

I acknowledge the Gadigal people
of the Eora nation on whose land
we meet today and I pay my
respect to their Elders, past,
present and emerging.

Please be advised that this lecture contains images of and by
people who are now deceased

Social Objects: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art



Laurie Nelson Mungatopi, Bob One Aputimi, Jack Yarunga, Don Burakmadjua, Charlie Quiet Kwangdini, unknown artist. **Tutini (Pukumani grave posts)**, not dated. Dimensions Various. Art Gallery New South Wales. <http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/IA1.1959.a-q/>



CAPTAIN COOK'S LANDING AT BOTANY, A.D. 1770.

Captain Cook's Landing at Botany AD 1770. Supplement presented gratis with Christmas number of the Town & country journal, Decr. 21st, 1872. National Library of Australia. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135775020/view>

Site of Cook's first landing: Kurnell, Kamay Botany Bay National Park



BBC + British Museum, 2010, **A History of the World in a 100 Objects: “Australian Bark Shield: Exploration, Exploitation and Enlightenment (1680-1820AD)”**,
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00v3x6v>





Shield, Gweagal people, collected at Botany Bay in April 1770, 97 x 29 x 12 cm. British Museum Oc1978,Q.839.



Shield on display at National Museum Australia Dec 2015 as part of Encounters exhibition.



Richard BROWNE, not titled [weapons including four different types of spear or lance, the hootia or fish gig, the nulla nulla and the wamareen] (1821). ink; paper; watercolour drawing in pen and ink and watercolour sheet 35.0 h x 25.0 w cm. National Gallery Australia



Kelp water container, Tasmanian Aborigines, collected from Oyster Cove by Joseph Milligan in 1850–51, 11.3 x 6 x 15.5 cm (longest stick). British Museum Oc1851,1122.2.



Bark etching, Dja Dja Wurrung people, collected from Fernyhurst by John Hunter Kerr before 1855, 67 x 31 x 13 cm. British Museum Oc.1827.



Burreditj (feather skirt), Gunditjmara and Kirrae Whurrong peoples, collected by Augustus Strong, probably from St Marys, Warrnambool, in 1842–44, 27 x 95 cm. British Museum
Oc1847,0413.2

- Art and Country
- Art and Kinship
- Art and communication

- The sacred and secret
- Ceremony, Ritual and Performance
- Art and the Everyday
- Art and Engagement with the world



Aboriginal
 Language/Tribe
 Map© Aboriginal
 Studies Press,
 AIATSIS and
 Auslig/Sinclair,
 Knight, Merz, 1996

ART HISTORY TIMELINE

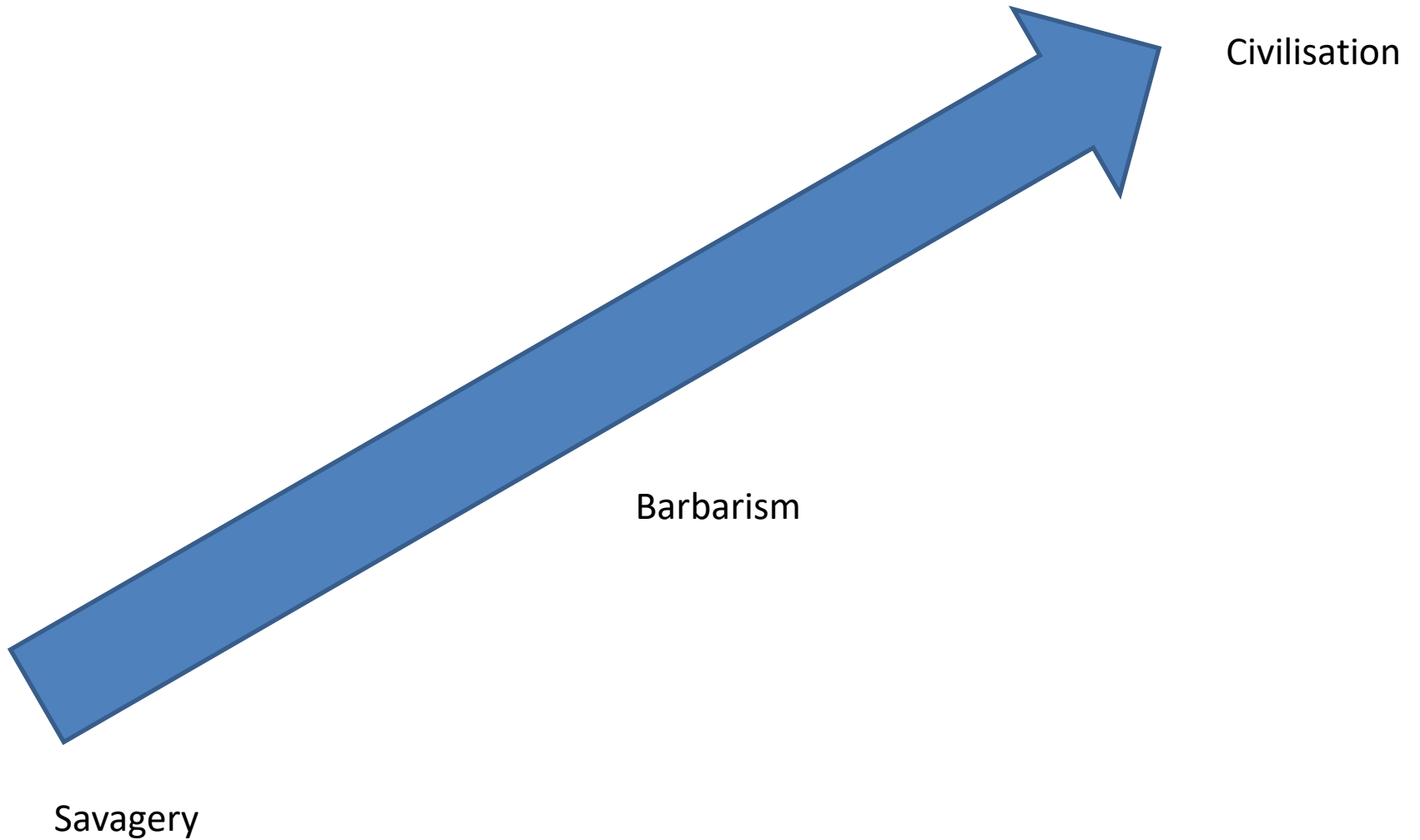
A.D. 1000 - Gothic printing press; 976-1000: Chinese woodblock printing; 1000: Viking Age; 1000-1100: Muslim conquests; 1100-1200: High Middle Ages; 1200-1300: Gothic period; 1300-1400: Middle Ages; 1400-1500: Renaissance; 1500-1600: Age of Exploration; 1600-1700: Baroque; 1700-1800: Rococo; 1800-1900: Romanticism; 1900-2000: Modernism; 1900-2000: Industrial Revolution; 1900-2000: Neoclassicism; 1900-2000: Romanticism; 1900-2000: Realism; 1900-2000: Impressionism; 1900-2000: Expressionism; 1900-2000: Modern Art; 1900-2000: Cubism; 1900-2000: Surrealism; 1900-2000: Postmodern Art; 1900-2000: Contemporary Art.

Major Art Periods:
 - **Classical:** Greek and Roman art, including sculpture and architecture.
 - **Medieval:** Gothic, Romanesque, and Byzantine art.
 - **Renaissance:** Focus on humanism and naturalism.
 - **Baroque:** Dramatic and emotional style.
 - **Rococo:** Ornate and decorative style.
 - **Romanticism:** Emphasis on emotion and nature.
 - **Realism:** Focus on everyday life and social issues.
 - **Impressionism:** Capturing light and color.
 - **Expressionism:** Conveying inner feelings.
 - **Modern Art:** Abstraction and new forms.
 - **Cubism:** Geometric shapes and multiple perspectives.
 - **Surrealism:** Dreamlike and subconscious imagery.
 - **Postmodern Art:** Questioning traditional art forms.
 - **Contemporary Art:** Diverse and experimental.

B.C. 10000 - Prehistoric Times; 10000-5000 B.C.: Paleolithic Cave Art; 5000-3000 B.C.: Neolithic Revolution; 3000-2000 B.C.: Mesopotamian Civilization; 2000-1000 B.C.: Ancient Egypt; 1000-500 B.C.: Classical Greece; 500-100 B.C.: Hellenistic Greece; 100-500 A.D.: Roman Empire; 500-1000 A.D.: Byzantine Empire; 1000-1500 A.D.: Islamic Golden Age; 1500-1800 A.D.: Renaissance; 1800-1900 A.D.: Romanticism; 1900-2000 A.D.: Modernism.

Key Ancient Civilizations and Art:
 - **Prehistoric:** Cave paintings, tools, and early human settlements.
 - **Mesopotamia:** Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian art and architecture.
 - **Ancient Egypt:** Hieroglyphs, pyramids, and mummies.
 - **Classical Greece:** Parthenon, Greek sculpture, and philosophy.
 - **Roman Empire:** Colosseum, Roman architecture, and mosaics.
 - **Byzantine Empire:** Mosaic art and religious iconography.
 - **Islamic Golden Age:** Geometric patterns and architectural marvels.
 - **Renaissance:** Revival of classical art and humanism.
 - **Modernism:** Breakthrough in art and thought.

