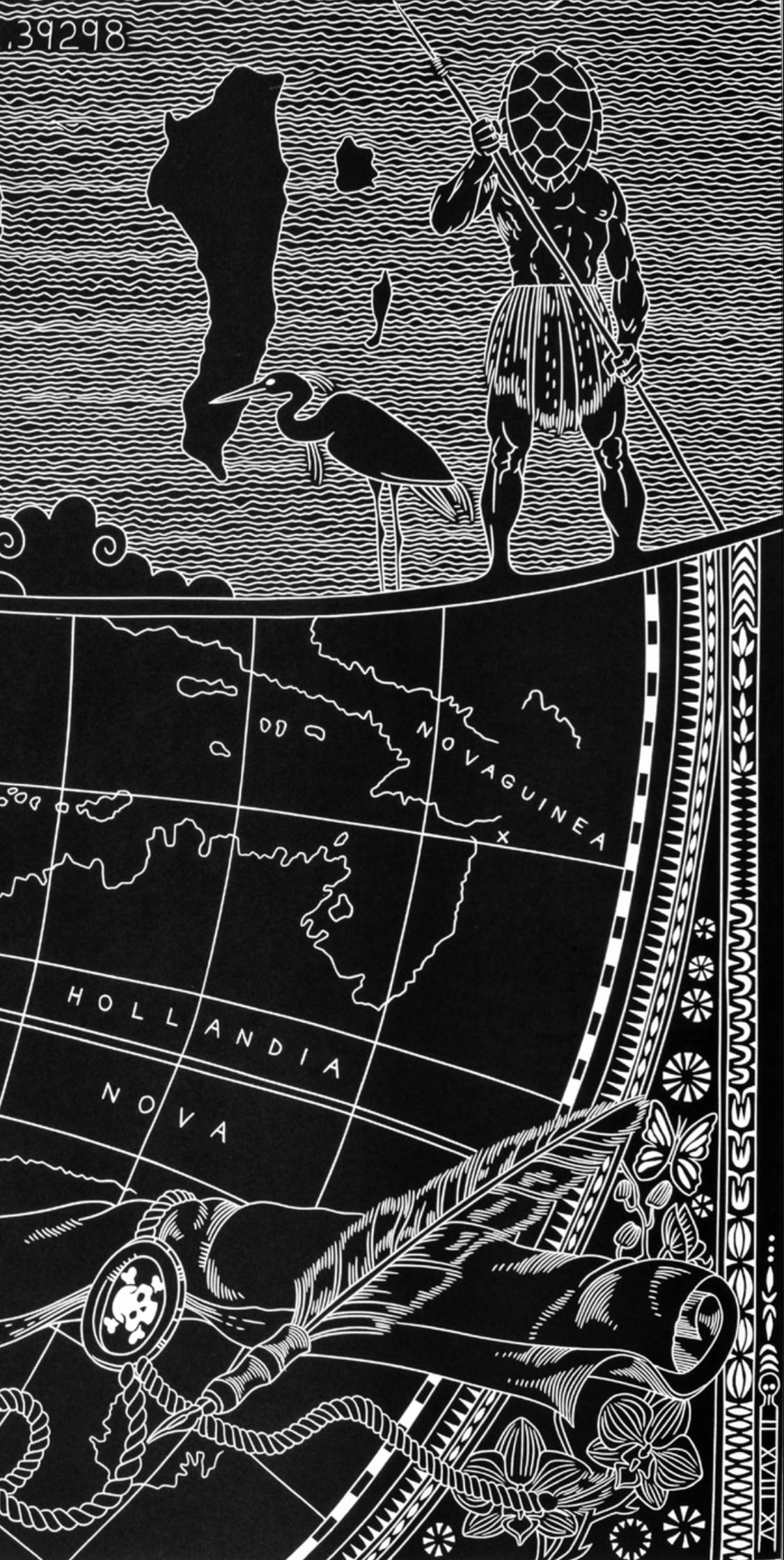


Exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories —
A Geelong Gallery collection resource

Victorian Curriculum

Levels 5 to 10—The Arts (Visual arts)



39298





Acknowledgement of Country



Geelong Gallery acknowledges the Traditional Owners of our land, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Geelong Gallery recognises Aboriginal people as amongst the oldest surviving continuing cultures in the world, having occupied the continent we now refer to as Australia for at least 60,000 years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this resource contains names of deceased people.



