

# Speaking in Colour

EDUCATION RESOURCE

19 March - 29 May 2011



NEWCASTLE REGION ART GALLERY

...I like to get to the essence of this country. I love using colour and mixing paints, and I like all the tonal variations. These are the things that you see in the desert all the time. Every colour imaginable is present. My whole psyche is filled with colour and that is integral to my paintings.

Daniel Walbidi (in Daniel Walbidi, Australian Aboriginal Art Issue 1, March-May 2009)

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# About the exhibition

Prior to European arrival in Australia, Aboriginal populations had knowledge of naturally occurring pigments local to their regions. Ochre, charcoal and plant materials were used in rock, sand and body painting traditions. High quality ochre, especially reds, were valued for their sacred, healing and ceremonial properties and were traded across the continent. From the late 19th century, Western pigments began to be used by Indigenous people to express and record their knowledge and ownership of land to an outside audience. Reckitts blue pigment, a form of laundry bleach, was used in rock paintings in Western Arnhem Land from the 1880s in just one early example of modernity and antiquity creating a hybrid art form. Blue astonished the Western Arrernte people when Rex Battarbee arrived in Hermannsburg with his picturesque images and paints in the mid 1930s. Albert Namatjira exchanged knowledge of his country for Battarbee's technical skills and materials, and Namatjira and his peers would incorporate this new form of colour into an innovative landscape

idiom. The Ntaria (Hermannsburg) Suite 1946-53, recently acquired and exhibited here for the first time, reveals the collective artists' skill in rendering local colour and light through keen observation and intimate knowledge of their subject. *Speaking in colour* echoes the vernacular term 'speaking in language', which refers to speaking in the local Indigenous dialect. It also cites the idea of being 'in country' – usually meaning back in one's traditional homelands or ancestral country. Drawn exclusively from the Gallery's collection, colour is the link between these distinct works. From the velvet hues of Tiwi ochre, the lucid washes of Central Australian watercolour and the diverse acrylic palettes of desert, Bentinck Island and Bidjandanga communities, these paintings highlight cultural expressions of country and celebrate individual artistic visions.

Una Rey  
Guest Curator



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# About this resource

This resource has been developed by Newcastle Region Art Gallery with contributions from the curator of the exhibition, Una Rey, and Aboriginal artist and teacher Cherie Johnson.

The resource targets Visual Arts stages 3, 4 & 5. However the discussion, art making and further enquiry activities can be adapted to suit any classroom or program.

It is now mandatory across the curriculum to cover aspects of Aboriginal studies in all programs delivered within the classroom. To this end galleries are now employing the expertise of Aboriginal educators to develop resources that inform and empower classroom teachers and enable the delivery of content that is correct, significant and engaging.

To understand Aboriginal art it is important to have some understanding of Aboriginal people, traditional lifestyle, traditional boundaries and Aboriginal lore. However, it is important to understand that no one is an expert on everything Aboriginal. While this resource will attempt to provide an insight into the communities of the artists whose work is included in *Speaking in colour*, for a full understanding further enquiry and research is imperative.

This resource includes works of art by artists from distinct language groups and regions including Ntaria (Hermannsburg) in Central Australia, Eastern and Western Desert communities, The Tiwi Islands, Bentinck Island and the Kimberley Coast. It provides information to assist in the delivery of the activities to assist teachers and students in the quest to gain insight into Aboriginal art and culture, engendering discussion and encouraging connections to other curriculum areas.

**Cherie Johnson**  
*Aboriginal Education Consultant*

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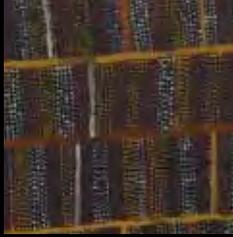
# Artist Map



Click on the name to go directly to each artist's work

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# Palette Colour Pick



Can you guess which artist belongs to each coloured square? Click on the square to go directly to each artist's page and see the whole work of art.

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Art is old. It was passed on from our ancestors to our grandfathers to our fathers to us... Art is talking about the land, the sea, about our culture, about our connection, about our kinship relationships – songs, dance, names, places, country, sacred sites. All these things are important to us.

-ANKAAA Board of Directors' Statement 2007

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# Artists from Ntaria

(Hermannsburg)



Picture courtesy of Big hART's Namatjira project - [www.namatjira.bighart.org](http://www.namatjira.bighart.org) Image by Sophia Marinos

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# Albert Namatjira

born 1902 Hermannsburg NT, died 1959 Alice Springs NT



Albert Namatjira *Ghost gums* c1950

watercolour on paper,

Purchased with assistance of the Newcastle Gallery Society and by public donation through the Newcastle Region Art Gallery Foundation 2009

Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# About artists from Ntaria

(Hermannsburg)

Albert Namatjira (1902-1959) was the undisputed icon of what has been termed The Hermannsburg School, but less well known is his artistic legacy.

