

Narrated World

Contemporary
Indigenous
Australian Art

With Artworks from the
Bähr/Frost Collection

Elisabeth Bähr
Lindsay Frost



This book is dedicated to Lotte Reimers and Bernhard Lüthi

Elisabeth Bähr, Lindsay Frost

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Read Me First

This book aims to promote discourse in Germany and beyond concerning contemporary Indigenous Australian art, an art that is almost exclusively a narrative one.

This publication is a 1:1 translation of the original German-language 495-page hardcover book 'Erzählte Welt' with identical figures, pagination, and only minor corrections in the text. The book was published in Germany in November 2022 (ISBN 9783803040381).

Unique to this book are analyses of techniques, motifs, styles, and themes, and their developments across two centuries in Indigenous Australian art. It uses high-quality images (280), many in large format (146), to illustrate the principles on which this art is based, citing quotations from artists and art historians. An extensive bibliography of over 400 references, electronically accessible wherever possible, is included.

The ten chapters can be read in almost any order. Everyone should first read the short introduction, '01 Preliminaries', to understand the limits of coverage of this book and some of the terminology including some concepts, such as what is erroneously called 'Dreamtime' ('Traumzeit' in German).

Additional material and means to contact the authors can be found here: www.aboriginal-art.de/narrated-world.

Out of respect for the intellectual property and the wishes of many artists—to whom we give our heartfelt thanks for their support and even more for their creative drive—the images are shown here online at half the resolution of the hardcover book version. All rights are reserved.

Members of Indigenous communities are respectfully advised that a number of people mentioned in writing or depicted in photographs in the following pages have passed away, possibly also since the book was completed in 2022.

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01 — Preliminaries

‘I think the provocation of the exhibition is really to imagine the world otherwise. [...] I also really hope that people see the exhibition as not art of the other but simply as a significant form of contemporary art.’

Stephen Gilchrist¹

‘I would like to give the same advice to people who are looking in vain for “value standards”: “Keep your ear open to music, open your eyes to painting. And stop thinking!” Examine, if you will, after you have heard, after you have seen. Ask yourself, if you like, whether this work has “carried you away” into a world hitherto unknown to you. If so, what more do you want?’

Wassily Kandinsky²

Openness and Equality

During his visit to the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in 1990, where he saw Western art for the first time, Rover Thomas (Joolama) studied carefully the painting ‘#20’, 1957, by Mark Rothko and commented, ‘*That fella paints like me.*’³ Rover Thomas (Joolama) was on his way to the Venice Biennale, which exhibited his works together with those of Trevor Nickolls. This was the first exhibition of contemporary Indigenous Australian art at the Biennale.

On his trips to Europe, John Mawurndjul visited important art museums whenever possible and with great pleasure, such as the Alte Nationalgalerie in Berlin in 2018, studying without preconceptions the artworks. The linguist Garde said, ‘*The view which he has often expressed to me on such trips is that everyone’s rarrk—or “ways of making images”—is to be equally respected and appreciated; while the external appearances are different, the making of art is common to all humans and that each work has its own “power”.*’⁴

These anecdotes not only illustrate that Indigenous artists know and appreciate Western art, but they also show the respect that the artists have for all art. They express their view of the equality of



Rover Thomas (Joolama), Bedford Downs Massacre, 1985, natural pigments and natural binder on canvas, 95.7 × 179.7 cm

The above painting by Rover Thomas (Joolama), exhibited at the 1990 Venice Biennale, was labelled ‘Bedford Downs’, a censorship to promote the government narrative of a non-violent past and a pacified generation of artists, respectively, Indigenous people. The true title of the painting is ‘Bedford Downs Massacre’. (AGWA 1990)

¹ Harvard Art Museums 2016

² Kandinsky 1939, p. 236

³ Carrigan 2003, p. 50; Kalina 2007, p. 96

⁴ Garde 2018



John Mawurndjul at the Alte Nationalgalerie in Berlin, March 2018



Rover Thomas (Joolama), *Two Men*, c. 1985, natural pigments on painting board, 91 x 61 cm



Mark Rothko, #20, 1957, oil on canvas, 233 x 193 cm

Paji Honeychild Yankarr, *Pulujarra*, 1991, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 56 x 76 cm; Wassily Kandinsky, *Colour Study—Squares with Concentric Rings*, 1913, watercolour, gouache, black chalk on paper, 23.9 x 31.5 cm



Eunice Napanangka Jack, *Trees growing in saltwater, near Tjukurla*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 72 x 121.5 cm (see fig. pp. 50/51)



Sol LeWitt, *Horizontal Brushstrokes*, 2003, gouache on paper, 28.9 x 76.2 cm



all art, quite different from how it is seen by many Western art historians.

Furthermore, it can be observed time and again that some Western and Indigenous works of art show correlations in colour and form in their aesthetics, although they have no concrete correspondences in what the artists intend to convey. Of particular interest are those works of art which fall outside the ‘isms’, such as Impressionism, Cubism, etc., that seem to commune with each other across different art movements and cultures. Indeed, one could compare Rover Thomas’ (Joolama) ‘Two Men’ painting with works by Mark Rothko, as well as ‘Pulujarra’ by Paji Honeychild Yankarr with the colour study ‘Squares with concentric rings’ by Wassily Kandinsky or ‘Trees growing in saltwater, near Tjukurla’ by Eunice Napanangka Jack with ‘Horizontal Brushstrokes’ by Sol LeWitt. This brings to mind parallel evolution in biology, which refers to an analogous development of unrelated species, where the main coinciding features often have an identical or similar function.

In fact, there are both similarities and major differences between Western and Indigenous Australian art. The similarities are—with the exception of the unique painting on bark in northern Australia—mainly in the

use of the same materials such as synthetic polymer paint, natural pigments, canvas, etc. and in working with all forms of art such as painting, printmaking, photography, installations, sculpture, ceramics, and video. Indigenous and Western artists also have in common that they deal in

their works with what constitutes their respective culture and values as lived today, that which they feel is meaningful for themselves or society. However, what appears as commonalities on the aesthetic level, through similar or identical colours and forms, differs in the reflected content, not in principle but concretely. Since the cultures and worldviews are different, the works rarely reference corresponding content.

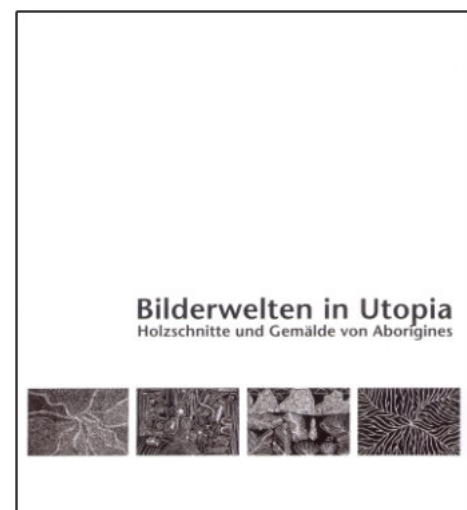
When Sol LeWitt saw an exhibition of Emily Kame Kngwarreye's work at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney in 1998, he felt moved to buy some of her line paintings and said, *'[...] the type with lines, since this is what I am doing also. [...] I feel [...] a great affinity with her work and have learned a lot from her work.'*⁵ While Sol LeWitt and Wassily Kandinsky emphasise form and technique, albeit guided by an intuitive way of painting, Indigenous artists fundamentally refer in their work to cultural content that reflects the Indigenous worldview. Eunice Napanangka Jack, for example, gives indications of this not only through the title of the painting but also through the script-like brushwork, especially in the stripes with a blue background. The first fundamental hurdle to overcome in the acceptance of contemporary Indigenous Australian art, within the Western understanding of art, is that the cultural implications must be considered. This, however, is a hurdle that all art created outside of one's own small cultural circle must overcome, for example art from African countries, from China, or from Japan.

The Kunstmuseum Reutlingen|Spendhaus, as one of the very few art museums in Germany that has shown openness to contemporary Indigenous art, owns the 'Utopia Suite'. This portfolio of 72 woodcuts, a technique that is rather rare in Indigenous art, was created in 1990 by 69 artists from the Utopia region. It was exhibited together with acrylic paintings in Reutlingen and Bayreuth in 2004. At the same time, another exhibition with woodcuts of classical modernism was shown. One could compare and admire the delicacy of the Indigenous artists' woodcuts.⁶ The 'Utopia Suite' is also part of the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney.

Because so little is known and made known about this art in Germany, this book aims in particular to give German readers the broadest possible insight into Indigenous art. The characteristics and principles of the art are presented in juxtaposition with artworks. The book is aimed at art lovers, students, and art historians alike.

Naturally it is not possible to show all of contemporary Indigenous art, nor can all of its themes be treated exhaustively; the art is simply too diverse. Thus, despite its great importance, the topic of bark painting is only outlined in some short sections in this book. Nor are techniques such as etching and woodcut, videos, sculpture, or photography treated separately, although photography, for example, is increasingly finding its way into Indigenous art. For example, Desart, an umbrella organisation of 30 art centres, has been awarding an annual photography prize since 2012.

⁵ Cited in McLean 2016, pp. 180–181



⁶ Städtisches Kunstmuseum 2004

Art Movement

Contemporary Indigenous art—like Western art—is born out of a rich and millennia-old culture. It is created by people who survived physical and cultural violence, preserving thereby their beliefs. It is born out of the whirlwind of Indigenous cultures, colonisation, oppression, genocide, discrimination, self-determination, and political affirmation of the last 250 years in the capital cities as well as the tiniest townships. It emerges from the personal life experiences of the artists and their families, their parents, and grandparents. Each artist ‘owns’ his or her life story, including such memories as being helped by a kind missionary, being assaulted by the police, being offered a chance at an exhibition by a respectful gallery owner, or being insulted by strangers while shopping. The art is born of hope or even of despair and shows an inner vision of what can be, a testimony of what is. All artists have these visions. What is special about Indigenous art is that it is inspired or shaped by a relationship to an Indigenous culture and to a shared history, whether in the remotest areas or at Sydney Harbour. Much has been written about the art of a diaspora (Jewish, African, etc.), when people are displaced from their lands: many of the Indigenous Australian artists have experienced exile in their own country.

At the latest in the 1970s, a new, innovative art emerged in Australia. Some Australian art historians believe this genesis was ‘[t]he most fabulous moment in Australian art history [...]’.⁷ As early as 1984, the then director of the National Gallery of Australia, James Mollison, commented in the Sydney Morning Herald on January 26th that the paintings of the artists’ cooperative Papunya Tula were ‘[...] possibly the finest abstract art achievements in Australia to date [...]’.⁸ These remarks may have been a little bold, but the fact is that in comparison with an Indigenous population of about 800,000⁹ there are an unusually large number of artists creating masterpieces of the highest quality for museum collections. Such artworks can be found in the collections of all major Australian art museums as well as in international art museums and private collections. Paradoxically, the terms ‘Indigenous Australian art’ or ‘Aboriginal art’ tend to lead German art historians to involuntarily and rather thoughtlessly disparage the art. So-called ‘urban art’, which is often about opposition to racism, is less deprecated. Unfortunately, the art of the First Australians is rarely exhibited in German art museums, and it is completely absent from the curricula of art academies and art departments in universities.

In the chapter ‘Narrated World’, it becomes clear that contemporary Indigenous Australian art cannot be filed under the categories of Western art history. Nor is it possible to subsume the dot paintings of artists from Utopia under the Western category of pointillism, nor the earth pigment paintings from Warmun under that of colour field painting. As Stephen Gilchrist has written, ‘*The lesson of Indigenous art is not that it behaves differently from contemporary art, but rather that contemporary art can*

⁷ McLean 2011, p. 180

⁸ McLean 2016, p. 123

⁹ ABS 2019b

no longer be considered a singular entity. Like the other myriad alternate forms of contemporary art practice current today, Indigenous art must be evaluated on its own terms.¹⁰

¹⁰ Gilchrist 2014, p. 48

At some points in this book, reference is made to so-called Indigenous ‘urban art’. No essential distinction is intended compared to the art that is created outside cities. The term is merely an abbreviation to refer to a constellation of artists and artworks that deal with issues that are particularly pronounced in urban areas: discrimination, political statements regarding the history of colonialism and neo-colonialism, the persistence of racism, and so on. It is not a geographical classification because Indigenous artists address political issues in all areas of Australia. This book concurs with Hetti Perkins, one of the first Indigenous museum curators. She wrote in 1994 about the relationship of Indigenous urban dwellers to those in central and northern Australia, ‘*The contemporary realities of indigenous people in this country may not easily be collapsed into reductive and exclusive binary models of remote and urban dwellers. Families and settlements around Australia are as unique as each member of their group [...] Furthermore, underscoring and informing the capacious indigenous contemporary urban experience are pre and post contact histories, written and unwritten. These histories, as varied as they may be, provide a common context for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—as symbolised by our flags.*¹¹ Still, prescriptive notions of Aboriginality based on externally prescribed indicators continue to be used in an attempt to determine difference and disenfranchise the art practice and identities of Kooris, Murris, Nungas and Nyoongahs etc [...].¹²

¹¹ With the emergence of the movements for land and civil rights for Indigenous people in the late 1960s and the 1970s, two flags were conceived: one for First Nations people on the mainland and another for Torres Strait Islanders. Some local groups have additional flags of their own.

¹² ACCA 1994, p. 5

The Bähr/Frost Collection

The Bähr/Frost art collection is used in this book to show a segment of Indigenous Australian art, albeit a significant one. The collection took shape during the operation of the Aboriginal Art Gallery Bähr from 1997 to 2007, and its later expansion was directed at supplementing the styles already present. The majority of the collection consists of works using synthetic polymer paint on canvas by artists from Wirrimanu (Balgo), Yuendumu, Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) and from Kiwirrkurra and Walungurru (Kintore), as well as a number of etchings by the artists represented with paintings in the collection. A special feature of the collection is its significant corpus of paintings from Warmun using natural pigments, paintings that take the Country (land) as their theme. A difference exists between ‘Country’ and the English word ‘land’: in the Indigenous worldview, ‘Country’ stands for the ancestral land of the individual and their spiritual connection with it, and vice versa.

The majority of the artists represented in the collection have their works in many internationally renowned collections and those of Australia’s state art museums. Because the Bähr/Frost Collection is of museum

quality, works have been loaned for exhibitions to museums (eight so far), including the Neues Museum Nuremberg for the exhibition ‘Double Up!’ in 2022, the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen for the exhibition ‘Punkt.Systeme. Vom Pointillismus zum Pixel’ in 2012, to the Sprengel Museum in Hannover for the exhibition ‘Opening Doors’ in 2006 and to the Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg for the exhibition ‘Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren’ in 2001.

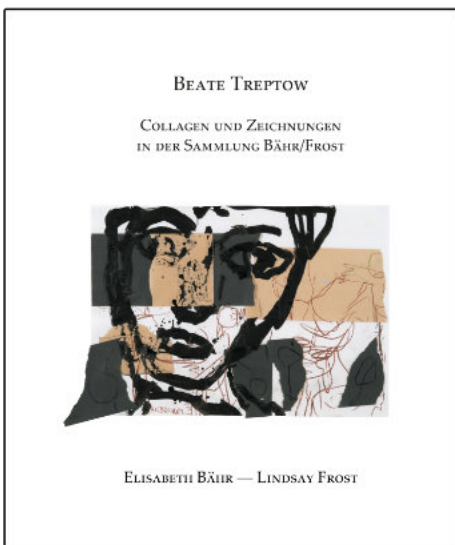
The collection mainly reflects the art of the 1990s and 2000s, although it contains later works. It includes some works by the founders of the painting movement in Papunya in the early 1970s, such as Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, and Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula. Also represented in the collection are works by Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin and Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, who were among the first women painters in Wirrimanu (Balgo).

Individual artistic characteristics and mutual inspiration can be shown as they become visible within families of painters across the generations, for example, in the works of Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra and Richard Yukenbarri Tjakamarra. Using works by Churchill Cann (Yoonany) as examples, the collection allows us to follow the individual development of an artist from his early to his mature work. Using the example of several paintings by Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, the collection allows an insight into the diversity of the styles of a single artist.

Complementing the Indigenous contemporary artworks, the Bähr/Frost Collection includes two corpia of works by two German female artists, illustrated in the monographs *Lotte Reimers. Die Keramik in der Sammlung Bähr/Frost* and *Beate Treptow. Collagen und Zeichnungen in der Sammlung Bähr/Frost*. Taken together, the works in the three media of painting, ceramics, and collage/drawing possess a coherence along three aesthetic principles: a hidden complexity, a deliberate unveiling of space, and an opulent haptic. In addition, there are diverse concepts of time. Indigenous painting embeds layers of narration, the connection between the individual and his/her Country, and a non-linear concept of time in painting techniques with different haptics.

Terminology

Almost every text in German about Indigenous Australian art drones on about the Dreamtime (‘Traumzeit’ in German). This term is found even in exhibition catalogues from renowned museums, such as the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen.¹³ Some texts also substituted the English words ‘Dreaming’ or ‘Dreamtime’,¹⁴ instead of the terms in Indigenous languages. The origin of the terms ‘Dreaming’ or ‘Dreamtime’ is a idiosyncratic translation from 1896, by the Australian Francis James Gillen, of



¹³ Spieler and Scheuermann 2012, p. 21

¹⁴ König et al. 2010

the word ‘Alcheringa’ from the central Australian language Arrernte.¹⁵ The linguist and ethnologist T. G. H. Strehlow commented, ‘*The English “dream time” is [...] a vague and inaccurate phrase: and though it has gained wide currency among white Australians through its sentimentality and its suggestion of mysticism, it has never had any real meaning for the natives, who rarely, if ever, use it when speaking in English.*’¹⁶

¹⁵ Green 2012, p. 161

In literal translation into German, this word was and is rendered as ‘Traumzeit’. Dreamtime means neither a dream nor a time nor a combination of the two. Stephen Gilchrist prefers the old English word ‘Everywhen’ to the word ‘Dreaming’,¹⁷ because it emphasises the concept of time as a unity: the present moment is inextricably linked to the distant future and to the distant ancestral past, in a way that defies the Western concept of time as a forward-flying arrow. Past, present, and future overlap. This is described in more detail in the chapter ‘Sources of Inspiration’.

¹⁶ Strehlow 1971, p. 614

¹⁷ Gilchrist 2016, p. 9

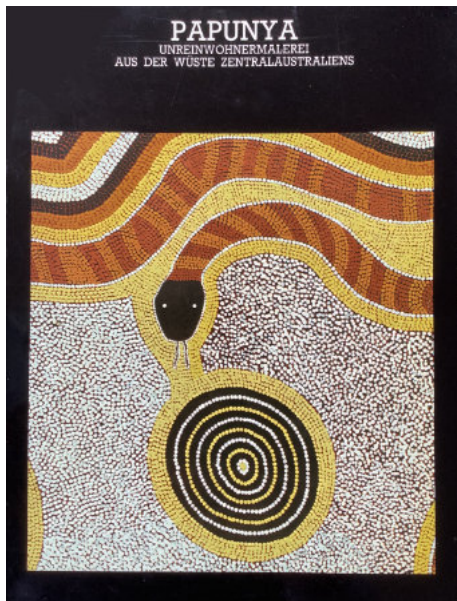
This book uses the terms that First Australians use in their respective languages to describe their worldview, because those terms do not have misleading connotations, neither in English nor in German. This approach is recommended in the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara dictionary.¹⁸ The worldview is called Ngarranggarni among the Gija and Jumanangkarni among the Walmajarri in the Kimberley, Tjukurrpa among the Pintupi in Papunya, Tjukurpa among the Pitjantjatjara in Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra, or Altyerr among the Anmatyerr in the Utopia area, etc. The Warlpiri term Jukurrpa is used in cases where no particular language group is the focus but rather all Indigenous people in distinction to non-Indigenous people, because the Warlpiri belong to the numerically largest language groups.

¹⁸ Goddard 1996, p. 184

As the work of linguists progresses, the transcriptions of Indigenous languages change, so that different spellings for the same terms may be referenced in this book. The names of Indigenous artists are also subject to these changes. Different spellings can be found even in the reprintings of important documents such as the ‘Bark Petition’ (see pp. 261–262).

Respect for the Indigenous peoples and their cultures dictates that places that retain an Indigenous name should be so referenced. When writing about the former Lutheran mission stations, for example, one notes the small (but important for the art) place near Mparntwe (Alice Springs) named Hermannsburg, as the German missionaries from Hermannsburg in the Lüneburger Heide called it. But the Arrernte name is Ntaria. This is where Albert Namatjira lived, who was one of the first Indigenous artists to achieve fame throughout Australia with his watercolours (see pp. 331–333).

In describing Indigenous art, which is primarily—as evidenced throughout this book—a narrative art, the term ‘story’ refers to the content embodied in the images. The stories reflect the Indigenous knowledge system, which can include locations together with their implications, or can include a personal history, history being one aspect of Jukurrpa.



Catalogue of the exhibition 'Papunya. Ur-
einwohnermalerei aus der Wüste Zentral-
australiens', Vienna, 1983

Just as wrong as 'Traumzeit' is the German term 'Ureinwohner'. The United Nations introduced the term 'Indigenous' (from the Latin *indigenus* = born in a country), which is increasingly replacing the word 'Aborigine'. Many publications on Indigenous art in German still use words like 'Ureinwohner' or sometimes 'Aboriginals' when referring to First Nations Australians. The terms 'native people' or 'primitive people' have negative connotations in several respects. They are terms that have survived to the present day from colonial times. They were used to describe people who, from a Eurocentric viewpoint, were considered primitive, uncivilised, inferior, underdeveloped, infidel barbarians, or noble savages. Here racist views are paired with degrading, romanticising, and mysticising ones. An error that is ridiculous and can only be understood with a great deal of cynicism was made by the translators of a brochure for an exhibition in Vienna in 1983, the title of which, significantly, read *Papunya. Unreinwohnermalerei aus der Wüste Zentralaustraliens* (literally, 'Papunya. Paintings by the unclean inhabitants from the Desert of Central Australia'). The difference in German is between 'Unrein' and 'Urein'. Even if this was a simple typo, the many others in the brochure reveal a disrespect by the translator for the artists and their art that corresponds with the widespread racism at the time (not only) in Australia. The booklet had to be shredded and reissued.

The word 'aboriginal' without the addition of 'Australian' as a designation for Indigenous Australians excludes the inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands on the one hand and names any Indigenous inhabitants in the world on the other hand. 'Aboriginals', used as a noun, is simply grammatically incorrect, as *aboriginal* is an adjective. Nevertheless, it was used as a noun for a long time by Australian government agencies, which thus documented their discriminatory views of Indigenous Australians.¹⁹ If the term 'native' is still used in ethnology, it may be assigned to the language of science, which serves to categorise without further definition. However, it has no place in art, because it is also a term of colonialism: i.e., the 'native' who must be instructed in Western civilisation.

Roberta Sykes, an activist in Townsville, stated in 1972 that the word 'Aborigine' should be rejected because it had been introduced by the British colonialists, because it had no Australian connotation and because it excluded other oppressed groups such as the Kanakas, people of the South Pacific Islands who were often abducted to work for low wages on Australian sugar plantations. Instead, the word 'Black' should be used.²⁰ In a similar argument, Destiny Deacon used the spelling 'blak' not only in some of her artwork titles such as 'Blak lik mi', 1991/2003, but also to describe herself and her art.

In the meantime, it has become widely accepted in Australia to use the term 'Indigenous Australians'. It is even better to use the name of the individual language groups wherever possible, as an expression of

¹⁹ Cf. Fesl 2006

²⁰ McLean 1998, p. 106

their identity. For they are each unique in terms of language and culture as a whole and they try to preserve their uniqueness, or what remains of it in the aftermath of colonisation. For example, the Warlpiri, Pintupi, Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjatjantjara and many other groups live in Central Australia and the Gija in the Northeast. The common name for Indigenous inhabitants in the various Australian states, which do not denote a specific language group, is Murri in Queensland, Nungga in South Australia, Nyunga in southern Western Australia, Palawa in Tasmania, and Koori in Victoria.

This book does not use the term ‘religion’ for Jukurrpa, since that would be misleading: the Christian world separates different aspects of life that are inseparable in the Indigenous worldview.

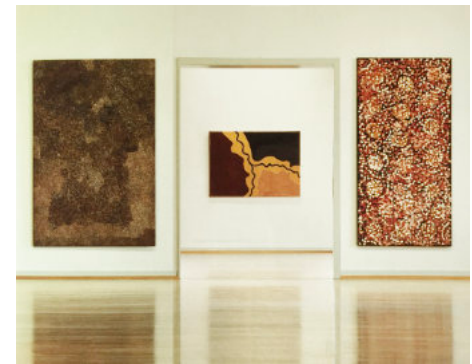
Following Chapters

The section of the book with large colour plates features the 129 paintings and 17 prints in the Bähr/Frost Collection, because books on art live from visual perception, and many of these works serve as examples in the following discussions. In later chapters, additional illustrations are included whenever they are important for understanding the art, details of its content or techniques used.

Although the various Indigenous cultures are fundamentally based on a sense of community and mutual responsibility, they do highlight the role of those artistic personalities who make an important contribution to art. In the section ‘Individuality and Community’, artists are presented who are exemplary in terms of the development of their visual language, the diversity of their styles and their undermining of prejudices. This counterbalances a recurring bias, that Indigenous Australian artists are firmly bound to an unchanging iconography.

If this book refrained from briefly outlining the worldview of Indigenous Australians, people trained in Western art would miss many points of reference for understanding Indigenous art. It would be like studying Renaissance paintings without acquiring knowledge of the period or analysing paintings in Catholic churches without knowing stories from the Bible. Therefore, the chapter ‘Sources of Inspiration’ elucidates some basic questions: What is Jukurrpa? What is the significance of the land and the night sky for First Nations people? What role in art does the history of oppression and racism play? How does the art relate to space and time?

In the subsequent chapter ‘Narrated World’, the art itself, its principles and characteristics, are described in detail using example images. The almost exclusively narrative art deals with a wealth of themes that illustrate the cultures alive today—showing sometimes also their incongruity—whereby the perception of the themes by the occidental ob-



Exhibition view at the Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg 2002

server is often subject to limitations. The art is sometimes used purposefully for the transmission of First Nations cultures to descendants, or their dissemination to non-Indigenous people, or for demanding rights such as land and sea rights. Artworks can show a Christian influence, can connect the history of persecution and massacres with elements of the Country, or can demand remembrance of genocide. The art cannot, therefore, be described as abstract. It is not static but open to new events and has an external impact (transculturality).

The sources of the stories associated with the paintings, which are often cited in the chapter ‘Narrated World’, are the certificates that the artists’ cooperatives provide with each painting. The certificates also note the creator(s) of the artwork and the year of its creation because with few exceptions the artists do not sign or date their artworks.

Contemporary Indigenous art now encompasses the whole range of painting, diverse graphic techniques, photography, sculpture, and video. The materials used, i.e., brushes, palette knives, acrylic paints, natural pigments, canvas, etc., do not differ from those used in Western art, with the exception of the materials in bark painting. The chapter ‘Techniques and Materials’ discusses the uniqueness of dot painting with its many forms; the accentuated play of light on the convex surfaces of applied acrylic paint; the various techniques for achieving glowing, shining, and shimmering; the emphasis of haptics using pastose application of paint, or graininess in natural pigments; aspects of colouring; working with contrasts; various techniques in bark painting, etc.

The chapter ‘Brief History of Indigenous Australian Art’ provides an overview from the earliest surviving paintings and drawings of the late 19th century to today’s art. The contemporary art is a very young art; its rapid expansion and development began in the 20th century with the entry of artworks into art museums and continued with the acknowledgement of so-called ‘urban art’ by art museums in the 1980s. The chapter describes, among other topics, the function and significance of art centres in rural areas and includes a brief outline of the history of exhibitions.

The two-part chapter ‘(In)Acceptance of Indigenous Australian Art’ describes the history of exhibiting this art in Germany, followed by a theoretical analysis of the factors that promote or impede acceptance of a non-European art form as contemporary art, within the German art community.

The final chapter contains a list of selected solo and group exhibitions from artists featured in the Bähr/Frost collection, their art prizes, the national and international collections, and bibliographical references.

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Exhibition view at the Kunstmuseum Bayreuth, 2004

02 — The Bähr/Frost Collection





Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, Bundujarlpa, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119.5 × 179.5 cm



Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, Near the Canning Stock Route, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 60 cm



Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, Kinyu, 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 118 × 40 cm



Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra, Winpurpurla, 2010, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 × 75 cm



Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra, Winpurpurla, 2010, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60 × 45 cm



Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra, Winpurpurla, 2010, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 75 × 50 cm



Lucy Yukanbarri Napanangka, Puturr Soak, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 × 100 cm



Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, *Winyililpa*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 180 × 119.5 cm



Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Kulyarrar, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 120 × 80 cm



Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Pilkarti Soak, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90.5 × 60.5 cm



Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Mangal Kutjarra Soak, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119.5 × 80 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, *Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald)*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 69.5 × 149.5 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Lampintja, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 136.5 × 76 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald), 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 153 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Mungarrtjirringu, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 137 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122.5 × 92 cm



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 101 cm





Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, Parwalla, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119.5 × 179.5 cm



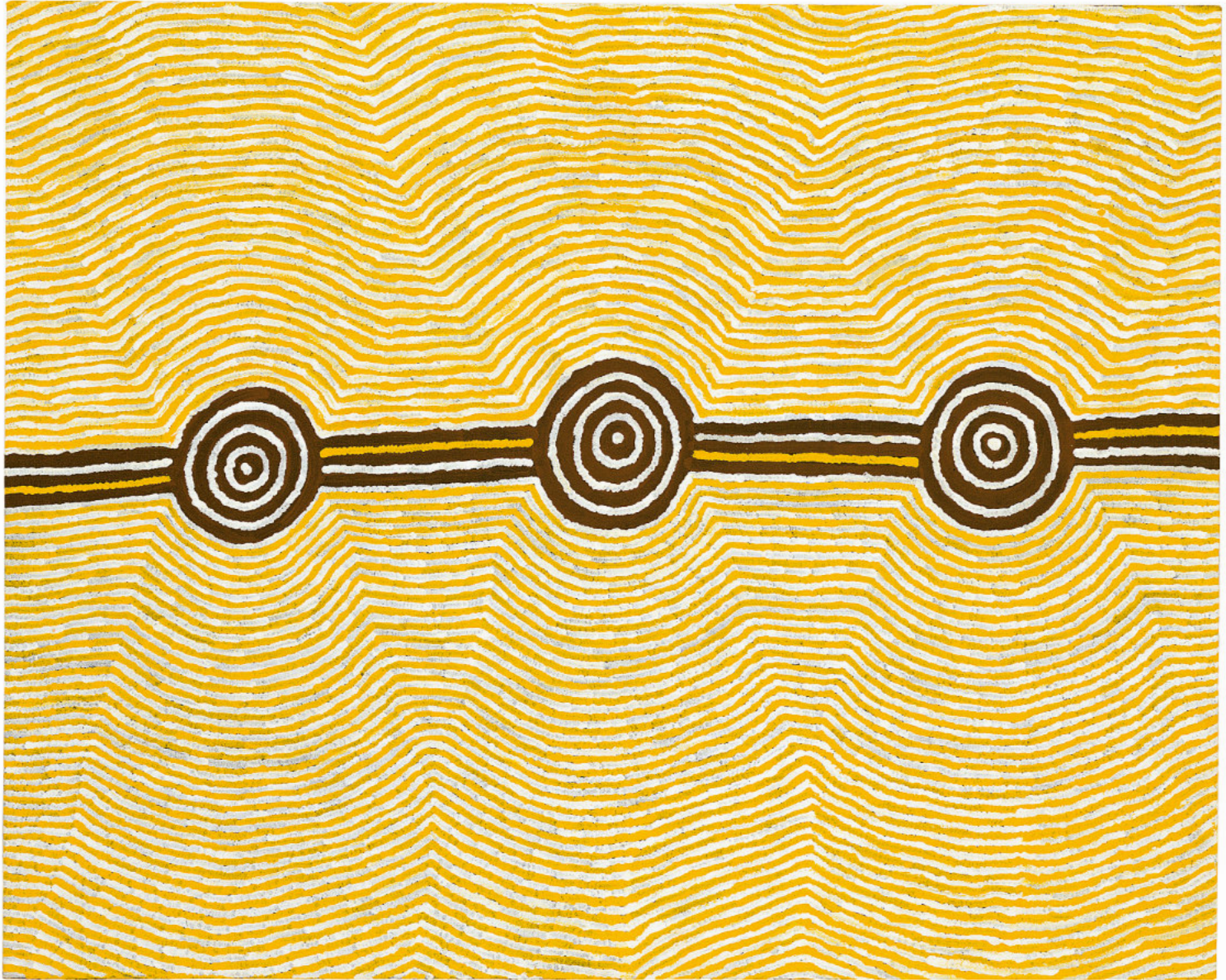
Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, Parwalla near Kiwirrkurra, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 60 cm



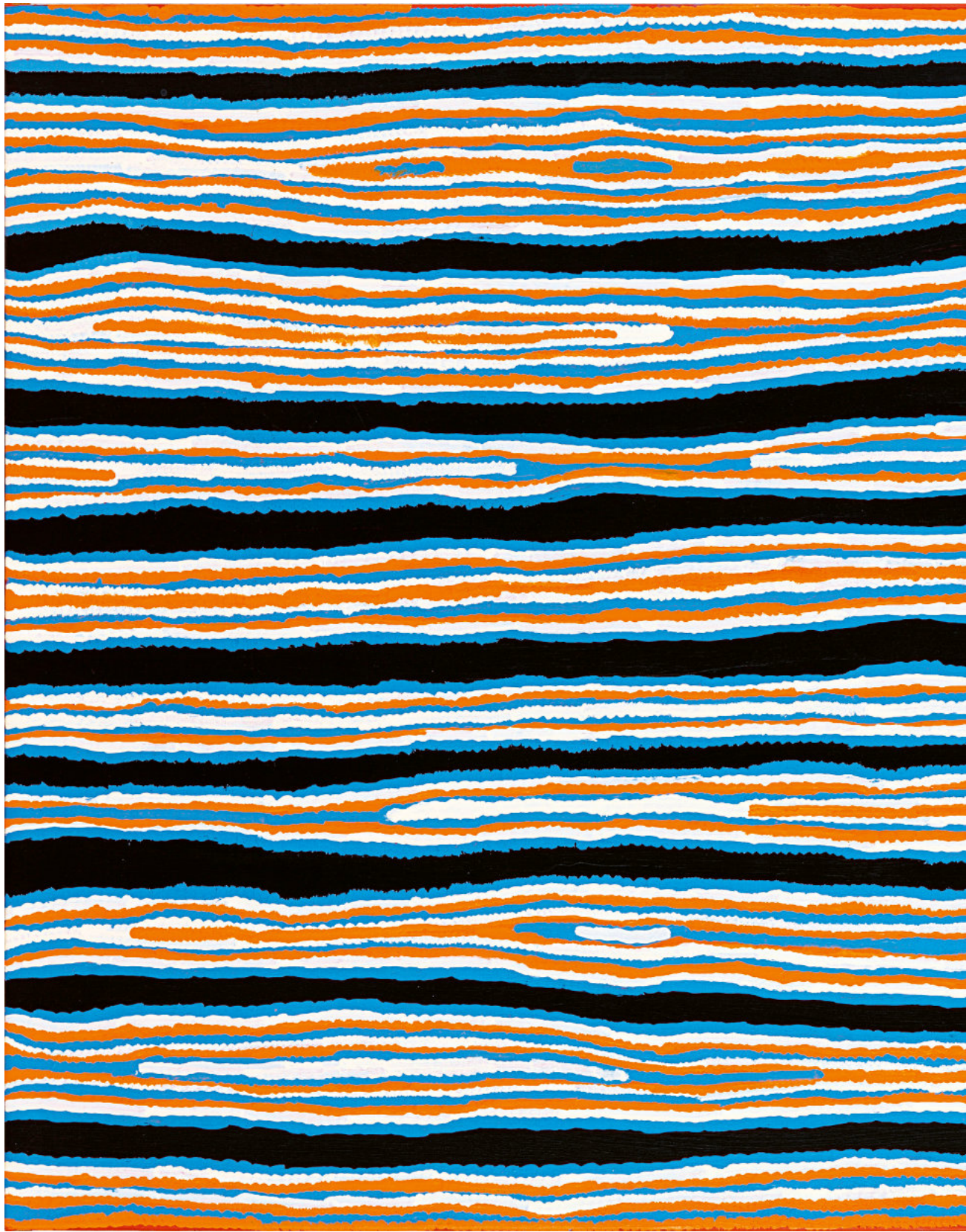
Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, Parwalla near Kiwirrkurra, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 120 × 80 cm

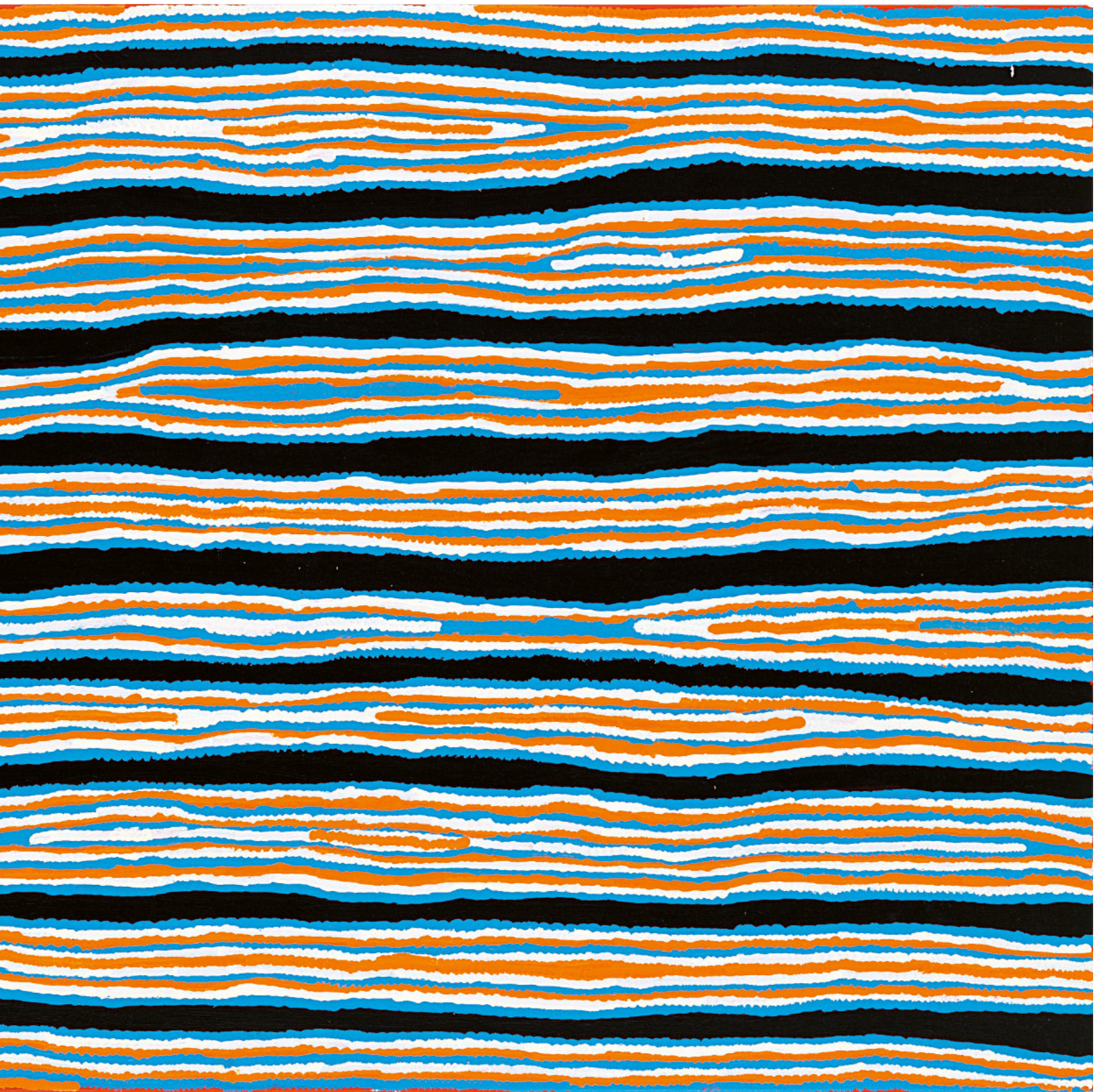


Tjumbo Tjapanangka, *Bibarr*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 179.5 × 120 cm



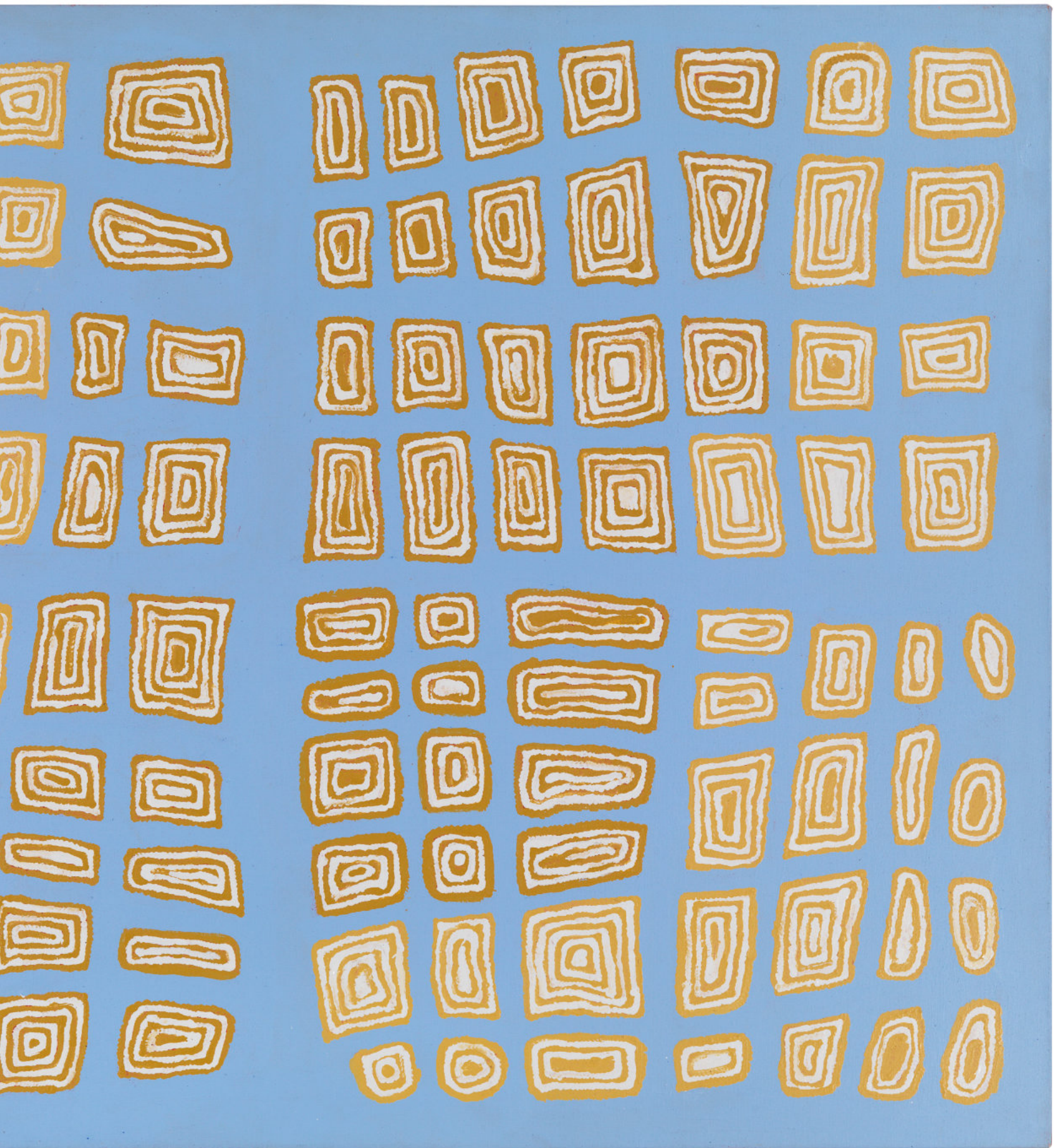
Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon, Talaalpi, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 151 cm





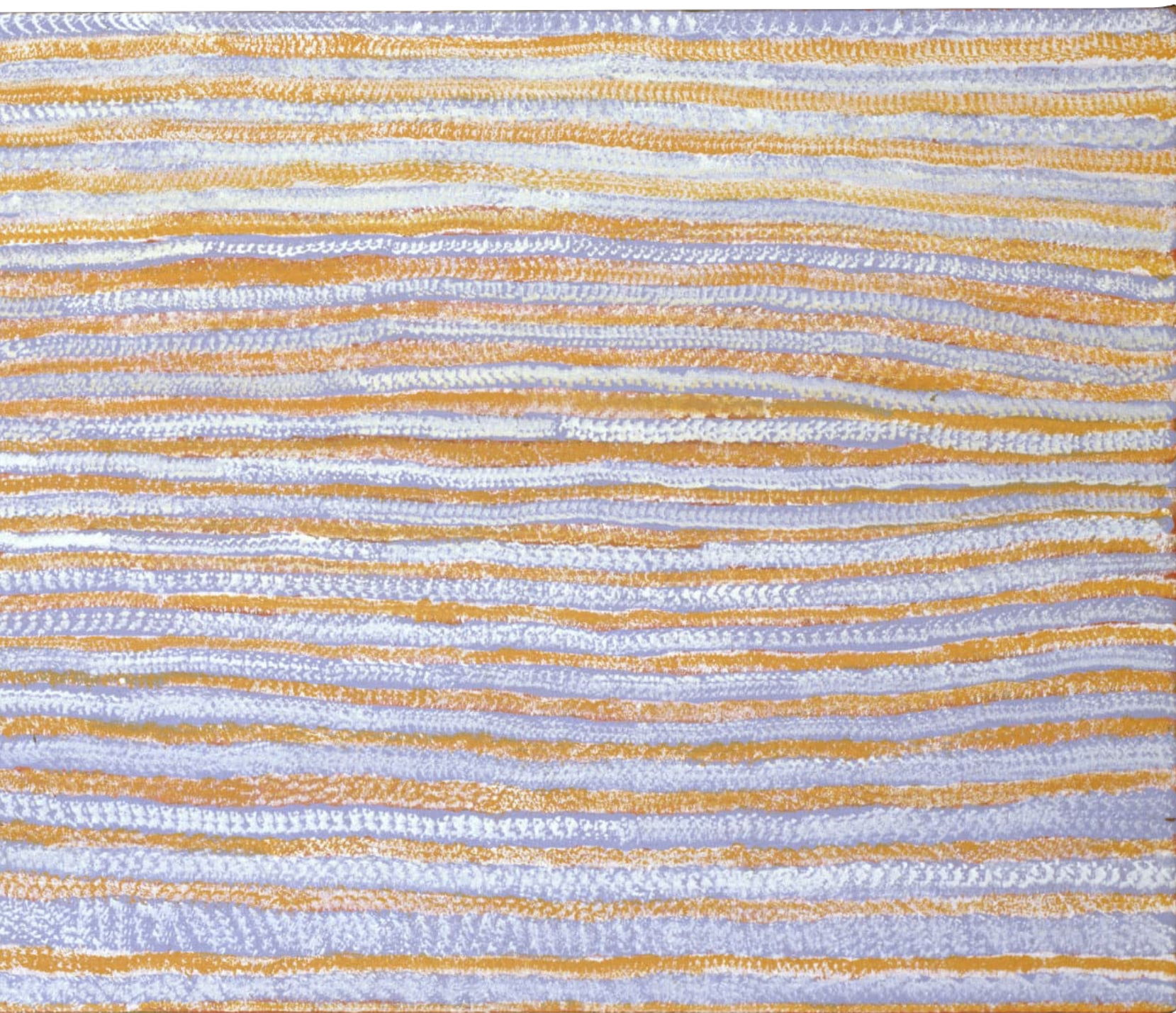
Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon, Tali, 2007, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 101.5 × 183.5 cm





Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon, Alkatjirri near Talaalpi, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 136.5 × 182.5 cm





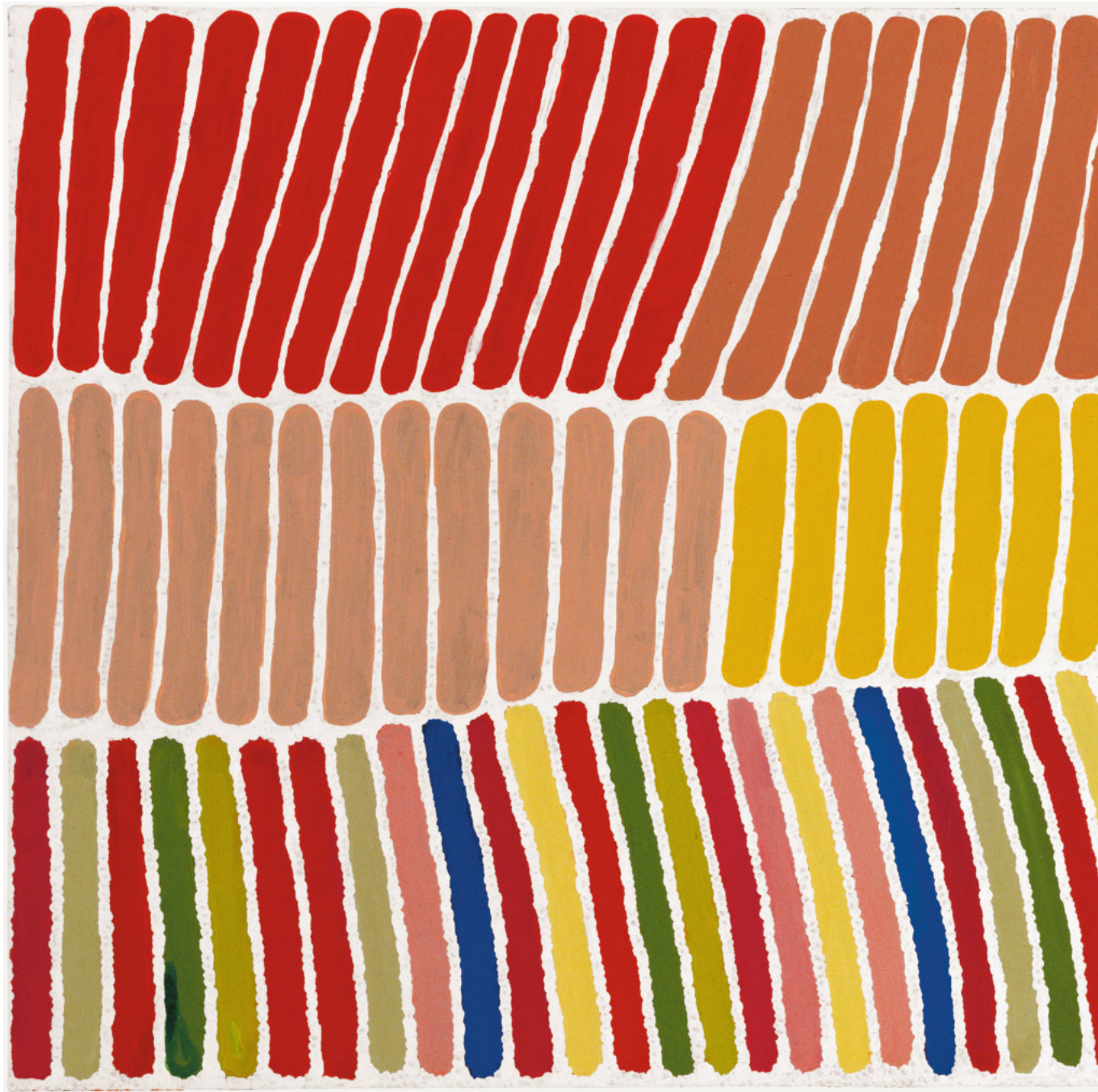
Eunice Napanangka Jack, Trees growing in saltwater, near Tjukurla, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 72 × 121.5 cm

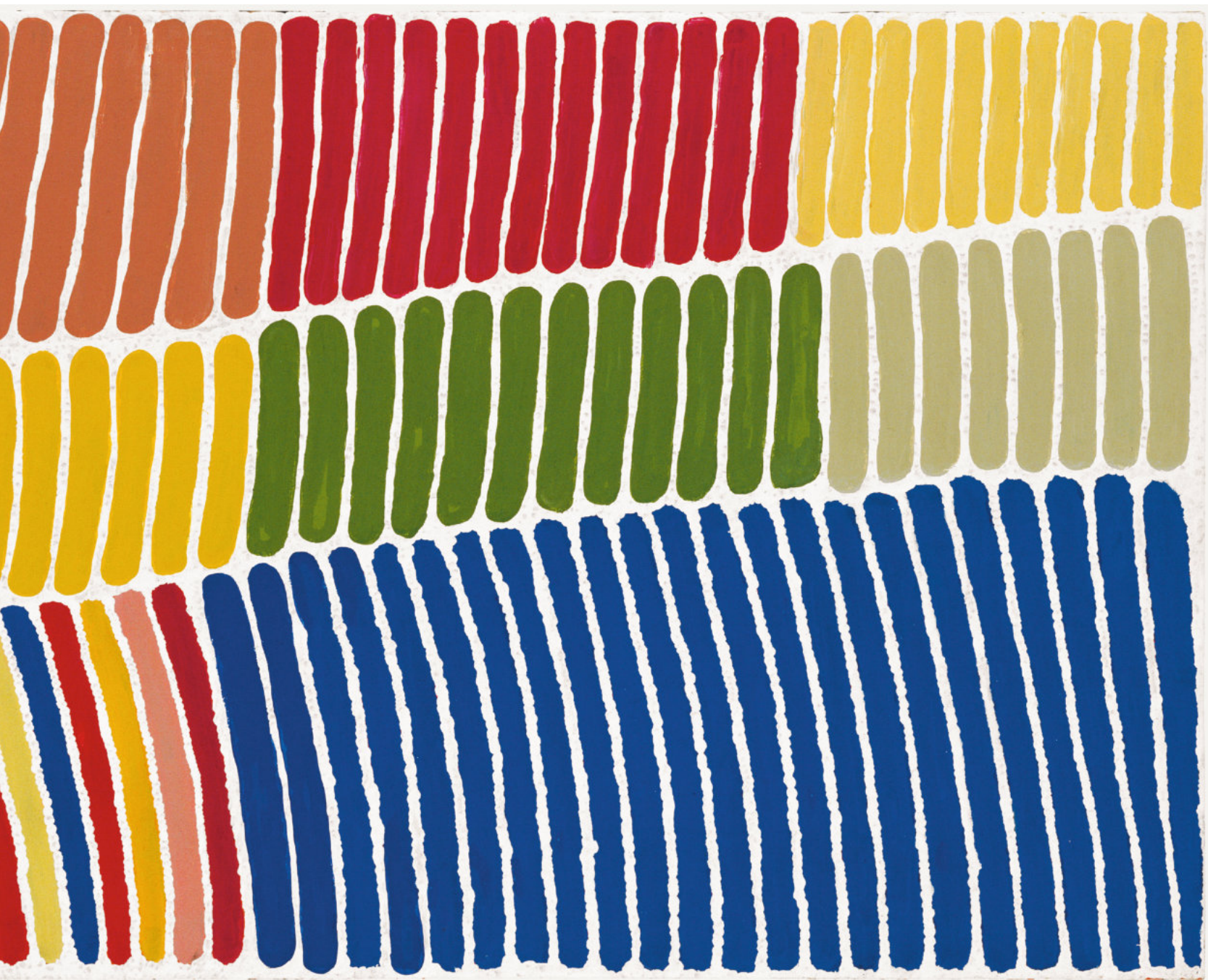


Nancy Naninurra Napanangka, Yarllalya, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 118.5 × 79.5 cm



Susie Bootja Bootja, Kurtal Country, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60 × 90 cm



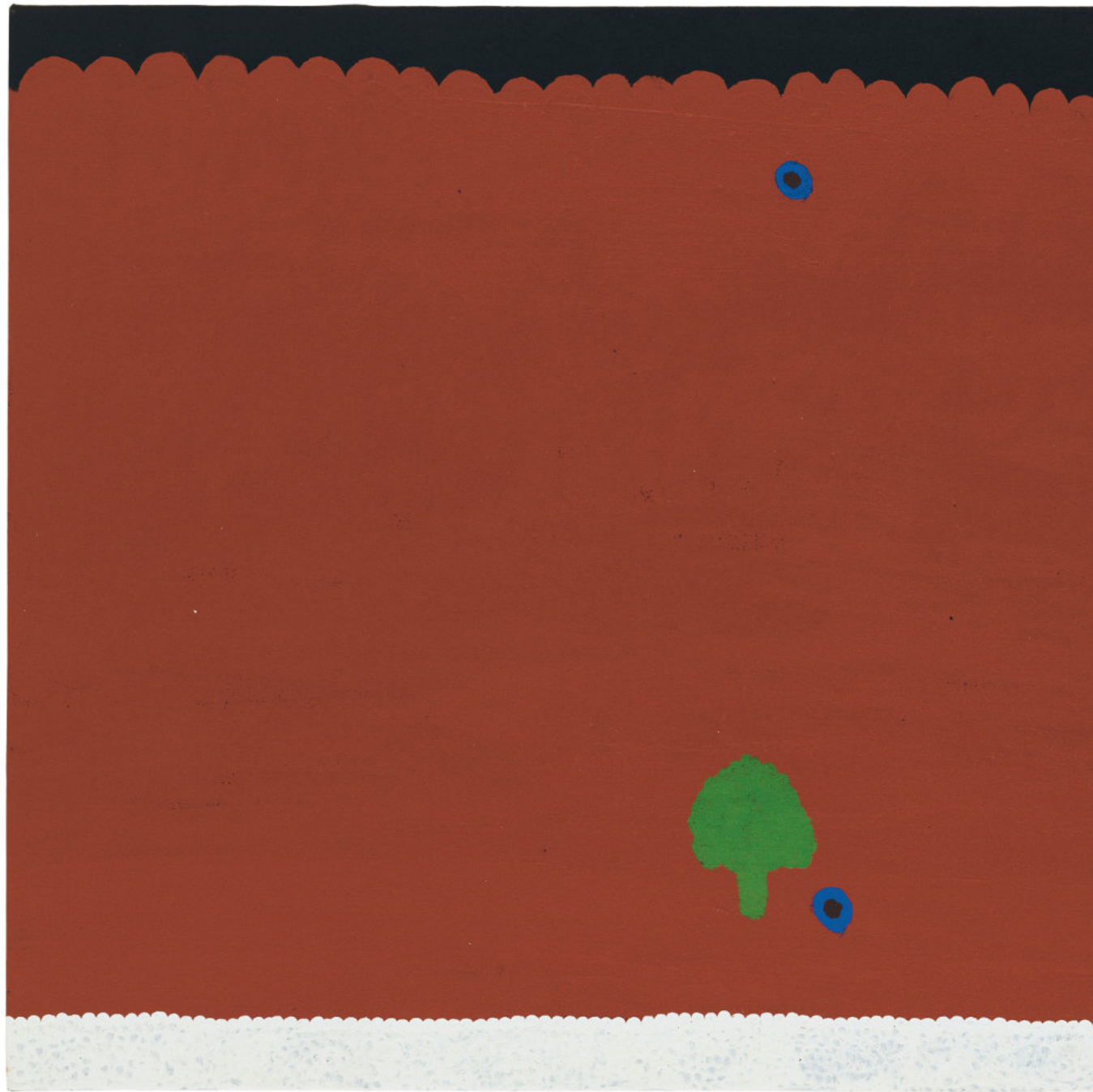


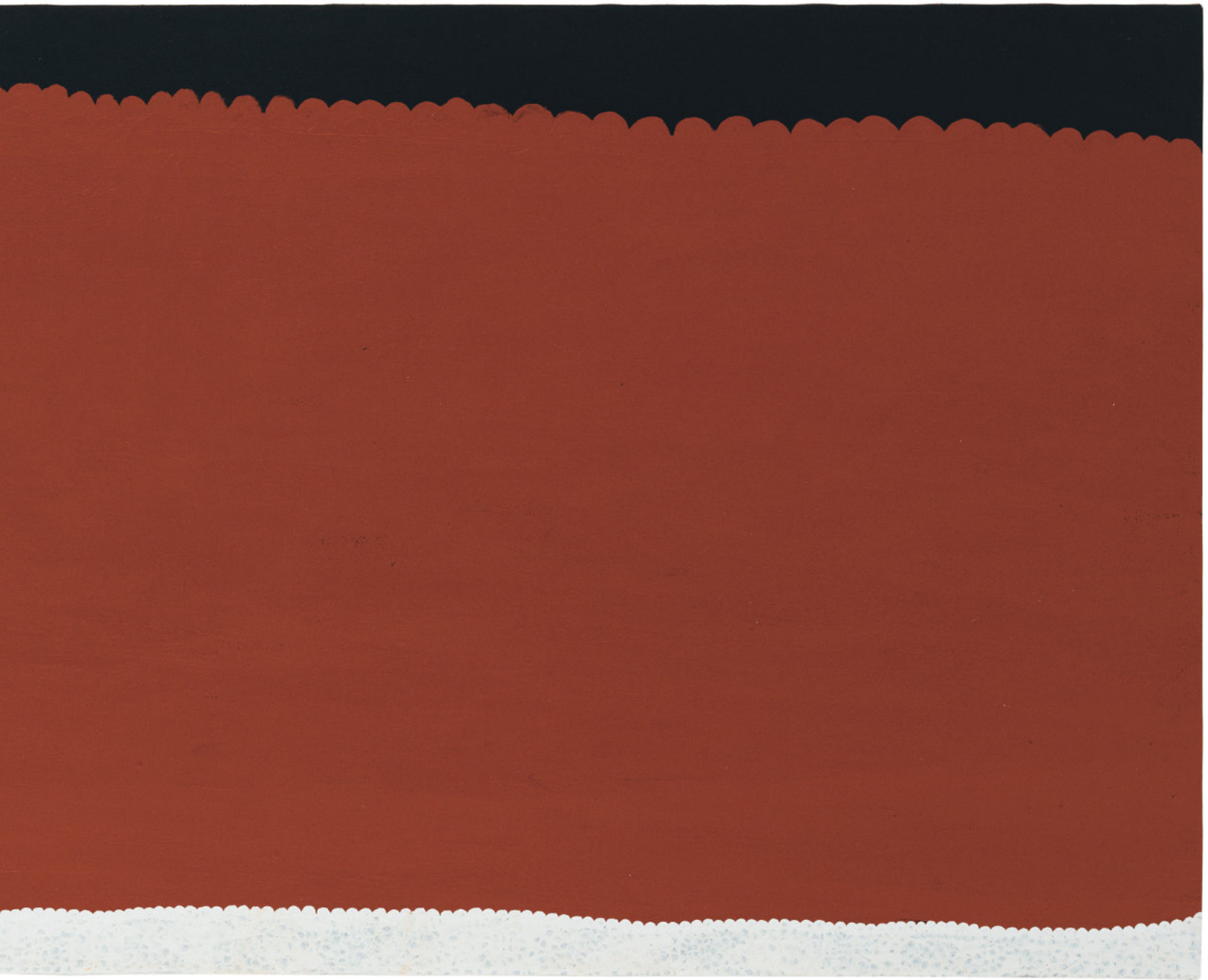
Mitjili Napurrula, Nulla Nulla Tjuta (Many Fighting Sticks), 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 80.5 × 181.5 cm





Mitjili Napurrula, Untitled, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 184 × 312 cm





Long Tom Tjapanangka and Mitjili Napurrula, *Mereeni Range*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 80.5 × 180.5 cm



Long Tom Tjapanangka, *Untitled*, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182.5 × 152.5 cm



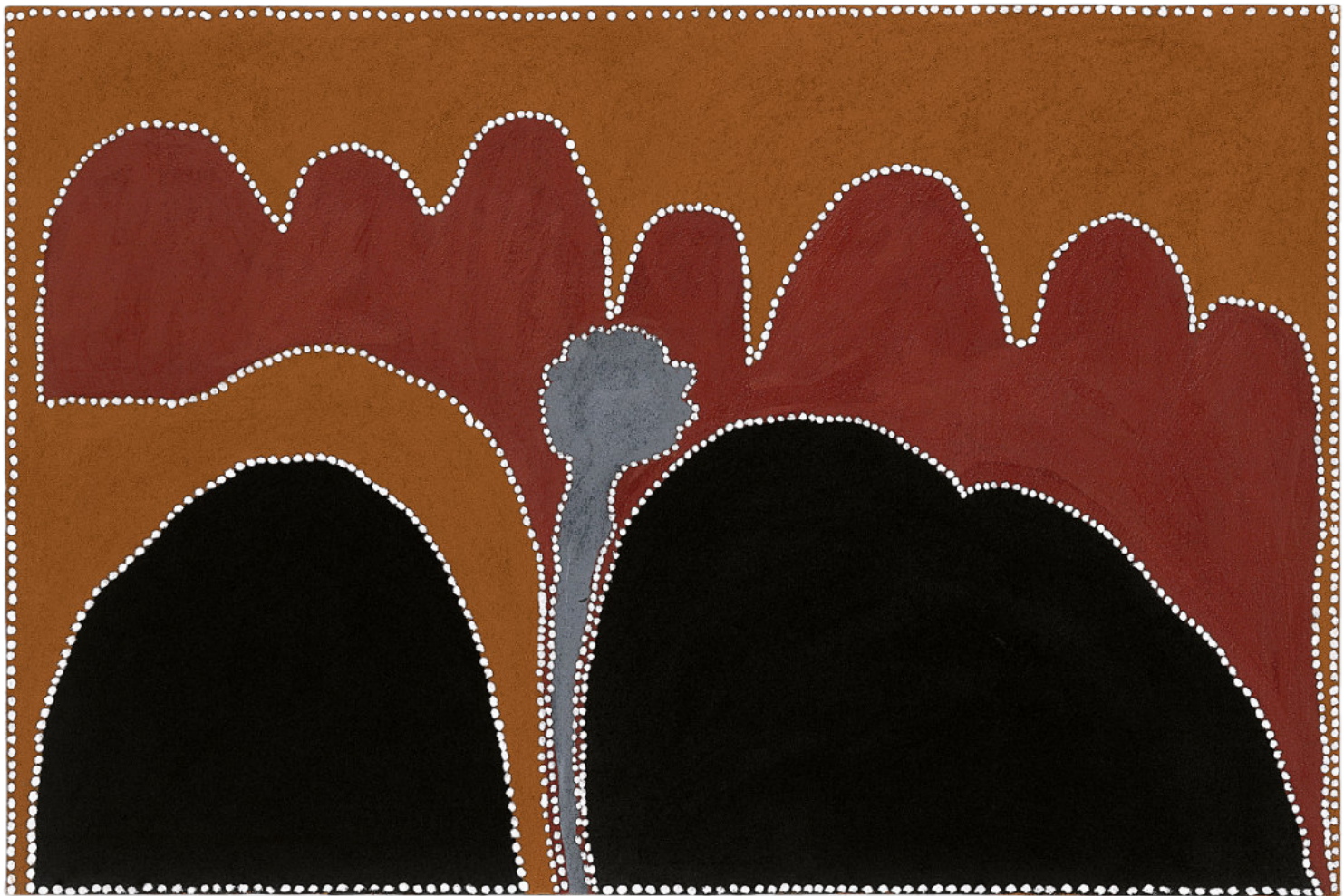
Patrick Mung Mung, *Two Main Hills*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 61 × 81.5 cm



Patrick Mung Mung, Warrmarngoon, 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



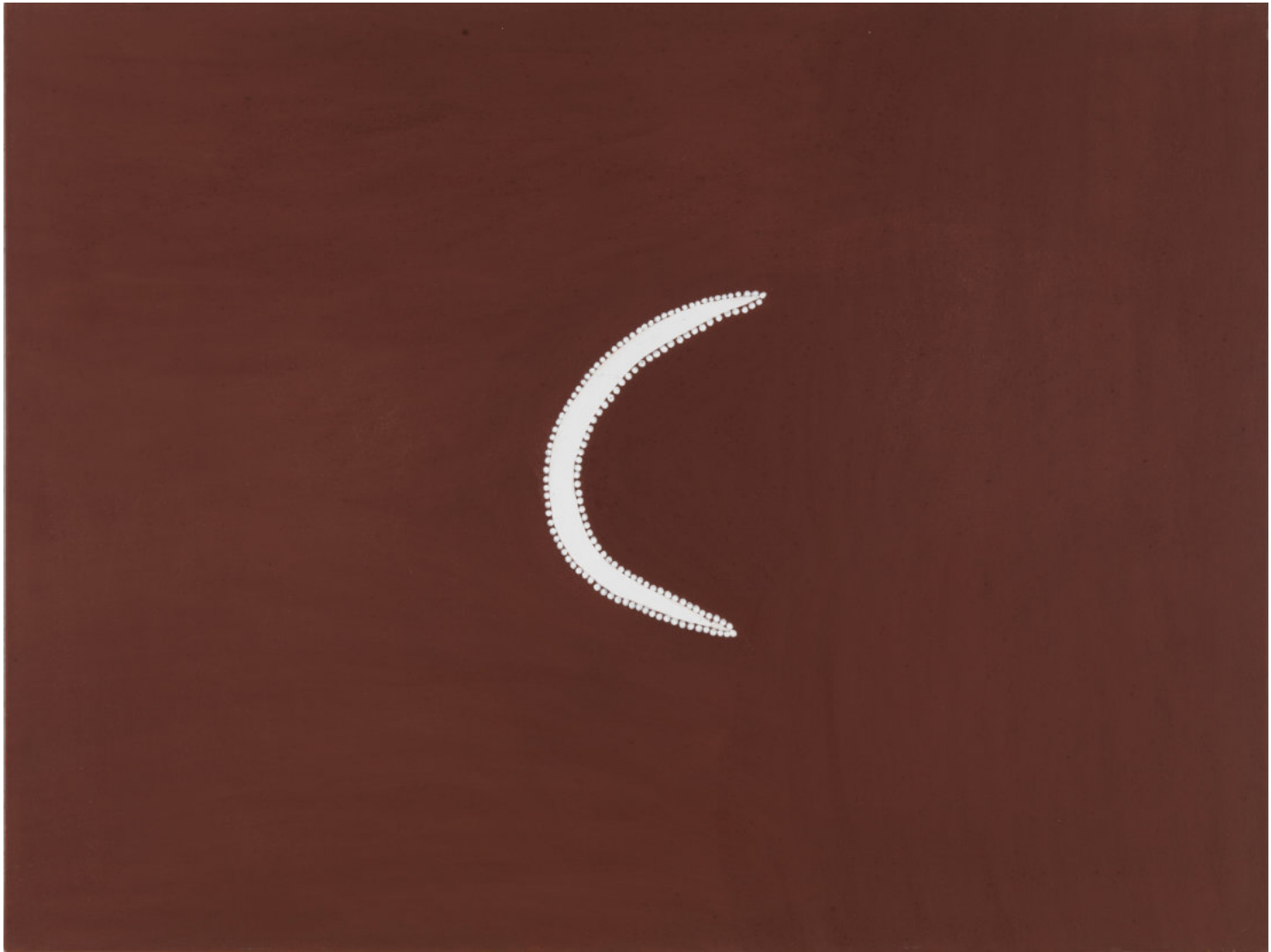
Patrick Mung Mung, Yunurrl Country (14 Mile), 2001, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



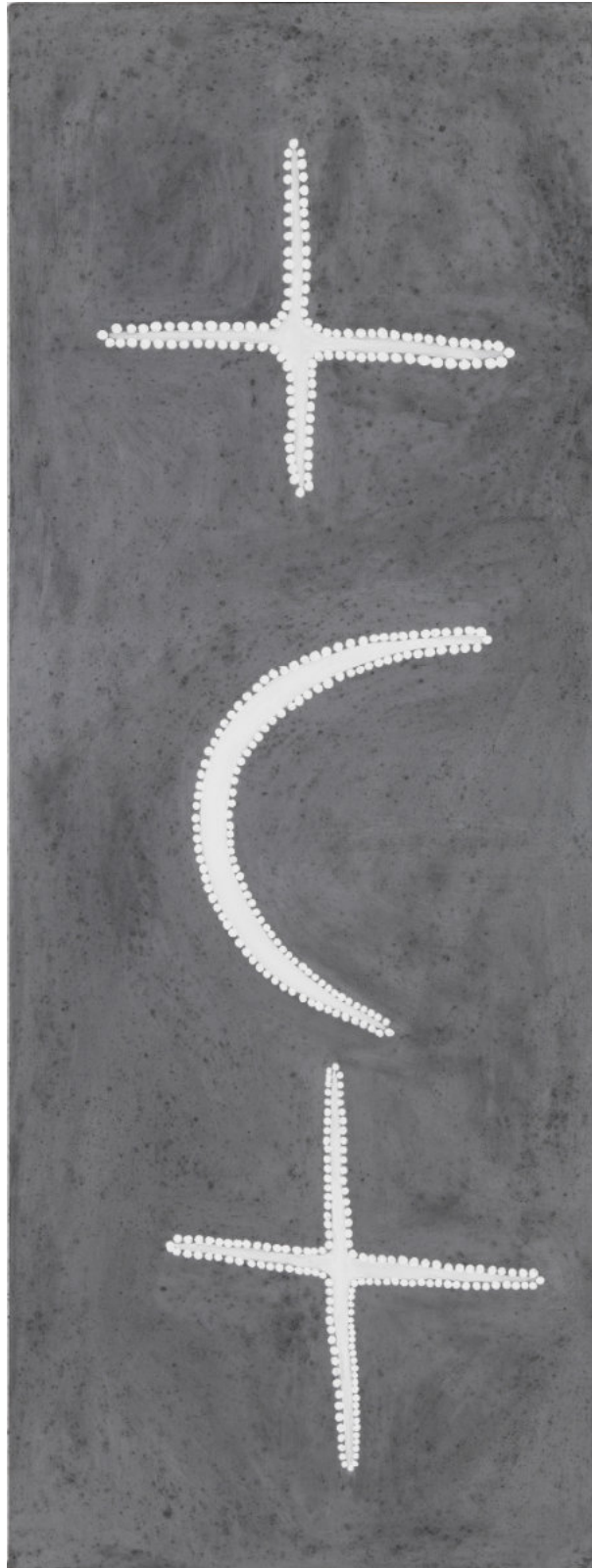
Gordon Barney, *Birno*, 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 80 × 120.5 cm



Gordon Barney, *Alice Downs*, 2013, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 120 cm



Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), Karrngin Ngarranggarni, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 120 cm



Mabel Juli (Wiringoon), *Karrngin Ngarranggarni*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 121 × 45 cm



Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), Darrajayin (Springvale Farm), 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



Shirley Purdie, Mabel Downs – Gilbun, 2004, natural pigments on canvas, 119.5 × 180.5 cm



Shirley Purdie, Mabel Downs Country, 2001, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



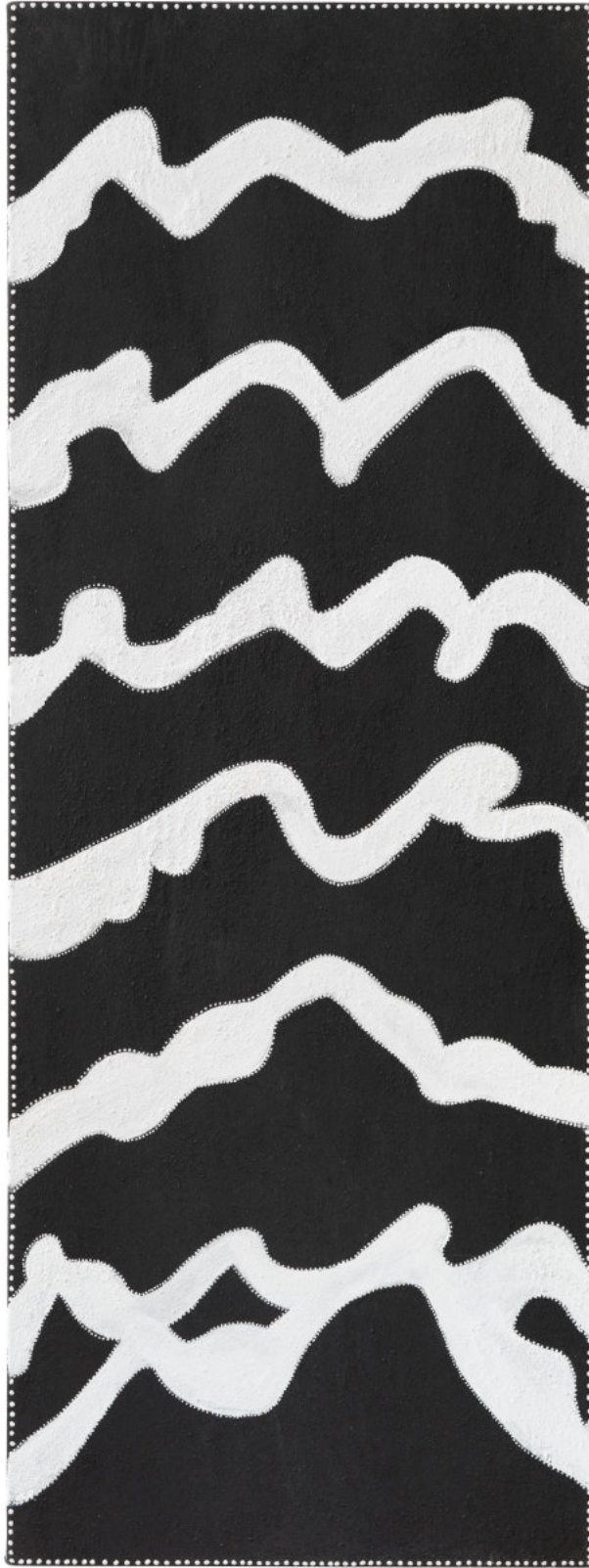
Shirley Purdie, Manungoo Country, Chamberlain River, 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



Shirley Purdie, Untitled, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 220 × 139 cm



Betty Carrington, Dowooloon (Anne Springs), 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 46 × 60.5 cm



Betty Carrington, Darrajayin Country, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 120 × 45 cm



Betty Carrington, Darrajayin Hills, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, 140 × 100 cm



Marlene Juli, Kilfoyle Rivers, Texas Downs, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, 45 × 120 cm



Marlene Juli, Turkey Creek, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, 60.5 × 80 cm



David Cox, *Sing Out Spring*, 2013, natural pigments on canvas, 180 × 50.5 cm



David Cox, *Sing Out Spring*, 2013, natural pigments on canvas, 139.5 × 100 cm



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Revolver Springs, 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 80 × 120.5 cm



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Texas Country, 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Pandamus, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 120 cm



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Major the Bushranger, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 120.5 × 120 cm



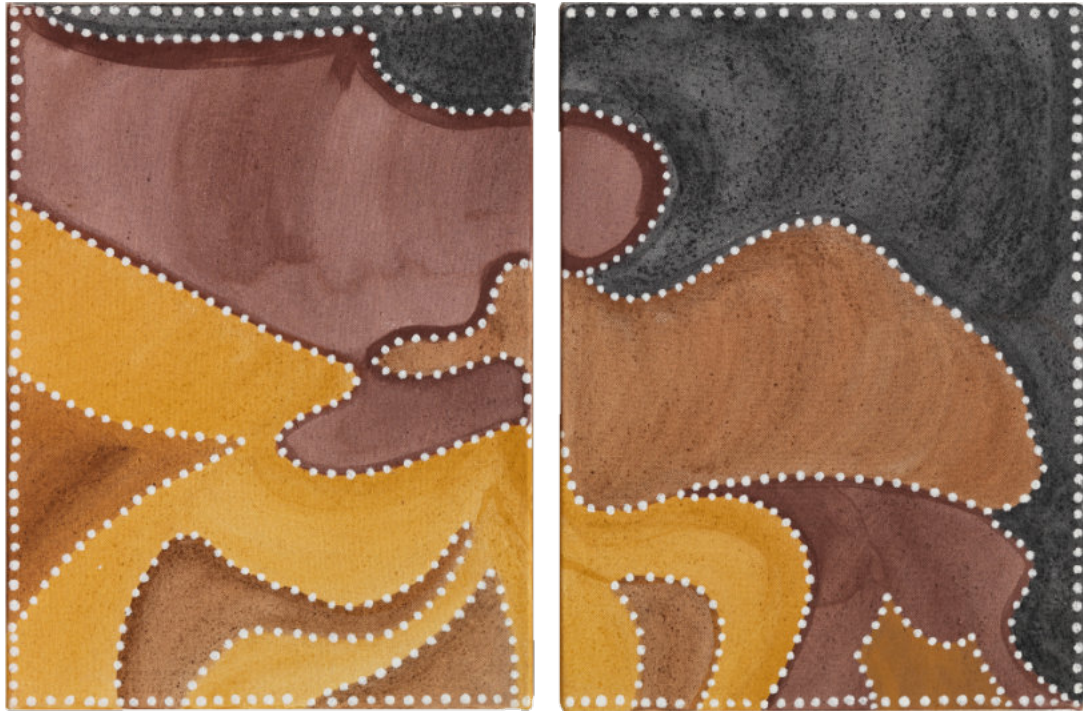
Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Buffalo Hole, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 100.5 × 140 cm



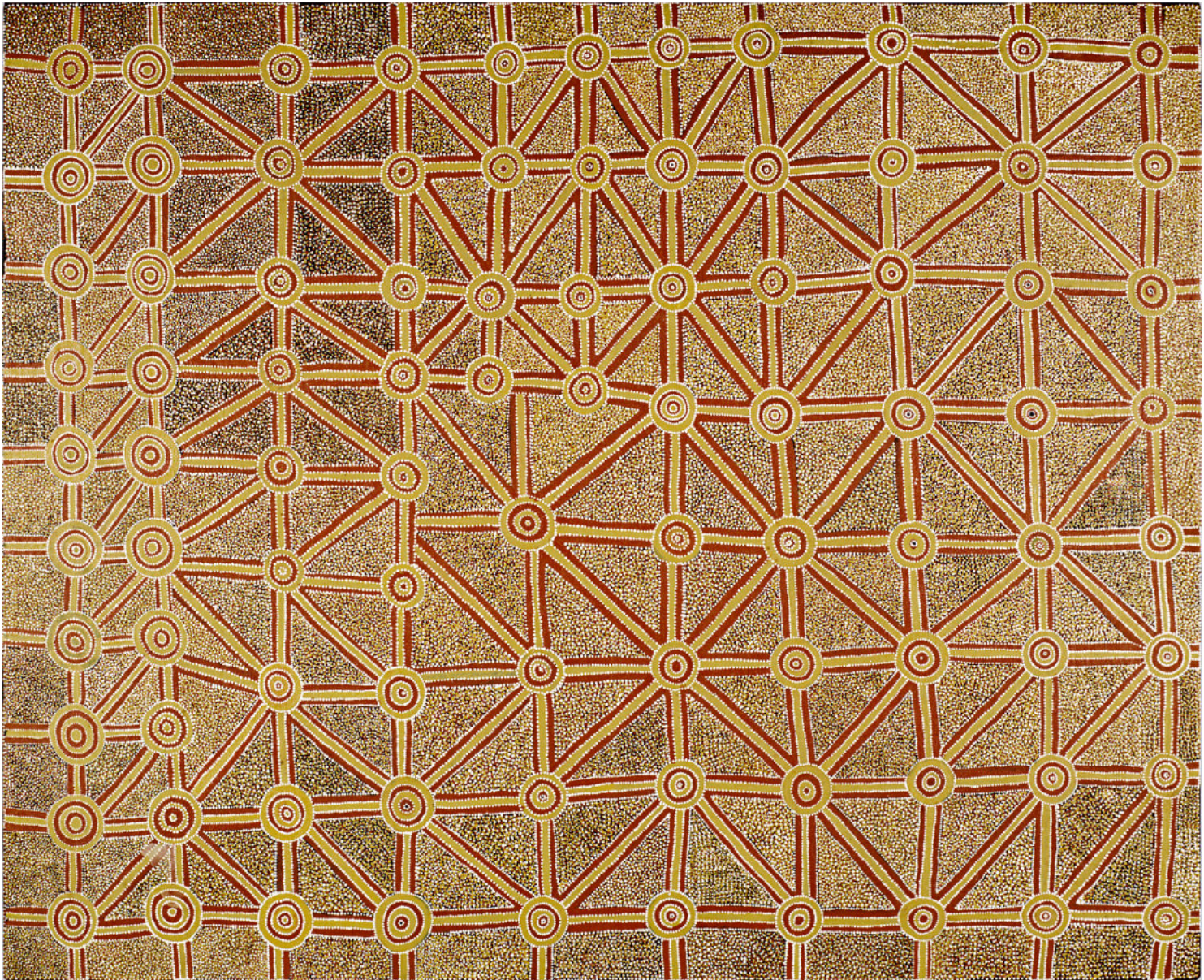
Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Kelly's Waterhole, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 60 × 80 cm



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Untitled, 2015, natural pigments on canvas, 120 × 180.5 cm



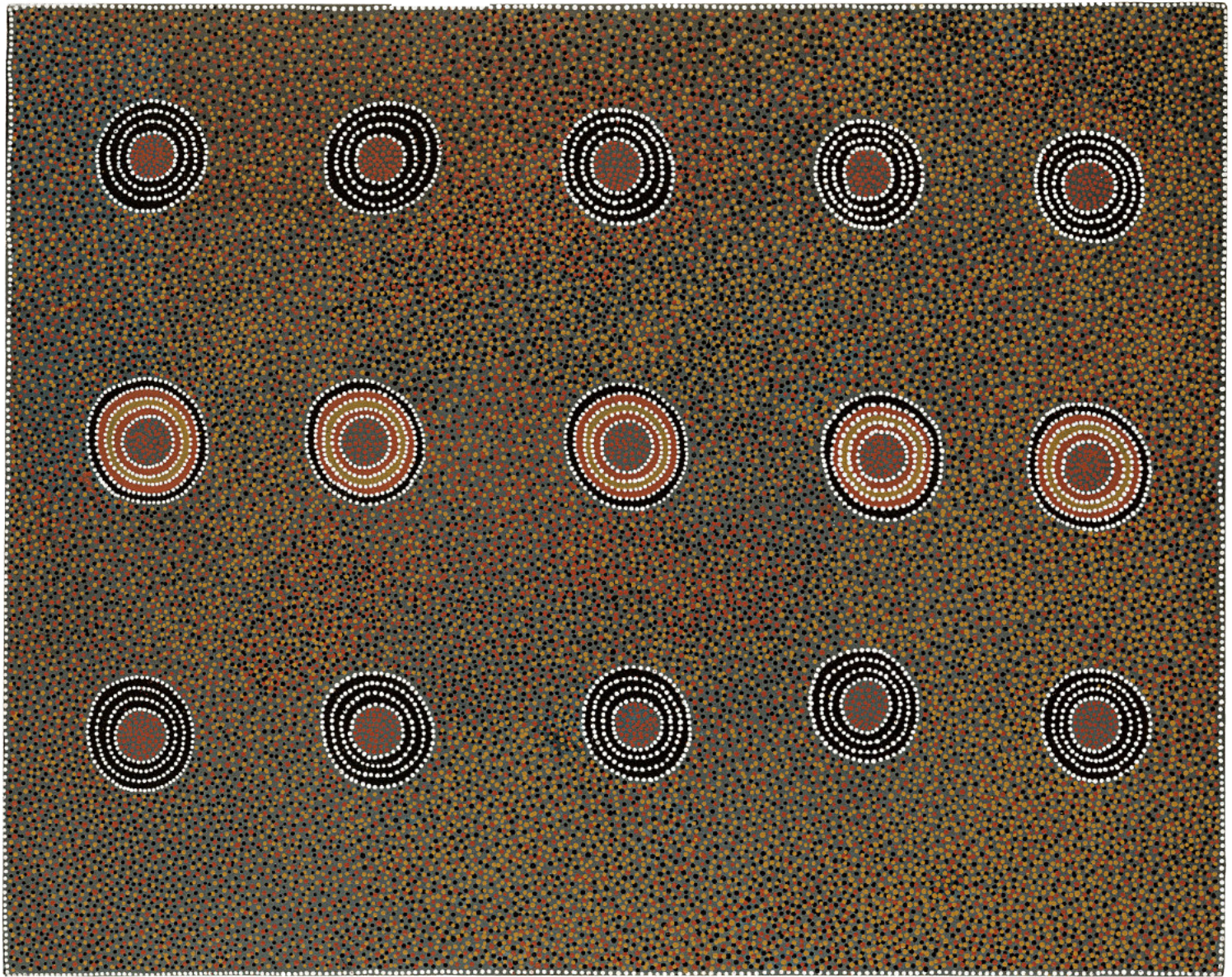
Charlene Carrington, Red Butte Hill, Texas Country, 2001, natural pigments on canvas, 60 × 40 cm



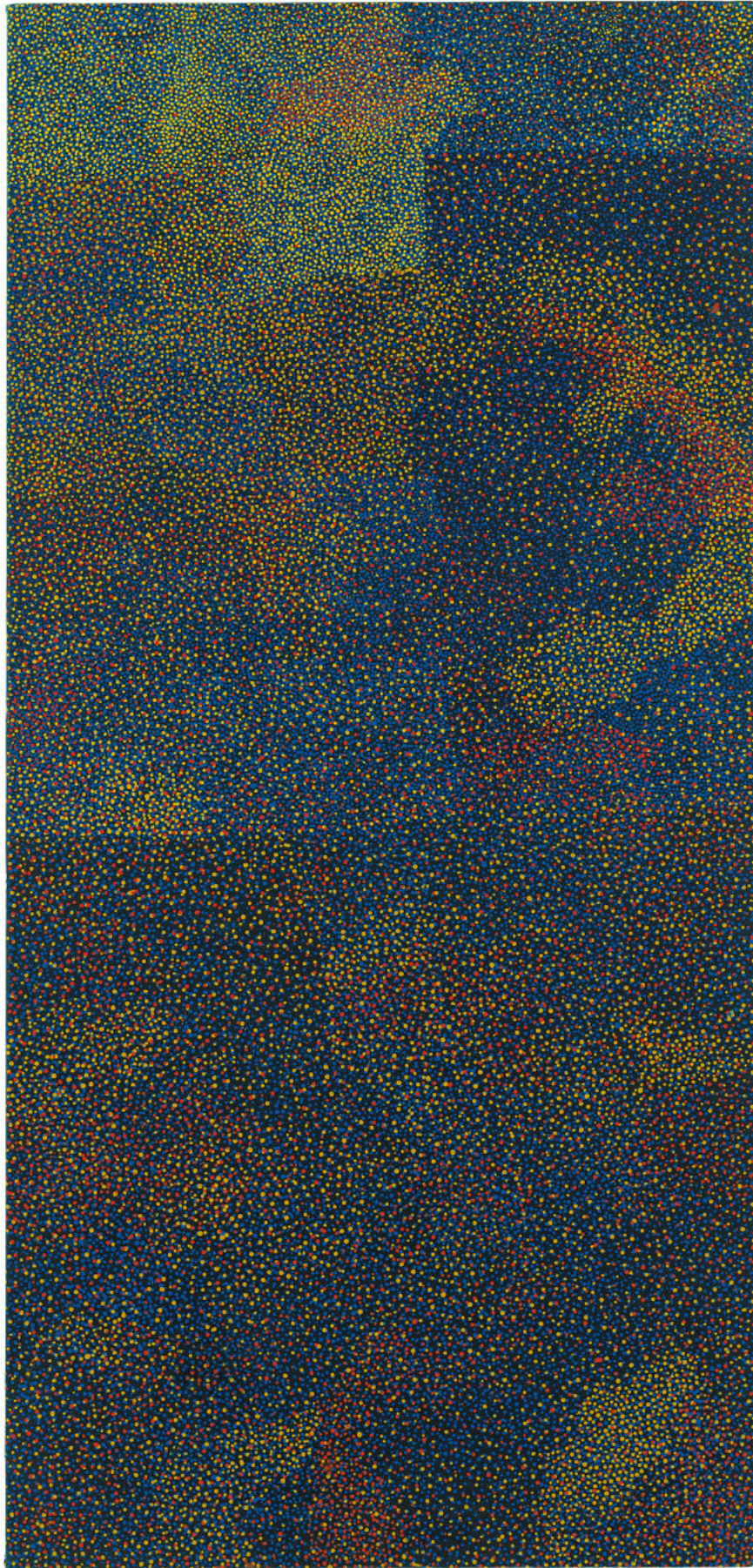
Greeny Purvis Petyarre, *Emu Altyerr*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 148.5 cm



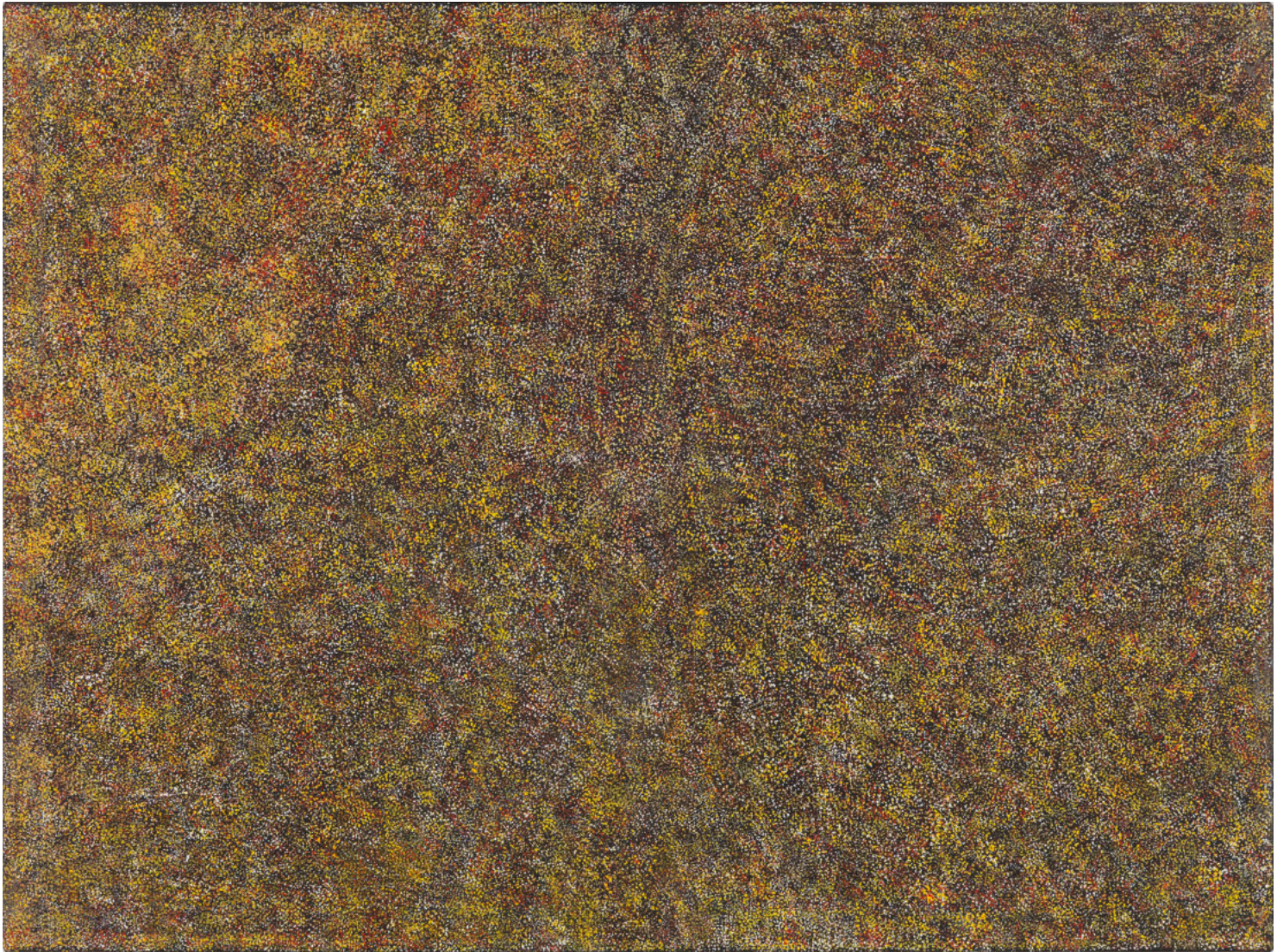
Greeny Purvis Petyarre, *Yam Seed Altyerr*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 181.5 × 120.5 cm



Lyndsay Bird Mpetyane, *Mulga Seed Altyerr*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 120 × 150 cm



Gladdy Kemarre, Anwekety Altyerr (Bush Plum Altyerr), 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 175.5 × 83 cm



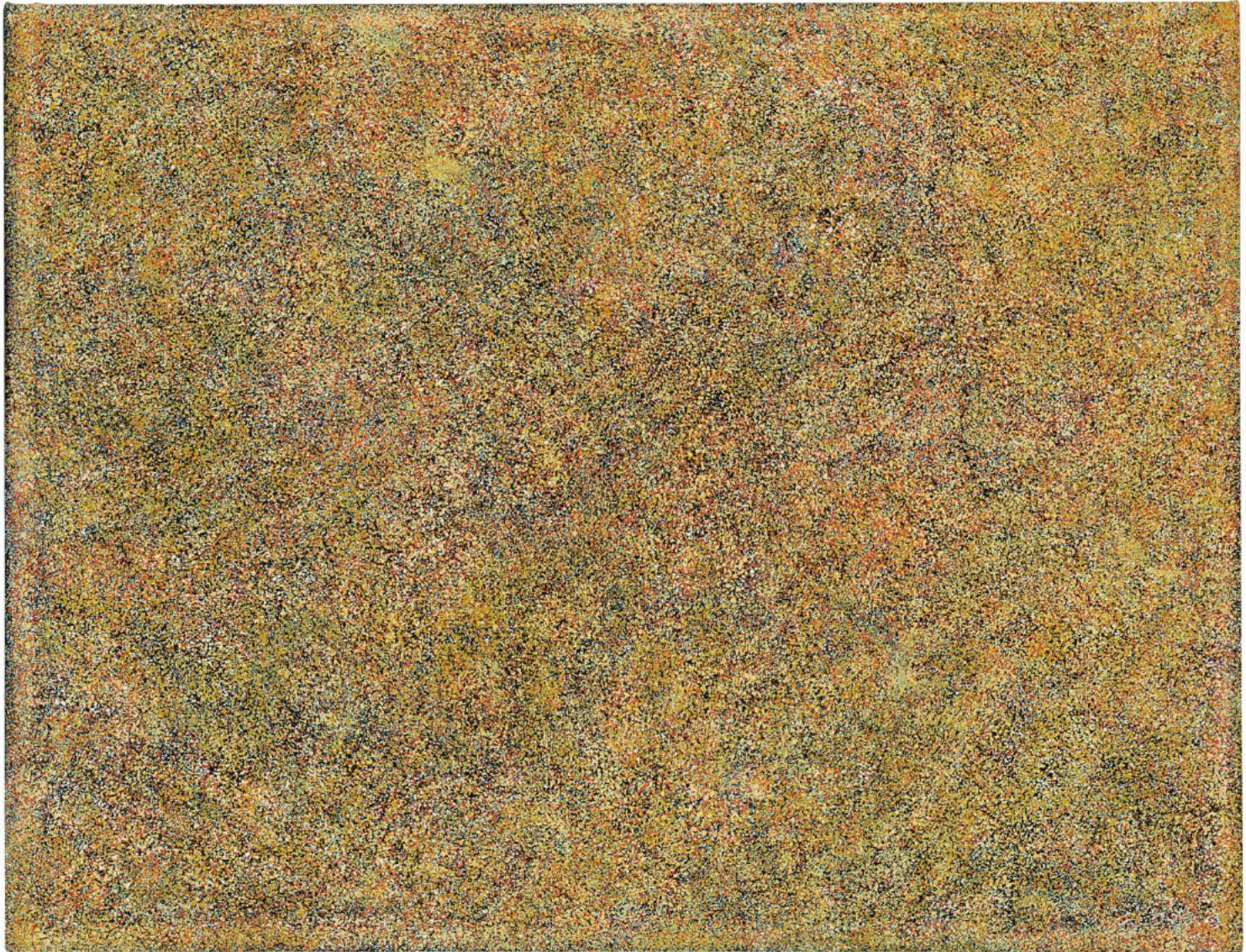
Rita Pwerle, Ilyentye Awely, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 89 × 119 cm



Maxie Tjampitjinpa, Untitled, 1993, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 61 × 91 cm



Gracie Morton Ngale, *Anwekety Country*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91.5 × 150.5 cm



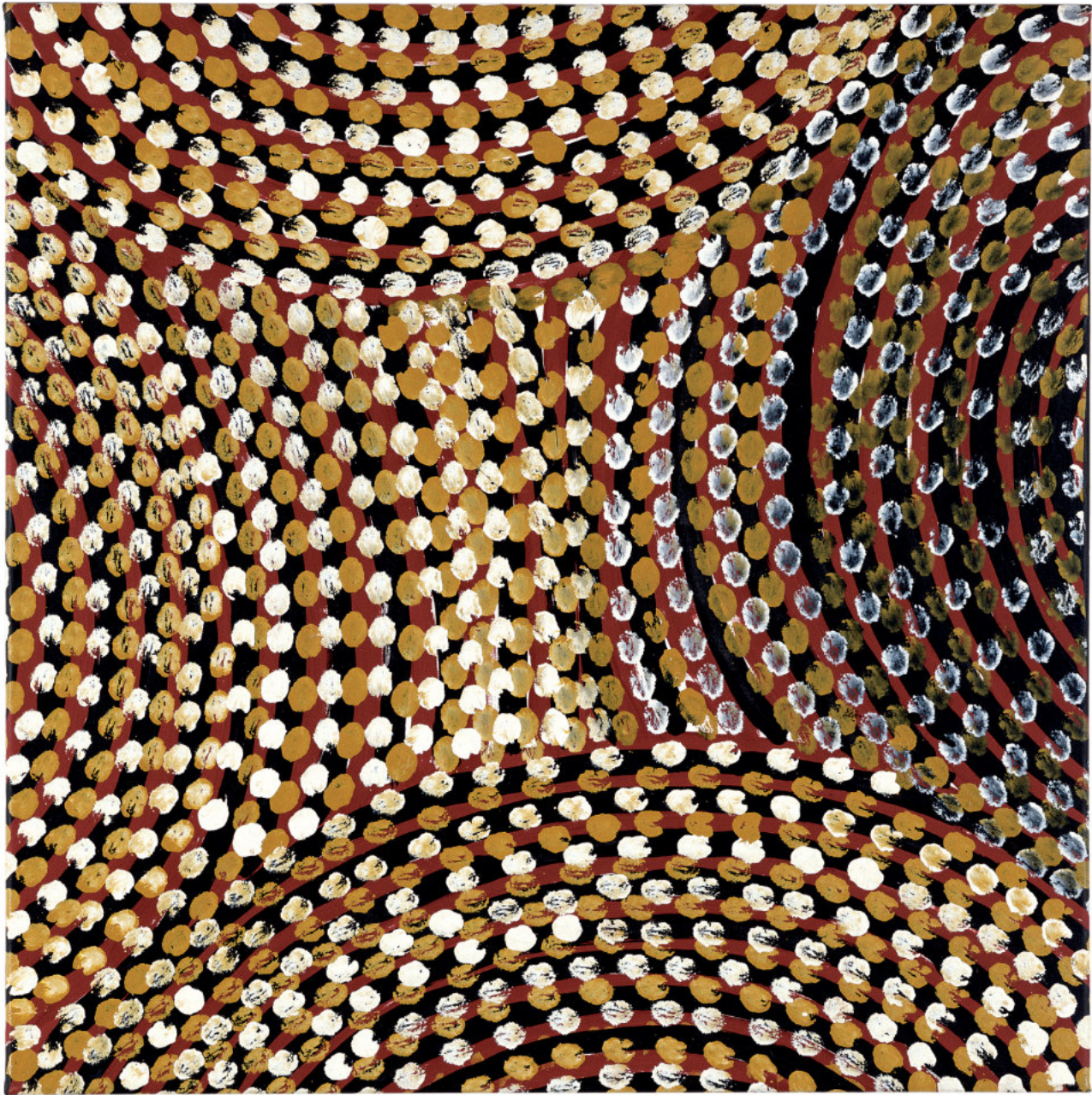
Gracie Morton Ngale, *Anwekety Country*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 95.5 × 124.5 cm



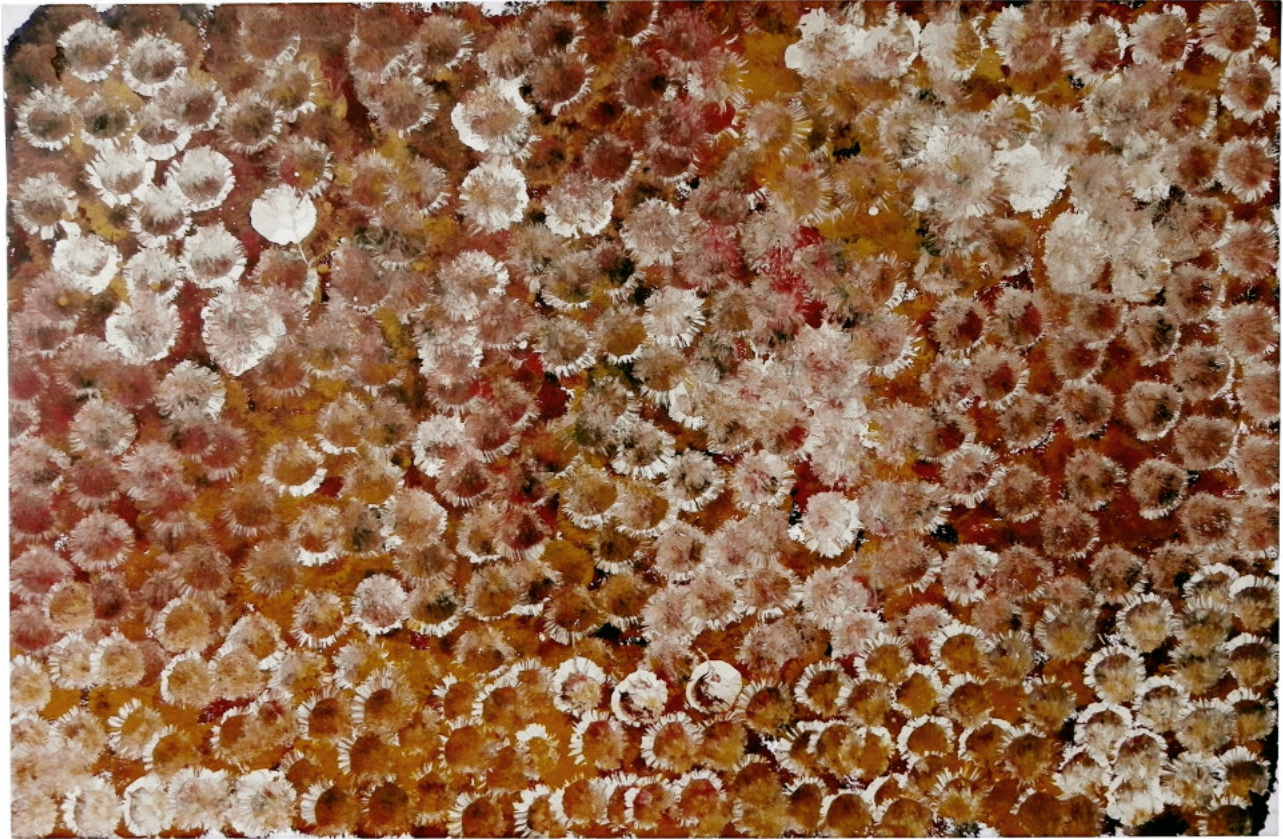
Gracie Morton Ngale, *Untitled*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 60 cm



Gracie Morton Ngale, *Anwekety Altyerr* , 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 198.5 × 61 cm



Lily Sandover Kngwarreye, Ngkwarlerlaneme Altyerr, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 85 × 85 cm



Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *My Country*, undated, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 57 × 87 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Alpita*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 210 × 150.5 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Bush Medicine*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 91.5 cm

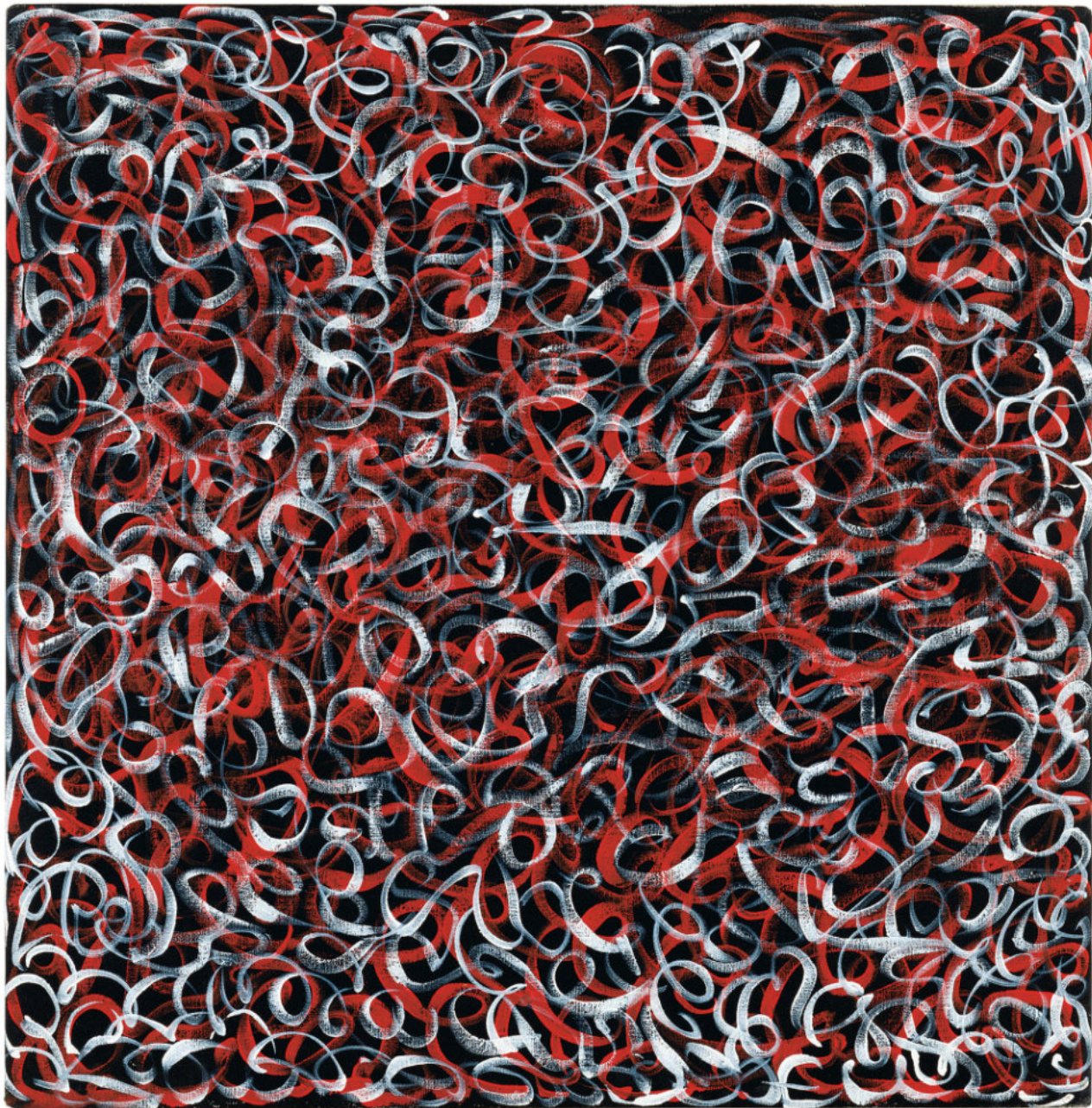




Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Untitled*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 117 × 176 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Arnkerrth – Mountain Devil Lizard, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60 × 60 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Untitled, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 90 cm



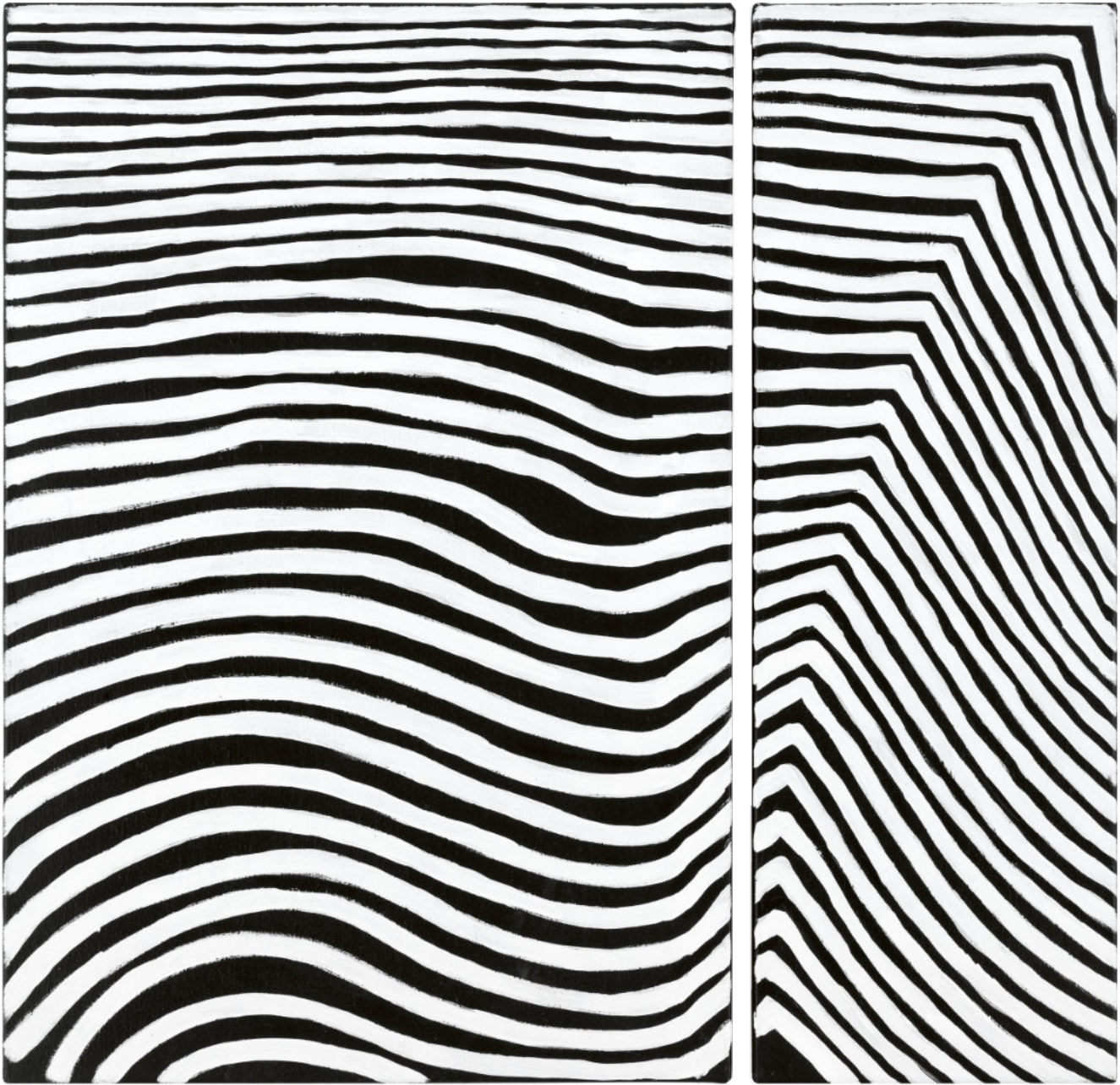
Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Arnkerrth – Mountain Devil Lizard, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119 × 119.5 cm



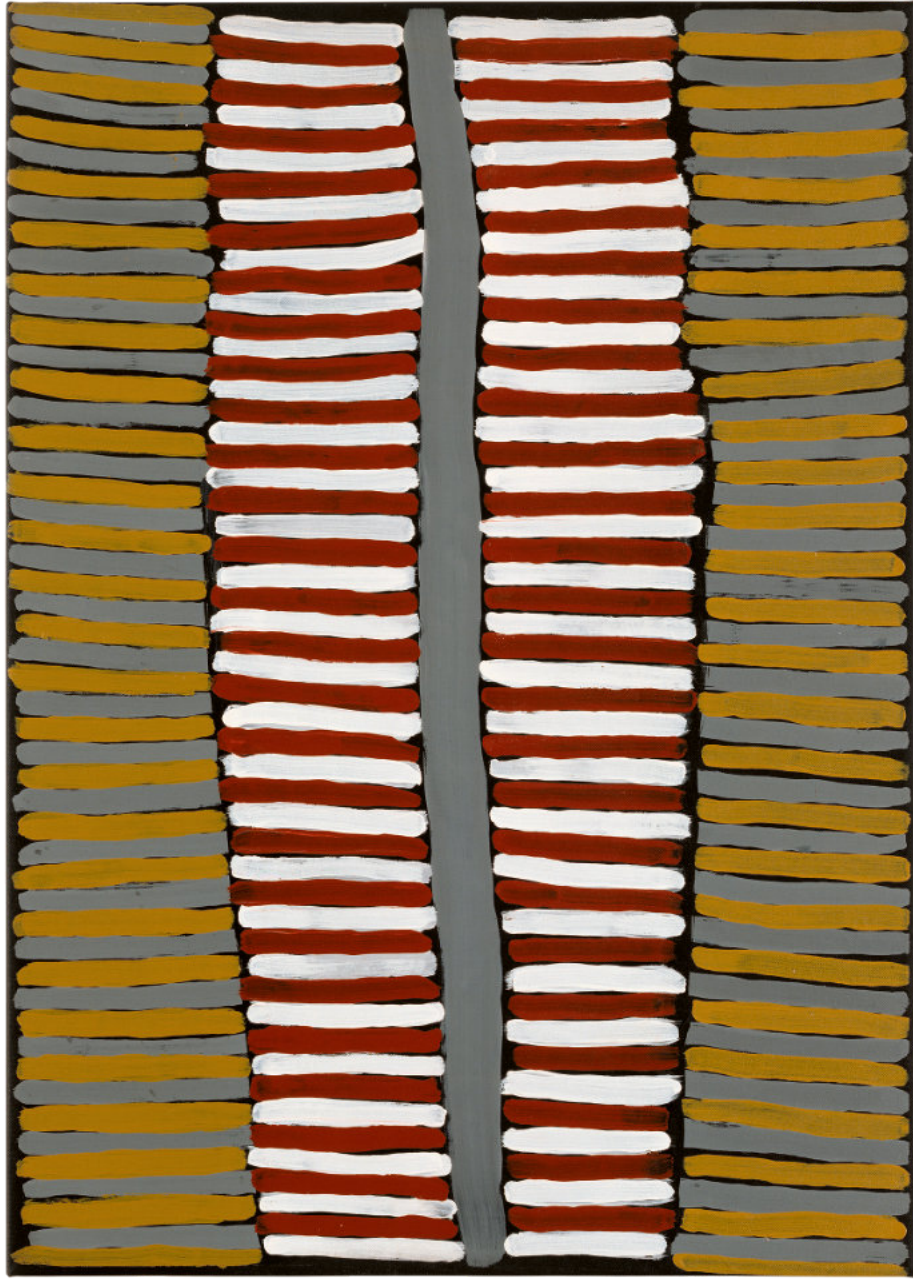
Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 180 × 90 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 84 × 52.5 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Awely*, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 90 cm



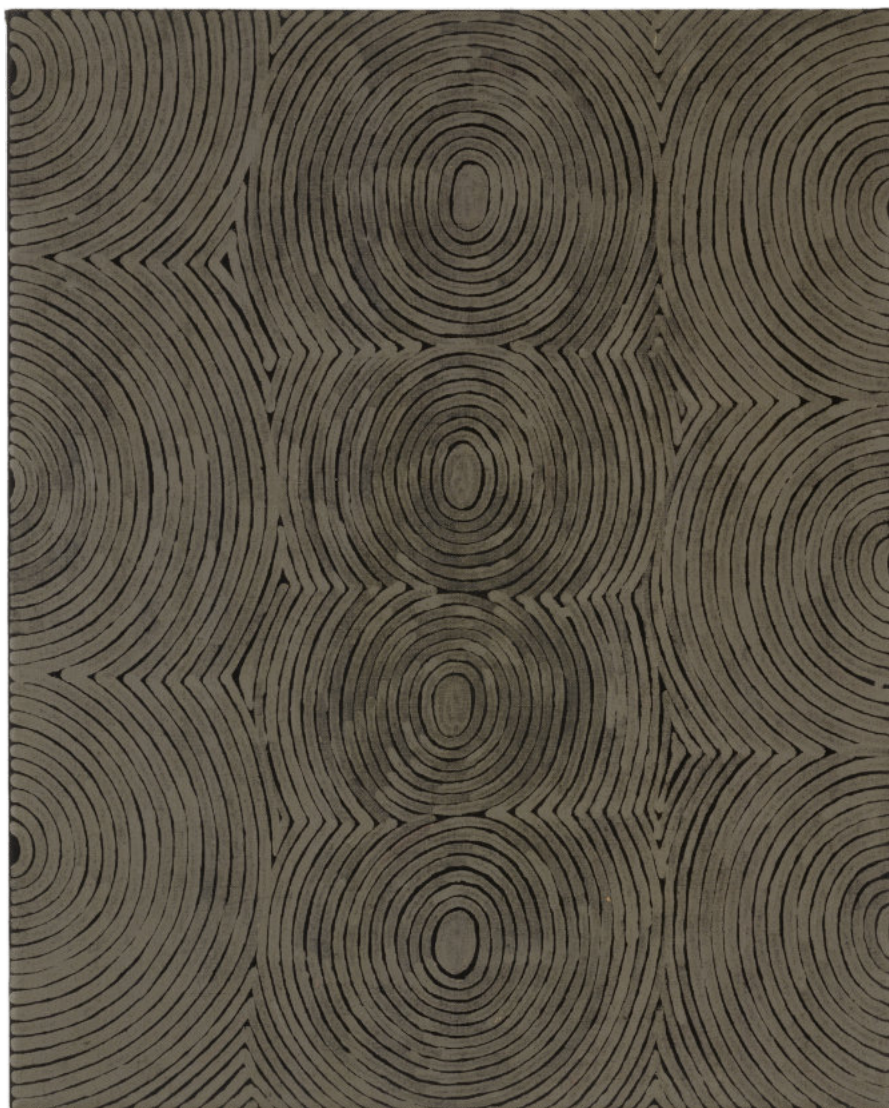
Ada Bird Petyarre, *Untitled*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 86.5 × 61.5 cm



Ada Bird Petyarre, *Untitled*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 85 × 61.5 cm



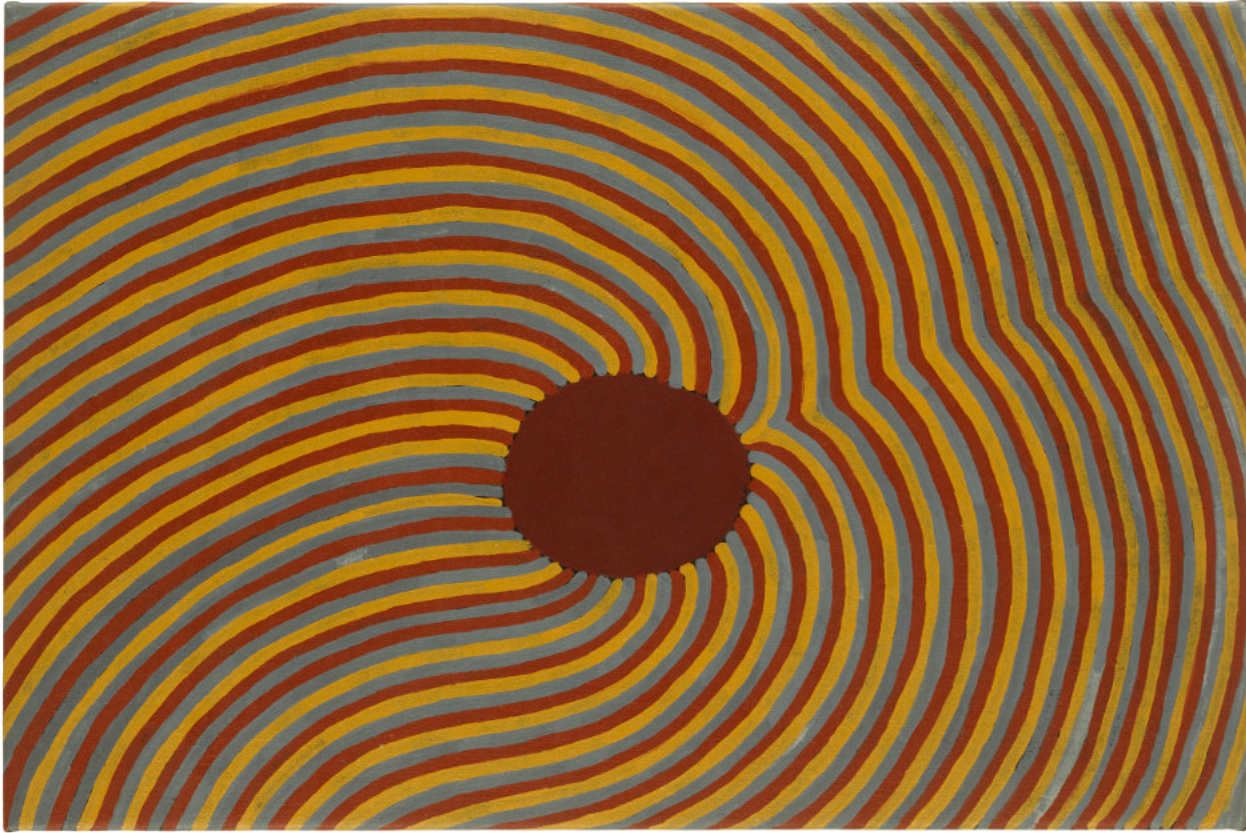
George Tjungurrayi, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 89.5 × 60 cm