Indigenous art from the collection



Geelong Gallery has the beginnings of a fine and focussed representation of Indigenous Australian art that reveals the cultural and aesthetic diversity of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. In careful and considered ways the Gallery intends to continue to develop its representation of Indigenous Australian art to honour the vital creative practices and visual traditions through which we are invited to see different visions of Country, and to ensure the diverse histories of Australian art and artists are made accessible to our audience.

Introductory text,
Beginnings—
Indigenous art from the collection,
Geelong Gallery, 2018

Brian Robinson
Bedhan Lag: Land of the Kaiwalagal 2019
linocut; edition 5/10
(printed by Theo Tremblay,
Editions Tremblay)
Geelong Gallery
Ursula Hoff Institute award, 2019
Courtesy of the artist
Photographer: Michael Marzik



About this resource

This education resource examines key works in the Gallery's collection made in artistic centres throughout Australia including Utopia, Haasts Bluff, the Kimberley region and Torres Strait Islands.

Teachers are provided with practical insights into artworks with questions for viewing, research topics and art-making activities to promote visual analysis and foster critical and creative thinking across the different learning areas. Students are encouraged to consider how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, shape visual arts practice.

Curriculum links

Victorian Curriculum levels 5 to 10—
The Arts (Visual arts)

Explore and express ideas, visual arts practices,
present and perform, respond and interpret.

This resource also promotes the four capabilities
within the Victorian Curriculum F–10; Critical and
Creative Thinking; Intercultural; Personal and
Social; and Ethical Capability.

Learning objectives

- Analyse and interpret themes, concepts and ideas in artworks included in the resource and discuss how they are expressed
- Discuss how artists use different materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise the intentions in their artworks
- Discuss important influences on artist style and art making
- Identify and connect specific aspects of different artists work to a wider historical, cultural and social context.
- Identify and connect specific aspects of artist's work to a wider historical, cultural and social context.
- All teachers must follow the relevant protocols when teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. For advice, please follow the link to the Department of Education and Training's [*Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols for Victorian and Government Schools*](#).

Educators—Learning activities

The activities outlined throughout this resource can be tailored to suit specific learning needs, please contact us at info@geelonggallery.org.au if you require more specific lesson plans or ideas.

The works included in this resource are part of the Gallery's collection and may not be on current display.



