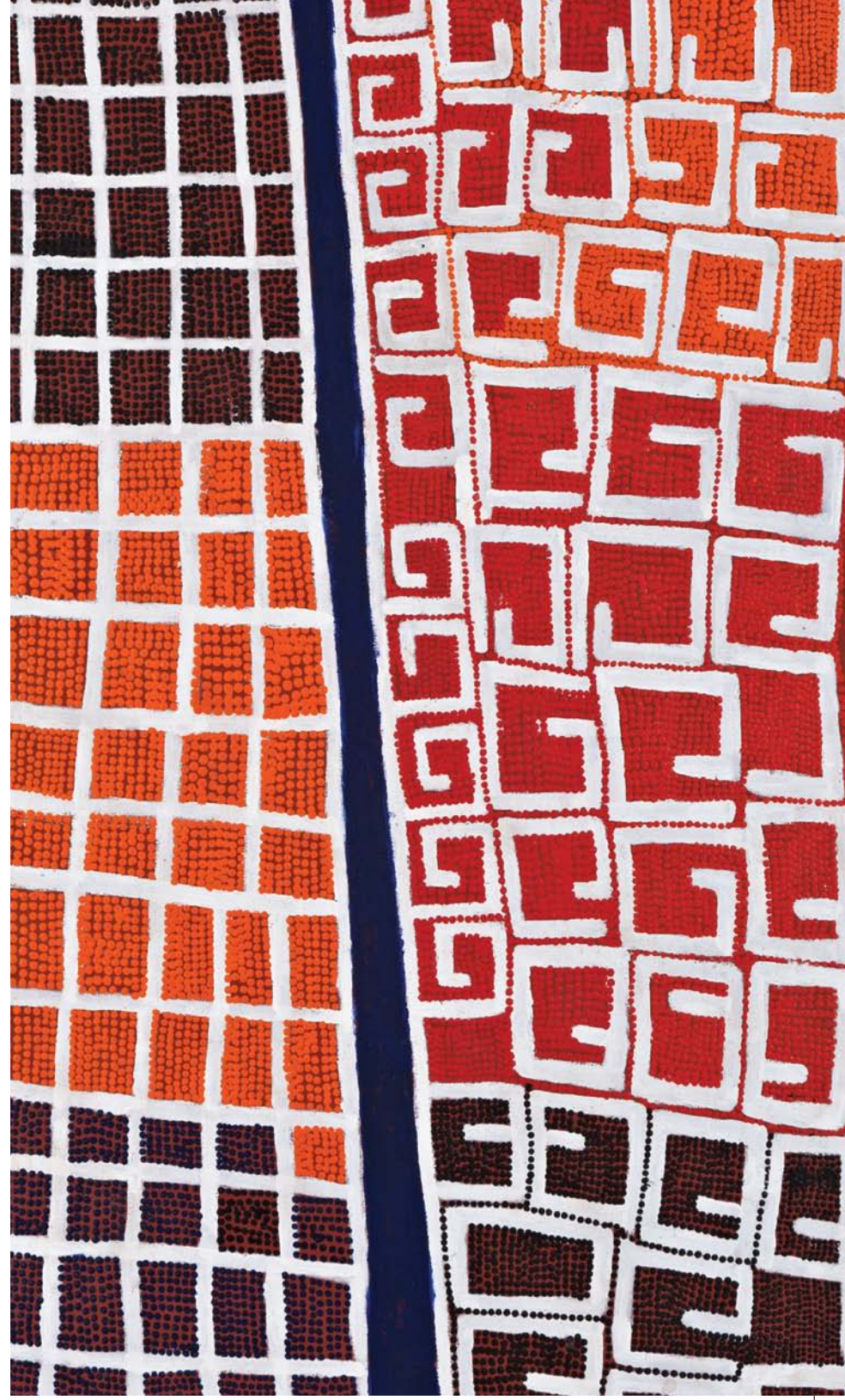


# AN ARCHITECTS EYE

The John Mainwaring Collection



Published in 2012 by JMA Architects and Noosa Regional Gallery, Sunshine Coast Council.

Address:

Riverside, Pelican Street, Tewantin

Locked Bag 72, Sunshine Coast Mail Centre, Qld 4560

Telephone: 07 5449 5340

Email: gallery.noosa@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Opening Hours: Open Wednesday to Sunday,  
10.00am–4.00pm. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

© Artwork, the Artist

© Photographs, John Mainwaring Architects

© Catalogue Foreword, John Waldron

© Catalogue Essay, Dr Maura Reilly

© Catalogue Essay, Diane Moon

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced without prior written permission of the copyright owners. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Noosa Regional Gallery.

Project Team

Gallery Director

Lead Curator

Assistant Curator

Catalogue Essay

Gallery Curator

Exhibitions Officer

Public Program Officer

Creative

Designers

Photography

Printing

John Waldron, Sunshine Coast Council

Dr Maura Reilly

Gail Cowley

Dr Maura Reilly

Nina Shadforth

Nicole Maggs

Julie Hauritz

Marty Towers | Think Creative Design

Jack Towers and Kristen Rodenbush | Think Creative Design

Mick Richards Photography

Printcraft

National Library of Australia

ISBN 978-0-9805736-4-0

Published for the Exhibition *An Architect's Eye: The John Mainwaring Collection*,  
at the Noosa Regional Gallery, 22 March to 6 May 2012.

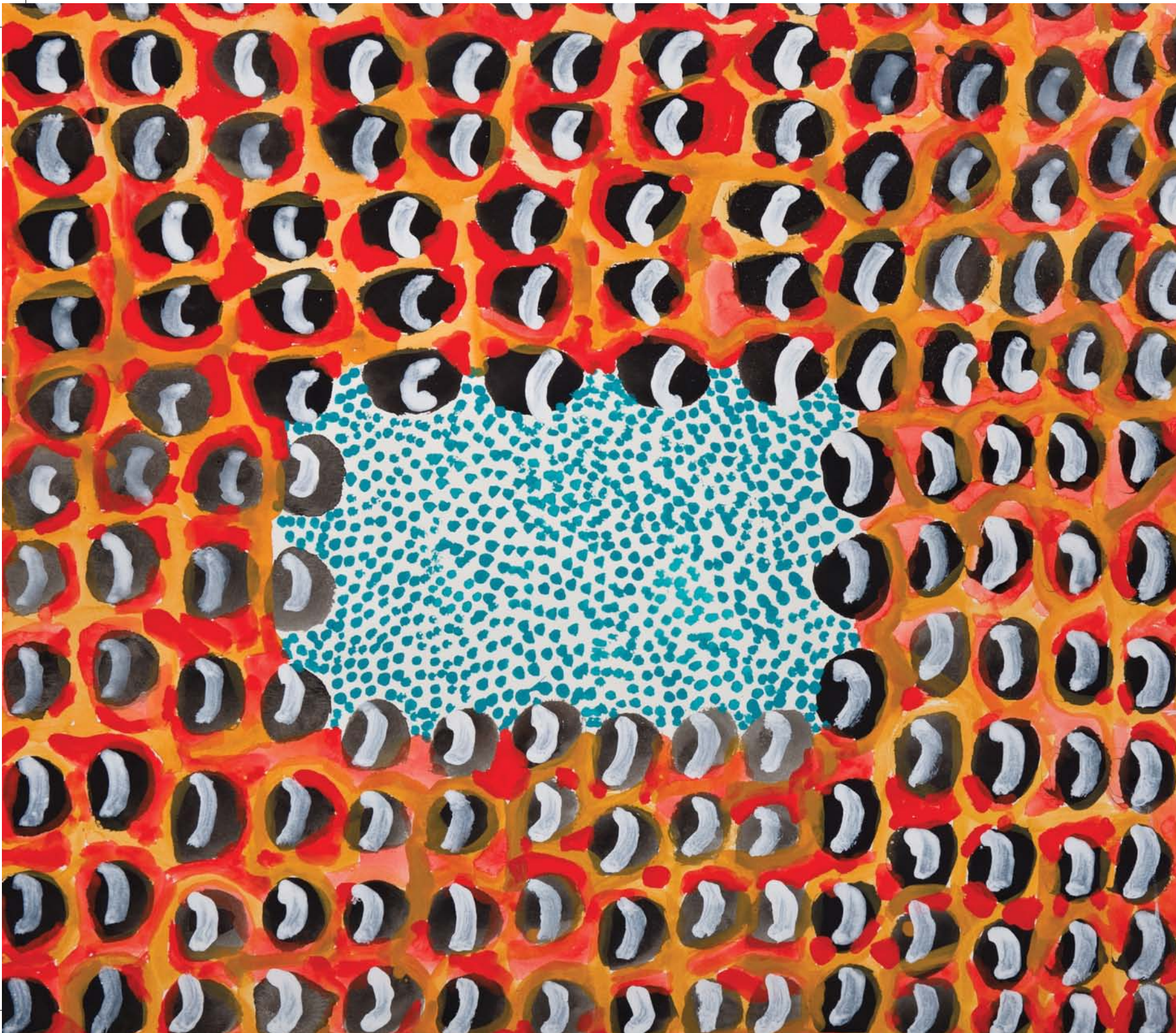
# AN ARCHITECTS EYE

The **John Mainwaring** Collection

J M A  
A R C H I T E C T S

Sunshine Coast  
Council

NOOSA REGIONAL  
GALLERY



## WITH THANKS

Gabi Gabi – the traditional owners of the land on which this exhibition takes place; Peter Leeds – exhibition panels; Tom Kanshanasinith – design assistant; Penny Campbell – Studio 969; Garth Hollindale – partner JMA; Tracey Moffatt – initial concept; My children – Christina, Jonathan and Grace

In loving memory of my nephew Andrew Forsyth



# CONTENTS

**8: FOREWORD** by John Waldron

**9: INTRODUCTION** by Suzanne O'Connell

**10: MORE THAN JUST PRETTY PICTURES:  
AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MAINWARING**  
by Maura Reilly

**32: BARK PAINTINGS AND ETCHINGS  
FROM ARNHEM LAND** by Diane Moon

**THE COLLECTION**

## Foreword

John Waldron

The Noosa Regional Gallery is proud to present *An Architect's Eye: The John Mainwaring Collection*. John Mainwaring is a well-known figure in Australian architecture. He has received many citations and commendations for his work from all aspects of the industry. His work has been published extensively, including in South East Asia, France, Spain, England, Japan, Germany and Italy. He has been involved with many buildings in East Queensland and in particular the Sunshine Coast where, as a passionate Noosa local since the early 1970s, he has first hand understanding of the region's unique environment, history and culture.

Over time, John has amassed an extraordinary collection of mostly contemporary Aboriginal art. This selection is the first public display from the collection. Throughout the exhibition Lead Curator Dr Maura Reilly has investigated the relationship between the art collection and John's architectural vision and practice. The work of Aboriginal artists such as Gloria Petyarre, Sally Gabori, Janangoo Butcher Cherel, Terry Ngamandara Wilson and others have helped formulate the tectonics of John's buildings and their surroundings, helping to give them their distinct shape, scale, texture and warmth.

Nestled on the Noosa Hill behind Hastings Street, the Viridian Village, a collection of villas and apartments, show the influence of the art on the architectural design. Mainwaring describes the idea of 'patching' in the elevations, which reveals the geometry to be vertical or horizontal. This composition of lines allows coloured planes to act as an expression of nature, similar to the art of Rosella Namok, helping blend the buildings into the landscapes.

In 2008 the Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane presented the *Place Makers: Contemporary Queensland Architects*. As a featured architect, the exhibition celebrated Mainwaring's achievements, 'as having played a key part in the development of the distinctive lightweight construction style of the Sunshine Coast region since the late 1970s'.

Mainwaring's fundamental belief is that architectural and urban design on the east coast of Australia must take its own direction and contribute to a genuine Pacific architecture. In his words 'We live in a unique part of the world where architecture should be more about space, air and lightness. The building should not just sit lightly on the ground, but have a cultural lightness'.

For the Kingaroy Crematorium, awarded the 2011 Gabriel Poole Award for Building of the Year, Mainwaring went as far as to build a 'non-building'. The crematorium builds on the mature landscape in which it sits and is deliberately subservient to the cypress pines and eucalypts that establish a place of substance. The crematorium provides an example of the influence of the vernacular culture on Mainwaring's work. The importance placed on local resources and traditions ensure a 'cultural lightness'.

This exhibition provides an opportunity to honour Mainwaring's architectural achievements in his home region and to understand how the particular patterning, geometries, abstraction, layering, structures, shading and textures of Aboriginal art held in his collection have inspired his distinct style.

I would like to thank all of those who have been involved with the development of the exhibition. Its success has been due to the dedication and professionalism of the team. The Gallery has been privileged to work with Dr Maura Reilly as lead curator. Maura's extensive experience has ensured that the high quality exhibition was achieved. I also thank and acknowledge the work of Gail Cowley as Assistant Curator, who worked closely with Maura to develop the exhibition.

Most importantly, I thank John Mainwaring. Not only for providing access to his art collection but also for this unique insight to his practice. With it comes a greater appreciation of his contribution to Australia's architectural heritage. It has been a privilege to develop this exhibition with John.

## Introduction

Suzanne O'Connell

Suzanne O'Connell is the proprietor of Suzanne O'Connell Gallery, New Farm, Brisbane, which specializes in indigenous Australian art.

This exhibition takes the viewer on a journey of one man's dedication to space and form. John Mainwaring, with his keen artistic temperament, often spends a minute or two in my gallery discussing upcoming shows and my forays all over the country curating work and identifying cultural output. He has been known to pick up the hammer and rehang a painting or two. A lot of the work in my gallery has been procured by major galleries around Australia.

I first met John in the 90's through his sister Sue on the Gold Coast, where he had attended boarding school at The Southport School.

It was after a sailing trip (another great passion of John's) to North Queensland that John decided to open an office on the Sunshine Coast and subsequently moved to Noosa in the late '70's. But he still keeps a strong presence on the Gold Coast due to family.

Even though John had touched on Indigenous art by acquiring a wonderful bark by Horace Munmilli and acrylic painting by Gracie Morton, it was in 2001, when I opened Thornquest Gallery in Southport that John really expanded

his liking and appreciation of indigenous art by being exposed to the wide range of painting styles practiced across the nation. John immediately connected with the work on many levels. He saw and appreciated the work through an architect's eye. An eye attuned to design and art based on the theory of stripping back to its essential and basic form. He regards indigenous art as an 'abstract phenomenon from nature'.

In 2005, I opened the Suzanne O'Connell Gallery in New Farm, Brisbane. Of course, John followed and continued expanding his collection, including works on paper, acrylic on canvas, bark, wood sculptures, fabric and natural ochres. His first paintings acquired from my gallery were a selection of etchings (works on paper) by Samuel Namunjaja, John Mawurndjil and Terry Ngamandara Wilson.

John's tastes in art has no boundaries, and contrasts greatly from the slow process and restrained palette of a Terry Ngamandara Wilson bark to the dynamic, gestural, unleashed acrylic work of Western Australian artist Nora Wompi.

Even after purchasing original lino print cotton and silks by Arnhem Land artist Susan Marawarr, John immediately had two shirts made out of the fabric....wearable art!

It is always a pleasure to show exciting artwork to someone who 'really gets it'.

# ‘More than just pretty pictures’: An Interview with John Mainwaring

by Maura Reilly

Maura Reilly, an independent curator and writer, is Professor of Art Theory at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University.

Since the late 1980s, award-winning architect John Mainwaring has amassed an extraordinary collection of mostly contemporary Aboriginal art by some of today’s most well known practitioners, including, among others, Eubena Nampitjin, Gloria Petyarre, Sally Gabori, Janangoo Butcher Cherele, Terry Ngamandara Wilson, Netta Loogatha, and Elizabeth Nyumi Nungarrayi. Throughout his career, Mainwaring has been inspired by this collection and, in particular, by the patterning, geometries, abstraction, layering, structures, shading, surface textures, that are so integral to many of the works.

Throughout his almost four-decade practice, one encounters evidence of his ‘sampling’ from sources as varied as indigenous art, European art, Japanese prints, Akira Kurosawa films, Navajo blankets, sailboats, Nazca art, AsiaPacific / Melanesian / Polynesian architecture, as well as his more localized Queensland environs, e.g. Fraser Island, Noosa National Park, the Australian outback, and the Glass House Mountains. This direct and symbiotic interaction between his art collection and practice is visible as early as the 1990s in buildings such as Chapman House 1 (1996), Sunshine Coast University Library (1997) (with Lawrence Nield), and St. Vincent’s Nursing Home (1997), and continues through more recent projects, such as the Queen Street Mall (Brisbane, 2000), Cooroy Studio (2007), Mornington Island Arts Centre (2008), Viridian Residences (Noosa, 2006-2010), and the Kingaroy Crematorium (2010).

