TOGART
CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD (NT)
2008

DARWIN
Darwin Convention Centre
18 June–6 July

ALICE SPRINGS
Araluen Arts Centre
2–26 October

TENNANT CREEK
Pyramid Gallery
6–28 November

KATHERINE
Katherine Civic Centre Gallery
4–16 December
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THE DARWIN WATERFRONT
A SHOWCASE FOR CREATIVITY

It is no accident that the opening celebrations for the Darwin Convention Centre will feature the Togart Contemporary Art Award 2008—along with the first of eight, of a proposed 37 permanent public art installations as part of the overall waterfront development.

There’s a simple reason for this. It has always been integral to the vision of the Toga Group, led by Ervin Vidor AM, that the work of our artists should be part of the fabric of the Darwin Waterfront.

One of the little heralded aspects of the Darwin Waterfront and Convention Centre is the role it will play in developing and promoting creativity and a unique marketplace of ideas about our past, present and future. They will be ideas about our place in the Territory—and indeed of our place in the wider world. This will come, of course, through the conferences and conventions that will take place here—but just as importantly through the skills and imaginations of our artists.

As the nation’s northernmost capital, and by far the closest to our Asian neighbours, we will be judged—in significant part—by our creativity, and by the way we embrace the creative industries that are developing around us. While we can be confident of the strength of the Territory’s contemporary artists—we have more visual artists per capita than anywhere else in Australia—we live in a part of the world that will open us to new ideas and new ways of expressing creativity.

Which is why the Togart Contemporary Art Awards are so important, and why they will grow in stature in the coming decade. It’s a sign that we can be a community that respects and learns from tradition, while also being open to difference and diversity in creative endeavour.

In only its second year, the Togart Awards have attracted 125 entries, with 33 selected to be exhibited for the first time at the Waterfront. All the artists who have contributed should be congratulated for being at the genesis of the marketplace of ideas that the Darwin Waterfront will become.

The Honourable Paul Henderson MLA
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
The Northern Territory Government has made a substantial commitment to public art as part of its initiative to create a world-class Darwin Waterfront.

Toga, as developers and builders of the private elements of this exciting project are honoured to have the responsibility to be part of the delivery of this art commitment. These are exciting times for the arts in Darwin with the first of the public art pieces commissioned for the Waterfront unveiled in June.

The Togart Contemporary Art Award (NT) is now in its third year and the calibre of over 120 entries received was most impressive in quality and artistic standard. For the first time three dimensional works have also been included in the 2008 exhibition creating an interesting and expanded display of the unique artistic talent inspired by the Northern Territory. These include cast bronze and aluminium works, as well as carved timber and an impressive selection of hollow logs presented by artists from Arnhem Land.

The short listing process by our panel of experts was painstaking with voting very close on some works. Our sincere appreciation and thanks to the Selection Panel for their long and hard deliberations in selecting the final 33 entries.

We thank all the artists who submitted their work and encourage those who did not make the final list to continue to enter next year.

Through the strategic relationship forged between The Toga Group and the Artaid Northern Territory Arts Touring, the 33 selected entries will be exhibited in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine thus extending the exposure of the 2008 Togart Award and allowing regional audiences to engage with the exhibition and participate by voting for the People’s Choice Award.

It is appropriate that this year, the Togart Award is hosted in the new state-of-the-art Darwin Convention Centre as an integral part of the opening events for this magnificent building.

Finally, we sincerely thank our three distinguished judges for accepting the most difficult role of choosing the winning entry for 2008, and express our appreciation and gratitude to all those involved in staging this exciting annual event.

Ervin Vidor AM
Executive Chairman
ELENA TAYLOR

Elena Taylor is the Curator of Australian Painting and Sculpture at the National Gallery of Australia. She has expertise in contemporary sculpture and was the curator of the National Sculpture Prize and Exhibition in 2001, 2003 and 2005. Her other exhibitions include the retrospective Grace Crowley: Being Modern and Australian Surrealism: the Agapitos/Wilson collection.

Elena was previously Curator of Art at the Australian War Memorial. She has written and lectured on many aspects of twentieth-century Australian art. Elena is a member of the Parliament House Art Advisory Committee.

STEVE FOX

Steve has had a lengthy association with the NT starting back in 1969 with a stint on Lameroo Beach. Graduating from the SA School of Art in 1978 receiving the H.Gill Memorial Medal for the Highest Honours. 1979 to 1984 worked as Art Co-ordinator for Yirrkala Arts & Crafts (now Buku Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre) returning again 1990 until 1993. Between this time lectured in printmaking at SA School of Art & ran printmaking workshops for Jerry Mason Senior Memorial Centre & at the Cadell Training Centre for Aboriginal Artists in the Riverland. 1994–1997 Director of 24HR Art the NT Centre for Contemporary Art and from 1997–2006 Director of Maruku Arts at Muttjulu community NT. Steve established his own gallery Mogo Raw Art and Blues in July 2006 on the South Coast combining his two passions Art from the Heart and Blues music.

Steve’s own artwork is represented in the NGA, NGV, QAG, Power Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery of NSW, Araluen Art Centre, University of Tasmania as well as many private collections.

PHILIP BACON AM

Well-regarded art dealer, patron and philanthropist Philip Bacon established Philip Bacon Galleries in Brisbane in 1974. In the late 1980s Philip was Art Consultant to Expo 1988 and adviser to the Estate of Lady Trout. In 1990, he was made a consultant and adviser to the Margaret Olley Art Trust. In 1994 Philip became a member of the board of Opera Australia. He was a member of the Council of the National Gallery of Australia from 1996 to 2003 and has been a Trustee of the Gordon Darling Foundation since 2000. He is a Founder/Benefactor of the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation and Perpetual Donor and board member of the National Gallery of Australia. Philip was made a Member, Order of Australia in 1999 receiving in the same year a Doctor of Philosophy (honoris causa) from the University of Queensland. In 2002 Philip received a Doctor of the University from Griffith University, and Doctor of the University from QUT in 2005.
At a recent forum on so-called ‘Outsider’ art, in Melbourne, there was impassioned debate about the need for such a label, generally reserved for art which is produced outside ‘normal’ Western conventions of sanity, intellectual capacity and/or artistic training and practice. Glenn Barkley, co-curator with Peter Fay of the exhibition Without Borders: Outsider Art in an Antipodean Context which spawned the forum, spoke of his desire that this exhibition would help end such a demarcation; that the work of the artists therein would be curated into exhibitions on broader aesthetic or thematic grounds.

The notion of ‘Outsider’ art is relevant to the subject of Aboriginal art. Indeed, Barkley’s presentation considered this duality in diametric: that Aboriginal art may, by definition, be considered Outsider art; and that any Australian art by non-Indigenous people may also qualify as art by ‘Outsiders’. This duality certainly runs through this year’s Togart Contemporary Art Award (NT) exhibition, more so the latter admission of Aboriginal art’s primacy which is reason enough to give it particular focus in this brief essay, albeit within a context which celebrates the connection of art and place above questions of ethnicity.

