interview results to German-speaking readers as such—not least given their different strata, such as age, gender, educational and ethnic background—but to provide an insight into readers' individual responses to Ginibi's writing.

## II

I discovered Australian Indigenous literature by chance. It was on a rainy afternoon in the northern summer of 2003 when I borrowed Rita Huggins' biography *Auntie Rita* (1994) from the university library in Vienna. Ruby Langford Ginibi's *Don't Take Your Love to Town* was the second Indigenous book which I read. Both authors, despite their differences, inspired me. Their books emanated resilience. Rita Huggins seemed to evince a rather intellectual stance on her critique of white dominance. She appeared to have an aura of refinement. Someone, I thought, you would not greet on your first encounter with 'hi mate, how ya doin!', but with more formality. Ginibi, by way of contrast, seemed to be the rather defiant and rebellious author, the mate you could drink a few pints with and then get ready to smash the repressive political system. The one you would rather meet on the street than in the classroom. The one most students seem to love.

I loved both authors, the one for her gentleness, the other for her frankness. In Ginibi I liked her unconventional approach to criticising white knowledge. Remarks such as the following were the most impressive to me:

Why are we still the objects of so much intense study and examination and that includes our lives, the way we live? Along with all this comes the racial stereotypes which this intense study perpetuates and makes us Aboriginals the oddity, the outsider, the other and it marginalizes us even more. And if it was we Aboriginals doing the intense study about Anglo culture, they'd be screaming like stuck pigs [Laughing] (Personal interview).

I was not impressed by the actual remark itself—in fact I disagree that *all* academic studies carry racial stereotypes or that every Indigenous representation was automatically free of prejudice. But I was impressed by the author's courage to speak up and question the power imbalance of racial representation. The humour—the screaming stuck picks—added to this impression.

Having taken history and political science classes at the University of Vienna, I have experienced German-speaking academia as exclusively white: I attended classes on subjects, such as the Harlem Renaissance or the biography of Nelson Mandela, without my teachers ever having questioned their own whiteness. I learned about different races in the German-speaking countries, about Romany and Sinti people, Black Germans, and, yet again, all my teachers were white and none reflected their own whiteness. In the classes I took, the academic knowledge, produced by and addressed to white Austrian audiences, has never been questioned as for its *racial* power relations. Being of Romany

descent, I learned about the continuous persecution of Romany people in Austrian and German History, I learned about how *they* had been murdered in the concentration camps, about how *they* were the least-advantaged and most oppressed racial minority in Europe.

After having read Ginibi's book, I was just happy to have found an alternative version to the paralysing and, alas, often moralising story of racial oppression as well as absence of any trace of self-reflection. Suddenly I found an inspiration in an author who, paradoxically enough, was writing in a cultural context which was completely different from Central Europe. It was by chance that I 'found' Ginibi (as well as many other Indigenous authors, such as Rita and Jackie Huggins, Anita Heiss, Melissa Lucashenko, Steve Kinnane, Philip Morrissey, or Aileen Moreton-Robinson). For the most part, Ginibi's writing did not offer immediate identification—I liked her books, yet never studied them; most of her experiences will, in fact, remain highly different from mine and there is little immediate identification with Indigenous writers. I like the clear and straightforward style as well as the humour of much Indigenous writing; yet most of these features do not serve as an actual identification.

There are, however, many inspirations emanating from Indigenous writing, one of them being Ginibi's courage to fight, or, as she would have it, to 'bump some bloody heads together'. I have drawn a lot of inspiration from this courage. After having finalised my thesis on the history of publishing Indigenous Australian autobiographies, I started to work in Vienna before moving to Edinburgh. It was a long way from Eagle Vale to Edinburgh via Vienna, but Ginibi's spirits have always accompanied me since I met her in 2004. One of the last times she accompanied me was when I joined an academic lecture in Berlin. The lecture, on Romany people in contemporary Europe, turned out to be one of the homogenising and paternalistic egghead talks I had known from my years in Vienna—Romany people are all oppressed, *they* suffer, *they* are the poorest of the poorest, the presenter outlined. And suddenly Ginibi came to my mind.

I jumped up and asked why the presenter conceived Romany people exclusively as 'problems' and added, 'you see, I have a good friend from Australia, an Aboriginal writer, and she'd say something along the lines of there being a lot of people with a lot of good intentions yet doing a lot of harm'. Honestly, this would not have been the exact words Ginibi had used, but the message would have been the same: it's time to bump some bloody heads together; 'NINGINAH! STOP!' as Ginibi writes in *My Bundjalung People* (212).