Most Australians growing up from the 1940s would have seen reproductions of Namatjira's work and formed a distant affinity for a region that few had experienced first-hand. Over the past decades Namatjira's audience have developed an understanding of the heartrending circumstances that led to his death at the age of fifty-seven caught in the fissure between two cultures.

The Ntaria Suite of 27 watercolours painted between 1946-1953 reveal rich variations in palette and unique visions of Western Arrernte country.

Today the descendants of these painters continue to paint personal accounts of Arrernte country in the Western MacDonnell Ranges and further afield, capturing the translucent colour of Central Australia with distinctive styles.

Namatjira inspires and informs contemporary Western Arrernte artists such as those working at Ngurratjuta Iltja Ntjarra (Many Hands art-centre), including Douglas Kwarlple Abbott and Elton Wirri.



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# Henoch Raberaba

born 1914 Hermannsburg Died 1975 NT



Henoch Raberaba *Chumantara Gorge Central Australia* 1946  
watercolour on paper, 25.0 x 35.0 cm  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Cordula Ebatarinja

born 1919 Hermannsburg Died 1973 NT



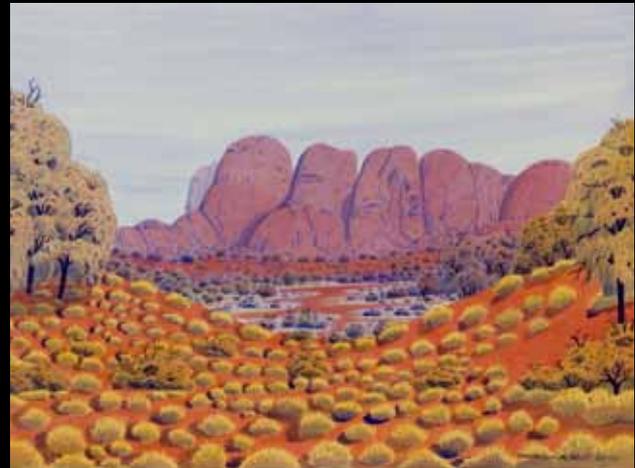
Cordula Ebatarinja *Untitled* 1953  
watercolour on paper, 27.0 x 37.5 cm  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Douglas Kwarlple Abbott

born 1948 Hermannsburg NT

Douglas Kwarlple Abbott was a baby at Hermannsburg when the Ntaria Suite was being painted. This work reproduces an image made famous by postcards of the world heritage listed national park, which since 1985 has been returned to traditional Anangu owners who oversee its management. The red sandy foreground is dotted with Spinifex and flanked by desert oak casuarina trees in a classically balanced Hermannsburg composition.



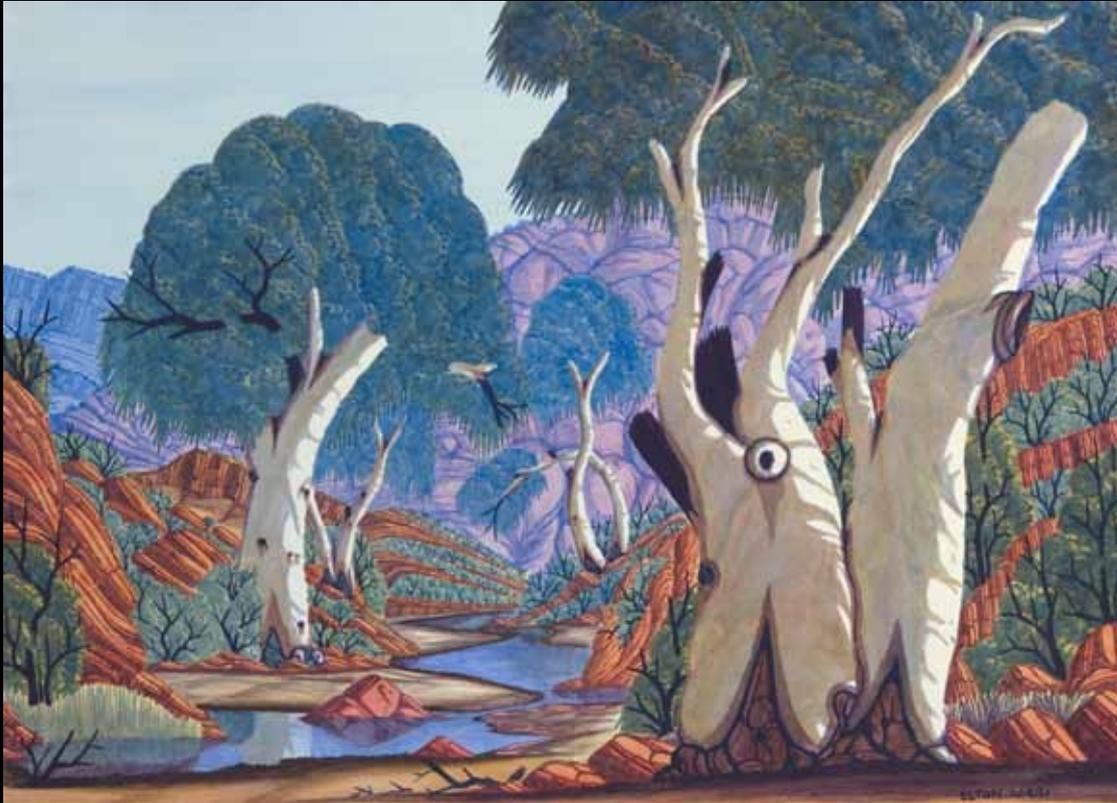
Douglas Kwarlple Abbott *Kata Tjuta - the Olgas* 2009  
watercolour on paper, 54.5 x 74.5 cm  
Les Renfrew bequest 2009  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

