

MARKING TIME

INDIGENOUS ART FROM THE NGV

ARTWORK LABELS

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Introduction

This exhibition looks at images, signs and text drawn or marked on public surfaces across Indigenous Australia, from ancient times to now. The impulse to draw and make images is deeply embedded in Indigenous cultures throughout the world and is fundamental to the human experience.

In Indigenous Australia, permanent and impermanent ochre drawings and incised markings occupy the surfaces of rock faces, the ground and bodies. This exhibition shows that this ephemerality can be counteracted by the inventions of Indigenous artists, who reimagine a recovered and regenerated visual language and thus present new forms of aesthetic durability. These artists transfer meaningful markings and iconic forms from rock face, ceremonial ground, body and object to circulating images. In this exhibition these inherited and disseminated visual revivals move across bark, object and all contemporary mediums. Whereas Jimmy Midjawmidjaw transfers ochre body markings and rock images to bark supports, Reko Rennie translates diamond incisions on carved trees into bold neon icons and street art.

Drawings made on public surfaces can communicate dissent as well as affirmation. An unbroken visual phenomenon, such communication of Indigenous presence and primacy attests to the continued relevance and power of Indigenous expression in the art of this nation and beyond.

From rock face to bark

Rock faces and shelters throughout Australia are marked with incised and painted figures, schematic signs and designs. These are the earliest known figurative paintings. A running subtext of this image making is detected on current bark and sculptured forms, and is evidence of an enduring visual tradition. The ephemeral ochre images of Mimih figures, X-ray animals and birds seen on the rock galleries of Western Arnhem Land live on in the barks of Kunwinjku artist Yirawala; the enigmatic Wanjina figures that enliven rock walls and sepulchres of the Kimberley are reawakened in the arresting incised and painted works of Manila Karadada and Lily Karadada; and slender Mimih spirits, who impressed their images, on rock are rendered permanent on bark by Paddy Compass Namadbara, or realised in the elegant three-dimensional forms of Crusoe Kuningbal.

Further referencing the historical antecedents of figurative rock art is a bark wet-season shelter by Bardayal Nadjamerrek and Ngulayngulay Murrmurru commissioned by archaeologist George Chaloupka to honour a practice that co-existed with painting on rock. This shelter is a palpable contemporary embodiment that celebrates the origins of bark painting in Western Arnhem Land and beyond.

The diversity of the artists' responses to these historical expressions of culture and primacy both expands our knowledge of these archaic figurations and closes up the distance between the past and now.

Mick Kubarrkku

Kuninjku c. 1922–2008

Lorrkon ceremony

c. 1978 Kubumu, Northern Territory

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Gift of Jacky Healy in memory of
Christopher M. Taylor, 1990

O.15-1990

This work refers to Lorrkon, the final burial ceremony in a sequence of mortuary rituals celebrated by Kuninjku. The ceremony involves the placing of the deceased's bones into a hollow log that has been painted with clan designs and ceremonially placed into the ground where it remains until it slowly decays over many years. In this work, the spirit of the deceased is shown flanked by a marlinjdji (praying mantis) on either side. The praying mantis is believed to carry the spirit of the deceased back to a sacred waterhole of his clan.

Mick Kubarrkku

Kuninjku c. 1922–2008

Mimih spirits

1992 Maningrida, Northern Territory
earth pigments on wood

Purchased from Admission Funds, 1992

O.103–105-1992

The ephemeral ochre images of Mimih spirits found on the rock faces of Western Arnhem Land are constantly being reinvented in wooden sculptures such as these. Kuninjku people believe that Mimih spirits left their images behind on rock faces before time. The artist says of these tall and slender spirits that 'the wind can snap their necks. They usually live inside their rock caves and so if they feel the wind blowing, they go back inside and slam the doors to their rock hiding places'.

Yirawala

Kunwinjku c. 1903–76

Nakidjkidj spirit with dancing Mimih figures

c. 1963 Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Gift of Professor Crossley, 1987

O.17-1987

Jimmy Midjawmidjaw

Kunwinjku 1897–1985

Sorcery figure

1975 Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Utah Foundation,
Fellow, 1990

O.55-1990

This is a sorcery image painted as a form of malevolent medicine. The female figure with enlarged vulva and splayed arms and legs, is pierced with stingray barbs through her breasts, hands, thighs, feet and vulva. Her white-ochre body bears simple linear markings, cross motifs and a simple backbone, as in the ephemeral rock art of Western Arnhem Land. Alongside the figure is a fish, also seen in X-ray.

Didjbarakka Naroldol

Kunwinjku c. 1924 – c. 1980

Nakidjkidj spirit

1975 Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of the Utah Foundation,
Fellow, 1990 O.57-1990

The malevolent Nakidjkidj spirit, renowned for his cannibal tendencies, is shown with two of his victims on an atypical white-ochre background. He has speared a Mimih woman and her husband with a two-pronged spear. The Nakidjkidj spirit is painted with body designs related to the Mardayin ceremony. Sacred objects are also shown.

Crusoe Kuningbal

Kuninjku c. 1922–84

Mimih spirits

1979 Barrihdjowkkeng, Northern Territory
earth pigments on wood

Purchased, NGV Supporters of
Indigenous Art, 2011

2011.423–427

Kuningbal has carved five Mimih figures whose elongated bodies lean and sway, following the natural curve in the softwood, thereby capturing the ephemeral and elusive nature of Mimih spirits. These sculptures are inspired by ephemeral paintings found on cave faces in Western Arnhem Land. These rock paintings depicting spirit beings in vigorous poses are said to have been made by Mimih spirits who were also thought to have taught the ancestors of contemporary Kuninjku how to paint on rock shelters. Mimih spirits are said to have been living across greater Arnhem Land when the first Aboriginal people were created.