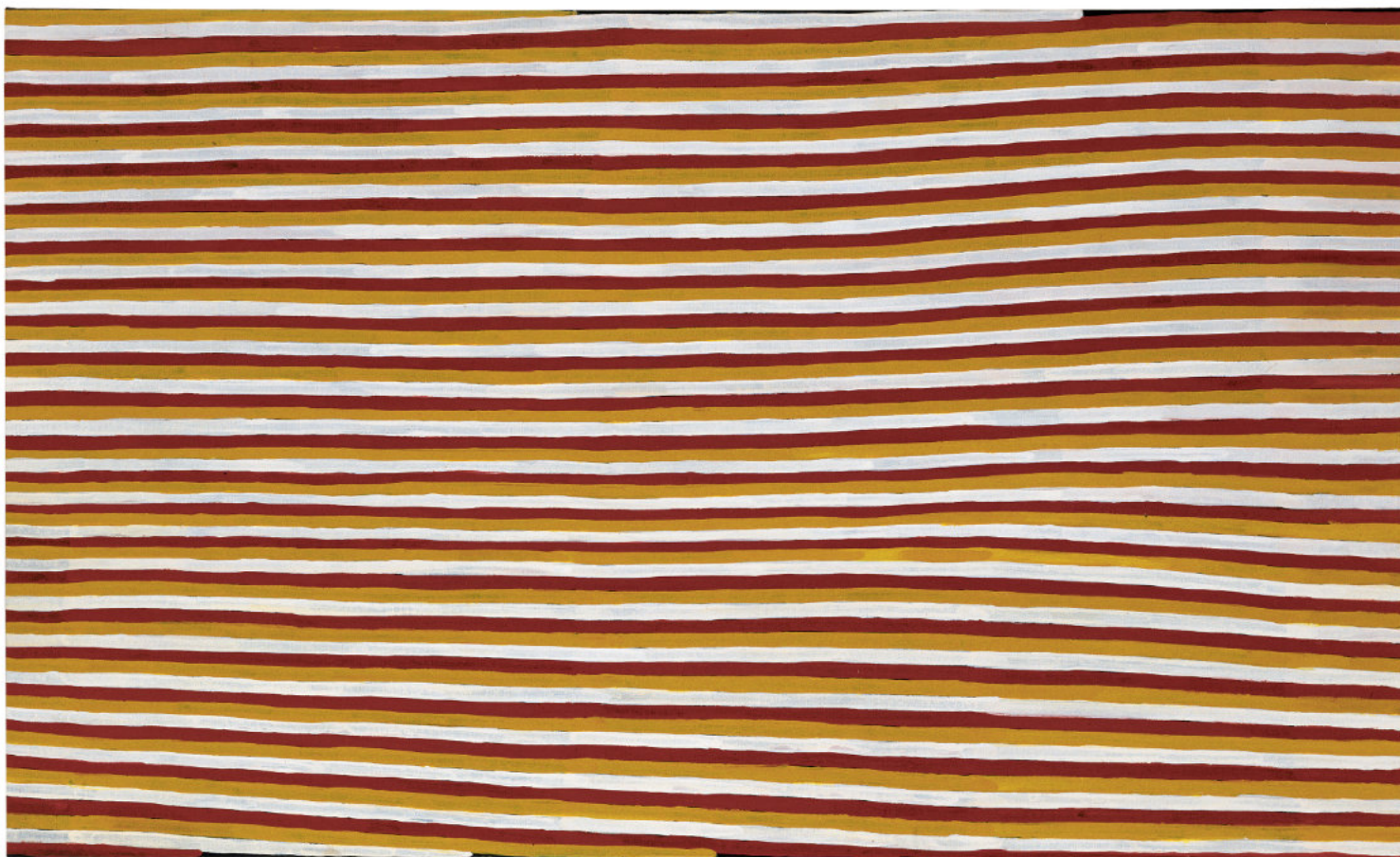
Suzie Petyarre, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 75 × 60 cm



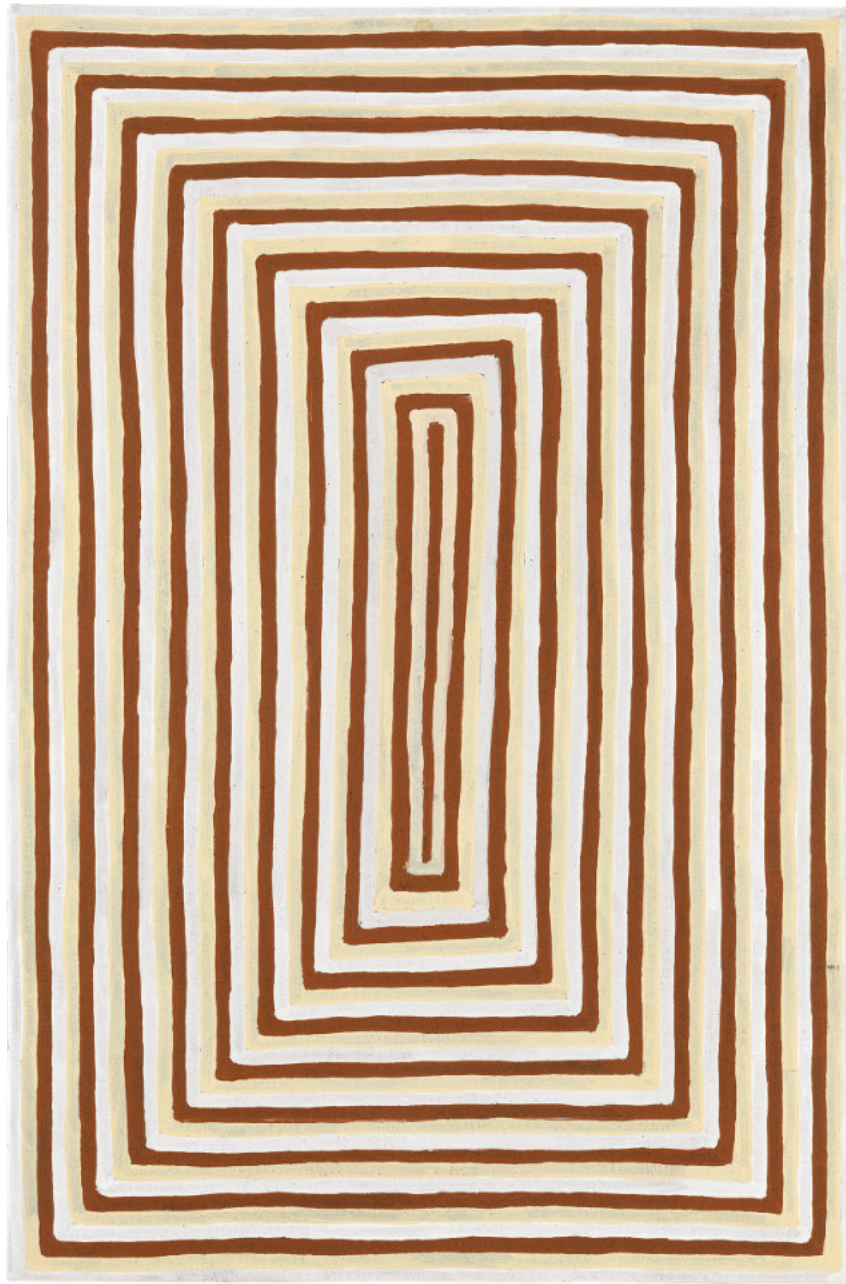
Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 46 × 38 cm



Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 59.5 × 89.5 cm



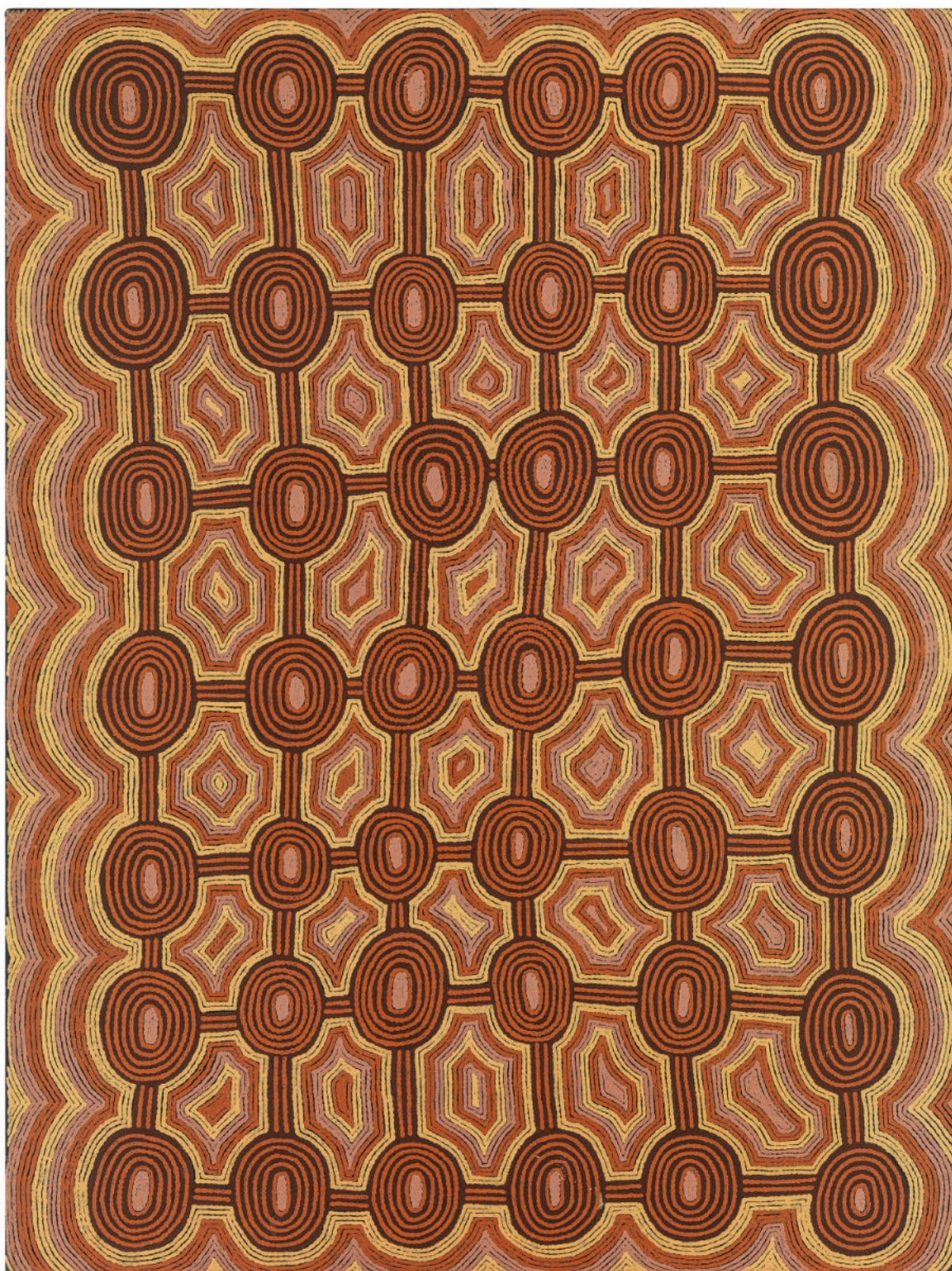
Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, *Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 150.5 cm



Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 60 cm



Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa, *Untitled*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 61 cm



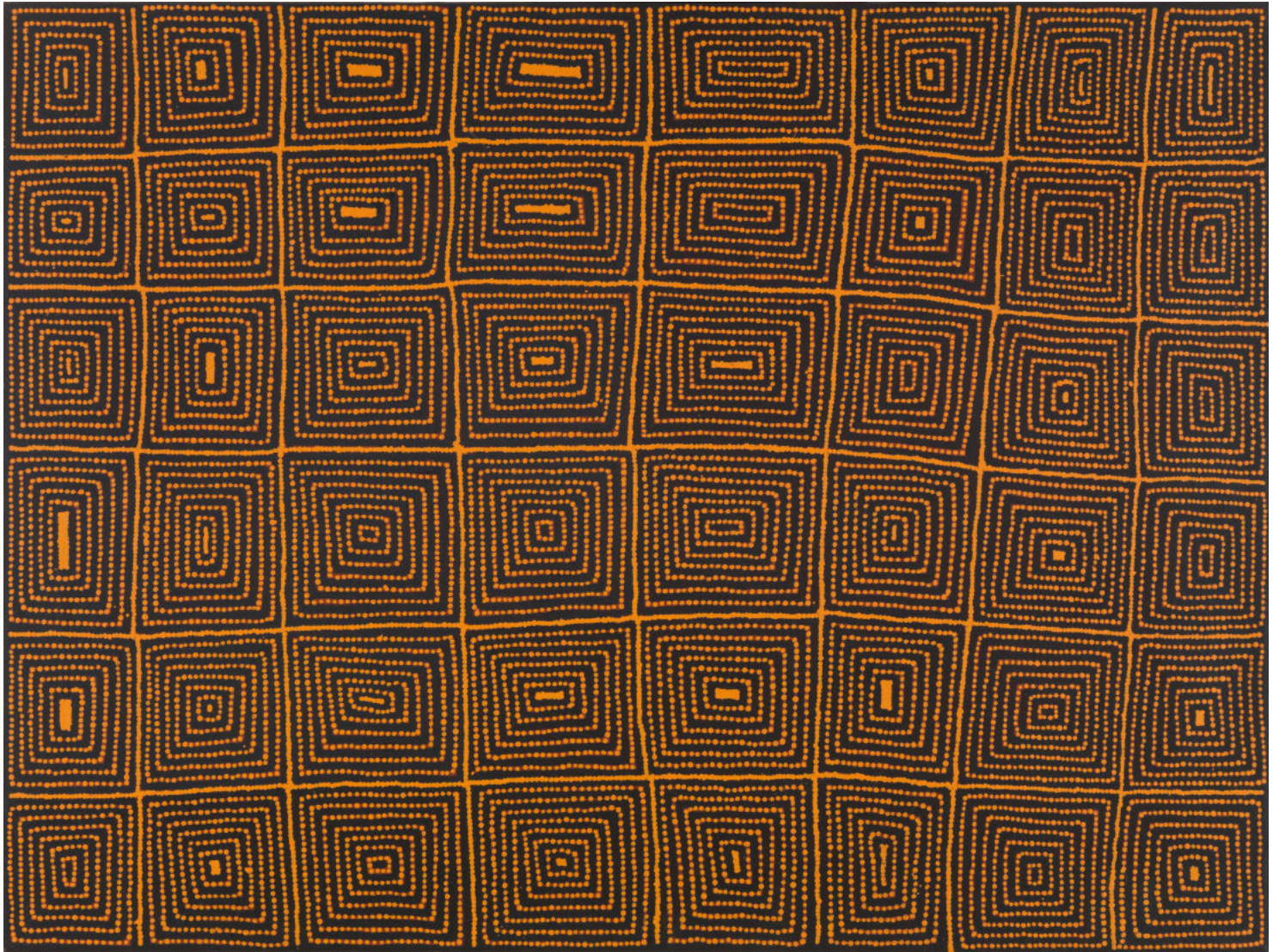
Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 92 cm



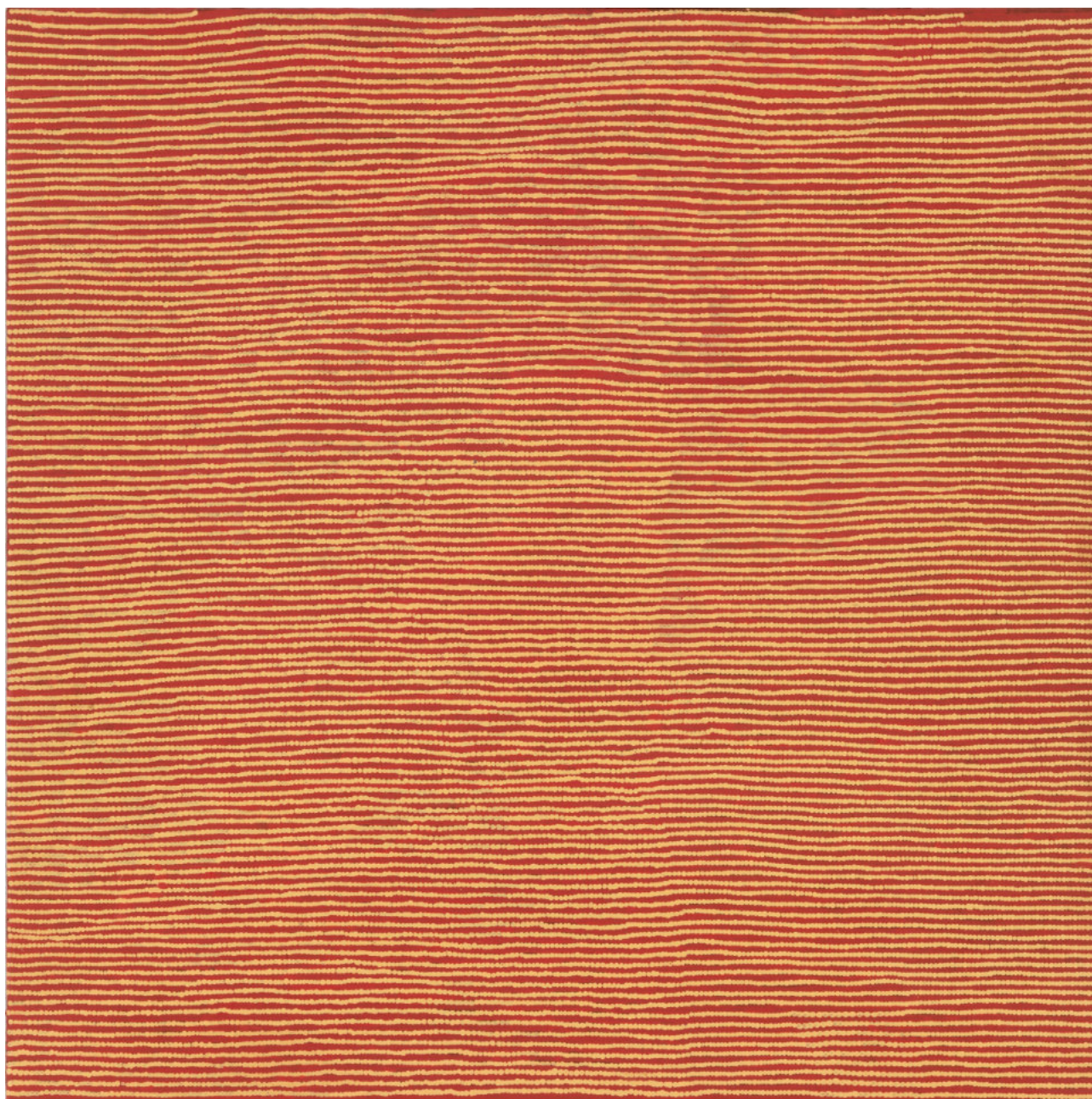
Mary Napangati, Untitled, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 151 cm



Mary Napangati, Untitled, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 121 cm



J. J. Tjapaltjarri, Untitled, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 121.5 cm



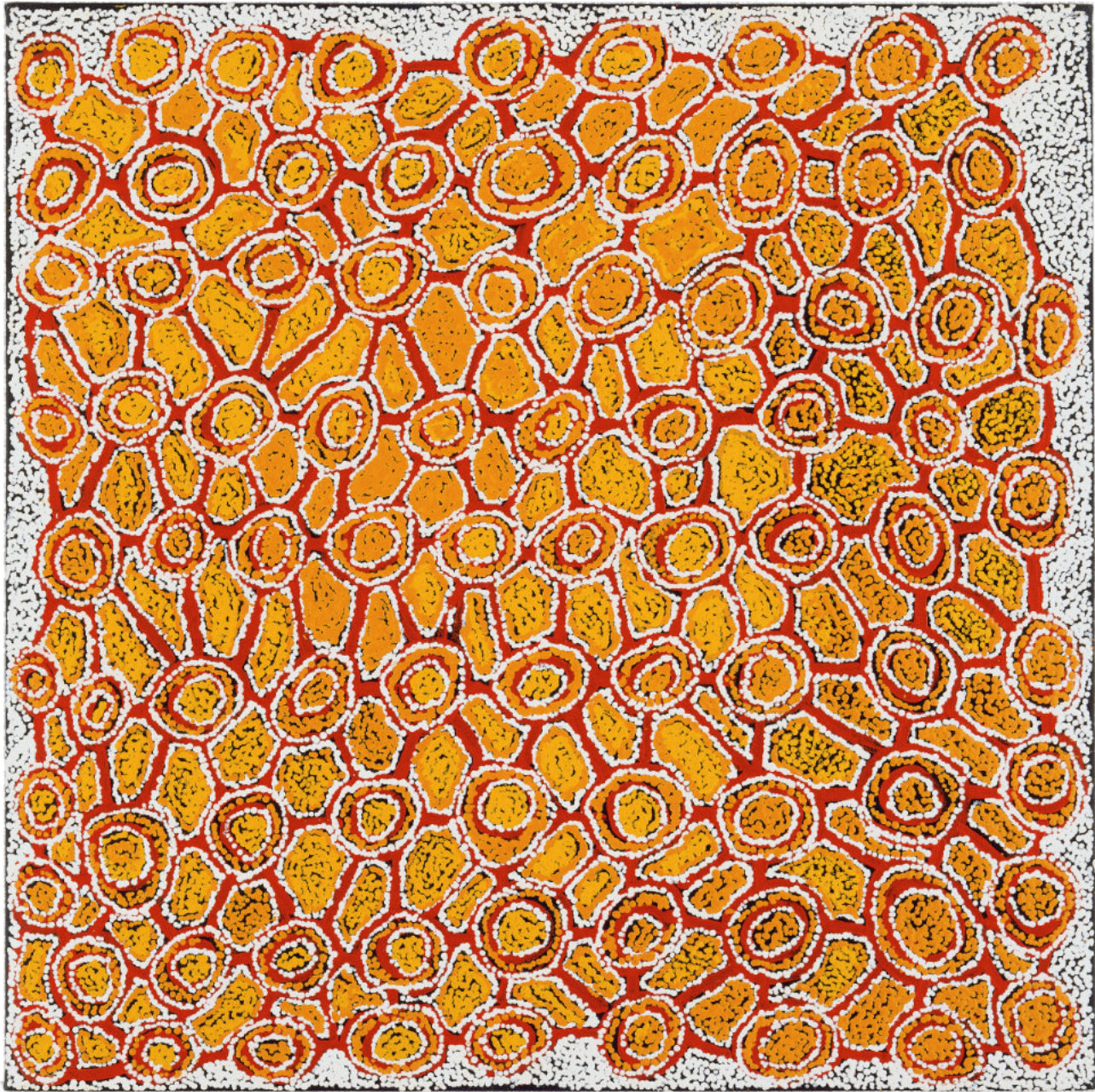
George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri, Untitled, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 91 cm



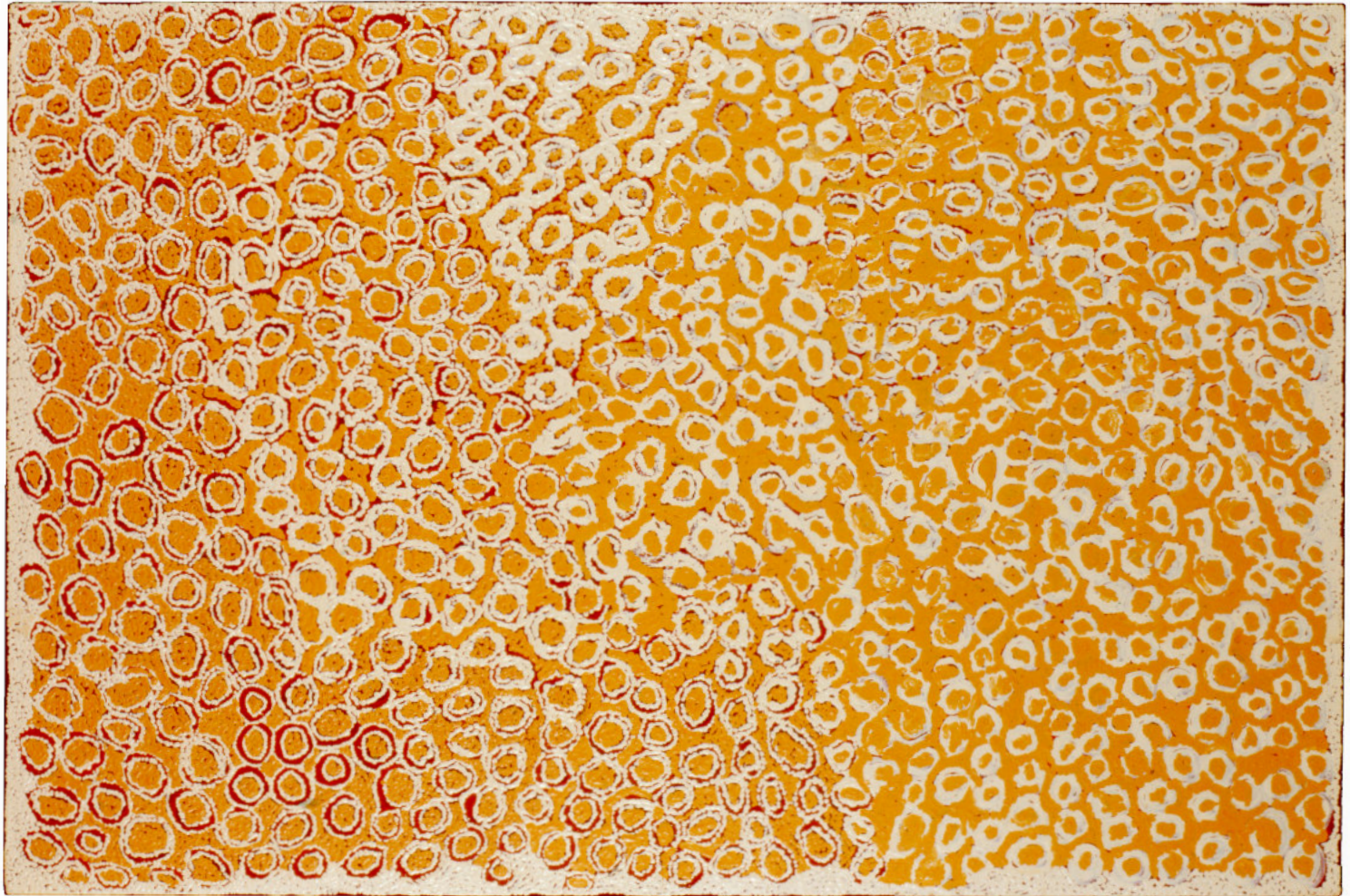
Bobby West Tjupurrula, Untitled, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91.5 × 45.5 cm



Richard Yukenbarri Tjakamarra, Untitled, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 121.5 cm



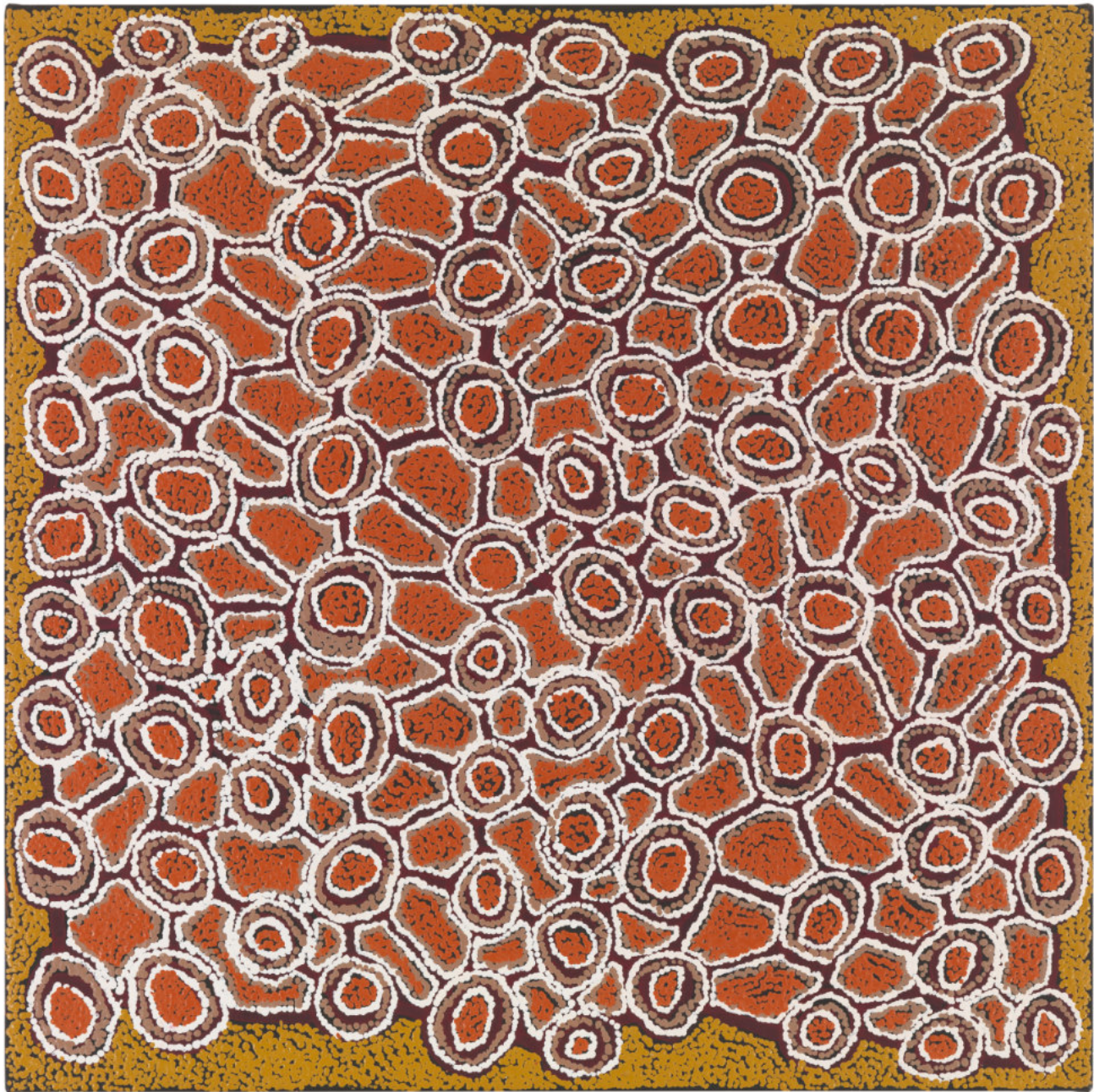
Walangkura Napanangka, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 91 cm



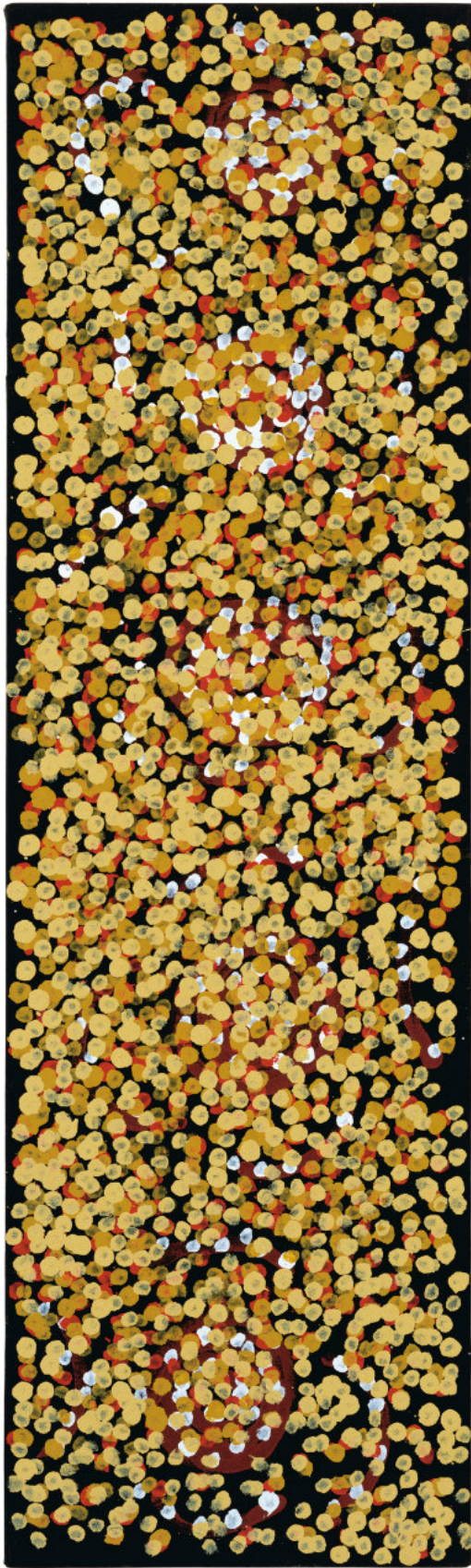
Walangkura Napanangka, Untitled, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 136 cm



Walangkura Napanangka, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 61 × 55 cm



Walangkura Napanangka, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 91 cm



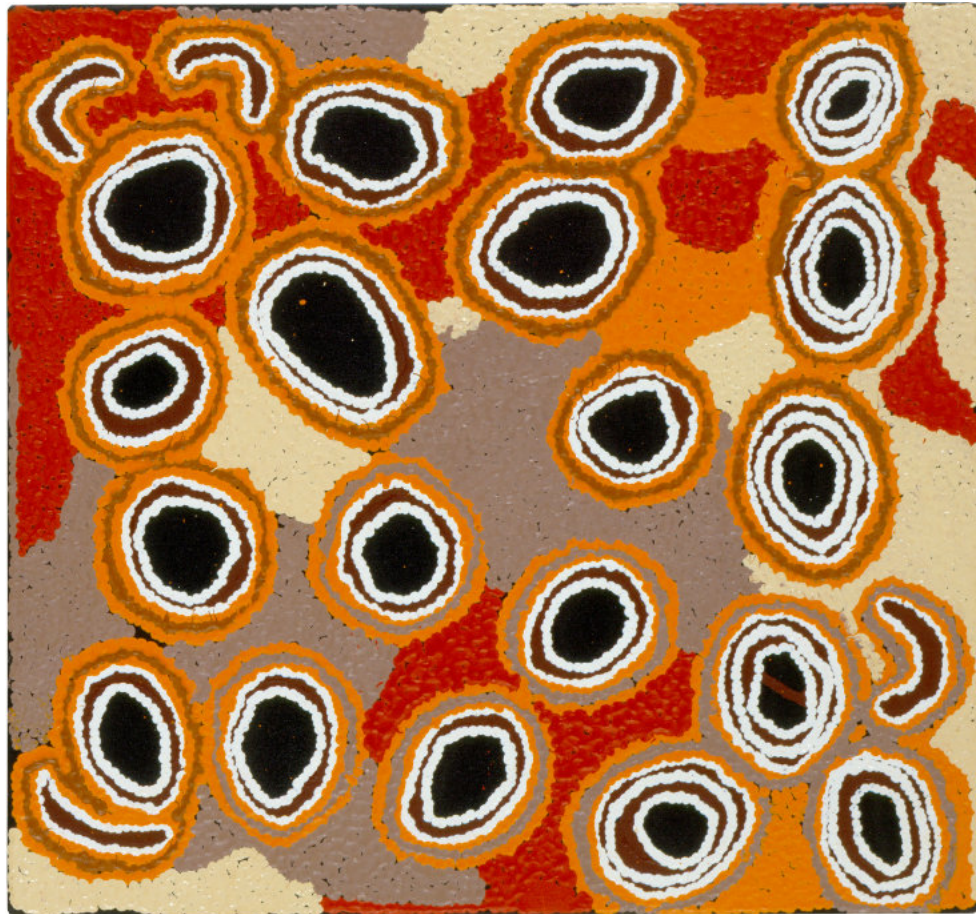
Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, *Water Tjukurrpa*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.5 × 45.5 cm
Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, *Water Tjukurrpa*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.5 × 45.5 cm



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, *Water Tjukurrpa*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182.5 × 92 cm



Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 55 × 61 cm



Tatali Nangala, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 55 × 61 cm



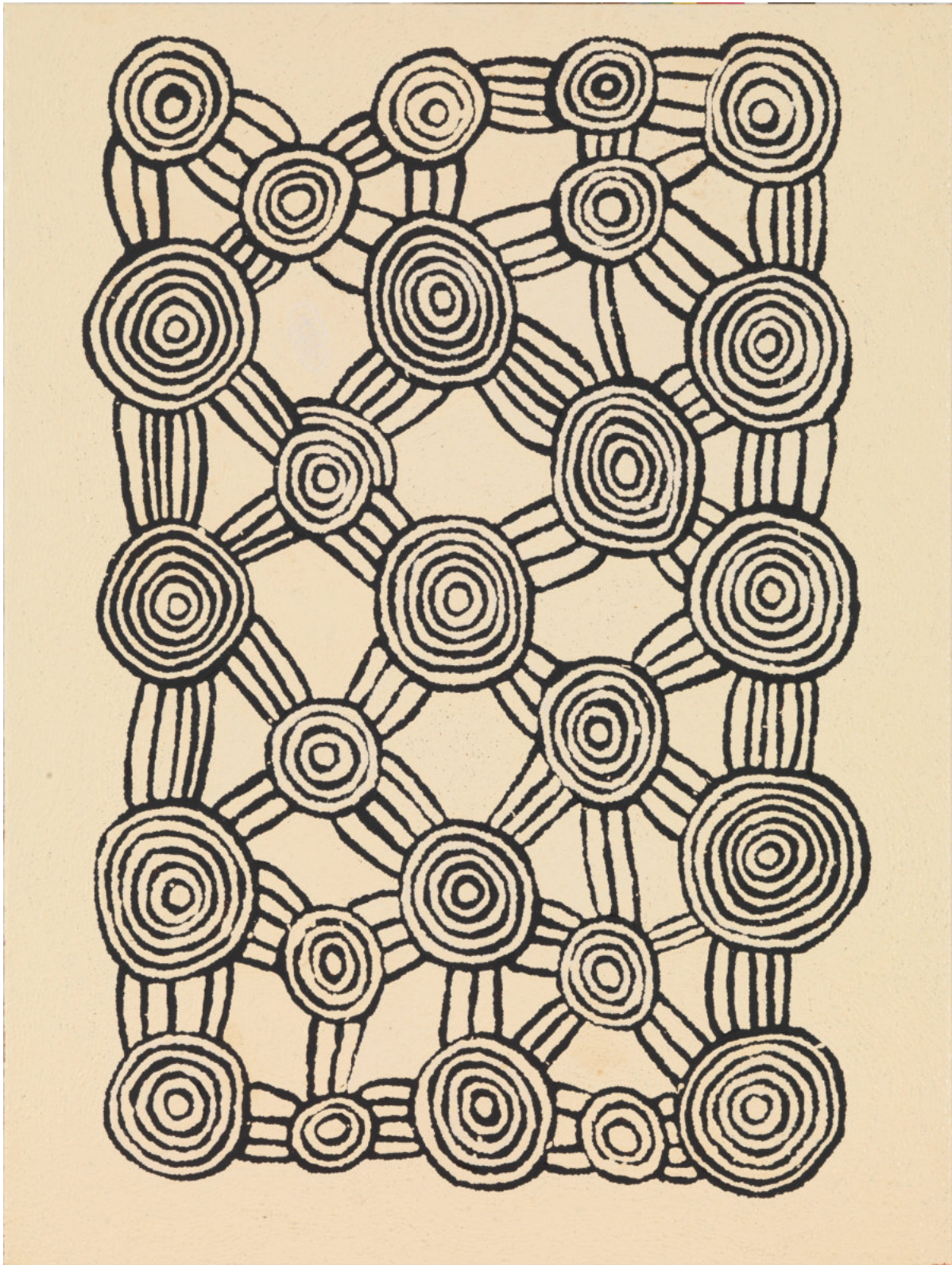
Nyurapaya Nampitjinpa, Untitled, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 136 cm



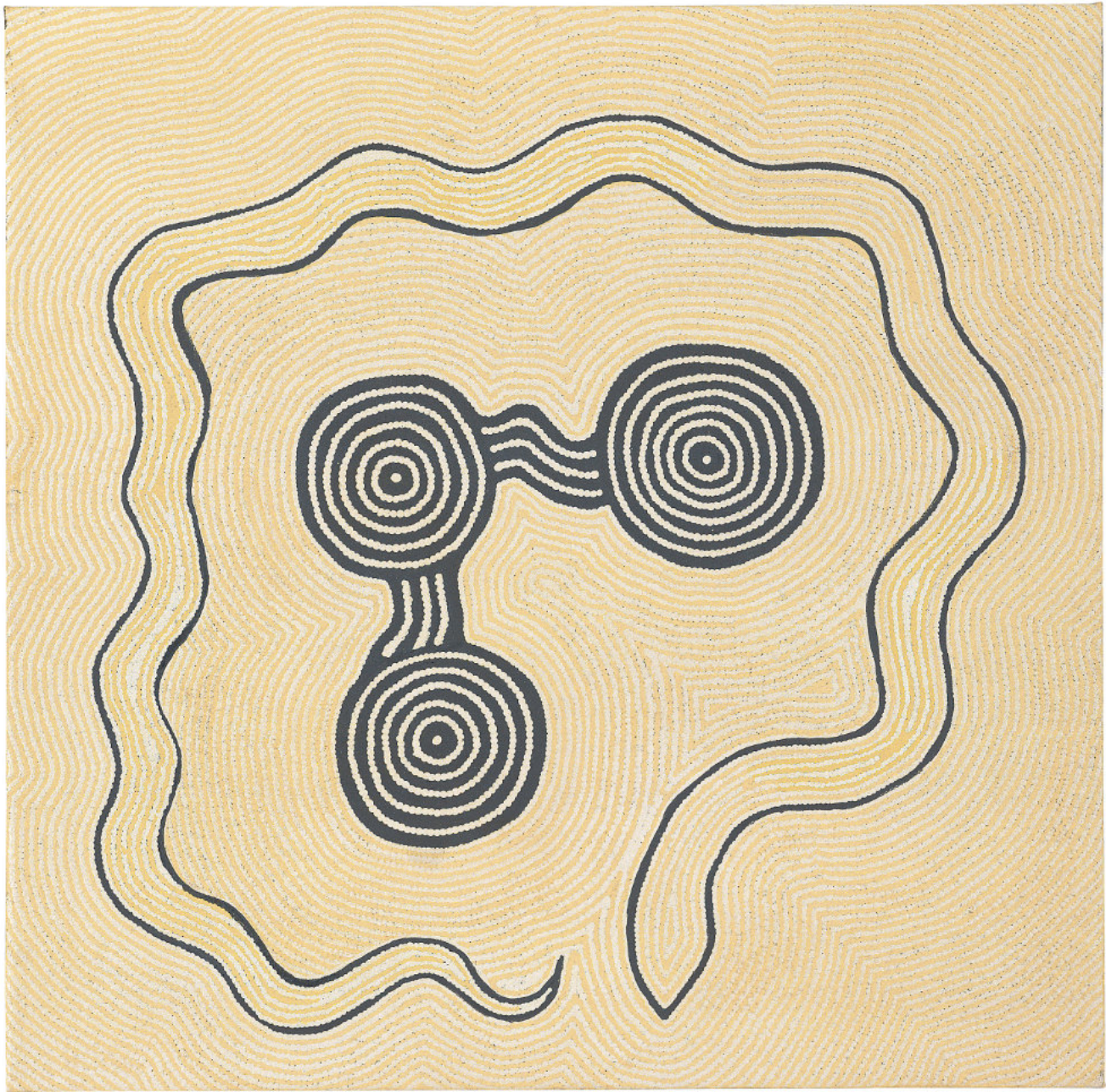
Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa, Untitled, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 121.5 cm



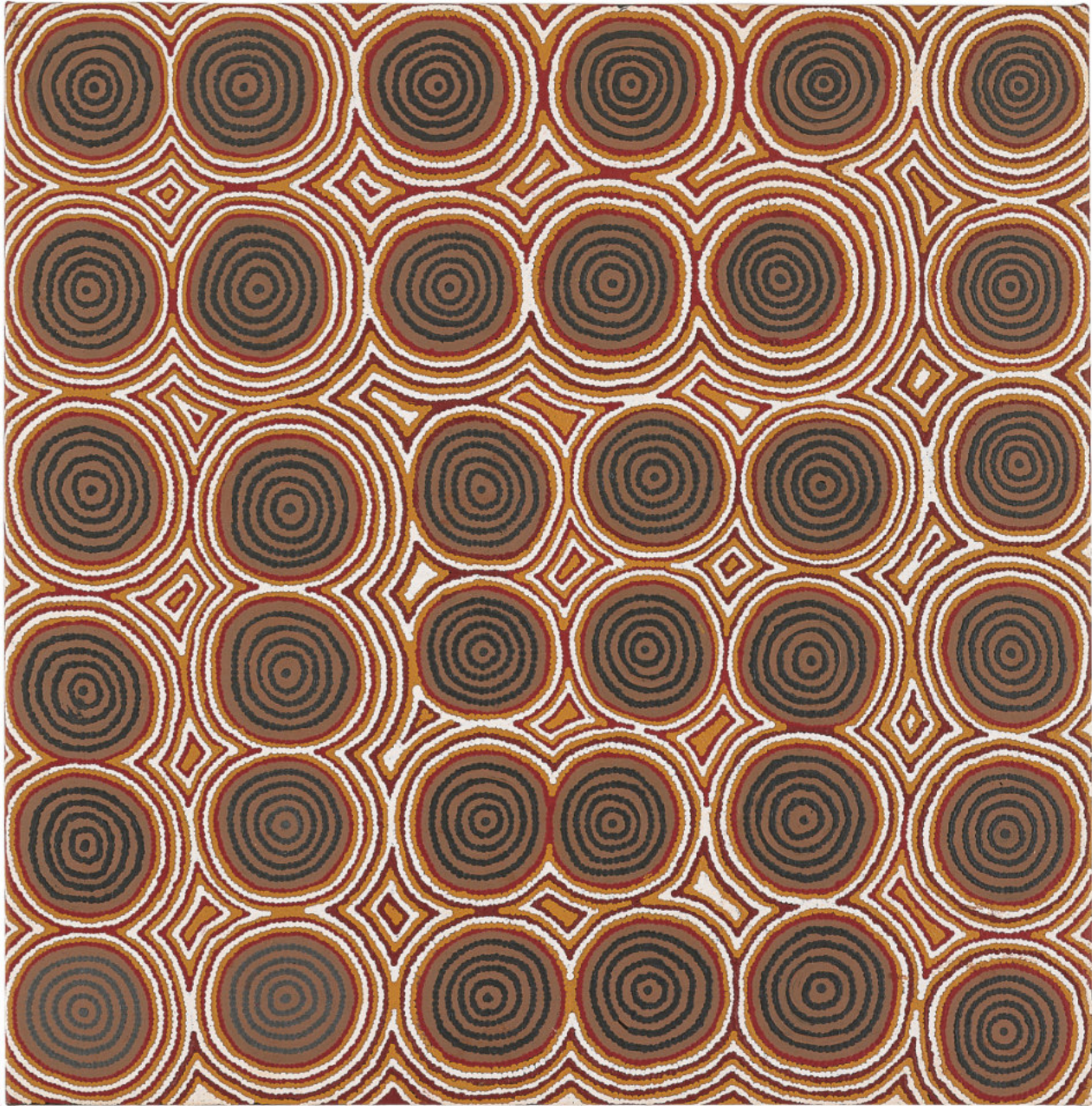
Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa, Untitled, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90.5 × 152 cm



Kayi Kayi Nampitjinpa, Untitled, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121 × 90.5 cm



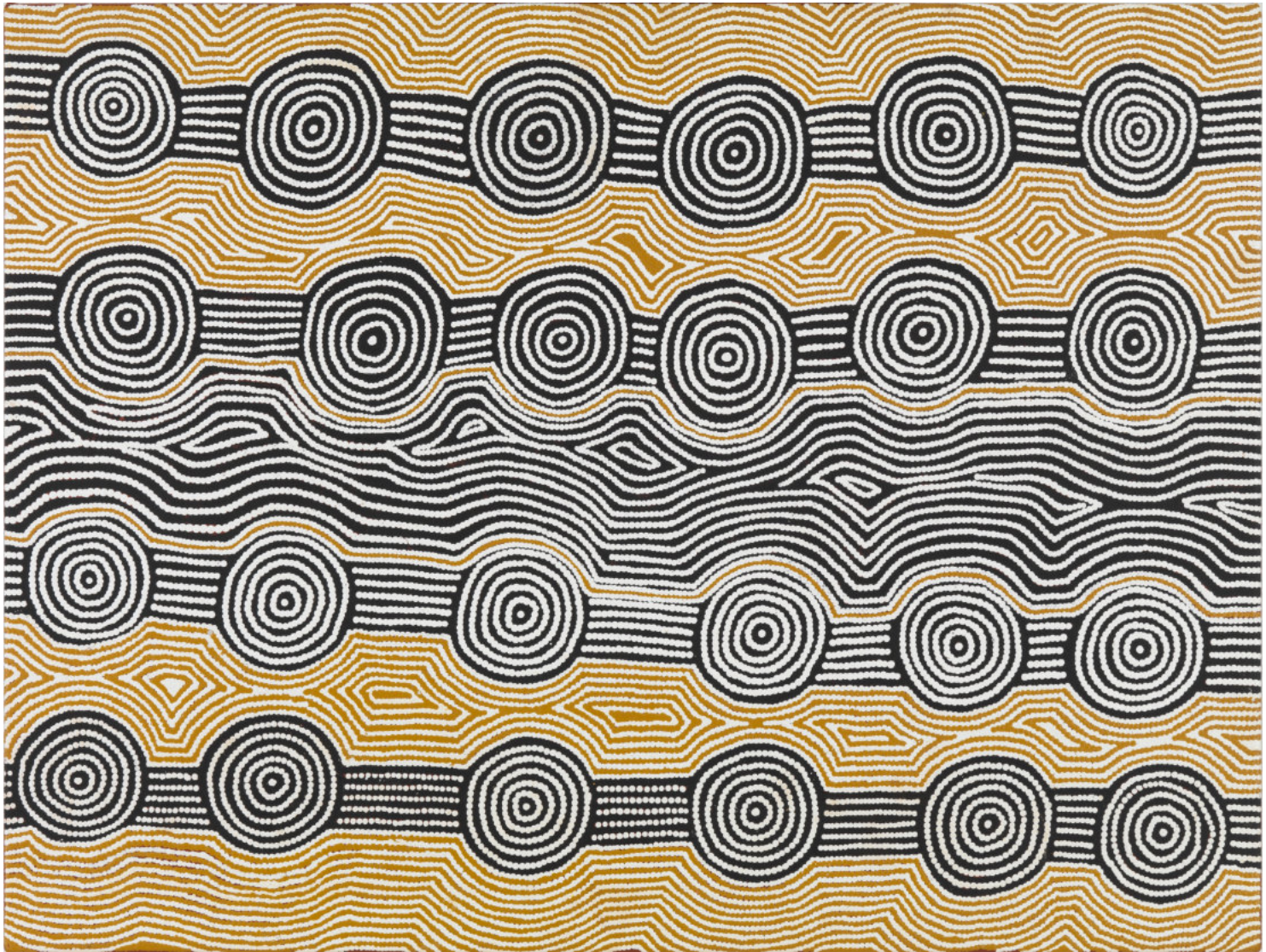
Tony Tjakamarra, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90.5 × 90 cm



Tony Tjakamarra, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90.5 × 89.5 cm



Tony Tjakamarra, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 55 × 61 cm



Tony Tjakamarra, Untitled, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91.5 × 121.5 cm



Yumpululu Tjungurrayi, Untitled, 1995, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 107 × 27.5 cm



Pantjia Nungurrayi, Kungka Tjuta Tjukurrpa (Many Women Tjukurrpa), 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 61 × 55 cm



Don Tjungurrayi, *Untitled*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60 × 121 cm



Darby Jampijinpa Ross, Liwirringki Jukurpa (Lizard Jukurpa), 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 75.5 × 46 cm



Andrea Nungarrayi Martin, Ngarlu Jukurrpa (Love Jukurrpa), 2007, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 61 cm



Liddy Napanangka Walker, *Wanakji Jukurpa*, 2007, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.5 × 106.5 cm





Bessie Nakamarra Sims, Jorna Napurrurla Nelson, Mona Napurrurla Poulson, Jillie Nakamarra Spencer, and Peggy Napurrurla Poulson, *Janganpa (Possum Jukurrpa)*, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 213.5 cm



Bessie Nakamarra Sims, Ngarlajiyi Ngapa Jukurrpa
(Bush Carrot and Water Jukurrpa), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 76 cm



Bessie Nakamarra Sims, Pamapardu Jukurrpa (Flying Ant Jukurrpa), 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 45 cm



Bessie Nakamarra Sims, *Yilpinji Jukurpa*, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 153 × 61 cm



Bessie Nakamarra Sims, Janganpa Jukurrpa (Possum Jukurrpa), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121 × 46 cm



Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Yanjirpirri Jukurrpa (Star Jukurrpa), 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 61 cm



Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Yanjirpirri Jukurpa (Star Jukurpa), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121 × 91 cm



Andrea Nungarrayi Martin, Jarjirdi manu Janganpa Jukurrpa
(Native Cat and Possum Jukurrpa), 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 153 × 76 cm



Andrea Nungarrayi Martin, Jarjirdi manu Janganpa Jukurrpa
(Native Cat and Possum Jukurrpa), 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152 × 76 cm



Maggie Napaljarri Ross, *Miinyapa Jukurrpa*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 106 × 60.5 cm



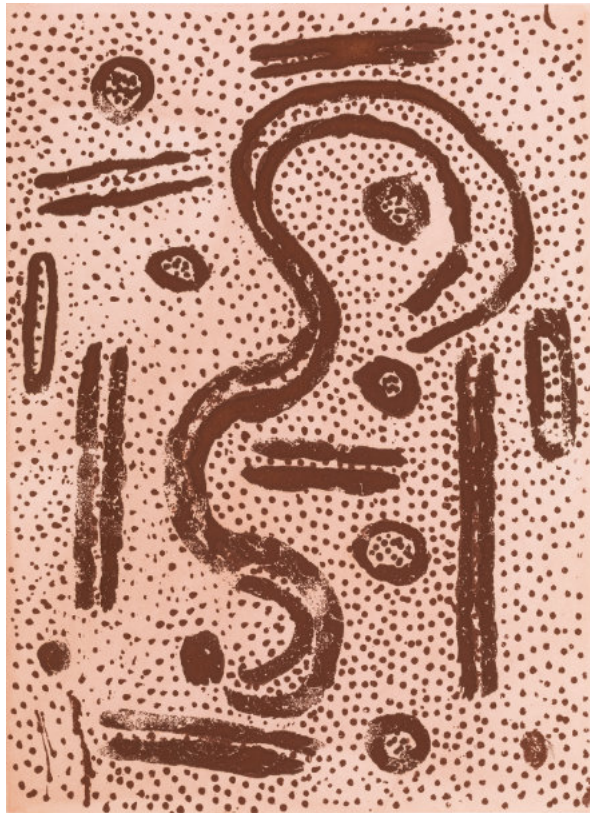
Maggie Napaljarri Ross, *Janganpa, Wiinywiinyapa manu Ngatijirri Jukurrpa*
(Possum, Grey Falcon, and Green Budgeriga Jukurrpa), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 75.5 cm



Darby Jampijinpa Ross, Yankirri Jukurrpa (Emu Jukurrpa), 2001, etching (93/99), 32.5 × 49.5 cm



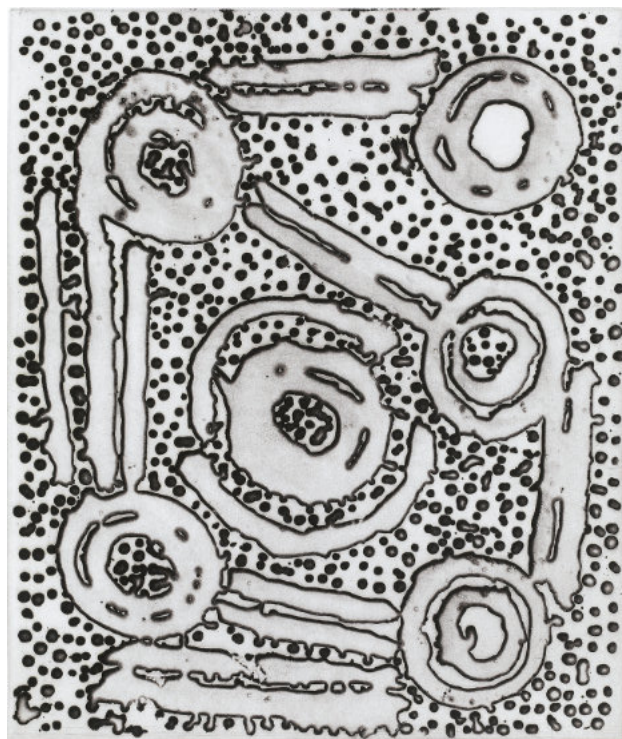
Paddy Japaljarri Sims, *Witi Jukurrpa*, 1999, etching (AP), 49 × 40 cm



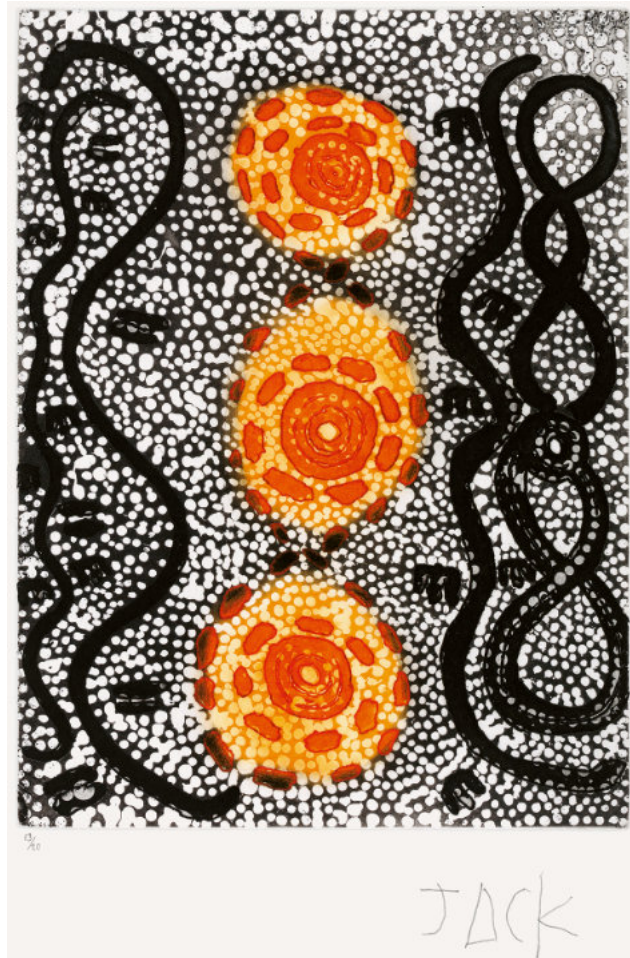
Paddy Japaljarri Sims, *Witi Jukurrpa*, 1998, etching (AP), 34 × 25 cm



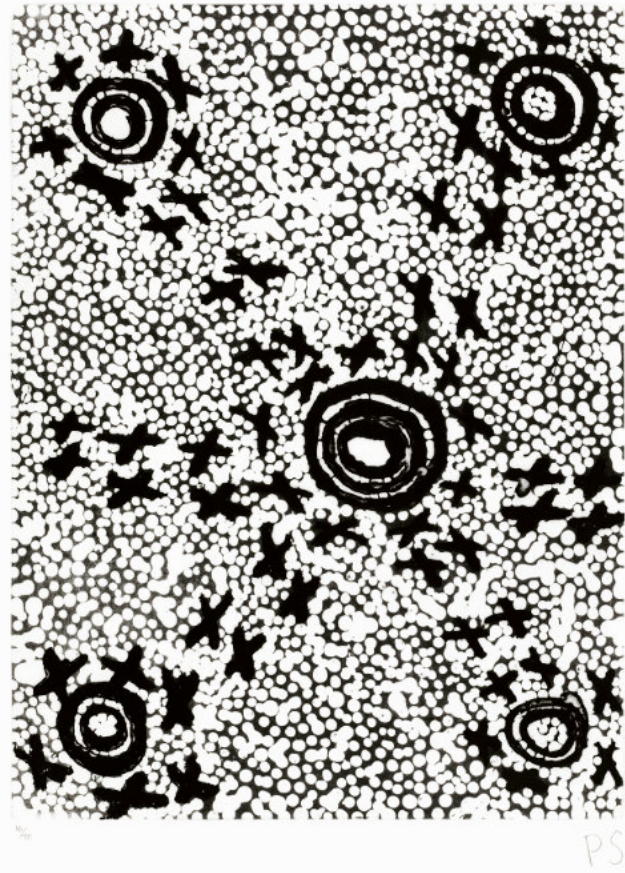
Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Yanjilpirri Jukurrpa (Milkyway Jukurrpa), 2003, etching (AP), 43 × 24.5 cm



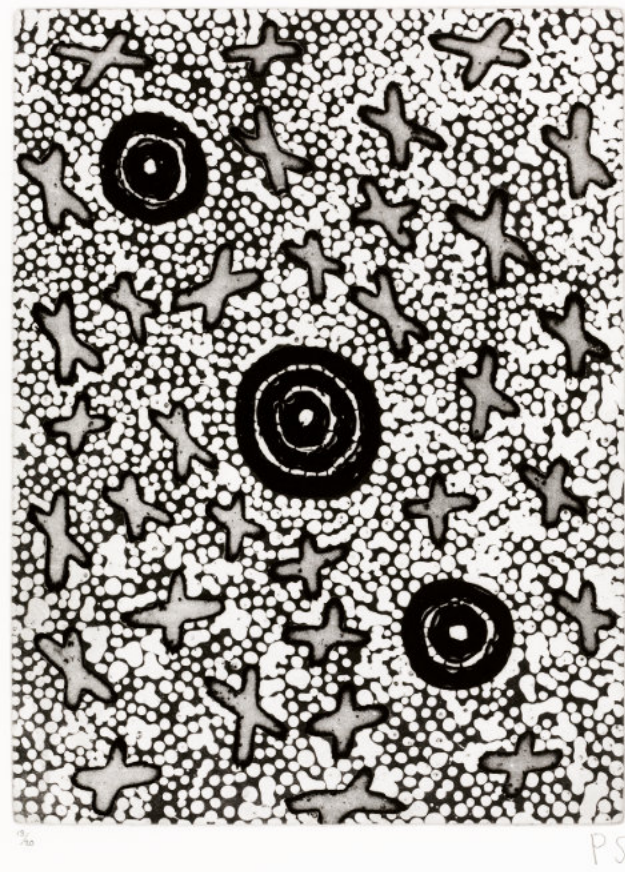
Paddy Japaljarri Sims, *Witi Jukurrpa*, 1999, etching (AP), 21 × 25 cm



Jack Jakamarra Ross, Ngapa, Pamapardu, Janganpa manu Ngalyipi Jukurrpa
(Water, Flying Ant, Possum, and Snake Vine Jukurrpa), 2004, etching (13/20), 33 × 24.5 cm



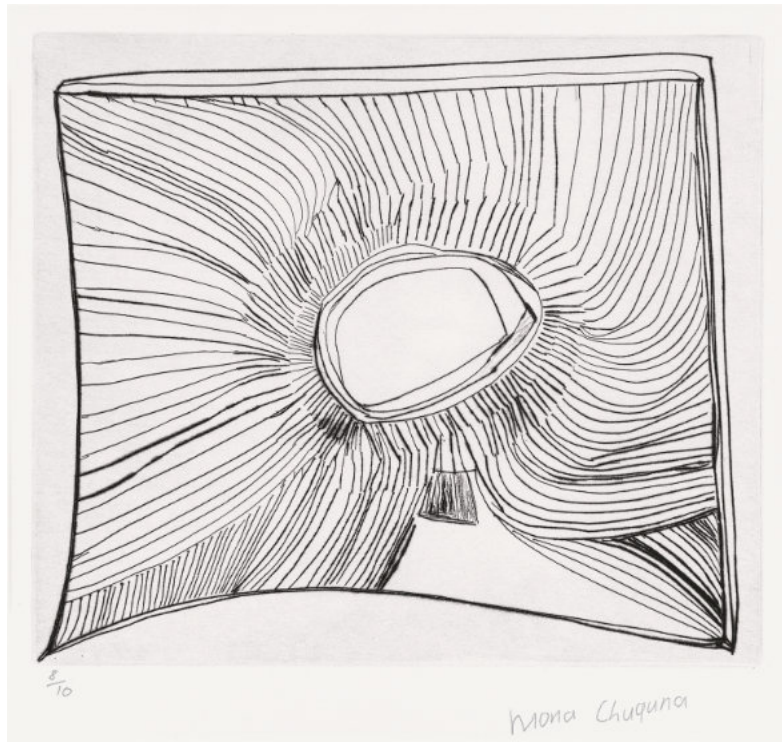
Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Ngatijirri Jukurrpa I (Green Budgerigar Jukurrpa), 2004, etching (16/20), 33 × 24.5 cm



Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Ngatijirri Jukurrpa II (Green Budgerigar Jukurrpa), 2004, etching (13/20), 33 × 24.5 cm



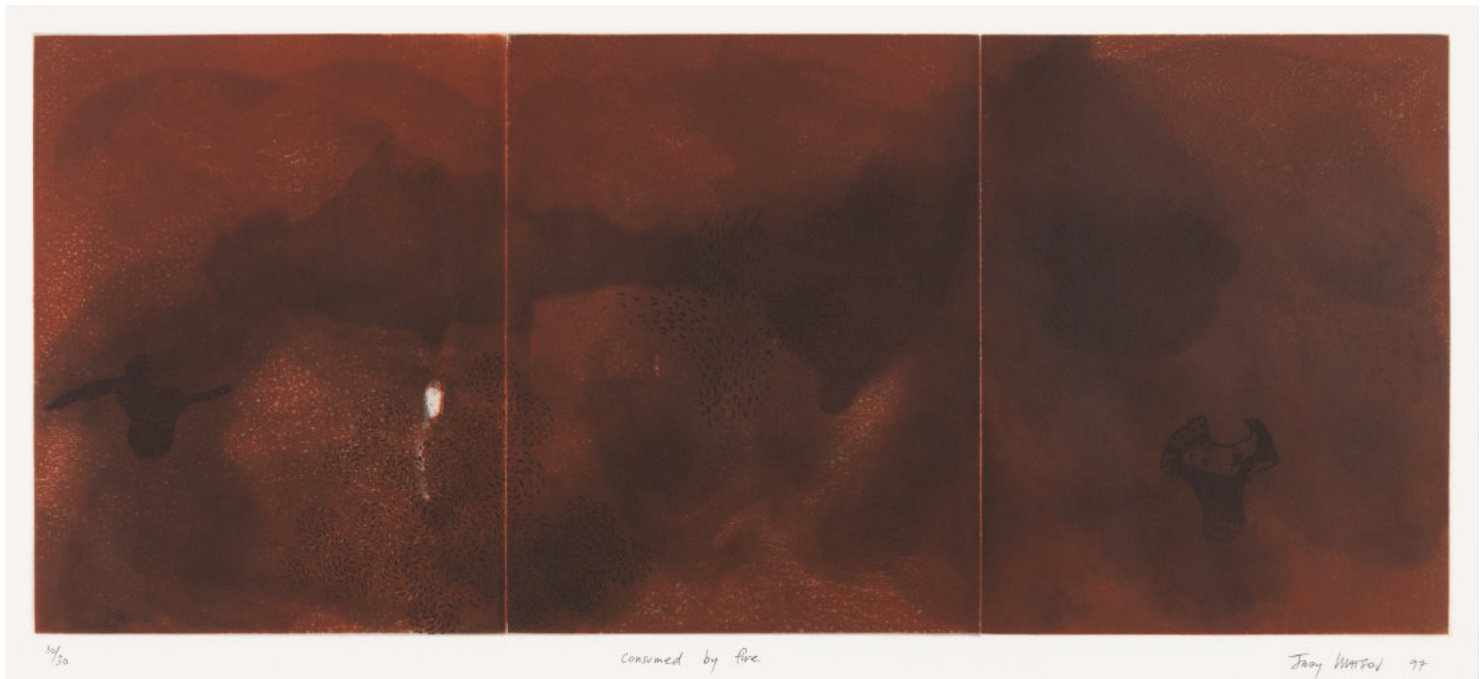
Susan Marawarr, Yawk Yawk, 1999, etching (4/40), 50.5 × 33 cm



Jukuna Mona Chuguna, Untitled, 1997, etching (10/10), 21 × 24.5 cm



Judy Watson, spine and ribs, 2003, etching (35/40), 47.5 × 35.5 cm (sheet 69 × 50 cm)



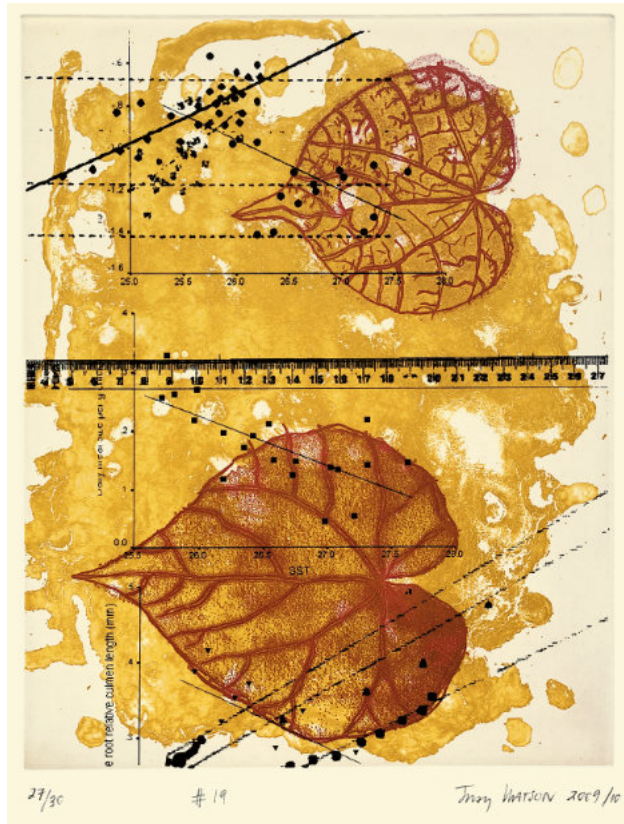
Judy Watson, consumed by fire, 1997, etching (30/30), 29 × 68 cm



Judy Watson, heron island suite #7, 2009, etching (14/30), 24.5 × 19.5 cm (sheet 50 × 35.5 cm)



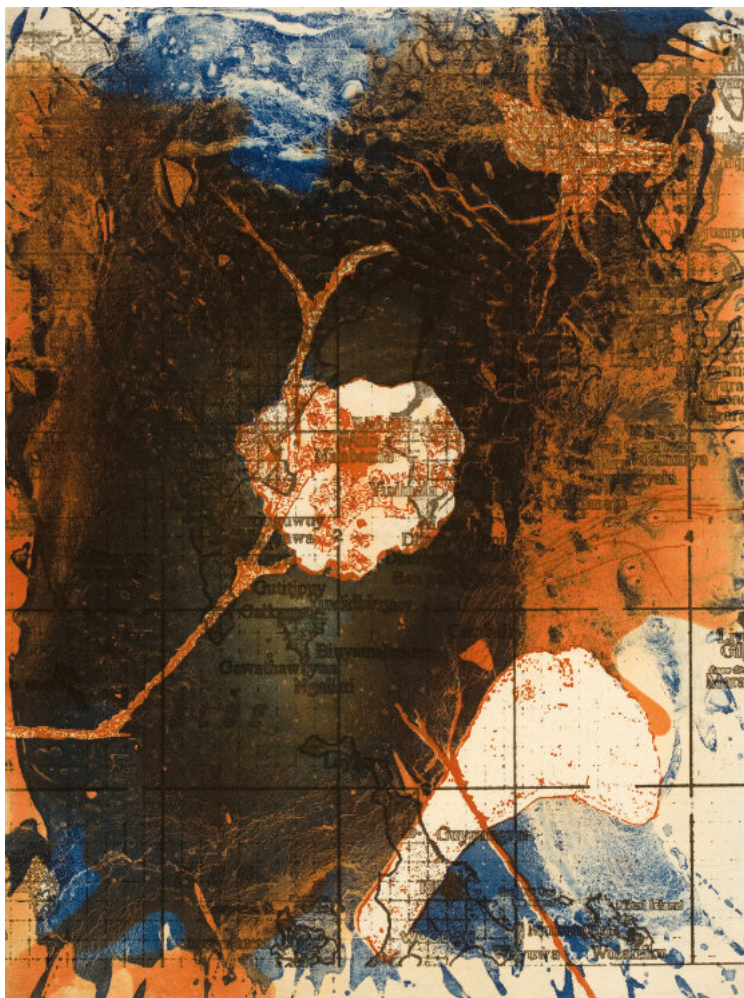
Judy Watson, heron island suite #4, 2009, etching (15/30), 24.5 × 19.5 cm (sheet 50 × 35.5 cm)



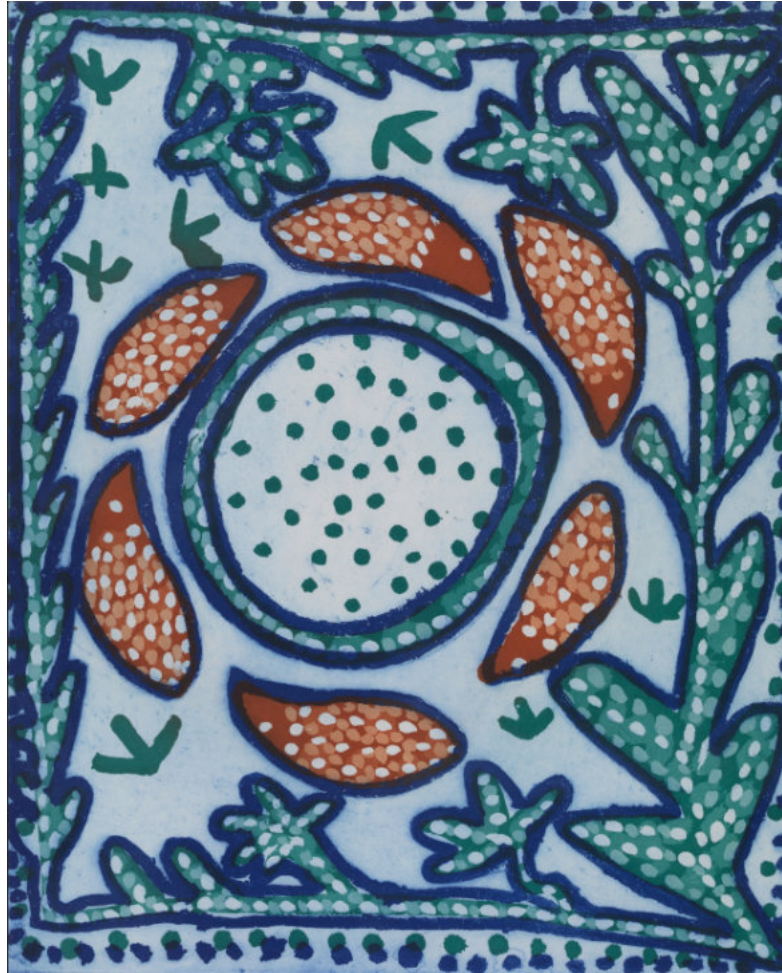
Judy Watson, heron island suite #19, 2009/2010, etching (27/30), 24.5 × 19.5 cm (sheet 50 × 35.5 cm)



Judy Watson, sand palm, dodder laurel, flat-leaf plant, 2006, etching (24/40), 33 × 24.7 cm (sheet 48.5 × 29.5 cm)



Judy Watson, baniyala, blue mud bay, 2010, etching (6/40), 50 × 37.5 cm (sheet 65 × 54 cm)



Nancy Gaymala Yunupinu, Untitled, 1999, etching (AP), 49 × 39 cm

03 — Individuality and Community

‘I am constantly thinking about new ways in my painting. I am always looking for something new, something different. My work is changing. I have my own style.’

John Mawurndjul¹

‘It is up to each artist to think which way he wants to go. [...] Our generation uses art sometimes to follow what the old people have shown and some follow their own ideas in a different way.’

Yinimala Gumana²

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate, using examples from a few artists, the uniqueness, individuality and diversity of the art, be it through their own unique brushwork, in the extreme reduction of the palette, or conversely in an absolute mastery of nuanced colouring, in the entirely independent way in which they create their paintings, in an highly expressive dynamic, in the evolution of the colour palette used, in the juxtaposition of social criticism with grim humour, in the continuous evolution of painting technique, in the simultaneity of representational and non-representational painting and in ever-new pictorial inventions on related themes. In short, this chapter is intended to give some insight into the many different directions of contemporary Indigenous art, not necessarily focusing on the best-known artists about whom much has already been written but referencing some of the most innovative. Five female and five male artists were chosen for these examples.

The following episode may illustrate the extent to which Indigenous artists can be dedicated to their art: Rover Thomas (Yoolama) and other artists travelled to Darwin in 1994 to Northern Editions, then the printmaking workshop at Charles Darwin University. While there, he had a mild heart attack and was hospitalised. He insisted on being taken to the workshop during the day, lifted out of his wheelchair and placed in his preferred position for painting.³

The languages and cultures of the Indigenous inhabitants of Australia, the Pintupi, Arrernte, Wiradjuri, Waanyi, Gija, Warlpiri, Yolŋu, Anmatyerr, Luritja, Wangkajunga, Kukatja, Miriwoong, Alyawarr, Yamatji, Walmajarri, KuKu, Goonlyandi, Pitjantjatjara, Gurindji, Badtjala, Tiwi and many more differ from each other, as much as do the languages and cultures of the French, Russians, or Swedes. From more than 250 Indigenous languages—not including dialects—about 120 were still spoken in Australia

¹ Museum Tinguely 2005, p. 27

² Stubbs 2014, pp. 52–53

³ Northern Editions 2000, p. 34

in 2014, 25 fewer than ten years earlier. About 100 of those 120 languages are in danger of extinction, but 30 have experienced a revival in recent years through language programs that will hopefully lead to their preservation.⁴ A common language is an expression of a common identity; in this respect, linguistic diversity suggests many different understandings of self or group. In the various chapters of this book, it becomes clear that together with all the diversity, there are also commonalities in the Indigenous worldview—e.g. the meaning of Country, their views of time—that are significant also in Indigenous art within the major cities. So-called urban art became characterised, after a phase of painting concerning identity, by anti-colonial political aspects.

⁴ Marmion et al. 2014, p. xii

As diverse as Indigenous Australians are, their art is equally diverse. Even though, for the sake of simplicity,⁵ art historians and non-Indigenous curators often still classify art outside the major cities by place (Papunya art), region (Western Desert art) or material (bark painting), the artists have each developed their own distinctive visual language and painting techniques. When artists talk about the beginnings of their painting, they do not refer to the art movement, the Papunya Tula art centre or Geoffrey Bardon (see pp. 339–343) but to artists who acted as their teachers or who influenced them.

⁵ When, for example, it is written that the artists at the Papunya Tula Artists' Centre in the 1970s oriented their colour palette mainly to the four colours red, yellow, black and white, or that the artists at the Warlukurlangu Art Centre in Yuendumu used a wide range of colours from the very beginning, such a classification may still be justified.

Although the various Indigenous cultures hold community and mutual responsibility as fundamental precepts, they honour the role of individual artists who developed a particular style, told an important story in their painting, or travelled to other places and brought back inspiration.⁶ Like Western art, Indigenous art has produced artistic personalities who, in terms of creating their own visual language and special techniques, have anchored their work in the art scene through exhibitions in major Australian art museums and in international collections. Not least in terms of their success in the art market, they meet the same quality criteria as Western artists.

⁶ La Fontaine and Carty 2011, p. 195

Kaapa Tjampitjinpa, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri and Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri had worked on cattle stations west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) since childhood and therefore knew Albert Namatjira, who had become famous for his watercolours since the late 1930s. They very early had an understanding of the Western concept of 'artist'.⁷ Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula and others claimed this model for themselves, calling themselves 'artist-painters'.⁸ Through manifold kinship relationships which can extend over long distances—e.g., between families in the region of Utopia northeast of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and Ngukurr in southern Arnhem Land—and the resulting visits, as well as travels to their exhibitions in the cities, including internationally, many artists know each other and know of course Western art.

⁷ Johnson 2003, p. 50

⁸ Musée d'Aquitaine 2013, p. 245

Maxie Tjampitjinpa

A first example of a completely original painting technique is the Bushfire series by Maxie Tjampitjinpa. These are purely expressive works in which short, overlapping brushstrokes create a vibrating surface and, together with the choice of colour, evoke the idea of fire and swirling ash. This painting technique, inspired by a natural phenomenon, became a model for a whole set of other artists.

Maxie Tjampitjinpa was one of the younger artists in Papunya who, since the 1980s, were more restrained in integrating ceremonial elements into their works—perhaps because they had not yet accumulated sufficient knowledge regarding the implications of Jukurrpa. Nevertheless, his paintings have a narrative content, e.g., the bushfire to renew the Country. In this series, Maxie Tjampitjinpa turned away from the dot technique and symbolism common among Papunya artists and developed a new direction emphasising subtle painterly effects.

The artist, born in Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), moved to Papunya in the 1960s because of its school. Later, Maxie Tjampitjinpa worked in various jobs in Darwin, Maningrida and Port Keats before settling in Papunya. There, in the early 1980s, he was taught by Old Mick Wallankarri Tjakamarra, who was one of the first artists in Papunya. In 1995, Maxie Tjampitjinpa was invited to open in Hannover the landmark exhibition ‘Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen’ at the Sprengel Museum.



Maxie Tjampitjinpa, Untitled, 1993, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 61 × 91 cm (see fig. p. 93)

⁹ Ryan 1997, pp. 23–24

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 29

Ginger Riley Munduwalawala

Ginger Riley Munduwalawala is another of the many examples of independent artistic personalities. With his representational, expressive painting style in sophisticated compositions, he showed in great brilliance his mother’s Country with the hill formation of the Four Archers. The artist achieved this with often bright, transparent but intense, luminous colours, which he sometimes contrasted in unusual ways. It is also unusual that Ginger Riley Munduwalawala painted not only on canvas but also with acrylic on high-quality watercolour paper (i.e. Arches sheets) because he appreciated the absorbent power of the paper.⁹

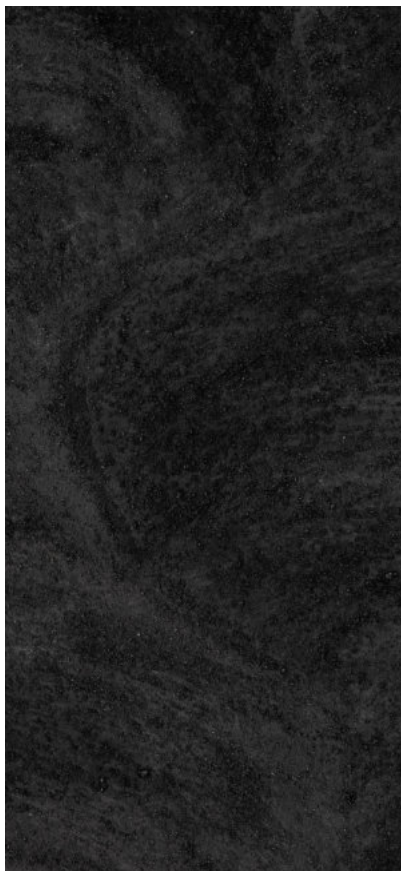
The Four Archers are a recurring theme in the artist’s paintings because, according to his convictions, they are ‘[...] the centre of the earth, where all things start and finish.’¹⁰ They appear several times



Ginger Riley Munduwalawala, The Four Archers, 1993, synthetic polymer paint on paper, 48.7 × 50.2 cm (sheet 56 × 57 cm)



Ginger Riley Munduwalawala, *Ngak Ngak and the Limmen Bight River*, 1993, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60.6 × 91.1 cm (sheet 67 × 97 cm) detail



David Cox, *Sing Out Spring*, 2013, charcoal, natural pigments on canvas, 139.5 × 100 cm, detail (see fig. p. 79)

in the painting 'The Four Archers', both in the foreground and in the background, and in this way demonstrate their central importance.

They are also present in 'Ngak Ngak and the Limmen Bight River'. In particular, the painting technique in this work is characterised by rows of dryly applied dabs, that, placed close together, overlap in several layers in the gentle hills and end there in short peaks, as seen also in the two black hills. The artist often allows the underlying colour to shine through. Using this painting technique, Ginger Riley Munduwalawala creates the impression of a shadowy landscape, as it appears in the rainy season.

The artist, who lived in Ngukurr from the 1970s and later in the Limmen Bight River area of southeastern Arnhem Land, began painting around 1986 or 1987. Ten years later, he became one of the first Indigenous artists to receive a major retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne. He belonged to the Mara people, whose Country lies southeast of Ngukurr on the Gulf of Carpentaria. As a youth, he travelled south, saw the watercolours of Albert Namatjira, and, returning north, experimented with painting. He used natural pigments, the only materials available at the time, and was not satisfied; but this episode was not forgotten. Later trips to Yuendumu left him uninfluenced by the dot painting there, and likewise by the painting with natural pigments on bark in Arnhem Land or the technique of rarrk (cross-hatching). He was one of the few artists who did not work within the framework of an art centre but was represented commercially by a gallery, the Alcaston Gallery in Melbourne.

David Cox

The works of David Cox are also impressive in their uniqueness. A monochrome colour surface of brown natural pigments or black charcoal, bordered at the edges of the painting by lines of white dots, may at a cursory glance give the impression of creative triviality. On closer inspection, the painting reveals a great liveliness despite its dark monochromaticity. The artist evokes the idea of hills on either side of the river by a masterly layering of pigment, from a fine grounding to a top layer of coarsely crushed pigments, and through a moving, fluid brushwork that reveals the arching course of the river, to which curved brushstrokes lead from the right and left sides of the painting. The corporeality of the coarse-grained black or brown pigments is reinforced by the sweep of the serpentine line of the river. The spiritual is thus linked to the physical; both are contained in the image and reflect the subject of the painting, the course of the river, as well as the Indigenous concept of Country. To an

extent, one could compare the exceedingly plastic graininess and the emphasis on the haptic in David Cox's work with that in some of the paintings of Shirley Purdie or Gordon Barney (see pp. 65, 69). However, no other Indigenous artist who works with natural pigments on canvas limits their choice of colours so radically and provides the works with such an incomparable depth through the use of dark colours.

Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori

Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori was one of the most extraordinary and original artists in contemporary Indigenous art. The launch of her artistic career was due to a remarkable coincidence. She visited the art centre on Mornington Island (then part of the Woomera Aboriginal Corporation; today, Mirndiyan Gununa Aboriginal Corporation) in 2005 when she was about 80 years old to ask for a ride to the hinterland. She walked into a painting workshop. Spontaneously, she took a brush, paint and a small canvas and started to create with unmixed colours her first painting 'My Country', which is now part of the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery. Everything her art stands for is already laid out in that painting. That same year, she had her first solo exhibition at the Woolloongabba Art Gallery in Brisbane.

Like many other artists, she painted her artworks in memory of the lost Country. Severe droughts from 1942 to 1945 and a flood caused by a cyclone in 1948, which contaminated the few water sources with salt water, made it possible for the Presbyterian missionaries to remove the last Kaiadilt people from Bentinck Island to Mornington Island. They were exiled into a world unknown to them, the Lardil Country. The missionaries separated the children from their parents, placed them in an orphanage and banned their language. As a result of these traumatic events, no children were born for several years. The separation of the generations caused the Kaiadilt language to die out to such an extent that today only a handful of people speak it.¹¹ What is here almost euphemistically called 'traumatic', the UN justifiably defines as genocide. For the next forty years, the Kaiadilt had no possibility of returning to the Country that belonged to them.

Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori was about 24 years old at the time of her exile. She did not return permanently to Bentinck Island in the 1980s, when other Kaiadilt did, because no medical care was available. She saw her Country again for the first time in 2005, when she could afford to visit Bentinck Island by plane with her husband, Pat Gabori, and some of their children, using the money she earned at an exhibition.¹²

Unlike many Indigenous artists, Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori could not base her work on known graphic elements. There were no rock paintings on Bentinck Island, like the ones in Arnhem Land and many other areas of Australia, nor were there sand or other ground



Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori, *My Country*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 60 × 30 cm

¹¹ Evans 2005, pp. 14–15; Evans 2008, pp. 57–58

¹² How did Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori get her name? She was given the first name Sally by the missionaries on Mornington Island. For her surname, an altered form of her husband's birth name Kabarrjngathi was chosen; it was easier for non-Indigenous people to speak and remember, entirely in keeping with the Christian tradition that a woman must bear her husband's name. At the time that she was becoming famous as an artist, prepended to these names were the place name of her birthplace Mirdidingkingathi (born near Mirdidingki) and Juwarnda (dolphin). (Evans 2005, p. 15)

¹³ McLean, Bruce, 2016, p. 17

¹⁴ Ryan 2016, p. 33

¹⁵ Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori's brother, whose name was Makar-kingathi Dingkarringathi Thuwathu Bijarrb, was one of the leaders of the Kaiadilt and as such was given the name King Alfred by the colonialists (see p. 279).

¹⁶ Turner 2005, p. 31

¹⁷ McLean, Bruce, 2016, p. 29



Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori, *Dibirdibi Country*, 2010, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 198 × 305 cm



Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori, *Thundi*, 2007, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 101 × 76 cm

reliefs as in central Australia, and Kaiadilt ceremonial objects were rarely painted. The only artworks known to survive from Bentinck Island are drawings made by the older inhabitants at the request of the anthropologist Norman B. Tindale during his expedition in 1960, which he collected in order to document their stories.¹³ Thus, there were hardly any graphic examples, so Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori was completely dependent on her own imagination in the pictorial realisation of her Country or that of her husband's as in 'Dibirdibi Country'. This freedom from precedents resulted in quite extraordinary paintings, comparable indeed to the late works of Emily Kame Kngwarreye. The latter artist also began painting at the advanced age of about 80, after having created batiks for several years, and painted about 3,000 artworks in the last seven years of her life.¹⁴

For an outsider unfamiliar with the Kaiadilt language or Bentinck Island, or its natural features of Country and water and their stories, the works of Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori are hard to decipher. For Kaiadilt people, it is different. For example, when artist Melville Escott saw Gabori's first painting, he said: *'Is that Sally's painting? [...] you can see the river, sandbank and the ripples the fish leave on the water and this side is her brother's King Alfred's¹⁵ Country and these [...] are the fish traps she used to look after, this was her job.'*¹⁶ The artist herself rarely spoke about the content of her paintings, saying: *'This is my Land, this is my Sea, this is who I am.'*¹⁷

In her first painting ('My Country', 2005, see previous page), Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori placed large, blurred, merging dots in clear colours and varying shapes on a white background, mostly close together, sometimes only in outline. From a turquoise curved line in the upper left of the painting, one can draw a mental connection to the narrow area of the same colour in the centre left and to thin turquoise lines in the lower centre of the painting, thus visualising an interrupted arc. Only the mid-tone blue area in the upper part of the painting, split with an energetic red line as if by lightning, is created by the artist using broader brushstrokes.

Almost immediately after beginning her artistic work, Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori turned away from rather dot-oriented painting—towards a style characterised by generous, broad brushstrokes applied with great energy, which she applied wet-in-wet. One can literally feel the joyful temperament with which the artist moved the brush in grand gestures, pushing it forcefully onto the canvas, creating a dense texture. She mainly used unmixed contrasting colours and shapes that blended into each other. The dynamism and drama in the paintings might also have been inspired by the storms that repeatedly hit the island.

In a series of paintings from 2007 and 2008, the artist exchanged her preferred clear colours for pastels. She applied white as the final layer of paint, thicker or thinner, thereby creating different hues in the translucent colours beneath. She continued to apply her brush with energy, in broad sweeps.

Mirdidingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori inspired several of her children and nieces to paint, thus establishing and perpetuating a painting tradition. She herself was able to paint for barely eight years.

Patrick Mung Mung

Patrick Mung Mung takes a completely autonomous direction in his artworks, which are painted with natural pigments on canvas.

Patrick Mung Mung, whose wife Betty Carrington is also an artist, was born in Yunurrl (Spring Creek) about 30 km west of the World Heritage site of Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles) National Park in the East Kimberley. He worked for many years on various cattle stations until, as the last worker there, he was forced to leave the Texas Downs station when it was abandoned in the 1970s. Thus, Patrick Mung Mung and the other Gija living and working on the Country belonging to them lost their livelihood there. Patrick Mung Mung began his artistic career in 1991, shortly before the death of his father, George Mung Mung, another well-known artist who combined Christian with Indigenous symbolism in his works. Patrick Mung Mung was also active in the Warmun community, playing a leading role in founding the local art centre in 1998 and acting as its chairman for some time. His knowledge of Country and Indigenous laws and his mediation skills regarding Indigenous and non-Indigenous culture made him one of the most respected men in Warmun.

Patrick Mung Mung is a master of colour. The artist uses 15 colours and shades for 'Yunurrl Country (14 Mile)' to reproduce the restless sweep of paths, of hills and of chunks of limestone that slide down the black hills after sudden downpours in the rainy season. The sky shows an intense pink, which is repeated in gradations in the hills. The artist emphasises the materiality of the painting by using a different grain of pigment in many of the layers of paint. The paths and some of the hills are painted with finely ground ochre, thus appearing smooth, while other hills receive a relatively coarse-grained final layer of paint. It is a painting of the Country with the material from the land itself. Paintings using pinkish ochre are quite rare, although Queenie McKenzie, the first female artist at Warmun, included it in her paintings as early as 1995.¹⁸ The rows of dots both separate and connect the various areas of colour and round off the painting at the edges. Above all, however, they create a flowing movement across the entire canvas. Regarding the short row of dots in the upper right corner of the painting, Patrick Mung Mung gives the terse explanation that this is Ngarranggarni (see pp. 203–205). The different textures of semi-transparent



Patrick Mung Mung, Yunurrl Country (14 Mile), 2001, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm (see fig. p. 63)

¹⁸ BFB 2016, p. 30

ent and opaque layers, as well as the contrast between rows of dots and painterly surfaces on the one hand and between colours on the other, reflect in a finely coordinated way the beauty and fragility of the Country.

Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin



Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, Kallyangku, 1988, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 100 × 76 cm

In the paintings of the outstanding artist Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, a strong brightening of her colour palette and a greater focus towards the painterly can be noted over the decades. The artist began painting with acrylic paint on canvas in 1986, and her work was immediately shown in the first exhibition of art from Wirrimanu (Balgo) at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth, 1986–1987. The artist initially worked closely with Wimmitji Tjapangarti, her second husband, often on the same canvases—a type of collaboration not uncommon in the early days of the painting movement. Similarities in the way they created their paintings can still be seen, even after they worked separately from 1993 onwards. However, their paintings with their abundance of lively structures differ from those of all the other artists in Wirrimanu. Together with Wimmitji Tjapangarti, Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin supported the anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt in their field research, was involved in the compilation of a Kukatja–English dictionary together with her first husband Purungu Tjakata Tjapaltjarri Gimme, and also taught children and adults in their language, Kukatja.

In her early works, until 1989, the artist used thin wooden sticks to place dots precisely on the canvas in shades of brown and red—lightened with white or, in rare cases, a washed-out blue-green. The rich symbolism of concentric circles, U-shapes, and curving lines that convey the content of the paintings were usually painted in the typical brown or black tones. She then began experimenting with yellows, pinks, whites



Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, Nyilla Rockhole, 1989, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 75 × 98.5 cm

and a light green on sections of the canvas, still placing the dots individually but more densely, causing the precision to disappear in favour of a more fluid painting style. The symbols often remained in brown or black until 1997, after which the dark colours faded away. Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin's painting style developed into a dense, impasto application of overlapping layers of colour. From the mid-1990s—after Wimmitji Tjapangarti was no longer able to work artistically due to his age—the individually placed dots completely disappeared from Nampitjin's works. She began to paint in a rhythmically structured manner in which curved lines determined the composition. The dots become larger, more imprecise, strung together and merged into one another. In her colour palette, bright yellows, oranges, reds and light greens had, by

1998, largely prevailed. *'[It] signals the development of Eubena's work into a realm where colour becomes a luminous essence rather than a surface descriptor of form.'*¹⁹

Using a brush from that time onwards allowed the artist to apply paint more generously. Her daughter Ena Gimme Nungurrayi, who had begun painting in 1990 using brushes rather than wooden sticks, now influenced with her very textural painting *Eubena (Yupinya)* Nampitjin's way of working.²⁰ The dots blended together to produce a densely worked impasto surface as the artist dipped the same brush into different colours, allowing the elements to merge into textured fields. By this time, her transition to a colour palette of bright yellows, oranges and reds was complete.

In her works of recent years, *Eubena (Yupinya)* Nampitjin increasingly used white as well as a bright violet, which previously only appeared in the form of densely dotted lines. The colours now finally replaced the symbolism in the paintings as structuring elements, and themselves became instruments of composition. The artist drastically reduced the iconography and assigned the key position to colour. Broad, expansive strokes fill the canvas, on which large, merging dots, often lightened with white, are set. Thus, the artist's technique remains predominantly a special form of dot technique until her last works, despite a pastose, flowing painting style.



Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, *Kinyu*, 2012, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 118 × 40 cm; *Eubena (Yupinya)* Nampitjin, *Near the Canning Stock Route*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 60 cm (see fig. pp. 25, 24)

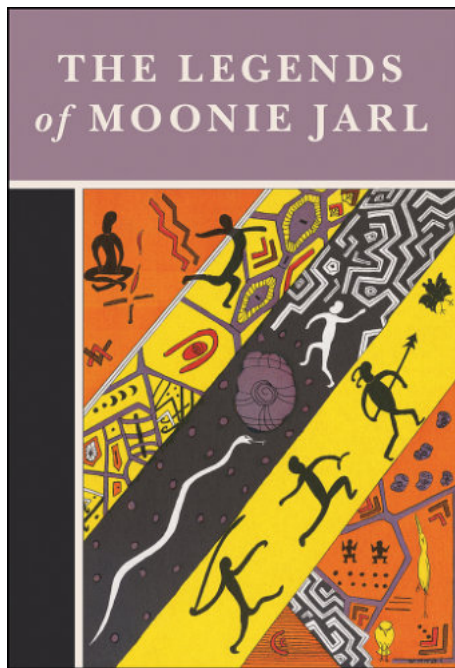
¹⁹ Watson 2004, p. 120

²⁰ WAAC 2005, p. 22

Fiona Foley

Fiona Foley was born in 1964 in Maryborough, Queensland. She grew up at Hervey Bay on the mainland opposite Thoorgine (Thorgyne, K'gari), the world's largest sand island—the non-Indigenous call it Fraser Island—and in Sydney. Fiona Foley belongs to the Wondunna clan within the Badtjala language group, who lived alongside the Gubbi Gubbi on Thoorgine and on the facing mainland. The artist trained in art and education at the Sydney College of Art and was one of the first Indigenous students to attend an art academy. In 1985, she visited Ramingining in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, then lived and worked there for nine months in 1989 and returned almost annually until 1993. During her stays in Ramingining and Maningrida (also in Arnhem Land), she studied the local art: bark painting. She also learned about the mode of operation of the artists' co-operatives in the art centres, which proved helpful when she co-founded the Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative in 1987 (see pp. 350–351).

This versatile artist—her work in Brisbane includes painting,



Wilf Reeves: *The Legends of Moonie Jarl*, Brisbane 1964 (new edition by Wiley, 2022)

graphics, sculptures, installations, and photography—is the ‘historian’ among Indigenous artists. For many of her works, she researches archives, libraries, and ethnological collections or uses the oral histories of the Badtjala in order to make visible the hidden history of colonialism, with all its excesses, and the history of Indigenous Australians, and bring them into the consciousness of all Australians. ‘*I Speak to Cover the Mouth of Silence*’ is the telling title of one of her essays.²¹

The artist was interested from an early age in Indigenous history, imparted by her family. Her mother, Shirley Foley, did much research on the culture of the Badtjala people of Thoorgine and the adjacent mainland, published a dictionary, and made sure that her children knew about their origins and felt pride in their culture. Fiona Foley’s great-uncle Moonie Jarl (Wilf Reeves) collated Badtjala stories that had been passed down the generations, her great-aunt Wandi (Olga Miller) illustrated them, and a book was published in 1964 under the title *The Legends of Moonie Jarl*.

This family background and the journeys to Arnhem Land directly influenced her art, already during her studies, when she created in 1986 the work ‘Annihilation of the Blacks’. It is an allegorical representation of the treatment of Indigenous people by colonialists: a white figure



Fiona Foley, *Annihilation of the Blacks*, 1986, wood, synthetic polymer paint, feathers, rope, 204.5 × 267 × 85.7 × cm

gazes at several hanged black figures. Formally, the inclusion of the two branching tree trunks relates to classical Indigenous sculptures as used for ceremonial purposes in North Queensland. In terms of content, the work refers to a massacre on the Susan River in Queensland, which Shirley Foley had recounted to her daughter.

In the year the work was created, the National Museum of Australia in Canberra acquired it as one of its first by an Indigenous urban artist. In the mid-2000s, there was a bitter dispute—called the ‘History Wars’—among Australian historians about the extent of such massacres. Tess Allas wrote: ‘*It was during these “wars” that Annihilation of the Blacks was removed from public view at the newly opened Museum. Coincidence or not, I felt in this instance, it appeared that the politics of shame and its companion “denial” came into play.*’²²

As described elsewhere (see p. 217), it is not only Indigenous people living outside the cities who have a close connection to their Country: Indigenous people in cities also often feel this relationship. In the late 1980s, Fiona Foley returned for some time to Hervey Bay to prepare with others a land rights case for Thoorgine (Fraser Island). The case ended in 2014, 18 years after the application was made, with the recognition of certain rights for the Badtjala over 1,640 km² of land but not including the

²¹ Foley 2012, p. 55

²² Allas 2010a, p. 58

areas developed for tourism, i.e., those from which profits can be made.²³ The stay in Hervey Bay also allowed Fiona Foley to learn more about the culture and Country of the Badtjala. It is a testament to the resilience of the few Badtjala remaining after the genocide,²⁴ that they seek to identify and record those parts of their culture that survive. Fiona Foley reflects this in her early works. Many of the plants and animals referenced in them have significance in Badtjala culture.

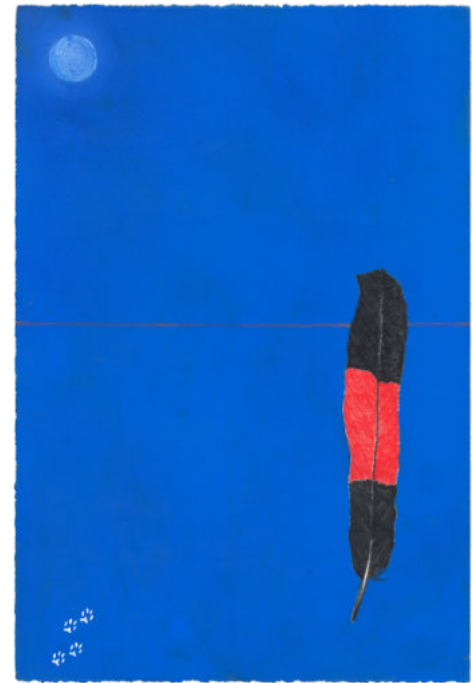
A pastel from the series ‘Solitaire’ shows a feather balancing on its tip, a pale daytime moon and dingo tracks in the lower left corner against a blue background divided by a thin horizon line. The feather, a symbol of native animals and plants often used by Fiona Foley in her early work, is that of a red-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*). It holds itself upright in a still, empty landscape and—in keeping with the painting’s title—stands almost alone in the composition. The few traces of the dingo are a metaphor for the stories of the Badtjala and a powerful symbol for the extensive depopulation of Thoorgine (Fraser Island) through massacres. Yet, the image does not commemorate these negative events but celebrates the fact that despite massive oppression, the Badtjala survived, as did the dingo.

Such works, therefore, do not represent naturalistic painting, or naturalism but rather the realm of mental associations; they contain visual references to a concept or experience. ‘Solitaire’ shows a quasi-floating landscape anchored only by traces of things; thus, the artwork is equally an expression of loss and of confidence. With its poetry and aesthetic beauty, which the artist repeatedly displays in her works, it invites contemplation.

However, the artist refers not only to history in her works, such as in ‘Annihilation of the Blacks’. Rather, she said, ‘*Dominant post-colonial attitudes and behaviour are still well entrenched in Australian society and permeate all strata, releasing a pervasive stench.*’²⁵

Fiona Foley counters this ‘stench’ in the photographic series ‘HHH’ (see next page), with a good deal of provocation, sarcasm, but also black humour, which is not necessarily at all obvious due to the intended and immediate evocation of the Ku Klux Klan. The work, which was created during her five-month residency at MoMA PS1 in New York in 2004, seems to be inconsistent: e.g., above the openings for the eyes, the hoods show ‘HHH’ as an acronym for ‘Hedonistic Honky Haters’. Honky is a pejorative term for a white person in the USA. The clothing is deliberately splendid and colourful—in contrast to a white KKK outfit. And above all, there are eyes gazing at us from dark-skinned faces.

As if Fiona Foley had sensed the timeliness of her work, on her return to Queensland she spotted on the front page of the *Courier-Mail* of November 11th, 2004, a Queensland daily newspaper, a photograph of a group of white soldiers from Lavarack Barracks in Townsville, posing in the distinctive Ku Klux Klan garb—for the purpose of intimidating In-



Fiona Foley, *Solitaire*, 1993, pastel, 57 × 38 cm

²³ Watts 2014

²⁴ In the 1840s and 1850s, white settlers began to occupy the mainland along the Mary River, opposite Thoorgine (Fraser Island). The Badtjala and Gubbi Gubbi resisted the invasion until their armed resistance ended in the Maryborough Massacre in 1861. The remaining Indigenous people were expelled, either to mission stations or to reservations. A closed reservation was established in 1897 on Thoorgine (Fraser Island) to confine Indigenous people from all over Queensland who were considered unproductive or troublemakers; it was dissolved in 1904. By 1905, the settlers had reduced the number of Badtjala on the island from about 3,000 to 12 through killings and deportation. (Davidson and Desmond 1996, p. 12)

²⁵ Foley 2000, pp. 498–499



Fiona Foley, HHH #1, 2004, ultrachrome print on paper, 76 × 101 cm



Fiona Foley, HHH #4, 2004, ultrachrome print on paper, 101 × 76 cm

²⁶ MCA and UQAM 2009, p. 39

²⁷ Foley 2000, pp. 498–499

²⁸ NGA 2017a, p. 27

²⁹ Personal conversation with Fiona Foley on May 29th, 2014

digenous and other black soldiers who had been forced to sit in front of them. This was part of a hazing ritual for new recruits condoned by superiors. The photo dates from 2000 and was sold to soldiers of the Royal Australian Regiment for 10 Australian dollars. When the Indigenous soldiers complained, they were compelled to sign a legal waiver absolving the army of any responsibility. This regiment, of all possible choices, was shortly afterwards deployed to East Timor, a former protectorate of Australia.²⁶ Fiona Foley is right in her comment on the ‘[...] dominant post-colonial attitudes and behaviour [...] in Australian society [...] and its] pervasive stench’.²⁷

The news reports in November 2020 about war crimes by Australian army personnel in Afghanistan between 2009 and 2016 support this.

‘HHH’ was first exhibited in a Melbourne gallery in 2005 and has since been shown in many art museums, including Berlin in 2017–2018, in an exhibition of Indigenous Australian art from the collection of the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. There, the work was exhibited as a textile sculpture rather than a photograph, which diminished the confrontational effect because there are no wearers of the costumes; the unforgiving staring eyes, dark-skinned hands and Rasta hairstyle are missing—anyone could be in the costumes. The catalogue accompanying the Berlin exhibition reads, ‘This provocative and compelling work references a secret sect, Hedonistic Honky Haters, that was formed in 1965 in America in direct response to the dangerous and violent white supremacist sect the Ku Klux Klan.’²⁸ Fiona Foley had expounded this at the time the work was created. However, other, earlier publications phrased the story more cautiously, more questioningly, rather than as fact. Indeed, when asked if the Hedonistic Honky Haters really existed and where she had found information about the sect, Fiona Foley replied with a smirk, ‘I made it up.’ And further: ‘I just wanted to put that in the mix. They don’t exist. I just made them up. That is called “artistic license”.’²⁹

In ‘HHH’, Fiona Foley examines the foundations of racist vigilante ‘justice’ but breaks the overly obvious references to the Ku Klux Klan several times, not only by having the eyes of black people fixate on the viewer. The artist also gives the biting commentary on racism an aesthetically pleasing visual expression through the beauty of the printed fabrics

of the robes, despite the gravity of the subject. The cloths are so-called ‘Dutch wax block printed fabrics’; a production technique originating with Javanese batiks brought to Europe by the Dutch in the 16th century, produced there from 1880, and exported to the African colonies. Although the patterns are based on those of the former Dutch colony of Indonesia, they are reminiscent of African clothing because of their colourfulness, which was important to Fiona Foley. She sourced the fabrics from a shop in Harlem that specialised in African imports. ‘*So the work does have this double-sidedness to it: there is on the one hand a beauty to the work and I call that seduction. It is a seduction through the beauty, so the beauty draws you in. And then when you face looking at it then you see the punch.*’³⁰

³⁰ Ibid.

The photographs, whether of individuals or the group photo, show rather sterile and distanced portraits in full frontal view. There is no dynamic or background that would place the persons in a context other than that of the Ku Klux Klan, i.e., that of racism, violence, and hatred. And yet, the photograph stands in the greatest possible contrast to what constitutes the Ku Klux Klan: its position of power is broken by the colourful costumes. The KKK sect is dangerous but no longer potent. The cheerful colours create a more feminine aspect, which in turn undermines the masculine supremacy of the sect. The artist declares with her photograph: colourful is beautiful, colourful stands for the diversity of humanity.

Fiona Foley ridicules all the concepts associated with the Ku Klux Klan or their uniforms: the racist hatred and the racist thinking that uses white hegemony and black powerlessness to condone violence, which the pure white of the costumes stands for in this context. The artist does not mirror the hatred and violence that is the Ku Klux Klan but instead breaks it; she reverses it. Fiona Foley counters the hate not only with the colourful costumes but also with the word ‘hedonistic’ in the title of the work, meaning joy, pleasure, enjoyment, and sensuality. Hedonistic Honky Haters is a playful, mocking, subversive response to the Ku Klux Klan. The work is not a biting indictment but a mischievous, somewhat cunning play midway between confrontation and life-affirming, joyful colourfulness. And yet, the work does not really evoke laughter but instead leaves one with an ambivalent feeling wavering between fright and mirth.

Fiona Foley said of Australia: ‘*You have to have that lightness, because things in this country can get very heavy.*’³¹ The artist strikes a balance between poetic aesthetics and political confrontation in her work; this is evident in ‘Witnessing to Silence’, both with the lotus shrouded in water mist and the naming of the massacre sites on the slabs of stone lying in the ground (see p. 242). It is also evident in ‘Solitaire’, with the silent landscape illuminated by the pale moon and the statement of the dingo tracks, and likewise in ‘HHH’ with the colourful fabrics and the connotation of the Ku Klux Klan.

³¹ MCA and UQAM 2009, p. 15

Churchill Cann (Yoonany)

The works of Churchill Cann (Yoonany) are free of any political statement, even when they sometimes refer to the persecution and killing of Indigenous people (see p. 274). The artist painted his Country with great attention to detail. He was born on the Texas Downs cattle station, north-east of Warmun in Western Australia, where he grew up and worked for a long time as a stockman. Churchill Cann (Yoonany) travelled the Kimberley extensively and worked on various stations between Warmun and Broome. He later came to Warmun with Patrick Mung Mung, where they both began their artistic careers. He was an important elder, knowledgeable in Indigenous culture, a significant dancer at ceremonies, one of the last medical healers among the Gija and a member of one of the great artistic families. His sisters Nancy Nodea and Katie Cox, his daughter Charlene Carrington, likewise his wife Sade Carrington and his mother-in-law Betty Carrington, as well as her husband Patrick Mung Mung, are known for their painting with natural pigments on canvas. In 2013, Churchill Cann (Yoonany) received the Western Australian Artist Award from the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth.

Characteristics of Churchill Cann's (Yoonany) art are a rigorous progression from opaque to glazed painting in a wet-on-wet technique, the mixing of different colours in the same part of the painting, and a play with haptics through the use of various finely ground pigments and their careful distribution on the canvas. He was not the only Warmun artist to create watercolour-like paintings with natural pigments. This already appeared in Rover Thomas' (Joolama) works, especially from the 1980s; Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon) also painted a threatening, ill-fated sky with various intermingling colours, in the wake of the 2011 Warmun floods after days of rain.³² Churchill Cann (Yoonany), however, was the one who most consistently pursued this mode of representation in his later works. The seven paintings in the Bähr/Frost collection, beginning with one from 1998, when the art centre opened in Warmun, to one from 2015, a year before the artist's death, show this progression, which took painting with natural pigments on canvas into a new dimension.

The works 'Revolver Springs' from 1998 and 'Texas Country' from 1999 reflect Churchill Cann's (Yoonany) knowledge and experience of the land, dealing with everyday life; no connection to the Ngarrangarni can be discerned even from the texts accompanying the paintings. Just how important the Country was to the artist, just how much it affected him and how great his need was to preserve it and literally handle it can be seen from the fact that he collected ochre throughout his years as a stockman, without actually using it.³³ Thus, the unique feature, not only for his artworks but for all the artists from Warmun and Kununurra, is to perform the painting of the land with the material of their land.

Revolver Springs is a special place east of the Old Texas Downs

³² Cf. NGA 1994; Carrigan 2003; Massola 2016, p. 32

³³ Massola 2016, p. 80



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), *Revolver Springs*, 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 80 × 120.5 cm (see fig. p. 80)

station, to the north-east of Warmun. Two ridges are separated there by a deep gorge through which a tributary flows into the Ord River. Churchill Cann (Yoonany) used to round up cattle in this area. The spring and river served as a resting place and a source of food: the Gija fished here and gathered honey. Churchill Cann (Yoonany) said of this painting that the rock faces of the gorge were magnificent to behold.

The artist painted the two ridges in an ‘aerial’ view of the land typical of many paintings, using opaque areas of colour, which do not reveal any heights or depths in the landscape. The land is painted in a closed form in its outward appearance. Only in the areas of colour representing the hills are restrained brushstrokes discernible, revealing a first inkling of the painting technique, to be pursued a few years later, of reducing the opacity of the layers of paint. The same is true of ‘Texas Country’, the Country of Churchill Cann (Yoonany), where some of the hills and streams on the station’s area are depicted. The English name of the stream in the right half of the painting is Bamboo; it arises in the hills and flows into the Jessie River. Again, it is a view from above, that clearly replicates a landscape, similar to the example photograph included here, whereby the photograph is actually from a different region in central Australia.

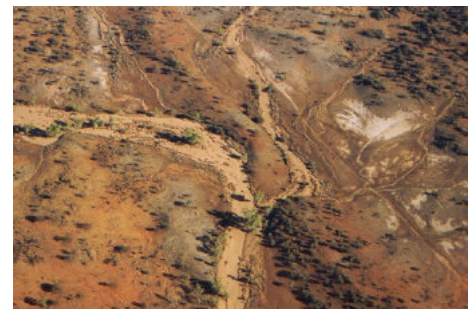
Pandamus is the (non-Indigenous) name of a waterhole in the rocks on the land of the Texas Downs station. The artist has painted the waterhole as a pale round shape within the brown-coloured area in the upper half of the painting. In this painting, Churchill Cann (Yoonany) combines aspects of the Ngarranggarni with knowledge of Country. He commented about his painting, *‘If a new man (stranger) comes to this country, and he goes this place, then he’ll make em big rain. This is a dangerous place. This way further back is a good fishing place. It has deep clean sand during the dry time, you can catch plenty of goondarnning (fish).’*

In this painting, the watercolour effect is already fully developed. Soft washes give rise to a painting of great dynamism in a restrained and light colouring. It is no longer just a view of the Country from above, since the three-dimensionality of the hills becomes visible, especially in the lower part of the painting, while the grey area appears rather flat. Two- and three-dimensionality are thus combined in one painting. Although some artists from Warmun have ‘aerial’ views and profile views of the countryside in the same painting—as in Gordon Barney’s ‘Birno’ from 1998 (see p. 64)—a three-dimensional representation is not found elsewhere. Unlike his early works and those of many other artists from Warmun, Churchill Cann (Yoonany) does not simply show Country in its outward appearance, through watercolour and glazing but allows a view into the depths, conveying a sense of a hidden world.

The story of ‘Major the Bushranger’ is described on p. 274. Therefore, only one feature of this work will be referenced here: Churchill Cann (Yoonany) clearly delimits the different coloured areas, except for the pointed area at the bottom of the painting, with the help of rows of white



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Texas Country, 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm (see fig. p. 81)



Aerial photograph from central Australia



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Pandamus, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 120 cm (see fig. p. 82)

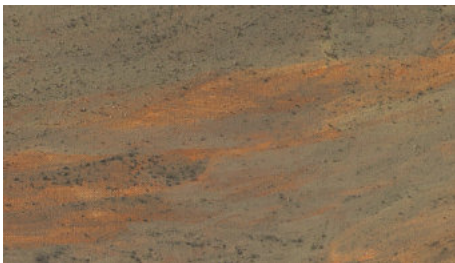


Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Major the Bushranger, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 120.5 × 120 cm (see fig. p. 83)

³⁴ French 2015, p. 115



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Buffalo Hole, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 100.5 × 140 cm (see fig. p. 84)



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Buffalo Hole, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 100.5 × 140 cm, detail



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Kelly's Waterhole, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 60 × 80 cm (see fig. p. 85)

dots and then frames the entire painting with a row of similar dots. It is a kind of delimitation common to most artists in Warmun. According to Alana Hunt, who worked as consultant at the Warmun Art Centre for several years, there can be different reasons for this: *'[S]ome have said it represents their walking across country, others have said they like it at a purely aesthetic level because it brighten up the work [...].'*³⁴

In both paintings, 'Pandamus' and 'Buffalo Hole', Churchill Cann (Yoonany) makes the Country visible in an almost three-dimensional way, with its mountains, gorges and special sites. Indeed, it seems as if a view into the interior of the Country and its details is possible, as if one can perceive its layers and hidden structures.

The translucent technique developed by Churchill Cann (Yoonany) logically implied attaching less importance to the usual lines of white dots. Sometimes the dots become very small, as in 'Buffalo Hole', and no longer frame all the coloured areas present in the painting, or they no longer bound the entire painting, as in 'Untitled'. These changes give the paintings a remarkable depth. The different parts of the artworks are not delimited from each other and can correspond more intensively with each other. The painting can extend beyond itself and in this way suggest an infinity or eternity that reflects the Indigenous concept of time and the holistic worldview (see chapter 'Sources of Inspiration').

The artist used another novel painting technique in 'Buffalo Hole' and 'Kelly's Waterhole'. While the individual parts of the paintings in the earlier works were each portrayed in only one colour, Churchill Cann (Yoonany) now mixed different colours and allowed the brushwork to become clearly visible. These different hues and distinct textures lend greater vibrancy to the paintings and allow one to sense the chequered history imbued in the Country, as well as the connection to the Ngarranggarni.

In 'Kelly's Waterhole', the irregular indentations at the edges of the central brown area correspond to the restless, agitated brushwork and the mixture of grey and blue pigment with its rather inconspicuous, slightly grainy pigmentation on the one hand and its grey, black and reddish brown paint, with distinct black grainy pigmentation, on the other. Thus, the overall painting style is coherent in a lively, restless work.

In 'Untitled', in particular, the artist induces a feeling for the physical nature of his Country. In the upper part, coarse grains of black charcoal of varying sizes are applied along brushstrokes on a translucent grey, tracing them and thus giving this part of the painting more weight compared to the colour in the lower and especially left part of the painting. Rarely has Churchill Cann (Yoonany) placed such large, coarsely ground pigments in chunks on the canvas, thus linking the feel of the painting with the physical presence of the Country.

Churchill Cann (Yoonany) began his paintings with an initial thin, translucent layer of ochre, into which he sketched with a small stone the main lines of the composition,³⁵ clearly visible on the edges of the light

³⁵ Massola 216, p. 78

brown coloured surface in 'Untitled' from 2015. The artist developed a very free, gestural painting style by applying the most finely ground ochre pigments in glazed layers wet-in-wet to the canvas, thereby making each individual brushstroke visible and allowing two different colours to communicate with each other in some areas. In other areas, the artist created a particularly detailed structure using a top layer of coarsely ground pigments.

The artist captured in his paintings both the memory of the time when he worked as a stockman in his Country and the special narratives inherent in the Country. He gave expression to his emotions for that time and for his Country with his gestural, dynamic style of painting. The layers of natural pigments do not simply portray a particular region of Country that the artist painted because of its unique topography or in memory of particular incidents, but instead they allow a glimpse into the events themselves. They allow one to sense his deeply felt bond, in which the Country and its features are interwoven with history, i.e., with the narratives of the ancestors which convey meaning and with his own experiences from the past, that have never lost their vividness and emotional impact, in which time is suspended. Churchill Cann (Yoonany) wrote, *'[...] it can make you cry. What you're doing in the painting. It's like old people keep talking to you when you're painting. You can hear them talking. What Country and how that thing been run.'*³⁶

It is these emotions that the artist makes visible in his works, through his painting style.

N. Yunupɪŋu

N. Yunupɪŋu was one of the very few artists in Yirrkala in north-eastern Arnhem Land who had the audacity to include themes of personal experience in her works. Another was Mawalan Marika (see p. 286). In other regions, it is quite common to paint one's own experiences but not in Arnhem Land. Audacity was required in two respects. Artistically, because with very few exceptions, all art created there dealt and deals with themes of the Yolŋu culture, i.e., with the oral histories and symbols that define identity using strict geometric forms. Audacity was also required, however, because the artist played a rather subordinate role within the Yunupɪŋu family (see p. 259) and the Gumatj clan, which are highly active in political matters and prominent in art. In Quentin Sprague's dissertation, N. Yunupɪŋu is described as a delicate, friendly, reserved, older woman who had been almost deaf since childhood and mostly let her sisters speak for her.³⁷

Her artistic training consisted of intensive observation of her father Muŋurrawuy Yunupɪŋu, who was, until his death in 1997, one of the leading artists and leaders of ceremonies in Yirrkala. But it was not



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), *Untitled*, 2015, natural pigments on canvas, 120 × 180.5 cm (see fig. p. 86)

³⁶ AGWA and WAC 2014

³⁷ Sprague 2016, pp. 171–172

³⁸ The printmaking workshop gains importance from the fact that, during the dry season, bark cannot be removed from trees for use as a painting surface (see p. 309).



N. Yunupingu, Incident at Mutpi 1975, 2008, natural pigments on bark, 36 × 128 cm



N. Yunupingu, White painting #2, 2010, natural pigments on bark, 162 × 56 cm

³⁹ Scholes 2020, p. 101

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 103

⁴¹ Cf. ibid., p. 144

until 1996 that she began her artistic work in the same year that the Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre opened its printmaking studio,³⁸ the one and still only Indigenous art centre with a printmaking centre. Ten years later, she began painting figuratively with natural pigments on small barks mainly

of animals. In 2008, she won the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award within the 25th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, organised by the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin. The winning painting, 'Incident at Mutpi 1975', was accompanied by an

explanatory video. The image and video tell of the attack on N. Yunupingu by a water buffalo, against which she defended herself with a tree branch but was seriously injured. The renewed confrontation with this traumatic event, even if only in painterly form, evoked such negative feelings in her that she never directly touched this subject again.

In contrast to the rarrk (cross-hatching) in the typical yellow and red colours on the right side of the painting, the white strokes on a dark background in the lower left part of the painting already reveal hints of her artworks to be created in the following year, the so-called 'White paintings #1–#7'. Those works only show rarrk in an imprecise, very fleeting form.