... a classically balanced  
Hermannsburg composition.

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# Elton Wirri

born 1990 Alice Springs NT



Elton Wirri *Ellery Creek Gorge* 2009  
watercolour on paper  
Gift of the Newcastle Gallery Society 2009  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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Elton Wirri at a watercolour workshop as part of Big hART's Namatjira project - [www.namatjira.bighart.org](http://www.namatjira.bighart.org). Alice Springs, March 2010. Photo by Beth Sometimes.

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# Enquiry

## Discussion

Since Albert Namatijra's death in 1959, there has been continuing critical discussion concerning his style of painting, with early opinion suggesting that the works, both through their medium and subject matter, confirmed his assimilation into Western culture. More recently there has been an acknowledgment that the works are a reflection of his own connection to his subject matter, country. Discuss the issues involved. Does this mean that Aboriginal art is only 'traditional' if it is created using pre-contact designs and media, such as bark painted with ochre?



## Art making

Create a water colour painting of a place with which you have a strong connection, a place which is imbued with memory and meaning. Through the use of colour and perspective, ensure that the things you love and value about that place are emphasised.



## Further research

Research the events surrounding the establishment of the Hermannsburg art 'school' or art movement. How have its origins impacted upon the type of art the community creates now?

### Link:

The history of the Hermannsburg school:  
<http://www.hermannsburgschool.com/index.php?history>

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# Artists from the Tiwi Islands



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# Timothy Cook

born 1958 Goose Creek, Melville Island NT

The Tiwi Islands are comprised of Melville Island and Bathurst Island, located approximately 100 kms off the Darwin. The Tiwi Islands were proclaimed an Aboriginal Reserve in 1912. Tiwi is the main language spoken on the islands, with the population of approximately 2,700. There are three main settlements: Nguiu on Bathurst Island and Pirlangimpi (Garden Point) and Milikapiti (Snake Bay) on Melville Island.

*Pumpuni jilamara* translates as good design; *Kurlama* refers to the initiation ceremony for young men that coincides with the ripening of the round 'cheeky' (peppery) yam between February and April. Distinctive rings appear around the full moon as a signal that it is time to perform the important song-making kulama ceremony prior to burning off season. Timothy Cook creates his own creative interpretations of ritual *pwoja* (body paint), which is applied during ceremonies such as *kurlama* and *pukumani* (funeral rites) when people sing and dance to farewell the deceased.



Timothy Cook *Pumpuni jilamara - Kurlama* 2002  
natural ochres on paper  
Purchased 2010  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Pedro Wonaeamirri

born 1974 Goose Creek, Melville Island NT

At Jilamara Art and Craft on Melville Island, *turtiyanginari* (ochre colours) are sourced locally by the artists and mixed with water and a synthetic binder-medium to form paint. White is found along the clay-like sea-cliffs and yellow ochre is collected further inland and 'cooked' to produce the red ochre (iron oxide) in a process known as calcining. This method is also common to European traditions – note the difference between raw and burnt sienna.