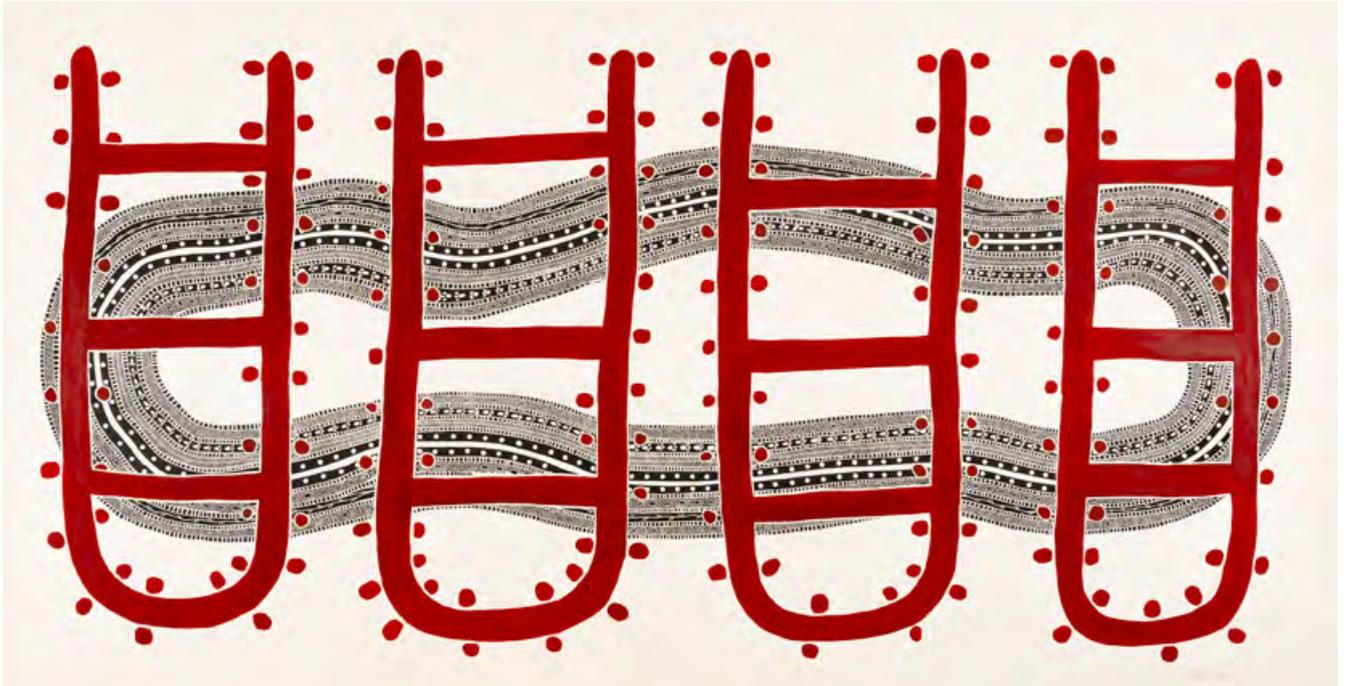
Teho Ropeyarn

Born 1988, Mount Isa, Queensland

Community: Injinoo

Clan Group: Angkamuthi and Yadhaykana (Northern Cape York)

Themes: printmaking, reconciliation, bloodlines, Injinoo community, totems and traditional designs