Originally known as 'Mayilimiriw' (= meaningless), the works were renamed by the art centre as 'White paintings #1–#7' to better distinguish them. It is noted elsewhere (see pp. 224, 286) that the quality and value of a work of art is generally considered by Indigenous artists to be dependent on the narrative told in the painting. The content of the paintings is discernible to fellow Indigenous people in the same area, in contrast to non-Indigenous people. Therefore, this comment of an artist from Yirrkala about the 'White paintings' cannot be surprising: '*There's nothing to see; those paintings have no power. They are hard to relate to our visual hierarchy and, although there are old and new ways of looking at things, they don't communicate anything to Yolŋu—only you, balanda [non-Aboriginal people].*'³⁹

In response to a series of questions from Luke Scholes, about the possible meaning of her work, N. Yunupingu answered in the best traditions of many Western artists who do not like to comment on their artworks and prefer to leave the interpretation to the viewers or art historians: '*I wake up in the morning and think to myself: what will I do today? I think I'll go to Buku-Larrngay and paint, and I paint until my arm gets tired.*'⁴⁰

Of course, the artist did not paint without thought or concept, as shown by the fact that in the following years she produced both Mayilimiriw paintings and also those with a reduced figuration. It was not a sequential progression from figuration to abstraction since both occurred within the same period. In 2011, for example, she painted 'Leaves and

circles', derived from the red bush apple trees (*Syzygium suborbiculare*) that played a role in the water buffalo incident. In this respect, the artist returned to a narrative but only in a very mediated form. In 2015, she painted the 'Pink diptych (a and b)' (see adjacent), and in 2017 she won the 34th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award in the bark painting category with 'Lines' (see below). In 2018, she painted 'Untitled' (see next page), a work similar to a painting (not shown) titled 'Ganyu (Stars)', based on the story of the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters. Her father, Muṅurrawuy Yunupinju, and her sister, Gulumbu Yunupinju, also included this theme in their works. Unlike in central Australia (see pp. 231–232), the narrative here is also linked to seven islands to which the Seven Sisters travelled and which they set on fire to renew the Country. They ended their journey at Dhuraka (Rocky Bay), where they transformed into women and hence represent all women who live in harmony with nature; they are the Yolṅu women.⁴¹

In 'Leaves and circles', N. Yunupinju used both the rarrk (cross-hatching), especially within the circles, as well as thin, short, parallel lines. A striking feature is a colour gradient that changes from light to dark from top to bottom, using hatching of varying density, which allows the dark ground to shine through weakly or strongly. However, representationalism is predominant in the painting, not so much through the seven almost hidden human figures in the upper left half but rather through the leaves and the circles derived from them. The visual motif becomes even clearer and more vivid in 'Untitled', in which not only the seven stars of the Seven Sisters appear against a background of fine strokes and a small collection of dots, but also the entire Milky Way is shown.

In contrast to the previous two works, neither 'Pink diptych (b)' nor 'Lines' allude to narrative or representational elements. 'Pink diptych (b)' gains its liveliness through an extremely fine imprecise rarrk (cross-hatching) and, above all, through a play of differently toned image segments from white to a lighter and darker pink to a brown, intensified by different shaping of these segments. In 'Lines' there is no rarrk, only lines: fine short ones and wider long ones, both arranged vertically or horizon-



N. Yunupinju, Leaves and circles, 2011, natural pigments on bark, 175.5 × 92 cm;



N. Yunupinju, Pink diptych (b), 2015, natural pigments on bark, 157 × 103 cm



N. Yunupinju, Lines, 2017, natural pigments on bark, 210 × 113 cm



N. Yunupingu, *Untitled*, 2018, natural pigments on bark, 223 × 95 cm

tally. The broad lines give the painting support and structure, preventing it from becoming incoherent.

What is striking about all her works since 2009 is that N. Yunupingu has largely replaced the dominant colouring in bark painting of yellow and red ochre with white, called ‘gapan’. When she worked with colours, as in ‘Pink diptych (b)’ or in ‘Untitled’, they were either restrained or not used across the entire surface of the artwork. This emphasises the structures in the paintings compared to the narrative, where present.

Like the works of Emily Kame Kngwarreye, many of N. Yunupingu’s artworks tempt us to see and evaluate them in the context of Western abstraction. Unlike the works of Emily Kame Kngwarreye, however, some of N. Yunupingu’s paintings can legitimately be described as abstract because they explicitly and recognisably convey no content, neither for the Yolŋu nor non-Indigenous people. Nevertheless, N. Yunupingu was shaped by the Yolŋu culture; she used natural pigments on bark as a painting surface. The materiality of the paintings—irregular bark, ochre and hatching, even if it is not precise cross-hatching—references her relationship with the Yolŋu culture and the will to preserve culture without revealing information or knowledge. The artist did both: she painted freely, untethered from the themes and the geometries prevailing in the artworks of most other artists in Arnhem Land but also in the context of Yolŋu culture, i.e., in the context of narratives passed down the generations, that define identity and symbolism.⁴²

Gloria Tamerre Petyarre

Gloria Tamerre Petyarre was born in the Utopia region about 250 km north-east of Mparntwe (Alice Springs).⁴³ She was a spokesperson for the Anmatyerr and one of the outstanding artists within the contemporary art scene in Australia. In 1999, she was the first Indigenous artist to win the prestigious Wynne Prize for landscape painting, awarded by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney. Her winning artwork was from her series, begun in 1994, of so-called ‘leaf paintings’ (see pp. 100, 101). In 1995–96, she received a grant from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board. She was married to the artist Ronnie Price Mpetyane; her sisters Kathleen Petyarre, Violet Petyarre, Ada Bird Petyarre, Myrtle Petyarre, Nancy Kunoth Petyarre, and Jean Petyarre are (or were) also artists.

A series of batik-making workshops began in Utopia in 1977 under the leadership of Jenny Green, a linguist who published two dictionaries of the Alyawarr and Central and Eastern Anmatyerr languages. The batiks were initially used to generate money for a land rights court case, which was successfully concluded in 1979. They also used the batiks to provide proof that the Country had always been associated with the

⁴² For a detailed discussion of the cross-cultural framework within which N. Yunupingu’s art operates, see Sprague 2016, pp. 155–189.

⁴³ Utopia is an approximately 3,200 km² area that contains 15 so-called ‘outstations’ (settlements). The area was given its name by German settlers because of the large number and easy hunting of wild rabbits, which are now a pest. The Alyawarr, who make up about 85% of the inhabitants, call the land Urapuntja. In total, there are 22 languages spoken in the area. (RHAC 2009, p. 4)

Alyawarr and Anmatyerr. The workshops gave rise to the Utopia Women's Batik Group, which included Gloria Tamerre Petyarre and her sisters, as well as Emily Kame Ngwarreye, and marked the beginning of the art movement in the region.

The Museum of Victoria in Melbourne was the first museum to acquire some of the large silk batiks, as early as 1979, followed two years later by the Art Gallery of South Australia in Adelaide. In 1981, the Adelaide Festival of Arts opened with the exhibition 'Floating Forests of Silk: Utopia Batik from the Desert'. In the first quarter of 1988, 87 female artists and one male artist—Lyndsay Bird Mpetyane—completed 88 silk batiks for the opening of the Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute in Adelaide. The exhibition then toured Australia under the title 'Utopia—A Picture Story' and was exhibited internationally in 1990, including Dublin, where Gloria Tamerre Petyarre travelled to represent the artists. The first paintings using acrylic on canvas were created in 1988 as part of a project led by Rodney Gooch of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)⁴⁴ in collaboration with the Holmes à Court Collection. The 81 works produced as part of this project were shown in the exhibition 'Utopia Women's Painting – The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–1989' and were included in the Holmes à Court Collection, as were the 88 batiks. A third project was initiated in 1990 by the gallery Utopia Art Sydney, which represented Gloria Tamerre Petyarre: 69 artists made 72 woodcuts, the 'Utopia Suite'.⁴⁵

In the works by Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, her abundance of artistic creativity is reflected in constantly renewed painterly inventions and unique realisations of similar or related themes. None of her artworks is accompanied by a detailed narrative. There are only brief notes that the paintings interpret the themes of: Indigenous medicine; Awely (a body painting used in women's ceremonies, associated in some of her artworks with Arnkerrth, the thorny devil lizard (*Moloch horridus*); the Altyerr of the thorny devil lizard itself. Gloria Tamerre Petyarre commands several very different painting techniques and thus achieves correspondingly different optical effects and pictorial statements. She was an innovative artist who placed great emphasis on different painterly effects through the arrangement of lines and dots or the choice of colours. She influenced several women artists from Utopia.

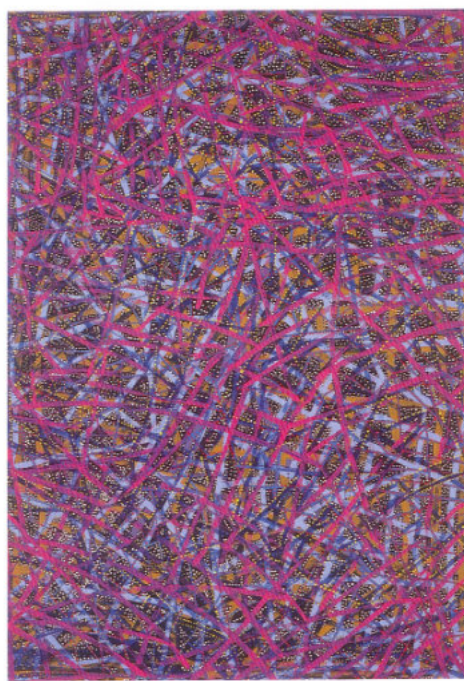
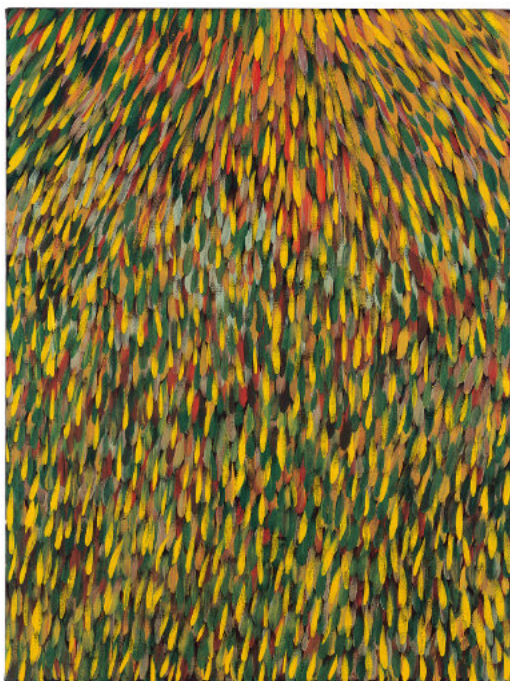
The paintings that relate to plants and their use in medicine, are derived from observation of nature and tend to focus on external appearances. In the painting 'Bush Medicine', from 1999, narrow ovals tapering to a point at one end and round at the other, which seem to be scattered across the canvas from a point on the midline outside the upper edge of



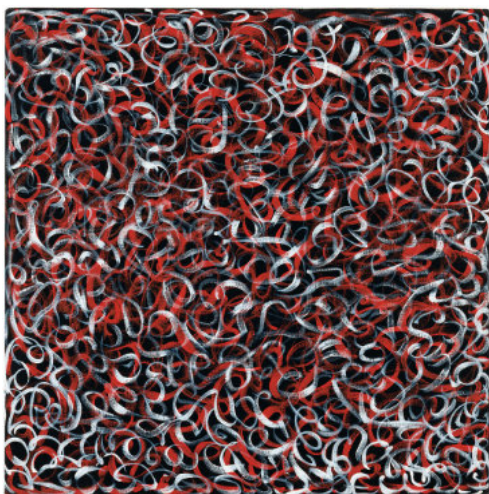
Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Emu Dreaming at Atnangkere*, 1988, batik on silk, approx. 233 × 117 cm

⁴⁴ CAAMA operated a radio network, video production centre, and later a television station.

⁴⁵ A detailed description of the three projects and all illustrations of the 'Utopia Suite' can be found in SKSP 2004.



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Bush Medicine*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 91.5 cm (see fig. p. 101); Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 195 × 136 cm



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Untitled*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 90 cm; Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, *Arnkerrth-Mountain Devil Lizard*, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119 × 119.5 cm (see fig. pp. 105, 106)



Thorny devil lizard (Arnkerrth)

the painting, create the impression of falling leaves in a sunlit landscape, connoted by the predominant yellow colour. The multitude of colours adds great vividness and may represent the different plants used in Indigenous medicine.

Gloria Tamerre Petyarre also shows another form of observation of nature that connects the superficial appearance with *Altyerr*, the creative principle that endows the world with meaning, in the painting ‘*Untitled*’ from 1997 and in ‘*Arnkerrth-Mountain Devil Lizard*’ from 2002. The thorny (mountain) devil lizard (*Arnkerrth*) is associated with important womens’ sacred ceremonies called *Awely*. However, it is not the animal itself that is the subject of these paintings but the spiritual fusion between the thorny devil lizard and the Countries of *Atnangkere* and *Alhalkere* (associated with the artist’s father). All of Gloria Tamerre Petyarre’s sisters refer to this subject in their art. The painterly form of the curved and intertwined lines is inspired by the rough and uneven texture of the thorny devil lizard’s back.

The lizard’s typically upright curved tail and the long curved spines that cover the entire body quite obviously prompted Gloria Tamerre Petyarre to create the three works. The thorny devil lizard, an animal that is only 18 to 20 cm long, can adapt its colour to its surroundings. It can cleverly provide itself with water in its arid habitat: when the morning dew settles on the animal’s skin, it collects in thousands of tiny furrows and eventually flows to the lizard’s mouth.

The visual form of ‘*Mountain Devil Lizard*’ from 1998 is also based on the fact that the lizard does not move in a straight line but always leaves a curved trail. Gloria Tamerre Petyarre lets a multitude of slightly curved lines in four different colours run irregularly across the canvas,

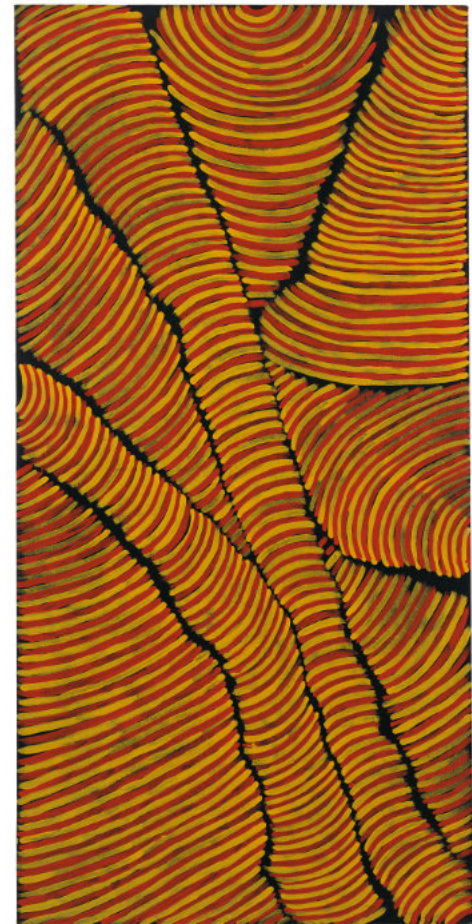
then either forms light dots into lines that bring further unrest into the painting or fills in the dark areas between lines with dots. Together, this creates a disordered, jagged structure, reminiscent of the lizard's appearance but reminding especially of its mode of locomotion.

Even artworks that may seem abstract at first glance, such as the two untitled paintings from 1996 and 1998, are inspired by Awely, by women's sacred ceremonies involving body painting and linked to the story of the thorny devil lizard.

In 'Untitled' from 1998, Gloria Tamerre Petyarre showed a painting technique based purely on parallel lines. She created three-dimensional forms with the help of curved lines, as broad as the brush stroke, and a sequence of two colours, which is emphasised by the black ground peeping through at the edges of the forms. Three-dimensionality was rarely found in Indigenous art when the painting was created in 1998. Another notable feature is that there are different viewpoints for the forms: in the upper centre, it is a view from above of a conically tapering form, whereas almost all the others are painted in profile view.

In the painting 'Untitled' from 1996, Gloria Tamerre Petyarre painted dynamic blue structures of irregular density and irregular arcs with a very broad brushstroke on a ground that flames in various hues of red. The movement arises not only from these colliding arcs but also from the form left by the brushstroke. In the upper half of the painting, the blue evaporates. It is replaced by a muted red that opposes the aggression of the clash of red and blue but adapts to a movement that strives upwards. It is as if the colours are flying away. Where they are caught on the canvas, they live and pulsate; the painting glows and is filled with a life that combines materiality and spirituality. The artist did not give her work a title, but it is obviously about important themes.

All these examples of paintings are representative of a multitude of independent approaches and artistic personalities that contemporary Indigenous art has generated since the 1970s and continues to produce. Indigenous art is a highly individual and multifaceted art. Nevertheless, through the narratives recounted, it is embedded in the community of place or clan and in the conflicts surrounding persecution and racism.



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Untitled, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 180 × 90 cm (see fig. p. 107)



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Untitled, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 117 × 176 cm (see fig. pp. 102/103)

04 — Sources of Inspiration

'When you sit down with no painting you get lonely.'

Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula¹

With brevity and precision, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula summarised what it means for an Indigenous person to be an artist. It is not simply the creation of a work of art that protects against loneliness but the reliving during the painting process of relationships important in Indigenous cultures. Yinimala Gumana from Yirrkala, in the northeast of Arnhem Land, described the relationship between being an artist and the consequences for one's spiritual and mental life in more detail, *'With that marwat [brush made of human hair], when you paint, that is your life. When you put your marwat on the bark you can shape yourself. You can shape your life with this marwat. [...] And, [...] It comes with this ceremony, with this painting, with this story and what I have learnt from my people, from my Elders. It comes from the spirit of the land, which is speaking for us. For everybody, really. Wherever you go you can feel the spirit of the land. It can talk to you, and give you something! [...] You can feel yourself becoming human.'*²

This chapter discusses the sources of inspiration for Indigenous Australians' art. In the first part, an attempt is made to describe the worldview of the Indigenous people who live in the settlements outside the major cities. It is a worldview that defies modular, occidental logic. It is a holistic worldview determined by transcendences, one that is comparable to the Western worldview in its complexity. The Indigenous people call it Jukurrpa (Warlpiri people), Tjukurrpa (Pintupi), Tjukurpa (Pitjantjatjara), Ngarranggarni (Gija), Altyerr (Anmatyerr and Arrernte), Jumangkarni (Walmajarri), Djang (Kuninjku), Lalai (Ngarinjin), etc., depending on the language group to which they belong.³ In this worldview, the Country (place) and its connections to people are of decisive importance; time is not.

The second part of the chapter deals with the sources of inspiration for the art, which are very often rooted in the history of repression of the First Australians by a white, occidental society. The repeated incidences of oppression, land theft, and massacres in the different parts of the country, the cramming of people of different language groups (who had not always lived together peacefully in the past) into closed reservations, the search of Indigenous people in the cities for their identity, and the persistent racism: all these have sought and found an expression in parallel to political resistance: art.

¹ Perkins and Fink 2000, p. 171

² Gumana 2014, p. 51, 53

³ For terminology see also pp. 18–20

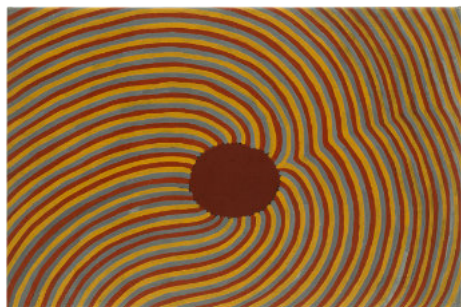
Jukurrpa, the Holistic Worldview

Stanner, an Australian anthropologist, suggested two ways of considering Jukurrpa in order to understand it: either to try to view everything in inseparable unison, an approach more in line with the Indigenous one, or to apply the differentiated European view, according to which Jukurrpa can be described as the emergence of the world together with the things and beings within it.⁴

⁴ Stanner 1979, pp. 24, 28

⁵ Ibid., p. 27

The first approach assumes that ‘*Man, society and nature, and past, present and future are at one together within a unitary system [...]*’.⁵ According to this, Jukurrpa is, on the one hand, a fixed ordering principle of values that define the spiritual quality of the world, and also of behaviours that maintain and continually revive the values and order of the world. These behaviours include the performance of sacred ceremonies not meant for the public or performed separately by women and men. Also included are rules about how to behave, e.g., when approaching a sacred site or a waterhole such as one inhabited by a woman transcended into a poisonous snake called Kutungka Napanangka, as described by Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri in his 1996 painting ‘Untitled’. On the other hand, Jukurrpa is a flexible system into which things from the changing world are integrated. As an example, the historical massacres are identified with the place where they occurred and thus become an integral part of Jukurrpa. The flexibility allows previously unknown things and behaviours to be incorporated into Jukurrpa and thus adapt it to the changing living conditions.



Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, *Untitled*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 59.5 × 89.5 cm (see fig. p. 115)

This flexibility has also been reflected in art, where previously unknown materials such as canvas and brushes were used as soon as they became available to represent the Indigenous cultural identity, which had previously been reflected in ground reliefs of different forms and materials for ceremonies or in rock paintings. To incorporate new events or things into Jukurrpa, it is important to connect them with the old and to transfer the power and spiritual identity inherent in the entities already present into the new ones. An example of this in art was a discussion in 1981, between male artists who painted with ochre and other men from the Wirrimanu (Balgo) community, about whether they should use acrylic for their paintings, like the artists from Papunya. There were close kinship and Jukurrpa relations between the people of Papunya and Wirrimanu. It was finally decided to use acrylic in their paintings and to exclude the symbols or stories that are secret/sacred (see pp. 213–214). At the same time, it was agreed to collect ochre from Country associated with the various artists, so that it could be mixed with synthetic polymer paints, individually for each artist. In this way, the spirituality and the power present in the Country were transferred to the new colours and to the canvas.⁶

⁶ Cf. Healy 2014, p. 28

Mary Graham, after lecturing (in Indigenous history, politics, and comparative philosophy) at the University of Queensland, worked in many regional and national organisations promoting Indigenous life and

rights. As an associate professor at the University of Queensland, she described Jukurrpa as follows, ‘*Aboriginal logic maintains that there is no division between the observing mind and anything else: there is no “external world” to inhabit. There are distinctions between the physical and the spiritual, but these aspects of existence continually interpenetrate each other. All perspectives are thus valid and reasonable: there is no one way or meaning of life. There is never a barrier between the mind and the Creative; the whole repertoire of what is possible continually presents or is expressed as an infinite range of Dreamings.*’⁷

⁷ Graham 2008, p. 189

Land and Identity

One constant in life is the connection to the land (Country). In English-language literature on Indigenous art, the word ‘Country’ is often used with a capital C rather than ‘land’ to indicate the difference between Western ownership of the land and Indigenous cultural association with Country. Country is essential in Indigenous culture and has multiple connotations. Basically, each person is associated with a part of the Country, just as conversely, the Country is associated with the person. It is not a relationship of ownership but rather a reciprocal relationship of care and responsibility. The Country, with its material and spiritual resources, provides for the well-being of the person, and the person, conversely, is responsible to the Country, ensuring that it is not harmed. The Country is alive. ‘*People talk about country in the same way that they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country,*⁸ *visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country and long for country. People say that country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy. Country is not a generalised or undifferentiated type of place [...]. Rather, country is a living entity, with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will toward life.*’⁹

⁸ ‘Singing the land’ means both celebrating the Country through appropriate ceremonies or songs, especially at sacred sites, and also remembering the past so as to affirm the future of the Country.

⁹ Rose 1996, p. 7

The Country associated with a person is of immense importance, not only culturally but also individually. The Country and the knowledge about the Country determine the identity of the person, his spiritual, moral, and material identity, because everything that is important for the life of the human being is laid out in the Country. The ancestors, including the creator ancestors (see p. 211), are localised there: that is, the ancestors of today’s people, those who determine the present relationships within the large families and society. Thus, a person’s association to a particular part of the Country also establishes the individual’s position and responsibility within the family and the community. The Indigenous society is not a hierarchical one. There are no kings or chiefs, but there are Elders among the women and men who bear responsibility because they have accumulated extensive knowledge. Existence is defined by collective wisdom with mutual responsibilities and an identity that is derived from Country and perpetuated in Jukurrpa.

¹⁰ Juli 2014, p. 81

Ralph Juli, the son of the artist Mabel Juli (Wirringoon), commented that ‘[...] if I don’t know story, I am nobody. Someone might come and ask me for my country and I’ll have nothing.’¹⁰ And, ‘Story is good for me—it helps me a lot in the way things are running now. I need to know Country so I know exactly where I am. I need to know who is my rightful family, where my family come [sic] from and who I am. I know Country through my relationships with family, on both sides—from my mother and my father. Other people might take over that Country if I don’t know. But if I know story, I can talk for that Country.’¹¹

¹¹ Ibid., p. 79

The spiritual and psychological dependence on the associated Country can be illustrated by the following example. When Warmun was flooded after days of heavy rain on March 15th, 2011, and most of the inhabitants were evacuated to Kununurra, many of the Gija did not feel comfortable there. Kununurra is part of the Miriwoong Country and the evacuees’ camp was close to important Miriwoong sacred sites. Mental well-being was disturbed because contact with their own Country was broken and they were on Country associated with other Indigenous groups.¹²

¹² Massola 2016, p. 41

The description on page 183 about the genocide of the Kaiadilt shows how life in the respective associated Country is indispensable for the continuation of the culture. On the individual level, the traumatic experience of the loss of Country is demonstrated by the following example. Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori, who was one of the exiled Kaiadilt, was able to afford to fly from Mornington Island to Bentinck Island because of the earnings she acquired through her art. The final time this occurred before her husband Pat Gabori died, was in 2007. A year

¹³ McLean, Bruce, 2016, p. 16

earlier, Pat Gabori had already ceased to speak and it was thought that speech was beyond him. ‘Yet, when he travelled back to his *dulka*, his Country, he erupted into speech, telling stories and giving voice to his many memories.’¹³

Another form of loss of Country, or loss of its cultural significance and thus damage to Jukurrpa, is seen when the Country itself is damaged, especially the sacred sites. This happens, for example, when roads are laid or when ground is excavated for mines. Damaged thereby are the spiritual values that remain in the Country from the bodies of the ancestors, i.e., also the narratives they represent, because there is an inseparable connection between the physical and the spiritual. Thus, the protection of Country is to be understood not only as its physical preservation but as a safeguarding of the spirituality that lies within the Country, a protection of Jukurrpa. A recent example of white society’s disrespect of



Rio Tinto’s Argyle mine produced diamonds for 37 years until 2020—at its peak it produced 40% of the world’s output—and destroyed many sacred sites in the process. Parts of the mine infrastructure are planned to remain in the ground forever, which arouses the adamant opposition of Indigenous people because then the Country can never heal.

Indigenous culture is the blasting of 46,000-year-old sacred sites, caves in Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara, in May 2020 by the British-Australian corporation Rio Tinto, in order to expand an ore mine. Access to Country and sacred sites is essential for the preservation of Indigenous culture, which is why the land rights movement experiences such intense support. It is not surprising, therefore, that there have often been, and still are, disputes between Indigenous people and companies, or the government, when mining of various kinds damages the Country and sacred sites in particular, e.g., diamonds in the Kimberley or uranium in the Kakadu National Park (which is supposedly protected as a World Heritage Site).

The bond of people with Country is not just a bond with nature but with everything which Country embodies. The following example illustrates the reciprocal relationships between Country and human beings, without which Jukurrpa is unthinkable.

The artist Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin said in 2008, *'I grew up with Kinyu. Kinyu is the one that grew me up.'*¹⁴ Kinyu is the name of a former soakage site where Well #35 was drilled during the construction around 1910 of the approximately 1,850 km long Canning Stock Route, used to muster livestock from Halls Creek to Wiluna in Western Australia. This soakage was extremely close to a very significant sacred site associated with and named after the dingo ancestor, Kinyu, the primordial mother of the dingo. Kinyu must be treated with great respect and reverence, which is why the name Jarntu, an Indigenous word for dingo, is often the only name used for her. Kinyu's children live in the rock holes connected by tunnels that surround the Well #35. She herself has healing powers that can be transferred to the people who are born there or are associated with this part of the Country, who thus become especially gifted healers of children. In addition, Kinyu protects people from danger.

Kinyu is thus both a specific and an important place because water can be found there and because an ancestor of that name lives there, who has special abilities that she can transfer to people. She is a dingo with important powers and was viewed by Eubena (Yupina) Nampitjin as a creature with human characteristics, who had great influence on her life. As in many stories cited in the chapter 'Narrated World', the holistic worldview, which knows no separation between natural, social, and spiritual phenomena, is evident here. Indigenous people do not feel an abstract but rather a deeply intimate and specific connection with their ancestors, who are manifest in the Country and without whom people's self-knowledge is impossible.

There is an interaction between the human being, the concern for the Country associated with them, and the spirituality contained in the Country and connected to the person. As Patrick Mung Mung said about a waterhole, *'When I go far away, water becomes dirty. When I come close, water becomes clear. I went away to Darwin and water became dirty, but when I came back to the water I could see it clear up, right in the middle. Fish was coming up to me.'*¹⁵

¹⁴ La Fontaine and Carty 2011, p. 95; cf. also WAAC 2005

¹⁵ Kranenbarg 2004, p. 39

As soon as people can care for the Country, which usually requires being there, materiality and spirituality combine. Often, however, it is not possible for people to live on their associated Country, because they had been expelled due to colonisation. To nevertheless ensure the connection, to keep the memory and the comprehensive knowledge of Country alive, it is important to visit the sacred sites again and again, and to perform ceremonies there. Caring for Country includes exactly that. This is another reason for the importance of the land rights movement, namely, to retain or regain access to sacred sites. As soon as the coercive laws against Indigenous Australians were relaxed in the 1970s, many moved back to their associated Country. The Pintupi were the first to return, initially to Yayayi Bore (Kakali Bore) 40 km west of Papunya and then to Walungurru (Kintore) 270 km west of Papunya and then to Kiwirrkurra, near their sacred sites where they could take care of the Country. By living according to principles handed down the generations and performing ceremonies, the people continually renew the connection between themselves and their Country.

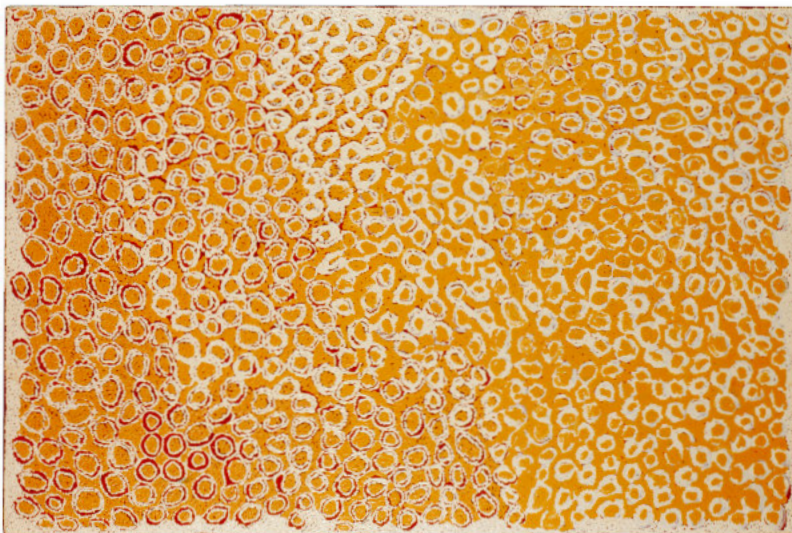
The essential connection of people with Country has two consequences for art. Firstly, through the painterly representation of the Country and everything it implies, it is possible to prove that people have always been associated with that part of the Country and the Country to them. That proof has been expressed in large, joint artworks (see p. 265) and is crucial in land rights cases. Secondly, the process of painting often seems more important than the completed painting itself, because the Country and all that it implies is animated by the process of painting. As Gabriel Nodea from Warmun said, ‘Corroboree¹⁶ and painting are like our archives [...] It keeps us strong and keeps connection to country and gives us strength to live in the white man’s world.’¹⁷ This strength is greatly needed, considering the history of repression (see pp. 218–220).

The Country is full of meaning and narratives, creating both in perpetual repetition and renewal. Almost every tree is named, every rock formation tells a story, every river has its meaning. The Country is full of life.

Walangkura Napanangka has shown this to perfection in her painting ‘Untitled’ from 2000. An abundance of closely spaced single or double circles covers the canvas. Each circle stands for a place or an important feature of the Country. The Country’s vigour is reflected in a painting style that makes a plethora of structures visible while reducing the colour palette to beige, orange and a deep red. Sometimes the double circles are painted in the kinti-kinti technique (see p. 298) with edges of different widths, revealing deep red

¹⁶ ‘Corroboree’ is the name given to a ceremony intended for the public, involving dance, song, and body painting, celebrating narratives from history, and celebrating spirituality.

¹⁷ Massola 2011, p. 124



Walangkura Napanangka, *Untitled*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 136 cm (see fig. p. 127)

²¹ ‘Madayin’ is the term used by the Yolŋu in northeast Arnhem Land for their system of laws. For a detailed description, see Gondarra and Trudgen 2011.

²² Skerritt 2016, p. 35

Regarding the artistic work of Terry Djambawa Marawili, Skerritt notes that, ‘*In translating this Law into paintings [...] Marawili asserts his embodied right to speak as part of his land. Painting is thus a claim to land ownership—and inalienably so, because entitlement is the result of the artist’s very embodiment. This adds complexity to Marawili’s request that people “look at my paintings and recognize our law”.* Beyond making a decisive claim for Yolŋu sovereignty over their ancestral territories, Marawili’s paintings are the defiant assertion of a fundamentally different way of viewing, valuing, and understanding the world. The translation of Madayin²¹ into paint is an attempt to communicate this radically different world picture.’²² (emphasis in the original)

Time

A characteristic of the unity of the social, physical, and spiritual world is that, in the Indigenous view, there is no strictly linear succession of times such as yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Influences exist in all directions. Thus, the flow of time as an abstract category does not exist in Indigenous philosophy. Even the narratives about massacres, portrayed in the paintings, are not classified in terms of time but are related to the place of the event or reported as an event that affects the family. Sometimes it is said that the narrative took place ‘during the Jukurrpa’, not assigning it to a specific time but interpreting it as an expression of Jukurrpa, the world-view. Whereas the Western concept of time considers, besides the present moment, only a linear forward or backward dimension and places all of existence in this scale of time, Indigenous philosophy sees existence in terms of events that happen, that have relationships based on place, not time: Reality *is*.

This concept implies that history is never finalised but ‘*[...is] a continually unfolding process, requiring a constitutive act of remembering designed to make the past present. [...] In this conception, history is never resolved or complete, but constantly replayed and extended.*’²³

²³ Skerritt 2012

History is therefore a living part of the present. In this respect, it would be misleading to speak of past traditions in the Indigenous world-view. Western cultures have major problems with this view. Admittedly, William Faulkner’s ‘*The past is never dead. It is not even past.*’²⁴ is sometimes declaimed and quoted, but it is rarely taken to heart.

²⁴ Faulkner 1956, p. 106

For non-literate societies, it is a logical and also very wise approach to cultivate a culture of remembrance through place-based stories, songs and ceremonies. In addition to conveying factual knowledge, the knowledge of human behaviour and spiritual existence is thus embedded in everyday life.

The interplay of past, present, and future and their inseparability from each other implies an everlastingness that is reflected in the persistence of Indigenous culture and Indigenous law. They are immutable in

the sense that Indigenous people are convinced that their culture will endure despite all the damage it has suffered from colonialist repression.

Jukurrpa as an Archive of Knowledge

Stanner's second suggested way of viewing Jukurrpa is as the creation of the world, together with all things as well as moral and societal rules, a creation story that is inseparable from the land, the sky and the sea. It is revealed in the thousands and thousands of narratives handed down in different variants, depending on the clan, that comprise Indigenous knowledge.

The land has always been present, but it was flat and inanimate. Creator ancestors emerged from the land, came down from the sky or rose from the sea. They travelled the land, creating mountains and hills, rock formations, waterholes, animals, and plants, the stars and everything that is visible today.²⁵ They also created the invisible, defined social rules of living together and generated knowledge. In a similar way that Country is understood as a living entity, Jukurrpa cannot be called a religion, and the creator ancestors are not gods. They act like humans, so they also possess negative qualities such as envy or violent rage. Like humans, they act positively or negatively. They are the ancestors from whom people today are descended.

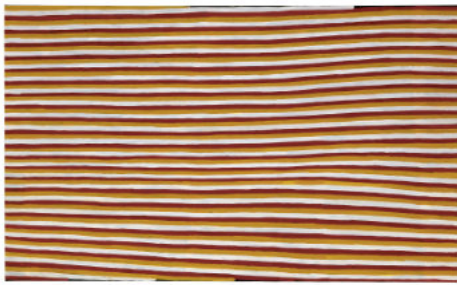
After the creator ancestors had finished their activities, they returned to the land, sea or the sky. There are sacred sites today where they re-entered the Country and became part of it.

In Indigenous philosophy, transcendencies play a major role and are an expression of the interconnections between humans, the Country and moral values. During the process of creation, ancestors could transform into animals, plants, rocks, or stars. However, these transcendencies do not imply an equivalence between humans, animals, plants, landscape formations, or heavenly bodies. The *Warlpiri to English encyclopaedic dictionary* explains the relationship as follows, 'The term jukurrpa may be applied to individual ancestral beings or to any manifestation of their power and nature, i.e., knowledge of their travels and activities, rituals, designs, songs, places, ceremonies. This provides the model for human and non-human activity, social behaviour, natural evolution. Jukurrpa is not conceived as being located in an historical past, but as an eternal process which involves the maintenance of these life forces, symbolized as men and as other natural species.'²⁶

The Indigenous knowledge system is therefore one of relationships that are woven between human beings, the Country that is associated with them, the creator ancestors, the metamorphosed beings, and real conditions. Country, sky, and sea are the archives of knowledge. They contain everything that people need for their current existence.

²⁵ In the chapter 'Narrated World', the formation of the moon as told by the Gija is described in detail using paintings (see pp. 226–229).

²⁶ Quoted from Goddard and Wierzbicka 2015, p. 44



Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, *Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 150.5 cm (see fig. p. 116)

Jukurrrpa, by manifesting as all knowledge, also exists in communion with the mundane. In other words, the mundane, such as the making and use of hunting implements like spears, is often linked to incidents from Jukurrrpa and to a specific place, e.g., as depicted by Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula in ‘Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau’. The making of spears is linked to a battle between two groups of men—the Mitukatjirri and an unnamed group—who met at a rock called Ilyingaungau, fought each other and then separated. The Mitukatjirri then went to the secret cave of the same name, where they performed ceremonies.²⁷ In this way, an everyday activity, here a craft, is linked with an ancient story of battle and with ceremonies together with their locations. Notable is that the men and the cave are given the same name, which indicates that men and place form a unity.



Shirley Purdie, *Untitled*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 220 × 139 cm (see fig. p. 72)

A good example of the interconnectedness of different spheres of life is also epitomised in the painting ‘Untitled’, 2003, by Shirley Purdie. In this work, she shows part of her worldview in 15 stories, ranging from a reference to a pleasant place to stay in cold weather to a Ngarranggarni narrative about the creation of diamonds. The diamond mining area of the Argyle mine was a sacred site of the Gija and Mirriwoong women. Ngarranggarni is as true as is the presence of diamonds; they are just different dimensions of one unity. The same is illustrated in the artworks by Gracie Morton Ngale, that at first glance refer to the wild plum (*Terminalia ferdinandiana*), whereby in nature it provides very nutritious sustenance. However, its presence is also associated with ceremonies that celebrate the spirit of the wild plum. In addition, the fruit plays a role for lovers, where sharing of the fruit shows the community that they should be recognised as a couple.²⁸ Thus, there are no boundaries between the mundane and Jukurrrpa. Seamless transition from one phenomenon to another is an axiom in the Indigenous worldview.

Historical Events as Part of Jukurrrpa

As an example of how historical events of the recent past can become part of Jukurrrpa and thus become a source of inspiration for art, consider a 1928 event known as the Coniston Massacre. Coniston is located about 250 km northwest of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and was the westernmost outpost of the invaders at the time. The actual starting point of the massacre was Yurrkuru (Brooks Soak) 20 km west of Coniston cattle station.²⁹ In the massacre, an unknown number of Warlpiri, Anmatyerr and Kaitetye people – estimates range from 31 to 110³⁰– were shot by a vigilante group led by Constable William George Murray, between August and late October 1928. The trigger for the first killings was the murder of the dingo hunter Frederick Brooks on August 7th, 1928, and it is generally assumed that the culprits were Warlpiri.³¹ The reason for the murder can no longer be verified. Massacres were usually a retaliation, e.g., for the killing of a

²⁷ Johnson 1996, p. 97

²⁸ Nicholls 2006, p. 40

²⁹ Wilson and O’Brien 2003, p. 60

³⁰ Kean 2011, p. 45

³¹ Wilson and O’Brien 2003, p. 62

white person in response to his sexual abuse of Indigenous women, or for the stealing and slaughter of cattle. Most of the Indigenous people were killed by Murray for no apparent reason. Family members of the artists Darby Jampijinpa Ross, Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri and Dinny Nolan Tjampitjinpa were among those murdered.³² A state commission of enquiry acquitted Murray because he allegedly acted in self-defence in all of his killings. The analysis by Wilson and O'Brien³³ and the similarly detailed report *Get Shot for Nothing* by Liam Campbell³⁴ told a clearly different story.

While there are differences in the oral accounts of Indigenous people about the Coniston Massacre, the strong emotions expressed indicate that such events are deeply embedded in memory. They are localised, inscribed in the place where they occurred, and have become part of the Country. Because the Country contains and provides the material and spiritual essence of life, these historical events can enter into the Jukurrpa, to be passed on to future generations, becoming also an inspiration for art.

The following events can illustrate this process. In 1984, the film 'The Coniston Story' was created by Frances Jupurrurla Kelly and the Warlpiri Media Association, one of the first videos involving Yuendumu. It was filmed at the site of the massacre. Without prior consultation with the small filming team, more than twenty Warlpiri decided to accompany them. The Warlpiri felt that as ceremonial custodians of the Country, they had an obligation to ensure that the story of the massacre would be told *junga*, that is, accurately and truthfully.³⁵

Discussion Secret/Sacred

Jukurrpa contains much information that is not meant for the public, neither Indigenous nor non-Indigenous. Such information is passed on to initiates in secret rituals, thus admitting them into the adult community. In later ceremonies, they are provided with further knowledge. This knowledge goes beyond facts, e.g., about the location of water holes. It is more. It is about the inherent binding relationships of the world. If this knowledge was made public, it would lose its effectiveness, and Jukurrpa would suffer irreparable damage. Moreover, individuals could even be endangered.

During the first months of the painting movement in 1970 (see pp. 338–343), some artists in Papunya were not yet aware that the paintings sold to Geoffrey Bardon would be resold. The artists assumed that Bardon would keep them and so some secret/sacred symbols from ceremonies were revealed in the works. Bobby West Tjupurrula, when asked why this was done, replied, '*They were happy and proud of their culture, of their knowledge, and they wanted to put it down in a painting and show other people what they knew.*'³⁶

A little later, the artists developed strategies to keep the sacred

³² Campbell 2006; McGregor 2011, p. 186; Kean 2011, p. 46

³³ Wilson and O'Brien 2003

³⁴ Campbell 2006, pp. 164–183

³⁵ Ginsburg 1995, p. 72, Hinkson 2002, p. 204

³⁶ Scholes 2017b, p. 122

knowledge secret. Overpainting, as Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula did with great differentiation and perfection (see also p. 240), was one method; changing the symbolism was another. There were recurring discussions about what could be made public. This was also the case during the famous painting of the school doors of Yuendumu, whereby original symbolism in some places was painted over or changed by the artists on the instructions of the knowledgeable Elders.³⁷ Nevertheless, the works of art are not mundane but full of meaning. The artists recognise the secret/sacred meaning associated with the artworks. John Mawurndjul said, *‘Everything I paint can be looked at, the view is free, but hidden in it are secret meanings that others do not need to know.’*³⁸ Similarly, Bobby West Tjupurrula stated that, *‘[...] We only tell others [outsiders] what they need to know [...].’*³⁹

The preservation of the secret/sacred principle is thus the reason why paintings are only ever provided with narratives suitable for public usage.

Preserving the Cultural Heritage

Art created outside the major cities has always had a political dimension. It was, and still is, an act of cultural self-assertion, understood as teaching Western society about Indigenous culture, as teaching one’s own descendants, as a form of affirmation of identity and representation or as a demand for land or sea rights. Nevertheless, the art is not primarily making political demands according to the Western model. Rather, in its diversity, it is a holistic presentation of Indigenous life, oriented towards self-assertion and reconciliation, despite all the attacks by settler society. The artist Mawalan Marika, who lived in Eastern Arnhem Land, shortly before his death in 1967 said to his son Wandjuk Marika,

*‘Look Wandjuk, my son, I’m no longer with you.
I have passed it all on to you.
You have to think hard
and learn about many ways.
Take my stick (djuta),
take my word,
take my energy,
take my courage.
One Day the Balanda,⁴⁰
they will come and destroy our land,
but I’m not going to see what is going to happen,
so you have to stand tall,
to talk for our land,
for your children,
for your children’s children.*

³⁷ AIATSIS 1992, p. 138

³⁸ Kohen 2005, p. 72

³⁹ Scholes 2017b, p. 122

⁴⁰ ‘Balanda’ is a term of the Yolŋu for white people.

*Doesn't matter whatever, whether black or white,
if they're going to hate you, don't take notice of them seriously,
just talk kindly and sensibly.*⁴¹

⁴¹ Marika and Isaacs 2008, p. 10

Jukurrpa as Everlasting Energy

Citing Stanner again, *'The European has a philosophical literature which expresses a largely deductive understanding of reality, truth, goodness, and beauty. The blackfellow has a mythology, a ritual, and an art which express an intuitive, visionary, and poetic understanding of the same ultimates. In following out The Dreaming, the blackfellow "lives" this philosophy. It is an implicit philosophy, but nevertheless a real one.'*⁴²

⁴² Stanner 1979, p. 29

The artist and author Sally Morgan described the life-giving, meaning-giving, emotional characteristic of Country as follows, *'Country is the source of all creation, all beauty, all wisdom. It sustains us, nourishes us, guides us. It gives us life, and teaches us how to live, so that life—in all its shapes—will always go on. Country is our joy, our love, our hope. Country is our heart.'*⁴³

⁴³ Morgan, Tjalaminu and Blaze 2008, p. viii

Just as new narratives can arise, law and customs are not unchanging, not static. To accommodate the evolving environment into Jukurrpa, new concepts emerge. However, they are not interpreted as being new but rather as being adaptations. Thus, Indigenous identity, and by extension art, has never insisted on being backward-looking, beholden only to the past. Partly due to coercion through physical and cultural annihilation, but even more because of their own conceptualisation and understanding of time and thus of history, Indigenous identity has been able to change and develop by combining parts of the contemporary culture that is rushing in with the culture that has been passed down through generations. This is not surprising, considering that contact with settlers has already existed for more than two centuries. Furthermore, there is a deep conviction that the culture of other people must be acknowledged and not spurned, that it has equal validity, as expressed by John Mawurndjul (see p. 11). Indigenous culture recognises coexistence and adopts what it finds to be meaningful or of value. This perspective, the connection of different times and cultures, the cross-border openness, makes Indigenous art a contemporary one. It is not constrained within one tradition but opens up to the multi-layered and interwoven world, without abjuring the Indigenous heritage.

In art, the inseparable relationships of Jukurrpa come alive. Art has several functions. On the one hand, it is artistic expression, and the artists, like everyone else in the world, try to make a living from their work. On the other hand, art has the function of sustaining culture and reliving it again and again. Art is a documentation of the power that is in Country. Wandjuk Marika expressed it as follows,

'I am not painting just for my pleasure,

*there is a meaning, knowledge and power.
 This is the earthly painting for the creation
 and for the land story.
 The land is not empty,
 the land is full of knowledge,
 full of story,
 full of goodness,
 full of energy,
 full of power.
 Earth is our mother,
 the land is not empty—
 there is the story I am telling you—special, sacred, important.’⁴⁴*

⁴⁴ Marika and Isaacs 1995, p. 125

Jukurrpa has a conglomerate of meanings. United and acting together within it are: the place which determines a person’s soul, the principles for living together, and histories about the origin of the world and all its phenomena. Jukurrpa explains natural phenomena and the spiritual values that arise from Country. Jukurrpa is a paradigm that connects the real world with the spiritual one, linking facts and actions with moral values that hold the world together. Jukurrpa is an everlasting source of energy from which people can draw.

Repression as a Source of Inspiration

A second major source of inspiration for art is the history of repression against First Australians by colonialist society. Whereas the artists who live in rural areas reference persecutions in their art, especially in the form of massacres as localised history, the so-called ‘urban artists’ often create artworks of accusation and protest. Such works demonstrate three main themes: identity, Indigenous history, and post-colonial politics. It is debatable whether these are in fact three distinct themes, because Indigenous identity today is inconceivable without considering responses to racism. This includes responses to everyday racism, to histories of persecution and genocide, and to current discriminatory government policies. Even artists like Tracey Moffatt or Gordon Bennett, neither of whom want to be labelled as *Indigenous* artists but simply as *artists*, which of course applies to all artists, react in many of their works to Indigenous history and to racism.

Other themes include the confrontation with the personal past, such as ‘The Stolen Generations’—the kidnapping by the government of children of Indigenous women and white men—and the importance of the family. Country is also a recurring theme, whether as a reference to the bond with Indigenous Country, as Lin Onus indicates in ‘And on the Eighth Day...’ (see also p. 293), or as a critique of the destruction of the

Country, as Nici Cumpston depicts in ‘Ringbarked, Nookamka Lake’ (see also pp. 255–256).

The following quotations from three Indigenous artists and one author, as well as a visual statement by the photographer Ricky Maynard, show commonalities between the perceptions of Indigenous artists from the cities and from those in the countryside.

The artist Nici Cumpston, curator since 2008 at the Art Gallery of South Australia in Adelaide, commented in 2010 that, ‘*We believe that the land owns us, not the other way around, and we must do our utmost to care for it. State and territory borders do not exist for Aboriginal people. Our boundaries are drawn by our birth places and our relationships to those places, made manifest through the ancient stories connecting our people to their country.*’⁴⁵

Michael Riley replied, when asked in an interview whether there was a spiritual bond between urban Indigenous people and those living in rural areas, ‘*Of course, you don’t lose your Aboriginality.*’⁴⁶

Judy Watson said in 1992, ‘*I’ve just been thinking about Aboriginality—all of us carry a sense of that being some part of our lives, our history, our parentage. When we do not look visibly the stereotype of an Aboriginal person we are assumed to have no identity. We are the invisible Aboriginals.*’⁴⁷

Jim Everett, Indigenous author from Tasmania, wrote, ‘*Aboriginality and Aboriginal identity, Indigeneity or Native: the sense of Aboriginal being and Aboriginal spirituality are integral dimensions to each other. There is no set spiritual formula, or One Story; there simply exists a fundamental connection with the greater spirit of our Earth Mother whereby we respect all other life.*’⁴⁸ (emphasis in the original)

The longing for the lost land is not only for Country and its implicit relation with the creation of the world and the rules of coexistence but is linked to grief for the people lost together with the land. Ricky Maynard’s art captures this longing in the photograph ‘Broken Heart’ and clarifies it with a quotation as part of the artwork, from a petition to Queen Victoria by eight Indigenous Elders, dated February 17th, 1846, ‘*When we left our own place we were plenty of People, we are now but a little one.*’⁴⁹

The fact that the artist chooses a seascape for this, not a place on the land, is due partly to his family history. Maynard’s extended family escaped persecution in Tasmania by moving first to Cape Barren Island in Bass Strait in the mid-19th century and later settling on Flinders Island. On the other hand, the completely empty and calm sea, the almost cloudless white sky and the lone figure of a man who looks into this emptiness without finding anything, evokes in the viewer a feeling of hopelessness and longing.



Lin Onus, *And on the Eighth Day...*, 1992, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182 × 245 cm



Nici Cumpston, *Ringbarked II, Nookamka Lake*, 2008, inkjet print on canvas, hand-coloured with watercolours and pencil, 75 × 205 cm

⁴⁵ Cumpston and Patton 2010, p. 13

⁴⁶ Riley and Dewdney 1994, p. 144

⁴⁷ Isaacs 1992, p. 10

⁴⁸ Everett 2006

⁴⁹ Reprinted in MCA 2007, p. 51



Ricky Maynard, *Broken Heart*, 2005, black and white silver gelatine print, 40.5 × 40.5 cm (see caption opposite)

For a better understanding of the so-called ‘urban art’, some information on the history of repression is useful.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that more than 300,000 people lived in Australia in 1788, at the time of the arrival of the first eleven English ships in Sydney Bay.⁵⁰ The ships were filled with about 741 military personnel and ships’ crews and 759 prisoners, of whom 191 were women.⁵¹ At that time, most Australians lived near coasts and rivers where food was plentiful.

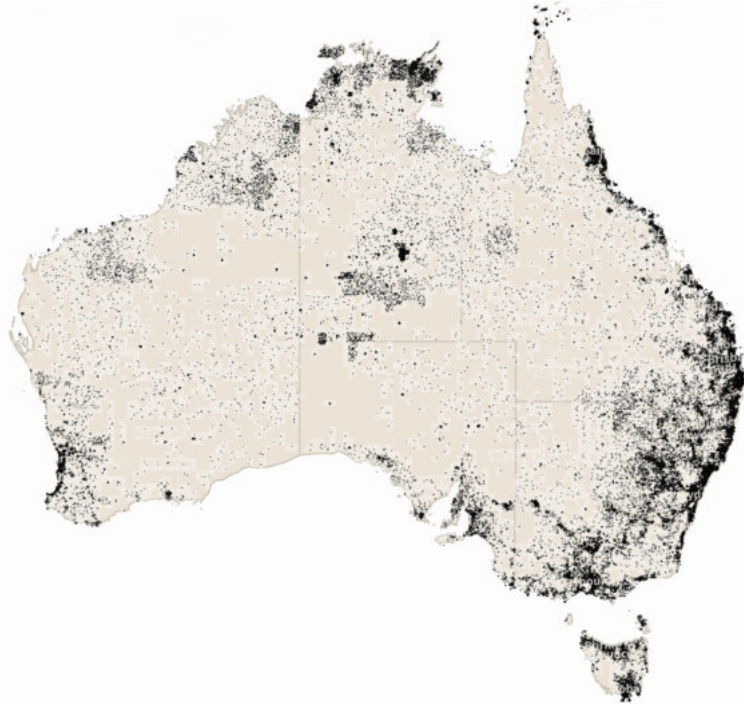
During the next 140 years, the conquerors and colonists caused the death of the majority of Indigenous people through disease, starvation or massacres and attempted to destroy their culture through forced assimilation, kidnapping of children, as well as other political methods defined

by international human rights law as genocidal.⁵² By 1930, 75% of the original population had been wiped out, with only about 75,000 surviving.⁵³ This period is called ‘The Killing Times’. Yet, the Indigenous peoples survived. And more than that, their numbers increased to about 800,000 people, or 3% of the population, as estimated by the Australian Bureau of Census in 2016. The graphic shows the distribution of Indigenous people across Australia, with the majority living along the coasts and in the major cities.

Australia was declared an independent nation by the British Parliament on January 1st, 1901. Since then, federal government policy has taken dozens of different approaches and U-turns regarding land rights, support for health and medical treatment, allowing, encouraging, or prohibiting the teaching of Indigenous languages in primary schools, racial discrimination and many

other issues that fundamentally affect the lives of Indigenous Australians. In 1937, the federal government consulted with those senior officials of the seven Australian states who were responsible for social legislation affecting Indigenous Australians, in a conference about the ‘Indigenous problem’. They recorded as its first conclusion, ‘[...] *the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth, and it [this Congress] therefore recommends that all efforts be directed to that end. [...] the general policy in respect to full-blooded natives should be [...] (b) To keep the semi-civilised under a benevolent supervision [on reservations ... until] their elevation to class (a).*’⁵⁴

Other records of the Congress evoke nausea in today’s reader, as they are fatally reminiscent of the propaganda in Germany at the time, with opinions like, ‘[...] *there is no reason in the world why these coloured people should not be absorbed into the community. To achieve this end we must*



Places of residence of Indigenous Australians according to the 2011 Census (after Saberi et al. 2015)

⁵⁰ ABS 2019a

⁵¹ Bateson 1985, p. 97

⁵² UN 1948

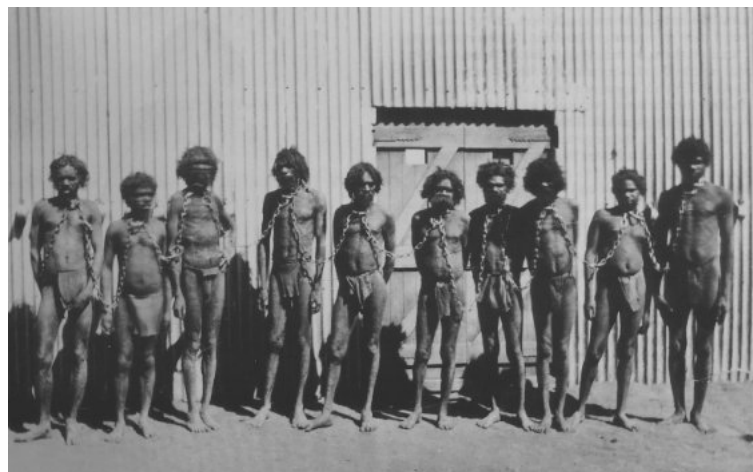
⁵³ ABS 2019a

⁵⁴ Australian Government 1937, p. 3

have charge of the children at the age of six years; it is useless to wait until they are twelve or thirteen years of age. In Western Australia we have power under the act to take any child from its mother at any stage of its life, no matter whether the mother is legally married or not.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 11

For multiple generations, the government had been able to remove Indigenous people to reserves where they needed written permission if they wanted to leave the area, be visited by friends or family, marry, etc. It was not until the *Aborigines Act 1971 Cth* that this forcible confinement to reserves was fully abolished. However, today's policy still allows Indigenous people to be arrested or detained, for example if they are found in possession of several litres of alcohol in any of the areas to which the so-called 'Intervention' laws (see below) apply. The ban applied even in their own homes, with penalties of up to six months in jail, as set out in the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012 Cth*, Section 8. Anyone caught by police for drunkenness three times in 60 days risked 90 days of compulsory detention in a rehabilitation centre, which in Alice Springs is conveniently located next to the prison. This provision was repealed after a few years, but similar oppressive laws still exist.



Prisoners in the 1880s

The Northern Territory Intervention Acts (the 'Intervention') were announced by Prime Minister Howard on June 21st, 2007. They were aimed at controlling the income expenditure of about 70% of the Indigenous people in the Northern Territory, reducing community service employment in their communities, removing their ability to deny access to unwelcome tourists, suspending the right of Indigenous groups to participate in mining negotiations and prohibiting self-government of communities. There were a variety of additional discriminatory measures. The stated intention was to increase policing, reduce unemployment, alcoholism, and child sexual abuse, and improve health, nutrition, and housing conditions. The 220 pages of laws were passed by the Senate in just four days, without any consultation with affected Indigenous stakeholders.

Three years later, however, unemployment had risen by about a third and alcoholism had increased. Government agencies' reports admitted in the fine print that there had been no evidence of particularly high levels of sexual abuse prior to the 'Intervention', health indicators had worsened, nutrition was unchanged, and the number and quality of housing had not improved. The incarceration rate for Indigenous people had increased by over 30% by 2010, and by 2014 it had doubled and was about 15 times higher than the national rate for non-Indigenous people.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Frost 2017

On February 13th, 2008, the new Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, made his famous Sorry speech to the Australian House of Representatives, 'We apologise for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments

⁵⁷ Rudd 2008, p. 167

that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.’⁵⁷ This was lip service, from which Rudd’s own support for the ‘Intervention’ had been purged. It was a perfidious and macabre speech, because the abductions of Indigenous children and other schemes of the ‘Intervention’ were ongoing and unabated.

⁵⁸ Australian Government 2010, p. 39

Two years later, a confidential report for the Federal Cabinet by the Federal Department of Finance and Deregulation summarised the situation as follows, ‘*The history of Commonwealth policy for Indigenous Australians over the past 40 years is largely a story of good intentions, flawed policies, unrealistic assumptions, poor implementation, unintended consequences and dashed hopes. Strong political commitments and large investments of government funding have too often produced outcomes which have been disappointing at best and appalling at worst.*’⁵⁸

⁵⁹ Anaya 2010

Also in 2010, the United Nations appointed an independent expert to assess the ‘Intervention’. His final report in June of the same year concluded that several aspects of the ‘Intervention’ were racially discriminatory against Indigenous Australians and violated their basic human rights.⁵⁹

⁶⁰ Australian Government 2020b

In 2012, however, the ‘Intervention’ was extended in most respects for another ten years under the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012 Cth*. Eight years later, the quality of life of Indigenous people across Australia was still many times worse than that of non-Indigenous people. Indigenous child mortality rates were double those of non-Indigenous children. Adult mortality rates worsened relatively over the decade and were about 1.7 times higher than for non-Indigenous people. Life expectancy was about eight years shorter, at 72 years. Prime Minister Scott Morrison could not avoid mentioning these facts in his February 2020 report to Parliament on the living conditions of Indigenous people.⁶⁰ The fact that Australia had experienced uninterrupted economic growth since 1992 makes the governments’ failures all the more incomprehensible.

That extraordinary art can emerge under such socio-political conditions speaks volumes about political resistance, the indomitable will to preserve culture and the transformative power of art.

Conclusion

Indigenous art is, on the one hand, event-oriented in that it incorporates events from ancient or more recent times into the artworks. It does not signify whether the events are creation narratives or political events such as massacres. On the other hand, art is memory-oriented in that it references the topographic forms of the artist’s Country in either a concrete or else transcendent way. And it is highly emotional. The knowledge that flows into the paintings, that is contained in them, is transformed into an emo-

tion, into an emotional pictorial expression. This emotion radiates back from the paintings and can evoke the chanting of the songs and dancing of the dances associated with the narratives contained in the paintings, all as part of Jukurrpa. It is said of Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori, for example, that at the press preview of the exhibition ‘unDisclosed’ at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in 2012, when faced with the display of her paintings, she could no longer stay seated in her wheelchair but just had to rise to chant and dance.⁶¹

⁶¹ McLean, Bruce, 2016, p. 30

On the one hand, the paintings are a visualisation of spiritual-emotional references to Country and what is imbued within it. Cowan aptly described this as, ‘*What we are seeing when we look at their works is a visualization of that “invisible architecture” which makes up the world.*’⁶² On the other hand, the paintings also serve to show identity, for example, when Lin Onus explicitly uses the iconography of artists from outside the cities in the landscape depicted in ‘And on the Eighth Day ...’ (see p. 293). Or else, they drag the history of oppression of the First Australians into the light of day, give Indigenous history a visual expression and are a constant outcry against the indifference of a colonialist society that relies on repression when dealing with an uncomprehended Indigenous reality.

⁶² Cowan 1994, p. 25

Much Indigenous art is autobiographical in the sense that, starting from the history of the individual artist and his or her ideological or familial interdependencies, the art shows the connection to Country, to history, as well as to current politics, social phenomena, or particular events. The pictorial inventions in the art are extremely diverse, and the views about the meaning of Country and of oppression may be equally diverse. Despite all the individuality, however, related values emerge. Indigenous art is not limited to documenting lost cultures. Quite the opposite: in its pride in its own cultures, in the presentation of its own identity and in relation to the history of persecution—whether it is about land rights or racism—the so-called ‘urban art’ converges with the art of central and northern Australia.

05 — Narrated World

‘I like painting from my heart. [...] I love painting pictures, big pictures; it makes my soul strong.’

Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin¹

Introduction

Learning a new painterly language is like learning a new spoken language. Some concepts are completely new and have no direct relation to your own first language. Other concepts seem easy to grasp but then prove to be strange. Therefore, it is helpful to see many examples of the new visual language while learning their context. Such an approach was chosen here, whereby the examples complement the explanations and themes of the previous chapter.

Having previously discussed in this book artworks by some important artists—the list could be extended many times over—, this chapter refers to various individual artworks to exemplify some basic aspects of contemporary Indigenous art. At the same time, fundamental directions in the art are shown. It is an art that often uses layers of narrative in paintings, that can capture the entire worldview in one artwork, that deals with history—especially colonialism—and that has the goal of communicating Indigenous cultures both to Indigenous descendants and to non-Indigenous society. In addition, this chapter gives reasons why aspects of the art are difficult for the non-Indigenous viewer to decipher.

Important themes are handled, such as the priority of the family and the inseparable connection of human beings with Country, as are the manifold influences that this solidarity and mutual responsibility have on the art. Indigenous culture is a living one and takes many political events as artistic themes to document them, to raise them from oblivion, to mourn them or to criticise them. The art opposes the stereotypical representation of Indigenous people and the corresponding racism. This chapter notes transcultural influences, e.g., of Christianity, and some responses by non-Indigenous artists to Indigenous art. It also notes intra-cultural responses, mutual inspiration within families of artists, or between Indigenous artists of very different art movements. There is an attempt at the end of the chapter to clarify the question of abstraction in Indigenous art.

¹ WAAC 2005, p. 19

Narrative Art

‘Through painting, I will teach you first the surface stories ... the deeper meanings I hold in my hands.’

Narritjin Maymuru²

Indicative Art from a Holistic Worldview

² National Museum of Australia 2013, p. 5

Indigenous art is a narrative art. The paintings almost always contain a reference to a particular part of the Country, to a historical event, to an everyday occurrence, or else they tell a story that denotes a moral principle or an Indigenous law. In this respect, and with reference to the fact that the narratives convey received truths, this art can also be called indicative—in the sense of the Latin *indicare* ‘to indicate’—because it acquaints the viewer with a specific worldview and all its implications.

One should always bear in mind that this worldview is holistic and is not linearly constrained, in contrast to Western views. A sweeping generalisation may be useful here. A European typically bases his/her thinking on concepts that go back to, e.g., Aristotle or Socrates, and learns from childhood that everything can be built up modularly like bricks in a wall. The Indigenous Australian has typically learned from stories told by Elders or with the help of ceremonial songs that are sometimes older than the pyramids. In that worldview, everything is wonderfully multi-layered and interwoven, comparable to a living ecosystem. Whereas a Western European thinks, like Isaac Newton, that a thing moves in a straight line unless external forces direct it into a different path, an Indigenous Australian typically thinks in categories that can be compared to aspects of quantum mechanics: a thing can have the characteristics of particles as well as of waves; a change in one place can affect what happens in a far distant place.

As in any other art, Indigenous artists paint what is thematically significant to them, reflecting their culture as it is lived in the present day. The Jukurrpa narratives recounted through generations are no less real than everyday events or historical events, just of different relevance. Whereas material possessions are often of secondary importance in Indigenous cultures, the possession of knowledge, especially knowledge of moral and social laws, is of the highest value. Therefore, the works of older artists, who have accumulated more knowledge and can reference it in their paintings, are usually considered to be of higher quality and value. Some artists judge the material value of a painting according to the relevance of the portrayed narrative to the spiritual life within the Indigenous community.³ The artists constantly discuss and evaluate their paintings within the art centres.

³ Kjellgren 2002, p. 354

The meaning of the narratives and the acceptance of this meaning

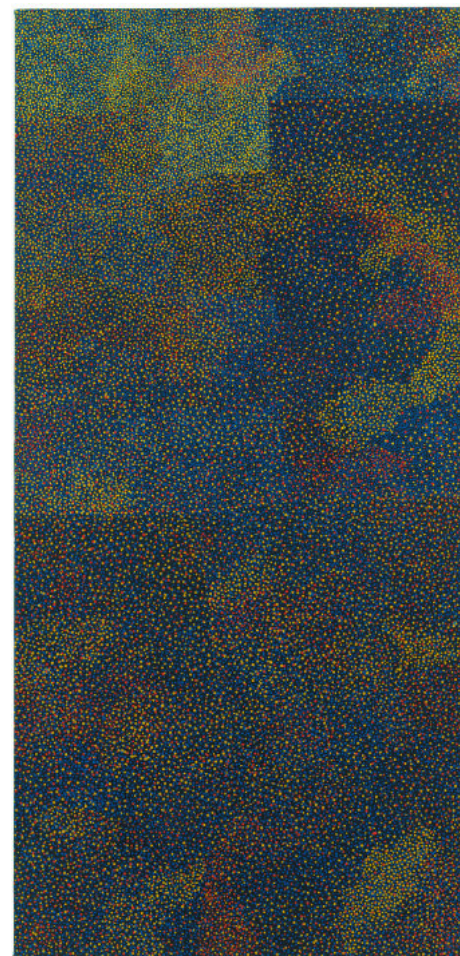
by the community give the paintings value, power and also beauty in the eyes of the Indigenous artists. Beauty arises from memory; it is the repeated reflection on what constitutes the essence and values of life in the Indigenous community and how deeply these are anchored in the artwork. This may be one reason, in addition to the direct relationship of the artist with Country and local history, why many of the artists create artworks in thematic series. The story in the painting is often of such great importance that it does not become 'used up'. On the contrary, it should be painted, sung or danced over and over again in order to animate it and maintain the connection between the narrative and people. The reliving of the narratives, reliving the interactions with the characters in the narratives, is intertwined with present reality. Thus, the theme can and should be painted repeatedly, whereby composition, colours and painting techniques can vary markedly yet retain the same meaning.

The following analyses of paintings illustrate the narrative aspects of Indigenous art and, at the same time, show that in this respect no fundamental distinction can be made between artists who live in the major cities and those who live in rural areas. What is crucial is that their convictions, which flow into their brushstrokes, are influenced by Indigenous cultures and Indigenous value systems.

Narrative Layers, True Stories, Concepts of Time

In addition to the omnipresent connection between Country, history, and people, other essential characteristics of Indigenous art can be seen in the paintings. Each narrative has multiple levels. Moreover, they interconnect various times with each other, and each narrative is true in the sense that each defines present spiritual life and explains natural phenomena.

One example of this may be seen in a painting by Gladdy Kemarre, who was inspired by Awely (ceremonial body painting) associated with the story of the wild plum (Anwekety). It concerns the artist's country called Alhalkere, about 230 kilometres northeast of Alice Springs. Altyerr is the term for Jukurrpa in her Anmatyerr language. The different colours in the painting show the changing colours of the plum as it ripens. The wild plum is a unique food source with medicinal qualities because it contains 150 times more vitamin C than oranges and is rich in antioxidants. The wild plum is a plant that is very dependent on water supply. It blooms in a lavish blaze of colour after rainfall but withers very quickly after hot summer months. The impression that only everyday things are depicted in this painting is deceptive, however, because the places where this food is found in abundance are often also those where ceremonies take place or will take place because, in those locations, nourishment for many people can be found. Furthermore, a black colour can be extracted from the ripe fruit and used for body painting during ceremonies.



Gladdy Kemarre, Anwekety Altyerr, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 175.5 × 83 cm (see fig. p. 91)

Different levels of the narrative are interconnected in the painting. Wild plums are shown on the superficial level, representing food for the family. However, they are shown in various degrees of ripeness, ignoring Western temporal phases that strictly separate yesterday from today and from tomorrow. Time, in the European sense of a strict sequence, plays a subordinate role in Indigenous culture, because past, present, and future are intertwined, affecting each other. This, therefore, increases the relative importance of the locations where the events occur. On the second narrative level, the wild plum becomes an inseparable part of Country and, therefore, enters the interrelationship between the artist and the Country, Alhalkere. On the deepest level, the painting is about sacred ceremonies performed by women or, rather, the body painting used in them. All levels are only hinted at, but their meaning goes far beyond what is visible on the surface.

As in this example, much of contemporary Indigenous art is about making visible the cultural heritage and worldview, not as a past tradition but as a continuity of the past into the present, as a condition operating on the present life and equally into the future.

A more detailed analysis of the entanglements of Country, history, time, and cosmos can be made for two paintings by Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon). The artist provided the following narrative with her painting 'Darrajayin (Springvale Station)' from 1999, *'In the centre of the painting is the waterhole Mowrungarrin in the form of a circle of yellow dots. Diamonds were discovered here. The waterhole is surrounded by hills; the red hill is called Dairelingin. The blue areas are balalin, large flat rocks. The hills appearing striped with the help of dots are the Garnkiny Ngarranggarni, the Moon Ngarranggarni. On the right is the hill Garnkiny, the moon, and to the left of him is Daawool, the black-headed python (thoowerndemanbel), the mother-in-law of the moon. In the Ngarranggarni, Garnkiny returned from kangaroo hunting and saw a mother with her daughter. The mother, Daawool, was very beautiful with long black hair, and Garnkiny fell in love with her. The people asked Garnkiny who he wanted to be his wife, and he replied that he loved the mother. The people pointed out that he could not take her as his wife because she was his mother-in-law, asked him again whom he wanted to marry and pointed to some suitable young women. But again, Garnkiny pointed to Daawool. Thereupon Garnkiny was expelled, because it is forbidden for mothers-in-law and sons-in-law to marry each other. Enraged, Garnkiny climbed a hill and rose into the sky. As he left the people, he menaced them, saying that they would all die, but that he would return to life every month.'*



Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), Darrajayin (Springvale Station), 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm (see fig. p. 68)

'In the centre of the painting is the waterhole Mowrungarrin in the form of a circle of yellow dots. Diamonds were discovered here. The waterhole is surrounded by hills; the red hill is called Dairelingin. The blue areas are balalin, large flat rocks. The hills appearing striped with the help of dots are the Garnkiny Ngarranggarni, the Moon Ngarranggarni. On the right is the hill Garnkiny, the moon, and to the left of him is Daawool, the black-headed python (thoowerndemanbel), the mother-in-law of the moon. In the Ngarranggarni, Garnkiny returned from kangaroo hunting and saw a mother with her daughter. The mother, Daawool, was very beautiful with long black hair, and Garnkiny fell in love with her. The people asked Garnkiny who he wanted to be his wife, and he replied that he loved the mother. The people pointed out that he could not take her as his wife because she was his mother-in-law, asked him again whom he wanted to marry and pointed to some suitable young women. But again, Garnkiny pointed to Daawool. Thereupon Garnkiny was expelled, because it is forbidden for mothers-in-law and sons-in-law to marry each other. Enraged, Garnkiny climbed a hill and rose into the sky. As he left the people, he menaced them, saying that they would all die, but that he would return to life every month.'

The connection between the artist and the Country is present in several ways. Darrajayin, now enclosed by the Springvale cattle station, is a part of the Country associated with the artist's mother, and Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon) worked on this station during her childhood. The narrative

is about a site near the artist's present home of Warmun in the Kimberley, i.e., near the Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles) National Park. It is a hilly area characterised by its unique appearance with transverse striations caused by iron mineral-infused sandstone with crusts of cyanobacteria. Mabel July (Wiringgoon) takes this up in her painting in the form of the three transversely dotted hills, with the space between two of these hills filled with white dots. The hills are the actual bearers of the narrative and the location of the event. By localising the narrative in the Country, it can be portrayed as a painting of the Country. Thus, the Country contains both a marriage law and the story of the formation of the moon, i.e., out of the Country arise both Indigenous morality and natural phenomena. It seems to be this connection between the Country and the law it incorporates, that leads Indigenous people to see their law as inalienable and everlasting.



Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles)

As mentioned above, one of the hallmarks of Indigenous art is that the narrative in many paintings has multiple layers of meaning, the deepest of which is usually only accessible to those who have been extensively initiated into Indigenous knowledge throughout their lives. In Mabel Juli's (Wiringgoon) painting, several layers of meaning are revealed and interconnected. The first, the visible layer, is about features of the Country such as hills or waterholes and the Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles) hills. The second level denotes a marriage law, and the third proclaims the formation of the moon. The fourth level, which deals with the lost immortality of humans, is only hinted at in the story accompanying the painting and only becomes apparent through the artists' comments on this narrative. Phyllis Thomas, who began painting in 1998 and whose work is represented in the collections of some of Australia's major art museums, also commented on the Garnkiny story, *'If he had married his mother-in-law the Black-Headed Snake we would have been right, just like him. When we died we would have come back to life like him.'*⁴ And Mabel July (Wiringgoon) commented, *'We would have stayed alive always you know, just die for three days and then come out alive again. This did not happen because they wronged him [Garnkiny]. If they had said that he could marry the beautiful Black-Headed Snake woman it would have been alright. We would have died for three days and then risen again.'*⁵ Thus, the marriage law of the forefathers changed the world forever and was accompanied by the loss of immortality.

Notable is the Christian-influenced choice of words 'risen again', which is more commonly used in connection with the resurrection of Christ after three days than with phases of the moon. In fact, many Warmun residents adhere to the Catholic faith while simultaneously living their Indigenous beliefs. On the other hand, the statements could also refer to the cycle of the new moon. Although the time interval between the still

⁴ Warmun 2014, p. 12

⁵ Ibid., p. 36

visible waning moon and the new moon is only about 35 hours, three days fits the perceived interval since on both days before and after the new moon it is invisible to the eye, i.e., only briefly visible as an extremely narrow crescent.

The story is also evidence of the way Indigenous cultures deal with different time frames, namely, not to regard them as consecutive but as fused together. The desire to marry and the expulsion of Garnkiny are set solely in the distant past, according to Western understanding. However, they are in fact linked both to an event from the more recent past (the discovery of diamonds or their mining in the Argyle diamond mine beginning in 1982) and to the rising and the setting moon, which took place in the past, is taking place today and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

This notion of times interacting is not reserved to Indigenous people far from the major cities. For example, in the context of his 2016 photography series ‘Mother’ and his 2015 photographic artwork ‘Identity–Andu (Son)’, Michael Cook wrote, ‘*I create artwork about Indigenous issues, past and present, and how the past relates to the present and eventually moulds the future.*’⁶

⁶ Cook 2016

The story of Mabel Juli’s (Wiringgoon) painting reveals another Indigenous principle: the transformation or duality of human, animal, or other natural phenomena. One hill *is* the moon; a second hill *is* Daawool, and at the same time is the black-headed python (*Aspidites melanocephalus*) and the moon’s mother-in-law. This idea of transformation reflects a certain conception of truth. The narrative exists, it takes place, and it is not simply a fantasy or a belief. For example, Rover Thomas (Joolama) said of his Goorirr Goorirr cycle that he did not invent or compose it; it was ‘true’.⁷ Just as the massacres of Indigenous people in the so-called Frontier Wars, often perpetrated with police assistance, are true, so are the narratives told in the paintings. The artists do not invent reality but reactivate it. It is a reality that is connected to their person. In summary: ‘*Two aspects of traditional epistemology—what we might characterize as the traditional philosophy of knowledge and knowledge acquisition—are especially significant in this respect. The first is belief that all that is really important, including knowledge itself, derives from the Dreaming. The second is that the Dreaming is a continuing process, not a process at an end but one linking past and present and involving living people in its continuance.*’⁸

⁷ Carrigan 2003, p. 59

⁸ Ibid.

The narratives within the paintings are not only true but also have a material aspect beyond the spiritual one, manifesting in physical forms in the Country or as celestial bodies. For example, as retold by Mabel July (Wiringgoon), the moon left a crescent-shaped depression in a flat basalt rock in the Little Pantan River when he tried to fish with the help of a bundle of spinifex grass. He ate all the big fish and prevented the small ones from swimming upstream. That is why nowadays only small fish are found there.⁹ In fact, after the damming of the Goonoonoorang (Ord

⁹ Warmun 2014, p. 66

River) in 1972 to form Australia's largest dam, 99 metres high and 341 metres across, barramundi can no longer migrate upstream to live in the Little Panton River.¹⁰

The second painting by Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), 'Garnkiny Ngarranggarni', tells the same story with slight variations. Here, Garnkiny is given a choice of two promised wives, the two daughters of his (future) mother-in-law Daawool, who transformed into the Morning Star and the Evening Star after he rejected them. Daawool was also cursed and transformed into the black-headed serpent that roams the area.

The imagery is entirely different here. There is no longer any reference to the Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles) hills or to the diamonds. Garnkiny and the betrothed women, who in 'Darrajayin (Springvale Station)' were represented by the form of the Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles), are depicted here in the symbolism of a crescent and two stars, which is also understandable in Western art terms. These two stars can sometimes be seen very close to the moon; their names are Nyidbarriya and Joonggoobal, the Evening and Morning Star. Nyidbarriya also exists in the form of a hill of the Boornoolooloo (Bungle Bungles). The artist painted the sides of the canvas with coarsely crushed pigments, beyond the edge of the front surface. The eye is tempted to imagine that she also painted the reverse side. In this way, she illustrates infinity, as it were, for a story that endures and is constantly present in its complexity.

Pertaining to the narrative of the moon's creation, which concerns love, death, immortality, sustenance, and a tenet in Indigenous law, there are a number of further details captured in paintings by Queenie McKenzie, Hector Jandany, Mick Jawalji, Rusty Peters, Phyllis Thomas, Jack Britten, Shirley Purdie, Charlene Carrington, and Patrick Mung Mung.¹¹ A detailed interpretation of the narratives related to the moon has been written by David Rose.¹² Phyllis Thomas, for example, painted the location of Mende-Menden (Island Yard), where the man who later becomes the moon dives into the water to swim and fish,¹³ while Patrick Mung Mung painted a journey of this man through the artist's Country of Googoomooloon on his way to Darrajayin.¹⁴ It is a significant narrative for the people of Warmun, and its importance is also shown by the remark that all the stars faded when Garnkiny took away people's immortality.¹⁵

As the paintings by Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon) show, it is not only the Country that has a close relationship with people but also celestial events, again premising that Country, sky, and human beings are not separate elements but are an interrelated and interwoven unity.

There are also depictions concerning the moon in bark paintings. Mick Kubarkku, an artist from western Arnhem Land, began painting as early as the 1950s. In 'Dird Djang', he shows a full moon, a half moon, the sun and three stars. 'Dird' means moon, and 'Djang' is the term either for 'sacred' or for a specific site of that name. In this case, it is a unique rock formation with a large round hole made through the rock by Ngalyod, the

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 94

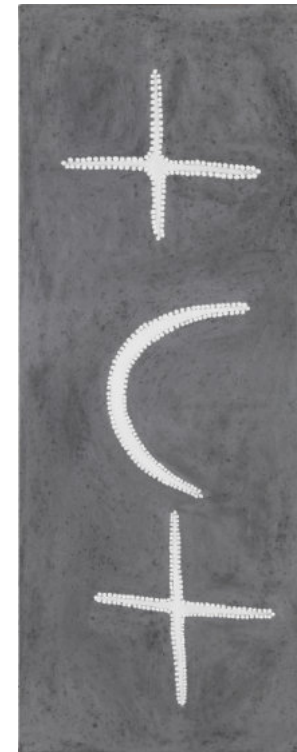
¹¹ Ibid., pp. 2, 91

¹² Rose 2014, pp. 83–89

¹³ Warmun 2014, p. 7

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 20

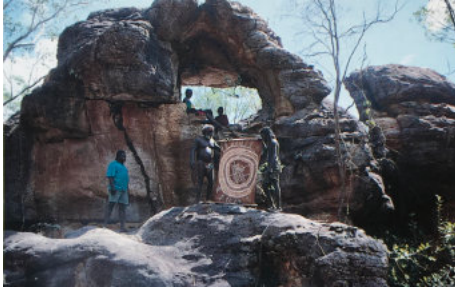
¹⁵ Ibid., p. 61



Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), *Garnkiny Ngarranggarni*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 121 × 45 cm (see fig. p. 67)



Mick Kubarkku, *Dird Djang (Moon Dreaming)*, 1990, natural pigments on bark, 122 × 73 cm



Mick Kubarkku and family members in front of the rock at the Dird Djang site

¹⁶ AGNSW 2004a, p. 223

¹⁷ Mawurndjul 2004, p. 138

Rainbow Serpent. The site is not far from the tiny settlement of Yikarrakkal that the artist established in 1970. The location has long been used as a burial site because the moon, which was once a man, also represents the mortality of humans, as in the paintings by Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), ‘*In ancestral times, Dird and his adversary, the spotted quoll, argued over the fate of humanity. The quoll decided that he would die once and once only, but the Moon took his place in the sky to be reborn each lunar month, represented by bukkulurl, the full moon, and lirkk, the new moon.*’¹⁶

In this painting, Mick Kubarkku used the technique of rarrk (cross-hatching) in the colours red, yellow, white, and black to create a visual effect, not, however, to include any hidden meaning based on body painting of the Mardayin ceremonies. Shown on a red background, which used to be typical of bark painting in western Arnhem Land, the moon and crescent shine through the finely executed cross-hatching and through the white rays from the sun and the stars. As in nearly all Indigenous paintings, these are not concrete illustrations but expressions of the energy and power associated with the figurative. As John Mawurndjul said, ‘*We don’t paint the actual body [of Ngalyod], but its power. We represent its power with crosshatching, we don’t paint its human form, no. We only paint the spirit, that’s all. It has a human body “inside”, but we only paint the spirit.*’¹⁷

Paddy Japaljarri Sims was born around 1917 at Kunajarrayi (Mt Nicker) and, after a nomadic youth, first came to Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) at the age of about 25. He moved to Yuendumu in 1946, when government ration depots were established there in response to extreme droughts. Those droughts had led to growing competition for land use between the farmers and the Indigenous population and ended in massacres. Paddy Japaljarri Sims worked on various cattle stations and married the artist Bessie Nakamarra Sims. Their daughter, Alma Nungarrayi Granites, and granddaughter, Sabrina Napangardi Granites, are also artists. When bilingual education was introduced at Yuendumu school in 1974, Paddy Japaljarri Sims taught painting, dances and other components of Jukurrpa. He also accompanied the students on field trips to Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and Darwin. Already during his first year of artistic work in 1985, he participated in an art exhibition. He was one of the artists who painted the doors of Yuendumu, which have since become famous (see pp. 244–246), and he was one of the founding members of the Warlukurlangu art centre there. As one of the six Warlpiri artists selected from Yuendumu, he created a large floor installation for the revolutionary art exhibition ‘*Magiciens de la Terre*’ at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris in 1989.

The painting ‘*Yanjirpirri Jukurrpa (Star Jukurrpa)*’ by Paddy Japaljarri Sims exemplifies the connection between Country, sky, and people. On the narrative level, the work tells of a group of hills called Yanjirpirri (Stars), west of Yuendumu, and of initiation rituals of the Japaljarri and Jungarrayi men who travelled west from Yanjirpirri to Lapilapi on the



Paddy Japaljarri Sims, *Yanjirpirri Jukurrpa (Star Jukurrpa)*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121 × 91 cm (see fig. p. 155)

edge of the Warlpiri Country. During the initiation ceremonies, the men danced under the starry sky. They carried spears and had red eucalyptus leaves attached to their legs with the help of the stems of ngalyipi (golden guinea vine, snake vine or *Hibbertia scandens*). The spears are called witi and are represented in the painting by long, straight, black lines; the stars are shown as white circles.

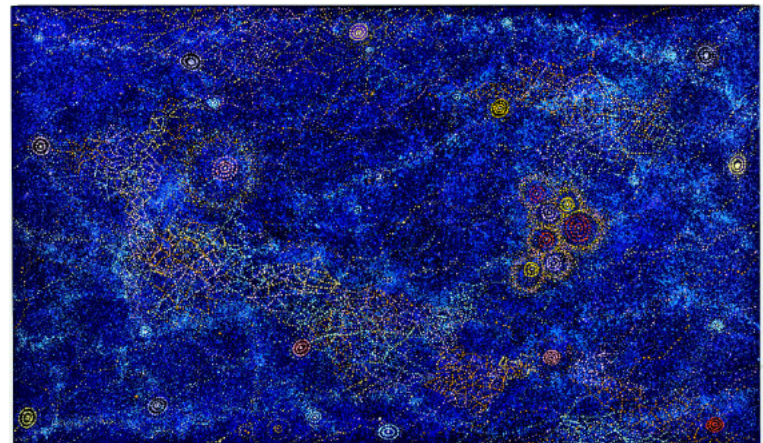
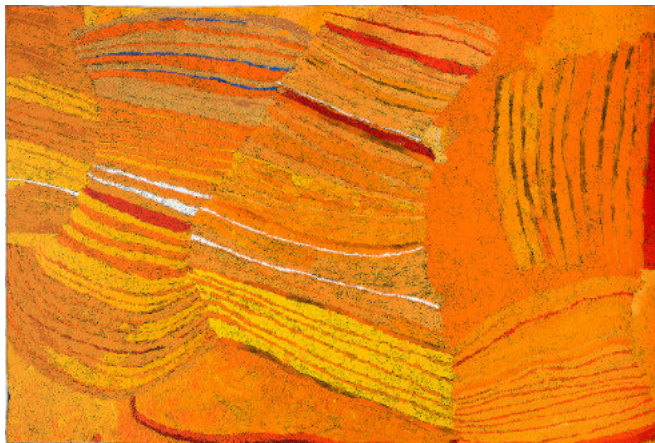
As shown also in a painting by Nancy Naninurra Napanangka (see p. 254), Paddy Japaljarri Sims did not depict the narrative in a figurative (naturalistic) way but chose to clarify the content with symbols such as the concentric circles or the long lines, whereby the symbols are painted in a dark colour—here black—as in almost all classical works of Indigenous painting. An exception are the stars, which shine out of the painting as white circles. For this asymmetrically composed work executed in the dot technique, the artist chose a radiant colour combination of red, orange, yellow, and a bright green, which is characteristic of his last artistic works.

Paddy Japaljarri Sims shows in this artwork only one part of the narrative, albeit an extremely important one, since it references initiations, which are always associated with the transmission of knowledge. In another aspect of the narrative, stars that were simultaneously ancestors fell from the heavens and became large boulders at Yanjirlpirri but were later transported back into the sky. Some of these stars were collected and placed on a huge pole representing the munga (night). Men carried the pole first to the west, then to the east and south, then lifted it high above their heads at Ngnaripulong. Thus were the stars put back into the sky, simultaneously ushering in the longer days and shorter nights of summer.

These fragments of stories are closely connected to the origins of the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, a narrative painted by many artists using very different visual representations.

The narrative of the Seven Sisters stretches from the Northern Territory to South Australia, from western to eastern Australia, and is highly varied. Many examples are given by Neale.¹⁸ The National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne has more than 30 artworks on the subject.

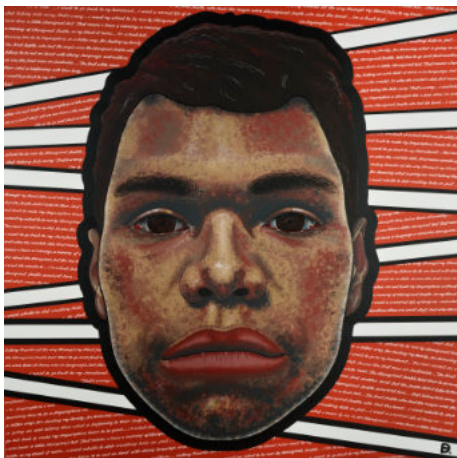
¹⁸ Neale 2017



Wingu Tingima, *Kuru Ala*, 2009, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 131.5 × 198 cm; Alma Nungarrayi Granites, *Yanjirlpirri/Napaljarri-warnu Jukurrrpa (Star/Seven Sisters Jukurrrpa)*, 2009, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 107 × 183 cm



Yaritji Young, *Seven Sisters*, 2016, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 198 × 150 cm



Blak Douglas, *Writing in the sand*, 2020, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 250 × 250 cm

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 158–160; Bloch and Garcia 2017, p. 14

²⁰ La Fontaine and Carty 2011, p. 98

²¹ Ibid., p. 80

²² In just one year, almost 600 children aged 10 to 13 were locked up in prisons across Australia, and many more were put through the criminal justice system. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are disproportionately affected, making up 65% of younger children who end up in prison. (HRLC 2020)

²³ HRLC 2019



Jennifer Mintaya Connelly, *Kungkarangkalpa (Seven Sisters)*, 2011, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152 × 182 cm

Whereas the titles of the narrative and its protagonists change from language group to language group and thus from place to place, there is a fundamentally identical narrative thread. The Seven Sisters flee from the incessant advances of a lustful old man (represented by the star Orion), who was forbidden for cultural reasons to have a relationship with any of these women. He pursued them from the heavens to earth, under water and back again into the sky, where they appear as the Pleiades, which rise and set in the constellations at annual cyclical intervals. Sometimes, the story references the rock formations to which the Seven Sisters fled, escaping male sexual predation,¹⁹ and at other times, the narrative recounts the women's cunning tricks to escape the lecherous old man.²⁰ As in the story of the formation of the moon, with its manifestation as a hill formation, Nora Wompi identifies the Seven Sisters also with a group of trees on the Canning Stock Route, '*The Seven Sisters are standing up as a group of trees between Nyipil [Well 34] and Kunawarritji [Well 33].*'²¹ Surprisingly, the story of the Seven Sisters resembles some aspects of the European mythology surrounding Orion. Because the annual appearance of the Pleiades coincides with the beginning of the rainy season in northern Australia, they are considered in some areas to be the triggers for rain.

This narrative is sometimes referenced also by artists living in the major cities, e.g., by Blak Douglas, who was a finalist for the Archibald Prize 2020, held annually by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, with his portrait of Djujan Hoosan.

Djujan Hoosan, an Arrernte and Garrwa youth, aged twelve, addressed the UN Human Rights Commission in 2019 concerning the imprisonment of ten-year-old youths in Australia.²² He was the youngest speaker ever to address this Commission.²³ Blak Douglas inserts into this portrait seven wide banners in the colour of the Northern Territory's official flag, representing the Seven Sisters. On these banners are written excerpts from Djujan Hoosan's speech. Just as the Seven Sisters were innocent and yet persecuted, Indigenous youths are in danger of imprisonment for marginal transgressions of white laws. The Seven Sisters fought a long, cunning series of skirmishes and won. This is inscribed in the sky and gives hope and confidence to persecuted Indigenous people.

What makes Indigenous art extraordinary are the layers of nar-

rative, the connections between Country, cosmos, individual people and events, together with the mediation of rules of social coexistence, the non-linear concept of time, the transformations and the concepts of truth.

The Indigenous Worldview

Shirley Purdie, born to the Gija people, has depicted a large part of her worldview in her 2003 artwork 'Untitled'. The painting contains fifteen representations of the Country associated with her and her ancestors, as well as their relationships to the Country, the incorporated moral precepts, the historical events, and the explanations of natural phenomena. It is an unusual work of art, with this wealth of narratives, and clearly shows the connection of contemporary life with the Ngarranggarni.

In the centre of her painting, Shirley Purdie depicted, as one of the 15 stories, one of the many massacres perpetrated in the Kimberley against Indigenous people until as late as the 1930s. The Mistake Creek massacre is historically attested and has been passed down in several slightly different oral versions. Shirley Purdie recounted it as follows, *'In the centre of the painting is a tree image and a small black grave. During the 1920s the manager of the old post office at Turkey Creek told an Aboriginal man from Darwin who was working for him to look for his milking cow that had gone missing. The man went looking for the cow. He found a group of Gija people who were on holiday (from the stations) camped at Mistake Creek by a large jurmulun (boab tree). They had been hunting a big mob of kangaroo and "porcupine" (echidna) and were cooking a kangaroo in the fire. The man found the cow but took its bell off and chased it away. He went back to the manager and told him that the Gija people had killed the cow and were cooking it. The manager took horses and guns and went off to Mistake Creek and started to shoot the Gija people down. One person escaped and ran back to Turkey Creek to tell the police. When the police arrived, they told the manager to look in the cooking hole, and he saw only a kangaroo cooking there. The Aboriginal man from Darwin jumped on his horse and galloped away, so the policemen chased him and shot him down. The police made the manager walk from Turkey Creek to Halls Creek for court and back again (320 km). He was kicked out of the community and told never to come back. Today there is a memorial beside the tree in the place where the people were killed.'*

A second narrative in the painting explains the source of diamonds at the Argyle Diamond Mine, a previously sacred site of the Gija and Mirriwoong women. The mine is owned by Rio Tinto, one of the largest mining companies in the world. The company is infamous since 2020 for having suddenly and stealthily blasted apart a more than 46,000-year-old sacred site in Juukan Gorge, in the Pilbara, for which heritage protection had been sought.²⁴ Since 1983, Rio Tinto mined more than 825 million carats of rough diamonds from Argyle, mainly from open-pit mines, about one-fifth of the world's production.²⁵ Shirley Purdie de-



Shirley Purdie, *Untitled*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 220 × 139 cm (see fig. p. 72)

Mistake Creek Massacre

The Mistake Creek massacre was committed on March 30th, 1915. It was led by the manager of a cattle station, Michael Rhatigan, accompanied by employees, including two Indigenous people from another part of the country. At least seven Indigenous people were shot dead. They had allegedly slaughtered and eaten the manager's dairy cow. The cow wandered back unharmed, however, after the massacre. Michael Rhatigan was briefly gaoled, and one of his Indigenous employees was charged with murder. Both were acquitted for lack of evidence, because no one except the Indigenous families was interested in actually looking for proof. The police report exposes the negligence and self-serving actions of the police, through its citing of a dispute among Indigenous people as the reason for the massacre. Michael Rhatigan, a former police officer, had been praised twenty years earlier by the highest-ranked police officer in Western Australia for shooting dead four Indigenous people, who allegedly had planned to kill and eat cattle. In 1988, Warmun residents found bones at the site of the Mistake Creek massacre, buried them and commemorated the location with a plaque. (Smith 2007, pp. 10, 19–20)

²⁴ Stanley and Gudgeon 2020

²⁵ Rio Tinto 2020

scribed the source of diamonds in her painting as follows, *'In the Ngar-ranggarni, three women were fishing in the waters of the Bow River, just to the north of Warmun. A large barramundi, Diawel, swam past them. Excited at the prospect of catching the fat fish, the women decided to rush ahead of the fish and catch it in a narrow section of the river. They cut spinifex grass, formed rolled bundles from it to serve as a fish net, placed it in the water in the traditional way and sat down on the riverbank to wait. Diawel was a clever fish and saw what the women were doing so she jumped over the fish net and over the hill behind the Bow River into the Jimbala Country, which is where the Argyle diamond mine is now located. In jumping over the hill, Diawel's belly scraped the rock, scratching off some scales and making a crack in the hill. The three women were furious and chased Diawel up the hill, but partway up they turned to stone and can still be seen there today. The fish scales that fell into the surrounding Country became the precious rainstones (diamonds) that the gardiya (whites) collect.'*

One of the most important narratives of Warrmarn, 'a place to stay', as the Gija call Warmun, connects the indignation about someone taking advantage of the work of others without compensation and the denial of requested help with the characteristics of a bird, namely the origin of the white eye rings and black plumage of crows (*Corvus arru ceciliae*). The story occurred in the immediate vicinity of the present-day municipality of Warmun, in the times when eagles and crows were people. As in many narratives, the paintings concern moral ideas reflected in a holistic worldview where everything connects with everything else, and therefore transformations of humans and animals can take place. Shirley Purdie said, *'When eagle and crow were human, the eaglehawk was preparing to hunt kangaroos. Sitting with his wife the crow next to a patch of white rock (quartz) he asked the crow to help him make spearheads from the hard quartz. Eaglehawk built up a fire, to heat rocks to later bake the kangaroo. He asked the crow again for help, but she refused. The eaglehawk went hunting and killed a small, fat female kangaroo. When he returned to the camp, he found the crow asleep. In anger at the crow's laziness, the eagle threw a piece of quartz at the crow and hit her in the eye. He also took the hot stones out of the fire and burnt the crow's feathers all over, for being so lazy. They both turned into birds, and that is why crows are black with white rings around the eyes. On the hill near Warmun you can still see the white quartz deposit at the camp of the crow and the eagle.'*

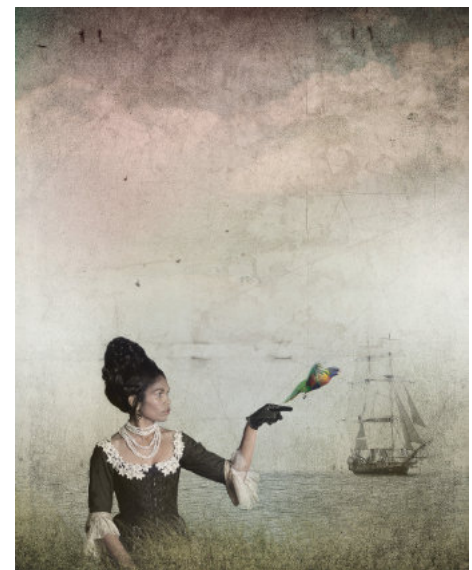
The other depictions in Shirley Purdie's painting contain references to: how a hunt for kangaroos or a fishing trip can be successful; a pleasant place to stay in cold weather; the most important waterhole in this area, which is fed by a spring and always has water; the hunt of a man with his two dingoes for a kangaroo and the transformation of all four into stones, which can be seen in the Bow River and on a hill above the river; the transformation of Munganbool into a waterfall after the man lied to the waterfowl, saying that one could not find barramundi in the rivers of Gurra Gurra (Petrel bird) Country; a view from above of Nungbun (Wesley Springs), the Country associated with the artist's maternal grandfather

near the Argyle diamond mines, with its hills called Gowarring and its streams; some painted implements used for hunting and preparing food; Yaralalil, a woman who lived in a cave at Mount Ungbool, who travelled long distances and protected young men working alone but also guarded all people of the Gija language group from danger; the Ngarranggarni of Mawundu (white ochre), which Indigenous people painted on their bodies to better conceal themselves when hunting in the tall grass, and which is associated in Baloowa (Violet Valley) with the hill Ngowalabun and its white rocky peak; Baloowa, belonging to the Country of Shirley Purdie's mother, where Barnung, the night owl, and Dirringinji, the black owl, quarrelled and transformed into a black and red hill; the description of a sacred site associated with men on an island in Turkey Creek, together with the transformation of a spear into a tree on this island and a fish-hunting scene; the depiction of the Country associated with her father, paternal grandmother and the artist herself, where her mother became pregnant and Shirley Purdie was born, and where there is a water spring, a cave and, most importantly, the burial places of her forefathers. The artist also provides with the painting a description of funerals. All this is contained in the painting.

Shirley Purdie does not always portray the subject of the story but shows instead its location in the Country and its place in Indigenous history. The narratives are part of the Country; they are anchored there, they are intrinsically localised there, and so can be cast in the form of paintings *of* the Country. Here, the largest areas in the painting are taken up by the images of the kangaroo hunt, as one of the most important sources of food, and of the burial site of the massacre. All the narratives stand individually against a wonderfully rough, deep black, grainy earth pigment background. Dotted double-lines simultaneously separate and connect the fifteen different sites or stories and give support to the entire composition. Although it appears that some narratives contain greater meaning than others, none are distinguished by prominent painting techniques or colours, excepting some differences in areas covered. This can be taken as a sign that each of these stories has its own *raison d'être* and relevance.

The Incongruence of Cultures

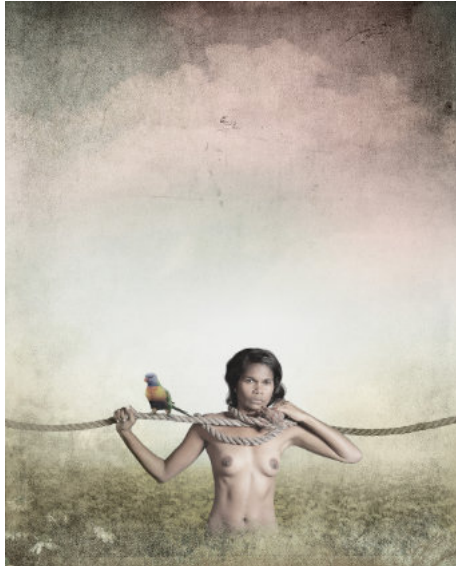
Just as Shirley Purdie has set out and depicted much of her worldview in one painting, Michael Cook's 'Broken Dreams', 2010, narratively presents his view of the incongruence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures. In a series of ten photographs, he references the time of colonisation and evokes the hope of liberation by means of reflection on one's own culture. A young Indigenous woman envisions the time of colonisation, adopting the white settlers' style of dress, hairstyle and



Michael Cook, Broken Dreams 3, 2010, inkjet print, 124 x 100 cm



Michael Cook, Broken Dreams 6, 8, 10, 2010, inkjet print, 124 × 100 cm



jewellery. With an attentive, tense gaze, she releases the Indigenous rainbow lorikeet from her gloved hand. As time passes, she notices the negative influences of the settler culture and tries to shake them off. She discards the clothing except for the accoutrements of missionary life, the Christian cross and the ruff, which is still worn as part of the regalia of the Lutheran Protestant church in some parts of Germany. Later, the young woman also removes the cross and ruff. She is terrified by the danger of being shot, a realistic fear until the 1930s, and tries to ward off the threat in a guileless way by poking her index finger into the muzzle of the gun. Bound with a thick rope, she attempts to ward it away from her neck to escape strangulation. The rainbow lorikeet takes the rope and leads her back to freedom in her Country.

Life was not always easy for Indigenous people before colonisation, for example, when water sources disappeared due to drought. It became far more dangerous after colonisation, with the accompanying annexation of the land, the widespread destruction of water holes by cattle, etc. Nevertheless, the settlers' materialistic culture was somehow seductive and some experience was needed to realise the destructive aspects, withdraw from it and reaffirm one's own culture. Michael Cook symbolises these opposites using, on the one hand, European clothing, the cross, the ruff, and the strangling rope and on the other hand, the rainbow lorikeet, i.e., a native bird species conspicuous due to its prevalence, its extremely colourful plumage and its raucous call.

Michael Cook does not simply create an artwork that refers to the days of the first settlements. He shows the incompatibility of the cultures and connects the time of colonialism with the present. The Indigenous cultures that are alive today, as in the past, exist in parallel with the persecution of the Indigenous population,²⁶ which began during colonialism and continues. However, after many failures in terms of recognition and equality, there is again a dialogue concerning the protection and preserva-

²⁶ Cf. Frost 2017

tion of Indigenous cultures and ways of life by means of a national treaty.

In 'Majority Rule', a seven-part photographic series from 2014, Michael Cook shows exclusively Indigenous people in every conceivable role. In contrast to 'Broken Dreams', however, it is no longer the countryside but the city that is the key setting—the city, where most Indigenous people now live. In this photograph, a number of Indigenous figures, dressed in classic but slightly outmoded business suits and holding English 'brollies', are shown in front of the Old Parliament House in Canberra, above which the Aboriginal flag flies. Each figure is always the same man. It is an unreal scene, and the 23 images of the same person heighten the surreality of what should be a readily imaginable situation. Similarly, in another image from the series, the artist shows only Indigenous people inside the parliament building as protagonists of political power. Michael Cook invites us to place ourselves in a history that could have evolved entirely differently if the balance of power, due to the sheer number of non-Indigenous people, their equipment and their intentions, had been different and respectful. Cook portrays a role reversal. He asks viewers to imagine an Australia in which Indigenous people are in the great majority.

In this way, Michael Cook challenges the deeply rooted belief system of white hegemony, that is, *'The colour of the man's skin is the disjunction that prompts the viewer to wonder, and then wonder at their own wonder. It becomes a gauge for internalised racism. Australian audiences may ponder why this collection of well-dressed black men in a city street strikes a discordant note, an atmospheric that feels wrong, unusual, discomfiting.'*²⁷

The artist reverses the Eurocentric gaze and challenges us to re-think this view. Michael Cook wrote in 2015, *'I never aim to offend, as offence risks a defensive ignorance. I aim to shock, because that kind of buzz can get a person thinking. Thinking of disrespect, of history, of divisions in society. Shock is a little slower, but more effective in the long-term, so while inequality exists, I'll pursue an art that highlights human bias and challenges my audience's interaction with the work, and society at large.'*²⁸

Michael Cook, a Bijara, was born in Brisbane in 1968. He lives and



Michael Cook, Majority Rule 5, 2014, inkjet print, 200 × 140 cm or 120 × 84 cm



Michael Cook, Majority Rule 6, 2014, inkjet print, 200 × 140 cm or 120 × 84 cm

²⁷ Martin-Chew 2014

²⁸ Cook 2015, p. 54

works today at the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. He was a fashion photographer for 25 years, during which time he amassed a wealth of ideas for artistic photography, which he began exhibiting in 2010 with the series 'Through my eyes'. In that series, he estranged the portraits of all 27 previous Australian prime ministers and gave them emphatically Indigenous facial features.

Secret/Sacred and the (Non-)Readability of Paintings

One could say that layers of narratives often have their counterpart in over-painted layers of the pictorial structure of the composition. This is because, due to the affinity of their art to their worldview, which includes sacred concepts, it has become a principle in painting to avoid revealing sacred content to those not authorised to see it. Indeed, the fact that Indigenous culture was, and largely still is, based not on material but on spiritual values, from which the extraordinary significance of Jukurrpa derives, it becomes possible to 'steal' spiritual values. As the artist Ngarralja Tommy May said, '*We can't show white people everything. If you tell everybody, it is like selling your country. You have no law there behind. You can give a little bit, but not too much. Kartiya [white people] can take away the stories, the pirlurr (one's spirit), the power for your country and leave you with nothing.*'²⁹

²⁹ Chuguna 2006, p. 116

This impacts the Tingari narrative, for example, which is widespread in the Western Desert. All that is revealed publicly is that the Tingari can take human or animal forms, that they travelled long distances and created sacred sites, as well as animals, plants, and notable natural features. They established rituals and transmitted explanations of rules which are to be followed even today, such as the observance of mutual obligations and responsibilities based on classificatory family relationships.³⁰ Their journeys and their adventures are recounted in songs that can contain several hundred verses, which describe rituals, as well as the location of waterholes or freshwater springs. The Tingari were usually accompanied on their journeys by women and young initiates. Even today, the song cycle is celebrated and serves above all to pass on its detailed knowledge.

³⁰ The classificatory kinship system allows genetically unrelated people to be included in kinship, i.e., in the system of mutual obligations and responsibilities. In this way, there can be several mothers for one child, for example. Non-Indigenous people who establish a close relationship with Indigenous people can also be included in the classificatory kinship system so that everyone can recognise that person's position in Indigenous society.

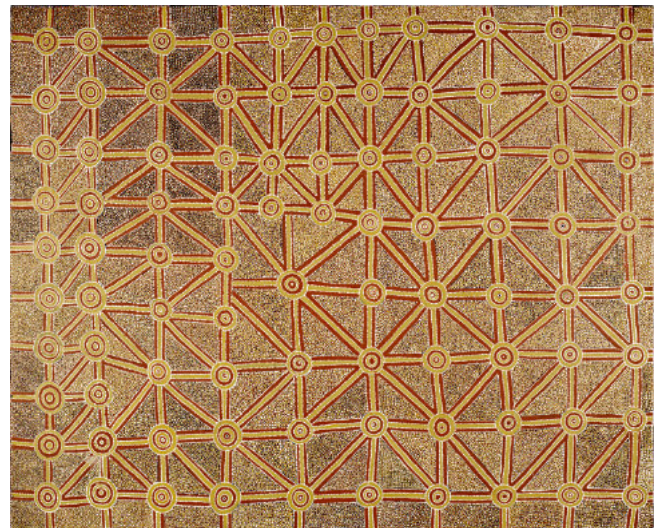
Because the narratives portrayed in the paintings are always connected with sacred concepts, there was, as described in the chapter 'Sources of Inspiration', from the beginning of the painting movement in the 1970s until the 1980s, an ongoing discussion among the artists in the various art centres about how to retain the confidentiality of this knowledge without depriving the paintings of their meaning and thus their value.

The first paintings by Papunya artists were not intended for sale and distribution and could, therefore, contain representational depictions of ceremonial objects or of ceremonies. Many such paintings can be found

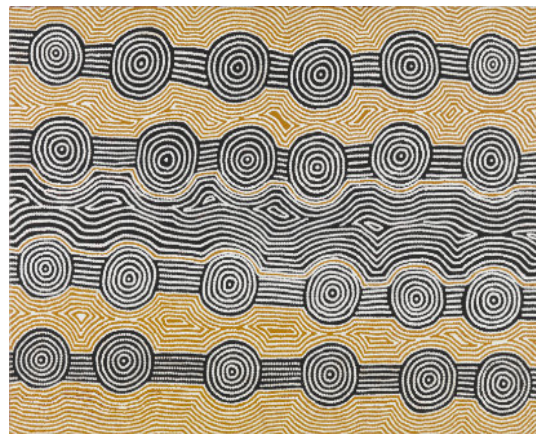
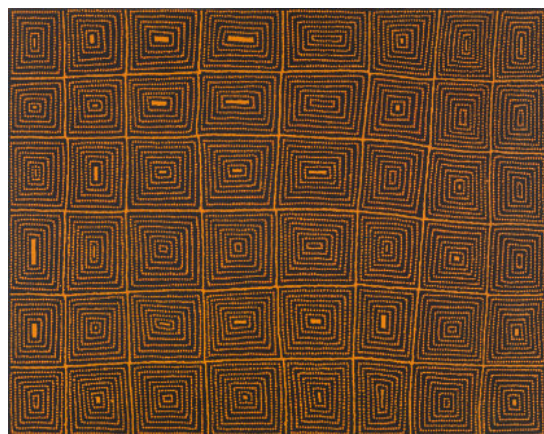
in the book by Bardon and Bardon.³¹ The backgrounds of those early paintings were often painted monochrome black or reddish brown. However, once the paintings were made available to a non-Indigenous, uninitiated, and thus unknowing audience, the artists developed new visual expressions for their narratives. Many turned to variations of basic geometric structures. For example, the episodes of the Tingari cycle were depicted by many Pintupi artists of the Papunya Tula art cooperative in the form of sets of concentric circles, a very old symbol, usually connected by parallel lines. Since the associated ceremonies were celebrated together by Indigenous clans from distant areas, Anmatyerr and Alyawarr artists also sometimes adopted this symbolism, like Greeny Purvis Petyarre in 'Emu Altyerr', who additionally filled the background of the painting with dots.

Papunya Tula artists, in particular, developed a wide variation of representational forms for the Tingari cycle: J. J. Tjapaltjarri chose nested dotted squares, Bobby West Tjupurrula used curved dotted lines, with several arranged one below the other, interrupted by free white space, thus creating dynamic and sometimes flowing forms; George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri chose finely dotted narrow straight lines. Some women artists of Papunya Tula, such as Kayi Kayi Nampitjinpa, used the classic iconography of the Tingari cycle, with concentric circles connected by lines, describing women's journeys at Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay). Also referencing Wilkinkarra, which plays a role in the Tingari Cycle, are paintings by Tony Tjakamarra. The artist Tjumbo Tjapanangka from Wirrimanu titled one of his paintings 'Bibarr' (see next page), which is the name of a part of the Country south of Wirrimanu that is an important stopping point in the Tingari's travels. In his painting, the artist shows two red rectangles representing sites for obtaining ochre. Since ochre is used for many ceremonial purposes, Tjumbo Tjapanangka thus made a connection not only to the locations associated

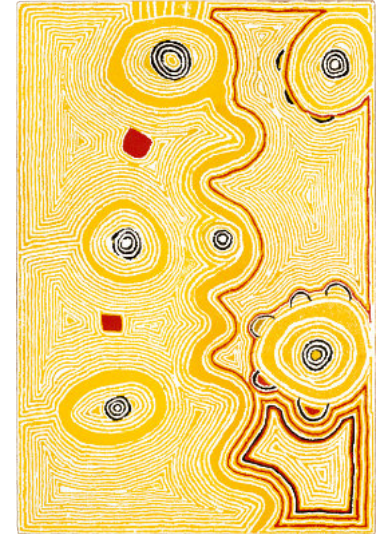
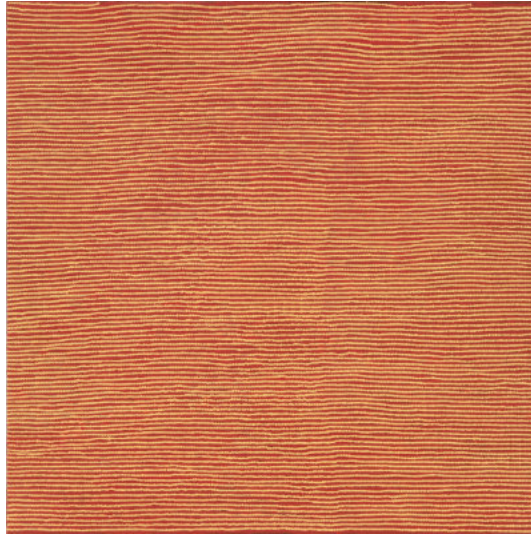
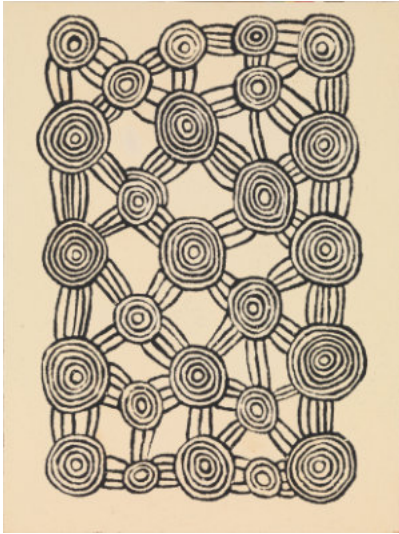
³¹ Bardon and Bardon 2004



Greeny Purvis Petyarre, *Emu Altyerr*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 148.5 cm (see fig. p. 88)



J. J. Tjapaltjarri, *Untitled*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 121.5 cm; Tony Tjakamarra, *Untitled*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91.5 × 121.5 cm; Bobby West Tjupurrula, *Untitled*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91.5 × 45.5 cm (see fig. pp. 122, 141, 124)



Kayi Kayi Nampitjinpa, *Untitled*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121 × 90.5 cm; George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri, *Untitled*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 91 cm; Tjumpo Tjapanangka, *Bibarr*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 179.5 × 120 cm (see fig. pp. 137, 123, 44)

with the Tingari's journeys but also to the ochre material with which the secret/sacred concepts were portrayed. This brief enumeration shows that, despite binding the paintings' contents to Jukurrpa, there is great freedom to pictorially interpret the narratives.



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, *Water Dreaming at Kalipinyapa*, 1972, synthetic polymer paint on fibreboard, 80 × 75 cm

An important method of complying with the requirement of secrecy for sacred content was to conceal the sacred and therefore secret signs or objects by means of overpainting. Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula was an early master of concealment using a wide variety of graphic elements. In 'Water Dreaming at Kalipinyapa', for example, he only allows the secret elements to be glimpsed as if under a veil, using several layers of short, white, bold lines, or using fields overpainted with black dots and white lines that only allow delicate dark strokes to shine through, or using cross-hatching. The artist also employed straight or curved lines of varying lengths that are offset or parallel to each other, some connected by transverse lines, and dotted parallel arcs or sometimes finer and sometimes coarser irregularly dotted areas. At the same time, the abundance of graphically varying overpainting in the artwork represents the lush growth of plants in the desert after rain. Benjamin and Weislogel describe the painting in detail.³² This complex painting style was already fully developed in Papunya by 1972. In his late

work, Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula reduced this complexity to a more or less dense network of large dots, beneath which the symbols are hidden (see figure pp. 130/131).

By means of this new vocabulary of form, which foregoes the de-

³² Benjamin and Weislogel 2009, p. 127

picture of the real, and through targeted use of colour, the narrative contents of artworks are veiled to a large extent, so that the emotions that these hidden contents evoke are expressed in a new way. Obscuring the contents while exposing the emotionality evoked by them is an important characteristic. The depth of feeling associated with the viewing of early works is indicated by Sid Anderson's comments during a conversation between Luke Scholes, then Curator of Indigenous Art at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin, and the artists Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra, Michael Jagamara Nelson, Bobby West Tjupurrula, and J. J. Tjapaltjarri. Sid Anderson was President for several years of the MacDonnell Regional Council, the Indigenous governing body for the region, and noted, *'When I saw the the old men's [the first artists of Papunya] paintings they just hit me [thumps chest]; they hit me in my heart and I just accepted them as my own. They are a gift from those old men and they came into my body like a soul. The feeling it gave me enabled me to look at them with confidence. [...] I saw them and the knowledge hit me ... in my heart. It helped me not feel my pain. It made me feel lighter.'*³³

Some authors compact this to *'The Dreaming is communicated directly in the feeling for the work.'*³⁴ This was very evident in the behaviour of artists who were present when early works by the first Papunya artists were unpacked for the exhibition 'Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius' in 2000 in Sydney. They had almost certainly never seen those works before, yet every single painting was received with great understanding, excitement, and lively discussion by the artists present.³⁵

Techniques of concealment and obfuscation have their counterpart in highlighting using colour, form, or composition. Gracie Morton Ngale worked initially exclusively with dots, without renouncing apparent formation of lines through the close placement of the dots. By positioning the dots in different sizes and densities on the canvas, she creates different segments in the painting that stand out more or less distinctly. In the artwork 'Anwekety Altyerr', the artist describes the ceremonial significance of the wild plum associated with the artist's Country at Mosquito Bore, about 260 km north of Alice Springs. In a view from above and using subtle colour variations, Gracie Morton Ngale shows the ripening cycle of the wild plum during the different seasons. Another form of highlighting can be created by different types of shimmer or sheen, emphasising the whole painting and thus showing its strength (see p. 304).

The techniques of concealing and highlighting have their semantic correspondence in the connection between reality and spirituality. That is, the descriptions provided with the paintings only represent the surface, under which the actual meaning of the Jukurrpa or Altyerr is hidden. That hidden meaning is not communicated to the viewer, the outsider but is known to the Indigenous group of the artist.

The superficial view of a painting is thus indecipherable to non-Indigenous viewers as well as to Indigenous people of distant clans, which

³³ Scholes 2017b, p. 124

³⁴ Ferrell 2012, p. 76

³⁵ Benjamin and Weislogel 2009, p. 12



Gracie Morton Ngale, Anwekety Altyerr, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 198.5 × 61 cm (see fig. p. 97)

³⁶ Myers 2002, pp. 63–64

³⁷ Benjamin and Weislogel 2009

³⁸ Ryan 1990, p. 26

³⁹ Biddle 1998, p. 37

⁴⁰ Boulter 1991, p. 61

is why it is at all feasible, according to Fred Myers,³⁶ to make paintings with secret/sacred content accessible to such viewers without violating society's rules. However, this protection through ignorance has its limits. An exhibition of early works by Papunya artists, curated in 2009 for the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University in Ithaca, USA, showed images with secret/sacred content. However, in the internationally distributed exhibition catalogue *Icons of the Desert*³⁷ these images were not reproduced in the main catalogue but in a supplement that was not included with the catalogue sales in Australia. In this way, out of respect for the Indigenous culture, Indigenous uninitiated people were prevented from accidentally seeing such images, which could be detrimental to them.

However, for Indigenous people of the same clan, the content contained in the paintings is easily discernible. Jimmy Robertson Jampijinpa, artist from Lajamanu, commented, 'When some other Yapa community they come and have a look at your painting there, they just talk that one, they read one. They know which way it started and where it finished and which one is sacred site. Same as paper again. Kardiya can't read it. [...] They got to look that paper. They got to read from a book, not from a painting.'³⁸

Artists, especially from Yuendumu and Lajamanu, developed a multitude of signs and symbols that became the carriers of meaning in their paintings. However, because the symbolism is not published with its manifold and multi-layered meanings, explaining it is not particularly useful for understanding individual paintings. Anthropologists may disagree, although the anthropologist Jennifer Biddle does note that an overemphasis on the iconicity of the images can lead to the exclusion of other meanings.³⁹ Art historians, on the other hand, may not necessarily disagree with a refusal to explain the symbolism, because the paintings can be seen as objects to be grasped emotionally or mentally rather than intellectually or factually, as the following example shows. When Emily Kame Kngwarreye was asked what meanings underlie her paintings, she replied, 'Whole lot, that's whole lot, Awelye (my Dreaming), Arlatyeye (pencil yam), Arkerrthe (mountain devil lizard), Ntange (grass seed), Tingu (a Dreamtime pup), Ankerre (emu), Intekwe (a favourite food of emus, a small plant), Atnwerle (green bean), and Kame (yam seed). That's what I paint: whole lot.'⁴⁰ Her paintings often have the title 'My Country', because everything is laid out and present in Country.

In some of her art installations, Fiona Foley is a master of obfuscation while at the same time putting her finger in the wounds left by colonialism. 'Witnessing to Silence' from 2004 is one of 14 works by Queensland artists commissioned for the opening of the Brisbane Magistrates Court building. Fiona Foley created an installation of lotus lilies of bronze, shrouded in mist, with gleaming steel columns and memorial stones set into the ground. Each of the stones is engraved with names of places in Queensland. One side of each column features, behind glass, tall insets of laminated ashes.

Fiona Foley initially informed the Art Selection Committee for



Fiona Foley, *Witnessing to Silence*, 2004, lotus stems: cast bronze, etched pavers, 180 × 140 cm diameter, water feature: stainless steel, laminated glass, 5 pillars, 210–350 × 25 × 25 cm

the Brisbane Magistrates Court that her installation referred to bushfires and floods in Queensland. A few months after the building opened, the artist revealed the true meaning of her artwork. She had hired a researcher to delve into state archives as well as any literature on 94 massacres of Indigenous people in Queensland. Fiona Foley engraved the 94 place names on the stones of the installation. Furthermore, the ashes symbolising fire actually refer to various attempts to hide the massacres by burning the bodies. The lotus lilies, common in Queensland, symbolise a second way of disposing of the bodies of murder victims by dumping them in rivers or ponds.