**Maura Reilly:** You are undoubtedly one of the most original and boldest architects in Australia. Your architectural works have a recognizable ‘line’, the Mainwaring ‘line’,

and much like one can recognize the ‘line’ of a Matisse drawing or of a Terry Ngamandara Wilson print, when viewing one of your buildings (Fig. 1) there is no denying that it is your hand at work. And, yet, the more one examines your practice, the more complex it becomes, with layers of influence, including those from your art collection. As you know, this was the initial concept for the exhibition—that we display your art collection and in doing so we show audiences some of your visual interactions and inspirations. This exhibition showcases over 90 works from your personal art collection. When did you first start collecting art?

**John Mainwaring:** I have been collecting art for over twenty years. The first work I owned was by my mother (Sybil). It’s a botanical watercolor of lilies that hung in my bedroom in the family house. I also grew up with commercial reproductions of works by Lyonel Feininger, ‘Girl with a Pearl Earring’ by Vermeer, Van Gogh’s Sunflowers, and ‘Senecio’ by Klee (Fig. 2), and then later would hang small works by colleagues and peers. The very first major work that I ‘collected’, however, was *Owl Creek Two*, which I purchased in 1989, by Lawrie Daws. I bought it because it reinforced my ‘sense of place’ as I travelled past the Glass House Mountains thousands of times to/from work and home. The first Aboriginal painting I purchased was a simple Rarrk hatched bark by the local back-hoe driver Horace Minmilli at Maningrida. It has a very simple, abstract, yet warped geometric pattern that is simply lovely to look at, any way it is hung. Perhaps, it best expresses the cultural and sustainable qualities of the timber at a micro level and the traditional Aboriginal light footprint on the landscape at a macro level.

**Reilly:** Some people would think it very courageous of you to expose your visual and artistic inspirations. It is a very ‘revealing’ thing to do; meaning, that a lot of creative folk clam up when asked to describe visual inspiration. But, here, on the walls and in the catalogue we are demonstrating a

direct connection between your architectural practice and the artworks and artifacts that have greatly influenced your vision over the past few decades. How do you feel about that?

**Mainwaring:** That is a brave question. I have always been interested in history, art, and vernacular architecture, here in Australia as well as abroad. I can remember making a pilgrimage to the ‘Trulli’ houses in Italy (Fig.3) and of course to the old timber buildings in Japan. Art, history and human settlement are of course intertwined. What you have picked up on is that all the pieces in the collection are more than just buying a pretty picture. Whenever I travel I get to the older settlement fabric pretty quickly. In Australia, I love the old rural buildings, particularly the mix of domestic and utilitarian structures. These structures include silos, yards, shearing/wool sheds etc. and more importantly the spaces and landscape structures in between. As kids we grew up with choko vines and creepers on horticultural structures. Internationalism has given us pseudo fountains and ornate surrounds. To me, ephemerality, the light footprint, and the sense of decay and patina, is what we really are about. When in Syria, I stayed with the nomads and greatly appreciated their sense of style and ephemerality: Beautiful tents and rich carpet on the dirt. Mostly, we do not do the ‘extravagant’ very well and the nouveau rich and ‘cultural cringe’ is alive and well. This is why I have learned how to treat this country, our land, from First Australian art, and from other indigenous art. Anyway, my architecture seeks to abstract the vernacular to what is loosely referred to as ‘neo-vernacular’ (e.g. Molvig’s ‘Stockmans hut’, Blair’s ‘Grommet-Somers Family store etc’, Ian Smith’s shed, and so on). I want to re-interpret our vernacular. I strive for simplicity and synergy with the soft and hard landscape. For example, I live in one of the Viridian villas in Noosa (Fig. 4). It looks like a tree house, and is designed as part of the ecological succession of the coastal forest. Our culture wants to dominate and exterminate natural context.

Yet the First Australians lived in harmony with the environment, even when it is very harsh. This is one of the underlying themes in the exhibition, I think, and it’s what I strive for in my practice.

**Reilly:** The strongest part of your collection is unquestionably the ones by First Australian artists. What is it specifically that draws you to Aboriginal art?

**Mainwaring:** I love Aboriginal or indigenous art or artifacts in all parts of the world, as most architects and artists at some stage use it for appropriation or are influenced by it. The history of civilizations is the DNA for the present and future, e.g. Picasso, Breton, Corbusier, etc. So often art is directly tied with history. Contemporary culture defines art as a creative process that delivers a vision, interpretation, or statement about anything. Originally, with the indigenous peoples, artistic ability was associated more with ‘cultural expression’. In most cases, the expression was recording a way of life. Sometimes, such as in pre-Inca and Nazca, the history was embedded into forms of textiles, which are now difficult to decode. I have a collection of textiles, as well. One of my favorites has always been a Navajo ‘Coal Mine Mesa’ blanket (circa 1990’s) (Fig. 5). I also have a Nazca pouch from about 300 AD that I’m particularly fond of. When looking at it, I often wonder at what stage the pure ‘string bag’ becomes a decorated one. Questions like this are up for continual conjecture. A good example is Rarrk. There is embedded in the art a certain philosophy for the way to treat and understand the land. This is probably why I like indigenous pieces because there is cultural expression as well as creativity. Gloria Petyarres’ *Mountain Devil Dreaming* (2004) is an example of providing creative options, as the tracks of the lizard become a vertical painting or permeable screen. In the case of Sally Gabori, I was the architect for the Mornington Island art centre (which did not go ahead), and had the opportunity at the time not only to meet her, but also to witness the emerging women’s art movement there. I am

inspired by art but more importantly enjoy the dialogue, which usually has some personal or professional implication. Besides the history it must also be remembered that I gained a better understanding of Aboriginal art because I studied Paul Klee at art school and university. Hence the Klee thing being the underlying shadow of the show. I now generally believe that globalism is so rampant that indigenous originality and practice is certainly changing and also partly disappearing. However, purchasing a Gabori is still a lot cheaper than a Motherwell or Tuckson. But the thing that is the most fascinating aspect is the evolution of it all. For example, I had no idea that the ancient Japanese had traveled to South America. How is it that Aboriginal art can be a footprint of the earth’s crust when the artist has not been in a plane? How does body painting, mythology and weaving morph into a canvas? It’s because abstraction, controversially, is perhaps a more efficient form of communication than realism.

**Reilly:** Hence your love of Klee again. Indeed the title of this exhibition took inspiration from Paul Klee’s book, *The Thinking Eye* (1961 ed.), which you say has influenced your vision as an architect. What is it about Klee that you so admire?

**Mainwaring:** At the Moriarty art school and at University, where I studied the Bauhaus, I got into Klee in more detail and bought a second hand copy of *Notebooks Volume 1 ‘The Thinking Eye’* and *Volume 2 ‘The Nature of Nature’* (1973 ed.). I had always been interested in indigenous art but more so after visiting Yuendumu in the late 90’s. When deciphering the paintings there I found similarities to Klee’s philosophy. Particularly, in the way, graphically, abstract notions are derived from natural phenomenon. Lyonel Feininger’s art was also part of my art education as a schoolboy, and well before I studied architecture (Fig. 6). Like Klee, I rediscovered his art, with the likes of Albers, through Bauhaus lectures. Unlike them, Feininger began abstracting through spatial, ground, vertical and sky; translucent planes,

i.e. light, movement and space rather than emphasizing form. He also loved yachts and sailing ships, which have also been a life long passion of mine. The original work that I have came via Buenos Aires where a lot of German art ended up after the war.

**Reilly:** It's interesting to me that the reproductions that hung in your home as a child had so much influence on your practice. I remember, too, that you once told me about a childhood book that also resonated for a long time, Mervyn Skipper's *The White Man's Garden*, which follows the story of a boy named Borneo (Fig. 7). You said your mother read it to you as a boy and that you were fascinated by the images of the buildings within it, especially. Can you tell me about the importance of this book?

**Mainwaring:** This book epitomizes the European romantic fantasies for the Antipodes, 'Spice Islands', and 'Orient', in general. It shows memorable images of archipelago exotica including the blending of ephemeral architecture and the power of Pacific tropical and sub tropical landscape. There was also the underlying lesson later on that, in my opinion, an appropriate architecture for our region consists of both European and Pacific influences. Having experienced Indonesian, Micronesian and Melanesian villages, one can apply certain principles to our own sub and tropical environment. Take, for example, my stilt villas at Viridian, or the Modica Residence 'Shiosai' (2003) (Fig. 8 & 9).

**Reilly:** I also see a lot of Japanese influence in your work—architecture, film, prints, etc. Am I correct in thinking this?

**Mainwaring:** Yes. During my university period I discovered Japanese architecture and culture, including prints (Fig. 10). The filmmaker Akira Kurosawa, who directed films like *Seven Samuraj* (1954), had a cult following, and because of his meticulous sets, we discovered as architectural students that we could see and 'feel' Japanese medieval architecture, streetscapes and urban design (Fig. 11). This is significant, of course, because

many 'timber' urbanisms (such as ancient Edo or Tokyo), no longer exist. The exception is at Ise, where one can see the wonderful timber (Fig. 12) Shinto shrine, which is rebuilt every 20 years, keeping traditional construction detailing.

**Reilly:** I loved viewing those intense early Kurosawa films and pin-pointing some scenes that were reminiscent of your work – such as the brooding fortress in *Throne of Blood* (1957). You also told me that that the Felix Beato photographs (Fig. 13) of Japanese villages in 1860s were influential. Can you tell me about this, especially as it relates to Viridian?

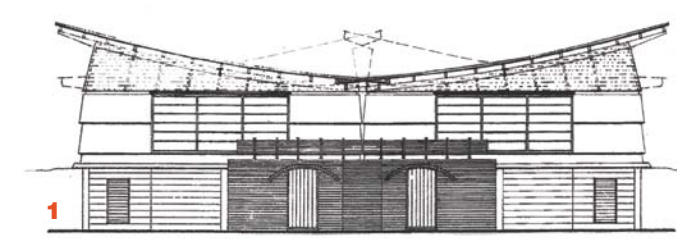
**Mainwaring:** The Felix Beato photos were also part of finding some historical images of traditional building fabric. When we designed the Viridian Resort village the images in this book were very influential.

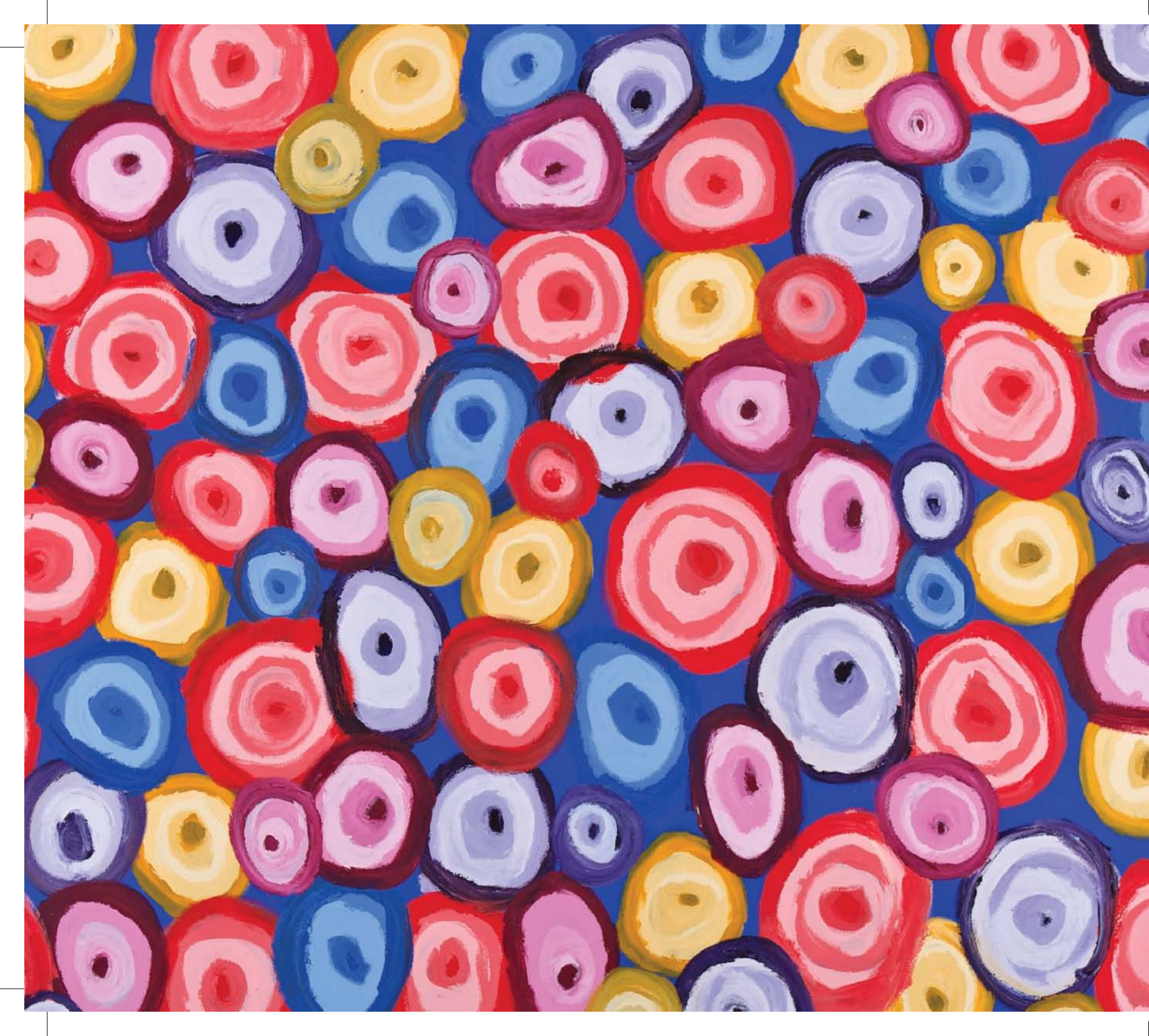
**Reilly:** One of the most prominent visual inspirations would have to be the delicate tradition of Japanese architecture. As is visible, I suppose, in your use of wood and thin timber stripes/patterns in your houses, and the play of intense Queensland sunlight shafting through them, particularly in the design of the Sunshine Coast University. From a distance a lot of your buildings can look like cut up sticks arranged together. What can you tell the audience about your "style" of architecture?

**Mainwaring:** Sometimes without mature landscape my architecture can appear a little clumsy. In the Viridian Residences it actually becomes part of botanical succession and habitat for native fauna. In a uniquely Australian way the gardeners leave dead trees for animals to live in, as the buildings become part of the maturing native landscape. It is hard to imagine Cambodian or Archipelago stilt houses without context. Many 'international' style buildings can be anywhere in the world. I have always tried to create a genuine, simple antipodean architecture and urbanisms, particularly in addressing airflow and the use of natural light. Spaces,

voids and semi-outdoor spaces are more important than the form, with shade, light and patterning being the defining parameters. I use light-weight materials and structure and, like traditional Asian architecture, prefer heaviness in fencing, courtyard surrounds and tarmac. In today's socio-economic climate my office is experimenting with smaller footprints with flexible and 'double use' spaces. To me, there is something special about the emotional warmth of wood and I have always tried to use it sustainably such as using slender steel stilts instead of tree trunks and plywood cladding both internally and externally. The properties of timber are more conducive to producing screening but I have always experimented with other materials, such as perforated metal, polycarbonate, and aluminum. Screens are necessary components for translucency when creating transitional and transactional spaces, which are suitable for our climate in the form of outdoor rooms that started as 'add ons' to 'Georgian' introverted boxes by our forbearers. To me, ephemerality and lightness of our built environment fits better into our landscape than monumentality and heaviness (Fig. 14). This is just one of the fundamental lessons that I've learned from indigenous and traditional Asian cultures.