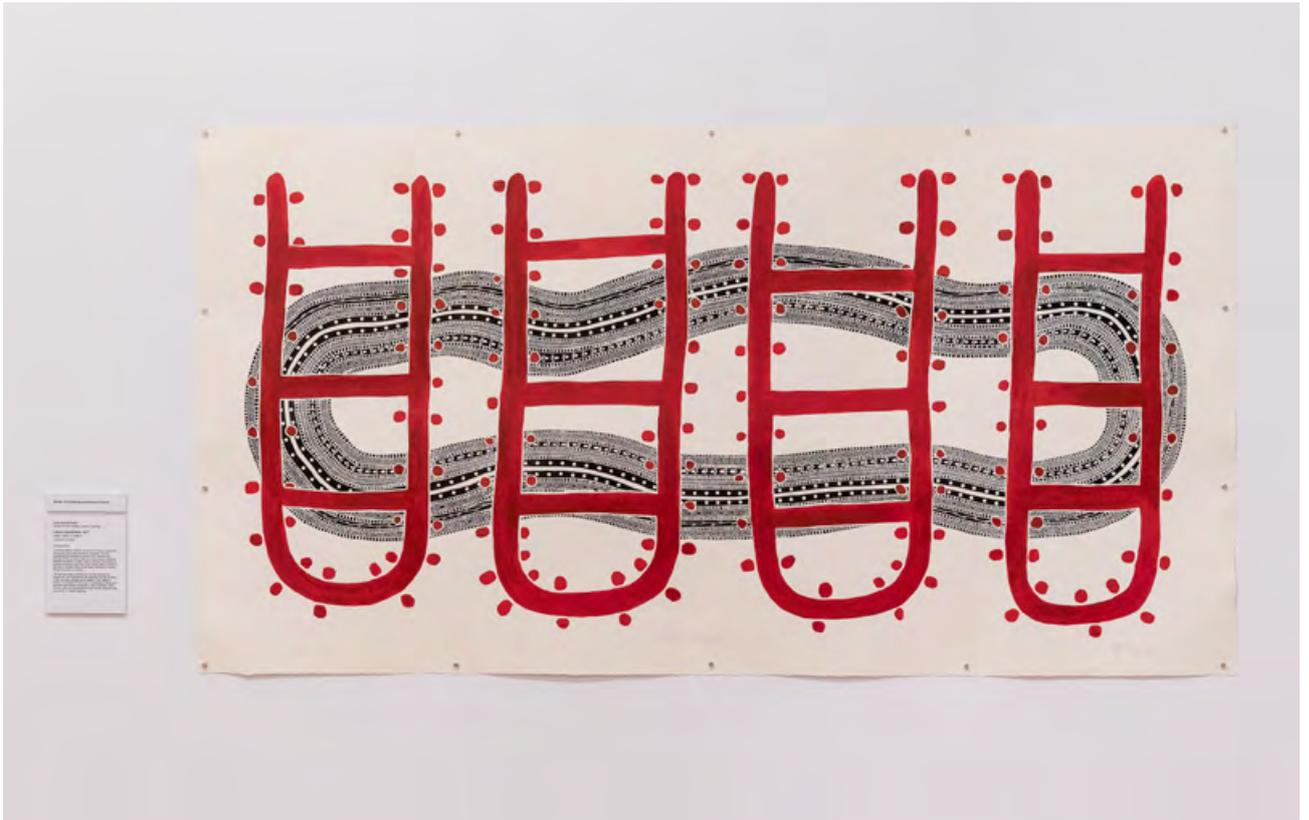
Artist statement

Lukuyn Apudthama refers to the blood connection maintained through the Injinoo Ikyā Aboriginal language. The work emphasises the ancestral connection that maintains the strength of the four Injinoo clans who have lived on traditional lands for thousands of years. Injinoo is home to the traditional owners of Northern Cape York: from Captain Billy's Landing on the East, to Skardon River on the West, and Pajinka to the North (the tip of mainland Australia).

The vast land mass is divided into four clan groups: the Angkamuthi, the Yadhaykana, the Atambaya and the Gudang. These four clans willingly came together in the 1900s at Injinoo to live together in harmony. It is believed to be the only recorded reconciliation movement in early Australian history. The four clans are represented through the four large red male ceremonial 'U' shaped markings.

The spirit stream depicted contains the four main totems from each clan, and designs representing the environment of Injinoo traditional lands, including its freshwater and saltwater areas. The four main totems are: the Uwinthyn—the freshwater turtle of the Angkamuthi nation; the Utaga—the dingo of the Atambaya nation; the Ikambala—the crocodile of the Yadhaykana nation; and the Urruvu—the land goanna of the Gudang nation. The designs of the four main totems are featured in the spirit stream as tracks made by, or patterning on, an animal.

Teho Ropeyarn
Lukuyn Apudthama 2017
vinylcut; edition 1/5 (state II)
(printed by Theo Tremblay,
Editions Tremblay)
Geelong Gallery
Geelong acquisitive print awards
(winner), 2019
Courtesy of the artist
Photographer: Andrew Curtis



Explore

Injinoo (also known as Cowal Creek or Small River) is one of the five communities forming the Northern Peninsula Area in the northern most region of Cape York in far north Queensland. Locate the area on a map and research the history, culture and reconciliation movement of the four clan groups.

Discuss

What does the title of the artwork tell you about the meaning or intention of the work?

Why is it important for us to understand diverse cultures and identities in Australia?

Look closely at the artwork. Can you see how the artist has incorporated the four main totems for each clan in his design?

