

# TWELVE CANOES

A **STUDYGUIDE** BY ROBERT LEWIS

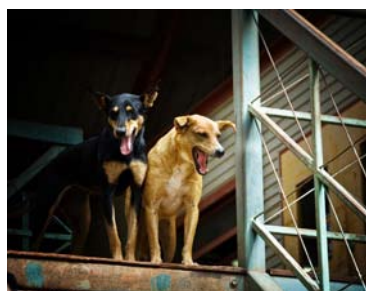


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## INTRODUCTION TO THE MENU

*We are the first people of our land.  
These are some of our stories from where we have lived so long.  
We welcome you to know about us, about our culture, this way.  
The Yolngu people of Ramingining*

**T**WELVE CANOES is a website and DVD presentation of twelve linked short audio-visual pieces, some companion short videos to these twelve stories, 120 photographs and art pieces, and music files, that together paint a compelling portrait of the people, history, culture and place of the Yolngu people whose homeland is the Arafura Swamp of north-central Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. The menu elements are:

**TWELVE CANOES:** Consisting of twelve video pieces that provide a visual portrait of the history, culture

and environment of the Yolngu people of the Arafura swamp of north-central Arnhem Land, in the Northern Territory. Once a video piece has been accessed, its companion short videos are accessible through the 'extras' link.

**GALLERY:** Consisting of three sections, *Art*, *Music*, and *People and Place*. These provide a series of artworks and music from the area, as well as a collection of fifty-nine photographs of local people, environment and activities.

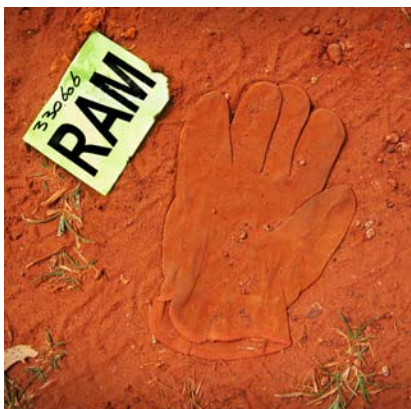
**ABOUT US:** Consisting of *Where in the World*, *Meanings*, *Study Guide* and

*The People*. These provide a link to a Google Earth image of the Ramingining area, a brief history of the area, some explanations of some common Yolngu words and terms, and an on-line version of this study guide.

**SHARE:** Consists of an invitation to the viewer to send an email to a friend or associate to 'share' in the stories/website.

This study guide provides some suggested approaches for using some of these menu elements with students.





## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

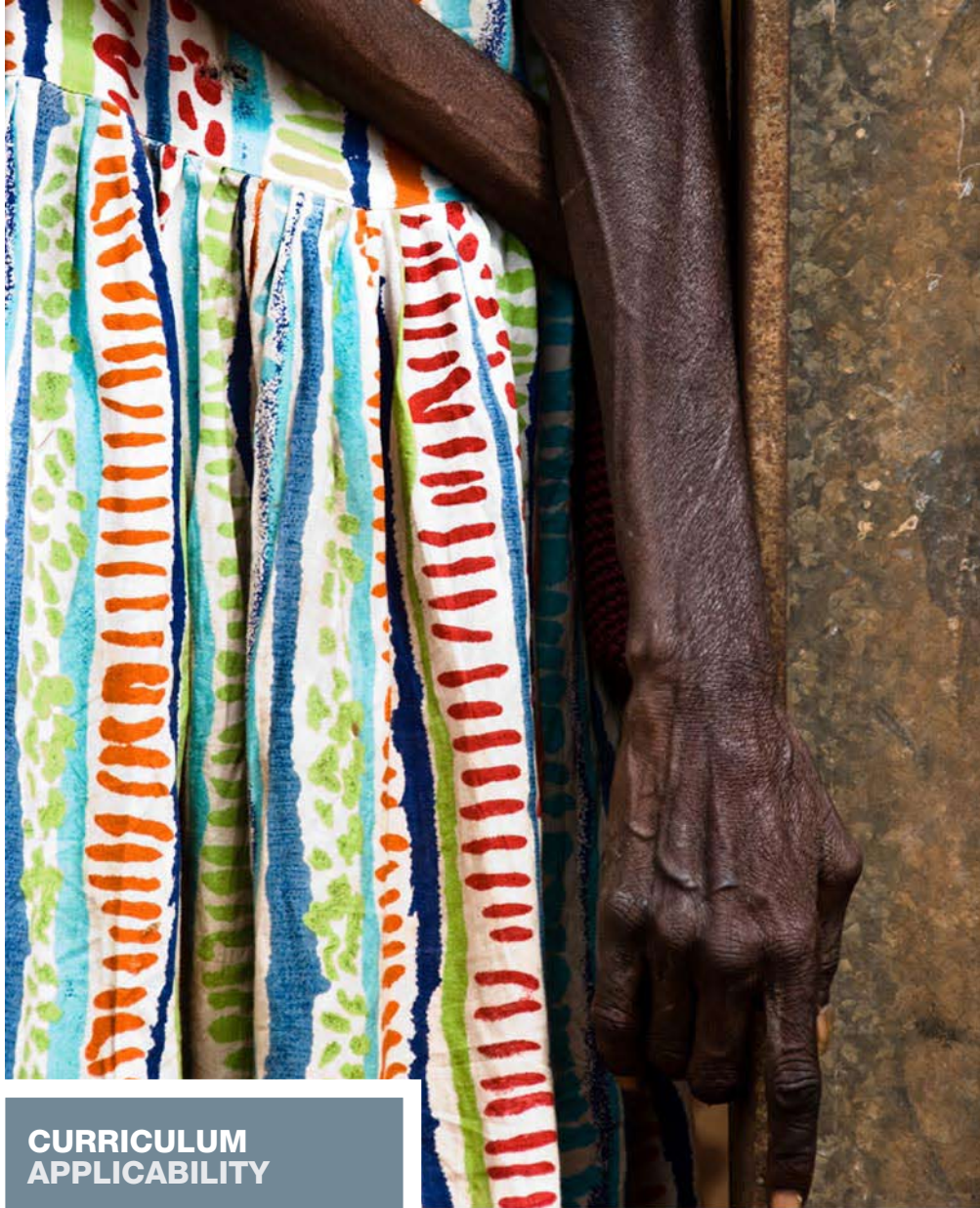
- 1 Go to the Google Earth image of the area in the *Where in the World* section of the **About Us** menu heading.
- 2 Suggest how the place might influence the nature of life for the people of this area. Take into account the environment, the weather and seasons, likely sources of food, communications, history, economy, technology, cultural elements, recreational activities.

What you have done is to create a series of hypotheses about the place, and its impacts and influences on the people who live there, the Yolngu people of Ramingining. The remaining activities in this study guide will enable you to test these hypotheses.

## BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

### The community

Ramingining is an isolated town about 500 kilometres east of Darwin in north-central Arnhem Land. It supports a population of about 1,500 people, mainly Indigenous, in the township and surrounding districts. Set up by the government in 1972 to bring together the different peoples of the region, Ramingining is consequently a mixed settlement of primarily Yolngu people. Many are close to or on their traditional tribal lands; others are some distance removed from them.