James Iyuna

Kuninjku 1959–2015

Mimih spirit

1991 Maningrida, Northern Territory
earth pigments on wood

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of The Shell Company of Australia Limited, Founder Benefactor, 1991 O.203-1991

Kuninjku people in the rocky environments of Western Arnhem Land tell of the existence of tall slender spirits like the one sculpted here, which they call Mimih. The Mimih are said to have taught Kuninjku the foundations of their culture, including ceremony, song, hunting skills and survival in the rocky escarpment country. Many very old examples of rock art are attributed to the Mimih who left their images on the rock face.

Ignatia Jangarra

Woonambal c. 1930–2000

Wanjina

c. 1980 Kalumburu, Western Australia

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Presented through the NGV Foundation by
James Rowe and Jan McDonald, Governor, 2003

2003.330

Wanjina is the general name of spirit ancestors of the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples of the North-West and Central Kimberley. It is believed that Wanjina ancestral beings left themselves behind as paintings on rock in the Dreaming and created the laws of social behaviour. Wanjina are associated with the life-giving properties of water, bringing the monsoonal rains and distributing spirits of the unborn to their clan waterholes. This Wanjina shares certain features with Wanjina on rock, being a frontal, solid image of a mouthless anthropomorphic being. A red-ochre band with linear markings, symbolic of lightning, encircles the Wanjina's head.

Waigan Jangarra

Woonambal c. 1930–96

Wanjina

c. 1980 Kalumburu, Western Australia

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria
by Dr Milton Roxanas, Fellow, 1995

1995.347

Manila Karadada (attributed to)

Woonambal c. 1920–89

Wanjina

c. 1966 Mowanjum, Western Australia

earth pigments and natural binder on bark, cane, fibre

Purchased, 1996

1996.732

As a figuration of supernatural power, this Wanjina shares certain features with Wanjina paintings on rock. It is a frontal, solid image of a mouthless being, painted in red ochre, and black and sepia pigments on a white ground comprised largely of white ochre mixed in the mouth then sprayed over the surface. The large head is encircled by a band of red ochre bearing radiating lines, symbolic of lightning. The head is dominated by black eyes that almost touch the beak-like nose, suggestive of an owl emerging out of mist and storm.

Manila Karadada

Woonambal c. 1920–89

Wanjina

c. 1975 Kalumburu, Western Australia
earth pigments on wood

Purchased from Admission Funds, 1988

O.42-1988

This Wanjina figure with a dramatic headdress of lightning is incised on a wooden panel heightened with red ochre. It is believed that Wanjina lay down and became paintings on rock shelters in the ancestral period, predetermining the form and features of Wanjina. As David Mowaljarlai expressed it, 'Wanjina's hair is lightning, the middle halo the cumulous cloud. His face is covered in mist, we see only his eyes and nose. Wanjina is the creator of life. We are his children. His image on rocks must be touched up to keep it fresh, otherwise the rain and all our food will disappear'.

Lily Karadada

Woonambal born c. 1927

Wanjina

1990 Kalumburu, Western Australia
slate, earth pigments

Purchased through The Art Foundation
of Victoria, 1991

O.109-1991

Lily Karadada

Woonambal born c. 1927

Wanjina

1991 Kalumburu, Western Australia

earth pigments on slate

Purchased from Admission Funds, 1991

O.232-1991

The artist has engraved a full-length Wanjina figure onto an oval-shaped piece of slate. The cloud spirit is shown emerging from a veil of dots (rain) which also inundate his body. Such depictions of single Wanjina made on portable sheets of material differ from art in rock shelters where multiple images of Wanjina, both male and female, surrounded by images of associated totemic species support the belief that Wanjina are not meant to be alone, or depicted alone, because Aboriginal life is not solitary.

Jimmy Midjawmidjaw

Kunwinjku 1897–1985

Untitled

1975 Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Purchased, NGV Supporters of Indigenous Art, 2010

2010.316

Jimmy Midjawmidjaw

Kunwinjku 1897–1985

Untitled

c. 1975 Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Gift of Louise Rath in memory of Rene Davidson through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2013

2013.614

The back bone and internal organs of Kandakid (the male plains kangaroo) are represented here in X-ray, in keeping with images in cave art of Western Arnhem Land. Kandakid bears rarrk (crosshatched designs) for the Mardayin ceremony on his hind legs, indicating his Dreaming significance. A male Mimih hunter carrying a dilly bag is represented on the right as a red ochre silhouette on the white background, with spears and a spear thrower nearby. In common with the artist's paintings of human figures, the Mimih's genitalia is clearly indicated.

Jimmy Midjawmidjaw

Kunwinjku 1897–1985

Male and female Mimih spirits

1959 Minjilang, Northern Territory

earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Gift of Dr Margaret Bullen, 2007

2007.429

Paddy Compass Namadbara

Iwaidja c. 1890–1973

Namarnday spirits

early 1960s Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Gerstl Bequest, 2000

2000.224

Iwaidja artist Paddy Compass Namadbara was born in the Cobourg Peninsula in Western Arnhem Land and spent long periods of his life at nearby Minjilang, on Croker Island, working with historically important Kunwinjku bark painters – Yirawala, Midjawmidjaw and Nangunyarri. This brazen sketch represents male and female malignant spirits, known as Maam or Wayarra, who are associated with love magic and acts of sorcery used as a punishment for sexual misconduct. These animated spirits have prominent genitalia, which is common in sorcery paintings found on cave walls.

Paddy Compass Namadbara

Iwaidja c. 1890–1973

Namarnday spirits

early 1960s Minjilang, Croker Island, Northern Territory
earth pigments on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus sp.*)

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria
by Mr Ian Rogers, Member, 2000

2000.220

The artist depicts male Namarnday spirits, who represent the profane ghosts of the human dead as opposed to the sacred soul. When a person dies, the sacred soul eventually returns to a sacred site in the clan lands of the deceased, while the Namarnday may linger near the bones of the dead or congregate with other Namarnday in dark forested places. These male Namarnday are associated with acts of sorcery used as a punishment for sexual misconduct and are shown with limbs and genitals abnormally long and twisted, symbolic of evil or retributive intent.