I do not think I would have made this disobedient remark without having known Ginibi (or many other Indigenous writers). It was less the content of Ginibi's writing, and more the fiery character of her writing, which established a link between (Indigenous) Australia and Austrian culture. As for me, Ginibi's writing has reached a German-speaking world with its highly formal and rigorously established hierarchies. To me her writing was not merely about a different set of cultures, but about decentring (racial) hierarchies. I was desperate for someone who would bump some bloody heads together and I found one: some 20,000 miles away.

### III

Ginibi's writing has had an impact not only on Australian but also on overseas readers. As studies of the translation of Australian Indigenous literature have shown, German is the largest market for Indigenous Australian literature in Europe, making up 32% of the entire corpus of Indigenous translations into European languages other than English (Haag "German" 2). Different causes have been canvassed for this dominance of German interest in Indigenous literature generally, including the massive numbers of German-speakers within the EU, the long-lasting tradition of a German self-perception as tribal and indigenous to Central European lands, as well as the increasing interest in 'foreign' literature and culture after the isolation during Nazism (Conradi; Haag "Audiobooks" 58-59; Haag "German" 2). Although none of Ginibi's books has been translated into German so far, there are a few chapters which have been translated (see Haag, "Bibliography of Ginibi's Writings"). One of the main reasons for the relatively low number of translations of Ginibi's books—there is only a Finnish version of *Don't Take Your Love to Town*—rests with the difficulties of translating the highly verbal texts into a more 'literary' language, especially German. This, however, does not mean that Ginibi's texts had not been read in the German-speaking countries, as most high-school educated German-speakers possess sufficient knowledge to read literary texts in English.

Despite the lack of translations, it is thus justified to scrutinise German readers' responses to Ginibi's writings. Such responses are influenced by the relative unfamiliarity with which European readers approach to Indigenous literature. In the case of translations it is the translator who intermediates between the cultural differences between source and target text, usually through techniques of explanation, foreignisation and domestication (Venuti; Gerber). In the case of original texts, however, there is no process of intermediation, leaving readers to make their own sense of the culturally unfamiliar context.

Significantly, the cultural contexts of Ginibi's writings are neither easy to understand nor always immediately expressed. Critics have pointed towards the cultural specifics of Ginibi's writing which need to be unearthed like a palimpsest in order to recognise its fundamentally Indigenous origins. Julie Finlayson has highlighted the importance of landscape in Ginibi's writing which, in a textual sense, encompassed the author's biography, hence the requirement of reading landscape as a biographical story (36). Linda Westphalen, in turn, uncovers three major features indicating that Ginibi's books were emanating from the discourses of the Dreamings (17, 77, 229, 243-244): first, as Westphalen argues, they had the same underlying *intentions* as Dreamings, that is, education, connecting people with each other and their lands, and identification with the past (92-101); second, just as Dreamings are stories of the *creation* of landscape, so are the authors (re)creating landscape in a colonised space. Thus, the self-creation, how an author has survived invasion as an Indigenous person, has a parallel in creation stories (30-32, 100). Third, the process of storytelling, Westphalen's argument runs, can be considered a form of *journey*, thus resembling creation movements (101-103). These journeys could be either real movements, as in the frequent theme of re-joining with the ancestral lands, or virtual movements, in the sense that both reader and author undertake

a journey through storytelling (104). The deciphering of these specificities in Ginibi's texts thus require a sound acquaintance with Indigenous cultural knowledge and are thus likely to be over-read or not recognised by a readership unfamiliar with Indigenous cultural knowledge. This, however, does not mean that readers from a culturally foreign background were entirely unable to tease out any meaning of Ginibi's writing. Rather, this meaning will become transformed and adapted to the readers' familiar cultural context.

The present study explores some of the mechanisms of rendering unfamiliar cultural contexts in Indigenous writing familiar. It draws on three qualitative interviews which lasted between 30 and 45 minutes; two of the interviewees are from Germany, one is resident in Austria. All of them have read one or more of Ginibi's books and were asked to re-read at least two chapters before the interview. Two of the interviewees are university-educated, one is high school-trained; two are female, one is male, ranging from 35 to 63 years in age. All translations from German into English are the author's; editorial clarifications have been made.