Wonaeamirri uses a fine ironwood comb, *kayimwagakimi*, to apply the delicate linier dotting in this work. Traditionally charcoal was used for black pigment, but has been replaced with a powder pigment.



Pedro Wonaeamirri *Pwoja-pukmani / bodypaint design 2007*  
ochre on paper  
Purchased 2011  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Jean Baptiste Apuatimi

born 1940 Pirlangimpi NT



Jean Baptiste Apuatimi *Jikapayinga* 1999

natural ochres on paper

Gift of Kean Ooi through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program 2008

Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Kitty Kantilla

born 1928 Melville Island NT, died 2003 Darwin NT



Kitty Kantilla was born on Melville Island but she moved to Bathurst Island to start work as a carver during the 1970s, she returned home to Milikapiti in the early 1990s where she began to create works on paper and canvas.

The title of the work *Parlini Jilamara* translates loosely as old design, and Kantilla also titled many works simply *pumpuni jilamara* - good design.

Tiwi iconography is drawn from *yirrinkirri-pwoja* body-painting, associated with the *Pukumani* (funeral) ceremony. *Turtiyanginari*, ochre colours, are sourced locally and imbue the work Tiwi-ness.

Kitty Kantilla *Parlini Jilamara* 1998

natural earth pigments and synthetic binder on linen, 100.0 x 103.1 cm

Purchased in recognition of 13 February 2008, the official apology to Indigenous Australians 2008

Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Enquiry



At Jilamara Art and Crafts, Milikapiti (Snake Bay, Melville Island), the artists including Pedro Wonaeamirri (above) and Timothy Cook were particular about their *turtiyanginari*, ochre colours. Pedro Wonaeamirri uses the fine wooden-comb *kayimwagakimi* to apply his delicate linier dotting.



Kitty Kantilla's paint palette.

## Discussion

Compare the variations stylistically between the four Tiwi artists in *Speaking in colour*- although they all use the same palette, how do they differ in their 'mark-making' and 'style'. Discuss and describe what we mean by these words.

## Art making

Looking at Kitty Kantilla's painting, notice the number of different coloured ochres and horizontal lines. Using a restricted palette and vertical and horizontal lines to create a sense of movement, design a work in response to her work. Every two minutes turn the design to the right, working quickly and in an overall manner so there is no top and bottom.

## Further enquiry/ research

Kantilla draws inspiration for her paintings from the designs used during the traditional Tiwi funeral ceremony, known as Pukumani. She paints with a fine stick of coconut palm frond. It is not appropriate for a non Indigenous person to directly copy Aboriginal dot painting in an attempt to exploit this Indigenous tradition. However the dot itself is a universal motif that exists not only in the earliest examples of cave painting but as a symbol in Western art movements. Research the intentions behind the use of the dot in such movements as Pointillism and Pop Art.

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# Artists from the Desert



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# Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula

born 1942 Yalyalpi NT, died 2001



Another development in the Aboriginal palette followed school-teacher Geoffrey Bardon's arrival in Papunya in 1971. Senior men, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula amongst them, took charge of a dynamic art movement which started with the short-lived honey-ant dreaming mural at the school. Acrylic paint in a broad spectrum of colour, although generally drawn from the original 'boss colours' of red, yellow, black and white, has evolved into subtle and sophisticated palettes in Papunya Tula artists' work. This natural convergence of 'media' and 'message' has become an internationally renowned language of colour and imagery.

Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula *Spear Straightening Ceremony* 1993  
acrylic on canvas, 91.5 x 61.0 cm  
Gift of Ron Ramsey through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program 2009  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Enquiry

Papunya is located 240km north-west of Alice Springs and was originally established by the government as a compound, centralizing Aboriginal populations from several different language groups or 'nations' who had been forced off their land by white occupation. The Aboriginal Art Company Papunya Tula was established in 1972. School teacher Geoffrey Bardon was a catalyst for the art movement, encouraging children to paint their own designs after he observed them drawing in the sand with their fingers or sticks. Senior men painted a mural at the local school, originally intended as a teaching tool.

Since the late 1980s many inhabitants have moved back to their traditional lands with many Papunya Tula artists now living and working in the communities of Kintore and Kiwirrkurra far to the west of Papunya.

## Discussion

Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula was a major figure in the Papunya Tula art movement, and the longest-serving chairman of the Papunya Tula Artists' Company. After his father's death, he took over ceremonial responsibility for his country. Research the artist and changes in his style over the thirty years of painting his dreaming or tjukurpa.