Lofty Bardayal Nadjamerrek

Kunwinjku c. 1926–2009

Dick Ngulayngulay Murrumurru

Kunwinjku/Dangbon c. 1920–88

Bark shelter

1987 Marlkawo, Northern Territory
earth pigments on bark, wood

Purchased, 1995

1995.565.a-i

In 1987, rock art specialist George Chaloupka commissioned two Kunwinjku bark painters to make this bark shelter with ridgepole construction. Bardayal and Ngulayngulay painted it with powerful icons and djang (ancestral beings) of their culture, employing the 'old fashioned' parallel line hatching used in rock art. In marking the overhanging canopy with their stencilled handprints, created by blowing delek (powdered white pipe clay) from their mouths, the artists registered their personal mark or signature, as in cave art. The work is a palpable embodiment of how painting on bark originated on wet-season shelters, as seen in many parts of Indigenous Australia.

From ground and body to board

In 1971, senior Aboriginal men at Papunya used the walls of the Papunya School to reclaim identity and provide an alternative narrative of Country. Their *Honey Ant Dreaming* mural (painted over in 1974) established a mode of visibility, valorised the primacy of their culture and reiterated their right to remain on Country. The dynamic legacy of their act of cultural assertion precipitated the Western Desert art movement and the creative explosion that saw the transfer of designs from ground and body onto board.

In 1986, Warlpiri senior men, accustomed to making vast ground paintings in closed ceremonial contexts, decided to make public their kuruwarri (ancestral designs) on post-industrial supports. Working spontaneously with impromptu materials in the local TAFE centre, the men transplanted ephemeral designs from the ceremonial ground to rough sheets of board. This artistic initiative was communicated their language through a sublime aesthetic and compounded cultural and historical authority over Country. The shiny paints echo and critique the incongruous elements of settlement living – ‘neon-sign’ colours, video images, trail bikes and tucker in tins. The paintings serve as charters to the land and attest to the strength of Warlpiri law.

Jampalwarnu Paddy Japaljarri Gibson

Warlpiri c. 1925–2001

Janganypa Jukurrpa (Marsupial Mouse Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
enamel paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.50-1989

The artist represents Janganpa, the Marsupial Mouse Dreaming – the tract of land associated with Janganpa lies between the two concentric circles. Janganpa, indicated by E-shaped paw prints and meanders, or tail tracks, travelled from Laga Laga north of Yaturluyaturlu and moved west. Laga Laga is an important ceremonial place for Japaljarri and Jungarrayi men who are the joint custodians of this Dreaming. The kuruwarri (design) of this work is evocative of many performers dancing to ensure the increase of the species. It represents the combination of linear body design and circular headdress, which are worn in ceremony: the action as a whole expresses the procreative power of the ancestor.

Dick Japaljarri Raymond

Warlpiri born c. 1936

Ngatijirri Jukurrpa (Budgerigar Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint and enamel paint on
composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.16-1989

The artist depicts Ngatijirri, the Budgerigar Dreaming, which emerged from Wirliyajarrayi, indicated by the central roundel. Some of the budgerigar ancestors travelled through Jila, others went to Tanami. The large cross shapes are tracks of the budgerigar; the short lines are nulla nullas (clapsticks) for ceremony. The arcs represent Warlpiri men and women who are custodians of this Dreaming.

Abie Jangala

Warlpiri c. 1919–2002

Ngapa manu yankirri Jukurrpa (Water and Emu Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
enamel paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.37-1989

This enamel painting on an uneven, recycled board with crooked edges is painted with bold immediacy, free of subsidiary ornament. Upon a ground composed of uniform white dots, Jangala applies two bold curving lines signifying ngapa (water) and large arrow-like tracks symbolising yankirri (emu). The two concentric circles joined by a central line signify the tract of land associated with the travels of these ancestral beings. The use of a white background serves to heighten the graphic signs which can be read without confusion or camouflage, like symbols written on a clean sheet of paper or drawn with fingers in the sand.

Jimmy Jampijinpa Robertson

Warlpiri c. 1946–2002

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.34-1989

This performative-action painting of immense gravitas and visual power translates the iconography of an ephemeral ground painting into permanent acrylic paints on a recycled board of equivalent scale. The work is a modern narration of the Seed Dreaming of two ancestral Nangala women who journeyed south, north, east and west, gathering ngurlu (seed) in their coolamons for grinding and sharing with their families. Eventually, the Nangala made their home at Jurntuwarriji, indicated by the central roundel, where ngurlu is always plentiful.

Jimmy Jampijinpa Robertson

Warlpiri c. 1946–2002

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.33-1989

The artist shows women grinding ngurlu (seed), which has been gathered from a tree. The ground seed is made into damper and cooked in the fire, indicated by the large roundel. The outer scroll shapes represent drying seed pods, the source of the seed. The repetition of these scroll forms imparts a heraldic rhythm to the painting. Towards the centre of the composition the dominant half circles depict seated Nangala women with adjacent paired sticks; the small arcs are their children. The site of this Dreaming is Junjawarriyi, just north of the Granites.

Abie Jangala

Warlpiri c. 1919–2002

Ngapa Jukurrpa at Ngutpulurrngu (Water Dreaming at Ngutpulurrngu)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.30-1989

This work shows 'power rain', illustrated by random curving lines, emanating from the sacred site of Ngutpulurrngu, the central roundel. This natural spring was formed by the actions of ngapa (the water ancestor) who awoke from his eternal sleep and burst up through the earth's surface. From here ngapa spread out to soak the land, accompanied by lightning (the parallel bars). As the artist Abie Jangala explains, 'My father taught me the Water Dreaming that belongs to Jangala and Jampijinpa. It travelled through Country from Thompson's Rockhole to Ngutpulurrngu, a lake south of Lajamanu. This is Country of the Water-Rain-Clouds-and-Thunder-Dreaming and is therefore sacred to us'.

