



Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre

PO BOX 570, NHULUNBUY NT 0881
tel: 08 8987 1701 fax: 08 8987 2701
art@yirrkala.com
www.yirrkala.com



Gunybi Ganambarr

Date of Birth: 14/04/1973

Country:

Homeland: Yarıunbi

Biography

Gunybi has mainly lived and worked as an artist at Gangan, sometimes based at Dhuruputjpi or Yilpara. His mother Mäpuŋu Gumana originates from here but is now deceased. He came to notice as a ceremonial yidaki (didjeridu) player sought after by elders to accompany their sacred song. He accompanied the Yolŋu delegations to the opening of the National Museum in Canberra 2001 and the Jarrakitj installation at the Sydney Opera House 2002, and played at the opening of Djambawa Marawili's exhibition in the 2006 Sydney Biennale.

Under the tutelage of artists like Gawirrin Gumana and Yumutjin Wunurŋmurra from his mother's Dhalwaŋu clan whilst living on their country he has now assumed ceremonial authority.

He first came to the notice of the Buku-Larrnggay staff as an artist with a carved and painted Ironwood sculpture of a Wurran or cormorant (a totemic species of his mother clan) in 2002. The wood's natural shape suggested itself to him and he commenced to reveal the bird within. He then added pigment to achieve the colouring but both, sculpting Ironwood for sale (rather than ceremony), and painting Ironwood are new actions in North East Arnhem land public art. This began a consistent theme of Gunybi following his own inclinations in expressing his vision.

He has combined that with a startling innovative flair to produce groundbreaking sacred art that is at once novel and still entirely consistent with Yolŋu maŋayin (law).

His first recognition in a wider sphere was when he was invited by Brenda Croft of the National Gallery of Australia to enter the National Sculpture Prize in 2005. He submitted one of his first sculpted Jarrakitj.

In the year of 2008 he was chosen as an exhibiting finalist in the Xstrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Artist Award at the Gallery of Modern Art at Queensland Art Gallery. He went on to win that Award.

In August 2011 Gunybi Ganambarr won the richest Indigenous Art Award \$50,000 WAIAA. At this time The Australian wrote;

"When Ganambarr was a young man, senior Yolngu artists recognised his ability and ensured he had the skills and knowledge to create the extraordinary bark paintings on show.

These wonderfully complex and technically brilliant barks sit alongside new works that exploit the potential of materials found around mining sites. Using the layered webs of lines fundamental to traditional Yolngu painting and the incising of lines that characterises Yolngu carving, he has reclaimed the insulation panels and rubber belts discarded by miners and transformed them into panels that combine traditional image-making with an enhanced sense of visual depth and tangible space.

Ganambarr's work epitomises the innovative and exploratory nature of contemporary Aboriginal arts practice and not surprisingly the judges awarded him the \$50,000 main prize."

Gunybi has had the instinct to introduce radical new forms without offending community tolerance. He has introduced or developed novel forms such as double sided barks, heavily sculpted poles, incised barks, ironwood sculpture, inserting sculptures into poles.

He attributes his confidence in using new materials to his twelve-year stint as a part of a building team in remote homelands.

Gunybi is an energetic participant in ceremonial life who is always cheerful with a robust sense of humour. He is a natural leader amongst his peers. His vigorous zest for life sees him throw himself into whatever activity he is engaged in. He is married to Lamangirra Marawili, a classificatory daughter of Djambawa Marawili.

His inclusion at the APT8 at QAGOMA in 2015 signalled an acknowledgement of his significance as a contemporary Australian artist. The installation curated by Diane Moon of nine pieces included suspended two sided reclaimed water tank steel, incised and sand covered

conveyor belt and irregular larrakitj. All major reviews singled his work out for mention from the eighty artists of 30 countries.

He was featured in The National (a survey of 48 contemporary Australian artists) at the AGNSW in 2017 when John MacDonald of the Sydney Morning Herald wrote "If any artist in this show deserves the epithet "great" .. it's Gunybi."

Other commissions at this time included Pacific Bondi permanent wall work in Sydney NSW and a collaboration with Seattle-based Native American Glass artist Preston Singletary where one of his pieces was purchased by one of the US major collectors and tech co founder. In 2017 his work in the collection of US collectors Robert Kaplan and Margaret Levi was accepted into the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (The Met) who said of the collection at that time;

"Monumental in both scale and ambition, the paintings are part of a 2016 gift that introduces an electrifying new dimension into The Met's representation of global contemporary art. ***On Country: Australian Aboriginal Art from the Robert Kaplan and Margaret Levi Gift*** explores a particular kind of movement in nature—one that shines or shimmers, as in rain or lightning—and its relationship to time and the ancestral landscape. Mastering dynamic resonance, or shimmer, and finding ways to capture it on canvas is a highly valued visual effect in Australian Aboriginal art, and one on which these Aboriginal artists have built international reputations."