## Art making

Most Papunya Tula artists work on a black or deep red-ochre primed canvas. Make a series of three or four works on paper each with a different ground colour: a deep blue or black, a bright warm colour such as red, yellow and a pale grey or green - be inventive. Draw lines with PVC glue onto your work – the shapes can be quite abstract, but should be symbolic of something of importance to you. Then one at a time, sprinkle two natural substances contrasting in colour, such as dirt and sand or shavings from coloured pencils, graphite or charcoal over the surface.

## Further Research

Papunya Tula has become a very successful Aboriginal owned and managed business. Community art centres such as Papunya Tula have been important in supporting artists in making and selling their work. In recent years Aboriginal art generally has become a well established category and commodity within the art market both nationally and internationally. However there is still concern about the proportion of the income from art sales that actually reaches the creators of the works. Research the beginning and development of Papunya Tula Aboriginal Art Centre and the ways it has attempted to redress this imbalance.

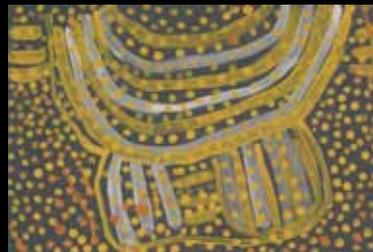
# Emily Kame Kngwarreye

born c1910 Alhalkere (Soakage Bore) NT died 1996 Alice Springs NT

In 1975 Utopia, which is located approximately 250kms north east of Alice Springs, was returned to the Aboriginal community as freehold property. Soon after, the Alyawarr and Anmatyerr people moved from the surrounding pastoral stations to settle in camps there.

Kngwarreye was introduced to non-organic colour and materials through workshops in batik, tie-dying and block printing at Utopia in 1977.

Created two years after her first acrylic paintings on canvas, the colour in *Awelye* (bodypaint) is closely aligned with the traditional ochre palette used by Anmatyerr women to 'paint up' for ceremony. Ochres were traditionally applied with animal fat producing a lustrous shine to the skin. The marks that decorate the breasts, collar and upper arms are associated with different skin groups and the strong contrasting colours denote power and connection to the *altyerr* or dreaming through the use of ochre.

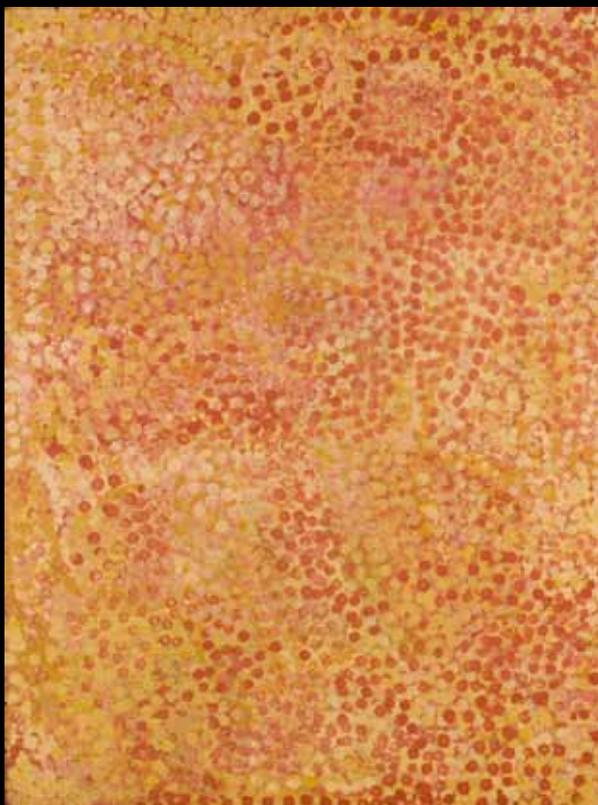


Emily Kame Kngwarreye *Awelye* 1990  
synthetic polymer paint on composition board  
Purchased 2010  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Emily Kame Kngwarreye

.... continued.



Emily Kame Kngwarreye *Kame Awelye* not dated  
oil on canvas  
Gift of Roderick Bain through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts  
Program 1999  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Enquiry

Emily Kame Kngwarreye (Kam Kngwarray) was a founding member of the arts movement founded at Utopia. Kngwarreye began painting when she was in her seventies. Initially working in batik often depicting plants, Kngwarreye was introduced to canvas in 1988. She was a prolific artist, her imagery inspired by ceremony. Kngwarreye often described her paintings as being about the 'whole lot'.

## Discussion

What do you think Kngwarreye might have meant by 'whole lot'? How can a single painting contain so much information? What are some methods used by the artist? How are colour and marks used in each of her works in *Speaking in colour*?

