



# BUKU-LARRNGAY MULKA

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## Djambawa Marawili

<b>Other Names</b>	Miniyawany
<b>Born</b>	13/04/53
<b>Died</b>	na
<b>Moiety</b>	Yirritja moiety
<b>Homeland</b>	Baniyala
<b>Clan</b>	Yithuwa Madarrpa - Nyunudupuy Madarrpa

### Selected Details of Artist's Working Life

#### *Medium and Theme*

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



### *Biography*

Djambawa Marawili (born 1953) is an artist who has experienced mainstream success (as the winner of the 1996 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art award Best Bark Painting Prize and as an artist represented in most major Australian institutional collections and several important overseas public and private collections) but for whom the production of art is a small part of a much bigger picture.

Djambawa as a senior artist as well as sculpture and bark painting has produced linocut images and produced the first screenprint image for the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Printspace.

His principal roles are as a leader of the Madarrpa clan, a caretaker for the spiritual well-being of his own and other related clan's and an activist and administrator in the interface between non-Aboriginal people and the Yolngu (Aboriginal) people of North East Arnhem Land.

He is first and foremost a leader, and his art is one of the tools he uses to lead. As a participant 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 drew 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.

Again 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 made to explain the concepts of Yolngu ownership of undersea lands called "Terry Djambawa Marawili-My Native Title". 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.

Away from the spotlight of activism, Djambawa must fulfil several other onerous 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, an aged father and many children and grand children.

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 ceremony that he is required to assist or lead. As a Director and later Chairperson of the Association of Northern and Kimberley Aboriginal Artists Association 1997-2008) and Chairperson of Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre 1994 - 2000 (the art centre servicing north-east Arnhem Land) art is never far away from consideration. In 2004 he was appointed to the Australia Council ATSI Board. He was granted a two year Fellowship from the Australia Council in 2003.

As a man living at Baniyala, some three hours from Yirrkala (the nearest shop/mains power/fuel etc.) he is immersed in the country that he paints and carves. Everywhere he looks the landscape reveals to his educated eyes the designs within. His role as the voice of Wakuthi, his ancient, blind father, is to protect these knowledges with the tools his father gave him. The art is one of these.

## ***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

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  
April 2005 Kaplan Collection exhibition Seattle Museum  
May 2005 Source of Fire Annandale Galleries Sydney-solo  
July-August 2005 Y kumirri Raft Artspace (exhibition purchased by the Holmes a Court collection)  
2005 14 October-27 November 'Y kumirri', Holmes a Court Gallery , Perth  
June 2006 'Walking together to aid Aboriginal Health' Shalom College UNSW  
June 2006 - Solo exhibition in Sydney Bienalle  
November 2006 Asia Pacific Triennale Queensland Gallery of Modern Art opening Brisbane  
2006 'Bulayi Small Gems' Suzanne O'Connell Indigeous Art Brisbane  
2007 Bukulurṯhunmi - Coming Together, One Place, Raft Artspace, Darwin, NT.  
2008 'Some Men I Have Met' Steve Fox of Mogo Raw Art, Mogo, NSW  
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, Gapan Gallery, Gulkila Garma site, north esat Arnhem Land NT

## ***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  
Art Gallery NSW  
British Open University Art Museum Milton Keynes England  
Holmes a Court Collection  
Woodside Energy Ltd. Art Collection  
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland

## ***Bibliography***

### REFERENCES:

- Aboriginal Arts Management Association, 1990, Contemporary Aboriginal Art 1990 - from Australia (presented by the Aboriginal Arts Committee, Australia Council and Third Eye Centre, Glasgow), exhibition cat., Redfern NSW. (C)
- Caruana W., 1987, Australian Aboriginal Art, a Souvenir Book of Aboriginal art at the Australian National Gallery, The Australian National Gallery, Parkes, ACT. (C)
- Fox S., Baniyala Artworks, exhibition cat., Yirrkala Literature Production Centre, Yirrkala NT.
- O'Ferrall M., Keepers of the Secrets, Art from Arnhem Land in the Collection of the Art Gallery of WA, Perth. (C)
- 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards 1996, touring cat, Museum and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT.
- 1984, Baniyala Artworks, exhib cat, Yirrkala Literature Production Centre.
- Fox, S. Baniyala Artworks, ex. cat 1984, Yirrkala Literature Production Centre, NT
- 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.

## ***Awards***

- Best Bark Painting - 13th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards 1996.
- Australia Council Fellowship 2004-5
- Major protagonist of the successful Blue Mud Bay case in the High Court

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