

MEMORIES OF NOW

A single owner collection of
masterworks from Yirrkala



1 MARCH – 17 APRIL 2025

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D'Lan Contemporary is delighted to present this single-owner collection of exceptional paintings and sculptures by some of north-east Arnhem Land's modern masters. This remarkable exhibition brings together seminal works by some of the most important artists to emerge from the much-celebrated Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre. Collected through a network of relationships with artists, art centre managers and gallerists, this timely exhibition provides collectors and cultural institutions with an opportunity to acquire works of a rare quality.

For well over a decade, the remote Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre at Yirrkala in the Northern Territory has been a powerhouse of energy, integrity and art making of global significance. Governed by a Yolŋu committee, and serviced by a dedicated team of ŋäpaki (non-Yolŋu), the art centre's ability to nurture creativity, and the accompanying practical demands, ensures that 'Buku' remains at the forefront of Australian cultural life.

At Buku's heart is a collective of interwoven Yolŋu families who for generations have withstood the incursions of settler culture to maintain their cultural identity and express it on a national, and increasingly international, stage. The mediums of visual art, literature, music, dance and good old-fashioned conversation are tools through which Yolŋu engage and educate.

Recently a delegation of Yolŋu leaders travelled to New York City for the opening of *Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala* at the Asia Society. At the core of this mission were Djambawa Marawili and Gunybi Gunumbarr, two of the artists whose work appears in *Memories of Now*. Over the period of a week, in an endless succession of engagements, members of the delegation generously spoke, danced and sung their way into the hearts and minds of foreign diplomats, ambassadors, ex-prime ministers and art connoisseurs. It was a proud moment, not only for Buku-Larrngay and the Yolŋu community, but for Australia.

Because of the quality of the work, the important artists it has nurtured and its uncompromising ethics, Buku-Larrngay Mulka continues to be supported by some of Australia's most discerning collectors. As a result of recent institutional and commercial exhibitions, high-profile gifts and donations to major collections in the United States, an increasing number of international collectors are now seeking fine examples of contemporary paintings and sculptures from Yirrkala.

Two of Australia's more perceptive collectors are offering this tremendous consignment of paintings and sculptures for sale. With patience and veracity this couple has applied a searing eye to commercial and institutional exhibitions, catalogues and collections to determine a collecting strategy focused on securing museum-quality works. Travelling to interstate and international exhibitions, these collectors have experienced almost all of the works 'in person' prior to purchase. Such visits provided them with the opportunity to evaluate each exhibition in its entirety and often afforded them the first opportunity to purchase.

Visits to Yirrkala, during which these collectors conversed with artists about their work and collected larrakitj, have been formative experiences that have shaped their collecting activity.

There are a few collectors who have the insight and instinct to collect ahead of the game, and resist the lure of trends and fashion. However, for this couple, it was never about the name, nor the size of the work. Decisions were made after time spent with each work, 'feeling its rhythm' and assessing the work on its own inherent qualities.

This fine collection embraces some of the most dynamic artists to ever emerge from north-east Arnhem Land. D'Lan Contemporary invites our clients to view this exciting offering at our Sydney gallery.

LUKE SCHOLES
DIRECTOR

NONGIRRŊA MARAWILI

c. 1939 – 2023
Yolŋu language

Lightning 2017
enamel paint on aluminium
composite board
200 × 122 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Yirrkala,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 2081-17
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
Private Collection, Sydney, acquired
from the above

EXHIBITED

Nongirrŋa Marawili: Progression,
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne,
30 June – 22 July 2017

AUD 100,000

Over the past decade, few Australian artists have captured the zeitgeist more than Nongirrŋa Marawili. Following a series of successful solo exhibitions, and the acquisition of major works by cultural institutions across Australia, Nongirrŋa's brutalist interpretations of Yolŋu visual forms became highly sought after.

Prior to her passing in 2023, Nongirrŋa was part of a group of women painting at Yirrkala who collectively shifted the Yolŋu aesthetic. She, like other women, refrained from painting miny'tji (clan designs), knowing that others might consider this to be a transgression upon the domain of male relatives. Instead Nongirrŋa employed the duality of these designs and their meanings to create paintings unencumbered by cultural strictures. This enabled her to experiment in ways previously unseen – thereby creating a new category of Yolŋu painting that demanded its own interpretation.