## Art making

*Kame Awelye*, (n.d.) conceptually can be likened to a self-portrait, but not in the sense that Kngwarreye has made a recognizable image of her physical features or face. Rather it is an image of

her identity expressed in terms of her ceremonial status. Compare the work with *Awelye* 1990, which is a painting symbolising womens ritual and ceremony, showing painted torsos.

Paint two self portraits responding to the two works.

In one, use only the daubing or blotting technique with a large round paintbrush; it will be difficult to obtain fine detail, and colours will need to be mixed to obtain the tonal highlights to differentiate between areas.

In your second artwork, design some body art based on your own cultural heritage. This could be in the form of designing a tattoo, a piece of jewellery, a mask, face painting or full body painting. For inspiration look at Polynesians tattooing, masks from Asia, South American jewellery or contemporary full body tattoos.

## Further enquiry/ research

As the works in *Speaking in colour* demonstrate, over time Kngwarreye's work has changed and developed. Investigate these changes in style and media. Discuss the pressure from the art market for artists to maintain a consistent style throughout their careers. Is this equally true for Indigenous and non Indigenous artists?

The art means to carry on our stories, to know it belongs to my family and it belongs to my father and grandfather, so that everyone can know about us, so we can carry on, so our kids can carry on forever, even when we're gone. So non-Indigenous people can know about us in the future, how we fought to keep our culture strong for the sake of our children's future.

The art is about who you belong to, about what country you belong to, it's about the only way you can know and others will know too. Our art has got to be protected because it belongs to individual people and their families. It is their belonging, it belongs to their group so it must be treated right way.

Valerie Napaljarri Martin -Chairperson of Desart 2001 -2004

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# Artist from the Kimberley Coast



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# Daniel Walbidi

born 1982 Bidyadanga WA

Bidyadanga is a coastal town situated 250km south of Broome and is the traditional land of the Karrajarri. Most of the Bidyadanga artists are Yulparija elders who have spent most of their lives in the desert living traditionally.

After a visit to their traditional homeland and the realization that many of their grandchildren will never know the land the artists were inspired to paint. Much of their work depicts their country on the Canning Stock Route around Well 33. Today there are five language groups living within the community.

Daniel Walbidi's Yulparija people were forced by drought and land degradation to migrate from the desert to the northern Kimberley coastal community of Bidyadanga in the 1960s. This adopted country is where iron-rich red pindan soil and aquamarine tidal sea-beds meet. This painting refers to the border country between the two traditional custodianships. The detail and precision of Kulyakartu, near the Perceval Lakes in the Great Sandy Desert, incorporate Walbidi's ancestral lands at Winpa which he visited for the first time in 2006.



Daniel Walbidi *Kulyakartu* 2008  
synthetic polymer paint on linen, 112.7x 166.8 cm  
Les Renfrew bequest 2008  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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# Enquiry

## Discussion

Many of Walbidi's paintings are titled *Kirriwirri* and are about jila ('living' water) in the area near Well 33 on the Canning Stock Route in the Great Sandy Desert of Western Australia. As a result of severe drought, Walbidi's community was forced to move from their traditional lands if they were to survive. Often the ancient ground water so precious to Aboriginal people is diminished by mines and bores. In the Kimberleys, Argyle Diamond open cut mine has created a partnership with the local community. Research the partnership agreement with the community, then discuss its impact on the community's culture, tradition, lifestyle, physical and mental health.

## Art making

*"I will be painting about all the country of the old people, all the different countries they paint. They are desert mob, but now they live at Bidyadanga, salt water country. It will be like a giant map."*  
Daniel Walbidi.

Aboriginal artists often paint topographic maps of their country as Walbidi has in *Winpa* 2006. These maps are designed to indicate tribal boundaries, camp-sites and natural features such as hills, water sources and food locations. Paint a topographic map of your block, suburb, or town using a limited palette (3 or 4 colours) but a variety of mark-making implements - cotton wool,

glad wrap, sticks, pieces of sponge or any other materials you can adapt. Use a daubing technique to define areas. You can either use Google maps or, as an Aboriginal artist would, try visualizing the area from memory. Will you include all the detail, or be selective?

## Further research

To gain further understanding of what it meant for this community to revisit their country visit...

