BUKU-LARRNGAY MULKA

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Djambawa Marawili AM

Other Names	Miniyawany
Born	13/04/53
Died	na
Moiety	Yirritja
Homeland	Baniyala
Clan	Yithuwa Madarrpa

Selected Details of Artist's Working Life

Medium and Theme

Earth Pigments on Bark
Incised and painted wood scupture
Printmaking
Ceremonial objects - hollow log coffins

Biography

Djambawa Marawili is an artist who has experienced mainstream success but for whom the production of art is a small part of a much bigger picture. Djambawa's principal role is as a leader of the Madarrpa clan. He is a caretaker for the spiritual well-being of his own and other related clans, and an activist and administrator in the interface between non-Aboriginal people and the Yolngu (Aboriginal) people of North East Arnhem Land.

First and foremost a leader, art is one of the tools Djambawa Marawili uses to lead. He was involved in the production of the Barunga Statement (1988) which led to Bob Hawke's promise of a treaty; the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody; and the formation of ATSIC. Djambawa was appointed to the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council in 2013.

In 1997, Djambawa was one of the elders at Timber Creek who burned the Prime Minister's 10-point plan. In the push for Sea Rights he is the focus of a Northern Land Council video called 'Terry Djambawa Marawili – My Native Title'. This was made to explain the concepts of Yolngu ownership of undersea lands and, as before, he uses his painting to show the sacred designs that embody his right to speak as a part of the land (although this time the land is under sea).

He was instrumental in the initiation of the *Saltwater* exhibition. He co-ordinated the eventual Federal Court Sea claim in 2004, which eventuated in the High Court's determination in the 2008 Blue Mud Bay case that Yolngu did indeed own the land between high and low water mark. In these political engagements, Djambawa draws on the sacred foundation of his people to represent the power of Yolngu and educate outsiders in the justice of his people's struggle for recognition.

Away from the spotlight of activism, Djambawa must fulfill several other leadership roles. The principal ones are: as a ceremonial leader; as an administrator of several mainstream Yolngu organisations; as the leader of a 200-strong remote homeland community; and as a family man with three wives, and many children and grand children. In recent years he has been very successful in advocating for his and other homelands against the anti-homeland movement championed by urban policymakers. This included a televised demonstration against the NT

championed by urban policymakers. This included a televised demonstration against the NT Government's Homelands policy at the anniversary of the Sea Rights victory at Yilpara in 2009. He has recently secured a new school building and permanent teachers for Yilpara.

Somehow art is integral to each of these roles as well. Obviously the sacred designs figure to some (secret) extent in the countless circumcision, burial, memorial and other ceremonies that he is required to assist or lead. As a Director and later Chairperson of the Association of Northern and Kimberley Aboriginal Artists Association (ANKAA) from 1997, and Chairperson of Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre from 1994-2000, art is never far away from consideration.

In 2004, he was appointed to the Australia Council ATSIA Board. He was granted a two year Fellowship from the Australia Council in 2003. He has been at various times a member of the Northern Land Council.

In 1996, Djambawa won the Best Bark Painting Prize Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art award. He is represented in most major Australian institutional collections as well as several important overseas public and private collections. In addition to sculpture and bark painting, this senior artist has also produced linocut images and notably the first screenprint image for the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Printspace in 1996.

Other highlights of Djambawa's artistic career include *Buwayak-Invisibility* (2003) and his solo *Source of Fire* (2005) shows at Annandale Galleries; The *Wukidi Installation* at The Supreme Court of the NT; his solo show at the Sydney Biennale in 2006 and the one man show to launch the 2006 Asia Pacific Triennial and the new Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane in the same year. In 2009 he travelled to the 3rd Moscow Biennale in Russia and sang open his installation of bark paintings there. He also opened the exhibition *Larrakit,'* featuring 110 memorial poles from the Kerry Stokes Collection at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in 2009. This show featured in the Sydney Biennale in 2010 at the MCA.

Djambawa's artistic influence since the mid 1990's has been monumental. As well as pioneering a path and an aesthetic for other artists he has inspired a new generation of 'Young Guns' through example, encouragement and direct mentorship. A whole generation of artists took inspiration from his muscular engagement with his own law to produce new aesthetics that were at once visually dynamic and spiritually powerful. He bent the formal compositions and moulded them onto fluid representations of the water they signified.

He was the main activist in shaking off conventions that had been entrenched since the 1950's about how painting for the outside world should be composed. He argued for a freeing up of these restrictions as long as the spirit of the Law was honoured. This was part of his own natural creativity and instinct to challenge the status quo responsibly. He found it difficult to be criticised by his elders for encouraging them to reveal deeply held Law in the course of the sea rights claim. He understood their objections but felt that a proactive stance was required. A younger generation of artists took as a given the innovations that he had fought hard for.

Amongst the notable artists who acknowledge their debt to Djambawa are his sons-in-law Gunybi Ganambarr and Yilpirr Wanambi. There are countless others who he has encouraged directly and indirectly to take on greater authority in ceremony and art. This encouragement extends beyond his region through his leadership of ANKAAA. He applies his generosity, sense of Indigenous unity and belief in the power of art to all artists.