A respondent from Germany first read Ginibi's *Don't Take Your Love to Town* on the return journey from Australia. He had purchased the book in a second-hand bookstore in Sydney and had not heard about the author before:

**I:** Why did you buy Ruby Ginibi's book [*Don't Take Your Love to Town*]?

**R:** I was just in this bookstore and there were a few books by Aborigines in which I was interested. You know, we don't get these things in Germany and I didn't know any author. The cover caught my eye [there are Mimi spirits on the 1988 cover].

**I:** Why did the cover catch your attention?

**R:** I am not sure. I think it was quite nice. It was Aboriginal. The drawing. It was my first trip to Australia and I noticed that they are selling Aboriginal things for the tourists. This is strange because, on the one hand, you have all the dancing and the painting and the boomerangs and all that and then you have these awful scenes on the streets in Alice Springs. It's a strange country somehow. Anyway, the painting was somehow appealing.

**I:** And the book tackled this strange image?

**R:** Yes. I think especially many tourists have a particular view of Aboriginal people. Either the magician close to nature or the beer drinking one in the pedestrian zone of Alice Springs. And she [Ginibi] doesn't fit into this picture. I think all of the tourists should read her.

**I:** And what did the book mean to you personally?

**R:** It is funny. There is wit in her writing. I liked it and started to read it in the plane. You know, usually, I don't like autobiographies. But her style is very lively. It's like watching a movie and you try to imagine how the author looks like. And then I googled her name and she looked real.

**I:** Real?

**R:** It's difficult to describe. Her photograph somehow matched her story; the single mother who was raising her kids and talking in jargon. Just like a normal and down-to-earth person, perhaps a bit like in some movies. Perhaps not that normal [Laughing]. A kind of Whoopi Goldberg. I don't know, she seemed to be

very likeable and not typical for her age. As if she had stones in her handbag, throwing it to some ill-bred young guys and they are all running away, screaming. She kind of broadened my image of Aborigines. It's not just the naked guys and the drunken guys.

Although Ginibi's writing is culturally specific in the sense of being situated historically and culturally within inter-racial Australian history and the discourses of the Dreamings, it can nonetheless be connected to a culturally foreign context. In this example the linking between the different cultural contexts has been forged in two broad ways: firstly, through the positive style of writing ('funny', 'wit in her writing') and secondly, through the unconventional depiction of the protagonist. Both rendered possible a connection between the German reader and the Indigenous author, despite the lack of any deeper inter-cultural knowledge (the respondent was not aware of Indigenous literature and only read about racial inequity in travel books).

The comparison of Ginibi with the American actress, Whoopi Goldberg, acts like a translation of a 'foreign' cultural context into a more well-known cultural context, in this event American popular culture. The German reader connects to Ginibi in ways which might seem awkward for Australian audiences who would not consider Ginibi primarily funky (e.g., 'scaring some ill-bred youths') nor would the first associations of her writing encompass the terms 'fun' and 'wit', despite the increasing attention drawn to Indigenous humour. For the German reader, by way of contrast, it is Ginibi's humour—or more precisely, what he regards as humorous—which acts as the first and immediate link to Ginibi's texts. The first step in making sense out of Ginibi's writing and connecting to it is in this instance not achieved through *what* Ginibi is writing but rather through *how* she is writing. It is her style and personality—both of which are deemed unconventional—which act as the prime focus of connection. The altering or broadening of the images of Indigenous people brought about by the reading of Ginibi's books is also mentioned in the interview, but occupies a less central stage or is rather derived from the perception of unconventionality ('the unconventionality stands as an alternative to the "noble savage" and "drunkard"').

Quite conspicuously, there is no mention of inter-cultural learning ('edu-ma-cating') and claims to Indigenous sovereignty, cultural autonomy and land rights which are inherent motives in Ginibi's writing (Perera). This omission is less out of ignorance towards Indigenous sovereignty than proper understanding of the cultural contexts of Indigenous politics and history. Having asked the respondent about the importance of sovereignty, he first misunderstood the question and replied, obviously shocked, that he thought Indigenous Australians had the citizenship. Having explained the basic issues around the dispossession of Indigenous lands and the different meanings implicating the understanding of land ownership, the respondent made clear that he was well aware of some of these issues which to him, however, were less important than Ginibi's style and personality:

I know what you mean. The text is very political. Not that I know anything about this in Australia. But it can be seen as a form of protest writing. Or perhaps not. However you see it, the critique of history is rather an issue for Australians. So I read about this, I think, but it was more her kind of saying,

'fuck', which was more appealing to me than reading some details about Australia. I am a kind of fan of Che [Guevara], the old communist in me [Laughing] but I am not interested if he was fighting in Bolivia or in Peru. So it is the general picture. Does this make any sense?