## CURRICULUM APPLICABILITY

While *Twelve Canoes* is specifically about the Yolngu people of Arnhem Land, each segment can be used as a starting point to help students develop ideas and hypotheses about aspects of all Indigenous people's history in Australia.

Ideas and themes raised in the segments (or 'canoes' of ideas) can also be used in a variety of other subject areas at middle-senior secondary levels, including:

- Geography
- Resources
- Management
- Art
- Society and Environment / HSIE / SOSE
- English
- Music
- Indigenous Studies.



Close to Ramingining is the Arafura Swamp, a World Heritage-listed tract of freshwater wetlands that extends to 130,000 hectares during the wet season. The Swamp is central to the lives of most of the people, historically, culturally and spiritually.

The community is one of contrasts. Most people know six or seven lan-





guages, but English is spoken only out of necessity, and often in rudimentary fashion. Hunting, fishing and gathering are still practised, in both traditional and non-traditional ways, but at the same time people turn to the internet to do their banking.

Conventional work is scarce. Increasingly there is engagement with the arts and craft, which in turn helps keep some of the traditions alive.

## History of the project

In 2003 filmmaker Rolf de Heer was collaborating with the Indigenous Yolngu people of Ramingining to devise a storyline for the film *Ten Canoes* (Rolf de Heer and Peter Djigirr, 2006). A lot of material, greatly varied subject

matter, was brought in for discussion, with the individual Yolngu contributors each very keen to have their ideas incorporated, and that the film in some way should reflect the entirety of their lives, culture and history.

There was soon general recognition that no film could achieve all that, and the idea of a website was born. Initially the site was going to be a non-specifically focussed, non-encyclopaedic site wherein disparate pieces were to be connected in a lattice-like framework, to better reflect the Indigenous worldview of the connectedness of everything.

But the very positive response from so many different countries to the feature film *Ten Canoes* had had a strong

impact on both the community and their desire to showcase their art and culture to the world. The proposed lattice format, intended to allow users to meander through the site, was superseded by a plan to use the emotional capabilities of cinema to have audiences as individuals connect with the material in a cinema-like way on their computer screen.

## The project

Twelve key subjects were decided upon. Each subject was to deal with a particular key aspect of Yolngu culture, place, or history, and each of these sections on the website would be headlined by an audio-visual 'tone poem'. Each tone poem would be an independent module incorporat-





ing works of art, video material, stills, music and sound. Each was to be of about five minutes duration and would be supported on the website by other available material.

The modules, poetic in nature with strong, sometimes ethereal imagery, are generally accompanied by words from different Ramingining storytellers.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE SITE

### Twelve Canoes

This section of the menu provides twelve video pieces on aspects of the history, environment and culture:

**Creation** tells of when the people of the area came into being. As there are many creation stories, this is the story of Dog Dreaming and his travels from the swamp to the sea.

**Our Ancestors** describes the way the Yolngu used to live, in the old times, before the arrival of any visitors from the outside world, and how this society used to operate.

**The Macassans** from the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, were the first who



came from another place. Long before the coming of the white man, the Macassans were trading partners of the Yolngu, who were introduced to cloth, metal, tobacco and seafaring skills.

**First White Men** tells of the various wars, ultimately won at great cost to them, fought by the Yolngu to protect their lands and people from the encroachment by white man, including the Americans who tried ranching the land.

**ThomsonTime** speaks of Dr Donald Thomson, the anthropologist who came to solve the turmoil in Arnhem Land in the 1930s. Thomson learnt the language of, lived with, studied and befriended the people and was a great advocate for them to government.



**The Swamp** describes the World Heritage-listed Arafura wetlands just south of Ramingining. The swamp and its people have a historical, cultural, economic and spiritual relationship which is now threatened by a number of factors.

**Plants and Animals** is about the diversity of the flora and fauna of the Arafura wetlands and surrounding areas, and their continuing but fragile existence in a changing world.

**Seasons** is about how the blooming of a flower can tell you the sharks are being born in the sea; it is about the interactive description of the changing life cycles that punctuate the weather patterns of the Yolngu year.

**Kinship** highlights the complexity and historical importance of family structure and ancestral relationships. The expression of kinship today has evolved, but its importance and complexity remain.

**Ceremony** is about the rites and rituals that describe aspects of the Yolngu inner life, the ceremonies that bind the community together and keep the people and their traditions strong.

**Language** tells the story of how the different languages were given to the different clans of people of the region and describes the relationship of the clan groups and the people as a whole to their languages.

**Nowadays** captures a slice of the contemporary way of life for the Yolngu in the township of Ramingining.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 1. Creation

*Creation* tells of when the people of the area came into being. As there are many creation stories, this is the story of Dog Dreaming and his travels from the swamp to the sea.

- 1 This story is part of the Dreaming. Describe what happens or what we are told.
- 2 Why do civilizations create stories about origins?
- 3 How are they passed on?
- 4 What is their purpose?
- 5 What other roles do they play in a society?
- 6 What happens to the culture if they are lost?
- 7 Scientific and secular knowledge challenge the literal meaning of these stories. Are they still important and worth keeping?
- 8 How does the film tell the story? Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 9 This episode is specific to a certain sub-clan of the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 5 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.



### DOG DREAMING

{Johnny Pascoe (Buniyira). Earth pigments on bark. 104 x 57 cm}

*Long, long story. This is the short one of the story.*

*Back in the Creation time, warnyu the flying foxes lived like men, in a cave.*

*The dog was searching round for a place to live in. He heard the flying fox screaming. The dog went into the cave and frightened all the flying foxes away.*

*The dog travelled, all over. He met a female dog and they travelled together. They could smell cooking from far*

*away. They followed the cooking smell and went into the sea to follow it. They live together in the sea. When a boat comes from anywhere, they chase the boat.*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal

figures

- the use of symbols (the numerous small flower-like dot arrangements, for example, represent flying fox droppings).





## 2. Our Ancestors

*Our Ancestors* describes the way the Yolngu used to live, in the old times, before the arrival of any visitors from the outside world, and how this society used to operate.

- List the knowledge we are given in this segment about Indigenous people before European invasion and:
  - behaviour
  - beliefs
  - social relations
  - environmental sustainability
  - use of land and water
  - attitudes to the environment
  - marking of time
  - law
  - ceremony.
- Put together, these all constitute 'culture', the way of life of the people. Living culture changes, it is not static. Suggest any elements of traditional culture that might be subject to change today, and some that might continue to be important in their old form.
- Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.