The Myth of Social Evolution



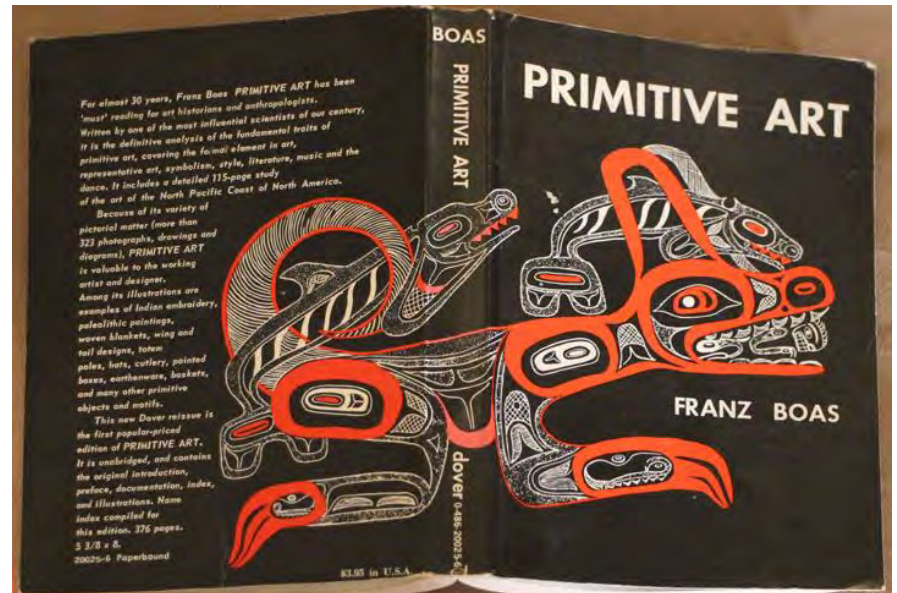
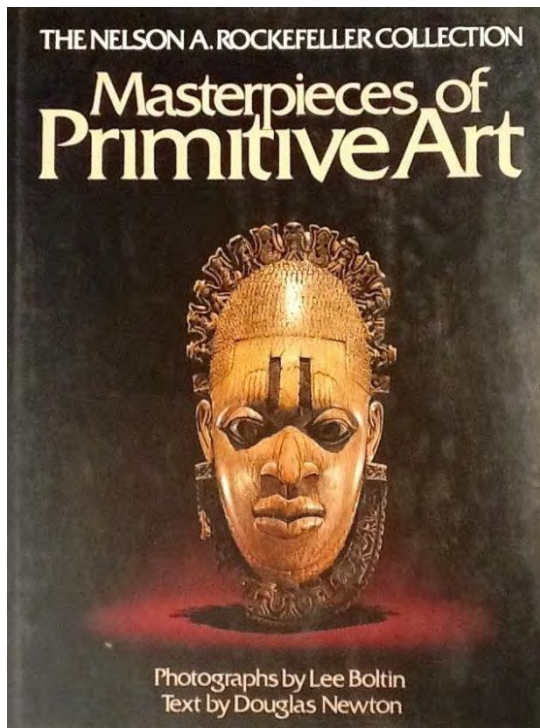
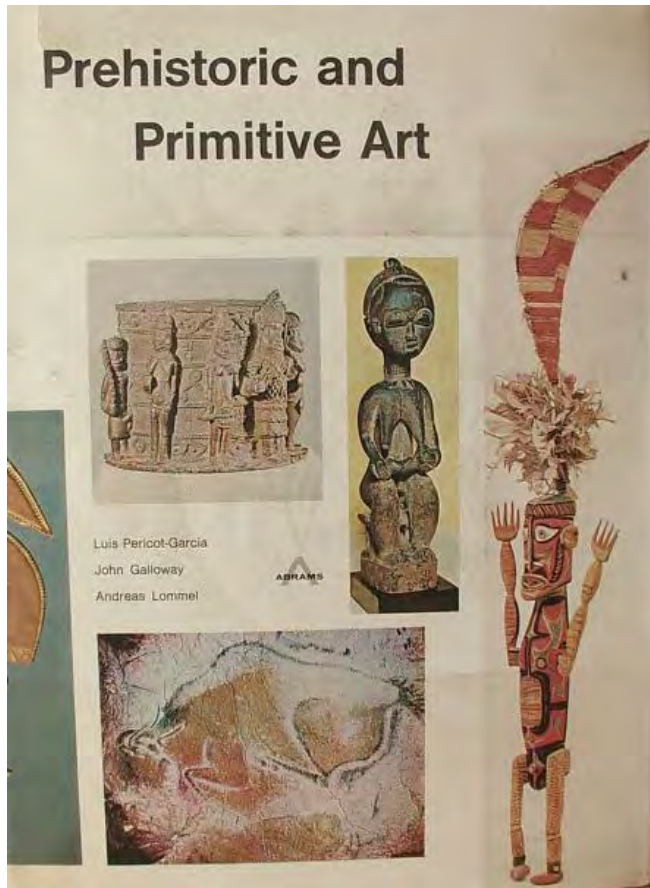
Justifications of Colonialism and “White Man’s Burden” narratives



“From the Cape to Cairo. Tough the Process Be Costly, The Road of Progress Must Be Cut.” Udo Keppler, Puck, December 10, 1902. Source: Library of Congress



Pablo Picasso. **Les
Demoselles d'Avignon**
(1907). Oil on Canvas. 243.9
x 233.7 cm. MOMA

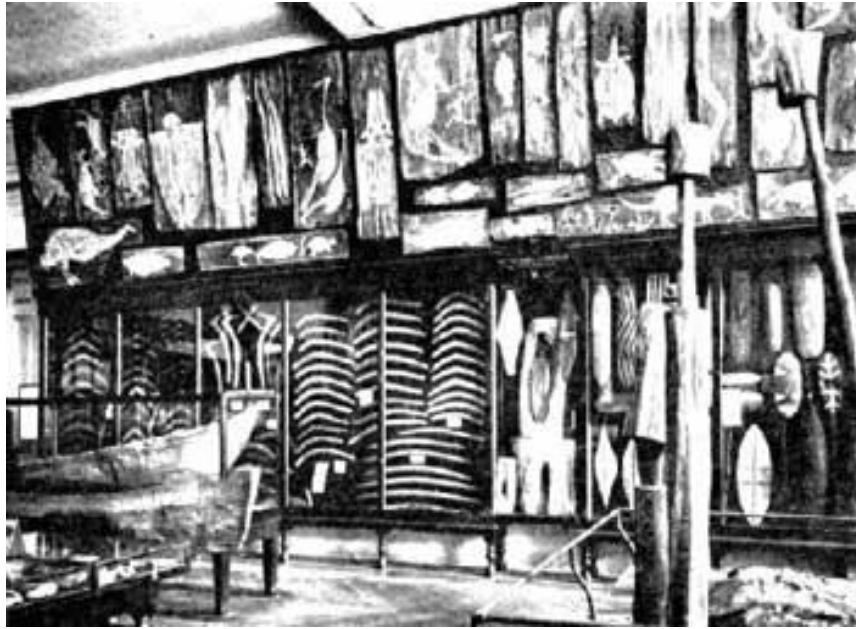


Various texts on primitive art



Exhibition view of MOMA's 'Primitivism' in 20th Century art: Affinity of the Tribal and Modern', touring exhibition (Dallas Museum of art 1985). The exhibition displayed 'primitive' works alongside those of European Modernists.

Uncomfortable Art and Anthropological Histories



Above: Display of Aboriginal paintings, weapons and other objects in the 'Spencer Gallery' (1939) Museum of Victoria.

Aboriginal Art imagined as:

- *Relic of the ancient past*
- *Window into man's infancy*
- *Timelessness*
- *Savagery*
- *Primitivism*



Right: 'Aboriginal artefacts on display at the Western Australian Museum, ca. 1913' Western Australian Museum

Time



Travel



An ornately carved wooden shield from the Murumbidge River region of New South Wales. It was donated to the museum by H.S.W. Crummer in 1890. Photographer: Rebecca Fisher, © Australian Museum <http://australianmuseum.net.au/image/shield-e002819>

Jonathan Jones, lean to, 2012, mdf wood, tarpaulin, fluorescent lights , 360.0 (h) x 1750.0 (w) x 85.0 (d) cm. Photo: NGA, Courtesy the artist and Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney.



Art, Country and the Dreaming





North Bondi Golf Course

Rock engravings, North Bondi Golf Course





Aboriginal rock engraving of an
echidna
Photographer, Ku-ring-gai
Chase National Park ©
Australian Museum

Red Hand Cave,
Blue Mountains
National Park. ©
National Parks NSW





Crushing ochre at Warmun Arts Centre © Artist's Chronicle

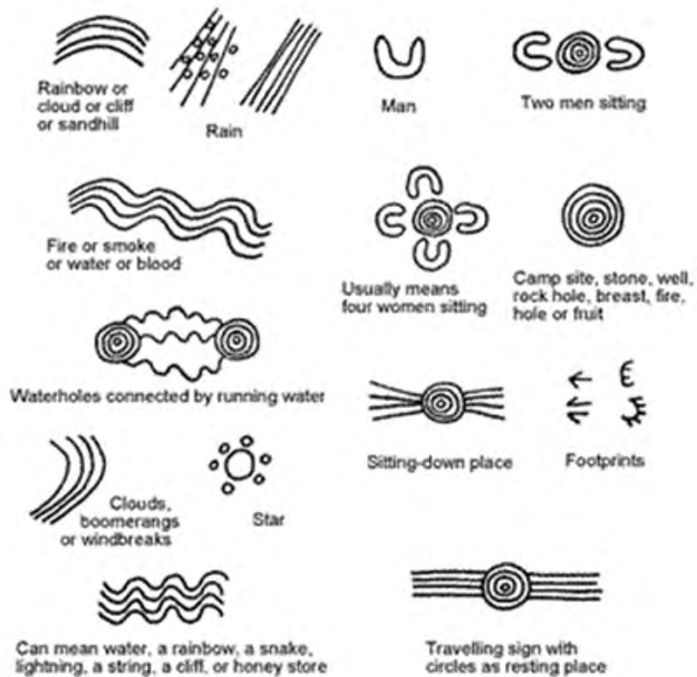


John Mawurndjul collecting bark.

Episode 1 of Art + Soul: A personal journey into the world of Aboriginal art



John Mawurndjul, 'Nawarramulmul (Shooting star spirit)', 1988, ochres and synthetic polymer on bark, (H 219.4 W 95 D 8.5cm), Museum of Contemporary Art.



Symbols used in Papunya Central Desert art - Based on information from "Papunya Tula" by Geoffrey Bardon.
<https://www.aboriginalartonline.com/culture/symbols.php>



Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri, **Inma** (1972), synthetic polymer paint on composition board, 60.0 h x 42.0 w cm, NGA.



Clifford Possum
Tjapaltjarri & Tim
Leura Tjapaltjarri
(Language group:
Anmatyerr,
Central Desert
region)
'Warlugulong',
1976, synthetic
polymer paint on
canvas, 168.5 x
170.5 cm
stretcher.
Collection of the
Art Gallery NSW.

The Dreaming

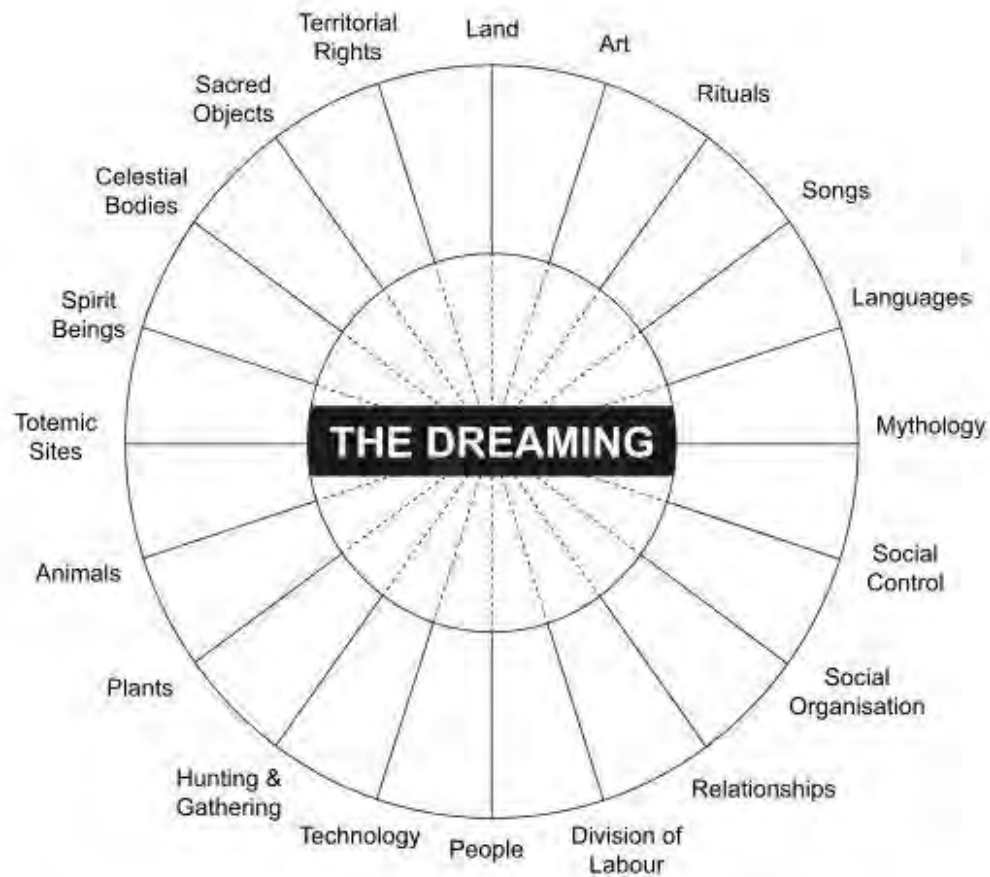


La Perouse, South Sydney, Kameygal Country

Frank Gillen, Baldwin Spencer, Erlikiliakirra (Jim Kite), Chance, and Purunda (Warwick), members of the 1901-1902 Expedition, Alice Springs, Central Australia, 18 May 1901. Glass plate. Silver gelatin emulsion. Half plate