1. Mainwaring architectural sketch
2. Paul Klee, *Senecio*, 1922
3. Trullix houses, Puglia, Italy
4. Viridian villas in Noosa. It looks like a tree house
5. Lyonel Feininger, *Gaberdorf II*, 1924
6. Mervyn Skipper's *The White Man's Garden*
7. Stilt villas at Viridian
8. Navajo 'Coal Mine Mesa' blanket (circa 1990's)
9. Modica Residence 'Shiosai', 2003
10. Japanese Ukiyo-e print, 20th-century
11. Akira Kurosawa, *Film Stills from Throne of Blood*, 1957
12. Shinto temple, Ise, Japan
13. Felix Beato, *Japanese Village*, 1860s
14. Sunshine Coast University Library, 1997





AN  
ARCHITECTS  
EYE

NORTHERN QUEENSLAND





Abstract Expressionism has always been an inspiration to me. I have been fascinated with how an abstracted set of elements, feelings or situations can be a very direct way of communicating from one human to another. Abstraction can be more multi-dimensional, spiritual or universal than realism.

1. Mornington Island



TOP LEFT

**Birmuyingathi Maali Netta Loogatha**  
Old Jack's Country 2006  
Acrylic on canvas | 137 x 91 cm  
Purchased from Mornington Island Arts & Crafts via WAG

TOP MIDDLE

**Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori**  
Mosquito Story Place 2006  
Acrylic on canvas | 91 x 137 cm  
Purchased from Mornington Island Arts and Crafts via WAG

TOP RIGHT

**Lindsay 'Spider' Roughsey**  
Untitled 2005  
Acrylic on canvas | 40 x 30 cm  
Gift from the artist

BOTTOM

**Birmuyingathi Maali Netta Loogatha**  
Makarrki 2006  
Acrylic on linen | 151 x 101 cm  
Purchased from Mornington Island Arts and Crafts via WAG

Thuganmu Arnold Watt, a senior painter and elder to the Mornington Island community, records culture in a realistic manner. If one looks at a detail in his works, one can see the beginnings of the 'women's movement' and their fundamental involvement in natural land and water lifestyle. An example of this connection is 'Balarrid', "A story place at Dibirdibibi"

1. Sally Gabori



LEFT

**Thuganmu Arnold Watt**  
Netting River 2004  
Acrylic on canvas | 106 x 80 cm  
Purchased from Mornington Island Arts & Crafts

RIGHT

**Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori**  
Balarrid 2005  
Acrylic on canvas | 910 x 210 cm  
Purchased from Mornington Island Arts and Crafts via WAG





The Mornington Island Arts and Crafts Centre (2005) gave me the opportunity to work with culturally special dynamics other than the typical Anglo-Saxon constructs that my office normally deals with. Working with facilitator Simon Turner who was a catalyst in developing the contemporary art movement in this region, the building has not yet been realized. It has been a great privilege to be involved with the emergence of this women's abstract painting movement as it evolved from weaving and body painting. The architectural design explored the idea of embedding and fusing abstract images of landscape, seascape and skyscape into the elevations.

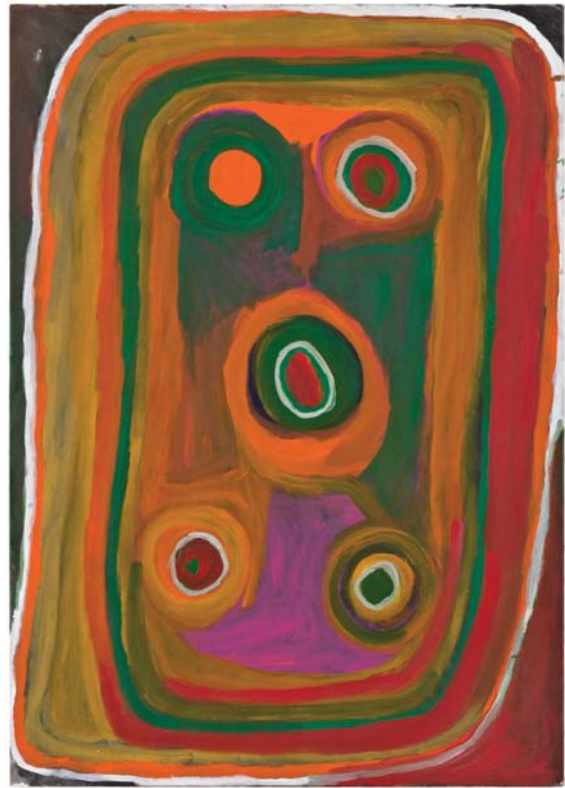
1. JM Digital Rendering for Mornington Island Art Centre, 2005
2. JM Sketch for Mornington Island Art Centre, 2005

**Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori**

All the Fish in the Sea 2005  
 Acrylic on canvas | 420 x 195 cm  
 Purchased from Mornington Island  
 Arts & Crafts via WAG

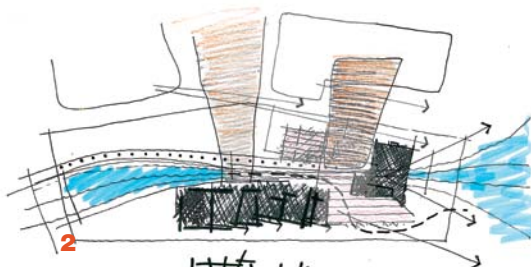
AN  
 ARCH  
 ITECTS  
 EYE

WESTERNDESERT



From the Western Desert there is incredible, raw beauty expressed in art, particularly in the way the geographical and topographical characteristics of the land create layers of color. This identifies the tectonics, shelter and spirituality in the landscape and water bodies. Although the Dragon House (2001, Sunshine Beach) is adjacent to the ocean, the natural landscape and seascape informs the design of the pool or 'dunal lake'. The headland becomes the walls, which are weathered colored concrete.

1, 2 & 3. JM Dragon House, Sunshine Beach, 2000



TOP LEFT  
**Nyuju Stumpy Brown**  
Ngapa 2007  
Acrylic on canvas | 140 x 100 cm  
Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency via WAG

TOP RIGHT  
**Jukuna Mona Chuguna**  
Kurrkalminti 2007  
Acrylic on canvas | 90 x 90 cm  
Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM  
**Wakartu Cory Surprise**  
Ngurra-Yantarni 2006  
Acrylic on linen | 120 x 90 cm  
Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency via WAG



From the Canning Stock Route, Nora explores the way water and sky contrasts desert vegetation, earth, sand dunes, and waterholes, which occur at the end of a 'striped' maze that infers travelling through the land. In the case of the Harding Studio (2008, Cooroy), the service core is buried in the ground, allowing the 'studio pavilion' to float or hover on the side of a hill alongside Mount Cooroy without bruising the landscape. This building was designed for exhibitions and artists-in-residence travelling from all over Australia, particularly the west.

1, 2 & 3. JM Harding Studio, Cooroy, 2008



**Nora Wompi**  
Kinyu 2007  
Acrylic on linen | 150 x 75 cm  
Purchased from Warlayirti Artists via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery





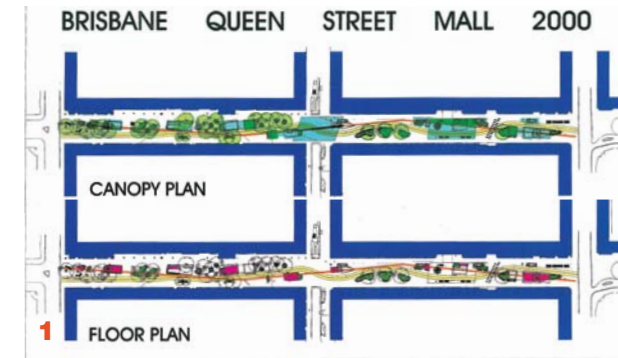
Elizabeth, an artist from Balgo, paints bush tucker and practices bush medicine. (The richness and luminosity of this painting makes me feel good and gives me an appetite for things like cassata!) This painting deals with the fundamentals of life before we even think about architecture. Although 'Parwalla' is all about the discipline of painting, or Tjukurrpa, expressing knowledge and creativity, the content is nomadic. The use of creams and whites is unlike the vibrant ground surface reds and pinks used by other painters in the region. She often records desert food staples, such as bush tomatoes, raisins, and seeds. This work shows a symbiotic relationship to country, and the roving, itinerant form of living, between the dunes (Tali), rain, spinifex, water and salt lakes that forms a white on white context. The free-form geometry expresses the physical connection of desert dwellers to their country, prioritizing a lifestyle of human movement, not how big your "McMansion" or car engine is. Every detail of the landscape is revered and embraced unlike the obliteration of the land in other cultures that leaves a trail of debris and refuse. In some ways, this work is a delicious fragment of the cosmos compared to the many static, lifeless still-life art works in Western culture.

1. *Desert Dunes and Salt Lake*

**Elizabeth Nyumi Nungarrayi**  
Parwalla 2005  
Acrylic on Belgian linen | 180 x 80 cm  
Purchased via Warlayirti Artists from WAG

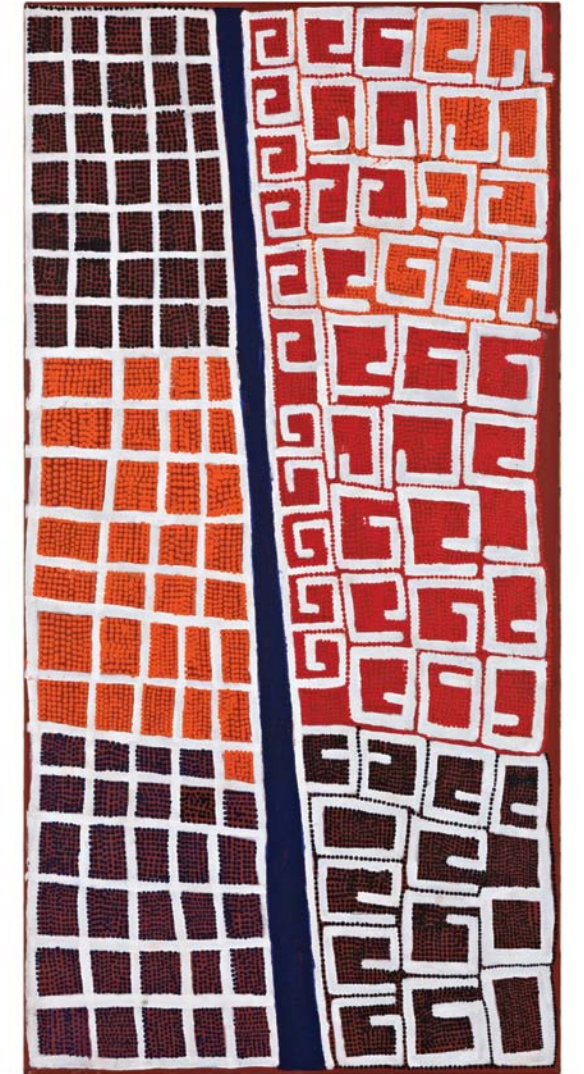
Molly's painting shows us how hard it is to design habitat for people of European background in these regions. The sand hills and valleys are made from vivid reds, yellows, whites, and pinks. The sunlight is so vertical and hot that the sides of the dunes are in silhouette, reinforcing the parched land in-between. Boxer geometrizes ground water with a diagonal flash of flooding river and a matrix of tributaries and eddies. The content of this painting is the analogy of the water flow in urban design. In the Queen Street Mall redevelopment (2000, Brisbane), the design theory referred to the local riverbed and deltas.

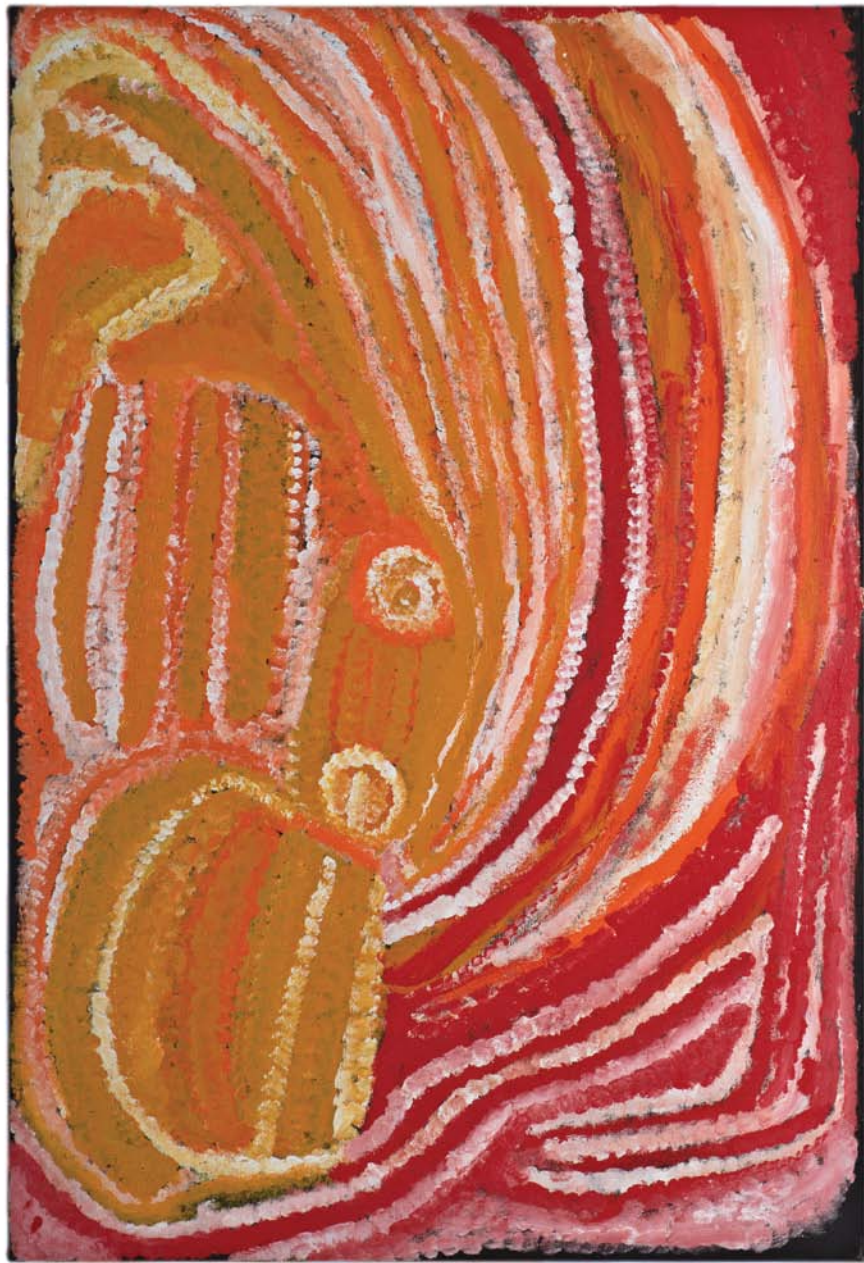
1. *JM Queen Street Mall Footprint, Brisbane, 2000*



LEFT  
**Molly Napaltjarri Jugadai**  
Tali Tali (Sand Hills) 2006  
Acrylic on linen | 101 x 137 cm  
Purchased from Ikuntji Art Centre via WAG

RIGHT  
**Boxer Milner Tjampitjin**  
Purkitji 2007  
Acrylic on Belgian linen | 150 x 75 cm  
Purchased from Warlayirti Artists via WAG





Near Balgo, Eubena depicts talis (sandhills), which spiral into the location of water. The power generated by the mixture of magenta and the traditional reds, yellows, pinks and whites, gives incredible dynamism, with interpreted symbolism of the universe that mirrors the ground plane. This is the closest we get to astral travel through space. Overleaf, the paintings refer to the area around Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay) and Kaakuratintja (Lake MacDonal). Makinti's work represents hair string that is made into such things as hair belts for ceremonies.

