

# BALNHODHURR

- A LASTING IMPRESSION



PRESENTED BY ARTBACK NT IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BUKU-LARRNGGAY MULKA ART CENTRE

ARTBACK NT PRESENTS

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Front cover: Dhalmula Burarrwanga, *Milkarri (tear)*, 2012, photographic screenprint, 30 x 21 cm.

All photographs of artwork by Fiona Morrison.



# BALNH DHURR

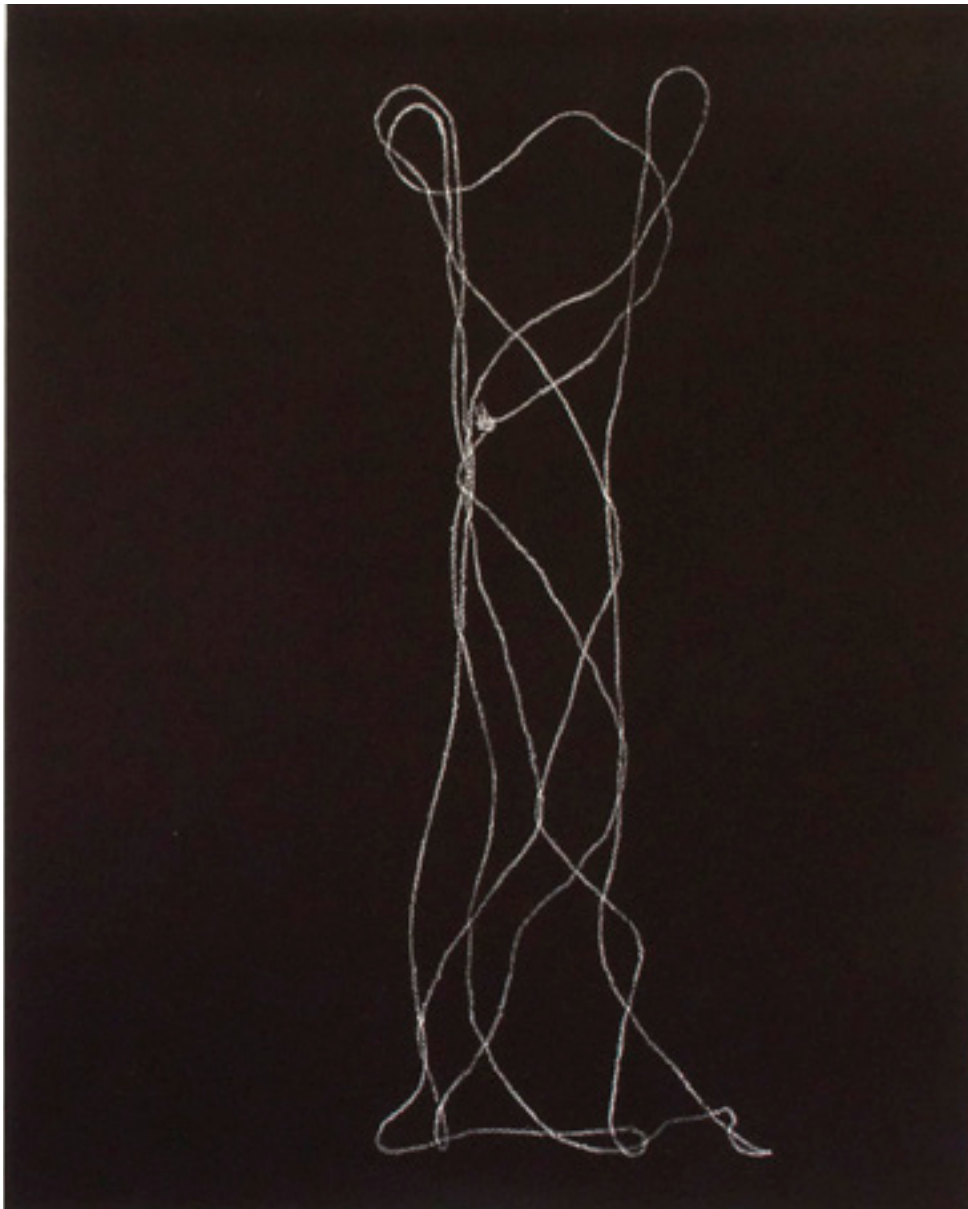
## - A LASTING IMPRESSION

### EXHIBITION OUTLINE

*Balnhdhurr – A Lasting Impression* celebrates twenty years of onsite print production at the Yirrkala Print Space in the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre. Located in the remote Aboriginal community of Yirrkala in Northeast Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, the Yirrkala Print Space is unique amongst remote community art centres boasting twenty years of continual production of limited edition fine art prints by locally employed and trained Indigenous printmakers.