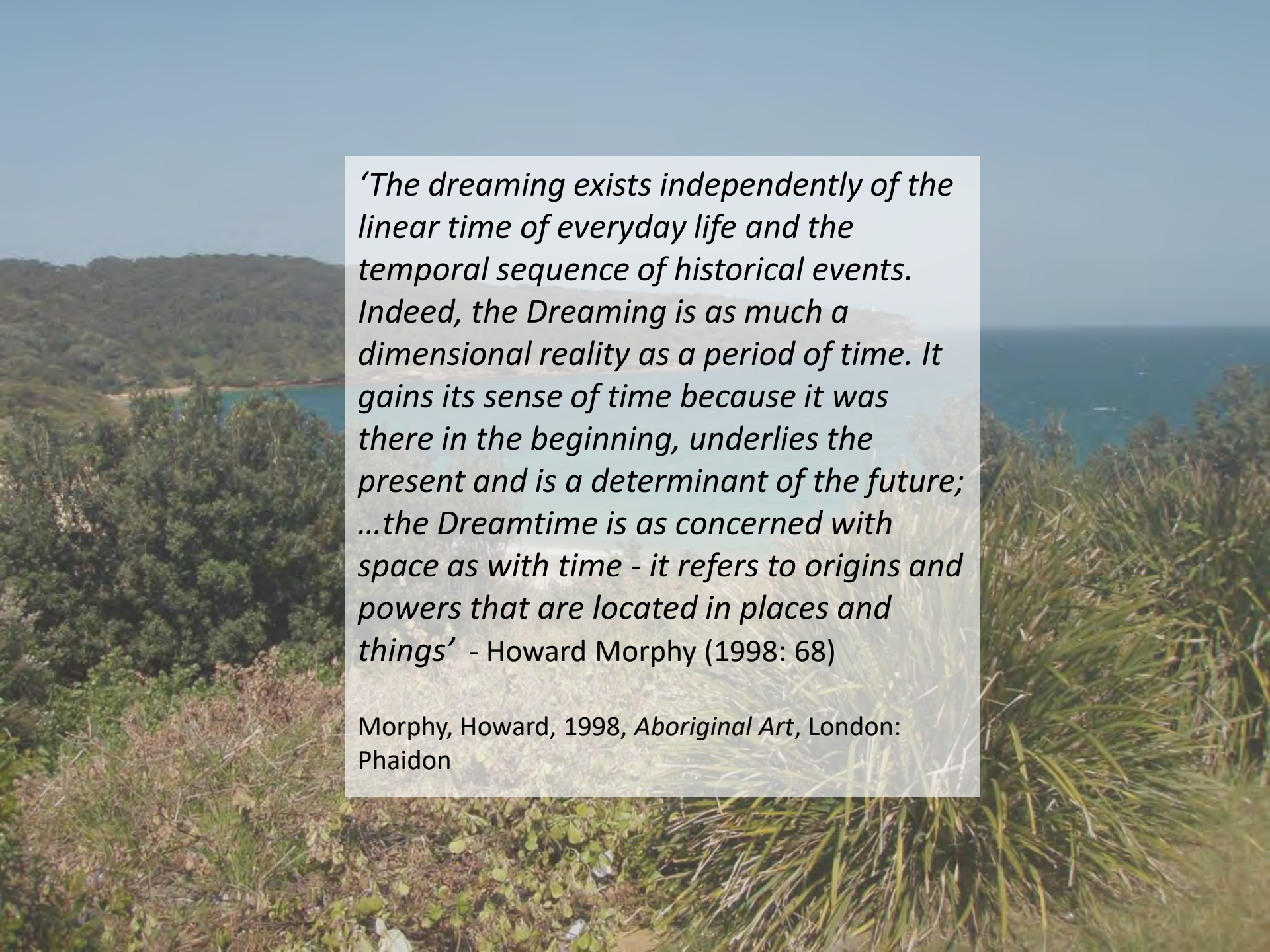


“Tjukurrpa: The Dreaming...also means to 'see and understand the law' as it is translated from the Arrernte language”



**THE DREAMING AS THE BASIS OF ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE IN
TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES**

Original Design Layout: Keith Goldsworthy



'The dreaming exists independently of the linear time of everyday life and the temporal sequence of historical events. Indeed, the Dreaming is as much a dimensional reality as a period of time. It gains its sense of time because it was there in the beginning, underlies the present and is a determinant of the future; ...the Dreamtime is as concerned with space as with time - it refers to origins and powers that are located in places and things' - Howard Morphy (1998: 68)

Morphy, Howard, 1998, *Aboriginal Art*, London: Phaidon

Jeannie Nungarrayi Herbert,
**Ngarlkirdi Jukurrpa (Witchetty grub
Dreaming)** (1989), earthenware,
20.2 × 20.2 cm diameter. National
Gallery Victoria





Clifford Possum
Tjapaltjarri & Tim
Leura Tjapaltjarri
(Language group:
Anmatyerr,
Central Desert
region)
'Warlugulong',
1976, synthetic
polymer paint on
canvas, 168.5 x
170.5 cm
stretcher.
Collection of the
Art Gallery NSW.



Frances Belle Parker, 2005, *Mapping Ulgundahi*, 10,000 wooden pegs with ink and plaster, 400 x 300 cm





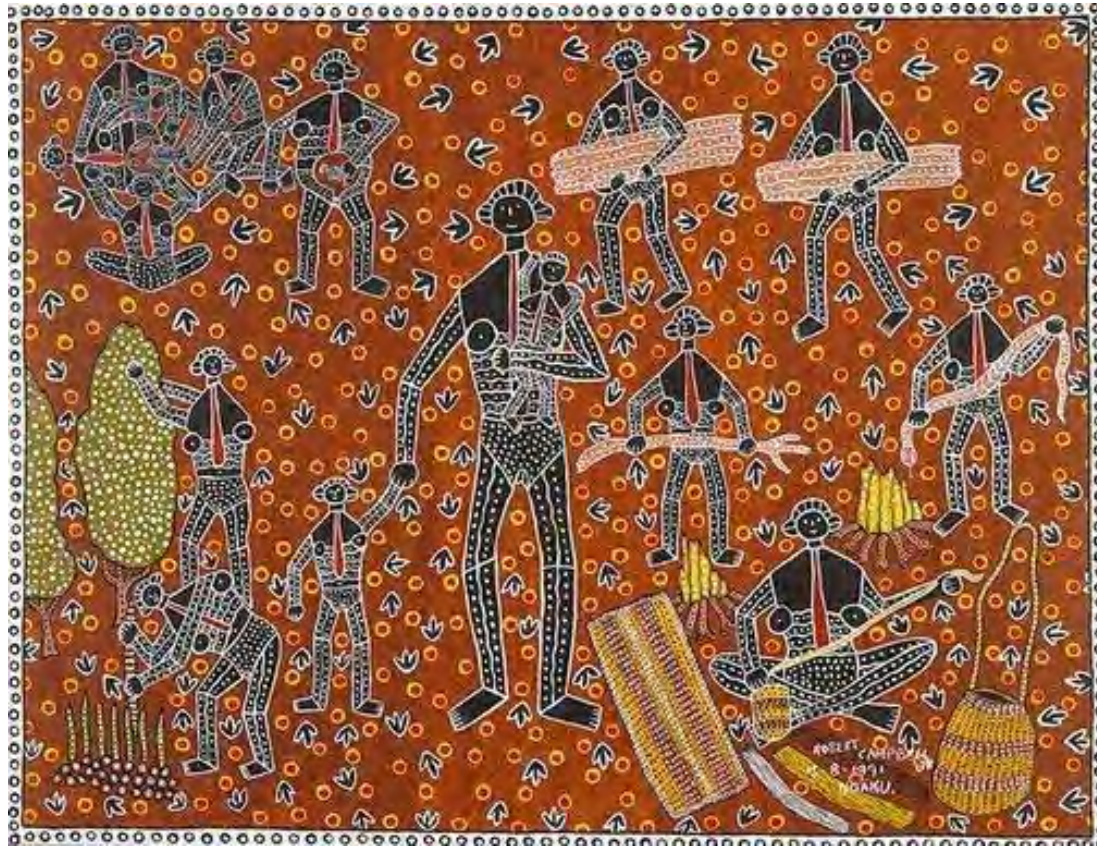
Frances Belle Parker, 2005, *Mapping Ulgundahi*, 10,000 wooden pegs with ink and plaster, 400 x 300 cm



Country and Dreaming: Expressions in Art



Maintaining and Enriching Country



Robert Campbell Jr, **Women's Business**,
c.1990, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 88.6
x 115.0 x 2.5 cm, © Robert Campbell Jr Estate

**Artworks engaging with,
and maintaining
Country/Dreaming in
various ways:**

- Representation for learning and communication
- Made for Ritual
- Adorn and Enhance Sacred and other Sites
- Evocation and Confirmation of Power



Frances Belle Parker, **A Fragmented History**
(2009), Acrylic on Canvas, 150 x 138cm ©
Frances Belle Parker

“...these works are "performative" ...they bring into being what they purport to represent...”

– Jennifer Biddle 2006:64

Biddle, Jennifer L., 'Country, Skin, Canvas: The Intercorporeal Art of Kathleen Petyarre', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol 4, no 1, 2003, pp. 61-76.



