



THE NEXT GENERATION:
LORRAINE KABBINDI WHITE & GENEVIEVE KEMARR LOY

12 August – 30 September 2017

LAURINE · DIGGINS · FINE · ART

Please be advised images of deceased indigenous elders are contained within. The images are reproduced with the permission of both artists.



Genevieve Kemarr Loy

Preserving the Stories

Following in the footsteps of their grandparents, two young artists, Lorraine Kabbindi White and Genevieve Kemarr Loy continue the tradition of creating striking artworks inspired by their ancestral landscapes.

Darwin-born Lorraine Kabbindi White paints both barks and works on paper depicting her family's country at Mankung Djang, western Arnhem Land. The influence and teaching of her grandfather Bardayal 'Lofty' Nadjamerrek AO is clearly evident in her confident use of fine white lines set against the red ochre background to paint the spirit beings, fauna and flora of her grandfather's country, often in his specific "Stone Country" x-ray style.

Genevieve Kemarr Loy is from Utopia, around 300 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs; an area which has produced a number of well-recognised artists including Emily Kam Kngwararray, the Petyarr sisters and the Ngal sisters. Genevieve is the granddaughter of Nancy Petyarr and was taught to paint by her father Cowboy Loy Pwerl. She depicts specific custodial subjects associated with her country, particularly the Bush Turkey story (*Arwengerrp*), with a bold use of colour and detailed patterning.



NANCY KUNOETH PETYARR 1934 - 2009
Mountain Devil Dreaming 2007
synthetic polymer on linen
181.5 x 181.5 cm

The world's oldest artistic practice continues to flourish with the current young generation of artists who have a tangible and meaningful link to the elders who have become household names - significant artists who command respect on the international stage; are celebrated by public institutions and recognised by serious collectors.

The art of Bardayal 'Lofty' Nadjamerrek (c.1926 - 2009) is steeped in the tradition of rock art. He is a celebrated master of the 'x-ray' style of painting, often representing the organs and skeletal structure of various spirit figures; animal species, including kangaroo, emu, crocodile, goanna; as well as local flora. His distinctive red cross-hatching and meticulous parallel line work dazzles the eye.

Bardayal Nadjamerrek bridges between traditional rock art, being amongst last to paint the rocky escarpments of Arnhem Land¹ and contemporary bark painting. Lofty, so-called due to his height, began painting his expressive, animated barks for the western art market in 1969 at Gunbalanya (Oenpelli), also producing works on paper later in his career. He was acknowledged for his cultural and artistic creativity with an AO in 2004 and his reputation recognised with a retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney in 2010; further, his work featured in *Old Masters - Australia's Great Bark Artists* at the National Museum of Australia in 2014. He is represented in major collections including the National Gallery of Australia; the National Gallery of Victoria and the National Museum of Australia.

At the MCA exhibition a number of Lofty's relatives, including Lorraine, painted a commissioned mural, living proof of his ongoing legacy.² Lorraine regards herself as a custodian of the culture and traditions of her people, preserving the stories taught to her as a child. She learned to paint in her grandfather's style, sitting by his side, at Kabulwarnamyo, and has adopted his specific West Arnhem



Genevieve Kemarr Loy with Nancy Kunothe Petyarr, Melbourne, 2012

x-ray style - depicting spirit beings, animals and plants, especially food sources, from her grandfather's country. Whilst he remains the inspiration for her own artistic practice, Lorraine brings her own aesthetic and experience to her work.

Continuing the bridge between past and present, Lorraine sources her bark from Arnhem Land, travelling to this ancient landscape defined by rocky outcrops, freshwater rivers, billabongs and grass plains. This area near to Kakadu, has been exposed to non-indigenous anthropologists, missionaries, collectors and traders since the early twentieth century and bark painting continues to flourish here.