The impetus for this artwork was a comment by a curator at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art stating that Australia had been settled peacefully.⁴¹ Fiona Foley justified her initial concealment of the theme by her fear that the work would not have been accepted by the selection committee if the significance of the installation had been known—a foreboding that would almost certainly have come true. Now ‘Witnessing to Silence’ is an unrelenting indictment that has found its proper place. The installation is an accusation to be remembered in perpetuity because of the material and its execution, which could entitle the artwork to be categorised as a memorial. It is even more, however, because the artist not only accuses but also reveals a part of the suppressed, ignored Indigenous history. Foley is always seeking new metaphors to bring these parts of Indigenous history into the collective consciousness and to cement them in place, *‘Largely, the premise behind my public art is to write Aboriginal people, Aboriginal nations and Aboriginal history back into the Australian narrative. I do this because we have been written out too often.’*⁴²

⁴¹ Foley 2012, p. 64

⁴² Ibid.

Art for the Transmission of Culture

Colonial settlement and subsequent policies over the following two centuries forced traumatic changes in the way of life of Indigenous people. Many were expelled from their associated Country and could no longer properly perform their ceremonies. They were usually barracked on reservations or taken to mission stations, where they were often forbidden to speak their own language, the children were separated from their parents, and other horrific treatments occurred. It became all the more essential to maintain their own culture and to impart it to their descendants. After a relaxation of coercive and persecutory measures and the introduction of elements of self-determination, especially since the late 1960s, it also became their concern to educate the non-Indigenous population about the worldview of Indigenous people. Means to achieve both goals were, on the one hand, the oral transmission of narratives handed down the generations, which inform about values, moral concepts and rules of conduct, and on the other hand art.

⁴³ In the literature, the initiative to paint the Yuendumu Doors is usually attributed to Terry Davies, who was headmaster of the school for one year. (Jones 2014, p. 18) In fact, however, the initiator was Edith Coombe, a teacher at the school since 1979. The paintings were, however, only realised after Terry Davies became headmaster in 1984. The year 1983 is also often incorrectly given in the literature as the date of painting.

⁴⁴ Jones 2014, p. 37

One of the weightiest examples, literally, was the painting of the 80 kg metal doors of the Yuendumu school. At the suggestion of teacher Edith Coombe,⁴³ five knowledgeable senior men were commissioned to paint narratives on the doors: Paddy Jupurrurla Nelson, Roy Jupurrurla Curtis, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Paddy Japaljarri Sims, and Larry Jungarrayi Spencer.

After extensive discussions, in which women from Yuendumu community also participated, the artists began painting 30 doors in February 1984 and finished towards the end of July. The doors were painted in a specific order, prioritised according to the importance of the narratives they convey. For example, the first door painted combines three narratives that occurred at Yuendumu. Jones⁴⁴ described the doors as a compendium because many of the depicted narratives are interrelated. They are important to both men and women, and, as with all artworks, only versions suitable for the public were depicted. Initially, the school provided finger paints as the pigments and the artists used brushes made from chewed

thin twigs, but soon they were provided with acrylic paints and artists' brushes. A further six doors were painted by the artists, mainly on teachers' houses.

Of the 30 school doors, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart painted seventeen, Paddy Japaljarri Sims five, Larry Jungarrayi Spencer and Paddy Jupurrurla Nelson two each. Two of the doors were painted jointly by Paddy Japaljarri Stewart and Paddy Japaljarri Sims, and one jointly by Paddy Japaljarri Sims and Larry Jungarrayi Spencer. Another door was the joint work of Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Paddy Jupurrurla Nelson and Roy Jupurrurla Curtis.

In 1984, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart recounted part of the narrative associated with a door by Larry Jungarrayi Spencer, a rather terse story, a typical example of how information was obscured beyond recognition. He explained,

*'This is about Women. The Women were painting for ceremonies. They were sitting in line. These Women are Dreamtime Women. One of the Women who danced got up from Kanakurlangu and came from the west. She went ahead while the other Women stayed behind. She stopped at Munyuparntiparnti. She kept going from the west to the east. These Women had digging sticks, which are here. Here they ate the meat of the goannas they killed. These Dreamtime Women ate here, as is shown on the painting.'*⁴⁵

In fact, however, that karnta (women's) Jukurrpa is a narrative to which both women and men have rights, and it stretches across large



From left: Paddy Jupurrurla Nelson, Roy Jupurrurla Curtis, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Paddy Japaljarri Sims, and Larry Jungarrayi Spencer

⁴⁵ AIATSIS 1992, p. 58

areas of Country, beginning in Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay). Jones identified further details after interviewing Paddy Japaljarri Stewart in 2012. The ancestral women caused two things through their dance: firstly, a large cloud of dust, as depicted with the aid of rather blurry dots in the uppermost part of the door, and secondly, the dance caused digging sticks to emerge from the ground, shown in the painting as vertical lines. No less than five of the paintings relate to the *karnta* (women's) *Jukurrpa*, the significance of which is also revealed by the fact that two of these doors tell of a time when women, not men, had control over sacred objects and weapons.⁴⁶ The intention behind the project of painting the school doors was not just to familiarise the children with their own culture: the children already knew many stories and the associated sites from narratives told by their parents or grandparents. Rather, the school itself should be transformed into a place of learning extending beyond solely Western cultural elements. In this respect, painting the doors was also a political act that demanded at least some participation in school education. Indeed, during 1984 and later, lessons on Indigenous knowledge were provided, in which a whole range of artists were involved.

Unlike the paintings on the school walls at Papunya (see pp. 339–340), those on the school doors at Yuendumu escaped bureaucratic, thoughtless, culturally ignorant destruction. Although plans arose within a few months of their completion to overpaint them, as part of the renovation of the school at the behest of the Northern Territory government and under the jurisdiction of the Education Department in Alice Springs, the teacher Edith Coombe managed to prevent that.

In 1986, the Australian National Gallery in Canberra (today: National Gallery of Australia), founded in 1967, offered 2,000 Australian dollars per door, a high price at the time. The artists refused. Ten years later, a Melbourne art dealer offered 30,000 Australian dollars per door. However, the artists decided to give the doors, which had suffered from weathering and graffiti, to a museum to ensure their preservation. In exchange for two Toyota Land Cruisers for the artists—the cars are important for travelling around their Country—and new doors for the school, the doors were placed for restoration in 1996 in the care of the South Australian Museum in Adelaide. Since then, they have been shown in international exhibitions, e.g., in 2006 at the Aboriginal Art Museum in Utrecht and at the Sprengel Museum in Hannover, together with paintings by other Yuendumu artists from various art collections of museum quality.

Just as in Papunya, following the painting of murals at that school, the painting of the Yuendumu school doors was the final impetus for a veritable outbreak of painting. Immediately after the doors were completed, women in Yuendumu began to work as artists. Only two years later, the Warlukurlangu Artists Association was established as the local art centre, with the five artists of the doors as founding members. Sixteen years after the doors were created, two of the artists who had painted most



Larry Jungarrayi Spencer, *Karnta-kurlu (Women)*, 1984, synthetic polymer paint on metal, 208 × 81 cm, door 11

⁴⁶ Jones 2014, pp. 116–117

of them, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart and Paddy Japaljarri Sims, drew inspiration from the basic motifs of the paintings and realised the now famous graphic portfolio ‘Yuendumu Doors’, with 30 etchings (the printer was Basil Hall at Northern Editions, Darwin). The portfolio won the prize for artworks on paper at the 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award in 2001.

Many paintings in contemporary art can be used to convey culture or knowledge. Some, like Fiona Foley’s ‘Witnessing to Silence’, bring hidden Indigenous history to light, and others combine many narratives without revealing their deeper meanings to an uninformed viewer. An example of the latter is the painting ‘Janganpa, Wiinywiinyapa manu Ngatijirri Jukurrpa (Possum, Grey Falcon, and Budgerigar Jukurrpa)’ by Maggie Napaljarri Ross, who explained her painting as follows, ‘*Wiinywiinyapa is the name of the Grey Falcon jukurrpa. The story tells of a Jungarrayi man called Wiinywiinyapa who sat with some other Jungarrayi and Japaljarri men who were hunters and were making parraja (wooden dishes). He went to Wiinywiinyapa Mulju, a water soakage site, where he cut himself with a stone knife (junma). He returned to the other men, claiming he had been attacked, and asked them to follow him. But they quickly realised he had been lying and confronted him. Wiinywiinyapa fell to the ground, turned into a grey falcon and flew away. The traces of its claws can be seen in the centre of the painting. Japaljarri and Jungarrayi men are the guardians of the second jukurrpa referenced in the painting. The tracks of the Janganpa (possum) are depicted in the painting as curved lines, like those left by its tail in the dust, and the E-shapes are its pawprints (wirliya). The jukurrpa associated with Janganpa the possum describes a secret ceremony performed by Janganpa at Yakurdiy. The Jajirdi (wild cat) saw the Janganpa but did not realise that the ceremony was taking place and burst into the middle of them. The Janganpa and Jajirdi men then started fighting with each other, but the women were not around because the ceremony was mens’ business. When they finished fighting, the Janganpa men forced the Jajirdi to participate in the initiation ceremony, that they ended with a big corroboree for young men. The women danced all night until dawn. The Country associated with this jukurrpa is Mungapunju, a hill to the south of Yuendumu. Possums used to be a welcome food for First Australians. The animals lived in hollow trees, hunted at night and carried their young on their backs. The circles in the painting symbolise the Janganpa’s campsites, the trees. The third jukurrpa in the painting is about the Ngatijirri (green budgerigar), whose tracks are represented by crosses in the upper left corner of the painting. The Ngatijirri jukurrpa is associated with the Napaljarri and Nungarrayi women and the Japaljarri and Jungarrayi men. Ngatijirri are small, bright green budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) common in central Australia and often found in the Yuendumu area. Men would hunt for budgerigars’ nests; the eggs are considered a delicacy, as are the young. The jukurrpa site of the Ngatijirri is called Yangarnmpi and is located to the south of Yuendumu. The jukurrpa travelled from there to Patirlirri near Willowra and on to Marnngangi in the north-west of Mt Dennison. Each time a flock of Ngatijirri*



Maggie Napaljarri Ross, *Janganpa, Wiinywiinyapa manu Ngatijirri Jukurrpa* (Possum, Grey Falcon, and Budgerigar Jukurrpa), 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 75.5 cm (see fig. p. 159)

settles on the ground, it celebrates ceremonies with songs and dances. Such sites are represented by concentric circles in the painting, whereas the arrow-shaped forms represent the footprints of the birds. The U-shapes symbolise men hunting the budgerigars with boomerangs and spears.'

In her artwork, Maggie Napaljarri Ross painted dots on a light blue background with great precision and in exactly the same size, only sometimes overlapping them a little. The black-coloured symbols of the narratives, highlighted by the white dots surrounding them, stand out from the predominantly light and well-balanced colours. The hues harmonise perfectly with each other and thus counterbalance the very dramatic flows generated by curved lines that stream out from four sets of concentric circles in the painting. The movement is taken up and intensified by dotted lines converging on each other to form several pointed shapes. The flows correspond with the abundance of narrative messages and the painting literally vibrates with rich meaning. However, as is customary for the protection of Jukurrpa, the various narratives are revealed only in their superficial forms. It is quite easy to imagine that, like the doors in Yuendumu, this painting, by reason of both its aesthetics and complex content, could serve as a didactic example for the transmission of Indigenous culture.

Love and Family

The Importance of Family

Not only Country has a fundamental significance in Indigenous life and art but also the family or clan. They provide cohesion and both physical and spiritual well-being for their members, promoting living in mutual responsibility.

Judy Watson made this clear in the etching 'spine and ribs' from 2003. The spine is an allusion to strength, and indeed female strength. It stems from the life story of her great-grandmother Mabel Daly, who had to flee Riversleigh Station with her three children, escaping their violent father and the threat of the children being taken away by the police. The image of the spine refers to that of a fish, whose most nutritious flesh surrounds its backbone, which Mabel Daly reserved for her children to eat. Judy Watson's grandmother Grace Isaacson commented on this to the artist, saying, '*She gave us the flesh of the backbone, she gave us the best of what she had.*'⁴⁷ Thus, the spine in Judy Watson's work became emblematic of the strength and resilience of Indigenous women. The artist said, '*When I use the image of the spine, I am really thinking about women, Aboriginal women predominantly, but that's in my family history holding culture and country and family together as much as I can.*'⁴⁸

Also inspired by her family's history, particularly that of the women and the places where they were born, is 'listening springs' from 1991.



Judy Watson, spine and ribs, 2003, etching (35/40), 47.5 × 35.5 cm, sheet 69 × 50 cm (see fig. p. 170)

⁴⁷ Watson and Martin-Chew 2009, p. 168

⁴⁸ Fondation Opale 2020



Judy Watson, listening springs, 1991, pigment powder, pastel, gouache on canvas, 190 × 130 cm

In the painting, Judy Watson refers to Louie Creek at Lawn Hill near Riversleigh Station, the birthplace of the artist's mother and grandmother. Springs, drawn in the form of white swirls of short strokes, gush from the bottom of the creek, making the land fertile. Shown in the lower right of the picture is the form of a piti, a wooden container previously used by women for many purposes, including carrying collected bush food or cradling babies. Black lines show the marks of wood-cutting from construction of the piti. The curvy line of white dots in the lower left third of the painting connotes for the artist the feminine shape, formed when a woman cradles a child in her arms.⁴⁹ Judy Watson said in an interview on December 13th, 2020, on the occasion of the exhibition 'Resonances' at the Fondation Opale in Lens, Switzerland, *'When I see a tool, I don't just see a dusty thing in a dusty museum, I see something that has life, resonance, meaning [...] It was made by our ancestors, and it carries the energy and spirit of that person within it. When I see it, it's like a lifeline back to my country.'*⁵⁰

Comparisons to the art of central Australia and the north suggest themselves insofar as Judy Watson includes symbols in her paintings, such as the dotted swirls, two dotted circles or the curved line, without revealing the meaning of the symbols in detail. Allusions to Country are unambiguous, as is the connection to the Indigenous people of central Australia and the north through the piti. And yet, it is a symbolism all her own. Judy Watson's art draws inspiration from the forces of nature that shape the landscape (and people). The artworks are not descriptions of landscapes but evoke notions of Country.

Judy Watson's oeuvre covers the entire world of Indigenous life. Motivated by her interest in Indigenous history, reinforced by her contact with her grandmother, she processes all facets of this history: the living connection to Country, the relationships between the Indigenous people in the cities and those living far away, the persecutions at the time of the massacres but also aspects of contemporary history and, last but not least, personal history. She never references these directly but always in a mediated way, as if the events were too painful to be more clearly shown in the artwork.

The bond within the family and with the ancestors is also evident in artworks that refer to the transfer of knowledge within the family or the clan, a transfer that was important in the past and is still significant today. The central components of the Indigenous artworks are references to information on obtaining water and sustenance, and the relationship of family members with areas of Country, which ensures their emotional and mental well-being.

⁴⁹ Cf. Watson and Martin-Chew 2009, p. 22

⁵⁰ Transcription by the author

Love, Sexuality, and Marriage Laws

Love and sexuality are shown in Indigenous art at the narrative as well as at the pictorial level in various forms. Very rarely is romantic love, which leads to a long and satisfying union between the partners, depicted in paintings. This is also the case in Western contemporary art.⁵¹ Indigenous artists, especially women, much more often describe a particular narrative about the failures of a lustful old man in his pursuit of the Seven Sisters (see p. 232), whereby the dramatic events are barely comprehensible on the pictorial level. Other paintings on the theme of love include, e.g., the exposition of an important marriage law in the form of a warning against unlawful, immoral, covetous behaviour, often linked to romantic love through the seduction of a desired love partner. This law and the related narratives prohibiting love and marriage between a man and his mother-in-law are associated with incest, which was a significant issue due to the small number of people per group during the period of nomadic life.⁵² Such a relationship was strictly forbidden and subject to severe penalties. Mabel Juli's (Wiringgoon) paintings 'Darrajayin (Springvale Station)' and 'Garnkiny Ngarranggarni' tell of this (see pp. 226).

In a diagonally divided joint painting, Jukuna Mona Chuguna and Pijaju Peter Skipper painted of their love, Jukuna Mona Chuguna in the right part of the painting, Pijaju Peter Skipper in the left. In the primarily representational depiction, more opulent and dense in the case of Jukuna Mona Chuguna, more stylised in the case of Pijaju Peter Skipper but nevertheless with fine details that emphasise the individual motifs more clearly, they refer to their Country. The footprints in the left part of the painting, emanating from the waterhole of Japingka, show Pijaju Peter Skipper in his search for a wife. He finds her in Wayampajarti Jila, where Jukuna Mona Chuguna lived with her family. The individual's footprints become a double set and thus symbolise the joint life and love of these two artists.⁵³ The waterhole of Japingka, the dark green shape with four bulges circled by white and red lines, is also found in the collaborative work about land rights, 'The Ngurrara Canvas II' (see p. 265), in which both artists were involved.

The artist couple worked together on Cherrabun Station until the 1970s and then moved to Fitzroy Crossing. They were consultants on the translation of the Bible into the Walmajarri language and lent their language skills to the compilation of a Walmajarri-English dictionary. Pijaju Peter Skipper was one of the main plaintiffs in the land rights case for which 'The Ngurrara Canvas II' was painted (see p. 265). In 2004, the book *Two Sisters: Ngarta & Jukuna* was published in Walmajarri, written by Jukuna Mona Chuguna and her sister Ngarta Jinny Bent, about their life in the desert.

Like Mabel Juli (Wiringgoon), Maggie Napaljarri Ross combines romantic love with the above-mentioned marriage law in her painting

⁵¹ Cf. Scheuermann and Langanke 2014

⁵² Musharbash 2010, p. 287

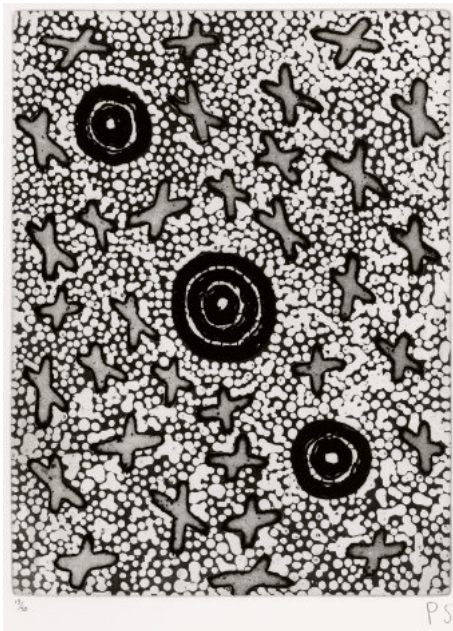
⁵³ Cf. Cubillo and Caruana 2010, p. 103



Jukuna Mona Chuguna and Pijaju Peter Skipper, Jamirlangu (Husband and Wife), 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182 × 151 cm



Maggie Napaljarri Ross, *Miinypa Jukurrpa*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 106 × 60.5 cm (see fig. p. 158)



Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, *Ngatijirri Jukurrpa I (Green Budgerigar Jukurrpa)*, 2004, etching (13/20), 33 × 24.5 cm, sheet 61 × 41 cm (see fig. p. 167)

⁵⁴ The centre of love is not the heart but the stomach.

⁵⁵ QAGOMA 2013, p. 37.

‘Miinypa Jukurrpa’. The very detailed narrative is reproduced here because it shows particularly vividly the holistic worldview of Indigenous people. ‘*The Jukurrpa site of Miinypa or Yanyilingi—both are names for the fuchsia shrub with small red flowers—is called Ngarlu (red rock) Country east of Yuendumu. A Jungarrayi man named Lintipilinti who lived at Ngarlu fell in love with a Napangardi woman. According to the Warlpiri marriage laws, such a union is forbidden because the Napangardi woman was the mother-in-law of the Jungarrayi man according to the classificatory kinship relations. Lintipilinti was aroused when he saw the woman digging a large hole in the ground and urinating. He thought about how he could seduce the Napangardi woman. He went to Ngarlu and knotted strings of hair for her while he sang. The Napangardi woman could not sleep and felt strange feelings in her stomach.⁵⁴ She realized that someone was singing for her. A little bird visited her every day and brought Lintipilinti’s songs to her. This bird [Budgerigar] can still be heard sometimes today: it helps people find certain bush food and it speaks to them when they are lonely or sad or in danger. When the pair later met and made love, they turned into stones because their union was forbidden. The place where this happened can still be seen at Ngarlu today. Lines in the painting represent the power of the songs that drew the Napangardi woman to Lintipilinti. The concentric circles in the painting represent the Miinypa bushes. When ancestral women gossiped and chitchatted about the forbidden relationship between the two lovers, they turned into Miinypa flowers. Fuchsias have sweet nectar in their flowers, which are edible and taste like ice cream. Ngarlu is a sacred site where Miinypa or Yanyilingi are common even today.*’

Yilpinyi ceremonies are held by both women and men. Paddy Japaljarri Stewart has depicted the narrative related to the above one in his two etchings ‘*Ngatijirri Jukurrpa I and II*’ but without referring to the fuchsia (the gossiping women). The concentric circles in his painting represent waterholes. Also visible are the tracks on the ground from Ngatijirri, the Green Budgerigar, as in Maggie Napaljarri Ross’ painting (see p. 159).

Painting of the Country versus Landscape Painting

Indigenous art makes it necessary, as will become clear in the following sections, to differentiate between a landscape painting in the Western sense and a painting of Country. As Judy Watson indicated, ‘*I don’t call my works landscapes as this carries notions of European perspectives, of looking out. I imagine my works looking above and below and through earth, water, sky. It’s as if the surface layer is peeled away.*’⁵⁵

Art historians and art museums in Australia recognise the parity of both systems. One example is seen in the prestigious Wynne Prize for Landscape Painting and Sculpture, awarded annually since 1897 by the

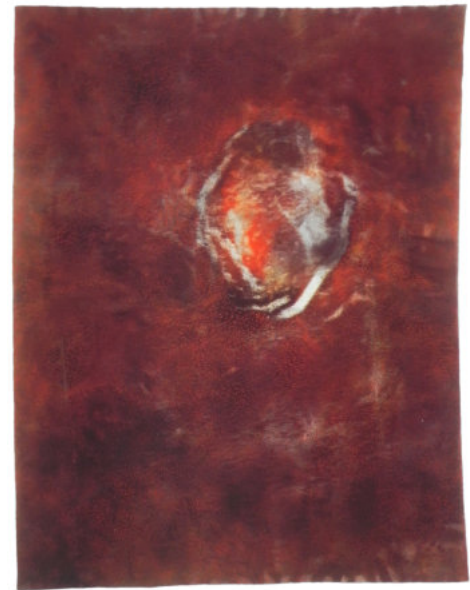
Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney. The number of Indigenous finalists from hundreds of entries now exceeds or is close to that of non-Indigenous entries (see p. 382). Indigenous artists won the prize in six of the seven years from 2016 to 2022: a Ken family collaborative work in 2016, Betty Kuntiwa Pumani in 2017, Yukultji Napangati in 2018, Sylvia Ken in 2019, Hubert Pareroultja in 2020 and N. Yunupingu in 2021.⁵⁶ While in 2017 the hanging of works in the exhibition was separated according to Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, this separation was dropped in subsequent years.

Judy Watson creates paintings seeking to portray the interior of a hidden world, in a similar vein to the approach of Churchill Cann (Yoonany) (see p. 193). She never mounts such works on stretcher frames.⁵⁷ The artist has been working with representations of Country since the late 1980s and one such painting, ‘heartland’ from 1991, depicts a view into the interior of a living land. Many layers of pigment in the work lead the eye inwards and direct the gaze through the lighter hues and red colours to the oval shape. The artwork shows a living organism in which a heart seems to beat. In fact, Judy Watson tries to ‘[...] paint the land from both sides, from above and beneath to integrate the body with the Country.’⁵⁸

The interconnection of the internal and the external in representations of Country is inherent in the work of Indigenous artists outside the major cities. There, too, it is not about an idealised or romanticised, idyllic landscape but about real places in the land that have gained meaning through a combination of interacting elements of history, memory, experience, and relationships to those places. The Country is not just a collection of mountains, rocks, trees, and rivers but consists of places full of activity and meaning. Even if the theme is a real stretch of land, or a specific area, the natural elements are not shown as realistic studies of nature but in their transcendental relationships to events or values recounted over generations. For this reason, the painterly realisation can often dispense with perspective. For the most part, the art is not concerned with spatial effect but with highlighting through glistening, shimmering or other types of painterly emphasis.

For example, in his 1997 painting ‘Mereeni Range’, Long Tom Tjapanangka used bright blue and green colours to emphasise essential pictorial elements in an area completely dominated by red cliffs. The Mereeni Range, located south of Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), occupies most of the artwork and is painted against a black evening sky. The richly dotted white foreground was painted by his wife, Mitjili Napurrula. It is one of the rather few examples of a figurative painting and yet keeps its meaning hidden. Long Tom Tjapanangka commented on his artwork without explaining the content, ‘*The story is sacred. The tree is sacred. The two*

⁵⁶ AGNSW 2022



Judy Watson, heartland, 1991, pigment powder, pastel on canvas, 176 × 173.5 cm

⁵⁷ In an interview on December 13th, 2020, on the occasion of the exhibition ‘Resonances’ at the Fondation Opale in Lens/Switzerland, Judy Watson explained why she never puts her canvas paintings on stretcher frames, ‘[...] I don’t frame them because I like the fact that when they are pinned [to the wall] they float slightly. They almost have something like a fleeting, ephemeral feeling, and they float and shift, and sometimes they catch the air currents and move slightly. So, it’s like a skin, a skinned skin.’ (transcription by the author)

⁵⁸ Watson and Martin-Chew 2009, p. 13



Long Tom Tjapanangka and Mitjili Napurrula, Mareeni Range, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 80.5 × 180.5 cm (see fig. pp. 58/59)

holes are entrances to a cave. You go up to the top and will see a lot of bush tucker everywhere. It is Tjukurrpa, dreaming.'

The artist, therefore, does not describe a landscape painting in the European sense but a painting of the Country, whereby the Country contains many meanings and ideas that allow for a diversity of pictorial compositions.

Some scholars refer to Country as a social landscape, a landscape experienced in the past and in the present,⁵⁹ with different cultures and social relations integral to it. These different actors and their histories and relations are recognised by Indigenous people as interconnected, or at least as co-existing, and so Country is perceived, as is the act of painting, as a performative space or act of interculturality.

In a more direct way, ignoring interculturality, Myers describes the connection between Country or landscape and artist as follows, '[...] for Pintupi people, a painting is (or should be) a particular person's perception of his or her places, showing what the painter is entitled to manage or give. Such a perspective transforms landscape from an undifferentiated visual scene to a socially organized "patchwork". The experience of the landscape is organized by the social relations and activities through which people engage with it.'⁶⁰

Country is even more: it is a landscape made of memories, alive in the remembrance of its associated people, even in their exile, where reflections and mental imagery of events of the distant past and of recent

years accrue, conveying knowledge. It is a living Country, a Country that accuses, a Country that provides material and spiritual resources. Country is a multidimensional unity. Indigenous people live in and with the Country, as the birthplace of all things in life, including such abstract things as ideals. The Country has brought forth and continues to bring forth everything. Country has a soul and is, therefore, an essential factor in cultural identity, as Long Tom Tjapanangka testifies with his reference to Tjukurrpa.

The different dimensions of Country are reflected in the art. For example, the artists from Wirrimanu (Balgo) and Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) often paint their artworks in memory of the Country from which they were expelled by the colonialists in the 1930s, or which they left due to drought and vanishing water sources, but which is still their Country. One such painting from 2004 is 'Karrkurutinytja' by Narputta Nangala Jugadai.

The artist came as a small child to Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), from near the salt lake Karrkurutinytja (Lake Macdonald), which lies about 300 km to the west of Ikuntji on the edge of the Western Desert and on the border between Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

⁵⁹ French 2015, p. 130

⁶⁰ Myers 2016, p. 57



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, Karrkurutinytja, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 153 cm (see fig. p. 36)

The painting represents the Country around the salt lake, the Country of her father. The semicircular arches, showing red earth inside, represent the hills (puli), the slightly curved lines show the sand dunes (tali) surrounding the huge salt lake, which is 58 km long and 23 km wide. The dried-up lake itself is represented by the blue areas, like white salt layers shimmering after rain. The density with which the artwork is painted shows the significance of the Country. For Narputta Nangala Jugadai and her family, it is a sacred Country, and the painting process was for the artist synonymous with a care for the Country and the Indigenous law/lore that is associated with and emerges from it.

Still influenced by the paintings of her husband Timmy Tjungurrayi Jugadai, whom she had been assisting since the mid-1970s, Narputta Nangala Jugadai began painting on her own in 1992, becoming one of the first female artists in Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff). Her artworks, painted initially exclusively in dot technique, changed conspicuously towards a more vivid, flowing painting technique as she began to use brushes. In particular, a visit in 1996 to the Country associated with her and her forefathers, not far from the salt lake, served as a source of inspiration for an extensive series of paintings on that theme. Whole ranges of hills (pulis) and sand dunes (tali) are shown sovereign, separated by lines. The salt lake Karrkurutinytja is shown in the same way, as an isolated white area in paintings portraying the dry season or as a blue area when representing the rainy season. Narputta Nangala Jugadai won in 1997, with a work from this series, the prestigious National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, in the category General Painting.

Close Observation of Nature

Even if a painting of Country does not show any realistically depicted features, the artwork nevertheless reflects an impressive power of observation. This has its origins in the necessities of survival, schooled in a world that often made its resources available only to those with skills of precise observation and analysis in context. Such observation skills apply not only to the easily visible but also to barely perceptible phenomena. Thus, not only were bright stars given names but also some extremely faint ones that are only barely visible.⁶¹ Observation is also directed at things that lie beneath the earth's surface, as Mitjili Napurrula included in her painting 'Untitled' from 2003.

The painting refers to Uwalki near the Kintore Ranges, a part of Country associated with the artist's father and shown here as

⁶¹ Hamacher and Frew 2010



Mitjili Napurrula, *Untitled*, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 184 × 312 cm (see fig. pp. 56/57)

black hills. However, it is not the hills of Uwalki with their deep black colour, that dominate the painting, but rather the partly intertwined, partly parallel roots of the Watiya Tjuta, the desert casuarina tree (*Allocasuarina decaisneana*), shown in the lower part of the artwork together with the repeatedly depicted trees at the top of the painting.

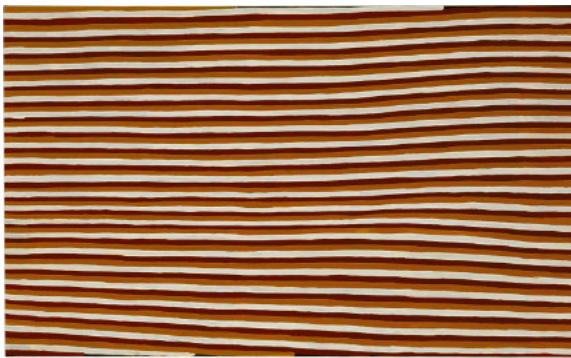
The desert casuarina, which grows up to 16 metres high, has several notable characteristics that enable it to survive in hot climates, in arid, sandy, infertile soil. It develops a taproot up to ten metres deep to reach water, and its shallower roots have nodules that contain nitrogen-enriching bacteria. Its thick, rough bark protects it from fire. Its hard, woody, unusually shaped fruit clusters, which can grow up to 9.5 cm long and 3.5 cm in diameter, contain an edible seed.

In her artwork ‘Untitled’ from 2003, Mitjili Napurrula first painted with a brush the various forms of mountains, roots and trees, using black on a reddish-brown ground, and then contoured them in white paint using the so-called kinti-kinti dot technique, i.e., with very closely spaced and overlapping dots. In this painting, the artist connects the Country associated with her father with the abundance and characteristic survival strategies of the desert casuarina. The hard wood of the desert casuarina was also used to make spears. Her half-brother, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, also an artist and one of the co-founders of Papunya Tula Artists, repeatedly depicted the Tjukurrpa of the ‘Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau’ in his paintings.

Even if sometimes Indigenous art is interpreted as associated with topographical views, the artworks by no means detail a landscape with topographic features in their exact positions, nor according to their distances in relation to each other. They are *not* maps, despite what is still often misstated in the literature about Indigenous art. ‘Yarllalya’, painted by Nancy Naninurra Napanangka in 2000, can serve as an example. Yarllalya is the name of the Country located south of Wirrimanu in the Great Sandy Desert and is associated with the artist’s father.

The meandering black lines at the bottom of the painting represent a kiliki, a stream, which flows through this area and carries water, at least during the rainy season. Along the stream, a pond—visible in the centre of the painting as a black elongated shape—has formed between small hills painted as U-shapes. The smaller concentric circles represent the trees typical of this area. The main part of the painting shows talis, the sand dunes that form the landscape, running mainly parallel over large expanses of land, sometimes merging into each other. The distance of the creek from the pond, with its disproportionate size, shows clearly that this is not a depiction of a landscape to scale. Although real features are shown, they are neither in their actual relationship to each other nor accurate in terms of size.

This painting, with its displaced depiction of the river and the



Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 150.5 cm (see fig. p. 116)



Nancy Naninurra Napanangka, Yarllalya, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 118.5 × 79.5 cm (see fig. p. 52)

pond, indicates that not simply the image of the landscape nor solely the characteristic details are shown. There is always a painterly translation with all its artistic freedoms. It is not merely the visible that is depicted. The essential aspects in painting are instead the meanings behind the things and the spirituality contained in the Country. Therefore, the knowledgeable viewer sees two aspects: on the one hand a specific part of Country, and on the other hand, the spirituality contained within it.

The connection of something concrete (in Nancy Naninurra Napanangka's painting, the river, the hills, the pond) with something general (the spiritual, the conceptual reference to Country and all things and living beings that belong to it) is one of the fundamental principles of most Indigenous art. Thus, unless the paintings are (only) about everyday themes, they always have a meaning that is not visible, a 'truth' that eludes the eye of the untutored.

Landscape Paintings as Witnesses of Destruction and as a Call for Cultural Survival

With her hand-coloured canvases of black and white landscape photography, Nici Cumpston pursues objectives similar to Fiona Foley, namely, to bring to light the signs of past Indigenous life. Furthermore, she raises awareness that Indigenous heritage must not be further destroyed. The heritage includes the Country for which people have been responsible for tens of thousands of years, and for which they continue to be responsible. Nici Cumpston said, *'These portraits of our precious trees and waterways are created to give them reverence and provide an important platform for discussion about how we can all continue to survive and thrive on this most sacred land. As a nation, we are all responsible to take action, as this is affecting us all.'*⁶²

In 2007, in an act that was disastrous for the environment, the Australian federal government ordered blocking of the flow of the Murray River into the lake Nookamka—called Lake Bonney since colonisation days. The Murray is the largest river in southern Australia and supplies the capital city of Adelaide, among others. The blockage caused the desolation of large parts of the Country, with previously imposing eucalyptus trees standing dead. What was once the largest freshwater lake in the Riverland region became a stagnant body of water of increasing salinity. After protests, the inflow closure was rescinded at the end of 2010. Nici Cumpston is culturally connected to the Murray-Darling river system through her Barkindji affiliation and has since mid 2000 been bearing artistic witness to these events in a series of photographs.

The two names of the lake stand for two meanings: the Indige-



Nici Cumpston, Ringbarked II, Nookamka Lake, 2008, linkjet print on canvas, hand-coloured with watercolours and pencil, 75 × 205 cm

⁶² Email communication with Nici Cumpston in February 2022

nous one for abundance and plenty, the non-Indigenous one for exploitation and impoverishment. In earlier times, the Nookamka was used by many Indigenous inhabitants as an important meeting place, and signs of the life of that time can be found even today on the now-dead trees in the form of segments of bark cut outs for canoes or coolamons. At the same time, the desolate landscape is a reminder of the brutal oppression of the Indigenous inhabitants by the settlers. Nici Cumpston reflects these ambiguities by imbuing her documentary-style photographs with an unreal atmosphere achieved by colouring them with water-colours and pencil. Thus, a method from the beginning of photography in the late 19th and early 20th century, that served to provide the monochrome images a higher degree of lifelike realism, is used by Nici Cumpston to instill her photographs with a deep emotionality and lyricism, contrasting the documented cultural and environmental destruction. At the same time, she uses this technique to evoke impressions of valued family portraits, revered and loved, just like the trees bear witness to the lives and Country of the Indigenous inhabitants. Nici Cumpston said, ‘*These are areas of abundance and I get the strong sense [when visiting there] that the ancestors have only just departed.*’⁶³

⁶³ Ibd.

Nici Cumpston, a Barkindji of English, Irish and Afghan ancestry, was born in Adelaide in 1963. She trained at the South Australian School of Art at the University of South Australia, lives and works in Adelaide as an artist and as curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

The Portrait

A social rule that applied generally even in recent times for most Indigenous people was not to mention the name of a deceased person for a significant period of time and not to show images of his or her face. This hindered the development of portrait painting as an art. The constraint was first weakened by the influence of the Christian missions and later by the spread of new media such as television and computers, although it still applies in parts of society today. Another reason for the absence of portraiture may be the structure of Indigenous societies, which still emphasise the community over the individual, even though famous artistic personalities have emerged (see pp. 179–201).

This first published portrait by an artist working outside the main cities immediately became one of the 55 finalists (out of 1,068 entries) of the 2020 Archibald Prize for portraiture, awarded annually by the Art Gallery of New South Wales. It is a work of genius by Charlene Carrington showing her father, the artist Churchill Cann (Yoonany). It is not a direct portrait, however, and its genius lies in portraying multiple relationships and transformations, that can hardly be shown more clearly and yet at the same time more covertly in a painting. It depicts relationships: between the person and



Charlene Carrington, My dad, Churchill Cann, 2020, natural pigments on canvas, 70 × 70 cm

their Country, which also provides for the person's well-being; between the person and their dependence on water; between the person and their professional past; between the person and their relationship to Jukurrpa; and, finally, between the person and their love of their children. On the occasion of the Archibald Prize, Charlene Carrington wrote, *'In the painting, that brown hill, his hat, is Red Butte. That's a good fishing place and where the old people used to hang out. That yellow part of his hat is the sandy ground around Red Butte, the buttons are the Texas rock holes. When we were young we used to walk up there and go swimming. It's real clear water, like a big pool. The moon on his neck is the necklace I gave him that he always wore.'*⁶⁴

The Ord River flows past the Red Butte hill, where there is a water hole and caves in which oral histories are localised. Of particular note in the painting is the arrangement of the hills to form the father's hat, an allusion to Churchill Cann's (Yoonany) earlier work as a drover on the Texas Downs Station. The proximity of hill and head also points to the spirituality imbued in Country, and at the same time to the transformations inherent in the Indigenous worldview—mostly from human to animal and vice versa; here, even from hills into a hat. With the relationships and the transformation, the painting thus presents a holistic worldview not in the form of narratives but as pictorial parts related to each other, and is thus unique.

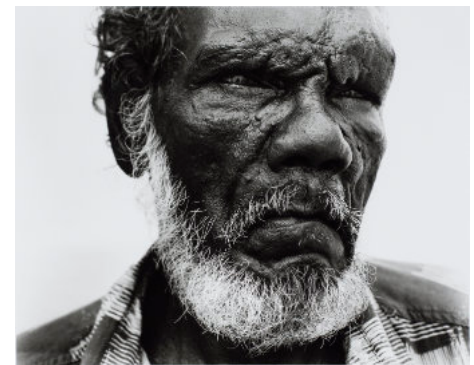
Charlene Carrington, who lives and works in Warmun, grew up among artists. Her grandfathers Hector Jandany and Beerbee Mungari, her grandmother Betty Carrington and her grandmother's partner Patrick Mung Mung, her father Churchill Cann (Yoonany) and her mother Sade Carrington are, or were, all active as artists. In particular, Hector Jandany and Jack Britten can be considered her teachers, under whom she studied painting and who taught her the use of natural binders in painting with natural pigments. Charlene Carrington is the only one among the younger artists in Warmun to use that method occasionally. She also learned painting techniques from Queenie McKenzie when that very senior artist taught at the Warmun school, a position that Charlene Carrington also later held for a time.

While Charlene Carrington makes a variety of connections in her portrait, Ricky Maynard's series 'Returning to places that name us', with the photographic portraits of five Wik Elders, reveals in their faces the hard life of their years-long struggle for land rights but also their pride in what was achieved.

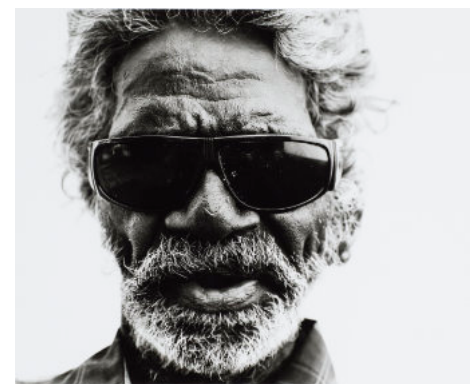
Among Indigenous artists, Ricky Maynard is the documentary photographer. He is convinced that photography can be a means of affecting social change. Therefore, in his view, the photographer has to face the responsibility that comes from this power to present society and culture in specific ways, to provide interpretations about beauty, conflict, hope, etc. Ricky Maynard believes his documentary photography to be an artform with a deep personal connection to the subject photographed, in contrast to journalistic photography.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ AGNSW 2020

⁶⁵ Munro and Maynard, 2007, p. 91



Ricky Maynard, Wik Elder, Arthur (from the series 'Returning to places that name us'), 2000, silver gelatine print, 122.1 × 147.1 cm



Ricky Maynard, Wik Elder, Bruce (from the series 'Returning to places that name us'), 2000, silver gelatine print, 121.7 × 146.4 cm

⁶⁶ Everett 2007, p. 33

⁶⁷ Leonard 2009, p. 8

⁶⁸ Tamisari 2007, p. 52

⁶⁹ Leonard 2009, p. 8

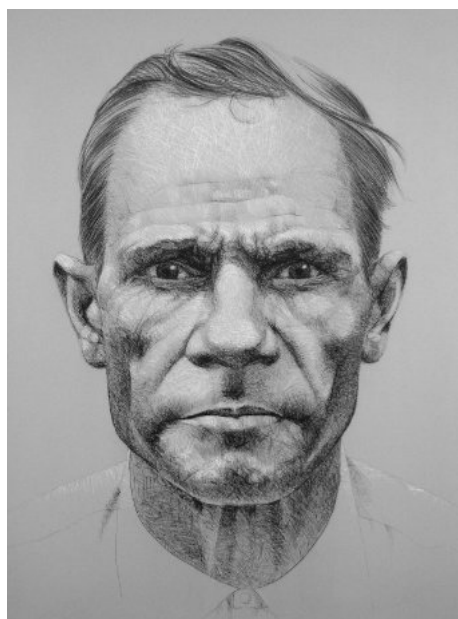
Maynard is not concerned with revelations about colonialism but with a representation of Indigenous history that challenges the perceptions of non-Indigenous Australians. He rejects the idea that the West can pejoratively categorise Indigenous Australians and their knowledge, according to the Eurocentric view, then use that twisted representation to excuse the forced assimilation of the Indigenous people it has colonised.⁶⁶ He conceives of the dispossessed not as victims but as crusaders for their own future and for freedom in their Indigenous existence. He captures in his photographs ‘the whole of life’: struggle, grief, but also pride. It is a documentary style and yet emotionally engaged photography.

Ricky Maynard, born in 1953 in Launceston on Tasmania, belongs to the Indigenous groups of Ben Lomond mountain and Cape Portland. He lives and works on Flinders Island. He trained as a photographer at Hobart Technical College in Launceston, at Reid Tafe College in Canberra and at the International Center of Photography in New York. Maynard won the ‘Mother Jones International Documentary Photography Award’ in 1994 and the ‘Australian Human Rights Award for Photography’ in 1997.

In two very different ways, Vernon Ah Kee also produced markedly politically motivated portraits. As a child, he had noticed that his grandmother always carried with her photographs of her parents. As an adult, Vernon Ah Kee discovered these and other photographs in the Museum of South Australia in Adelaide, photographs which the anthropologist and ethnologist Norman Barnett Tindale had made in the first half of the 20th century. Tindale had done so with the purpose of documenting and preserving images of Indigenous people who, in the view of the time, were inevitably doomed to extinction.⁶⁷ They are photographs in the manner of police mug shots: frontal and side-view but without providing names. In fact, the photographs from Vernon Ah Kee’s great-grandfather George Sibley and his great-grandmother Annie Ah Sam had been made in a studio under the supervision of a police officer.⁶⁸

Vernon Ah Kee used the photographs as models for his drawings and thereby released from namelessness those who had been photographed, giving them back their identities. By transforming the photographs into masterful drawings of strong presence and vividness, he ‘freed’ his great-grandparents from a prison-like historical existence that matched their internment as ‘maladjusted’ Indigenous people on Palm Island in the early 20th century.⁶⁹

His second method for political portraits emerged a few years later, when Vernon Ah Kee began to dissolve the drawings at the sides, finally reducing them to nameless, unidentifiable, depersonalised, mask-like heads in the series ‘Unwritten (unbecoming)’. Consisting of intersecting, densifying lines, the portraits show only hints of eyes, nose or sometimes mouth, which dissolve into nothingness at the sides. They have lost all their human individuality, but they are faces of Indigenous people. Vernon Ah Kee said in an interview, ‘*When I read about white Australian his-*



Vernon Ah Kee, George Sibley, 2006, synthetic polymer paint, charcoal and wax crayon on canvas, 180 × 121 cm

tory, including Aboriginal components within that history [...] It's so wildly out of context that it renders me as a person invisible, invalid, unrecognisable, not real at all. [...] No voice, no sight, no hearing. That's how this [white] culture accepts Aboriginal people.'⁷⁰

They are the 'Ghost Citizens', as Djon Mundine, a Bandjalung, called them on the occasion of the exhibition 'Ghost Citizens: Witnessing the Intervention', 'Aboriginal people are the ghosts in Australian history. We hang around but people don't know what to do with us. We are sometimes physically present and sometimes like smoke that can be blown away.'⁷¹ The exhibition, curated by Djon Mundine and Jo Holder, was shown in various cities in Australia during 2012–2013.

Vernon Ah Kee, who is also known for his paintings consisting of provocative statements in large black block letters, lives and works in Brisbane. His artworks are included in all major Australian art museums and in international collections. In 2009, he represented Australia in the exhibition 'Once Removed' at the 53rd Venice Biennale.

The Political in Indigenous Art

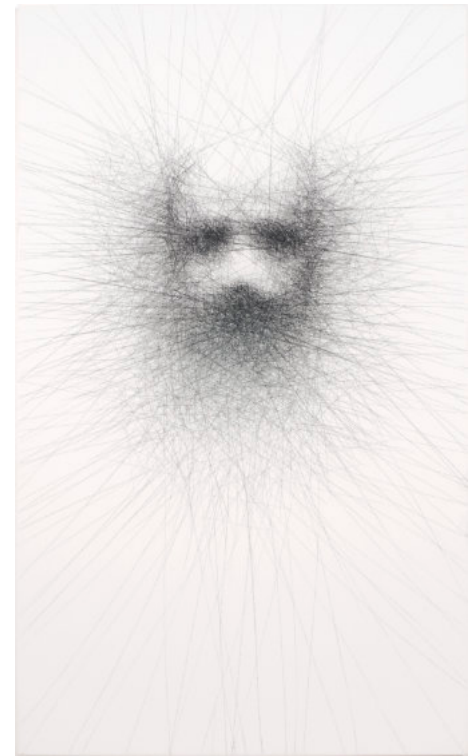
'[...] in his idea of the coherence of the social and political with the poetic, the visionary, lay the reference to the world of thought of those who never wanted to resign themselves to the given patterns and rules [...].'

Peter Weiss⁷²

All Art is Political

'All Aboriginal art is political, because it is a statement of cultural survival',⁷³ said Gary Foley in 1984, the year he became the first Indigenous director of the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts. Gary Foley was instrumental in the establishment of the Tent Embassy on the grounds of Parliament in Canberra in 1972, the founding of the National Black Theatre in the Sydney suburb of Redfern in the same year, which grew out of the land rights movement and also the launch of the Aboriginal Legal Service in Sydney in 1970. From 2001, he lectured first at the University of Melbourne and later at the Victoria University in Melbourne.

Galarrwuy Yunupinju is a member of an extended family of political activists and artists. His father, Munurrawuy Yunupinju, was involved in painting the Yirrkala 'Bark Petition' in 1963, and he himself participated in 'The Barunga Statement' in 1988 (see pp. 262–264). His brother Mandawuy Yunupinju was the frontman of the famous rock group Yothu Yindi, was the first Indigenous Australian in Arnhem Land to graduate from university, received an honorary doctorate from the Queensland University of Technology in 1992 and was for a time headmaster of the Yirrkala school. His sisters Gulumbu, Nancy Gaymala, Barrupu and N.



Vernon Ah Kee, *Unwritten*, 2008, charcoal on canvas, 150 × 90 cm

⁷⁰ Barkley 2009, p. 23

⁷¹ Llewellyn

⁷² Weiss 2016, pp. 528–529

⁷³ Quoted from Johnson 2016

Yunupinju (see pp. 195–198) are, or were, all artists. Galarrwuy Yunupinju was active in the land rights movement the 1960s and, with interruptions, was head of the Northern Land Council from 1977 to 2004. He wrote, *‘When we paint—whether it is on our bodies for ceremony or on bark or canvases for the market—we are not just painting for fun or profit. We are painting as we have always done to demonstrate our continuing link with our country and the rights and responsibilities we have to it. Furthermore we paint to show the rest of the world that we own this country, and that the country owns us. Our painting is a political act.’*⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Yunupinju 1997, pp. 65–66

These two quotations from Indigenous political activists in no way contradict the typical statement of an artist, for example Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, that painting is a matter of the heart for her, which makes her soul strong. On the contrary, both aspects are inherent in Indigenous art through the interaction between the person and the Country associated with them, which defines both individual and social-cultural identity. As a result, art is used, on the one hand, to assert rights to land, sea and civil rights, and on the other hand, for the individual artist, the artwork contributes to the constant renewal of their spiritual and emotional bond with their Country from which they have largely been dispossessed.

Indigenous art can also be described as political because, among other things, it serves as a means of inculcating descendants with the Indigenous worldview, i.e., asserting one’s own culture. Furthermore, art is used to inform non-Indigenous society about Indigenous culture. This also includes illuminating colonial history from an Indigenous viewpoint and drawing attention to it, as shown by many paintings about massacres of Indigenous people. It is a pictorial way of writing history, either as historical documentation, or as support to claim human rights, or as opposition to a one-sided and discriminatory representation. Likewise, art can be seen as having a political goal when artists resist the stereotypes that describe Indigenous people as ugly, dangerous, or alcoholics.

Land Rights – Three Forms of Political Art

Given the oppressive living conditions, the persecutions since the settler invasion, the legislative ‘Intervention’ measures in the Northern Territory since 2007⁷⁵ and the everyday racism, it is not surprising that many artists confront political trends. Upon closer examination, however, a distinction must be made between three categories of such artworks: firstly, those that place a focus on the conflicts over land and sea rights; secondly, those that simply describe historical events without direct criticism, being political in terms of their subject matter but not inciting political change, providing instead a historical-chronistic, quasi-objective representation documenting cultural identity; and thirdly, paintings that are to be understood as a historiography of persecution, an unveiling of the history of re-

⁷⁵ Frost 2017

pression, a protest against racism, against neo-colonial politics and oppression, and serving as a demand for justice and rights.

Land and Sea Rights

In Indigenous cultures, the extremely close connection between people and their Country is considered the fundamental basis of existence. Therefore, the struggle for land and sea rights, which became widespread in the late 1960s and is still ongoing, has had a vital role, not only in the self-image of Indigenous Australians but also in the preservation of their cultures, which is also reflected in their art.

As described in the sidebar, the High Court of Australia ruled in the land rights case ‘Mabo v. Queensland (2)’ in 1992 after ten years of litigation. This ruling cleared the way in principle for First Australians to claim restitution of their Country. However, the court also ruled that many parts of Australia were excluded from restitution, including any that were already owned by others. It also established a number of different categories of land ownership and rights, so that restituting parts of the land to First Australians does not usually mean they can dispose of it freely.

The Bark Petition

The ‘Bark Petition’ from 1963 is one of the earliest and best-known works of art that makes political pleas. A paper sheet with the petition, written in the Yolŋu Matha and English languages and signed by Elders of the clans from around Yirrkala in north-eastern Arnhem Land, is attached to two bark paintings showing the distinctive designs of the participating clans. The authors of the petition protested the excision for bauxite mining of part of their government-acknowledged land. They had not been consulted and had not given their consent. They feared that their interests would be ignored and called upon the House of Representatives in Canberra to establish a commission to listen to the views of the Indigenous people of Yirrkala before excising part of their Country. Initially, the parliament refused to accept the ‘Bark Petition’ on the grounds that its form did not follow normal procedures.

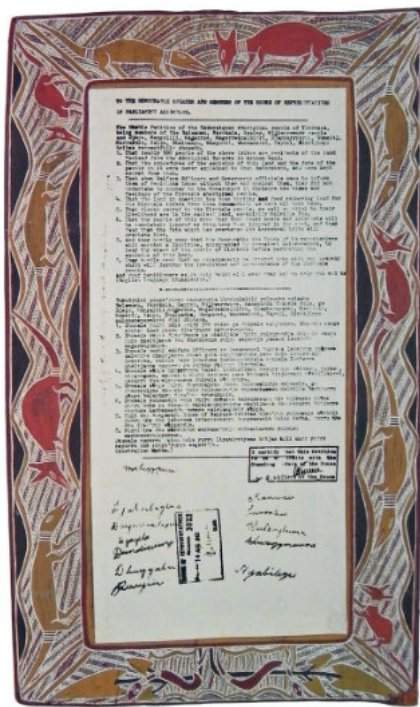
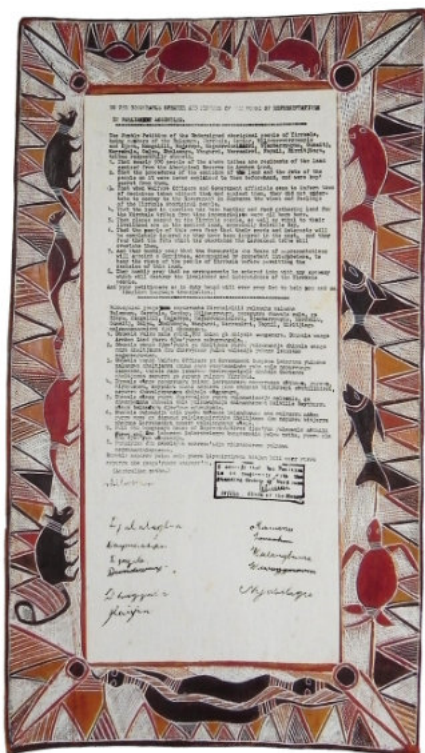
The ‘Bark Petition’, beginning with the words ‘*Bukudjulni gonga’yurri napurrunha Yirrkalalili [...]*’, follows the Indigenous tradition of negotiations in both its form and tone of pleas and references and does not make any aggressive demand.

‘The Humble Petition of the Undersigned aboriginal people of Yirrkala, being members of the Balamumu, Narrkala, Gapiny, Miliwurrwurr people and Djapu, Mangalili, Madarrpa, Magarrwanalinirri, Djambarrpuynu, Gumaitj, Marrakulu, Galpu, Dhaluangu, Wangurri, Warramirri, Naymil, Rirritjinu, tribes, respectfully showeth:

‘Terra Nullius’ and Land Rights Proceedings

After ten years of litigation, the High Court’s 1992 judgment in the land rights case of ‘Mabo v. Queensland (2)’ disagreed with the previous application of both the *simple* doctrine of ‘terra nullius’ and the *extended* doctrine. The simple doctrine means ‘inhabited by no-one’; the extended doctrine of ‘terra nullius’ states that people can only exercise sovereignty over their land if they are organised into communities for permanent political government. The English invaders asserted the continent to be without sovereign ownership under constitutional law, entitling them to claim it. For the founding of colonies, this was a common and agreed principle among Western countries. With the Mabo ruling, the applicability of these doctrines was rejected but not their principles. That means, it was recognised that Australia was inhabited before the invasion, which in principle opened up the possibility for Indigenous Australians to reclaim land, but it also meant that in any case of land claims, Indigenous people must prove that they have always belonged to and been culturally connected to that land. (HCA 1992)

In 1996, the High Court handed down another landmark ruling in the Wik case, recognising the co-existence of pastoral land leases and Indigenous land rights. The High Court noted, however, that pastoral leases had prerogatives, and Indigenous people were only conceded *access* to sacred sites on those leases. In a further case in 2000, specific land was finally granted to the Wik people, land in Cape York in north Queensland, from which the Wik had been expelled in the early 20th century, in favour of mining and farming interests.



Signatories: Milirrpum, Djalalingba, Daymbalipu, Dhayila, Dundiwuy, Dhuygala, Raiyin, Manunu, Larrakan, Wulanybuma, Wawunymarra, Nyabilingu, The Bark Petition, 1963, natural pigments on bark, typewritten text on paper, two parts, each 46.9 x 21 cm

1. That nearly 500 people of the above tribes are residents of the land excised from the Aboriginal Reserve in Arnhem Land.
 2. That the procedures of the excision of this land and the fate of the people on it were never explained to them beforehand, and were kept secret from them.
 3. That when Welfare Officers and Government officials came to inform them of decisions taken without them and against them, they did not undertake to convey to the Government in Canberra the views and feelings of the Yirrkala aboriginal people.
 4. That the land in question has been hunting and food gathering land for the Yirrkala tribes from time immemorial; we were all born here.
 5. That places sacred to the Yirrkala people, as well as vital to their livelihood are in the excised land, especially Melville Bay.
 6. That the people of this area fear that their needs and interests will be completely ignored as they have been ignored in the past, and they fear that the fate which has overtaken the Larrakeah tribe will overtake them.
 7. And they [the undersigned] humbly pray that the Honourable the House of Representatives will appoint a Committee, accompanied by competent interpreters, to hear the views of the people of Yirrkala before permitting the excision of this land.
 8. They humbly pray that no arrangements be entered into with any company which will destroy the livelihood and independence of the Yirrkala people.
- And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray God to help you and us.⁷⁶

A hearing took place, but the detachment of 360 km² of land persisted.⁷⁷ Even though the 'Bark Petition' was unsuccessful, it had a major influence on strengthening the fight of Indigenous Australians for their Country.

The paintings applied to the bark petition show the symbols of the clans living in that part of the country. They are an integral part of the petition, as proof that the Indigenous inhabitants there have always had a right to their Country. The fact that the petition consists of two parts, with the same text but different compositions, is due to the social structure of the Indigenous people in this area, a differentiation between the Dhuwa and the Yirritja moieties.

Even earlier, the Yolŋu used bark paintings during visits by government representatives as a conciliatory gift or as an indication that they were the guardians and 'owners' of the land. In this respect, it was not unusual that the 'Bark Petition' included painting, but it was highly unusual that embodiments of two cultures were combined in the bark painting of the Yolŋu and the typewritten text on paper in the European way.

'The Barunga Statement'

'The Barunga Statement' was similarly written and presented to the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke during the annual Barunga Sports and Cul-

⁷⁶ ALATSIS 1963

⁷⁷ Lüthi 1993, p. 341

tural Festival on June 12th, 1988, by Wenten Rubuntja and Galarrwuy Yunupinju, the Council Chairpersons of the Central and Northern Land Councils.⁷⁸ Remarkably, this statement speaks not only for Indigenous inhabitants of a demarcated part of the country—like the ‘Bark Petition’ for eastern Arnhem Land—but for all Indigenous Australians, as can be seen from the different painting styles used: dot painting for central Australia and rarrk (cross-hatching) for north-eastern Arnhem Land. ‘The Barunga Statement’ proclaims:

78 Prime Minister 1988, p. 1

‘We, the indigenous owners and occupiers of Australia, call on the Australian Government and people to recognise our rights:

– to self-determination and self-management, including the freedom to pursue our own economic, social, religious and cultural development;

– to permanent control and enjoyment of our ancestral lands;

– to compensation for the loss of use of our lands, there having been no extinction of original title;

– to protection of and control of access to our sacred sites, sacred objects, artifacts, designs, knowledge and works of art;

– to the return of the remains of our ancestors for burial in accordance with our traditions;

– to respect for and promotion of our Aboriginal identity, including the cultural, linguistic, religious and historical aspects, and including the right to be educated in our own languages and in our own culture and history;

– in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, including rights to life, liberty, security of person, food, clothing, housing, medical care, education and employment opportunities, necessary social services and other basic human rights.

We call on the Commonwealth Parliament to pass laws providing:

– a national elected Aboriginal and Islander organisation to oversee Aboriginal and Islander affairs;

– a national system of land rights;

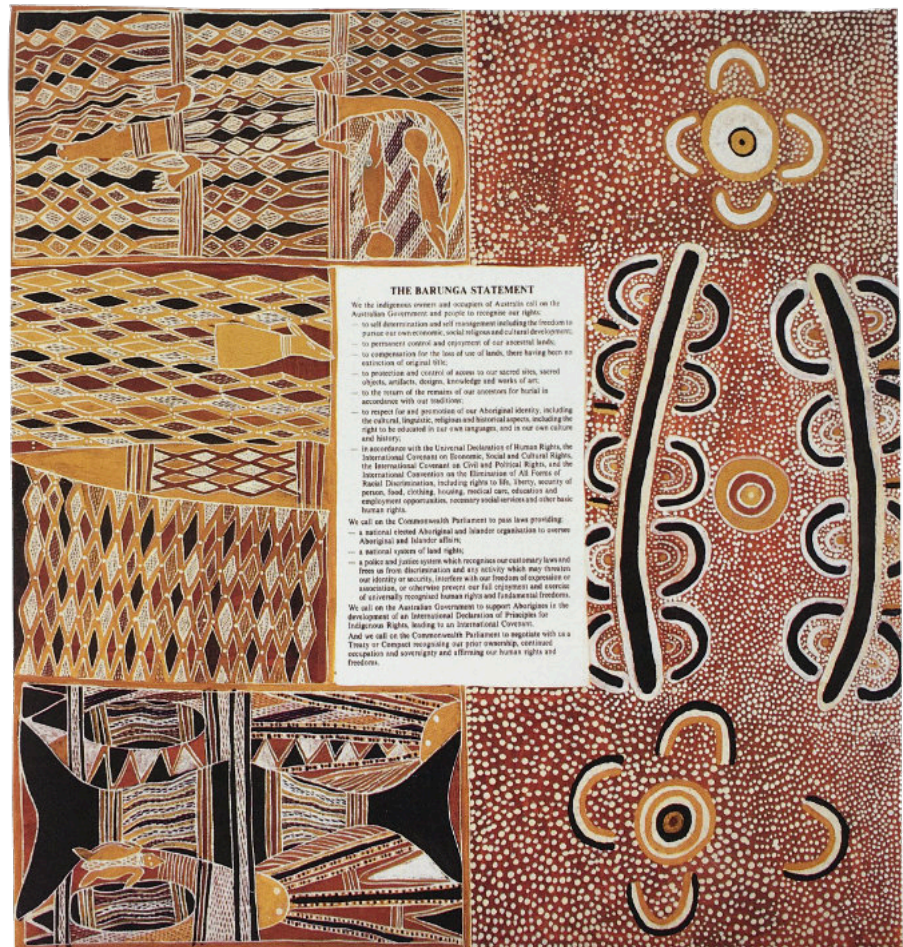
– a police and justice system which recognises our customary laws and frees us from discrimination and any activity which may threaten our identity or security,

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Galarrwuy Yunupinju, Djewiny Ngurruwutthun, Bakulanay Marawili, Terry Djam-bawa Marawili, Marrirra Marawili, Dula Ngurruwutthun, Wenten Rubuntja, Lindsay Turner Jampijinpa, and Dennis Williams Japanangka, The Barunga Statement, 1988, natural pigments on wood, printed text on paper, 122 × 120 cm

interfere with our freedom of expression or association, or otherwise prevent our full enjoyment and exercise of universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We call on the Australian Government to support Aborigines in the development of an International Declaration of Principles for Indigenous Rights, leading to an International Covenant.

And we call on the Commonwealth Parliament to negotiate with us a Treaty or Compact recognising our prior ownership, continued occupation and sovereignty and affirming our human rights and freedoms.’⁷⁹

⁷⁹ AIATSIS 1988

The wording in the declaration is demanding and not requesting as in the ‘Bark Petition’. The demand for a treaty is a demand that has been made again and again and promised several times but has not been fulfilled to date. Galarrwuy Yunupinju, one of the artists, said that ‘[the statement] was meant to be a follow-up to the Yirrkala Petition ... Prime Minister Hawke promised to hang the painting in Parliament House, and that there would be a treaty between indigenous people and the government.’⁸⁰ In fact, Bob Hawke had stated that he wanted a treaty to be concluded by the end of his legislative term, i.e., by 1990.⁸¹ That treaty still does not exist today.

⁸⁰ Kleinert and Neale 2000, p. 102

⁸¹ Prime Minister 1988, p. 2

The painting ‘The Barunga Statement’ shows on its left side stylised animal representations and rhomboid shapes, typical of Arnhem Land paintings. This was painted by Galarrwuy Yunupinju, Djewiny Ngurruwutthun, Bakulanjay Marawili, Terry Djambawa Marawili, Marri-rra Marawili, and Dula Ngurruwutthun. On the right side of ‘The Barunga Statement’, painted by Wenten Rubuntja, Lindsay Turner Jampijinpa, and Dennis Williams Japanangka, is dot painting characteristic of central Australia with a symbolism of U-shapes and concentric circles representing, among other things, the Jukurrpa of the ‘Two Women’, a narrative that has meaning in all the major language groups of central Australia. Thus, the paintings unite the people of the north with those of central Australia. ‘The Barunga Statement’ was placed in the art collection of the Australian Parliament in Canberra.

The ‘Ngurrara’ Collaborative Painting on Land Rights

The first group to create a huge 1000 × 800 cm collaborative painting to prove their claim to lands in Western Australia were, in 1997, forty-two artists from several language groups in the Kimberley, who lived in and around Fitzroy Crossing and who claimed 77,810 km² in the Great Sandy Desert.⁸² Large collaborative works had been painted previously but not to contest land rights. For example, in 1992 at the Yuendumu Art Centre, a large work was painted for the exhibition ‘Aratjara. Art of the First Australians’ in Düsseldorf, Germany.^{82a} As in other land rights cases, the Mabo judgement provided an impetus for the artists in Fitzroy Crossing, particularly for Pijaju Peter Skipper and Jukuna Mona Chuguna, who were instrumental in the creation of the painting. A year earlier, 19 artists

⁸² FCA 2007

^{82a} Lüthi 1993, pp. 286/287, 348

had painted the collaborative work ‘Ngurrara I’, but they felt it was insufficient to document their land claim. That 1000 × 500 cm artwork is now in the collection of the National Museum of Australia in Canberra.

‘The Ngurrara Canvas II’ was painted in ten days by 42 artists prior to the hearing of the National Native Title Tribunal, showing all the freshwater springs and sacred waterholes as evidence of their social, economic and individual connections to this Country. Before the artists gathered to paint at the Pirnini Outstation, far south of Fitzroy Crossing, they had spent four years discussing their land rights and planning a proof in the form of the painting. The negotiations for the 77,810 km² of Country lasted a further ten years and were finally decided in favour of the Indigenous people in 2007. During these ten years, the painting was exhibited in all major art museums in Australia, including in 2018 at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, and previously in 2000 at the Lyon Biennale. The painting finally returned to Fitzroy Crossing, where it is housed at the Mangkaja Art Centre.



‘Ngurrara’ means ‘home’. Thus, the painting shows the Country associated with each artist or plaintiff and all that is contained within it. Pijaju Peter Skipper said, ‘*That big canvas [...] is wangarr [the shadow] and mangi [the soul or essence left behind by a deceased person]. That’s what we call it now. [We painted our entire country.] The stories and bodies of our old people are in their country, our country. [...] Bulldozers come into our country and grade the roads right through these places, through those bodies. When the mining company takes the earth away they pull out the mangi and take it to another place, they take it away. That’s why we are fighting for our country, to keep the mangi there in our country.*’⁸³

Manmarriya Daisy Andrews, Minangu Huey Bent, Ngarta Jinny Bent, Wanina Bidee Bonny, Pulukarti Honey Bulagardie, Nyuju Stumpy Brown, Pajiman Wardford Budjiman, Parlun Harry Bullen, Junjarli John Charles, Juguna Mona Chuguna, Tapiri Peter Clancy, Kapi Lucy Cubby, Purlta Maryanne Downs, Wayawaya Sundown Ellery, Kurtiji Peter Goodijie, Kuji Rosie Goodije, Jewess James, Yilpara Jinny James, Jack Japarta, Luurn Willie Kew, Nyangarni Penny K-Lyon, Trixie Long, Milyinti Doris May, Ngarralja Tommy May, Mawukura Jimmy Nerrimah, Yamapampa Hitler Pamba, Kuntika Jimmy Pike, Killer Pindan, Tjigila Nada Rawlins, Lanyi Alec Rogers, Janjin Sweeney Nipper Rogers, Walka Molly Rogers, Pijaju Peter Skipper, Jukuja Dolly Snell, Nyilpirr Spider Snell, Scotty Surprise, Wakartu Cory Surprise, Myapu Elsie Thomas, Tjapangardi George Tuckerbox, Boxer Yankarr, Paji Honeychild Yankarr, Gypsy Yata, The Ngurrara Canvas II, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 1000 × 800 cm

⁸³ Dayman and Lowe 2001, p. 33

The road that bulldozers graded through the middle of their Country, disturbing the peace of the dead, is part of the Canning Stock Route, which can be seen as a continuous line in the lower third of ‘Ngurrara Canvas II’. Kuntika Jimmy Pike started the painting with this line, with reference to which all other artists could locate and paint the Country associated with them. The iconography in the painting does not suggest a

struggle for land rights. The symbols represent important features of the Country; they are documentations of the association of the Country with the people and vice versa. The painting is political art in so far as it was used in a political struggle about land rights.

Another Form of Demanding Land Rights

The paintings of Gordon Hookey illustrate a different approach to disputes about land rights. The artist was born in 1961 in Cloncurry, a small town in Queensland, attended the College of Fine Arts at the University of New South Wales in Sydney and has artworks in the collections of many art museums in Australia. He is of the Waanyi people.

The triptych entitled 'Native Title Now' demands the return of the stolen land. The first part is dominated by the Tasmanian Tiger, a marsupial wolf with tiger-like stripes. A unique animal that has been extinct since the 1930s, it represents in the painting the First Australians in Tasmania, who were also persecuted. Half the size of a German Shepherd dog, the marsupial wolf was the largest Australian predator, had strong teeth and could open its mouth unusually wide. The white settlers of Tasmania were quick to decry it as a sheep killer, and it was hunted mercilessly. Farmers paid bounties for dead Tasmanian Tigers. From 1830, the Governor of Tasmania paid a bounty for each captured Indigenous Australian. The Governor's intent, however, was to remove them from the deadly violence of the settlers and put them into a reservation. Thus, for Gordon Hookey, the Tasmanian Tiger becomes an apt symbol for Indigenous people.

In the first part of the triptych, human footprints branch out in the painting to form a wickerwork reminiscent of tree roots. Indigenous people hide behind this wickerwork, men and women whose bodies are painted, as is still done today in sacred ceremonies. However, the body paintings extend further, into drawings of skeletons. The footprints of the people merge into those of the tiger. The text on the painting gives the hint that these are indeed allusions to Indigenous cultures on the one hand and to the persecution of Indigenous people on the other. It reads, *'I know you know what you done to me and you are still doing it to us natives.'*

Three ropes appear in the central part of the triptych, in the form of a boxing ring, where the struggle for land rights is being fought out. The boxing match is a motif that the artist uses rather frequently. The opponents shown are a kangaroo and the former Prime Minister John Howard—known for his refusal to apologise to First Australians for government persecution and also for his rejection of the 1997 Kyoto Climate Change Protocol (because climate protection should take a back seat to economic interests). The kangaroo is cheered on by other native Australian animals, symbolising Indigenous Australians. The fight takes place on and about Australian land, where the ring is set up. The subtitle of the painting *'Native Title Fight Over Aboriginal Lands'* clarifies the message but also contains



Gordon Hookey, Native Title Now, part I, 1999, oil on canvas, 181.5 × 182.5 cm



Gordon Hookey, Native Title Now, part II, 1999, oil on canvas, 121 × 152 cm



Gordon Hookey, Native Title Now, part III, 1999, oil on canvas, 121 × 152 cm

a play on words: ‘Native Title Fight’ is first of all the fight for Native Title land rights; but the term ‘Title Fight’ is also the name for the final contest in a series of boxing events. So, there is a lot at stake. Howard’s head is shown in an enlargement as a pig’s head, an animal typical of the colonists; he wears glasses through which a money-centric Australia peers out. Howard is supported by many pig-faced boxers, all in dark suits and ties. They are strong, and one is even the devil.

The subtitle of the third part of the triptych confirms the outcome of the struggle: ‘*Native Victory Over Neo-Colonialism*’. Thus, the painting is not simply about land rights but about overcoming neo-colonial policies towards Indigenous people, policies that use the unique and distinctive cultures of Indigenous Australians for tourism but deny the people themselves the rights to their own cultures and self-determination. The land glows in the colours of the Aboriginal flag, the typical Australian animals are all gathered and decorated with the colours of the flag, the ropes have moved into the background, the kangaroo still wears the boxing gloves, but all the pigs are dead.

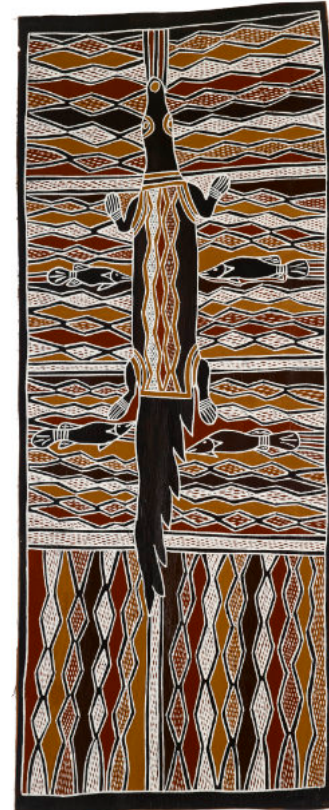
It is not the content of Gordon Hookey’s art that is in any way offensive, objectionable or abusive. Rather, it is government policy and racism towards Indigenous Australians that is offensive and unacceptable.⁸⁴ Gordon Hookey’s art is not one aimed at reconciliation; rather, it uses a good dose of humour and sarcasm to put its finger on the wounds and visualise a just outcome for Indigenous people.

Sea Rights

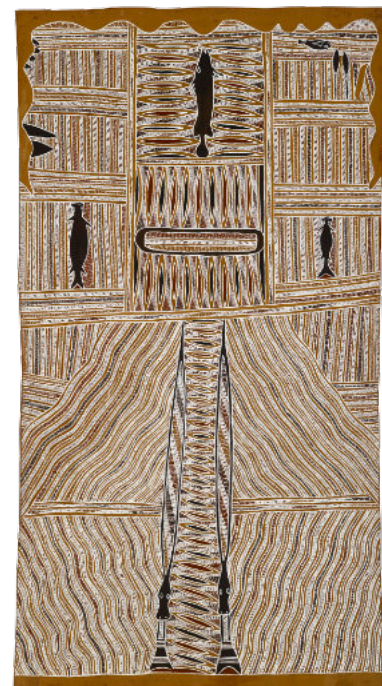
Bäru is the crocodile ancestor and his images played a major role in obtaining maritime rights for the Yolŋu in north-east Arnhem Land. In 1996, people from Yirrkala discovered at Garrangali (a sacred site of Bäru) an illegal fishery that had desecrated the sacred site. In response, Terry Djam-bawa Marawili developed the idea of a campaign to educate non-Indigenous people about the culture of the local Indigenous people, using paintings to help teach the importance of the sea and the sacred sites. Within three years, 80 bark paintings had been created by 47 Yolŋu artists from 15 clans in 18 localities in north-east Arnhem Land: the ‘Saltwater’ paintings. Taken together, the artworks show the coast from the Wessel Islands down to Blue Mud Bay and demonstrate the everlasting relationship between the clans and the coast, using the clan designs.

Gawirriṅ Gumana’s painting, one of the 80 ‘Saltwater’ bark paintings, represents the sacred coastline and waters of his clan. It conveys the energy generated by the ebb and flow of the tides and the storms that form over the sea and rain down over land at the mouth of the Baraltja River. As with land rights cases, the ‘Saltwater’ bark images were used as evidence when the peoples of Blue Mud Bay filed a case in the High Court in 2002 to claim sea rights. The first hearings were held at Yirrkala and Yilpara.

⁸⁴ See also Hookey 2006



Nuwandjali Marawili, Bäru at Yathikpa, 1998, natural pigments on bark, 117 × 45 cm



Gawirriṅ Gumana, Djarrwark ga Dhalwanju, 1998, natural pigments on bark, 154.5 × 83.5 cm

In 2008, the High Court made a sensational decision: it ruled that the Indigenous inhabitants have the exclusive right to determine access and fishing rights for over 85% of the Northern Territory coastline, which corresponds to a length of 6,050 km, within the area of the tidal boundaries, i.e., between the markers indicating high and low tide. The ruling is sensational in that it was the first time ever in Australia that Indigenous people were granted the right to directly decide the use of an economically valuable property. The 80 ‘Saltwater’ bark paintings are now part of the collection of the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.

The Assertion of Indigenous Culture and Identity

In 1988, the invaders celebrated 200 years of their settlement. On this occasion, a series of exhibitions of Indigenous art was organised, from which



several artists withdrew their works.⁸⁵ For the Indigenous Australians, this occasion was of course not one of joy but of mourning and protest. Their Country had been stolen, massacres had been committed against them, children continued to be taken away from their families, and so on and on. They ‘celebrated’ Australia Day as Invasion Day, in their own way. A group of artists created one of Australia’s most important political artworks, the ‘Aboriginal Memorial’. James Mollison, the former director of the National Gallery of Australia, named it ‘[...] one of the greatest works of art ever to have been made in this country.’⁸⁶ The impetus for the ‘Aboriginal Memorial’ was given by Djon Mundine, who was working at the time at the Ramingining Art Centre in central Arnhem Land.

Djardie Ashley, Joe Patrick Birriwanga, David Blanas, Roy Burnnyila, Daisy Ganyila 2 Dalparri, Mick Daypurrun 2, Tony Dhanyula, Paddy Dhatangu, John Dhurrikayu 1, Jimmy Djelminy, Tony Djikululu, Dorothy Djukulul, Tom Djumburpur, Robyn Djunginy, Charlie Djurritjini, Elisabeth Djuttara, Billy Black Durgumba, Yambal Durrurrnga, Paddy Fordham (Wainburranga), Toby Gabalga, Philip Gudthaykudthay, Neville Gulaygulay, Don Gundinga, George Jangawanga, David Malangi (Daymirringu), Jimmy Mamalunhawuy, Terry Mangapal, Agnes Marrawurr, Andrew Marrgululu, Clara Matjandatjpi (Wubukwubuk), John Mawurndjul, Dick Smith Mewirri, George (Malibirr) Milpurruru, Peter Minyngululu, Jack Mirritji 2, Jimmy Moduk, Neville Nanyjawuy, Victor Pamkal, Roy Riwa, Frances Rrikili, William Watiri, Jimmy Wululu, Wurraki 2, The Aboriginal Memorial, 1987–1988, natural pigments on wood

The ‘Aboriginal Memorial’ is an installation of 200 painted hollow log poles. It was created by 43 artists from nine different language groups and clans living along the Glyde River and its tributaries to mark 200 years of ongoing repression. The installation

is inspired by memorial poles associated with the final part of funeral rites. The ‘Aboriginal Memorial’ commemorates all the First Australians who lost their lives fighting for their Country since 1788. Djardie Ashley, one of the artists, commented, ‘Our art is not just for looking at; it has meaning. It is about our land and our history. [...] this Memorial is for all the dead Aboriginal people all over Australia.’⁸⁷

Each tree trunk stands for a year of settlement and the land theft

⁸⁵ Mundine 2010, p. 22

⁸⁶ Jenkins 2003, p. 121

⁸⁷ Musée Olympique 1999, p. 17

that accompanied it, and they represent in their entirety a forest of souls but also a warriors' cemetery commemorating the resistance against colonisation.⁸⁸ Furthermore, the 'Aboriginal Memorial' is a symbolic place of farewell for all those Indigenous Australians who had been denied a real funeral, a ritual interment. Massacres and deaths in the early 20th century, not only in Arnhem Land, were often so extensive that no one remained to bury the dead. However, the 'Aboriginal Memorial' is also a testament to the resilience and resistance of Indigenous Australians, who preserve a culture of remembrance through, e.g., artworks.

Whereas the 'Bark Petition' is a plea for negotiations and the 'Barrunga Statement' makes explicit political demands, the 'Aboriginal Memorial' is a monument. It not only bears witness to the grief caused by oppression and can thus be equated in its significance with the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, but it is also a monument of pride in one's own culture, which defies neo-colonialism and all its repressive measures. It is part of the collection of the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. It was exhibited in the Sprengel Museum in Hannover, Germany, in 1999–2000 and subsequently in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Another work of art that has significance in the context of 200 years of colonisation is the mosaic designed by Michael Jagamara Nelson, that was installed in front of the Parliament House in Canberra and opened on May 9th, 1988. In connection with events surrounding this mosaic, a culturally defined, completely different approach to politically justified demands becomes visible.

Covering an area of 196 m², the mosaic consists of 88,000 round granite stones of different colours. The initiative to commission an Indigenous artist to design the work came from the architect of the parliament building, Ronaldo Guirgola, who was personally interested in Indigenous art. He assigned the mosaic a central role in the overall design of the building. He wanted the importance of Indigenous culture in the history of the country and in contemporary Australia to be commemorated.⁸⁹ It was obvious that the opening of the new Parliament House and with it the mosaic would attract a great deal of public attention as part of the 200th anniversary celebrations. This was especially true at a time when the struggle for land rights was nowhere near being resolved, 25 years after the 'Bark Petition'. At dawn on May 9th, 1988, a group of Papunya women elders—Michael Jagamara Nelson lived in Papunya—held an appropriate ceremony at the mosaic to dedicate it to its Jukurrpa purpose. Later, many thousands of Indigenous Australians gathered and protested loudly and conspicuously for land rights.

The mosaic is an enlargement of the painting 'Possum and Wallaby Jukurrpa' by Michael Jagamara Nelson. Kevin Gilbert, author and one of the most prominent Indigenous rights activists, attempted on



The Aboriginal Memorial, partial view

⁸⁸ The first Indigenous Australian warrior whose name was recorded, was Pemulwuy, born near Botany Bay, who led attacks on settlers from 1792. (Kohen 2005)



Michael Jagamara Nelson, Mosaic at Parliament House Canberra, 1988, granite, 196 m²

⁸⁹ Johnson 1997, p. 84

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 87

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 90

the eve of the opening of Parliament House to persuade Michael Jagamara Nelson to present during those celebrations written material on discrimination against Indigenous Australians to the visiting Queen of England. The artist refused, saying later, ‘*Something stopped me [...] I don’t want to make trouble.*’⁹⁰ And, ‘*I have done this painting [or mosaic] for good purposes, for both white and black Australians.*’⁹¹

A few years after the ‘Mabo v. Queensland (2)’ court case in 1992, one of the most important judicial decisions on land rights, a government commission could not agree on the legislative implementation of this judgement. Kevin Gilbert again tried to persuade Michael Jagamara Nelson to carry out a protest action. He was asked to knock out the central stone of the mosaic, to show that patience with the government was finite. Although there is a photograph showing the artist with a hammer and chisel bent low over the mosaic, amidst a demonstrating crowd, in fact he did not chisel out the stone. The press reported widely, however, on the purported removal of the stone. Negotiations on the implementation of the Mabo ruling reached their conclusion shortly afterwards.

Here, two completely different views collided concerning how to deal with legitimate claims against non-Indigenous Australians. These are cultural differences. For some people, the mosaic does not simply represent a work of art but one to be used politically. For others, it is sacrilege to destroy a part of the Jukurrpa that the artwork became through the ceremony of the Elders. Michael Jagamara Nelson said in a speech in front of Parliament House in 1993, during the protest against the delayed implementation of the Mabo ruling, ‘*I am an artist, not a politician. [...] I only speak for my paintings. And my paintings speak for me—and my culture. [...] You the white people took this country from us. You must recognise Aboriginal people have their own culture, our Dreamtime, ceremonies, [sacred] places where we held our corroborees for our Dreaming. It is what my paintings are about.*’⁹²

⁹² Ibid., p. 127

Thus, the mosaic offers room for interpretation: for the artist, it is both a work of Indigenous self-assertion and one of reconciliation in that he wants Indigenous cultures to be understood and, above all, recognised as belonging to the whole of Australian culture, which is of course also a political demand. Others assign the mosaic through its placement in front of parliament a purely political function, to be used in the struggle for rights.

Destruction of Country and Disrespect for Indigenous Life

Maralinga, a word taken from the local language which roughly meant ‘thunder’, is a theme in political art that continues to cause outrage and anger today. Between 1952 and 1963, at the Montebello Islands off the west coast, at Emu Field in central Australia, and at Maralinga, 193 kilometres to the south, i.e., about 1,000 km north-west of Adelaide, a total of twelve major nuclear weapon explosions and many smaller tests were carried out by the British military. These caused the fallout of a large quantity



Totem Test at Emu Field, October 15th, 1953

of plutonium, uranium and other radionuclides. Around Maralinga itself, seven nuclear explosions were carried out between September 1956 and October 1957.⁹³ The first nuclear explosion at the Montebello Islands on October 3rd, 1952, had a force of 25 kilotons, 50% more than the atomic bomb over Hiroshima.⁹⁴ Two more explosions were carried out at Emu Field in 1953, and seven more nuclear weapons were detonated in 1956–1957.⁹⁵ There were about 600 tests to determine how radioactivity scatters in the air, releasing about 24 kg of deadly plutonium and 115 kg of uranium.⁹⁶ Plutonium and uranium act chemically and through radiation: 20 milligrams of plutonium can cause immediate death, much smaller amounts can cause cancer years later.

In a telephone conversation with the British Prime Minister in September 1950, the then Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies had agreed to the atomic bomb explosions at the Montebello Islands, 70 km north-west of the Australian mainland.⁹⁷ Written permission was given on December 27th, 1951, but only Menzies, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Finance knew about it; the Cabinet was not consulted.⁹⁸

It was known that Indigenous Australians lived on the Montebello Islands, but this was completely ignored.⁹⁹ Nor was there any in-depth investigation into how many Pitjantjatjara lived in the area before the atomic bomb explosions near Maralinga.¹⁰⁰ Some were forcibly relocated and thus became refugees in their own country. Others were not tracked down and instead, absurdly, leaflets in English were dropped from planes to warn the Indigenous population. The result was death or disease for an unknown number of Indigenous people. British soldiers were also exposed in an incredibly reckless manner to radiation during the tests.

In the 1960s, the contaminated soil was initially only dug up and turned over. Substantial areas of the land were returned, however, to the Pitjantjatjara people in 1985, as a result of the *Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act* of the previous year (and the rest was returned in 2009). After renewed investigations in the 1980s, due to protests and scientific disputes, the most contaminated soil was removed from 1996 onwards and buried at a depth of five metres.

Kunmanara Queama was born in Ooldea in the far east of the Nullarbor Plain, attended a missionary school and later worked on cattle stations. He became chairman of the Maralinga Tjarutja Municipal Council and worked tenaciously to get the land returned. In 1984, Kunmanara Queama and his wife Hilda Moodoo, both belonging to the Pitjantjatjara language group, founded together with others the township of Oak Valley, 150 km northwest of Maralinga. In the year of Hilda Moodoo's birth, her parents had been forcibly relocated to Barmera on the Murray River, more than 1,200 km away, so that the artist saw the Country associated with her and her (extended) family for the first time at the age of 18.

The painting 'Destruction I' shows the atomic mushroom cloud in typical dot painting style with different colour fields in white, yellow,

⁹³ McClellan 2011, pp. 3–4

⁹⁴ National Archives 1953

⁹⁵ Britain's Nuclear Weapons 2007

⁹⁶ McClellan 2011, pp. 6–7

⁹⁷ Tynan 2016, p. 3

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68

⁹⁹ McClellan 2011, p. 9

¹⁰⁰ Mattingley 1988, pp. 90–91



Kunmanara Queama and Hilda Moodoo, *Destruction I*, 2002, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 119 × 98.2 cm

¹⁰¹ Cumpston and Patton 2010, p. 130

¹⁰² Chrystides 1996, p. 75

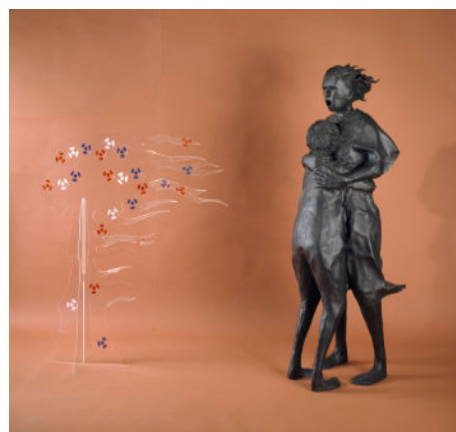
¹⁰³ Cumpston and Patton 2010, p. 128

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Johnson 2003, p. 71

¹⁰⁵ De Lorenzo 2012, p. 61



Jonathan Kumintjara Brown, *Poison Country*, 1995, synthetic polymer paint and natural pigments on canvas, 225 × 175 cm



Lin Onus, *Maralinga*, 1990, plexiglass, synthetic polymer paint, paper, 163 × 56 × 62 cm (figures), 125 × 119 × 45 cm (cloud)

and red as well as shading in brown. The mushroom cloud is traced around by blue, yellow, and brown dotted bands set off against each other by white dotted lines. It is the style of dot painting that is widespread in central Australia and differs only in that the content of the painting is depicted with the help of a symbol that is also burnt into Western iconography. The painting shows no signs of outrage or protest against the expulsion of the Pitjantjatjara from their Country, or against the destruction of their land, or of the long struggle for the return of their Country. The painting is a pure representation of a historical event. It is part of a series of paintings by various artists who intended to ‘[...] pass on their knowledge through their paintings and leave their history behind for others.’¹⁰¹

‘Poison Country’ is part of a series of paintings by Jonathan Kumintjara Brown, also a Pitjantjatjara, who belonged to the Stolen Generations. It was only in adulthood that he found his mother again and realised, ‘She could not speak English and I could not speak Pitjantjatjara.’¹⁰² The painting shows in the background, in black and white, a typical representation of Indigenous Country with concentric circles and fields of dots connected by lines. However, this land is devastated, almost entirely obliterated, which the artist portrays very vividly in a painterly way by using brown natural pigments to cover over the classical symbolism in an unstructured manner, obscuring it almost completely. The Country is almost destroyed. It is a representation of destruction—not only of the Country but also of human life. And yet Jonathan Kumintjara Brown said of this series of paintings, ‘It is not a protest... But I am asking: why did they do this damage to my grandfather’s land?’¹⁰³ These are images of accusation and mourning, whose painterly overlaying appears almost nowhere else in Indigenous art. It is at most reminiscent of early works by Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri from Papunya, where the similar iconography deals, however, with other themes.¹⁰⁴

The painting by Jonathan Kumintjara Brown is part of a series that the artist created in 1994 and 1995. He titled it ‘Maralinga Nullius’ and with this allusion to ‘Terra Nullius’ injects much fatalism. How right he was is shown by an incident in 2005, when the government of Prime Minister Howard decided to dump nuclear waste in Manuwanguku, 120 km north of Tennant Creek, and the then Science Minister Brendan Nelson claimed that this place was in ‘the middle of nowhere’.¹⁰⁵

It is not fatalism or pure representation of an event that Lin Onus shows in his installation ‘Maralinga’. The face of the mother, who protectively holds her child in her arms against the invisible atomic cloud, is distorted in an expression of extreme horror and fear; her hair and the figures’ clothes flutter in the storm of the atomic explosion. The signs of radioactivity clinging to the cloud in blue, red, and white are in the colours of the British flag. They are the colours of death. This emotionally charged installation is aimed against the disregard and disrespect of Indigenous Australians on the one hand and against the colonial abuse of the land on the other. It is a work of protest and not of historiography.

From the artworks concerning Maralinga, it is clear that in Indigenous art, on a subject that in Western understanding is completely political, distinctions must be made between a purely historical understanding, an indictment of colonial contempt and a call to protest as a political act. The purely historical treatment shows the event as a process that must be documented and remembered in order to be able to communicate it to subsequent generations. An indictment of colonialist contempt is shown in Jonathan Kumintjara Brown's question, '[...] *why did they do this damage to my grandfather's land?*', and a call to protest as a political act is suggested by Lin Onus' installation.

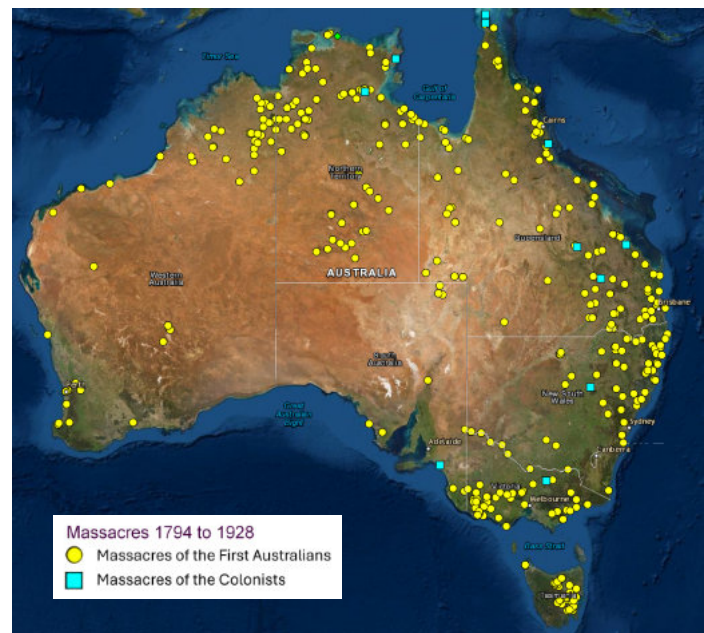
¹⁰⁶ Ryan et al. 2020

¹⁰⁷ Kranenbarg 2004, pp. 40, 59, 64

Genocide and Annihilation: Opposing Oblivion

Massacres Portrayed as Historical Events and as Critique

Similar to the paintings about Maralinga, there are others on the theme of violence by settlers or police against Indigenous people, violence that culminated during the so-called Frontier Wars in numerous massacres, which lasted into the 1930s.¹⁰⁶ Researchers led by historian Lyndall Ryan at the University of Newcastle conducted a research project from 2017 to 2024 to investigate and map the number, location, cause, and scale of known massacres perpetrated between 1794 and 1928. The researchers define a massacre as the deliberate killing of more than five defenceless people. Their map therefore does not illustrate the full extent of the violence, because incidents with fewer reported deaths are not included, and it is likely that many massacres were not recorded. Nevertheless, the map gives a picture of the widespread violence of the settlers.



Artists from the Kimberley take up this theme in their paintings. Betty Carrington and her granddaughter Charlene Carrington, for example, painted the Mistake Creek massacre; Charlene Carrington's father, Churchill Cann (Yoonany), painted 'Major the Bushranger' (see next page) and also the Horse Creek massacre; and Mabel Juli (Wirringoon) painted the Springvale station massacre.¹⁰⁷ In a series of paintings in the late 1980s and 1990s, Rover Thomas (Joolama) made the massacres on cattle stations in the Kimberley a subject of his paintings. Often the bodies were burnt to better conceal the murders and the artist also included that in his paintings.

'Kananganja (Mt King)' from 1988, describes the massacre at Bedford cattle station in the early 1920s. The vast expanse of colour painted in a medium brown, extending from the right-hand part of the painting to its



Rover Thomas (Joolama), Kananganja (Mt King), 1988, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 180 cm

centre, shows Kananganja (Mount King). It casts a shadow in the form of a dark-brown bordered narrow area above the mountain, making visible the shadows of the murdered Indigenous people. The dark brown, almost round circle shows the site where the victims were burnt.

The painting ‘Major the Bushranger’ by Churchill Cann (Yoonany) shows the Country where the Indigenous man nicknamed Major was shot in 1908. The place where Major was killed, like the place of the burnt victims in the painting by Rover Thomas (Joolama), is depicted in the form of a circle. That is the Indigenous form of a *memento mori*, with no additional symbolism. The entire painting by Churchill Cann (Yoonany), the place of the burnt dead in the painting by Rover Thomas (Joolama), and the narrow areas illustrating the souls of the murdered are all painted in very dark colours, mournful colours.

Churchill Cann (Yoonany) accompanied his painting with the following story. ‘Major was an Indigenous man who moved around this area in the early 20th century. When he noticed two white men living with Indigenous women, he became very angry and shot the two men. Police, trackers and farmers hunted Major down and forced him to retreat into the mountains. During a fire-fight, Major killed a policeman with the last shot from his ‘40-40’. Now that he was out of ammunition, he came out from behind a large rock and challenged the policemen to shoot him. They killed Major, severed his head from his body, took the head back to Warmun and displayed it there. The round area in the painting represents the place where Major was killed.’

Other artists, such as Freddie Timms or Peggy Patrick, have told the story of Major in more detail.¹⁰⁸ In an interview, which is well worth reading, Jack Sullivan gave a detailed account of Major and described vividly the violent times at the beginning of the 19th century.¹⁰⁹ The differing versions are due to oral tradition.

Compared to ‘Major the Bushranger’, ‘Texas Country’ by Churchill Cann (Yoonany) is about hills and streams on the Texas Downs cattle station where the artist was born and worked for a long time. The Bamboo Creek arises in the hills and flows into the Jessie River; a large mountain is depicted on the left of the painting. With this artwork, the artist recalls the time when many Indigenous people worked on the stations in the Kimberley, on stations excised from their ancestral Country. This work enabled them to obtain their livelihood and to combine this with their cultural life, holding ceremonies on the Country associated with them. This was true until the 1967 federal referendum and subsequent legislation of a right to equality of wages. On the one hand, this ended the feudal labour relations, but on the other hand, it resulted in the expulsion of the Indigenous families from the stations and, thus, from their Country, leading to a rupture in cultural life.

The pictorial rhetoric of both artworks, with their planar colour segments of different sizes, shows no fundamental differentiation, although the themes could hardly be more different. Whereas ‘Texas Coun-



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Major the Bushranger, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 120.5 × 120 cm (see fig. p. 83)

¹⁰⁸ Ian Potter Museum 2002, pp. 36–45

¹⁰⁹ Shaw and Sullivan 1979, pp. 96–108



Churchill Cann (Yoonany), Texas Country, 1999, natural pigments on canvas, 100 × 140 cm (see fig. p. 81)

try' is about everyday things like working on the cattle stations in a certain area, 'Major the Bushranger' is about the killing of Major as a historical event from the recent past, which has become part of the Ngarranggarni, as the people from Warmun call their worldview.

Such representations provide a visible image for Indigenous history but not an image of protest or disclosure. Instead, it is the representation of the event as a historical-chronistic, quasi-objective description. The event is localised; it becomes directly and inextricably linked to the place of the event and thus becomes a part of the Ngarranggarni, to be handed down to following generations.

In contrast, Fiona Foley's interest is not simply to save history from oblivion but to drag it into the light in the first place, to hold up a mirror to colonial politics—in the literal sense.

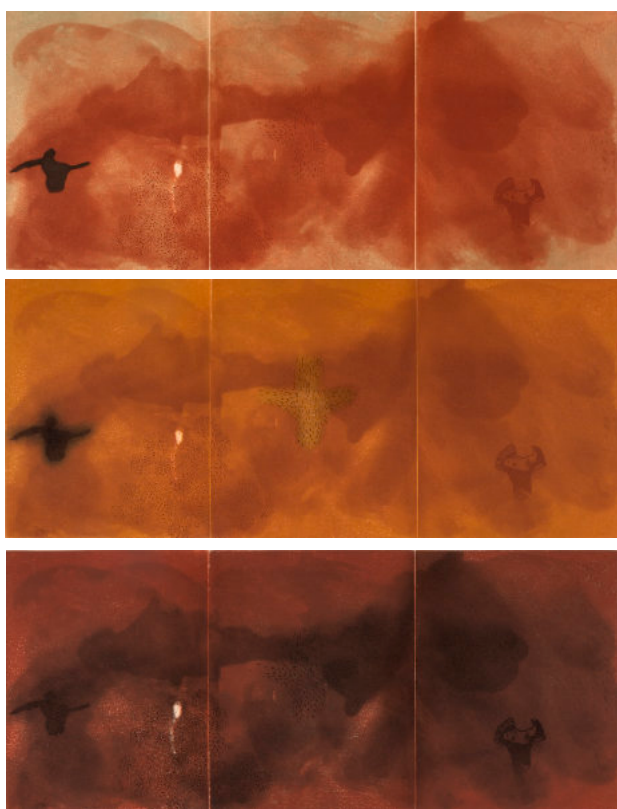
In her extensive work in many media, Fiona Foley draws from diverse sources such as ethnological collections, the oral histories of the Badtjala, scholarly texts, government documents, and publications on Indigenous history. Through such research, the artist has encountered the manner in which the government has employed the term 'disperse' to describe a solution to the 'Indigenous problem', i.e., the presence of Indigenous people on land that farmers would like to claim for themselves. 'Disperse' has a number of definitions: to dissipate or dissolve, to scatter, to pull apart or to dispel. The verb was used in sentences such as *'The police "dispersed" the blacks, clearing the way for land to be used for farming.'*¹¹⁰ Thus 'dispersed' served as a trivialising paraphrase for murdering and killing. Today, this is called 'ethnic cleansing'.

Text is a very effective means of castigating political events or political behaviour. The distinctive feature of Fiona Foley's artwork lies in the simple yet highly impressive way that she uses cartridges to emphasise the deadliness of a word that is in itself innocuous and value-free, thus exposing the violence behind the apparent harmlessness of the above quotation. The materials of the work establish the reference to its narrative: the cartridges refer to the murder of Indigenous people and the burnt wood to the burning of their corpses. The work has an intimidating impact because the cartridges are directed at the viewer, so that one feels threatened. On the other hand, the reflecting aluminium in the word 'disperse' makes the viewer part of the work, as if they were one of the colonialists. The work is in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.



Fiona Foley, *Dispersed*, 2008, singed wood, aluminium, .303-inch calibre cartridges, 51 × 25 × 500 cm

¹¹⁰ Allas 2010b, p. 4



Judy Watson, drowning in language, swimming in blood, consumed by fire, 1997, etching, each 29 x 68 cm, sheet 54 x 79 cm (see also fig. p. 171)

¹¹¹ Australian Government 2020a

Unlike Fiona Foley, Judy Watson cloaks sharp political critique in subtle, emotionally coloured imagery. In this respect, her works are similar to those of Michael Riley (see p. 281). However, her works are no less political; on the contrary, they challenge the viewer to engage with the history of persecution of Indigenous Australians.

Judy Watson was born in 1959 in Mundubbera in north-west Queensland, grew up in the suburbs of Brisbane and is of Waanyi descent. She is academically trained, however, she finds the source of her creativity in her Indigenous heritage. From 1979 to 1982 she studied fine arts at the University of Tasmania in Hobart and at Monash University in Melbourne. She trained in printmaking and works also with sculpture and painting—though she never mounts her canvases on stretcher frames. She is one of the three Indigenous artists whose work was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1997.

Examples of veiled political criticism and memorable titles of paintings are three etchings from 1997 with the same image but printed in different colour shadings. The first is titled ‘drowning in language’, the second ‘swimming in blood’ and the third ‘consumed by fire’. The etchings themselves do not reveal the connotations immediately arising from the titles. Only the two dark forms in the left and right parts of the picture, which are reminiscent of animal skulls, refer to death. In the central etching, the lighter printing makes the dynamic reddish-brown colour gradient stand out more strongly and could thus be reminiscent of flowing blood. In the lower etching, the addition of black changes these structures to seem like smoke from a fire. The subject of the images is implicitly the same: the persecuted Indigenous people of Australia.



Julie Dowling, A Welcome of Tears, 1999, synthetic polymer paint, red and white ochre, silver on canvas, 100 x 120 cm

Stolen Generations

The artist Julie Dowling, famous for her portraits, had a grandmother who was one of the Stolen Generations, those children taken away from their parents, from their white father and an Indigenous mother, under racist assimilation policies. Today, this in effect continues under the *Families Law Act 1975 (Cth)*: as of June, 2018, 17,787 Indigenous children had been taken from their parents, representing 5.9% of all Indigenous children and 11 times more than non-Indigenous children.¹¹¹ Until the 1970s, children were placed in orphanages where girls were ‘educated’ to be household servants and boys to be station workers. The Christian missions were usually deeply involved. Julie Dowling refers directly to this in one of her paintings.

In the painting ‘A Welcome of Tears’ from 1999, she de-

picts the story handed down by her grandmother about the inhumane treatment of Indigenous girls at St Joseph's Mission in Subiaco, a suburb of Perth. In the painting, the artist portrays her grandmother and great-aunt as children who had been sent to the orphanage of that mission. They are holding a funeral ceremony for a friend who had died of pneumonia caused by hunger, hard work, and debilitation.¹¹² Julie Dowling wrote as a commentary on this painting, *'I wanted to paint this event as a message to my family of what my family had to endure and how many in our community grew up within [sic] prejudice.'*¹¹³

The significance of this painting is that Julie Dowling chooses for the deceased girl a posture like that depicted by Hector Jandany in 'The Dead Christ in the Tree', a posture that references funeral ceremonies in the north-west of Australia where the deceased were first laid on a platform in a tree. In Julie Dowling's painting, the body is carried not by a tree but by the mourning children. Thus the artist does not choose Christian iconography for her critique of the mission but opposes it with Indigenous iconography and, at the same time, shows the strength of Indigenous cultures by transferring the power of the trees to that of the children. Hector Jandany's painting 'The Dead Christ in the Tree' became part of the War-mun Community Collection.

A second example of the artist's critique of missions and their contribution to the 'Stolen Generations' is the triptych 'Minority Rites I, II, III' from 2003. Literally, the title means 'Rituals of Minorities'; however, when spoken, it also sounds like 'Minority Rights'. Through this play on words, the artist ironically links the lack of human rights for the Indigenous population with their attempt to preserve Indigenous culture.

She portrayed three women and one child, from within four successive generations of her family, who were all terrorised by crimes committed by the churches, by the forcible removal of their children. Besides the four people, the pictorially dominant feature is the Aboriginal flag, placed in the centre of the triptych. Furthermore, there are a number of restrainedly painted symbols. In all the paintings, the dotted horizon line separates the Indigenous Country, marked by concentric circles, from the sky. Julie Dowling gave the following biographical and historical background information, *'I wanted to also illustrate the tensions, which have existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures regarding the use of religion as a colonising tool. I also wanted to reflect on the history of forced removal and the tug-of-war between religions to get Indigenous souls to convert within Western Australia. My great grandmother, Mary Latham was taken from her mother Melbin who was "saved" from the bush and was*

¹¹² Flinders 2004, p. 62

¹¹³ Ibid.



Hector Jandany, The Dead Christ in the Tree, undated, natural pigments on canvas, 92 × 60 cm



Julie Dowling, Minority Rites I, II, III, 2003, synthetic polymer paint, blood, red ochre on canvas, each 80 × 50 cm

baptised in the Church of England. Melbin's daughter, Mary Oliver was taken from her and baptised Anglican. Mary Oliver's daughter, Mary Latham was also taken from her mother and she was subsequently baptised Catholic. This took less than 40 years to achieve.'¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 74

Against Racism and the 'Intervention'

To this day, commonplace racism against Indigenous people in Australia has not disappeared and manifests itself in many ways. For example, the city of Darwin expanded its gazetted urban area by about 30% in 2007 without any significant settlement of the area in later decades. This had the effect that Indigenous people could no longer try to gain Native Title for that land. Everyday racism is also reflected in the fact that in Alice Springs it is forbidden to camp in the dried-up bed of the Todd River, because this does not correspond to white customs and makes poverty dramatically visible in the middle of the city.

In his painting 'Blackfella whitefella' from 1999, Freddie Timms depicted the strict racist hierarchisation of people and cultures as it is anchored in a globalised right-wing, fascist-like way of thinking. Four symbols surrounded by white dots stand out against a deep black background, appearing as the profile of bones or their cross-sections. At the top is the white bone symbolising the white man, below that is the yellow symbol for the Chinese man or his culture, below that for the African and at the bottom is that for the First Australians and their cultures. The image is a stoic representation of the experiences Indigenous people have had in the past and even in Australia today. It also contains a clever connection, showing a hierarchy of peoples corresponding to the racist worldview and, at the same time, holding a mirror up to this view. The choice of the faded bones as symbols refers to the impermanence of all people and thus to their ultimate equality.

One of the most severe racist measures in recent times was undertaken by the government in 2007, with the introduction of the so-called 'Intervention' in the Northern Territory, in which even the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)* was temporarily completely suspended and never fully reinstated. This was condemned and strongly criticised by the UN Commission on Human Rights. Measures of the 'Intervention' such as the abolition of community self-government, the right to self-determination over income and many others are still operative to this day.¹¹⁵

It is not surprising that artists have taken up this theme. For example, Jason Wing, who studied art and graphic design in Sydney, started as a street artist and now works with photography, painting, installations, sculptures, and prints. His origins—his mother was a Biripi, his father a Chinese from Canton—led him to deal in his art with identity arising from various cultures. In the past, he focused more on the violation of human rights or the destruction of culture, on the expropriation of land or related



Freddie Timms, *Blackfella whitefella*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint and natural pigments on canvas, 122 × 135 cm

¹¹⁵ Frost 2017

issues. In 2012, Jason Wing won the New South Wales Parliament Indigenous Art Prize with his provocative and controversial sculpture ‘Australia was Stolen by Armed Robbery’.¹¹⁶ It is more than hypocritical that in the same year the Australian government extended the ‘Intervention’ measures for another ten years.

Jason Wing’s criticism is reflected in the way the artist portrays himself as a respectable citizen who is guilty of nothing more than being critical, and yet is stigmatised as a criminal by means of a plaque. It is not just anyone, or even he himself, who makes him a criminal but the government, through its measures of the ‘Intervention’, as the plaque declaims. In terms of art, Jason Wing, like many artists before him, adopts a form of confrontational representation by portraying the figure gazing directly at the viewer from within the painting. He heightens this effect even further with the bright blue eye colour. It is almost impossible to escape this gaze, a serious but challenging gaze that demands a reaction from the viewer. The blue eye colour is replicated in the plaque. The eyes and plaque are the objects in the portrait that draw the viewer’s attention. There are no other colours in the photograph; the artist, depicted in shades of grey, stands before a black background. Even though the body is not highlighted by the neutral grey, it is not without impact, for its nakedness conveys defenselessness. Thus, the impression of the figure oscillates between defencelessness and energetic self-assertion distanced from any irony.

Nevertheless, the photograph also contains a satirising aspect in the form of the plaque. For plaques, usually worn on a chain around the neck, have a long tradition in Australia’s colonial history. Coming from the military—and note that the ‘Intervention’ in 2007 began with an incursion by the (unarmed) Australian army—they were modifications of badges of rank worn by officers of the infantry in Australia until 1832.¹¹⁷ Plaques were given by the government and the settlers to Indigenous people who, from the colonists’ point of view, were either leaders of a clan (named ‘King’ by the settlers) or had behaved in a particularly obliging manner towards the settlers, e.g., as guides on land surveys, as trackers in search of escaped convicts or also in making the land usable for farmers by providing information about water sources.¹¹⁸ Later, individual Indigenous people received special certificates from the Aboriginal Welfare Board that granted them some civil rights. Albert Namatjira was probably the most famous artist to receive such a certificate. These certificates were sarcastically called ‘dog tags’ by Indigenous Australians.¹¹⁹ After 1948, ‘dog tags’ were issued to all Indigenous people, because they were granted citizenship of Australia, which inspired Sally Morgan to create an impressive graphic artwork that includes the sentence, ‘*We had to be licensed to be called Australian.*’¹²⁰ Jason Wing follows this tradition with ‘An Australian Government Initiative: Criminal’, in other

¹¹⁶ O’Shea 2014



Jason Wing, An Australian Government Initiative: Criminal, 2012, digital print on coated paper, mounted on aluminium, 150 × 100 cm

¹¹⁷ Troy 1993, p. 3

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 6

¹¹⁹ Bourke 1994, p. 41

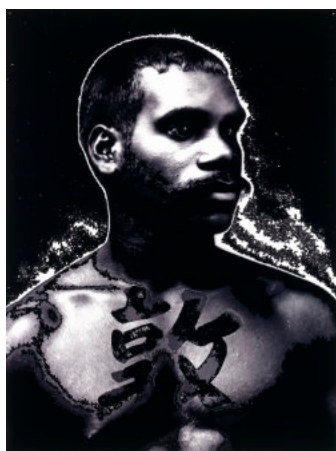
¹²⁰ Morgan 1996, p. 18



Aboriginal chief, 1901–1907, photographer unknown, Kerry & Co, Sydney, 11.3 × 8.8 cm



Brook Andrew, *Sexy and dangerous*, 1996, computer-processed colour film on transparent polymer resin, 145.9 × 96 cm



Brook Andrew, *S & D II*, 1997, computer-processed colour film on transparent polymer resin, 169 × 126.9 × 0.6 cm

words, he has created a new ‘dog tag’. The form is a satire; the content is an exposure of criminalising government policy.

Against Stereotypes

The depiction of young men is not uncommon in Indigenous art and mostly serves to oppose their widespread stereotypical defamation and degradation as alcoholics, drug addicts, criminals, child molesters or the like. While Jason Wing’s 2010 photograph ‘An Australian Government Initiative: Criminal’ responds to the stigmatisation of Indigenous men with biting criticism and satire in the context of the ‘Intervention’, and Brook Andrew counters the stereotype with irony in his famous 1996 photographs ‘Sexy and dangerous’, Michael Riley’s 1989 photograph ‘Gary’ highlights the beauty of Indigenous people.

Brook Andrew first saw in 1995 ethnological photographs from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Thousands exist in archives, mainly intended to document Indigenous people as a race supposedly doomed to extinction. The colonists had no interest in depicting individual people by name, only as anonymous stereotypes. Sometimes, however, the photographs additionally had the purpose of impressing and entertaining tourists with something ‘exotic’, pasted on cartes de visite, which were a precursor to postcards. Brook Andrew used as the basis for his artwork one such photograph, taken at the Kerry & Co. studio in Sydney in the early years of the 20th century.¹²¹ The artist added texture to the photograph’s original sepia background using colour, which enlivened the portrait and coloured the figure to make it stand out more clearly. He cropped the photograph on the sides, emphasising the upper body. Brook Andrew retained the body painting, as that is still part of Indigenous ceremonial life. On the man’s chest were placed three Mandarin characters, one corresponding to the title of the artwork and the others indicating (loosely translated) ‘devious femininity’ or ‘wicked girl’,¹²² an allusion to the racist slur of illicit sexuality of Indigenous people. Note that the ‘Intervention’ mentioned above was mainly precipitated and accompanied by propaganda in the media regarding such sexual prejudices.

The artist demystifies these people of the past, transforms them into today’s reality and gives them an identity. The larger-than-life representation, in contrast to the small ethnological photograph, emphasises the physical presence of the man and thus exerts a strong attraction. The Chinese characters may serve as a provocation, but Brook Andrew is not actually a provocateur. Instead, he reverses the impression from the original anonymous ‘exotic’ figure to a contemporary portrait of a charismatic man, possibly inducing the viewer to rethink racial prejudices.

A second painting, ‘Sexy and dangerous’ from 1997, dispenses

¹²¹ Snell 2017

¹²² Ibid.

entirely with the ethnological context and shows a powerful, young, Indigenous man. Not least through the black colouring, the artist lifts the image completely out of its racist origin and transforms it into a respectful portrait with a personality, albeit with irony. After all, the man still bears the Chinese characters on his chest. Brook Andrew thus sharpens his ironic critique by pointing out to white citizens their disparaging, witless, clichéd perception of Indigenous men, which is simultaneously one of desire and fear, saying, '[...] it is the way in which all Aboriginal people are regardless of what we look like, we are either sexy or we are dangerous.'¹²³

The artist was also concerned, however, with beauty in two respects: on the one hand, he wanted to contrast the beauty of the Indigenous figure with the Western ideal of beauty, and on the other hand, he wanted to use beauty to gain the viewer's attention. During the colloquium series 'blakatak' in September 2005 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, Brook Andrew explained, '[...] I really wanted to take the naked body and draw on these classical notions of Greek beauty, because that was really the only way I could combat that [the prejudice against Indigenous people] in this full on sort of society.'¹²⁴

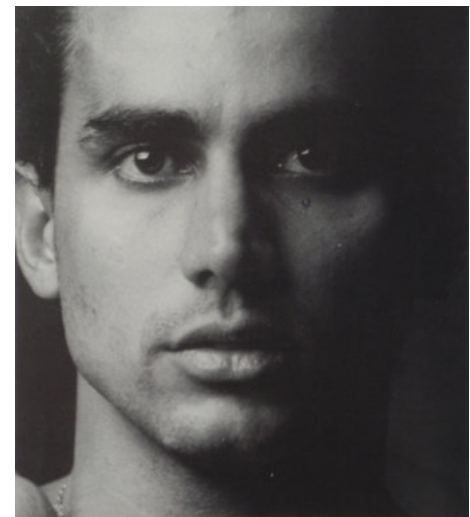
Michael Riley also confronted stereotypical views and prejudices about Indigenous Australians in several series of photographs. He set a counterpoint to the image of the Indigenous person as someone living under a windbreak or as a drunk on the street, an image that is constantly reiterated and prevalent today. Such tendentious descriptions deny in their narrowness the diversity and distinctions between Indigenous Australians. They reduce First Nations people to a level where paternalistic treatment finds justification. With his portraits, Michael Riley resolutely opposes the perception of Indigenous people as victims of society and as degraded. Thus, even works such as these portraits, which supposedly only show beauty, are political statements in that they counter—using the beauty of the Indigenous countenance—the widespread propaganda of the drunken, lazy, black man.

The Influence of Christianity and the Missions

Some artworks reveal a special kind of influence, not on composition but on content, related to the Christianity originally evangelised by missionaries. The success rate of missionary work, as indicated by actual Indigenous converts, was very low and only increased significantly after Indigenous priests had been ordained. Although many refused to renounce their own sacred worldviews despite conversion, preferring to reconcile the two,¹²⁵ there were nevertheless a number of artists who incorporated Christian iconography into their paintings. The intentions pursued with such paintings vary greatly. The examples considered here include one

¹²³ MCA 2005, p. 20

¹²⁴ Ibid.

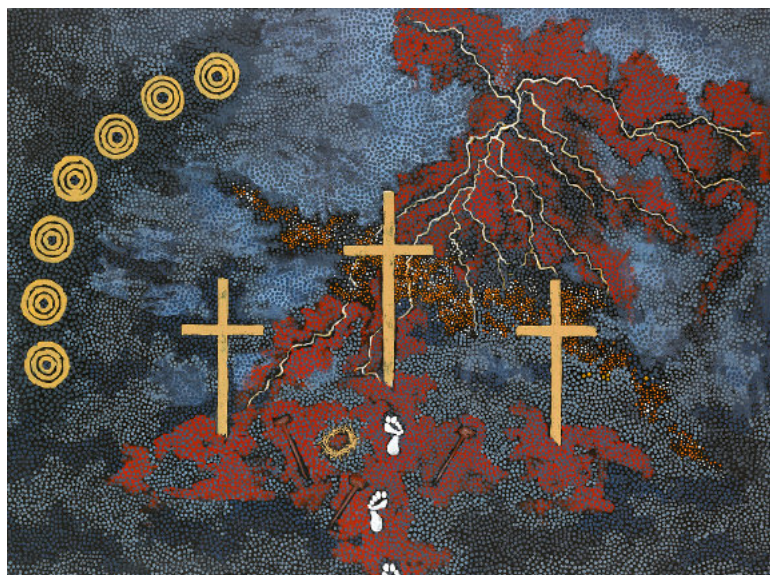


Michael Riley, Gary (from the series 'Yarns from the Talbragar Reserve'), 1989, silver gelatine photograph, 23.2 × 20.4 cm (sheet 30.4 × 24 cm)

¹²⁵ Bähr 2012

painting each by Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Shirley Purdie, and Blak Douglas.

Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, who was a co-founder of the new painting movement, like Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula and Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, painted only very few works with a Christian theme. The example of this artist can be used to understand reasons for a partial turn to Christianity. Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's father, Tjatjiti Tjungurrayi,



Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, *Good Friday*, 1994, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 116 × 154 cm

only narrowly escaped the Coniston Massacre in 1928 (see pp. 212–213). Living conditions for Indigenous people in parts of central Australia were so precarious, e.g., due to the destruction of natural water sources by cattle farming and sometimes additionally by droughts, that Tjatjiti Tjungurrayi died of thirst a few years after the massacre. Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri only survived because he was taken to the mission station in Ntaria (Hermannsburg) by Pastor Friedrich Wilhelm Albrecht and nursed there. This experience filled the artist with a lifelong attraction for Christianity, although he often said, ‘*This Dreaming, that’s God for us.*’¹²⁶ The artist, who was initiated at Tjuirri (Napperby), rekindled his Lutheran faith when he faced a risky eye operation in 1994; the other eye had been blind since his youth.

Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri inserted into his painting ‘Good Friday’, which he painted in the Easter days of 1994,¹²⁷ the distinctive Christian iconography of the three crosses, which are arranged in the painting as if erected on a hill, Golgotha. A crown of thorns, placed in the lower part of the painting between the two crosses on the left, together with three oversized nails, completes the Christian symbolism. The artist did not paint the crucifixion itself but only the symbols that stand for it. In doing so, he follows one of the conceptual foundations of Indigenous painting: depicting the essence of things in an appropriate symbolism, not their visible or realistic appearance. Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri thus did not depart from the principles of Indigenous painting by including Christian symbols. It is interesting to note that the idea of arranging in the painting the crown of thorns and nails independently of the body of Christ is found in a very similar way in a number of 17th century paintings of the ‘Lamentation of Christ’, e.g., in a painting by van Dyck, painted between 1627 and 1632. Footprints are often found in the artworks of Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri; here they represent Jesus’ walk to the cross. In a style that is typical for the artist, appearing in his earliest paintings from the 1970s, the background is composed of dotted irregular fields, reminiscent of clouds and shadows.

The artist painted the hour of Christ’s death which, according to the Gospels of Mark and Matthew,¹²⁸ is accompanied by darkness, im-

¹²⁶ Johnson 2002

¹²⁷ Johnson 2003, p. 249

¹²⁸ Matthew 27: 45–51; Mark 15: 33–38

pressively depicted by the grey-black background, and by the tearing of the curtain in the Jewish temple, which may be represented by the death-bringing, fiery, seemingly endlessly branching lightning against a blood-red background. According to the artist's common-law wife at the time, Milanka Sullivan, the lightning represents God's anger at the death of his son.¹²⁹ Using this explanation, it could indicate that Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri was recalling during this work his own anger and grief at the death of his first son, who had died a few years earlier. The whole painting is a sky scene seething with grey and red pigment, a red that is more reminiscent of the blood of Christ than of the Australian landscape.

¹²⁹ Johnson 2003, p. 249

In this painting, Christian symbolism is combined with the representation of a celestial phenomenon, the Milky Way as represented by the diagonally arranged white dots and especially orange dots. The Christian symbolism of the crosses and the crown of thorns is simultaneously combined with the Indigenous symbolism of the seven concentric circles, which are painted in the same yellow colour and depict the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, one of the most wide-spread Jukurrpa narratives on the Australian continent. Thus, Indigenous and Christian symbolism stand on an equal footing in this artwork.

In 2007, Shirley Purdie became the first Indigenous artist to win the Blake Prize for Religious Art, which has been awarded in Sydney since 1951, with her painting 'Stations of the Cross'. In 2013, Trevor Nickolls won this prize posthumously. Note that, in the literature on Indigenous art, there is misinformation that Linda Syddick Napaltjarri also won the Blake Prize for Religious Art.

Shirley Purdie's painting does not follow the usual sequence of the 14 Stations of the Cross but begins with the birth of Jesus in the upper centre of the painting, continues counterclockwise and ends below the first station with a fifteenth scene. The representation of the individual Stations of the Cross as separate and free-standing images, which is common in Western art, has quite obviously influenced the composition of the painting. Indigenous art related to significant sites, on the other hand, often uses lines connecting these sites to indicate the journeys of the creator ancestors, as shown in the painting 'Untitled', 2003, by Shirley Purdie (see page 212). Brown paths dotted on both sides connect the 15 different stories in that painting. In 'Stations of the Cross', the artist dispenses with these connections. However, she frames the individual Stations of the Cross in a similar way, by outlining the individual areas with a double dotted line around them.