Kathleen Petyarre, **Mountain devil lizard Dreaming (with winter sandstorm)**, Utopia, NT, synthetic polymer paint on canvas , 183 cm x 183 cm, Art Gallery of South Australia

Kathleen Petyarre, **Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming**, n.d,
60cm x 60cm Acrylic on Canvas





Kathleen Petyarre , **Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming**, 2009, Acrylic on linen, 180x240cm



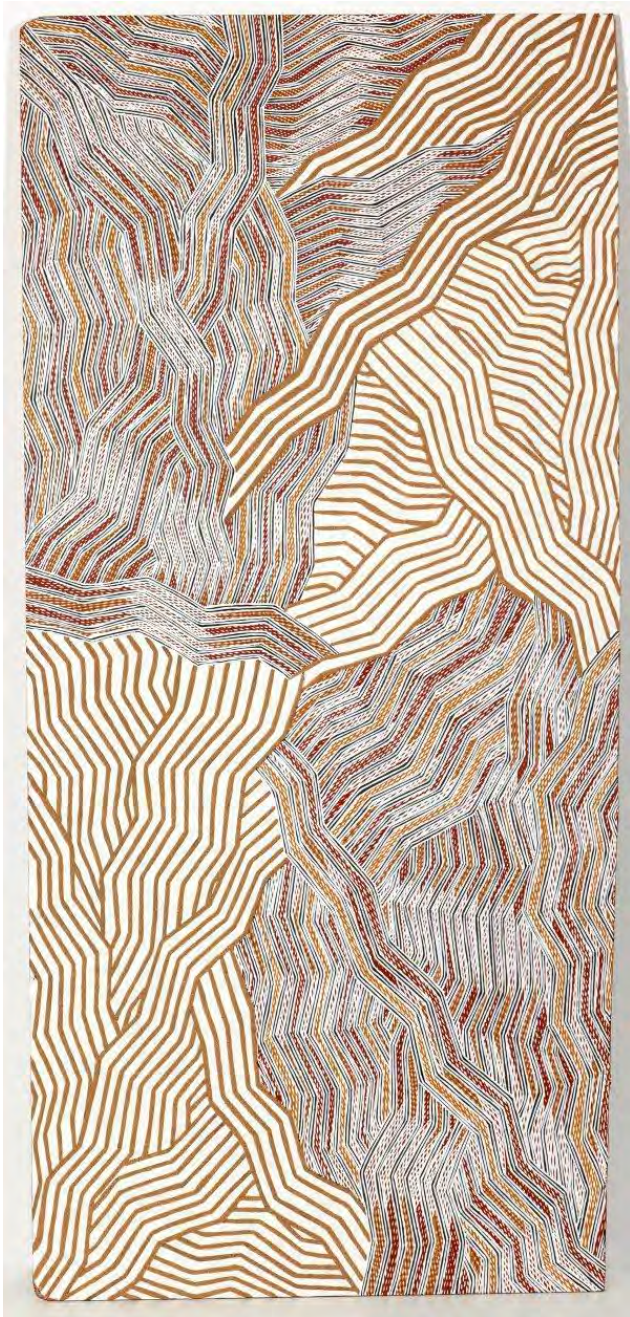
Detail of Kathleen Petyarre's, **Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming**, 2009, Acrylic on linen, 180x240cm

“Petyarre's paintings do not represent the Dreaming. They enact it. Canvas does not serve as a substitute for country but is a performance of country”

– Jennifer Biddle
2006:64

Biddle, Jennifer L.,
'Country, Skin, Canvas:
The Intercorporeal Art
of Kathleen Petyarre',
*Australian and New
Zealand Journal of Art*,
vol 4, no 1, 2003, pp.
61-76.

Art and Kinship



Lamangirra Gumana, Garraparra (2015). natural pigments on board, 121.0 x 56.0 cm. Art Gallery NSW



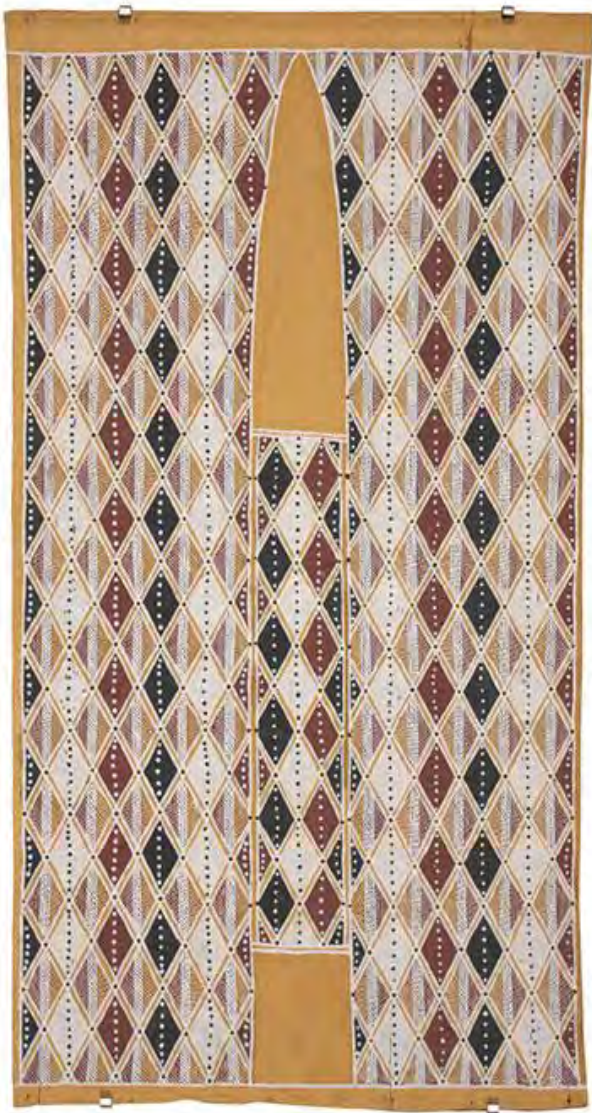


Yolgnu moieties:

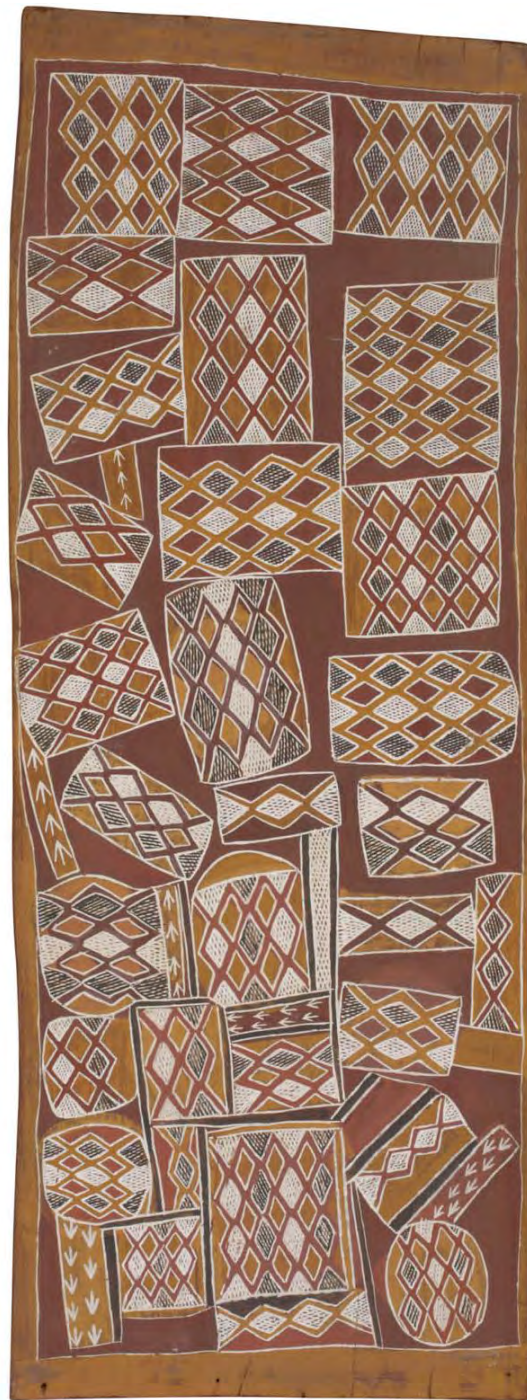
Dhuwa

Yirritja

Mawalan 1 Marika.
Djang'kawu, 'Ancestral
Being of the Dhuwa
Moiety' Carvings 1960.
Art Gallery of New South
Wales Collection, Sydney.



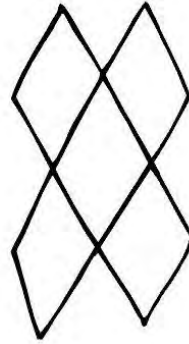
Jimmy Wululu , **Sugarbag Dreaming** (1980s), Daygurrurr clan, National Museum of Australia.



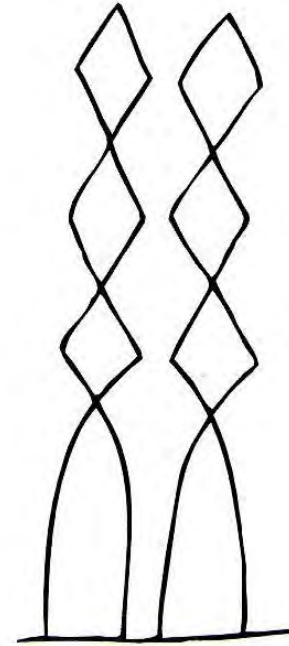
Birrikitji Gumana, **Närra Ceremony** (1966), Dhalwaṅu clan, Licensed by Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre 2013.



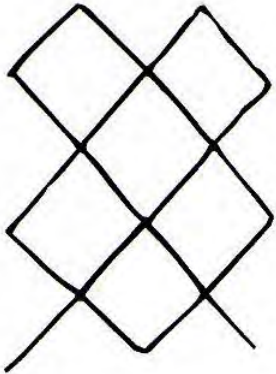
Dhalwangu



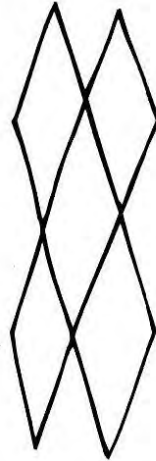
Gumatj



Madarrpa



Munyuku



Yarrwidi

Yirritja moiety clan designs. North-eastern Arnhem Land (NT) from Morphy (2000: 64)