The connection to Ginibi's writing is in this instance not reduced to the image of a 'funky' personality and thus devoid of any political content but very political. The political moment is not associated with Australian Indigenous politics, such as land rights and sovereignty, but rather transnational or transcultural patterns of identification. These patterns are marked by Ginibi's stance to question authorities, which to her might have been rather white authorities, but which the German reader 'translates' into authorities as such, as exemplified through reference to Che Guevara and "fuck"-attitudes.

Another respondent establishes a connection to the pleas of motherhood, especially so the pain involved in losing a child. To her, the strongest link to Ginibi's writing was her persistency to struggle against all odds and her eventual achievement of becoming a writer. This respondent had never been to Australia and read Ginibi's *Don't Take Your Love to Town*, along with Black American texts, for an English seminar:

**R:** It is something like survival about which she [Ginibi] is writing. And this affects us all in one way or another. Perhaps not under such circumstances. I lost my child which was incredibly painful. And although I cannot imagine how life was for Ruby, I can imagine how it was for her to lose a child.

**I:** So the loss of children was a kind of connection?

**R:** Yes. I think we can speak sometimes a very common language. I mean the really essentially human things which are the moving issues in our lives. I would say that the author is like a role model. She survived the death of her children, or some of them, and she also gave up alcohol. I mean many people would have killed themselves or just ended up as total drunkards. But she did not. She had the wish to become a writer and eventually became one. How can this not serve as a role model? It almost sounds as if it is too good to be true.

**I:** It is true.

**R:** I think this woman was incredibly rich. Lots of people would envy her.

**I:** She did not have much money.

**R:** This is not what I mean by being rich.

Similarly to the previous interviewee, this respondent neither relates her reading to the specifically Indigenous themes of re-connecting to ancestral lands or sovereignty claims which are integral to Ginibi's books. The survival of common human suffering ('she fought alcohol and became a writer') serves as the actual parameter of forging a link

between the Indigenous Australian writer and the German-speaking reader. In this instance, the reader does not mention explicitly the political, historical and cultural significance in her reading Ginibi's books, but establishes a connection with personal experiences which render the foreign contexts familiar. Moreover, there is a trace of identification discernible in the construction of common suffering. Although this common suffering is only established in relation to the loss of a child, the overcoming of suffering (the successful fight of drinking and the doggedness to become a writer) is seen as a role model for many people ('many people would envy her'). The projection of Ginibi as a quasi-heroine figure probably transcends Ginibi's intentions to first and foremost educate her readers about Indigenous history and culture. In the German instance, the very moment of education as well as the Indigenous components of Ginibi's story recede to the background—just as Ginibi's stories are cherished as stories of survival in contrast to *Indigenous* survival, so is Ginibi herself elevated to a heroic stature yet not an *Indigenous* stature. The circumstance of Ginibi being Indigenous as well as her writing being Indigenous remains actually unrecognised or at least neither explicitly nor implicitly mentioned as important for the reading of her texts.

This distancing from the Indigenous component of Ginibi's stories can also be observed in the following interview with a Saxon farmer's daughter who had once travelled as a tourist to Australia and bought *Don't Take Your Love to Town*, along with Sally Morgan's *My Place*, in a bookshop in Melbourne. The respondent said she had only basic knowledge of Indigenous cultures, but knew of the Stolen Generations and, without knowing any specific details, inter-racial violence in Australia. Interestingly, for this basic knowledge, the respondent identified inter-racial tensions not with tensions over land ownership (hence Indigenous rights), but considered racism in terms of structural inequity based primarily on physical appearance; markedly she compared inter-racial tensions in Australia with racism against Black people in the European Union and North America. Being Indigenous was not associated with sovereignty and land ownership, but instead conceived of as a universal form of Blackness (given the parallels drawn to Black people in North America and the European Union). The Indigenous specifics of inter-racial Australian history thus remained unmentioned and so were also the specifically Indigenous themes in Ginibi's stories:

**I:** How did you like *Don't Take Your Love to Town*?

**R:** I liked it very much. She describes in such a simple way the scenes from her childhood and then later on as an adult.