Djuwakan#2 Marika, Mari, 2012, photographic screenprint, 21 x 30cm.



Nyangungu Marawili, *Dhamula (sea eagle)*, 2013, soft-ground etching, 49 x 39cm.

This collection is made up of a diverse array of work, a curated mix of art chosen because of the importance of the artist, the technique used, its influence or its presence in a broader project or series. *Balnhdhurr – A Lasting Impression* includes prints that are historically significant. The *Macassan Boat* tells the story of Macassan trade with the Yolngu before the arrival of Captain Cook, while *The Berndt Etchings* series talks about the Berndt Crayon Drawings of Yirrkala, produced by the artists' forefathers in 1947. Similarly, *The String Figures* series are a response to another archaeological collection from 1948. Reflecting the dynamic nature of Yolngu art, the exhibition also provides an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the artists who have worked and created prints that have contributed to the conversation between the Yolngu people of Northeast Arnhem Land and the national and international community.

This range of work showcases the Yolngu respect for clan and country, with many prints relating to the creation stories and Law as passed on by their ancestors, highlighting the importance of kinship. Prints provide another medium for passing on knowledge to the younger generations in order to keep culture and history and identity alive and strong, whilst at the same time informing the outside world about Yolngu culture.



Dundiwuy Wunungmurra, *Dhanbul wu Yolngu Marrnyun*, 2001, screenprint, 48 x 40cm.

*Balnhdhurr – A Lasting Impression* takes the viewer on a visual journey, creating a platform for meaningful dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Works reveal examples of techniques learnt and mastered onsite at Yirrkala Print Space, demonstrating continuing traditions passed on through generations and highlighting the artistic output by different artists; from works by young people and work influenced by collaborative projects and non-Indigenous artists. It is a coming together of cultures and time, where audiences have the chance to learn of the Yolngu's strong tradition in artwork and how their skills, talent and creativity have translated to printmaking. This exhibition provides an opportunity for the wider public to recognise the accomplishments of a sustainable, functional and thriving print studio operating in an isolated landscape and the artistic development of its artists. Exhibition visitors will learn about the nuances and stories of the art of the Yolngu of Northeast Arnhem Land and through this artistic storytelling audiences are exposed to the knowledge held deep in Indigenous culture.

*"Every print has to be the design of the artist's own clan or connecting clan. The design has to be done very carefully so as not to mix them up, and to understand their story. We have to talk about it with other people in that clan, so when the design is printed there is no problem. It's a similar idea to the traditional designs used in the bark paintings and the wood carving, but in printmaking we get the direction from our elders to design the image of the outside story only. In the workshop a lot of Yolngu come and watch what we do in the print studio so they can understand the process."*

Marrnyula Mununggurr and Mundul Wunungmurra Mununggurr





Mulkun Wirrpanda, *Rakay #4*, 2013, woodblock, 102 x 38cm.

*Balnhdhurr – A Lasting Impression* provides the printmakers an opportunity to actively share their stories through art and to reflect on their creativity brought to life in a small remote community. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to acknowledge the many individuals who have been involved in the Yirrkala Print Space over the twenty years and to honour the significant work of those who have passed.

## YIRRKALA PRINT SPACE

A dedicated print studio was built in Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre through a collaboration between the art centre and master printer Basil Hall. Opened in February 1996, the Yirrkala Print Space has become one of Australia's premier print studios specialising in limited edition works on paper produced onsite by its own press. Appreciated as one of the few remote printmaking facilities that employs and trains local Indigenous printmakers, the Yirrkala Print Space has, to date, produced over 800 editions of prints by 135 artists.



Nongirrnga Marawili, *Lightning and The Rock*, 2014, screenprint, 59 x 25cm.

The Yirrkala Print Space was established with a philosophy to provide an environment to educate and engage the vision of Yolngu through the development of artistic skills and the exploration of non-traditional techniques including printmaking and new colour palettes. Stepping into a world of bright colours not traditionally used in the area allowed artists to explore a whole new genre of artistic storytelling. Traditional motifs printed in fluorescents; crocodiles that were pink, trees that were orange, this discovery was a joyous explosion of colour and expression. Other intricacies of printmaking techniques – Japanese woodblocks, linocuts, etchings, screen prints, collographs and lithographs – were also enthusiastically embraced by artists of all ages. When sanctioning the production of art by mechanical reproduction, community elders were concerned about preventing copyright infringement of *miny'tji* (sacred design), which is significantly more serious in Yolngu culture than in mainstream law. Elders decreed that 'to paint the land, you must use the land', limiting *miny'tji* to original works painted using natural colours like ochres on natural mediums, barring it from being reproduced by printing techniques.