The most striking feature of the work by the 19 Aboriginal finalists in this exhibition is the quality of classicism. From the maze-like glyphs of veteran Papunya (Pintupi) artist Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, whose painting career mirrors the rise of the desert acrylic movement, to the masterfully painted larrkitj (hollow log coffin) by north-east Arnhem Land Mangalili clan leader Baluka Maymuru, the Aboriginal work in this selection gracefully upholds the time-honoured iconography and aesthetics for which this art has become world-renowned. In this regard, the exhibition most faithfully represents art from the NT’s most established art centres or regions, namely Buku-Larrngay at Yirrkala, Maningrida, the Tiwi Islands and Papunya Tula (representing Western Desert artists from the NT and WA). In this breakdown, Western Desert artists claim significant ground with Ronnie Tjampitjinpa joined by fellow luminaries Joseph Jurra Tjapaltjarri, George Tjungurrayi and, of course, the irrepressible vanguard of women artists: from the delicate tracery of Dorothy Napangardi’s acclaimed Mina Mina saltpan-scapes to the graphic vigour commemorating key rockholes and related ancestral journeys in the paintings of Yuyuya Nampitjinpa, Yinarupa Nangala, Doreen Reid Nakamarra and Eileen Napaltjarri whose imagery reaches an even bolder pitch with its scaled-up, scorched minimalism.

The Aboriginal classicism in this year’s exhibition is also reflected, on the whole, in the works’ ochre-based palette. Gone are the bright acrylic accents in the work of Sally Gabori, Adrian Robertson and Patrick Tjungurrayi from last year’s Award exhibition. ‘Brightness’ is achieved through more traditional means in the application of white ochre, intricately dotted and/or cross-hatched, in the paintings of Tiwi artists Nina Puruntatameri, Susan Wanji Wanji and Margaret Renee Kerinauia, and in the painted log coffins of Yolngu artists Baluka Maymuru and Djirrirra Wurungmurra, and Kunwinjku artist Ivan Namirkkii. The woven Dirdbim (Moon Dreaming) sculpture by fellow Maningrida-based Kunwinjku artist Marina Murdilinga heralds the exhibition’s cohesive tenet of innovation on classical form (including the translation of Margaret Gamuti’s weaving into monumental aluminium-cast sculpture), just as talented teenager Elton Win’s watercolour landscape Near Mt Leibig shows that a classic (‘Namatjira’) style can establish itself in the span of two generations.

Borroloola’s Nancy McDinny and the Utopia region’s Josie Kunoth Petyarre are distinguished by their less classic though no less Aboriginal aesthetic through more figurative and colourful planar-style paintings. Both the cattle and drovers in McDinny’s Droving Cattle to Kujabi, are black, white and brindle, a beguiling picture of outback unity for this essentially inclusive exhibition, against an animated scene of red dust rising.

Maurice O’Riordan is editor of Art Monthly Australia, and a freelance arts writer.
MINING THE NARRATIVE

Most find the time spent in Northern and Central Australia a defining experience that stays with them. With this in mind, we come to appreciate the claims of commentators and critics who maintain that visual art practice in the Northern Territory is nuanced by extreme climatic and cultural conditions. Intercultural exchange which commonly transpires over long-term relationships continually shifts and creates a sense of momentum and celebration. These relationships continually draw non-Indigenous artists to return or to stay. Yet importantly others resist overtly referencing ‘where they are’ in their artwork and have spoken of the risk at being consumed into a ‘territory lifestyle’. Some of the magnitude of this diversity of practice is captured here in the Togart Contemporary Art Award exhibition.

The works of well known Darwin artists Rob Brown, Brian Bulley and Monique Auricchio are somewhat diarist appearing in both epic and intimate configurations. More often than not at the heart of each endeavour are satirical observation and an ironic self-effacing stance.

Bulley’s work typically looks at processes of immersion and cultural differences. The Hitchhiker captures a sense of movement and energy, vulnerability and alienation.

Monique Auricchio who completed studies at the Canberra School of Art and thereafter managed and taught in fine art print workshops arrived in Darwin in 1997 and has maintained over several years investigations in animal iconography creating shadowy dreamlike etchings. Animal Series speaks to the ambiguous and fluid dynamics of power relationships. These works also embody personal stories for the artist, unfamiliar to the viewer, of suburban encounters with dangerous yet alarmingly familiar animals.

Narratives of a quirky life both real and imagined are source material for the work of painter Rob Brown who arrived in Darwin in 1998. In Billy Downs & His Incredible Inflatable Crocodile a man is dressed in the well turned-out suit and hat which is typical attire of a country man coming to town. Both man and crocodile (which is gripped, trophy-like above his head) appear out of their normal environment. Thus the context for Brown’s crocodile is ambiguous and is rendered in a stylised form typical of the artist’s oeuvre.

Chayni Henry, Franck Gohier and Matt Huttlestone more directly than the Darwin artists already mentioned provide agency for local narratives. Gohier and Huttlestone mine historical archives whilst Henry’s narratives are drawn from individual experience. For Franck Gohier a childhood investigating the debris of Cyclone Tracy and the Second World War has honed an acute awareness of the aesthetic and historical value of found objects which complements the research he has periodically incorporated into his art practice. Huttlestone too is interested in local histories with which he then engages audiences on a universal level. The sculptural installation Horsehide Raft tells a universal story of drastic deeds in the name of survival.

Huttlestone’s comment on an earlier artwork is of relevance here ‘like so many of us come for a short while, head full of dreams, build our own little empires then leave’. In some regards Huttlestone’s hypothesis is common to much non-Indigenous art practice in the Northern Territory articulating ambiguous status, contested histories and fluid narratives.

By contrast Chayni Henry casts her eye not to the threatening untamed landscape but to the radical suburbs of Darwin. Henry is not a satirist but treats suburbia with affection and reveals the absurd reality of everyday life. Henry is distinct in her approach to corresponding contemporary practice elsewhere in Australia, from the neon-graffiti style of Howard Arkley to the more distilled suburban interiors of painter Anne Wallace. She incorporates text of autobiographical tales in an easy and colourful style.

A maritime theme is shared across the works of Huttlestone, Gary Shinfield and Katrina Tyler. The links of cubed steel of Tyler’s necklace is evocative of the rusted hulls of sea containers in which marine creatures have found new hosts allowing for sporadic growth. Tyler’s work speaks to a mediated landscape reconceptualised in much contemporary jewellery, in which nature is encountered primarily as form and pattern rather than direct experience (Murray 2007). Infant Reef is astutely optimistic of nature’s resilience and ability to regenerate.
Sydney based printmaker Gary Shinfield has undertaken thorough field and archival research which has enriched his creative practice most evidently in his aerial vistas of the northern and north-west coastline in which the landscape is abstracted into undulating patterns and delicate modulations of colour. **Raft 3** in its stylised abstracted forms is evocative of the visual language of artist and voyager Ian Fairweather. Shinfield’s dense rendering of stylised, calligraphic-like mark strokes sets the scene for an image of visceral fluidity.