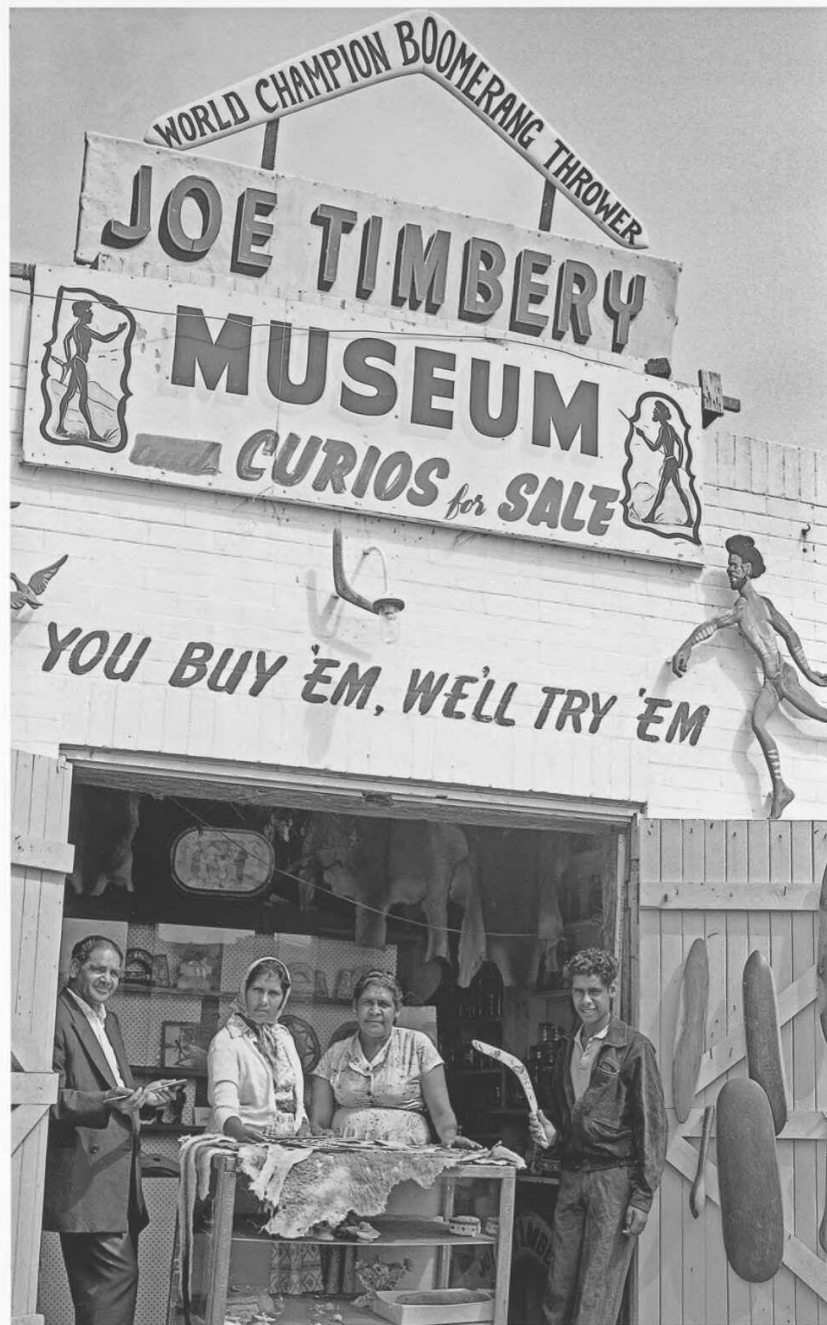
Artist unknown , Miniature shellwork Sydney Harbour Bridge model, made at La Perouse, 1950-1960.
Collection of Power House Museum, Sydney



La Perouse Shellworker Jane Simms, 1929,
Photograph from the missionary newspaper,
United Aborigines Messenger.



Mavis Longbottom and Lola Ryan, **Shell Box** (1986), Power House Museum



Carter, Jeff, **Timbery family standing outside their boomerang shop at the Joe Timbery Museum, La Perouse, New South Wales** (1963); black and white photograph, 41.9 x 26 cm., on sheet 48.4 x 33 cm.



Unknown photographer,
Emma, Queen of La Perouse, Aboriginal Shellwork
(1895), State Library NSW



Esme Timbery, Power House Museum
Castle Hill (2011), Shellworking
workshop, Powerhouse Museum.

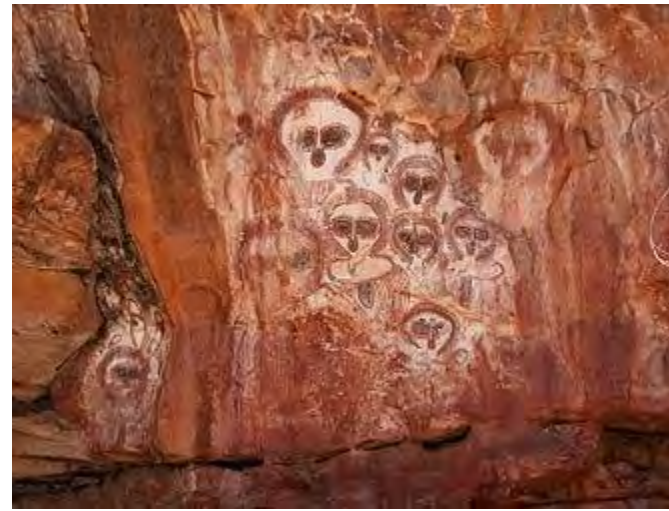


Esme Timbery, Shellworked booties (c.2010) displaying the trademark Timbery starries (white sea shells), fanning out from a central shell, another Timbery trade mark.

Art as Communication: Storytelling and Knowledge Sharing



'Bradshaw rock paintings', north-west Kimberley (WA)



Wandjina figures, Wunnumurra Gorge, Kimberley (WA)



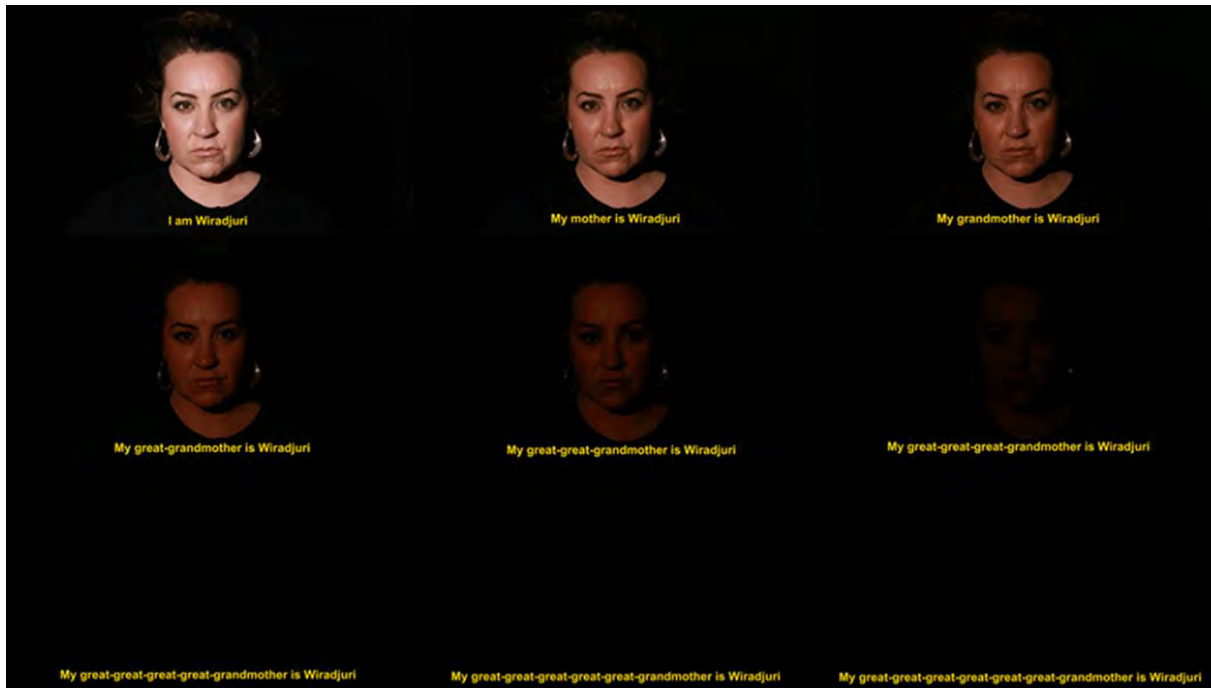
Creator being *Biaime* (NSW) © *Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation*



Balang (Mick) KUBARKKU
Kuninjku, **Dird Djang**
(moon dreaming) (c.1990)
c.1990, natural earth
pigments on eucalyptus
bark, 112.0 h x 90.0 w cm,
NGA, © Balang (Mick)
Kubarkku.

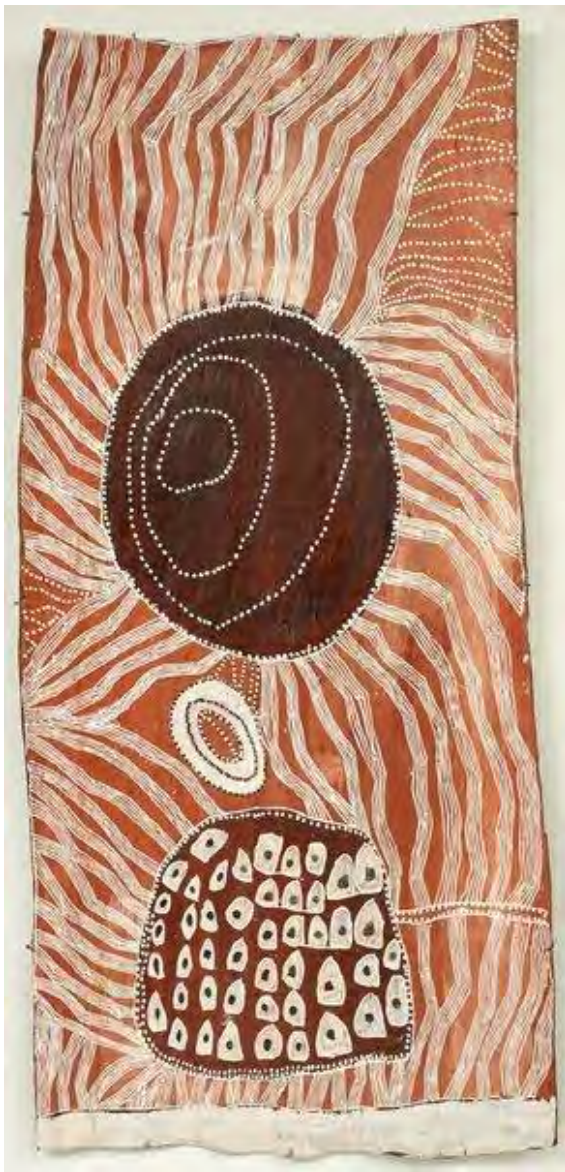
White Kangaroo at
KarbenadjarInglawe,
Kudjekbinj, Arnhem Land
(NT)





Amala Groom, **The Invisibility of Blackness** (2014) single-channel digital video, sound 47s dimensions variable, filmed: Liz Warning. Viewable courtesy of the artist.