Create

Family plays an important role in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's lives—create a symbol or design that represents your own family and draw your image onto a vinyl relief plate (Japanese vinyl) with a thin permanent black marker. Once your design is finished, cut it out using a lino cutting tool and then print onto paper (250gsm) using ink.



Katarra Nampitjinpa

Born, c. 1940, Died 1998
Language group: Pintupi

Themes: Western Desert painting, pattern, design, colour, ceremonial sites and places of significance



Katarra Nampitjinpa began painting on the first part of the Minyma Tjukurrpa' Kintore Haasts Bluff painting project in 1994. The same year, she became actively involved with the Kintore batik project organised by Jill Squire and Therese Honan who were employed by the Aboriginal Education Unit of the Department of Education. Katarra moved to Haasts Bluff in late 1994 where she produced paintings on canvas for the Ikuntji Women's Centre. Ikuntji was established in 1992 and is situated in the unique and striking landscape of the west MacDonnell Ranges.

Explore

Katarra Nampitjinpa was an important Pintupi artist who originally painted with the Papunya Tula artists. As a class, research painter and teacher, Geoffrey Bardon, and the history of the Papunya Tula arts movement and discuss your findings.

Katarra Nampitjinpa was a member of the Kintore batik project; research the project and the batik technique—a traditional wax-resist dying technique that originated from Indonesia.

Discuss

Ikuntji artists are known for their striking use of bold colours and traditional use of symbols and motifs. Discuss how Nampitjinpa uses colour, pattern and shape in her painting.

Discuss the role of art in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—look at the different forms of art, such as ceremonial art, body painting and art created for public viewing.

Create

Create your own artwork inspired by the batik project Katarra Nampitjinpa used as part of the Kintore batik project. Create a design that represents your own personal symbols or story by following the steps below:

1. Draw your designs onto cotton fabric using a craft glue.
2. Paint over your cotton fabric using two bold colours.
3. Allow the paint to dry and then peel off the glue to reveal your design.



Brian Robinson

Born 1973, Waiben (Thursday Island)
Community: Moa and Wuthathi tribal groups
Language groups: Kala Lagaw Ya and Torres Strait Creole

Themes: printmaking, Torres Strait Islands, First Fleet, colonisation, land rights, traditional designs and popular culture



Artist statement

It is ironic that the place of possession for the Australian Mainland was a small island, a place called Bedhan Lag. From this island all of Australia's recent land control battles started. In 1770 Lieutenant James Cook sailed northwards along the east coast of Australia in the Endeavour. At Bedhan Lag (Possession Island) he once more hoisted English colours and in the name of His Majesty King George III took possession of the whole Eastern Coast under the name of New South Wales.

The Kaurareg people of the Kaiwalagal nation have maintained links with Bedhan Lag through traditional lore and customs since *Bipotaim*, the time before. The Kaurareg people continue to live on or close to their traditional country, despite forced removal to Moa Island in 1922, and make use of the land and sea resources, according to their traditional customs and knowledge.

Explore

As a class, locate Bedhan Lag. Research the history and culture of the Kaurareg people who have inhabited the land for thousands of years.

Discuss

The artist represents imagery from both western popular culture and his Torres Strait Islander heritage—describe what imagery you can see in this artwork.

What do you believe the artist is trying to say in this artwork, why?

Printmaking is a popular art form for contemporary Torres Strait Islands artists. Discuss why you believe artists are drawn to this art-making process.

Create

Brian Robinson's linocut is representative of the distinctive style that has emerged from the Torres Strait Islands since these artists began printmaking in the mid-1980s. The detailed designs are generally printed in black ink on white paper and draw on motifs and carving techniques traditionally used to decorate functional items and ceremonial objects. Research a traditional pattern or design in your own culture to create your own linocut design.