Shirley Purdie emphasises the theme of the painting, the stations of Jesus' suffering, with the help of two measures. One is the distinctly different colours of the irregular shapes, in shades of brown, yellow and, pink, against the light, monochrome sand-coloured background. The other measure relates to these closed



Shirley Purdie, Stations of the Cross, 2007, natural pigments on canvas, 213 × 151 cm

shapes themselves, into which the figures are set. They are shapes that connote the soft hills of the Kimberley. In this way, the Country is as present in the painting as is the Passion of Jesus, quite apart from the material of the natural pigments, which are themselves from Country.

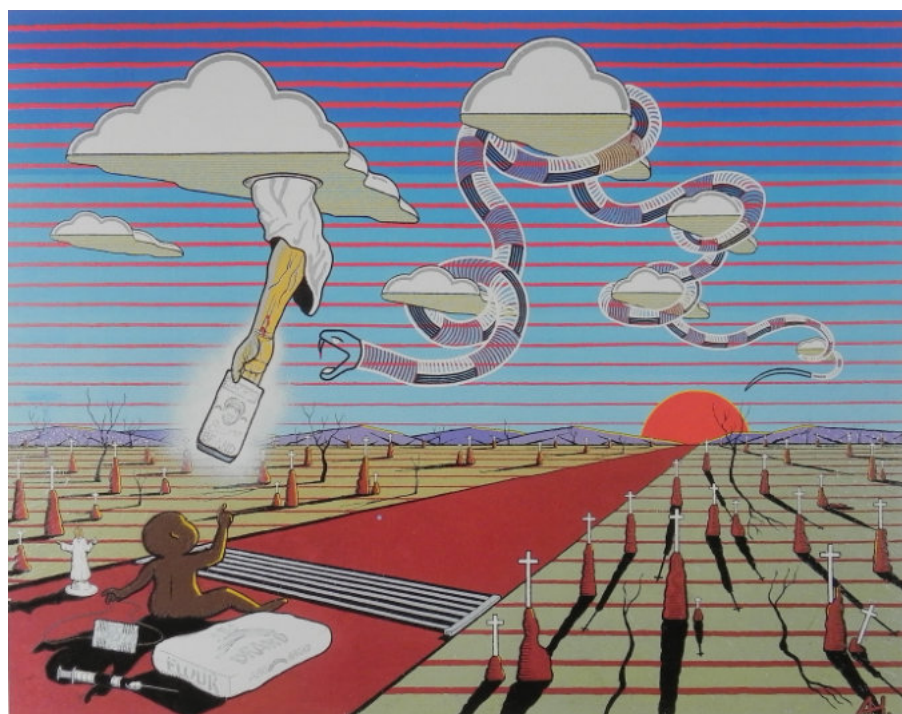
The presence of Country is further highlighted by Shirley Purdie's inclusion of two hills in the painting, similar to those found in many of her other artworks. Together with the above-mentioned rounded forms reminding of the Kimberley, the Indigenous aspects of the 'Two Ways' approach are represented, i.e., life according to both the Indigenous worldview and that of the Christian religion.¹³⁰ The artist makes a subtle distinction between two types of hills through the use of grey and black colouring and through the depiction of some hills in profile. One could say, then, that in this painting there is an approximate balance between the Christian narratives and the Indigenous significance of Country. There are two shapes in the painting that do not correspond to Kimberley hills: the oval one at the top and another slightly below the centre. This is only logical, since the depiction of Christ's birth and of God and Christ are not directly part of the story of the Passion.

Like Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Shirley Purdie's painting combines the Indigenous and Christian worldviews. The painting was in the art collection of the Warmun community, to which it had been donated by some patrons, until its destruction together with damage of more than 700 other paintings by the devastating Warmun floods on March 15th, 2011.

A painting by Blak Douglas contains Christian iconography, albeit not in the form of the 'Two Ways' aspect but instead symbolising harsh criticism of Christianity in its proselytising form as seen in Australia.

The artist was born in Blacktown in 1970 and grew up in Penrith, a working-class area of Sydney. He studied design at the University of Western Sydney. With this painting, Blak Douglas—whose name at the time was Adam Hill—won the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award in the category 'General Paintings' in 2003. The award is granted by the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin. The artist combines criticism with irony and many allusions, as in this work 'Hand, Christian and Her Son' from 2003. The title itself, as is often the case with his works, is a play on words and

¹³⁰ Bähr 2012



Blak Douglas, Hand, Christian and Her Son, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 180 × 230 cm

¹³¹ Email communication with Blak Douglas on June 6th, 2018

refers to the poet Hans Christian Andersen, particularly known for his fairy tales, i.e., Hand(s) Christian And (H)er Son.¹³¹

His deep sense of the value of Indigenous cultures, on the one hand, and of the losses over the centuries that have been (and continue to be) inflicted on them by government policies, on the other hand, makes Blak Douglas a political artist. He explains that, *‘Politics comes into art for me because there are things that need to be said and things that are second nature to mainstream society that actually hurt Indigenous people on a daily basis. [...] There’s an endless list of things to be commented on in the way our Government [sic] is operating, and this is where my inspiration and my sources come from every day.’*¹³²

¹³² Deadly Vibe 2004

The painting was created after the artist had heard the song ‘Mission Ration Blues’ by Archie Roach, one of Australia’s best-known songwriters, guitarists and activists for the rights of Indigenous people. Blak Douglas portrayed the destructive introduction of Christian practices through the symbolism of the distribution of flour and sugar.

The painting shows an Indigenous toddler, described by Blak Douglas as an unsuspecting, somewhat naïve and slightly greedy one, reaching for a packet of sugar from the hand of Jesus. On the sugar packet is written ‘Jacky Brand’. ‘Jacky Jacky’ is how the English colonialists insultingly referred to the First Australians, presumably because it rhymes with blacky. The packet depicts an Indigenous face with a headband, as often worn during ceremonies. The face is flanked by two boomerangs. Another is visible on the flour sack to the right of the toddler along with the words ‘Abo Brand’. Abo is a swear word, and the boomerang is an absolute cliché. A small blond-haired Jesus, with the Bible in his hand and in a pose of blessing, stands like a somewhat kitschy toy to the left of the child.

The hand, which extends down from a cloud, supplies the child with the unhealthy mission gifts and bears the stigmata of Christ, which, however, are not inflicted on him by nails of the crucifixion but by the bite of a snake. The snake could either be associated with one of the many poisonous snakes in Australia or, more likely, with the rainbow serpent known as an important Indigenous figure for the creation of mountains, rivers, etc., as depicted by artists in northern Australia using rarrk technique (cross-hatching). Another allusion is to images in Western art, where the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River is often associated with God reaching his hand through clouds in blessing. To baptise as many Indigenous children as possible, that is, to alienate them from their culture’s sacred ideas and inculcate them with Christian ones, was the goal of all missionary activity.

The whole is embedded within a typically arid, Australian landscape, with numerous termite mounds, all bearing a cross as a symbol of the many missions. By 1928, there were more than 100 mission stations for an estimated Indigenous population at the time of about 75,000.¹³³ The cattle grid represents confinement in one’s own country, on reserves and mission stations. A subtle allusion to the destructive effects of the missions is evident in the form of the completely defoliated trees, which could only be caused by widespread poisoning because native trees bear leaves all year round.

¹³³ ABS 2019a

The artist pictorially translates his criticism of culture-destroying missionary activity into a striking aesthetic. Skies painted in stripes—or also the landscape in this painting—have become a distinctive feature of Blak Douglas’ painting. There are two reasons for this form of representation. First, it allows the artist to create the effect of depth in his primarily flat painting style, and second, it represents his spirituality. He refers to the stripes as his ‘[...] *spirit lines, and it’s the song lines that are passed through Aboriginal heritage, and through information is conveyed orally through the understanding of song, in understanding the culture. So I introduced those as a key symbol of my spirituality, in showing that wherever you are this spirituality is present.*’¹³⁴

¹³⁴ ABC1 2008

Blak Douglas sometimes uses the number 7 in his paintings in the form of seven clouds standing in the sky, all dark on their undersides. These are the dark sides of the abuse of power with which the seven governments of the Australian states and territories, represented by the seven points of the Commonwealth star in the Australian flag, darken the lives of the Indigenous people. Blak Douglas calls them the ‘government clouds’. While in Western art the number 7 usually stands for the magical and inexplicable, in this artist’s work, it takes on an extremely mundane meaning that is to be understood as criticism.

¹³⁵ Johnson 1997, p. 133



Mawalan Marika, Sydney from the Air, 1963, natural pigments on bark, 91.3 × 43.3 cm

Paintings Without Narratives – An Abstract Art?

Michael Jagamara Nelson once said, ‘*Without the story, the painting is nothing.*’¹³⁵ This is still true in many areas of Indigenous art, especially when art is meant to transmit culture to Indigenous or non-Indigenous people, or when it addresses political processes. However, this is not true for all Indigenous art. For a long time now, paintings have been created that do not deal with narratives handed down the generations nor are existential for contemporary life but instead take up themes that describe individually experienced events or abstract concepts. These include the two following paintings, ‘Sydney from the Air’ by Mawalan Marika, which he painted on the occasion of a trip to Sydney, and ‘Waterbrain’ by Rusty Peters.

Mawalan Marika had flown for the first time from his home in Yirrkala in Arnhem Land to Sydney and captured this event in one of his paintings. The content of the work, however, is interpreted in variously ways. Howard Morphy described the restlessly arranged sections, filled with a lot of white rarrk (cross-hatching), as the city shimmering at night due to its many streetlights. Terry Smith, on the other hand, explained the squares painted with natural pigments in lighter and darker browns as the imagined distribution of various clans in the region and the cross-hatched sections as surrounding them, taking the highly divergent directions in which the rarrk sections run as a sign of a disorderly, restless



Rusty Peters, *Waterbrain*, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, eight panels, each 180 × 150 cm

world.¹³⁶ The painting is given no wider message than that of Mawalan Marika's plane flight; it does not tell a story of sacred sites or convey a rule of coexistence.

Rusty Peters spent several years thinking about the concepts in 'Waterbrain' before tackling the unusually large work, consisting of eight panels. Like Mawalan Marika, he does not refer in the painting to narratives that have been handed down, nor to events that have been experienced but to the rather abstract idea of human development, which he depicts in its temporal course. Reading from left to right, water plants can be seen first because, according to Gija ideas, the souls of unborn children live under these plants. The following two panels show the infant and the child. The grey, almost circular shape in the middle of the painting represents the brain and symbolises the learning human being who reaches adulthood. A large part of the image is taken up by the depiction of tools as a symbol of the adult and educated human being, because the ability to make tools was an essential part of education and necessary for survival.¹³⁷

Even though Mawalan Marika and Rusty Peters explore in their art new themes in painting, they remain true to their individual painting styles. Mawalan Marika retains painting on bark and the technique of rarrk (cross-hatching), and Rusty Peters remains true to his usual style of painting on canvas with various coloured natural pigments. N. Yunupinju, belonging to a large family of artists (see p. 259), was taught by her father Munurrawuy Yunupinju and took developments one step further.

Unlike Munurrawuy Yunupinju, the artist did not refer to narratives from Indigenous culture or to historical or contemporary events in her series of 'White paintings'. The artist, who began printmaking in 1996 and painting on bark in 2007, was initially inspired by her own personal experiences. The series of 'White paintings' from 2009, in contrast, no longer have a narrative content. N. Yunupinju did not portray anything representational but painted for the sake of painting, thus setting her art apart from the vast majority of contemporary Indigenous art. She also changed the style of painting from sections with often representational or symbolic depictions—widespread in eastern Arnhem Land—into a non-representational one. In doing so, she retained the technique of rarrk (cross-hatching), albeit without its sequential segments but in a less strict,

¹³⁶ Morphy 1998, pp. 37, 40; Smith 2020

¹³⁷ Cf. AGNSW 2004b, p. 118.



N. Yunupinju, *White painting #2*, 2009, natural pigments on bark, 162 × 56 cm

less ordered manner. On a shimmering red-brown ground, she used white ochre to make the cross-hatchings in a free, unregulated, flowing gesture.

The 'White paintings' can be described as the *first* abstract works in Indigenous art, because they are Mayilimiriw, i.e., without meaning. Nevertheless, many treatises on a wide variety of narrative works assume that they, too, are abstract art.¹³⁸ What appears abstract, however, is actually imbued with a defined or mediated content expressing a unique worldview. In other words, 'Every society has its own logic and its own form of expression. The problem is that the Eurocentric views seems to think that European logic fits with everything else.'¹³⁹

Western art historians explain abstract art as follows and are rather unanimous in their definitions, 'Abstract art. Term applied in the narrowest sense to forms of 20th century Western art that reject representation and have no beginning or end point in nature. Unlike processes of abstraction from nature or objects [...] abstract art as a conscious aesthetic based on the assumption of self-sufficiency is an entirely modern phenomenon.'¹⁴⁰ 'Abstract painting [...], in the strict sense of the word, is a type of representation that has stripped itself of all reference to visible reality and uses only its inherent means—form, colour, and line—to make a statement. It stands in contrast to representational painting, which more or less objectively reproduces the perceptible world or is related to it.'¹⁴¹

Richard Gassen, former director of the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Germany, the municipal art museum in Ludwigshafen, defined it as follows, 'What unites the abstract artists as a whole, regardless of the direction [...], was their rejection of the reproduction of material reality, of mimetic depiction [...]. Abstract images are thus about the invisible, they are inner images, visualisations of inner realities that elude figurative, representational depiction.'¹⁴² Up to this point, this could also be a description of some contemporary Indigenous art. But Richard Gassen continues, 'History and stories are replaced by a more art-immanent questioning of form and colours; the aim is a "pure" or "absolute" art, which can develop independently of the reality it finds.'¹⁴³

In contrast, Indigenous artists almost always use their painting to describe and communicate their worldview and its components through narratives. These can be narratives that depict a value system or a rule of living together. They can be about love or death, medicine, water, creation, political events of persecution, or other essential themes of life. Indigenous art does not abstract but focuses on the connection between something representational and something spiritual. The paintings themselves are understood as a means of bringing the worldview = Jukurrpa to life, again and again; Jukurrpa is *in* the paintings. A final example will illustrate this.

The painting 'Ilyentye Awely' by Rita Pwerle appears designed merely to form with its fine dots a somewhat indeterminate structure of yellow, white, and red colours on a black ground, with a bright area in

¹³⁸ Morphy 2013, pp. 25–27; Skerritt 2014, pp.14–15; Smith 1998, pp. 24–42; Museum Tinguely 2005, p. 156

¹³⁹ Mundine 2012, p. 39

¹⁴⁰ Turner 1996, p. 73

¹⁴¹ Bauer 1975, p. 5

¹⁴² Gassen 1994, p. 1

¹⁴³ Ibid.

the upper left corner. It could perhaps have been painted on a sunny day, after rain in the desert had changed the landscape dramatically into huge fields of flower blossoms. If so, this would not contradict the fact that the paintings' title refers to 'Ilyentye', a water soakage in the Utopia station northeast of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and to 'Awely', the name for women's ceremonial body painting, so that the painting references rituals associated with that water soakage. Therefore, it conveys similar content to artworks that use clear motifs or symbols. The painterly reduction to the essentials allows for spiritual experience, which for Indigenous artists—unlike in Western abstract art—does not preclude associations and narratives.

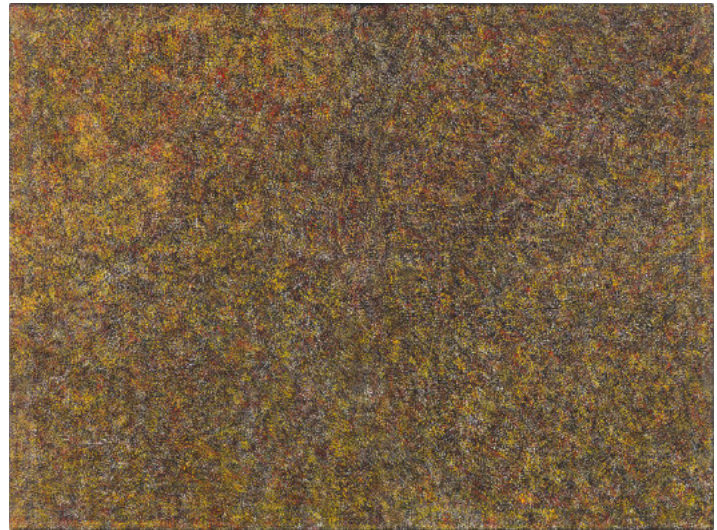
It is not only this example that shows that what appears to be abstract in the pictorial composition is almost always the expression of a narrative. Indigenous art is indicative; it points to a holistic view of the world and the existence of the narrative reveals that Indigenous art has nothing in common with abstraction as defined in Western art history.

Mutual Inspiration

As in any other art form, contemporary Indigenous art contains many examples of mutual inspirations between artists. This does not go as far as, for example, Impressionism, which was emulated for a certain time by numerous artists—many no longer known today—and which spread as far as Australia (Heidelberg School). Influences, however, are visible on various levels. They often occurred during the artists' travels, similar to in Europe. For example, Nora Wompi and Nora Nangapa travelled from their Country (Kunawarritji) to the township of Wirrimanu in the 1950s, and later regularly, becoming familiar with the artist Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin, and also her painting techniques. Similarities in the colour palette and composition can still be seen in their paintings from 2007/2008.¹⁴⁴ Discussed in the following sections are mutual inspirations within artists' families and within art centres, i.e., intracultural, intercultural but also transcultural influences.

Intracultural Influences

The example of the Yukenbarri family of artists reveals both the inspiration of similar pictorial inventions between kin as well as the similarities that exist between groups of artists who are not kin but are affiliated with the same art centre.



Rita Pwerle, *Ilyentye Awely*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 89 × 119 cm (see fig. p. 92)

¹⁴⁴ Carty 2011, pp. 190–191



Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, *Puturr Soak*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 × 100 cm (see fig. p. 29); Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, *Marpa*, 2001, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 179.2 × 120 cm



Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra, *Winpurpurla*, 2010, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 75 × 50 cm and 60 × 45 cm (see fig. pp. 28, 27)

Since the end of the 1980s, Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, who lived in Wirrimanu (Balgo), painted using synthetic polymer paint on canvas and developed her very own pictorial language of form and colour. She applied bright contrasting colours to the canvas in broad bands—very impasto—so that a dense painterly texture became visible and the sheen of the acrylic colours stood out clearly. This is an effect often desired in Indigenous art and achieved in various forms (see p. 304). Her painting technique, called *kinti-kinti* (close together), in which dots are placed so close together on the canvas that they merge and can no longer be distinguished as individual dots, has influenced many artists. The theme of her works—like in ‘*Puturr Soak*’—is very often the life-giving freshwater springs and the narratives surrounding them, which are usually shown as an oval or round shape in a dark colour almost in the centre of the painting.

The title of the painting ‘*Marpa*’ by Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka refers to a part of the Country associated with her grandparents, named after the rockhole there. In this work, the artist shows a much finer style of painting: either single larger dots, clusters of dots or small circles containing a dot in the middle are set on a different coloured ground, creating a detailed and expressive image,

that still shows broad bands.

The artworks by Christine Yukenbarri Nakamarra, daughter of Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, reveal a similarity with her mother’s works, both in her compositions with their broad bands of colour and in the delicacy of her dot painting (see also p. 26). As far as the choice of palette is concerned, she does not always opt for bright yellow, red or orange hues, and in particular she no longer adheres to the ceremonial significance of black for the waterholes. *Winpurpurla* is one such waterhole,

yet she paints them in a medium brown or even gold colour, unlike her mother's style.

Richard Yukenbarri Tjakamarra, the son of Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, takes a completely different direction. Since his early adulthood, he no longer lived in Wirrimanu (Balgo) but 500 km south in Kiwirrkurra. He was not influenced by his mother's painting style but by the precise dot painting and very reduced colour palette of the local artists. His small dotted curved lines, which are aligned to several foci in the painting, appear in front of a background of very discreet gradations of the same colour. Larger or smaller distances between the rows of dots evoke an even greater dynamic in the painting than the curved lines alone, and the two together create something approaching three-dimensionality. This mode of representation sets his art apart from that of many other artists in Kiwirrkurra, who often pursue a still, calm, and austere dot painting style with simple geometric structures, as illustrated by Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula's painting 'Untitled'. It thrives on a suggestive effect, in that the artist leads the eye deeper and deeper into the interior of the painting through the delicately graded colours, as if into a corridor with many doors, but keeps the last of these doors—the dark strip in the middle of the painting—closed.

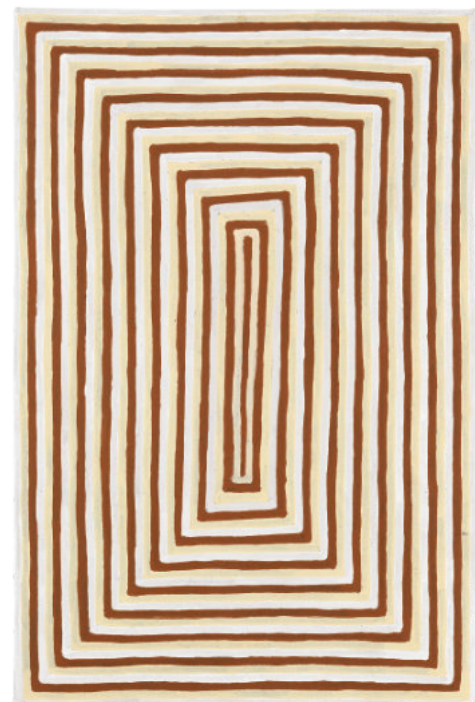
The close proximity of the artists in the small towns and the very lively communication between them inevitably give rise to similarities in the pictorial inventions but also to contrasts, because there is a constant flow and exchange of thoughts and ideas within the art centres.

Already at the beginning of the painting movement, many artists from the different townships knew each other, which also led to mutual inspiration in their painting. In Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), for example, following the opening of the Ikuntji Women's Centre in 1993, a series of workshops were held. This Minyma Tjukurrpa Project, in which artists from Ikuntji painted together with their Pintupi relatives from Walungurru (Kintore), resulted in the first exhibition for these artists at the Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute in Adelaide in 1995. The colourful painting by the women artists of the Ikuntji Artists' cooperative encouraged many of the Papunya Tula women artists, in contrast to their male colleagues, to develop a more free, more lively, more generous brushwork, using more vivid colours, as shown by Inyuwa Nampitjinpa's paintings.

The artist was a trailblazer in this style of painting. She came to



Richard Yukenbarri Tjakamarra, *Untitled*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 121.5 cm (see fig. p. 125)



Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, *Untitled*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 90 × 60 cm (see fig. p. 117)



Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, *Untitled*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 55 × 61 cm (see fig. p. 132)

Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff) with a group of Pintupi in December 1956 from near the salt lake Karrkurutintjinya (Lake Macdonald), 250 kilometres due west, at the time when the Lutheran Mission administration was replaced by a government one. She later married Tutuma Tjapangati, one of the founders of painting in Papunya. In the early 1980s, they moved onto their Country at Walungurru (Kintore), shortly after some Pintupi had relocated there. There was only the simplest infrastructure, such as shelters and a hand pump for water. Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, as one of the Elders involved in the Minyma Tjukurrpa Project in 1994, held a leadership role in the pictorial interpretation of women's ceremonies. Her painting is characterised by a dense, impasto application of paint that emphasises the tactile, contrasting with the more austere, disciplined painting of the Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra artists, and had not been seen before in central Australian art. Inyuwa Nampitjinpa's less restricted, more fluid painting style had a lasting influence on many women artists in Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra.

Intercultural Influences

A number of artists in the 1980s were inspired to reevaluate their Indigenous identity, not only due to their backgrounds and upbringing but due to major political events. Examples are: the political struggles related to setting up the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on Parliament House grounds in Canberra in 1972, the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* and the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 Cth*. The latter allowed people for the first time to successfully fight for land rights. Artists incorporated these influences into their art. Among such artists were Fiona Foley and Lin Onus, both of whom travelled to Arnhem Land to learn more about the Indigenous cultures there.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Neale 2000, pp. 14–15

During her studies in the early 1980s, Fiona Foley experimented with etchings including motifs from Arnhem Land artists but found that '[...] when I pulled the prints off the plate I realised the imagery had nothing to do with me. I then understood I had to be true to my own culture, even if the remnants were scant, in order to articulate my Aboriginal identity and ancestry.'¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Kleinert and Neale 2000, p. 589

Whereas Fiona Foley refrained from directly adopting the motifs and technical execution associated with artists in Arnhem Land, Lin Onus responded in a very different way.

The artist started as a landscape painter; later, he also created art installations. He lived in Melbourne, belonging to the Yorta Yorta on his father's side, whereas his mother came from Glasgow. His father, Bill Onus, had been one of the leading Indigenous political activists in South Australia since the 1930s. Lin Onus visited Maningrida in Arnhem Land in 1986, as a representative of the Aboriginal Arts Board, meeting Jack Wunuwun and other renowned northern artists. He was initiated later at Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) in 1988 and, like many non-Indigenous people who have close rela-

tions with an Indigenous language group, was accepted into their classificatory kinship system. Lin Onus described this as one of the most significant events in his life. His close relationships with Jack Wunuwun and John Bulunbulun decisively transformed his landscape painting, both in technique and content. His painting techniques thereafter often used the colour palette common to Arnhem Land art and included insets using the rarrk technique, the typical cross-hatching of art in Arnhem Land. His artworks were thereafter no longer simply landscapes but carried a message.

The Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative was founded in the late 1980s in Sydney by Indigenous urban artists to raise their visibility in the art world (see pp. 350–351). When Boomalli invited several artists in 1992 to submit work for an exhibition about the British flag, Lin Onus painted ‘And on the Eighth Day...’.

By inserting symbols of concentric circles into a scene of sparsely wooded bush, typical of some areas of Australia, the artist established a clear reference to Country in the Indigenous worldview: Country as identity-giving, as a cultural archive; Country that must not be disrupted or destroyed. Above the Indigenous landscape, two angels dressed in the British flag fly under a threatening sky. They carry symbols of the British invasion in their hands: a pistol as a symbol for genocide, a lamb and barbed wire as an expression of destruction of Country, a Bible as a sign of cultural destruction, and a plastic bottle. Significantly, the bottle resembles a typical toilet cleaner (toilet duck), which Lin Onus once described as the most useless of all Western inventions. The angels are not angels of salvation but of death. For Lin Onus, the colours of the flag stand for the colours of death, which he also included as such in his installation ‘Maralinga’ (see p. 272). The artist uses the title of the painting, which immediately evokes associations with a destructive continuation of the Genesis story, and Christian symbols—the angels, the Bible—for his critique of the invaders and their treatment of the land and the people.

Transculturalism

Transculturalism implies the acceptance and adoption of (some) aspects of other cultures’ artistic value systems into a new, expanded, syncretic worldview. Such inspirations take place in two directions, both from Western to Indigenous art and from Indigenous to Western art. Transcultural influences from Western into Indigenous art have already been evident in the example of Christianity in art, including the painting ‘Stations of the Cross’, 2007, by Shirley Purdie (see pp. 283–284), in which the Gija artist adopts a narrative from Western culture into her art. It was, however, not only the



Lin Onus, *And on the Eighth Day...*, 1992, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182 × 245 cm

Gija in Warmun who had a hundred or more years of experience with white settlers, farm work, and missions before they began their contemporary painting. Therefore, it is not surprising that Indigenous art—quite apart from using Western materials such as brushes, palette knives, synthetic polymer paints, and canvas—reflects influences from outside their own culture. As for the *acceptance* of different value systems, it is well illustrated by the anecdote about Rover Thomas (Joolama) in the first chapter of this book.

When James Cowan wrote, ‘*It remains to be seen whether their [Indigenous artists’] originality will influence modern artists in any future endeavours.*’¹⁴⁷ it had already happened. Influences of Indigenous art on non-Indigenous urban or international artists’ art can be seen, for example, in artworks by Tim Johnson and Zhou Xiaoping.

Tim Johnson lives and works in Sydney; his artworks are found in all major art museums in Australia. He is a versatile artist and had in the 1970s experimented with conceptual art, performance art, and photography, installations, film, and even music. In 1980, he travelled to Alice Springs and Papunya for the first time; further trips followed, resulting in close relationships with some of the artists there and several collaborative artworks. For some time, he worked in the administration of the artists’ co-operative Papunya Tula Artists. Commenting on the lasting impression Indigenous art made upon him, he said, ‘*For me, sitting down next to them on the ground and watching them paint was one of the most important experiences in my life as an artist. I learnt a new way of painting.*’¹⁴⁸

During the same period, Tim Johnson began to research Buddhist art of China, Japan, and Tibet and later worked with artists from Tibet and Vietnam. Since his experiences in Papunya, Tim Johnson has incorporated symbols and signs from other cultures into his works.

Even though many of Johnson’s works are named after places of cultural or historical significance, they do not depict these places or landscapes but instead show a collection of signs and symbols connected with the artist’s own unique iconography. ‘Approaching Mt Meru’ from 2017 shows several luminous centres of spiritual experience. A plethora of real and unreal images drift weightlessly against the dotted background: animals, people, musical instruments, temples, mountains, trees, Buddhist and Indian saints, UFOs, aliens, clusters of concentric quarter circles and more. These are ethereal images, in terms of the choice of colours and the distribution of bright centres in the painting, which combine the spiritual essence of different cultures without the symbols being directly related. The paintings show the richness and simultaneously the diversity of the world in a positive sense, in that the cultures are connected, and interact and yet can be lived independently.

¹⁴⁷ Cowan 1994, p. 12

¹⁴⁸ Johnson 1990, p. 28



Tim Johnson, *Approaching Mt Meru*, 2017, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183 × 152 cm

Zhou Xiaoping was born in China in 1960 and received there his artistic training in classical Chinese painting. Today he lives in Melbourne. In 1988, he came to Australia and travelled through central Australia, the Kimberley and especially the north of the country, exploring for three years the Indigenous cultures there. The painting aesthetic used by the artists from Maningrida and Yirrkala in Arnhem Land held a great attraction for Zhou Xiaoping. He saw parallels between the uniqueness of the bark painting surface, obtained from the tree *Eucalyptus tetradonta*, and the peculiarities of Chinese Xuan paper, a very light and absorbent paper which is partly made from the bark of the sandalwood tree (*Pteroceltis tatarinowii*).

Zhou Xiaoping has collaborated with several artists, including Kuntika Jimmy Pike, with whom he exhibited together at the Hefei Jiuliumi Art Museum in 1996 and at the National Gallery of China in Beijing three years later, making Kuntika Jimmy Pike the first Indigenous Australian artist to exhibit in China. Zhou Xiaoping's close connection, appreciation, and respect for Indigenous art is clearly evident in the double portrait 'Back to Back' from 1999.

The painting 'Portrait of Johnny Bulunbulun' was created as a direct collaboration in 2007. Using the typical colours of bark painting (white, black, red, and brown), Johnny Bulunbulun painted the background using rarrk technique (cross-hatching) and integrated some figurative elements, as is characteristic of some art in Arnhem Land. Because of its expressiveness and size, the background stands on an equal footing with the figurative portrait. Zhou Xiaoping adapts his colour palette to that of Johnny Bulunbulun and identifies him as an artist by means of the brushes in the breast pocket of the shirt. It is a portrait that does not simply show the artist but also represents his cultural and artistic identity using the background. It is a tribute to the Indigenous way of thinking that connects the visible with the spiritual. *'As he [Johnny Bulunbulun] ground up the colours on the slab, it reminded me of the ink sticks and ink stones I frequently used in the past in Chinese calligraphy and painting. It inspired a sudden sense of warm familiarity in my memory. ... For the next few days I went to help Bulunbulun grind colours every day, it is an art that combines both time and patience. ... During this process I gained a deep understanding of the endurance and perseverance of Aboriginal painters.'*¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that contemporary Indigenous art is not just about form, colour, and composition. It is created to convey something, be it a



Zhou Xiaoping, Back to Back, Portrait of Jimmy and Xiaoping, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on rice paper on canvas, 207 × 154 cm



Zhou Xiaoping and Johnny Bulunbulun, Portrait of Johnny Bulunbulun, 2007, synthetic polymer paint and natural pigments on canvas, 200 × 147 cm

¹⁴⁹ Quoted from Inglis et al. 2018

narrative about social rules, land rights, massacres, or government nuclear weapons testing. It rarely does so with a figurative representation but instead with the aid of a symbolic or non-representational one. In the relatively short period since the 1970s, artists have developed a variety of art directions with great dynamism and have embraced new techniques. The art is not abstract and cannot be described in the categories of Western art history, because its characteristics and principles follow its own systematic and visual language. It is an indicative art that shows and depicts a reality, an actual event.

06 — Techniques and Materials

This chapter introduces the particular techniques and materials that Indigenous artists use to create their works. Some of these techniques and materials are fundamentally different from those used in Western art and, therefore, require a detailed presentation. Particularly in need of explanation are techniques such as painting with dots and the use of materials such as tree bark, ochre or, in sculpture, hollowed tree trunks (see pp. 268–269). Art techniques such as photography, video, various graphic techniques, etc. and materials such as canvas and synthetic polymer paints are the same as in Western art, however, there are sometimes unique aspects in the implements used to apply the paint to the canvas or bark.

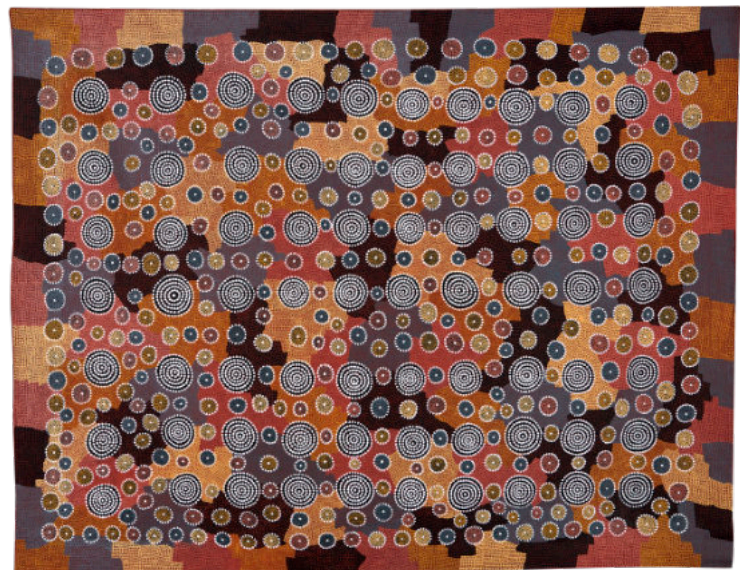
In painting, synthetic polymer paint on canvas is the most common approach. The reason for this is the relatively fast drying of synthetic polymer paints as opposed to oil paints, an advantage for the conditions under which painting takes place outside the studios in the major cities. In the art centres of the rural areas there are suitable premises, but because of the regularly hot climate, painting is often done on the shaded verandas.

Techniques

Dot Painting

The best known technique, because it is the most unique, is that of painting with dots, solely or almost exclusively. It is a technique that has also influenced non-Indigenous artists (see p. 294). However, dot painting is not just dot painting but has a variety of different techniques, each with its own unique impression and connotation.

In many works of dot painting, the symbolism reveals the meaning of the paintings, and the dots are to be interpreted as background, and they serve to fill in the structures formed from the symbols. Even though the paintings depict Country, there is no perspective, no horizon, so there seems to be a parity of spatial perception. In fact, however, the differing composition of foreground and background creates a certain spatial orientation. This is easily seen in the painting ‘Budgerigar



Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri, *Budgerigar Dreaming*, 1987, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 182 × 232.5 cm

¹ Johnson 1996, p. 39



Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa, *Untitled*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 92 cm (see fig. p. 119)



Tatali Nangala, *Untitled*, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 55 × 61 cm (see fig. p. 133)

Andrea Nungarrayi Martin, *Jarjirdi manu Janganpa Jukurrpa (Native Cat and Possum Jukurrpa)*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152 × 76 cm; Bessie Nakamarra Sims, *Pamapardu Jukurrpa (Flying Ant Jukurrpa)*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 45 cm (see fig. pp. 157, 151)



'Dreaming' from 1987 by the artist Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri. There, the network of concentric or centred circles seems to float above a background of dotted, angular and variously coloured fields.

In dot painting, there are two fundamentally distinguishable directions and, of course, many intermediate forms. Relatively soon after the art movement emerged, one direction developed into a specific form in the early 1970s among many artists of the Papunya Tula Art co-operative: Concentric circles are connected in a network of double or multiple lines, whereby the spaces in between are filled with dots, which in some works—as in Kenny Williams Tjampitjinpa's painting 'Untitled' from 1998—align parallel to the contour of the symbols. Here, the circles and the multiple lines connecting them are the bearers of meaning in the painting. It is a strictly directed, calm painting that always slightly diverges from symmetry. The fact that Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula was, as early as 1972, able to create his famous painting 'Water Dreaming at Kalipinypa' (see p. 240), which is devoid of precision and is not a pure dot painting, documents the existence of individual artist personalities from the very beginning of the painting movement.

Vivian Johnson calls the net or grid structure the 'pintupi style',¹ followed in its distinctly geometric form (see p. 139) by the artists of the Papunya Tula Art co-operative, whereas female artists, such as Tatali Nangala or Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa, who began painting only in the early- or mid-1990s, turned to freer modes of representation. By that time, many artists had fundamentally changed the way they applied dots, from being disjoint with the greatest possible precision, to overlapping. The so-called 'kinti-kinti technique'—meaning 'close together'—is a dot painting technique that can only be recognised as such from close up, due to the high density of the application of pigment. It opened up new forms of ex-

pression. It was first used by Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka from 1990, a year after she started painting. Many artists have adopted this technique.

The second direction of dot painting uses rich symbolism on dotted backgrounds and is found mainly among artists in Yuendumu. Bessie Nakamarra Sims dotted around the symbols in several colours, giving them a special weight and bringing them into close proximity to each other. In 'Jarjirdi manu Janganpa (Native Cat and Possum) Jukurrpa', Andrea Nungarrayi Martin also circumscribes the symbols with dotted lines but brings the symbols even closer together. This physical juxtaposition matches the theme of the

paintings, which recounts a fight between the Jarjirdi and Janganpa people (native cats and possums); spears and boomerangs are clearly visible (see previous page).

Painting of an artwork usually begins with the main lines of the composition, with the symbols or with the outlines of the figuration (if used). This also applies to bark painting, in which dots sometimes appear, dots that are already found in rock paintings.

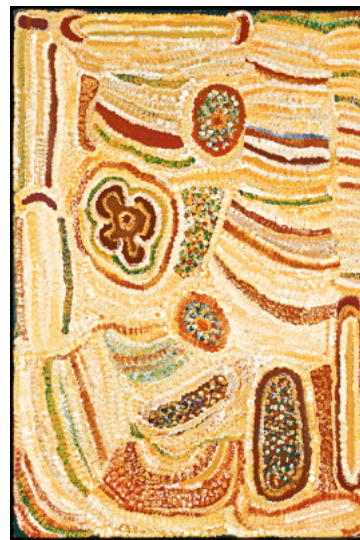
For many years, the symbols were generally painted in dark colours, mostly black or brown; in the meantime, other colours are also used. In bark painting, the separation of colours between main motifs and rarrk (cross-hatching) is not so clear. Contrasting colours or differently coloured fields of dots, as well as—especially in bark painting—a different texture of the background, may further accentuate the symbolism.

The symbols acting as carriers of the painting's message have different meanings depending on the story narrated by the painting. While the U-shapes in Nancy Naninurra Napanangka's painting 'Yarllalya' represent hills, they stand instead for people in the painting by Tatali Nangala (see p. 298), or in the artwork 'Parwalla, near Kiwirrkurra' by Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi. The often-shown concentric circles, a symbol already used in millennia-old rock carvings, represent specific places, meeting spots, sacred sites or water sources, or even individual trees, if a special event is associated with them. It is idle to draw up a list of symbols and their meanings, because those are usually revealed by the narrative associated by the artist with the painting. If this is not the case, it is intentional. The meaning of some images or symbols in the paintings are not published, or not published in their entirety, because they remain associated with sacred ceremonies which would be desecrated if they were presented in public. For example, Patrick Mung Mung did not explain the meaning of the slightly curved rows of dots in the upper right and left corners of 'Warrmaragoon' (see p. 62) but explained that they are sacred, i.e., secret, and must not be revealed to the uninitiated, i.e., those not equipped with the appropriate knowledge.²

Objects exchanged between different Indigenous groups sometimes took on a new meaning. What might be profane to one group acquired a secret/sacred meaning to another.³ This may be why iconographic elements such as circles, U-shapes, arcs, short or straight lines, etc., are not understood in the same way, or at all, by all groups. On the other hand, during a visit in 1985 to Papunya, artists from 700 km distant Wirrimanu were able to read and understand the pictorial symbolism of the Papunya artists.⁴



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, Papunya



Elizabeth Nyumi Nungurrayi, Parwalla, near Kiwirrkurra, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 120 × 80 cm; Nancy Naninurra Napanangka, Yarllalya, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 118.5 × 79.5 cm (see fig. pp. 43, 52)

² Personal communication with the artist, 1999

³ La Fontaine and Carty 2011, p. 192

⁴ Dempsey 2014, p. 52

⁵ Johnson 1996, p. 49



Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *After Rain*, 1990, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 210.8 × 121.6 cm



Greeny Purvis Petyarre, *Yam Seed Altyerr*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 181.5 × 120.5 cm (see fig. p. 89) and detail



As a result of the successive discussions of secret/sacred matters that flared up in the 1970s and 1980s, depending on the start of painting in the different places, the artists felt compelled to absolutely avoid using representational depictions referencing sacred ceremonies. They developed a painting style in which symbolism, as the carrier of the pictorial narrative, was reduced and only shone through a layer of covering dots. Vivien Johnson described this as a radical innovation.⁵ A typical example of such a mode of painting is ‘After Rain’ from 1991, by Emily Kame Kngwarreye, in which the artist superimposes an overlayer of dots on symbolism in the form of broad lines. The three paintings by Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula on pp. 134–135 can serve as further examples.

The complete abandonment of any symbolism and the sole use of dots is another innovation that the artists formulate in various ways. ‘Yam Seed Altyerr’ by Greeny Purvis Petyarre is a masterpiece in this way.

Here, the dots transform into spatial structures and are themselves carriers of meaning in the narrative of the picture. The artist painted myriads of precise white, light brown or reddish brown round dots, hovering on a black background. They combine to form a multitude of different shapes, reminiscent of flying clouds of seeds but also of aspects of the land such as gentle hills or steep rocky outcrops. A concentration of many smaller white or slightly larger light brown dots brightens up areas of the painting or makes them stand out more clearly. The artist achieves a darkening of other parts of the painting by leaving more of the black ground visible and reducing the number of white dots. The painting seduces the viewer into an extensive journey of discovery with the eye. Through the

different arrangement of the dots, the artist gives the painting an ethereal, a spiritual impression. When the painting is sharply illuminated, its apparent colour changes dramatically due to the increased reflection of the white dots.

Rita Pwerle and Gracie Morton Ngale pursue the most radical form of dot painting without symbolism. The structure of the paintings is no longer defined by dot sizes but by the concentration of colours—in Rita Pwerle’s painting by yellow, red or white on a black ground—and by the dry or wet application of paint, which is therefore more restrained or, with a lot of colour, more distinct (detail see next page). The only recognizable

structure in the painting is a gradient of yellow, as if the sun were shining from the upper left onto a field of blossoming flowers, as seen so impressively after rain in the desert. In two paintings by Gracie Morton Ngale (see pp. 94, 95) even such structure is eliminated. They seem like a starry sky viewed through a telescope. It is a sensual, spiritual painting, and one would be tempted to describe it in terms of Western abstractionism if unaware that the sensual and the spiritual are precisely associated with Awely, ceremonies that women perform at a soakage site called Ilyentye in Utopia.

A particular process can be traced in Mary Napangati's painting. The artist first completely covered the canvas with a reddish-brown colour. She then overpainted it with black but left narrow stripes of reddish brown of varying length, in curves or sometimes in a straight line. On these stripes, she placed with a round stick dots of red and orange, often a little larger than the width of the stripes, so that they stand out well against the black. The dots do not touch at all, or only very slightly. On the one hand, long paths are created in this way, each consisting of several parallel rows of dots leading the eye across the painting, and on the other hand, variously curved shapes are created, dotted in the two colours. Nowhere is a static form to be seen, so that, due to the long pathways and sweepingly curved shapes, the whole painting suggests a rather turbulent movement. What is special about the painting is that, the further one steps away, the more clearly the two essential colours, orange and red, stand out and reveal the structures.

J. J. Tjapaltjarri's painting technique is very similar to Mary Napangati's, in that the dots are spaced apart and are also placed upon reddish-brown lines surrounded by black, but he achieves a completely different impression (see p. 122). The strictly geometrical arrangement of the rectangles—the interiors of which are either completely filled with dots or else left blank—allows the more closely joined dots that delimit the rectangles from one another to stand out as lines. The abutting dots enhance the vibrancy of the yellow hue and emphasise the linear effect, with the lines counterbalancing the filled rectangles. Thus, J. J. Tjapaltjarri established a clear relationship with line paintings in terms of painting technique. In terms of content, there is no correspondence between the paintings by Mary Napangati and J. J. Tjapaltjarri, apart from the fact that both reference narratives that have been passed down the generations.

In the earth pigment paintings of the artists in the East Kimber-



Rita Pwerle, *Ilyentye Awely*, 1999, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 89 × 119 cm (see fig. p. 92) and detail



Mary Napangati, *Untitled*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 121.5 × 121 cm (see fig. p. 121) and detail





Betty Carrington, Dowooloon (Anne Springs), 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 46 × 60.5 cm (see fig. p. 73)

⁶ Personal communication 2013

⁷ French 2015, p. 115

⁸ Myers 2002, p. 68



Emily Kame Kngwarreye, My Country, undated, synthetic polymer on canvas, 57 × 87 cm; Lily Sandover Kngwarreye, Ngkwarlerlaneme Altyerr, 1996, synthetic polymer on canvas, 85 × 85 cm (see fig. pp. 99, 98)



Emily Kame Kngwarreye

ley, the dots that usually delimit the individual colour fields and also frame the entire painting are primarily applied in white pigments, clearly separated from each other. Very rarely, a different colour instead of white is used, as in the lower part of the painting 'Dowooloon (Anne Springs)' from 1998 by Betty Carrington. Exceptions with regard to the framing of the entire painting can be found in the works, among others, of Mabel Juli (Wirringoon) or her daughter Marlene Juli, as well as in the later works of Churchill Cann (Yoonany) (see pp. 66, 77, 86).

The importance of the dots is variously evaluated. Jonathan Kimberley, manager for several years of the art centre in Warmun, did not attribute any content-related significance to the dots but only an aesthetic significance, to brighten up the paintings.⁶ Alana Hunt, also for several years manager of the same art centre, mentions two further possibilities: For some artists, the dots represent journeys, and there is also a connection to body painting in ceremonies.⁷ This complements Myers' view that dots

and rarrk (cross-hatching) in the paintings both function as aesthetic means to create a brilliance or shimmer that symbolise ancestral power.⁸ In this respect, the relationship between the painting and its embedded narrative is aesthetically reinforced through painting techniques.

Another form of dot painting is found in works by Emily Kame Kngwarreye or Lily Sandover Kngwarreye, where the dots are large and structured.

The appearance of the dots depends on the painting implement used. In some of her paintings, as in the enlarged excerpts shown

here, Emily Kame Kngwarreye had a particular way of using brushes for the large, textured dots. She would dip a relatively thick brush into two or even three colours, thus saturating it to the utmost with pigments, and then stamp the brush straight onto the canvas from above. This caused the brush hairs to dramatically splay out, creating on the canvas the large dots with frayed, feathery edges.

The uniform round dots indicate that thin wooden sticks, wooden skewers or the wooden end of a brush were used, as also sometimes used in the kinti-kinti technique. Some artists use a comb-like tool to place thin rows of dots next to and behind each other on the canvas.

Often the pictorial space is stretched to infinity: Rows of dots can be continued in all directions, as in the work by Bobby West Tjupurrula shown on page 124. Cropped motifs, as in a work by Lily Sandover Kngwarreye (see p. 98), also seem to continue in the space outside the canvas and thus expand the pictorial field. Mabel Juli (Wirringoon) even painted on the narrow sides of the frame (see p. 67). And in his late works Churchill Cann (Yoonany) completely omits the dots delimiting the edge

of the painting, or sometimes those outlining fields within the painting itself, which leads not only to an expansion of the visual field but also to a greater effect of depth (see p. 84).

Lines

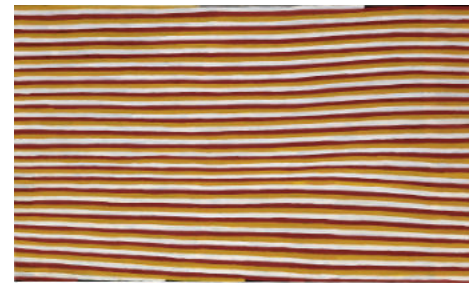
Dot painting is only one aspect of contemporary Indigenous art. Another is painting with lines, and of course there are smooth transitions, as shown in the painting 'Untitled' by J. J. Tjapaltjarri (see p. 122). In that work, horizontal and vertical bands of connected dots form lines. One of the most famous paintings of this style is 'Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau' (1990) by Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, which belongs to the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia in Adelaide.

It is the first painting in his series on the same theme, in which he brought to mastery the kinti-kinti technique developed by Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, together with a very reduced mode of representation experimented with by a number of artists at the Papunya Tula Art co-operative. Subtle changes in colour reveal forms beneath the surface. For the paintings are not only about the production of spears but about a warlike confrontation between two Indigenous groups. Thus, the works are comparable in content to the painting by Andrea Nungarrayi Martin (see p. 157), yet completely different in terms of style. All the other paintings in the series show the line form, either in the kinti-kinti technique or as continuous lines drawn with a brush.

The latter technique, i.e., lines drawn with a brush, is used by many other artists for a wide variety of subjects. Ada Bird Petyarre referred to body painting for ceremonies in many of her works and in her art transformed them into enlarged, short, offset, contrasting lines of colour. George Tjungurrayi, after a period of dot painting in the typical 'Pintupi style' using a structure of concentric circles connected with a network of multiple lines, turned from 1996 exclusively to the technique of solid lines. He sometimes drew the lines horizontally in parallel across the entire canvas, with slight deviations upwards or downwards, thus not allowing them to freeze into immobility. Or else he created organic forms dancing across the canvas, working in each painting with



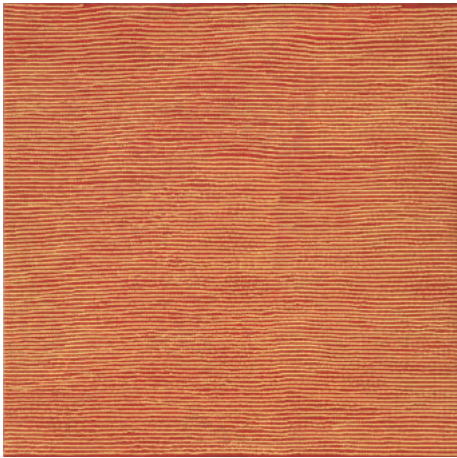
Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, *Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau*, 1990, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 181.5 × 244 cm



Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, *Straightening Spears at Ilyingaungau*, 1990, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 150.5 cm (see fig. p. 116)



Ada Bird Petyarre, *Untitled*, 1997, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 85 × 61.5 cm; George Tjungurrayi, *Untitled*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 89.5 × 60 cm (see fig. pp. 111, 112)



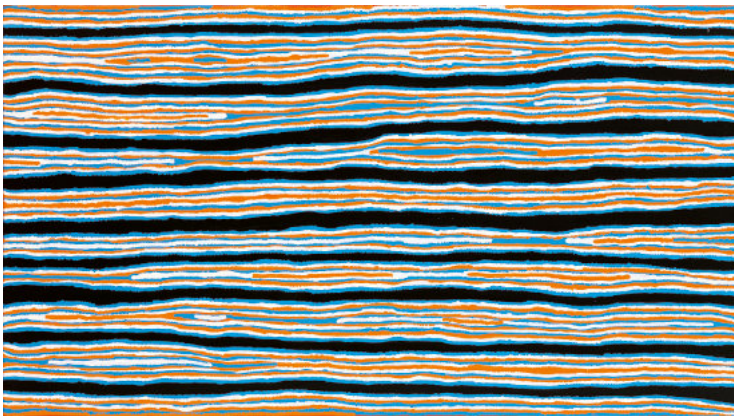
George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri, *Untitled*, 2004, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 91 cm (see fig. p. 123)

no more than two colours, often contrasting them only slightly. Sometimes he combined unusual colours, as can be seen in the painting on the previous page. In both variants of line painting, George Tjungurrayi creates with great precision a flickering, shimmering appearance.

Glow, Shine, Flimmer, Flicker

Common to many artists are designs that make the paintings glow, shine, shimmer, or flicker and in this way create the illusion of movement. In the brilliance and luster as aesthetic characteristics, they recognise the immanence and manifest nature of the power of the ancestors; thus, these characteristics establish a formal relationship with the narratives imbued in the paintings.

The techniques for creating glow or shimmer are manifold. For example, in the work from 2004, George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri conveys shimmering heat in the desert by means of the densely dotted



Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon, *Tali*, 2007, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 101.5 × 183.5 cm (see fig. pp. 46/47)

yellow lines on a red-lined background and intensifies this effect through the slightly different sizes of the yellow dots and, above all, through their sometimes more and sometimes less impasto application of paint. In this way, the horizontal structure is interrupted and a vertical one arises, adding liveliness and movement to the painting in addition to the shimmering. In her work 'Tali', concerning kilometre-long sand dunes running parallel under the hot desert sun, sometimes merging into one another, Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon achieves the flickering with the help of contrasts between the wider black and narrower bright orange and light blue as well

as white bands of colour, which induce the viewer's gaze to oscillate back and forth. Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka worked with wide swathes of bright, warm colours and relied upon the light reflecting from the slightly glossy synthetic polymer paints, enhanced by an extremely impasto application of pigment that additionally emphasised the tactile quality.



Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, *Winyililpa*, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 180 × 119.5 cm (see fig. p. 30)

Unlike synthetic polymer paints, natural pigments do not glisten but artists nevertheless found a technique to enhance the glow of a painting. This is achieved primarily with the white dots that frame the whole picture and/or the individual colour fields. Some artists like Betty Carrington or Churchill Cann (Yoonany) create a similar effect through an extreme black on white contrast or use of glowing colours. In bark painting from Arnhem Land, a shimmering effect is achieved by the technique of rarrk (cross-hatching) as in the work of John Mawurndjul. The occasionally white grounding not only allows the red and yellow ochre to shine, but together with the fine parallel lines applied to the bark with great clarity and exactly equal spacing, it creates a luminous effect. If, additionally,

the rarrk lines change their direction in adjacent painting fields, an added sense of movement is created.

The artists use techniques that directly affect the very complex process of vision, in which an image is projected through the eyeball onto a very dense set of nerve endings on the retina. These light-sensitive cells fire nerve impulses to the brain, but the frequency of the impulses rapidly decreases when the light intensity of that part of the image directed at a cell remains constant. That is, evolution has caused the nerves to be more sensitive to changing, rather

than to static, light intensity. The visual system compensates for that decreasing sensitivity by having the eye make tiny rapid movements, called ‘saccades’, in all directions, so that each nerve ending subsequently receives a different part of the focused image. The deviations from the saccades average only about one or two degrees, which is about the size of a thumbnail held at the distance of an arm’s length. The brain learns to transform such small shifts into a stable ‘mental image’.

If the eye focuses on a very detailed painted image with a fine structure, there is even a tendency for the eye to make many smaller microsaccades to further improve visual sensitivity. There is also a separate tendency for the focal points of the two eyes to drift apart during a saccade and jump back into closer focus at the new position. Such a change in focus creates a feeling that an object is moving away and moving closer again; however, the brain normally compensates also for this impression.

But what happens if the image contains lines or dots that are roughly the same distance apart as the microsaccades? Then the brain has difficulty deciding whether the structure in the image has actually shifted or if the change was just a normal microsaccade. Depending on the distance of a viewer from an image with such a structure and depending on how the viewer’s brain has learned to manage the shifts through saccades or microsaccades, the brain may decide that it is the structure in the image that ‘jumps’. The viewer experiences this as a flicker in the image, or in part of the image. In addition, the aforementioned change in focus length during a saccade can be interpreted by the brain, albeit partially, as a movement back and forth of the structure in the image. Experiments even show that some people then unconsciously react by rocking their heads slightly back and forth. In European art, such kinds of effects have been taken up in Op Art, in particular. Scientists have been inspired, for example, by Bridget Riley’s ‘Fall’ (1963, resin on hardboard, 141 × 140.3 cm) to design experiments to study eye responses.⁹



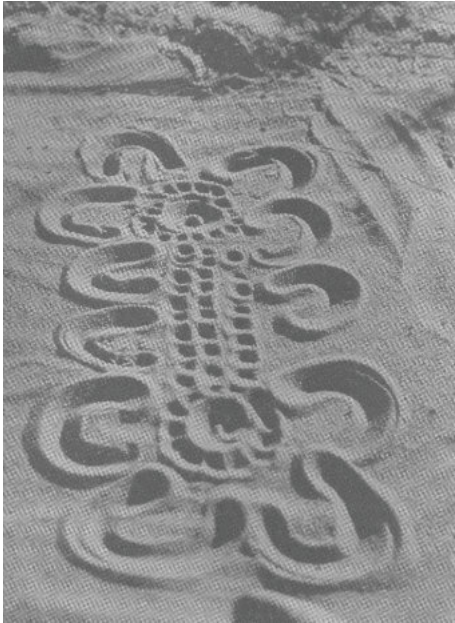
Betty Carrington, *Darrajayin Country*, 2003, natural pigments on canvas, 120 × 45 cm; Churchill Cann (*Yoonany*), *Buffalo Hole*, 2012, natural pigments on canvas, 100.5 × 140 cm (see fig. pp. 74, 84)



John Mawurndjul, *Dirdbim (Moon)*, 2003, natural pigments on bark, 71 × 41 cm

⁹ Zanker and Walker 2004; Hermens and Zanker 2012; Zanker et al. 2010; Marmor 2016

Techniques of emphasising and revealing have their counterparts in techniques of concealment (see also pp. 240–241, 300), which follow the principles of handling of secret/sacred content and formally consist of overpaintings that— more or less—conceal underlying structures or symbols. An early and a late example of such paintings from the oeuvre of Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula are ‘Water Dreaming at Kalipinypa’ from 1972 and ‘Water Dreaming’ from 1998 (see pp. 240, 131).



Signs in the sand

The Haptic in Art

The haptic has a special place in Indigenous art. Forms showing the shape of terrain, or accompanying narratives, are at times drawn in the sand in central Australia. The ground reliefs created for ceremonies, whether made of sand or of organic materials, can be experienced haptically. From there, it is a small step to take the emphasis on the haptic into the art. This presents itself differently in the various art movements. In the X-ray style of bark painting, one might almost reach inside the figures (see p. 308). Rarrk makes the surfaces painted with this cross-hatching stand out clearly.

In paintings with synthetic polymer paint on canvas, the flickering and shimmering gives the impression of vitality. In addition to techniques that seem to be borrowed from Op Art, synthetic polymer paint is often applied extremely impasto to the canvas, allowing the sheen of the colours to reflect from the painting. Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka and Helicopter Tjungurrayi (see pp. 29, 31), for example, used impasto that rose above the painting surface like a relief.



Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka, Puturr Soak, 1998, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 150 × 100 cm; Jack Jakamarra Ross, Ngapa, Pamapardu, Janganpa manu Ngalyipi Jukurpa (Water, Flying Ant, Possum, and Snake Vine Dreaming), 2004, etching, 33 × 24.5 cm, sheet 61 × 40 cm (see fig. pp. 29, 165)



In addition, various techniques for creating depth effects are seen in acrylic artworks and etchings, whereby use of contrasts such as colour contrasts (Jack Jakamarra Ross), light/dark contrasts (Kayi Kayi Nampitjinpa, see p. 137) as well as with contrasts of angular vs. round shapes (Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa, p. 135) is predominant. Sometimes the style of painting creates depth by drawing the eye into the interior of the painting, as described on pages 117 and 251 for the artworks ‘Untitled’ by Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula and ‘heartland’ by Judy Watson.

Finally, in natural pigment painting on canvas, it is the different-

sized grains of pigment that above all provide the haptic. The application of the ochre pigment in layers promotes the impression of depth, which is foremost achieved by a translucent visibility of the lower layers in the painting. Two other methods of creating a vibrant surface are either to apply two colours inside a colour field or to apply the pigments in such a way that the brush marks remain visible.

Hector Jandany provided exceptions to the emphasis on the haptic in earth pigment painting on canvas, by using a stone to smooth the painted surface of the painting, creating a diffuse, indistinct appearance of the Country.

In addition, there is a ‘conceptual haptic’, whereby layers of differing meaning are included in the painting or, in the more explicitly political art, when reference to racist incidents is hidden under a more poetic impression from the painting. This is the case for Judy Watson, who even transfers the haptic impression of paper into her canvas paintings. In an interview on the occasion of the exhibition ‘Resonances’ 2020–2021 at the Fondation Opale in Lens (Switzerland), the artist revealed her own unique treatment of her canvas paintings in order to not only make the haptic visible but to feel it in the production process of the artwork itself, ‘[...] *The canvas has a memory, just like water has a memory or even paper. So if you fold it or pinch it or make marks on it, you can really challenge the way it absorbs the pigment, the paint or the dye. But you can also wet it on the back and then stretch it out. So I think of it as a kind of skin. [...] I don’t want to impose a hard edge on the work. I want it to feel like the blinkers are off and it’s almost like there are no boundaries. [...] I also sit on my work a lot when I make it, roll it up. I’ve been known to spend my lunch break or my siesta on my canvases. [...] The work leads me to have a conversation with it, so it becomes a bit [...] a dialogue, or a dance with the work itself. And sometimes I literally dance on the canvases [...] but at the same time I control how I press the pigment and what I do later. And then it becomes something more cerebral.*’ (transcription by author)



Judy Watson in her studio, 2019

Bark Painting

Using tree bark as a structural base for a painting is a special and a very old medium for Indigenous art. It is unknown when it originated or how widespread it became; historical sources report variously or even conflictingly. What is certain is that it is one of the oldest arts, along with rock painting and rock carving, which are tens of thousands of years old. The oldest surviving bark paintings date back to the 1870s.¹⁰ The Frenchman Nicholas Baudin was the first European to report about bark paintings, seen in 1802 in Indigenous dwellings on Maria Island off the coast of Tasmania.¹¹ Mis-

¹⁰ Taçon 2003, p. 233

¹¹ Taylor 2004, p. 119

sionaries and ethnologists have carried many examples of such work into European ethnological museums. Today, painting on bark is particularly favoured by artists in Arnhem Land and on the islands to the north.

The artists drew their inspiration from rock paintings and rock carvings, because '[t]hese are our history, our history books', as explained by Big Bill Neidjie,¹² the last speaker of the Gaagudju language, after which the Kakadu National Park is named. In the past, clear regional differences could be found between figurative paintings, non-figurative and a mixture of both. Over time, figurative painting in Western Arnhem Land has reduced in prevalence, compared to the more geometrically oriented forms associated with the unique technique of rarrk (cross-hatching), and trends towards the painting style of the Yolŋu in eastern Arnhem Land.

A special aspect of paintings in Western Arnhem Land is the so-called 'X-ray style', in which the interior of the figures is shown, as in the

painting by Dick Nguleingulei Murrumurru. On a reddish-brown background, which used to be common in Western Arnhem Land painting, a female black kangaroo is depicted but in white rather than black, so that the spine and internal organs, filled in with rarrk, stand out all the more. The painting provides a clear reference to rock paintings, where drawings have been showing the insides of humans or animals, skeletons and organs, for at least 10,000 years.¹³ Such rock paintings could serve two purposes. Firstly, the animals are painted as important sources of meat and fat by showing the cutting lines, but this is only the superficial information. Secondly, figures have spiritual significance,

and are then often shown in a dancing position and/or with a hair ornament of feathers.

John Mawurndjul, his wife Kay Lindjuwanga, daughter Anna Wurrkidj and his brothers Jimmy Njiminjuma and James Iyuna are—or were—all artistically active. The great painterly importance of John Mawurndjul's works has several reasons. In some of his artworks, the white background allows the yellow and red ochre and the black paint to glow in contrast, seemingly springing out of the painting. This emphasis is not necessarily new, as can be seen in a weaker form in the painting by Dick Nguleingulei Murrumurru. What is new, however, is how John Mawurndjul uses the technique of rarrk and structures the composition.

His painting on the following page references motifs of the Mardayin ceremonies, and the corresponding sand sculptures, with their spiritual connections to the ancestors and to the

¹² Taçon 2003, p. 233

¹³ Taylor 2004, p. 119



Dick Nguleingulei Murrumurru, Djukerre, c. 1975, natural pigments on bark, 58.5 × 91.5 cm



John Mawurndjul paints rarrk

creation of the world. The two red dots in the upper part of the painting mark two poles, and the black line shows a watercourse running through the Country belonging to Mawurndjul's clan. The artist composes the painting 'Mardayin' from vertical fields and from horizontal sections of approximately the same height, set off from each other by lines of black dots on a white background. Some of the oldest rock paintings have cross-hatching and dots. The horizontal divisions dominate by means of their height the vertical ones, which in their width often occupy only a third of the height of the horizontal divisions. Only in the first two sections at the top of the painting are these divisions slanted. The focus is on aesthetics, in that the entire painting is filled with a very fine rarrk executed with the utmost mastery. Rarrk bands with a sequence of the colours yellow, black and white are continued over several horizontal sections, divided by the dotted lines. Sometimes such a band stretches across almost the entire width of the painting, but often it is deliberately interrupted so that one's gaze is halted again and again. Sometimes John Mawurndjul continues the movement of the bands but changes the sequence of colours or the angles at which the bands are placed in relation to each other. On the left side of the painting, in the third and fourth section from the bottom, the bands even show a mirror-image colour gradient. The only special pictorial features in the sequence of sections filled with rarrk are the two red dots mentioned above, the black line, the slanted sections at the top of the picture and a small white oval area in the middle of a field criss-crossed with lines.

This 'play' with rarrk gives the image a great dynamism, taking the movement inherent in the uneven texture of the bark and amplifying it in an extraordinary way. In order to be able to paint the rarrk with delicacy and precision, the artists usually employed thin brushes made of human hair, called *marwat*; for everything else, common brushes are used.

Materials

Bark

The preparation of the bark support for the paintings is complex. Only during the rainy season, when the barks contain enough sap to make them pliable, can they be peeled off the trees. *Eucalyptus tetradonta* (Stringybark) is an appropriate tree because its trunk is largely free of branches up to a relatively great height. The loose outer bark is removed down to the denser brick-red layer underneath. Over an open fire, the superfluous outer bark is charred so that it can easily be peeled off. At the same time, the fire drives out the moisture and hardens the bark (see next page). It is then smoothed and stored for two to three weeks, weighted down in order



John Mawurndjul, *Mardayin*, 2001, natural pigments on bark, 215 × 81 cm



to straighten it. Sticks are attached to the top and bottom of the bark to stabilise it. The dry season, during which no bark can be removed from the trees, is the time to work on sculptures or etchings.

Natural Pigments and Charcoal

The Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies of the Harvard Art Museums examined the pigments and binders of early bark paintings, including two from the late 19th century, using infrared spectroscopy and a pyrolyser coupled to a mass spectrometer and a gas chromatograph. The examined paintings had been created at Yirrkala, at Maningrida, on Groote Eylandt or on the Tiwi Islands. Besides yellow ochre and various forms of red ochre containing iron oxide, white pigments based on kaolin, or sometimes the mineral huntite, were found. Black was based on manganese dioxide obtained from stones found on the beach or riverbanks, which when ground and mixed with water gave a black colour. At Groote



John Mawurndjul preparing a bark

Eylandt, manganese dioxide was also extracted from old batteries left at a military base after the Second World War, or a mixture of both forms of manganese dioxide was used. The binder found during the investigations was in some cases the resin from the bloodwood tree (*Eucalyptus corymbosa*). The hard, dark-red secretion of the trees was ground and mixed with water until it reached a gelatinous consistency. In the majority of cases, however, the sap of orchids was used as a binder. Beeswax, blood or animal fat, which are mentioned more often in the literature as binders, were not found. The investigation of the Harvard Art Museums proves that binders have always been used in painting, not just with the advent of the art trade.¹⁴ Today, PVAC is used

¹⁴ Khandekar et al. 2016, pp. 72–74

as a binder, and the pigments come from minerals that can usually be found near the art centres.

Except in the case of bark painting, there are only a few artists who paint with natural pigments, and they paint on canvas. The artists live in Warmun, a small community of about 500 people, and Kununurra in the Kimberley. In Warmun, the first paintings were done in the 1970s. It is not possible to date them exactly, but it is known that in the late 1970s Rover Thomas (Joolama), Queenie McKenzie, Hector Jandany and George Mung Mung were painting works for their teaching at the local school.

The artists make their own pigments. Ochre is composed mainly from iron oxide and is found in many shades, from brown and red, to pink and a very light yellow. Ochre has a clay-like consistency and fragments vary in hardness. White pigment in the form of kaolin is a precious material because it must be dug out from deep in the earth, along some river-



Natural pigments

beds, from a rock-hard soil, using crowbars and shovels. After it is cleaned and dried, it can be further processed. It is indispensable not only for direct use as a white paint but also for mixing with other colours to create new hues.

Black paint in Warmun is made from charcoal usually from the wood of the *Eucalyptus leucophloia* (Snappy gum tree), one of the 600 species of eucalyptus. In Kununurra, the coral tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*) is also burnt for charcoal.¹⁵ Whereas at the beginning of the painting movement—the art centres in Kununurra and Warmun were opened in 1988 and 1998 respectively—only the four basic colours red, yellow, white and black were used in the paintings, today the artists obtain many different hues and shades by mixing different pigments. However, some individual artists began painting and mixing their colours years earlier, for example, from as early as 1990, Queenie McKenzie developed a love of pink in her painting.^{16]}

Green is created from a mixture of yellow and black, the black of charcoal, which shows a bluish shimmer as long as the paint is wet. This blue component is sufficient to create, together with the yellow, a green pigment. Some artists also mix in a little white. Yellow ochre can be heated to produce different shades of colour, from orange to a rich brown-red, with yellow ochre from different places producing different hues. It is a process that was known in Greece as early as the 5th century BCE.¹⁷ In Warmun, artists heat the ochre over an open fire. They have no temperature control but just wait until the desired hue is achieved. Pink is usually produced through a mixture of red with white, although there is also an occurrence of pink ochre in the Fitzroy Crossing area, about 650 km southwest of Kununurra.

The natural pigments occur in varying degrees of hardness and are pounded in a very large mortar to any desired fineness so that the paintings can be given different textured surfaces. Churchill Cann (Yoonany), for example, mortared and sieved pigments into a very fine powder for his glaze-like applications on canvas so that he could use the colours in a wet-on-wet technique. Other artists apply multiple layers of pigment after each has dried. If the ochre is very hard, it can take up to an hour to grind a tennis ball-sized piece into powder. After sieving the crushed pigment to remove impurities, artists mix it with a little water and the fixative polyvinyl acetate copolymer (PVAC), also common in occidental painting, a mixture that has proven to be both highly durable and flexible for painting on canvas primed with gesso.

Betty Carrington, like Patrick Mung Mung (see pp. 185–186), is a master of colour. In ‘Darrajayin Hills’ she uses no less than 19 different colours or hues to depict the layered ranges of hills: The foreground and the sky appear in the same yellow, but black, three shades of grey, dark brown, gradations of reddish-brown to pink, various shades of yellow, white and green are to be seen. Unlike for the chain of hills, the colour for

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 74

¹⁶ Field 2008

¹⁷ Lohmiller 1998/1999, p. 122

Ochre Mines

Ochre mines can be found in many parts of Australia; there are 17 known just in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. The largest and deepest mine, 20 metres in depth, is Wilgie Mia in Western Australia, called ‘place of the red ochre’ by the Wajarri Thuwarri Thaa. It is primarily an open pit mine with a series of caves and tunnels dug by Wajarri to follow the ochre seams. It has been in use for about 30,000 years, and it is estimated that about 19,600 m³ of ochre and rock weighing 40,000 tonnes were excavated. From 1944 to 1981, the area was commercially exploited, and 10,245 tonnes of ochre was extracted for the construction industry, a sacrilege in relation to First Australian culture. Ochre was not only used as a remedy for wounds, for example, but it possessed spiritual power and was the only pigment appropriate to paint tjuringas or on the body for ceremonies. It was also irreplaceable for rock painting. In 1972, the mine was placed under (some) protection according to the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 and has been part of the national cultural heritage since 2011. Ochre has been traded since time immemorial. There were extensive trade routes and barter networks that stretched across the continent, with the highest quality ochre ranging the longest distance. Ochre from the Wilgie Mia mine, for example, was traded not only in Western and central Australia but as far away as Queensland and the Nullarbor Plain in South Australia, a range of 1,600 kilometres. Even today, ochre is sometimes exchanged but no longer over such long distances. (Australian Government 2013)



Betty Carrington, Darrajayin Hills, 2002, natural pigments on canvas, 140 × 100 cm (see fig. p. 75)



Gordon Barney, Birno, 1998, natural pigments on canvas, 80 × 120.5 cm (see fig. p. 64)



Gordon Barney, Alice Downs, 2013, natural pigments on canvas, 90 × 120 cm (see fig. p. 65)

the foreground and sky is applied with a very finely ground pigment, so they appear with smooth surfaces, whereas all the hills have rough surfaces, created with the help of granular pigments. A chain of hills in the middle of the painting is painted in the very precious—because not easily found—white pigment. The yellow hill chain in the upper third of the picture was created in several painting steps. First the natural pigments, ground to the greatest fineness, were applied, and then, in the last painting step, coarser pigments were overlayed on the upper part of the hill chain. The same painting method can also be noted on two other hill chains, although less clearly.

In many of the earth pigment paintings on canvas, mountains and hills ‘flow’ across the painting in gently curving forms. Thus, the tops of the ranges in ‘Darrajayin Hills’ by Betty Carrington are rounded throughout, although the painting exudes great movement through the diversity of shapes and colours of the mountains. These Australian mountains and hills have been eroded through millions of years and are therefore rounded; only rock formations show steep slopes or incisions. The way the mountains are depicted in the paintings follows their forms. There is a clear distinction between the paintings from Warmun and the acrylic works of the Western Desert: The former often reproduces

the hills in a side view, the latter—when referencing Country—almost always in a view from above, marked by symbols. For the Western Desert is a planar landscape, in which even the few mountains seem flattened like mesas. It is striking that some artists using natural pigments combine both an overhead and a side view in the same painting, as Gordon Barney does in ‘Birno’: The artist depicts the mountains in a side view and the course of the river in an overhead view. In this respect, it is only logical that there is no horizon line, unless in the work ‘Alice Downs’ by the same artist one interprets the top of the hills as the horizon, separating them from a bisected sky.

There is, however, another reason for not marking the horizon. Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri, one of the founders of the modern painting movement, has explained the absence of the horizon line thus: ‘*Do not feel it [...] do not see it.*’¹⁸ Thus, the paintings make visible the invisible architecture which holds the world together, but they do not directly depict it.

A relatively recent phenomenon in painting with natural pigments is to create colour fields in two colours; two different techniques are used. Gordon Barney, in ‘Alice Downs’, applied black, coarsely ground charcoal pigments to a dark brown colour field, giving a warm velvety surface texture and further deepening the brown colour. Churchill Cann (Yoonany), on the other hand, mixes two or more colours in one colour field (see p. 194).

¹⁸ Bardon 1989, p. 46

New Elements of Design

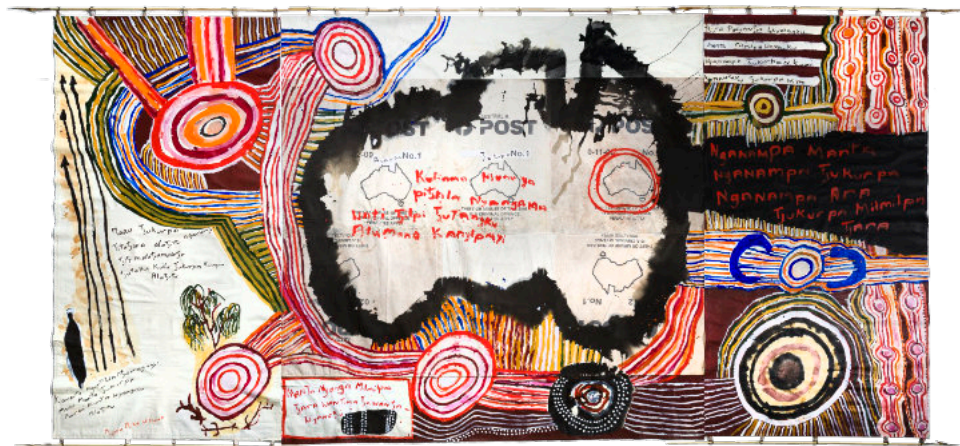
There is hardly any art that evolves so rapidly and innovatively in multiple directions as Indigenous Australian art. Changes that took centuries in Western art took decades in Indigenous art. Meanwhile, artists are ‘discovering’ and using further media, beyond canvas and bark. This can be shown by two examples.

Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams lived and worked in Mimili in the north of South Australia. Early on, he was active in the land rights movement that led to the return of land under the *Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act* in 1981, ‘We were proud and happy to get our land back, but we always know that there’s *walawuru nyanganyi* (an eagle watching over)—and that eagle is government, the eagle is mining, the eagle is anything that tries to take that land and Tjukurpa away again.’¹⁹

He titled his last work of 2018 ‘Kamantaku Tjukurpa wiya (The Government doesn’t have Tjukurpa)’.²⁰ During the three previous years, the artist used sacks from the Australian Post Office for his works. This is because these sacks have a strong symbolic power: Postal stations in Central, Western and Eastern Australia as well as in the Northern Territory were used in the past as places to distribute flour, sugar and tobacco to Indigenous Australians, and sometimes poisons were added to these ‘gifts’ to kill them.²¹ Thus, the postal sacks are a metaphor for the abuse of power and for the effects of colonialism on First Australians, that continue to this day.

Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams committed a misdemeanour through the use of the mailbags, since they remain the property of the Post Office and it is forbidden to use them for other purposes. The artist incorporated this prohibition into his work and reversed it by commenting, ‘*Painting on Australia Post mailbags is about ownership. Government always want to say that something belongs to them, “it belongs to the Commonwealth, we’re the owner” but I’m saying “wiya (no), this belongs to Anangu, to the traditional owners”*’.²² At the same time, the mailbags contain the connotation of sending messages. Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams notes: ‘*I paint on mailbags because I want to depict our history on them. They are symbolic of letters, which we are sending out to the world. Letters for politicians to read, letters for anybody to read. [...] This is what I depict: our Tjukurpa. Our land. Our enduring culture. This is the message: I want everybody to understand.*’²³

Indeed, Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams used his Pitjantjat-



Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams, *Kamantaku Tjukurpa wiya* (The Government doesn’t have Tjukurpa), 2018, synthetic polymer paint, ink, acrylic marker pen on linen mailbags and cotton, spears by Sammy Dodd from spearbush (Wonga Wonga Vine), kangaroo tendon, mulga leaf resin, 300 × 600 cm

¹⁹ blackartprojects and Mimili Maku Artists 2018

²⁰ In a very similar vein, Mura, a Murinbata, expressed in the 1930s, ‘*White man got no dreaming [...]*’, meaning that white people have no spiritual identity in the community and no real understanding of the relationship between man and the land, where Indigenous people believe reality is grounded. W. E. H. Stanner used Mura’s statement as the book title for his reprinted essays from 1938 to 1973. (Stanner 1979)

²¹ Clark 1995

²² blackartprojects and Mimili Maku Artists 2018

²³ Williams 2019, p. 165

jara language in the works to draw the recipient's attention to messages, even if the viewer cannot necessarily read the words. In the painting 'Kamantaku Tjukurpa wiya (The Government doesn't have Tjukurpa)' it states:

*'Black-skinned Aboriginal people have always had powerful Tjukurpa Dreaming Law and have passed it down through generations since time began. / The government simply cannot claim ownership of this land and must never destroy cultural heritage sites. The shame of it. / Do not destroy sacred sites or dig up the land around them. / The first people, the true culture. / Listen, if you come here, you must accept that the Law of our land is under the control of our senior men. / Do not plan to build roads in the vicinity of sacred sites, because of the risk of destroying Tjukurpa. / The government doesn't have a Dreaming. / This is our land. Our Tjukurpa. Our cultural heritage. Our Tjukurpa is sacred.'*²⁴

²⁴ Ibid., following p. 118

²⁵ Ibid., p. 123

²⁶ See also Dodd 2020, p. 80

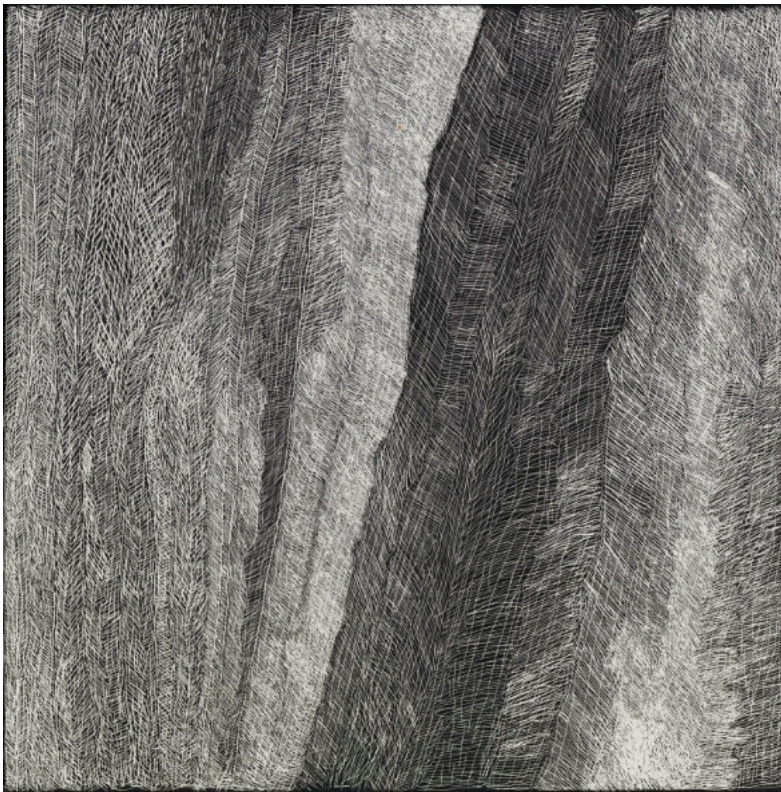
The reference to one's culture and its defence is emphasised by the hanging of the mailbags using spears, since spears, placed as a dense fence around sacred sites, are in the artist's mind a powerful protection.²⁵ The spears were made by professional spearmaker Sammy Dodd.²⁶

The second example of new materials in art is an extraordinary etching on metal and enamel by Ngarralja Tommy May, which won him the A\$ 50,000 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NAT-SIAA) in 2020.

The artist, who lives in Fitzroy Crossing, works on both canvas and paper and already has a long career. He has also been involved in the promotion of Indigenous art and has therefore served as Vice-Chairman of Mangkaja Arts Centre, Chairman of the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) and for twenty-one years on the Board of the Association of Northern Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA, now Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists ANKA).

In the etching, Ngarralja Tommy May shows a clay pan, sand dunes and a waterhole on the Canning Stock Route; water flows down the sand dunes during a heavy rain. This part of the country reminds the artist of the loss of his brother there. The drawing shows an impressive delicacy,

for which a number of artists in Fitzroy Crossing are known (see the etching by Jukuna Mona Chuguna, p. 173). In Ngarralja Tommy May's etching, light and dark bands caused solely by a differing density of short white lines appear in succession. The bands are each separated by a fine, continuous vertical line. The short lines, through their different orientations, evoke the impression of movement, of heavy rain whipped by wind in different directions.



Ngarralja Tommy May, Wirrkanja, 2020, enamel on metal, 122 × 122 cm

Use and Meaning of Colour

As soon as European ethnologists and missionaries brought paper, pencils, canvas and paints—and Indigenous artists were given access to them—all these materials were immediately put to use. Of course, all colours beyond the basic four natural pigments were already known, as they were used in central Australia in the form of coloured organic materials in the ground reliefs designed for sacred ceremonies. The colours themselves were not the limiting factor but access to them, which became available from the 1880s onwards. The first Indigenous artists whose names have been recorded—William Barak, Mickey of Ulladulla, Tommy McRae, and Oscar of Cooktown, who all lived in the 19th century—used in their artworks whatever materials and colours they could get. These were paper, sketchbooks, ink and pen, coloured pencils, gouache and watercolours. William Barak also mixed his watercolours, and the above-mentioned artists often used red and blue.²⁷

²⁷ Ryan 2004, pp. 99–100

In the 20th century, the same process repeated itself in the art centres as in the 19th century in contacts with missionaries and ethnologists: As soon as the full range of acrylic colours was available, it was used. Wirrimanu (Balgo) may serve as an example. In the forerunner of the art centre there, the Christian Adult Education Centre, initially only paper, calico and natural pigments were available, and the first artists painted long banners for the church on calico in 1981. These were the first publicly exhibited works in Wirrimanu. From the mid-1970s onwards, paintings had been created sporadically on small wooden panels. With the establishment of the Warlayirti Artists art centre in 1987, and especially through the personal commitment of Michael Rea, who was the coordinator of the centre between 1989 and 1992 and who procured all the synthetic polymer paints, the palette of the local artists abruptly began to brighten. Painting experienced an explosion of colours, which had a liberating influence on the art and gave rise to new directions. It is not surprising that this occurred in central Australia, because after rain the desert produces an extensive carpet of colourful flowering plants in many places.

The four ochre colours red, yellow, white and black, used in body painting during ceremonies, were associated with secret/sacred content and therefore had sacred significance. The overcoming of restrictions to these four colours by the artists of the Papunya Tula art centre at the beginning of the 1990s was an essential and logical step, because the artists had some time previously already concluded their discussion about the representation of secret/sacred contents. Nevertheless, each artist strictly restrained himself to a reduced colour palette.

For many years, even the artists who broke away from the reduced colour palette continued to use the colours black and brown—rarely also white—to paint any symbolism that functioned as a carrier of meaning. Divergence from this principle first became apparent with the artists



Mitjili Napurrula, *Nulla Nulla Tjuta (Many Fighting Sticks)*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 80.5 × 181.5 cm (see fig. pp. 54/55)

²⁸ AGNSW 2007, p. 257

²⁹ Mundine 2006

³⁰ Watson 2004, p. 120.

³¹ Daymen 2004, p. 117

of Wirrimanu (Balgo) and Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff). Thus, in Mitjili Napurrula's painting, 'Nulla Nulla Tjuta', the fighting sticks appear in a colourful array.

Pijaju Peter Skipper commented on the use of colours as follows: 'When I see all the different colours arrive [...] I want to use all the colours—the green for jurtal [green grass] and manawarnti [trees]—to show the seasons in the desert, not just Ngarrangkarni stories. I like to use all of the colours. We see all of these colours in the desert.'²⁸ Micky Dorrng said, '[...] the colours hold the power of the land.'²⁹

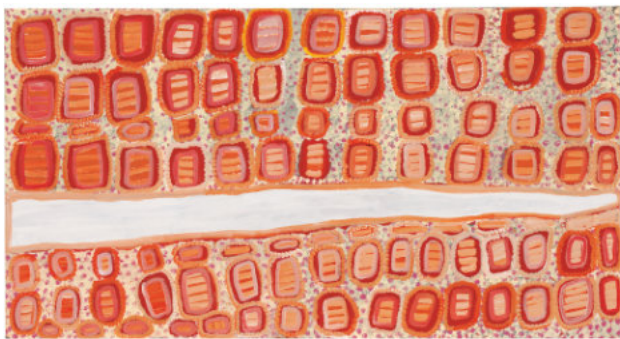
These two quotes from artists from different regions of Australia—Pijaju Peter Skipper lived in Fitzroy Crossing and Micky Dorrng in Arnhem Land—show that the colour palettes contain both aesthetic and semantic aspects. Ochre, extracted directly from the land, was understood as a substance transformed from the bodies of the creator ancestors, and could thus confer power to the paintings.³⁰ A superficial view suggests that synthetic polymer paints might lack this direct

connection to the land. In fact, however, many artists refer to natural phenomena or landscape features through their choice of colours, although the hue does not have to correspond exactly to a realistic appearance. Jukuna Mona Chuguna, artist in Fitzroy Crossing and partner of Pijaju Peter Skipper, commented, 'I take red, green, white; all these colours are in my desert country. I paint parranga (hot weather time) and yitalal (cold weather). I use different colours for the hot and the wet weather.'³¹

This practice of colour differentiation of features of the natural environment was followed, for example, by Narputta Nangala Jugadai when she depicted the salt lake Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald) either in white colour, or in blue after rain, depending on the surface appearance.

The colour blue is often considered atypical for Indigenous painting. Indeed, it is far less common compared to red or yellow tones, for example. However, as mentioned above, it was already used by the first artists recorded in the 19th century, as well as by five Darwin artists whose drawings were exhibited in the 'Centennial International Exhibition' in Melbourne in 1888.

The 365 coloured pencil drawings by 27 Yirrkala artists collected by Ronald and Catherine Berndt during their 1946–1947 research expedition to northeast Arnhem Land, documenting Yolŋu culture, present an eloquent overview of the use of colour. Blue appears in the overwhelming majority of the drawings, and all other colours provided were also used. A comparative examination of the drawings demonstrates that each artist developed their own colour palette.³²



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, *Karrkurutinytja (Lake MacDonald)*, 1996, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 69.5 × 149.5 cm (see fig. p. 34)



Narputta Nangala Jugadai, *Karrkurutinytja*, 2005, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 91 × 101 cm (see fig. p. 39)

Although the Yirrkala artists returned to the use of four earth pigment colours to represent their identity within their style of bark painting, nevertheless a room full of surprising artworks was on display at the 2020–2021 Triennial at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne: Dhambit Munungurr from Yirrkala painted large barks and hollowed tree trunks in vibrant blue colours. The artist described blue as the colour of water, which has a stimulating effect on the environment, refreshes the souls of the Yolŋu and is part of their identity.

Similarly to how Micky Dorrng describes the transfer of power to the paintings through the use of natural pigments of Country, Jukuna Mona Chuguna refers to synthetic polymer paints when she said, ‘[...] *we make them [the paintings] good, strong with colour.*’³³ Colour itself, regardless of its source, can thus convey a certain strength. The colours of the desert can change dramatically in a very short time, depending on the weather conditions. In this way, the idea of transmitting strength and power to images connects not only with natural pigments but also with synthetic polymer paints.



Dhambit Munungurr in the NGV Triennial 2020–2021

³² Many of the drawings are reprinted in Pinchbeck 2013

³³ Daymen 2004, p. 117

07 — A Brief History of Indigenous Art

Introduction

Hundreds of articles have been written about the development of contemporary Indigenous art in Australia. This chapter provides historical background, summarises events and individual achievements, and traces ramifications in the history leading to recognition of the artworks as fine art and contemporary art. It focuses on the beginnings of the art movement. Three different perspectives are taken: that of the settlers, that of the First Australians and that of the art scene (curators, critics, artists). This approach has parallels with some other analyses that refer to the ‘ethnographic discourse’, the ‘ownership discourse’ and the ‘aesthetics discourse’.¹

The historical outline extends to the beginning of the 21st century and provides the reader with a sufficient framework for further study. The following and current artistic developments, art historical controversies, and political storms are not covered, i.e., the policies of the so-called ‘Intervention’ in 2007 and ‘Stronger Future’ in 2012, which oppressed Indigenous residents of the Northern Territory by restricting their freedoms.² Art historian Jennifer Biddle wrote about some of the effects on her own art in her book *Remote Avant-Garde. Art under Occupation*.³ In addition, the aftermath of the financial crises around 2009, 2015, and 2020 made life extremely difficult for artists, and the pandemic that began in 2020 had devastating direct and indirect effects as the lockdown cut people and organisations off from the art world.

The perspective of the Western art scene is described in this chapter with its twists and turns, from ignoring Indigenous art, to denying it as art, to pejoratively categorising it as primitivism, to denying its dynamic creativity, to reflecting on it, and finally accepting and admiring it. This process culminated in November 2002 in a dispute over Richard Bell’s artwork ‘Scientia e Metaphysica’ and the accompanying essay ‘Bell’s Theorem: Aboriginal Art–It’s a white thing!’⁴

By citing, as an Indigenous artist, familiar features of Indigenous painting and garnishing them with streaks of colour à la Jackson Pollock, he protested the annexation of Indigenous art by the Western-dominated art market and, moreover, he excoriated the hypocritical politics that prioritises the marketing of Indigenous life, especially for tourism, over the acceptance and furtherance of it.

The following texts, full of pitch-black sarcasm, can be read in the black and white parts of the painting. In the white image field, he wrote,

¹ Berryman 2012, p. 2

² Frost 2017

³ Biddle 2016

⁴ Bell 2007



Richard Bell, *Scientia e metaphysica (Bell's theorem)*, 2003, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 240 × 360 cm

'I AM HUMILIATED. I am sorry. Your ancestors were the kindest the most humane colonial power in the history of the world. They didn't steal our land. You did in 1992 [Mabo verdict]. Your ancestors were very kind to Aboriginal people all over Australia. They gave work rations of flour, tea, sugar and even tobacco. And it is quite silly to think that work for rations was slavery minus the accommodation. You didn't commit genocide. You didn't even steal our children ... I was wrong. You can justify everything.' In the black area of the image it says, *'I AM not a racist. I just don't like apoze, juze, wogz, slow pedz and reffoze.'*

The confusion that Richard Bell creates with these texts—it is not immediately clear who the speaker actually is—is intentional,

designed to startle out of its lethargy a white audience that lauds Indigenous art, yet ignores Indigenous culture and discriminates against Indigenous life, and to provoke it into taking a stand of some kind. In this way, Indigenous art has come full circle, spanning several centuries: from being judged as inferior by the judges, i.e., the art scene, to demanding self-judgment and self-reflection.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an insight into these interactions of cultures—and the resulting changes in the inspiration of Indigenous artists—that took place in Australia after the arrival of the British settlers in Sydney Harbour on January 26th, 1788. Therefore, the chapter begins with an account of some of the very early historical events that set the scene.

Before the British

Australia was settled at least 60,000 years ago by people crossing the land bridge from Papua New Guinea to what is now Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, or 'island hopping' to northwest Australia using rafts or canoes.⁵ Tens of thousands of stone tools discovered in caves show that people were already then gathering and processing plants and ochre for decorative purposes. Using data from mitochondrial genome variation of human remains from archaeological sites, it is clear that the First Australians migrated around and throughout Australia over the next 20,000 years.⁶ Around 10,000 BCE, sea levels began to rise and 2,000 years later Australia was isolated. By 6,000 BCE, sea levels had risen a total of about 60 metres to their present level.⁷

Immediately before the arrival of the British, Australia was populated from coast to coast by up to one million Indigenous people living in

⁵ Clarkson et al. 2017

⁶ Nagle et al. 2017

⁷ Sloss et al. 2017, p. 1424

thousands of communities with over 250 different languages and twice as many dialects. Each community protected its land, trade in some rare commodities stretched for hundreds of kilometres, and neighbouring communities could communicate with each other because many people spoke three or more languages. Conflicts arose between neighbouring groups, sometimes there were skirmishes, individuals broke social rules and were punished for it with violence, but concepts such as the ‘Divine Right of Kings’, ‘President for Life’, ‘God will know his own’, or ‘A Thousand Year Reich’ never arose in these societies.

The role and type of art created in the different communities varied but cannot be described in detail today—with the exception of 19th century artworks and the centuries-old rock paintings—because it was not preserved. Another exception are the large communal ceremonial reliefs on a levelled sandy area, described in the art literature concerning the Central Desert region. At the time of Sydney’s colonisation, bark paintings were reported there,⁸ as also in northern Australia and southern Tasmania. It is therefore reasonable to assume that bark painting was widespread. Similarly, painting with ochre and natural pigments on smooth rock walls has been found throughout Australia.

⁸ Cooper 1981

Engravings on rock walls or on stone floors of caves are exceptionally widespread: A 380-page monograph published in 2008 by McDonald, for example, examined about a third of the 3,500 known engraving sites within a radius of only about 100 kilometres of the present Sydney Opera House.⁹ Virtually nothing was written about these artworks in the first hundred years of colonisation,¹⁰ although McDonald points to some 7,800 individual artworks with a wide variety of motifs: axe, first contact motif, eel, emu, fish, kangaroo track, man, shield, snake, whale, woman, etc.

⁹ McDonald 2008, p. 51

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 3

So it is clear that at the time of the arrival of the British, the First Australians had a strong and diverse culture with different art forms that were simply ignored by the British.

The Viewpoint of the Settlers around 1788

Invasion

The small British fleet of eleven ships and 1,500 people that arrived in Botany Bay on January 26th, 1788, with 568 male and 191 female convicts had been travelling for eight months via Rio de Janeiro and via the southern tip of Africa, the Cape of Good Hope.¹¹

¹¹ Bateson 1985, p. 97

Why did the British government go to the expense of sending people halfway around the planet? This is often perfunctorily explained by the exploding number of prisoners in England at the time, for a totally

inadequate number of prisons. About half of the prisoners were debtors who were simply waiting for their relatives to pay their bills; perhaps 20% were petty crooks. The rest were accused of serious robberies or violent offences, which could be punished by deportation or conscription to military service.¹² British newspapers at the time were full of reports of prison escapes, and there was great public fear that overcrowding would lead to outbreaks of ‘prison fever’ (typhus) and hence epidemics.¹³

¹² Foley 2004, p. 44

¹³ Ibid., p. 47

British decision-makers of the time, indeed British society as a whole, were apparently hardened when it came to issues such as war and the conquest of other countries. England had been involved in dynastic wars in Europe for hundreds of years, for example against Portugal in 1602–1640, against Spain in 1625–1630 and again (this time allied with Portugal) in 1640–1668, and against France in 1627–1629 and 1715–1716. England had completed the conquest of Ireland in 1641–1653 and suffered numerous civil wars (religious, dynastic, separatist) thereafter, e.g., 1642–1651, 1685, 1688, 1689–1691, 1715–1716, 1719, 1745–1746. One could easily add a dozen more examples.

The finances of the British government were generally in poor shape. The American War of Independence, which began in 1775, had by 1783 left the British Crown with an international debt of some £ 20 million. This was considered almost unsustainable at the time and was equivalent to about one-sixth of the annual domestic product¹⁴ with 85% of the debt having been incurred in the Netherlands,¹⁵ against which the British also regularly waged war.

¹⁴ Stokey 2001, p. 23

¹⁵ Wright 1997

The testimony in 1779 of Joseph Banks, the famous naturalist who had sailed with James Cook on the first British voyage to Australia and New Zealand in 1768–1771, to a government committee on the question of establishing a convict colony was perhaps influential. He suggested to politicians the viability of colonisation, ‘[...] if the people formed among themselves a Civil Government, they would necessarily increase and find Occasion for many European Commodities; and it was not to be doubted, that a tract of Land, such as New Holland [Australia], which was larger than the Whole of Europe, would furnish Matter of advantageous Return.’¹⁶

¹⁶ Foley 2004, pp. 85–86

Taking their Land, Saving their Souls

Conditions for Indigenous people in the new colony near Sydney, and later throughout Australia, quickly became traumatic, beginning with an epidemic in April 1789 that did not affect the colonists but killed about half of the Indigenous people and caused most of the rest to flee, spreading the disease along the coast.¹⁷ Although the original royal orders to Governor Arthur Phillip included a request to endeavour to live ‘in friendship and kindness’ with the First Australians,¹⁸ violence occurred almost

¹⁷ Short 2013, p. 26

¹⁸ Frederick 1787, p. 15

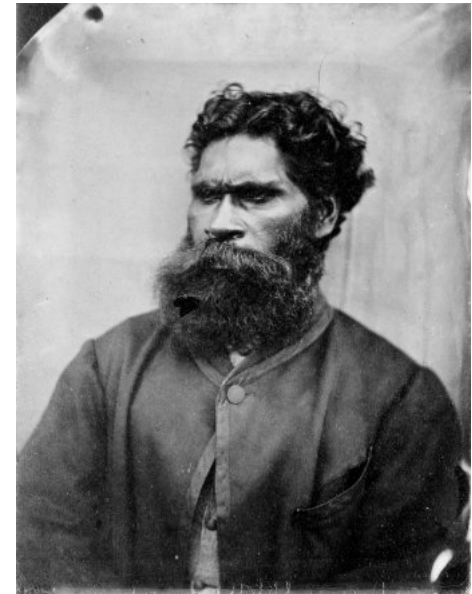
immediately, spreading across Australia as permanent settlements were established in Tasmania (1803), Queensland (1824), Western Australia (1826), Victoria (1835), and the Northern Territory (1869).

The explosive influx of Europeans and Chinese after the discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria in 1851 and in the Northern Territory in 1871 dramatically exacerbated the conflicts. The total number of settlers in Australia quadrupled from 430,000 in 1851 to 1.7 million two decades later. Two years after gold was discovered in Victoria, the state's settler population had increased sevenfold.

The First Australians responded in many ways. The Wurundjeri near Melbourne, decimated by violence and disease, were nevertheless able to, e.g., petition parliament in 1859, through advisors and their Elders such as William Barak, to obtain land for a reserve on which they could live in peace. This culminated in 1863 with the establishment of their own farm called Coranderrk, about 60 km north-east of Melbourne. For more than twenty years, they managed to deal with government laws and regulations in a way that protected them from invading cattle ranchers and squatters. However, after that, children were taken away by government decree from their parents and eventually Coranderrk was closed down, which ultimately benefited the local cattle ranchers. This happened in a series of political moves around 1886.

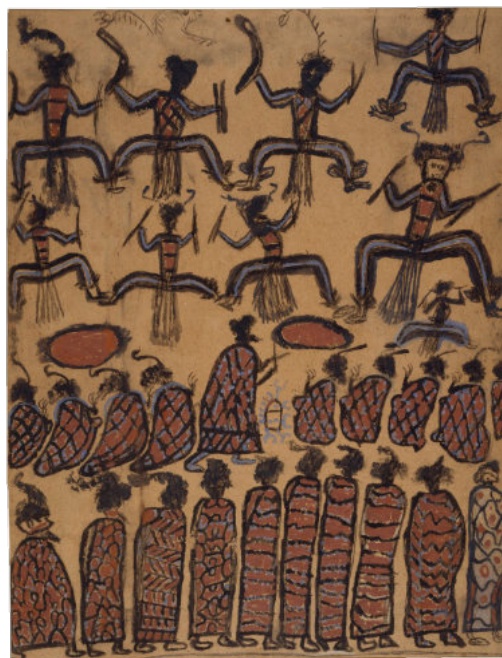
Near Melbourne, Coranderrk was a popular tourist destination in the 1860s to 1880s, and William Barak was even able to earn a living as an artist. He worked with gouache or watercolours—also mixed with ochre and charcoal—on paper or cardboard using a palette including cobalt blue, Prussian blue, emerald green, olive green, pink or orange. About 50 of his works still exist. No doubt many other artists were active in Australia, but only a few of them are today known by name, such as Tommy McRae, who also made a living from his work as an artist, Mickey of Ulladulla, and Oscar of Cooktown.

Two of Barak's works were donated in 1895 to the Museum of Victoria in Melbourne by artist John Mather¹⁹ who was known for his plein air landscape paintings in oil and watercolour and was a member of the board of the National Gallery of Victoria. Mather was a strong advocate

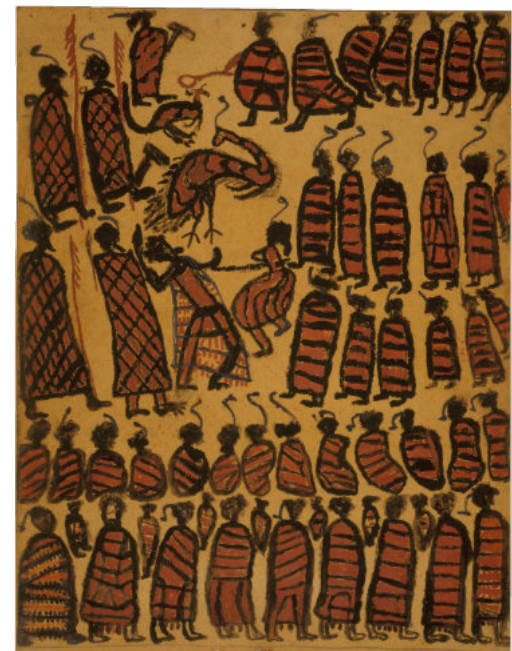


William Barak, around 1866

¹⁹ Today they are in the State Library of Victoria.



William Barak, *Untitled [Aboriginal ceremony]*, in the 1880s, brown ochre and charcoal on cardboard, 73.2 × 55.5 cm; *Untitled [Aboriginal ceremony, with wallaby and emu]*, in the 1880s, brown ochre and charcoal on cardboard, 73 × 56 cm



for Australian artists, a founding member of the Victorian Artists' Society and its president on several occasions. It was not until 1962 that the National Gallery of Victoria added two other works by Barak to its collection, and a further five in later years.²⁰

²⁰ NGV 2003, p. 11

In 1898, five years before his death, Barak painted a map-like landscape painting of Yering Farm, 20 km west of Coranderrk, where de



William Barak, Samuel de Pury's vineyard, c. 1898, watercolour, 56 × 76 cm

Pury had planted the very first vineyards in Victoria. The work was a gift to Samuel de Pury, an old friend who had returned to Switzerland years earlier. In format, the artwork is an amalgamation of Indigenous Australian and settler themes, including a reminder that the land was called Goorring Nuring by the Wurundjeri people. At the bottom of the painting is noted 'Samuel de Pury's vineyard' and a message from William Barak to his friend Samuel de Pury, *'I send you two pictures / Native Name Goorring Nuring / The English name is Bald Hill / this is all your Vineyard / and trees this all belong to / you there your house above / with the vineyard where / you yours [sic] to stop before this is / the picture of it what your see now / I send you this paper / I still remember you all the / time not forgetting you at all / and your Uncle. I am getting very / old now I*

²¹ Culture Victoria 2016

*can't walk about / now much / William Barrak.*²¹ The Pury family later donated the artwork and two others to the museum in their hometown of Neuchâtel.²²

²² McBryde 1977, p. 60

At this time, Australia became a magnet for Christian missionaries seeking to save the souls of Indigenous people who had never heard the message of Christ and to teach them the benefits of a 'civilised' education, or at least to protect them from violence and slaughter by white settlers. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies lists some 200 mission stations, with one established almost every year from 1820 onwards; their numbers continued to increase in the 1890s, only to decline after the 1950s.²³

²³ AIATSIS, undated

Missionaries eventually exerted a strong influence on many Indigenous communities. Sometimes they banned the use of local languages and tried to detach children from the Indigenous faith, in other cases they learned Indigenous languages and promoted 'two-way' knowledge of the Christian and Indigenous faiths. Often the creation of artwork was encouraged because it could supplement livelihoods. Some of the mission stations later housed important art centres. These include the missions in Ntaria (Hermannsburg), founded in 1877, in Millingimbi (1923), in Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) (1925), in Wirrimanu (Balgo) (1939), in Milyirrtjarra (Warburton) (1933), in Yirrkala (1935), in Yurntumu (Yuendumu) (1946), and in Fitzroy Crossing (1952).²⁴

²⁴ Thwaites et al. 2004, p. 19

The establishment in 1877 of an Evangelical Lutheran mission at Ntaria (Hermannsburg) in central Australia near the Finke River, 120 km west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs), was typical of the time and would much later facilitate the rise of a great Indigenous artist, Albert Namatjira (see pp. 331–333).

For Lutheran pastors, the contrast between their home in the Lüneburg Heath and the Australian outback was enormous. Just the journey from Adelaide to Ntaria (Hermannsburg) with wagons, horses, and a few sheep took twenty months and covered some 1,800 kilometres—about as far as from their German home to Naples in Italy—through sandstorms and drought-stricken areas. The mission was built at one of the few sources of permanent water, to serve as a buffer or refuge for the Indigenous people from the west who had come into conflict with the cattle ranchers encroaching on their land.

That such protection was desperately needed became clear in 1884 when a major battle, one of many across Australia, occurred further north and over 900 km further east in Queensland, pitting Indigenous people against police and settlers in the border area at Mt Isa. This battle has been called the ‘last stand’ of the local Kalkadoon.²⁵

But were the Kalkadoon completely wiped out? They have not disappeared and have certainly not been forgotten. In the Australian art and museum scene today, one member of the East Arnernte and Kalkadoon is known to all: Hetti Perkins. She is a respected Indigenous writer and art curator. For thirteen years she was the lead curator of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. In 2021, she curated the National Gallery of Australia’s fourth National Triennial of Indigenous Art.

Despite the overwhelming problems they faced, Indigenous Australians held on to their culture and took every opportunity the colonisers gave them to do so. The next section, focusing on the arts, describes how Indigenous Australians seized such opportunities.

The Indigenous Perspective

Introduction

‘*There is no real distinction for us between art and life*’ is an oft-quoted description by Wandjuk Marika in 1978 of the role of art in Indigenous communities (for the full quotation see p. 329). The following sections describe how different Indigenous groups in different areas of Australia developed their lives and art in the 20th and 21st centuries and how their art gradually overcame the Eurocentric viewpoints of settler society.



Hermannsburg Mission in Ntaria, 1920

²⁵ Furniss 2001, pp. 282, 289

Artists' associations that established art centres play a special role in the history of contemporary Indigenous art in Australia. To illustrate this, about 10% of all art associations are described in a little detail below. They are always much more than just an office to handle art sales and order materials. They are in many cases the heart of the Indigenous community, a place where artists and other residents exchange ideas, where they organise joint trips to the Country with which they are associated, a place where their creativity, wisdom, and Jukurrpa are expressed. It is a place where they are sovereign. Each art centre has its own unique history. They exemplify many forms of collaboration, in support of the arts and communities.

The art centres are first and foremost the artists' representatives to art museums, collectors, and commercial galleries. They promote the artists, negotiate exhibitions, negotiate the prices (of which the artists keep 60% on average²⁶), and provide information about the provenance and narratives of the artworks. They often function as the artists' embassy to the rest of the world. Almost all art centres rely on state financial support, which varies from 10% to 80% of their annual budget. The responsibilities of an arts centre manager are extremely extensive and demanding. Particularly important functions are the procurement of all necessary art materials, advising artists on the organisation of group, solo, or retrospective exhibitions, as well as conducting negotiations, archiving and administration.

The existence of at least 104 art centres in 2013 illustrates their importance not only for the artists and the communities but also for the art world as a whole.²⁷ At that time, there were approximately 14,000 Indigenous artists, of whom about 70% were women artists. Of those 14,000, 93%

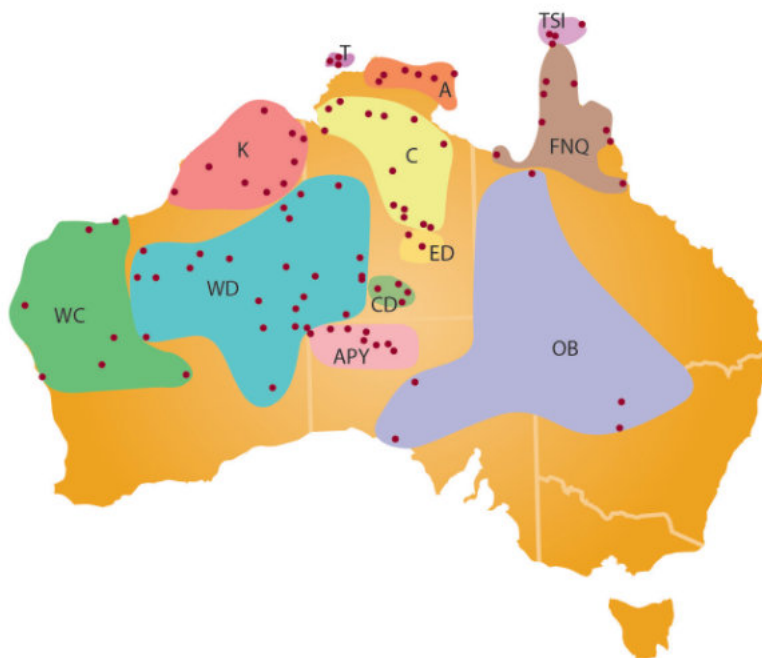
worked in art centres.²⁸ Most art centres have become professionalised over time and are members of one or more business associations such as: AACHWA (Aboriginal Art Centre Hub Western Australia), ANKA (Association of Northern, Kimberley, and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists), Desert, UMI Arts, IACA (Indigenous Art Centre Alliance), or Western Desert Mob.

Each of the following sections describes the emergence of the arts movement in one locality. The dates in the headings indicate the approximate year in which the artists attracted the attention of historians. The examples show the different local circumstances. Where possible, key players—Indigenous or non-Indigenous—are mentioned, because it was often the initiative and dedication of individuals that brought about the breakthroughs.

²⁶ That artists actually did receive 60% of the value of art sales is shown by government audits of 56 art centres in the years between 1990 and 2014. Total sales were 201 million Australian dollars, of which artists received 117.8 million. Government grants to arts centres over the same period amounted to 144 million Australian dollars. (Acker 2016a, p. 8)

²⁷ ORIC 2012, p. 10; Woodhead and Acker 2014, p. 3

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. viii, 5



Overview of Art Centres, Woodhead and Acker 2014, p. 2

1931 Yirrkala

Yirrkala is now known as a tiny coastal settlement on the northeastern-most tip of Australia, 660 km east of Darwin. The first international visitors to the area were Makassan traders who arrived from Indonesia on wooden ships in the 1700s.²⁹ Later, European explorers and missionaries arrived by boat. There is still today no direct road to Darwin, because of countless swamps and estuaries. This isolation has saved the local First Australians, the Yolŋu (meaning ‘people’ in several local languages), from much of the direct violence of colonisation. This remoteness has allowed their art to develop with lessened external shocks compared to other parts of Australia.

On April 14th, 1931, the Commonwealth Government of Australia continued its policy of segregation by proclaiming the Arnhem Land Reserve³⁰ and granting the Yolŋu partial autonomy over 80,300 km², an area roughly the size of Austria. In 1935, the government agreed to the establishment of a Methodist mission on the land of the Rirratjŋu clan in Yirrkala, with the consent of Elders such as Mawalan Marika. One of the church’s first official acts was to sell handicraft items and bark paintings to museums to raise money for the church.³¹ The arrangement between church and state lasted until the outbreak of World War II, when the government established a military presence that had a strong impact on the Yolŋu.

When anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt visited Yirrkala in 1946, they asked the artists to reproduce examples of their bark paintings, using crayons on paper for ease of production and transport. The artists immediately embraced the new materials, techniques, and colour palette and created a total of 365 artworks in innovative styles. One of the artists was Mawalan Marika’s eldest son, Wandjuk Marika. A selection of 81 of the artworks on paper by 27 artists was exhibited at the Art Gallery of New South Wales many decades later, in 2013.³²

When Yolŋu artists were asked in 1948 by Charles Mountford to create artworks specifically documenting their culture and faith (Wangarr), leading artists such as Binyinyuwuy Djarrankuykuy, Jimmy Lipundja, and Makani Wilingarr responded with 484 bark paintings, 89 of which Mountford sent to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.³³ Most of the others were donated in 1956 to Australian museums. This was one beginning for the formal recognition of Yolŋu bark paintings as art. In 1954, Mountford had published with great success *Australian Aboriginal Paintings* for the UNESCO World Art Series,³⁴ which brought Indigenous art to a wide audience, selling 1.8 million copies by 1959.³⁵

The Yolŋu continued to develop their approach to art, interacting with scholars, collectors, interested artists from overseas, as well as government agencies and local school teachers. For example, although art classes for young school children had been available for many years, the

²⁹ Clarke and May 2013

³⁰ National Archives of Australia 1931

³¹ Salvestro 2016, p. 51



Wandjuk Marika, Djang'kawu emblems, 1947, wax crayon and pencil on paper, 99 × 74 cm

³² Pinchbeck 2013

³³ Geissler 2017, p. 111

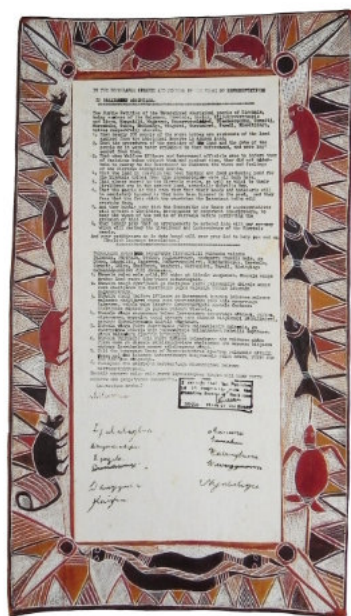
³⁴ Mountford 1954

³⁵ Geissler 2017, p. 116

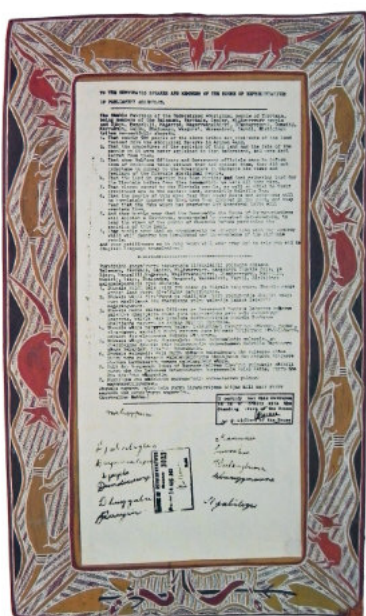
first headmaster of the high school, established in 1958, encountered difficulties when he asked the elder artists in the community to teach painting. Classes for male youths were introduced quickly, but it took the Elders six months to agree on what the classes for the young women could and should look like, because many artistic motifs related to the community's laws were used in sacred ceremonies, which were often restricted by gender.³⁶

³⁶ Salvestro 2016, p. 67

In the following decades, however, some elder artists taught their wives and daughters, resulting in the development of many notable women artists. For example, Narritjin Maymuru, who made drawings for Berndt in 1947 and played a central role in initiatives such as the Church Panels and the Bark Petitions discussed below, taught his daughter Galuma Maymuru and his niece Naminapu Maymuru. Both artists later earned the prestigious National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award and have artworks in the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, and the National Gallery of Australia.



The Yirrkala Bark Petition, 1963



The Yolŋu were hit hard in 1963 when the federal government approved plans for open-cut bauxite mining on 362 km² of their land, changing land rights without informing the Yolŋu. Supported by the Methodist mission and their lawyers, Yolŋu Elders, including Wandjuk Marika, submitted in August 1963 a petition to the House of Representatives in the form of two bark paintings, to convey to the Australian government the depth and long history of their relationship with their land (see pp. 205–210). Wandjuk Marika was also active later in the related land rights case ‘Mirrpum and others vs. Nabalco Pty Ltd.’ in 1971.

Although the petition was not granted, the paintings were exhibited in the House of Representatives and have become famous as the first written attempt by Indigenous Australians to assert their land rights. It is indicative of the importance of art in their society that a work of art representing their culture and laws was chosen as the medium. According to Galarrwuy Yunupingu, art was the only way to express the Yolŋu's deep relationship with their land, because Europeans did not understand any of the Yolŋu dialects, and the English language alone was insufficient.³⁷

³⁷ Lüthi 1993, pp. 64–66

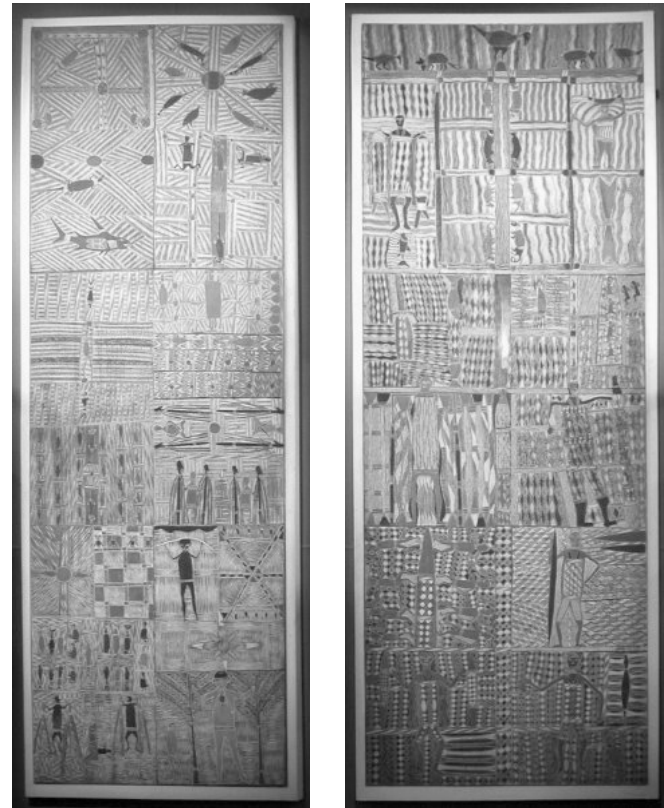
Earlier that same year, in 1963, senior artists of the Dhuwa and Yirritja groups had created large works of art for the local church, to show that there was no inherent incompatibility between the Christian and Yolŋu faiths and that Yolŋu law and culture were strong. All Yolŋu people belong to one or the other of the two equal and complementary groupings, Dhuwa and Yirritja. Each group has an extremely rich history and rela-

tionship—which are distinct yet common—with everything in nature, each with their own specific graphic elements and shades of colour. For example, the Dhuwa panel on the left uses cross-hatching, while the Yirritja panel on the right shows diamond shapes. The crucial narratives of both groups are depicted in the different sections.³⁸ The panels stood in the church behind the altar for many years but were put out in a shed around 1984 by a priest who thought they were insufficiently pious. Since 1988, they have been kept in a purpose-built museum room at the Buku-Larrngay Art Centre in Yirrkala.³⁹

When the open-cut mining destroyed large parts of the Country in the early 1970s, the Yolŋu saw this as a growing threat to their important cultural sites and their culture. Indeed, the destruction is now clearly visible even from space, as the bare brown earth of the open-cut areas in the 2021 satellite photo shows. Many families took advantage of changes in government policy in the 1970s to move out of Yirrkala and form small communities of 20 to 100 people where they felt better able to care for their Country.

Related changes in government policy had created the Australia Council for the Arts in 1971, which established co-funding of art centres to support artists in locations far from major cities, rather than providing individual grants. Wandjuk Marika was a founding member of the Australia Council for the Arts and a member of the Aboriginal Arts Board from 1973 (chair from 1975 to 1979). He strongly supported this approach, writing in 1978, *‘The land forms the link between the past and the present, and every feature is a reminder of our legendary ancestors who first lived here and whose lives are perpetuated in song and dance and symbolically represented in the finely detailed patterns of our art. [...] We express this in our art which binds together all these elements to form the basis of our ceremonial and religious life. There is no real distinction for us between art and life; art is the expression of our beliefs, it upholds the laws by which we live and is an important element in the way in which we relate to the physical world around us. It is an integral part of our lives, not separate as it so often is in the life of Western man, but an important function in our ritual and of prime importance in our learning process.’*⁴⁰

When Steven Fox was hired as the new administrator of the art centre in 1979, he wanted to introduce the techniques of photography and printmaking that he had studied at the South Australian School of Art, but senior Yolŋu artists like Narritjin Maymuru had their own ideas, *‘They told me I wasn’t there to teach them art—they knew how to paint—I was there to show them how to market it.’*⁴¹



Yirrkala church panels, 1963, ochre on hardboard, 360 × 120 cm each. The left panel was created by artists of the Dhuwa group, the right panel by those of the Yirritja group of the Yolŋu.



Aerial view of the open-cut mining area (brown), that is destroying large parts of the Yolŋu Country

³⁸ Smith 2020, pp. 5–7

³⁹ MCA 2008, p. 84

⁴⁰ Salvestro 2016, pp. 39–40

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 89



Narritjin Maymuru, *Bandicoots*, 1978, etching (AP), 20 × 25 cm (sheet 35.6 × 39.6 cm)

⁴² Morphy 2013

⁴³ Salvestro 2016, p. 124

⁴⁴ NTU 1993, p. 2; Northern Editions 2000, p. 63

⁴⁵ Salvestro 2016, p. 114

Moreover, the artists already in principle knew printmaking. Narritjin Maymuru had been exposed to professional printmaking techniques during a three-month Coombs Creative Arts Fellowship at the Australian National University in 1978, to which he had been invited by the printer Jörg Schmeisser to work on a series of etchings. These were the earliest etchings by a Yirrkala artist, but Maymuru was reportedly not impressed with the technique.⁴²

Schmeisser was perhaps not too surprised by Narritjin Maymuru's lack of enthusiasm. In 1976, on his way to taking up his visiting fellowship at the Australian National University, he had visited Arnhem Land and met the artist Albert Waradjima. Schmeisser demonstrated to him the technique of drypoint etching and recalled Albert Waradjima's comment later that this was just like his bark paintings. However, when Schmeisser pointed out that this technique had the advantage of being able to print many images from one plate, Albert Waradjima reportedly asked, '*Why would you want more than one?*'⁴³

Nevertheless, various printing techniques were pursued, and not only in Yirrkala. Other Indigenous artists from Arnhem Land, such as John Bulunbulun and David Milaybuma, made screen prints, for example in 1979 at Larry Rawlins' Port Jackson Press Studio in Melbourne.⁴⁴ In the early 1980s, Banduk Marika, youngest daughter of Mawalan Marika and sister of Wandjuk Marika, focused on linoleum prints. She had left Yirrkala a decade earlier to study in Darwin and later Sydney, where she trained in 1980 in printmaking at Willoughby School of Art and at East Sydney Technical School (now National Art School). Around 1983/1984, she began working with linocuts, which became her favourite medium. In 1988, Banduk Marika took over the administration of the Buku-Larrngay Mulka Art Centre for a time and the following year became the first Indigenous person to be appointed to the board of the National Gallery of Australia.