Fred Jampijinpa Jigili

Warlpiri c. 1930–98

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Big Rain Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
enamel paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.29-1989

Red enamel ancestral tracks of yankirri (emu) and ngapa (water) sweep across the surface of this huge board, writ large in the mind of the artist. The central roundel represents Pirlinyanu, the artist's birthplace where there is an important cave site. Ngapa's Dreaming path, or body, is indicated by bold meanders that signify creeks brimming with floodwater seen from above, whereas the repeated short bars represent wirnpa (thunder and lightning) that splits the clouds and trees, connecting land and sky. The work in its mighty scale, raw simplicity and emphatic archetypal language translates a sacred ground painting into modern materials.

Joe Japanangka James

Warlpiri c. 1946–2014

Wakulyarri Jukurrpa (Rock Wallaby Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with
the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.23-1989

Wakulyarri, the Rock Wallaby ancestor, emerged from Country near Yuendumu. He only travelled at night and when the sun rose he went into caves in Pulaja country, shown here by the central striped section, an allusion to ceremonial headdresses. The large arc shapes represent Japanangka and Japangardi men seated at ceremonial sites; the small loops below the central roundel indicate younger men receiving instruction. The Rock Wallaby ancestor's travelling path is indicated by the vertical lines bisecting two lines of paw marks, representing its tail tracks.

Jampalwarnu Paddy Japaljarri Gibson

Warlpiri c. 1925–2001

Warna Jukurrpa (Snake Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.27-1989

Warna Jukurrpa, the Snake Dreaming, travelled eastwards with his two sons from near Balgo Hills in Western Australia, across the Tanami Desert and through Parulu before finishing at Mt Arrabri. The snakes became rainbows at the end of their journey; one was Japaljarri and the other was Jungurrayi. The snakes' bodies indicate their line of travel, the bars indicate their ribs and the arcs their offspring, as seen in the painting at Ngama cave.

Jack Jungarrayi Birrell

Warlpiri c. 1925–87

Wati Jarra Jukurrpa (Two men Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.22-1989

Juntiyi Japaljarri

Warlpiri c. 1918–87

Warnayarra Jukurrpa (Rainbow Serpent Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.14-1989

In this iridescent vision of metaphysical landscape, devoid of black and white pigments, the artist represents two Warnayarra (Rainbow Snake) ancestors. The bright, thick crimson lines (meanders) indicate both the body of the snakes and their travelling paths from Lapi Lapi in Western Australia to Warlpiri Country. When the Rainbow Snake Dreaming finished travelling it went underground. Warnayarra lives under the water of many Dreaming sites, indicated here by concentric circles. Warnayarra has the power to send out rain: his body shines with the colours of the rainbow and lightning.

Peter Japanangka Blacksmith

Kartangarruru c. 1918–91

Warna Jukurrpa (Snake Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

synthetic polymer paint and enamel paint on
composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.35-1989

This work is painted with acrylic and enamel paints on an uneven sheet of composition board salvaged from derelict housing. Its post-industrial materials reflect incongruous elements of settlement living – ‘neon sign’ colours, violent video images, trail bikes, card games and tucker in tins. The work re-enacts the epic journey of warna (snake), a creative ancestor who travelled with his brother from the saltwater coast of Western Australia to Wadjipilli, a spring twenty-five kilometres from Lajamanu, in search of water. Small snakes sprang from the body of warna, whose journey was traced by a rainbow, bringing with it rain which revitalised the land.

Freddy Jangala Patrick

Warlpiri c. 1930–98

Ngapa manu wirnpa Jukurrpa (Water and Lightning Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

enamel paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.38-1989

This work is dominated by three strong vertical bolts of wirnpa (lightning) that struck three times in the Dreaming to make big rain in the artist's Country. Lightning that splits clouds and trees may be imagined as standing up and flashing into the sky, as in this work. Above the lightning Jangala has denoted small clouds moving in to bring rain, shown by criss-crossing paths. The red graphs with yellow edges dramatise the movement of the Cloud-Rain-Water-Lightning Dreaming through the land. The dots represent raindrops, children of the Water Dreaming.

From street to gallery

Modern forms of mark making scribbled on street walls and in alleyways are an unavoidable visual element of nearly every city around the world. Such impromptu imagery is a voice of protest and affirmation on the Aboriginal Tent Embassy and the bark shelter, and in the subversive figurative compositions of H. J. Wedge. It can be aesthetically aggressive, as in the monumental, figurative and text-loaded sociopolitical paintings of Gordon Hookey, or it can employ styles from both within and outside Indigenous culture, as in the work of Brook Andrew, where the sanctioned diamond inscriptions on dendroglyphs (carved trees) and shields interact with advertising and signage. It can remain a visual element on the street or make the transition to the gallery as fine art, where it can maintain urgency and relevance. The work of Reko Rennie inhabits both these spaces, illuminating an unbroken link between Kamilaroi incised mark marking and a hip-hop vibe.

Modern forms of Indigenous art have developed out of the reciprocal language of Indigenous visual culture and the dynamic tradition of street art, as seen in the art of Josh Muir. The cultural particularities of high and low art have coalesced in the work of Trevor Nickolls and produced multiple aesthetic outcomes to reclaim, resist and provoke alternative interpretations of history and power.

Yorta Yorta/Gunditjmara/Dja Dja wurrung/Wada wurrung/
Barkindji born 1991

Isobel Knowles

Australia born 1991

DJ Sadge (Dylan Clarke)

Wotjobaluk born 1991

Josh Muir animated

2018 Melbourne

3 synchronised digital video files with audio ed. 1/3

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2019

Josh Muir's electro soundscape and accompanying animated, three-wall projection creates a feeling of deep intensity, like being in a nightclub. The moving colours and cartoons transport the audience to a psychedelic, surrealist cityscape. The imagery narrates Muir's origin story as a graffiti artist working in Ballarat, drawing from his Yorta Yorta, Gunditjmara, Dja Dja wurrung, Wada wurrung and Barkindji ancestry.