In 2010 Djambawa was awarded an Australia Medal for his services to the arts, homelands, sea rights. He was also accorded the honour of being appointed as a judge of the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award. In this year he also hosted a groundbreaking project between 4 prominent non-Yolngu artists (Fiona Hall, Judy Watson, Jorg Schmeisser and John Wolesley) at his homeland in Yilpara. The resultant exhibition *Djalkiri* was shown in Darwin and Yirrkala before touring nationally.

During his ascent to leadership in the mainstream world as a leader in land and sea rights, arts administration, homeland policy and general Indigenous governance, Djambawa also became increasingly important ceremonially. He now holds a rank within the Yolngu spiritual world that is the equal of any. His knowledge is deferred to by all who seek it. Typically he exerts that influence within the narrowest zone required of him but is often called upon to assist or adjudicate elsewhere which he invariably honours.

Exhibitions

1984 *Aboriginal Art*, an Exhibition presented by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra.1984, Baniyala Artworks, Collectors Gallery,Sydney.1984, Baniyala Artworks, Crafts Council Gallery, Sydney
1986 *Painted objects from Arnhem Land*, University Drill Hall Gallery (Pod), Canberra, ACT 1989 *Aboriginal Art, The Continuing Tradition*, National Gallery of Australia.
1990 *Keepers of the Secrets, Aboriginal Art From Arnhem Land*, Art Gallery of WA, Perth, WA.
1994 11th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Museum and art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT.
1995 *Miny'tji Buku-Larrnggay, Paintings from the East*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Vic.
1995 12th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT.
1996 *Miny'tji Dhawu,* Savode Gallery Brisbane
1996 Big Bark, Annandale Gallery, Sydney. 1996, 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT. (Winner best Bark painting Category).
1997 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards Exhibition, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT.
1997 *Native Title*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney NSW
1997 *Djambawa*, William Mora Gallery, Melbourne Vic.
1998 *Hollow Logs from Yirrkala*, Annandale Gallery, Sydney.
1998 The Fifteenth National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Galleries of the NT, Darwin
1999 *Carvings by Djambawa Marawili*, Alcaston House Gallery, Melbourne, Vic.
1999-2001 *Saltwater Country - Bark Paintings from Yirrkala,* A National Tour - The Drill Hall Gallery, ANU, Canberra - John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Perth WA - National Australian Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour, Sydney NSW - Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne Vic - Araluen Art Centre, Alice Springs NT. Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane Qld
1999 16th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museums and Art Galleries of the NT, Darwin NT.
1999 *Gapu Minytji,* an exhibition of sacred water designs of the Australian Aboriginals of north east Arnhem Land - Crafts Museum - New Delhi India.
2000 Fifth National Cultural Heritage Art Awards, Old Parliament House, Canberra, ACT
2000 Art Fair 2000, with Alcaston House Gallery, Melbourne Vic.
2000 Annandale Galleries, Sydney, NSW: group show with Galuma and Dhukal Wirrpanda
2001 Ben Grady Gallery, Yolngu Bark
2001 18th NATSIAA, MAGNT
2002 Garma Larrakitj Installation
2002 Sydney Opera House Larrakitj installation
2003 *Buwayak* ,Annandale Galleries Sydney
2003 *Wukidi* installation 29th June 2003 NT Supreme Court
2003 *<abstractions>,* Drill Hall Gallery Canberra
2004 21st NATSIAA MAGNT
2004 *Binocular: Looking closely at country*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW COFA