1 & 2. *Central Desert*

**Eubena Nampitjin**  
Kinyu 2008  
Acrylic on linen | 80 x 120 cm  
Purchased from Warlayirti Artists via WAG

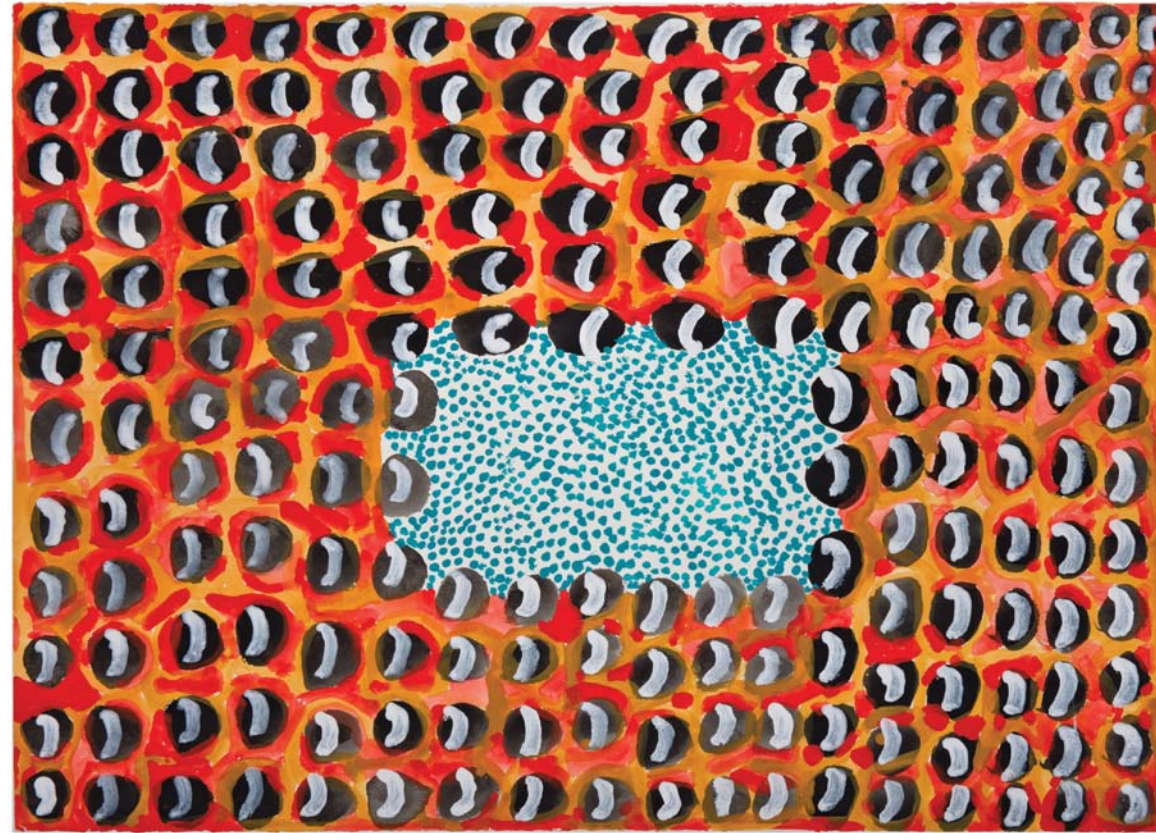


The imagery also refers to patterns of movement throughout the desert between waterholes in territory around Kintore. Pauline refers to ancient stories about the lake being created by intense bushfire, snake and kangaroo hunting mythology. These lakes are often vast areas of salt. Mythology in the painting symbolically refers to sexual interaction between ancient members of the local Pintupi and Kukatja clans.

3. *Salt Lake, Central Desert*

LEFT  
**Pauline Sunfly**  
Wilkinkara 2007  
Acrylic on linen | 50 x 100 cm  
Purchased from Warlayirti Artists via WAG

RIGHT  
**Makinti Napanangka**  
Lupulnga 2007  
Acrylic on linen | 91 x 91cm  
Purchased from Papunya Tula Artists  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery



Butcher's trans-generational patterning systems of ancient body painting designs and the geometrification of fauna and flora inadvertently reflect some philosophies explained in the renowned book by Paul Klee, *The Nature of Nature* (1970 ed). Klee explored novel ideas celebrating dynamism, which characterizes Futurism. In fact, most desert art deals with motion. In 'Ngawayaya' the freshwater mussels are sitting in flowing water and the triangulation variation gives one a sense of time and place. Butcher also celebrates his cultural knowledge through his painting. In all three celebratory works here, the marks are almost tachist, where abstract, lyrical marks are made intuitively.

TOP LEFT  
**Janangoo Butcher Cheral**  
 Ngawayaya 2007  
 Acrylic gouache on cotton rag paper | 67 x 39 cm  
 Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM LEFT  
**Janangoo Butcher Cheral**  
 Untitled 2007  
 Acrylic on canvas | 70 x 45 cm  
 Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT  
**Janangoo Butcher Cheral**  
 Girndi 2008  
 Acrylic gouache on paper | 76 x 56 cm (framed)  
 Purchased from Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery



Lena's 'Sugarbag Yard' shows a hill high above a river where a man is calling his dogs. Kimberley artists are part of an elite group that includes stockmen Rover Thomas, Paddy Bedford and Freddy Timms. They produce paintings like maps, showing topographical features and human interventions. Rammey's relatively formal configurations remind me of traditional 'Asian' settlement patterns, such as courtyard housing in the archipelago. Jack, also a stockman and legendary horseman, worked with natural pigments, including kangaroo blood and red ochre. The Bungle Bungle Mountain forms are secondary to the geometric grid of crescents, wave lines, and rhythm of white dots that shift horizontally like articulated roof forms.

1. JMA Bell's Reach Mini Houses, 2012



TOP LEFT

**Rammey Ramsey**

Warlawoon Country 2008

Ochres/pigments and acrylic binder on canvas | 100 x 80 cm

Purchased from Jirrawun Arts via Raft Art Space

BOTTOM LEFT

**Jack Joolama Britten**

Tickerlara Country 2006

Natural ochre and pigments on canvas | 60 x 45 cm

Purchased from Waringarri Aboriginal Art

via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT

**Lena Nyadbi**

Sugarbag Yard Hill 2009

Silkscreen print | 19 x 14 cm

Purchased from Nomad Art



This painting relates to a traditional corroboree story told to Phyllis by her father. The content is about creek bed stones, and running water in the Kimberley. The circular images are made from natural ochre by crushing up the stones (gerran). We used the picture as a palette within our office to generate color schemes that relate the architecture to the natural landscape.

1. JM Viridian Residences, Noosa, 2006

2 & 3. JM Viridian Houses, 2006



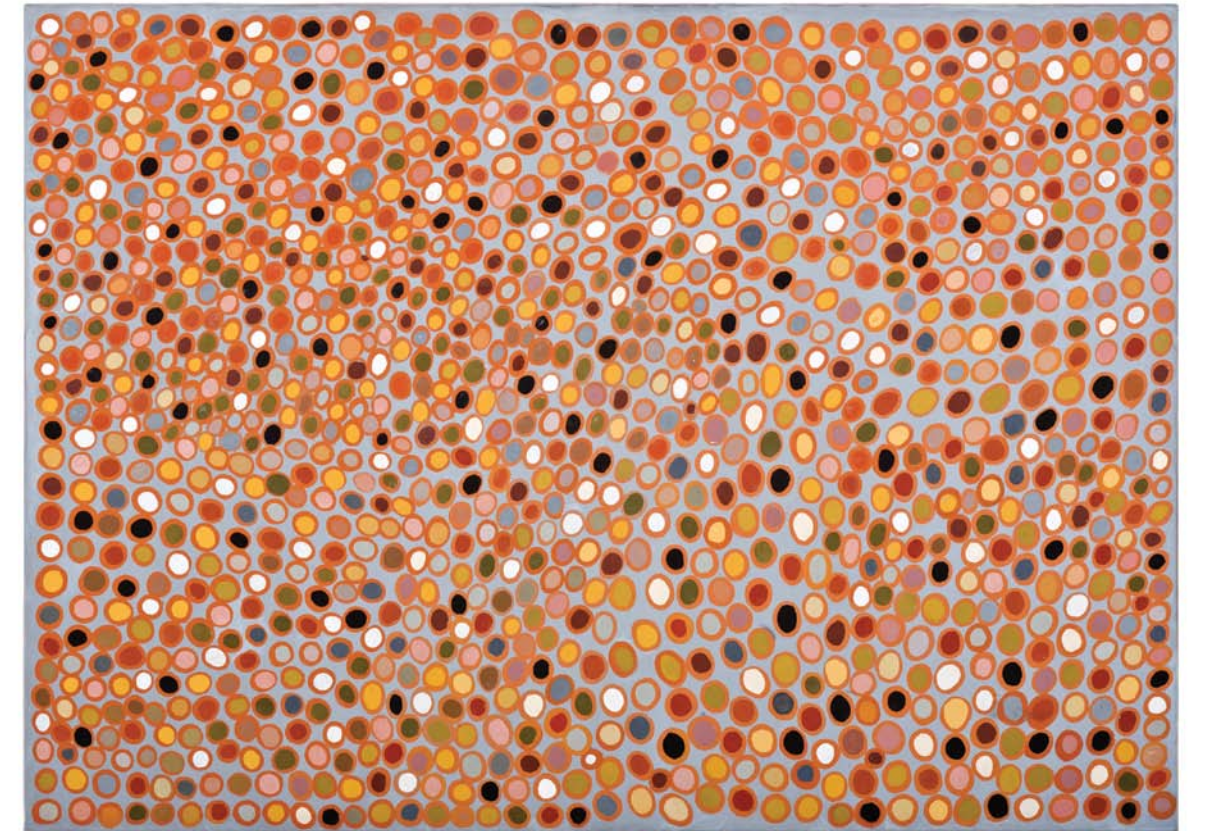
**Phyllis Ningarmara**

Gerran - Stoney Country 2007

Natural ochre and pigments on canvas | 140 x 100 cm

Purchased from Waringarri Aboriginal Art

via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery





Terry Ngamandara Wilson

**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
Gulach 2006  
Etching on paper | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

AN  
ARCHITECTS  
EYE

**NORTHAUSTRALIA**



# Bark Paintings & Etchings from Arnhem Land

by Diane Moon

Diane Moon is the Curator, Indigenous Fibre Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane. She is an expert in indigenous Australian art. Among other major exhibitions, Moon organized *Land, Sea and Sky: Contemporary Art of the Torres Strait Islands* (2011), as well as the critically acclaimed, *Floating Life: Contemporary Aboriginal Fibre Art*, which John Mainwaring has referred to as ‘the most poetic, powerful, articulate and mind-blowing exhibition he has ever seen’.

This fascinating group of bark paintings and etchings, dated c. 2006-2011, illustrates an artistic progression in works by western, central, and eastern Arnhem Land artists.

## Western Arnhem Land Eastern Kuninjku Painting

Ideas about life, its origins and its diversity are features of western Arnhem Land rock art; remaining still as a fragile record of a time, some 40,000–60,000 years ago, of great changes in climate, landscape and society. The Rainbow Serpent is a recurring image, emblematic of this volatile period. It is painted and engraved into the rocks as a mutable being that encompasses elements of earth, sky, sea and the underworld, embodies male and female, and can have crocodile and kangaroo heads, turtle shells, human body parts or the horns of the introduced water buffalo. Other figures found painted and engraved in rock galleries in the region of Mumeka, Marrkolidjban and Kubumi include Namorrkon (Lightning spirit), Namorrordo and Yawkyawk: the comely young fresh water mermaids that inhabit the waterholes.

Gradually, over time, people painted themselves into the rock pictures in true-to-life scenes of hunting, ritual and domestic life; often with realistic depictions of local plants, animals and sea creatures. These images were painted more recently in ochres on the walls of draped stringy bark wet-season shelters. The earliest bark paintings made for the market (c. mid-19th century) also drew inspiration from rock paintings and reflect their influence.

Perhaps most significant for the contemporary eastern Kuninjku painters from this region are the dynamic Mimih spirits, believed to have been an Indigenous group befriended by their ancestors, who now live deep in the escarpment caves. They made the first rock art and taught Arnhem Landers how to paint as well as passing on the practical, spiritual and ritual knowledge they needed to survive and thrive. John Mawurndjul, James Iyuna, Ivan Namirrkki and Samuel Namundja attribute their knowledge and talents to the mimih; they are still revered and very present in the sinuous carved figures of Crusoe Kurdal and Owen Yalandja.

As the artists refined their techniques and a viable market grew, the iconic figures of ancestral spirits and the totemic animals that created the Aboriginal world became central to their art, peaking in the late 1980s when rock art was the all-consuming inspiration for eastern Kuninjku painters. Barks became huge (over three metres in height), and these wonderfully complex beings stood in action-packed poses to remind the viewer of the potency and dangers of the escarpment country. As John Mawurndjul confidently stated: New York didn’t have electricity until it was sent there by Namorrkon (Lightning spirit). However, over the dynamic images drawn onto the blank bark surface were segmented infill areas of fine rarrk patterns; cross hatched lines which were signature devices for individual artists. These could be read almost as abstract paintings within the larger work.

Gradually, through the 1990s until the present, recognisable images began to disappear from view and Mardayin (ceremonial designs) and abstract depictions of landscape and sacred clan sites took precedence. An increasingly sophisticated and appreciative public gave impetus to this movement, with perhaps its ultimate refinement and complexity seen in the works of John Mawurndjul, who quickly developed an international reputation.

This abstract style of painting is now firmly entrenched as identifying eastern Kuninjku art, valued for its convergence with western minimalist aesthetics and recognised as the work of contemporary painters who just happen to be Aboriginal.

Through this period women, who previously assisted male artists in the painstaking process of rarrk infill, started drawing and also learned printmaking techniques. They began to make their own paintings, often inspired by weavings and landscapes which found expression in abstraction. They were included in exhibitions, collections and competitions, and, eventually, in solo shows, and individual artists such as

Kaye Lindjuwanga, Susan Marawa, Kate Miwulkku, Marina Murdingna and Lena Yarinkura established reputations for their exciting, innovative work.

## Central Arnhem Land Terry Ngamandara Wilson

The six bark paintings by Ngamandara here subtly reiterate his attachment to his clan waterhole at Barlparrnarra, which lies within a large area of swamp north-west of Gochan Jinyjirra where he lives. Barlparrnarra is important as a point of convergence of the Dreaming tracks of ancestral beings associated with Murlurlu, the local version of the Djang’kawu sisters who travelled on their creative journey from the east (sunrise). In repetitively painting this site, the artist reiterates his role as its senior custodian and defines his links with a wider kinship network. During annual ceremonies celebrating this theme Ngamandara and his clansmen paint their bodies with this design.

In one version, the artist depicts Barlparrnarra as a circular form with fine diagonal rarrk emphasising the gleam on the water’s surface and hinting at its shadowy depths waterholes are believed to be the life-giving womb containing the souls of the unborn as well as those of the deceased. In another view, Ngamandara uses vertical patterning of repeated triangles with sharply-angled hatching, standing for both the swamp and the stems of edible fresh-water plants spike rush and waterlilies that grow there. Though not the first in the region to experiment with mixing natural pigments, Ngamandara found that black charcoal and bright yellow ochre produced the perfect matt olive green for him to depict aquatic plants.

Ngamandara first offered his work for sale to Maningrida Arts and Culture in 1985. As fish and other freshwater creatures are plentiful at Barlparrnarra and the water also attracts various game animals, not surprisingly his early paintings contained these images. A stark, velvety black outline of a catfish imposed over a sinuous stream of fine rarrk had great impact and contained all the promise fulfilled in his later work. Encouraged by the appreciation of his unique style of rarrk, Ngamandara began painting on a more ambitious scale on bark and lorrkon (hollow log burial poles), finding great satisfaction in refined, geometric interpretations of his country. He became identified with this minimalist style and ceased including recognisable images.

For a period in the late 1980s, Gochan Jinyjirra was a creative hub where artists England Bangala, Les Mirrikuria and Ngamandara painted in their simple ‘studios’,

stimulating each other to great heights. There were successful joint exhibitions of their work and well-deserved critical acclaim. In 1988 a memorable installation of Ngamandara’s waterlily paintings in a circular room at the Museum of Modern Art in Brisbane echoed Monet’s great works in l’Orangerie in Paris.

## Eastern Arnhem Land Djirirra Wunungmurra & Yunupinu Nyapanyapa

Djirirra Wunungmurra continues ...

When Yolngu art from north-east Arnhem Land was ‘discovered’ by visitors to the region in the 1950s, an acceptable visual language was developed by the artists to identify and communicate their songs and stories while avoiding transgression of cultural laws of secrecy. (Abstract imagery was most often associated with secret/sacred ceremonial art on the body and objects). Their solution was to cover the bark with recognisable images. More recently though, artists from Yilpara (Baniyala) developed a style they termed ‘Buwayak’ (Invisibility) in which representational elements are disguised. ‘Buwayak’ allows the artists to respond to current market preference for abstract or less figurative work without breaching Yolngu protocols.