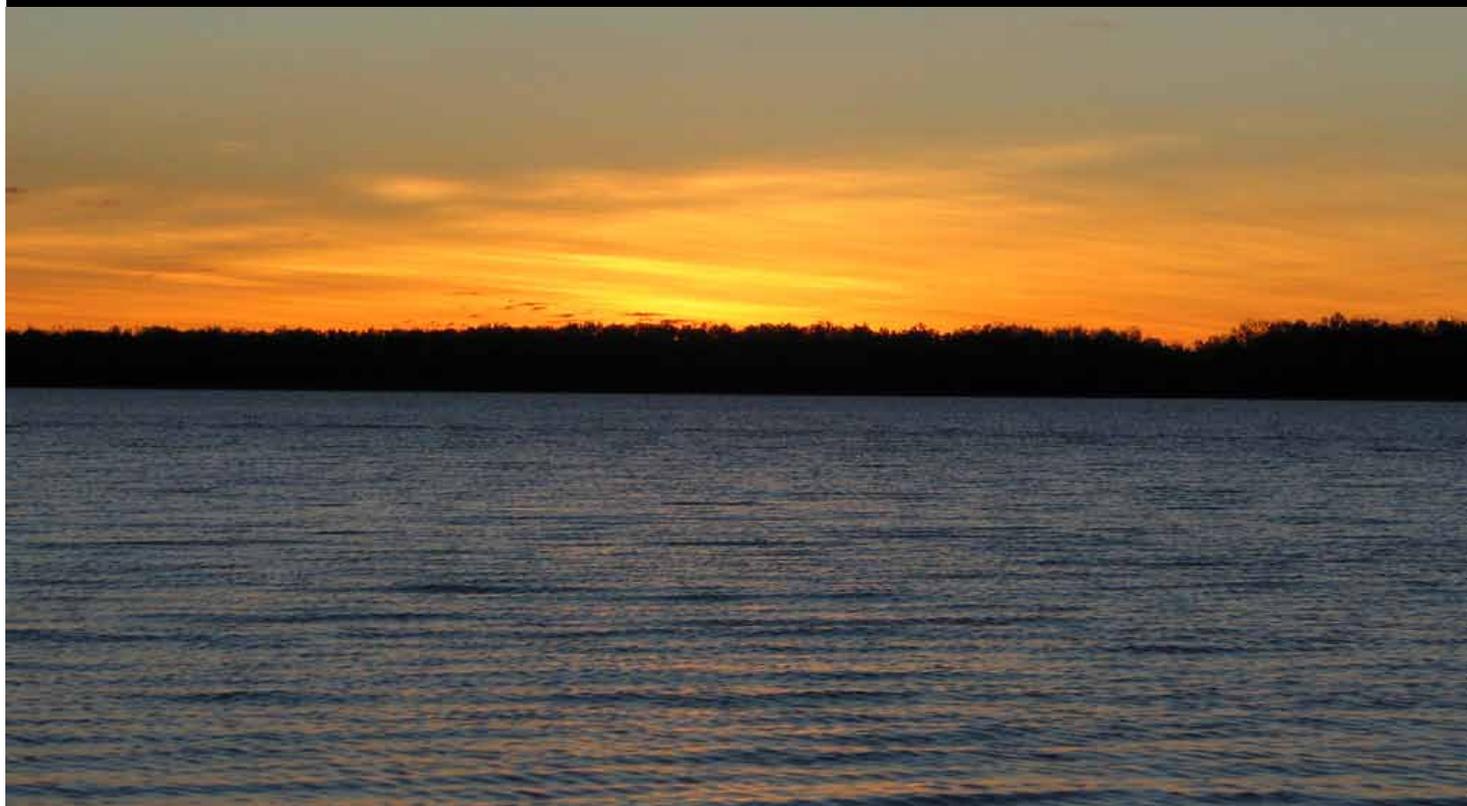
[www.rebelfilms.com.au/desert-heart.html](http://www.rebelfilms.com.au/desert-heart.html)

[http://www.nag.org.au/collection/about\\_the\\_collection/contemporary\\_collection/artist/daniel\\_walbidi,\\_kulyakartu,\\_2008](http://www.nag.org.au/collection/about_the_collection/contemporary_collection/artist/daniel_walbidi,_kulyakartu,_2008)



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# Artist from Northern Queensland



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# Sally Gabori

born 1924 Bentinck Island QLD



Sally Gabori *Dibirdibi Country* 2010  
synthetic polymer paint on linen, 198.0 x 100.5 cm  
Purchased 2010  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

Sally Gabori was born in 1924, and she lived a completely traditional life without contact with the outside world until the 1940s. Gabori, originally a weaver, began painting with acrylics on canvas at Mornington Arts and Crafts center in 2005. She is one of the last remaining people left who speak the *Kaiadilt* language.