Reko Rennie

Kamilaroi born 1974

Regalia

2013 Melbourne, Victoria

opaque synthetic polymer resin, neon ed. 1/2

Purchased, Victorian Foundation
for Living Australian Artists, 201

2015.178.a-c

‘Three hand-drawn symbols – the crown, the diamond and the Aboriginal flag – present an emblematic statement about the original royalty of Australia. The crown symbol pays homage to my graffiti roots, pays due respect to Jean-Michel Basquiat, but most importantly reminds us that Aboriginal people are the original sovereigns of this country. The diamond symbol expresses my connection to the Kamilaroi people: it is similar to a family crest; it is part of me. The hand-drawn Aboriginal flag in the form of a graffiti tag pays respect to all Aboriginal people, from environments both urban and remote, and anywhere in between.’

REKO RENNIE, 2013

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Buuga-Buuga

2000 Sydney, New South Wales

neon, transparent synthetic polymer resin

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of The Marjory and Alexander Lynch Endowment, Governor, 2000

2000.54

'Buuga-Buuga is a neon work which comments on the continual beating up of Aboriginal subjects, culture and people by non-Aboriginal perceptions which continue to define Aboriginal people in a negative light. Buuga-Buuga literally means "very rotten meat" in the Wiradjuri language. Buuga-Buuga also refers to the Walt Disney cartoons, which show kangaroos and pygmies chasing each other with the pygmy screaming out "ooga booga". Hence the animated neon boondi (club) slams down and sparks up the text "BUUGA".'

BROOK ANDREW 2000

Robert Campbell Junior

Ngaku 1944–93

Initiation tree

1981 Kempsey, New South Wales
enamel paint on cardboard

Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of The Marjory and Alexander Lynch Endowment, Governors, 2005 2005.408

The artist represents a particular carved tree from the Kempsey area that was cut out of the ground and placed in a Sydney museum. Two young male initiates with body designs are shown pointing to the sacred designs on the carved tree. Emu tracks found in many of Campbell's works are indicated in the background. The oesophagus-like red tie that appears on these figures expresses ongoing relationships with the natural and supernatural worlds, and recalls the X-ray style of rock art in Western Arnhem Land.

Trevor Nickolls

Ngarrindjeri 1949–2012

Third eye

1986 Adelaide, South Australia

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

The Joseph Brown Collection. Presented through the NGV Foundation by Dr Joseph Brown AO
OBE, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2004

2004.249

In this work Nickolls aims to bridge the gap between Western art and Aboriginal art, shown by the combination of an eye set within a pyramid, and markings and images sourced from cave art. The stencilled hand echoes its constant use in rock art as a signature and emphasises Nickolls's Aboriginality. His use of blue for the handprint and throughout the composition occurred because Nickolls had seen blue paint in historical examples of Aboriginal art from south-east Australia. The freely painted cross-hatching reflects his fascination with herringbone line work found in Noongar art from South Australia and indirectly refers to the bark tradition.

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Blind faith

1992 Sydney, New South Wales

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of Waltons Limited, Fellow,
1994 O.85-1994

‘Ever since white settlement landed in this great land of ours they started pushing the original owners out of their homes and off their land ... the tribesmen are shown being chained up like dogs and locked up in prison. The painting shows men, women and children being killed because they placed their trust in the strangers, but the strangers, like a snake, blinded them with false promises and false hopes. Today these betrayals are still happening but there are some politicians who are trying to give some of the land back to us. Aborigines today are too knowledgeable to be tricked again.’

H. J. WEDGE, 1992

Reko Rennie

Kamilaroi born 1974

Initiation

2013 Melbourne, Victoria

synthetic polymer paint on plywood

Purchased with funds donated by
Esther and David Frenkiel, 2014

2014.41.a-00

Informed by 1980s American culture, Reko Rennie started his practice as a teenager graffitiing the inner-western suburbs of Melbourne, finding his voice on the side of buildings, trains and laneways. *Initiation*, 2013, recalls the urban landscape of the working-class suburb of Footscray, where he was born and grew up, evoked through retro symbols amassed to create a sense of home. Among icons of Rennie's suburbia he includes his own personal tag of a crown, a diamond and the Aboriginal flag. While each symbol speaks to Aboriginal sovereignty, their application in Rennie's hand quotes the aesthetic of fellow street artist Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Ngajuu Ngaay Nginduugirr (I see you)

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

Ngajuu Ngaay Nginduugirr (I see you)

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

Ngajuu Ngaay Nginduugirr (I see you)

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009 2009.67, 2009.68, 2009.69

In these three screen-prints the artist intertwines elements of Wiradjuri visual and spoken language. Andrew gives visibility to the Wiradjuri words, Ngajuu Ngaay Nginduugirr (I see you), and to the zigzag and diamond designs of his special form of Op art, derived from Wiradjuri designs on men's shields or incised onto dendroglyphs (carved trees). Andrew translates the small or indistinct tooling on wooden parrying shields and stone-cut markings on dendroglyphs into dramatic hard-edge designs that in their optical geometry form a dynamic echo of Russian constructivism.

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Black & White special cut

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

ed. 5/5

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents

Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009

2009.71

In these screenprints slick advertising brands of cigarette packaging, chewing tobacco and chewing gum explode incongruously out of Wiradjuri texts and optical geometry, in a dynamic echo of Russian Constructivism. The series unpacks contemporary global advertising by disclosing the way in which capitalist multinational corporations seduce the consumer to buy the ultimate in First World consumer goods – cigarettes – through disingenuous trademarks, such as 'Peace & Hope'. Andrew also teases out the repercussions of brand names, such as Black Black ('hi-technical excellent taste and flavor') and Black & White Special Cut, which serve to commercialise and glamourise, while obscuring difference.