Gaymala Yunupingu, *Baru*, 2004, screenprint, 62 x 46cm.



An integral component of the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre and the wider Yirrkala community, the Print Space enables Yolngu printmakers to print full time, passing skills and stories to new generations of Yolngu artists. This connection to place ensures that the growing and sharing of skills stays within and strengthens the local community.



Galarwuy Yunupingu, *Mawindi*, 2008, Berndt Series, soft-ground etching, 25 x 50cm



## BUKU-LARRNGGAY MULKA

Buku-Larrnggay – *'the feeling on your face as it is struck by the first rays of the sun'* (ie: facing east)

Mulka – *'a sacred but public ceremony'*

Specialising in the traditional art of the Yolngu, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre is renowned for its works on bark, sculptures and *larrikitj* (hollow logs). The art centre is dedicated to the maintenance and preservation of Yolngu cultural practices and convention. Located in remote Northeast Arnhem Land in the community of Yirrkala, approximately 700 kilometres east of Darwin, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre employs twenty staff comprised mainly of Yolngu and services Yirrkala and twenty-five homeland centres in a radius of 200 kilometres.



Garawan Wanambi, *Marrangu*, 2015, etching/screenprint, 40 x 40cm.



In the 1960s, a beachfront gallery was set up by Narritjin Maymuru where he sold art that now adorns the walls of major museums and private collections. Counted among the art centre's main inspirations and founders, Narritjin Maymuru's vision of a Yolngu-owned business to sell Yolngu art has now grown into a thriving business – Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre has an international reputation, exhibiting and selling work globally.

In 1976, Yolngu artists established 'Buku-Larrnggay Arts' in the old mission health centre as an act of self-determination coinciding with the withdrawal of the Methodist Overseas Mission and the Land Rights and Homeland movements.