- This episode is specific to the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

### GANALBINGU CEREMONY STORY

{Charlie Djurritjini. Earth pigments on canvas. 120 x 260 cm}

*Big story! All the same story, just different parts.*

*Mosquito huts are the camp. First thing for the Dupun ceremony, hollow log is made. Then they doing the action part, like making dilly bags.*

*They used to put the bones in the dilly bag first, singing and dancing at the same time. Two different style of dilly bag, one from man, one from woman. They know their own style. The old men still know for that style.*

*In sacred place they make another two now, gumang [magpie goose] and waterlily totems ... paperbark and string. You can see them in the painting with wings hanging. Three dilly bags you can see, with bones in*

*them. Everything taken to open area, away from sacred area. First went dupun [hollow log] with bones already in, then gumang and waterlily. Dancing going on now, singer, yidaki [didgeridu] player. Then they finish him up that hollow log ceremony in the public place. Some people stay camping with that hollow log for maybe two, three or four years, even longer. Until it falls down, that hollow log.*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 3. The Macassans

*The Macassans* from the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, were the first who came from another place. Long before the coming of the white man, the Macassans were trading partners of the Yolngu, who were introduced to cloth, metal, tobacco and seafaring skills.

- 1 Describe the nature of relations between the Macassans (Indonesians) and the Yolngu.
- 2 What benefits did each gain from the trade?
- 3 What harm was caused?
- 4 How did this contact bring change?
- 5 Why was each group able to accommodate the other?
- 6 How can we see elements of this contact incorporated into traditional life?
- 7 Later contact with Europeans would not be so peaceful. Suggest why not. You can test your ideas further in the next segment.
- 8 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 9 This episode is specific to the coastal Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 10 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.



#### MACASSAN STORY

{Selina Galalanga. Earth pigments on canvas}

*The Macassans came and they wanted the trepang [sea slug] that lived in the wet sand. The trepang are in the middle section of the painting. The Macassans traded with all Yolngu people. They gave knives, wine, rice, tobacco and pipes, and they built their houses on Yolngu land.*

*The boat in the painting is called*

*garrurru or prahu. The boats had a storage area for all the things they brought. You can see this storage area in the striped box. The lines coming off the bottom of the boat is where the Macassans used to hang smaller boats off the side.*

Discuss the way the artist has rep-

resented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 4. First White Men

*First White Men* tells of the various wars, ultimately won at great cost to them, fought by the Yolngu to protect their lands and people from the encroachment by white man, including the Americans who tried ranching the land.

- 1 Set out the sequence of contacts that we learn from this segment.
- 2 Why did the Europeans behave in the way they did?
- 3 The Yolngu explanation is that 'they had no Law'. What does this mean? Do you think it is an accurate description?
- 4 Who were the Native Police?
- 5 Describe the role they played in the invasion of the Yolngu territory.
- 6 Why do you think they co-operated with the whites, the 'Balanda', in this invasion?
- 7 How did the Yolngu adapt some elements of the white culture and technology into their own?
- 8 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 9 This episode is specific to the Yolngu of the Arafura Swamp region, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 10 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### COMING OF THE WHITE MAN

{Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 172 x 112 cm}

*In those days no one understood each other. The Balanda did not understand the stories of the swamp. This painting is about in those days.*

*It happened not just in Murrwangi, it happened everywhere, but this painting is a real story of what happened in Murrwangi, the killing by the Balanda of the Aboriginal people ... but it hap-*



*pened everywhere, everywhere the Balanda did that.*

*My people fought too, my people killing bullocky, breaking in and stealing things, and the Balanda got very upset, they couldn't understand. But our people said, 'Don't take our land.'*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 5. ThomsonTime

*ThomsonTime* speaks of Dr Donald Thomson, the anthropologist who came to solve the turmoil in Arnhem Land in the 1930s. Thomson learnt language, lived with, studied and befriended the people and was a great advocate for them to government.

- 1 Why is Donald Thomson such an important figure?
- 2 Compare his behaviour and attitudes with earlier whites.
- 3 What strategies did he implement to enable successful co-operation with the local people?
- 4 Cultural meeting is often a case of give and take. What did each give, and what did each take from this meeting of cultures?
- 5 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 6 This episode is specific to the Yolngu of central and east Arnhem Land, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 10 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.



#### THOMSON

{Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 147 x 102 cm}

*In those days they're doing everything the right way, like cutting and making shelters. Same thing like we are building a house nowadays, they in the old times had to study how to do it and learn.*

*Then Thomson came, first Balanda man who came to understand us, and they took him to the swamp. 'Come, sit with us, we show you round'. They looked after each other those days. Then Thomson learnt how to do all those things that we learnt before and he photographed it.*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 6. The Swamp

*The Swamp* describes the World Heritage-listed Arafura wetlands just south of Ramingining. The swamp and its people have a historical, cultural, economic and spiritual relationship which is now threatened by a number of factors.

- 1 The swamp is a central place to the lives of the Yolngu. Create a diagram or mind map like in **Item 1** that shows how the swamp is central to all aspects of Yolngu life. Add a brief explanation under each heading. You may find other aspects to add to the diagram. Draw connecting lines between the swamp and each of the different aspects to show the swamp's centrality to all aspects of life.
- 2 A key challenge to traditional culture is the need to adapt to modern life while maintaining the core of traditional culture. Discuss how the centrality of the swamp to Yolngu life is under challenge today.
- 3 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 4 This episode is specific to the Yolngu of the Arafura Swamp region, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 5 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### ARAFURA SWAMP

{Charlie Nunumawuy. Earth pigments on canvas. 115 x 90 cm}

*When you go to the swamp, it's all a Yirritja area. When you look around the swamp you see crocodiles and magpie geese and turtles, all Yirritja. The animals in the painting are all Yirritja, and the plants are all Yirritja, and the fish are all Yirritja.*



RELATIONS WITH  
OTHER PEOPLE

LAW

BELIEFS

SOCIAL RELATIONS

ARAFURA  
SWAMP

FOOD

STORIES

TECHNOLOGY

CEREMONIES

#### ITEM 1

*I created this story to be a Yirritja story, a vision of what is in my mother's country, that I'm responsible for.*

Note: *Yirritja* is one of the two moieties (halves) of the kinship system, the other being *Dhua*. So everything is classified as being either *Yirritja* or *Dhua*, including people. *Yirritja* people thus have a closer affinity to *Yirritja* objects and places, as do *Dhua* peo-

ple with *Dhua* objects and places.

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 7. Plants and Animals

*Plants and Animals* is about the diversity of the flora and fauna of the Arafura wetlands and surrounding areas, and their continuing but fragile existence in a changing world.