At the time *Lightning* 2017 was created, Nongirrŋa had begun to work with a variety of new materials, including large sheets of aluminium board. On this and other mediums, including paper,

bark and larrakitj, Nongirrŋa produced a series of works to articulate her cultural ties to lightning and the Country, and narratives associated with it.

Nongirrŋa's father, Mundukul Marawili (c. 1890 – c. 1950), was a famed leader of the Maḏarrpa clan with wives of the Marrakulu, Dhuḏi-Djapu' and Gälpu clans. As well as being her father's name, Mundukul is an ancestral lightning snake who resides in the waters of Blue Mud Bay at Baraltja. Baraltja is a Maḏarrpa site located in a floodplain region where salt water and fresh water mix. When the lightning snake Mundukul tasted the mixing of the waters, it excitedly spat lightning into the clouds. Historically this lightning has appeared in the form of diamond shapes, which is also the Maḏarrpa clan design for salt water.

In *Lightning* 2017, Nongirrŋa has painted the rocks in the bay of Baraltjala in the form of two bathi (dillybags). Nongirrŋa insisted, however, that the cascading diamond shapes in this painting represents salt water in its mundane form as it splashes against these rocks and causes sea spray to rise dramatically into the air.





NONGIRRŊA MARAWILI

c. 1939 – 2023
Yolŋu language

Tea Cups and Dilly Bags 2012
earth pigments on bark
240 × 67.5 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Yirrkala,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 4186R
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
Private Collection, Sydney, acquired
from the above

AUD 80,000

After commencing her solo practice in 2005, Nongirrŋa, like many Yolŋu women, experimented with a range of subject matter. Although authorised to continue painting her late husband's Country at Wandawuy, she was hesitant to begin miny'tji (clan designs) associated with her own Maḏarrpa inheritance. The complexities of this arrangement are captured by curator Cara Pinchbeck in the publication that accompanied the retrospective exhibition *Nongirrŋa Marawili: From My Heart and Mind* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales:

Having grown up under a strict regime where painting without authority could be a capital offence, Nongirrŋa has always been careful to respect the sanctity of miny'tji. These clan designs were solely the domain of men, and it is only in the last generation or two that women have been allowed to represent these designs in artworks. While many women painting today were directly instructed by their fathers, Nongirrŋa was not. She is of a slightly older generation and was given permission to paint the Dhuwa, Djapu design for freshwater, not the Yirritja, Maḏarrpa designs for her own country.¹

In 2011, when Nongirrŋa began painting on a regular basis, she joined a group of women who utilised the courtyard at Buku-Larrŋgay as their studio. Inspired by the women surrounding her, she began to document the everyday, more specifically time spent on hunting trips with her extended family. Such excursions involved collecting oysters, pandanus leaves, mangrove crabs and honey; hunting for stingray, magpie goose and broлга; and feasting by the fire drinking cups of tea. These experiences inspired a famed series of works featuring figurative renderings of utilitarian objects including teacups, pots and bags, and bathi (dillybags).

When staff at Buku-Larrŋgay asked her about the teacup motif, Nongirrŋa made the gesture of drinking from a large vessel of tea, a motion that speaks to the satisfaction intrinsically linked with the experience of resting after hunting, sitting by the fire – time with family, satisfied and secure.

1. Nongirrŋa Marawili, *Nongirrŋa Marawili: From My Heart and Mind*, edited by Cara Pinchbeck et al., Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2018, p. 16.



NONGIRRŊA MARAWILI

c. 1939 – 2023
Yolŋu language

Tea Cups 2013
earth pigments on wood
199 × 20 × 20 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Yirrkala,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 43011
Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
Private Collection, Sydney, acquired
from the above

EXHIBITED

*Nongirrŋa Marawili: From My Heart
and Mind*, Art Gallery of New South
Wales, Sydney, 3 November 2018 –
24 February 2019

LITERATURE

Nongirrŋa Marawili, *Nongirrŋa
Marawili: From My Heart and Mind*,
edited by Cara Pinchbeck et al., Art
Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney,
2018, pp. 68, 113 (illus.)