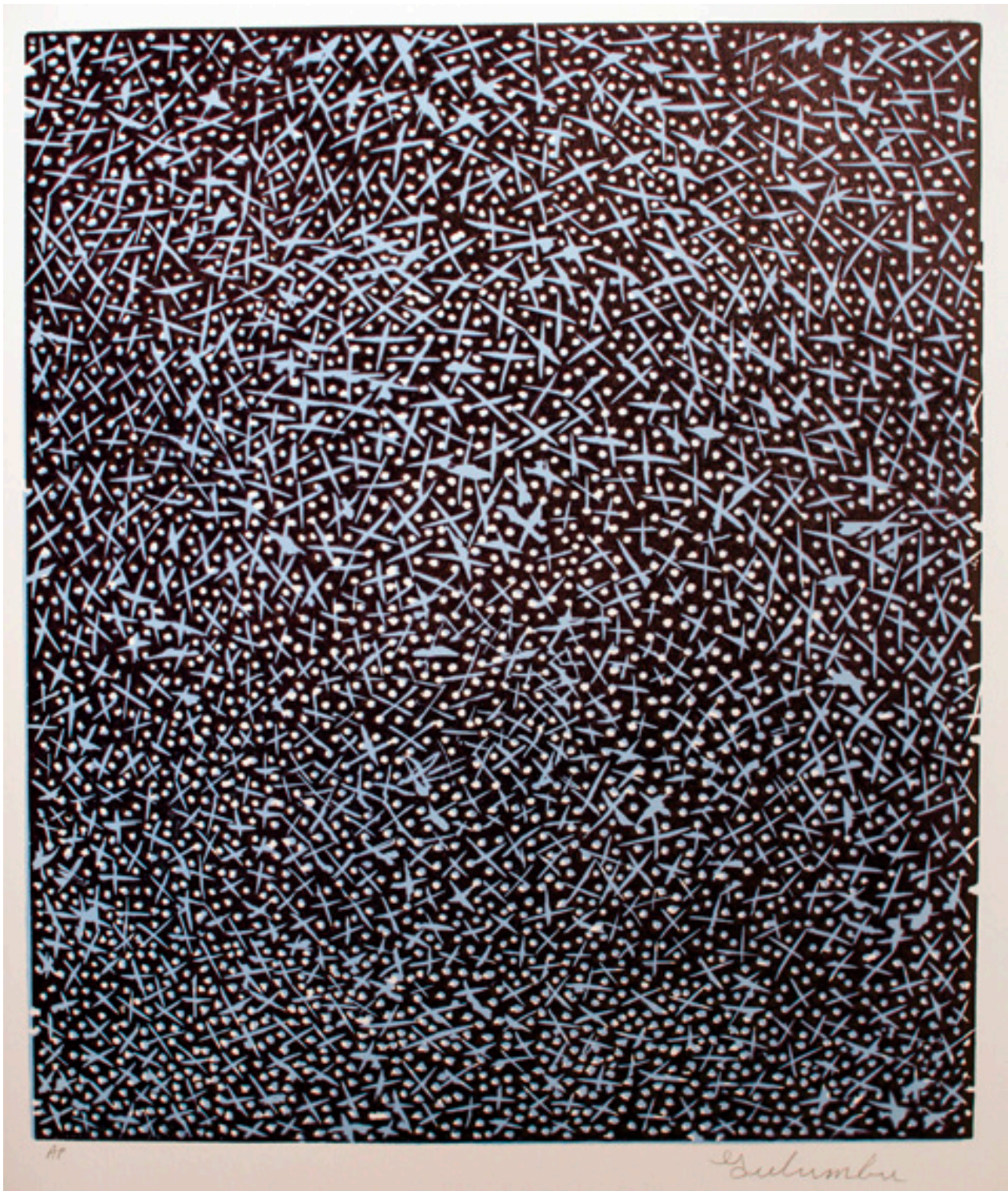


Djuwakan#2 Marika, Ngarra, 2010, photographic linocut, 30 x 21 cm.



In 1988, a new museum was built with a bicentenary grant. This now houses a collection of historically significant works illustrating clan law and includes the Message Sticks from 1935 and the 1963 Yirrkala Church Panels.

In 1995, a screen print workshop and extra gallery space was added to provide a range of different mediums to explore. In 2007, The Mulka Project was added. This facility contains and displays a collection of tens of thousands of historical images and films as well as creating new digital product. Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre now consists of two divisions; the Yirrkala Art Centre, representing Yolngu artists exhibiting and selling contemporary art and The Mulka Project, which acts as a digital production studio and archive centre incorporating the museum.



Gulumbu Yunupingu, *Gan'yu*, 2011, reduction linocut, 50 x 43cm.