- 1 Watch and listen, and create a list of words to describe the nature of the environment.
- 2 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 3 This episode is specific to the Yolngu of the region, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about and understand the different types of environment that exist in different parts of Australia and that have influenced Indigenous life in the past?
- 4 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### 4 PANELS: TORTOISE; FISH; SNAKE; MAGPIE GEESE

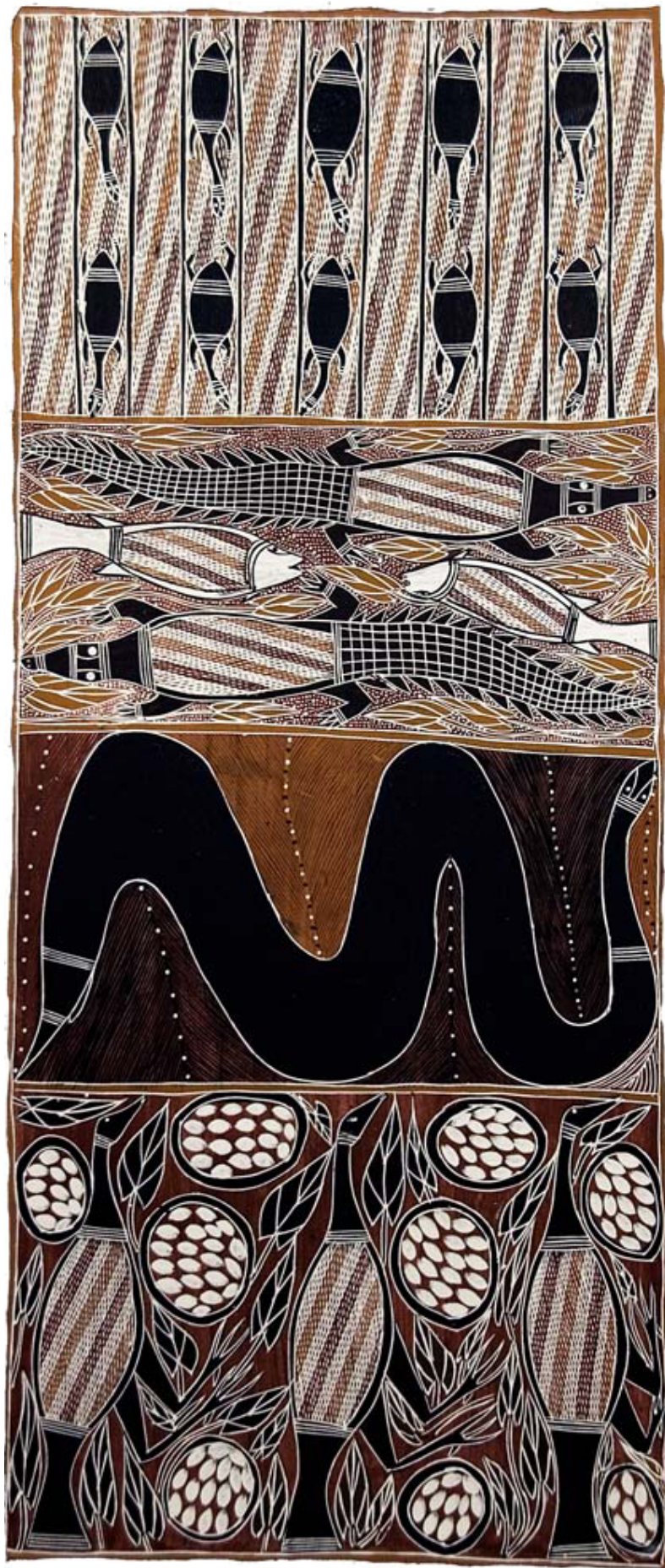
{Roy Bumyila. Earth pigments on canvas}

*This is not a sacred story. That first panel, all the people go camping at the swamp and collecting eggs. They hit the water, "Doom doom! Doom doom!" to let them know they're coming.*

*That second panel rainbow snake, it makes the rain come and the rainbow so you can see the swamp all pretty.*

*The crocodiles are hunting for fish, not for people. When we have someone die, we dance that one, the baru (crocodile) for the hollow log ceremony. Maybe also even the gumang (magpie goose) but not the rainbow snake.*

*The turtles in the fourth panel we dance for the body, to clear the spirits out of it. We hit ourselves with burning bushes, then we shower and get red ochre and rub it on ourselves so the spirits can't follow us.*



Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 8. Seasons

*Seasons* is about how the blooming of a flower can tell you the sharks are being born in the sea; it is about the interactive description of the changing life cycles that punctuate the weather patterns of the Yolngu year.

One feature of Arnhem Land life is fire. Fire is a key traditional Indigenous management tool used in the area.

The attitude of Indigenous management about the use of fire can be seen in this statement by Bill Neidjie, an Indigenous custodian of the Kakadu area:

*This earth ...  
I never damage,  
I look after.  
Fire is nothing,  
just clean up.  
When you burn,  
new grass coming up.  
That mean good animal soon ...  
Might be goose, long-neck turtle,  
goanna, possum.  
Burn him off ...  
new grass coming up,  
new life all over.*

Bill Neidjie, Stephen Davis and Allan Fox, *Kakadu Man*, Mybrood P/L, Sydney, 1985, p.35.

- 1 What effects does fire have on this environment?
- 2 Why would Indigenous people in the area want to encourage this?
- 3 Does this action seem controlled or random? Explain why.

Look at the following information on the nature and impact of fire in the savannah area of northern Australia.

**See Item 2.**

- 4 Create a table that summarizes the impacts, benefits and dangers of fire in the area for each of the



**Item 2:** Tropical savannah covers twenty-five per cent of the Australian landmass.  
<http://savanna.ntu.edu.au/centre/>

The savannah is the vegetation and area that burns most frequently. There are different types of fires, depending on the timing of the fire. Most fires are started by lightning strikes. Early dry-season fires tend to be low-intensity, as the fuel still contains moisture from the preceding wet season; later dry-season fires can be high-intensity, as the fuel has dried out. The intensity of the fire also depends on how long it has been since the last fire: frequent fires thin out the fuel available; long gaps between fires leads to a build-up of fuel, and consequently much fiercer fires.

#### AIR

In a typical year tropical savannah burning releases about eighty million tonnes of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere. This compares with about seventy million tonnes from Australian vehicles and industry each year. However, the following growing season takes up about the same amount each year in the savannah.

#### SOIL

Each fire reduces the nitrogen content of the soil, impoverishing it.

#### WATER

The effects of savannah burning on streams can be dramatic. It creates erosion, and consequently a degraded water quality. Some waterborne vegetation benefits from this infusion of nutrients in the water.

#### ANIMALS

The major effect of fires on animals in the area is indirect – it changes the nature of the habitat and food supplies, and creates the risk of predation due to loss of cover. Some animals become winners, with easier prey available, and others become losers, as they turn into easy targets. Small mammals such as

bandicoots are very vulnerable to fire, as they cannot escape. Larger species such as dingoes easily outrun it, and can move into unburnt areas. Tree-dwelling species such as possums are especially vulnerable to late season high-intensity fires. There is no one type of fire that benefits all species.

#### BIRDS

Many take advantage of fire. Flocks of black kites gather at fire fronts, eating insects and other small animals flushed out by the flames. After fire, scavenging birds such as hawks and kookaburras feed on dead and injured animals, and on exposed seeds and nuts, and a few weeks later on insects attracted to new growth. Birds such as Partridge Pigeons and finches and honeyeaters, who often nest on the ground or very low in trees, lose habitat.

#### REPTILES

Predatory and scavenging reptiles such as snakes and goannas 'clean up' after fires.

#### INSECTS

Fires have little overall effect on them, regardless of the type of fire.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

seven aspects of the environment listed above. **See Item 3.**

There are different uses of the area that includes Arnhem Land – by Indigenous people, cattle graziers, tourist companies and conservationists.

People who use the area have different ideas about how it should be managed.