Tobias Richardson is a committed practitioner with exhibitions and projects locally and interstate who is progressively being acknowledged for his accomplished, critical art practice. Evident in his oeuvre of the past ten years, is an increasingly complex understanding of architecture and memory. Richardson’s creative explorations of these dual concerns are evident in the recent exhibitions **Siege** and **Cross Currents: Focus on contemporary Australian Art**. Catalogue essayist Angus Cameron (2004) observes “[Richardson’s] practice involves the collection of objects and images, which he incorporates into his art... he has an uncommon ability to re-contextualise ideas into the un-conventional”. It is with this awareness of Richardson’s practice that we arrive at an understanding of the importance and place of the **Slippage** series in the artist’s corpus. The unfinished or raw qualities of the sculpture are evocative of childhood educational toys evident in the solo exhibition **Exquisite Houses** and inscribed here through the rubric of the artist’s recent residency in Kuala Lumpur.

Nomadism is crucial to the practice of Pamela Lofts. Much of her works are concerned with perceptions, narratives and lived experiences of Australian deserts. She lives in Alice Springs where she moved after attaining her Bachelor of Arts at Sydney College of the Arts in 1989. Lofts primarily works in sculptural installation and photography. Something of her exploration of nomadism is apparent in the **Blue Tongue (Grotesquerie)** a mutated anthropomorphic form whose character metaphorically evokes homelessness and displacement. Pamela Lofts’ art practice is informed by personal experience and addresses cultural, political, historical and environmental issues.

Non-Indigenous artists, in responding to the particular cultural history and environment, are implicated either unwittingly or intentionally with a political agenda. Whatever their positions these artists demonstrate an ability to craft nuanced layers of meanings. Artists use the tools available to them to ensure the work is powerful and evocative for the audience. The survey of artworks represented in the **Togart Contemporary Art Award (NT)** exhibition shows that in being driven by a local narrative they have powerfully engaged with universal concerns.

Allison Gray is a curator at the Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory.
Many of the artists represented in the 2008 Togart exhibition are engaged with some dominant themes in contemporary Australian and international art: home; belonging; connection to place; displacement, drifting and social instability; and general environmental fragilities and transformations.

In 2002 the artist Fiona Hall, reflecting on the economic, environmental and sociological politics in her recent works, made the poignant statement that ‘now we know that the seemingly infinite, disparate variety of living matter on earth, of which we are but a part, is life’s giant, polymorphic skin, encasing us all, inside which we dwell in kindred, genetic proximity.’

Human impact on built and natural habitats increasingly conditions individual and community consciousness, and the ways in which we live. It is true too, of course, that the various environments we inhabit condition us, and this exhibition reinforces the enduring power of history and country on senses of identity, social relations and cultural continuity. It is intriguing to be writing this from Melbourne, for instance, looking at artists’ works that reflect so strong a Top End context. Distance and difference, however, have their counterpart in the humanistic concerns that so many artists examine in their works and that communicate some shared, fundamental contemporary human conditions.

Images and objects anchor individuals to specific histories and places. Contemporary artists provide us with images and ideas that can be poetic encapsulations of their times, and important alternative visions to mainstream media. Visual artists working in disparate cultural and social situations can subtly or declaratively counter the totalising power of globalisation and the sheer ease with which it can immediately transform the unique into the generic.

As one of the artists in this exhibition, Chayni Henry, reminds us, our lives and times are not always great, but that art is a process enabling reflection on and externalisation of ‘memories, from the maudlin to the mundane’ and to locate ourselves in the present. One of the fascinating things that this exhibition reiterates is that there is no compass in the field of contemporary art to point us in a certain direction. Contemporary art is an environment in which uncertainty and unpredictability are motivating forces. As viewers and commentators, as participants in the wide-ranging visual culture essential to our intellectual and emotional lives, we are in the field with contemporary artists at any given time, responding and determining our own pathways through concepts, propositions and provocations.

Elaborating on the abstract, indeterminate space of his image Raft 3, Gary Shinfield offers an apt reflection on the necessity of art to provide structure, clarity and possible meanings to twenty-first century existence: ‘To live in the present is to live with constant change and uncertainty. What was once solid ground has become increasingly fluid, and in some ways we are all searching for the raft of safe passage’.

Jason Smith is the Director of the Heide Museum of Modern Art
Animal Series features a suite of nine multi-plate etchings depicting the dynamics of power. Whilst the animals appear to be locked in battle, struggling for dominance, there is ambiguity and equanimity within their relationships. Through the absence of sharp teeth and claws of the aggressors, and the sense of pride and dignity of the subjugated, a situation is created where it is no longer black or white and the balance of power could shift at any time.

Parallels can be drawn between the contradictions and complexities in these images to that of human experience, and these dramas are as much about the external struggles of the human psyche. Although inhabiting an allegorical space, they also embody personal connections. While the peacock may stand for wealth and vanity in Venetian heraldry, there is also the tale of the local peacock parading down the street in suburban Darwin and the house calls of the curious golden tree snakes.

Monique has lived in Darwin since 1997, working as a printer/collaborator across the Top End with mainly Indigenous artists. She began seriously developing her career as a practising artist in 2003 and since then has shown in over 20 exhibitions nationally and internationally.

Monique has gained recognition due to her highly developed printing skills and imaginative imagery. Her work contains whimsical and theatrical elements of animals infused with human sensibility where she explores the fragile and peculiar pecking order of the human and animal condition.

Monique is represented by Australian Galleries in Sydney Australia.
Meet Billy Downs, father, uncle, cowboy and inflatable crocodile hunter. Billy lives in the Kimberly and comes to Darwin at least once a year. I enjoy these visits and every year we manage to go ‘hunting’ together.

This painting of Billy celebrates our very first crocodile hunt. I was a naïve city boy when he first offered, with a big grin on his face, to take me croc hunting. I was also bloody excited!

The day arrived and off we set. After stopping at several corner stores around the suburbs, then a detour to Casuarina my excitement turned to confusion. Billy is a quiet bloke, and when he’s not silent, he mumbles. I didn’t know if it was weapons or bait or what we were after in a bloody shopping mall!

Then his face lit up and he pointed into a shop full of pool and swimming stuff. There, hanging from the ceiling was an inflatable crocodile. Bastard thought it was the funniest joke in the world!

Every year when he comes to the big smoke, Billy and I go ‘hunting’ together. And every year the kids down at the water hole near his outstation wait for his return. Splashing and laughing and telling stories of the legend that is, Billy Downs & His Incredible Inflatable Crocodile.

Rob graduated with first class honours from Charles Darwin University in 2000 and was awarded the Chancellor’s medal from the University in the same year. He has exhibited extensively in many solo exhibitions and numerous group shows within the Northern Territory as well as nationally. He is also represented in several important collections including the Parliament House Collection in Canberra.
In 1986 and 1991 I hitchhiked from the central coast of NSW to Darwin. Both times I cheated a little but a majority of both these long trips (the first via the east coast, the second via Melbourne and Adelaide) I made by standing on the side the road with my finger out. In Australia we don’t use the thumb method of North America or Europe, we use the more relaxed index finger pointing to the roadside, like a partially straightened hook hoping to catch a lift.