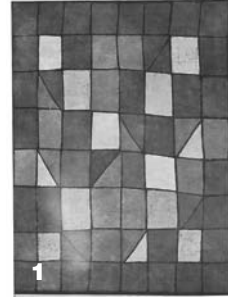
A solo exhibition in 1983 of abstract bark paintings by Ramingining (east Arnhem Land) artist Philip Gudthaykudthay at Garry Anderson Gallery, Potts Point, Sydney, may have broken new ground for Aboriginal art in Australia. Notably, the barks were collected mainly by designers, artists and architects. These small scale works, shown in a minute, elegant gallery space, held all the shimmer of a moment in the bush when, in searing heat, the surface of a finely-painted bark responds to the dappled light of a leaf shade gently rustling in the breeze.

## Rarrk and pigments

In central to eastern Arnhem Land, artists are bound to paint rarrk (cross-hatching) in a prescribed colour sequence for the whole of their ritual and artistic life. For yirridja moiety artist John Bulunbulun this is yellow white red white butjalak, gamanungku, miku, gamanungku. This holds for the four Yirridja skin groups: bangardi; bulang; gotjok and ngarritj. However, in the hands of female artists such as elder Nyapanyapa from Yirrkala, her rarrk is wildly expressive to suit her equally creative paintings.

The colours traditionally used in bark paintings are yellow ochre, red ochre, white pipe clay and black charcoal using the land to paint the land. Pigment and place have multi-layered connections and colours are mined according to strict protocols. These colours have been described as being black for skin, white for bones, red for blood and yellow for body fat and the sun a prized pure white found in western Arnhem Land is said to be the excrement of the Rainbow Serpent.

Colours are traded; e.g. a metallic purple rock pigment found on Galiwin’ku (Elcho Island) changes hands throughout Arnhem Land to be rubbed onto women’s skin for annual ceremonies and is also used by some painters. Gulumbu Yunupingu carries a rock bag around with her holding more than one shade of all colours; three or four reds, different whites and yellows. She mixes black and white to make grey and black, yellow to make green and red and white to make pink; she even collected a special soft, pale yellow at Darwin’s East Point when she accompanied her daughter to hospital there.



These etchings make me breathless; I'm still getting over how small the paintbrushes are. The shapes and lines are abstracted landscapes, as well as being macro or micro cosmos. As Paul Klee explained in his book, *The Thinking Eye* (1961): 'The earth, from a cosmic point of view, provides the basis for a static-dynamic synthesis. Starting from here, earthbound man arrives at a cosmically ideal-static view of the world and an earthly-cosmic one.'

1. Paul Klee, *Architecture in the Evening*, 1937

TOP LEFT  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Waterhole at Barlparrarra 2006  
 Etching on paper | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
 Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

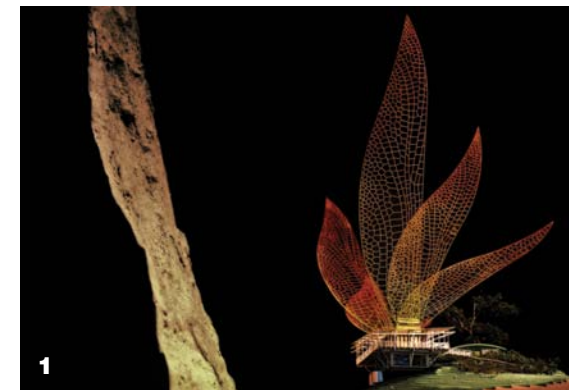
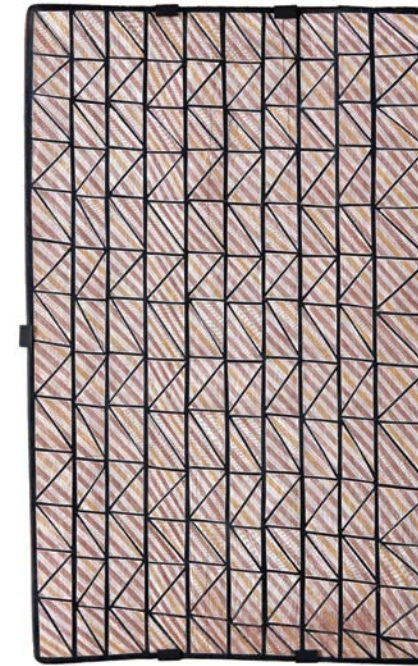
TOP MIDDLE  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Waterhole at Barlparrarra 2006  
 Etching on paper | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
 Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP RIGHT  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Gulach 2007  
 Etching on paper | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
 Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Gulach 2006  
 Etching on paper | 63 x 43 cm  
 Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

There is such an incredible dynamic happening in Terry's barks, especially as the geometric patterns age with the timber surface. Architectural ephemerality instead of monumentality, lightness as opposed to heaviness, buildings that fly!

1. JM Harding Studio, Cooroy, 2008



LEFT  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Gulach - Spike rush 2007  
 Natural ochres and pvc on stringybark | 58.5 x 37cm  
 Purchased from Maningrida Arts and Culture  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT  
**Terry Ngamandara Wilson**  
 Waterhole at Barlparrarra 2006  
 Natural ochres and pvc on stringybark | 63 x 43 cm  
 Suzanne O'Connell Gallery





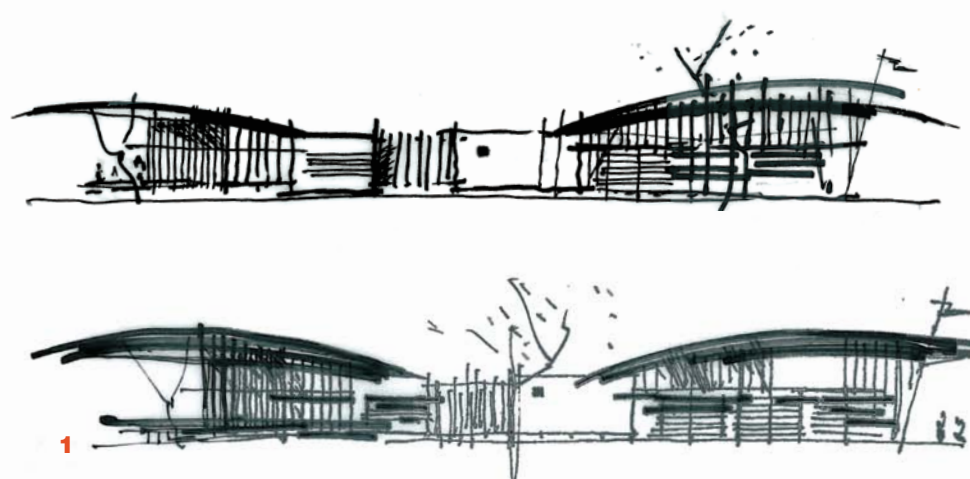
On an architectural jury tour I acquired my first bark by Horace whose other job is as a Maningrida backhoe driver. This 'naive' bark lacks the geometric precision of a Tommy, Ivan or Terry. However, it is abstract: Depending on the way it is hung, various visual options appear, as interpretations of the warping and undulation within the landscape.

LEFT  
**Horace Munmilli**  
Burrara 1999  
Natural ochres on stringybark | 92 x 24 cm  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts and Culture

LEFT MIDDLE  
**Ivan Namirrkki**  
Kudjarolno Creek 2007  
Ochre pigments on stringybark | 92 x 24 cm  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT MIDDLE  
**Dzirrirra Wunungmurra**  
Wukili 2006  
Earth pigments on bark | 74 x 19 cm  
Purchased from Buku-Larrngay Mulka NT  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT  
**Tommy Gondorra Steele**  
Jima jima (Water Lily) 2007  
Ochre pigments on stringybark | 66 x 21 cm  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts and Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

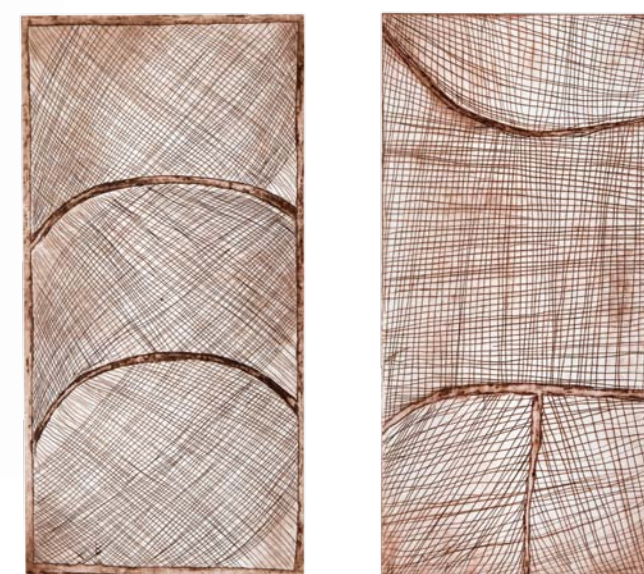


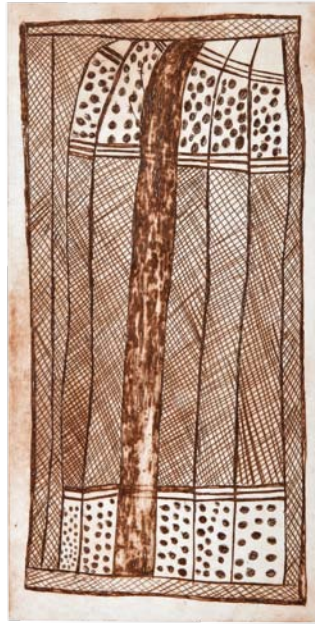
'Rarrk' (or cross hatching) is a fundamental technique of using a matrix of lines, shapes, and form for artistic or cultural purposes. Rarrk began as barks and then became very suitable for canvasses and the printing process. Because of the fineness of the lines, the various printing processes have generated a contemporary form of artistic expression in itself. The expression is similar to the architectural process at design stages. The lines are generators of light and shade patterns.  
1. JM's sketch for Cotton Exhibition Centre, Narrabri, 2002  
2. JM St. Vincent's Nursing Home, 1996

TOP LEFT  
**John Mawurndjul**  
Milwihgkai 2008  
Etching | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP RIGHT  
**John Mawurndjul**  
Maradayin at Dilebang 2008  
Etching | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

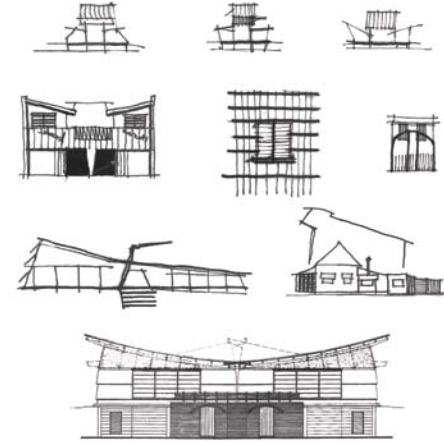
BOTTOM  
**Samuel Namunjda**  
Gungara 2005  
Etching | 63 x 43cm (framed)  
Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery



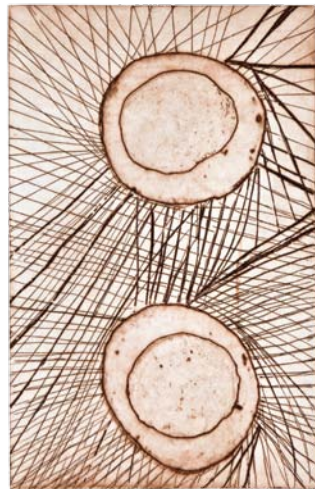


Often Rarrk lines are similar to tectonic elements that are used for transitional and translucent elements within the building fabric. The architectural and shadow lines produce three-dimensional patterning.

1. Mainwaring's Chapman House 1, 1996



JMA's miscellaneous sketches



TOP LEFT

**John Bulun Bulun**

Bakarra 2007

Etching | 63 x 43cm

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP MIDDLE

**John Bulun Bulun**

Bakarra at Djakidjirral 2008

Etching | 63 x 43cm (framed)

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP RIGHT

**Kate Miwulku**

Grass from Long Time ago 2008

Etching | 63 x 43cm (framed)

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM

**Susan Marawarr**

Floor Mat 2009

Etching | 63 x 43 cm (framed)

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP LEFT

**Marrirra Marawilli (Gabaniya)**

Limbarri 2008

Etching on paper | 50 x 25cm (unframed)

Purchased from Buku-Larrngay Mulka NT via Nomad Art Productions

BOTTOM LEFT

**Marnnyula Mununggurr**

Djapu Design 2008

Etching on paper | 50 x 25cm (unframed)

Purchased from Buku-Larrngay Mulka NT via Nomad Art Productions

TOP RIGHT

**Laurie Marburduk**

Body Design 2007

Etching | 63 x 43 cm (framed)

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM RIGHT

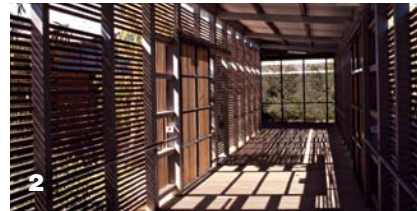
**Laurie Marburduk**

'Honey' 2007

Etching on paper | 63 x 43cm (framed)

Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery





In Northern Australia, Rarrk evolved from weaving, ceremonial body painting, adornment of burial coffins, poles, the passing on of family stories, and the expression of landscape spirituality. Younger women artists like Yunupinu Nyapanyapa are abstracting the traditionally male and fairly well controlled discipline of Rarrk. Typically, we, as Anglo Saxons, use the core of a tree for building materials or pulp; indigenous cultures use the bark's inherent sustainability for drawing tablets, shelters and canoes. The expression of cultural aspects like weaving, spiritual aspects of the landscape, burial, and ceremonial body marks, as a physical part of a tree, is typical of how art becomes a 'way of life'.

1. Noosa National Park
2. JM St. Vincent's Nursing Home, 1996
3. JM Dragon House, Sunshine Beach, 2000
4. JM Viridian Stage 3, 2010

**Yunupinu Nyapanyapa**  
 Wallaby Beach 2011  
 Natural ochres on bark | 75 x 50 cm  
 Purchased from Maningrida Arts & Culture  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

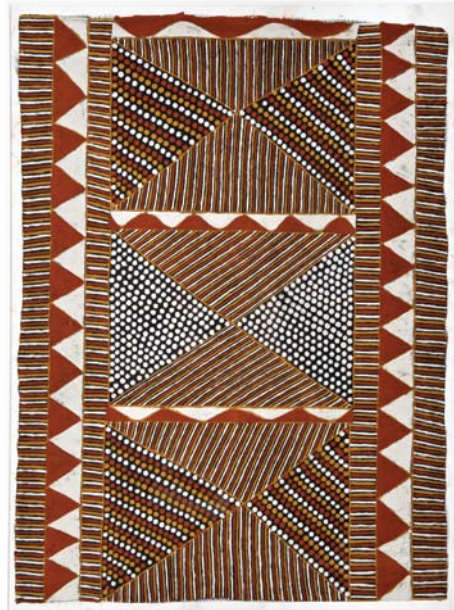
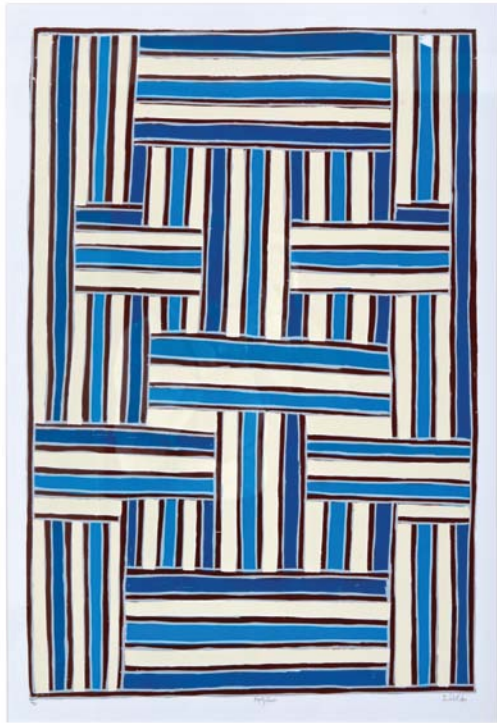


In Timothy's work, the richness of Tiwi life translates as 'good design or painting'. This particular painting reminds me of the 'chance' compositions and patterning encountered in Melanesian houses.