Management is about control. But it is also about choices. So, do we manage bushfires for the benefit of people and property, in which case the environment will change; or do we manage it for the environment, which means that people have to change the way they live?

Here are some ideas to help you consider that issue.

- Aboriginal people have been in Australia for perhaps 60,000 years. For all that time they have had to live with fire.
- We do not know exactly how Aboriginal people have used fire

over time in different places. However, we do know that Indigenous people used it for thousands of years for warmth, hunting, communication, ceremonies, cooking, warfare, encouraging regrowth and providing a fire-safe environment. Different patterns were used in different places and probably at different times.

- Most historians describe Aboriginal use of fire as 'firestick farming' – the deliberate use of fire to control the nature of an environment. This seems usually to have been to create a patchwork of different stages of regrowth in different areas.

5 What would be the advantages of having different stages of growth in different areas?

6 What knowledge or expertise would be required for this to be achieved?

When Europeans invaded Australia they disrupted these traditional burning practices. Except in areas where Europeans cleared the land for crops and animal grazing, this led to the creation of a denser bush, a different environment.

7 Why would Europeans have wanted different fire regimes to those of the Aboriginal people?

8 What impact would the creation of denser bush have had on bushfires?

Traditional Aboriginal management techniques are still used in parts of northern Australia today. When undertaken under Indigenous custodianship, burning today is concentrated in non-pastoral, relatively high-rainfall regions. Traditionally, fires are set in the early- to mid-dry season, so that frequent low-impact burning keeps fuel loads low – the 'clean up burning' that Bill Neidjie refers to in his words.

Where traditional burning in the north has been disrupted by European settlement the situation is different. Where burning was largely controlled in the past, today it is caused by lightning strikes. There is a trend towards more frequent and larger, hotter fires. The increase of monsoon rains creates more vegetation, which in turn fuels larger fires. This is seemingly tied to climate change: four of the ten highest annual rainfalls for the region have been recorded in the last ten years. As much as half the area is currently burnt every year, or two years.

These newer fire patterns differ from traditional Aboriginal burning, where small patches were burned as people moved through the country, creating

ASPECT	IMPACT	BENEFITS	DANGERS



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

smaller and less intense fires. This tended to create a mosaic or patch-work, rather than a single environment.

Studies in the area concluded that too frequent burning had the worst impact on the ecosystem. For optimum maintenance of current biodiversity and ecosystems the need was for burning every three to five years.

A problem is that there are now several different sets of demands on the environment: the demand of some Aboriginal people to maintain their traditional practices; the demands of many conservationists to reduce the impact of artificial management processes; the demands of pastoralists for the maintenance of an environment that suits their grazing animals, rather than the natural environment; and the demands of tourists for a smoke-free, unburned, 'undestroyed' environment.

- 9 Explain how different expectations might affect the way the area is managed today.
- 10 Imagine a conversation between people with competing interests in the area. List the main points that each would make.
11. Can all competing ideas and interests be accommodated? Or must priorities be set? And if so, what are the priorities you would give for the area? Discuss your ideas.
12. Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
13. This episode is specific to the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
14. Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

### LUNGGURMA

{Dorothy Djukulul. Earth pigments on canvas. 89 x 60 cm}



*North-East Wind, warrpum lunggurma clouds [all of them are north-east wind clouds]. Dots are little bit rain, small rain. Yaka yindi waltjan [not big rain]. Only small. No lightning. This painting come from my mari [mother's mother's] country. The place is near Yuruwi [Milingimbi, an island] but it is in the sea, in the salt water. There is story for ceremony in this painting ... cross part is painted on chest in dhapi [initiation] ceremony, in marradjirri [exchange] ceremony. Tri-angle part painted down arms. These ceremonies any time, but this wind*

*only blows in worlamirri, season of the coming of first rains. Biyangu bula dhawurr [no more story].*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 9. Kinship

*Kinship* highlights the complexity and historical importance of family structure and ancestral relationships. The expression of kinship today has evolved, but its importance and complexity remain.

Kinship is a way of behaving towards others. Kinship rules have developed over thousands of years.

- 1 What determines your ties to people in your community?
- 2 How are these similar to and different from those of the Yolngu people?
- 3 What advantages might the strict Yolngu ties have for that society?
- 4 What disadvantages might they have?
- 5 The ties have developed to suit a particular culture. If the culture is changing, how does this challenge the traditional kinship ties that are part of that culture?
- 6 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 7 This episode is specific to the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 8 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### YIRRALKA

{Bobby Bunungurr. Earth pigments on bark. 55 cm diameter}

*I made this painting round like clan waterhole where the spirits are before we are born and after we die. This is a painting about history and breaking the kinship law.*

*This is true story from Ramingining from long time ago. A man and a woman got wrong way married, that man stole that woman from another tribe. So he had to get speared and*



*there was a big war between the tribes.*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 10. Ceremony

*Ceremony* is about the rites and rituals that describe aspects of the Yolngu inner life, the ceremonies that bind the community together and keep the people and their traditions strong.

- 1 How do we see ceremonies helping keep traditional culture alive?
- 2 What other benefits might ceremonies have for a society?
- 3 What ceremonies do you observe today? Consider:
  - religious
  - family
  - formal
  - informal ones.
- 4 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 5 This episode is specific to the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 6 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### HOLLOW LOG STORY

{Jimmy Djelminy. Earth pigments on canvas. 140 x 75 cm}

*This painting is the story of a dead man and his bones.*

*There is a hollow log in the middle of this painting, for the dead man's bones. People in the ceremony have spears, didgeridus, clapsticks and woomera. You can see them.*

*There are four dilly bags for carrying the dead person's bones. The gumang [magpie goose] sculpture is only allowed for dancing with the dupan [hollow log], in the public place. It's a secret one that gumang, but my father and his brothers paint it.*



Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



## EXPLORING THE TWELVE SEGMENTS

### 11. Language

*Language* tells the story of how the different languages were given to the different clans of people of the region and describes the relationship of the clan groups and the people as a whole to their languages.

- 1 What is the importance of language in culture?
- 2 How can language enrich a culture?
- 3 How can an emphasis on traditional language over English harm a society today?
- 4 Identify the various elements used in this 'tone poem'.
- 5 This episode is specific to the Yolngu, but it can also help us understand about Indigenous life in general. How does this episode help you know about, understand and empathize with elements of Indigenous life in the past?
- 6 Look at the artwork that is used to introduce this segment.

#### DJIRRIDIDI BODY DESIGN

{Richard Birrinbirrin. Earth pigments on canvas}

*Two creation beings, the Djunkawo, came out of the water. They had the three-colour body design on them. They started naming the areas of my land, talking the Garrawarra language. Then they ate the Longbum Shell. They started talking different language, Munarnngo language. The body design in four colours just started coming out on their bodies, just like that. That's what this painting represents.*

Discuss the way the artist has represented the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.



### 12. Nowadays

*Nowadays* captures a slice of the contemporary way of life for the Yolngu in the township of Ramingining.