Similarly, and like her father and grandmother Nancy before her, Genevieve's paintings are a meaningful and expressive depiction of the relationship between artist and country. Her work is characterised by a beautiful and careful handling of paint, a harmonious sense of colour and great control of the delicate marks that make their way across her canvas. Her work shows an innate and mature grasp of colour, design, and resolved



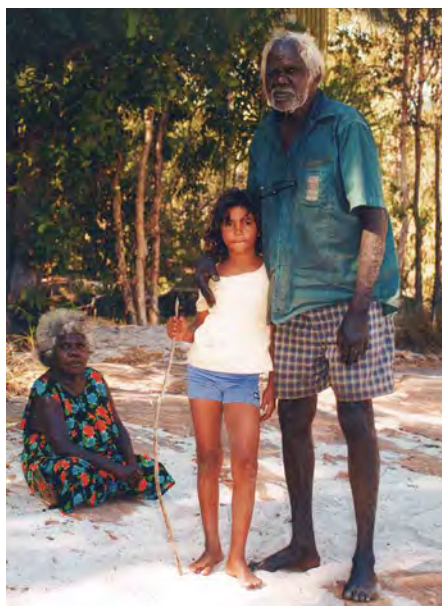
Lorraine Kabbindi White

aesthetic direction. The *Bush Turkey Dreaming* (*Arwengerrp*) paintings combine traditional meticulous dots and elegant wisps, creating vibrant, pulsating, and richly textured surfaces. Genevieve recalls that from around the age of five she watched both her grandmother Nancy, and father Cowboy painting, and following this early engagement, she grew to understand the technique of painting as they shared their knowledge with her. She learnt about marks on the canvas, in particular the bold diagonal lines so evident in both Nancy and Cowboy's work, effective use of colour and line and dot, and most importantly, the subject matter, the stories that are poured out onto the canvases. From such illustrious teachings, Genevieve has evolved as an independent artist, producing original paintings representing her own re-imagining of all she has learnt. Whilst her paintings hold their own as contemporary abstract paintings, to simply view them as such, would be a misinterpretation as there is a wealth of knowledge in her work.

Nancy Kunoth Petyarr (1934 – 2009) was a senior indigenous artist with a career stretching back to the original batik movement in Utopia of the 1980s, along with one of the most renowned Indigenous artists, Emily Kam Kngwarrray.



BARDAYAL LOFTY NADJAMERREK c.1926 - 2009
Sugarbag Spirits c.1985
 ochres on paper
 75 x 53 cm



Lorraine Kabbindi White with her grandfather, Bardayal Lofty Nadjamerrek
 (photograph courtesy the artist)

A member of the famous Petyarr sisters,³ Nancy shared custodianship of *Arnkerrth*, the thorny or mountain devil lizard. Her paintings followed its travels across the desert in search of food, water and shelter. The elegant semi-circular markings that diagonally traverse Nancy's canvasses echo the distinctive *awelye* body designs, reminiscent of the lizard's tracks. Varying colours communicate changing seasons, time of day and the diverse palette of different areas across the country.

Utopia, in the centre of Australia, is a desert region rich in colour, with sweeping blue skies contrasting with the red earth and rocks, the white of the ghost gums lining the usually dry river bed of the Sandover, and the greenery and coloured flowers that flourish after the rain. It is an area renowned for its artistic output, the main industry of this area, which has produced internationally celebrated figures. Amongst the respected elder artists sits Cowboy Loy Pwerl (1941 -), whose work depicting the *Bush Turkey Dreaming*, *Arwengerrp*, is featured in significant collections such as the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and the Art Gallery of South Australia. Cowboy's wife Elizabeth Kunoth Kngwarrray (1961 -) also an artist, has had her work exhibited in the Wynne Prize for Landscape

at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2008 and 2010. Like 'Lofty', Cowboy has passed his knowledge onto his descendants, his daughter Genevieve who is one of the most exciting, naturally gifted and promising young artists to emerge recently from Utopia.