AUD 55,000

This beautifully shaped larrakitj was included in the retrospective exhibition *Nongirrŋa Marawili: From My Heart and Mind* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2018. Larrakitj, sometimes referred to as memorial poles, seem an appropriate vessel for Nongirrŋa's contemplative homage to time spent with her family drinking cups of tea. She appears to have put some effort into visually differentiating these cups into groups, perhaps based on family or clan groups. Nongirrŋa may have associated each of these cups with individuals not only from her past and those present, but also designating cups she intended to share with family in the future.



WUKUN WAŃAMBI

1962–2022

YolŃu language

BamurrŃu 2018earth pigments on
compressed fibreboard
120 x 240 cm**PROVENANCE**The Artist, painted at Yirrkala,
Northern Territory
Buku-LarrŃgay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 4677V
ReDot Fine Art Gallery, Singapore
Private Collection, Sydney,
acquired from the above**EXHIBITED***Trial Bay: Gurka'wuy*, ReDot
Fine Art Gallery, Singapore,
6–31 January 2016**LITERATURE***Trial Bay: Gurka'wuy*, ReDot Fine Art
Gallery, Singapore, 2016, p. 44 (illus.)

AUD 140,000

This monumental painting by the late Wukun WaŃambi illustrates schooling wawurritjpal (sea mullet) at BamurrŃu, a sacred rock in the middle of Trial Bay. WaŃambi created this work using a sheet of compressed fibre board that was originally part of a makeshift stage that the Bangarra Dance Theatre company performed upon at Yirrkala. Many of the panels that composed the stage were painted upon by senior artists and are now considered as important works in YolŃu art history.

BamurrŃu is one of three rocks that stand in the mouth of Trial Bay submerged either completely or partially within its waters. The Gurka'wuy River flows into Trial Bay past these rocks, where it clashes with the incoming tidal waters of the ocean. The names of the rocks – DuŃdiwuy, BamurrŃu and Yilpirr – are rarely spoken.

YolŃu speak of a hole submerged under the rocks, from which bubbles are seen rising to the surface, sometimes bursting forth with a rush. In sacred song, BamurrŃu is an emblem of ancestral spirit, surrounded by wawurritjpal. According to Marrakulu Law, these fish became the Marparrarr ancestral beings who were the original inhabitants of the lands around Gurka'wuy. The bubbles that rise to the surface from beneath BamurrŃu are seen as the life force of these ancestral beings, revealing their direct ancestral connection to the Marrakulu clan.

When the Marrakulu perform ritual dance for the events depicted in this painting, participants move towards a spear representing the steadfastness of the rock. As the dancers approach, the spear splits the dancers, who then surround the spear, as BamurrŃu,

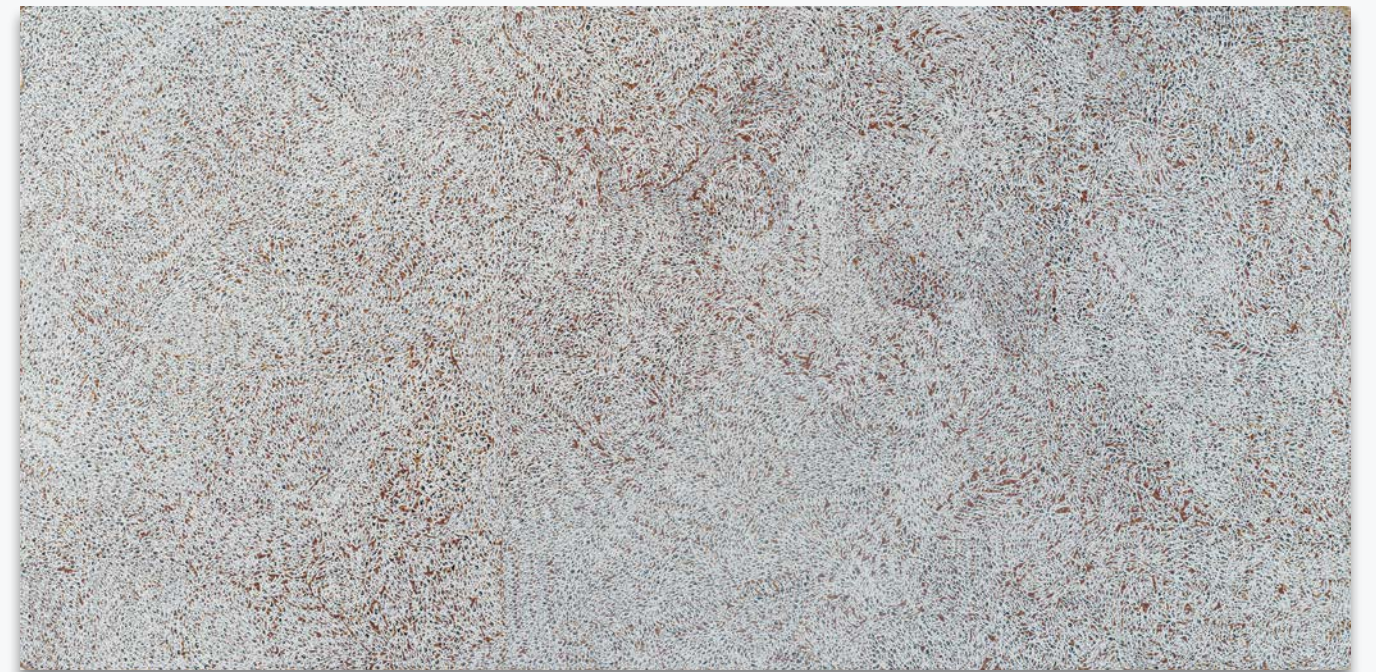
moving like the sea to the song and rhythm of yiḏaki (didjeridu) and bilma (clapsticks).¹ Wukun's description of these events provides further insight:

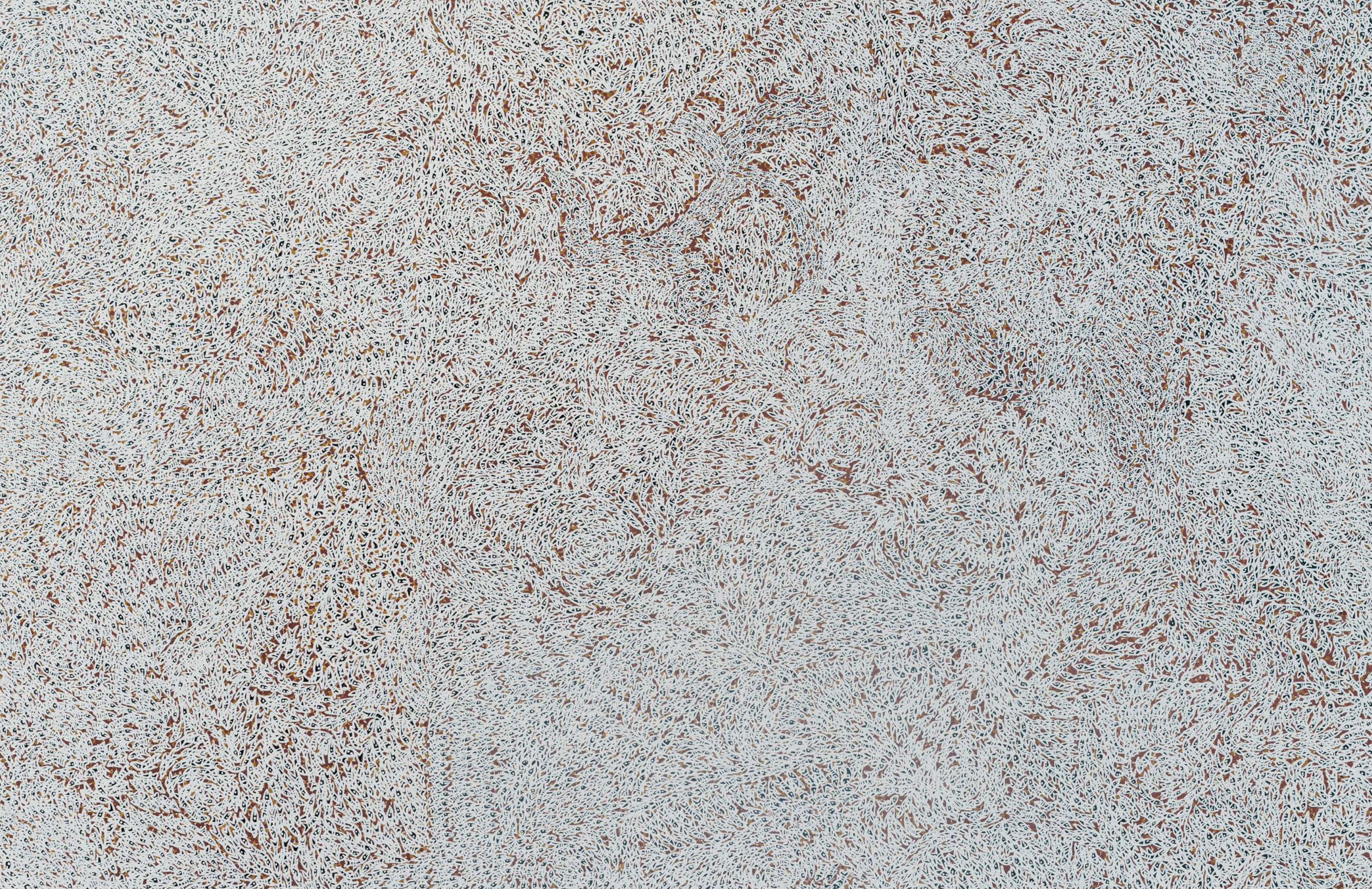
In ceremony, you will see us dancing this special place, mimicking how the fish moves in the water. You will see these clan groups dance the same way this fish moves and demonstrate that this fish comes from the water called Guḏultja. And this water will crash upon the rocks called BamurrŃu, Bulunymirri and Nyuḷa'nyuḷa. When we hear the sound of the water that crashes onto the rocks, it gives us strength and power.²