- 1 List the activities that are part of Ramingining today.
- 2 How would you say that the people of Ramingining are living in two cultures, two worlds?
- 3 Identify the various elements used

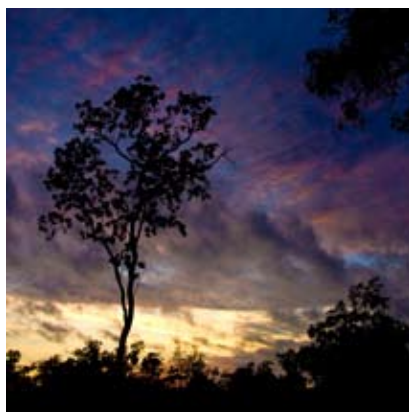
in this 'tone poem'.

- 4 There is no artwork used to introduce this segment.

Discuss the way an artist might represent the topic or theme or key idea in his or her art. Consider such elements as:

- the use of patterns and colours
- the style of the work
- the use of human or animal figures
- the use of symbols.





## Gallery

This section of the menu provides examples of Yolngu art and music, and a set of modern photographs of aspects of the place and people.

### Art

- 1 Select a few of the artworks for each individual or group in the class to investigate. This can be done by enlarging the work on the screen, or by capturing it and printing the image.
- 2 Investigate each artwork, focusing on:
  - First impressions
  - Colours, shapes
  - Signs, people, animals

- 3 Decide what you think this artwork is about, and its meaning.
- 4 Now click on the story and test your ideas against that of the artist.
- 5 What do you now decide are its messages or meanings? Start your explanation with the words: 'This artwork helps me understand that ...'.
- 6 After the chosen pieces have been presented, discuss what the artworks help you understand about the:
  - culture

- environment
- people
- history
- economy
- values and attitudes of the Yolngu people at Ramalinging.

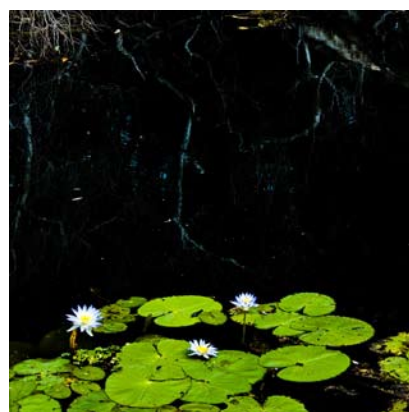
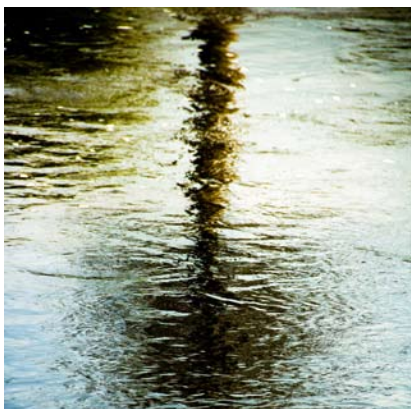
## INFORMATION ON THE ARTISTS

### Johnny Pascoe (Bunyirra)

Johnny is the son of the late George Milpururru, probably Ramalinging's most famous artist to date. He lives and paints at Wulkubimirri Outstation, about a kilometre out of Ramalinging.

Johnny's principal imagery is of flying foxes (*warmyu*), crocodiles (*baru*) and





long-necked tortoises (*minhala*). These are all major totems of the Ganalbingu people.

As a dancer, Johnny has travelled with the David Gulpilil dance group. He is one of the more political and influential participants in a newer, emerging generation of Ramingining artists.

### Charlie Djurritjini

*My father, and my elder brother George Milpururru, taught me to paint. I'd watch George, then my father.*

*I like painting ... paint for one year, then rest, maybe the next year I paint.*

*To paint, I think for myself. My father already told me what to paint, see, like my country ... I paint what I was taught by my father.*

*I only paint from (about) one place, Matika ... that's my country. These pictures come from my head. I think about my culture.*

### Selina Galalanga

*I'm Gumadtj, from Boaka Outstation near Yirkalla, my grandfather's land, my father's land, my land. I started painting when I was seventeen ... I learnt from my mother Elizabeth Gurwiwi and my father Charlie Matjui, a Gumadtj people leader.*

*My father said to me, 'I'm getting blind, I can't see what you're painting'. I said to him, 'Are you sure? Because what I'm painting is what you taught me to paint'. He taught me the Macassan stories. 'Look at this, is it right?' 'Yes it's right, you can paint it anytime'.*

*My brother Peter Daitching taught me how to paint when I'm in other communities, like Ramingining. I'm still waiting to be in an exhibition.*

### Bobby Bununggurr

Bobby is something of the Renaissance man of Ramingining. He's an important traditional songman, a significant artist and a well-travelled

contemporary musician.

More traditional with his art and highly collected in the seventies and early eighties, Bobby then pursued his musical career for a time.

Upon his return to art, Bobby developed his own style, which attracted admirers and critics alike. In his more recent paintings, Bobby reveals the Ganalbingu totems in a new and exciting way.

### Charlie Nunumawuy

Nunumawuy is a relatively young and promising artist. Taught by his father Dick Yambal Dhurrunga, he mostly paints with the fine traditional technique endemic to the Liyagalawumirr clan.

Charlie is also an accomplished dancer and has performed traditional dances with other members of the Ramingining Dance Troupe. His paintings have been exhibited around Australia and in the Netherlands, Italy and the United States.



## Roy Burnyila

Born in the bush on the mainland opposite the island of Milingimbi, Burnyila is a prolific painter of the subject matter of his group, the Ganalbingu people of the Arafura Swamp. His style is distinctive in his uses of light yellow and whites offset by the black he puts in his cross-hatching.

Roy contributed several poles to the famous *The Aboriginal Memorial* for the 1988 Biennale of Sydney and now on permanent display at the National Gallery of Australia. He was one of three artists who travelled to Canberra to sing and consecrate *The Aboriginal Memorial* into place.

Roy has been widely exhibited for over twenty-five years, in every major city in Australia and in many in other parts of the world ... Rotterdam, Brussels, Florence, Lausanne, Madrid and frequently in New York.

## Dorothy Djukulul

Born at Murwangi, and sister to George Milpururru, Dorothy Djukulul has a special place in the Aboriginal art of the region in that she has been taught to paint designs normally taboo to women, although what she may know of the designs is limited.

Within her caveat on the use of these designs and spiritual stories, Dorothy has developed her own stamp that distinguishes her among both men and women painters. Her 'hand' and style are admired by Balanda and Yolngu alike.

Her style has an inner strength which underlies the power of her character, enabling Dorothy to continue painting despite the social pressure against it.

## Jimmy Djelminy

Artist and Songman, the late Jimmy Djelminy is another from that powerful family of influential Ganalbingu artists that include George Milpururru, Charlie Djurritjini and Dorothy Djukulul.



Jimmy was responsible for the naming of Ramingining's Bula'bula Arts Centre (the name refers to the tongue of the Creator Kangaroo who travelled across the swamp from east to west and then over to Milingimbi).