I spent a lot of my late teens and early twenties hitching around, mainly the central coast where I grew up or on uni breaks in Newcastle to various coastal and inland spots of NSW. Hitchhiking was a type of philosophy, a state of mind for me. You needed time to hitchhike. It made you slow down, to observe and meditate on the passing traffic, good for a young artist. Plus it was free, a little risky and truly an adventure, you met all types.

The painting The Hitchhiker is in part an amalgam of these memories and the romance of travelling north. Though it is also of contemporary times, the forward manic rush we find ourselves within and the observer on the roadside watching it all whiz by.

Note: Mitsubishi Magna drivers were like the Volvo drivers that preceded them and never, ever picked you up.

After arriving in Darwin in 1986 Bryan returned south and completed a BA in visual arts at Newcastle Uni in 1990. Returning in 1991, he lived in Kakadu NP for 18 months, rural Darwin for a while, Milingimbi in Arnhem Land for 4 years and travelled through Mexico, Central America and the US for 8 months. He settled in Darwin in 2000 to focus on his painting.

Bryan has shown in many solo and group exhibitions since then, his work held in both private and public collections.

BRYAN BULLEY
The Hitchhiker
Acrylic on canvas 70 x 150 cm

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I am Margaret Gamuti. I learnt weaving by watching and helping my mother and my grandmother weaving when I was a young girl. Then I started weaving myself and with help from my sisters.

So I sold some of my art works to Milingimbi art centre.

In late 2007 last year, four artists—Alfred Walpay, David Roy, Melinda Getjin, myself, Chris Durkin the Manager and Matthew Ward from ANKAAA went to Brisbane.

We went to Urban Art Projects for a casting workshop.

When we were there, Alfred made *ganadharr* (bird), David made *larratjatja* (flying fish), Melinda made fish trap and myself Margaret made *bathi* (basket).

Margaret Gamuti
(assisted by Ruth Nalmakarra)
A brief history of Smith Street is also, necessarily, a brief history of Darwin since European settlement on Larrakia land. On the one hand Darwin has been resilient through extreme adversity, relative isolation and the constant changes it has endured as a consequence. Yet, on the other hand, Darwin has also been adaptable to these very same circumstances...just like those people who choose to call Darwin home.

Franck is a Darwin based artist who chose in 2003 to focus purely on his practice. He has been exhibiting his work since 1989 and is represented in many major national collections as well as many private collections nationally and internationally. Franck is represented by Ray Hughes Gallery in Sydney Australia.
Storytelling is a very important component of my work; in fact, it’s the entire foundation on which it’s built. I’ve always recorded the stories of Darwin and the Territory through my own experiences and this work is no exception. I understand I have portrayed only a sliver of Darwin’s suburbs, but they are the ones I have probably spent the most time in.

Most of the occurrences depicted are of a slightly mundane nature, they are nonetheless, some of the individual components that eventually make up the larger picture of my past.

Chayni has been exhibiting her work since 2002 and she is a self taught artist. Over the last six years she has established a strong following and a distinctive style which draws on Central American retablos painting for inspiration. Importantly she was the winner of the first Togart Award in 2007 and in 2006 she was chosen to participate in Primavera at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney. Chayni is represented by Bett Gallery in Hobart Australia.
“Upon life’s rivers...
Like Explorers we travel...
Each and everyone of us...”

In the Wet-season of 1866, an exploration party left the ill-fated settlement of Escape Cliffs with the intention of finding a ‘more suitable’ location for European settlement in the Northern Territory.

Battling against rising flood waters, stricken with tropical fevers, dysentery, malnourishment, and spear attacks, the party, desperate to save their own lives conceived a plan to build a raft and float down the crocodile infested East Alligator River to the sea and then westward back to the settlement.

The raft, which was approximately 3 x 7 metres, was constructed from bound together saplings and lined with hides cut from their horses. They called it ‘The Pioneer’, and upon it floated 15 men for seven days!

Two people had to bail constantly day and night, whilst others took turns paddling against the winds and currents. At one stage they were reportedly swept eight miles out to sea and were regularly circled by sharks and crocodiles which were attracted to the stench of the rotting hides.

When the explorers finally arrived back at the settlement, they were burnt raw, bearded and unrecognisable. They had travelled approximately 300km in five months. The whole expedition was described by JT Manton (the acting Governor General) in his report back to Adelaide as one of the greatest failures ever recorded in the annals of exploration.

The Front Door: Lockwood, Douglas: RIGBY1984

Matt Huttlestone lives and works in the rural area just south of Darwin. He regularly exhibits paintings and sculptures both locally and interstate. Recently, he was nominated in Australian Art Collector Magazine’s list of ‘the most collectible’ Australian Artists. Essentially concerned with the landscape, Matt’s work often references historical narratives as a way to reflect, describe and question contemporary issues and perspectives.
There is an old tiwi creation story about that man Yirrikapayi. He used to carve spears near Cape Fourcroy on Bathurst Island. One day he was attacked by another mob who were jealous of his ceremonial spears. He made Arawinkiri with long barbs down both edges of the spearhead. They chased him off the edge of the cliff and threw his spears at him. That man became yirrikapayi the salt water crocodile and his spear became his tail. Yirrikapayi Turwara—crocodile tail. That’s my painting.

I learnt how to paint from the old people, they used to teach us at school. My grandfather, Jerry Kerinauia was an artist, we have the book at home. That’s why I decided to become an artist, to carry on the family tradition. My mother’s uncle is an artist too. His name is Yiwala. He is half Tiwi, half Kunwingku—like me.

Margaret Kerinauia
PAMELA LOFTS

Blue Tongue (Grotesquerie)
Cast Bronze (unique) 25 x 58 x 22 cm

Blue Tongue is one of a number of small objects, which I have playfully called grotesqueries. They recall the ‘chance encounters’ of objects favored by the Surrealists and have evolved from my exploration into our relationship with Australian place, particularly the desert. The grotesqueries are hybrid creatures; cast in bronze from animal skulls and mulga roots I have collected in the desert, and serve to epitomize its extremes. The points of the roots have been honed and polished to reveal the warmth of the bronze, inviting touch yet warning against it. I wanted to evoke a sense of displacement with these objects—a sort of searching for belonging. A homelessness. They could hint at an environmental or genetic mutation—’arrested in the process of becoming something else’. They are ambiguous, multivalent and strangely desirable. Perhaps they are us.

Pamela Lofts is a nationally recognised visual artist, and children’s book illustrator. Her art practice, principally sculpture and photomedia, is grounded in the narratives, emotions and material substance of Central Australia. Over the last twenty years she has exhibited widely throughout Australia and participated in a number of artist residencies overseas. Her work has been collected by state and regional galleries, including the National Gallery of Australia and she has been awarded a number of Australia Council grants, the latest being to co-facilitate an artist camp at a goldmine in the Tanami Desert. She has worked collaboratively with Indigenous groups, recording stories for publication, and has recently designed social history exhibitions (CLC 30 Years Celebration, Alice Springs and Opening the Common Gate, Lingiari Foundation, Broome). Significantly, she founded and was the first Coordinator and Curatorial Director of Watch This Space, an artist-run initiative that has been responsible for raising the awareness and profile of contemporary art in the region. In 2007 she completed a Master of Philosophy in visual art at ANU. She has lived in Alice Springs for sixteen years.
Baluka is the undisputed ceremonial leader of his Manggalkili clan. He is son of the brothers Nanyin and Narritjin Maymuru whose identity as artists and statesmen of their people remain large well after their passing. Baluka was a young boy at Yirrkala where his fathers were amongst the founding members of the famous painting school at Rangi (late fifties)—the beach at Yirrkala. Baluka too is a renowned artist of a deep and passionate character.