BamurrŃu was the subject of Wukun's first painting, which he produced in 1998. When Wukun was a young man, his father, Mithili WaŃambi, passed away, leaving related Elders to teach him to paint the sacred designs of his father's Country. When Wukun did his first painting of BamurrŃu, it was the first time it had been depicted since his father's death. A short time after its completion Wukun's painting was entered into the 15th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 1998, where it won the Telstra Bark Painting Award.

Prior to Wukun's untimely passing in 2022, he was one of the lead curators of the acclaimed exhibition *Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala*. An innovative, multi-disciplinary artist, his artistic and intellectual contribution to Buku-LarrŃgay cannot be overstated.

1. From documentation supplied by Buku-LarrŃgay Mulka Centre.
2. <https://madayin.kluge-ruhe.org/experience/pieces/bamurrunu-bamurrunu/>. Accessed on 19 January 2025.





GUNYBI GANAMBARR

born 1973
Yolŋu language

Garrapara 2015
earth pigments and sand on wood
175 × 27 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, created at Gängän,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 4737U
Annandale Galleries, Sydney
Private Collection, Sydney,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED

Unbranded, La Trobe
University, Bendigo, Victoria,
6 May – 22 June 2019

LITERATURE

La Trobe Art Institute, *Unbranded*,
edited by Trevor Curtis and Glenn
Iseger-Pilkington, La Trobe University,
Bendigo, Victoria, 2019, p. 25 (illus.)
'Gunybi Ganambarr', *Artist Profile*,
7 November 2018 (illus.)

AUD 45,000

It would be laughable to classify Gunybi as simply an Aboriginal artist. He is one of those rare figures whose work speaks to all times and all places. It is hard to think of another artist, of any ethnicity or nationality, that has made so many leaps in such a short space of time. Gunybi is modest and unassuming in demeanour, but his work invites hyperbole because the magnitude of his achievements is indisputable.¹

Though now a relatively common practice among Yolŋu artists, the incorporation of natural galls and burls of eucalyptus trees into decorated larrakitj was pioneered by Gunybi Ganambarr. Never one to work within the parameters of 'traditional' art practice for long, Gunybi seeks to challenge the status quo – and, as a consequence, inspire the creativity of others around him.

Garrapara is a coastal area in the Blue Mud Bay on the eastern coast of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. The site is a sacred burial area for the Dhaŋwaŋu clan and is also where disputes were formally settled by Makarrata (a trial of ordeal by spear which settled serious grievance and sealed the peace forever). According to Dhaŋwaŋu song, two ancestral hunters drowned in the bay, and their canoe and paddles washed ashore. In this work, Gunybi has shown the Yirritja salt water (Munurru) through wavy designs. According to the artist, this design also shows the choppy water near Garrapara in the windy dry season.