1. JM Hiller Residence, Kenilworth, 1996
2. Melanesian House

**Timothy Cook**  
 Pumpuni Jilamara 2004  
 Natural ochres on linen | 80 x 60 cm  
 Purchased from Jilamara Arts and Crafts Association  
 via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery





Works by Lydia and Aileen come from the islands at the beginning of the Archipelago, at the top end of Australia. Tiwi people live a life of abundance and the patterning is a palette for body painting and pukumani ceremonial poles. The natural ochre is mined in Melville Island and the richness of this pattern spans between their textiles, woodwork and canvasses. Banduk's work, although untitled, shows the fundamental building block of woven fronds (masi) or weaving, which are elemental components of her estuarine culture. In this case there is light and blue sky within the geometric patterning.

1. *Melanesian architecture*



TOP LEFT

**Banduk Marika**

Miyntjinharra' ('no meaning') 2006  
Screenprint | 56 x 76 cm  
Purchased from Buku-Larrngay Mulka Print Space  
via Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

TOP RIGHT

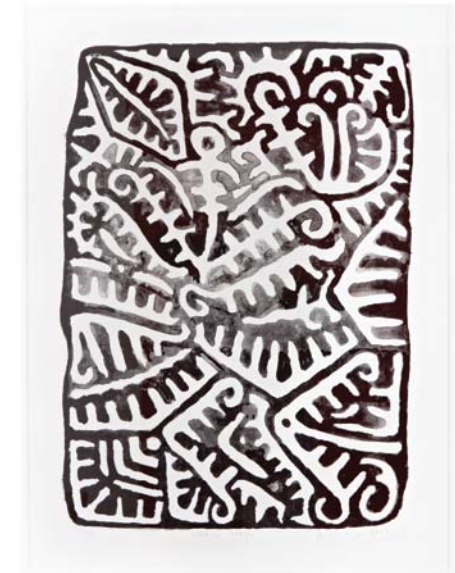
**Aileen Henry**

Untitled 1995  
Natural ochres on paper | 92 x 71cm  
Purchased from the artist via  
Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

BOTTOM

**Lydia Burak (nee Tippakilippa)**

Body Painting 2007  
Natural ochres on canvas | 30 x 40cm  
Purchased from Munupi Arts and Crafts via WAGy



Dennis Nona's etching shows how indigenous artists have mastered the technique of printmaking. This particular work shows how traditional island communities protected their delicate ecosystems and social fabric. It also reminds me of sitting on the ocean bed looking upwards though currents at sea life, and of how the ocean and small islands are intertwined.

LEFT

**Dennis Nona**

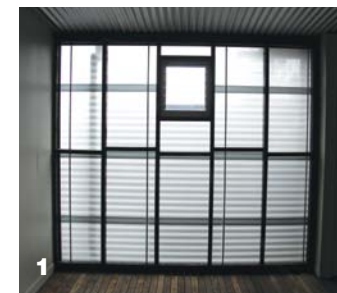
Sarup-Aw Zig (Stranded on an Island) 2005  
Etching | 158 x 105cm (framed)  
Purchased from the artist via WAG

RIGHT

**Billy Missi**

Wapin Naral (Fish Bones) 2009  
Lithograph | 59 x 36cm  
Purchased from the artist via WAG

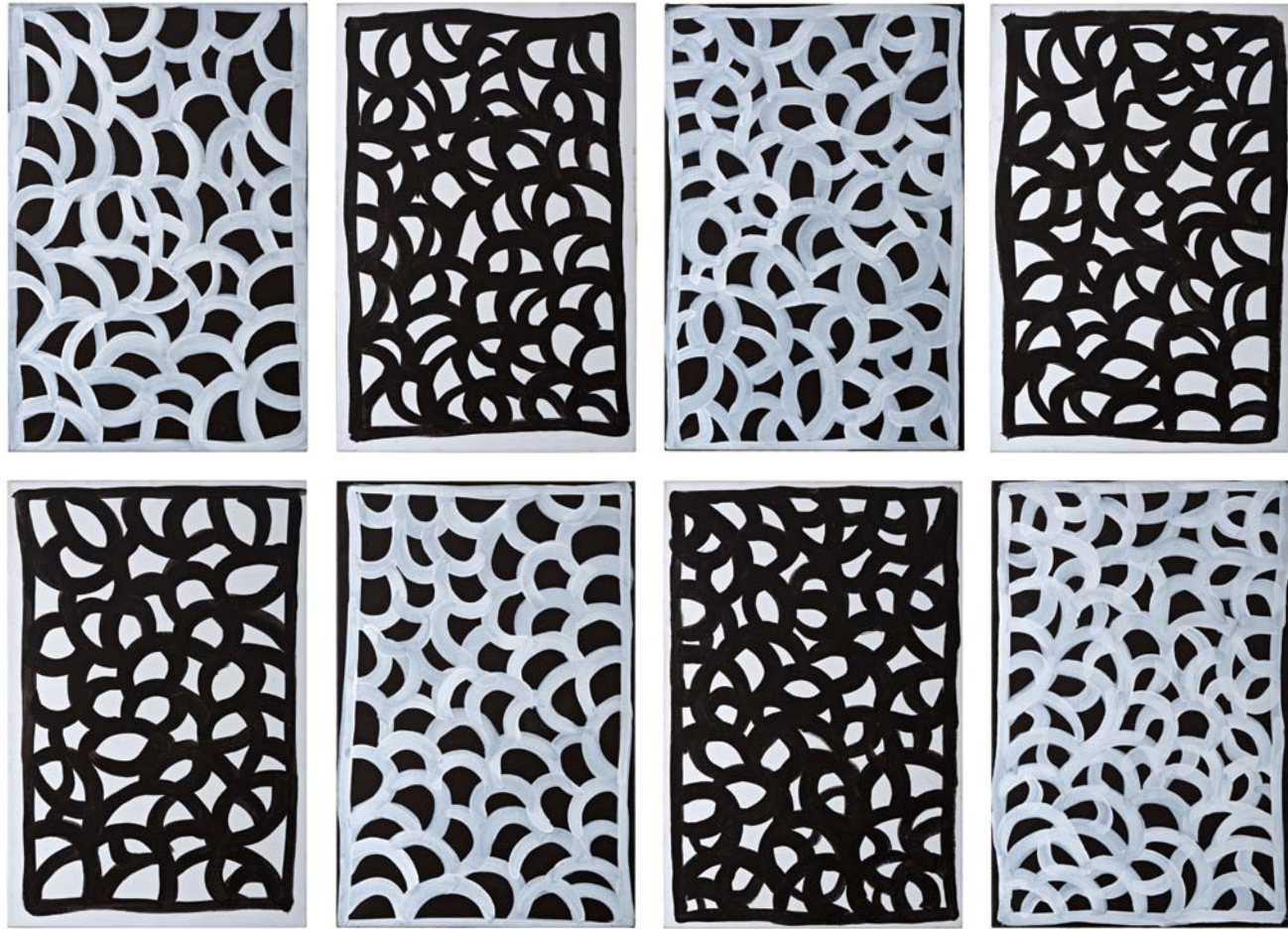
# CENTRAL AUSTRALIA



**Gloria Petyarre**  
Body Stripes 1-3 2004  
Acrylic on linen | 181 x 91 cm x 3  
Purchased from the artist via WAG

Kasimir Malevich, the Russian artist who investigated abstract space, comes to mind in projects as I explore sequences of voids where form is secondary. It is particularly dynamic when spaces, light and permeable walls interact or collide. These stripes reveal the skill and patterning of traditional body painting. The quick motion of paint creates a subtle vertical curvature or secondary pattern that is an underpinning principle of good architecture.

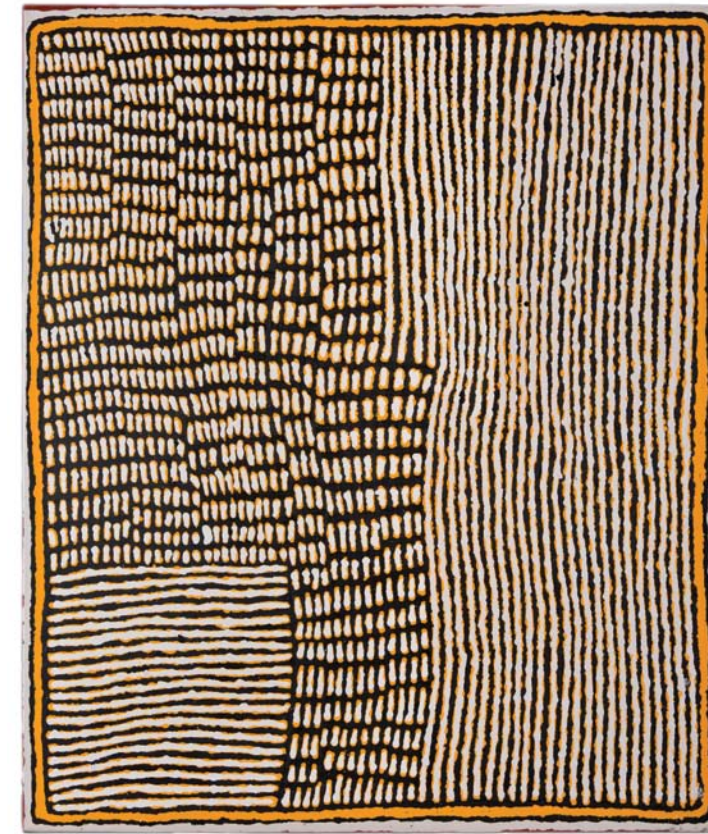
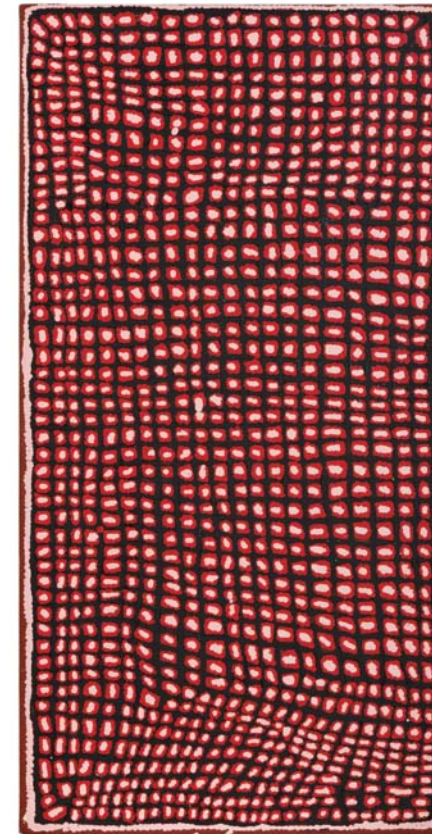
1. JM Viridian Residences, 2006
2. JM Captain Good Vibes House, Noosa, 1979
3. JM Quoll House, 1973



My favorite character in desert mythology is the Mountain Devil or Thorny Dragon. This animal is at a convergent part of evolution where it has developed ultimate sustainability because the whole body is a giant sponge that absorbs moisture as required. It is a chameleon, whether in mountain or plain. Is this the image of architecture in the future? Gloria Petyarre's paintings of the wandering tracks of this extraordinary lizard are orthogonal in plan. When the pattern becomes vertical as in a painting, the individual pieces become windows with free-form grill patterns and voids, rather than tracks on the ground: the interplay of ground and sky (void).

1. Mountain Devil

**Gloria Petyarre**  
 Arnkerrthe (Mountain Devil Dreaming) 2004  
 Acrylic on linen | 60 x 90 cm x 8  
 Purchased from artist via WAG



LEFT  
**Yuyuya Nampitjinpa**  
 Swamp and Claypan site of Watanuma 2005  
 Acrylic on canvas | 75 x 35 cm  
 Purchased from Suzanne O'Connell Gallery

RIGHT  
**Narrabri Nakamarra**  
 Payarrnga 2006  
 Acrylic on linen | 109 x 91 cm  
 Purchased from Papunya Tula Artists via  
 Suzanne O'Connell Gallery



'Payarrnga' is a rock aperture near Nakamarra's home of Kintore in central Australia, west of Alice Springs. The footprint shows how Lungkata (Blue Tongue Lizard) created the sandhills, represented by the yellow lines. When it becomes a vertical plane or painting the topographical 'in-between' becomes a fenestration / landscape screen. Yuyuya's granular work captures the warping of swamp and clay landscape.

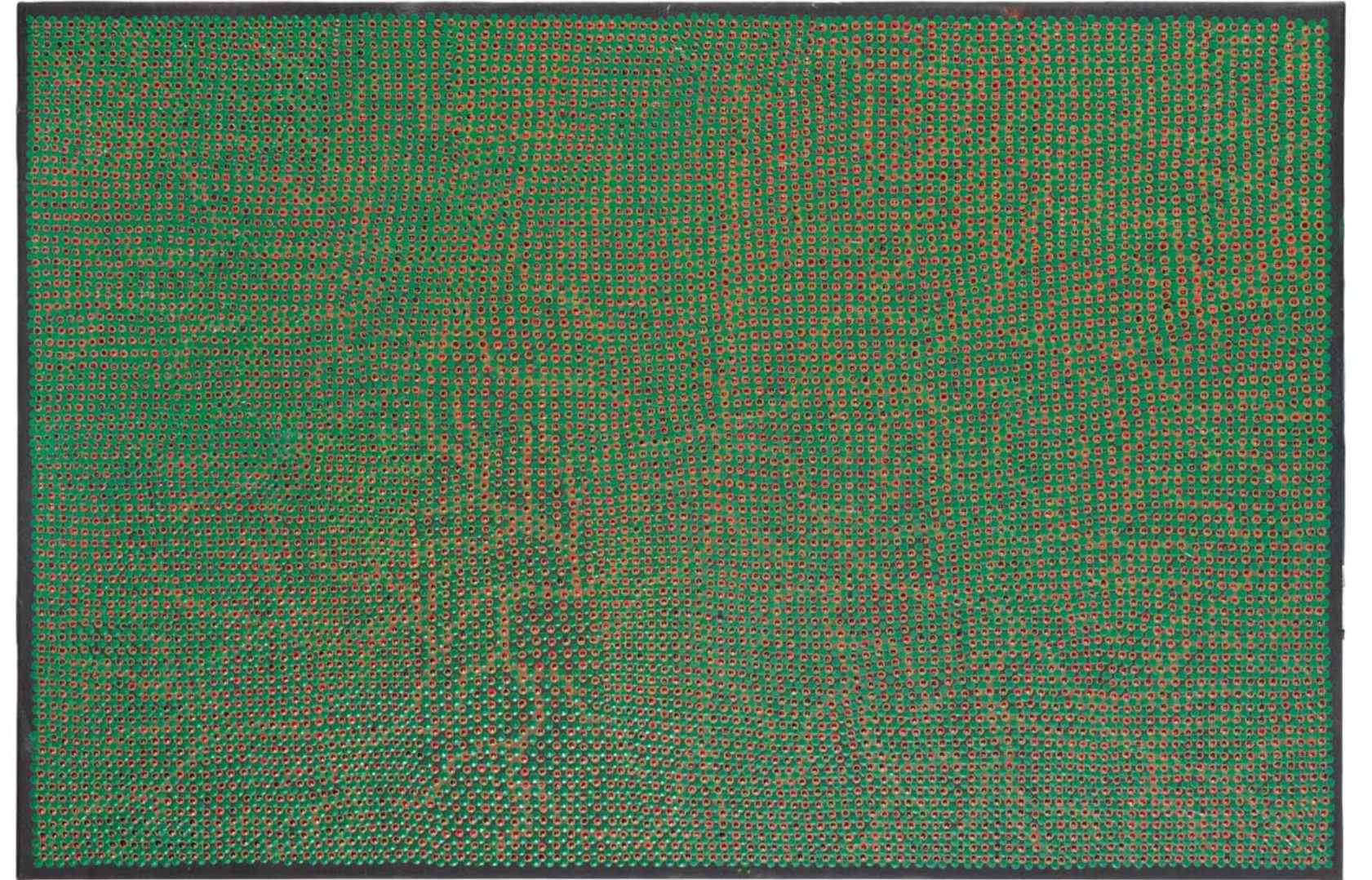
1. JM St. Vincent's Nursing Home, 1996
2. JM Chapman House 1, Noosaville, 1996
3. JM Powell House, Noosa, 1991





Tali Tali represents a geological history, and how the wind, rain, and time causes sand hill terrain to be in a state of flux. Over time, the rock is turned to sand that blows off the ridge tops. This painting alternates between a footprint and a three-dimensional, elevational perspective view. The fourth dimension (or time) comes into the composition; whereas, the Bush Plum sits in a spatial or horizon warp accessed via the dunes, under the clouds, with airborne sand. These elements are combined into flowing, interlocking fan-shaped elements that resemble the structural makeup of space itself—like Nano particles, the universe, black holes and outer galaxies. The ground plane mimics the sky plan, or travel through time planes reminiscent of Stanley Kubrick's film, *Space Odyssey* (2001).