A Yirrkala artist's choice of subject matter for artworks was not without its constraints. Young school children in the Northern Territory, for example, had been using various woodblock and linoleum printing techniques for T-shirts or postcards since the 1960s, and in Yirrkala since the 1980s, without any problems, because the elder artists supervised the school children's work to ensure that important motifs were not used inappropriately. In one case in 1989, the Elders objected to the use of a particular motif on a set of Dhalinybuy School shoulder bags planned to be taken on a student exchange to a school in Canberra: The motifs were only suitable for display within the local Dhalinybuy community,⁴⁵ not to the general public (see discussion on secret/sacred pp. 213–214).

Making a distinction between motifs that are appropriate or inappropriate to paint or show may be difficult for outsiders to understand. But Western societies make their own distinctions in a comparably complex way: Just ask a corporate lawyer about copyright, trademark protec-

tion, logo registration, the Berne Convention, or business name regulations as they apply in different nations or times!⁴⁶

Even more serious is the theft or misuse of a clan's motifs. Wandjuk Marika discovered in 1974 that important motifs were being mass-produced on commercial fabrics and tourist objects. He was appalled and very soon launched a campaign for copyright protection of Indigenous art, which led to the establishment in 1976 of the non-profit Aboriginal Artists Agency Ltd. to handle licensing requests.⁴⁷ The agency continues to operate to this day, serving over 300 artists. Wandjuk Marika wrote, '*It is not that we object to people reproducing our work, but it is essential that we be consulted first, for only we know if a particular painting is of special sacred significance, to be seen only by certain members of a tribe, and only we can give permission for our own works of art to be reproduced. It is hard to imagine the works of great Australian artists such as Sydney [sic] Nolan or Pro Hart being reproduced without their permission. We are only asking that we be granted the same recognition, that our works be respected and that we be acknowledged as the rightful owners of our own works of art.*'⁴⁸

In 1993, Steven Fox successfully applied to the federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for funding for a building extension to the art centre, including a print workshop. Yirrkala Print Space began operations in February 1995, and by 2018 the artists and locally trained printmakers had created over 800 limited edition prints.⁴⁹

Yirrkala is an excellent example of the long-term development of artwork in various media by an Indigenous society and its artists, but it is far from the only one, even when restricting the scope to northern Australia. Today, the umbrella organisation ANKA (Arnhem, Northern, and Kimberley Artists) counts more than 45 art centres among its members. In the area around the communities of Gunbalanya (Oenpelli), Maningrida, and Ramingining, west of Yirrkala, bark painting and painting on hollow log poles have been continuously developed by artists. One of the most famous artworks of the First Australians was created in Ramingining in 1988, the 'Aboriginal Memorial' in the form of 200 painted hollow log poles. It was created as a protest against the 1988 Australian Bicentennial celebrations and is now part of the collection of the National Gallery of Australia.⁵⁰

1934 Ntaria (Hermannsburg)

Ntaria is the Indigenous name for the place that was called Hermannsburg by the missionaries who came there in the 1870s. The watercolour painter Rex Battarbee, who had made several journeys through the Aus-

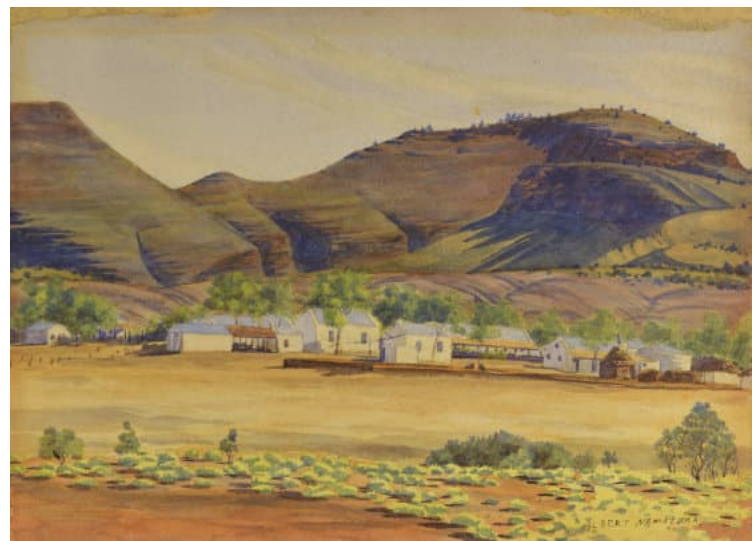
⁴⁶ See Davis 1996; Drahos 1999; Anderson 2003; Nemlioglu 2019

⁴⁷ MCA 2008, p. 12

⁴⁸ Marika 1976

⁴⁹ Salvestro 2016, p. 9

⁵⁰ See pp. 268–269; see also Mundine 2020



Albert Namatjira, Hermannsburg Mission with Mount Hermannsburg, 1937, watercolour, 28 × 37.5 cm

⁵¹ Hardy et al. 1992, pp. 10, 29

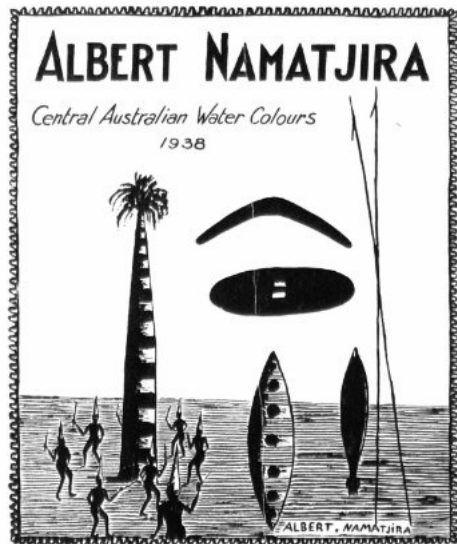
⁵² Ibid., p. 111

⁵³ Ibid., p. 152

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 154

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 162

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 111



Catalogue cover of his first solo exhibition in 1938, *Albert Namatjira: Central Australian Water Colours*. All 41 watercolours exhibited were sold within three days. (Mackenzie undated)

⁵⁷ AGNSW 2007, p. 333

⁵⁸ Sydney Morning Herald 1950



Albert Namatjira, *Illum-Baura (Haasts Bluff), Central Australia, 1939*, watercolour, 34.9 × 52.7 cm

tralian outback to paint the varied landscapes, visited Ntaria in 1934 and gave for two days an impromptu exhibition of his works in the schoolhouse. The exhibition was seen by most of the 300 people living in Ntaria at the time.⁵¹ One of them, Albert Namatjira, came up to Battarbee afterwards and said, *'I can do the same.'*⁵² This was not Namatjira's first exposure to oil or watercolour painting—he had been hired as a cameleer by two artists, Jessie Traill and Violet Teague, for a trip in 1932⁵³ and had also previously met the artist Arthur Murch—but the encounter with Rex Battarbee was the decisive one for Namatjira's career.

He obtained some watercolour materials and began to experiment but was dissatisfied. When Battarbee visited again in 1936, Namatjira arranged a painting trip with him for several weeks, taking care of the camels and camping equipment in exchange for art lessons.⁵⁴

Battarbee promoted Albert Namatjira's work in the Adelaide and Melbourne art scenes and helped to organise Namatjira's first solo exhibition at the Fine Arts Gallery in Melbourne, which ran from the 5th to the 17th of December, 1938, and was entitled 'Exhibition of Watercolours by Albert Namatjira, an Australian Aboriginal of the Arunta Tribe, Central Australia'. Sales from that exhibition brought Namatjira £204,⁵⁵ an enormous sum for him, his wife, and seven children. Namatjira later remarked that in comparison, his 'profit' from his earlier work, helping to transport carts of food and supplies 600 km over rough roads from Oodnadatta to the Hermannsburg Mission, had brought him 'about sixpence'.⁵⁶

Albert Namatjira's works were initially rejected by Australian art museums, as the prevailing opinion was that bark painting from northern Australia was the sole authentic expression of First Australian art. However, the public soon became his enthusiastic supporter, and Namatjira became the first Indigenous artist to earn a sizable income. On the occasion of his second solo exhibition in Adelaide in 1939, the Art Gallery of South Australia became the first art museum in Australia to purchase a work by an Indigenous artist ('Illum-Baura', opposite)—as opposed to accepting a donation, as had the Fine Art Gallery in Ballarat (see pp. 358–359).⁵⁷ A less welcome indication of Namatjira's fame were the first forgeries of his works, appearing in Melbourne and Adelaide in December 1950.⁵⁸

After Australia entered the Second World War in September 1939, difficulties arose in Ntaria. The Australian army felt that the inhabitants, especially the German missionaries, were a security risk (!) and wanted to disperse the Indigenous people back into the desert. However, a compromise was reached in which the pedal-powered radio was confiscated, and Battarbee was appointed Residential Inspector, enjoined to send reports to the government every fortnight. Battarbee

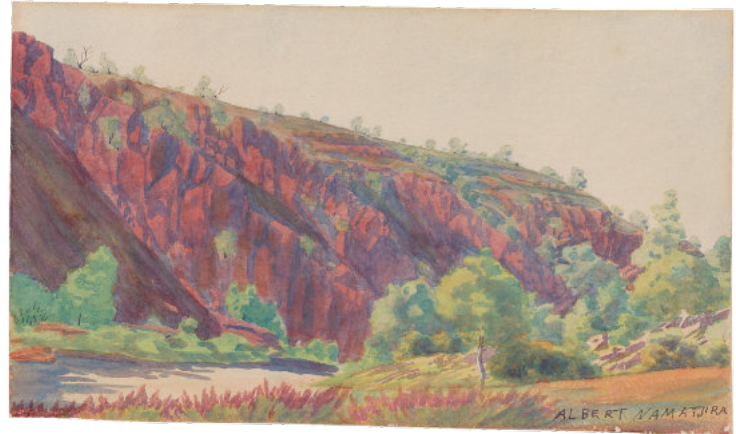
filled the reports with news about painting exhibitions and about wild animals and plants.⁵⁹

After the war, Battarbee remained in Ntaria and in Mparntwe (Alice Springs), continuing to promote the work of Namatjira and a number of other artists of Ntaria. Missionaries and Department of Native Affairs officials attempted to control the ‘fair sale’ of the artworks through an enforced monopoly, by establishing an Art Advisory Council and later an Aranda Arts Council. Battarbee was an advisor and/or chairman in these organisations. The reported motivations⁶⁰ for trying to control how much money Indigenous artists received and how they spent it are eerily similar to the details of the Australian government’s coercive legislation for the Northern Territory from 2007 to the present,⁶¹ showing that some sophisms (‘it’s for your own good’) are timeless. The monopolies eventually collapsed in the late 1950s because they were boycotted by artists. Those experiences certainly influenced the art revolution in nearby Papunya a decade later (see p. 338–342).

Many journal articles and monographs have been written about Namatjira’s watercolours:⁶² about whether they were ‘authentic’, whether the technique was unique or even ‘professional’, whether the landscapes referred to Altyerr explicitly as well as implicitly (almost all the landscapes show areas associated with important cultural sites) and so on.

Namatjira died following a heart attack in Mparntwe hospital (Alice Springs) on August 8th, 1959, after many personal tragedies. He left a legacy of artistic triumph over adversity for the many young people in Ntaria who took him as an example and aspired to and achieved independent careers as artists. For example, his great-grandson Vincent Namatjira was orphaned as a young child and taken by the authorities to a series of foster homes in Perth, over 2,500 km away. However, he returned to visit Ntaria in 2001 and eventually settled in Kampi, some 600 km to the southwest in the APY Lands (see pp. 352–354). In 2011, he began his career as an artist and in 2020 became the first Indigenous artist to be awarded the prestigious Archibald Prize for portraiture by the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Almost half a century after Albert Namatjira’s death, a number of Indigenous artists in Ntaria cooperated in 2004 to establish their own art centre, Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands), to actively promote watercolour art and the artists of Ntaria. Today, other techniques such as limited edition etchings (in collaboration with the University of New South Wales) and acrylic painting on canvas are also used by various artists. Since 1992, a group of mainly women artists have used the pinch-pot technique, with glazes in clear, defined colours, to produce themed ceramics, some of which are in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the Mu-



Albert Namatjira, Twa-tarra, c. 1938–1939, watercolour, pencil on wove paper, 23 × 38.8 cm

⁵⁹ Hardy et al. 1992, p. 165

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 181–197

⁶¹ Frost 2017

⁶² e.g. Mountford 1944; Hardy et al. 1992; NGA 2017b

⁶³ ORIC 2012, p. 34

seum of Victoria, the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.⁶³ The art centre continues to be owned and managed by Indigenous Australians.

1948 Pukatja (Ernabella)

⁶⁴ Ernabella Arts 2021

From 1948, eleven years after the Presbyterian Board of Missions established a small settlement there, art was produced for sale at Pukatja (Ernabella), about 400 km southwest of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) in Anangu, Pitjantjatjara, and Yankunytjatjara (APY) Country.⁶⁴ The Ernabella Mission was established with the express purpose of promoting the welfare of Indigenous people and teaching them Christianity without suppressing their customs. Unlike most other missions, the children were taught in their mother tongue (Pitjantjatjara), they were not separated from their families in dormitories and they were not required to wear European-style clothing. The First Australians could come and go as they chose, and they arranged their own camping areas. All this was practically unheard of in other missions.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Macgill 1999

⁶⁶ Pybus 2012, p. 195

⁶⁷ McKenzie 2008; Young 2017

⁶⁸ Pybus 2012, pp. 196–198

The missionaries held to the principles that careful and meaningful work was a form of worship and that the humanitarian activities of the mission should ultimately be funded by the work of the local people. The first systematic artistic activities took place in a craft room, established to produce handcrafts, such as weaving, for sale for the benefit of the mission. A few women were given instruction and some meals for this work, and gradually carpets, shawls, etc. were sold. In later years, the young women were paid a small wage. By 1955, their numbers in the craft room had risen to 140,⁶⁶ and the uniqueness of their designs attracted attention.

Winifred Hilliard ran the craft room from 1954 to 1986 and was the one who insisted on the European practice of signing the artworks.⁶⁷ She ensured that the artists received instruction or participated in workshops on a very wide range of techniques (batik, pottery, watercolour, printmaking, acrylic painting), always obtained the best materials the craft room could afford, and did not dictate to the artists what they should create. As reported from several sources,⁶⁸ the artists created their designs so as to be unique and distinguished from the motifs of previous generations: There was no secret/sacred symbolism, only their own individual aesthetics. Artist Tjikalyi Tjapiya is quoted as saying, *‘We’re not telling stories. When Nyukana [Baker] finishes a painting, she can’t tell a story. I can’t too ... Don’t ask for stories. This is not a sacred one [story/painting], wild flowers–wiya [no]. It comes from our mind and from our heart.’*⁶⁹



Yipati Kuyata, Untitled, 1983, silkscreen, 25 × 28 cm (sheet 39 × 54.5 cm)

⁶⁹ Eickelkamp 1999, p. 48

Two decades before the men of Papunya became famous for their

acrylic paintings (see pp. 338–344), the women of Pukatja (Ernabella) were professional artists—although the art they created was pejoratively categorised as craft, due to the general assumptions of the art world at the time (or even today).

Leo Brereton, a New York artist, was hired for two months in 1971 to lead a batik workshop. In 1975–1976, the Danish artist Vivianne Bertelsten taught, introducing naphthol and permanent indigo sol dyes and a range of waxes. The batik work from Pukatja (Ernabella) gradually became known, and people who had gone to school there moved to other places, transferring their expertise. Using this knowledge, artists in the different art centres of, e.g., Fregon, Yuendumu, and Walungurru (Kintore) created their own distinctly different batik artworks.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ McKenzie 2008

In 1983, Hilliard was able to arrange for the artists Kunmanara (Nyukana) Baker and Yipati Kuyata to visit the National Museum of Ethnography in Osaka, where they demonstrated their batik techniques and produced three serigraphs, which were the first prints on paper produced by Pukatja artists. By the late 1980s, Pukatja artists were aware of course of the successes of other art centres in acrylic painting on canvas, and some experimented with the dot technique. For many decades, artworks in Pukatja (Ernabella) were created exclusively by women, and it is only in recent years that male artists have joined.

Kunmanara (Nyukana) Baker provides an example of the life of a dedicated artist in Pukatja (Ernabella). She was born there in November 1943, began her artistic work in 1958 and is probably the first Indigenous woman to spend her entire working life earning a living as a professional artist: in batik, painting, ceramics, weaving, and printmaking. She was among the first to try batik in 1971. After a study period in 1975 at the Batik Institute in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, she developed further techniques for her art. She was chairperson for eight years until 2000 of Ernabella Arts Inc., which was founded in 1974 and is managed by Pitjantjatjara. Eighteen of her works are in the Art Gallery of South Australia, with others in the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and other major Australian art museums.

1969 Yurntumu (Yuendumu)

Known to the Warlpiri as Yurntumu, Yuendumu is the official name of the township 300 km north-west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs). Until 1910, the Warlpiri had little contact with Europeans, but then there was a gold rush at nearby Tanami and another in 1932 at The Granites, where a large open-pit gold mine operates in the 21st century. From 1910, the Warlpiri were dispossessed by the government, which granted various leases for cattle ranching. The Indigenous population was



Kunmanara (Nyukana) Baker, Raiki wara, 2005, silk batik, 320 × 112 cm

massacred in 1928 in Coniston, less than 70 km east of Yurntumu (see pp. 212–213). The opening of the Adelaide–Alice Springs railway in 1929 increased the number of conflicts. Twenty years later, the government began concentrating people in Yuendumu, where a Baptist mission had been established in 1947. Thirty years later, in 1978, the Warlpiri who lived in Yurntumu numbered about 1,200 and were granted about 2,200 km² of land by the government, including some of their associated Country. This provided some rejoicing but no source of income, since they had no significant stake in the prosperous gold mine at The Granites.

The Warlpiri elder had realised by the late 1960s that settling in the township would prevent them from holding sacred ceremonies in the necessary seclusion, and that sacred objects kept at remote sites were at risk of theft by souvenir hunters. So they decided to build two museums: one for men and one for women. The Men’s Museum was one of the first community-based Indigenous repositories and, indeed, one of the first stone buildings in Yurntumu. It was built by Warlpiri men between 1969 and 1971. Half the cost was borne by the Indigenous residents and half by

⁷¹ Carmichael and Kohen 2013, p. 112



Mural in the Yurntumu Men’s Museum, Emu Dreaming, 1971, c. 200 × 240 cm by Darby Jampijinpa Ross and other Jampijinpa-assistants

the government.⁷¹ Paddy Japaljarri Sims, who was involved in the construction, said in an interview, ‘*All the men who had the idea for the building are all gone now, except me. There was Barney Japanangka Poulson, Jimmy Jupurrurla Peters, Larry Jakamarra Nelson, Rufus Jungarrayi Woods, Comadi Japanangka Martin and Pompy [sic] Japanangka Martin. It was better to bring all those sacred objects together so it’s safer, and it would stop them from drying out.*’⁷²

The much younger artist Harry Jakamarra Nelson, who was also interviewed, recounted that during the building work more ideas emerged, ‘*They [Paddy Japaljarri Sims and Paddy Japaljarri Stewart] said, what are we going to do about the walls? And they came to the decision to paint the walls. They got together and decided to put paintings on the walls instead of going out hundreds of kilometres [...]*

They made up their minds, all the different groups. [...] Doing those paintings, each skin group was showing off their dreams to each other. They were proud and wanted to show off their histories. The township was just building up then. People were living all around a settlement area. That place [the museum] was originally built to teach. Instead of taking young fellas out to the original sites, the paintings were done already. The teaching could be done on the spot. They had the facility there, instead of driving out for hundreds of kilometres.’⁷³

The nine murals of the Men’s Museum were completed over several months, leading up to the opening on July 31st, 1971, which became a major media event with guests from all over Australia. Two of the murals in the Men’s Museum are more than 15 metres long and one, painted by Darby Jampijinpa Ross, is two metres high.

Over the following years, the Elders moved away or passed away,

⁷² Ibid., p. 111

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 112–113

and by the 1980s only Darby Jampijinpa Ross, then in his seventies, was available to care for the museum. Eventually, the sacred objects previously stored there were removed. The building was then empty, unused and dark. More decades passed. Then the community decided to restore the Men's Museum and, after consultation with the Elders, it was agreed that the murals should be opened to the public. The reopening took place on September 6th, 2015, after many years of restoration work. The activity had continuous support from the local Warlukurlangu Arts Centre, which had been established in 1985 and has since become a focal point for the people of Yurntumu.



The restored interior of the Yurntumu (Yuendumu) Men's Museum, September 2015

The Women's Museum was completed in 1979 and has been used continuously as a venue for ceremonies, for training young women in song and dance, and for associated artworks such as floor reliefs, painted panels for dances, and other objects for ceremonies.⁷⁴ In late 1982, the Women's Museum was commissioned by the Australian Museum in Sydney to provide artworks for an exhibition as part of a 'Women in the Arts' festival in Sydney, which ended in March 1983. This was fortuitous since at that time the Women's Museum was seeking funds to purchase a vehicle to visit sacred sites. More than 30 women artists responded to the commission request, with 140 artworks on wood and other objects, using synthetic polymer paint and water-soluble paints.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Mitchell 2016, p. 89

⁷⁵ Ibid.

About a year later, in March 1984, five senior men from the community reached agreement with the school headmaster to paint the 30 doors of the local school in the motifs of the Jukurrpa of their Warlpiri Country, so that the children could grow up knowing their heritage (see pp. 244–246). At least two of these artists had already contributed over a decade earlier to the design of the Men's Museum; Elders among the women were also consulted, some of whom had already painted with synthetic polymer paint on canvas.

The establishment of the Warlukurlangu Art Centre in 1985 by Darby Jampijinpa Ross, Jack Jakamarra Ross, Samson Japaljarri Martin, Uni Nampijinpa Martin, Dolly Nampijinpa Daniels, Rosie Nangala Fleming, Maggie Napangardi Watson and others was a success to which both male and female artists had contributed. The first exhibition of work by these artists was held at the Araluen Arts Centre in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) in October 1985.

In 1986, almost the same group of artists who had painted the school doors arranged with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) the exchange of two large acrylic paintings on canvas, each 255 × 131.5 cm, for a four-wheel drive vehicle. This gave the artists the opportunity to travel regularly to their Country, whereas the Institute received two masterpieces, which are recorded in its collection as 'Toyota Dreaming (painting untitled from Yuendumu)' from



Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Yiwarrakurlu (Milky Way), 1984, synthetic polymer paint on metal, 208 × 81 cm, door 29

1985. These events show what is important to the artists: children, Jukurrpa, and Country.

⁷⁶ Petitjean 2006, p. 29; Jones 2014

In 1994, artist Paddy Japaljarri Stewart initiated negotiations to add the 30 doors to the collection of the South Australian Museum,⁷⁶ where they were restored and later loaned for international exhibitions, such as the exhibition ‘Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu’ at the Sprengel Museum Hannover from October 1st, 2006, to January 14th, 2007.

⁷⁷ Northern Editions 2000, p. 44

After a decade of working with synthetic polymer paints, the first printmaking workshop took place in 1998, attended by Paddy Japaljarri Sims and others.⁷⁷ Later that year, artists Alice Nampitjinpa Dixon and Narputta Nangala Jugadai travelled to Darwin to Northern Editions to create prints. In 2001, Paddy Japaljarri Sims and Paddy Japaljarri Stewart created a small commemorative edition of prints depicting the Jukurrpa motifs of the 30 Yuendumu Doors, which are in the collections of several public art museums, such as the Art Gallery of Western Australia. Warlukurlangu is now one of the oldest and most successful Indigenous-owned art centres.

⁷⁸ Cf. Bardon 1979; Bardon 1991; Perkins and Fink 2000; Bardon and Bardon 2004; Johnson 2008

1971 Papunya



Papunya streets, 1970, laid out in a Honey Ant Tjukurrpa design

The story of the art movement in Papunya has been retold many times.⁷⁸ It began in 1954 when a mission station was established 250 km west of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) after successfully drilling for water at a soakage site known to Indigenous people for generations to be associated with the important Papunya (honey ants) Tjukurrpa.

From 1959, during one of the prolonged droughts and at the height of the Australian government’s policy of assimilation, hundreds of Indigenous people who had been living nomadic lives in areas to the west but were suffering from the drought and from the recent influx of settlers were encouraged to settle in Papunya. They came from very different language groups—Pintupi, Warlpiri, Anmatyerr, Arrente, Luritja—, and attempts were made to reflect this in the planning of the streets, to give each language group its own zone.

By 1970, the population had grown to about 1,500, whereas the space and facilities were only planned for a few hundred people. Disease and death were prevalent, so that only about half of the people survived who had been brought in from the desert in 1963–1964, and more than half of the survivors were under sixteen years old. The close-packed proximity of different Indigenous groups led to quarrels and brawls and to many of their customs being broken. Even the school library was set on fire.⁷⁹ Some men had tried to earn an income by selling woodcarvings, watercolours and other paintings, and had already taken over an abandoned adminis-

tration office as a studio at the end of 1969, but they lacked contact with the Western art scene.

When the 30-year-old teacher Geoffrey Bardon arrived in Papunya in February 1971, he was confronted by different factions within the occidental and Indigenous communities. After a series of negative encounters with the non-Indigenous, he immersed himself in the Indigenous men's community and began to strongly defend their side.

Two months after taking up his post at the school, Bardon received permission from the administration to focus his teaching on arts, after demonstrating his prowess with a mural.⁸⁰ He then tried to interest the school children in painting, particularly using Indigenous motifs rather than copying from Western books. Among other projects in pottery and with textiles, he started a project to paint murals on some external school walls. The work went slowly because the children were too young to know much Indigenous symbolism but old enough to know that they should not encroach on Men's Business.

However, the interest of the community Elders was piqued and they approached Bardon to be allowed to complete the work. Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa had been chosen by the Elders, together with Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri and Long Jack Phillipus Tjaka-marra, to take responsibility for the murals.⁸¹ Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa played a key role, negotiating with the school headmaster, with Bardon, and with other senior artists from the different language groups.

The mural required extensive discussion between the Elders of the different language groups in the community, and many of them started meeting in Bardon's garage to draw their ideas using watercolours and pens on any available scraps of paper. Bardon kept these early drawings, which are now in the collections of the National Museum of Australia and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.⁸² Even during the actual painting of the walls, some parts of the design were renegotiated to obtain full consensus. The five murals were completed in July and August 1971, with one 1,000 × 300 cm mural facing the main schoolyard.

It is noteworthy that, as described earlier, Indigenous artists in Yurntumu (Yuendumu), just 125 km to the north, were at the same time already making murals in their Men's Museum. Geoffrey Bardon and Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa and some other Elders even attended the opening ceremony.⁸³ Paddy Japaltjarri Stewart, one of the strongest pro-



Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula in front of the mural painted at the Papunya school in April 1971 by Geoffrey Bardon (photo: September 1971)

⁸⁰ Scholes 2017a, p. 130

⁸¹ Perkins and Fink 2000, p. 189



Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa in front of the Honey Ant mural at Papunya school, September 1971

⁸² Gilchrist 2016, p. 45

⁸³ Scholes 2017a, p. 131

ponents of the Yuendumu murals, was also involved in planning the murals in Papunya.

Bobby West Tjupurrula, who was thirteen years old at the time the murals were created and had lived in Papunya since 1963, recalled many years later when he himself was curator for a major exhibition, ‘*Pintupi people were having a hard time in Papunya. There was a lot of fighting, a lot of arguments and they wanted that to change. All the tjilpis [Elders], it was their idea. The Pintupi men wanted to show people of Papunya that they had really strong law, Tingarri [sic]. They wanted to share it, teach it, because they were all together in Papunya and they wanted to show this other way, Pintupi way, Tingarri [sic]. They were giving it as a gift, that Tingarri [sic]. Warlpiri, Luritja, Anmatyerr, were watching, waiting for their turn [to give a counter-gift and make their Jukurrpa known].*’⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Scholes 2017b, p. 117

⁸⁵ Jones 2014, p. 34

This first major collaboration of artists, involving all Papunya language groups, encouraged many artists to individually create artworks. They began with materials initially provided by Bardon, given from the school’s stock with the permission and support of the school authorities but later used painting boards and synthetic polymer paints purchased by Bardon.

Shockingly, the murals were obliterated only six months later, during the school holidays from December 1971 to February 1972, as all the teachers were on annual leave, when the murals were painted over in an act of thoughtless vandalism during regular maintenance ordered by the Alice Springs Education Department.⁸⁵

The artists remained enthusiastic, although the commercial success for their paintings was slow. The first sales were to Bardon himself and a few to the school, to be kept for the community. The artists didn’t care, as long as they were free to paint, which they did profusely. Bardon provided them with materials and recorded the concepts underlying each work, using simple sketches and brief recountings by the artists. He was thus the first person to document the works as works of art, in contrast to the ethnologists who had concentrated on decoding the myths.

Of course, Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa and the other artists knew of the success of the artistic activities in Pukatja (Ernabella) and of Albert

Namatjira and other artists in Ntaria. Albert Namatjira had visited Papunya many times, and Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa and some others had even tried their hand at watercolours.

Through a happy coincidence and Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa’s acumen, the first major chance of success in the art world came at the time of the mural project. The Regional Social Welfare Office official, Jack Cooke, visited Papunya at the end of July 1971, and while there he also visited the men painting in the old administration office. Cooke was keen to see commer-



Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa, *Untitled*, in the 1970s, watercolour, 40.6 × 55.5 cm



Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa, *Men’s Ceremony for the Kangaroo ‘Gulgardi’*, 1971, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, 61 × 137 cm (irregular)

cial activities in Papunya, and Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa was able to persuade him to try to sell some paintings in Alice Springs. Cooke immediately entered three of them into the annual Caltex Art Award, organised by the Central Australian Art Society, which for many years had included both Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists.⁸⁶

On August 27th, 1971, Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa was awarded first prize at the Caltex Golden Jubilee Art Award in Alice Springs for his artwork ‘Men’s Ceremony for the Kangaroo “Gulgardi”’. Cooke immediately arranged the sale of all the other works, one to himself and one reserved for the collection of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. In the process, he raised 750 Australian dollars for Tjampitjinpa, including the value of the Caltex price.⁸⁷ This sum, which was roughly three times the average annual income of an Indigenous man in Papunya as a gardener or school caretaker, caused a sensation among the artists. In November 1971, the artists took over an old corrugated iron shed that had previously served the town administration and subsequently received permission to use it. From then on, the shed became known as the ‘Men’s Painting Room’.

Bardon was extremely keen to promote the artworks. He travelled to Alice Springs within two weeks of the Caltex Prize with 29 paintings and approached all the commercial art galleries. He finally had success at the gallery owned by Pat Hogan, the Stuart Art Centre. By early December 1971, the gallery had accepted two more consignments of 60 and 41 paintings.⁸⁸ Bardon asked acquaintances for help and Richard ‘Dick’ Glyn Kimber promoted the cause of the artists to Bob Edwards, who at the time was Curator of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum in Adelaide and had influence with several federal government departments. This led about a year later to financial support for the artists from the Aboriginal Arts Board.

Before that, however, in late 1971, Geoffrey Bardon had to leave Papunya temporarily for health reasons and then permanently in August 1972. In the meantime, sales were slow and most of the artworks were still unsold in January 1972, when Pat Hogan persuaded the first director of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Colin Jack-Hinton, to visit her gallery in Alice Springs: He bought almost all the works. These 105 paintings on fibreboard, chipboard or similar painting surfaces, now extremely valuable, formed the basis of the new museum’s collection.⁸⁹ Those works formed a magnificent retrospective exhibition there from July 1st, 2017, to February 18th, 2018, entitled ‘tjungunutja: from having come together’, co-curated by four of the then living artists: Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra, Michael Jagamara Nelson, Bobby West Tjupurula, and J. J. Tjapaltjarri.

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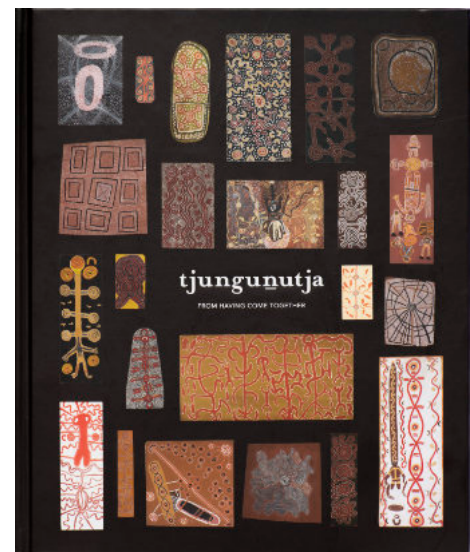
Pintupi and Anmatyerr artists in the Men’s Painting Room (c. August 1972). From left: Charlie Tjaruru Tjungurrayi (seated), Ronnie Tjampitjinpa (kneeling), Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri, and Long Jack Phillipus Tjakamarra (wearing hat). Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa is standing at the back of the room.

⁸⁶ Scholes 2017a, p. 133

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 134

⁸⁸ Megaw et al. 1986, p. 55

⁸⁹ Scholes 2017a, p. 143



Catalogue cover of the exhibition ‘tjungunutja: from having come together’

⁹⁰ Kimber 1986, p. 44

⁹¹ Megaw et al. 1986, p. 21

⁹² Kimber 1995, p. 129

⁹³ Johnson 2010, pp. 49–55

⁹⁴ Peter Fannin was a determined man and became an enthusiastic patron of the arts. He had qualifications in electrical engineering, mathematics, music, botany, and education and could even teach in Luritja, one of the local languages. He acquired many of the early works, which he was eventually able to sell to the National Gallery of Australia in 1998. Before that, he had several times rejected multi-million dollar offers from overseas collectors. He donated a very large proportion of the museum's \$1 million purchase price to the artists' families. (Ross 2017)

⁹⁵ Thorley 2011; Ross 2017

After Bardon's final departure, a teacher friend of his, Peter Fannin, and a few other supporters ensured continued access to painting materials for the artists and the sale of the works in Alice Springs.⁹⁰ Pat Hogan received over the next year more than 620 paintings in 19 deliveries but struggled with a lack of demand.⁹¹

By early August 1972, the enthusiasm of the artists far exceeded the sales and storage capacity of Pat Hogan's art gallery, requiring additional storage of more than 500 works in a Papunya community hall. At that time, during the Yuendumu Sports Weekend of 1972, held annually in August, some of the artworks were put on display in a special exhibition at the Yuendumu Men's Museum. A painting by Shorty Lungkata Tjungurrayi was perceived there as a serious transgression against the secret/sacred principle.⁹² Papunya artists had previously reached a consensus on the confidentiality of such motifs, within their own community, however, the Indigenous people of Yuendumu had not been consulted, even though they also had rights to—and responsibility for—some aspects of the shared Jukurrpa.

The painting was immediately removed from view, but the consequences were lasting. After two years of intense discussion, the consensus among artists was to altogether avoid depictions of secret/sacred motifs. It is generally assumed that this Yuendumu controversy was the catalyst for an innovative change in style, towards the use of the 'uncontroversial' dot painting for backgrounds or for overpainting. However, Vivien Johnson has analysed the first hundred artworks sold by Bardon in Alice Springs and found that even a number of those earlier works, painted with wall paints and varnishes and made before Bardon's introduction of school materials, could clearly be attributed to a dot painting style.⁹³ Therefore, the artists just applied the dot technique they had already known, in an innovative and refined way, in order to avoid the problem of revealing secret/sacred motifs (see chapter 'Techniques and Materials' and p. 240).

The artists persisted and—with the support of the new Aboriginal Arts Board (AAB), of which Bob Edwards was the first director—the artists' cooperative Papunya Tula Artists Ltd. was founded in August 1972 (formal incorporation, however, did not take place until November 16th, 1972). A promising indication for the future was that the Caltex Prize was again won by a Papunya artist, Old Mick Tjakamarra, at the end of August.

The first chairman of Papunya Tula Artists Ltd. was Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa, and at the end of the year Peter Fannin became its first managing director. Shortly afterwards, Papunya Tula opened a gallery in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). It was Peter Fannin⁹⁴ who coordinated the first overseas exhibition, 'Art of Aboriginal Australia', which opened in Stratford, Canada, in June 1974. It toured to twelve other locations and was largely supported by the AAB, which commissioned 17 works for the exhibition.⁹⁵ Because transporting wooden panels abroad is expensive due

to their weight, Fannin later obtained canvas for the artists, setting the stage for a rapid expansion of the painting movement.⁹⁶

During this period, some Pintupi, disaffected by the strife, left Papunya. This was aided by changes in government policy, as well as improved access to water through easing of droughts and by using freshwater boreholes drilled by mining prospectors. About 200 Pintupi moved west and established small outstations, the first in mid-1973 at Yayayi (Kakali Bore) 40 km west of Papunya. As in Papunya, the men set up a painters' camp. In August 1974, a group of 116 Pintupi and Luritja moved 130 km southwest of Papunya to Kungayunti (Brown's Bore) to establish a new outstation.⁹⁷ Still later, they moved further west to Country associated with them and established Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra.

The main motivation for the moves was to live closer to their associated Country, one of the main sources of inspiration for their art. The Papunya Tula cooperative retained its gallery in Mparntwe (Alice Springs), expanding its activities to surrounding outstations and encouraging the use of larger canvases. In 1976, the first large-scale work, 'Warlugulong', 168.5 × 170.5 cm, was created as a collaborative effort by Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri and his half-brother (their mothers were sisters) Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri.⁹⁸ It was purchased in 1981 for the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney.

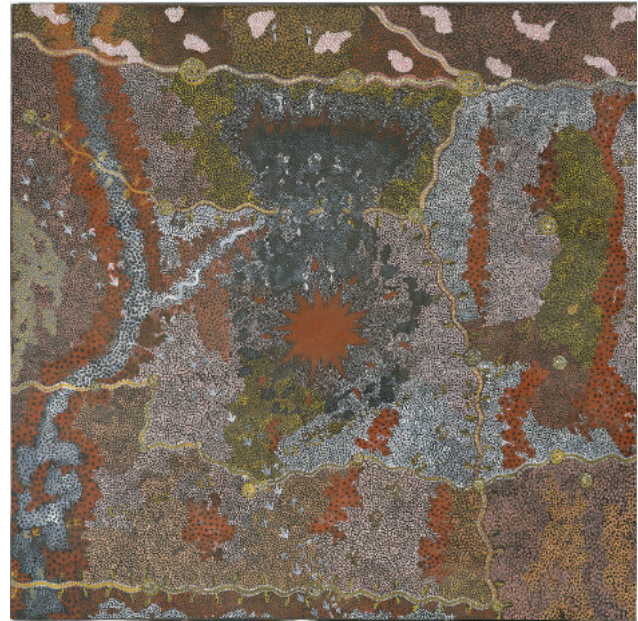
In 1983, the artists took the bold step of donating 94 of their early paintings from the period 1971 to 1974 to the Australian Museum in Sydney, on the condition that they form a permanent Papunya collection accessible to future Indigenous generations in perpetuity.⁹⁹ These artworks had been reserved for posterity from the beginning by the artists and the art managers Geoffrey Bardon and Peter Fannin.

Developments and innovations continued. Women artists began to paint in Walungurru (Kintore) and Kiwirrkurra and introduced new styles (see pp. 291–292). Many of these women were among the Elders of their communities. Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, Makinti Napanangka, Tatali Nangala, and Naata Nungurrayi had the first exhibition of their work in a major gallery beyond Mparntwe (Alice Springs) at the Utopia Art Sydney gallery in 1996. The Art Gallery of New South Wales acquired several of their paintings. Solo exhibitions in commercial galleries in Sydney and Melbourne soon followed.

Some Papunya-based artists, who wanted a more local supporting organisation, were able to establish an art centre there in 2007, the Papunya Tjupi Art Centre Aboriginal Corporation, which grew to about 100 members by 2012 and about 150 by 2020. They created works using synthetic polymer paint on canvas as well as prints, punu (woodwork), woven baskets, and jewellery, and set up their own gallery space in Papunya. Through interstate and international gallery contacts, they were

⁹⁶ Thorley 2016, p. 140

⁹⁷ Megaw et al. 1986, p. 31



Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri and Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri, Warlugulong, 1976, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 168.5 × 170.5 cm

⁹⁸ Isaacs 1999, p. 251

⁹⁹ Khan 2016

¹⁰⁰ ORIC 2012, p. 12

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Bolger 1987

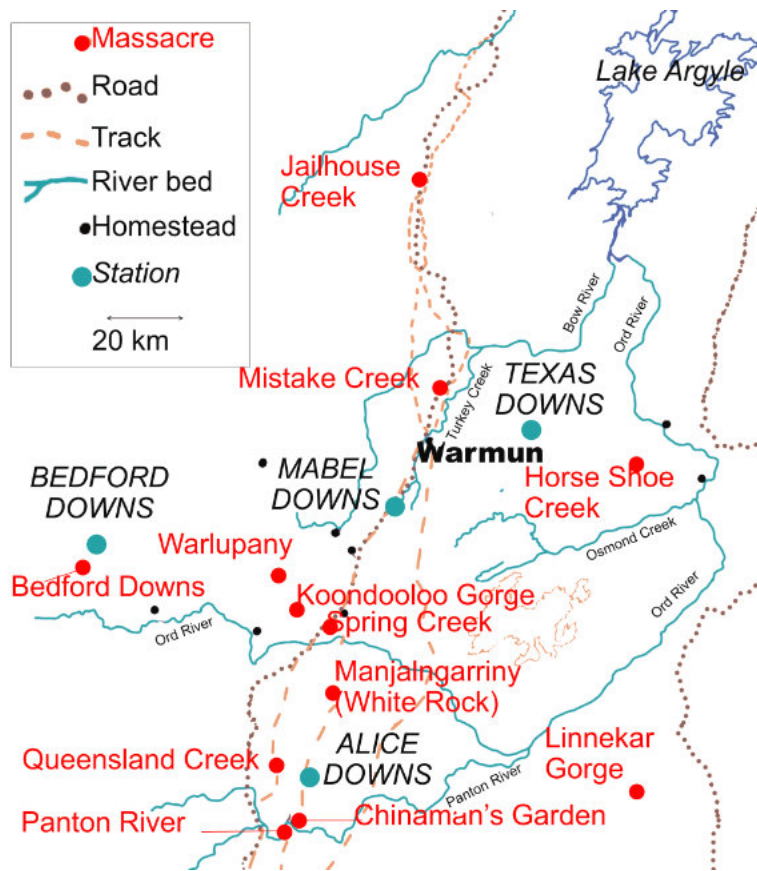
¹⁰³ Cf. Brock 2004 and references therein

¹⁰⁴ Ross 1989, pp. 1–20, 53–62

¹⁰⁵ Massola 2016, p. 72

able to organize five to ten exhibitions a year.¹⁰⁰ In 2012, Papunya Tjupi art manager Kasumi Ejiri explained the cooperative's approach, *'The key is recognizing which paintings belong in the tourist market and which can enter the fine art market. We operate at both ends of the spectrum so we can be an all-inclusive community art centre.'*¹⁰¹

1975 Warmun (Turkey Creek)



Places of massacres, homesteads, cattle stations, (dry) rivers in the Kimberley region (after Ross 1989, p. ix)

Indigenous groups in the vicinity of Warmun (known to white settlers as Turkey Creek), 1,200 km northwest of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and 850 km east of Broome, have been repeatedly forced out of their associated Country, and then from their refuges, for over a century. Gija is spoken in the Warmun area, Miriwoong by those who came from the Kununurra area, Walmajarri, Worla, or Malignin in neighbouring areas. Almost all speak Kimberley Kriol, a combination of Gija and English. The last few decades of interaction with the various state and federal governments and their dozens of agencies have been marked by misunderstandings, personal conflicts, a perfidious lack of consultation, paternalism, and bitter disappointments. An astonishingly frank report to the government was written in 1987 by social scientists.¹⁰²

The first cattle ranchers had arrived in the region in 1882. The settlers' homestead at Turkey Creek was established in 1887, a year after gold had been discovered 165 km to the south at Halls Creek, as a stopover for changing and watering horses and camels on the long trek from the coast to the gold-

fields. Later it became a beef butchering shed, then a police station, then a post office, and finally the arts centre.

Massacres continued to occur in the region well into the 20th century. In contemporary Australia, there is an ongoing controversy among some (Western) historians about the exact number of atrocities, but even the official record is horrifying.¹⁰³ Transcripts are available of the oral histories of Warmun residents from this period.¹⁰⁴

Gordon Barney created the painting 'Massacre at Kooloongnoorri' in 2001 and explained some of the background, *'That one bin, yeah, he's my grandfather. They used to be I don't know what from, they bin get them people, big mob, they bin dragging them people gotta chain you know. Going with a chain all the way. Big chain yeah. Take em some. They bin killing them la Queensland Creek [Merrmerrji] [...]'*¹⁰⁵



Gordon Barney, Massacre at Kooloongnoorri, 2001, natural pigments on canvas, 80 × 100 cm

The first cattle station in the area was Texas Downs in 1897, followed by Mabel Downs (1897), Frog Hollow (c. 1900), Alice Downs (1901), Mistake Creek (1904), Bedford Downs (1906), Bungle Bungles (1907), Han Spring (1915) and others.¹⁰⁶ Many of the artists worked on the stations for most of their lives. Patrick Mung Mung and Churchill Cann (Yoonany), for example, worked at Texas Downs Station, which was part of their associated Country, until they were evicted along with other Indigenous people following the *Federal Pastoral Industry Award Law* of 1968. That law mandated equal pay for Indigenous employees, so instead of being ‘paid’ in kind as they had been before, the Indigenous workers should have received a much higher monetary wage. So, instead they were fired. The names of the huge cattle stations are often found in the (English) titles of the artists’ artworks.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 61

The groups with different Indigenous languages that came to Warmun usually set up separate camps, and it was difficult to reach consensus in solving local problems. The Miriwoong and Gajerrong in particular were completely uprooted after much of their Country was permanently flooded by the Lake Argyle dam in 1971 without any prior consultation or even any attempt at compensation. Over 1,000 km² (or 2,000 km² in flood years) with the many sacred sites were gone forever.

In 1977, an 8 km² area around Turkey Creek was designated by the Western Australian government as the Warmun Aboriginal Community. Since then, a patchwork of land claims and leases has significantly increased the land belonging to Warmun. There was little infrastructure in 1977; it took three years for the first houses to be built(!). The children were forced by government officials into the nearest schools, 200 km away in Halls Creek. They were only allowed home during the summer holidays. A number of the Warmun Elders therefore consulted, then asked the nuns of the Catholic order Sisters of St Joseph, whom they knew from other communities, to start a local school and provide education in both cultures, Western and Indigenous.

Classes at Ngalangangpum School began in May 1979 under a Warlarri tree (*Eucalyptus platyphylla*) to which Indigenous prisoners had reportedly been chained in the 1890s on their 400-kilometre walk from Halls Creek to Wyndham Prison.¹⁰⁷

Sister Theresa Morellini arrived at Warmun in May 1979 as one of the first two teachers at Ngalangangpum School. The philosophy of ‘lirr-garn’, or ‘mutual learning’, was central to the curriculum. The children were taught the usual Western content by the nuns *and* the Gija language and culture by local Elders. The Gija term ‘lirr-garn’ means reciprocity and exchange of teaching and learning, i.e., both teachers and students teach and learn.¹⁰⁸ It was not simply two separate curricula or only bilingual teaching. The Elders thus became teachers, with their paintings as teaching tools. These teachers of Gija knowledge and culture at Ngalangangpum School became, in some cases, well-known artists, such as Rover



Beginning of classes under a tree in May 1979

¹⁰⁷ Carrington et al. 2014, p. 2

¹⁰⁸ Massola 2016, p. 13



Lucas van Leyden, *Lot and His Daughters*, c. 1520, oil on wood, 48 × 34 cm

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 15

¹¹⁰ Kranenbarg 2004, p. 26

Thomas (Joolama), Queenie McKenzie, Hector Jandany, George Mung Mung, Mabel Juli and others.

Descriptions of the development of the art movement in the East Kimberley by anthropologists, art historians, and art critics usually begin, however, with a 1975 Goorirr Goorirr dance ceremony, for which Rover Thomas (Joolama) devised the accompanying chant text and at which ochre-painted panels were held overhead. These panels attracted a lot of attention in the art world. Massola cites 29 art historical references as examples.¹⁰⁹

The Goorirr Goorirr dance ceremony relates to Cyclone Tracey, which during Christmas 1974 flattened Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory. Many Indigenous people saw this as a warning not to forget their own culture. This is human nature: For over two thousand years a similar story has been told in the Torah and the Old and New Testaments of the Bible of the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah due to man's sinfulness. Rover Thomas (Joolama) had a vision which inspired him to create the Goorirr Goorirr dance cycle and many subsequent paintings, exemplifying the creation of a new Ngarrangarni.

In 1984, the National Gallery of Australia first acquired works by Rover Thomas (Joolama), who became one of Australia's best-known artists and who not only promoted art in Warmun but also led it to international prominence when he represented Australian art with Trevor Nickolls at the 1990 Venice Biennale.

On October 26th, 1998, the Warmun Art Centre was officially re-

gistered as a co-operative, founded by artists Queenie McKenzie, Madigan Thomas, Hector Jandany, Lena Nyadbi, Betty Carrington, and Patrick Mung Mung.¹¹⁰ They used the century-old homestead building and later post office. In 1999 and 2000, the art centre organised artists' participation in 28 major exhibitions across Australia and overseas and established the careers of at least twelve new and emerging artists. In an interview in August 2000, Patrick Mung



Warmun Art Centre, group photo with artists, c. 2001

Mung, then Chair of the Artists Council, explained the importance of the Centre, *'[It's good] for our people and our children so we carry it on with them. So they can take it on, like us, take it on from the old people, but they still come here ... young people so the art centre is good to be a centre. It reminds the kids so they got to learn from this. Then they got strong. Then they know the painting. But the real thing. We should take them to the country. Show them what's left in the country with these old people and what they have taught us. Things like where they given em just round here. Where bad country for them, part of*

us that country, some of them have been in that place. That's why but we might get in there some day. I hope these old people give it a way. Look at them. That's all right then.'¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Healy 2002, p. 9

Nine years later, in 2009, artist Gabriel Nodea said, '*The most important thing I want to communicate is that our Art Centre is our last line of defence. It is living the Warmun dream, chasing Gija destiny. Corroboree and painting are like our archives. This is what the Art Centre is. That's what the old people wanted. It keeps us strong and keeps connection to our country and gives us strength to live in the white man's world.*'¹¹²

¹¹² Carrington et al. 2014, p. 7

In March 2011, Warmun was hit by a natural disaster when Turkey Creek overflowed its banks and the flooding almost completely destroyed the township, forcing evacuation. Many paintings were irreparably damaged or simply disappeared. More than 730 artworks from the Art Centre¹¹³ and about half of the Warmun community's collection of 340 paintings and woodworks, which the artists and Elders of Ngalangangpum School had donated for teaching in order to preserve them for future generations, were covered in water and mud. The most damaged works were transported 3,767 km by refrigerated truck (donated by Toll Express) to the University of Melbourne, to be restored in a partnership with the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation there, with the participation of artists.

¹¹³ Massola 2016, p. 44

What is the significance of the community collection for the Indigenous artists and for the art world? Journalists have repeatedly quoted Western art critics and concerned citizens who have described the collection as a national treasure of unique provenance from the birth of a new art movement. Betty Carrington was asked by a sympathetic visitor, ten months after the flood, what she thought about the lost and damaged paintings. She raised her arms and said, '*It doesn't matter, we will just make more.*'¹¹⁴ That is so typical of active artists!

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 7

1977 Utopia

The land about 200 km northeast of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) has many names. The name 'Utopia' was used by farmers who, between 1910 and 1930, were granted government leases in this area on the best lands of First Australians who had been 'dispersed' (massacred or evicted) by the police (see p. 275), for example, in retaliation for an attack on Adelaide-Darwin Telegraph Line employees at Barrow Creek in February 1874.

The Indigenous people survived, scattered over some 20 tiny outstations, and were forced to find work and subsistence on settler-owned farms until about 1979, when some Indigenous families in the area applied for a land grant. After a court case in 1980, where batik artworks had been presented as evidence of the Alyawarr and of Anmatyerr claims to the land, they were given back part of their Country as Freehold Title (unsaleable common property).



Emily Kame Kngwarreye

Women artists had started working with batik around 1977 after attending workshops organized by linguist Jenny Green, then an adult education teacher. In 1978, some artists who later became famous—including Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Audrey Morton Kngwarreye, and the Petyarre sisters Kathleen, Violet, Gloria, Nancy, Myrtle, and Ada Bird—formed the Utopia Women’s Batik Group. Some of their works were acquired by the Museum of Victoria in 1979. The proceeds from the sale of the batik helped them to pursue their land rights claim described above. In 1980, the group had their first exhibition in Mparntwe (Alice Springs), and in 1981 the exhibition ‘Floating Forests of Silk: Utopia Batik from the Desert’ was shown during the Adelaide Art Festival.

In the late 1980s, the artists experimented with a range of art forms including printmaking, but there was no common art centre. From 1987 to 1991, the artists were supported by the Mparntwe (Alice Springs) based organisation CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) and by art coordinator Rodney Gooch, who travelled regularly to all the outstations. This resulted in 88 batik artworks on silk, which were later exhibited many times under the title ‘Utopia – A Picture Story’ and were acquired by the Holmes à Court collection.¹¹⁵ Later, some of the artists were invited to exhibitions in Ireland, England, France, Thailand, and India.

Some artworks were included in the exhibition ‘A Changing relationship: Aboriginal themes in Australian art c. 1938–1988’ at the S. H. Erwin Gallery, an art museum in Sydney, from June 8th to July 31st, 1988. The exhibition aimed to ‘[...] survey and critique fifty years of sustained interest by European and Aboriginal artists and designers in Aboriginal themes and issues [...]’.¹¹⁶ In the same year, the artist Christopher Hodges founded with Helen Eager the contemporary art gallery Utopia Art Sydney, which quickly gained renown and focused on works by artists from Utopia and Papunya.

Because the batik artworks had in general found little art market success, Gooch encouraged artists to paint with synthetic polymer paint on canvas. With the support of Holmes à Court, Gooch was able to distribute 100 small canvases and the four colours white, black, red, and yellow to artists in seven settlements during the summer (December–January) of 1988/1989. The resulting 81 paintings, all purchased by Holmes à Court, became known as ‘The Summer Project’ and were exhibited as ‘Utopia Women’s Painting – The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–1989’ at the S. H. Erwin Gallery in Sydney in April 1989.¹¹⁷ During this early period of art in Utopia, Lyndsay Bird Mpetyane was the only male artist in the group.

The Summer Project catapulted the artists into the contemporary art scene, whereas their decade or so of work with batik was largely ignored. Soon the director of the National Gallery of Australia, James Mollison, purchased several paintings by Emily Kame Kngwarreye, who had

¹¹⁵ Brody 1990

¹¹⁶ De Lorenzo and Dysart 1988, p. 5

¹¹⁷ Brody 1989

her first solo exhibitions during 1990 in commercial galleries in Sydney and Melbourne and quickly achieved international recognition.

Since these beginnings, artists in the Utopia region have developed multiple new styles, held major group and solo exhibitions nationally and internationally, and become integrated into the global art scene.¹¹⁸ Although a few local art centres appeared over the years, only in 2020 was a central one established. It is rather unique to the artists of Utopia that they usually negotiate the sale of their own works to a plethora of art dealers and museums who visit the Utopia area more or less regularly—according to Schmidt¹¹⁹ about twenty per week.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Boulter 1991; Neale 1998; AGNSW 2007; Neale 2008

¹¹⁹ Schmidt 2015, p. 69

1981 Wirrimanu (Balgo)

Wirrimanu (Balgo) is located almost equidistant between Broome on the Western Australian coast (770 km northwest) and Mparntwe (Alice Springs) (790 km southeast). People from nine different language groups live in Wirrimanu, ever since the Catholic Pallottine Mission established a refuge there for Indigenous people from the incursion of pastoralists.¹²⁰ The Catholic Mission had to move several times following the late 1930s, until it settled in Wirrimanu in 1965.

¹²⁰ Isaacs 1999, p. 116

Sporadic painting began in Wirrimanu on whatever small wooden panels were available between the mid and late 1970s after a few stays by Papunya artists visiting relatives.¹²¹ The real art movement started in 1981, when Elders (none of whom had chosen to be christened) painted church banners with poster paints on calico on the occasion of a jubilee anniversary for Father Arthur Peile. These were the first publicly displayed works by Wirrimanu artists. Canvases became available there from 1982. Inspired by the discussions in Papunya, the Elders of the group who painted with ochre discussed with other local men the pros and cons of synthetic polymer paint and canvas for artworks that would be for public display. They decided to work with synthetic polymer paint, while abstaining from inserting any secret/sacred symbolism (see pp. 213–214).

¹²¹ Brody et al. 1995, p. 45

Around 1984, women artists such as Nancy Naninurra Napanangka and Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin also became active and worked at the Adult Education Centre. Soon, husband/wife artist partnerships formed from a number of married couples: Eubena (Yupinya) Nampitjin and her husband Wimmitji Tjapangarti, Bai Bai Napangardi and Sunfly Tjampitjin, Muntja Nungurrayi and John Mosquito Tjapangarti, Millie Skeen Nampitjin and Tommy Skeen Tjakamarra, Susie Bootja Bootja and Mick Gill Tjakamarra, Ningie Nangala and Tjumbo Tjapanangka, Nora Wompi and Dick ‘Cowboy’ Tjapanangka, Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka and Helicopter Tjungurrayi. Many of these earliest artists have built long careers.

¹²² AGWA 1986

The first exhibition of artwork in a major museum was held at the Art Gallery of Western Australia from November 29th, 1986, to January 4th, 1987, entitled ‘Art from the Great Sandy Desert’.¹²² Organised by anthropologist Ronald Berndt and in collaboration with adult education staff in Wirrimanu, the exhibition featured 105 acrylic works (roughly equally divided between canvas and painting board) by 22 male and 12 female artists, as well as two church banners created by several artists.

¹²³ Healy 2014, pp. 55–57

Immediately after that 1986–1987 exhibition, the Warlayirti Art Centre was established with the support of some artists from the original Papunya Tula group.¹²³ The purpose-built art centre opened on July 23rd, 2001, and has been essentially self-financed since 2002.

1987 Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative (Sydney)

¹²⁴ ABS 2018

According to the census of June 30th, 2016, more than 90% of non-Indigenous Australians live in urban or suburban areas of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide.¹²⁴ For the approximately 800,000 First Australians, the figure is 60%. Their so-called ‘urban art’ is inspired, among other things, by lives shaped by settler arrogance, racial discrimination, political protest, or poverty in the midst of affluence.

¹²⁵ This repeats critique levelled against Albert Namatjira 45 years earlier, in comparison to the supposedly only authentic art of Indigenous painting, i.e., bark painting (see p. 332).

The exhibition ‘Koori Art ‘84’ at Artspace Gallery Sydney was the first major exhibition for ‘urban art’. Critics labelled it ‘student art’. Museums denounced it as ‘inauthentic’ and not truly Indigenous, because the style did not match that of artists in remote regions of Australia.¹²⁵ Bronwyn Bancroft was later quoted as saying, ‘*For years we were punished for being black, now we’re punished for not being black enough.*’¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Perkins 1993/1994, p. 100

The artists represented in ‘Koori Art ‘84’ could be described as



30 years Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative, 2017: Avril Quail, Bronwyn Bancroft, Djon Mundine (curator of the exhibition ‘The Boomalli Ten’ 2017–2018), Kyra Kum-Sing (Boomalli curator), Tracey Moffatt, Euphemia Bostock, Fern Martens, Brenda L. Croft, Arone Meeks, Jeffrey Samuels

Sydney’s black avant-garde and a number of them agreed in 1987 to found the Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative, partially inspired by the success of the art centres in Northern Australia, one of which Fiona Foley had visited in 1984. Boomalli means ‘to strike, to make a mark’ in the languages of the Kamilaroi, Wiradjuri, and Bundjalung, the First Australians of the Sydney region. Shortly before Boomalli was founded, Tracey Moffatt had been arrested in Portsmouth, England, while protesting against the historic re-enactment of the ‘Launch of the First Fleet’ in honour of Australia’s Bicentenary, but Boomalli members were not primarily political activists, they were *art* activists. Their goal was to be seen as individual artists creating works from their urban Indigenous background. Their first exhibition, ‘Boomalli au go go’,

opened on November 25th, 1987, in the Sydney suburb of Chippendale in a run-down warehouse that they had renovated.

Twenty years later, the Art Gallery of New South Wales presented a retrospective of the work of these artists, noting that ‘[...] Boomalli confronted head-on the lack of representation of urban Aboriginal art within the wider art scene and stereotyped notions of Aboriginal culture created through lack of knowledge and the harvesting of historically based preconceived ideas. [...] For 20 years now Boomalli has been at the coal face of the development and education of urban Aboriginal culture, not only acting as a gallery but as an vehicle for social reform, constantly challenging preconceptions and stereotypes held by mainstream community and becoming one [of] Australia’s most important cultural establishments.’¹²⁷

Other artists’ co-operatives such as proppaNOW or the Campfire Group have equally played, or are playing, a significant role in making contemporary Indigenous art visible.

1997 Jirrawun Aboriginal Art Corporation

Of course, the various artist groups are not homogeneous. For example, at the time the art centre opened in Warmun, Freddie Timms and Hector Jandany set up a private company, the Jirrawun Aboriginal Art Corporation, and appointed Tony Oliver, a well-known Melbourne gallery owner, to manage it. The chairman was Freddie Timms and members included artists Timmy Timms, Paddy Bedford, Rusty Peters, Rammey Ramsey, Goody Lilwayi Barrett, Phyllis Thomas, and Peggy Patrick. They started in Rugun (Crocodile Hole), later moved to Frog Hollow, then Bow River, Kununurra, and finally to a purpose-built centre in Wyndham. Jirrawun Arts was extremely successful but closed in 2010, after some of the founders passed away. A large collection of materials, such as exhibition documentation, catalogues etc. was given to the Warmun Art Centre in 2017, to re-unite two streams in the history of art by Warmun artists.

The Jirrawun Aboriginal Art Corporation facilitated the creation of some groundbreaking artworks. For example, Rusty Peters and New Zealand artist Peter Adsett collaborated in 2000 on a major art project called ‘Two Laws: One Big Spirit’, which has been exhibited at many venues; the image opposite is part of the project. Peter Adsett is a Pākehā from the Gisborne region of New Zealand, who lived in Australia for twenty years until 2002, and whose art is often classified as geometric abstraction. The collaboration was a dialogue for a fortnight, with one of the artists creating and presenting a piece of art one day, and the other responding in kind on the next day. They had agreed on a colour palette of red, white, and black. It was Rusty Peters who expressed the concept of the ‘two laws’ having their origins in the one ‘big spirit’ and that these laws can coexist without compromising each other or being intelligible to all.

¹²⁷ Jones 2007



Rusty Peters, Father and Grandfather Teaching Place For Me, 2000, natural pigments on canvas, 122 × 135 cm



Peter Adsett, Painting number 6, 2000, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 135 cm

2001 APY Lands

‘APY Lands’ is a lazy shorthand. It is used because most non-Indigenous Australians cannot pronounce, let alone spell, the names of the Indigenous language groups that lived and live in the region around the intersection of the three state boundaries of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory: the Anangu, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara. When the settlers carved up Australia into governable parts, these First Australian regions were divided between the three new states like a kind of family pizza.

Although the name ‘APY Lands’ ignores the Ngaanyatjarra in the region and incorrectly includes the term ‘Anangu’, which means ‘people’ in the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara languages, the abbreviation has endured. It was not until 1981 that the South Australian government granted Indigenous groups some legal recognition of ownership of their Country in South Australia, for an area slightly larger than Austria. The decision has been regretted, reviewed, rescinded, amended, and revised again in the ensuing decades in a socio-political saga worthy of a contested family testament.¹²⁸ The Anangu live in tiny townships scattered across their Country. The artists have established several art centres and created their own network across this very sparsely populated part of Australia, which is 1,500 to 2,000 km away from any of the state capitals Perth, Adelaide, or Darwin and can only be reached by bumpy roads. Iwantja Arts centre was established in the late 1980s in Indulkana, Tjala Arts (originally Minymaku Arts) in Amata in 1999, Ninuku Arts in Kalka in 2006, Tjungu Palya in Nyapari, Kaltjiti Arts in Fregon also in 2006, and Mimili Maku Arts in Mimili in 2006 (and again in 2009). Those six arts centres are in South Australia, whereas Walkatjara Art at Uluru and Ernabella Arts in Pukatja are in the Northern Territory, and Irrunytju Arts is in Irrunytju in Western Australia (see pp. 352–354).

Professionalisation has been pursued with the help of several interstate organisations. Ku Arts (Ananguku Arts and Cultural Aboriginal Corporation, now based in Adelaide), for example, was established in 1998 as a support and marketing organisation for the three then existing APY Lands arts centres: Ernabella Arts, Kaltjiti Arts, and Iwantja Arts. It then gradually took on other roles in organising workshops, advising artists who lived outside the townships, and organising major exhibitions such as ‘Tjukurpa Pulkatjara – The Power of Law’, in 2010, as part of the 50th Adelaide Festival of Arts and ‘Ngintaka’, in 2014, at the South Australian Museum. In 2017, another umbrella organisation for arts centres was launched, the APY Art Centre Collective. It opened galleries in Sydney in 2018, Adelaide in 2019 and Melbourne in 2020. Of the 660 entries from across Australia for the prestigious Wynne Prize in 2021, 39 were selected as finalists, 20 of which were by Indigenous artists and 14 of those works were by artists from the APY Lands.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Cf. Tedmanson 2016

¹²⁹ Wynne Prize 2021



Alec Baker, founding member of the first arts centre in the APY Lands, Iwantja Arts in Indulkana

Iwantja Arts in Indulkana pioneered art centre activities in the APY Lands. It was founded in the late 1980s by Alec Baker (see previous page), a famous artist from the Yankunytjatjara language group, together with artist Sadie Singer, who later became known for her printmaking. They fought for years for land rights and for funding for an arts centre, travelling to Adelaide and Canberra for this purpose. Alec Baker is still a very active artist in 2022 at the age of about 90, and the arts centre continues to enjoy strong community support.

The Anangu, who live in Ngaanyatjarra Country just over the state border in Western Australia, in the township of Irrunytju (also known as Wingellina),¹³⁰ established the Irrunytju Arts co-operative in 2001. The funds for this had been raised by local Pitjantjatjara and Ngaanyatjarra women through the sale of second-hand clothing.¹³¹ Irrunytju (Wingellina) was the home of Yannima Pikarli Tommy Watson, whose artworks are now in the collections of almost all Australian state art museums, and who became internationally known when his 2006 painting 'Wipu Rockhole' was selected as one of eight works to be included in the construction of the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris in 2007.¹³²

Yannima Pikarli Tommy Watson was born around 1935, about 50 km west of Irrunytju (Wingellina), travelled all over central Australia and lived for a time in Papunya, meeting Geoffrey Bardon and observing the artists at work. He knew the history of Papunya Tula Pty Ltd. very well and was a senior and founding member of Irrunytju's Men's Painting Group in 2001. He decided to avoid the use of sacred symbolism in his own art and concentrate on the use of colour, line and rhythmic stippling. This and his success in the art world, had a great influence on other artists in the region, even though Watson left Irrunytju (Wingellina) and moved to Mparntwe (Alice Springs) in 2004. After a few years, the Irrunytju art centre was disbanded, but a new one called Minyma Kutjara Arts Project was established in 2012.

In 2016, the artists from the APY Lands art centres decided to co-create a major exhibition at the Hazelhurst Gallery near Sydney, called 'Nganampa Kililpil: Our Stars'. The exhibition included paintings, prints, ceramics, and installations involving about a hundred artists. Some works were on loan from public and private collections. Themes of their Country and the night sky served as inspirations, and the artists decided to create a kind of 'complete catalogue' of cultural history in four monumental



Alec Baker, Ngura (Country), 2018, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152 × 198 cm

¹³⁰ The future of Irrunytju (Wingellina) is uncertain because this site lies on one of the largest nickel-cobalt 'pure oxide' deposits in the world, with much ore within 25 m of the surface, making it attractive for open pit mining. A mining company has leased 18,000 km² of land (slightly smaller than Slovenia) and is planning open pit mining using a process for metal extraction called HPAL, which carries significant environmental risks. In other words, huge parts of the land and local Tjukurpa are likely to be stripped and thus destroyed, including the community itself and its arts centre. The mining company has promised to move the town to another location, but until then the government has for years refused to invest in water or road works in a place that is destined for demolition. The Indigenous population has almost no control and hardly any financial benefits from the mining. The artists carry on.

¹³¹ Gilchrist 2016, p. 47

¹³² Naumann 2006



Pepai Jangala Carroll, Rupert Jack (Ernabella Arts); Alec Baker, Eric Barney, Peter Mungkuri, Vincent Namitjira, David Pearson, Jimmy Pompey (Iwantja Arts); Taylor Cooper, Arnie Frank, Witjiti George (Kaltjiti Arts); Willy Muntjanti Martin, Kunmanara (Mumu Mike) Williams (Mimili Maku Arts); Willy Kaika Burton, Ronnie Douglas, Stanley Douglas, Brenton Ken, Freddy Ken, Ray Ken, Mick Wikilyiri, Anwar Young (Tjala Arts), Wati tjilpi Tjutaku Tjukurpa munu Manta Kunpu alatjitu (The Culture (Law) and Country of the senior men is strong), 2016, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 300 × 480 cm



Tjariya Nungalka Stanley, Carlene Thompson (Ernabella Arts); Sandra Goodwin, Betty Muffler, Jeannie Wallatina, Judy Wallatina (Iwantja Arts); Tjangili Tjapukula George, Manyitjanu Lennon, Matjanka Nyukana Norris, Antjala Tjayangka Robin (Kaltjiti Arts); Betty Kuntiwa Pumani, Puna Yanima (Mimili Maku Arts); Freda Brady, Wawiriya Burton, Nyurpaya Kaika Burton, Iluwanti Ungkutjuru Ken, Sylvia Ken, Tjungkara Ken, Alison Munti Riley, Mary Katatjuku Pan, Maringka Tunkin, Yaritji Young (Tjala Arts); Angkaliya Eadie Curtis, Beryl Jimmy (Tjungu Palya), Kungkarangkalpa – Seven Sisters, 2016, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 300 × 480 cm

works. One collaborative painting by 21 artists, created over three days of intense work, depicts their Country and its many Tjukurpa stories. Two of these works are pictured opposite. Another collaborative work by women artists, created over several workshops in Kaltjiti, also depicts the story of the Seven Sisters; it was exhibited at the Guggenheim (Bilbao) and the Centre George Pompidou (Paris) in the exhibition ‘Women in Abstraction’ in 2021–2022.

In summary, the above brief descriptions of art movements in various places in Australia show an enormous wealth of new beginnings. The accounts do not cover even a tenth of all art centres, showing the explosive growth that resembles a landscape of flowers in the desert after the end of a drought. Elsewhere in this book, many of the art movements that have emerged and the development of artists’ personal styles, within or outside of an artists’ cooperative, are covered in more detail. The examples are a testament to the wide variety of approaches that artists have found to advance their work. The examples described here are a clear confirmation of Wandjuk Marika’s remark¹³³ in the introduction that ‘*for us there is no real difference between art and life*’: As soon as living conditions allowed it, their art flourished.

¹³³ Salvestro 2016, pp. 39–40

Support by the Government

Every history of art highlights the celebrities, but what about the bureaucrats? Herbert Cole (Nugget) Coombs was one of the most influential bureaucrats in Australian history, personal advisor to seven prime ministers and someone who helped lay the foundations for many changes in Australian society, including the increasing acceptance of Indigenous people and their art. By some accounts, he was instrumental in writing the policy platform on Indigenous issues of the Labor Party elected to government in December 1972, including its commitment to Indigenous land rights and self-determination.¹³⁴ In 1979, Coombs established the Aboriginal Treaty Committee and called for a formal treaty with Australia's First Nations. He died on October 29th, 1997, receiving a state funeral and, a little later, full Indigenous burial rites, with half of his ashes scattered at Yirrkala in the Northern Territory. He was the first white person to receive this honour.¹³⁵

Coombs successfully lobbied for a federal authority for the arts and in 1968 was appointed chair of the new Australian Council for the Arts (ACA), which was renamed the Australia Council in 1973 and given statutory powers by the *Australia Council Act* in 1975.

In his capacity as chair of the ACA, Coombs commissioned Professor Ulli Beier in 1969 to review the art trade of the Arnhem Land missions, in order to promote the arts more effectively.¹³⁶ For the ACA report, Beier first spoke to prominent Indigenous activists such as Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) and Gary Foley, and then spent six weeks conducting research at the Yirrkala, Gunbalanya (Oenpelli), Port Keats and Croker, Goulburn, Bathurst, and Melville Island missions. Beier submitted a 45-page report in late 1969 called *Encouraging the Arts among Aboriginal Australians*. The report contained extensive recommendations for improvement and scathingly damned many policy programmes of the time for their structural racial discrimination and incompetent leadership. Coombs promptly refused to release the report and is quoted by Beier from a personal letter as writing, 'Though I agree with virtually everything you say, you must forgive me if I won't publish your report: for it would set me back 10 years with the Northern Territory Government.'¹³⁷

Coombs opted for a different tactic and arranged for the existing academic Aboriginal Arts Advisory Committee (AAAC) to be replaced in May 1973 by a new Aboriginal Arts Board (AAB) as one of the seven sections of the Australia Council, with the aim of targeting government resources more specifically at

¹³⁴ Geissler 2020, p. 272

¹³⁵ Fenner and Harris 2000, p. 80

¹³⁶ Ulli Beier was a prominent linguist, author, and arts promoter first in Nigeria, and later in Papua New Guinea, Australia, and Germany. In Nigeria he founded a museum, now called the Ulli Beier Museum, and in 1981 the Iwalewahaus for non-European art and culture at the University of Bayreuth in Germany.

¹³⁷ Geissler 2020, p. 277



A meeting of the Aboriginal Arts Board in Cairns with board members and guests, June 1975. L.t.r.: (back) Apuatimi, Wandjuk Marika, Bill Reid, Bobby Barrdjaray Nganjmira, Eric Koo'oilala, Terry Widders, Harold Blair, Charles (Chicka) Dixon; (middle row) Violet (Vi) Stanton, Dick Roughsey, Leila Rankine, Kitty Dick, Brian Syron; (front) David Mowaljarlai, Ken Colbung, Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri (Berrell 2009, p. 16)

¹³⁸ Kath Walker, who decades later changed her name to Oodgeroo Noonuccal, renounced in 1987 her award of the Member of the Order of the British Empire in protest at the bicentenary celebrations of the settlement of Australia.

¹³⁹ Berrell 2009, p. 17

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18

¹⁴¹ Peterson 1983, p. 64

¹⁴² Berrell 2009, p. 14

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 17

making the arts visible both in Australia and internationally. Who was appointed to this board? Fifteen Indigenous people, the majority of them artists! Coombs already had close relationships with the well-known Indigenous poet and activist Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker),¹³⁸ the Yolŋu artist David Malangi and Lardil artist and writer Dick Roughsey, whom Coombs appointed as the Board's first chair.

The AAB tried to promote exhibitions in Australian art museums as well as commercial galleries, initially without success. The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory bought a number of artworks by Papunya artists in the 1970s, but none of the other state art museums did so. Even 'maverick' private galleries such as Kim Bonython Gallery in Adelaide, Rudi Komon Gallery in Sydney, or Terry Clune's in Sydney were not interested in acquiring Indigenous art through the AAB.¹³⁹

A policy of the AAB was to purchase works directly from the artists or art cooperatives, in order to support the artists and stabilise the cooperatives. The result was that by the mid-1970s, the AAB was acquiring up to 70% of all artworks sold from central Australia.¹⁴⁰ By 1981, the AAB controlled about 30% of the total market for Indigenous art (including works not classified as fine art), created by about 5,000 artists.¹⁴¹

Initially failing to capture the imagination of the Australian art world, the AAB turned its attention to the international scene. The first major exhibition it sponsored toured thirteen venues in Canada between 1974 and 1976. From 1974 until the early 1980s, when the programme came to an end, the AAB organised nineteen touring exhibitions in 40 countries.¹⁴² The exhibitions sometimes included up to 120 works and were usually attended by large audiences. The AAB had guidelines for the exhibitions, aiming to provide educational and contextual information about the artworks and the culture(s) of their creators.

In Australia, where the AAB had met with disinterest from commercial galleries, it began in 1976 operating its own galleries. These were the Collectors Gallery and the Red Ochre Gallery, both located opposite the AAB offices in North Sydney. By 1977, the AAB operated eight galleries and was the major exhibitor of Indigenous art. However, the galleries were denied membership of the Australian Commercial Galleries Association.

The AAB worked tirelessly to place artworks in art museums. In 1978, an exhibition of a significant collection of 52 bark paintings from Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) was blankly refused by the Art Gallery of New South Wales and could only be shown in a corridor of the (Natural History) Australian Museum.¹⁴³

The AAB was later renamed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB) and in mid-2021 was reformed again to an advisory body, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (ATSIA) Panel, with no direct control over funding for arts projects. Throughout all these changes, the actual annual funding for Indigenous artists and their art

centres remained at a comparatively low level of between 15 to 25 million Australian dollars per year, spread across a very large number of projects. Nevertheless, this support and the continuity and professionalism it fostered can be seen as absolutely essential to the growth of an independent Indigenous art scene in Australia.

The Art Scene View

In the previous sections, the history of Indigenous art has been examined from the perspective of the first settlers and then from that of some of the many Indigenous artist groups. Now the perspective of the (occidental) contemporary art scene in Australia will be described, which has been strongly impacted by some influential individuals. There are many different views of museum curators, art critics, and (Western) artists, described for example by McLean in his article ‘Aboriginal art and the art world’.¹⁴⁴ Such viewpoints are often written and rewritten according to the respective prejudices or personal experiences of the authors.¹⁴⁵

It should first be noted that the institution of the ‘pure art museum’ did not exist in Australia until the opening of the National Gallery of Victoria in 1861. The National Gallery of South Australia followed in 1881, opened by Prince Albert Victor and Prince George Frederick (later King George V). The first air-conditioned exhibition space for art in Australia was a small extension added in 1962 to what is now the Art Gallery of South Australia. An academic art history publication unabashedly dates the professionalisation of art museums to 1962, when university graduates were hired as curators, replacing the (*prima facie* unprofessional) museum boards, ‘[...] curatorial decisions (including art acquisitions and exhibition hanging) [...] had been made by museum boards, who were often either collectors or artists’.¹⁴⁶

Indigenous art, however, was already being recognised and collected as art by private individuals, not institutions, in the late 19th century, as already mentioned with the example of William Barak. Another Indigenous artist already recognised at that time was Tommy McRae, who lived near Corowa, about halfway between Sydney and Melbourne. He was commissioned in 1886, for example, by a merchant named Lefaivre to produce a series of drawings.¹⁴⁷ These drawings were donated fifty years later to the Mitchell Library in Sydney, which is now part of the State Library of New South Wales.

Apart from art museums, whence arise art critics? No Australian university taught art history until such a department was opened at the University of Melbourne in 1946. Professor Joseph Terence Bourke, later Sir Joseph, was recruited from England and focused the curriculum for the next two decades on European art.¹⁴⁸ The next art faculties opened at Flinders University of South Australia in Adelaide around 1966 and at

¹⁴⁴ McLean 2011

¹⁴⁵ Jones 1988; Morphy 2001; Lowish 2009; Coleman 2009; Thomas 2011a; O’Riordan 2013; Goldstein 2013; Sloggett 2014; Garneau 2014; McLean 2014; Inglis et al. 2018

¹⁴⁶ De Lorenzo et al. 2011, p. 7

¹⁴⁷ Jankelson 2019, p. 64

¹⁴⁸ Dolan 2001, p. 58

Sydney University in 1968. When the Australian National University in Canberra opened the Department of Art History in 1977, it made reference to Indigenous art in its curriculum but did not hire a specialist in the subject until 25 years later.

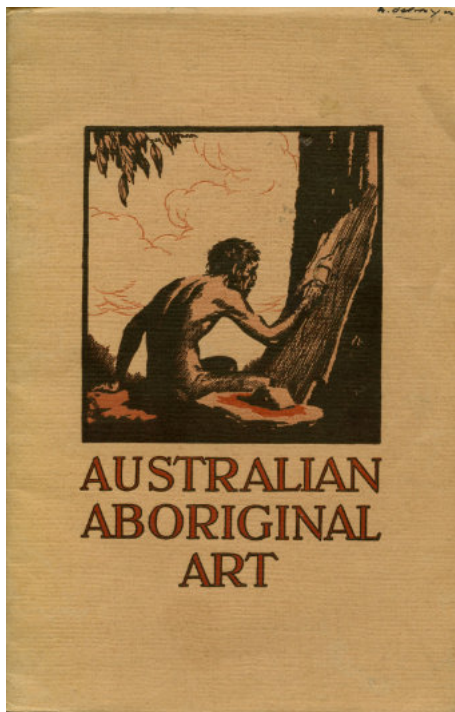
The most important Australian visual arts journal that promoted discourse on contemporary art was, and still is, *Art and Australia*, published quarterly since 1963. The first issue featured an article by the non-Indigenous artist Russell Drysdale that referred to Indigenous motifs. Ten years later, Indigenous artists were mentioned by name for the first time, and in 1976 a Special Issue on Australian Aboriginal Art appeared, which was also the first issue to associate the word ‘contemporary’ with Indigenous art.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 64

¹⁵⁰ Lowish 2014

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Thomas 2011a, p. 6



Brochure of the 1929 exhibition ‘Australian Aboriginal Art’ at the National Gallery of Victoria

The Art Museums

Around 1910, Baldwin Spencer, self-taught anthropologist and endowed professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, seems to have facilitated a breakthrough in the recognition of Indigenous bark paintings as art, rather than as ethnographic exhibits. He had studied art in England and was an avid collector and patron of Australian art, including artists such as Arthur Streeton, Frederick McCubbin and Hans Heysen, whom he also encouraged to acquire Indigenous art. In 1895, Spencer had been appointed a member of the board and later honorary director of the National Gallery of Victoria, which shared premises with the natural history National Museum of Victoria. During an expedition to Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) in Arnhemland in 1912, Spencer collected 38 bark paintings, which he, however, donated in 1917 to the National Museum of Victoria, despite his role at the art museum.¹⁵⁰ Ultimately, Spencer commissioned a total of 170 bark paintings in the years between 1912 and 1922, mainly from artists in the Gunbalanya (Oenpelli) and Alligator Rivers areas.¹⁵¹ These were the first recorded instances of artworks being commissioned from Yolŋu

artists. However, be it noted, Spencer ‘paid’ the artists in tobacco and donated the paintings to the Natural History Museum (rather than the National Gallery of Victoria).

Then, in 1929, the year Spencer died, these works became the basis of the ‘Australian Aboriginal Art’ exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, the first ever art museum exhibition of Indigenous art.¹⁵² However, the overwhelming majority of the art profession and the public felt that this was ‘primitive’ art by ‘primitive’ people, of interest mainly to anthropologists and sensationalists.

In 1934, the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, which had been established in 1884 in the heart of one of the richest goldfields in the world and had one of the largest regional collections, ac-



William Barak, *Ceremony*, c. 1895, natural pigments, watercolour, and pencil on paper, 56.6 × 78.8 cm

cepted the gift of a work by William Barak. It appears to be the first artwork by an Indigenous artist to be accepted into an art museum collection. In 1939, the Art Gallery of South Australia followed with the acquisition of a watercolour by Albert Namatjira, 'Illum-Baura (Haasts Bluff)' (see p. 332).¹⁵³

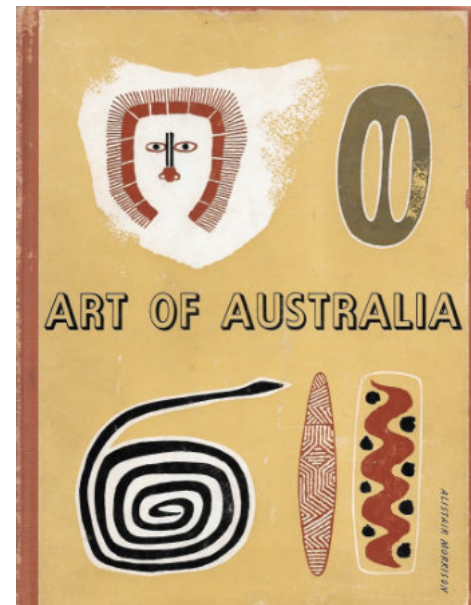
Ten years later, the Art Gallery of South Australia held its first exhibition of Indigenous art with bark paintings borrowed from the South Australian (Natural History) Museum next door.

The Carnegie Foundation sponsored the first international exhibition 'Art of Australia 1788–1941', which toured Canada and the USA during 1941–1942. It was first shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (MoMA).¹⁵⁴ At the insistence of one of the curators, the director of the Yale University Art Gallery, Theodore Sizer, eleven bark paintings from the Baldwin Spencer collection and three drawings by Tommy McRae were included in the 144-artwork exhibition.

Another anthropologist, Charles Mountford, was instrumental in further promoting Indigenous bark paintings into Australian art museums. Mountford had an abiding interest in the art of Indigenous Australians and an eye for photography, which led to his making several films about the Pitjantjatjara and about Albert Namatjira, and eventually resulted in him being sent by the Australian government on a goodwill lecture tour to the USA in the last years of World War II. Partly because of his renown from that tour, and as the author of a pamphlet on *The Art of Albert Namatjira*,¹⁵⁵ he was consulted by MoMA New York for the 'Arts of the South Sea' exhibition, which ran from January 29th to May 19th, 1946. Two bark paintings were described in detail in the catalogue but without any indication of the artists.¹⁵⁶

In 1948, Charles Mountford was appointed head of a large anthropological team sent to Arnhem Land, funded mainly by the US National Geographic Society, with a personal focus on collecting art, in particular bark paintings. As mentioned above, the works were often commissioned by him. After much personal and political intervention, he finally arranged in 1956 the donation of 144 of the 276 bark paintings that he had collected to six state art museums across Australia. This formed the basis for their later collections of Indigenous art.¹⁵⁷

One of the first critics to champion bark paintings as art, rather than as ethnographic objects, was Alan McCulloch, art critic from 1951 to the early 1980s of the Melbourne-based newspaper *The Herald*.¹⁵⁸ McCulloch vehemently demanded an appropriate exhibition of the bark paintings that Spencer had donated to the National Museum of Victoria, and through his personal contacts he eventually succeeded in arranging the 'Aboriginal Bark Paintings from Australia' exhibition of major works at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts in the USA, which opened on December 16th, 1965. McCulloch and many like-minded people considered the works



The catalogue title for the exhibition 'Art of Australia 1788–1941' was designed by the non-Indigenous graphic designer Alister Morrison in a kind of Aboriginal Art Deco style that was very popular in Australia at the time.

¹⁵³ Radford 2011

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.; MCA 2008, p. 23

¹⁵⁵ Mountford 1944

¹⁵⁶ Linton and Wingert 1946, p. 195

¹⁵⁷ MCA 2008, p. 15

¹⁵⁸ James 2014, p. 181

to be art but of a unique kind that should not lose its pristine quality through occidental influences.

Tony Tuckson was deputy director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 1950 and director from 1957. He also became famous as an artist, for his abstract expressionism. A great admirer of art from Arnhem Land and the Tiwi Islands, he began in 1958 an extensive acquisition campaign for the Art Gallery of New South Wales. He commissioned sculptures from six artists on Melville Island, for example, and in June 1959 displayed them prominently in the museum's entry exhibition space. The group of carved and painted ceremonial pukumani grave-posts were created by the artists expressly for display in an art museum, using ironwood rather than the blackwood commonly used for ceremonial purposes.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ AGNSW 2013

In 1960, Tony Tuckson curated a major exhibition of bark paintings for a national tour of all state art museums.¹⁶⁰ It opened in Sydney in August 1960 and ended in Hobart in June 1961. It was subsequently shown in scaled-down form at the VI Biennale in Sao Paolo. This exhibition was perhaps the first to show the transition, from anthropology with a focus on art, to art that drew information from anthropology.

¹⁶⁰ Radford 2011

One of the most important Australian art critics at the time, Wallace Thornton, who worked for a Sydney newspaper, stated, '*Each of the quite abstract patterns of design has some meaning which is known to the artist and members of his clan, and for these the finely documented catalogue is most useful [...] there is tremendous aesthetic satisfaction to be gained from the excellence of these bark paintings. For here there is no mere symmetry but the continual wonder of the unexpected imposed on works of such balance of changing patterns and textures that only the most gifted and perceptive artists could be responsible for their conception.*'¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ Thornton 1960

By the late 1960s in Australia, the work of northern artists using natural pigments on bark or hollow tree trunks was widely accepted as art, though not as contemporary art.

Throughout the 1970s, attempts to bring acrylic works by Papunya artists into art museums were rejected. As Radford recalls, '*It also needs to be documented that in the 1970s the emergence of Western Desert paintings caused some confusion among those who had become familiar with the more traditional art forms from Arnhem Land. Art museums were very reluctant to accept them. Adelaide played a major role in the acceptance of the new movement. There, the Flinders University Art Museum played a role as pioneers in the promoting of Western Desert painting.*'¹⁶²

¹⁶² Radford 2011

It is sometimes claimed that the AAB's first significant success in 'breaking into' museum collections came in 1978 when the Art Gallery of South Australia accepted a donation of 20 acrylic paintings created by Papunya artists during 1974–1975.¹⁶³ The true story is more complex. The first director of the AAB from 1973 to 1980 was Bob Edwards, who was also an honorary advisor to the Art Gallery of South Australia. He used his in-

¹⁶³ Berrell 2009, p. 19

fluence with certain Art Gallery board members so that works were slipped through the acquisition process and only entered into the museum's inventory years later.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Radford 2011

The Flinders University Art Gallery (formerly the Flinders University Art Museum) was the first to purchase a significant number of contemporary Indigenous works of Western Desert painting. It acquired in 1979 works on paper by Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula and David Corby Tjapaltjarri from Papunya, who were Artists in Residence at the museum that year. In 1980, the Art Museum purchased a further 122 works from Papunya Tula Artists.

Ron Radford was appointed Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1980 and was unaware of the twenty Papunya works buried in the museum's depot. One of his first acts was to propose the acquisition of Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's 'Man's Love Story'. He wrote in his recommendation, *'The Board is respectfully asked to consider this proposed acquisition without prejudice or preconception, not as an example of ethnology suitable for an historical or ethnological museum, but as an excellent work of art by a living Australian painter. [...] It is proposed that the painting be hung in the Gallery unashamedly with other Australian contemporary abstract paintings.'*¹⁶⁵



Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Man's Love Story, 1978, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 217 x 261 cm

Radford reported that the director at the time opposed the acquisition as 'not suitable for an art museum', but the request was allowed to go on the board agenda, unsupported by the director, where it was approved by a majority of one vote!¹⁶⁶ Radford immediately had the work displayed in the rooms for contemporary Australian Art. It was the first painting from the Western Desert to hang in a major art museum.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ There is some doubt concerning this anecdote about Radford. According to Dolan (2001, p. 61), the director at the time, David Thomas, supported the purchase of the painting.

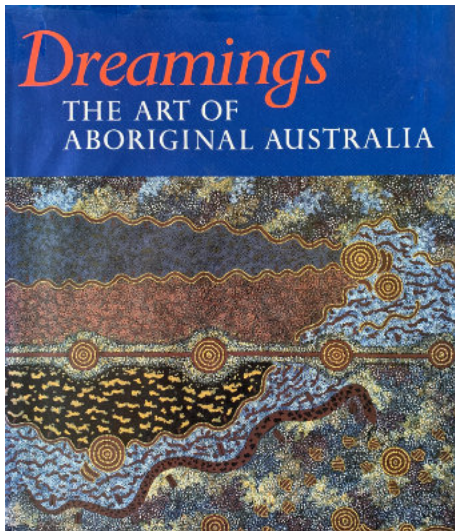
When the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) opened in Canberra in 1982, there was only one Western Desert painting on display, which had been acquired only that year with the help of a private grant: Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula's 'Yala, Wild Potato Dreaming' from 1981.¹⁶⁷ The inaugural exhibition was unusual, however, in that Daniel Thomas (no relation to David Thomas), as director of the NGA, fully departed from the curatorial tradition of separating artworks by media and/or cultural background, and integrated the works of Indigenous artists with those of non-Indigenous artists. For example, bark paintings were shown alongside works by Margaret Preston (see p. 362).

¹⁶⁷ Radford 2011

Radford curated in 1984 an exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia entitled 'Aboriginal Dreamings: Paintings from the Desert'. It showed for the first time the twenty paintings that had been donated to the museum by the AAB in 1978, as well as ten others he had quietly ac-



Daisy Leura Nakamarra, *Women Dreaming*, 1982, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 59 cm Ø



Catalogue of the exhibition at the Asia Society Galleries in New York, 1988

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Acker 2016b, p. 7

¹⁷¹ Preston 1925, p. 44; see also Preston 1930; Leslie 2015; Butel 2015

quired, including a 1982 painting, the first acquired by an Australian art museum from a female Indigenous artist: ‘*Women Dreaming*’, by Daisy Leura Nakamarra.¹⁶⁸

In 1986, Radford began selecting works for a major touring exhibition to mark the bicentenary of the arrival of the British in Sydney harbour. The bicentennial organising committee wanted him to curate an art exhibition to be shown in all state art museums: ‘*The Great Australian Art Exhibition 1788–1988*’. Naturally, he wanted to give a prominent place to the works of Indigenous artists and immediately contacted the director of the Australian Arts Board, Gary Foley, who promptly refused collaboration, saying, ‘*While you whities are celebrating 200 years of European culture in Australia we will be celebrating 40,000 years of Aboriginal culture with exhibitions in Europe.*’¹⁶⁹

Foley was referring to the touring exhibition ‘*Dreamings: The Art of Aboriginal Australia*’ at the Asia Society Galleries in New York from October 6th to December 31st, 1988, which set an attendance record and helped attract the first serious international collectors but actually failed to be accepted into any European art museum.¹⁷⁰

Foley resigned from the AAB a little later and devoted his energies to organising protests against the bicentenary celebrations. The next director of the AAB was Gavin Andrews, who pledged his support to the anniversary exhibition, and ‘*The Great Australian Art Exhibition 1788–1988*’ was shown with a strong and diverse selection of Indigenous artworks.

Influence of Indigenous Art on Non-Indigenous Artists

From as early as 1925 and repeatedly thereafter, Margaret Preston, a prominent non-Indigenous artist who was influenced in her painting by the form and colour of Indigenous art, advocated its blatant appropriation as the basis of a new national art style for Australia, ‘*It is on the primitive natural forms that we must depend. In returning to primitive art, it should be remembered that it is to be used as a starting point only for a renewal of growth [of a national style], and a gradual selection must take place to arrive at the culmination. Therefore I feel no loss of dignity in studying and applying myself to the art of the aboriginals.*’¹⁷¹

Margaret Preston did not succeed in this. It was not until Indigenous contemporary art gained some visibility in art museums in the mid-1980s, and some commercial galleries began to specialise in this field—for example, Coe-ee Aboriginal Art Gallery from 1981 at several locations, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi in Melbourne from 1987, Utopia Art Sydney from 1988—that the influence of Indigenous art on non-Indigenous artists became apparent.

The exhibition ‘*A Changing relationship: Aboriginal themes in*

Australian art c. 1938–1988’ from June 7th to July 31st, 1988, with over 110 exhibits in various media at the S. H. Ervin Gallery in Sydney¹⁷² was the first to address the mutual cross-cultural interaction. However, one had to wait until 2004 before the exhibition ‘Talking About Abstraction’, shown from May 27th to July 3rd, at the College of Fine Arts of the University of New South Wales in parallel to the Sydney Biennale would focus directly on the influence of Indigenous art on non-Indigenous artists. This exhibition was ‘[...] premised on the belief that Aboriginal painting assumes an authoritative influence on the practice of many non-Indigenous artists.’¹⁷³ The exhibition featured works by leading Indigenous artists such as Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Mitjili Napurrula, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, and George Tjungurrayi alongside abstract works by non-Indigenous artists such as Melinda Harper, A.D.S. Donaldson, Debra Dawes, Angela Brennan and others, highlighting formal and painterly similarities. No attempt was made to analyse Indigenous artworks within the formalism of Western abstraction.

The indisputable influence of Indigenous art on non-Indigenous artists in Australia is apparent in another exhibition, ‘roads cross. contemporary directions in Australian art’ of 2012.¹⁷⁴ It juxtaposed two etchings by Rover Thomas (Joolama) with works by sixteen non-Indigenous artists, as well as with collaborative works by four Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists. Other examples of cross-cultural influences are analysed in detail by, for example, Hayley French¹⁷⁵ and Howard Morphy.¹⁷⁶

Being inspired by the form and colour of a work of art is one kind of influence. Another is appropriation: incorporating images or parts of images by another artist into one’s own work, either unchanged or with minor alterations. Appropriation implies a conscious and overt reference, homage or criticism of the appropriated art. It can be liberated from its original meaning, due to the new context, and thus gain a new meaning. This tried and tested method in Western art can lead to uproar in Indigenous art. For if permission from the source of the original art is not legitimised, questions of originality, authorship, authenticity, and the arrogation of intellectual property arise. The latter is now somewhat complicated by Australia’s copyright laws for Indigenous images.¹⁷⁷

In the 1980s, non-Indigenous artists began to incorporate parts of images of works by Indigenous artists into their paintings. The 2012 exhibition ‘The Loaded Ground: Michael Nelson Jagamara & Imants Tillers’¹⁷⁸ offered a variety of in-

¹⁷² De Lorenzo and Dysart 1988

¹⁷³ Fenner and Johnson 2004, p. 1

¹⁷⁴ Flinders University Art Museum 2012

¹⁷⁵ French 2015

¹⁷⁶ Morphy 2020

¹⁷⁷ Janke and Quiggin 2006; Arts Law Centre of Australia 2011; Korff 2020

¹⁷⁸ ANU 2012



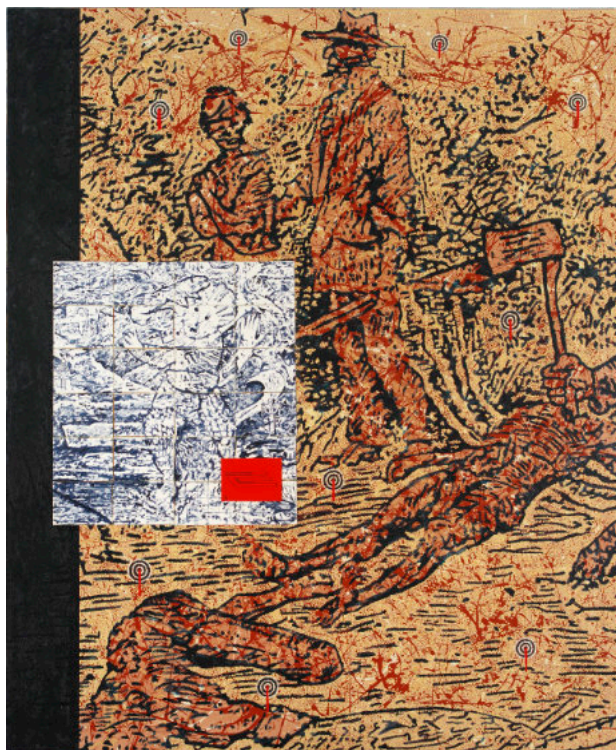
Michael Jagamara Nelson, *Five Stories*, 1984, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122 × 188 cm

179 NGV 2007, p. 12

180, 181, 182, 183 see next page



Imants Tillers, *The Nine Shots*, 1985, synthetic polymer paint and oil pencil on 91 canvases, 330 × 266 cm



Gordon Bennett, *The Nine Ricochets (Fall down black fella jump up white fella)*, 1990, oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas and painting panels, 220 × 182 cm

sights into this practice and documented the collaboration between the two artists, which enabled Tillers to make amends for his earlier disregard of Indigenous intellectual ownership. For Imants Tillers had appropriated

parts of images from Jagamara's work 'Five Stories', 1984, into his work 'The Nine Shots', 1985, without seeking permission. The appropriation is unproblematic in relation to the central human figure that Tillers had taken from Georg Baselitz's work 'Forward Wind', 1965, but appropriation from Jagamara's work without explicit permission is a serious offence under Indigenous rules, as only the relevant representatives/owners of a Jukurrpa are allowed to use the motifs and they are also obliged to protect the motifs from unlawful use.

Controversy erupted in 1986 when both works were exhibited at the Sydney Biennale and reproduced side by side in the catalogue. Fireworks Gallery director and mutual friend Michael Eather later helped Tillers resolve the conflict by instigating a collaboration between the two artists that resulted in thirteen paintings over a twelve-year period. The 2012 retrospective exhibition 'The Loaded Ground: Michael Nelson Jagamara & Imants Tillers' showed these joint works and several others that are in dialogue with each other.

Five years after 'The Nine Shots' and well before the collaboration between Michael Jagamara Nelson and Imants Tillers, Gordon Bennett, an artist with Indigenous and Anglo-Celtic heritage and a master of appropriation, responded to Tillers' painting in an ironic yet bitterly serious manner. Previously, Bennett had himself, in a phase of identity formation, used without permission some symbolism (Mimi Spirit figures) inspired by wood carvings by Indigenous artist Crusoe Kuningbal of Arnhem Land, provoking a dispute for which he apologised in person in 1989.¹⁷⁹ In his pictorial response to Imants Tillers' 'The Nine Shots', which he titled 'The Nine Ricochets (Fall down black fella jump up white fella)', Bennett adopted the personal cultural symbolism of Tillers' painting 'Pataphysical Man' of 1984¹⁸⁰ and even mimicked the latter's characteristic style of assembling individual small canvas panels into a larger painting. Bennett's technique in his painting is derived from Jackson Pollock's dripping technique and aspects of the dot technique of Western Desert painting.

The main focus in Bennett's painting, however, is on another appropriation, the image of 'dispersed' (murdered) Indigenous people and an upright man holding a rifle. The original image first appeared with the title 'Queensland Squatters "Dispersing" Aborigines' as a frontispiece in a book¹⁸¹ and was later reproduced by Elder.^{182, 183} Bennett did not take the entire original image but only a section which he enlarged to bring the

gruesome reality more into the foreground. In this way, Bennett sets Indigenous reality in critical contrast to the 'Pataphysical Man'. He re-appropriates the concentric circles but transforms their meaning, showing blood flowing from them. The ricochets hit the first appropriator.

Conclusions

Judith Ryan, then a curator at the Ian Potter Centre in Melbourne, published an essay in 2014 in which she stated in the very first sentence, '*Until recently, the question of the aesthetic principle has figured rarely in discussions of Aboriginal art.*'¹⁸⁴ Ryan went on to claim that political correctness impedes aesthetic criticism, to avoid negative evaluations being attributed to racism (see p. 397). She goes on to state quite correctly, '*In considering the quality of a work, there is far more to discover than the meaning of the iconography, which is but one part of the whole. We also need to consider the painting as painting, in terms of its visual elements.*'¹⁸⁵ Therefore, it is time to establish the principle of 'lirrgarn', reciprocity and exchange of teaching and learning, as practised for example in the Indigenous community of Warmun (see p. 345). Artists (Western and Indigenous) can learn from each other; viewers, Western or Indigenous, can learn from the artists. Learning in both directions is key.

This chapter has traced the history of the various beginnings of contemporary Indigenous art: from the time of the first British settlement in Sydney in 1788, when art on rock faces and bark was briefly noted but then ignored by the settlers, through the recognition of bark painting as art by critics in the 1960s, the introduction of Western materials and its slow recognition as contemporary art, especially by Papunya artists in the 1970s/1980s, to the full inclusion of Indigenous art in all collections of Australia's major state art museums from the 1990s onwards.

Today, a number of rural and urban Indigenous artists regularly participate in Australian art biennials and triennials, their work is shown in retrospectives and is part of the permanent collections of art museums. Some of the artists pursue academic careers while continuing to work artistically and engage with their cultural heritage, such as Fiona Foley or Julie Gough.

The cross-cultural interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists is a sign of parity in cooperation and recognition. The perception of the aesthetics and complexity of Indigenous artworks by the Western art scene is a sign of greater appreciation. The rise and success of Indigenous curators such as Brenda L. Croft (Gurindji/Malngin/Mudburra), Djon Mundine (Bandjalung), Hetti Perkins (Kalkadoon), and Avril Quail (Noonuccal) have contributed significantly to this.

The success of contemporary Indigenous art in the art world was by no means assured. During the last hundred years of gradual acceptance

¹⁸⁰ Gordon Bennett made a conscious decision to appropriate the small black and white figure that Tillers repeatedly includes in his artworks, based on an image that was significant to him in his childhood in Latvia. Gordon Bennett wanted Tillers to immediately experience a similar sense of cultural theft as had Jagamara. (email communication with L. Bennett on May 22nd, 2022)

¹⁸¹ Vogan 1890

¹⁸² Elder 1988

¹⁸³ Vgl. NGV 2007, S. 121

¹⁸⁴ Ryan 2014

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

within occidental society, the barriers described in the chapter '(In)Acceptance of Indigenous Australian Art in Germany – Part II: An Analysis' had to be overcome at every stage. The biggest differences between the situation in Australia and that in Germany is that in Australia there have always been a number of influential figures supporting these arts, there has been and continues to be important, if irregular, funding from the government, and there is a very diverse and vocal network of artists and curators in Australia contributing to the discourse.

08 – (In)Acceptance of Indigenous Australian Art in Germany – Part I: A Report

‘White people, non-Aboriginal people, should be educated about our art, especially at colleges or universities; it would sort of give them a better understanding. I mean, there are different sorts of arts, and those people should be educated at those institutions, to make them better aware of our art, because we appreciate their art too.’

Jeannie Herbert Nungarrayi¹

‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’ (Düsseldorf 1993), ‘Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen. Elf Künstler der australischen Aborigines’ (Hannover 1995), ‘Dreamtime – Jukurrpa’ (Frankfurt 1996), ‘Kunst der Aborigines’ (Leverkusen 2000), ‘Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren’ (Wolfsburg 2001), ‘Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien’ (Aschaffenburg 2002), ‘Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines’ (Reutlingen and Bayreuth 2004–2005), ‘Opening Doors’ (Hannover 2007), ‘Remembering Forward’ (Cologne 2010–2011), ‘DOCUMENTA (13)’ (Kassel 2012).

With all these exhibitions in art museums and art associations or places known for their exhibitions of contemporary art, and there were at least 18 more exhibitions until 2012, shouldn’t it be clear that Indigenous Australian art is recognised as so-called ‘high art’ in Germany?

Far from it! Note that all these exhibitions took place over a period of 20 years; whereas from 2000 to 2016, works by Picasso alone—a favourite painter of a number of artists in Arnhem Land²—were shown in 81 solo and 91 group exhibitions in Germany, counted according to reports in *kunsttermine.de*. These figures do not include the 49 exhibitions about Picasso at the Pablo Picasso Art Museum in Münster.

Note a seemingly positive remark by a museum director³ in 2013, ‘*After our intensive engagement with Indigenous Australian art [...] we have decided to take some distance from this subject area now.*’ The ‘intense engagement’ had taken place 20 years earlier!

In a publication in 2017, a director commented on the reception of art, noting that aspects could be found in Kandinsky’s writings that would regain importance today, e.g., Kandinsky’s appeal to the viewer to stand in front of an artwork ‘with an open soul’ and without any ‘objective criteria’. The director believed that this would inevitably bring to mind the theme of ‘how to unlearn’ as a means of overcoming prejudices, precon-

¹ Ryan 1990, p. 18

² Musée d’Aquitaine 2013, p. 232

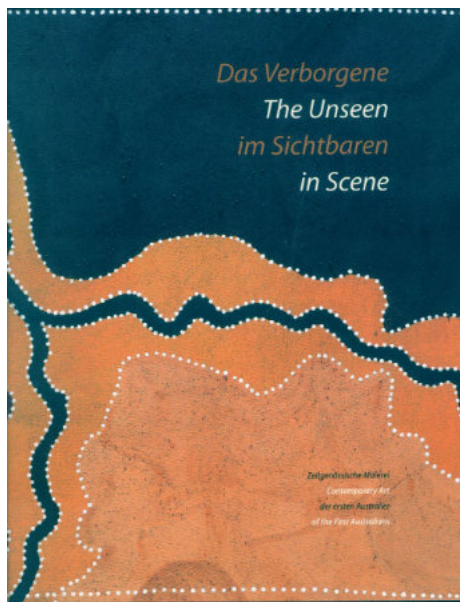
³ In this chapter, the directors or art historians are referred to only in the masculine form but not because there were no women among the directors. We use this form and avoid naming them because some of the statements are quite discriminatory, and it is not our intention to embarrass individual art historians.

⁴ Exceptionally, the source is not given in order to protect the director.

ceptions and Western-dominated perspectives.⁴ A positive statement? Not really, but rather a politically correct one, because this was stated by the same director who had been so ‘intensely’ involved in Indigenous Australian art 20 years previously and now no longer saw the need. It would be helpful—to put it mildly—if not only this director but all art historians in Germany, would take Kandinsky’s recommendations to heart and, above all, apply his suggestions to all art in the world.

This chapter reports on the experience of applying for exhibitions of contemporary Indigenous Australian art in German art museums between 1997 and 2013 and again in 2022. All quotations in this part of the chapter are either from personal conversations with the directors of the art institutions contacted or from their letters of response to the applications. Convinced of the quality of the works and assuming that only a lack of knowledge about this art would prevent its exhibition, attempts were made to place the art in exhibitions with the help of professional documentation, without using personal connections but with all the greater persistence. The next chapter discusses why this art was rejected by 97.1% of the contacted contemporary art museums, art associations or other exhibition venues known for their contemporary art exhibitions.

Troublesome



Exhibition catalogue *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, 2000

During its existence between 1997 and 2007, the Aboriginal Art Gallery Bähr applied for exhibitions throughout Germany with the aim of raising the profile of Indigenous Australian art as contemporary art. Until 2000, applications to art museums were accompanied by brief information about the art and a few professionally produced images; it was explicitly stated that further information could be provided and that an exhibition could take place *at any time*. These sentences were found in all applications for exhibitions, including those of a later application marathon in 2013.

Between 2000 and 2007, the applications were accompanied by the 151-page bilingual catalogue of the very successful exhibition *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*. It contains articles by Vivien Johnson, an expert on Indigenous art who wrote on the history of this art, by Bernhard Lüthi, the curator of the first major exhibition in Germany ‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’, who discussed the concept of tradition, and the gallery director, who provided detailed information about the art on display.⁵ In this way, it was possible for the art institutions contacted to gain a good impression of the intention of an exhibition and the quality of the exhibits.

Between 1997 and 2007, the Gallery Bähr sent out 182 applications in this way, addressed to directors by name. For comparison: in 2005, the total number of German art museums was 616, rising to 674 by 2013.⁶ However, this figure also included museums not focussing on contempo-

⁵ Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr et al. 2000

⁶ Institut für Museumsforschung 2006, p. 15; 2014, p. 19

rary art. The number of art associations has remained the same at around 300. Ten exhibitions could be realised based on these 182 applications.

The gallery director always tried to telephone the art museum when an answer was long delayed. The table on the following page shows that this was not always successful and was more arduous in 2013 than in previous years. At times the reactions took on bizarre forms. One director was interested in making an exhibition. An appointment was found to visit the collection, but on that very day, one of the rare German railway strikes prevented the director from arriving. After that, despite numerous attempts via email or telephone, no more contact was possible. Echoing silence.

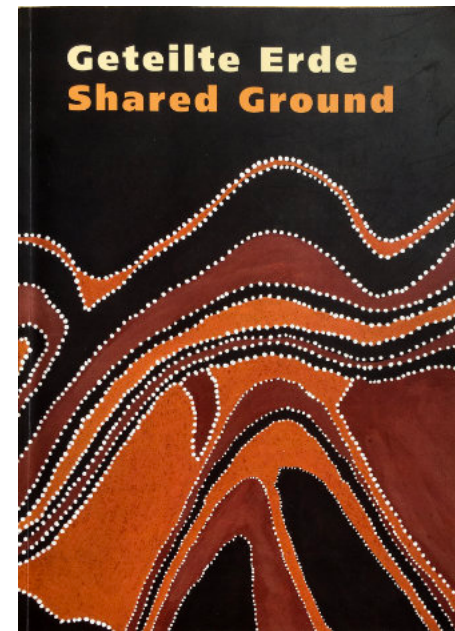
In the 2013 application marathon, the documents included references to the activities carried out to date to promote the arts, a description of the personal art collection that had been meanwhile assembled and expanded as well as the various themes that could be illustrated through this collection. The applications also included image examples from the collection and examples for a possible Indigenous art photography exhibition. A recent catalogue was provided from the 2012 exhibition *Geteilte Erde. Shared Ground*,⁷ whereby part of the collection was shown in dialogue with modern ceramics by Lotte Reimers. The directors of 163 art institutions were contacted, some of which were the same museums as in the years 1997 to 2007, but not always led by the same directors. Forty-seven per cent responded directly. Not a single exhibition could be realised as a result.

Statistical

The standard refusals contained two arguments. One was that all exhibition planning for the next two or three years had been completed, which ignored the offer that an exhibition could take place *at any time*, i.e., in five, seven or ten years. Renewed referral to this did not achieve a different response. Such refusals could also be interpreted as a polite form of ‘don’t bother me any further’.

The second and most frequent argument for refusal was that such an exhibition did not fit into the museum programme. On the one hand, this is a reasonable argument, but on the other hand, programmes are *formulated*, and in conjunction with the offer of an exhibition at any time, if there had been sufficient interest, there would have been the possibility of developing a future programme that would have included an exhibition of Indigenous art. In fact, some directors expressed that in a sequence of thematically appropriate exhibitions, one with Indigenous art would be possible, but still did not want to consider this.

Another argument, that their own collection did not offer a point of connection to Indigenous art, was perplexing because this reasoning was also put forward by art institutions that curate exhibitions from beyond their own collection. Furthermore, it is a somewhat nonsensical justi-



Exhibition catalogue *Geteilte Erde. Shared Ground*, 2012

⁷ Lotte Reimers-Stiftung and Bähr 2012

fication: a direct connection with their collection *cannot* be found, because they own not a single work of Indigenous Australian art. The only art museum that had a few such works at the time that it was approached refused an exhibition without providing grounds.

Response types to applications	1997–2007	2013
Exhibition planning has been completed	47	44
Does not fit into the programme	62	70
No link to the collection	5	19
Recommendation Ethnological Museum	12	8
Rejection without rationale	28	16
Other exhibition of Indigenous art too close in time, or the art has already been shown enough	8	5
Institution not responding or not reacting again after first contact	17	28
Approval, exhibition has taken place	10	0

Statistic of responses to 182 applications between 1997 and 2007 and to 163 applications in 2013 (multiple responses possible)

The relatively large number of refusals without rationale, combined with a number of clarifying phone calls, indicated that expertise in Indigenous Australian art was (and is) marginal. A search via the internet in 2017 and again in 2021 revealed that no art historian publishing on Indigenous Australian art could be found at German art colleges or at the corresponding faculties of universities. Only one art historian with an interest in Indigenous art, but self-admittedly limited knowledge of it, has argued in an article for its possible integration into occidental art museums for non-Western art.⁸ The widespread ignorance was confirmed by directors stating that they only show exhibitions for artists of international calibre, that they are a museum of the 20th and 21st centuries, that they only show contemporary art, and that they work with current or socio-political themes. Indigenous art can fulfil all these criteria.

Another indication of the lack of awareness among the art historians was the statement of one director that he would prefer, if at all, to exhibit works by Indigenous urban artists, but—as it turned out—he did not even know Judy Watson or Trevor Nickolls. Works by Judy Watson were exhibited together with works by Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Yvonne Koolmatrie at the Venice Biennale in 1997. Trevor Nickolls and Rover Thomas (Joolama) were the first Indigenous artists to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale in 1990. Even as late as 2013, a director put Indigenous art in the category of pointillism, thus ageing the works by almost 100 years, quite apart from the fact that this category of Western art history does not apply to Indigenous art.

It was always gratifying when a director professed ignorance. Then, his refusal was understandable, for, as a rule, one does not exhibit art that one does not know. These confessions were more frequent in the

⁸ Bonnet 2009, pp. 123–134

period between 1997 and 2007 than in the 2013 applications, which may have been due to the exhibitions that had taken place in the meantime, which could not be overlooked.

Less pleasing was when the directors admitted their ignorance of Indigenous art yet combined this with the assertion that there was no need for such an exhibition. In the same category are statements that the subject is too unusual for their city, where there is little, if any, interest in such art, and that the art does not fit the city. This strangely limited and paternalistic view makes the director the arbiter of art in a city and is tantamount to disenfranchising potential visitors. One outlandish justification for rejecting an exhibition, that one should not overburden the public with international exhibitions, also matches this.

On the other hand, it was gratifying when directors at least noticed or even visited the exhibitions that did take place in Germany. This at least occurred for some larger exhibitions ‘Arañjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’, ‘Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren’, the ‘DOCUMENTA (13)’ and the five exhibitions at the Sprengel Museum Hannover.

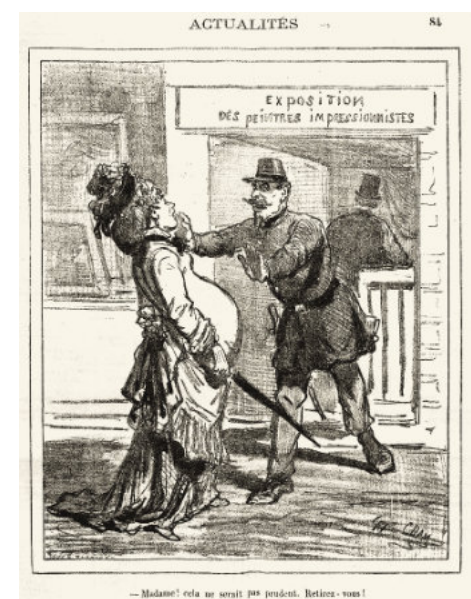
Finally, the directors who never say no should be mentioned. Over a period of six years, the director of one art museum repeatedly managed to show interest in an exhibition, in different directions of Indigenous art, without ever coming to a decision. One cannot interpret this in any other way than as a supposedly polite rejection tinged with alleged interest. Such formulations were indeed found rather frequently in the response letters, and after a few negative experiences, it was clear that such letters should not inspire reactions.

Disrespectful

The director of one art museum commented in 1995, ‘*When we heard about this exhibition, we all thought, now he’s gone completely mad.*’ By ‘we all’, he meant himself and other directors or curators, and by ‘he’ was meant the then director of the Sprengel Museum in Hannover, who had just opened the exhibition ‘Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen’. When the catalogue was pushed into his hands, he remarked quietly, talking to himself, ‘*Oh, that’s how it is, that’s interesting.*’

He thus combined two typical comments on Indigenous art and revealed that ignorance about this art is paired with the disregard inherent in the Eurocentric approach prevalent in German art history.

An in-depth conversation in 2017 with curator George Petitjean of the (unfortunately closed) Museum of contemporary Aboriginal Art in Utrecht, The Netherlands, confirmed that the same problems exist across Europe. Even an offer by Museums & Galleries Queensland, an organisation that supports regional public museums, and the Gold Coast City Gallery to tour the exhibition ‘Saltwater Country’ without any local



Madame! Cela ne serait pas prudent. Retirez-vous! – Madame! It is not advisable to enter. Withdraw!

Amédée Charles Henri de Noé, pen name Cham, *Le Charivari*, Avril 16th, 1877

⁹ Kalina 2007, p. 97

costs—even for the transport of the artworks—was only accepted by the Utrecht museum and no other museum in Europe. Similar conditions prevailed in the USA: Although the exhibition ‘Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters’ was shown in 2006 at both the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D. C., and the Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, New Hampshire, 50 other museums declined to host the exhibition.⁹

One could already conclude the first part of this chapter here, but one would then miss some subtleties of dealing with Indigenous art as contemporary art in Germany.

One director wrote in 1998 that he was ‘[...] sceptical whether the now clearly commercialised and schematised productions by Aborigines known by name really meet museum requirements.’ It remained unclear what he meant by ‘schematised’. Another art historian even distinguished between ‘first- and second-generation’ artists, i.e., those who had realised that there was money to be made in painting. The accusation of commercialisation serves only to discredit them, for what artist would not desire to be able to make a living from their art?

One director crowned the disrespect by blurting out in some agitation, not realising with whom he was speaking on the phone, ‘Our mentally handicapped people achieve more than these natives. It’s too decorative, you can print it on coffee cups. People over there, like those in Canada, overestimate themselves.’ It seems that he has never visited a museum shop and seen the mugs, fridge magnets, and umbrellas with images of the works of, e.g., Mondrian or Monet. Or would it be better to comment that his remark brought Indigenous artists into renowned artistic circles?



A teacup with motifs by Renoir in art museums shops

Eurocentric

Apart from the completed exhibition planning for the next two to three years and an unsuitable programme, the Eurocentrically motivated reasons for refusal were relatively numerous but revealed differences.

First of all, there were suggestions to relegate Indigenous art to the ethnological museums. Not even the suggestion was missing, as an echo from earlier centuries, to exhibit in a Natural History Museum—together ‘with the bones of the dinosaurs’, as Michael Jagamara Nelson once noted.¹⁰ Such recommendations are in famous company—read and marvel at the ‘documenta 14’ of 2017, where works were shown in the Museum of Natural History in the Ottoneum, Kassel, by artists from Colombia, Cambodia, Australia, Mongolia, Norway, Sweden, etc.¹¹ It cannot be assumed that the curators of ‘documenta 14’ understood these exhibits as belonging to natural history, but such an exhibition venue does not testify to sensitivity. One needs to give the curators of ‘documenta 14’ credit for the fact that works by Indigenous artists were also to be found in other exhibition venues.

¹⁰ Johnson 1997, p. 47

¹¹ Naturkundemuseum 2017

It also belongs in the category of adamant referral to ethnological museums that a decision-making committee debated whether this art was art at all, that one director saw it as pure folklore, and another could agree to accept the art as ethnological but declared it bad and unacceptable as contemporary art. Another director was unsure whether Indigenous art was art in the European sense and whether it was the task of the German museums to exhibit it widely. Another art historian confessed that he was strictly following Eurocentric criteria.

After these statements, it was clear that the public debate at Art Cologne 1994 about the participation of one of the leading Australian galleries specialising in Indigenous art had not changed attitudes. The debate was conducted with the help of a radio programme on WDR¹² and many newspaper articles. The Art Cologne jury wanted to exclude the gallery from participating in 1994 because it had shown ‘folk art’ the previous year.¹³ As a consequence of its Eurocentric views, Art Cologne changed its admission guidelines and excluded what it called ‘Ethnographics and Folk Art’ from future fairs.¹⁴

Another line of argumentation for rejecting exhibitions referred to the different cultures from which the art emerges. One director declaimed: even though he could very well understand that Indigenous art could be seen in the context of contemporary, international art, it belonged in the ethnological museum because it came from a completely different culture whose myths and traditions need explanation.

Another art historian said that Indigenous art cannot be integrated into Western art because that would lead to misunderstandings since the viewer must be able to correctly place the artist in an art-historical framework. However, that would not be possible if too few examples were available for comparison; one would then very quickly end with arts and crafts. Indigenous art must be exhibited in a venue where it can be placed in a network of relationships. Another director put it slightly differently: he had problems with the approach of showing ethnological artworks in a European context because the conditions of origin and reception were not the same. The exhibition would need to be able to compare something completely unknown with familiar Western art. A more positive comment was that to do justice to the matter at hand, one could not show non-European art because it had to be seen from other points of view; one had to avoid ghettoisation. Therefore, a large exhibition that problematised this issue was appropriate.

¹² WDR 1994

¹³ Frieling and Bähr 2003, pp. 76–77

¹⁴ Art Cologne 2020. For the first time since 1994, Art Cologne 2022 admitted a gallery representing Indigenous Australian artists alongside other contemporary artists, the Smith Davidson Gallery from Amsterdam and Mexico City. However, the ‘Guidelines for the Admission Procedure’ still contain the exclusion of ‘Ethnographic and Folk Art’ under point 4.6, so it remains at the jury’s discretion, which art it subsumes under these terms.