He is one of the artists who contributed to *The Aboriginal Memorial*, permanently housed in Canberra's National Gallery, and described by James Mollison as 'one of the greatest works of art ever to have been made in this country'.

## Richard Birrinbirrin

Birrinbirrin paints, makes sand sculptures for ceremony and sings the clan songs for his mother's country.

*I started painting in the 1980s. Right, this is your chance for painting [my father said]. When Malangi painted he told the stories ... When I go [he said], you can do painting from your own country and stories. Don't paint other people's ... you got to get permission from the elders.*

Birrinbirrin is a trained health worker, was Chairman of Bula'bula Arts for three years and on the Executive of ANKAAA (Association of Northern Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists)

## PEOPLE AND PLACE

The photographs provide an alternative approach to the art activities, or to the Introductory Activity, suggested on page 4 of this study guide.

- 1 Select a few of the photographs for each individual or group in the class to investigate. This can be done by enlarging the work on the screen, or by capturing it and printing the image.
- 2 Investigate each photograph, focusing on:
  - the location of the scene: ('The setting is ...')
  - a description or activity shown – the key features and elements: ('This piece shows ...').
- 3 Decide what you think this photograph helps you understand about the:
  - culture
  - environment
  - people
  - history
  - economy
  - values and attitudes
  - activities of the Yolngu people at Ramingining.
- 4 Discuss what you think the best and worst aspects of life might be for the people of this place.



INFORMATION ON THE ART	
<b>Karr ga Gunungurr (Spiders and Black-Headed Pythons)</b> Shirley Banalanydju. Earth pigments on canvas. 174 x 92 cm	<i>The spiders and black-headed pythons live together at Moitjwakangalal. My father taught me to paint this one. These are my grandfather's totems, that's why I paint them.</i>
<b>Gunungurr and Grass (Pythons and Grass)</b> Shirley Banalanydju. Earth pigments on canvas. 104 x 53 cm	<i>The pythons sometimes sleep in the grass near Moitjwakangalal and sometimes they lay their eggs in the grass, and cover the eggs with the grass.</i>
<b>Magpie Geese</b> Graham Milmarupuy. Earth pigments on canvas. 108 x 80 cm	<i>Gumang hunting for waterlily to feed themselves, and looking for raki to eat and grass to make their nest so they can lay their eggs. The geese are talking every day, and looking for food to feed their kids. That part of swamp country, Mululumurr and Garriwinga, my country.</i>
<b>Gumang (Magpie Geese)</b> Billy Wilanydjangu. Earth pigments on Belgian linen. 42 x 33 cm	<i>You can see that eggs and the magpie [goose] nest in the wet season time. The grass grows. More rain comes. The grass grows as high as your thigh, then they make the nest, ready for all the eggs. Then people want to go look for eggs by canoes – they get the eggs from four or five different nests and fill up the different sections of the canoe with them. Then they go home, pushing with long sticks. People get painted up like geese, and dance the goose dance, and then the eggs can be given to the young girls first time. After that the young girls can have eggs any time.</i>
<b>Lunggurrma</b> Gladys Womati. Earth pigments on canvas. 98 x 135 cm	<i>Lunggurrma is the north wind. The design is used for body painting too, when they pass away, and initiation, and ceremony poles. It is Yirritja design. We use this design, we don't want to take other people's designs.</i>
<b>Karr (Spider)</b> Gladys Womati. Earth pigments on canvas. 100 x 85 cm	<i>Same way we do that painting ... horizontal and vertical bands are the different winds: north; east; south; west. The diagonal bands are the waterholes. In between are the spiderwebs. When the spider makes a web, it's the same: north; east; south; west. This is an 'outside' painting, anyone can know about it.</i>
<b>Flying Foxes</b> Gladys Womati. Earth pigments on canvas. 120 x 80 cm	<i>My father and my grandfather used to paint flying foxes. The design of the painting is from my homeland called Ngaliyindi. It's a Yirritja totem. It was originally a design that was used to paint on the bodies of certain deceased people and also on bark paintings, and also painted on the bodies of some young men to be initiated.</i>
<b>Moitjwakangalal</b> George Jnr Pascoe. Earth pigments on canvas. 128 x 118 cm	<i>Moitjwakangalal is an important place for me but it's not right to tell you why. The 'pole' in the centre is the stone place of Moitjwakangalal. The hatched part across the middle is the river. See the Yolngu, and their spears, and the spears in the spear bag. The rest of this story is not right for me to tell you ...</i>
<b>Gunungurr (Black Headed Python)</b> George Jnr Pascoe. Earth pigments on canvas. 51 x 18 cm	<i>This Gunungurr is my dreaming ... and the place is Moitjwakangalal. I just paint it because I want to paint it. My father was teaching me and I wanted to do it as soon as possible. The long grass is at the sides, and the python is crawling in it. This painting means a lot to me.</i>
<b>Gwaynan and Yalman (Turtles and Waterlily)</b> Dorothy Djukulul. Earth pigments on bark. 97 x 74 cm	<i>Turtle is making camp in the mud among the waterlilies. Dots are the mud ... it is dry of water. This is where they lay down all their eggs, all around the place, in the mud. They put grass on top of the eggs.</i>
<b>Gwaynan (Turtles)</b> Dorothy Djukulul. Earth pigments on bark. 94 x 51 cm	<i>This one same story as that other one [Turtles and Waterlily], but I painted this one first. Turtles in the mud, waterlilies around. No water, just mud ... dots are the mud. Turtle lays eggs all around the place and put grass on top of the eggs for the baby turtles coming.</i>
<b>Warrnyu (Flying Fox)</b> Dorothy Djukulul. Earth pigments on bark. 108 x 53 cm	<i>This one my dreaming. This country, mine and father, grandpa and my grandfather, brother Garraypingu dreaming. Warrnyu is Ganalbingu language for flying fox. It's a creation story. Those things that are little flowers on the painting, they not flowers, they flying fox droppings.</i>
<b>Warrnyu and Water</b> Dorothy Djukulul. Earth pigments on bark. 114 x 52 cm	<i>Lunggurrma the wind blew all the flying foxes to Mululumurr, the main area for flying foxes to live. A lot of jungle there, a lot of food, flowers. They staying there for many years, a river on one side. They stay there day and night, talking and sleeping and living.</i>
<b>Catfish, Long-neck Turtle and Waterlily Roots</b> Johnny Pascoe Buniyira. Earth pigments on canvas. 74 x 66 cm	<i>Story from fish from my land, which is swamp area near Murrwangi, all Yirritja. I can dance and sing the catfish and the turtle because they're my totems from my grandfather and my father.</i>
<b>Crocodile Nest</b> Johnny Pascoe Buniyira. Earth pigments on canvas. 78 x 73 cm	<i>This story ... two crocs in the water but that water is not water but it's fire. That big shape in the middle is fire, djanggarr. Then there's bream and leeches in the water, Dhua and Yirritja, this painting is both ... when my dreamtime is coming, to be married it has to be both, Dhua and Yirritja. And there's waterlily roots ...</i>
<b>Lunggurrma</b> Johnny Pascoe Buniyira. Earth pigments on bark. 57 x 22 cm	<i>This is a wind story, Lunggurrma. My wind is Lunggurrma, and it's getting cold at that time of year when Lunggurrma blows and when the tides are high and the water comes all the way into the swamp. The wind will remind you that this is going to happen soon.</i>
<b>Tortoise and Fire</b> Johnny Pascoe Buniyira. Earth pigments on bark. 38 x 150 cm	<i>Two rocks, with the water in between, I can show you that place. The turtles are in that water between the rocks. I can't tell you why the rocks are special, that's inside story. Turtles have inside story too and I can't tell you that. The painting is called Tortoise and Fire – the fire is inside story too! [laughs].</i>
<b>Freshwater Totems</b> Russell Pascoe. Earth pigments on bark. 128 x 64 cm	<i>From Ngaliyindi to bottom of Arafura Swamp.</i>