**I:** What do you mean by simple?

**R:** She writes in simple words. Not wordy. She is not arrogant. She narrates the things as she understood them as a child, so the things that happened to her when she was a child. She did not try to describe those things from the eyes of an adult. And this is quite authentic.

**I:** What else did you like?

**R:** How the bunch of children was collecting fruits, jumping into the water and how they showed a natural happiness. She conveys the daily life. The relationship among the children and also to the nature reminded me of my youth. We were also playing outside, having many friends. Okay, we did not have such an extended family, but still it was different growing up on the country and the farm [in rural Saxony].

**I:** So the childhood portrayal reminded you of your own childhood?

**R:** Yes, she describes a childhood which was actually nice, despite all problems. Even if her mother disappeared and the mothers and fathers of other children died or just disappeared. She does not just lament. It is not just desolate, broken and catastrophic.

**I:** So this was similar to your childhood?

**R:** As I said, we did not have extended families, but where I grew up [in rural Saxony] we were very poor. My parents were just farmers and the families of the other farmers were like a family; they cared for each other and we played in the nature. Without any technology, play stations and all the stuff the kids nowadays have. We were poor but very happy. And this is also what Ruby says.

It is worthwhile noting the respondent's focus on Ginibi's recollection of childhood experiences in contrast to stories from her later life in Sydney. The reason for this focussing lies in the nexus the respondent draws to her own childhood experiences which offer a direct relationship with Ginibi's story. The link here is forged through the common experiences of having had a poor but primarily a happy childhood ('we were poor but very happy'). The respondent stresses Ginibi's positive narration of childhood experiences, for all their hardships and problems, which serves as the actual moment of identification with the author. Ginibi's narration of her rural childhood in Bundjalung Country is connected to the German experiences of growing up in rural Saxony, thus transcending the cultural specifics of the Indigenous text. Although there are no real links between Saxony and Bundjalung Country, the reader construes such links which render the connection to Ginibi's texts very 'general' (childhood recollections as experienced by many people).

The Indigenous themes in *Don't Take Your Love to Town*, by way of contrast, do not function as points of identification or connection to the text, but are left unnoticed. In this event, Ginibi is rather seen as an author who happens to be Black, yet not necessarily Indigenous, not out of ignorance towards her Indigenous identity, but because of the lack of knowledge about the cultural contexts of Indigenous Australia. Despite this lack of knowledge, the reader was nonetheless able to connect to Ginibi's writing and make sense out of her stories.

#### IV

The writing of Ruby Langford Ginibi, as this tribute article has shown, reached out not merely to an Australian, but also to an overseas readership. For the most part, (Indigenous) Australian cultures are foreign territory to German-speaking readers, who need to find their own connections with Ginibi's books so as to make sense of them. These strategies are further diversified due to the lack of German translations with their guiding devices to domesticate a culturally foreign context. German-speaking readers are left on their own to interpret and connect to Ginibi's texts, engendering highly individual strategies of rendering culturally foreign contexts familiar. These renditions, as the interviews testify, draw on personal experiences, such as growing up in rural Germany, losing a child and survival mechanisms, but can also be of a political nature as with linking Ginibi's text to political activism and her unconventional personality.

Personally, my first connections to Ginibi's books were political, hearkening back to racial representations of Romany and Sinti people in Austria and Germany. Here too, as with the interviewees discussed in the present article, Indigenous politics—such as land rights and sovereignty issues—were not of primary importance in connecting Ginibi's writing to a German and Austrian experience. The immediate impact Ginibi's writing has exerted on me, as well as the respondents under study, was rather transcultural in scope.

Ginibi had the ability to connect not only to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian readers—but she also connected with the world. Readers in turn have connected with her, the playing child in the bush, the desperate mother, the poor Aborigine, the groovy writer, the disobedient troublemaker, the friend and lecturer, the incredibly rich and envied person. Ginibi is not gone. She is here: in Bundjalung Country, in Botany Bay, in Berlin classrooms, on Edinburgh streets and on Saxon fields. She is here with us, disobedient, funky and wonderful. She still is bumping some bloody heads together.

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