‘Folk art’ or contemporary art?
 Sean Scully, *Landline Far Red*, 2018, oil on aluminium, 215.9 × 190.5 cm;
 Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Linear Series*, 1994, synthetic polymer paint on canvas,
 77 × 56 cm

One could ask how such curators deal with art from China or Japan, cultures that do not correspond at all to those in Europe. The answers followed immediately: One does exhibitions with international art that show a kind of Western approach to art. Or: Of interest are the artists who engage on the basis of the conditions of a contemporary art debate, i.e., art that explicitly makes use of the global context of art. More insightful were comments that Indigenous art could be exhibited as a confrontation to European art, although it remained open whether both art directions were understood as having equal parity.

In order to perhaps be able to maintain the popular division between high art and ethnological artefacts without having to express this directly, one director showed interest (of course without deciding to make an exhibition) in Indigenous art that had a connection to metropolitan culture or had led to a new formal language in the confrontation between cultures. One could, of course, show the art made in the cities and thus expand the usual view of Australian art, but that would be a long-term project. Why long-term? Perhaps because art historians in Germany currently learn nothing at university about Indigenous Australian art and would need to acquire such knowledge themselves?

Respectful

And yet, they do exist! ... that small number of art historians who have studied Indigenous art a little or overcome their rejection born of ignorance or prejudice. One director had significant reservations about bringing Indigenous art into German art museums, but he revised his view after travelling to Australia. Nevertheless, there was no corresponding exhibition in his museum.

Four directors were interested in exhibitions, but they failed for different reasons. Two of the directors were dependent on other decision-makers who declined such an exhibition, one lacked the necessary funds, and the fourth did not want to exhibit the offered collection but instead wanted to cooperate with Australian museums, which, however, has not happened to date.

Of the 17 exhibitions realised by Galerie Bähr between 1997 and 2007 in art museums, art associations or venues known for their exhibitions of contemporary art, ten came about through applications and seven through the mediation of others. Exhibitions based on applications were shown at the Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg, the Kunstforum HDZ in Bad Oeynhausen, the Stadtgalerie Bamberg–Villa Dessauer, the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Bayer Kultur in Leverkusen, the Städtische Galerie Meiningen, the Kunstmuseum Reutlingen|Spendhaus, the Städtische Galerien in Traunstein and Wolfsburg. Through mediation, exhibitions could be curated at the Kunstmuseum Bayreuth, at the Jagdschloss

Granitz in Binz, at TUI in Hannover, at the Evangelische Akademie Iserlohn, at Deutsche Welle in Cologne, at Burg Vischering in Lüdinghausen, and the IHK Würzburg (in connection with the New Music Days festival).¹⁵

As a consequence of an exhibition, the Kunstmuseum Reutlingen|Spendhaus even purchased the graphics portfolio 'Utopia Suite'. Every exhibition of Indigenous contemporary art attracted a large stream of visitors; some of the guided tours through the exhibitions were attended by up to 80 visitors. A direct comparison with the number of visitors to other contemporary art exhibitions was rarely possible because attendance was usually not counted, or there were no parallel exhibitions. However, in the case of the exhibition 'Traumzeit-Tjukurrpa' at the Villa Stuck in Munich in 1994, it was found that the number of visitors (15,008) was significantly higher than at the simultaneous exhibition of photographs from Hollywood and about the same as at the exhibition on Max Beckmann shown a year earlier.¹⁶

Comparative

On the basis of the telephone calls and letters, it was not always possible to decide with certainty whether an interest in an exhibition was merely pretended out of sheer politeness or actually existed. It is clear, however, that in only a few cases was the interest so great that an exhibition was seriously contemplated. In this respect, the two periods for applications differ greatly. While in the period between 1997 and 2007, at least ten exhibitions came about as a result of the 182 applications, in 2013, with 163 applications, there was not a single one.

The reasons for this decline cannot be clearly explained. One reason may be that museum directors assess the competence of gallery directors (1st period) and freelance curators (2nd period) differently, despite the fact that their promotion of this art spanned about 20 years. Another reason could be that, after the exhibitions in the 1990s and early 2000s, directors were not motivated by gaining kudos for the originality of such an exhibition. That is, of course, a false premise, given the breadth of Indigenous art that has not yet been shown in Germany. However, it would be understandable given the aforementioned directors' ignorance. Supporting this hypothesis is the fact that one director mentioned in 2000 that his museum might lose its reputation for originality because Indigenous art had already been exhibited elsewhere.

Another major difference between the two application periods can be seen in the openness of the responses. In the period from 1997 to 2007, the answers were more explicit in their rejection and Eurocentric arguments were made much more often. By 2013, people had learned to be more politically correct.

¹⁵ In the period between 2007 and 2013 as well as afterwards, there were further exhibitions that came about both through application and mediation: in 2011 at the Kunstverein 'Talstrasse' in Halle (Saale) and in 2012 at the Theodor-Zink-Museum in Kaiserslautern. In the exhibition 'Punkt .Systeme. Vom Pointilismus zum Pixel' 2012 at the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen, Indigenous art was included through two paintings from the Bähr/Frost Collection. Other paintings from the collection were integrated into exhibitions at the Sprengel Museum Hannover 2006–2007 and the Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art in Utrecht 2006.

¹⁶ Bähr 1995, pp. 109–110

Well Known

Response types to applications in 2022	
Exhibition planning completed	9
Does not fit into the programme	11
Recommends an ethnological museum	2
Rejection without justification	3
Reply possibly later	4
Possible integration of some paintings	1

Extract from the 31 responses to 127 applications 2022 (multiple answers possible)

In 2022, 127 art museums were again contacted regarding an exhibition of the Bähr/Frost private collection or one with photography from Australia. The same museums were approached as in 2013, but the directorships had changed in more than half. This time, the documentation referenced the table of contents of this book in addition to information on the collection and photographs, each with examples of images (as in 2013). The timing of an exhibition was again discretionary. Only 24% of the directors responded at all.

The arguments raised against an exhibition were often the same as in previous years. Fewer directors dared to refer to ethnological museums. Two answers showed that not all directors even read the applications (or perhaps immediately closed their eyes at the mention of Australia). One director explained that a focus of their museum is on photography, and therefore an exhibition was impossible. Another preferred an application for a group exhibition with art from his region (!) as if Australia were a region of Germany. One director explained that Australia was so far away and, therefore, too difficult to interpret. Well ... we're all on the same planet. Of the 31 directors who responded, one mused that he might want to integrate a few paintings into some future exhibition. Conclusion: nothing new in '22.

What to Do?

Glimpses of the largely unknown and the fascination with the exotic permitted a number of exhibitions in the 1990s. However, as soon as the novelty was over, the art seemed no longer exhibitable. There were a remarkable number of refusals on the grounds that Indigenous art had already been exhibited elsewhere—even though five years had meanwhile passed—and that one would have to wait before exhibiting again. It was not the visiting public who found exhibitions of Indigenous art problematic but the directors.

The knowledge that Indigenous Australian art exists, together with a superficial overview of some of its characteristics, has improved over the years but not an understanding of it and therefore not acceptance. Ignorance seems to be the ongoing order of the day, rather than engagement and acquisition of knowledge; this reveals an intellectual parochialism that leads to the exclusion of entire art movements from German art museums. Including Indigenous art in the curricula of art colleges and universities could provide a long-term remedy. Furthermore, given the not-inconsiderable number of exhibitions that have come about as a result of mediation, the establishment of a network of people and institutions interested in this art seems to be a promising approach for the future.

09 – (In)Acceptance of Indigenous Australian Art in Germany – Part II: An Analysis

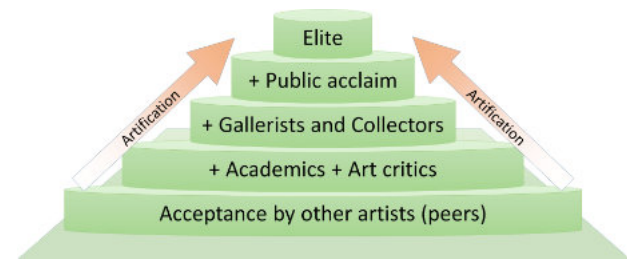
Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the many factors and interdependencies that interact to delay the recognition of Indigenous Australian art as contemporary art in Germany. Examples from the previous chapter are cited where appropriate. Very similar factors apply to Indigenous art from other countries—from A to Z, from America, Brazil, or Canada to Zaire.

This chapter is not about aesthetics but about the recognition and appreciation of Indigenous art. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder! Fame, however, comes from the pen of the critic. Bowness argued that there is a straightforward process to artistic success (acceptance) to the point that it is predictable.¹ According to Bowness, *‘There are four successive circles [barriers] of recognition through which the exceptional artist passes on his path to fame. I will call them peer recognition, critical recognition, patronage by dealers and collectors, and finally public acclaim.’*²

Of course, the degree of recognition for an artist can wax and wane, and the rise from the outer to the inner circle is not without reversals. The same process can apply to new directions in art. The previous chapter has shown that Indigenous Australian art has a difficult time being recognised as contemporary art in Germany, i.e., it is not treated as a subject of study in academic institutions (critical recognition) and is rarely given exhibition space in art museums. Therefore, it seems that Indigenous contemporary art in Germany has so far only reached the outer rings of the circles of acceptance presented by Bowness. Australian art critics such as Ian McLean, who closely observe and comment on the points of contact between Indigenous art and global trends, recognise this, *‘[...] Western Desert art demonstrated its modernity, conquered the Australian art world and indeed the hearts and minds of the Australian national consciousness, [but] it did not conquer the wider art world.’*³

An international symposium towards the end of 2018, organised by the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA) in Seoul, Korea, explored the impact of the end of the Cold War on global museum policy. Published as a book,⁴ the seminars explored two aspects:



Phases or stages of artistic success (loosely based on Bowness 1989)

¹ Bowness 1989, p. 7

² Ibid., p. 11

³ McLean 2014, p. 78

⁴ 2019



What Do Museums Collect?

firstly, the relationship between discourses on the ‘other’ and museum collecting under the theme ‘Collecting Others in Contemporary Art Museums: Diversity and Inclusion beyond Post-Colonial Discourses’; secondly, the renewal of collections in contemporary museums and the medial and formal changes in contemporary art under the theme ‘Strategies and Remediation of Collecting in Contemporary Art Museums: Rewriting Art/History, Digital Humanities, and Destination of Artworks’. The first chapter on post-colonial discourses was written by Tony Bennett, Professor of Social and Cultural Theory at the University of Western Australia. He focused on the issues of reclassifying and restructuring Indigenous art and contemporary Australian art and on how culture and museology are enmeshed in the exercise of power.

This chapter, therefore, bypasses the issues of ‘Is it art?’ and ‘Is it really contemporary art?’ in favour of a heuristic approach, to clarifying why it is not exhibited in contemporary art museums in Germany, although Indigenous art is shown in all major Australian art museums. As McLean noted, ‘[...] contemporary art is an artefact of the art world. It decides what counts as contemporary art—which art speaks to our times. Most art made today is not contemporary art (as the art world defines this term) for the simple reason that it is not found in contemporary art museums.’⁵

⁵ McLean 2014, p. 71

The heuristic approach is used here because of a lack of consensus on what is meant by contemporary art. The Australian art historian, Terry Smith, previously Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory at the University of Pittsburgh, wrote during a visiting professorship in Sydney, ‘[...] in tracing the incidence of the term “contemporary” in institutional art discourse [...] a clear picture quickly emerges. “Contemporary” [...] increases noticeably during the 1920s and 1930s, followed by a substantial upsurge in the 1960s [...]. By the 1990s, “contemporary” had come to be the predominant descriptor for both current and recent art [...].’⁶

⁶ Smith 2010, p. 371

Smith then offers a march through many decades of art history and theory, citing dozens of meritorious publications and discourses, and concludes—albeit initially with an expression of optimism—that a more explicit definition might soon become apparent, but that ‘[Artists today] share no style, prefer no mode, nor subscribe to one outlook: what they share is that their work is the art being called out by the circumstance in which contemporaneity is all.’⁷

⁷ Ibid., p. 380

The following section describes a number of factors that influence the acceptance of works as contemporary art, a process called artification. Thereafter, a section provides a brief history of the progress of curatorial practice in Germany over the past fifty years, followed by a section analysing why the artification process has not led to more success. This is partly due to counterforces such as Eurocentrism but also due to four other factors that are analysed before drawing conclusions. For comparison, a brief analysis regarding the acceptance of contemporary art from African nations is presented.

Artification: Factors Influencing Acceptance

Shapiro and Heinich considered the question, ‘*How do people do or make things that come to be seen as works of art?*’⁸ They referred to this process as artification, a term that had been used in a general sense since the early 1980s but not in this specific way. They defined artification as a dynamic process of social change through which new art objects and practices emerge.

⁸ Shapiro and Heinich 2012, p. 10

They are, of course, far from alone in this sociological approach. It gained many adherents after the initial publication of Becker’s book *Art Worlds* in 1982 and following the release of the revised edition in 2008.⁹ Marshall and Forrest and the works they cite noted, for example, that the public recognition of an artist is primarily a social evaluation of the artist’s works and is, therefore, driven by social processes.¹⁰ Shapiro and Heinich see this as an explicit challenge to today’s accepted canon of art, ‘*According to this perspective there exists no “art in itself” (en soi), grounded in an essentialist definition that would enable us to describe how social actors experience “art for themselves” (pour soi), but only historically situated, collectively accepted and relatively stabilized conceptions of what social actors understand by the word “art”.*’¹¹

⁹ Becker 1982

¹⁰ Marshall and Forrest 2011, p. 112

¹¹ Shapiro and Heinich 2012

Shapiro and Heinich’s approach is appropriate for this chapter because it only considers the issue of acceptance, which can be evidenced by the number of exhibitions or by high prices at auction sales as well as other factors, and does not involve artistic classification, which is subject to personal/professional opinion and endless debate. Shapiro and Heinich explicitly build on the work of Bowness.¹² This approach is more general than that of Krishnabhakdi-Vasilakis in her dissertation *On the Reception of Aboriginal Art in German Art Space*,¹³ which followed the approach of Bourdieu.¹⁴

¹² Bowness 1989

¹³ Krishnabhakdi-Vasilakis 2009

¹⁴ Bourdieu 1993

Shapiro and Heinich saw artification as a process with many components, some of which involve the abstraction or transformation of visual or social aspects into an idealised new form.

The idealisation of art is a specific issue in social processes, and a detailed analysis of it is beyond the scope of this chapter. European art museums have sometimes been compared to idealisations, such as ‘white temples’, and the 20th and 21st centuries have seen an unprecedented increase in the number, size, and funding of art museums.¹⁵ Their directors or curators have acquired in the public sphere and in professional circles a special status as guardians of art or as its mediators: Their endorsement of an artist or art movement is almost essential in order for the artist to gain public recognition as belonging to the mainstream. Innovative or rebellious artists may achieve fame or notoriety, but some form of recognition by museums is required for lasting public fame. Art auctioneers are well aware of this.¹⁶

¹⁵ Beisiegel 2017

¹⁶ Elmer 2016, p. 6

Governments that wish to promote specific art movements for

national or socio-political reasons recognise the importance of such support and sometimes promote it; examples from China, Canada, Japan and, of course, Australia readily come to mind.

Artification processes were seen by Shapiro and Heinich as continuous and ever-changing, so their analysis considered the stability of the outcome. Four stages of artification were identified that depend on the degree of success in durably overcoming the barriers to recognition: unattainable artification, ongoing, partial, and durable artification.

Unattainable artification refers to those ‘[...] cases where the process encounters obstacles that seem insuperable, and the accomplishment of artification seems unattainable under present conditions.’¹⁷ The authors gave as examples typography, gastronomy, oenology, landscape design, or perfumery. Each of these has promoters and supporters, however, none of these areas is accorded the degree of abstract intellectualisation and institutional support required for widespread recognition as art.

Ongoing artification refers to cases where recognition is relatively recent and unstable so that full acceptance is not assured but might occur. One example involves curators who achieve international fame and then position themselves as *authors* of the exhibitions they organise.

Partial artification is defined as the phase in which an artist is accepted by other artists and by critics and receives public recognition but either only for part of his or her production or only by part of the potential public.

Durable artification simply means ‘[...] what we define today as art, for it is in fact the outcome of a process of artification that has proven both comprehensive and enduring.’¹⁸ as in the case of Impressionist painting.

Shapiro and Heinich identified the following factors that enable or facilitate durable artification, i.e., that increase the chance that a worked object will be identified as fine art:

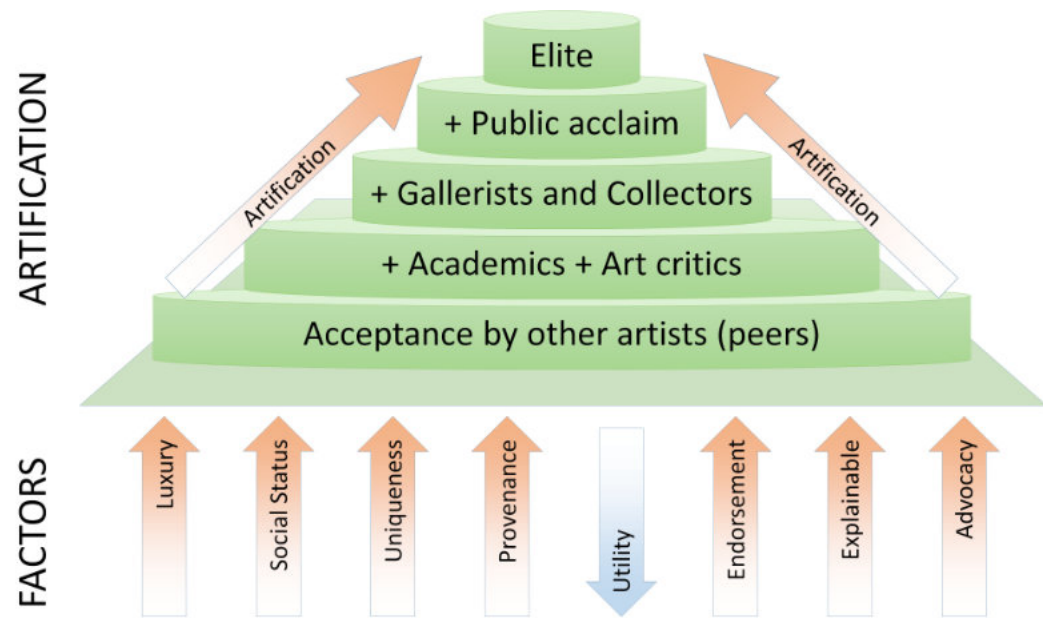
1. it is a rare and/or luxurious item, so that the work is considered a collectable rarity.
2. the artists, the supporters and the audience are considered to be of an acceptable social status; think of graffiti, for example, where this is not the case and its status as fine art is disputed.
3. the work is unique so that it highlights or demonstrates the individuality of the owner.
4. the provenance of the work is clear and demonstrates the autonomy of the artist, i.e., the artist is certainly not anonymous.
5. the work has no utilitarian purpose, unlike architecture or landscape gardening, for example.
6. the work is endorsed and promoted as fine art by authorities, e.g., institutions or governments, not just individuals.
7. the work is explicable in terms of an extensive body of critical discourse.
8. the art is advocated by a dense network of supportive individuals.

¹⁷ Shapiro and Heinich 2012

¹⁸ Ibid.

Shapiro and Heinich also wrote about the way in which the advantage of transportability promotes the acceptance of a work or group of works, however, in today's age of ubiquitous multimedia and art forms such as Land Art (e.g., works by Richard Long, Robert Smithson, Andy Goldsworthy) this characteristic can be disregarded.

In short, contemporary art is preferably a rare luxury good, unique, of clear provenance, endorsed by experts, explicable, endorsed by institutions or governments, without mundane purpose, and created by people of sufficient social status. Weakness in one or two factors is permissible; the absence of all factors dooms it to insignificance. Other factors are conceivable, e.g., visibility in today's digital landscape strongly affects recognition, however, the list provides a helpful starting point. Additional details are given later in this chapter.



Factors enabling durable artification (loosely based on Shapiro and Heinich 2012)

Although there is much anecdotal confirmation of the above theory, empirical verification is hard to find. Tim Acker¹⁹ examined the Australian and global art market for contemporary Indigenous art through a large number of case studies and found that all of the above factors play a role with varying degrees of intensity. A dissertation published in Australia in 2014 examined the lower and middle price tiers of the primary Indigenous art market.²⁰ A total of 874 purchasers were surveyed at three annual art events, analysing buyers' sensitivity to the provenance of works, to the availability of information about artworks and artists, and to art market regulations, particularly the Indigenous Art Code,²¹ which mandates fair practice and clear provenance. The results were consistent with the above criteria, clearly differentiating buyers and their buying criteria into two types: 'decorators' and 'collectors'. The latter had a significantly higher interest in provenance.

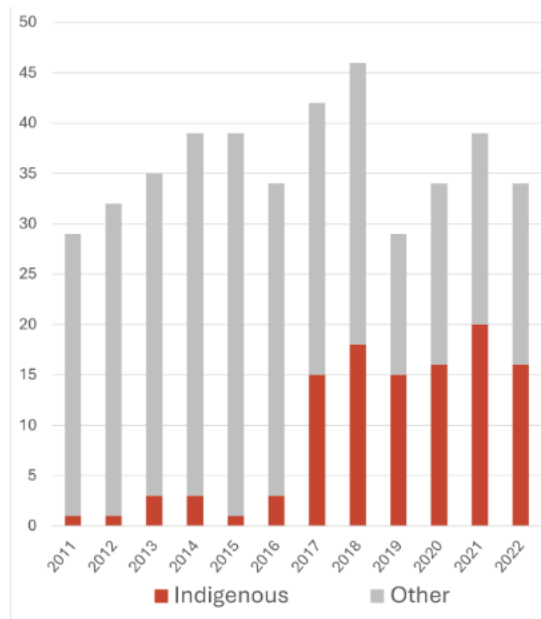
Of note is an analysis by Angelini et al. of all sales in Italian art galleries between 2007 and 2012 regarding the effects of talent, fame, and branding.²² Without referring to Shapiro, Heinich, or Bowness, they confirmed many of the effects mentioned above. In their analysis of branding, which can be loosely equated with Bowness' 'public recognition', they found that talent contributed much less to pricing than fame, which they derived from presence in exhibitions over a long period and from the

¹⁹ Acker 2016b

²⁰ Booth 2014

²¹ IartC 2011

²² Angelini et al. 2019



Finalists at the Wynne Art Prize, 2011–2022 (AGNSW 2022)

number of references in the press. This can be seen as confirming parts of Shapiro and Heinrich’s approach.

It is noteworthy that Indigenous art has achieved all of these artification factors *within* Australia. The Wynne Prize, awarded annually by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, can serve as a litmus test. For over a hundred years, it has been awarded to Australian artists for the best landscape painting or the best example of sculpture. Of the 42 finalists in 2017, 15 were Indigenous artists. In the following five years, the ratio was 18 out of 46, 15 out of 29, 16 out of 34, 20 out of 39 and 16 out of 34. Indigenous artists won the award in the landscape painting category in six of the last seven years.²³ Another indication of its recognition as contemporary art is that exhibitions in Australia are increasingly curated so as to feature both Indigenous and Western art.

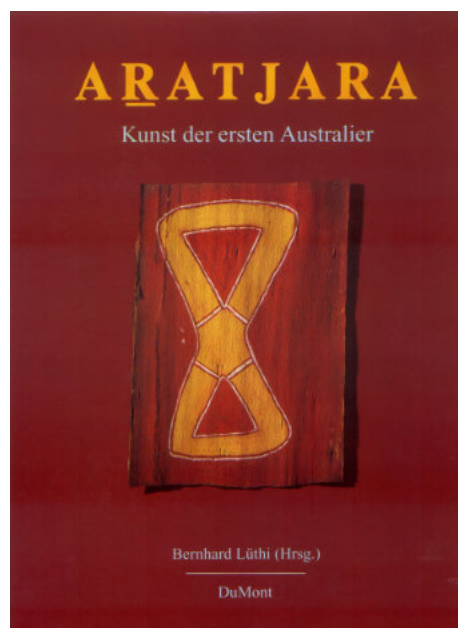
The next section analyses the situation in Germany.

Exhibitions in Germany

²³ AGNSW 2021

²⁴ Martin 1989

The breakthrough in Europe for Indigenous Australian art as contemporary art was the exhibition ‘Magiciens de la terre’ at the Centre Georges Pompidou and Grande Halle de La Villette in Paris from May 18th to August 14th, 1989.²⁴ The breakthrough in Germany came four years later with the exhibition ‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’ in Düsseldorf. The descriptions here of this and later exhibitions are brief and focus on the successes or lack thereof in advancing the recognition of the art. For details on the content of the individual exhibitions, the reader is referred to the catalogues and to archival websites.



Catalogue cover of the exhibition ‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’, 1993

²⁵ Lüthi 1993

1993 ‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’, Düsseldorf

The title of the exhibition that made Indigenous Australian art visible as contemporary art for the first time in Germany was ‘Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier’ (‘Aratjara. Art of the First Australians’) with the subtitle ‘Traditional and Contemporary Works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders’. It was exhibited at the important museum Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf from April 24th to July 4th, 1993, and subsequently travelled to London to the Hayward Gallery and to Humlebæk to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.²⁵

The initial discussions and planning for the exhibition spanned eight years, with a heroic commitment on two continents. In Germany, the Swiss-born artist and curator Bernhard Lüthi was at the centre of the planning. He used all his personal and professional contacts from his long career to realise collaborations with renowned museums and to

raise funding of two million DM (approximately 1.6 million Euro in 2020 prices). In Australia, Indigenous activists Gary Foley and Charles (Chicka) Dixon and Indigenous artist Lin Onus used all their contacts with artists and their professional roles on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board of the Australia Council (ATSIAB). As a result, approximately 150 artworks were on loan from artists, private collections, and major museums in Australia. Foley and Dixon were not re-appointed to the Council, but their successors in ATSIAB supported the exhibition when it was finally shown in 1993–1994. ATSIAB funded the travel of seventy artists and others to visit one or more of the three exhibition venues.²⁶

The concept of the exhibition, as described in the introduction of the catalogue, was to let the art and the artists speak for themselves. As a result, about half of the seventeen chapters of text were written by Indigenous authors, and the artworks came from all over Australia, from the southern tip to the central desert areas to the islands of the Torres Strait in the far north. Conceived as a counterweight to the chauvinist celebrations in 1988 of 200 years of colonial rule, political statements denouncing racism or demanding land rights were very evident in the artworks from the south of Australia and in the bark paintings from the north. As Galarrwuy Yunupinju wrote, *‘Just as our struggle for land is still strong, so is our fight to maintain and revive our culture, for our land and culture are indivisible from our lives. Therefore, I would ask the reader to remember this [...]. I am not asking you to ignore the beauty of the work; to my eyes the art of our people surpasses that of other cultures—I can’t ignore my own prejudices! But I do ask that you recognise that the paintings [...] are not just beautiful pictures. They are about Aboriginal law, Aboriginal life. They are also about our resistance over the last 200 years, and our refusal to forget the land of our ancestors. They are about cultural, social and political survival. You can’t get any clearer statement than that.’*²⁷

Djon Mundine, an Indigenous expert in art, was chosen as the travelling curator for the exhibitions. He was already well known in Australia since 1988 as the initiator of the ‘Aboriginal Memorial’, an installation by artists from central Arnhem Land. The ‘Aboriginal Memorial’, that shows 200 painted hollow log poles, each symbolising one of the 200 years since the annexation of Australia in 1788 and the death of many Indigenous people, has been part of the permanent exhibition of the National Gallery of Australia since 1988 (see pp. 268–269, 386).

Mundine pointed out that ‘Aratjara’ was very well attended at all venues, with a total of more than a quarter of a million visitors and that all catalogues were sold out. However, he observed time and again that visitors expected a different exhibition style from that commonly used for contemporary European art, *‘The curators tried to hang the exhibition in a*

²⁶ Mundine 2013, p. 50



Musical score of the first section in the Manikay song ‘Djapana: Sunset Dreaming’, sung by Galarrwuy Yunupinju (Yothu Yindi, 1999)

Galarrwuy Yunupinju, who was named Australian of the Year in 1978 and Member of the Order of Australia in 1985 for his commitment to land rights, was one of the artists who wrote the Barunga Statement in 1988 (see pp. 262–264). He was the elder brother of the lead singer Mandawuy Yunupinju of the popular Yolŋu rock band ‘Yothu Yindi’, designed the labels for their music albums and sometimes sang with the band. ‘Manikay’ are a series of songs passed down through generations.

²⁷ Yunupinju 1989, pp. 16–17

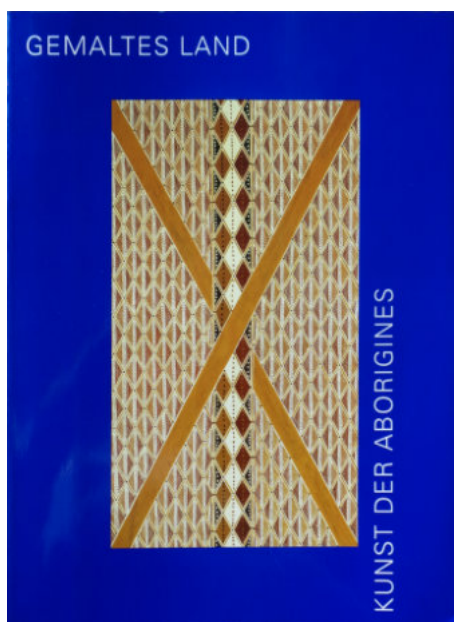
²⁸ Mundine 2013, p. 52

*modernist fashion—or give each piece a lot of space so viewers could focus on its individual attributes. The labelling was minimal—name of work, artist, date, country and materials—just as would be the case with any other contemporary art. But this was greeted with dismay. How could viewers understand the work without extended labels and photographs (despite the generous catalogue, an acoustic-guide and several informative handouts)?*²⁸

The exhibition of Indigenous Australian art was planned as contemporary art. It sought to maximise many of the artification factors described earlier: The artworks were valuable loans from major Australian art museums (i.e., ‘contemporary’, ‘luxury’), with clear provenance (i.e., from individual artists), they were exhibited in a major German contemporary art museum (‘endorsement’), and they were selected by a large team of knowledgeable curators (‘endorsement’). The exhibition described themes of artistic inspiration and techniques in a 350-page catalogue in German (‘explainability’) and was supported by the Australian government (‘endorsement’). Unfortunately lacking was a stable local (or national) network of art scholars in Germany to promote further discourse about this art (‘advocacy’).

1994 ‘Gemaltes Land. Kunst der Aborigines aus Arnhemland’, Stuttgart and Hamburg

²⁹ Heermann and Menter 1994



Catalogue of the exhibition ‘Gemaltes Land. Kunst der Aborigines aus Arnhemland’, 1994

The next exhibition was held in Stuttgart from June 2nd to September 25th, 1994, at the Linden Museum, an ethnological museum. ‘Gemaltes Land. Kunst der Aborigines aus Arnhemland’ (‘Painted Land. Aboriginal Art from Arnhem Land’) presented over a hundred bark paintings and wood sculptures, many on loan from the Museum der Kulturen Basel, the Musée des Arts d’Afrique et d’Océanie (today: Musée du quai Branly) in Paris, the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, and the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth.

The exhibition catalogue²⁹ was a combination of the tried and tested methods of the art and ethnology worlds. On the one hand, artworks were usually printed in large format colour images, subtitled with the year of creation and the artist’s name, and sometimes accompanied by an art-analytical description of the composition. On the other hand, about half of the text in the catalogue was devoted to explaining the myths, rituals, history, culture, and worldview of the clans to which the artists belonged, following ethnological traditions. The exhibition space in Stuttgart applied the ‘white cube’ principle, while the same exhibition later at the Völkerkundemuseum Hamburg was displayed more in the usual manner for ethnology museums—with wooden constructions that were supposed to be reminiscent of an Australian landscape.

In this way, the acceptance of the works as contemporary art was hindered, especially since such museums at the time exclusively con-

sidered ‘primitive’/poor peoples and thus evoked ‘inferior social status’ as a negative factor in artification. Moreover, the ‘advocacy’ factor only has a positive impact if the experts are respected for their art expertise, which is by definition not the case for directors or curators at ethnological museums.

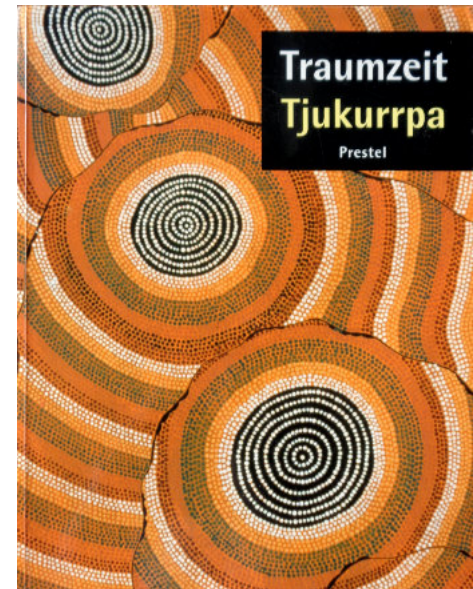
1994 ‘Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert’, Munich

Fortunately, from July 26th to October 16th, 1994, at the same time as the Linden Museum in Stuttgart, the Villa Stuck Art Museum in Munich exhibited a private collection—the Donald Kahn Collection, which subsequently toured to nine cities in Europe—of so-called Western Desert paintings by 34 artists. The director at the time (1992 to 2007), Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, was born in Brisbane and had previously been director of the Art Gallery of Vancouver, where she specialised in exhibitions of Indigenous artists. The exhibition ‘Traumzeit–Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert’ (‘Dreamtime – Tjukurrpa. Aboriginal Art of the Western Desert’), which was accompanied by a catalogue,³⁰ attracted at least as many visitors as had the exhibition ‘Max Beckmann Welttheater. Das graphische Werk 1901 bis 1946’, which subsequently travelled to Stuttgart and New York and had been shown one year earlier at the Villa Stuck. A parallel exhibition to ‘Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa’, with photography from Hollywood, attracted only half so many visitors as the exhibition of Indigenous art.³¹

1995 ‘Stories, eine Reise zu den großen Dingen’, Hannover

The following year, Indigenous Australian art was on display from March 8th to April 30th, 1995, in the exhibition ‘Stories, eine Reise zu den großen Dingen’ (‘Stories, a Journey to the Big Things. Eleven Australian Aboriginal Artists’) at the Sprengel Museum Hannover. It was fully funded by the Australian government and opened by the Australian Prime Minister at that time together with one of the artists, Maxie Tjampitjinpa. The exhibition included over eighty works from the Holmes à Court art collection, one of Australia’s wealthiest families. The exhibition later travelled to Leipzig, Berlin, and Aachen.

This exhibition and its catalogue³² built on the ‘Aratjara’ exhibition and marked the transition in Germany from presenting ‘works by an ethnic group’ to ‘works by specific artists with an ethnic background’. The focus was on the artworks and their creators. The catalogue emphasised this with an appendix listing each artist’s solo exhibitions, group exhibitions, works in collections, prizes, and literature.

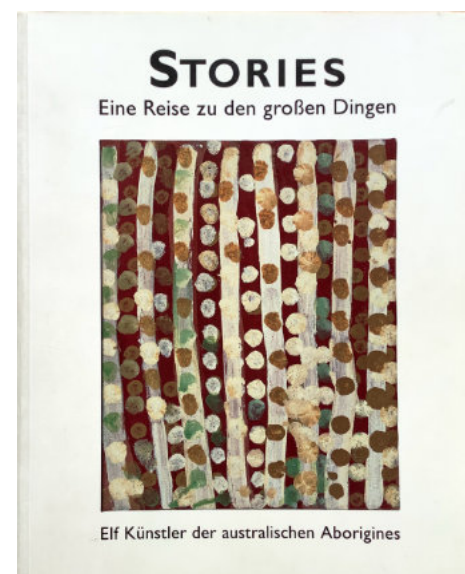


Catalogue of the exhibition ‘Traumzeit–Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert’, 1994. In the meantime, the exhibited collection has been scattered to the winds through sale.

³⁰ Danzker 1994

³¹ Bähr 1995, p. 110

³² Brody et al. 1995



Catalogue of the exhibition ‘Stories, eine Reise zu den großen Dingen’, 1995

³³ Robinson 1995



Maxie Tjampitjinpa at the opening of 'Stories' in the Sprengel Museum Hannover on March 8th, 1995, in front of his painting 'Watulpunyu Dreaming' from 1988

Interestingly, at almost the same time in New York, the Guggenheim Museum exhibited 'Antipodean Currents: Ten Contemporary Artists from Australia' from June 21st to August 6th, 1995, featuring works by a number of Indigenous artists but without highlighting their culture or 'ghettoising' them.³³ That is, the focus at the Guggenheim was entirely on the artworks, and the ethnicity of the artists was not emphasised.

In late 1995, Indigenous Australian art seemed to be on the cusp of acceptance as contemporary art in Germany.

1999–2000 'The Aboriginal Memorial', Hannover

'The Aboriginal Memorial' is an installation of 200 painted hollow log poles traditionally used in northeastern Australia as coffins for the deceased. The work was made in 1988—while the rest of Australia was celebrating two centuries of colonial conquest—to symbolically create a memorial to the souls of all the Indigenous warriors who died defending their land and families during those 200 years. The tree trunks, arranged along curves, were painted by 43 artists with intricate designs representing different areas along the Glyde River, a powerful river ecosystem in

the heart of Arnhem Land. The creation of the imposing artwork was inspired by Indigenous curator and author Djon Mundine, who later ensured that it was acquired by the National Museum of Australia, where it is on permanent and prominent display.

The installation is beautiful in itself, captivating, fascinating. Yet, standing among the tree trunks and becoming aware of the story, one feels a cold shudder and the need to close one's eyes tight in horror. The closest parallel to the 'Aboriginal Memorial' can be found in the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, erected by architect

Peter Eisenman in 2005. The labyrinth of concrete blocks of different heights is reminiscent of a cemetery for millions of nameless victims.



The Aboriginal Memorial (see pp. 268–269)



The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, designed by Peter Eisenman, was inaugurated on May 10th, 2005.

2001 'The Native Born. Objekte und Darstellungen aus Ramingining, Arnhemland', Hannover

The exhibition in Hannover, 'The Native Born. Objects and Representations from Ramingining, Arnhem Land', was derived from the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Sydney and was later shown in Madrid, São Paulo, New York, and Taipei. The exhibition was accompanied by a 240-page catalogue in English, featuring 200 works by

55 artists and containing very extensive information about the history of the Yolŋu of Ramingining, their culture, lifestyle, and ceremonies and stories as far as relevant to the artworks.³⁴ The authors provided a holistic insight into the connotations, meanings and importance of the themes inspiring the art. About 70 pages of the original text were translated for a German-language catalogue for the exhibition at the Sprengel Museum.³⁵

The artworks were not limited to two-dimensional painted surfaces but included sculptures, utilitarian objects, and objects of daily life that had been produced in the 1980s specifically to be kept in an art museum to represent the culture and essential themes from Ramingining. The director of the Sprengel Museum, Ulrich Krempel, stated in his introduction to the German-language catalogue, “‘The Native Born’ is an exhibition that provides, like hardly any other, images of the various areas of life of the Aborigines of Northern Australia. [...] In our latitudes, such exhibitions are usually found in anthropological museums but not in museums for contemporary art. However, this is where the claim comes in [...]: that this is a contemporary art, one that has multiple connections in its artistic expressions into the art of the Western world.”³⁶ (translation by the author)

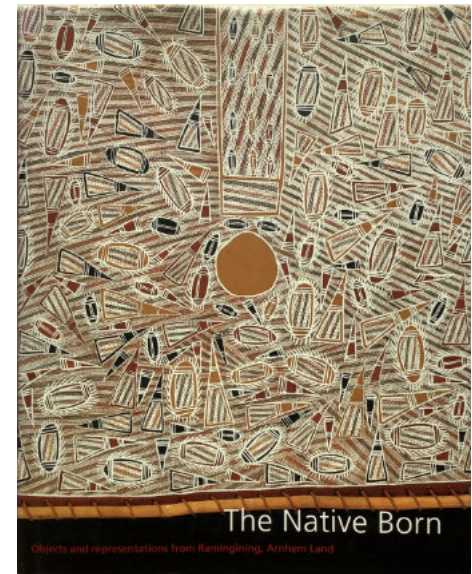
Detrimental concerning its acceptance in Germany as contemporary art was the diversity of the selection of Indigenous objects and artworks and the wealth of cultural information in the catalogue. This seemed more akin to an ethnological exhibition than a fine art exhibition. Additional factors that worked against its acceptance as contemporary art included Eurocentrism, references to the utilitarian nature of some of the works, and viewers’ assumptions that many of the artists were disconnected from modern or industrialised society.

2005–2006 “rarrk”. John Mawurndjul. *Zeitreise in Nordaustralien*, Basel/Hannover

As the exhibition title implies, “rarrk”. John Mawurndjul. *Zeitreise in Nordaustralien* (Time Travel in Northern Australia) was curated as a form of time travel in northern Australian art. Most visitors probably thought this meant ‘back through 40,000 years of tradition’. However, this exhibition actually went forward through decades of disproven art historical misrepresentations, through one man’s lifetime to the current now, to celebrate the artistic development and works of one artist, John Mawurndjul. Over seventy artworks from 1979 to 2005 were on loan from seven major art museums in

³⁴ Mundine 1996

³⁵ Sprengel Museum Hannover 2001



Catalogue of the exhibition ‘The Native Born’ 1996 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

³⁶ Ibid., p. 5



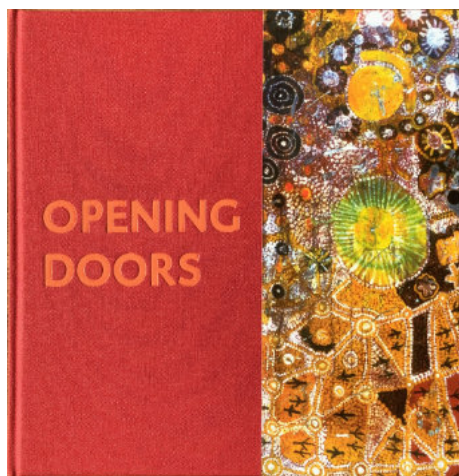
John Mawurndjul in front of the Museum Tinguely in Basel after the opening of his exhibition, 2005

³⁷ Museum Tinguely 2005



John Mawurndjul, Mardayin at Kudjarnngal, 2003, natural pigments on bark, 152.5 × 76 cm

³⁸ Kaufmann 2005, p. 225



Catalogue of the exhibition 'Opening Doors'

³⁹ Petitjean 2006

Australia, the Groningen Museum, the Museum der Kulturen Basel and many private collectors. The 240-page catalogue³⁷ in German included a lengthy interview with John Mawurndjul and texts by over a dozen authors, many of whom have known him and his work for decades. The interview clarifies that the artist actively participates in and appreciates the global art scene and is always considering new works, new representations, and changes in technique and motif.

The concluding words of the catalogue by the co-curator Christian Kaufmann make it clear that it is the art historians who live in the past, *'The presentation of the individual life and creative path of a single artist replaces a generalised ethnological view that places great value on understanding from the most precise knowledge of the context. As enlightening [...] as this still preceding approach was to follow the artistic forms of expression as works in their diversity and their existential interconnections, we now need the direct confrontation with what contemporaries today—here in Europe and there in Australia—can read from these images and have to say about them. Knowing something about where the painters and their families came from and what plagues and shapes them may be helpful. What seems more important to me is the willingness to explore the presence of the individual painter in the confrontation with the works and to trace the images created by the painter. This also includes questioning one's own traditional views.'*³⁸ (translation by the author)

2006–2007 'Opening Doors', Hannover

'Opening Doors' was an unusual exhibition focused on artworks from a tiny town called Yurntumu (Yuendumu) in central Australia. In 1984, five artists—who went on to establish new directions in Australian art—painted artworks on 30 metal doors of the local school, which were later sold to the South Australian Museum in 1995 to be preserved for posterity. Not only were the works exceptional examples of Indigenous art, but they were also deliberately painted on school doors to remind and teach children about their cultural heritage, as well as to remind the rest of Australia that an invisible world of knowledge and aesthetics exists outside the Western curriculum (see pp. 244–246). After their restoration, the doors were exhibited on tour in Russia, Vietnam, and at the Aboriginal Art Museum Utrecht in the Netherlands, followed by the Sprengel Museum in Hannover. There and in Utrecht, the exhibition was complemented by a series of works on canvas by Yurntumu (Yuendumu) artists, including those who had painted the doors. The exhibition was as much about politics as it was about art, alluding to colonisation and the oppression of Indigenous cultures. The works on canvas show that the doors were a specific project and that the art, as contemporary art, necessarily evolves. An eighty-page trilingual catalogue accompanied the exhibition and explained part of the doors' history.³⁹

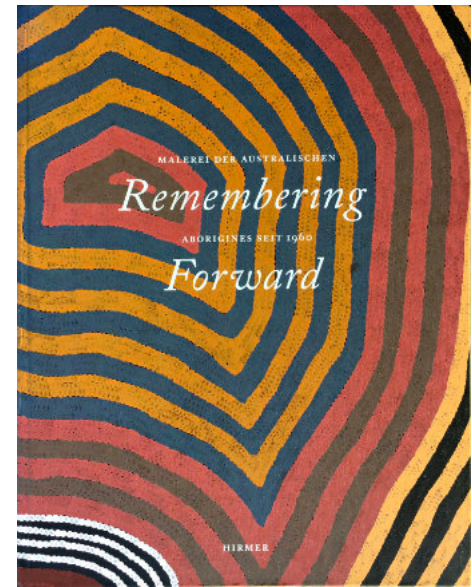
2010–2011 ‘Remembering Forward’, Cologne

From November 19th, 2010, to March 20th, 2011, the renowned Ludwig Museum in Cologne, Germany, generously supported by Australian government funding, exhibited in the ‘white cube’ style artworks from the 1970s to the 2000s by nine prominent Indigenous Australian artists. The artworks were on loan from major Australian museums. Alongside half a dozen works each by Paddy Bedford, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Queenie McKenzie, Dorothy Napangardi, Rover Thomas (Joolama), Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri, and Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, 15 bark paintings by artists from Northern Australia and the Tiwi Islands, created between 1955 and the late 1990s, were on display. The bark paintings were on loan from Australia and the Museum der Kulturen in Basel.

Instead of advancing the art discourse, e.g., through an in-depth retrospective of a few artists or through an exhibition in which works by so-called ‘urban artists’ or new art movements were inserted, or even through a solo exhibition, the museum pursued the very conservative approach of an overview exhibition of ‘star artists’. The German-language catalogue⁴⁰ contained one or two pages of text on each artist and an incomplete list of their past exhibitions. A number of well-known Australian curators or critics contributed (or reprinted) articles. However, there was a noticeable divergence between the exhibition and the catalogue, as not all articles referred to the works shown in the exhibition.

In response to the opening ceremony and closing symposium as part of ‘Remembering Forward’, Bernhard Lüthi wrote that the Ludwig Museum had realised the exhibition in such a way that it ‘[...] could also be read as disenfranchisement of the artists—and in this case, as the disenfranchisement of an entire culture.’ Lüthi noted that the Ludwig Museum showed ‘[...] zero consultation or cooperation with Aboriginal people [...] for the show’s curatorial backing, [or] for the symposium’s conceptual framework’ and ‘[...] neither was there any Aboriginal person [i.e., artist, curator, expert] present at the exhibition’s opening.’⁴¹ Lüthi further noted that no acquisition request came from the museum, although a sponsor had offered funding to purchase artworks for the museum’s collection.

In the art journal *Artlink*, Ian McLean reported on the two-day symposium ‘Exhibiting Aboriginal Art’ in which two Indigenous curators had participated (Franchesca Cubillo in Cologne and Margo Neale as a virtual speaker), together with about a hundred visitors from Germany and neighbouring countries. He praised the exhibition style and seemed to be quoting the museum director Kasper König when he wrote, ‘He wanted no one to be in doubt that this art, which in Europe is normally seen in ethnographic contexts, has all the aesthetic and critical power of the best European contemporary art. Some art world types might get their noses out of joint, but König saw few risks. In his opinion, the general public don’t care if art museums



Catalogue of the exhibition ‘Remembering Forward’

⁴⁰ König et al. 2010

⁴¹ Lüthi 2011

⁴² McLean, 2011

*show ethnographic work.*⁴² This opinion of König, as reported by Ian McLean, is a perfect example of German Eurocentrism.

2017–2018 ‘Indigenous Australia: Masterworks from the National Gallery of Australia’, Berlin

⁴³ Cubillo and Caruana 2017

⁴⁴ me Collectors 2018

The exhibition, initiated by the Australian Embassy in Berlin and accompanied by a 140-page German-language catalogue,⁴³ was shown from

November 17th, 2017, to April 2nd, 2018, in the me Collectors Room in Berlin, an exhibition space of the Olbricht Foundation. This museum was not a municipal or state art museum, and it closed in early 2020. Nevertheless, the exhibition is discussed here because of the very extensive loans of important Indigenous artworks from Australia. An exhibition venue in one of Berlin’s city or state art museums had proved impossible to gain, even though the exhibition had previously



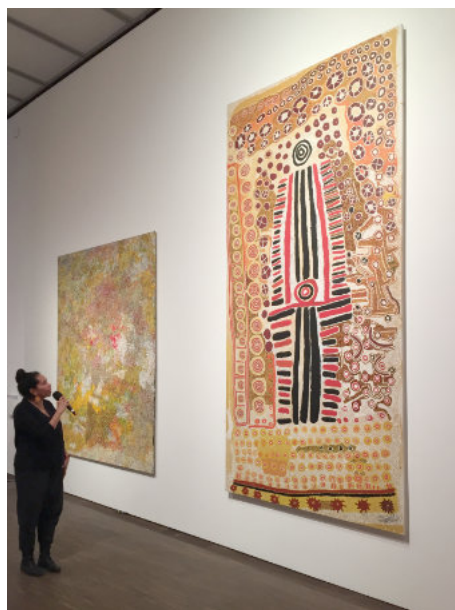
Exhibition view of ‘Indigenous Australia: Masterworks from the National Gallery of Australia’ in Berlin; see p. 190

been shown at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, the Australian government supported the exhibition, and the artworks on display were great examples in various media of Indigenous Australian art from the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

The exhibition, curated by Franchesca Cubillo (then Senior Curator Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, National Gallery of Australia), emphasised the development of different styles of Indigenous art: coloured drawings from 1885, bark paintings from the early 1960s, synthetic polymer paint and natural pigment paintings, light installations, photographs, and videos.

The archive of press releases⁴⁴ contains many positive articles from Berlin newspapers and blog sites, an announcement in the culture section of a major newspaper with nationwide circulation, three paragraphs in the widely distributed art newspaper *kunst:art*, and a one-page press release printed in the leading German art magazine *art: das kunstmagazin*. There was no art criticism.

This was the last major exhibition of contemporary art by Australian Indigenous artists in Germany prior to the writing of this chapter in 2021.



Franchesca Cubillo providing a guided tour of the exhibition ‘Indigenous Australia: Masterworks from the National Gallery of Australia’ in Berlin on November 16th, 2017

Documenta

Documenta is the most important event celebrating contemporary art in Germany. It takes place every five years in Kassel in all the city's major public exhibition spaces, displacing permanent exhibitions where necessary, and is seen by millions of German and international visitors. Arising in 1955 from the ashes of post-war Kassel, it has a very special place in the national and international art scene. The curatorial freedom exercised by its organisers, increasingly led by women curators or, more recently, a curatorial board, is always respected and often causes political or art-historical reproach.

In 2002, a work by Destiny Deacon was exhibited in a small corner. In 2012 and especially in 2017, the exhibition opened up to non-Western artworks. It featured in 2012 contemporary artworks by three Indigenous Australian artists, Gordon Bennet, Doreen Reid Nakamarra, and Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri, and in 2017, works by two 'urban artists', Dale Harding and Gordon Hookey.

This trend illustrates that Indigenous Australian art can hold its own in an art space where the avant-garde of global contemporary art is on display.



Visitors in front of the Fridericianum in Kassel, one of the oldest art museums in Europe and the centrepiece of Documenta

Private Art Museums, Municipal Galleries, Art Associations, and Ethnological Museums

Over the past three decades, through the efforts of a small number of gallery owners, collectors, and art professionals who have been able to pull the right levers at the right time, almost one exhibition per year has been shown in private art museums, municipal galleries, art societies (Kunstverein) and other venues in Germany. These efforts partially compensate for the dearth of exhibitions and aesthetic dialogue by major art museums:

- o municipal galleries (Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen|Spendhaus, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Kunstmuseum Bayreuth, Ulmer Museum, Theodor-Zink-Museum Kaiserslautern, Städtische Galerie Traunstein, Ernst Barlach Museum Wedel, König Museum der Stadt Landshut, Stiftung kunst:raum Sylt, Städtische Galerie ADA Meiningen)
- o art associations and cultural institutions (Iwalewahaus of the University of Bayreuth, Kunstverein Frankfurt, Kunstverein Alsdorf, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg, Kunstverein 'Talstrasse' Halle (Saale), Kunstverein Freiburg im Marienbad, Fabrik der Künste Hamburg, Galerie Brötzing Art e.V. Pforzheim, Kunstverein Schopfheim, Kunstverein Xanten, Schloss Agathenburg, Altes Rathaus Göttingen)

o private museums for contemporary art or organisations with permanent exhibition spaces (Kunstwerk Sammlung Klein, Feierabendhaus Bayer Leverkusen, Deutsche Welle Cologne)

In addition, there were exhibitions in ethnological museums such as the Linden-Museum Stuttgart, Völkerkundemuseum Hamburg, GRASSI Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig, Adelhausermuseum Freiburg, Völkerkundemuseum Herrnhut, Museum Fünf Kontinente Munich, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum Cologne.

In summary, over the past three decades, major exhibitions of Indigenous contemporary art have been shown in art museums in Germany on average every three years, initially almost annually, over half of them funded quite substantially by the Australian government. However, the intervals between exhibitions have become longer and longer so that there is no continuity of discourse in the public sphere, and each exhibition is always accompanied by interviews and press reports explaining yet again the '40,000-year-old culture and traditional art'. Continuity and sustainability of momentum are thus not apparent for recognition of contemporary art by Indigenous Australian artists, although Documenta shows that this art can no longer be ignored.

Artification Factors in Australia and Germany

Luxury Good

Being considered a luxury good is a factor in artification. Yet, the art of the First Australians is perceived as something other than collectable by the German public. Acquisitions in this art field are never mentioned in the national press. Although the local press does report on exhibitions, such local news has no national impact. One learns from the international press when Sotheby's in London or Sydney occasionally achieves six- or even seven-figure auction prices for Indigenous art. However, sales to the USA or Australia are almost exclusively mentioned, not to Germany. Sotheby's showed in 1999 in Cologne, as a preview to an auction, 42 artworks.⁴⁵ However, the event was poorly attended despite a select invitation list and a scheduled presentation by the director of the Sprengel Museum Hannover. The same artworks were previewed in the USA a short time later, and Americans later purchased seven of the ten most expensive works at auction.

⁴⁵ Huda 2011, p. 116

Material and Social Status

Since visits to Germany by Indigenous Australian artists are rare, it is difficult to know whether their social status, which can often be described as

marginalised as perceived by European art historians in terms of Western culture, education, health, and wealth, actually creates obstacles to the acceptance of their art in Europe.

There is a lack of cultural understanding for various reasons. German art historians do not know the Indigenous languages, and Indigenous artists from rural regions, although multilingual, often speak a Kriol-English that is difficult for Germans to understand. Art historians have not developed a discernible understanding of Indigenous culture and history, and Indigenous customs that differ from those in Germany are often ridiculed, e.g., the purification ritual of singing and burning eucalyptus leaves to produce smoke at the opening of an exhibition (even though German Catholics are happy to accept singing and incense in other circumstances).

Certainly, the disdain and suspicion in Germany regarding Indigenous Australian art is not markedly stronger than for Indigenous art from Africa, yet African art has achieved significant acceptance in Germany (see pp. 415–417). Although the strength of the social status factor cannot be assessed, it probably has less impact than other factors discussed here.

In the above paragraph, marginal social status is relativised and discounted as a disadvantageous factor. That this is not always true is evident from the comments of Agnes T. M. Schreiner, lecturer at the Faculty of Law at the University of Amsterdam, at the opening of an exhibition at the Aboriginal Art Museum of Utrecht in the Netherlands in 2007, ‘*The presence of the contemporary Wik artists at the opening of the 2007 exhibition can be of little support to the museum’s efforts to present the work as modern Aboriginal art, since the guests of honour were not just recognisable by their physical features as indigenous people of Australia, often enough to be qualified as traditional, even when they are wearing jeans and dresses. On this occasion, the Wik people showed up barefoot, with white paint on their skin and feathers placed in their hair and arm bands, ready to perform the reconciliation ceremony [emphasis added].*’⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Schreiner 2013, p. 170

In Australia, Indigenous people are certainly among the poorest and most marginalised sections of society, but this has not precluded the artification of their artworks over the long term. Therefore, while this factor should be kept in mind, it is probably not decisive.

Uniqueness, Provenance

The uniqueness and provenance of a work of art at a public exhibition in Germany is guaranteed by the professionalism of German curators and gallery owners, who in turn can rely on certificates from reputable sources in Australia and compliance with the *Indigenous Art Code of Practice*.⁴⁷ German buyers value the uniqueness of artworks, which is why even non-

⁴⁷ IartC 2011

professional sources such as sellers on eBay sometimes try to create the appearance of uniqueness by inventing artists' names compounded from the names of various famous Indigenous artists.



Australia's first 1-dollar banknote with pictorial elements from the artist David Malangi, from whom copyright permission was initially not requested.

The positive factors of uniqueness and provenance were largely ignored in Australia during the first period of interest in Indigenous art in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Ethnologists and collectors failed to note the names of the artists from whom they acquired works. Interest tended to be ethnography-led. As late as 1966, the Australian government ignored copyright laws and used without permission on the new \$1 note part of a painting by Indigenous artist David Malangi.⁴⁸ This was only corrected after a journalist pointed out that copyright had been infringed.

Over the last half-century, gallery owners and government-supported art centres have been diligent in proving provenance through appropriate documentation. As mentioned above, there is a code of practice for clarifying provenance and ensuring fair dealing. The Indigenous Art Code of Practice requires the avoidance of any misleading or deceptive conduct concerning '(a) the authenticity or provenance of an Artwork; (b) any sponsorship, approval or affiliation of an Artist (including an Artist's affiliation with a Dealer or an art centre); (c) the place of origin of an Artwork; (d) [indicating] that an Artwork has been produced by an Indigenous Artist or Artists; and (e) the Artwork's exhibition history, reference notes, authenticity statements or price'.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the artist's copyright in the work of art should be respected.

⁴⁸ Mundine 2004, p. 34

⁴⁹ IartC 2011

Non-Mundane

Indigenous Australians have always regarded their art as something above the mundane; they use it to represent their values of deepest significance and to communicate their history and culture to other peoples. They have fought hard to avoid the exploitation and abuse of their art and creativity by unscrupulous commercial interests.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Janke 2003, pp. 9–10

Nevertheless, it still seems possible for others to accuse them of mundane motivations, e.g., by accusing artists of producing meaningless artworks for a quick profit. A completely different example of imputing base motives is provided by Schreiner's publication mentioned above.⁵¹ In earlier chapters of this book, the central role of Jukurrpa (culture, customs, history, and laws) in Indigenous contemporary art was explained. Schreiner has reinterpreted these profound sources of inspiration as mundane in the following way, '[... Indigenous] law plays an important role as contextual background of the work that is exhibited. With this information,

⁵¹ Schreiner 2013

however, the devaluation starts. *Discussing issues of law does not make the dot paintings or wood carvings of more and higher artistic value. Indeed, this (need for) explanation distinct from the artistic style and the art historical concepts and qualifications, is the very proof of not being artistic enough for most modern art critics and art historians [emphasis added].*⁵²

⁵² Ibid., p. 169

Thus, a source of inspiration can be reinterpreted as a mundane purpose, thus categorising art as utility-oriented and relegating it to be a kind of commodity. Seen in this light, we would have to immediately remove the painting ‘Guernica’ by Picasso from the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid.

Endorsement

In terms of official recognition and funding of Indigenous art, strong but intermittent support from the Australian government for international exhibitions has been documented by Berrell, Myers, Griffin and Paroissien, Acker, Bleiker and Butler, and the Department of Culture and the Arts.⁵³ A detailed analysis by Fisher and McDonald⁵⁴ demonstrated the value of government support in promoting recognition using two crucial exhibitions as examples: ‘Fluent’ in 1997 at the Venice Biennale and ‘Culture Warriors’ in 2009 at the Katzen Arts Center of the American University in Washington.

⁵³ Berrell 2009; Myers 2013, p. 157; Griffin and Paroissien 2011; Bleiker and Butler 2016; State Government of Western Australia 2016; Acker 2016a

⁵⁴ Fisher and McDonald 2016

Unsurprisingly, endorsement activities correlate strongly with Australian government policy and attempts to gain good international standing. In Germany, Australian ambassadors have often given speeches at the openings of Indigenous Australian art exhibitions. For example, in 1995, Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating opened the art exhibition ‘Stories’ at the Sprengel Museum in Hannover. This correlated with the opening on the same day of the CeBIT industrial fair in Hannover, where Australia was the official partner country.⁵⁵ Because Australia had been under pressure from the United Nations in previous years for breaking international laws against racial discrimination, ‘Stories’ can be seen as one attempt to polish its image.

⁵⁵ Keating 1995

It is doubtful that such endorsement in Germany could have much impact on the acceptance of Indigenous Australian art as contemporary art. After all, it is not the German government that supports this art, so the impact is weaker than the kind of national government support considered by Shapiro and Heinich.

Explainability

In terms of explainability, it is not possible to point to a weighty body of discourse in Germany regarding Indigenous arts that would be compar-

able to the accumulated wealth of discourse and analysis regarding Western arts. A simple statistic can illustrate the lack of discourse on Indigenous Australian art. In the most widely read German contemporary art magazine, *art: Das Kunstmagazin*, only seven short articles on Indigenous art, six commentaries on exhibitions, one short article on the fall of market prices, and several dozen short notes on Australian museum exhibitions and the Venice Biennale appeared between November 2010 and December 2018.

This is more than disappointing when one considers that there are several hundred books about Indigenous Australian culture and a notable number on Australian art available in Germany's public libraries, including eight in which the authors of this book were involved.

⁵⁶ Haag 2009

From a different viewpoint, Haag⁵⁶ made a literature search of Indigenous Australian literature that had been translated into German and located approximately (depending on definitions of 'Indigenous' and 'literature') 26 books. Without apparent irony, he concluded that this literature had attracted increasing international interest over the last three decades.

The consequences of this lack of discourse and knowledge can be very detrimental to acquiring opportunities for art exhibitions. As examples from the previous chapter show, even museum directors who freely admitted their ignorance and were presumably willing to correct that deficit rejected exhibitions. Other directors impute to their museum visitors a complete lack of interest in Indigenous art with the arguments that '*[...] there is no need for such an exhibition. [...] the subject is too unusual for their city, where there is little, if any, interest in such art, and that the art does not fit the city [...] one should not overburden the public with international exhibitions.*' (see p. 371)

Are there other reasons for this continued ignorance of contemporary Indigenous art? It is hardly surprising that the lack of academic education and research in this subject within Germany has led to a very limited number of discussions about Indigenous art in Germany. But is this the only reason?

Concerns that academic art history, discourse, and criticism have insufficiently addressed Indigenous art have circulated for decades—even in Australia. Howard Morphy, a renowned ethnologist and art historian who has produced many articles and books about Indigenous art, stated at a conference presentation in 2006 that '*[t]here are some areas where there is a dearth of expertise [...] An example of what I mean might be the moderate state of Aboriginal art journalism in Australia and the low level of writing about Aboriginal art in general. [...] The general standard of writing has been reduced to the uninformative cliché. The lack of personnel working on Indigenous collections in Australian museums is another example.*'⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Morphy 2006, p. 13

Australian art historian and critic Ian McLean, Chair of Australian Art History at the University of Melbourne, wrote in 2014 that '*[t]he*

*gloom that hangs over Indigenous art is due to a failure of criticism as much as anything else: critics have barely understood the art's modernism, let alone worked out how to explain it as a postconceptual political practice engaging the transcultural and transnational globalism of today's world.'*⁵⁸

Within Australia, however, extensive material is available in a range of journals and magazines and in the form of exhibition catalogues and dissertations. Some excellent examples, with numerous references for further reading, are provided by Coleman, O'Riordan and Garneau.⁵⁹ The number of monographs and academic books has also increased over the last decades.

Perhaps the criticism is based on the quality or nature of the discourse and analysis? It is noticeable that a large proportion, especially of the earlier publications, are superficially descriptive or simply a repetition of the often quite familiar and rather terse background information provided with the works by the artist or the art centre manager. Only rarely did such texts add an analysis of form and colour, or make comparisons with previous works by the artist, as is the usual case for classical European paintings, or a critique of the novelty or significance of the artist's intended message, as is expected by art historians for conceptual and post-conceptual art of the 21st century. However, the art-analytical aspect has been increasing in publications for some years.

Another difficulty in Germany is that a well-researched critique or review of Indigenous art must naturally refer to the cultural background of the artists. However, Eurocentric views of art (see p. 414) and possible prejudices against non-technological cultures can mean that an explanation of the non-Western cultural background of the Indigenous artist is understood as if the artists and their works are curious, exotic, primitive, or archaic. Garneau has described the dilemma for art critics as follows, '*Should they treat this work as Aboriginal art or as art that happens to be made by an Aboriginal? Ignoring the cultural context may rob the work of essential meanings, but foregrounding it may reduce the agency of the artist, rendering the work a cultural product rather than a personal expression.*'⁶⁰

Perhaps more worryingly, some of the reticence is due to politics and social pressure. Indigenous artist Vernon Ah Kee said at a forum in London on June 28th, 2011, that no one had ever criticised his work, and when asked why, he replied, '*[...] because they are afraid*'.⁶¹ This remark can be interpreted in different ways: as a fear of being seen as racist even when criticising appropriately, a fear of denying artists' autonomous creativity, or a fear of revealing ignorance about the subject (see the adjacent figure).

Regarding the fear of being called racist, reference is made to the work of Czaban and references therein.⁶² Regarding ignorance, the artist and curator Bernhard Lüthi has stated that '*[o]ne of the first obstacle European gallery directors and curators will face while*

⁵⁸ McLean 2014, p. 78

⁵⁹ Coleman 2009; O'Riordan 2013; Garneau 2014

⁶⁰ Garneau 2014, p. 312

⁶¹ Radok 2012, p. 31

⁶² Czaban 2014



Vernon Ah Kee, *Let's be polite about Aboriginal art*, 2012, aquatint, 31 × 32 cm (sheet 50 × 44.5 cm)

getting involved in “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art” is not only the internal cultural discourse, but also the inseparable intertwine with everything Australian, whether it be colonial, historical, in social, political or in terms of how art relates to questions as Land Rights and, as an extended issue, how Aboriginality is conceived and defined in urban contexts.’⁶³

⁶³ Lüthi 2011

These issues were explored in an editorial in the June 2013 issue of the journal *Artlink*⁶⁴ that focused on critiques of Indigenous art. O’Riordan argued that while there is indeed a dearth of in-depth art criticism in Australia related to all art forms and not just Indigenous art, there is a vibrant discourse on Indigenous art, albeit not in mainstream media but ‘[...] largely manifest through niche publishing and academic agencies, [that do ...] not generally reach a mass readership’.⁶⁵ O’Riordan also noted that the frequency of negative criticism of Indigenous art, whether by occidental or Indigenous people, has decreased due to the likelihood that it will be interpreted and attacked as racist, neo-colonialist, or disrespectful of Indigenous artists’ creativity.

⁶⁴ O’Riordan 2013, pp. 33–38

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32

O’Riordan mentioned but did not substantiate the widespread fear of losing face or displaying embarrassing ignorance in a discussion or controversy. Because the field of contemporary Indigenous art is extremely broad, rapidly changing, and often linked to cultural and historical aspects, the risk of parading ignorance is relatively high.

It could be argued, of course, that art criticism is less frequent when innovation is rare because there is then little need to comment on or analyse the same things over and over again.⁶⁶ However, this cannot be used as an excuse for a lack of criticism and analysis of contemporary Indigenous art because—as the other chapters of this book show—the wildfire of innovation that broke out in the 1970s continues. The artists who achieved notoriety are also often those who repeatedly change their styles throughout their careers. Moreover, the social and political injustices that inspire so much art today never seem to be healed, only changed.

⁶⁶ Garneau 2014, p. 324

Advocacy

The Art Scene

This section looks at the factor of advocacy in the artification of Indigenous art, i.e., the network of social relations involved in promoting and accepting art, firstly in general and then in the context of Germany and Australia.

The advocacy of Indigenous art in Australia gradually evolved, resonating between academic and commercial interests, and today the art is fully established there. The situation in Germany is entirely different and will be discussed in detail.

The sociopsychologist Gary A. Fine analysed many aspects of the ethnography and sociology of the art world in his book *Everyday Genius* and stated in his introduction that ‘[t]he art world is a community (or several communities) with norms, values and standards. [...] Communities determine what is beautiful and what is powerful [emphasis added].’⁶⁷ He stressed that communities, defined by their social boundaries, consist of ‘an interconnected group of actors who perceive common interests and who are embedded in a network of social relations’.⁶⁸ Such communities hold the power of definition within their group.

⁶⁷ Fine 2006, p. 2

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 5

Rothenberg and Fine⁶⁹ compared the networks in the hierarchies of the art scene to the hierarchies of industrial societies. They placed outstanding artists, collectors, museums, auction houses, and high-ranking galleries at the top, critics (including academics) and lower-ranking galleries and the artists they represent in the middle, while the legions of artists who support themselves mainly through wage labour and service professions are at the bottom. Towse⁷⁰ provided a complete description of the many activities and roles in the modern art scene from the perspective of cultural economics.

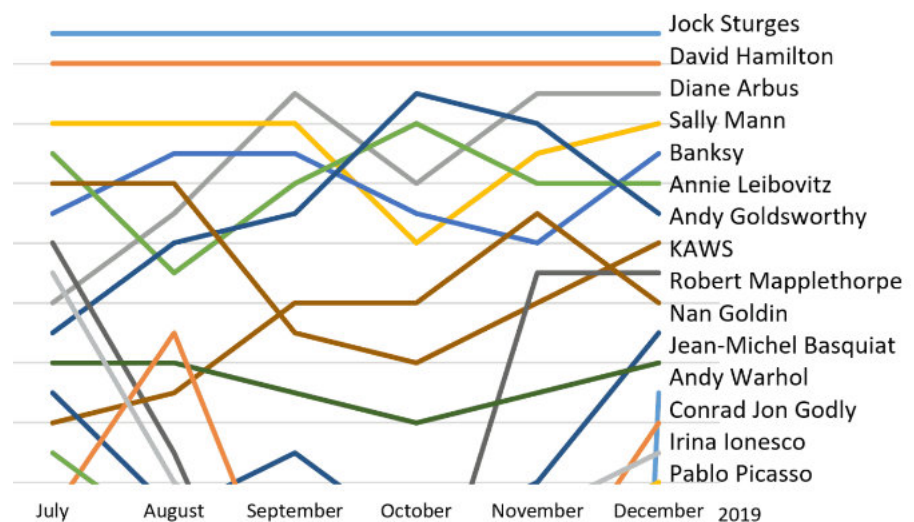
⁶⁹ Rothenberg and Fine 2008, p. 34

⁷⁰ Towse 2011

Heinich, within the framework of so-called pragmatic sociology (i.e., descriptive, not normative), emphasised the important role of intermediaries, including academics, in promoting the recognition of specific art trends, ‘[...] other artists who happened to form a group at the beginning [...]; an art critic [...] who baptised it; gallery owners who decided to show some of these works; art collectors who bought them; other art critics who wrote about them; auctioneers who sold them in public auctions; experts who authenticated or priced them; museum curators who persuaded their peers to buy them [...]; art historians who began to study the artist’s whole work; students who dedicated their PhD to it; as well as framers, transporters, insurers, restorers, printers, electricians, exhibition architects, attendants, lecturers and, eventually, photographers. Without all these people, there would have been no ‘artworks’, only old posters stored in a studio.’⁷¹

⁷¹ Heinich 2012, p. 697

Members of this network of different roles often work together to construct a common intellectual theoretical framework, which—not unintentionally—leads to individuals being able to enhance their reputation as experts in that theory. There are specialised collections, galleries, and museums. There are rankings for the prestige of individuals in particular roles: Artists, gallerists, collectors, museum directors, and academics. All have their particular rankings established formally by degrees, awards, and official positions or informally by success



There is a ranking for everything and anything. This figure is based on clicks at www.artnet.de, viewed on January 7th, 2021.

in the activities associated with their role. The same person may hold several or successive roles, although a high standing in one role is, in practice, only weakly transferred to another.

The roles mentioned above are obviously numerous in Germany for European art. However, what is the situation concerning mediators of contemporary Indigenous Australian art? The short list below highlights the weaknesses in the network:

Artists: There are no Indigenous Australian artists known to the authors who are living and working in Germany; therefore, they are not in a position to promote their own work locally. Several practical factors may help explain this, compared to the somewhat better situation for artists from African nations, for example: higher travel costs, additional language barriers, a dearth of artistic or educational exchange programs between Australia and Germany, and lack of a diaspora of already acculturated Indigenous Australians in Germany.

Gallery owners: Since 1990, there have been seven commercial galleries in Germany that specialised in Indigenous Australian art, generally not operating in the same years (in Speyer, Freiburg, several in Berlin, Hamburg, Rees-Millingen, Übach-Palenberg). In comparison, www.galerie.de listed over 700 commercial art galleries in 2021.

Collectors: If one defines collectors as those who acquire more works than they can hang in their homes, with many artworks having museum quality, there are at least six in Germany.⁷²

Curators: Apart from one museum director, the authors know of only a few people who have curated two or more exhibitions of Indigenous art in art museums in Germany since 1995.

Museum directors: Of all the exhibitions of Indigenous contemporary art in large or small art museums in Germany, after the first in 1993 and until 2020, only one museum director, Ulrich Krempel, organised several exhibitions, namely five.

Critics: Perhaps in part due to the paucity of exhibitions, no publishing German art critics are known to be experts on Indigenous Australian art.

Academics: Searches using Google in 2017 and 2021 found no art professors in art departments at German universities or academies who had written more than once about Indigenous Australian art in their publications.

Students: Based on the authors' personal experience, there might be as many as one or two diploma theses written each year that mention or treat Indigenous Australian art. Based on the number of doctoral dissertations available through the German National Library in Frankfurt, even fewer doctoral theses are submitted.

This persistent lack of a network of advocates in Germany is a significant disadvantage for the recognition of Indigenous Australian contemporary art in Germany. It is, therefore, essential to analyse the influ-

⁷² For a fascinating account of the motivations and history of the acquisition of two significant private collections within Australia, i.e., Tim and Vivien Johnson (eventually donated to the Art Gallery of New South Wales) and Dame Margaret Carnegie (some of which were donated to the Art Gallery of Victoria), see Myers 2005.

ence of art gallery owners, museum directors, and (academic) art historians in more detail. Gallery owners generally pioneer access to art, while museum directors decide what is accepted into museums and presented as fine art.

The Community of Art Historians and Museum Directors

The lack of directors willing and able to promote contemporary Indigenous art can be explained, or at least made plausible, by several hypotheses. In one analysis, Fine compared the relationships between the members and organisations of a non-mainstream contemporary art scene in the US with that of the mainstream. In particular, regarding the lack of museum directors promoting such arts, Fine quotes one director as saying that '*[a] museum, as an educational institution, has a responsibility to give its audience some insight into the historical circumstances and cultural conditioning of artistic production [...].*'⁷³

⁷³ Fine 2006, p. 28

Fine's book made it clear that this is unusually difficult for art outside the mainstream. In terms of the situation in Germany, the consequence is that a director avoids hosting an exhibition of this art if he or she believes that his or her expertise regarding contemporary Indigenous art is insufficient to reliably exercise such an appraisal function. This is painfully evident from the survey results and interview reports in the previous chapter, which stated, '*The relatively large number of refusals without rationale, combined with a number of clarifying phone calls, indicated that expertise in Indigenous Australian art was (and is) marginal.*' (see p. 370) The reasons for such widespread ignorance of this contemporary art stream among art museum directors are likely to be very similar to the reasons for art historians and are treated below.

The (successful) career of an art museum director and the choice of professional direction are influenced by another factor of the 20th and 21st centuries: Museums have become more and more reliant on corporate merchandising, marketing, and sponsorship not only for special exhibitions and events but also for essential funding of acquisitions or even infrastructure maintenance. As Fine notes, '*This affects who is asked to serve on the museum board. While boards are somewhat diverse with a few artists and major collectors, increasingly they are stocked with those who can help sell the museum to publics [sic] and corporations.*'⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 250

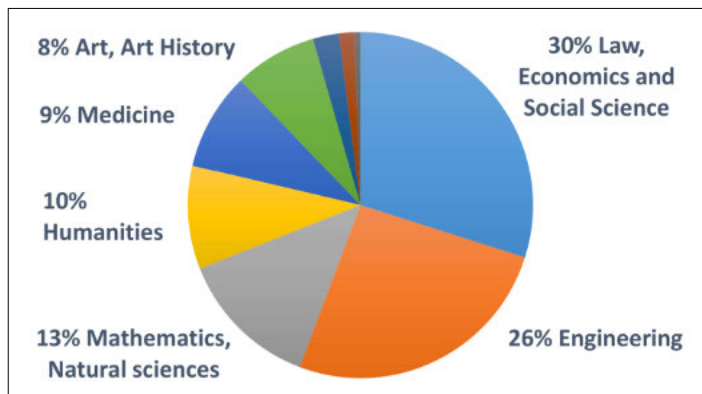
Applied to the situation in Germany, where helping to promote the museum often means winning the favour of the municipal and state sponsors and responsible politicians, experts in little-known or unaccepted art movements are not appointed as directors because they can make little impression on the funding bodies and private sponsors. Even if directors personally want to support an Indigenous art exhibition, they can be outvoted or need to make a tactical retreat in the face of disapproval from any of several sponsors. Examples were given in the previous

chapter, which quotes two directors who wanted to hold an exhibition but had to decline because they were dependent on other decision-makers (see p. 374).

In the above list of roles, the academic expert is particularly underrepresented in Germany. Why is this the case, and why is this fact important? The acceptance by the public of the legitimisation of novel art forms by advocates in academia is an important trend of the last century. Without such support, acceptance of a new art movement by the art scene and the public is very hesitant. Fine notes, *‘While all actors play their part in creating the field, academics and critics are given special authority. Grudging agreement exists that critics and art historians have the authority to separate the wheat from the chaff.’*⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 47

⁷⁶ Ibid.



According to the Federal Statistical Office (2021), there were 48,547 university professors in Germany in 2019, of whom 8% (3,765) were in art and art studies. Not one teaches about contemporary Indigenous Australian art.

Therefore, a lack of academic experts is very detrimental to the acceptance of Indigenous art. Why is there a lack of experts in Germany (or elsewhere)? There is a circular dependency: Experts are needed in order to encourage students to become experts. Unfortunately, students know that *‘[a] reality of academic (and critical) life is that one is known by one’s topics. There is a triviality barrier. Better to study mathematics than marbles.’*⁷⁶ Consequently, little-known or unaccepted art forms are entirely unattractive to those seeking to enhance their reputation in a mainstream career unless some role models show that success is possible. Such role models abound in Australia today but not in Germany.

The lack of academic treatment of a subject can become self-perpetuating. The impact of decades of dominant views in universities becomes reflected in the curricula and, thus, in the direction of thinking of graduates, the expertise of teachers-in-training and the priorities of students. An example from another field is given in an article by Rasmussen⁷⁷ on the secondary and tertiary education system in Norway, where he denounced the (constraining) rigid and Eurocentric views on the arts and analysed them in relation to the theory of critical discourse. In principle, experts from foreign countries could become accredited for a position at a German university or art institution, but that is rather rare and there remains a further difficulty.

Even if a person qualifies as an expert in contemporary Indigenous arts, by whatever means, the question then arises whether there are subsequent opportunities for academic positions. Another barrier becomes visible here, based on relative prioritisation. Fine noted, *‘Despite the impressive growth of arts departments [since the 1950s], no department can afford to have specialists in all fields. Academic specialties form a hierarchy, a hierarchy that—with some exceptions, such as nods to feminism and multiculturalism—still privileges the canon of European art [...]’*⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Rasmussen 2017

⁷⁸ Fine 2006, p. 47

The consequence is that academic positions are allocated with

higher priority to experts in mainstream fields, while art movements with low priority, low recognition or low acceptance are rarely, if ever, represented.

Another consequence of the above situation for academic positions is that young art historians who want to research Indigenous art are disadvantaged in terms of mentoring, role models, and resources, and—because they lack accreditation from relevant academic programmes of high repute—do not have the same opportunity for recognition of the quality of their research as, for example, students of the Italian Renaissance.

The Community of Gallery Owners

Commercial galleries are the intermediaries between artists, collectors, and art museums. They provide information, access to artworks, advice for young collectors, outreach at art fairs, lobbying and promotion of exhibitions in art museums, contributions to local newspapers and a certain degree of legitimacy. They print catalogues and promote art and artists directly and personally in their chosen field.

Commercial art galleries in Germany come in many forms, from short-lived to second- or third-generation, from galleries in private homes to glass-front palaces. It is rare for a gallery owner to risk focusing on a novel or ‘foreign’ art form, because continuous sales are necessary to pay the rent and print the exhibition catalogues. The German tax authorities grant small businesses five years in which to make a profit, otherwise they are taxed as ‘not-for-profit’, i.e., a hobby. Galleries are granted ten years.

In the last twenty years, to the authors’ knowledge, there have been a total of seven galleries in Germany specialising in Indigenous Australian art that operated for more than a year, mostly at different times, as well as some galleries that only existed for a shorter time. These galleries kept Indigenous Australian art in the public eye during the drought years between major exhibitions in art museums.

Several of these commercial galleries were able to improve the promotion of Indigenous art by managing to place non-commercial exhibitions in public exhibition spaces, usually in municipal art museums or in art associations (Kunstvereinen), and sometimes in ethnological museums that were open to the idea of an art exhibition. However, as described in the previous chapter, art historians and museum directors do not usually recognise exhibitions in ethnological museums as art exhibitions. Consequently, they believe that ethnological museums are the ideal place to exhibit Indigenous art, namely as ethnographic objects. In this respect, such exhibitions do not help to promote the acceptance of Indigenous art as contemporary fine art, however, the exhibitions at least allow the public to form their own opinion.

Outstanding Artists

It seems to be a necessary aspect of the acceptance of new art movements to elevate a few artists to the role of ‘star artist’. Nathalie Heinich has analysed in detail this sociological phenomenon, i.e., how society ascribes an exceptionally high value to certain artists, and calls it a ‘singularity system’.⁷⁹ According to Heinich, this trend began within France at least as early as the 19th century and is prevalent in Western cultures today. Beginning with her book *La gloire de Van Gogh: Essai d’anthropologie de l’admiration*,⁸⁰ she pointed to van Gogh as the most important early example. In her later publication *L’élite artiste. Excellence et singularité en régime démocratique*,⁸¹ she analysed the role and status of authors and artists from the time of the French Revolution to the 21st century and came to the conclusion that social roles were repeatedly reassigned to artists, from the rank of ‘artisan or craftsman’ to the rank of ‘expert’ to that belonging to the ‘talented’ and finally, in individual cases, to the ‘singularity’ role.

The above analyses assumed that a consensus of experts determined the status of an outstanding artist based on the extraordinary quality of their artworks. In today’s art markets, approval of ‘star artist’ status can also come from a kind of herd behaviour based on a so-called information cascade. For markets like the art market, which have high transparency but low sales per artist and high uncertainty in valuation, Azarmi and Menny⁸² have shown with statistical analyses of auction data that a few early observations of these data are a better indicator of future valuations than is the list of artists’ museum exhibitions. The reason is that buyers can minimise their financial risk and maximise their positive social feedback by following the herd, i.e., the peer group. Of course, this inevitably leads to some artists being celebrated as exceptional without clear criteria.

Adler⁸³ extended the work of Rosen⁸⁴ and showed that the designation of some artists to the role of ‘outstanding’ is a natural outcome of human nature, with finite resources such as time and money yielding greater positive outcomes (interesting discussions with peers, more enjoyment through deeper knowledge) when concentrated on a few artists, ‘Stardom is a market device to economise on learning costs in activities “where the more you know the more you enjoy”. Thus stardom may be independent of the existence of a hierarchy of talent.’⁸⁵ Azarmi and Menny wrote, ‘For the emerging and contemporary artists in our study [who are subject to significantly higher uncertainty in long-term evaluation], differences in quality of artist do not significantly impact the choice of art.’⁸⁶ Moreover, the analysis showed that outstanding artists dominate a large share of the market, ‘[...] in 2009, an artist ranked in the top ten percent [in auction sales] achieved more than 27 times the auction volume of an artist in the median distribu-

⁷⁹ Heinich 2005

⁸⁰ Heinich 1991

⁸¹ Heinich 2005

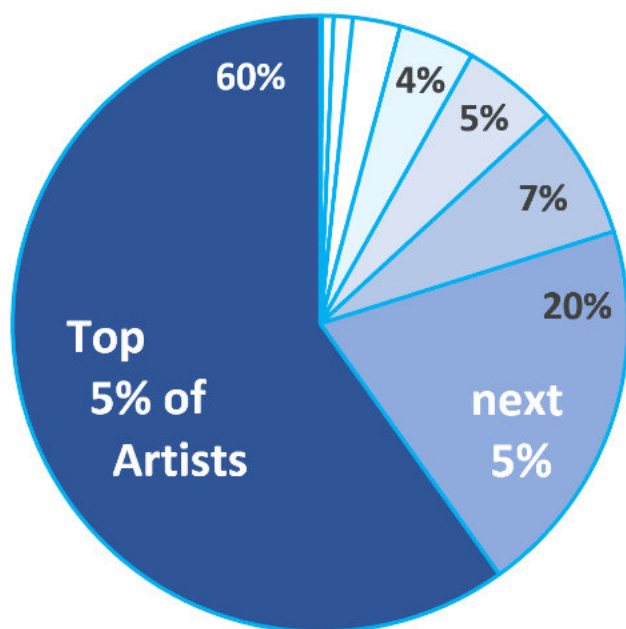
⁸² Azarmi and Menny 2013

⁸³ Adler 1985

⁸⁴ Rosen 1981

⁸⁵ Adler 1985, p. 208

⁸⁶ Azarmi and Menny 2013, p. 33

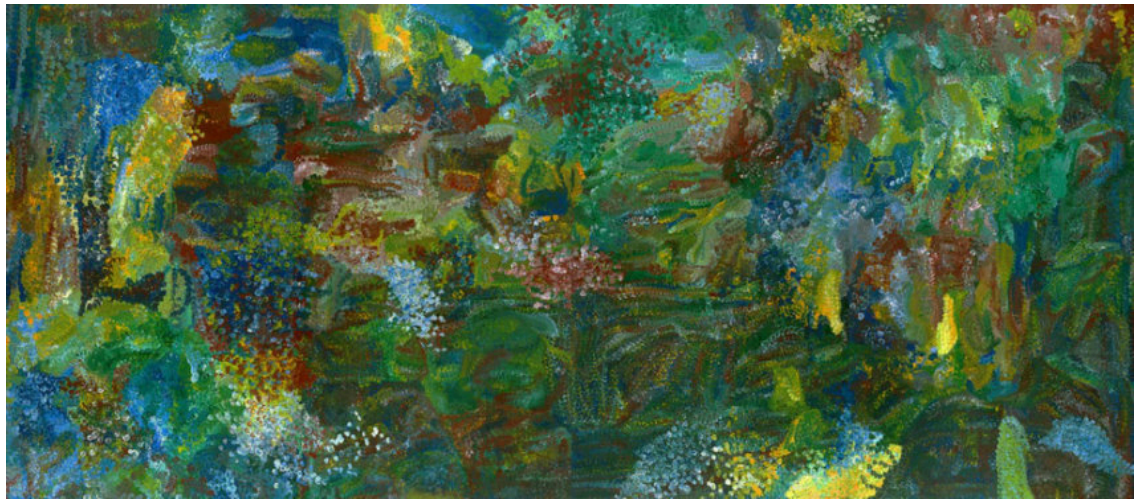


Share of global sales at auction for artworks by the highest-earning artists in 2009, subdivided into groups of ‘top 5%’ etc. (after Azarmi and Menny 2013, p. 18)

tion and more than 970 times the auction volume of an artist ranked in the bottom ten percent.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 31

The designation of outstanding artists is thus a century-old trend in society. It is driven by human nature and the dynamics of the art market, especially during the phase of ongoing artification. Moreover, the major auction houses are well aware of this trend and are doing everything they can to boost and exploit it. In Australia, but only in Australia, some Indigenous artists have achieved the status of star artists, such as Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Rover Thomas (Yoolama), Eubena (Yupina) Nampitjin, John Mawurndjul, Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, Judy Watson, Fiona Foley, and Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula and others.



Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Earth's Creation 1*, 1994, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 275 × 632 cm. The painting sold for 2.1 million Australian dollars at auction in Sydney on November 16th, 2017.

State of Artification

Earlier in this chapter, the work of Bowness⁸⁸ was cited, describing success for artists in terms of increasing recognition, from recognition by colleagues to recognition by critics to promotion by gallerists and collectors to public recognition.

⁸⁸ Bowness 1989

The nine major exhibitions of contemporary art in German art museums in the almost 30 years since 'Aratjara' in 1993 have repeatedly demonstrated the public's strong interest, but the approval of professional art historians and museum directors is still in abeyance. With one exception, all exhibitions were survey exhibitions that could show breadth but not depth. The artification factor of uniqueness is more substantial when a single artist is the focus and weaker when many artists are exhibited together under the common category of 'Indigenous art'.

In summary, with regard to the artification factors identified by Shapiro and Heinich⁸⁹ that contribute to the acceptance of new art forms, the insufficient strength of the network of advocates and the insufficient depth of the materials of discourse and critique are confirmed as two major problem areas for contemporary Indigenous art. The two negatives reinforce each other and tend to result in exhibitions being withheld from German audiences.

⁸⁹ Shapiro and Heinich 2012

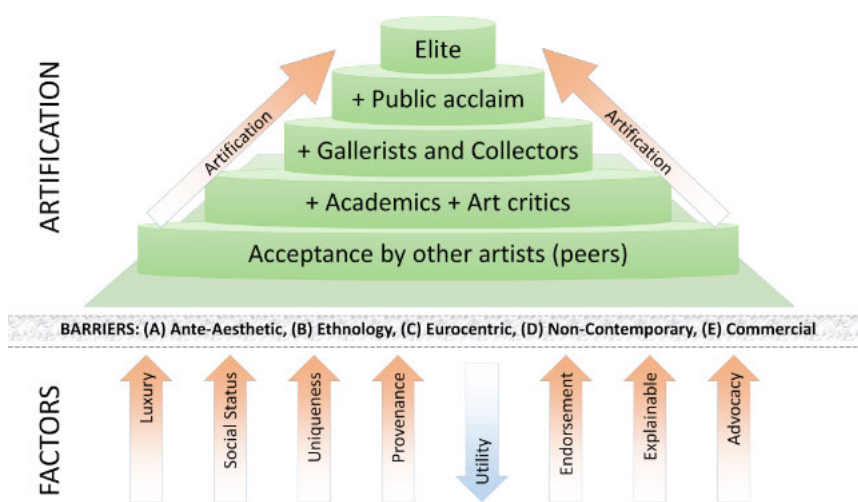
There is a small sub-population of art lovers and professionals in Germany who promote exhibitions and discourse on contemporary Indigenous Australian art. However, there is no focus or continuity in their activities. There is no consistent core of professionals in established academic positions or art museums who are able and willing to collect, weigh, critique, discuss, and then share what they have learned with students, the public, and colleagues over the decades of their professional lives.

Gallery owners and collectors are a rarity, limited to one or at most two simultaneously operating galleries in Germany and a handful of collectors.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the acceptance of contemporary Indigenous art within the professional art world in Germany will continue to be a slow process, limited by the rate of new appointments of academics and museum directors and the rarity of epiphanies. Each Indigenous art exhibition that does occur at a major art museum inspires new hope of permanent change, that is not thereafter realised. Furthermore, even another generation of new academics may bring little change if certain viewpoints, such as Eurocentrism, continue to dominate academic and professional thinking. The following section analyses such viewpoints and their potential impact.

Precluded Artification

Five Caveats



Shapiro and Heinrich's artification model is adapted to take into account barriers to artification (added by the author) such as Eurocentrism.

So far, the discussion has tacitly assumed that all new art movements must undergo a general artification process, albeit at different speeds (depending on many factors), to gain acceptance. However, there are at least five models of thought or philosophical positions that preclude the whole process and deny artworks any serious consideration for display in a museum of modern art. These philosophical positions exclude even the initial stages of artification. They are labelled by the author, in order of strength of rejection, as (A) ante-aesthetic, (B) ethnological, (C) Eurocentric, (D) non-contemporary, and (E) commercialism.

Indigenous Australian art is confronted with all five philosophical positions in its struggle for acceptance,

so it is appropriate to discuss each. In extreme cases, several such objections can occur in a few seconds of communication, as illustrated by the following example from the previous chapter, ‘*Our mentally handicapped people achieve more than these natives [ante-aesthetic]. It’s too decorative, you can print it on coffee cups [commercialism]. People over there, like those in Canada [Eurocentric], overestimate themselves.*’ (see p. 372)

Ante-aesthetics is a term invented for this chapter in order to categorise those reasons for rejection that are based on the assumption that the alleged works of art are created by individuals or groups who are uncivilised and, therefore, unable to understand the modern human condition. Such people, therefore, cannot possibly create art for art’s sake (‘l’art pour l’art’) or are incapable of imagination or innovation and therefore unable to create great art, i.e., they are like apes or the pre-Stone Age *Homo habilis*.

The previous chapter provides an example, quoted from a telephone conversation with a museum director, ‘[...] *a decision-making committee debated whether this art was art at all [...]*’ (see p. 373). The author of this chapter suspects that the inability of Indigenous artists to explain a complex intellectual or empathetic framework for their art style in any of the main European languages rather than in Warlpiri, Pintupi, or Gija is often taken as *prima facie* evidence of the ante-aesthetic nature of their artworks. In a sense, Art Brut is also occasionally haunted by this categorisation.

Recent research in child psychology and archaeology⁹⁰ refutes such views and shows that humans have been born with a sense of aesthetics for hundreds of thousands of years. The concept of ante-aesthetics is so racist and discriminatory that it is nowadays never given in writing as a formal reason for rejecting an exhibition, although it may arise in conversation.

Ethnography: The work is classified as art of some kind because it is technically demanding in terms of technique or elaborate production method but is only valid within the ‘exotic’ society that produced it. Therefore, it cannot in any way possibly be considered to be fine art or even be understood or appreciated by the European art community. In the previous chapter, examples from interviews were provided, ‘[...] *one director saw it as pure folklore, and another could agree to accept the art as ethnological but declared it bad and unacceptable as contemporary art.*’ (see p. 373) Famously, in 1994, the Art Cologne selection committee explicitly defined contemporary Indigenous art as folk art, thus relegating it outside the scope of its contemporary art fair.⁹¹

In such cases, it is usually suggested by art museum directors that the works be loaned to an ethnological museum for exhibition and kept under glass, usually without listing the artist’s name. Indeed, this can be seen as a litmus test of ethnological art, ‘[...] *ethnographic art is made by a “people”; contemporary art is made by a “person”*’.⁹² For this reason, it is rarely

⁹⁰ Dissanayake 2009; Lorente 2020

⁹¹ Frieling and Bähr 2003, pp. 76–77

⁹² Wilson-Anastasios 2011, p. 23

advantageous for professional artists to have their works displayed in an ethnological museum, no matter how exquisite the building and how white the walls.

Another tactic to avoid acknowledging the creativity of the individual artists and the modernity of their artwork is to focus an exhibition on a panoramic and encyclopaedic overview of the history and mores of the artists' society rather than on the artworks themselves, usually on the basis of the misleading justification that this will allow the public to more fully understand the artworks. In the first instance, however, it is more likely that the public will understand the artworks to be not the product of the artist's creativity but mainly the product of a long and 'exotic' cultural history. An example from the previous chapter illustrates this, where one director is cited as declaiming that *'Even though he could very well understand that Indigenous art could be seen in the context of contemporary, international art, it belonged in the ethnological museum because it came from a completely different culture whose myths and traditions need explanation.'* (see p. 373)

Eurocentrism: In this argument, it is considered that the art style is primarily appreciated and supported by people and institutions who hold to a value system that does not correspond or align to European values or who are outside the occidental art scene. In this case, the artification process does not easily find European supporters, so there is no majority consensus to agree to judge the artworks as valuable works of art. At best, antique dealers might collect the works for a modern Wunderkammer or an ethnographic collection.

The real or imagined difficulty that Eurocentrism presents as insurmountable is similar to that of explaining colour to a person with only monochrome vision (achromatopsia). The core of Eurocentrism's problem is its inability to perceive, from a view entirely shaped by Greco-Roman-influenced European art history, that the world can be seen in a different way and, therefore, thought about in a different way. An art historian who is entirely comfortable within that framework does not consider alternatives. Peter Sutton defined the problem, *'Learning to see the world through the eyes of others ideally means not just looking through a different lens, but stepping through it as far as feasible. [...] Proper attitudes, listening, being nice and cultural relativism are not enough. One has to change.'*⁹³

⁹³ Sutton 2009, p. 163

Non-contemporary: If neither ante-aesthetics, ethnology, nor Eurocentrism is considered sufficient objection, a rejection can be attempted by denying the contemporaneity of the artworks. In most such cases, the art style has already gained the support of some individuals within the European art scene but is described by others as neither modern nor contemporary and, therefore, in no way reflective of today's human existence. The artworks are, therefore, by definition, considered not to belong to contemporary art, whatever definition of art is used. They can then immediately be classified as folk art.

Commercialism: All four of the above models of thought assume that the artworks do not originate from Western culture; this means, conversely, that artworks by ‘local’ artists living in Berlin or Paris and perhaps even Sydney cannot be subsumed under the above categories. It is also obviously difficult to apply the above objections to works visually similar to those of well-known Western artists. Therefore, to preclude acceptance as contemporary art in such cases, it can instead be argued that the artworks are only mass-produced for short-term commercial gain, as mindless reproductions of traditional motifs or with purely decorative patterns of no particular novelty. Such a motivation would run counter to the ‘l’art pour l’art’ idea of modern art and to the uniqueness criterion of artification so that continued consideration of the works as works of art would be ridiculous. Q.E.D.

The following section looks in more detail at Eurocentrism, one of the most common lines of thought that hinder the acceptance of Indigenous art as contemporary art.

Transculturalism vs. Eurocentrism

Historical Context

Transculturalism has seen many definitions in the last century.⁹⁴ For example, a graduate programme has been established at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies. In this chapter, multiculturalism is defined as the acceptance of the validity of different cultural perspectives and aesthetics without necessarily adopting them, while transculturalism involves the acceptance and adoption of (some) aspects of other cultures’ artistic value systems into a new/expanded syncretic worldview. Eurocentrism abhors multiculturalism and denies the possibility of transculturalism. On a personal level, the emotional reactions to the artwork are, respectively, ‘That’s complete rubbish!’ versus ‘That’s interesting!’ versus ‘That’s beautiful!’

The decades of the 1950s to 1980s saw enormous socio-political change globally, with Western European influence waning and new countries with different cultural norms emerging from a post-colonial landscape. At the same time, the impact of digitalisation and globalisation on the exchange of goods, services and, ultimately, ideas led to the spread of those ideas like ink in water. The response of artists worldwide was incredibly diverse, and simultaneously the huge global increase in the numbers of middle-income and wealthy people led to a massive increase in the numbers of collectors, art museums, and exhibitions. The aesthetics of this period have been recapitulated in a series of major exhibitions, curated, for example, by Okwui Enwezor:

⁹⁴ Juneja and Kravagna 2013, pp. 23–24



Mawalan Marika, *Sydney from the Air*, 1963, natural pigments on bark, 91.3 × 43.3 cm

o 'The Short Century. Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1945–1994', Villa Stuck, Munich, February 15th to April 22nd, 2001; Gropius Bau, Berlin, May 18th to July 29th, 2001; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, September 8th to December 30th, 2001, and MoMA, New York, February 2nd to May 5th, 2002

o 'Postwar: Art between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945–1965', Haus der Kunst, Munich, October 14th, 2016, to March 26th, 2017

⁹⁵ Goldwater 1986

⁹⁶ Jorgensen 2008, p. 415

⁹⁷ Foster 1985

The exhibition 'Postwar' attempted to summarise the art of a postcolonial and decolonising world. With 350 works by 218 artists from 65 countries, the themes were social and not regional: 'Aftermath: Zero Hour and the Atomic Era', 'Form Matters', 'New Images of Man', 'Realisms', 'Concrete Visions', 'Cosmopolitan Modernisms', 'Nations Seeking Form', and 'Networks, Media and Communication'. The intention of the exhibition was partly to document the treatment of the end of colonialism by artists in Asia and Africa. One of the opening images of the website portrays Sydney from the air in an Indigenous formal style, a painting by the artist Mawalan Marika (see previous page).

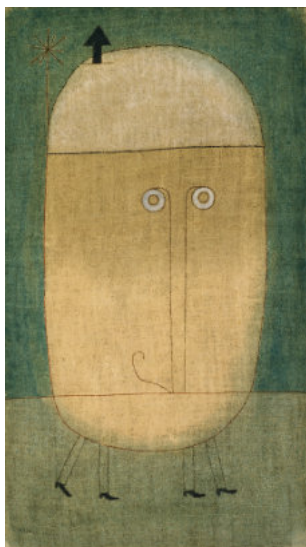
The perception of non-European aesthetics in Western European art circles grew rapidly in the post-war period. A trend towards multiculturalism arose, which was merged with a trend towards transculturalism. These trends reduced barriers to the acceptance of contemporary Indigenous art but did not eliminate them.

At the time Goldwater celebrated the influence of non-European art in his book *Primitivism in Modern Art*,⁹⁵ negative associations had become attached to the term primitivism, associating with it a kind of cultural parasitism. For example, the exhibition 'Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern', shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in late 1984, was heavily criticised. It exhibited important avant-garde paintings by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and Paul Gauguin alongside works from Africa and Oceania that had inspired them but without giving names and biographical details of the non-European artists.⁹⁶ The exhibition was heavily criticised by theorists of postcolonialism who claimed that the non-European works had been removed from their cultural context, first by Picasso et al. and then again by the exhibition's curator, William Rubin—all in the service of a Eurocentric view of art history.⁹⁷

The famous exhibition 'Magiciens de la Terre', shown in Paris in 1989 at the Centre Georges Pompidou and the Grande Halle de la Villette, was intended by the curator Jean-Hubert Martin to encompass all contemporary artistic creation as a universal and spiritual phenomenon of a global world and show in a balanced way over 450 works by 52 Western



The 1984 exhibition 'Primitivism in 20th Century Art' at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, showed European art in the context of African art that had inspired it. On the left of the room is 'Mask of Fear' by Paul Klee, 1932, inspired by a Zuni sculpture.



Paul Klee, Mask of Fear, 1932, oil on jute, 100.4 × 57.1 cm

and 52 non-European artists, including artists from Australia. The catalogue⁹⁸ contained many chapters on art and global-political analysis and devoted two pages to each artist, locating each on a world map, always centred on the artist's location. The focus on academically trained artists in the Western selection and mainly non-academically trained artists in the non-European selection provided a target for unwarranted accusations of exoticism. Art professor Annie Cohen-Solal, who collaborated with Jean-Hubert Martin, later remarked, *'[T]he fact that the original catalogue had not been translated into English and was never really available, as well as the relatively poor number of visitors in 1989 (a total of less than 300,000 for the Centre Pompidou and La Villette) created another phenomenon: for the audience at large around the world, Magiciens de la Terre became a legendary exhibition—a great many were discussing it without having actually seen it. [...] The video catalogue [...] coproduced by Cataloga, the Centre Pompidou and Z'Editions, which was shot during the hanging of the exhibition, focused on the "picturesque" side of non-Western artists. With numerous close-ups on their clothing and behaviour, it contributed to artificially emphasize the exoticization of the project.'*⁹⁹

Lafuente¹⁰⁰ later analysed 'Magiciens de la Terre' as part of a trend in the history of art museums that, based on the theories of Benoit de L'Estoile and others, can be interpreted as a dichotomy in representation between the self and otherness: art museums of the self (the familiar, i.e., predominantly European or North American) and the museums of the other. The former look inwards (who we are, how we see the world) and the latter observe from the outside, which creates a sense of superiority by implying a disempowerment of the represented and an exclusion of the observed.

Taking all this into account, there seem to be only two options for discourse on artworks that are not obviously part of the European worldview: (1) incorporation/co-option or (2) exclusion/rejection (Eurocentrism).

Discourse in Australia

Before discussing the possible effects of Eurocentrism on the acceptance of contemporary Indigenous art in Germany, the history in Australia will be briefly recounted. Further details can be found in the chapter 'Brief History of Indigenous Art'.

⁹⁸ Martin 1989



Richard Long, Red Earth Circle, 1989, and Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, Neville Japangardi Poulson, Francis Jupurrurla Kelly, Paddy Jupurrurla Nelson, Franck Bronson Jakamarra Nelson, and Towser Jakamarra Walker, Yam Dreaming, 1989, in the exhibition 'Magiciens de la Terre', Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, 1989

⁹⁹ Cohen-Solal 2014

¹⁰⁰ Lafuente 2013

The gradual success of this art in non-Indigenous Australia was not inevitable. The initial interest of academic institutions and art museums was a tentative one. A short article published in 2003 by an Australian author—perhaps revealingly, in a Canadian art magazine—analysed the growth of interest and concluded that ‘[l]ooking back at the role of the market, the public collecting institutions and the academy in the repositioning of Australian Aboriginal art in the late twentieth century, it appears that these three forces moved approximately together. At mid-century, all relegated indigenous art to a “primitive” anthropological category. [...] The art museums deserve credit for beginning the repositioning process, intermittently in the 1960s, and then vigorously in the 1970s and 1980s [...]’¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Dolan 2003, p. 64

¹⁰² Thomas 2011a

¹⁰³ Goldstein 2013

¹⁰⁴ Sloggett 2014

Thomas¹⁰² traced European and Australian interest in Indigenous art from the earliest records in 1837 to official recognition by museums in the 1980s and beyond. Goldstein¹⁰³ and Sloggett¹⁰⁴ have published research on the history of the discussions since about 1940. In a public address in September 2006, Howard Morphy stated, ‘What had been absent almost until the 1980s was an interest in Aboriginal art from the fine art world and the art gallery scene. The Art Gallery of New South Wales under Tony Tuckson had acquired the magnificent Scougall collections twenty-five years earlier [...] and the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory had consistently developed its Indigenous collections from its foundation in 1969. [...] It is hard to believe but it was until the early 1980s that the National Gallery in Canberra began to seriously develop its collection of Aboriginal art.’¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Morphy 2006, p. 6

Indigenous art has gained such a strong influence since the 1970s, and the respect given to the various art movements and artists is such that this art, like traditional European art movements, is fully accepted in Australia. This is very evident when art museums juxtapose Indigenous artworks with modern non-Indigenous works, including works by American or European artists. This fusion is a response to the dichotomy of Eurocentrism.

The Australian art scene—academics, gallerists, critics, active artists, and also government consultants—is naturally very concerned with the issue of Eurocentrism. The theme of the 32nd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art, meeting for the first time in Australia in Melbourne in 2008, focusing on postcolonial history and theory, was ‘Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration, Convergence’. Howard Morphy, Director of the Research School of Humanities, Australian National University, remarked at the last plenary session of the congress on the need to expand definitions of art across cultures, borders, and times, a call also echoed by Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, Director of the Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa.¹⁰⁶ From 2014 to 2016, a federal research grant supported research on ‘Australian Cultural Fields: National and Transnational Dynamics’,¹⁰⁷ which used the methodology of Pierre Bourdieu¹⁰⁸ to examine Eurocentrism in relation to the arts scene in Australia. A recent book on art practices in Australia¹⁰⁹ has gone beyond expressing

¹⁰⁶ Turner 2008

¹⁰⁷ Kelly and Bennett 2014

¹⁰⁸ Bourdieu 1993

¹⁰⁹ Bennett et al. 2020

pious hopes for the demise of Eurocentrism to describing the independent role of Australia and Indigenous Australia in the global art community and art markets.

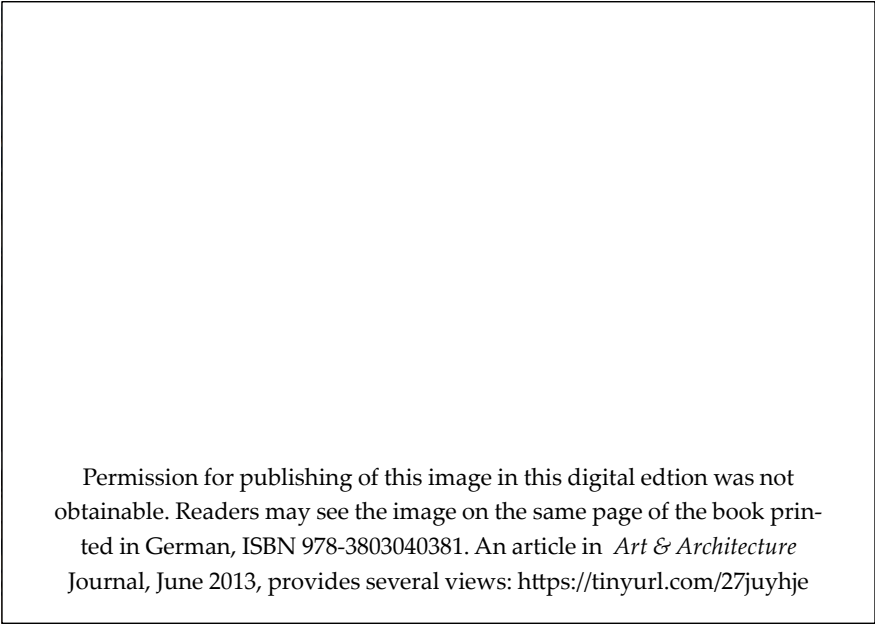
In Australia, the construction of the Musée du quai Branly in Paris in June 2006 was seen by some critics as a failed attempt at a transcultural approach to art and aesthetics. *‘The Musée is another example of the colonial drama replaying itself out, as the significant collection of Aboriginal Australian art on show here recreates the problem it wants to resolve. This is the problem of primitivism, [sic] In 2006, the then French President Jacques Chirac [sic] opened the Museum by declaring its difference from primitivisms of the past, but the museum itself only shows third and fourth world arts, returning to the historical distinction of colonised from coloniser. [...] while across the river the Pompidu stands as a monument to post-industrialism and contemporary art [...].’*¹¹⁰

This analysis was confirmed from numerous references by Jolly, who noted that *‘[...] eight contemporary Indigenous Australian artists were commissioned by Nouvel to create works to be an integral part of his building [...]. Most of these are installed in the module dedicated to administration, research and conservation [often as] ceiling decorations, [...] or] can only be seen from the road [...].’*¹¹¹

This treatment is sadly at odds with President Chirac’s intentions as expressed in his speech at the opening of the museum on June 20th, 2006, *‘Central to our idea is the rejection of ethnocentrism and of the indefensible pretension of the West that it alone bears the destiny of humanity, and the rejection of false evolutionism, which purports that some peoples remain immutably at an earlier stage of human evolution, and that their cultures, termed “primitive”, only have value as objects of study for anthropologists or, at best, as sources of inspiration for Western artists.’*¹¹²

Discourse in Germany

Is the unthinking rejection of non-Western contemporary art in Germany and Europe really as widespread as implied in previous sections of this book? Certainly, the number of contemporary art exhibitions in Germany of works by African, Japanese, Indonesian, Chinese and other artists has increased even more in recent decades than in the post-war years, but has it overcome the prejudices based on ‘the West and the rest’¹¹³ in contemporary art?



Lena Nyadbi, Dayiwul Lirlmim (Barramundi Scales), 2013, on the 750 m² rooftop of the Musée du quai Branly

Permission for publishing of this image in this digital edition was not obtainable. Readers may see the image on the same page of the book printed in German, ISBN 978-3803040381. An article in *Art & Architecture Journal*, June 2013, provides several views: <https://tinyurl.com/27juyhje>

¹¹⁰ Jorgensen 2013, p. 79

¹¹¹ Jolly 2011, p. 119

¹¹² Chirac 2007

¹¹³ The phrase ‘The West and the rest’ was originally a rallying cry for multiculturalism. Its first use was in the 500-page tirade against European greed and African complicity written by Nigerian humanist author Ibekwe Chinweizu: *The West and the Rest of Us: White Predators, Black Slavers, and the African Elite*, published in New York in 1975. (Chinweizu 1975) The term then spread following a widely read political article by Kishore Mahbubani, a Singaporean diplomat at the UN, on the new currents in international realpolitik of North versus South and West versus East. (Mahbubani 1992)

Kaufmann, Dossin, and Joyeux-Prunel express the following view in their introduction to ten chapters on the global character of modern art, ‘*The opening of the field to new sorts of objects and areas of research has at the same time refined and complicated understanding of previously dominant fields, notably the study of European and American art, which are now called to take into account the interconnected, international and multicultural aspects of their own concerns.*’¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Kaufmann et al. 2015, p. 1

The book’s contributors trace the rise of Eurocentrism in art analysis and appreciation through centuries of historical and political influences, including the gradual professionalisation of art history at universities in France, Germany, Britain, and (later) America, in which the supremacy of Western art was always assumed.

Kaufmann et al. point out that while some 16th-century art descriptions treated art globally, the tendency was always to favour some places over others, ‘*[U]niversal history in effect thus often collapsed into a history which elevated the art of certain selected areas in Europe at certain times, and ignored others, along with much of the rest of the world as well. World art history must thus deal with the problem of point of view and inherent bias. Frequently this bias is characterized as Eurocentrism.*’¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 26

During the last decades, there have been repeated attempts in Germany to escape a Eurocentric dichotomy (inside/outside, us/them) and to establish a global view of art. In 2002, the University of Leipzig organised a conference with the explicit aim of progressing the academic art historical debate on non-European and/or non-Western art, which ‘*[so far] is still deficient in German-speaking countries*’.¹¹⁶ One of the conference presentations identified Woermann¹¹⁷ as one of the first German publications to explicitly describe European art as superior to all others and referred to the *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte: Die aussereuropäische Kunst (Handbook of Art History: Non-European Art)*¹¹⁸ as a major counter-current that promoted non-Eurocentric views.¹¹⁹ However, another presentation at the conference by Barbara Paul documented that ‘*[...] the treatment of global art has not become established in academic research in the Federal Republic [... and] the dominant Federal Republic art historiography of the 1950s to 1980s [is] characterised by the exclusion and ignorance of non-Western contemporary art.*’¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Kruska 2002, p. 93

¹¹⁷ Woermann 1918

¹¹⁸ Springer et al. 1913

¹¹⁹ Kruska 2002, p. 94

¹²⁰ Ibid.

At the time of writing this chapter, the deficit of engagement in German universities with Eurocentrism does not appear to have changed significantly. The term ‘Eurocentrism’ was found in 2016/17 on 75 official university websites showing curricula. However, actual activity regarding Eurocentrism could only be found in two art departments: Philipps-Universität Marburg¹²¹ and Saarland University (‘In a model of world aesthetics, the Eurocentric perspective remains behind’).¹²² A third university, Freie Universität Berlin, had a special research project called ‘Transcultural negotiating spaces of art. Comparative Perspectives on Historical Contexts and Current Constellations’, which analysed the engagement

¹²¹ Philipps-Universität Marburg 2016

¹²² Universität des Saarlandes 2016

with non-Western art, but none of the listed 153 publication titles from this project directly referenced Eurocentrism.¹²³

¹²³ Freie Universität Berlin 2021

A Comparison with the Evaluation of African Art

In the following, the treatment of African art in Germany will be analysed in order to contextualise Eurocentrism and provide comparisons with the treatment of contemporary Indigenous Australian art.

Firstly, the views of artists and art historians from African countries regarding the role of African artists in global contemporary art will be considered. Of course, there is not just one such view but dozens or hundreds, as the discussions at the 2nd International Conference on African Cultures¹²⁴ in September 2017 at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe showed. The conference was inspired by the first such, held over half a century earlier in August 1962. Zvomuya, who wrote about both conferences, said of the first, *‘The principal aim of the conference and exhibition was to show “some of the prominent influences of African and of neo-African art and music on 20th century culture in the world”’. The main exhibition, comprising 100 “masterpieces of ancient African sculpture”, ranged from 2000-year-old Nok terra-cotta pieces to Benin bronzes from between the 15th and the 19th centuries, right to around 50-year-old wood carvings; also included were paintings, masks, sculptures, and other objects borrowed from the collections of galleries and museums in Africa, Europe, and the United States of America. The main show was accompanied by satellite exhibitions which showed “African influences on the School of Paris” and other European movements [...]*.¹²⁵ In this sense, African artists and curators see themselves as having influenced contemporary European art for centuries.

¹²⁴ NGZ 2017

¹²⁵ Zvomuya 2017

The views of the European and German art scene have been analysed by Flam and Deutch, Wolbert, Hiller, and Rampley et al.¹²⁶ A dissertation¹²⁷ provides a broad overview of German art historical literature from the 1890s to 1950 and comes to the conclusion that German art historians had begun the 20th century with the general feeling that African art had no place in discussions of classical or modern art. However, with the usual German monomania, German art historians had by 1914 categorised all art and found a place for African art in a social-Darwinist framework, with European art at the top ... and African art at the bottom.^{127a} In the period between the two world wars, African art was not seriously considered. However, in post-World War II Germany, they began to consider Africa as a complex, interconnected cultural and artistic landscape worthy of stylistic analysis. The many parallels with the treatment of Indigenous Australian art a century later are striking.

¹²⁶ Flam and Deutch 2003; Wolbert 2004; Hiller 2006; Rampley et al. 2012

¹²⁷ Husemann 2015

^{127a} Ibid., p. 144

The Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies¹²⁸ can be considered exemplary in Germany regarding the academic recognition of African art; it has been operating for over a decade and offers

¹²⁸ BIGSAS 2020

courses in, e.g., global art analysis. At the Art History Institute of the Free University of Berlin, contemporary art is one of the focal points in the Department of African Art, with specialisations in art from Senegal, South Africa, Egypt, Cameroon, Ghana, and Nigeria.

It should be noted, however, that the *first* exhibition at the Nationalgalerie of Berlin of contemporary African art took place only due to political pressure from the then Federal President, Horst Köhler, who wanted an exhibition to coincide with a conference of his Africa Forum Initiative.¹²⁹ The exhibition ‘Who Knows Tomorrow’ was eventually shown from June 4th to September 26th, 2010.

During the last three decades, there have been at least 29 major exhibitions of contemporary African art in Germany, 18 of them in art museums. Mutumba and Grosse¹³⁰ have already described in *art: Das Kunstmagazin* some hype regarding contemporary art from Africa and the African diaspora as a natural result of the enormous growth in the number and quality of visual art centres since the 1990s and the associated profes-

sionalisation of artists. Sotheby’s curator of modern and contemporary African art is quoted as remarking on ‘[...] an exponential increase in market demand from collectors in Africa and the African diaspora [...]’ as well as that international collectors are ‘[...] embracing art from Africa as exciting, innovative and relevant.’¹³¹

From August to September 2016, the Berlinische Galerie|Museum für Moderne Kunst, in collaboration with the ethnological museum Rietberg in Zurich and with loans from three important collections (Hannah Höch, Eduard von der Heydt and Han Coray), organised a retrospective art exhibition ‘Dada Africa: Dialogue with the Foreign’,¹³² which showed the extent of the influence of African art on the beginning in the early 1920s of Dada art. However, a critical review of the exhibition concluded, in contrast to several essays in the exhibition catalogue, that ‘[...] a conservative view is represented here and the representatives of Dadaism by no means regarded European and African cultures as equal.’¹³³ The accusation of Eurocentrism was not levelled at the curators but at the European artists who allegedly wanted to ‘[...] use African words and masks, taken out of their original context, to provoke.’¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Bystron and Zessnik 2016, p. 332; Okeke-Agulu 2010, p. 49

¹³⁰ Mutumba and Grosse 2013

¹³¹ Kinsella 2017

¹³² Burmeister et al. 2016

¹³³ Seipel 2016

¹³⁴ Ibid.



Exhibition view from ‘Beyond Compare: Art from Africa in the Bode Museum’, 2017–2019, juxtaposing art from Africa and European art in dialogue: Mangaaka, Congo or Angola, 19th century, Zams Retable, c. 1485

The Bode Museum in Berlin opened a fascinating two-year exhibition in October 2017, showing sculptures by African and European artists in co-equal juxtaposition (see figure p. 416). However, with the opening of the Humboldt Forum, the artworks of the exhibition ‘Beyond Compare: Art from Africa in the Bode Museum’ were dispersed and once again neatly distributed among the various museums.

Consider now the level of acceptance for contemporary Indigenous Australian art compared to art from African countries. Given that there have been 18 major exhibitions of African art in art museums and eleven in ethnological museums in Germany over the last three decades—excluding the permanent exhibitions in the latter—can the acceptance of African contemporary art be considered proven and the accusation of Eurocentrism rejected? Perhaps. After all, two private museums exhibit contemporary African artworks either permanently or regularly (the Iwalewahaus in Bayreuth and the Umuzi Afrikahaus in Freiburg).

In contrast, contemporary Indigenous Australian art is exhibited in only one private museum, approximately biennially, in the 1,000 m² Kunstwerk Sammlung Klein in Eberdingen-Nussdorf near Stuttgart.¹³⁵ Artworks are shown from the collection of the owner Peter Klein. Furthermore, only nine exhibitions in major art museums across Germany occurred over the last three decades. On the other hand, since 2011, there have been at least twelve large exhibitions of contemporary African art but only two of similar size and significance featuring contemporary Indigenous Australian art.

The above differences suggest a somewhat higher relative artificiality of African art, which is indeed reflected in global auction records. While the international auction market for contemporary African art had revenues of approximately \$10 million to \$26 million in US dollars in 2016,¹³⁶ total sales for Australian Indigenous art in 2016 were significantly lower at around \$6 million.¹³⁷ This needs to be seen in the context of the overall global art market, however, which was estimated to have a revenue 1,000 times higher, i.e., \$56.6 billion in 2016, of which 52% was post-war and contemporary art, 23% was classical modern, and 12% was Impressionist or post-Impressionist.¹³⁸ These figures differ significantly from a competing estimate of overall US\$45 billion, which uses a stricter categorisation of art dealers in conjunction with national economic statistics.¹³⁹ This led to interesting controversies, which can be expected in a highly opaque market.¹⁴⁰

In summary, contemporary art by some artists from African countries has found recognition in auctions and museums in Germany. That means the German art community has agreed that the above-mentioned ante-aesthetic, ethnological, Eurocentric, non-contemporary stigmas or anti-commercialisation aspects are not barriers for African artists. This offers some hope for Indigenous Australian artists.

¹³⁵ Kunstwerk Sammlung Klein

¹³⁶ Deloitte 2017, p. 86; Sayers Consultancy 2016

¹³⁷ AASD 2018

¹³⁸ McAndrew 2017, p. 15

¹³⁹ Pownall 2017, p. 12

¹⁴⁰ Queminn 2020, p. 106

Conclusions

The first part of this chapter examined the factors that lead to the acceptance of new art forms, i.e., artification in the sense of Shapiro and Heinich.¹⁴¹ The timing and content of exhibitions of contemporary Indigenous Australian art in Germany were analysed and it was found that the increasingly long intervals between major exhibitions have a negative impact on building momentum towards acceptance.

¹⁴¹ Shapiro and Heinich 2012

The second part examined the factors of artification in Germany in detail. It concluded that, assuming a sharp increase in the depth of discourse on Indigenous contemporary art and assuming a waiting period of a few decades during which discourse spreads within a growing network of academics and art professionals who gradually become convinced to support the art, the artification of Indigenous contemporary art will eventually take place.

The third part of this chapter examined five factors that might prevent such artification, including Eurocentrism. No particular reasons for pessimism about the eventual acceptance of Indigenous art were found. It is undergoing a similar, albeit slow, process as did various African art styles that are now respected as contemporary art in Germany.