Baluka continues his father’s struggle to live out at the clan’s remote saltwater estate of Djarrakpi (the tip of Cape Shield on the Gulf of Carpentaria on the maps) and now seems to be finding the right support mechanisms to do so. For the last 2 years he and his family have spent more time there than not and the few works of art (he paints on bark as well as memorial poles and carves eloquently) that he has made there are beautifully considered, executed and profound in content. The context and integrity in which he makes art cannot be dismissed for he is a formal practitioner of Yolngu ceremony and holds church with that.

The designs on this pole are of water running out to sea from bottom to top. The designs on the very surface depict the spiritual essence of his kin as it flows from inland Manggalkili estates, under large billabongs of the Dhuwa waters of the Dhudi-Djapu clan where Mana the shark resides (children of Manggalkili men), along a river of stars banked by shanks of sacred possum fur, over floodplains that awaken the Lightning Serpent excited enough to spit lightning into the sky. These sacred waters mix with the tides at the coast to be taken out to sea and return to the beaches at Djarrakpi, the spiritual foci of the clan. The original deaths occurred on this water, the original Yingapungapu mortuary ceremony took place within the confines of the elliptical sand sculpture on the beach and then to within the hollow log.

Baluka has won the NATSIAAA 3D prize twice, in 1987 and 2006.
In the late 1970s, my family moved to Wandangula Outstation. I lived there with my sisters Myra, Linda, Isa, Kim and all their children Adrian, Selma, Clayton, Cynthia, Kay, Ruth, Vanessa, Fiona, Joshua and Naomi. A little way from us lived my uncle Isaac Isaac and his wife Annie Isaac.

The men worked cattle at Wandangula, and the women used to cook up dinner and take it out to the men in the old Toyota. A bough shed was used for a school.

Every year, the men would round up the cattle and take them to Kujabi over in Queensland near Cloncurry where they would be loaded onto a steam train to be taken to the meatworks in Townsville. The drovers worked for old Jack Keirghan. The trip would take them between one and four months.

In this painting, I have painted the men droving cattle to Kujabi. It shows Dinny McDinny, Georgie Ahwon, Stewart Hoosan, Freddy Rory, Billy Kidd, Gordon Rory and the other men. At the back of the pack is Jack Keirghan.

Nancy McDinny, 2007

Nancy lives and works out at Borroloola in the Northern Territory and first started exhibiting her work in 2002. Nancy’s work often references the ‘olden’ times with a joy and freedom to be envied. She has works in major collections including the National Maritime Museum in Sydney and the National Museum in Canberra.
This pandanus sculpture by Marina Murdilinga refers to a site in her clan estate at a place called ‘Dirdbim’, which literally means ‘image of the moon’. The sight is an unusually round hole in sandstone residual on the plain not far from the Mann River. The large hole is said to be the full moon created by the rainbow serpent ‘Ngalyod’ who pierced the rock in times of the Dreaming and left the shape of the full moon. ‘Dirdbim’ is not far from the artist’s residence today at Yikarakkal and the area is rich in rock art and old camping sites. As well there are numerous human remains, bones wrapped up in paperbark and older remains lying in clefts of sandstone shelters. The Kuninjku people of the district have always used ‘Dirdbim’ as a mortuary site because of the mythological history of the area, which is connected to the moon story. Marina Murdilinga has also added a picture of a star *kinhkinh* which refers to the heavenly location of the moon.
This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole site of Marrapinti, west of the Pollock Hills in Western Australia. The lines in the painting depict the creek at the site and the sand hills that surround it.

In ancestral times a group of women of the Nangala and Napangati kinship subsections camped at this site during their travels towards the east. While at the site the women made nose bones, also known as marrapinti, which are worn through a hole made in the nose web. During ceremonies relating to Marrapinti the older women pierced the nasal septums of the younger women who were participating in the ceremony.

Nose bones were originally used by both men and women but are now only inserted by the older generation on ceremonial occasions.

Upon completion of the ceremonies at Marrapinti the women continued their travels east passing through Wala Wala, Ngaminya and Wirrulnga, before heading north-east to Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay).

Doreen was born in the Warburton Ranges in the mid 1950s. As a young girl she walked with her parents and other family members into the Haasts Bluff settlement. The family later moved to Papunya, where Doreen attended school. From there they moved to Areyonga and later Docker River. As a single woman Doreen travelled to Kintore in the early 1980s and met her husband, George Tjampu Tjapaltjarri. They eventually settled in Kiwirrkura close to George’s homeland.

Doreen completed her first paintings for Papunya Tula in 1996 and has since become a regular painter. George passed away in early 2005 but she has stayed on living and painting at Kiwirrkura, occasionally travelling south to Warakurna and Warburton to visit relatives.
On this hollow log, Ivan Namirrkki has painted *Gungura*, the spiraling wind associated with several sites in the Kardbam clan. On one level, this painting can be interpreted as a depiction of the kinds of mini-cyclones common during the wet season in Arnhem Land, where the artist lives.

In this painting, *Gungura* also relates specifically to a site called Bilwoyinj, near Mankorlod on Namirrkki’s clan estate. At this site, two of the most important Kuninjku creation beings, a father and a son known as *na-korrkko* are believed to have hunted and eaten a goanna. They left some of the goanna fat behind at the site, which turned into the rock that still stands there today. The word Bilwoyinj, which is the name of this site, also refers to the fat of the goanna. Bilwoyinj site is also a ceremonial ground for a ceremony called Yabbaduruwa, a major ceremony owned by the Yirridjdja patrimoiet. The Yabbaduruwa ceremony is primarily concerned with initiation, landownership and promoting the cyclical regeneration of the human and natural worlds.

The *Lorrkon* or bone pole coffin ceremony was the final ceremony in a sequence of mortuary rituals celebrated by the people of Arnhem Land. This ceremony involves the placing of the deceased’s bones into a hollow log which was decorated with painted clan designs and ceremonially placed into the ground where it remained until it slowly decayed over many years.

The western Arnhem Land version of *Lorrkon* ceremony involves the singing of sacred songs to the accompaniment of *karlikari* a pair of sacred boomerangs used as rhythm instruments. During the final evening of the ceremony, dancers decorate themselves with kapok down, or today, cotton wool and conduct much of the final segments of the ceremony in the secrecy of a restricted men’s camp. The complete ceremony may stretch over a period of two weeks, but on the last night the bones of the deceased, which have been kept in a bark container or today wrapped in cloth and kept in a suitcase are taken out, are painted with red ochre and placed inside the hollow log. This ceremony may take place many years after the person has died.