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Against all odds

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria
colour screenprint and collage

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents

Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009
2009.64

Against all odds

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria
colour screenprint and collage

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents

Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009
2009.65

Against all odds

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria
colour screenprint and collage

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents

Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009
2009.66

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Black & White special cut

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

ed. 2/10

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009 2009.71

In this screen-print, slick advertising for cigarette brands, chewing tobacco and chewing gum explode incongruously out of Wiradjuri texts and optical geometry in a dynamic echo of Russian Constructivism. The series unpacks contemporary global advertising by disclosing the way capitalist multinational corporations seduce the consumer to buy the ultimate in First World consumer goods – cigarettes – through disingenuous trademarks such as 'Peace & Hope'. Andrew also teases out the repercussions of brand names such as BlackBlack (high technical excellent flavour) and Black & White Special Cut, which serve to commercialise and glamorise, while obscuring difference.

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Blackblack

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

artist's proof

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009 2009.72

Brook Andrew

Australian born 1970

Hope & Peace

2005 Kinglake West, Victoria

colour screenprint

artist's proof

Gift of Brook Andrew in honour of his parents Trevor and Veronica Andrew through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2009 2009.70

Hannah Brontë

Wakka Wakka/Yaegl born 1991

Umma's Tongue – molten at 6000°

2017 Brisbane

HD video, sound, 4 min 50

ed. 2/5

Purchased, Victorian Foundation for
Living Australian Artists, 2019

The word 'umma', or mother, is repeated by a cast of Indigenous female rappers as a call to Mother Earth, who is embodied as the matriarchal figure of resistance in a dystopian, post-climate change landscape of human industry. As the artist describes, 'if Mother Earth were a rapper then this is her new music video'. By entwining women's bodies with images of the natural world, Brontë voices her warning about climate change, stating over and over within the video, 'don't make umma have to clap back'.

Gordon Hookey

Waanyi born 1961

Sacred nation, scared nation, indoctrination

2003 St Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria
oil on canvas

Presented through the NGV Foundation by Juliette,
Danielle and Georgina Jerums, Member, 2003

2003.481.a-c

This triptych is a satirical work that functions as a pictorial sociopolitical map of unpalatable truths. Part one attacks the destruction of the natural environment, a cataclysm illustrated by the inverted world, and juxtaposes it with the denial of Indigenous land rights. Hookey's play on terrorism and 'terra', meaning earth or land, politicises the debate concerning environmental issues and globalism. The Iraq War is critiqued on panels two and three of the triptych. Hookey views war and terrorism as having moral equivalences: the sacred nation has become a scared nation through indoctrination, subordination and pandering.

Peggy Napangardi Jones

Warlpiri 1951–2014

White cocky, black cocky and goanna

2001 Melbourne, Victoria

synthetic polymer paint on corrugated iron on
composition board

Presented through the NGV Foundation by
Lance Hammond, Member, 2002

2002.193

The artist depicts a black and white cockatoo and a green, yellow-spotted goanna against an audacious background divided into large sections of hot pink, blue and red. She has approached the sheet of corrugated iron freely, as if it were a canvas.

Barney Ellaga

Alawa c. 1941–2015

Alawa country

1998–99 Hodgson Downs, Northern Territory
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Purchased, 1999

1999.328

Claudia Moodoonuthi

Kaiadilt born 1995

Dog on scooter

2017 Brisbane, Queensland

pen on scooter, carved wood, kangaroo skin

Purchased with funds donated by Jo Horgan and MECCA Brands, 2017

Claudia Moodoonuthi

Kaiadilt born 1995

4 Wheeler with dog

2017 Brisbane, Queensland

synthetic polymer paint on bike, carved wood

Purchased with funds donated by Jo Horgan
and MECCA Brands, 2017

Claudia Moodoonuthi

Kaiadilt born 1995

Rocking horse and cowboy dog

2017 Brisbane, Queensland

synthetic polymer paint on rocking horse, carved wood

Purchased with funds donated by Jo Horgan
and MECCA Brands, 2017

Claudia Moodoonuthi

Kaiadilt born 1995

Trolley and dog

2017 Brisbane, Queensland

synthetic polymer paint on trolley, carved wood

Purchased with funds donated by Jo Horgan
and MECCA Brands, 2017

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

**Immaculate conception – What
hypocrisy! (Nun)**

1992 Sydney, New South Wales

synthetic polymer paint on plywood

Purchased with funds donated by Supporters
and Patrons of Indigenous Art, 2006

2006.223

H. J. Wedge's diptych *Immaculate Conception – What hypocrisy!* was displayed in a satellite exhibition of the 9th Biennale of Sydney. It comes from a peak period in the artist's career when he was focusing on important elements of his life, notably the impact of Christianity on his upbringing and that of other Wiradjuri people at Erambie Mission. *Immaculate Conception* bristles with audacious and unconventional forms and colours, seen with Wedge's inner eye rather than taught or appropriated.

H. J. Wedge

Wiradjuri 1957–2012

Immaculate conception – What hypocrisy! (Man)

1992 Sydney, New South Wales

synthetic polymer paint on plywood

Presented through the NGV Foundation by
Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Governor, 2006

2006.224

‘Ever since I could remember going to Sunday school, they’ve been teaching us right from wrong and about the bible. I had a lot of questions about the bible when I was a kid and the Christian teachers seemed to be giving me the run around when I asked any serious questions about certain things in the bible ... We did worship the land; the land was our spirit and that’s what I believe in. White people don’t know what to believe in and that is why they have a lot of religion ... Probably when I die I will go straight to hell.’

H. J. WEDGE, 1992

Kurnti Jimmy Pike

Walmajarri c. 1940–2002

Kalykalywurtu

1988 Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Gerstl Bequest, 2000

2000.225

The artist depicts the site of Kalkalwurtu, associated with the Seven Sisters Dreaming, a provocative narrative about sexual opportunity, voyeurism and sexual avoidance. The Seven Sisters travelled a vast distance across the Western Desert, obsessively chased by Nyiru, a lustful old man who wanted one of the sisters as a wife. The Seven Sisters evaded his advances and transformed into stars in the Pleiades cluster. The interlocking key design seen throughout the background derives from the incised patterning on wooden artefacts and pearl-shell pendants of the South Kimberley region.