Brian Robinson
Bedhan Lag: Land of the Kaiwalagal 2019
linocut; edition 5/10
(printed by Theo Tremblay,
Editions Tremblay)
Geelong Gallery
Ursula Hoff Institute award, 2019
Courtesy of the artist
Photographer: Michael Marzik



Queenie McKenzie

Born c. 1915, Died 1998,
Texas Downs Station, East Kimberley, Western Australia
Language group: Gija Kimberley region

Themes: painting, geographical landmarks, Kimberley region
and spiritual connection to landscape



Queenie McKenzie's approach to painting was distinctive for its lateral or profile view of the landscape. Her colourful and undulating compositions depict the rugged hills of her home Country at Texas Downs Station, East Kimberley and Warmun in Western Australia, where she lived in her later years. McKenzie's works include multiple locations, drawing audiences into a dynamic visual history of her life. The underlying narratives of her works pertain to her feeling for, and knowledge of, sacred lands. Her paintings depict specific geographical landmarks prompting an appreciation of her physical and spiritual connection to the landscape.

Explore

Within the Kimberley region of Western Australia there are many distinct artistic styles. Research the history of Aboriginal art from this area and new contemporary styles led by artists such as Paddy Jamanji and Rover Thomas.

Discuss

As a class, compare the similarities and differences in subject matter, region, underlying themes, materials, mediums and style used in Queenie McKenzie's painting *Untitled* (1994) with Gloria Tamerre Petyarre's painting *Mountain Devil Dreaming* (2003).

Create

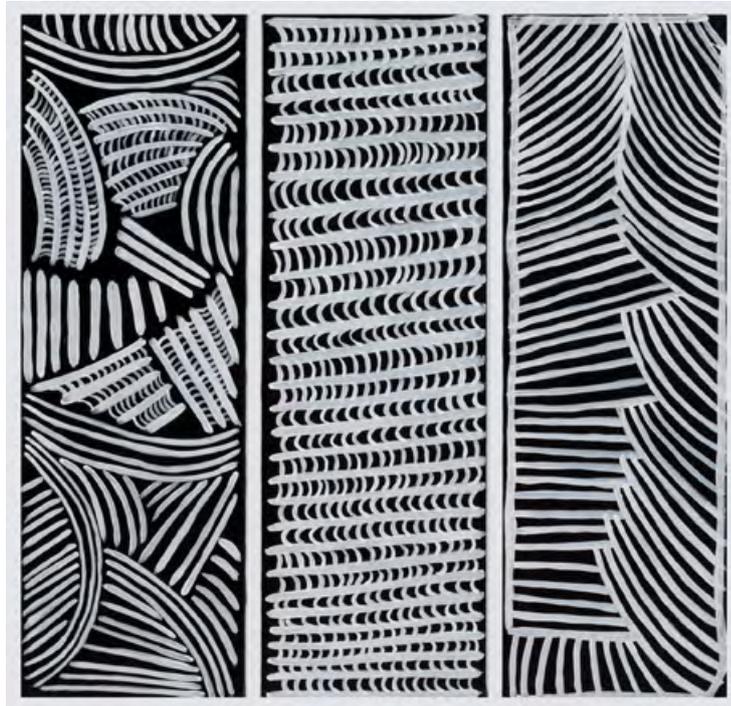
Ochre is the name given to a family of natural earth pigments which McKenzie uses as a painting medium in her artwork. Pigments (colours) are derived from crushing or grinding rock and clay and then adding water. Design and make your own painting using natural materials from your environment such as clay, rock and plants. Present your artworks to the class and discuss your choice of materials.



Gloria Tamerre Petyarre

Born 1942, Mosquito Bore, Utopia, Northern Territory
Language group: Anmatyerre

Themes: painting, Utopia, Dreamtime, ceremonial and ancestral totems



The panels in Gloria Tamerre Petyarre's work represent Awelye and the ceremonial body paint design associated with the Mountain Devil Dreaming in Atnangkere Country. In women's ceremony, these designs are painted onto the chests, breasts, shoulders and arms with ochres.