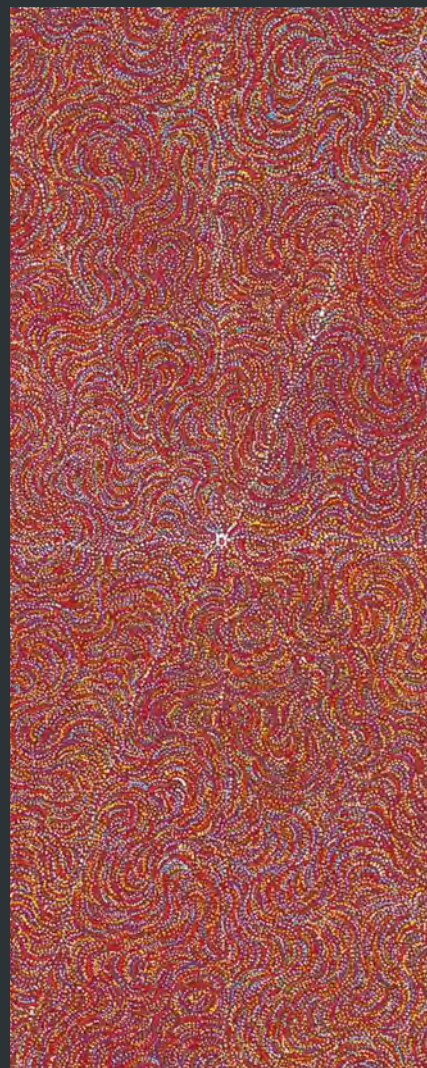
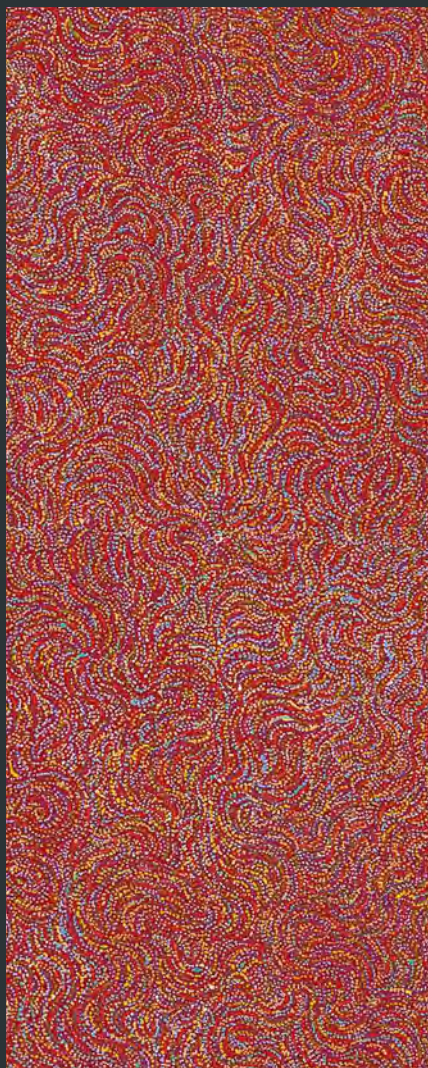
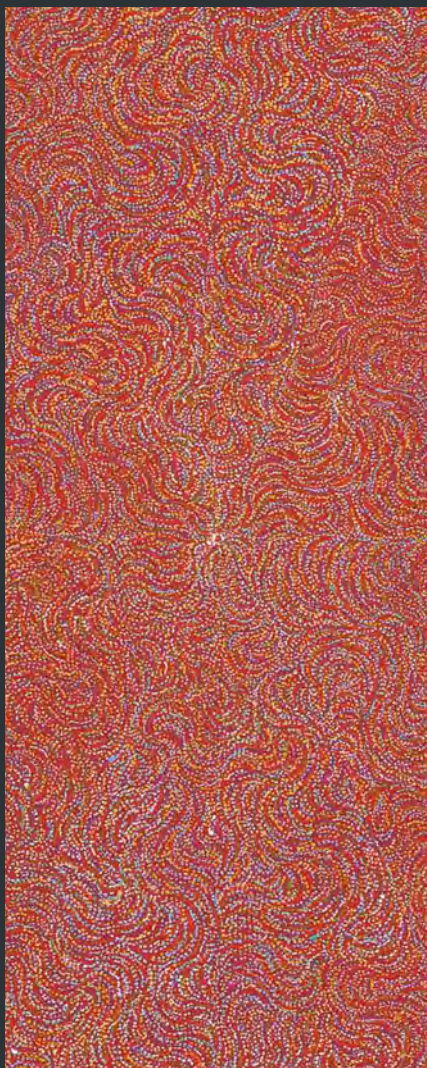
This idea of dynasty is a special relationship more than simply master and student, with both familial and cultural legacies being upheld. Like the Renaissance painter Orazio Gentileschi and his daughter Artemisa, or the A'Beckett/Boyd family, Lorraine and Genevieve have grown up in an environment encouraging of their artistic endeavours, not only being taught key skills and techniques, but absorbing the very idea of being an artist and making this a career. Whilst both have chosen to become painters, there is a substantial sense of responsibility, with each professing to the importance of carrying out the legacy of their family mentors.