The natural form that Gunybi has allowed this larrakitj to retain relates to his process of observing an object and 'finding the shape'. Gunybi's initial awareness of such creative instincts arose when hunting on Country and encountering a uniquely shaped tree.

I remember the first time. I went hunting. And I saw that botj [ironwood] tree standing there ... And I saw that tree. Half burnt. Half alive. 'Way! Hey! Can I make something from this botj? Am I going to make something from it?' And I talked to myself, nha bayin [like that]. 'OK! Ma! Go for it! Do that!' Shape it up, grinder. Get the machine, sander [claps his hands]. Electric. Go! Come on! Straight away! Djämanha. Work it. Shapingya. Finding the shape.²

The use of sand on this sculpture may refer to the significance of Garrapara for the Dhaŋwaŋu Yŋapuŋapu, a mortuary sand sculpture used in ceremony. This sand is likely to have been collected at Garrapara, Country belonging to Gunybi's wife, Lamaŋirra Marawili.

1. John McDonald, art critic for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in 2012.
2. Will Stubbs, 'Gunybi Ganambarr', originally published in *Artist Profile*, Issue 45, 2018. Accessed online on 20 January 2025; <https://artistprofile.com.au/gunybi-ganambarr/>



GUNYBI GANAMBARR

born 1973
Yolŋu language

Gudurrku 2019
enamel paint on etched
aluminium composite board
148 × 128.5 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, created at Gängän,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 235-19
Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide
Private Collection, Sydney

EXHIBITED

Mitji – The Group, Hugo
Michell Gallery, Adelaide
Unbranded, La Trobe University,
Bendigo, 6 May – 22 June 2019

LITERATURE

La Trobe Art Institute, *Unbranded*,
edited by Trevor Curtis and Glenn
Iseger-Pilkington, La Trobe University,
Bendigo, Victoria, 2019 (illus.)

AUD 45,000

Gunybi's rise into the higher echelons of ceremonial Law coincided with his employment as a builder for the Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation. Over a period of twelve years, he worked at homeland sites across north-east Arnhem Land, returning to his home at Gängän to continue his cultural education. Both roles provided him with the skills required to be the artist he has become: a man who has transformed Yolŋu art making within the acceptable bounds of community expectation.

His foray into working with materials found discarded on his Country was in part 'trying to balance the two worlds'. As Gunybi has stated: 'Balancing the Yolŋu knowledge with the ŋäpaki [non-Yolŋu] technology. To balance those systems. What is in the land with what is on the land. Because all those things come from the land don't they? Iron, board, fibreglass, plastic, rubber. They come from minerals don't they? Which comes from the land.'¹

Gudurrku 2019 is a remarkable example of Gunybi's ability to meld figuration and miny'tji (clan design). Gunybi has etched the physical presence of the Gudurrku (Brolga), a bird of cultural significance for Gunybi, which has been the subject of countless paintings and sculptures. The following passage provides insights into this composition and Gunybi's conceptual approach to design.

This work identifies the reservoirs of the Naymil/Datiwuy clan. Nalkan is an area on Naymil land and sea between the Gurrumuru and Cato Rivers that run into the Arnhem Bay. Within this area is another watercourse that leads up into a sacred area of a freshwater spring or Milngurr with special qualities called Balawurru. Dhangultji or Gudurrku [Brolga] are dancing here. Here Djanda the sacred goanna also swim in the lagoon created by the spring, their actions as they swim causing rippling patterns to be made on the surface that is covered by the totemic water weed Darra. Similarly the force of the water surging from under the ground ripples the surface.²

A pair of figurative brolgas sculpted by Gunybi and cast in bronze are on permanent display in the Garden of Australian Dreams at the National Museum of Australia. Not long after he began carving into aluminium composite board, Gunybi's large-scale work on aluminium, *Buyku* 2018, won the major prize at the 35th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in 2018.

1. Gunybi Gunumbarr, in *Gunybi Gunumbarr, From My Mind*, exhibition catalogue, Annandale Galleries, Sydney, 2012.
2. From documentation supplied by Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre.