A final lesson is that the ignorance in Germany and Europe about Australian art is not limited to *Indigenous* art. The Royal Academy of Arts in London received a one million pound sterling sponsorship to present a major survey exhibition of Australian art from September to December 2013, featuring 200 works under the banal title 'Australia'. The exhibition's curator, Anna Gray, Head of Australian Art at the National Gallery of Australia, later recounted during a conference in Australia that '[t]he exhibition "Australia", conveyed a story in a way that few previous exhibitions of Australian art in London had done. (Almost all previous exhibitions, apart from those at the Commonwealth Institute and the British Museum, had been medleys, mere collections of disparate works.)'¹⁴² 'It is too early to know overall impact of the exhibition. But at least it is possible to say that many people in Britain know [sic] have a better knowledge of Australian art [...] and some doors have been opened. Hopefully, the British now know that Australia is more than a sporting nation, or the world of Neighbours and such soap operas. Whether they are able to fully accept that Australia as a cultural nation, with a strong tradition of visual art, depends largely on how open to "the new" they are.'¹⁴³

¹⁴² Gray 2014, p. 5

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 12

This chapter has discussed the recognition of Indigenous art according to criteria that apply to the recognition of all contemporary art. It is hoped that the analysis of this chapter will help to steer the debate on the acceptance of Indigenous contemporary art along lines that 'favour' discussions on the aesthetics of this art rather than how it is categorised.

10 – Information on Artists represented in the Bähr/Frost Collection

The following two references contain information about many of the artists represented with artworks in the Bähr/Frost Collection.

Johnson, Vivien: *Aboriginal Artists of the Western Desert. A Biographical Dictionary*, East Roseville 1994.

Kleinert, Sylvia and Margo Neale, (eds.): *The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, Melbourne 2000.



Barney, Gordon (c. 1944)

Language group: Gija

— Solo exhibition

2001 Gordon Barney, Bett Gallery, Hobart

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2019 Desert, River Sea: Portraits of the Kimberley, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

2018 Gija. Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane

2015 Paintings from Warmun, ST PAUL St Gallery One, AUT University, Auckland

2013 Jagaden Warnkan Barden – Changing Climate in Gija Country, Goulburn Regional Gallery, Goulburn; The Cross Art Projects, Sydney

2009 Sharing Difference on Common Ground: Mangkaja, Mowanjum, Waringarri, Warmun, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth

2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg

2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg

2001–2002 Beyond Wings, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

2001 In Celebration–Peter Baillie Acquisitive Exhibition, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography

Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.

Bähr, Elisabeth (2003): ‘“Painting is our foundation. White man calls it art”’. *Die Kunst nach 1970*. In: Frieling, Ralph and Elisabeth Bähr (eds.): *Traumspuren – Kunst und Kultur der australischen Aborigines*, Iserlohn, pp. 46–78.



Bootja Bootja, Susie (c. 1932–2003)

Language group: Kukatja

— Solo exhibition

2002 Susie Bootja Bootja, Raft Artspace, Darwin

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom

2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade

2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d' Art Modern, València

2007–2008 Paintings from Remote Communities: Indigenous Australian Art from the Laverty Collection (Sydney), Govett Brewster Art Gallery, New Zealand; Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, Newcastle

2007 Down the Track, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth

2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg

2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville

1998 The Laverty Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

1997 Daughters of the Dreaming – Sisters Together Strong, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewook Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego

— Collections

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

Artbank, Sydney

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of
 Virginia, Charlottesville
 Lavery Collection, Sydney
 Morven Estate
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum
 of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Glowczewski, Barbara, Françoise Dussart, Georges Petitjean,
 and Arnaud Morvan: *Kunga: Law Women from the Desert*
 – *Les femmes de Loi du désert*, Milan 2012, exh. cat., fig.
 Healy, Jacqueline (ed.): *Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo*, RMIT
 University Gallery, Melbourne 2014, exh. cat., fig.
 McLean, Ian and Margo Neale (eds.): *Eaux Vivantes – Living*
Waters. Un projet de la Collection Sordello Missana – A
project of the Sordello Missana Collection, Doubleview
 2016, exh. cat., fig.
 Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans
 Bend 2006.
 Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*,
 Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.



Cann (Yoonany), Churchill (c. 1947–2016)

Language group: Gija, Miriwoong

— Award

2013 Western Australian Artist Award, Art Gallery of West-
 ern Australia, Perth

— Solo exhibitions

2015 Churchill Cann, Aboriginal and Pacific Art, Sydney
 2013 Churchill Cann – Wariwoony Joolany (Wild Dog),
 William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
 1998 William Mora Galleries, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
 2015 Paintings from Warmun, ST PAUL St Gallery One, AUT
 University, Auckland
 2014 Sublime Point: The Landscape in Painting, Hazelhurst
 Regional Gallery and Art Centre, Gympie
 2013 Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art
 Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und
 Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground.
 Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of
 Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
 2011 Evolving Identities – Contemporary Indigenous Art
 1970–2010, John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Perth
 2009 Kimberley Aboriginal Art: Sharing Difference on
 Common Ground, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth

2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie

Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg

2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art
 Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery,
 Adelaide

2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University
 Art Museum, Adelaide

2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer
 Kunstverein Aschaffenburg

2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie
 Wolfsburg

1994 The 2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 Art Awards Exhibition, Old Parliament House, Can-
 berra

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
 Edith Cowan University, Perth
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
 Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 University of Wollongong
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum
 of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

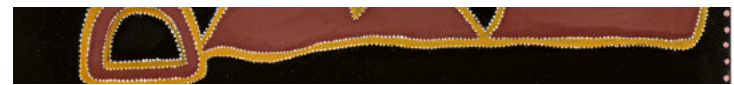
Art Gallery of Western Australia (ed.): *Western Australia*
Indigenous Art Awards, Perth 2013, exh. cat.

Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Big Country. Works*
from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection,
 Adelaide 2003, exh. cat., fig.

Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian*
Aboriginal Art, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.

Kunstverein ‘Talstrasse’ (ed.): *Aboriginal Art. Gemaltes Land*,
 Halle/Saale 2011, exh. cat.

William Mora Galleries (ed.): *Churchill: Gidja country, the*
black fella way, Melbourne 1998, exh. cat., fig.



Carrington, Betty (c. 1944)

Language group: Gija

— Awards

2002 Scholarship of the Coomalie Cultural Centre, Bachelor
 1999 East Kimberley Art Award, Heytesbury Award

— Solo exhibitions

2004 Betty Carrington, Allison Kelly Gallery, Melbourne
 2002 Betty Carrington, Allison Kelly Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg

- 2017 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, The Frist Center for Visual Arts, Nashville
- 2017 Of Country and Culture: The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio
- 2015 Warmun Then and Now, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2003 True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2002 Boundless, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
 Batchelor Institute
 Broadmeadows Public Hospital, Melbourne
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Harland Collection
 Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
 Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
 Laverty Collection, Sydney
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 National Australia Bank
 The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum of Art

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat. Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley*, Sydney 2002, exh. cat., fig.
- Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection*, Adelaide 2003, exh. cat., fig.



Carrington, Charlene (*1977)

Language group: Gija

— Awards

- 2020 Finalist – Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999 East Kimberley Art Award, highly commended

— Solo exhibitions

- 2006 Hector Jandany and Charlene Carrington, Raft Art-space, Darwin
- 2004 Charlene Carrington, Seva Frangos Art, Perth
- 2004 Charlene Carrington, Span Galleries, Melbourne
- 2002 Charlene Carrington, Kintolai Gallery, Adelaide

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2020–2021 Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes 2020, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2015 Warmun Then and Now, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2000 The 5th National Indigenous Heritage Art Award, Canberra
- 1999 East Kimberley Art Awards, Kununurra,
- 1995 Kids of Warmun, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
 The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum on Art
 Warmun Art Centre Collection
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography

- Australian Heritage Commission (ed.): *The Fifth National Indigenous Heritage Art Award. The Art of Place*, Canberra 2000, exh. cat., fig.



Chuguna, Jukuna Mona (c. 1933–2011)

Language group: Walmajarri, Juwaliny

— Solo exhibitions

- 2016 Jumu, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London
- 2009 Minyarti ngajukura ngiurrara – This one my country, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2010–2011 Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2007 X Marks the Spot, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 2006 Depth & Divergence, Cullity Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth
- 2001 8th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2000 Land Mark, Mirror Mark, University of the Northern Territory, Darwin

1993 Mangkaja Women, Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle
1993 Images of Power. Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
1991 Karrayili: Ten years on, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

— Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Charles Darwin University Art Collection
Lavery Collection, Sydney
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
National Museum of Australia, Canberra

— Bibliography (selection)

Bent, Ngarta Jinny, Pat Lowe, Eirlys Richards, Jukuna Mona Chuguna: *Two Sisters: Ngarta & Jukuna*, Fremantle 2004. National Museum of Australia (ed.): *Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route*, Canberra 2010.
Richards, Eirlys, Joyce Hudson and Pat Lowe (eds.): *Out of the Desert. Stories from the Walmajarri Exodus*, Broome 2002.
Tandanya–National Aboriginal Cultural Institute (ed.): *Kaltja now. Indigenous Arts Australia*, Adelaide 2001.



Cox, David (c. 1968)

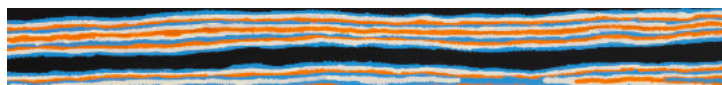
Language group: Goonlyandi, Walmajarri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
2021–2022 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the NT, Darwin
2019 Salon des Refusés, Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin
2015 Paintings from Warmun, ST PAUL St Gallery One, AUT University, Auckland
2014 Warmun: Gija Contemporary Art of Western Australia, Harvey Art Project, Sun Valley, Idaho
2002 All that Gija Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
2001 In Celebration–Peter Baillie Acquisitive Exhibition, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

— Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Dixon, Alice Nampitjinpa (c. 1943–2020)

Language group: Pintupi, Luritja

— Solo exhibitions

2013 Alice Nampitjinpa – Tali Tali Sandhills, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

2008 Alice Nampitjinpa and Eunice Napanangka, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2006 Alice Nampitjinpa, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2005 Alice Nampitjinpa & Eunice Napanangka, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
2000 Tjilkamata and Watuya (with Eunice Napanangka), Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
1999 Alice Nampitjinpa and Narputta Nangala, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021 Fremantle Arts Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre
2016–2017 Who's afraid of colour? National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
2001–2005 Mythology & Reality, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italien; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
1998–2000 Raiki Wara, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
1997 Circles about the Body, University Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart
1996–1997 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Gold Coast, City Art Gallery; Drill Hall, Canberra; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; Campbelltown Gallery; Westpac Gallery, Melbourne

— Collections

Active Youth, Japan
Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
Griffith University, Brisbane
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.

Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.

National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *Across the Desert: Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.

National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *Indigenous Australian Art in the National Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2002, fig.

National Museum of Women in the Arts (ed.): *Dreaming Their Way. Australian Aboriginal Women Painters*, New York 2006, exh. cat., fig.

Strocchi, Marina (ed.): *Ikuntji. Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, Alice Springs 1995, fig.



Jack, Eunice Napanangka (c. 1940)
Language group: Pintupi, Luritja, Ngaaytjarra

— Awards

2019 Defiance Gallery Award, as part of the Paddington Art Prize, Sydney

2019 Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award

2019 Vincent Lingiari Art Award

2017 Moreton Bay Region Art Awards, Caboolture

— Solo exhibitions

2021 Eunice Napanangka Jack, Outstation Gallery, Darwin

2019 Childhood Memories of Kuruyultu–Eunice Napanangka Jack, Outstation Gallery, Darwin

2017 Kuruyultu. Eunice Napanangka Jack, Outstation Gallery, Darwin

2008 Alice Nampitjinpa and Eunice Napanangka, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2005 Alice Nampitjinpa & Eunice Napanangka, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2004 Boutwell Draper Gallery, Sydney

2004 Eunice Napanangka Jack, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2000 Tjilkamata and Watuya (with Alice Nampitjinpa), Gallery Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2019 Salon des Refusés, Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin

2019 Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award, Fremantle

2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

2016 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido

1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

1997 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art

Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

1996 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra

— Collections

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Campbelltown Regional Gallery

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Art Collection, Canberra

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne

Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne

Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth

Moreton Bay Region Art Collection, Caboolture

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin

Thomas Vroom Collection, Amsterdam

University of Tasmania, Hobart

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.

Mellor, Doreen and Vincent Megaw (eds.): *Twenty-Five Years and Beyond. Papunya Tula Painting*, Adelaide 1999, exh. cat., fig.

Murray, Daena: *Hot Springs: the Northern Territory and contemporary Australian artists*, South Yarra 2012.

National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *LandMarks*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat., fig.

Strocchi, Marina: *Ikuntji. Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, Alice Springs 1995.

Strocchi, Marina: “Minyma Tjukurrpa: Kintore/Haasts Bluff Canvas Project. Dancing women to famous painters”, *Artlink* 26 (4) 2005, pp. 104–107.



Jugadai, Narputta Nangala (c. 1933–2010)
Language group: Pintupi, Pitjatjantjara

— Awards

1997 Fishers Ghost Art Award

1997 14th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award

1993 Northern Territory Women's Fellowship

— Solo exhibitions

2001 Narputta and Katungka, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

1999 Narputta Nangala and Alice Nampitjinpa, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

- 1997 Narputta Nangala Kutju, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- Group exhibitions (selection)
- 2021–2022 Before Time Began, Art & History Museum, Brussels
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2012 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d' Art Modern, València
- 2010–2011 Breaking with Tradition: CoBrA and Aboriginal Art, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Spirit Country – Aboriginal Art at Melbourne Museum, Melbourne
- 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1997 Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown
- 1996 Dreamings of the Desert. Aboriginal dot paintings of the Western Desert, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1996 Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia, Seoul Arts Centre, Seoul; Nicholson Museum of Modern Art, Mumbai, Calcutta; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
- 1994 11th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1993 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Australian Heritage Commission, Old Parliament House, Canberra

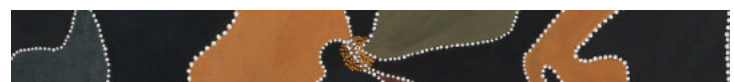
— Collections

- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
Arnaud Serval Collection, Paris

- Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Canberra
Campbelltown Regional Gallery
Charles Darwin University, Darwin
Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
Groninger Museum
Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
- Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
- Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Kunstverein 'Talstrasse' (ed.): *Aboriginal Art. Gemaltes Land*, Halle/Saale 2011, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.
- Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat.
- Strocchi, Marina: *Ikuntji. Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, Alice Springs 1995.
- Strocchi, Marina: 'Minyma Tjukurrpa: Kintore/Haasts Bluff Canvas Project. Dancing women to famous painters', *Artlink* 26 (4) 2005, pp. 104–107.
- The University of Newcastle, The University Gallery (ed.): *Strong Women, Strong Painting, Strong Culture*, Callaghan 2013, exh. cat., fig.



Juli (Wiringgoon), Mabel (c. 1932)
Language group: Gija

—— Awards

2013 Kate Challis RAKA Award

2001 Centenary Medal for Service to the Arts

—— Solo exhibitions

2018 Mabel Juli, Wiringgoon, Short Street Gallery, Broome

2015 Jiregewoorrarrem – All Kinds of Birds, The Cross Art Projects, Sydney

2013 Sublime Paintings: Mabel Juli, Seva Frangos Art, Perth

2012 Warrmarn: Mabel Juli & Tommy Carroll, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2010 Mabel Juli Karnkiny + Marlene Juli Gurlabal, Seva Frangos Art, Perth

2007 Mabel Juli, Seva Frangos Art, Perth

2007 The Great Mabel Juli, Short St. Gallery at Mary Place Gallery, Sydney

2006 Patrick Mung Mung & Mabel Juli, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2004 Kaliman Gallery, Sydney

2002 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

2000 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

—— Group exhibitions (selection)

2023–2024 Wer wir sind, Weserburgmuseum für Gegenwartskunst, Bremen

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg

2021–2022 We are ever present, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

2021 VOID, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle

2020–2021 Connected: MCA Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2020–2021 Know My Name. Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2020–2021 Under the Stars, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2019 The lover circles his own heart, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2018–2019 Compass, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2016–2017 In the Saddle – On the Wall, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne; Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

2016 Telling Tales – Excursions in Narrative Form, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2015 Paintings from Warmun, ST PAUL St Gallery One, AUT University, Auckland

2015 Warmun Then and Now, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth

2015 Crossing Time: Highlights from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

2014 Garnkiny: Constellations of Meaning, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne

2014 Terrain: Indigenous Australian Objects and Representations, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2013 Under the Sun: the Kate Challis RAKA Award 2013, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne

2012 Luminous World, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

2009 Sharing Difference on Common Ground: Mangkaja, Mowanjum, Waringarri, Warmun, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth

2007–2008 Living Black, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2006–2007 Country in Mind: Five Contemporary Aboriginal Artists – Kuntjil Cooper, Alkawari Dawson, Mabel Juli, Garry Namponan, Rusty Peters, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne

2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg

2003 True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg

2001–2002 Beyond Wings, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg

—— Collections

Artbank, Sydney

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of WA, Perth

Broadmeadows Public Hospital, Melbourne

Chales Darwin University, Darwin

Edith Cowan University, Perth

Edward Memorial Hospital Collection, Perth

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

Fondation Opale, Lens

FTB Group Collection, Sydney

Harland Collection

Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle

Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Laverty Collection, Sydney

Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden

National Australia Bank

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Parliament of Western Australia Art Collection, Perth

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

Tate Modern, London, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (joint)

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley*, Sydney 2002, exh. cat., fig.
Blagg, Janet (ed.): *Luminous World*, Fremantle 2012, exh. cat.
Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat., fig.
Davidson, Christina: 'Indigenous Art of the Kimberley – Warmun Arts: The Unfolding Stories', *Artlink* 26 (3) 2006.
Ian Potter Museum of Art (ed.): *Country in Mind: Five contemporary Aboriginal artists – Kuntjil Cooper, Alkawari Dawson, Mabel Juli, Garry Namponan, Rusty Peters*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat.
Warmun Art Centre (ed.): *Garnkiny. Constellations of Meaning*, Warmun 2014.



Juli, Marlene (*1975)

Language group: Gija

— Group exhibitions (selection)

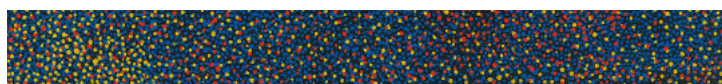
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
2002–2003 Garmerrun: All Our Country, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

— Collections

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle

— Bibliography

- Flinders University City Gallery (Hg.): *Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection*, Adelaide 2003, exh. cat., fig.



Kemarre, Gladdy (c. 1940–2016)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Awards

- 2013 Colleen Art Award, Cowra Regional Art Gallery, Cowra
2011 The Fleurieu Art of Food & Wine Prize, Adelaide
2011 The Waterhouse Natural History Art Prize, South Australian Museum, Adelaide (2nd Award)
2009 City of Swan Art Award, City of Swan

— Solo exhibitions

- 2014 Gladdy Kemarre – Anwekety, the Bush Plum, Mossenson Galleries, Perth
2012 Gladdy Kemarre, Mossenson Galleries, Melbourne
2010 Gladdy Kemarre: Anwekety, Mossenson Galleries, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
2015–2016 Tarnanthi, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
2018 Re(A)d Earth, Lake Macquarie City Gallery, Booragul
2015 32th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2014 Redland Art Awards, Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland
2012 Salon des Refusés, The alternative Archibald and Wynne Prize selection, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
2012 Highlights – Indigenous Artworks from the Redland Art Gallery Collection, Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland
2011 28th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Art Gallery and Museum of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2009 Utopia – Colours of the Desert, Gongpyeong Artspace, Seoul
2009 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
1996 Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia, Seoul Arts Centre, Seoul; Nicholson Museum of Modern Art, Mumbai, Calcutta; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
1989 Utopia Women's Painting. The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–89, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
Maitland Regional Gallery, Maitland
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Nangara Collection, Melbourne
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
Redland City Art Gallery, Cleveland

—— Bibliography (selection)

- Boulter, Michael: *The Art of Utopia. A New Direction in Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Craftsman House, Roseville East, Sydney 1991.
- Gongpyeong Artspace (ed.): *Utopia – Colours of the Desert*, Seoul 2009, exh. cat.
- Meeuwssen, Franca: *Aboriginal Kunst, de verhalen vertellen*, Zwolle 2000.
- Mossenson Galleries (ed.): *Utopia*, Subiaco 2010, exh. cat.
- Musée Olympique (ed.): *Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire, Aboriginal Art, An Immemorial Fountain of Youth*, Lausanne 2001, exh. cat., fig.
- Pizzi, Gabrielle (ed.): *Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia*, Melbourne 1996, exh. cat., fig.
- Spieler, Reinhard and Barbara J. Scheuermann (eds.): *Punkt. Systeme. Vom Pointilismus zum Pixel*, Heidelberg, Berlin 2012, exh. cat.



Kngwarreye, Emily Kame (c. 1910–1996)
Language group: Anmatyerr

—— Award

- 1992 Australian Artists Creative Fellowship, Australia Council for the Arts

—— Solo exhibitions (selection)

- 2023–2025 Emily Kam Kngwarreye, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Tate Modern, London
- 2022 Emily. Desert Painter of Australia, Gagosian, Paris
- 2020 the future is female, CODA Museum, Apeldoorn
- 2019–2020 Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Kunsthau Zug
- 2008 Utopia – The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye, The National Museum of Art, Osaka; The National Art Center, Tokyo
- 1999–2000 Of My Country: The Work of Emily Kngwarreye, Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga; Bendigo Art Gallery; Hamilton Art Gallery; Swan Hill Regional Gallery; Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery; George Adams Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Emily, Oude Kerk, Amsterdam
- 1998 Retrospektive, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1997 The Spirit Sings. Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Retrospective, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide
- 1994 Utopia, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London
- 1994 Emily Kame Kngwarreye: New Directions, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1993 Recent Paintings by Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 1993 Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
- 1993 The Alkalhere Suite, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1992 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 1992 Alkalhere, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1991 Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Utopia Art Sydney

- 1991 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 1991 Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
- 1990 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 1990 First Solo Exhibition, Utopia Art Sydney

—— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022–2023 Sol LeWitt. Affinities and Resonances, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
- 2021–2022 Before Time Began, Art & History Museum, Brussels
- 2021–2022 A Year in Art: Australia 1992, Tate Modern, London
- 2020–2021 Know My Name. Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2019–2020 Mapa Wiya (Your Map's Not Needed): Australian Aboriginal Art from the Fondation Opale, The Menil Collection, Houston
- 2018–2019 Blak to the Future: Indigenous Artists Work Forwards, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2017 The Score, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne
- 2016–2017 Who's afraid of colour? National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2016 Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge
- 2015 All the World's Futures, Venice Biennale, Venice
- 2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2013–2015 Visual Vertigo, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2011–2012 Be My Guest, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2011 Tell Me Tell Me: Australian and Korean Contemporary Art 1976–2011, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2010–2011 OnLine: Drawing through the Twentieth Century, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2010 Aboriginal Art Today, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2009–2010 Lands of Enchantment: Australian Aboriginal Painting, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C.
- 2009 Show Your Colours, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2009 Utopia – Colours of the Desert, Gongpyeong Artspace, Seoul
- 2008–2009 Community Culture Country, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2007–2008 Brilliance. A world of shimmer, rarrk and glitter,

- Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2007 Desert Dreamscapes: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from the Collection of Magaret Levi and Robert Kaplan, Holter Museum of Art, Helena
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Great Masters: from tradition to contemporary art, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2006 Prism. Contemporary Australian Art, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo
- 2004–2005 Explained, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2004 Blak Insights, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italien; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1998–2000 Raiki Wara. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1998 The Laverty Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 1997 Fluent – Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Yvonne Koolmatrie, Judy Watson, 47. Biennale Venice
- 1996 Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia, Seoul Arts Centre; Nicholson Museum of Modern Art, Mumbai, Calcutta; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
- 1996 The Eye of the Storm. Eight Contemporary Indigenous Australian Artists, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1995 Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen, Sprengel Museum Hannover; Ludwig-Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen
- 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1994 Identities: Art from Australia, Taipeh Fine Arts Museum
- 1994 Creators and Inventors. Australian Women's Art in the National Gallery of Victoria, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1994 Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert. Die Donald Kahn Collection, Villa Stuck, Munich
- 1994 Utopia Body Paint: The Oval Paintings Collection, Bishop Museum, Hawaii
- 1993–1994 Aṛatjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1993 Out on Selection: Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary Australian Paintings and Sculptures from the Holmes à Court Collection, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1993 Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1992 Aboriginal Paintings from the Desert, State Ukrainian Museum of Art, Kiev; State Byelorussian Museum of Modern Art, Minsk
- 1992 Crossroads – Toward a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia, National Museums of Modern Art, Kyoto und Tokyo
- 1992 My Story, My Country: Aboriginal Art and the Land, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1992 Aboriginal Art. Utopia in the Desert, Nogazaka Arthall, Tokyo
- 1991 Aboriginal Women's Exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1991 Australian Aboriginal Art from the Collection of Donald Kahn, Lowe Museum, University of Miami
- 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
- 1990 Utopia Artists in Residence Project: Louie Pwerle and Emily Kame Kngwarreye, 1989–90, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth
- 1990 Abstraction, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
- 1989 Utopia Women's Paintings. The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project, 1988–89, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- Collections (selection)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Canberra
Albertina, Wien
Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 Australian National University, Canberra
 Broken Hill City Art Gallery
 Coventry Collection, Sydney
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
 Fondation Opale, Lens
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Laverty Collection, Sydney
 LeWitt Collection, Chester
 Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
 Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Newcastle Art Gallery
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Sehwa Museum of Art, Seoul
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 Sydney University Union, Sydney
 Tate Modern, London
 University of Canberra
 University of New South Wales, Sydney
 Vatikan, Rom
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

ARAart (ed.): *Colour of Dreaming – Australian Indigenous Arts*, Seoul 2012, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Fluent. Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Yvonne Koolmatie, Judy Watson. 47th Venice Biennale*, Sydney 1997, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
 Brody, Anne, Ulrich Krempel and Elisabeth Bähr (eds.): *Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen. Elf Künstler der australischen Aborigines*, Hannover 1995, exh. cat.
 Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
 Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
 Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Gooch's Utopia: collected works from the Central Desert*, Adelaide 2008, exh. cat.
 Gilchrist, Stephen (ed.): *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia*, Cambridge (USA) 2016.
 Glowczewski, Barbara, Françoise Dussart, Georges Petitjean and Arnaud Morvan: *Kunga: Law Women from the Desert – Les femmes de Loi du désert*, Milan 2012, exh. cat.
 Gongpyeong Artspace (ed.): *Utopia – Colours of the Desert*, Seoul 2009, exh. cat.

Isaacs, Jennifer, Terry Smith, Judith Ryan, Donald Holt and Janet Holt: *Emily Kngwarreye – Paintings*, Sydney 1998.
 König, Kaspar, Emily Joyce Evans and Falk Wolf (eds.): *Remembering Forward. Malerei der australischen Aborigines seit 1960*, Munich 2010, exh. cat.
 Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1993, exh. cat.
 McLean, Ian: *Rattling Spears. A History of Indigenous Australian Art*, London 2016.
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (ed.): *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award 1984–2008: celebrating 25 years*, Darwin 2011.
 National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *Across the Desert: Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.
 Neale, Margo (ed.): *Emily Kame Kngwarreye. Alhalkere. Paintings from Utopia*, Melbourne 1998.
 Neale, Margo (ed.): *Utopia – the Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye*, Canberra 2008, exh. cat.
 Perkins, Hetti: *Art + soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art*, Carlton 2010.
 Petitjean, Georges: *Hedendaagse Aboriginal kunst. De AAMU collectie en Nederlandse verzamelingen*, Gent 2010.
 Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.



Kngwarreye, Lily Sandover (c. 1937–2002)
 Language group: Alyawarr

— Solo exhibition

1991 Gallery at the Prince and Frog, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2020–2021 Know My Name. Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug
 2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
 2003 Sanjski cas. Dreamtime, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
 2000 Land Mark, Mirror Mark, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
 1989 Aboriginal Art. The Continuing Tradition, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Delmore Collection, Delmore Downs
Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Powerhouse Collection, Sydney
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Boulter, Michael: *The Art of Utopia. A New Direction in Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Roseville East, Sydney 1991, fig.
Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center (ed.): *Sanjski cas. Dreamtime. Sodobna aboriginska umetnost. Contemporary Aboriginal art*, Ljubljana 2003, exh. cat., fig.
Musée Olympique (ed.): *Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire, Aboriginal Art, An Immemorial Fountain of Youth*, Lausanne 2001, exh. cat., fig.
Northern Editions (ed.): *Land Mark – Mirror Mark*, Darwin 2000, fig.
Städtisches Kunstmuseum Spendhaus Reutlingen (ed.): *Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines*, Speyer 2004, exh. cat., fig.



Marawarr, Susan (*1967)

Language group: Kuninjku

— Solo exhibitions

2018 Mandjabu Bark Painting, Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne
2009 Susan Marawarr, Suzanne O'Connell Gallery, Brisbane

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2019–2021 Jarracharra: dry season wind / Les vents de la saison sèche, Australian Embassy, Paris; Museo Nacional de Antropología, Madrid
2018–2019 Compass, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
2018 Ngaldjorlhbo – Mother of Everything – Mère de Toute Création, Galerie IDAIA, Paris
2016 Beyond the Surface, Cairns Regional Gallery
2004 Crossing Country – The alchemy of Western Arnhem Land art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2003 Weave, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
2003 Maningrida Threads, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
2003 Dreamtime, Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana
2002 Barks in the spotlight, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht

2001 Outside in. Research Engagements with Arnhem Land Art, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
2001 In the Heart of Arnhem Land. Myth and the making of contemporary Aboriginal art, Musée de l'Hôtel-Dieu, Mantes-la-Jolie
2000 Land Mark, Mirror Mark, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
1999 Art and Place, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
1999 Bush Colour: Works on paper by Female Artists from the Maningrida Region, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin

— Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Broken Hill City Art Gallery, Broken Hill
Lavery Collection, Sydney
Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Maritime Museum, Sydney
University of Queensland, Brisbane

— Bibliography (selection)

Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Crossing Country – The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art*, Sydney 2004.
Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center (ed.): *Sanjski cas. Dreamtime. Sodobna aboriginska umetnost. Contemporary Aboriginal art*, Ljubljana 2003.
Croft, Brenda L. (ed.): *Indigenous Art – Art Gallery of Western Australia*, Perth 2001.
McLean, Ian (ed.): *How Aborigines invented the idea of contemporary art*, Brisbane, Sydney 2011.
Northern Editions (ed.): *Land Mark – Mirror Mark*, Darwin 2000.



Martin, Andrea Nungarrayi (c. 1965)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2017 Yuendumu: Of Fire and Water, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore
2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
2009 Yuru-yurla: Women's Painting from Yuendumu, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover

- 2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Kurruwarri Pipangka – Designs on Paper, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2002 19th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2000 Paintings and Prints, Northern Territory University, Darwin
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1999 Love, Magic, Erotics, Politics and Indigenous Art, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1995–1996 12th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Westpac Gallery, Melbourne; Brisbane City Hall Art Gallery; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide
- 1994 Looking Toward the Future. Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Flinders University Art Gallery, Adelaide
- 1994 The Assembly Hall of the Territorial Parliament, Tahiti
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australien

— Collections

- Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Canson Australia Pty. Ltd.
- Downlands College, Toowoomba
- Ethnologisches Museum Berlin
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Gladstone Regional Art Gallery
- Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Surfers Paradise
- Grafton Regional Art Gallery
- Illawarra Grammar School, Wollongong
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Mildura Arts Centre
- Musée du quai Branly, Paris
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Newstead College, Launceston
- Print Council of Australia, Melbourne
- Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
- Seattle Art Museum
- South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum of Art
- University of South Australia, Adelaide
- Vermont Secondary School
- Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu

- Warrnambool Regional Art Gallery
- Wesley College, Prahran
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat., fig.
- Morphy, Howard and Margo Smith Boles (eds.): *Art from the Land. Dialogues with the Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Charlottesville 1999, fig.
- Petitjean, Georges (ed.): *Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu*, Zwolle 2006, exh. cat.
- Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat., fig.



Mpetyane, Lyndsay Bird (c. 1935)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Solo exhibitions

- 2000 Lyndsay Bird Mpetyane, Jeffrey Mosse Gallery, Seattle
- 1991 Utopia Art Sydney
- 1989 Syme-Dodson Gallery, Sydney

— Group exhibitions

- 2023 Utopia Community, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2019–2021 Body Language, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Lismore Regional Gallery; Museum of Art and Culture, Lake Macquarie
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1998–2000 Raiki Wara. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Cairns Regional Art Gallery; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

- 1990–1991 *Tagari Lia: My Family – Contemporary Aboriginal Arts from Australia*, Third Eye Centre, Glasgow; Glynn Vivian Art Gallery & Museum, Swansea; Cornerhouse, Manchester
- 1990 *Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection*, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
- 1989–1991 *Utopia – A Picture Story*, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
- 1989 *Utopia Women's Paintings. The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project, 1988–89*, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

— Collections

- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 CAAMA, Alice Springs
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Glasgow Museums
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 Kunsthaus Zug
 Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
 Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
 Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Arts Management Ass. (ed.): *Tagari Lia: My Family – Contemporary Aboriginal Arts from Australia*, Redfern 1990, exh. cat., fig.
- Boulter, Michael: *The Art of Utopia. A New Direction in Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Roseville East, Sydney 1991
- Desmond, Michael and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Flash Pictures*, Canberra 1991, exh. cat., fig.
- Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Gooch's Utopia: collected works from the Central Desert*, Adelaide 2008, exh. cat., fig.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Myers, Fred R.: *Painting Culture. The Making of an Aboriginal High Art*, Durham, London 2002, fig.



Mung Mung, Patrick (c. 1948)

Language group: Gija

— Awards

- 2012 Bank West Contemporary Art Prize
 1999 East Kimberley Art Award

— Solo exhibitions

- 2010 Patrick Mung Mung, Raft Artspace, Alice Springs
 2008 *The Gentle Light of Warmun: Patrick Mung Mung & Yvonne Martin, Seva Frangos*, Perth
 2007 Patrick Mung Mung & Betty Carrington, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
 2006 Patrick Mung Mung & Mabel Juli, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
 2004 *Living Water, Travelling Water. Jonathan Kimberley & Patrick Mung Mung*, Bett Gallery, Hobart
 2003 Patrick Mung Mung and Mick Jawalji, Artplace, Perth
 2000 Patrick Mung Mung, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2018 Gija, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
 2017 *When the Sky Fell: Legacies of the 1967 Referendum*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts
 2017 *Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection*, The Frist Center for Visual Arts, Nashville
 2017 *Of Country and Culture: The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, San Antonio Museum of Art
 2016–2017 *In the Saddle – On the Wall*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne; Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
 2015 *Desert River Sea: Kimberley Art Then & Now*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 2014 *In the Saddle – On the Wall*, Waringarri Art Centre, Kununurra; University of Notre Dame, Broome; Frankston Arts Centre
 2012 *Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers*, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
 2011 *Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 2009 *Looking at Landscape – Artworks from the Murdoch University Art Collection*, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
 2009 *Kimberley Aboriginal Art: Sharing Difference on Common Ground*, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth
 2008 *Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 2004 *Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge*, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
 2003 *True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

- 2003 *Big Country*. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2002–2003 *Garmerrun: All Our Country*, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2001 *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren*, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 1993 *Images of Power*. Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- BankWest Collection, Perth
- Batchelor Institute
- Broadmeadows Public Hospital, Melbourne
- Edith Cowan University, Perth
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Harland Collection
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
- Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- National Australia Bank
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Nibberluna Collection, Hobart
- Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
- San Antonio Museum of Art
- Strachan Collection, Melbourne
- The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum of Art
- Wesfarmers Collection, Perth
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *True Stories. Art of the East Kimberley*, Sydney 2002, exh. cat., fig.
- Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection*, Adelaide 2003, exh. cat., fig.
- Iseger-Pilkington, Glenn (ed.): *Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards*, Perth 2011, exh. cat.
- Lane, Carly (ed.): *Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards*, Perth 2008, exh. cat., fig.
- Perkins, Hetti: *Art + soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art*, Carlton 2010.
- Winter, Joan G. (ed.): *Native Title Business. Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Southport 2002, exh. cat., fig.



Nakamarra, Christine Yukenbarri (*1977)
Language group: Kukatja

— Solo exhibitions

- 2018 Christine Yukenbarri, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 2011 Christine Yukenbarri, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2022 *Balgo Beginnings*, South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- 2019 *Desert River Sea: Kimberley Art Then & Now*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2017 *Tarnanthi. Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2014–2015 *Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo*, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2010–2011 *Yiwarra Kujju – The Canning Stock Route*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2007 *24th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards*, Art Gallery and Museum of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2007 *Xstrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Artist Award*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- 2006 *34th Alice Prize*, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2005 *Balgo-Australia*, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 2004 *Spriti & Vision*. Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg

— Collections

- Albertina, Wien
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Lavery Collection, Sydney
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Alcaston Gallery (ed.): *Land, Sea & the Universe*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.
- Healy, Jacqueline (ed.): *Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo*, Melbourne 2014, exh. cat., fig.
- National Museum of Australia (ed.): *Yiwarra Kujju: the Canning Stock Route*, Canberra 2010, fig.
- Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat., fig.



Nampitjin, Eubena (Yupinya) (c. 1920–2013)
Language group: Kukatja, Manyjilyjarra, Wangkajunga, Putijarra

— Awards

- 2008 Honorary Award, 35th Alice Prize, Araluen Arts Centre
- 1998 15th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Open Painting Award

— Solo exhibitions

- 2022 Eubena: Selected works from the estate of Eubena Nampitjin, D'LAN Contemporary, Melbourne
2012 Eubena Nampitjin and Jane Gimme, Yippi watjaninpa yurntal wangka kamu tjukurrpa – Mother giving daughter her story and culture, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2010 Eubena Nampitjin, From Kinyu: Part II, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2010 Eubena Nampitjin. Ngurra-Turkulkulu-Nyinama – Country was with law all the time, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2009 Eubena Nampitjin, From Kinyu: Part I, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2007 Eubena Nampitjin, Alcaston Gallery Melbourne
2006 Ngurrangku Tjukurrpa Wakaninpa – Painting Country and Dreamtime, Alcaston Gallery Melbourne
2005 Eubena Nampitjin, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2002 Eubena Nampitjin, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2000 Lena Nyadbi and Eubena Nampitjin, Tineriba Gallery, Adelaide Festival of the Arts, Adelaide
1998 Kinyarri – My Country, Alcaston House Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2019 Highlights from the Collection, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2017 Of Country and Culture: The Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio
2016–2017 One Road: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Deserts, Ichihara Lakeside Museum, Chiba, Tokyo; City Museum of Art, Kushiro
2016 Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge
2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade
2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
2013–2014 Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley, Queensland Uni. of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane
2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore
2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
2011 28th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Art Gallery and Museum of the NT, Darwin
2010–2011 Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
2009–2010 Lands of Enchantment: Australian Aboriginal Painting, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C.

- 2008 Dreaming Tracks, University of Western Sydney Art Gallery, Sydney
2008 Bush + Burbs, Contemporary Indigenous Art from the Murdoch University Art Collection, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
2008 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2007–2008 Living Black, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2007 Meeting Place – Selected Indigenous works from the Murdoch University Art Collection, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2007 Desert Dreamscapes: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from the Collection of Margaret Levi and Robert Kaplan, Holter Museum of Art, Helena
2006 Western Desert Satellites, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
2006 Prism. Contemporary Australian Art, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo
2005 22nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
2003 A decade of prints, Northern Territory University Gallery, Darwin
2001–2002 Beyond Wings, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
1998 The Laverty Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
1997 Daughters of the Dreaming – Sisters Together Strong, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
1997 In Place (Out of Time). Contemporary Art in Australia, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford
1995 Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen, Sprengel

- Museum Hannover; Ludwig-Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen
- 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1993 Images of Power. Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1992 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1991 Aboriginal Women's Exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1990–1991 Tagari Lia: My Family – Contemporary Aboriginal Arts from Australia, Third Eye Centre, Glasgow; Glynn Vivian Art Gallery & Museum, Swansea; Cornerhouse, Manchester
- 1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
- 1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1986 Art from the Great Sandy Desert, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

— Collections (selection)

- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Batchelor Institute
- Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Harland Collection
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- J. & A. Montgomery Collection, Los Angeles
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Ken Thompson und Pierre Marceaux Collection
- Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Lake Macquarie City Gallery, Booragul
- Lam Collection of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art, San Antonio
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- R. H. & A. Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Sam Barry Collection, Brisbane
- Seattle Art Museum
- Singapore Art Museum
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- Western Mining Corporation

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Alcaston Gallery (ed.): *Eubena Nampitjin*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.
- Alcaston Gallery (ed.): *Land, Sea & the Universe*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
- Brody, Anne, Ulrich Krempel and Elisabeth Bähr (eds.): *Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen. Elf Künstler der australischen Aborigines*, Hannover 1995, exh. cat.
- Healy, Jacqueline (ed.): *Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo*, Melbourne 2014, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Izett, Erica: 'Eubena Nampitjin', *Art Monthly Australia* 262, August 2013, pp. 48–49.
- Kunstverein 'Talstrasse' (ed.): *Aboriginal Art. Gemaltes Land, Halle/Saale* 2011, exh. cat.
- La Fontaine, Monique and John Carty (eds.): *Ngurra Kuju Walyja – One Country, One People. Stories from the Canning Stock Route*, South Yarra 2011.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
- Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.
- Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat.
- Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Eubena Nampitjin – Art and Life*, Balgo 2005.



Nampitjinpa, Inyuwa (c. 1922–1999)

Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibition

- 1999 Recent Paintings by Inyuwa Nampitjinpa, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2017–2018 Past Legacy – Present Tense, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italien
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

— Collections

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

— Bibliography (selection)

- AAMU Museum voor hedendaagse Aboriginal Art (ed.): *Los van traditie. Cobra en Aboriginal kunst*, Gent 2010, exh. cat., fig.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- National Museum of Women in the Arts (ed.): *Dreaming Their Way. Australian Aboriginal Women Painters*, New York 2006, exh. cat., fig.
- Oliva, Achille Bonito (ed.): *Desert Art*, Milano 2002 [2001], exh. cat., fig.



Nampitjinpa, Kayi Kayi (c. 1946–2014)
Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National

- Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2006 Land Marks, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2001 Dreamscapes – Contemporary Desert Art, Møstings Hus, Frederiksberg
- 2000 17th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1999–2002 Twenty-five Years and Beyond: Papunya Tula Painting, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs; University of Tasmania, Hobart; Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery; Brisbane City Gallery
- 1999 16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

— Collections

- Australian National University, Canberra
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- University of New South Wales, Sydney

— Bibliography (selection)

- Hus, Møstings (ed.): *Dreamscapes. Contemporary Desert Art*, Frederiksberg 2001, exh. cat., fig.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, Melbourne 2011, fig.
- Mellor, Doreen and Vincent Megaw (eds.): *Twenty-Five Years and Beyond. Papunya Tula Painting*, Adelaide 1999, exh. cat., fig.
- National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *LandMarks*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat., fig.



Nampitjinpa, Nyurapayia (c. 1935–2013)
Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibitions

- 2010 Mrs Bennett, Metro Gallery, Melbourne
- 2004 Nyurapayia & Tjunkiya, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthau Zug

- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2006 Land Marks, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999–2002 Twenty-five Years and Beyond: Papunya Tula Painting, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs; University of Tasmania, Hobart; Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery; Brisbane City Gallery
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

— Collections (selection)

- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra
- Australian National University, Canberra
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Harland Collection
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- McGregor Collection, Melbourne
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- University of New South Wales, Sydney
- Yanda Art Collection, Alice Springs

— Bibliography (selection)

- Acker, Tim and John Carty (eds.): *Ngaanyatjarra – Art of the Lands*, Crawley 2012, fig.
- Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McGregor, Ken and Ralph Hobbs: *The Art of Nyurapayia Nampitjinpa (Mrs Bennett)*, Melbourne 2014.
- National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *LandMarks*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat., fig.
- Skerritt, Henry F. (ed.): *No Boundaries. Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting from the Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection*, Munich, London, New York 2014, exh. cat., fig.



Nangala, Tatali (c. 1925–1999)

Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2008 Virtuosity: The Evolution of Painting at Papunya Tula, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

- 1996–1997 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Gold Coast, City Art Gallery; Drill Hall, Canberra; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; Campbelltown Gallery; Westpac Gallery, Melbourne
- 1995 Minyma Tjukurrpa, Haasts Bluff/Kintore Canvas Project, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

— Collections

- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Lavery Collection, Sydney
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- AAMU Museum voor hedendaagse Aboriginal Art (ed.): *Los van traditie. Cobra en Aboriginal kunst*, Gent 2010, exh. cat.
- Araluen Arts Centre and Papunya Tula Artists (eds.): *Unique Perspectives – Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community*, Alice Springs 2012, exh. cat., fig.
- Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection*, Adelaide 2003, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- Meeuwssen, Franca: *Aboriginal Kunst*, Zwolle 2000.
- National Museum of Women in the Arts (ed.): *Dreaming Their Way. Australian Aboriginal Women Painters*, New York 2006, exh. cat., fig.
- Oliva, Achille Bonito (ed.): *Desert Art*, 2nd ed., Milan 2002, exh. cat.
- Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat., fig.



Napanangka, Lucy Yukenbarri (c. 1934–2003)
 Language group: Kukatja/Wangkajunga

— Award

- 1999 East Kimberley Art Award, Waringarri Art Award

— Solo exhibititons

- 2003 Always Together Painting: Lucy Yukenbarri Napanangka and Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 2003 Helicopter & Napanangka, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Tjurrnu – Living Water, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Helicopter Joey Tjungurrayi & Lucy Yukenbarri – Balgo Hills, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibititons (selection)

- 2019 Highlights from the Collection, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2014–2015 Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2013–2014 Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley, Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2008–2009 Community Culture Country, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2007–2008 Living Black, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Western Desert Satellites, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2003 Sanjski cas. Dreamtime, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2001 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2000 17th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1999 16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1998 The Lavery Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz, Italien

- 1997 Aboriginal Art, Goteborgs Konstforening, Göteborg
 1997 Daughters of the Dreaming – Sisters Together Strong, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 1997 Innenseite, Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel, Kassel und Göttingen
 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 1993 Images of Power. Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

— Collections

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
 Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, Perth
 Campbelltown City Art Gallery
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Ken Thompson und Pierre Marceaux Collection
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 Laverty Collection, Sydney
 Lynette Nampijinpa Granites
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
 Seattle Art Museum
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 University of New South Wales, Sydney
 University of Queensland, Brisbane
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
 Wollongong Art Gallery

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer, 2002 [2000] exh. cat.
 Glowczewski, Barbara, Françoise Dussart, Georges Petitjean and Arnaud Morvan: *Kunga: Law Women from the Desert – Les femmes de Loi du désert*, Milan 2012, exh. cat.
 McLean, Ian and Margo Neale (eds.): *Eaux Vivantes – Living Waters. Un projet de la Collection Sordello Missana – A project of the Sordello Missana Collection*, Doubleview 2016, exh. cat., fig.
 National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *Power of the Land – Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art*, Melbourne 1995, exh. cat.
 Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
 Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat.



Napanangka, Nancy Naninurra (c. 1933–2010)
 Language group: Kukatja, Warlpiri

- Group exhibitions (selection)
 2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne
 2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
 2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Wollongong City Gallery, Wollongong
 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
 2004 Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
 2003 Il Tempo del Sogno, Arte Figurativa Tribale degli Aborigeni Australiani, Biblioteca Comunale Centrale, Florenz
 2002 Beyond Wings, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
 2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 1986 Art from the Great Sandy Desert, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

— Collections

Albertina, Wien
 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
 Industrie- und Handelskammer, Würzburg
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Art Gallery of Western Australia (ed.): *Art from the Great Sandy Desert*, Perth 1987, exh. cat., fig.
 Cowan, James: *Wirrimanu. Aboriginal Art from the Balgo Hills*, East Roseville 1994, fig.
 Morphy, Howard and Margo Smith Boles (eds.): *Art from the Land. Dialogues with the Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Charlottesville 1999, fig.
 Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.
 Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat.
 Watson, Christine: *Piercing the Ground. Balgo women's image making and relationship to country*, Fremantle 2003, fig.



Napanangka, Walangkura (c. 1946–2014)
 Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022–2023 Indigenous Art from the NGV Collection, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2017–2018 Indigenous Australia. Masterworks from the National Gallery of Australia, me Collectors Room, Berlin; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi
- 2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2015 Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia's Western Desert (1971–Present), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2008 Virtuosity: The Evolution of Painting at Papunya Tula, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Land Marks, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2001 Dreamscapes–Contemporary Desert Art, Møstings Hus, Frederiksberg
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999 Flinders University of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1996 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, Australien

— Collections

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- University of Canberra
- University of New South Wales, Sydney
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
- Araluen Arts Centre and Papunya Tula Artists (eds.): *Unique Perspectives – Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community*, Alice Springs 2012, exh. cat.
- IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (ed.): *Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana*, València 2012, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, Melbourne 2011.
- National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *LandMarks*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat., fig.
- Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (ed.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat.
- Raffan, Jane: *Power + Colour. New Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Melbourne 2012.
- Ryan, Judith: *Living Water. Contemporary art of the far Western Desert*, Melbourne 2011, exh. cat., fig.



Napangati, Mary (c. 1953)

Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibition

- 2023 Mary Napangati, Tjutalpi, Utopia Art Sydney
- 2020 Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2023 Pintupi Way, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2005 Strong & Stately, Collection of Fine Papunya Tula Aboriginal Art, Red Dot Gallery, Singapore
- 2005 Rising Stars, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 2004 Pintupi Artists, Papunya Tula Artists, Alice Springs

— Collection

- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Sydney University Art Collection

— Bibliography

- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.



Napurrula, Mitjili (c. 1946–2019)

Language group: Pintupi

— Award

1999 Alice Springs Art Prize

— Solo exhibitions

2018 Watiya Juta, Mitchell Fine Art, Brisbane
2008 Kate Owen Gallery, Sydney
2000 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
1998 Mitjili Napurrula, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
1997 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
1996 Mitjili Napurrula, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug
2019 Highlights from the Collection, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
2009–2010 Lands of Enchantment: Australian Aboriginal Painting, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C.
2009–2010 Contemporary Aboriginal Painting from Australia, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
2008 Couleurs Aborigènes, Médiathèque Communautaire, Antibes Juan-les-Pin
2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
2000 Beyond the Pale, Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
1998 Kate Challis RAKA Award, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne
1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
1997 Aboriginal Art, Goteborgs Konstforening, Göteborg

— Collections

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Campbelltown Regional Gallery
Edith Cowan University, Perth
Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
Fondation Opale, Lens
Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
Seattle Art Museum
Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
University of New South Wales, Sydney
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
Art Gallery of South Australia (ed.): *Beyond the Pale—Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Adelaide 2000, exh. cat.
Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
Strocchi, Marina: *Ikuntji. Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, Alice Springs 1995.
Watson, Christine: ‘Weaving visions of country. Lilly Kelly Napangardi and Mitjili Napurrula’. In: Seear, Lynne and Julie Ewington: *Brought to Light II. Contemporary Australian Art 1966–2006 from the Queensland Art Gallery Collection*, Brisbane 2007, pp. 398–403.



Nelson, Jorna Napurrurla (c. 1930–2011)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia’s Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
2008–2009 Across The Desert – Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2006 Opening Doors, Museum of contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover

- 2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2003 Kurruwarri Pipangka – Designs on Paper, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 1998–1999 Raiki Wara: Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Straits, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney

— Collections

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Australian Museum, Sydney
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 The British Museum, London

— Bibliography (selection)

- Ryan, Judith (ed.): *Across The Desert – Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: *Raiki Wara. Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1998, exh. cat., fig.



Ngale, Gracie Morton (c. 1956)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Solo exhibition

- 2000 Ancient Earth Indigenous Art, Cairns

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1991 8th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
- 1989 Utopia Women's Paintings. The First Works on Canvas.

A Summer Project, 1988–89, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

— Collections

- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge (GB)
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 Slaughter and May International Law, London
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
- Bähr, Elisabeth: 'Wesen und Erscheinungsformen indigener Kunst in Australien – eine Einführung'. In: Altendorf, Ulrike and Liesel Hermes (eds.): *Australien – Facetten eines Kontinents*, Tübingen 2010, pp. 121–151, fig.
- Brody, Anne: *Utopia – A Picture Story. 88 Silk Batiks from The Robert Holmes à Court Collection*, Perth 1990, exh. cat., fig.
- Brody, Anne: *Utopia Women's Paintings – The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–89*, Perth 1989, exh. cat., fig.
- Girard-Geslan, Maud, Luc Chailleu and Marc Faugeras: *Painting the Desert. Where the traditional meets contemporary art*, Alice Springs 1999, exh. cat.



Nungurrayi, Elizabeth Nyumi (c. 1947–2019)

Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibitions

- 2006 Elizabeth Nyumi, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 2005 Elizabeth Nyumi, Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2004 Elizabeth Nyumi, RAFT Artspace, Darwin
- 2003 Elizabeth Nyumi, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
- 2002 Elizabeth Nyumi, Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2001 Parwalla, RAFT Artspace, Darwin

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019 A World of Relations, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth
- 2014–2015 Luminous World, Contemporary Art from the Wesfarmers Collection, Darwin University Art Gallery; Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide; The Academy Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart; Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne
- 2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne

- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2013–2014 Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley, Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane
- 2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2012 Luminous World, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2010–2011 Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2006 Bangu Yilbara: Works from the MCA Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000–2001 Transitions. 17 Years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
- Harland Collection
- Helen Read Collection, Darwin
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- Morven Estate
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Seattle Art Museum
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.
- Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat.



Nungurrayi, Pantjia (c. 1936)

Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2012–2013 Unique Perspectives, Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2008 Couleurs Aborigènes, Médiathèque Communautaire, Antibes Juan-les-Pin
- 2004 Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 1999 Zeichen des Seins. Malerei der australischen Aborigines, Städtische Galerie ADA, Meiningen

— Collections

- Albertina, Wien
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, Melbourne 2011, fig.
- Mellor, Doreen and Vincent Megaw (eds.): *Twenty-Five Years and Beyond. Papunya Tula Painting*, Adelaide 1999, exh. cat., fig.
- Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
- Strocchi, Marina: 'Minyma Tjukurrpa: Kintore/Haasts Bluff Canvas Project. Dancing women to famous painters', *Artlink* 26 (4) 2005, pp. 104–107, fig.



Petyarre, Ada Bird (c. 1930–2009)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Solo exhibitions

- 2002 Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs
- 2000 Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs
- 1999 Ginninderra Galleries, Canberra
- 1999 Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs
- 1990 Utopia Art Sydney

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
- 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthau Zug
- 2016–2017 Who's afraid of colour? National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2009–2010 Gooch's Utopia: collected works from the Central Desert, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide; Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, Perth; Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra; Macquarie University Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Black Abstract, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
- 2004 Dreaming of Country: Painting, Place, and People in Australia, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2003–2004 Women's Business, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001 Seven Sisters Petyarre, Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 1999–2000 Beyond the Future: The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- 1998–2000 Raiki Wara. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1994 Yiribana, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

- 1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1991 Aboriginal Women's Exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
- 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne

— Collections

- Anthropology Museum, St. Lucia
- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Kunsthau Zug
- Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- LeWitt Collection, Chester
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
- Tamworth Regional Gallery, Tamworth
- University of New South Wales, Sydney
- University of Queensland, Brisbane
- University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
- Boulter, Michael: *The Art of Utopia. A New Direction in Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Roseville East 1991, fig.
- Musée Olympique (ed.): *Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire, Aboriginal Art, An Immemorial Fountain of Youth*, Lausanne 2001, exh. cat., fig.
- Neale, Margo (ed.): *Yiribana*, Sydney 1994, exh. cat.
- Städtisches Kunstmuseum Spendhaus Reutlingen (ed.): *Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines*, Speyer 2004, exh. cat., fig.



Petyarre, Gloria Tamerre (c. 1945–2021)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Awards

- 1999 Wynne Prize for Landscape, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1995–1996 Scholarship of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board of the Australia Council for the Arts

— Solo exhibitions

- 2003 Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Indigenart, Perth
- 2003 New Works by Gloria Petyarre, Indigenart, Perth
- 2002 Gloria Petyarre: Leaves & Awelye, Utopia Art Sydney
- 2002 Leaves you thinking, World Vision of Australia, Walkabout Gallery, Sydney
- 2000 Paintings from Anungura, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1999 New Leaves, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1999 Red Desert Gallery, Eumundi
- 1999 Redback Gallery, Brisbane
- 1999 Wildflowers, Mbantua Gallery, Alice Springs
- 1999 Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Gloria Petyarre: A Survey, New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale
- 1998 Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Campbelltown Bicentennial Art Gallery, Campbelltown
- 1998 The Anangkere Growth Paintings, Chapman Gallery, Canberra
- 1997 Instant Pictures, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1996 Fire Works Gallery, Brisbane
- 1995 Gloria Petyarre: On the Line, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1994 Utopia Art Sydney
- 1993 Awelye, Utopia Art Sydney
- 1991 Utopia Art Sydney
- 1991 Australian Galleries, New York

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2022–2023 Sol LeWitt. Affinities and Resonances, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug
- 2015 Dreamtime – Australian Aboriginal Art from the Collection of Maccon Macnamara, The Gallery at Burren College of Art, Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan
- 2013–2015 Visual Vertigo, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2012 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
- 2009 Utopia – Colours of the Desert, Gongpyeong Artspace, Seoul
- 2008 Couleurs Aborigènes, Médiathèque Communautaire, Antibes Juan-les-Pin
- 2007–2008 Living Black, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2007 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Black Abstract, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2005 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australien
- 2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
- 2004 Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003–2004 Women's Business, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2003 Sanjski cas. Dreamtime, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2002 Crossroads: The Millenium Portfolio of Australian Aboriginal Prints, Singapore Art Museum
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Seven Sisters Petyarre, Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2001 Spirit Country – Aboriginal Art at Melbourne Museum, Melbourne
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 2000 The Australian Drawing Biennale, Drill Hall Gallery, The Australian National University, Canberra
- 1999 Utopia: Ancient Cultures – New Forms, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1999 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1998–2000 Raiki Wara. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Cairns Regional Art Gallery; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1996 Dreamings of the Desert. Aboriginal dot paintings of

- the Western Desert, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1995 Australian Art 1940–1990 from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia: In Search of an Inner Landscape, Museum of Fine Art, Gifu
- 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1993 Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Queensland, Brisbane
- 1992 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1991 Aboriginal Women's Exhibition, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1990–1991 Tagari Lia: My Family – Contemporary Aboriginal Arts from Australia, Third Eye Centre, Glasgow; Glynn Vivian Art Gallery & Museum, Swansea; Cornerhouse, Manchester
- 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
- 1989 Aboriginal Art. The Continuing Tradition, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1989 Utopia Women's Painting. The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–89, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, Australien

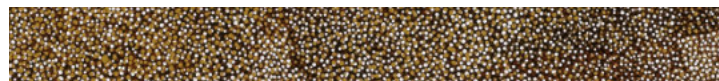
— Collections (selection)

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- British Museum, London
- Campbelltown City Art Gallery
- Federal Airports Corporation, Melbourne
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Surfers Paradise
- Griffith University, Brisbane
- James D. Wolfensohn Collection, New York
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
- Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
- Seattle Art Museum
- Singapore Art Museum
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- Supreme Court, Brisbane
- University of New South Wales, Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore

- Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford
- Westpac, New York
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- Wollongong Art Gallery
- Wollongong University

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002, exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
- Drury, Nevill and Anna Voigt: *Fire and Shadow. Spirituality in Contemporary Australian Art*, Melbourne 1999 [1996].
- Flinders University City Gallery (ed.): *Gooch's Utopia: collected works from the Central Desert*, Adelaide 2008, exh. cat.
- Gongpyeong Artspace (ed.): *Utopia – Colours of the Desert*, Seoul 2009, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat.
- Wussow, Indra and Ralf-P. Seippel (eds.): *Art Australia. Zeitgenössische Kunst*, Cologne 2003, exh. cat.



Petyarre, Greeny Purvis (c. 1930–2010)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Solo exhibitions

- 2003 Greeny Purvis Petyarre, Hogarth Galleries, Sydney
- 2000 Greeny Purvis Petyarre, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions

- 2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
- 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthau Zug
- 2016 Divine Geometry, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 2014 New Acquisitions 2012–2013, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle
- 2012 Punkt.Systeme. Vom Pointilismus zum Pixel, Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2011–2012 Divine Geometry, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
- 2009 Utopia–Colours of the Desert, Gongpyeong Artspace, Seoul

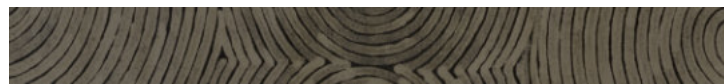
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2004 21st National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000 Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1996 Dreamings of the Desert. Aboriginal dot paintings of the Western Desert, Art Gallery of S.A., Adelaide

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Collection d'Arnaud Serval, Sion
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Musée des Confluences, Lyon
- Foundation Burkhardt-Felder, , Motiers
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- Newcastle Art Gallery
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr, Speyer (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2001, exh. cat.
- ARAart (ed.): *Colour of Dreaming – Australian Indigenous Arts*, Seoul 2012, exh. cat., fig.
- Côté, Michel et al. (eds.): *Aborigènes: collections australiennes contemporaines du musée des Confluences*, Lyon 2008
- Johnson, Vivien: *Dreamings of the Desert. Aboriginal dot paintings of the Western Desert*, Adelaide 1996, exh. cat.
- Musée Olympique (ed.): *Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire, Aboriginal Art, An Immemorial Fountain of Youth*, Lausanne 2001, exh. cat.
- Spieler, Reinhard and Barbara J. Scheuermann (eds.): *Punk. Systeme. Vom Pointilismus zum Pixel*, Heidelberg, Berlin 2012, exh. cat.



Petyarre, Suzie (c. 1966–2008)

Language group: Alyawarr

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2004 Bilderwelten in Utopia. Holzschnitte und Gemälde von Aborigines, Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus; Kunstmuseum Bayreuth
- 1999 Aboriginal Art – Australien heute, Deutsche Welle, Cologne

- 1996 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 1991 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 1989–1991 Utopia – A Picture Story, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick; Meat Market Gallery, Melbourne
- 1989 Utopia Women's Paintings. The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project, 1988–89, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1985 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

— Collections

- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, Perth
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kunstmuseum Reutlingen | Spendhaus
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle

— Bibliography (selection)

- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2001 [2000].
- Brody, Anne (ed.): *Utopia – A Picture Story. 88 Silk Batiks from The Robert Holmes à Court Collection*, Perth 1990.
- Brody, Anne (ed.): *Utopia Women's Paintings – The First Works on Canvas. A Summer Project 1988–89*, Perth 1989.



Poulson, Mona Napurrurla (c. 1936)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2006 Opening Doors, Museum of contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
- 2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide



Poulson, Peggy Napurrurla (c. 1932)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Solo exhibition

- 1999 Darby Jampijinpa Ross and Peggy Napurrurla Poulson, Songlines Gallery, San Francisco

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2019 Desert Lines: Batik from Central Australia, Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo
- 2015 Indigenous Art: Moving Backwards into the Future,

The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 2008–2009 *Across the Desert – Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 2006 *Opening Doors*, Museum of contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
 2005 *The Warlukurlangu Collection*, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 1999 *City of Hobart Art Prize*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
 1999 *16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 1998–1999 *Raiki Wara: Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Straits*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 1993 *La Peinture des Aborigènes d’Australie*, Musée des Arts d’Afrique et d’Océanie, Paris
 1991 *The Painted Dream: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from the Tim and Vivien Johnson Collection*, Auckland City Art Gallery

— Collections

AIATSIS Collection, Canberra
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Australian Museum, Sydney
 Australian Parliament House Collection, Canberra
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gordon Darling Foundation, Melbourne
 Musée du quai Branly, Paris
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 The British Museum, London

— Bibliography (selection)

Hobson, Shonae and Judith Ryan: *Desert Lines: Batik from Central Australia*, Bendigo 2019, exh. cat.
 Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings*, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland 1991, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith (ed.): *Across The Desert – Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, Melbourne 2008, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith: *Raiki Wara. Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1998, exh. cat., fig.



Purdie, Shirley (c. 1948)
 Language group: Gija

— Awards

2008 Needham Prize for Religious Art, Riddoch Art Gallery, Mount Gambier
 2007 56th Blake Prize for Religious Art, The Blake Society, Sydney

— Solo exhibitions

2022 Shirley Purdie: *Gilban* (Mabel Downs), Olsen Gallery, Sydney
 2014 Shirley Purdie, *Gilban*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
 2012 Shirley Purdie, *Burrum lirkarn ngarri ngumbarra mangbu – My mother & father two fella bin learn me all the way*, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
 2004 *Boutwell Draper Gallery*, Sydney

— Group exhibitions (selection)

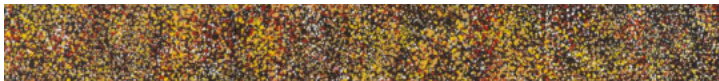
2023–2024 *Wer wir sind*, Weserburgmuseum für Gegenwartskunst, Bremen
 2021–2022 *Perspectives of Place*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
 2020 *Salon des Refusés*, Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin
 2018–2019 *Compass*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
 2018 *Gija*, Woolloongabba Art Gallery, Brisbane
 2018 *So Fine – Contemporary women artists make Australian history*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
 2017 *When the Sky Fell: Legacies of the 1967 Referendum*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth
 2016–2017 *In the Saddle – On the Wall*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne; Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
 2016 *Telling Tales – Excursions in Narrative Form*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
 2015 *Warmun Then and Now*, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth
 2015 *Paintings from Warmun*, ST PAUL St Gallery One, AUT University, Auckland
 2013–2014 *Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley*, Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane
 2009 *Looking at Landscape – Artworks from the Murdoch University Art Collection*, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
 2008 *Bush + Burbs*, Contemporary Indigenous Art from the Murdoch University Art Collection, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
 2007 *Meeting Place – Selected Indigenous works from the Murdoch University Art Collection*, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
 2004 *Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge*, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
 2002–2003 *Garmerrun: All Our Country*, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 2001–2002 *Beyond Wings*, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 2001 *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren*, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
 1994 *The 2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition*, Old Parliament House, Canberra

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
Charles Darwin University, Darwin
Commonwealth Institute Collection, London
Edith Cowan University, Perth
Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth
University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2001 [2000], exh. cat.
Bähr, Elisabeth: 'The Impact of Christianity on Australian Indigenous Art'. In: Holleuffer, Henriette von and Adi Wimmer (eds.): *Australien. Realität–Klischee – Vision. Australia. Reality–Stereotype – Vision*, Trier 2012, pp. 49–67.
Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
Northern Territory University (ed.): *Printabout. Lithographs, Etchings, and Lino Prints from the Northern Territory University Art Collection*, Darwin 1993.
Warmun Art Centre (ed.): *Garnkiny. Constellations of Meaning*, Warmun 2014.



Pwerle, Rita (*1972)

Language group: Anmatyerr

— Group exhibitions

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg
2000 Kunst der Aborigines, BASF Feierabendhaus, Leverkusen
1997 Dreampower – Art of Contemporary Aboriginal Australia, Museum Puri Lukisan, Ubud; The National Gallery, Jakarta

— Collections

Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica

— Bibliography

Museum Art International (ed.): *Dreampower. Art of Contemporary Aboriginal Australia*, Adelaide 1997, exh. cat., fig.



Ross, Darby Jampijinpa (c. 1910–2005)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Solo exhibitions

2008 Darby Jampijinpa Ross – Make it good for the people, Dell Gallery, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane
1999 Darby Jampijinpa Ross and Peggy Napurrula Poulson, Songlines Gallery, San Francisco

— Group exhibitions (selection)

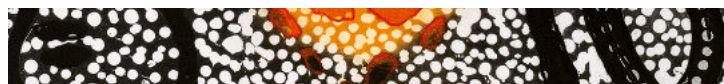
2017 Yuendumu: Of Fire and Water, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2015 Indigenous Art: Moving Backwards into the Future, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
2004–2005 Colour Power. Aboriginal Art post 1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
2000 Land Mark: Mirror Mark, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection Gallery, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
1997 Festival of the Dreaming, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
1994 Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert. Die Donald Kahn Collection, Villa Stuck, Munich
1993 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Old Parliament House, Canberra
1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
1992 Crossroads – Toward a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia, National Museums of Modern Art, Kyoto und Tokyo
1991 Te Whare Taonga o Aotearoa, National Art Gallery and Museum, Auckland
1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland
1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
1988–1990 Dreamings. The Art of Aboriginal Australia, The Asia Society Galleries, New York; David and Alfred Smart Gallery, University of Chicago

— Collections

Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Australian Museum, Sydney
Duncan Kentish Collection
Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
Kohane Collection
Musée du quai Branly, Paris
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
South Australian Museum, Adelaide
University of Canberra
Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu

— Bibliography (selection)

- Campbell, Liam: *Darby. One hundred years of life in a changing culture*, Sydney 2006.
- Griffith Artworks and Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Association (eds.): *Darby Jampijinpa Ross: Make it good for the people*, Brisbane 2008, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings*, Auckland 1991, exh. cat., fig.
- Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Cologne 1993, exh. cat.
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (ed.): *Thirteenth National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Darwin 1996.
- Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: *colour power. Aboriginal art post 1984*, Melbourne 2004, exh. cat.



Ross, Jack Jakamarra (c. 1922–2004)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

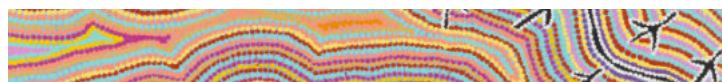
- 2017 Yuendumu: *Of Fire and Water*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 *Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu*, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
- 2006–2007 *Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2005 *Luminous*, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2003 *Sanjski cas. Dreamtime*, Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana
- 2003 *Kurruwarri Pipangka – Designs on Paper*, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2003 *Aboriginal Art*, Earth Wisdom Centre, Hida Museum, Gifu
- 2000 *Paintings and Prints*, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2000 *Land Mark: Mirror Mark*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 1999 *Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1997 *Festival of the Dreaming*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1993–1994 *Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1993 *Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1993 *The Art Gallery and Museum*, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- 1991 *The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings*, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 *Te Whare Taonga o Aotearoa*, National Art Gallery and Museum, Auckland

— Collections

- Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Christensen Foundation
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra
- Hida Museum, Gifu
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Seattle Art Museum
- South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
- Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu

— Bibliography (selection)

- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat., fig.
- Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings*, Auckland 1991, exh. cat., fig.
- Morphy, Howard and Margo Smith Boles (eds.): *Art from the Land. Dialogues with the Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Charlottesville 1999, exh. cat.
- Northern Editions (ed.): *Land Mark – Mirror Mark*, Darwin 2000, fig.
- Petitjean, Georges: *Hedendaagse Aboriginal kunst. De AAMU collectie en Nederlandse verzamelingen*, Gent 2010, fig.



Ross, Maggie Napaljarri (c. 1940)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2010 *Circles in the Sand*, Kluge-Ruhe Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2008 *Warlukurlangu Artists. The art of Yuendumu*, La Fontaine Centre of Contemporary Art, Bahrain
- 2005 *Luminous*, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2005 *Jukurrpa Wiri–Important Dreaming Stories*, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 1993 *Windows to the Future*, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide
- 1988 *Yuendumu: Paintings out of the Desert*, South Australian Museum, Adelaide

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville



Sims, Bessie Nakamarra (c. 1932–2012)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2017 Yuendumu: Of Fire and Water, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2012 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
- 2010 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Central Australia in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, Australian Embassy, Washington
- 2009 Yuru-yururla: Women's Painting from Yuendumu, Kluge-Ruhe Collection for Aboriginal Art, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
- 2006 Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women Painters, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- 2004 Likan'marri – Connections. The AIATSIS Collection of Art, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olym-pique, Lausanne
- 1994 Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert. Die Donald Kahn Collection, Villa Stuck, Munich
- 1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 Australian Aboriginal Art from the Collection of Donald Kahn, Lowe Museum, University of Miami

— Collections

- Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- AIATSIS, Canberra
- Australian Museum, Sydney
- Australian National University, Canberra
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra

- Grand Valley State University, Allendale
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Newmont Mining, Denver
- Seattle Art Museum
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- The British Museum, London
- University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
- Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Glowczewski, Barbara, Francoise Dussart, Georges Petitjean and Arnaud Morvan: *Kunga: Law Women from the Desert – Les femmes de Loi du désert*, Milan 2012, exh. cat.
- McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, Melbourne 2011, fig.
- McLean, Ian (ed.): *How Aborigines invented the idea of contemporary art*, Brisbane 2011, Sydney, fig.
- Raffan, Jane: *Power + Colour. New Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Melbourne 2012.



Sims, Paddy Japaljarri (c. 1917–2010)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Award

- 2001 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Works on Paper Award

— Solo exhibition

- 2004 Paddy Japaljarri Sims, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibition (selection)

- 2020–2021 Under the Stars, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2019 Claiming Country: Western Desert Painting from the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, Truman State University Art Gallery, Kirksville
- 2017–2018 Past Legacy – Present Tense, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2017 Yuendumu: Of Fire and Water, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2007 Desert Dreamscapes: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from the Collection of Margaret Levi and Robert

- Kaplan, Holter Museum of Art, Helena
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
- 2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 2005 Luminous, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
- 2004 Likan'marri – Connections. The AIATSIS Collection of Art, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2001 Yuendumu Doors Etchings, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 2000 Land Mark: Mirror Mark, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1996 Kunstverein Frankfurt
- 1996 Dreamings of the Desert. Aboriginal dot paintings of the Western Desert, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1995 Cleveland Centre for Contemporary Art
- 1994 Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert. Die Donald Kahn Collection, Villa Stuck, Munich
- 1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1993 Dot and Circle Retrospective, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1993 Dreaming the World, St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art, Glasgow
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1993 The Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- 1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery
- 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1991 Te Whare Taonga o Aotearoa, National Art Gallery and Museum, Auckland
- 1990 L'Été: Australie à Montpellier. 100 Chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture Australienne, Musée Fabre Galerie Saint Ravy, Montpellier
- 1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1989 Windows on the Dreaming, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1989 Magiciens de la Terre, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 1988–1990 Dreamings. The Art of Aboriginal Australia, The Asia Society Galleries, New York; David and Alfred Smart Gallery, University of Chicago
- Collections
- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra
- Australian Museum, Sydney
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
- Sammlung S.A.S. Albert II Prince of Monaco
- Seattle Art Museum
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- The British Museum, London
- University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
- Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- Bibliography (selection)
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (eds.): *Kuruwarri. Yuendumu Doors*, Canberra 1992.
- Coppel, Stephen: *Out of Australia. Prints and Drawings from Sidney Nolan to Rover Thomas*, London 2011, exh. cat.
- Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010, fig.
- Jones, Philip: *Behind the Doors. An Art History from Yuendumu*, Kent Town 2014.
- Martin, Jean Hubert (ed.): *Magiciens de la Terre*, Paris 1989.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- McLean, Ian: *Rattling Spears. A History of Indigenous Australian Art*, London 2016.
- Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
- Raffan, Jane: *Power + Colour. New Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Melbourne 2012.
- Royal Academy of Arts (ed.): *Australia*, London 2013, exh. cat.



Stewart, Paddy Japaljarri (c. 1940–2013)

Language group: Warlpiri/Anmatyerr

— Award

2001 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Works on Paper Award

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2017 Yuendumu: Of Fire and Water, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade

2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover

2005 Luminous, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin

2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

2003 A decade of prints, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin

2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

2003 Kurruwarri Pipangka – Designs on Paper, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin

2001 Yuendumu Doors Etchings, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2001 18th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

2000 Paintings and Prints, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin

2000 Unhinged, Araluen Centre for the Arts, Alice Springs
1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

1997 Festival of the Dreaming, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk

1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

1989 Magiciens de la Terre, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

1988–1990 Dreamings. The Art of Aboriginal Australia, The Asia Society Galleries, New York; David and Alfred Smart Gallery, University of Chicago

1995 Araluen Centre for the Arts, Alice Springs

— Collections

Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra

Corrigan Collection, Sydney

Duncan Kentish Collection

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne

Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Newmont Mining, Denver

Seattle Art Museum

South Australian Museum, Adelaide

The British Museum, London

University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney

Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ed.): *Kuruwarri. Yuendumu Doors*, Canberra 1992.

Gaiger, Jason (ed.): *Frameworks for Modern Art*, New Haven 2003

Hinkson, Melinda: *Remembering the Future. Warlpiri life through the prism of Drawing*, Canberra 2014.

Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.

Jones, Philip: *Behind the Doors. An Art History from Yuendumu*, Kent Town 2014.

Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1993, exh. cat., fig.

Martin, Jean Hubert (ed.): *Magiciens de la Terre*, Paris 1989, exh. cat., fig.

McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.

Morphy, Howard and Margo Smith Boles (eds.): *Art from the Land. Dialogues with the Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Charlottesville 1999,.

Quaill, Avril: *Marking our times. Selected works of art from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection at the National Gallery of Australia*, Port Melbourne 1996

Raffan, Jane: *Power + Colour. New Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Melbourne, 2012.



Tjakamarra, Richard Yukenbarri (c. 1960)

Language Group : Kukatja

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2010–2012 Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route, National Museum of Australia, Canberra; Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Perth; Australian Museum, Sydney
- 2006 The Peter Bailie Art Award, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

— Collections

- Artbank, Sydney
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- Seattle Art Museum
- The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

— Bibliography (selection)

- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- National Museum of Australia (ed.): *Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route*, Canberra 2010.
- Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat., fig.
- Tandanya–National Aboriginal Cultural Institute (ed.): *Deadly. In-between heaven and hell*, Adelaide 2012, exh. cat.



Tjakamarra, Tony (c. 1938–†)

Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 1990 Friendly Country – Friendly People, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 1988 5th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

— Collections

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin

— Bibliography (selection)

- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- Kimber, R. (ed.): *Friendly Country – Friendly People*, Alice Springs 1990, exh. cat., fig.
- Morphy, Howard and Margo Smith Boles (eds.): *Art from the Land. Dialogues with the Kluge-Ruhe Collection of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Charlottesville 1999, exh. cat., fig.
- Murnane, Gerald: 'Sista brevet till en brorsdotter'. In: *Artes. Tidskrift för Litteratur, Konst och Musik* 4, 2002, Arg. 28, Stockholm
- Musée Olympique (ed.): *Art Aborigène, Jouvence millénaire–Aboriginal Art, An Immemorial Fountain of Youth*, Lausanne 2001, exh. cat., fig.



Tjampitjinpa, Kenny Williams (c. 1950)

Language group: Pintupi

— Award

- 2000 17th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia's Western Desert (1971–Present), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan
- 2004 Looking Closely at Country, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004 Talking about Abstraction, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2004 Celebration 20 Years, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, National Archives of Australia, Canberra; RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne

- 2003 20th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2000 17th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1999 Twenty-five Years and Beyond: Papunya Tula Painting, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 1996 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
 Yalumba Wine Company

— Bibliography (selection)

Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.

Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008

McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, MacMillan, Melbourne 2011.

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (ed.): *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award 1984–2008: celebrating 25 years*, Darwin 2011, fig.

Myers, Fred R.: *Painting Culture. The Making of an Aboriginal High Art*, Durham, London 2002, fig.

Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat., fig.



Tjampitjinpa, Maxie (c. 1945–1997)
 Language group: Warlpiri

— Award

1984 Northern Territory Art Award

— Solo exhibitions

1993 Utopia Art Sydney

1992 Utopia Art Sydney
 1991 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide

2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne

2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

1995 Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen, Sprengel Museum Hannover; Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Ludwig-Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen

1995 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk

1993 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

1993 Utopia Art, Kerava Art Museum

1992 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

1991 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery

1990 L'Été: Australie à Montpellier. 100 Chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture Australienne, Musée Fabre Galerie Saint Ravy, Montpellier

1988 Queensland Museum, Brisbane

1987 Undercroft Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth

1986 Queensland University, Brisbane

— Collections

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
 Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 Campbelltown City Art Gallery
 Federal Airports Corporation, Melbourne
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Moree Plains Art Gallery
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Sydney University Union, Sydney
 University of New South Wales, Sydney
 University of Technology Art Collection, Sydney
 University of Western Australia, Perth

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
Wollongong Art Gallery

— Bibliography (selection)

- Brody, Anne, Ulrich Krempel and Elisabeth Bähr (eds.): *Stories. Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen. Elf Künstler der australischen Aborigines*, Hannover 1995, exh. cat.
- Caruana, Wally (ed.): *Windows on the Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings in the Australian National Gallery*, Sydney 1989, exh. cat., fig.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings*, Auckland 1991, exh. cat., fig.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Streets of Papunya. The re-invention of Papunya painting*, Sydney 2015.
- Kleinert, Sylvia and Margo Neale (ed.): *The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, Oxford Univ. Press, Melbourne 2000
- Mollison, James: 'De Tiepolo à Maxie Tampitjinpa'. In: Crossman, S. and J. P. Bardou (eds.): *L'Été: Australie à Montpellier. 100 Chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture Australienne*, Montpellier 1990, exh. cat., fig.
- Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat.
- Stourton, Patrick Corbally: *Songlines and Dreamings. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, London 1996, fig.



Tjapaltjarri, George Tjampu (c. 1945–2005)

Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibitions

2007 Utopia Art Sydney, Sydney

— Group exhibitions (selection)

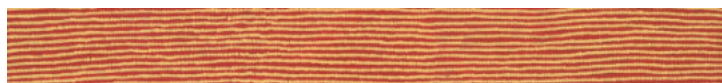
- 2005–2007 Luminous – Contemporary Art from the Australian Desert, i. a: Manly Museum and Art Gallery, Sydney; Flinders University Art Gallery, Adelaide; La Trobe Regional Gallery; Bathurst Regional Art Gallery; Tamworth Regional Gallery
- 2004 Looking Closely at Country, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004 Talking About Abstraction, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Arts, The University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1988 Queensland Museum, Brisbane

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

— Bibliography (selection)

- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- Kimber, R. (ed.): *Friendly Country – Friendly People*, Alice Springs 1990, exh. cat., fig.
- Manly Art Gallery and Museum (ed.): *Luminous – Contemporary Art from the Australian Desert*, Sydney 2005, exh. cat.
- National Gallery of Australia (ed.): *Culture Warriors. Australian Indigenous Art Triennial*, Canberra 2009 [2007], exh. cat., fig.
- Stourton, Patrick Corbally: *Songlines and Dreamings. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, London 1996, fig.



Tjapaltjarri, J. J. (c. 1952–2022)

Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibitions

- 2022 Joseph Jurra Tjapaltjarri. A Tribute, Utopia Art Sydney
- 2008 Scott Livesey Galleries, Melbourne
- 1995 Savode Gallery, Brisbane
- 1988 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore
- 2004 Mythology and Reality, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Aborigena Arte, Australiana Contemporaneu, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999–2002 Twenty-five Years and Beyond: Papunya Tula Painting, Flinders Art Museum, Flinders University, Adelaide; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs; University of Tasmania, Hobart; Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery; Brisbane City Gallery
- 1995 Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg
- 1993 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery
- 1989 Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City

— Collections

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Art Institute Chicago
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland

Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
 Groninger Museum
 Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge
 Institute of Contemporary Art, Chicago
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
 Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
 Mellor, Doreen and Vincent Megaw (eds.): *Twenty-Five Years and Beyond. Papunya Tula Painting*, Adelaide 1999, exh. cat., fig.
 O’Ferrall, M. A. (ed.): *Tjukurrpa – Desert Dreamings, Aboriginal Art from Central Australia*, Perth 1993, exh. cat., fig.
 Oliva, Achille Bonito (ed.): *Desert Art*, Milano 2002 [2001], exh. cat., fig.



Tjapaltjarri, Mick Namarari (c. 1926–1998)

Language group: Pintupi

— Awards

1994 Red Ochre Award
 1994 The Alice Prize
 1991 8th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award

— Solo exhibitions

2017 *The Mysteries that Remain: Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 1994 Utopia Art Sydney
 1993 Utopia Art Sydney
 1992 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
 1991 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 *Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 2021–2022 *Before Time Began*, Art & History Museum, Brussels
 2021 VOID, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle
 2021 *Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021*, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

2017–2018 *tjungunutja: from having come together*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 2017–2018 *Indigenous Australia. Masterworks from the National Gallery of Australia*, me Collectors Room, Berlin; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi
 2016 *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia*, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge
 2016 *Artist’s Hand: Collectors’ Eye. The Angel Gift*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 2015 *Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia’s Western Desert (1971–Present)*, Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan
 2013–2015 *Visual Vertigo*, Seattle Art Museum
 2012 *Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers*, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
 2012 *Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection*, Seattle Art Museum
 2011–2013 *Tjukurrtpjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art*, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 2010–2011 *Desert Country*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 2009 *Icons of the Desert. Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca; Fowler Museum of Cultural History, University of California, Los Angeles; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
 2008 *Virtuosity: The Evolution of Painting at Papunya Tula*, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 2008 *Tjukurrpa – Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, Università di Trento, Facoltà di Giurisprudenza, Trento
 2007–2008 *Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 2007 *One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 2005–2006 *Papunya – circa 1980. Works from the Holmes à Court Collection and Lenders*, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth
 2004 *Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art*, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
 2003 *Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection*, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
 2001–2005 *Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio*, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
 2001 *Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art*, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
 2001 *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren*, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
 2000–2001 *Transitions. 17 Years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1998 The Laverty Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 1997 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1996–1997 Spirit and Place. Art in Australia 1861–1996, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 1996 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1996 The Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery
- 1996 Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia, Seoul Arts Centre, Seoul; Nicholson Museum of Modern Art, Mumbai, Calcutta; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
- 1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1992 Aboriginal Paintings from the Desert, State Ukrainian Museum of Art, Kiev; State Byelorussian Museum of Modern Art, Minsk
- 1992 Crossroads – Toward a New Reality, Aboriginal Art from Australia, National Museums of Modern Art, Kyoto and Tokyo
- 1991 Aboriginal Paintings from the Desert, Union of Soviet Artists Gallery, Moskau
- 1990 National Gallery of Modern Art, Rom
- 1990 L'Été: Australie à Montpellier. 100 Chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture Australienne, Musée Fabre Galerie Saint Ravy, Montpellier
- 1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1989 Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City
- 1989 Foundation. The First Decade of Collecting, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1988–1990 Dreamings. The Art of Aboriginal Australia, The Asia Society Galleries, New York; David and Alfred Smart Gallery, University of Chicago
- 1988 Queensland Museum, Brisbane
- 1988 The Inspired Dream. Life as Art in Aboriginal Australia, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1987 Circle Path Meander, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1986 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1985 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Collections
 Albertina, Wien
 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
 Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 Australian Museum, Sydney
 Chartwell Collection
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Laverty Collection, Sydney
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Seattle Art Museum
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 University of Western Australia, Perth
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
 Wollongong Art Gallery
- Bibliography (selection)
- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
- Bardon, Geoffrey: *Aboriginal Art of the Western Desert*, Adelaide 1979.
- Bardon, Geoffrey: *Papunya Tula. Art of the Western Desert*, Melbourne 1991.
- Bardon, Geoffrey and James Bardon: *Papunya. A Place Made After the Story. The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne 2004.
- Batty, Philip: 'The extraordinary life and times of Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri: warrior, stockman, artist'. In: Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *Papunya painting – Out of the desert*, Canberra 2006, exh. cat., pp. 17–26.
- Benjamin, Roger and Andrew C. Weislogel (eds.): *Icons of the Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, New York 2009, exh. cat.
- Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
- Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Streets of Papunya. The re-invention of Papunya painting*, Sydney 2015.
- Kean, John: 'Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri. Shimmer and screen'. In: Seear, Lynne and Julie Ewington: *Brought to*

Light II. Contemporary Australian Art 1966–2006 from the Queensland Art Gallery Collection, Brisbane 2007, pp. 78–83.

- Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Aꞗatjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1993, exh. cat.
- O'Halloran, Alec B.: *Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri. The Master from Marnpi*, Sydney 2018.
- Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat.
- Petitjean, Georges: *Hedendaagse Aboriginal kunst. De AAMU collectie en Nederlandse verzamelingen*, Gent 2010.
- Pizzi, Gabrielle: *Contemporary Paintings from Papunya Tula*, Melbourne 1989, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith and Philip Batty: *Tjukurr tjaju: Origins of the Western Desert Art*, Melbourne 2011, exh. cat.
- Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat.



Tjapanangka, Long Tom (c. 1929–2006)

Language group: Pintupi, Ngaatjatjarra

— Awards

- 1999 16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award
- 1996 Alice Springs Art Prize

— Solo exhibitions

- 1998 Long Tom Tjapanangka, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1996 Long Tom Tjapanangka, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1995 Long Tom Tjapanangka, Schubert Gallery, Gold Coast
- 1995 Long Tom Tjapanangka, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2019–2020 *My Mother Country*. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug
- 2016–2017 *Sentinent Lands*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2016 *Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 *Indigenous Art: Moving Backwards into the Future*, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2014 *Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico*, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2012 *Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia*. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2010–2011 *Desert Country*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2008–2009 *Community Culture Country*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2007 *One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2003 *Spirit Country*, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama,

- Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2001 *Dreamtime*. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2000–2001 *Transitions*. 17 Years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide
- 2000 *Beyond the Pale*. Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1999 *Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1999 16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1998 *Dreamings*, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1998 *Richness in Diversity*, Australian Museum, Sydney
- 1998 *Aussie Express*, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul
- 1997 *Innenseite*, Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel, Kassel and Göttingen
- 1996 *Dreamings of the Desert*. Aboriginal dot paintings of the Western Desert, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1996 *Recent Acquisitions*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1996 *Contemporary Territory*, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 1995–1996 12th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Westpac Gallery, Melbourne; Brisbane City Hall Art Gallery; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide

— Collections

- Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Tasmania, Hobart
- Australian Museum, Melbourne
- Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
- Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Northern Territory University, Darwin
- Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- South Australian Museum, Adelaide
- Tullermarine Airport, Melbourne
- Western Mining Corporation
- Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
- Art Gallery of South Australia (ed.): *Beyond the Pale – Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Adelaide 2000, exh. cat.
- Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
- Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
- Ryan, Judith: 'Abstraction, Meaning and Essence in Aboriginal Art', *Art and Australia* 35 (1) 1997, pp. 74–81.
- Strocchi, Marina: *Ikuntji. Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, Alice Springs 1995.



Tjapanangka, Tjumbo (c. 1929–2007)
Language group: Kukatja, Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019 Claiming Country: Western Desert Painting from the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, Truman State University Art Gallery, Kirksville
- 2015–2016 No Boundaries: Aboriginal Contemporary Abstract Painting, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno; Portland Institute for Contemporary Art; Pérez Art Museum Miami; Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History, Detroit; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca
- 2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2014 Balgo, Contemporary Australian Art from Balgo Hills, Australian Embassy, Santiago de Chile
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2012 Ancestral Modern: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum
- 2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2007 Desert Dreamscapes: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings from the Collection of Magaret Levi and Robert Kaplan, Holter Museum of Art, Helena
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Indigenous Highlights from the State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olympique, Lausanne
- 2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1994 Art of the Rainbow Snake, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 1991 Aboriginal Paintings from the Desert, Union of Soviet Artists Gallery, Moskau; Museum of Ethnographic Art, St. Petersburg
- 1990 L'Été: Australie à Montpellier. 100 Chefs-d'œuvre de la peinture Australienne, Musée Fabre Galerie Saint Ravy, Montpellier
- 1990 Contemporary Aboriginal Art from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University; James Ford Bell Museum, University of Minnesota; Lakewood Center for the Arts, Lake Oswego
- 1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

— Collections

- Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection
- Fondation Opale, Lens
- Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kaplan & Levi Collection, Seattle
- Ken Thompson and Pierre Marceaux Collection
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Laverty Collection, Sydney
- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

National Museum of Australia, Canberra
Seattle Art Museum
Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
McLean, Ian: *Rattling Spears. A History of Indigenous Australian Art*, London 2016.
Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
Seattle Art Museum (ed.): *Ancestral Modern. Australian Aboriginal Art. Kaplan & Levi Collection*, New Haven, London 2012, exh. cat.
Skerritt, Henry F. (ed.): *No Boundaries. Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting from the Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection*, Munich, London, New York 2014, exh. cat.
Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004, exh. cat.



Tjungurrayi, Don (c. 1939–2020)
Language group: Warlpiri

— Award

1986 Alice Springs Art Prize

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2000 Traumpfade? Zeitgenössische Malerei australischer Aborigines, Städtische Galerie Traunstein
1994 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
1992 Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland
1987 4th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
1986 Queensland University, Brisbane

1984 Papunya and Beyond, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

— Collections

Artbank, Sydney
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Grand Valley State University, Allendale
Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
Wollongong Art Gallery

— Bibliography (selection)

Isaacs, Jennifer: *Australia's Living Heritage. Arts of the Dreaming*, Sydney 1984, fig.
Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
Johnson, Vivien: *Streets of Papunya. The re-invention of Papunya painting*, Sydney 2015.
O'Ferrall, M. A. (ed.): *Tjukurrpa – Desert Dreamings, Aboriginal Art from Central Australia*, Perth 1993, exh. cat., fig.
Premont, Roslyn and Mark Lennard (eds.): *Tjukurrpa–Desert Paintings of Central Australia*, Alice Springs 1988, exh. cat., fig.



Tjungurrayi, George (c. 1943)
Language group: Pintupi

— Solo exhibitions

2018 George Tjungurrayi. Major Works, Utopia Art Sydney
2016 George Tjungurrayi. Paintings, Utopia Art Sydney
2013 George Tjungurrayi. Pulka Canvasa, Utopia Art Sydney
2011 George Tjungurrayi. Space and Place, Utopia Art Sydney
1998 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne
1997 Utopia Art Sydney

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2021–2022 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
2020–2021 Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes 2020, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2019 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2018 21st Biennale of Sydney, Carriageworks, Sydney
2017 Salon des Refusés, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

- 2017 Perception/Deception, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2015 Above and Below: Australian Landscapes from the Gallery's Collection, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2015 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2009–2010 Contemporary Aboriginal Painting from Australia, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 2007–2008 Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2007 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2005 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2005 Shalom Gamarada Art Exhibition, Shalom College, University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2004 Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art, Klosterneuburg
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2003 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italien; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
- 2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2001 Indigenous Highlights from the State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1995 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

— Collections

- Albertina, Wien
- Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
- Australian National University, Canberra
- Corrigan Collection, Sydney
- Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
- Groninger Museum, Groningen
- Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
- Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
- National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
- Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
- Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore

Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
- Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
- Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
- Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
- McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings: Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art*, Fitzroy 2008.
- Ryan, Judith: 'George Tjungurrayi', *Art & Australia* 44 (4) 2007, pp. 582–587.



Tjungurrayi, Helicopter (c. 1947)

Language group: Kukatja

— Award

- 1999 East Kimberley Art Award (highly commended)

— Solo exhibitions

- 2016 Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Short Street Gallery, Broome
- 2012 Helicopter Tjungurrayi & Imelda Yukenbarri Gugaman. Wangkartu, Winpurpurla–Soakwaters continuing through time, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 2004 Helicopter Tjungurrayi, Alcaston Gallery @ Depot Gallery, Melbourne
- 2003 Helicopter & Napanangka, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
- 1999 Tjurrnu: Living Water, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2021–2022 The Purple House, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019 Wirrimanu: Art from Balgo, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2019 Highlights from the Collection, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2016–2017 One Road: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Deserts, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka; Prefecture Museum, Kawaga; Ichihara Lakeside Museum, Chiba, Tokyo; City Museum of Art, Kushiro
- 2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
- 2014 Yilpinji: Love, Magic and Ceremony, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade
- 2013–2014 Traversing Borders: Art from the Kimberley, Queensland Uni. of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane
- 2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore

- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2010–2011 Yiwarra Kuju – The Canning Stock Route, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2008–2009 Community Culture Country, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2008 Couleurs Aborigènes, Médiathèque Communautaire, Antibes Juan-les-Pin
- 2007–2008 Living Black, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2007 Meeting Place – Selected Indigenous works from the Murdoch University Art Collection, Murdoch University Art Gallery, Perth
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2006 Western Desert Satellites, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2004 Spirit & Vision. Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2003 Spirit Country, Museum of Natural Science, Matsunoyama, Niigata; Hillside Forum, Daikanyama, Tokyo; Kushiro City Museum, Hokkaido
- 2003 A decade of prints, Northern Territory University Gallery, Darwin
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olym-pique, Lausanne
- 2000 Dreaming in Colour, Australian Aboriginal Art from Balgo, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1998 Dreamings, Spazio Pitti Arte, Florenz
- 1997 Innenseite, Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel, Kassel and Göttingen

— Collections

Albertina, Wien
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Comunidad de Madrid, Department of Culture, Madrid
 Edith Cowan University, Perth
 Foundation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Harland Collection
 Ken Thompson und Pierre Marceaux Collection
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
 Lavery Collection, Sydney
 Murdoch University Art Collection, Perth
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

- Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
- Cowan, James: *Balgo new directions*, Sydney 1999, fig.
- Grishin, Sasha: 'Finding Water, Finding Life – Travels through the sand dunes and soak holes of Helicopter Tjungurrayi's sweeping canvases', *Art Collector* 61, July–Sept. 2012, pp. 130–135.
- Healy, Jacqueline (ed.): *Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne 2014, exh. cat.
- Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
- IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (ed.): *Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana*, València 2012, exh. cat., fig.
- National Museum of Australia (ed.): *Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route*, Canberra 2010.
- Nicholls, Christine: *Yilpinji: Love Art & Ceremony*, Fishermans Bend 2006.
- Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ed.): *Balgo 4-04. New paintings from the Kutjungka Region*, Balgo 2004.
- Winter, Joan G. (ed.): *Native Title Business. Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Southport 2002, exh. cat., fig.



Tjungurrayi, Yumpululu (c. 1930–1998)

Language group: Pintupi

— Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2015 Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia's Western Desert (1971–Present), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan
- 2009 Icons of the Desert. Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca; Fowler Museum of Cultural History, University of California, Los Angeles; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2007–2008 Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
- 2001 The Australian Aboriginal Art Exhibition, Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art, Asahikawa; Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Utsunomiya; Iwaki City Art Museum, Iwaki
- 2002 Die Kraft und das Licht. Kunst aus Australien, Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

— Collections

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs

Chase Manhattan Bank, New York
Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Araluen Art Centre and Papunya Tula Artists (eds.): *Unique Perspectives – Papunya Tula Artists and the Alice Springs Community*, Alice Springs 2012, exh. cat.
Bardon, Geoffrey and James Bardon: *Papunya. A Place Made After the Story. The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne 2004, fig.
Benjamin, Roger and Andrew C. Weislogel (eds.): *Icons of the Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, New York 2009, exh. cat.
Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
Johnson, Vivien (ed.): *Papunya painting – Out of the desert*, Canberra 2006, exh. cat., fig.
Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat., fig.



Tjupurrula, Bobby West (c. 1958)

Language group: Pintupi

— Award

2011 28th Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, General Painting Award

— Solo exhibitions

2014 Bobby West Tjupurrula & Katarra Butler Napaltjarri, ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
2002 William Mora Galleries, Melbourne

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2021–2022 The Purple House, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2021–2022 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
2018 35th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2015 32th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2014–2015 Warlayirti: The Art of Balgo, RMIT University Gallery, Melbourne; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
2011 28th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Art Gallery and Museum of the Northern Territory, Darwin
2009 Icons Of The Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings From Papunya, Herbert F. Johnson Museum Of Art, Cornell University, New York
2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2004 Die inneren und die äußeren Dinge, Stadtgalerie Bamberg, Villa Dessauer, Bamberg
2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

— Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Charles Darwin University, Darwin
Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover
Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Seattle Art Museum

— Bibliography (selection)

Healy, Jacqueline (ed.): *Warlayirti. The Art of Balgo*, Melbourne 2014, exh. cat., fig.
Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
Myers, Fred R.: *Painting Culture. The Making of an Aboriginal High Art*, Durham, London 2002, fig.
National Gallery of Victoria (ed.): *LandMarks*, Melbourne 2006, exh. cat., fig.
Perkins, Hetti: *Art + soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art*, Carlton 2010.



Tjupurrula, Johnny Warangkula (c. 1918–2001)

Language group: Pintupi, Luritja

— Solo exhibitions

2008 Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula – Discovering the past is just the beginning, Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney
1998 Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula. Fire and Water, Goddard de Fiddes Contemporary Art, Perth

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2021–2022 Before Time Began, Art & History Museum, Brussels

- 2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug
- 2017–2018 tjunguntja: from having come together, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
- 2015 Indigenous Art. Moving Backwards into the Future, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2015 Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia's Western Desert (1971–Present), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan
- 2014 Dreamings: Australian Aboriginal Art meets De Chirico, Museo Carolo Bilotti, Villa Borghese, Rom
- 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
- 2011–2013 Tjukurrjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art, The Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 2009 Icons of the Desert. Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca; Fowler Museum of Cultural History, University of California, Los Angeles; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
- 2008 Virtuosity: The Evolution of Painting at Papunya Tula, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2007–2008 Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
- 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2005–2006 Papunya – circa 1980. Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth
- 2003 Big Country, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
- 2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
- 2001 Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg
- 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1999 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
- 1999 Spirit Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner Myer Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- 1994 Traumzeit – Tjukurrpa. Kunst der Aborigines der Western Desert. Die Donald Kahn Collection, Villa Stuck, Munich
- 1994 Power of the Land. Masterpieces of Aboriginal Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1993–1994 Aratjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
- 1989 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1985–1986 The Face of the Centre. Papunya Tula Paintings 1971–84, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- Collections
 Albertina, Wien
 Alice Springs Law Courts, Alice Springs
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Fondation Opale, Lens
 Gantner Myer Collection, Melbourne
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 Orange Regional Gallery
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover
- Bibliography (selection)
 Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000], exh. cat.
 Aboriginal Artists Agency and Papunya Tula Artists (eds.): *Papunya – Ureinwohnermalerei aus der Wüste Zentralaustraliens*, 1983, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
 Bardon, Geoffrey: *Aboriginal Art of the Western Desert*, Adelaide 1979.
 Bardon, Geoffrey: *Papunya Tula. Art of the Western Desert*, Melbourne 1991.
 Bardon, Geoffrey and James Bardon: *Papunya. A Place Made After the Story. The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne 2004.
 Benjamin, Roger and Andrew C. Weislogel (eds.): *Icons of the Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, New York 2009, exh. cat.
 Crumlin, Rosemary: *Images of Religion in Australian Art*, Kensington 1988.
 Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010.
 Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
 Isaacs, Jennifer: *Spirit Country. Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, South Yarra, San Francisco 1999, exh. cat.
 Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
 Johnson, Vivien: *Streets of Papunya. The re-invention of Papunya painting*, Sydney 2015.
 Kean, John: 'Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula: Painting in a changing landscape', *Art Bulletin of Victoria* 41, 2002, pp. 47–54.

Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Aṛatjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1993, exh. cat.
 McLean, Ian: *Rattling Spears. A History of Indigenous Australian Art*, London 2016.
 Perkins, Hetti: *Art + soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art*, Carlton 2010.
 Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis and Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith and Philip Batty: *Tjukurrjtjanu: Origins of the Western Desert Art*, Melbourne 2011, exh. cat.



Tjupurrula, Turkey Tolson (c. 1938–2001)
 Language Group: Pintupi

— Award

1979 Artist in Residence at the Flinders University, Adelaide

— Solo exhibitions

1999 Warrior, Utopia Art Sydney

1993 Haywood Gallery, The South Bank Centre, London

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2022–2024 Double Up!, Neues Museum Nuremberg

2021–2023 Irrititja Kuwarri Tjunga (Past & Present Together): 50 Years of Papunya Tula Artists, Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia, Charlottesville

2021 Papunya Tula: 50 Years 1971–2021, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

2019–2020 My Mother Country. Malerei der Aborigines, Kunsthaus Zug

2016–2017 Sentinent Lands, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2016 O Tempo dos Sonhos. Arte Aborigene Contemporanea da Australia, Caixa Cultural, Sao Paulo

2016 Artist's Hand: Collectors' Eye. The Angel Gift, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

2015 Abstraction & Dreaming. Aboriginal Paintings from Australia's Western Desert (1971–Present), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University, East Logan

2012 Geteilte Erde. Malerei australischer Aborigines und Keramik von Lotte Reimers – Shared Ground. Indigenous Australian painting and the ceramic art of Lotte Reimers, Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern

2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València

2010–2011 Desert Country, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

2009 Icons of the Desert. Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca; Fowler Museum of Cultural

History, University of California, Los Angeles; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York
 2007–2008 Papunya Painting: Out of the Desert, National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 2007 One Sun, One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 2006–2007 Gifted: Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 2006 Prism. Contemporary Australian Art, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo
 2005–2006 Papunya – circa 1980. Works from the Holmes à Court Collection and Lenders, Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth
 2003 Big Country. Works from the Flinders University Art Museum Collection, Flinders University City Gallery, Adelaide
 2001–2005 Mythology & Reality. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin; Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Monash University Prato Centre; Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts; S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
 2001 Dreamtime. Zeitgenössische Aboriginal Art, Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg
 2001 Desert Art, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin
 2000 Art Aborigène – Jouvence millénaire, Musée Olym-pique, Lausanne
 2000 Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 1997 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 1997 Peintres Aborigènes d'Australie, La Maison de la Villette, Paris
 1996 Voices of the Earth. Paintings, Photography and Sculpture from Aboriginal Australia, Seoul Arts Centre, Seoul; Nicholson Museum of Modern Art, Mumbai, Calcutta; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
 1995 Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg
 1994–1995 Antipodean Currents. Ten Contemporary Artists from Australia, Guggenheim Museum, New York; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington D.C.
 1994 The Evolving Dreamtime, Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena
 1994 Songs of the Earth, Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg
 1993–1994 Aṛatjara. Kunst der ersten Australier, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Hayward Gallery, London; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk
 1993 Tjukurrpa. Desert Dreamings – A Survey of Central Desert Art 1971–1993, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 1992 Heritage of Namatjira, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 1991 The Painted Dream. Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings, Auckland City Art Gallery
 1991 Flash Pictures, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 1990 National Gallery of Modern Art, Rom
 1989 Mythscapes. Aboriginal Art of the Desert, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 1988–1990 Dreamings. The Art of Aboriginal Australia, The

Asia Society Galleries, New York; David and Alfred Smart Gallery, University of Chicago
 1988 Queensland Museum, Brisbane
 1985–1986 The Face of the Centre. Papunya Tula Paintings
 1971–1984, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

— Collections

Albertina, Wien
 Artbank, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Fondation Burkhardt-Felder, Môtiers
 Gabrielle Pizzi Collection, Melbourne
 Hudson River Museum, New York
 Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
 Kelton Foundation, Santa Monica
 Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville
 La Trobe University Art Collection, Melbourne
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 University of New South Wales, Sydney
 University of Western Australia, Perth
 Victorian Centre for the Performing Arts, Melbourne
 Victorian Museum, Melbourne
 Will Owen and Harvey Wagner Collection, Hood Museum of Art, Hanover

— Bibliography (selection)

Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr (ed.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2002 [2000].
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
 Bardon, Geoffrey and James Bardon: *Papunya. A Place Made After the Story. The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne 2004.
 Benjamin, Roger and Andrew C. Weislogel (eds.): *Icons of the Desert: Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, New York 2009, exh. cat.
 Cumpston, Nici and Barry Patton: *Desert Country*, Adelaide 2010, exh. cat.
 Heide Museum of Modern Art (ed.): *Mythology & Reality. Contemporary Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection*, Bulleen 2004, exh. cat.
 Johnson, Vivien: *Lives of the Papunya Tula Artists*, Alice Springs 2008.
 Johnson, Vivien: *Streets of Papunya. The re-invention of Papunya painting*, Sydney 2015.
 König, Kaspar, Emily Joyce Evans and Falk Wolf (eds.): *Remembering Forward. Malerei der australischen Aborigines seit 1960*, Munich 2010, exh. cat.
 Lüthi, Bernhard (ed.): *Arajtjara. Kunst der ersten Australier*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1993, exh. cat.
 Perkins, Hetti and Hannah Fink (eds.): *Papunya Tula. Genesis*

and *Genius*, Sydney 2000, exh. cat.
 Petitjean, Georges: *Hedendaagse Aboriginal kunst. De AAMU collectie en Nederlandse verzamelingen*, Gent 2010.



Walker, Liddy Napanangka (c. 1930–2017)

Language group: Warlpiri

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2012–2014 Watermark – The Signature of Life, The Space, Hongkong; The Arts House, Singapore
 2012 Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana, IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, València
 2012 Circles in the Sand: Aboriginal Art from Australia's Central Desert in the Kluge-Ruhe-Collection, William King Museum of Art, Abingdon
 2006–2007 Opening Doors. The Art of Yuendumu, Museum for contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht; Sprengel Museum Hannover
 2005 The Warlukurlangu Collection, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 2005 Luminous, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
 2003 Kurruwarri Pipangka – Designs on Paper, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
 2000 Paintings and Prints, Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
 1998 The 4th National Heritage Art Award, Canberra
 1990 Bond University Campus Gallery, Collangatta
 1989 Windows on the Dreaming, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

— Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Corrigan Collection, Sydney
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Gordon Darling Foundation, Canberra
 Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, Leiden
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 Warlukurlangu Collection, Yuendumu

— Bibliography (selection)

Caruana, Wally: *Die Kunst der Aborigines*, Munich 1997
 Cubillo, Franchesca and Wally Caruana (eds.): *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art. Collection Highlights, National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra 2010, fig.
 Hinkson, Melinda: *Remembering the Future. Warlpiri life through the prism of Drawing*, Canberra 2014.
 IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (ed.): *Arte indígena contemporáneo en Australia. Colección Sordello Missana*, València 2012, exh. cat., fig.
 Kwanhoon Gallery (ed.): *Sisters Dreaming. Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Isadong 2006, exh. cat., fig.
 McCulloch Childs, Emily and Ross Gibson: *New Beginnings:*

Classic Paintings from the Corrigan Collection of 21st Century Aboriginal Art, Fitzroy 2008.
 McGregor, Ken: *Artists of the Western Desert 2006–2011*, Melbourne 2011, fig.



Watson, Judy (*1959)

Language group: Waanyi

— Award

2006 23rd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Works on Paper Award

— Solo exhibitions (selection)

2021–2022 *A Year in Art: Australia 1992*, Tate Modern, London

2020–2022 *Looking Glas: Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Melbourne; Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane

2020 *Judy Watson*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

2018 *Judy Waston: edge of memory*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2018 *Judy Waston: concealed histories*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

2016 *Judy Waston: Indigo and Ochre*, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne

2016 *Judy Waston: the names of places*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane

2016 *Judy Waston: the scarifier*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville

2014 *Judy Waston: sacred ground beating heart / experimental beds / heron island suite*, Noosa Regional Gallery

2011–2012 *Judy Waston: waterline*, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne; Embassy of Australia, Washington D.C.

2009–2012 *Judy Waston: heron island*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane; University of Virginia; grahame galleries + editions, Brisbane

2008 *Judy Waston: blood language*, Grantpirrie, Sydney

— Group exhibitions (selection)

2020 *Rites of Passage*, Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane

2019 *New Woman*, Museum of Brisbane

2019 *I, Object*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2019 *Where We Now Stand – In Order to Map the Future*, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

2018 *Colony: Frontier Wars*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

2017 *Defying Empire: 3rd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2017 *Limitless Horizon: Vertical Perspective*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2016 *Sugar Spin: you, me, art and everything*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2016 *Beyond the Tower: UQ Art Museum, 40 Years and Counting*, UQAM, St Lucia

2016 *Mapping Australia: Country to Cartography*, Museum of contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht

2015 *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia*, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge

2015 *Artist and Empire: Facing Britain's Imperial Past*, Tate Britain, London

2015 *Unsettled: Stories Within*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra

2015 *Indigenous Australia: Enduring Civilisation*, British Museum, London

2014 *East Coast Encounter: re-imagining the 1770 encounter*, Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney

2013 *My Country: I Still Call Australia Home*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2012 *Taboo*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2012 *Arte Indigena Contemporaneo en Australia*, Institut València d'Art Modern

2012 *Luminous World*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

2012 *Making Change*, National Art Museum of China, Beijing

2012 *Contemporary Women*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

2011 *Spinifex Country and Beyond Asylum*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

2010 *Art + Soul*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

2010 *100 years: Highlights from the University Art Collection*, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

2009 *Culture Warriors*, National Indigenous Art Triennial, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; The American University, Washington

2009 *Terra Nullius*, ACC Galerie, Weimar; Halle 14, Leipzig

2008–2009 *Community Culture Country*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

— Collections (selection)

Allied Queensland Coalfields Collection
 Artbank, Sydney

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 ATSIAC, Canberra

Auckland Art Gallery

Ballarat Regional Art Gallery

Bendigo Regional Art Gallery

Brisbane City Art Collection

British Museum, London

Canberra Institute of the Arts Library

Charles Darwin University, Darwin

Commonwealth Law Courts, Brisbane

Edith Cowan University, Perth

Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide

Fondation Opale, Lens

Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education, Melbourne

Goethe Institut, Melbourne

Gold Coast City Art Collection

Griffith University, Brisbane

James Cook University, Townsville

Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Perth

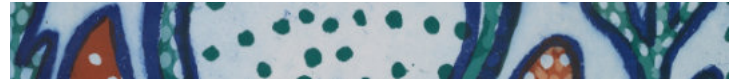
LaTrobe Valley Arts Centre

Macquarie Bank, Sydney und New York
 Monash University, Melbourne
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
 Museum of Modern Art, New York
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
 Queensland Museum, Brisbane
 Queensland University of Technology Art Museum,
 Brisbane
 Sordello Missana Collection, Antibes
 South Australian Museum, Adelaide
 State Library, Brisbane
 St Louis Art Museum
 Taipei Fine Arts Museum
 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
 Tokyo National University of Technology
 Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery
 University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane
 University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba
 University of Tasmania, Hobart
 University of Technology, Sydney
 University of Wollongong
 Wagga Wagga Art Gallery
 Wesfarmers, Perth
 Wollongong City Gallery

—— Bibliography (selection)

Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Fluent. Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Yvonne Koolmatie, Judy Watson. 47th Venice Biennale*, Sydney 1997, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Tradition today. Indigenous Art in Australia*, Sydney 2004, exh. cat.
 Art Gallery of South Australia (ed.): *Beyond the Pale – Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Adelaide 2000, exh. cat.
 Bähr, Elisabeth: “‘Aboriginality’ – Urban Indigenous Australian Artists”. In: Claus Demel (ed.): *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Ethnographischen Sammlungen Sachsen*, vol. XLVI, Berlin 2013, pp. 71–84 and plate XVII–XXX.
 Isaacs, Jennifer: *Aboriginality: Contemporary Aboriginal Paintings and Prints*, St Lucia 1992.
 Iseger-Pilkington, Glenn (ed.): *Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards*, Perth 2010, exh. cat.
 John Curtin Gallery and The Asialink Centre (eds.): *Sacred Ground Beating Heart: Works by Judy Watson 1989–2003*, Bentley, Melbourne 2003, exh. cat.
 Martin-Chew, Louise: *Fiona Foley. Provocateur, An Art Life*, Brisbane 2021.
 Moët & Chandon (ed.): *Judy Watson*, Reims 1996, exh. cat.
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (ed.): *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award 1984–2008: celebrating 25 years*, Darwin 2011.
 National Gallery of Australia (ed.): *Culture Warriors. Australian Indigenous Art Triennial*, Canberra 2009 [2007], exh. cat.

Perkins, Hetti: *Art + soul: a journey into the world of Aboriginal art*, Carlton 2010.
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (ed.): *My Country. I Still Call Australia Home. Contemporary Art from Black Australia*, Brisbane 2015, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Art in the Collection of the National Art Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne 2015, exh. cat.
 Ryan, Judith: ‘Abstraction, Meaning and Essence in Aboriginal Art’, *Art and Australia* 35 (1) 1997, pp. 74–81.
 Watson, Judy; Martin-Chew, Louise: *judy watson blood language*, Darlton 2009.



Yunupinju, Nancy Gaymala (c. 1935–2005)

Language group: Gumatj

—— Solo exhibitions

1998 Desert Designs (with Dhuwarrwarr Marika), Japingka Gallery, Fremantle
 1995 Nancy Gaymala Yunupinju, Paintings, A Girl’s Own Gallery, Canberra
 1992 Nancy Gaymala Yunupinju, I am Gumatj Lady, A Girl’s Own Gallery, Canberra

—— Group exhibitions (selection)

2000–2001 Transitions. 17 Years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide
 1999–2001 Saltwater Country – Bark Paintings from Yirrkala, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne; The National Maritime Museum, Sydney; Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra; John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Perth
 1998 Buku-Larrjaj Mulka Printmakers Exhibition, Yirrkala; Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin
 1998 15th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 1997 Fremantle Shell Print Awards, Fremantle
 1997 14th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

—— Collections

Charles Darwin University, Darwin
 Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide
 Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
 Museum Victoria, Melbourne
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 National Maritime Museum, Sydney
 National Museum of Australia, Canberra
 University of Wollongong

— Bibliography (selection)

A Girl's Own Gallery (ed.): *Nancy Gaymala Yunupingu. I'm Gumatj Lady*, Yirrkala 1992, exh. cat.

Christie, M.: 'Paint a yam, eat a yam', *Artlink* 15 (1) 1995, pp. 28–30, fig.

Coyne, Cynthia: *Buku Larrngay Mulka Printmakers*, 1998, exh. cat., fig.

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (ed.): *Transitions. 17 Years of the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, Darwin 2000, exh. cat., fig.

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- Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr, Speyer, Kulturabteilung Bayer, Leverkusen and Bayer Australia, Sydney (eds.): *Das Verborgene im Sichtbaren. The Unseen in Scene*, Speyer 2000, exh. cat.
- Aboriginal Artists Agency and Papunya Tula Artists (eds.): *Papunya – Ureinwohnermalerei aus der Wüste Zentralaustralien*, 1983, exh. cat.
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- ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics: '3105.0.65.001 – Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2019', Table 10.16 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, age and sex, states and territories, 30 June 2016 (2016 Census-based)', September 18th, 2019b.
https://web.archive.org/web/20210317180904/https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/historical-population/2016/3105065001ds00010_2019.002.xls.
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<https://web.archive.org/web/20210915155657/https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/estimates-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/jun-2016>.
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https://content.acca.melbourne/uploads/2016/11/1994_Blakness-Blak-City-Culture_catalogue.pdf.
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<https://web.archive.org/web/20201230100718/https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2016-09/apo-nid75783.pdf>.
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https://web.archive.org/web/20210223214952/https://nintione.com.au/resource/CR015_AEVC_ArtCentreFinances_Update.pdf.
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- AGNSW Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *Crossing Country – The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art*, Sydney 2004a, exh. cat.
- AGNSW Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): *One Sun One Moon. Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Sydney 2007, exh. cat.
- AGNSW Art Gallery of New South Wales (ed.): 'Pukumani grave posts', Sydney 2013.
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- AGNSW Art Gallery of New South Wales: 'Wynne, Past works and winners', Sydney 2022.
<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/prizes/wynne>.
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<https://web.archive.org/web/20210315002026/https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/transcript-yirrkala-bark-petitions-1963-4.docx>.
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- Allas, Tess: 'Why is Aboriginal Art Important to Modern Australia?', *The College Voice*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2010b, pp. 1–7.
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- uation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people', UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council A/HRC/15/37/Add.4., 2010.
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<https://web.archive.org/web/20200530190314/http://unsworks.unsw.edu.au/fapi/datastream/unsworks:618/SOURCE01?view=true>.
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- ANU Australia National University, Drill Hall Gallery (ed.): *The Loaded Ground. Michael Nelson Jagamara & Imants Tillers*, Canberra 2012, exh. cat.
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https://www.artslaw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/AITB_information_sheet_-_Indigenous_cultural_and_intellectual_property_ICIP.pdf.
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https://web.archive.org/web/20200823132518/https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/sites/default/files/publication-document/s/2001_child_protection_and_atsi_children.pdf.
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https://web.archive.org/web/20210306080759/http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;place_id=106044.
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About the Authors

Since 1997, Elisabeth Bähr has curated more than 20 contemporary art exhibitions in Germany, particularly Indigenous Australian art, in art museums, art societies (Kunstvereinen) and public spaces known for their contemporary art exhibitions. The aim was always to help place Indigenous Australian art in the German museum landscape and make it known to a large audience. Elisabeth Bähr has researched Indigenous Australian art since 1986, published several exhibition catalogues and written numerous articles. After studying cultural management at the FernUniversität Hagen (thesis in 1995: *The Art of the Australian Aborigines. On the Difficulties of Accepting the Foreign*), she curated three exhibitions of European art at the Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern from 1995–1996, before opening the Aboriginal Art Galerie Bähr in Speyer (1997–2007). Since then, she has focussed on promoting the recognition of contemporary Indigenous Australian art in Germany through publications, exhibitions and lectures.



Lindsay Frost gained knowledge of Indigenous art by circuitous means. He completed a PhD in experimental physics in Australia before conducting research at German and Italian universities from 1985 to 1995. In 1997, he moved to a telecommunications research centre in Heidelberg, where he also chaired working groups in international standardisation bodies such as the Wi-Fi Alliance and the Home Gateway Initiative and was twice elected to the board of ETSI (European Telecommunications Standards Institute). From 1997, he collaborated with Elisabeth Bähr in the Aboriginal Art Gallery Bähr, promoting exhibitions. Together they built up an art collection that pursues three aspects of contemporary art, with an emphasis on haptics: Indigenous Australian art, contemporary German ceramics and collages.



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We have written this book out of great admiration for the creativity of the artists and their adamant determination to preserve their culture. Our full respect goes to the artists, their Elders and the past and present generations in First Nations communities who have overcome incredible challenges to pass on their heritage and vision of the world to their descendants and to outsiders. We do not presume to speak for the artists, and we apologise for any errors that occurred when translating words from one of the many First Nations languages into English (or, in the original edition of this book, German).

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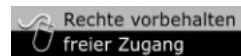
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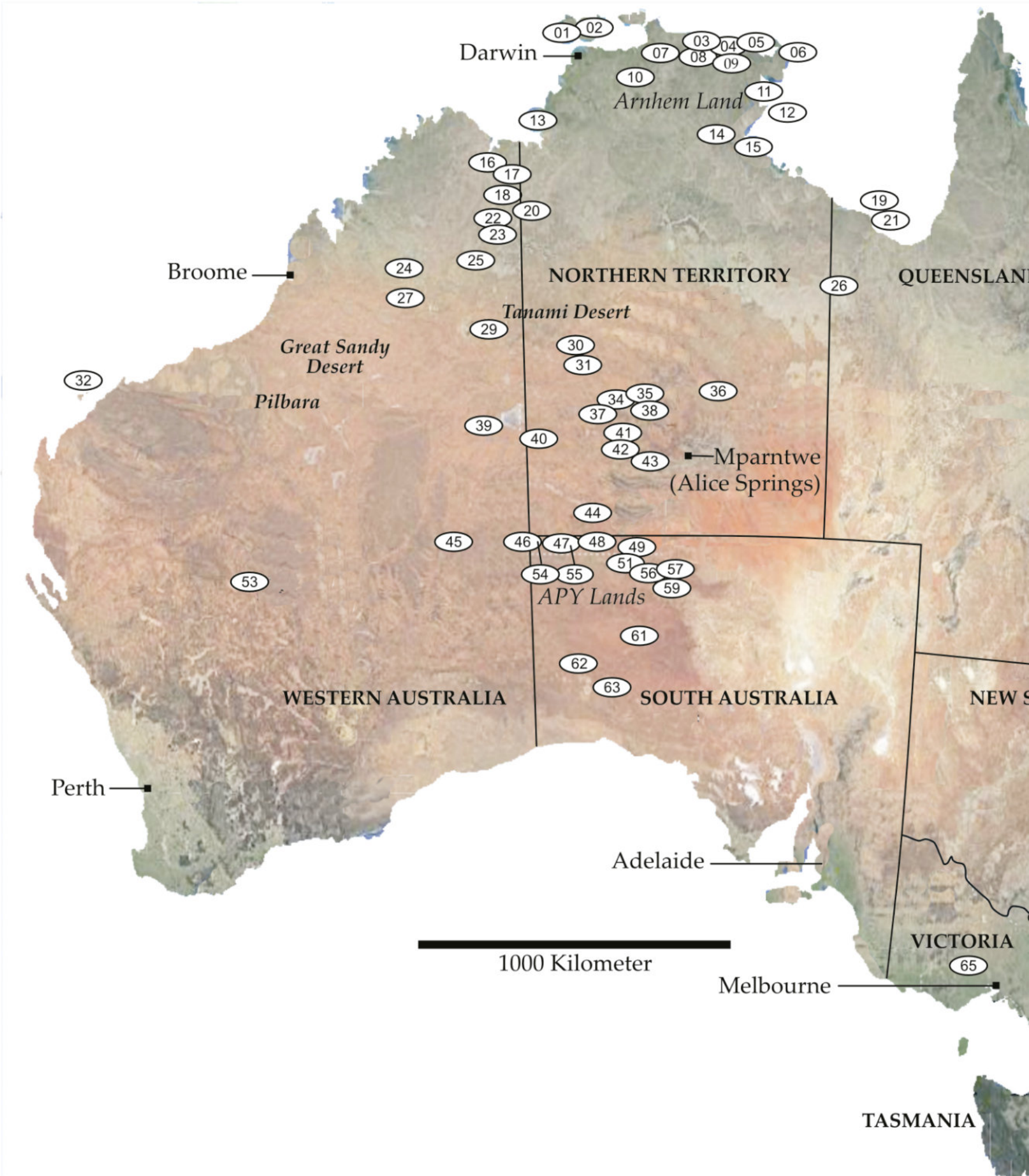
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