Secret and Sacred Knowledge: Or the Inside and Outside Story



- Levels of knowledge
- Story layers:

Simple (Young/Non-Initiates/ No Cultural Business/
Outside)

To

→ Complex (Elders/ Initiates/ Men or Women/Cultural
Business/ Inside)

Nongirrnga Marawili, 2018, **Baratjala**,
natural pigments on bark, 221.0 x
98.0 cm, AGNSW



Arthur Koo-Ekka Pambegan Jr, 1 Jun 2013, QaGOMA

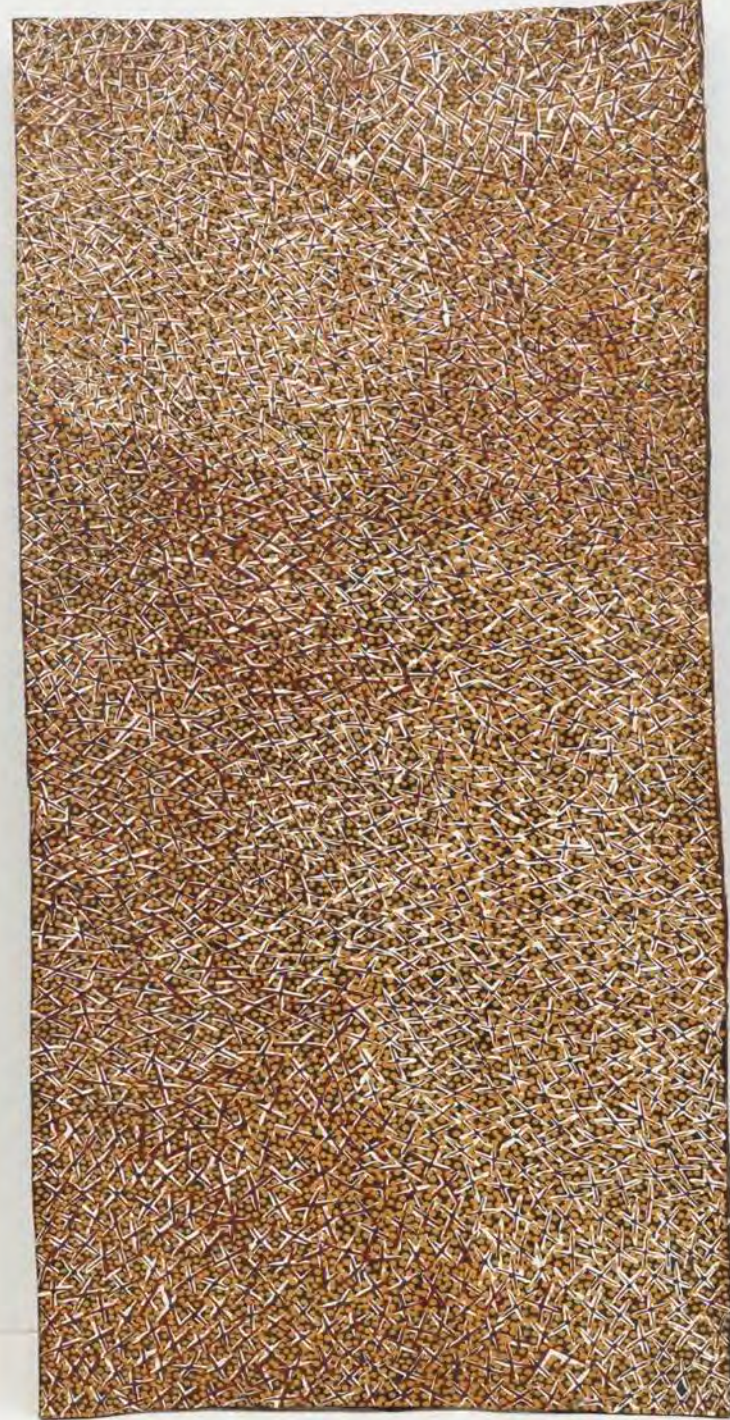
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j39f2Obcitc>



Arthur Koo-Ekka Pambegan Jr, **Flying Fox Story Place** (c.2002-03), Carved Milkwood, Synthetic polymer, natural pigment, sizes various. QAGOMA



Gulumbu Yunupingu - Art + Soul 1, Episode 3



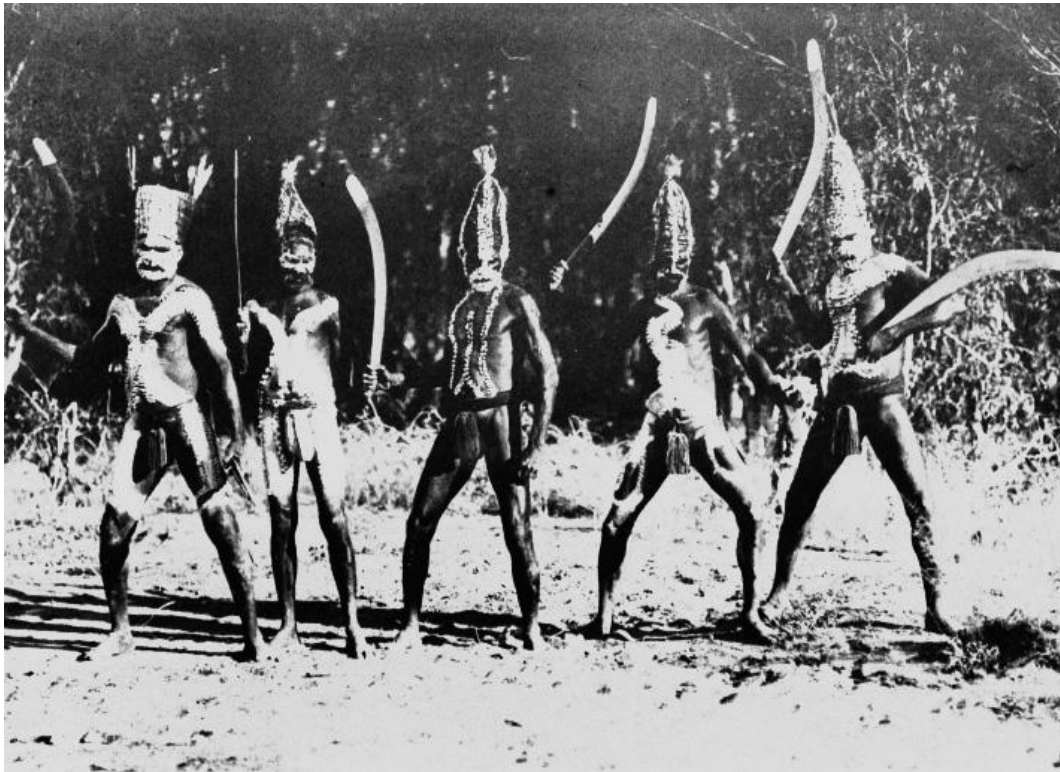
Gulumbu Yunupingu (c.1945 – 09 May 2012, Language group: Gumatj, Arnhem region), *'Garak (The Universe)'*, 2009, natural pigments on bark, 107.0 x 47.0 cm, Purchased with funds provided by the Aboriginal Collection Benefactors' Group 2010

'My story is of the universe... I found the story of the constellations from the sacred songs my father [Munggurrawuy Yunupingu] used to sing...he would start to sing the Djulpan constellation. He would sing those stars. That is the story that came from him. I have left alone the Djulpan constellation. This design came from when I saw the stars in the universe and that is what came to me – lots of stars...The meaning of this I discovered. It occurred to my mind. I saw the universe, this place, the earth, the people and the stars and thought, "we are just like the stars. All gathered close together, we are really as one, like the stars". We are so many living together on the earth and the land, the sea and the sky are a continuum. Like one. These stars are for us to see if we wish, wherever we are...'

- Gulumbu Yunupingu (Perkins, H., 2010, 'Art + Soul: A journey into the world of Aboriginal Art', Melbourne: Miegunyah Press)

Art and Ceremony, Ritual and Performance

Aboriginal people in ceremonial dress pose for a photograph of 'a Corroboree' in the late 19th century (Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – GPO 1 18775)



Yolngu body painting



The Seven Sisters / Pleiades constellation.

NASA, ESA, AURA/Caltech, Palomar Observatory
The science team consists of: D. Soderblom and E. Nelan (STScI), F. Benedict and B. Arthur (U. Texas), and B. Jones (Lick Obs.)



Josephine Mick, Pipalyatjara, **Seven Sisters Songline**(1994).
<http://sevensisterssongline.com/resources/>



NITV, 2017, *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*, watch:
<https://www.facebook.com/NITVAustralia/videos/songlines-tracking-the-seven-sisters/10155050866402005/>



Kuruwarri Sand drawing and Women's body painting
from Watson (2000: 46)

Taphoglyph from near
Dubbo / Henry King
Photo, Sydney
Henry King,
Taphoglyphs
(Aboriginal carved
trees), near Dubbo,
N.S.W., [191-?]
SPF/1153, State
Library NSW.
(http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events/exhibitions/2011/carved_trees/02_wiradjuri_country/image01.html)

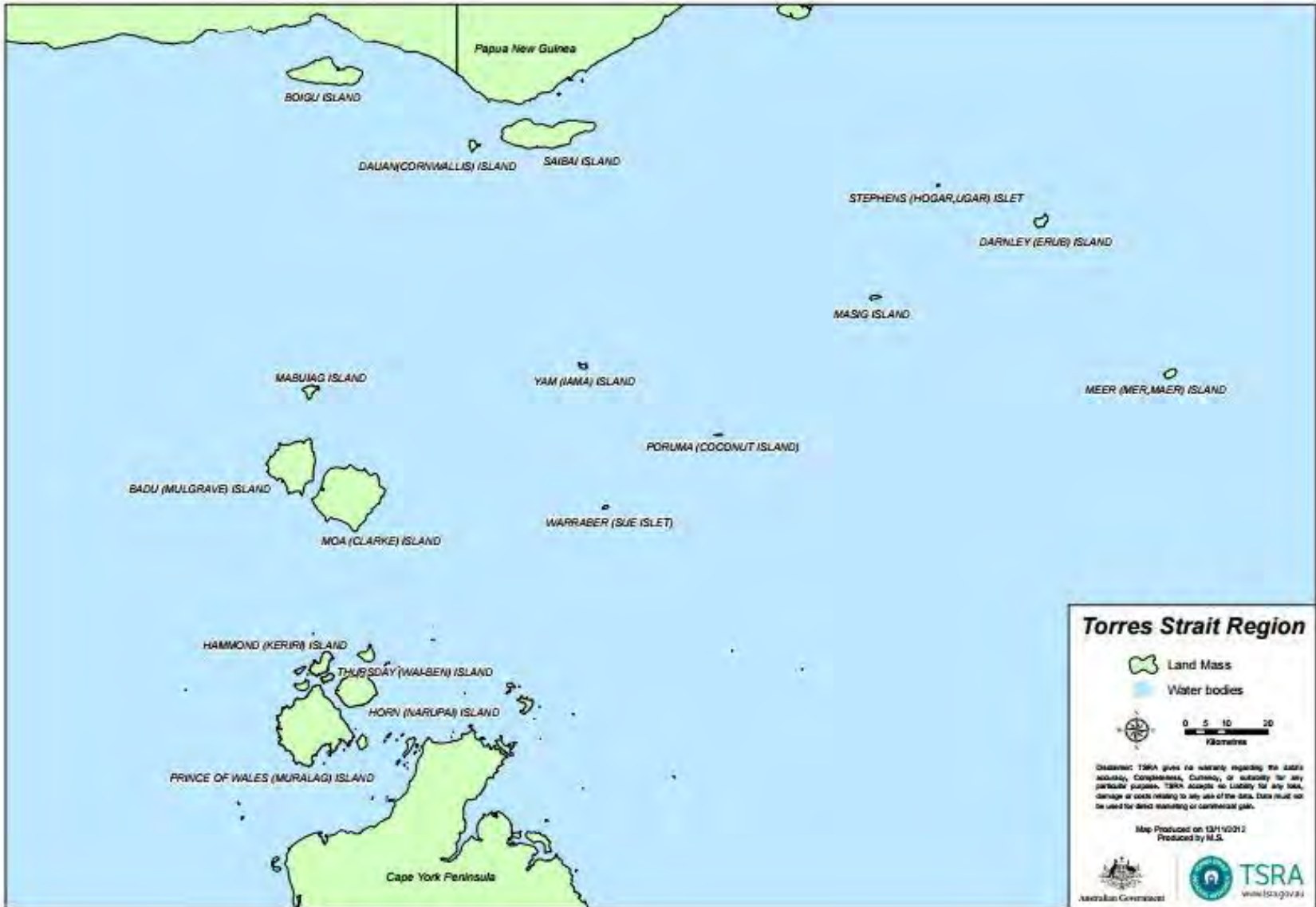




Bora Ground at Banaway [Collymongle], near Mogil Mogil, NSW, c. 1930s–1941, Russell Black, CC Towle collection, State Library NSW



Photographs of Aboriginal rock art and stencil art, stone tools and landscapes, c. 1925–1944, CC (Clifton Cappie) Towle, CC Towle collection, State Library NSW





Pop le-op (turtle-shell mask), Meriam people, collected on Mer (Murray Island) before 1855, 40 cm long. British Museum Oc1855,1220.169.