GUNYBI GANAMBARR

born 1973
Yolŋu language

Ngaymil Milngurr 2012
earth pigments and sand on rubber
170 × 61 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, created at Gängän,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 4215V
Annandale Galleries, Sydney
Private Collection, Sydney,
acquired from the above

EXHIBITED

*Found: Gunybi Ganambarr, Djirrirra
Wunungmurra & Ralwurrandji
Wanambi*, Annandale Galleries,
Sydney, 23 July – 31 August 2013

LITERATURE

*Found: Gunybi Ganambarr, Djirrirra
Wunungmurra & Ralwurrandji
Wanambi*, Annandale Galleries,
Sydney, 2013, p. 17 (illus.)

AUD 80,000

This rare painting was the first painting by Gunybi to incorporate earth pigments and sand on a discarded length of rubber. Few, if any other, examples of its type exist. As the instigator of the 'Found' movement at Yirrkala, Gunybi pioneered the use of reclaimed industrial materials by artists living in north-east Arnhem Land. Driven by the principle that 'if you paint the land, you use the land', Gunybi is determined not only to employ the natural resources of the land, but to exploit the introduced materials discarded within it. In much the same way that he will observe a length of wood and respond to it creatively, Gunybi's 'found' practice is largely dictated by the materials he comes upon and what they inspire.

The rubber substrate that Gunybi has used to create *Ngaymil Milngurr* 2012 is from the local bauxite mine's 18.7-kilometre conveyor belt. This industrial belt, which services mining operations at nearby Nhulunbuy (Gove), was at one time the longest in the Southern Hemisphere. The mine was established as a result of the federal government's decision to sell part of the Arnhem Land reserve to a bauxite mining company, Nabalco, without consultation with the Traditional Owners. Yolŋu leaders responded with the creation of the Yirrkala bark petitions, which led to the first litigation on native title in Australia.

Milirrpum v Nabalco Pty Ltd, also known as the Gove Land Rights Case, ruled against the Yolŋu claimants, thereby rejecting the doctrine of Aboriginal title.

Much more than just a rubber substrate, Gunybi's reclamation of this material for his own purpose could be considered to have broader political resonances. However, he remains far more intent upon educating a non-Indigenous audience about Yolŋu Law and culture and the land that it applies to.

I was immediately attracted to the law of sacred design, the practice of representing the deep foundations and which we are a part of. 'Ga! Give it to me!' And now I do these designs and share them with the world.¹

The roundel in this composition depicts the spring at Darrawuy where Djanda, the sacred goanna, swam, causing patterns to be made on the surface of the water that incorporate the totemic water weed Darra. The sacred clan design is a manifestation of these patterns, which belong to the Nŋaymil/Datiwuy clan.

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1. Will Stubbs, 'Gunybi Ganambarr', originally published in *Artist Profile*, Issue 45, 2018. Accessed online on 20 January 2025; <https://artistprofile.com.au/gunybi-ganambarr/>



DJAMBAWA MARAWILI AM

born 1953
Maḏarrpa language

Tsunami 2014
earth pigments on bark
198 × 68 cm

PROVENANCE

The Artist, painted at Yirrkala,
Northern Territory
Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala,
Northern Territory, cat. no. 4540F
Private Collection, Sydney, acquired
from the above

EXHIBITED

*31st Telstra National Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Art Awards,*
Museum and Art Gallery of the
Northern Territory, Darwin, 2014

AUD 45,000

This painting was a finalist in the 31st Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards in 2014. Djambawa Marawili is a distinguished leader of the Maḏarrpa clan. He is a caretaker for the spiritual well-being of his own and other related clans, and an activist and administrator in the interface between ṅāpaki (non-Yolŋu) people and the Yolŋu people of north-east Arnhem Land.

In *Tsunami* 2014 the miny'tji is the sacred clan design for waters imbued by Maḏarrpa Law. It is fire-imbued water that will return to the shores of Baraltja either as salt water from the tidal sea, or fresh water carried by Wangupini rains.