At first light on the final morning of the *Lorrkon* ceremony, the men appear, coming out of their secret bush camp carrying the pole towards the women’s camp. The two groups call to each other using distinct ceremonial calls. The women have prepared a hole for the pole to be placed into and when it is stood upright, women in particular kinship relationships to the deceased dance around the pole in a jumping/shuffling motion. The *Lorrkon* is then often covered with tarpaulin and left to slowly decay.
This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole site of Umari, situated in sand hill country, east of Mt. Webb in Western Australia.

A large group of ancestral women travelled east from Umari to the rockhole site of Pinari, which is north west of the Kintore community.

As they travelled the women gathered the edible berries known as kampurarrpa or desert raisin from the small shrub Solanum Centrale. These berries can be eaten straight from the bush but are sometimes ground into a paste and cooked in the coals to form a type of damper. The numerous small circles in this work depict the berries collected at this site. The larger oval shapes represent the rockholes at Umari while the grid-like shape represents the surrounding tali (sand hills).

From Pinari the women continued their travels towards the east to the site of Kalipinpa, a major water dreaming site north of Sandy Blight Junction.

Yuyuya Nampitjinpa was born west of Muyinga in Western Australia, just over the Northern Territory border, circa 1946. Her family moved into Haasts Bluff in the 1950s and later to the newly formed Papunya Community. She is the sister of the well known artist Ronnie Tjampitjinpa. In 1999 Yuyuya contributed to the Kintore women’s painting as part of the Western Desert Dialysis Appeal.
This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole site of Mukula, east of Jupiter Well in Western Australia.

During mythological times a large group of ancestral women came from the west and stopped at this site to perform the ceremonies associated with the area.

They later continued their travels towards the east passing through Ngaminya, Kiwirrkura and Wirrunga on their way to Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay). As the women travelled they gathered a variety of bush foods including *kampurarpa* (desert raisin) from the small shrub *Solanum Centrale*, and *pura* (bush tomato) from the plant *Solanum Chippendalei*. While at Mukula the women also gathered the edible roots of the bush banana or silky pear vine *Marsdenia Australis* known as *yunala*, which is plentiful in the region. The shapes in the painting represent the features of the country through which they travelled as well as the bush foods that they gathered.

Yinarupa is the daughter of the artist Anatjari Tjampitjinpa, a former shareholder of Papunya Tula Artists who is now deceased. She appears as a small child in the book ‘The Lizard Eaters’. Her sister Mantua Nangala and brother Ray James Tjangala are also in the book. She was married to Yala Yala Gibbs Tjungurrayi, who was also an artist and shareholder who passed away in December 1998.

In 1999 Yinarupa contributed to the Kiwirrkura women’s painting as part of the Western Desert Dialysis Appeal.
This painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole and soakage water site of Tjiturrulpa, situated in rocky hills west of the Kintore Community.

During mythological times a group of men and women travelled east from this site toward the rockhole site of Ilpilli. Along the way they gathered material for the production of various tools used in everyday life. The lines in the painting depict the lengths of wood that are yet to be fashioned into a variety of tools including kulata (spears), wana (nulla nullas), kiriji (shield) and kali (boomerang).

While at Tjiturrulpa the group also gathered a variety of bush foods including pitjara or desert yam, the edible tuber of the shrub Ipomoea costata, pura or bush tomato from the shrub Solanum chippendalei, and kampurarra or desert raisin from the small shrub Solanum centrale.

Eileen was born in Haasts Bluff in December 1956. Her father Charlie Tararu Tjungurrayi was one of the founding members of Papunya Tula Artists, and her mother Tatali Nangala was also a very successful artist with the company from 1996 until her death in 1999. Eileen grew up in Haasts Bluff and later moved to Kintore with her family when it was first established. The main site Eileen refers to in her painting is Tjiturrulnga, which is slightly west of Kintore and the birthplace of her father. She often sat beside both of her parents as they worked and although doing her first painting in 1996 Eileen didn’t start painting regularly until 1999.
This painting depicts a major women’s ceremonial site known as Mina Mina, the artist’s custodial country, located near Lake Mackay in the Tanami Desert, north of Yuendumu in the Northern Territory. During the Jukurrpa ancestral women of the Napangardi and Napanangka subsection groups (aunt/niece relationship, in which knowledge is passed from one to the other) gathered to collect ceremonial karlangu (digging sticks) that had emerged from the ground. They then proceeded east, performing rituals of song and dance, to the place known as Jankinyi. A large belt of trees Casuarina Decaisneana now stand where these digging sticks once were.

DOROTHY NAPANGARDI

Salt at Mina Mina
Acrylic on canvas 91 x 150 cm

This painting shows yet another development in the ever-evolving style of Dorothy Napangardi. As with all of this artist’s works, this painting revolves around the Mina Mina site, of which Dorothy is custodial owner.

Using a myriad of dots set against a white background Dorothy has created a shifting sea of wonderfully harmonious movement that gathers and disperses across the canvas. Like the sandhills in constant flux around and through the artist’s country so too does this painting move, backwards and forwards, the rippling effect produced so like that of the wind’s tracks in the sand.
My name is Josie Kunoth Petyarre and I am an Anmatyerre artist from Utopia. This painting shows the outstation of Pungalindum where I live with my husband Dinni Kunoth Kemarre, our five sons, four daughters and four grandchildren. At the bottom I have painted our house. It is next to a big antenna which is for the telephone. When the phone is broken, a man comes from Telstra in a helicopter to fix it. In the painting, I have painted his helicopter next to our house. On the other side of the house is our vegetable garden where we grow corn, pumpkin and chilies. We have a special tap next to the garden so that we can water our garden. Across the road are the other buildings at Pungalindum. The white building is our Lutheran church which we built for Easter. It is made from corrugated iron and has a large white wooden cross on the roof. It is where we hold our Easter and Christmas services. People come from all the other camps to our church. Next to the church, I have painted my son Simon in his four-wheel-drive. There are a lot of cars at Pungalindum, but not all of them work.
Ambiguous Estuarine Phylum (AEP), between land and sea is a work which captures a possible biological, chemical and physical act within our contemporary ecology. Ambiguous in function within everyday life this new phylum is revealed at a particular time and place between land and sea. The chosen specimen for study and exhibition was found in the tropical estuarine system on the northern coast of Australia.

Captured here in its dry phase, AEP exhibits similar morphology to the ancient Ediacaran biota. Multi-cellular and symmetrical AEP’s folds act as homes for a variety of microbial colonies. Ambiguous Estuarine Phylum (AEP), between land and sea creates a possible newcomer to the world of animals and plants. These new organisms or platforms of ecological abundance provide a new opportunity for thought and discussion about future directions.

It is unfortunate to uncover such a major discovery at a time of estuarine fragility. It would be good for those who wish to exhibit this find to do so in an educational bid to preserve and protect.

Sarah Pirrie has been working with organic paper forms for many years. “My sculptural forms often exploit colour & shape within the natural world to reflect on notions of beauty, sustainability and life.”

Sarah Pirrie has been a seasonal visitor to Darwin since 1996 and currently lectures in Visual Arts at Charles Darwin University.
This design depicts the Kulama ceremony of the Tiwi people: the dancers and the singers create a circle and prepare poisonous yam for eating. The Kulama occurs at the end of the wet season.