Genevieve and Lorraine are among the last group of young artists with a palpable connection to such noteworthy role models providing direct inspiration to them. Growing up with the imparted knowledge and teachings of their elders has influenced these women, their style and technique and subject, as they find their own way. The narratives these two young women use as inspiration for their work are so ingrained, so much a part of their beings, that the art of painting almost seems an innate gift. Whether in the actual country where these stories originated or in their more urban homes, the act of painting a particular totemic figure transports each of these young women, evoking memories of their familial ties. There is a reverence for what they have learned which keeps each of these young women connected to their cultural roots.

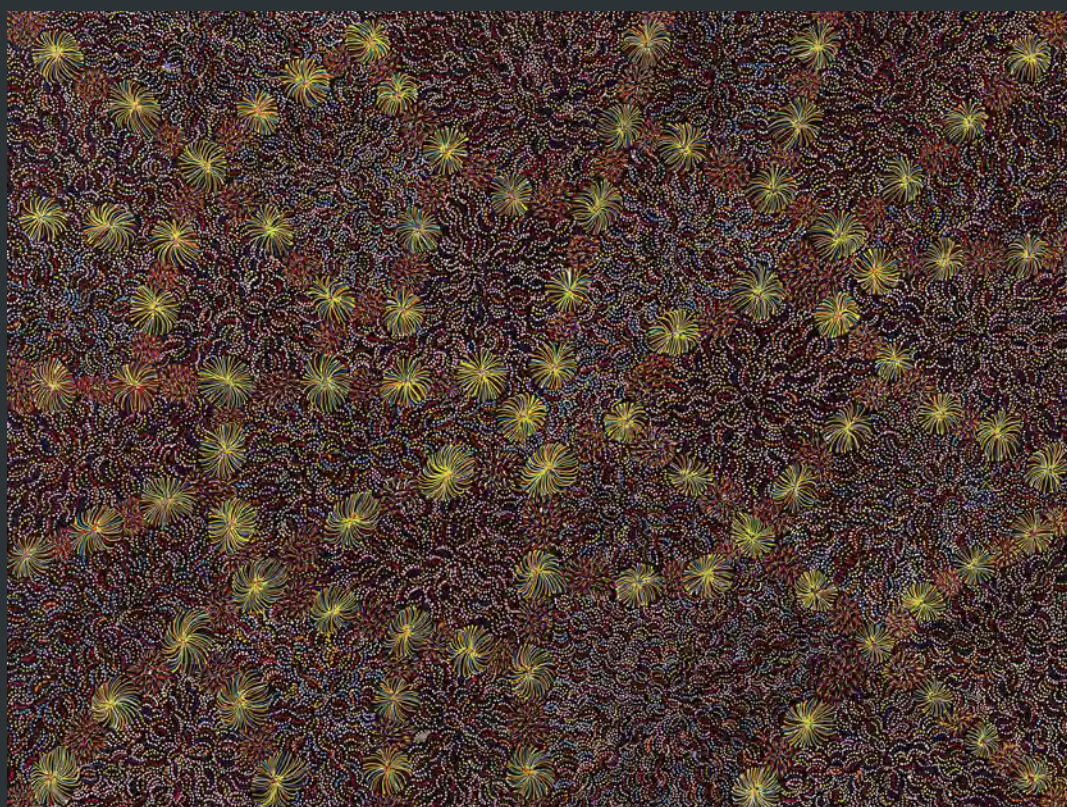
Ruth Lovell

1. Gunbalanya is some 330 kms east of Darwin, bound by the East Alligator, the Gumaderr and Liverpool Rivers. The plains of grass and swamps are flooded during the wet season, when the local indigenous people retreated to the shelter of caves in the sandstone plateau. These caves feature paintings bearing witness to thousands of years of unbroken Aboriginal culture and history, serving educational, communication and spiritual significance.
2. The other participants were Allan Nadjamerrek, Ray Nadjamerrek, Maath Maralngurra, Gavin Namarnyilk.
3. The Petyarr sisters: Ada Bird, Nancy Kunoth, Myrtle Violet, Jean, Gloria Tamerre and Kathleen.