1. *Western Desert Topography*

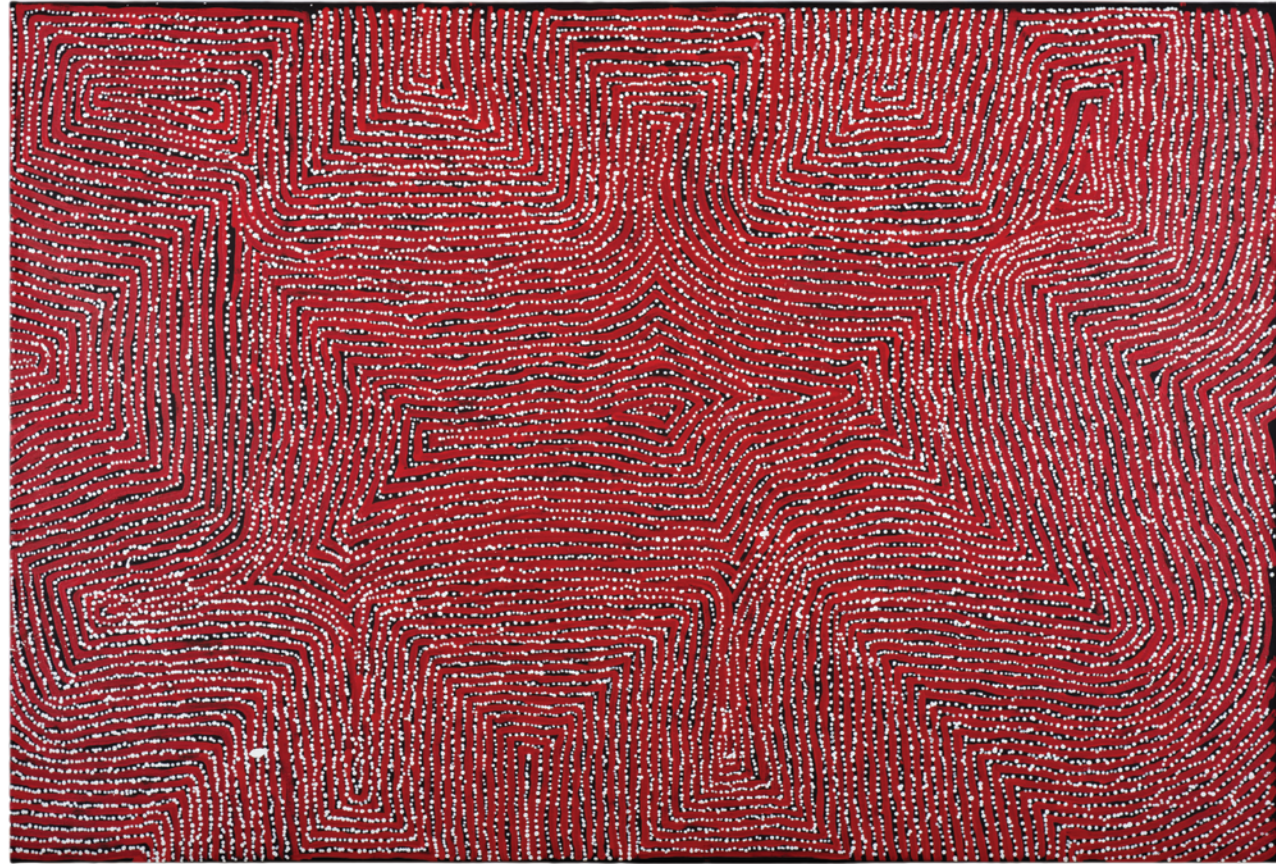


Yvonne Kunoth's family paint Australian Rules football games at Utopia. In contrast, she has developed a very abstract contrapuntal technique that Paul Klee also developed using the music of Bach. The ground surface is very tactile; the warping pattern of the Sturt Desert pea is almost three dimensional in a repetitive impasto textured relief with channel patterns of water, snake, and ant movement above or under the ground. Travelling over central Australia, there are green rain periods and red drought periods. At the Telstra awards one year, the first work I saw was a pink one, and by the time I received the commissioned one, drought had changed to wet.

LEFT  
**Lilly Kelly Napangardi**  
 Tali Tali (Sandhills) 2007  
 Acrylic on linen | 150 x 153 cm  
 Purchased from Papunya Tula via Fireworks Gallery

RIGHT  
**Gracie Ngala Morton Pwerle**  
 Bush Plum 2003  
 Acrylic on linen | 182 x 151cm  
 Purchased from Tingara Arts Centre  
 via Budds Beach Gallery

**Yvonne Kunoth**  
 Sturt Desert Pea 2008  
 Acrylic on canvas | 90 x 60 cm  
 Artist Commission



George Ward's painting is about water and the surface of the ground acting as soakage pits, and about how water finds its way into creeks, water holes, and the earth itself. It is about the cognizance of the environment by his people (Tingari) as they journey through sand hills, lakes, and creeks. You do not have to go far into the infrastructure corridors and built environment of today to find where water management and riparian zones have been misunderstood or ignored. Every time there are rain periods in our culture there is flood panic. One can see him, in the stages of painting the canvas, walking through his land, depicting sub and above ground topographical features. By contrast, Billy Kenda's delightfully lyrical diagonal fast lane shows that all roads lead to Alice.

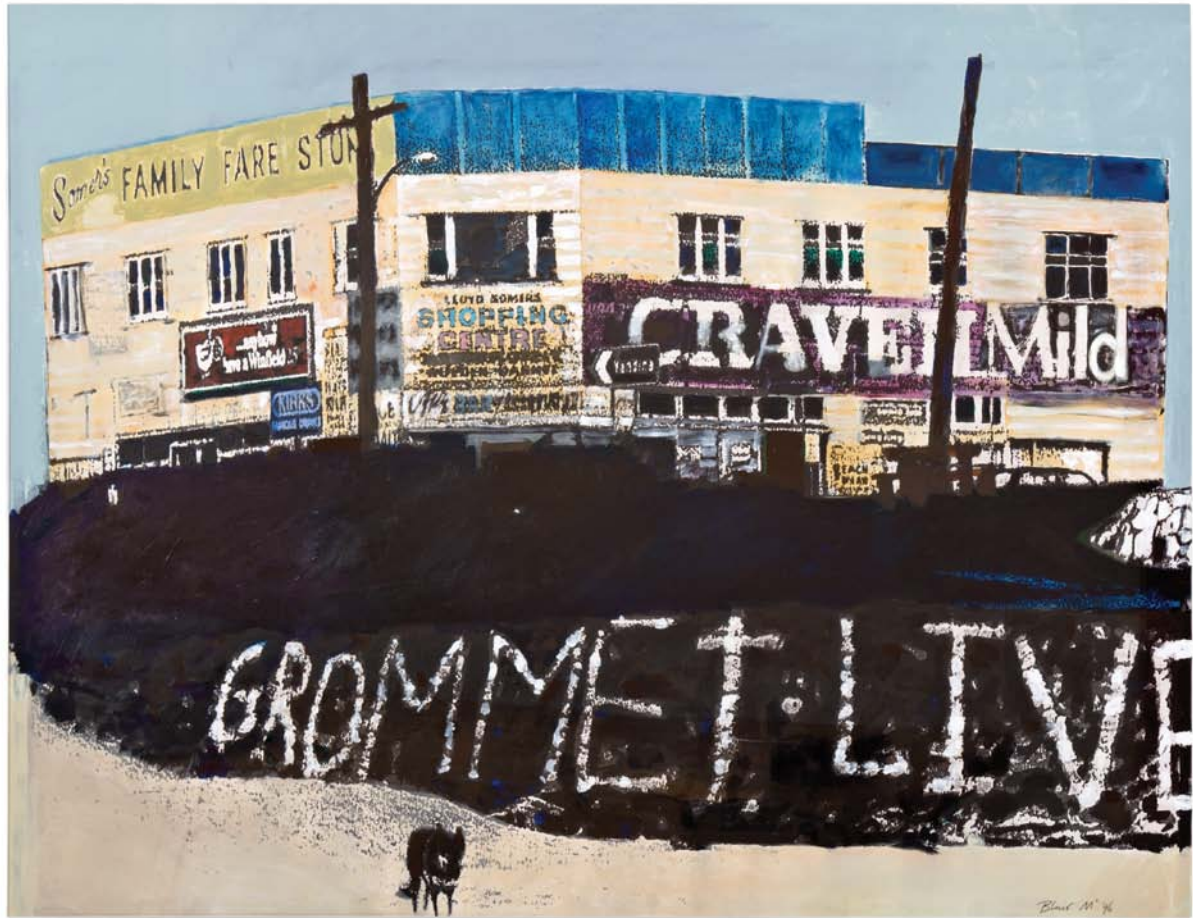


LEFT

**George Ward Tjungurrayi**  
Soakage Water of Kaakuratintja 2006  
Acrylic on linen | 182 x 122 cm  
Purchased from Honey Ant Gallery, Yandina  
via Mason Gallery

RIGHT

**Billy Kenda**  
Untitled 2009  
Acrylic on canvas | 46 x 20 cm  
Purchased from Bindi Inc Mwerre Anthurre Artists  
via Gail Cowley



Somers' Family Fare Corner Store (first built 1922; modified '50's; demolished '86) was a 'fibro' icon in Coolum that was always visited on surfing trips to Noosa. The lofty timber interiors had 'lolly' bottles and that special smell of fresh 'takeaway' and dank salt. This almost ephemeral building employed an ingenious use of basic, unpretentious materials and tectonics, which formed the inspiration for my Chapman House 1 (1996, Noosville). The epitaph expresses the casual but poignant cultural aspects of Sunshine Coast culture where local surfer 'Grommet' was killed in a Brisbane house fire when a group of Coolum surfers travelled to the city for a concert.



**Blair MacNamarra**  
Somers' Family Store, Coolum Beach 1987  
Mixed media | 135 x 104 cm  
Artist commission



LEFT  
**Lawrence Daws**  
Owl Creek II (from the first Owl Creek series 1979 – 1983)  
1982  
Oil on board | 140 x 100 cm  
Purchased from The Fine Art Stockroom

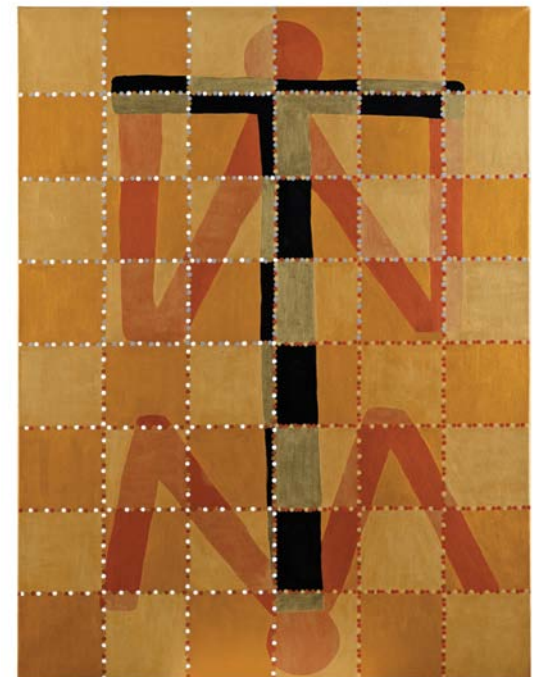
TOP RIGHT  
**Lilla J. Watson**  
Two Countries 2003  
Scorched paper | 101 x 82 cm  
Purchased from artist via Michel Sourgenes Gallery

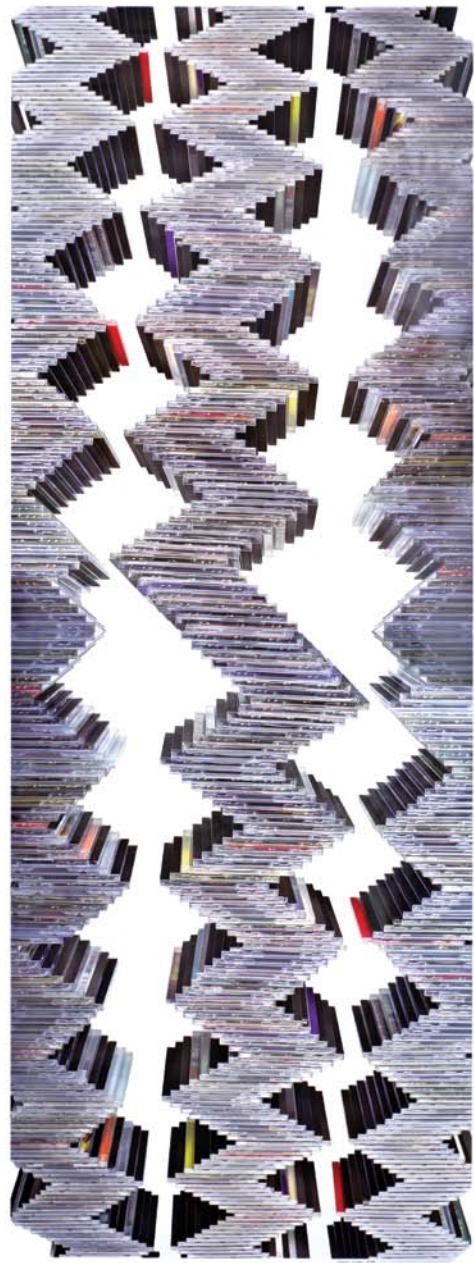
BOTTOM RIGHT  
**Marshall Bell**  
Letter T 1927 2009  
Acrylic on canvas | 120 x 90 cm  
Purchased from artist via WAG



With frequent travel past the Glass House Mountains I had acquired Lawrence Daws' Owl Creek II because it reaffirmed, subliminally, my sense of place. One day the penny dropped, I photographed the spirit in the painting: the light grey layers over gold and umber.

1. JM's photographs of the Glass House Mountains





A selection of Andrew Dixon's 'French Quarter' vignettes have remained with me in the office, with obvious references to one of my favorite French artists, Raoul Dufy. Andrew was able to sideline his own abstract art direction to help set up the Pacific colonial atmosphere.

David Nixon's very urbane approach to patterning depicts 'out of use' stacks of cassettes, which create an urban or classic 'zig-zag' canyon. One of my favorite 'zig-zag' textiles is an African kuba that I acquired on a Frank Lloyd Wright excursion to the iconic Morris Shop (now the Xanadu Gallery) in San Francisco. When viewing David's piece from a distance it transforms into forms that I like, such as textiles, e.g. a Navajo or Bolivian blanket.

1. African Kuba
2. Morris shop
3. Navajo blanket



LEFT  
**David Nixon**  
 Untitled 2008  
 Digital print on paper | 210 x 90 cm  
 Purchased from artist via WAG

RIGHT  
**Andrew Dixon**  
 French Quarter Series 1994  
 Gouche on Paper | 100 x 50 cm  
 Artist commission



I was invited to join Mervyn Moriarty's advanced art classes at Kangaroo Point, where Molvig once had a studio. This period got me well into abstract art. Though none of my works survive this period, I do have a couple of colleagues' work (Paul Memmott and Lenny Robb).