In 2018 Gunybi was awarded the First Prize in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award. As it happened that year there were three other winners from Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre. The winning work was a two panel piece which was made of Alupanel incised by dremel. In October 2019 a three panel piece of the same construction was a major feature of the Tarnanthi Festival at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Mediums

Print Making

Recycled Materials

Earth pigments on Stringybark

Recycled conveyor belt

Earth pigments on Stringybark hollow pole

Earth pigment on board

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** Mali - The Reflection/My Spirit - Annandale Galleries, Sydney
- 2020** Dhanun ŋalma - Here we are - Annandale Galleries, Sydney
- 2016** Gunybi Ganambarr - Annandale Galleries, Sydney, NSW
- 2015** Asia Pacific Triennial 8 - Gunybi Ganambarr - Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane QLD
- 2012** New Work Gunybi Ganambarr - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW
- 2009** Gunybi Ganambarr - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW

Group Exhibitions

- 2023** The Shape of Time: Art and Ancestors of Oceania from The Metropolitan Museum of Art - National Museum of Qatar
- 2023** Goyurr - Journey - Salon Art Projects, Praxis Art Space
- 2023** Story Place - Sullivan+Strumpf/Cork St Gallery
- 2023** 41st Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards-Finalist - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), NT
- 2023** The Shape of Time: Art and Ancestors of Oceania from The Metropolitan Museum of Art - Museum of Art Pudong Shanghai China
- 2023** Maḍayin; Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala - Katzen Art Centre, American University, Washington DC
- 2023** Tel Aviv Biennale of Crafts and Design 2023 - Tel Aviv, Israel
- 2022** Maḍayin; Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala - Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, New Hampshire
- 2022** Melbourne Design Fair - Collectable Contemporary Design - National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 2022** Our Blue Planet: Global Visions of Water - Seattle Art Museum
- 2021** Exposure: Native Art and Political Ecology - IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Sante Fe
- 2021** Murrŋiny - a story of metal from the east - Northern Centre for Contemporary Art / Salon Art Projects, Darwin
- 2020** Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Murray Bridge Regional Gallery

2020 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Signal Point Gallery, Goolwa, SA
2019 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Bunbury Regional Art Galleries
2019 Gurrutu - Tarnanthi 2019 - Art Gallery of South Australia
2019 Mother and Child - Jam Factory, Adelaide SA
2019 Mitji- The Group - Hugo Michell Gallery Adelaide SA
2019 36th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards-Finalist - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), NT
2019 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Whitlam Institute Gallery UWS NSW
2019 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Mornington Peninsula Regional Art Gallery
2019 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Cowra Regional Art Gallery, Cowra NSW
2019 unbranded - La Trobe Art Institute
2019 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Wagga Wagga Art Gallery
2019 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Wollongong Art Gallery, Wollongong NSW
2019 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Australian Design Centre
2018 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Warwick Art Gallery, Warwick QLD
2018 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Hawkesbury Regional Gallery
2018 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Caboolture, QLD
2018 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery
2018 35th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards - Finalist - Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory
2018 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Western Plain Cultural Centre, Dubbo
2018 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
2018 Wynne Prize 2018 - Finalist - Art Gallery NSW, Sydney
2018 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Griffith Regional Art Gallery, Griffith NSW
2018 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - QUT Art Museum Brisbane
2017 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Tasmanian Museum And Art Gallery, Hobart TAS
2017 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Hervey Bay Regional Art Gallery
2017 Notions of Country Bark: Paintings & Ceremonial Poles - Annandale Galleries
2017 Earth Matters: Aboriginal artwork from the Kimberley and Arnhem Land - FORM - The Goods Shed, Perth WA
2017 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Cairns Art Gallery
2017 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Bayside Arts and Cultural Centre Gallery, Brighton Victoria.
2017 Steel, Art Design Architecture- Touring Exhibition - Pine Rivers Art Gallery, Strathpine QLD
2017 34th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards - Finalist - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
2017 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - Castlemaine State Festival, Castlemaine Market Building VIC
2017 Wynne Prize - Finalist - Art Gallery of New South Wales
2017 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Touring Exhibition - University of Newcastle Gallery, Newcastle NSW
2017 The National - Art Gallery of NSW
2016 Gapan 16 - Prints from Garma 2016 - Chapman & Bailey and Hanging Vallery, Melbourne VIC
2016 32nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award - Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Darwin NT
2016 Yirrkala Print Space Group Show - Koskela, Sydney NSW
2016 Balnhdhurr - A Lasting Impression - Charles Darwin University Gallery, Darwin NT
2015 Balnhdhurr: A Lasting Impression – Tarnanthi 2015 - Adelaide College of the Arts, Adelaide SA
2015 Revolution: New work celebrating 20 years of printmaking at Yirrkala Print Space. - Nomad Art, Darwin
2015 Buku-Larrnggay Mulka - Yirrkala Print Space Exhibition - Gapan Gallery, Garma Festival, Gulkula, Northeast Arnhem Land NT
2014 31st Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award - Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Darwin NT