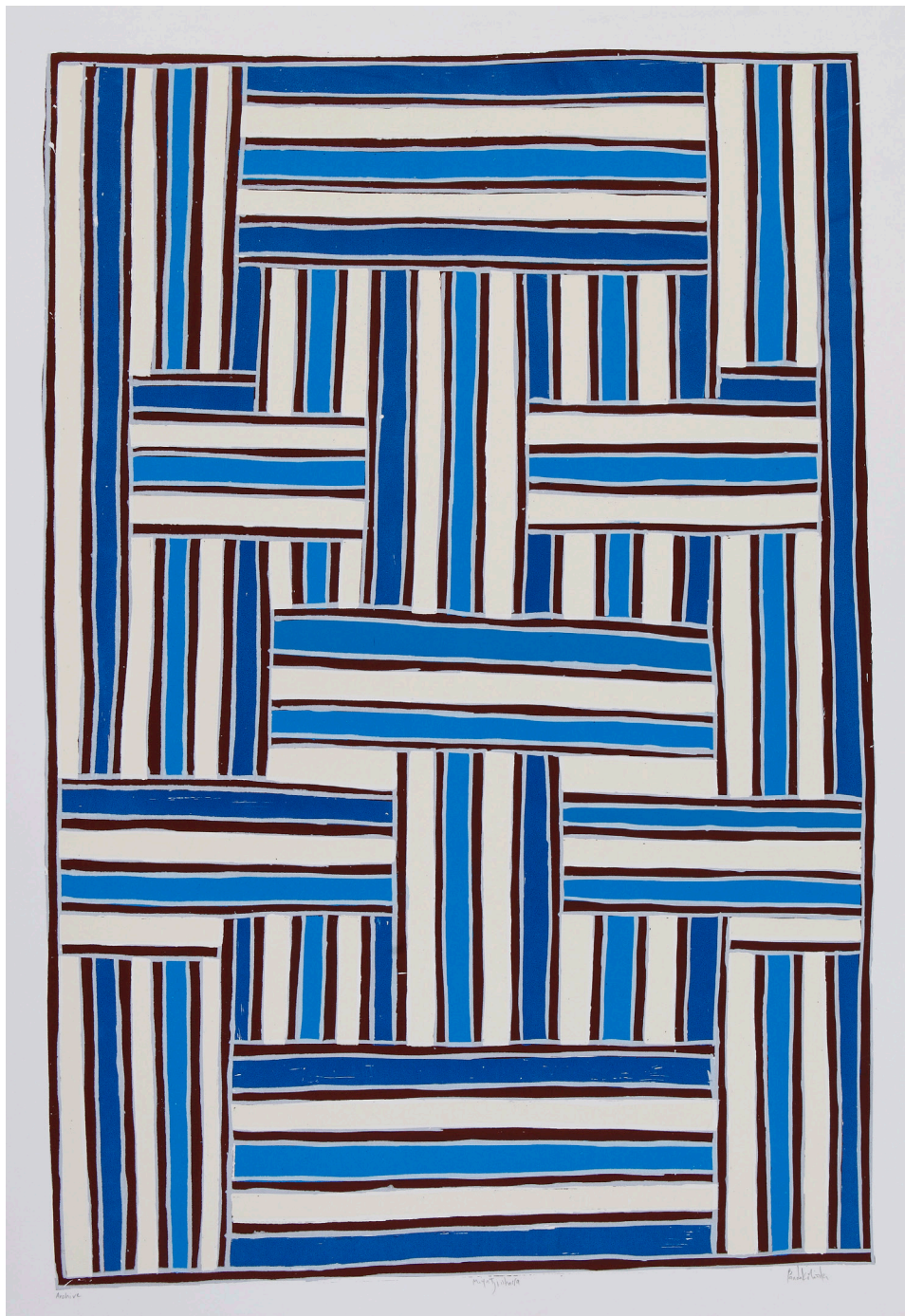


Nyapanyapa Yunupingu, *Hunting Dhawu*, 2001, screenprint, 47 x 39cm.

The artists who produce work at the Yirrkala Print Space have established a worldwide reputation for excellence, having won many of Australia's major Indigenous art prizes. Female artists played a leading role in the establishment of the Print Space as it gave them the freedom to explore their individual creativity free of the constraints traditionally imposed on females in the production of Yolngu art. These women have been leaders in innovation and change. Senior artists such as Gaymala Yunupingu, Nyalung Wunungmurra and Marrnyula Mununggurr have revealed true innovation in the area of Yolngu printmaking and have played a vital role in cultivating the talents of the younger generation of print artists.

## PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

Dhuwarrwarr Marika, Marrnyula Mununggurr, Nyapanyapa Yunupingu, Gaymala Yunupingu, Naminapu Maymuru-White, Manunu Wunungmurra, Dundiwuy Wunungmurra, Barrupu Yunupingu, Nongirrnga Marawili, Djambawa Marawili, Gulumbu Yunupingu, Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Gawirrin Gumana, Mulkun Wirrpanda, Gundimulk Wanambi, Djerrkngu Marika, Nyangungu Marawili, Dhundhdhunga Mununggurr, Munuy'ngu Marika, Burrthi Marika, Milika Marika, Djakala Wurramarrba, Muluyulk#2 Marika, Bulmirri Yunupingu, Gunybi Ganambarr, Banduk Marika, Ruby Djikarra Alderton, Naminuapu#2 Maymuru, Laklak#2 Ganambarr, Boliny Wanambi, Nawurapu Wunungmurra, Yalmakany Marawili, Mikey Gurruwiwi, Ishmael Marika, Djuwakan#2 DJ Marika, Dhalmula Burarrwanga, Gandhurrminy Yunupingu, Barrata Marika, Gurmarrwuy Yunupingu, Malaluba Gumana, Djalinda Yunupingu, Wukun Wanambi, Garawan Wanambi and Djirrirra Wunungmurra.



Banduk Marika, *Miny'tjinharra*, 2006, screenprint, 69 x 46cm.



## EXHIBITION CONTENT:

Exhibition running metres: to be confirmed, approximately 75 - 90 works

Education Kit

Catalogue

Public Programs – to be confirmed, dependent on Visions of Australia funding

Wall and Text Panels

Audio Descriptions

Cost: \$3,000 to \$4,000

Touring: 2017 to 2020/2021



Ruby Djikarra Alderton, *Yathiny*, 2012, etching, 15 x 34cm.

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