Upon seeing a dugong, a group of ancestral hunters took their harpoons and canoe out to the sea of Yathikpa. The hunters were lured too close to a dangerous rock by the dugong, which attempted to take shelter and eat gamata, a sea grass that is a manifestation of flames on the sea bed. Fire at this sacred site boiled the water, capsizing the canoe. This occurrence is sometimes referred to as an ancestral

tide. Yolŋu often speculate that this story is connected to an oral tradition about an ancient tsunami which initiates death and is the foundation of mortuary ceremonies that continue throughout the region.

The sacred harpoon changed into Dhakandjali – the hollow log coffin/memorial pole that floats on the seas of Yathikpa and further afield. Its journey within Blue Mud Bay connects other Yirritja clans (Mangalili and Dhaḷwanju) through kinship associations.

The remnants of the capsized canoe washed around in the tides of Yathikpa. When lawmen recount the ancestral connections that exist between clan groups via the saltwater estates, they speak of the course Dhakandjali took as it floated on these waters – using a metaphor relating to the sacred objects being swept up in a tidal surge, and drawing on their intimate knowledge of these sea currents and the ancient philosophies of differing states of water.¹

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1. From documentation supplied by Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre.





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Mulka Art Centre

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Mulka Art Centre

ABOUT

Established in 2016, D'Lan Contemporary presents exceptional modern and contemporary art by leading and emerging First Nations artists at its galleries in Melbourne, Sydney and New York alongside an international program of exhibitions, educational talks and events that celebrate and promote the rich art and culture of Australian First Nations peoples.

ETHICS

D'Lan Contemporary maintains strict ethical practices and is committed to creating a sustainable marketplace for this important segment of Australian art and culture. The gallery contributes 30% of its annual net profits to artists, artist projects and their communities.

PROVENANCE

Every work of art exhibited and sold by D'Lan Contemporary has a clear line of provenance.

Documentation we draw upon to establish provenance includes:

- Community Art Centre certificate of provenance/authenticity
- Transfer of ownership documentation
- Purchase receipt or invoice
- Inclusion in academic / art historical publications
- Inclusion in exhibitions and exhibition catalogues (private and/or public institution)
- Collection/exhibition inventory numbers (private and/or public institution)
- Inclusion in auction catalogues
- Documented appraisals

D'Lan Contemporary's guidance on best practice for buying Australian Indigenous art is:

CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS ART (1980–PRESENT)

All contemporary Australian Indigenous works of art should be accompanied by documentation linking the artwork to the artist via their Community Art Centre or their primary gallery/representative.

Community Art Centres operate with an ethical focus and establish their own individual guidelines by which all artworks are sold.

Primary market artworks should only be bought from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

Secondary market artworks should only be bought with a source of provenance from a Community Art Centre or an official artist gallery/representative.

MODERN INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN ART (1950S–1980)

For artworks created prior to the establishment of Community Art Centres, such as bark paintings, Hermannsburg watercolours, Papunya boards and sculptural artworks made for sale, there is less necessity for Community Art Centre provenance.

However, artworks from this period with no traceable history are likely to have less market value than those that do – even when an artwork is clearly authentic.

Highly desirable provenance for artworks from this period includes Papunya Tula Artists, Stuart Art Centre and Maningrida Arts, or a clear link to a primary collector such as Geoffrey Bardon, Dorothy Bennett, Sandra Le Brun Holmes or Dr Scougall – who were all active in the 1950s–1970s.

ARTEFACTS AND OBJECTS (1880S–1950)

With artefacts, often much of the important collection history has been lost over time. Therefore, proven provenance can greatly impact value.

Before acquisition, research should be undertaken to ascertain the origin of the artefact or object, and how and when it left its country of origin.

Best practice in this segment is to obtain advice from a trusted industry expert before buying or selling.

PROTECTION OF MOVEABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT

The *Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1985* (PMCH Act) implements Australia's obligations under the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970 (1970 UNESCO Convention), to which Australia is a State Party.

The 1970 UNESCO Convention requires State Parties to ensure that no collecting institution accepts illegally exported items.

The Australian Government administers the PMCH Act through the Ministry for the Arts. The PMCH Act regulates the export of Australia's most significant cultural heritage objects by implementing export controls for objects defined as 'Australian Protected Objects'.

If you have any questions about acquiring or selling Australian Indigenous Art, please contact us at: enquiries@dlancontemporary.com.au

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