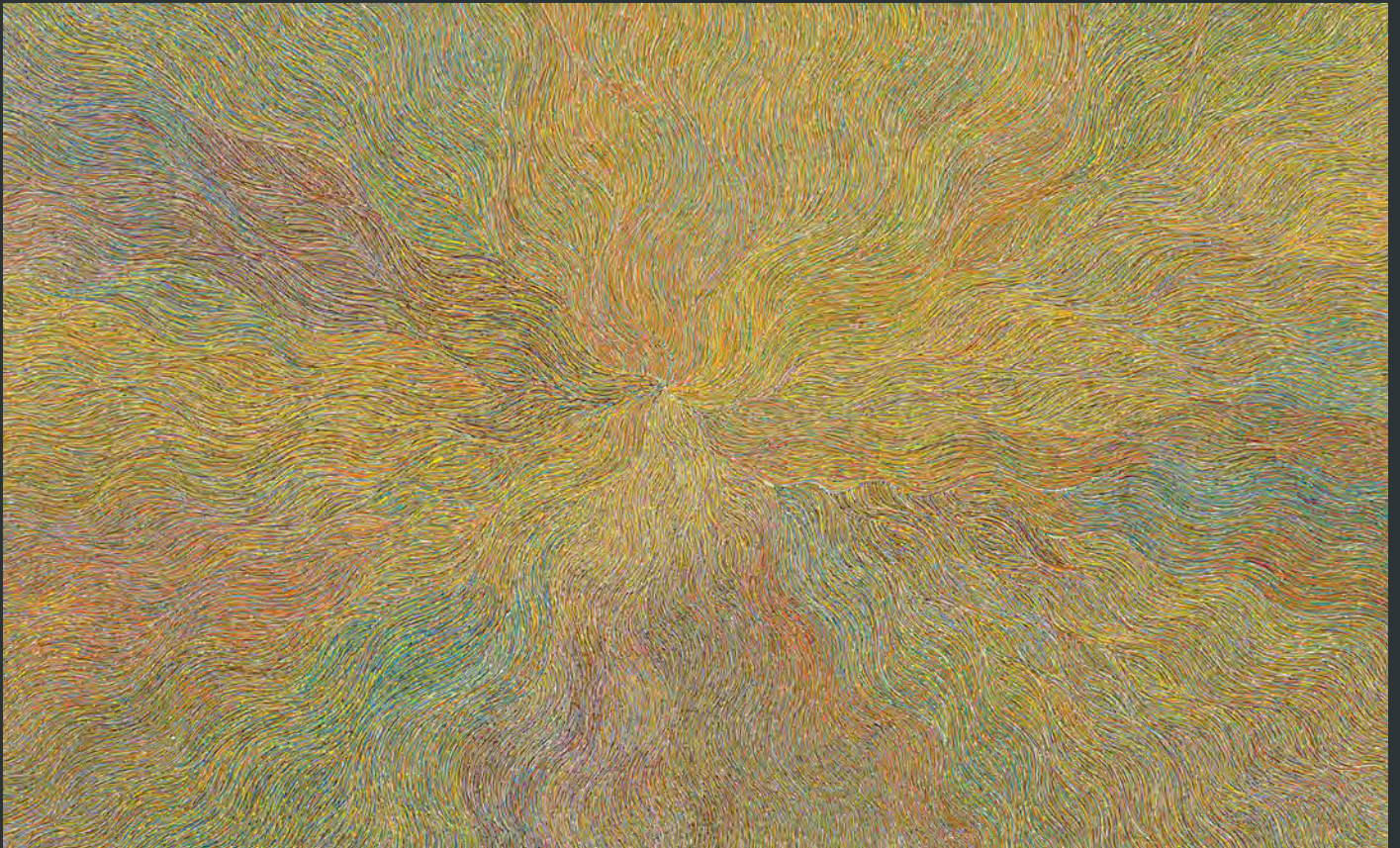
Genevieve Kemarr Loy



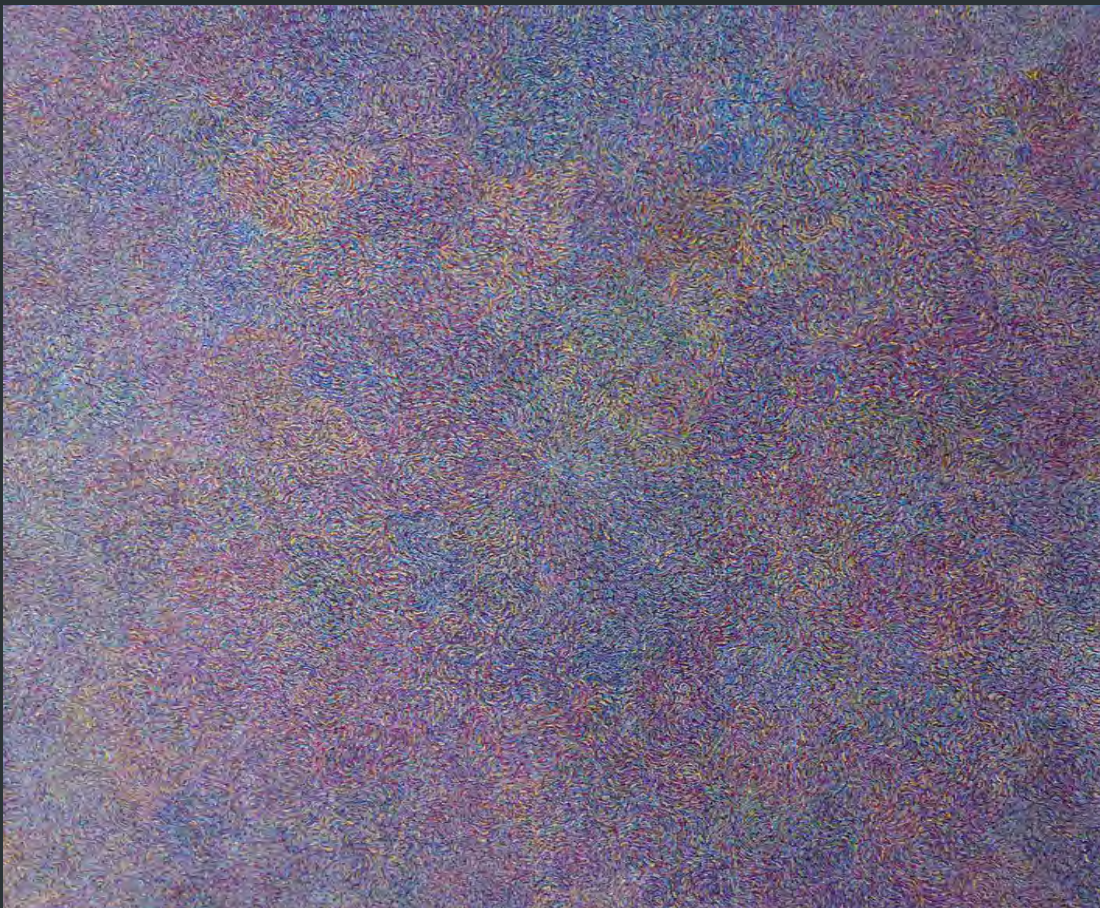
My Country 2013 (detail)
synthetic polymer on linen
150 x 60 cm each panel