Maino (?), **Crocodile Dance Mask** (c. pre 1889), 66(L) x 22 (W) x27 (H) cm. British Museum



Torres Strait Islanders (1889)
lead dancer in mask and two
Dari headdress dancers in the
Malu-Bomai Ceremony. Filmed
on the Haddon Exhibition to
Murray Island , Torres Strait.



Ken Thaiday, **Beizam (shark) dance mask** (1996), plywood, bamboo, strong, plastic, paint, glass, feathers. 86.7 x 106.0 x 71.0 cm. AGNSW

Ken Thaiday Snr at Carriage Works:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBjGkT7o0vw>



Art in the Everyday



Possum Skin cloak made as part of the Commonwealth Games Possum Skin Cloak Project. © Banmirra Arts Inc.



National Library of Australia

nla.pic-vn3083075-v

Portrait of unidentified Aboriginal woman wearing a possum skin cloak, carrying a child on her back, South Australia, ca. 1870s. National Library of Australia



Unknown ARTIST
Rainforest people
Australia Unknown – Unknown
Jawun [Bicornual basket]
19th - 20th Century



Dulloom (dillybag), Bundjalung people, collected
from Richmond River by Mary Bundock in the
1870s, 33 x 43 x 2 cm. British Museum
Oc1928,0110.107.



Yvonne Koolmatrjie, **Eel Trap**
(1997), Sedge Rushes, 168.0 x
59.0 x 59.0 cm. AGNSW



Yvonne KOOLMATRIE, **Bi-plane**, (1994), woven sedge grass Ngarrindjeri
coiled basketry, 50.0 h x 113.0 w x 135.0 d cm ; weight 74 kg
NGA

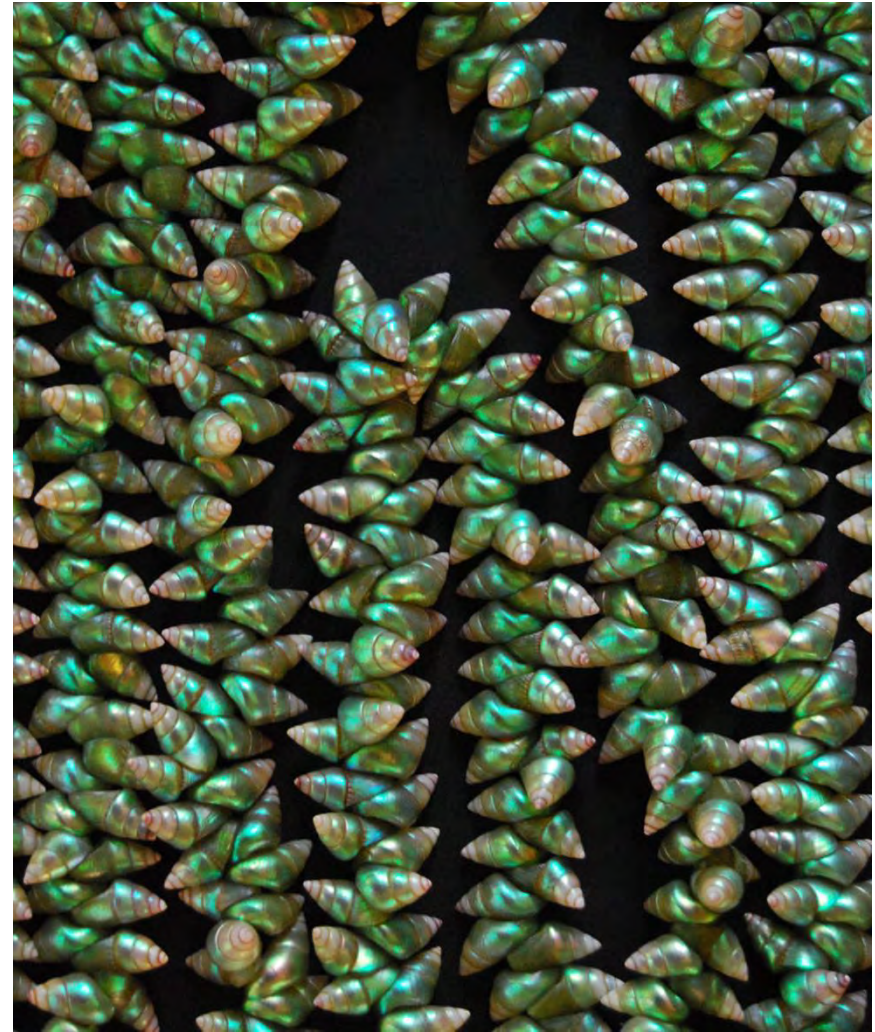


South eastern shields , artists unknown, L:
Melbourne Museum, M: Muséum d'Histoire
Naturelle - La Rochelle, R: Melbourne Museum

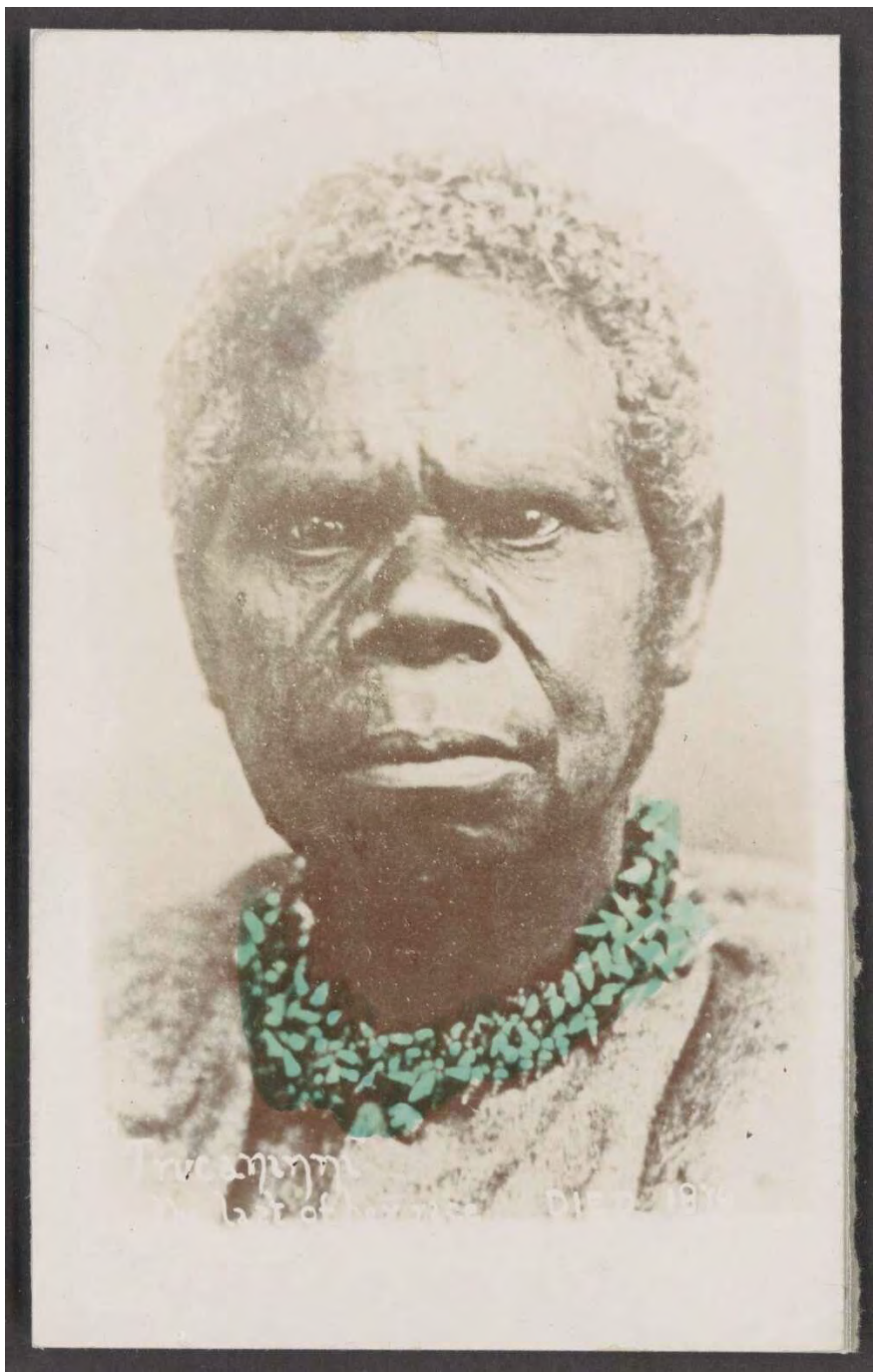
Rainforest Shield. C. 1885, artist unknown, Wood,
pigment. 83.0 (h/l) x 34.5 (w) x 6.5 (d) cm. Macleay
Museum



Dulcie GREENO, **Shell necklace** (1998), Ryes, mariners, black crows, NGA



Maireener shells, strung in spirals: Lola Greeno



C. A. Woolley , **Portrait of Truganini** (1866)
Photograph, painted. National Library of
Australia

10



LOLA GREENO: *Cultural Jewels*

Some of Lola Greeno's almost unwearable necklaces from <http://lolagreeno.blogspot.com.au/p/gallery.html>