Colour is Gabori's language of choice to communicate her origins and country to outsiders and decedents alike.

Gabori's colourful forms are rooted in specific landforms from her ancestral home on Bentinck Island, but she alchemises the iconography from memory and knowledge of culture. Her palette has undergone shifts since starting to paint and she produces bodies of work dominant in a particular hue.

The black and white of *Dibirdibi Country* 2010 represents her husband's country where the mangrove mud and salt-pan meet the sea, but overall her works can be attributed to an intense pleasure in working with paint and raw plastic colour.

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# Enquiry

The Kaiadilt people are from Bentinck Island in the South Wellesly Island group in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Queensland. In 1948 after a severe drought a tidal wave struck the island, after which Catholic missionaries relocated all of the people to Mornington Island, where many still live.



## Discussion

Gabori's work shares some visual (formal) qualities with non-Indigenous abstract painters, but we understand her work to be drawn from the country and culture of Bentinck Island. Investigate artists whose works seem visually similar. What prompts them to work in this manner? Does knowing the cultural significance of Gabori's work change your experience of the painting?

One of the biggest issues for Aboriginal people today is the loss of knowledge that is going with the old people. In Gabori's case, this is one of the reasons she is painting, using the language of colour to communicate her origins and country. Do you think Gabori would tell any Aboriginal person the knowledge?

## Art making

Even though Gabori still lives on Mornington Island she has gathered much inspiration from several flying visits over her traditional country. In these works she depicts aerial views of the sweeping coastline, the jagged lines of oyster-encrusted stone fish traps, darting sea life and radiant sunlit patterns dancing over the waves. Think of an area near you or a place you have a connection with that is full of life and beauty. Using only three or four colours recreate your coast line, river or dam with huge chunks of colour like Gabori in *Dibirdibi Country* 2010

## Further research

To understand an artist you must understand at least a little of their cultural history. In an Aboriginal person's case the level of contact with Europeans varied. Reflect on all or some of the artists' backgrounds in *Speaking in colour* and compare how the different levels of and experiences of contact with Europeans have influenced or altered their artistic expression.

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# Glossary

From region to region, written and oral languages may contain subtle differences in meaning or inference.

## Aboriginal Lore

a set of rules that have been laid down in the dreaming by the ancestral spirits for everyday living.

## Aboriginal Law

a punishment dispensed as a consequence of breaking lore.

## Aboriginal Reserve

land on which Aboriginal people lived under strict regulation by government. Many basic freedoms, such as the right to marry and to move around, were restricted. Following the 1975 NT land-rights act, many reserves (and missions, administered by various Christian Churches) became Aboriginal lease-hold lands or 'communities'. Permits are required for non-residents to visit Aboriginal communities.

## Altyerr (Anmatyerr)

Eastern desert language groups, creation time, associated with 'dreaming', ancestral law and codes of behaviour.

## Kayimwagakimi (Tiwi)

short wooden comb used to apply ochre to the body or pukumani poles.

## Kurlama (Tiwi)

young men's initiation ceremony associated with the round yam *Dioscorea bulbifera* in the early dry season.

## Ochre

pigment (colour) rich stone, naturally occurring across Australia. It also refers to the medium of paint, applied with a binding medium to a surface to create an artwork, or to the body as body paint.

## Palette

the colours that an artist uses in a particular artwork or across a series of artworks.

## Pukumani

Tiwi Islander's funeral ceremony which entails singing, dancing and ritualised body painting and the erection of tutini or pukumani poles.

## Tjukurrpa

a word used widely from the Western desert regions which encompasses creation, Aboriginal law, spirituality and power. 'Dreaming' is considered a loose, but not fully inclusive, translation of tjukurrpa, which also pertains to an individual's rights and responsibilities for certain stories or elements.

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## Acknowledgements

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### FUNDING SUPPORT

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### COLLECTION STATEMENTS

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*Penelope Finnigan Public Programs Officer*

## Disclaimer

*Having written this, I do not claim to be an Aboriginal expert by any measure; I do not claim to know all things and the majority of things I do know I have learnt through oral history. I am Aboriginal, I was raised by my mother Dawn Townsend and Grandmother Rachel Darcy. My family's traditional homelands are along the Bemudal river in Warren NSW. I was raised in Newcastle and am a known and active member of the Aboriginal Community.*

*Cherie Johnson*

Front cover image  
Daniel Walbidi *Winpa (detail)* 2006  
synthetic polymer paint on linen, 165.0 x 111.5 cm  
Les Renfrew bequest 2010,  
Newcastle Region Art Gallery collection

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