Untitled 2010
synthetic polymer on linen
91.5 x 120 cm



Akwerlkermwerlkerr 2017
synthetic polymer on linen
121.5 x 200 cm



Bush Turkey Tracks 2013 (detail)
synthetic polymer on linen
152 x 183.5 cm

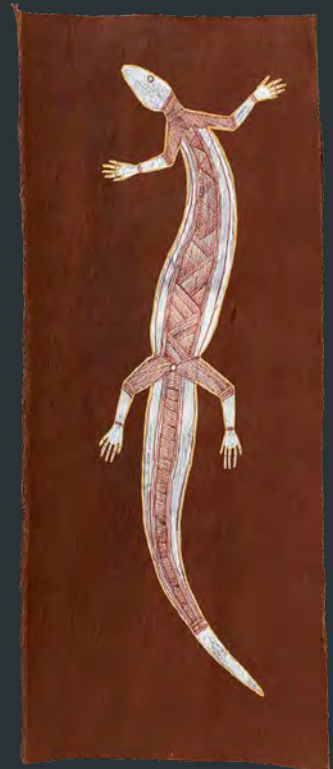
Lorraine Kabbindi White



Barrk (Male Black Wallaroo) and Djukerre (Female Black Wallaroo) 2017 (detail)
ochre on bark
54 x 35 cm



Ankung Djang (Sugar-bag Dreaming) 2017
ochre on bark
59 x 36 cm



Kalawan (Goanna) 2017
ochre on bark
73.5 x 29 cm



Aldadubbe (Site on An-kung Djang Estate) 2017
synthetic polymer on paper
57 x 76.5 cm