- 2013** Buku-Larrnggay Mulka - Yirrkala Print Space Exhibition - Gapan Gallery, Garma Festival, Gulkula, Northeast Arnhem Land NT
- 2013** FOUND - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW
- 2012** Ancestral Modern Australian Aboriginal Art - Kaplan and Levi Collection, Seattle Art Museum USA
- 2012** Gan'yu Gallery, Darwin Festival - Darwin, NT
- 2012** UnDisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial - National Gallery of Australia, Canberra ACT
- 2011** 28th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT
- 2011** West Australian Indigenous Art Award - Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth WA
- 2010** 27th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT
- 2010** 17th Biennale of Sydney - Larrakitj, the Kerry Stokes Collection - Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney NSW
- 2010** Togart NT Contemporary Art Awards - Chan Contemporary Art Space, Darwin NT
- 2009** Larrakitj, The Kerry Stokes Collection, - Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA
- 2009** Togart NT Contemporary Art Awards - Parliament House, Darwin NT
- 2008** Xtrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Artist Competition - Museum of Modern Art, Brisbane QLD
- 2008** Important Aboriginal Art - Caruana Reid Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2008** Young Guns II - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW
- 2008** Bitpit Yirrkala Sculpture - RAFT Artspace, Darwin NT
- 2007** Bukulungthunmi - Coming Together, One Place - Raft Artspace, Darwin NT
- 2007** 24th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards - Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin NT
- 2006** Galuku Gallery - Buku-Larrnggay Mulka, Yirrkala Print Space Exhibition - Darwin Botanical Gardens, Festival of Darwin, Darwin NT
- 2006** Young Guns - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW
- 2005** National Sculpture Prize Macquarie Bank Travelling Exhibition - QCA, Brisbane QLD
- 2005** National Sculpture Prize and Exhibition - National Gallery of Australia, Canberra ACT
- 2005** 22nd National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award - Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Darwin NT
- 2004** Circle. Line. Column - Annandale Galleries, Sydney NSW

Collections

Artbank, Sydney NSW

Bega Valley Regional Gallery

Charles Darwin University Art Collection

Hood Museum, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, USA

Ian and Anne McLean Collection

Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth WA

Levi and Kaplan Collection, Seattle USA

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney NSW

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra ACT

National Museum of Australia, Canberra ACT

Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane QLD

Richard and Harriet England Collection

South Australian Museum. Adelaide SA

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA

Wayne and Vicki McGeogh Collection

Bibliography

- 2015** A still from Ex Nilalang: Balud, a 2015 video by Justin Shoulder and Bhenji Ra in collaboration with Jai Jai. Photograph: Gregory Lorenzutti

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- 2015** A still from Ex Nilalang: Balud, a 2015 video by Justin Shoulder and Bhenji Ra in collaboration with Jai Jai. Photograph: Gregory Lorenzutti
- 2013** Annandale Galleries Catalogue: Found - http://www.annandalegalleries.com.au/images/Catalogue_LR.pdf
- 2015** Asia Pacific Triennial 8 review – a colourful snapshot of the world. The Guardian
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/nov/23/asia-pacific-triennial-8-review-a-colourful-snapshot-of-the-world>
- 2012** Australian Art Collector Magazine - Issue 51- Agenda Setters - Gunybi Ganambarr, by John McDonald.
- 2009** Australian Art Collector Magazine - Issue 51- Agenda Setters - Gunybi Ganambarr, by John McDonald.
<http://www.artcollector.net.au/AgendaSettersGunyabiGanambarr>
- 2005** Catalogue for the National Sculpture Award, National Gallery of Australia
- 2010** Catalogue, 17th Biennale of Sydney - The Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival, in a Precarious Age. ISBN 978 0 64652 794 9
- 2009** Gunybi Ganambarr - catalogue Annandale Galleries exhibition October 2009. ISBN978-0-9805402-3-9
- 2015** <http://news.aboriginalartdirectory.com/2015/11/the-vernacular-at-the-asia-pacific-triennial.php>
- 2013** <http://www.abc.net.au/arts/blog/susie-burge/gunybi-ganambarr/>
- 2008** <https://www.daa.org.au/bio/gunybi-ganambarr/biography/>
- 2019** Tarnanthi 2019 catalogue, Art Gallery of South Australia

Awards

- 2018** Finalist Wynne Prize, AGNSW, Sydney
- 2018** 35th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards - Overall Winner
- 2011** Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth WA - Winner
- 2011** Myer Foundation Creative Fellowship 2011-2013
- 2008** Xstrata Emerging Indigenous Artist Award, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane QLD - Finalist and Winner
- 2005** National Sculpture Award, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra ACT - Finalist

Commissions

- 2021** Hood Museum, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, USA- etched aluminium panel for vitrine
- 2020** Column, Chancellors Building Monash University
- 2017** Pacific Bondi permanent wall work, Sydney NSW
- 2016** Djambawa Marawili & Gunybi Ganambarr collaboration with Seattle-based Native American Glass artist Preston Singletary