<p><i>Hollow Log and Fish</i> Johnny Pascoe Buniyira. Earth pigments on canvas. 106 x 102 cm</p>	<p><i>Two hollow logs, but it's got meaning. One hollow log is a female and one hollow log is a male. They went travelling to every places, even from my country to far away. The rest of hollow logs I can't tell you, it's inside story. And barramundi, that Yirritja too. And those fish shapes with the dots on it, they float in the water, that's itchy stuff, when you go to the swamp you get itchy from them. And there's leeches and waterlily bush tucker. All Yirritja. I paint a lot of inside stories. For tourists I paint outside stories.</i></p>
<p><i>Gunbuluru kar Banda (Reeds and Turtles)</i> Peter Girirrkirir. Earth pigments on bark. 76 x 45 cm</p>	<p><i>Durringu [water snakes], liidjarra [turtle eggs], mapu [goose eggs] in their nest, gumang [magpie geese], yalman mar-kurr [waterlily leaves]. It's the swamp at that time.</i></p>
<p><i>Freshwater Totems</i> Peter Girirrkirir. Earth pigments on bark. 86 x 40 cm</p>	<p><i>These are my totems, gumang [magpie goose], the banda [long-necked tortoise], the rainbow snake. The stem of the flower, galluwurru, represents the sacred water hole Gumbaranga, where the didgeridu and the magpie geese speak, not men. I can dance all these except the snake, which a woman has to dance.</i></p>
<p><i>Ngaliyindi: Bottom Part</i> Peter Girirrkirir. Earth pigments on bark. 142 x 68 cm</p>	<p><i>Ngaliyindi has a big river there, a long billabong, part of the swamp. At the bottom of the painting are two gumang [magpie geese], and waterlily, and flower of the waterlily, and biiparal, rainbow snake. The circle at the centre is a sacred billabong, Gumbaranga ... they're always talking there, gumang and ngurubam-bunno, the natural didgeridu. Also gunbuluru and banda [long-necked tortoise] and all these things live there.</i></p>
<p><i>Waterlily, Geese and Nests</i> Charlie Djurritjini. Earth pigments on canvas. 175 x 84 cm</p>	<p>Charlie Djurritjini prefers not to tell the story of this painting.</p>
<p><i>Minhala (Long-necked Tortoises)</i> Charlie Djurritjini. Earth pigments on canvas. 110 x 55 cm</p>	<p>Charlie Djurritjini prefers not to tell the story of this painting.</p>
<p><i>Minhala (Long-necked Tortoise)</i> Charlie Djurritjini. Earth pigments on bark. 72 x 29 cm</p>	<p>Charlie Djurritjini prefers not to tell the story of this painting.</p>
<p><i>Karritjarr</i> Charlie Djurritjini. Earth pigments on bark. 106 x 28 cm</p>	<p>Charlie Djurritjini prefers not to tell the story of this painting.</p>
<p><i>Garrtjambal and Gandayala</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 42 x 80 cm</p>	<p><i>Ancestor story from this country, round Ramingining here, my grandfather's story. It's about the naming of the animals, big and small, the Yirritja animals. The kangaroos are talking, having a relationship, making a big family, just like people, like us, everyone.</i></p>
<p><i>Ten Canoes Story</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 104 x 66 cm</p>	<p><i>I did this one after I did the film Ten Canoes. Swamp people, they're living together, they're living on magpie goose and long-necked turtle and crocodile. They're getting ready to go hunting for magpie goose eggs, collecting them, bring them back to camp, no cost to anyone, just give them out in the community ... not like going to the city and living by the money.</i></p>
<p><i>Yolngu Hunter</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 48 x 88 cm</p>	<p><i>The man goes hunting, collecting eggs and catching fish, the barramundi, the catfish, all the native fish. It's a Yirritja story. It's about how my people, the swamp people, were living in the past, living our way.</i></p>
<p><i>The Stranger</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 79 x 79 cm</p>	<p><i>That's a man, he living by himself, like a stranger. The water in the swamp is getting dry. He walks around naked, nothing, that's what it was like. He speared that fish and jumped in and grabbed him, that fish. The man is like the Stranger in Ten Canoes. The women are the ones who collect the waterlilies, and crush them with a rock to make flour.</i></p>
<p><i>Magpie Goose Hunter</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 82 x 60 cm</p>	<p><i>The story of all these things, the file snakes and the magpie geese and their eggs and all the different sorts of fishes, the hunter takes them back to the community. The community lives at the edge of the swamp at that time of year, in those mosquito huts that keep out the mosquitoes. The hunter takes all them things back to them and just gives them, no money.</i></p>
<p><i>Ganalbingu Story</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 85 x 67 cm</p>	<p><i>They gathering together, they dance, all the women and the people, they dig up the bones of the dead person after he's been dead for a while, they smashing the bones of the dead person and they're dancing and having a totem pole and putting the smashed bone into the pole. This painting is part of telling showing our young people today how things were, because these days they learn both ways, western culture and our story. It's a public story, all this painting.</i></p>
<p><i>Mother Earth Dancing in the Jungle</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 111 x 77 cm</p>	<p><i>We are here because we got mother and father. This woman, Mother Earth, is like a mother ... if there's no woman, there's no family. She's dancing because she's telling herself, 'I'm the mother for everyone' and she's looking for a husband. Women these days have more freedom.</i></p>
<p><i>Lovers Meet in the Bush</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 43 x 39 cm</p>	<p><i>This is a story of they're lovers. In the jungle, they run away, and they're hiding and no one knows. And this is also the story of Nowalingu in Ten Canoes, when they thought she was running away and hiding with her lover.</i></p>
<p><i>Pigeons, Butterfly and Dragonfly</i> Bobby Bununggurr. Earth pigments on canvas. 38 x 23 cm</p>	<p><i>This is a Dhua story, butterfly, dragonfly, pigeons and yams. It's my mother's story. When they [the Dhua moiety] have singing, then I, because I'm Yirritja, do the conducting ... and we do these things when the yams are ready, which we know because of how the dragonfly and butterfly and pigeons are.</i></p>
<p><i>Gumang (Magpie Geese)</i> Peter Milaynga. Earth pigments on canvas. 61 x 83 cm</p>	<p>The artist of this painting has passed away. His story has passed away with him.</p>





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