Kurnti Jimmy Pike

Walmajarri c. 1940–2002

Mangarakarra Mangarakarra

1993 Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Gift of Violet Sheno through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2017 2016.1075

The artist represents a Walmajarri children's story: A man who was living with two women went hunting. While he was away a stranger encountered the two women alone in their campsite and asked them where their husband was. The women told the stranger that he had gone hunting for kangaroo and the man said that he would follow him. While the women's husband was busy hunting, the stranger speared him. The two women were left waiting and searched for their husband, whom they found dead. The man guilty of their husband's murder killed other husbands in different places.

Walmajarri/Juwaliny c. 1929–2007

Kirti

1992 Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Purchased from Admission funds, 1992

O.106-1992

This work depicts the Two Men who travelled through the Western Desert in the Dreaming, creating and naming sacred sites and performing ceremonies. They are believed to have finished travelling near Mulan, in the Great Sandy Desert, where they transformed into two boulders. Skipper shows the Two Men surrounded by windbreaks and the marks left in the sand when they lay down by the campfire. The geometric background patterning derives from motifs incised on shields and pearl-shell pendants, and painted on the body for ceremony.

Peter Pijaju Skipper

Walmajarri/Juwaliny c. 1929–2007

Purnarra II

1989 Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Gerstl Bequest, 2000

2000.226

The interlocking key designs in this painting are called purnarra and derive from Country that Tingarri ancestral men travelled through, and are specific to the artist. These designs, also found incised or painted on shields and pearl shell pendants, can only be made by initiated men and express the essence of the land itself. At a more general level, purnarra can also refer to any design, including body painting, patterns left by wood-eating insects, as well as sand-patterns left by wind and water.

Kurnti Jimmy Pike

Walmajarri c. 1940–2002

Three people

1987 Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Presented through the NGV Foundation
by John McPhee, Fellow, 2006

2006.196

From body to classroom to gallery walls

When preparing to perform yawulyu (women's ceremonies), Warlpiri women of Lajamanu gather communally to mark their bodies with cultural signatures of kuruwarri (signs or marks of ancestral beings in a metaphysical landscape). Each body painting creates a gendered dialogue that addresses questions of place, creation and identity. In 1986, the women, who were actively involved in bilingual and bicultural programs at Lajamanu School, painted a series of fifty-six works on cardboard or paper designed to teach the children their jukurrpa (Dreaming).

Exploring genres of land, body and performance, these Warlpiri artists reasserted their authority over women's business in a new medium. They prioritised and rendered durable ritual designs that enshrine their roles as nurturers of people, land and relationships, and as leaders in cultural maintenance. These powerful drawings, which moved from the organic surfaces of body and ground to flat rectangular supports, appropriate markings on the female body and bear witness to profound cultural knowledge. Like rock walls or streetscapes that transmit messages of identity and resistance, the female body functions as both context and site for Warlpiri ways of being, prior to a new recitation in the Lajamanu classroom and finally on gallery walls.

Betty Nangala Stafford

Warlpiri late 1940s–90s

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.105-1989

This painting shows ngapa (rain), two wet season shelters and two hooked desert boomerangs. Tracks of yankirri (emu) are shown among the raindrops. The site of this Dreaming is Lungkardajarra, between Yaturlu Yaturlu and Jila, and belongs to Nangala and Nampijinpa women.

Liddy Nampijinpa Miller

Warlpiri born c. 1943

Ngapa Jukurrpa manu yujuku (Rain Dreaming with shelters)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.102-1989

Lucy Nangala Hector

Warlpiri early 1940s–97

Yankirri Jukurrpa (Emu Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.109-1989

Liddy Nampijinpa Miller

Warlpiri born c. 1943

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Rain Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.101-1989

Liddy Nampijinpa Miller

Warlpiri born c. 1943

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.137-1989

Liddy Nampijinpa Miller

Warlpiri born c. 1943

Yujuku Jukurrpa (Shelter Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.108-1989

Linda Nangala Hector

Warlpiri c. 1942–99

Ngapa manu pardarri Jukurrpa (Water/Rainbow Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.104-1989

Liddy Nampijinpa Miller

Warlpiri born c. 1943

Jilja Jukurrpa (Sandhill Dreaming)

1986

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.129-1989

Topsy Nangala

Warlpiri 1914–90s

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.110-1989

Ruby Napurrurla (Yulanti)

Warlpiri born c. 1935

Marlu Jukurrpa (Plains Kangaroo Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.106-1989

(Yirdingali) Lily Nungarrayi Hargraves

Warlpiri c. 1930 – 2018

Ngatijirri Jukurrpa (Budgerigar Dreaming)

1986

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.121-1989

Pupiya Louisa Napaljarri Lawson

Warlpiri c. 1926–2001

Yiwarra (Milky Way Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.100-1989

Pupiya Louisa Napaljarri Lawson

Warlpiri c. 1926–2001

Ngalyipi Jukurrpa (Medicine Vine Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache, earth pigments on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.112-1989

Here Napaljarri depicts ngalyipi, the vine used in traditional medicine and to make string for adorning the body in ceremonies. The location of this Dreaming is Kunajarrayi, the Country of the artist's father and where six Dreaming tracks intersect. Through her boldly drawn kuruwarri (signs or marks of ancestral beings in a cultural landscape) that stand out clearly against an expanse of red ochre, Napaljarri expresses her affinity with Country. Napaljarri's visual language is performative, akin to women's sand drawings or body paintings for yawulyu (women's ceremonies), an intuitive form of expression readily transposed onto cardboard.