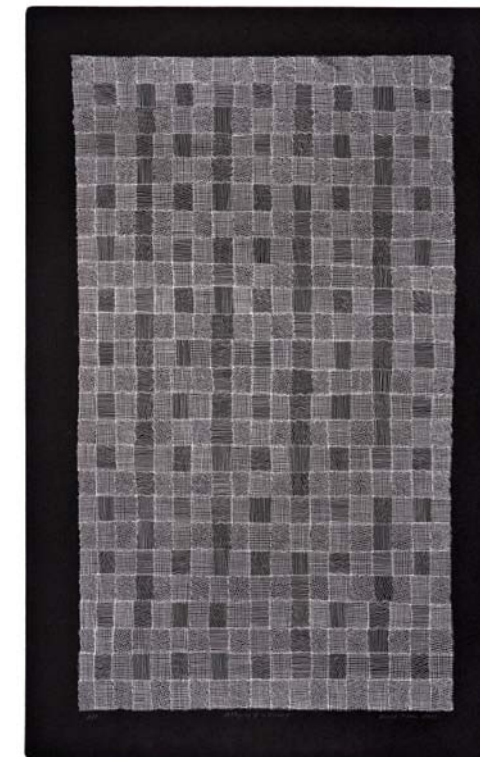
1. David Nixon, *Earth Music: Viridian Project*, 2009

TOP LEFT  
**Leonard James Robb**  
 Untitled Landscape 1968  
 Mixed media on paper | 34 x 30cm (framed)  
 Gift from the artist

TOP RIGHT  
**Paul Memmott**  
 Cylinder 1968  
 Acrylic on canvas | 60 x 27 cm  
 Gift from the artist

BOTTOM LEFT  
**David Nixon**  
 'Allegory of a Verse' 2005  
 Relief Etching | 0 x 0 cm  
 Gift from the artist

BOTTOM RIGHT  
**David Nixon**  
 Untitled 2009  
 Digital Print | 40 x 40 cm (unframed)  
 Gift from the artist





Jane Grealy gives architectural illustrations a strong sense of artistry. This work, reminiscent of Edward Hopper, was painted for the international architectural illustrators' awards of which she has won many using Mainwaring buildings. Her Attunga renderings capture the extraordinary qualities of the project.

Robyn Medek, a lifelong friend and artist, is an example of the east/west blurring of art. There is a distinct Pacific character here, yet I can see Bauhaus in the work too (after all she is married to Czech architect Fedor Medek who has worked on more award winning buildings for various firms than any other individual).

1. Jane Grealy, Attunga, 2008



TOP LEFT  
**Jane Grealy**  
Red House 2 2005  
Acrylic on canvas | 90 x 30 cm  
Artist Commission

TOP RIGHT  
**John Mainwaring (aged 5)**  
'House' 1954  
Watercolour on paper | 36.5 x 27 cm  
John Mainwaring estate

BOTTOM LEFT  
**Robyn Medek**  
'Screen from Scarlet lake' 2005  
Watercolour on paper | 52 x 51.5 cm  
Purchased from the artist via Milani Gallery

BOTTOM RIGHT  
**Robyn Medek**  
Untitled from the Red Shift 01 2005  
Watercolour on paper | 52 x 51.5 cm  
Purchased from the artist via Milani Gallery



TOP LEFT  
**Sybil Mainwaring**  
Lillies 1955  
Watercolour on paper | 42 x 28cm  
Inherited from John's mother,  
Sybil Mainwaring, a botanist

TOP RIGHT  
**John Mainwaring**  
Untitled Landscape circa 1960  
Oil on board | 44 x 35cm (framed)

MIDDLE RIGHT  
**William B. McInnes**  
Milking Time 1924  
Oil on board | 50 x 20.5 cm  
Purchased from Schubert Art Gallery,  
Gold Coast, Qld

BOTTOM RIGHT  
**Sandy Herbert**  
City View #19 2008  
Oil on panel | 29.7 x 29.7cm (framed)  
Purchased from the artist via Heiser Gallery



I grew up in the surreal urbanisms of Brisbane and the Gold Coast. One of my first artworks was under Brisbane landscape painter David Fowler. My mother Sybil trained as a botanist at Melbourne University but was also a wonderful illustrator and artist. Because of the colors and honesty of utilitarian homestead vernacular, this small impressionist painting by Billy McInnes 'ghosts' into architectural expression.

1. JM St. Vincent's Nursing Home, 1996
2. JM Sunshine Coast University Library, 1996
3. JM Hiller Residence, 1996





Ian's death shed reminded me of a favourite vernacular building in Kenilworth. The water reflections in the adjacent work are replicated in the polycarbonate clerestories within the Kingaroy Crematorium (2010, Kingaroy).

This image represents the original Captain Good Vibes House with landscape atrium and pavilions that I built for myself in Noosa. Note: Feininger like JM stained glass window expressing translucency and form. This building later developed and morphed into the Powell House (1993).

1. JM Kingaroy Crematorium, 2010
2. Vernacular Shed, Kenilworth
3. JM Captain Good Vibes House – see between atrium palm trees Noosa, 1979
4. JM Powell House, Noosa, 1991



TOP LEFT  
**Tony Edwards**  
 Captain Good Vibes House 1987  
 Oil on canvas | 141 x 106 cm  
 Commission for the artist to paint Mainwaring family house in Noosa

TOP RIGHT  
**Ian Smith**  
 Reflections 2008  
 Pastel on paper | 65 x 47 cm  
 Purchased from the artist via Heiser Gallery

BOTTOM RIGHT  
**Ian Smith**  
 The means just waiting for the inclination 2005  
 Pastel on paper | 65 x 47 cm  
 Purchased from the artist via Heiser Gallery



When sailing north, I always spent a night or so in a friend's anchorage on the southern tip of Fraser Island. This work encapsulates the foreshore and wild coastal bush with mysterious ocean debris and driftwood. For the first time an ephemeral building "Banfield" won the Queensland AIA 25-year award. Ephemerality sits well in thick coastal landscape.

During my time at the Moriarty Art School in the early 1970s, a handful of us rented Jon Molvig's house studio in Petrie Terrace, Brisbane. We visited his studio at Mount Cotton and became fans of his expressionistic landscapes. The Stockman's Hut is made of rusty single-skin cladding that has a very ephemeral and transparent feel with wonderful underpainting for the hut. Both works treat the landscape with solid impasto. In Molvig's case, he emphasizes the sometimes harsh Queensland outback landscape, shimmering heat and hazy horizons.

1. JM Banfield Pavilions, Mission Beach, 1983

TOP LEFT  
**Elizabeth Duguid**  
 Gary's Ancorage 1978  
 Oil on board | 115 x 93cm  
 Purchased from the artist via Lasting Impressions Gallery, Kennilworth Qld

TOP RIGHT  
**Jon Molvig**  
 Stockman's Hut 1956  
 Oil on board | 72 x 62.5 cm  
 Purchased from Heiser Gallery



I have always had a strong relationship with the water and the sea. My maternal grandfather introduced me as a boy to sailing with his 8-metre yacht 'Vanessa'. I charted many miles with sailing champ Tom Stephenson, who has evolved from a boat builder to master boat model craftsman whose yacht models are wonderful works of art. New Zealanders built ragtime out of simple, slab-sided plywood and many boats much larger than itself in the famed transpac race. I use the sustainable properties of plywood for construction materials. Every year I share my passion for ocean swimming with Brisbane artist Michael Eather. 'By swimming and flying', Paul Klee explains, 'we free ourselves from constraint in pure mobility'.

TOP LEFT

**Tom Stephenson** 1

Infidel (Ragtime) 1998

Paint and lacquer on carved wood | 87 x 27cm

Artist Commission

MIDDLE LEFT

**Tom Stephenson** 2

Vanessa 1998

Paint and lacquer on carved wood | 900 x 27cm

Gift from the artist

BOTTOM LEFT

**Tom Stephenson** 3

Windward Passage 1998

Paint and lacquer on carved wood | 900 x 27cm

Artist Commission

TOP RIGHT

**Michael Eather**

As Souls Sail by...#6 2011

Watercolour on paper | 21 x 16cm (unframed)

Gift from the artist

AN  
ARCHITECTS  
EYE

ASIAPACIFIC  
AND BEYOND



During visits to Asia and South America, I was fascinated by the ancient migrations around the Pacific Rim, which resulted in artistic interaction between varying migratory bodies. A certain amount of international cross-fertilization is always inevitable until globalism becomes oppressive and destroys regional identity. This dialectic is the great ambiguity facing mankind.



LEFT

**Unknown**

Unknown pouch circa 300AD (Nasca pre-Inca Era)  
Natural pigments and fibres | 95 x 80 cm  
Cusco Textile Gallery, South America

TOP RIGHT

**Unknown Japanese Artist**

Untitled circa 1900s  
Stencil on mulberry paper | 60 x 52 cm  
Xanadu Gallery, San Francisco US

BOTTOM RIGHT

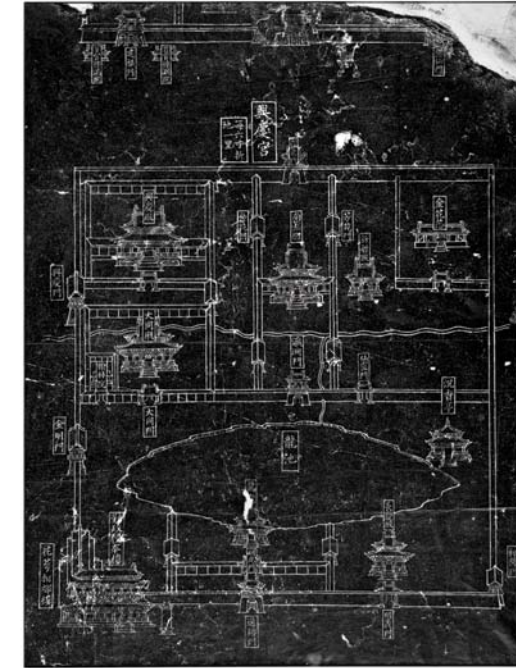
**Bang Si Truc**

Untitled 1997  
Oil on board | 71 x 34 cm  
Purchased from the artist  
via Art Gallery 7 Hang Khay Vietnam



The stone floor rubbing was collected in the early 90's on a town planning / architectural delegation to China. The architecture and planning depicted in the stone rubbing is Qin dynasty (circa 200 BC). It was used by the famous Tang Emperor Li Shimin Taizong as a basis for the 'necropolis' outside his mountain tomb in central China.

1. *Papa New Guinea Village Hall*



LIGHT

**Unknown Chinese Artist**

Untitled circa Qin Dynasty  
Floor Stone etching | 80 x 62.5 cm  
Purchased by John Mainwaring from Shanghai China

BOTTOM

**Unknown Papua New Guinean**

Unknown circa 1980s  
Natural pigments on tapa cloth | 120 x 68 cm  
Purchased from Gona in Far Eastern Papua New Guinea







With colonialism, trade, and now globalism, art and architecture in the west and the east has blurred. Like many European artists at the time of the Bauhaus, like Albers and Klee, Viet Le Thiet Cu'o'ng uses flat space, primary colors, shadow and graphic art strokes. However, many lessons can be learnt from traditional architecture in Asia. Early Anglo Saxon stilt houses were fairly clumsy, using one tree trunk per post. The Asian people have lived and settled for thousands of years in this part of the world and their stilt houses, for example, demonstrate real environmental integration: the building becomes part of ecological succession.

1. JM Viridian Houses, Noosa, 2006
2. JM Viridian Residences, Noosa, 2006
3. JM Sunshine Coast University Library, 1996



TOP  
**Le Huu Ich**  
 Untitled 1997  
 Mixed Media | 53 x 44 cm  
 Purchased from the artist via Art Gallery 7, Hanoi, Vietnam

BOTTOM  
**Le Thiet Cuong**  
 Beggar 2005  
 Oil on cloth | 81 x 50 cm  
 Purchased from the artist via Art Gallery 7 Hoian Vietnam

AN  
 ARCH  
 ITECTS  
 EYE

EUROPEAN



When I rediscovered Feininger while studying the Bauhaus in architecture lectures at university, I soon became interested in the likes of Albers, Klee, Bayer, Mies and Gropius, as well as in the Russian Constructivists and Italian Futurists.

1. JM's St. Vincent's Nursing Home, Noosa, 1996
2. JM Dragon House, Sunshine Beach, 2000

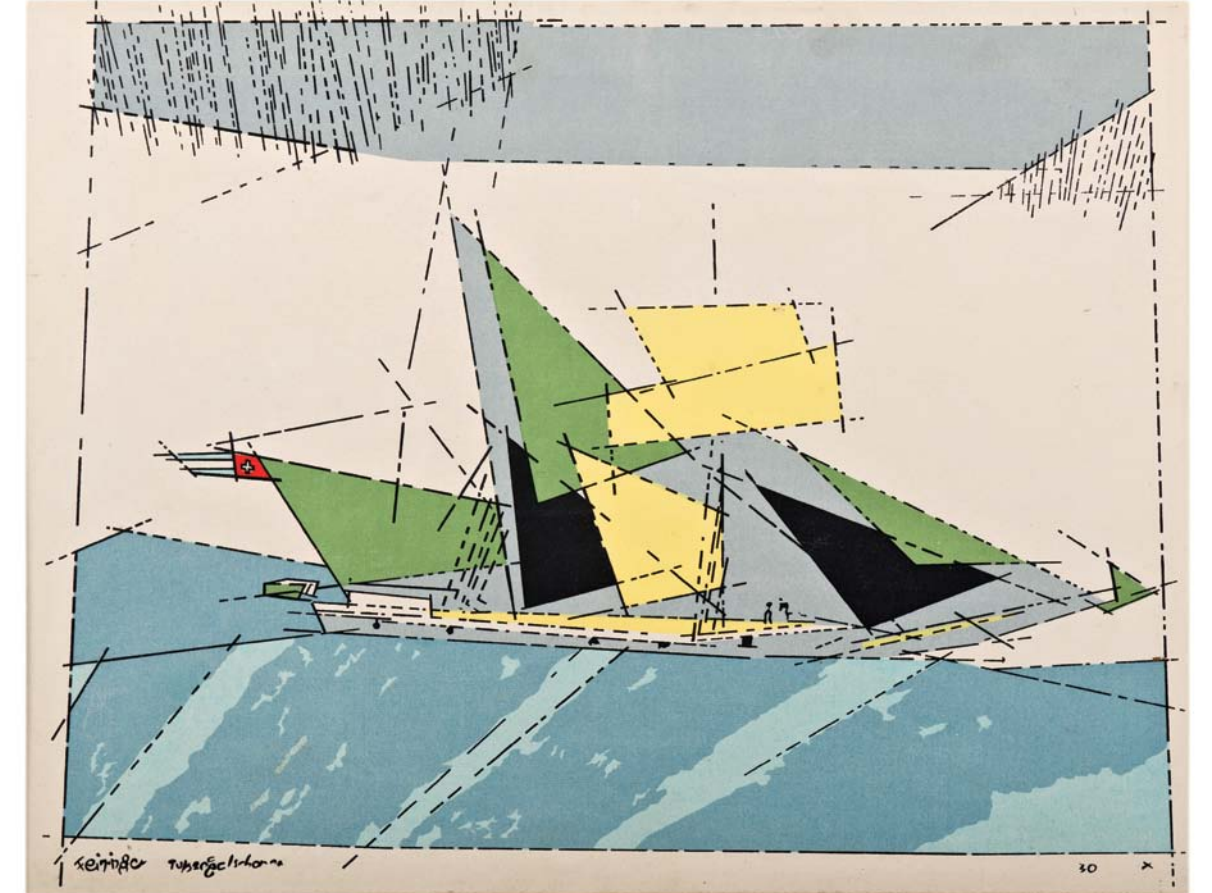
LEFT  
**Joseph Albers**  
 Pillars 1928  
 Screenprint | 50 x 46 cm  
 Purchased from The Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art,  
 New York USA

RIGHT  
**Unknown European Constructivist Artist**  
 Unknown 1947  
 Oil on board | 25 x 25cm  
 Unknown



Lyonel Feininger's art was part of my art education as a schoolboy, and well before I studied architecture. Unlike Cubism, Feininger began abstracting through spatial, ground, vertical and sky translucent planes, i.e. light, movement and space rather than emphasizing form. He also loved yachts and sailing ships, which have also been a life long passion of mine. The original work that this image is based on came via Buenos Aires - where a lot of German art ended up after the war.

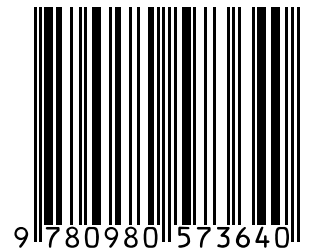
1. Lyonel Feininger, 1930s
2. JM's Dragon House, Sunshine Beach, 2000



**Lyonel Feininger**  
 Unknown 1932  
 Serigraph | 75 x 58 cm  
 Purchased from The Fine Art Stockroom

**'For the artist, dialogue with nature remains conditio sine qua non'**  
Paul Klee, *Ways to Nature Study* (1923).

ISBN 978-0-9805736-4-0



9 780980 573640