One of Petyarre's most significant Dreamtime stories is that of Arnkerrthe, the Mountain Devil Lizard. Arnkerrthe travelled over Petyarre's country creating people, sacred sites, songs and stories. The Dreamtime story says that in its neck Arnkerrthe holds a sack of ochre which Petyarre and her people use for ceremonies. These panels exemplify Petyarre's unique design of brush stroke swirls to represent the thorny skin on the back of the lizard.

Explore

Artworks with strong ceremonial associations from this region are based on stories and knowledge that is passed down through families—it is a way to communicate meaning and ideas about important cultural and spiritual beliefs. Petyarre's painting *Mountain devil dreaming* represents a Dreamtime story of the Mountain Devil Lizard (Thorny Lizard) and is the ancestral totem for Petyarre's family. Research the Mountain Devil Lizard and its importance to the Anmatyerre community. Discuss your findings as a class.

Discuss

As a class, discuss the meaning of Dreamtime in Aboriginal culture.

Do you know of any other Dreamtime stories?

What lessons might Dreamtime stories teach us?

Create

The artist has used a unique design to represent her own important cultural and spiritual beliefs passed down from her family—explore your own family heritage, religion, social and cultural beliefs as inspiration for an artwork. Experiment with symbolism, pattern and composition.

Gloria Petyarre
Mountain devil dreaming 2003
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Gift of Jim Cousins AO and
Libby Cousins, 2017
© Gloria Petyarre licensed by
Aboriginal Artists Agency
Photographer: Andrew Curtis



Pre-visit information

Learn offers a range of tours, talks, lectures and activities covering a range of themes across the curriculum relating to the Gallery's permanent collections and temporary exhibitions. To gain the maximum benefit from your visit to the Gallery we suggest that Educators visit the Gallery in advance and view the relevant exhibition or discuss the works with a Gallery Educator. If visiting the Gallery is not possible, please ensure all online resources are utilised.

Getting to the Gallery

Geelong Gallery is located in Johnstone Park. The entrance is at 55 Little Malop Street, in Geelong's arts precinct.

Travelling by train

A three-minute walk through Johnstone Park to the Gallery.

Travelling by bus

Arrangements for bus parking can be made with your Gallery booking.

To help us conserve works in Geelong Gallery's renowned collection for current visitors and future generations to enjoy, we recommend the following:

- Prior to your visit, Educators/supervisors to brief students on appropriate behaviour in the Gallery (e.g. walking in the Gallery, listening to instructions and not touching the exhibits)
- Students should take care entering and leaving the building from and to the bus
- Food and drinks are not allowed inside the Gallery
- Please consider other visitors
- Educators to accompany their group at all times during their visit
- Stools and clipboards are available for student use
- Only pencils are to be used in the Gallery

Bookings

Bookings are essential for all Learn programs and group visits:

T 03 5229 3645

An entry fee of \$5 per student will apply to school groups wishing to visit Geelong Gallery and experience a tour led by a Gallery Educator.

Self-directed school groups may visit the Gallery free-of-charge.

Gallery Educator tours are offered on weekdays during school terms only.

Gallery Geelong

55 Little Malop Street
Geelong VIC 3220 Australia
T 03 5229 3645
E info@geelonggallery.org.au

Conditions of entry

Please refer to the Geelong Gallery website for the COVID-19 safe Conditions of entry.

Thank you

Thanks to the South Western Victoria Region, Koorie Education Officers from the Department of Education and Training who have supported the implementation of this resource.

This resource is supported by Department of Education and Training Strategic Partnership Program



Brian Robinson
Bedhan Lag: Land of the Kaiwalagal
(detail) 2019
linocut; edition 5/10
(printed by Theo Tremblay,
Editions Tremblay)
Geelong Gallery
Ursula Hoff Institute award, 2019
Courtesy of the artist
Photographer: Michael Marzik