Pupiya Louisa Napaljarri Lawson

Warlpiri c. 1926–2001

Mala Jukurrpa (Hare Wallaby Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache, earth pigments on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.113-1989

Against a plain red-ochre ground, Napaljarri represents two lines of male mala (hare wallabies), shown by their paw and tail tracks leading to their shelter, which is protected by a windbreak. The artist also employs a women's striped body design for the mala's camp. The mala tracks and the body design stand out in negative space, like a drawing in the sand. The work is unnerving in the innocent directness of its message.

Liddy Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush Potato Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache, earth pigments, polyvinyl acetate, sand on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.120-1989

Nakamarra represents her yarla (large yam) Dreaming as a women's body-painting design on a red ochre background. Yarla always regrows in the desert, providing a reliable source of food; moreover, as the yam roots ripen, they burst up through the ground causing cracks to form in the red earth. When cracks are seen, the women dig for the yam and cook the tubers in the coals. The linear markings signify ngamarna, the long horizontal yam tubers of the yarla that travelled as an ancestral being and became the landscape in the Dreaming. The small arc shapes represent women gathering to perform yawulyu (women's ceremonies).

Liddy Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Yarla Jukurrpa (Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.141-1989

Peggy Napaljarri Rockman

Warlpiri born c. 1960

Watiya witi Jukurrpa (Vine Dreaming)

1986

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.132-1989

Unknown

Warlpiri active 1980s

Wirntiki Jukurrpa (Little bird Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.136-1989

Daisy Napurrurla

Warlpiri c. 1925–97

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.107-1989

Molly Napurrurla Tasman

Warlpiri born c. 1936

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.130-1989

Melody Napurrurla Tasman

Warlpiri c. 1930–96

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.115-1989

Daisy Napurrurla

Warlpiri c. 1925–97

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.138-1989

Napurrurla and Nakamarra women are shown gathering ngurlu (seed) in their coolamons. This is done by stealing piles of grass seeds gathered by ants. The grass seeds are then ground, mixed into seed cakes with water and dried in the sun. The site of the seed-gathering is Kunalarringyu.

Molly Napurrurla Tasman

Warlpiri born c. 1936

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.116-1989

Lady Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1945

Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush Potato Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.89-1989

Liddy Nakamarra Nelson

Warlpiri c. 1935–2007

Ngarlajiyi Jukurrpa (Small Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.117-1989

Liddy Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Wapirti manu yarla Jukurrpa (Big Yam and Small Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.122-1989

Gladys Napangardi Kelly

Warlpiri born c. 1945

Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.93-1989

Liddy Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush potato Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache, earth pigments on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.119-1989

Yulyurlu Lorna Napurrurla Fencer

Warlpiri c. 1925–2006

Yarla Jukurrpa (Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.135-1989

Lorna Napurrurla represents the yarla (large yam, *Ipomoea costata* sp.) associated with the site of Yumurrpa, of which she was custodian. The bold vertical lines, which Napurrurla has transposed onto cardboard, represent women's body paintings for yarla, worn in yawulyu (women's ceremonies). Yarla always regrows in the desert, providing a reliable source of food; moreover, as the yam roots ripen, they burst up through the ground, causing cracks to form in the red earth. The U-shapes on this painting represent Nakamarra and Napurrurla women sitting and digging for yam. The straight lines signify ngamarna, the long horizontal yam tubers of the yarla ancestor that travelled through and transformed into features of this Country.

Lady Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1945

Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush potato Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.88-1989

Beryl Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Yarla Jukurrpa (Yam Dreaming)

1985 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.103-1989

Liddy Nakamarra Barnes

Warlpiri born c. 1940

Yarla Jukurrpa (Yam Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989

O.141-1989

Peggy Napaljarri Rockman

Warlpiri born c. 1960

Ngarlu manu munikiyi Jukurpa (Honey and Wax Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.95-1989

The artist represents ngarlu (bush honey), found in wurrkarli trees at Yinapaka (Lake Surprise) near Willowra. The trees, shown in this painting by roundels, have pretty flowers from which pollen is collected. Insects then deposit wax into holes in the tree, where honey forms. Honey was used and valued as bush medicine in customary times, and gave people energy to hunt either during or after an illness. With the same wax, Warlpiri people would glue spearheads onto spears, then tie them on using chewed kangaroo sinews.

Unknown

Warlpiri active 1980s

Ngurlu manu pirdijirri Jukurrpa (Seeds and Seed Cake Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.134-1989

Mona Napaljarri Rockman

Warlpiri born c. 1924

Warlja Jukurrpa (Men's Secret Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.96-1989

The artist represents a jukurrpa (story) of conflict: A Jungarrayi ancestral man, indicated by the dominant curved shape, travelled around in the Dreaming chasing women. Other men became jealous of Jungarrayi's sexual prowess and threw boomerangs at him, so the Jungarrayi man left that Country and went to live at Tanami.

(Yirdingali) Lily Nungarrayi Hargraves

Warlpiri c. 1930–2018

Mala Jukurrpa

(Hare Wallaby Dreaming)

1986

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.114-1989

Peggy Napaljarri Rockman

Warlpiri born c. 1960

Ngatijirri Jukurrpa (Budgerigar Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.94-1989

Maisie Napangardi Kelly

Warlpiri born c. 1930

Janyinki

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.142-1989

Maisie Napangardi Kelly

Warlpiri born c. 1930

Janyinki

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.92-1989

Unknown

Warlpiri active 1980s

Karlangu Jukurrpa (Digging Stick Dreaming)

1986

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.140-1989

Napangardi and Napanangka women are shown seated with their digging sticks. The large oval at the centre surrounded by groups of half circles represents women singing and dancing in yawulyu (women's ceremonies) at Yinaparlka (Mount Singleton), west of Yuendumu.

Unknown

Warlpiri active 1980s

Karnta Jukurrpa (Women's Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.139-1989

Unknown

Warlpiri active 1980s

Ngurlu Jukurrpa (Seed Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory
gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
O.123-1989

Topsy Nangala

Warlpiri 1914–90s

Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming)

1986 Lajamanu, Northern Territory

gouache on cardboard

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of CRA Limited, Fellow, 1989
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