Our Tiwi artwork tells stories about our land, culture, language and ceremonies. To keep it strong to pass to our Tiwi children we have bush tucker, saltwater tucker and bush medicine. Also there is Kulama ceremony every year.

Nina Puruntatameri

Nina was taught to paint by her father, Romauld Puruntatameri. As a 14 year old, she would come home from school and work with him, painting his spears. Nina has worked at both Nguiu Adult Education and the Munupi Arts & Crafts doing bark painting and screen printing. She now lives at Pirlangimpi and works on canvas, etchings, linocuts and bark paintings. In 1993 Nina won the award for New Medium at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards in Darwin, providing recognition for her skills in etching.

Nina’s father, Romauld Puruntatameri, is represented in the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory Collection. Her grandfather, Paddy Teeampi Tepomitari Puruntatameri, and her aunt, Rosina Puuntulara, both carvers, are represented in the Melbourne Museum Collection.
Slippage is a series of sculptural works developed by Richardson whilst on residency in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia early in 2008. The result is a reflection and response on built environments in Malaysia, particularly contemporary architecture in Kuala Lumpur. Yet these are ubiquitous buildings from cities around the world that are striving to find harmony in the dynamics of past and present, of old and new and of memory.

The sculptures are created from bamboo chopsticks and skewers that form imaginary scaffolding, replacing any possibility of a permanent structure. Here the scaffolding does not shroud the buildings it becomes the buildings, inferring a new logic. Laced into the works are toy models constructed from woodcraft kits, which build into the work an indefinable and mysterious narrative. As an artist Richardson aims to place his observation in the slippage: that instance of slipping from a stable or desirable position. By challenging the good in the bad and the bad in the good, his work enables the imagination to roam more freely. Richardson’s works are models reminiscent and suggestive of something bigger, a memory of the future.

Richardson has been exhibiting widely throughout Australia for twenty years. First studying at the National Art School (Sydney), he later gained a BVA at the San Francisco Art Institute (CA, USA). Richardson has lived in the Northern Territory since 1997, teaching in remote Indigenous communities and most recently as Lecturer in Studio Practice at Charles Darwin University. Richardson’s work was shown at the 2007 Biennale Exhibition Focus on Australian Contemporary Art—Cross Currents at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. This year sees Richardson participating in a number of Artist in-residence programs and exhibitions.
Being off shore at the time, my experience of the Federal Government’s Emergency Intervention in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory was through the eyes of friendships and the media. I listened to my community’s heartache and clashed dreams, violent opinions and impulses no longer repressed.

Through a Glass, Darkly (1 Corinthians 13) was created in October 2007. This picture is not about ‘the intervention’. It is about the acceptance of great hardships and things lost and irreversible. It is about what we might need in order to emerge as a mind so unified we no longer perceive the past within us.

Therese Ritchie 2008
Raft 3 forms part of a body of work based on boats and maritime sites along the northern and western frontier of the Australian continent. I have had 7 visits to Darwin and surrounding areas and have become increasingly interested in voyages to and from the mainland, both past and present. This image is based on a drawing of the ‘raft’ used by Ian Fairweather who sailed on a perilous voyage across the Timor Sea in 1951. A copy of the original drawing is housed in the collection of the Museum and Art Gallery of The Northern Territory, and was made by a missionary living on the island of Roti at the time.

I am interested in the raft as metaphor. In this image it has been placed in the middle of the picture, hovering above possible disintegration. Above are a group of symbols—a house for security, a boat for safe passage, and a group of figures floating in the space between.

To live in the present is to live with constant change and uncertainty. What was once solid ground has become increasingly fluid, and in some ways we are all searching for the raft of safe passage.

The work is a six plate etching and the plates were made with Basil Hall in his Darwin studio and printed in Sydney.

Gary has held sixteen solo and group exhibitions in Australia since 1992. His most recent exhibitions include Seven Journeys in 2007 at Charles Hewitt Gallery, Sydney and sink or swim (with Geraldine Berkemeier) in 2006-8, which toured nationally, including Darwin as part of the 2007 Darwin Festival. He has exhibited internationally at Chiang Mai University, Thailand; Steendrukkerij Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Jelenia Gora, Poland; Frechen, Germany, and this year at The Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, China. Awards include Australia Council Grant recipient for New Work in 2005, NAVA Visual and Craft Artists’ Grant Scheme recipient in 2006, and National Print Council commissions in 1992 and 2006.
This painting depicts body paint designs associated with a Water Dreaming at the Tingari site of Malparingya, slightly west of the Kintore community. In ancestral times two snakes travelled to this site from the east, only to find there was no water there. The lightning at the site wanted the snakes to leave the area so began spearing the ground. This caused the snakes to burrow deep into the ground which then created a large claypan and soakages which remain at the site today.

Since events associated with the Tingari Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail was given.

Generally, the Tingari are a group of mythical characters of the Dreaming who travelled over vast stretches of the country, performing rituals and creating and shaping particular sites. The Tingari Men were usually followed by Tingari Women and accompanied by novices and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These mythologies form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.

Ronnie Tjampitjinpa was born in the early 1940s at Tjiturrunya, west of Mawuyan, across the Northern Territory border in Western Australia. He spent most of his formative years as a nomad in the remote desert surrounding his birthplace. He was initiated in the Winparku area of Western Australia. Due to drought conditions in the 1950s, he and his family walked into Haasts Bluff where Tjampitjinpa worked as a stockman. He and his family were then removed to the newly formed Papunya settlement in the early 1960s, where Tjampitjinpa worked as a fencer, making yards for cattle. Ronnie Tjampitjinpa commenced painting in 1971.
This painting depicts designs associated with the creek and rockhole site of Yunala, west of the Kiwirrkura Community in Western Australia. This site is named after the edible roots of the bush banana or silky pear vine, Marsdenia Australis, which is plentiful in the region. The lines in the work represent the root system of the plant growing out from beside the creek bed. In mythological times a large group of Tingari Women camped at Yunala digging the tubers before travelling north-east to Wilkinkarra (Lake Mackay).

Since events associated with the Tingari Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail was given.

Generally, the Tingari are a group of ancestral beings of the Dreaming who travelled over vast stretches of the country, performing rituals and creating and shaping particular sites.

The Tingari men were usually followed by Tingari women and were accompanied by novices, and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These ancestral stories form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.

Joseph Jurra Tjapaltjarri was born in the desert in Western Australia in approximately 1952, near where the community of Kiwirrkura now stands. He commenced painting for Papunya Tula Artists in 1986. In 1999 Joseph contributed to the Kintore men’s painting as part of the Western Desert Dialysis Appeal.
This painting depicts designs associated with the soakage water site of Tjulurulnga, west of the Kiwirrkura Community in Western Australia. In mythological times two Ngangkari (Aboriginal Healers) were camped at this site after travelling from further west. The two men held ceremonies relating to the site while they were there. One of the men also performed healing techniques to remove sickness from the other, who was ill in the stomach. This mythology forms part of the Tingari Cycle.

Since events associated with the Tingari Cycle are of a secret nature no further detail was given.