11



LOLA GREENO: *Cultural Jewels*

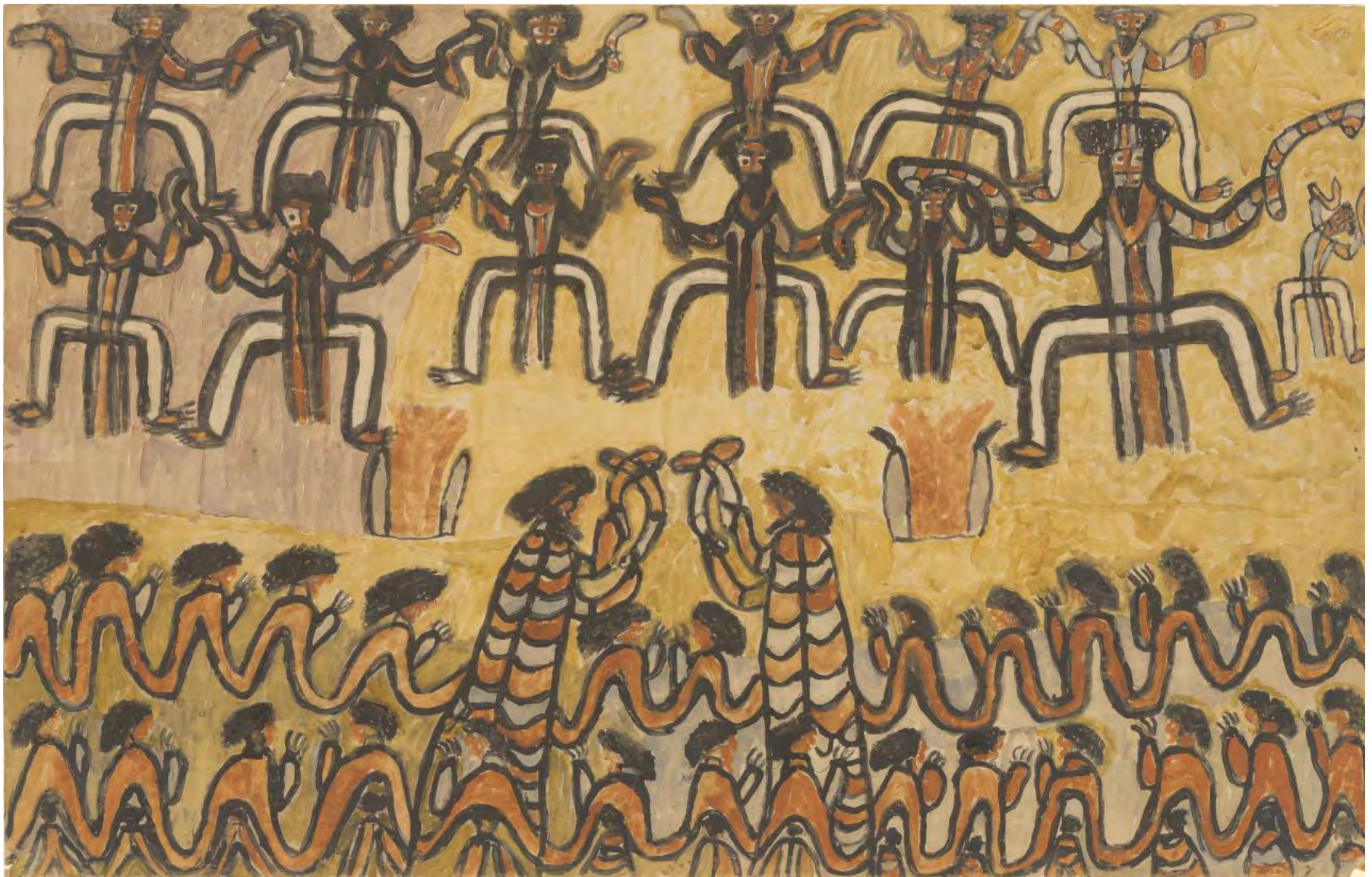
Art and Engagement with the World



Indigenous artist William Barak drawing a corroboree. His drawing position is upright, with his work tacked to the side of a slab hut.

Talm & Co., photographer, circa 1895.
Photograph. State Library of Victoria's Pictures Collection.

<http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/node/1004>



William Barak, **Ceremony** (1898). pencil, wash, ground wash, charcoal solution, gouache and earth pigments on paper. Measurements 57.0 × 88.8 cm (image and sheet) Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

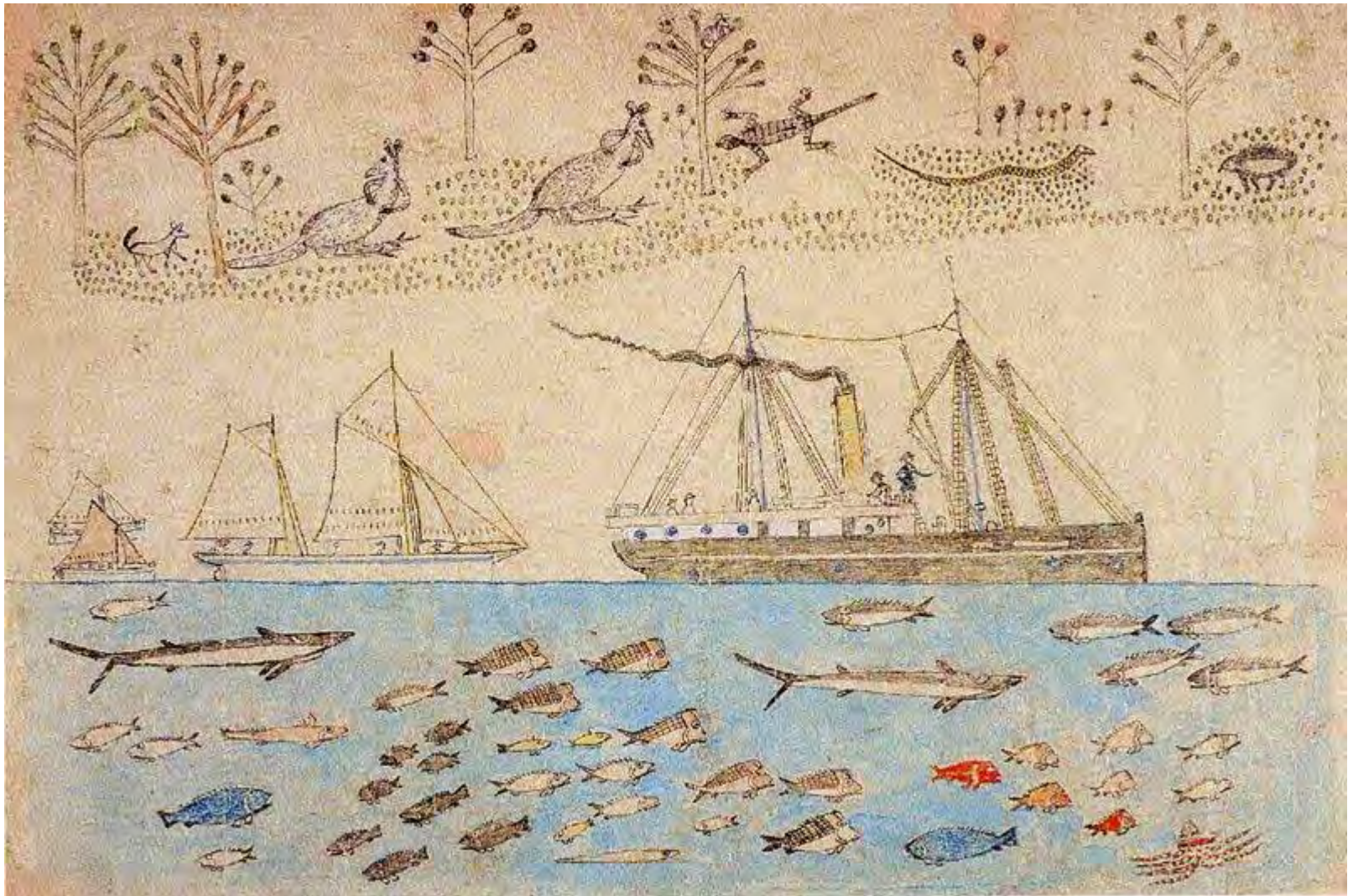
<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/30762/>



William Barak, **Figures in possum skin cloaks** (1898). pencil, wash, charcoal solution, gouache and earth pigments on paper. 57.0 × 88.8 cm (image and sheet).

National Gallery of Victoria,

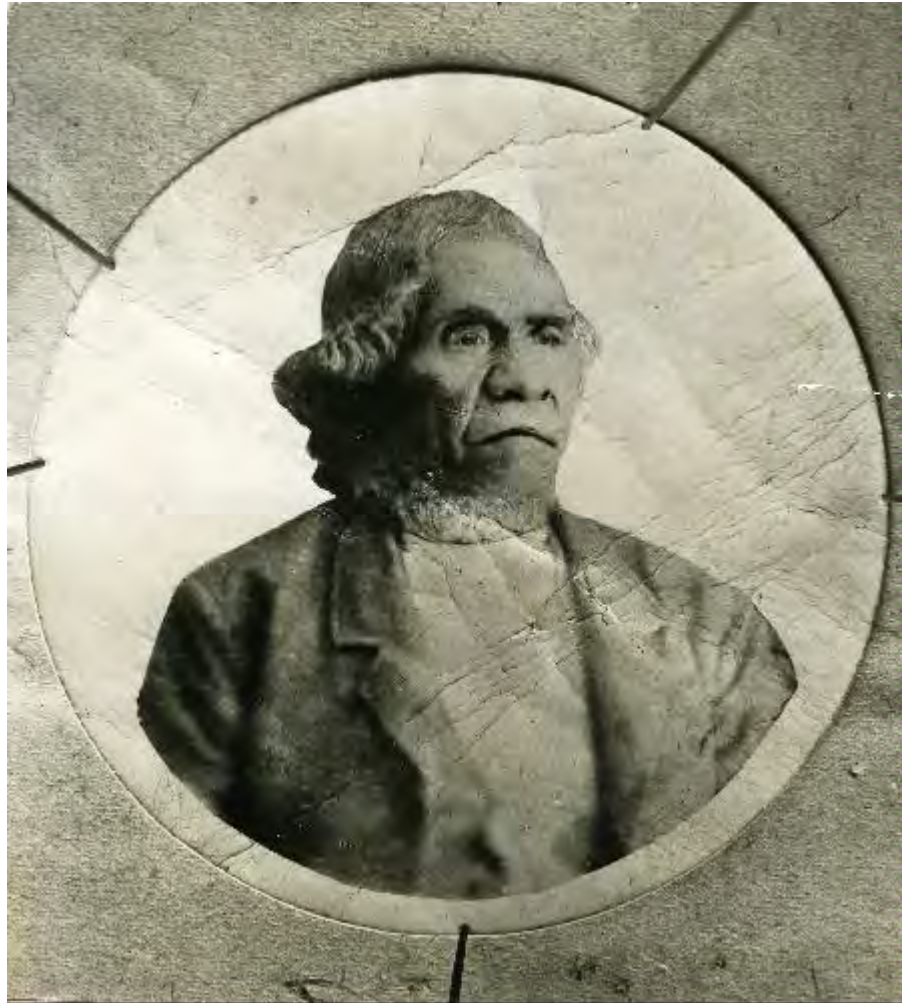
Melbourne <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/26844/>



Mickey of Ulladulla, Ceremony (c.1880s);
Scenes of daily life; native flora and fauna,
Mitchell Library NSW



Mickey of Ulladulla, Scenes of Aboriginal life c1880. Pencil, coloured pencil and water colour on paper, 55.1x74.2cm, Mitchell Library, State Library NSW



(c) Northern Territory Library

hdl:10070/207179

Portrait of Tommy McRae
c.1890s, Northern Territory
Library



Tommy McRae,
**Chinese man,
men fighting
and hunting,
squatter profile,**
(1890), pen and
blue ink, 20.2 x
16.c cm, NGA



Tommy McRae, **Sketch of squatters** (nd), Pen and Ink, 10.7 x 14 cm, Mitchell Library, NSW



Tommy McRae, **Corroboree** (nd), Pen and Ink, 23.3 x 33.6cm,
Mitchell Library NSW



Tommy McRae, **Returning from the hunt** from
Drawings depicting Aboriginal Life (c.1885), pen
and ink, 24.7 x 31.5 cm, Mitchell Library, NSW



“...In most of his drawings it seems as though McRae is looking back to the time of his youth, creating a record of the country he knew before it became someone else’s empire. In McRae’s work the past and the present converge, heralding an uncertain future”

-Hetti Perkins 2010: 176-177



Thank you!