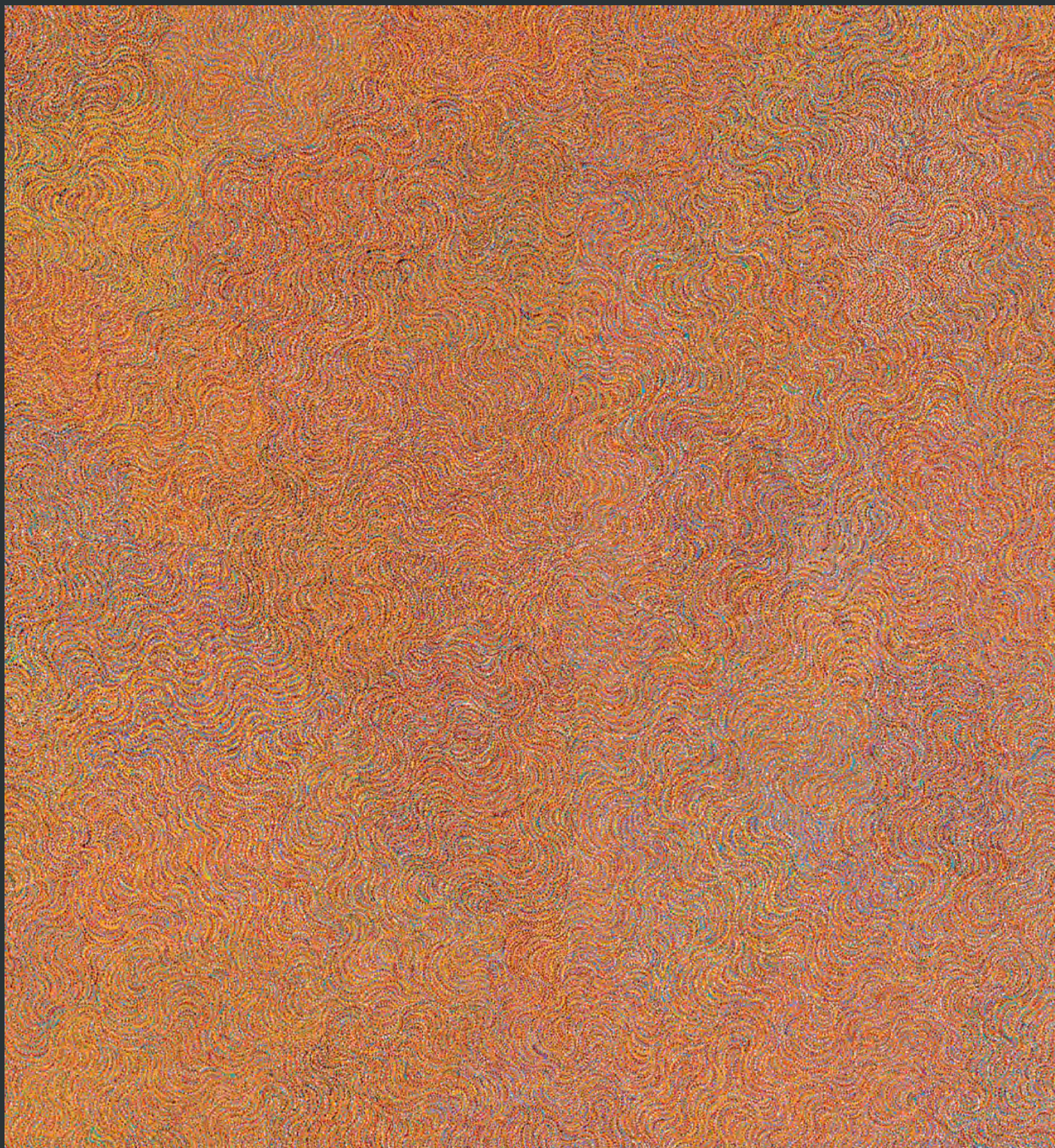
Kumoken dja Marrngunj (Fresh Water
Crocodile with Eel-Tailed Catfish) 2017
synthetic polymer on paper
77 x 58 cm



Wakkewakken (Honey Spirit) 2017
ochre on bark
75.5 x 29 cm



Ankardid (Braid Fern) 2017
synthetic polymer on paper
58 x 77 cm



GENEVIEVE KEMARR LOY 1982 -

Bush Turkey Tracks 2015 (detail)
synthetic polymer on linen
200 x 120 cm

Catalogue photography: Mark Ashkanasy & Jeremy Eccles
Catalogue design: Anton Banulski

COVER

LORRAINE KABBINDI WHITE 1991 -

Ngalkunburriyaymi
(*Freshwater Mermaids*) 2017
synthetic polymer on paper
42 x 30 cm

LAURINE · DIGGINS · FINE · ART

5 Malakoff Street North Caulfield Vic 3161
Telephone: (+61 3) 9509 9855

Email: ausart@diggins.com.au
Website: www.diggins.com.au

Gallery Exhibition Hours:
Tues - Fri 10am – 6pm, Sat 1pm – 5pm