Generally, the Tingari are a group of mythical characters of the Dreaming who travelled over vast stretches of the country, performing rituals and creating and shaping particular sites. The Tingari Men were usually followed by Tingari women and accompanied by novices and their travels and adventures are enshrined in a number of song cycles. These mythologies form part of the teachings of the post initiatory youths today as well as providing explanations for contemporary customs.

George Tjungurrayi was born in the desert in the vicinity of Kiwirrkura in approximately 1943, and is the younger brother of Naata Nungurrayi. George walked in to Papunya with another young man along a freshly graded road, after living at Mukula west of Kiwirrkura. He commenced painting for Papunya Tula Artists in the early 1980s.

George Tjungurrayi was named among the Top 50 of Australia’s Most Collectable Artists in *Australian Art Collector* Issue 23 January–March, 2003.
Infant reef serves to remind the wearer and viewer of the dual characteristics of fragility and resilience to be found in nature. Inspired by the man-made reefs found in Darwin Harbour Infant reef represents the way in which shipwrecks and scuttled illegal fishing vessels attract and are gradually repopulated by corals, sponges, fish and other marine species. In Infant reef the stylistic silver elements represent the first spores and seeds of life to attach to a metal object underwater, the forms and shapes being derived from surface patterns found in corals. The juxtaposition of the fragile, patterned elements to a heavy, industrial material highlights the delicate and precious nature of these first stages of habitation. There also lies in this work the notion that through the proliferation and colonisation of different species, man’s materials and instruments of domination will ultimately be dismantled and destroyed. Infant reef celebrates the resilience and opportunism inherent in nature as well as the beauty and complexity of the multitudinous patterns, forms and structures found in the underwater world.

Katrina Tyler completed her BA Fine Art in Gold and Silversmithing at RMIT in 2003 and had her graduate work selected for the Fresh! Award at Craft Victoria of the same year. In early 2005, after working on her practice and exhibiting her jewellery and small objects in Melbourne, Katrina downed tools to travel around Australia. Her travels led her to Darwin where she settled for nearly three years. The culture, lifestyle and surroundings of Darwin play a key role in Katrina’s current body of work, while the opportunities gained have enabled her practice to develop and grow. After receiving the 2007 Territory Craft Youth Mentorship Grant Katrina was able to spend three months in the Metal Design Studio at JamFactory in Adelaide, while a Toga Public Sculpture Commission at the Darwin Waterfront has enabled her to broaden her practice into a larger scale. Katrina will continue to make and exhibit her jewellery and small sculptural works building on current themes as well as developing further large-scale projects.
When we have ceremony we as family paint each other for dancing for our family member who has passed away.

**Susan Wanji Wanji**

Susan grew up in Maningrida and as a young girl learnt to make bark paintings and intricately woven mats and baskets. She started working at Munupi Arts and Crafts on Melville Island in 1990 and has since developed a unique style that has influences from Tiwi and Arnhem Land cultural traditions. In 1992 Susan went to Paris and represented the art centre and assisted with the hanging of a major exhibition on work from the Munupi. Susan works on canvas and paper in the mediums of ochres, acrylics and on occasion gouache. Susan has also produced some wonderful limited edition prints and is a fine weaver and maker of Tunga (traditional Tiwi bark baskets).
For the last 5 years I have been working with Rose Mamuniny and Mavis Ganambarr, two Yolgnu artists from Galiwin’ku. Rose and Mavis have introduced me to many natural materials and techniques unfamiliar to me and the works in this exhibition are inspired by these. The works reference natural materials, tusk shells the colour of the earth and ochre.

The long necklace of oxidized silver tube can be wrapped many times around the neck it is fine and delicate to touch. The Touch pins of ochre will dissolve if worn in the rain staining the wearer and their clothes with their rich ochre colours. The pins can be worn one at a time in a line or in a circular flower form on the body.
Greatly influenced by the work of his tribal grandfather Albert Namatjira, Elton Wirri depicts his desert surrounds and the dramatic land formations of his homelands in Central Australia. Elton’s painting of the area west of Alice Springs toward Mt Leibig captures the shifting light as it falls across the landscape framed by the ‘Hermannsburg School’ style signatory ghost gum.

This painting was inspired by Elton’s memory of time spent in Elton’s father’s country, near Mt Leibig. Elton paints in the tradition of his father who developed his skills alongside Albert Namatjira’s sons. Elton has a collection of images he uses as reference and combines these visual reminders with his strong connection to country.

Son of Doris Abbott and Kevin Wirri—Elton went to the Ngurratjuta Iljja Njarra art centre with his parents and showed a keen interest in painting watercolours like his grandfather. Right from the start he showed much skill and with some instruction from his father by the age of 15 he was producing some lovely paintings.

Elton first exhibited his work in 2004 in the Desert Mob show at Araluen in Alice Springs when he was just 14. Since then he has been in every subsequent Desert Mob show and had his first solo show in Sydney in 2007.

ELTON WIRRI
Near Mt Leibig
Watercolour on paper 60 x 80 cm

*Son of Doris Abbott and Kevin Wirri—Elton went to the Ngurratjuta Iljja Njarra art centre with his parents and showed a keen interest in painting watercolours like his grandfather. Right from the start he showed much skill and with some instruction from his father by the age of 15 he was producing some lovely paintings.*

*Elton first exhibited his work in 2004 in the Desert Mob show at Araluen in Alice Springs when he was just 14. Since then he has been in every subsequent Desert Mob show and had his first solo show in Sydney in 2007.*
Paradox

There are consistent patterns of duality in our world. The Heavens and the Earth. I am and I am not. Life is a paradox. Dialogue. Illusion. Duality. We are the players and the played. Black is defined by White and White is defined by Black. Your move, my move. Fate swoops like a bird; joyful, cruel. Play on.

Paradox was inspired by the early scene set in the Middle Ages in Ingmar Bergman’s film “The Seventh Seal”, where The Knight challenges Death to a game of chess. The Knight knows that Death will win but he plays to extend his life and his journey, just a little.

Bronwyn Wright 2008
Djirrirra has been painting the traditional designs of her clan for well beyond a decade and living the tradition all her life at Gangan, the source of her work. Her father was Yanggarriny, one of the truly great Yolngu artists and on whose painting he had Djirrirra learn the skills of the mawat—the fine human hair paintbrush. In this she has followed the near-pedantic style of her father and since his death in 2003 she has successfully embarked in making a name for herself. She is one of the senior artists working out of Gangan today and continues to develop a following. In 2007 she was chosen to participant in ‘Cross Currents: Focus of Australian Contemporary Art’ at the MCA.

Djirrirra paints water with straight lines. The designs generally refer to the sacred waters around Gangan and differing states such as levels of salinity or silt contamination and flow. Encased in these strong lines is the structure of the fishtrap made during Mirrawarr (early Dry Season) with Rangan (paperbark) and wooden stakes. This is the Buyku or fishtrap area which is ‘company’ land (i.e. shared by all the people who live by/ sing the river). The Dhalwangu and allied groups who participate in this song cycle and fishing activity are hunting Baypinga (Saratoga) as does the Gany’jurr (Reef Heron) which they identify with as the archetypal Yirritja hunter.
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