2005 Kaplan Collection exhibition, Seattle Museum
2005 *Source of Fire*, Annandale Galleries Sydney-solo
2005 Gapan Gallery, Print Exhibition, Garma Festival.
2005 *Yåkumirri,* Raft Artspace (exhibition purchased by the Holmes a Court collection)
2005 *Yåkumirri*, Holmes a Court Gallery , Perth
2006 *Walking together to aid Aboriginal Health*, Shalom College UNSW
2006 Solo exhibition in Sydney Bienalle
2006 Gapan Gallery. Print Exhibition. Garma Festival
2006 Galuku Gallery, Print Exhibition,. Darwin Festival
2006 Asia Pacific Triennale Queensland Gallery of Modern Art opening Brisbane
2006 *Bulayi Small Gems*, Suzanne O'Connell Indigenous Art Brisbane
2007 *Bukulungthunmi - Coming Together, One Place*, Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT.
2008 *Some Men I Have Met*, Steve Fox of Mogo Raw Art, Mogo, NSW
2008 *Berndt Etching Exhibition*, Gapan Gallery, GarmaFestival.
2008 *Berndt Etching Exhibition*, Galuku Gallery, Darwin Festival.
2008 *"Bitpit" Yirrkala Sculpture*, RAFT Artspace Darwin.
2008 *Outside Inside - bark and hollow logs from Yirrkala,* Bett Gallery Hobart, Tas
2008 Melbourne Art Fair, Larrakitj, represented by Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne, Vic.
2008 25th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, Museum and Art Gallery of the NT, Darwin NT
2008 *Etched in the Sun: Prints made by Indigenous artists in collaboration with Basil Hall & Printers 1997-2007*, ANU, Canberra
2008 *Ochre*, Menzies Auction, Melbourne
2008 *A Few Real Gems I Have Come Across*, Mogo Raw Art and Blues, Mogo, NSW
2009 *Larrakitj - the Kerry Stokes Collection,* Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA
2009 *After Berndt – Indigenart*, Mossenson Gallery, Perth, WA
2009 3rd Moscow Biennale, 'the Garage', Moscow, Russia.
2009 *Menagerie; Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture,* Australian Museum and touring.
2010 17th Biennale of Sydney - 'Larrakitj - the Kerry Stokes Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, NSW.
2010 *Djalkiri; We are standing on their names*, Nomad Art, 24-Hour Art, Darwin Festival.
2011 *Djambawa Marawili, Liywaday Wirrpanda and Nawurapu Wunungmurra*, Annandale Galleries
2011 Telstra NATSIAA, MAGNT Darwin NT
2012 Seattle Art Museum Modern icons
2012 *Barrku! RobyKing Gallery*, Seattle in association with Harvey Art Projects
2012 Chiarascuro Gallery Santa Fe
2013 *Djambawa*,Vivien Anderson Gallery
2013 Prized Nomad Art Darwin
2014 *The world is not a foreign land- new perspectives on contemporary Indigenous art; Timothy Cook, Djambawa Marawili, Ngarra, Rusty peters, Freda Warlapinni and Nyapanyapa Yunupingu,* Ian Potter Museum of Art curated by Quentin Sprague.

Collections

Art Bank Sydney
Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow Scotland.
Art Gallery of Western Australia.
Australian Capital Equity the Kerry Stokes Collection
JW Kluge Collection, Virginia USA
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.
Queensland University of Technology Art Collection
Crafts Museum, New Delhi, India. A collaborative canvas 16' x 4' with artists Liawaday Marawili (wife) and Indian 'tribal' artists Jangarh Singh Shyam and Bhuri Bai.
President of India Art Collection, a collaborative work with JS Shyam and B Bai, presented to the President by the Australia India Council in New Dhelhi 1999.
Australian Capital Equity Art Collection, Perth, WA.
Saltwater - Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country, National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour Sydney, NSW
Sydney Opera House, Sydney, NSW
Kerry Stokes Collection
NT Supreme Court
LeviKaplan Collection, Seattle, WA, USA
Art Gallery New South Wales
British Open University Art Museum Milton Keynes England
Holmes a Court Collection
Woodside Energy Ltd. Art Collection
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland

Bibliography

Fox S., *Båniyala Artworks*, exhibition catalaogue, Yirrkala Literature Production Centre, Yirrkala NT.

1984 *Saltwater - Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country.* ISBN 0 646 37702 7 pp 14, 15, 34, 35, 50, 51, 54, 55, 93, 99, 100, back flap, back cover.

1987 Caruana W, A*ustralian Aboriginal Art, a Souvenir Book of Aboriginal art at the Australian National Gallery,* The Australian National Gallery, Parkes, ACT. (C)

1990 Aboriginal Arts Management Association, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art 1990 - from Australia* (presented by the Aboriginal Arts Committee, Australia Council and Third Eye Centre, Glasgow), exhibition cat., Redfern NSW. (C)

1996 O'Ferrall M., *Keepers of the Secrets, Art from Arnhem Land in the Collection of the Art Gallery of WA,* Perth. (C)

1996 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, touring catalogue, Museum and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT.

2006 *Zones of Contact* - Catalogue 2006 Biennale of Sydney

2008 *Ochre*, Menzies Auction, Melbourne

2008 Etched in the Sun Prints made by Indigenous artists in collaboration with Basil Hall & Printers 1997-2007 ANU, Canberra

2009 Catalogue - 3rd Moscow Biennale - *Against Exclusion* - the Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture.

2010 Catalogue 17th Biennale of Sydney - *The Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival*

2010 Catalogue, 17th Biennale of Sydney *The Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival, in a Precarious Age.* ISBN 978 0 64652 794 9

2010 Catalogue, *Djalkiri; We are standing on their names.* Nomad Art, 24-Hour Art, Darwin Festival.

2011 *Djambawa Marawili, Liywaday Wirrpanda and Nawurapu Wunungmurra,* Annandale Galleries catalogue

2011 Telstra NATSIAA, MAGNT Darwin NT

Awards

1996 Best Bark Painting - 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards

2004-5 Australia Council Fellowship

2008 Major protagonist of the successful Blue Mud Bay case in the High Court

2009 Co-Judge of the 27th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award

2010 Membership (an AM) in the General division of the Order of Australia

2011 Highly Commended Telstra NATSIAA, MAGNT Darwin NT

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