



TNNT

M A G A Z I N E

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Don't label the Dreamtime

Whatever else the bicentennial has achieved, it's certainly encouraged London's galleries to look further east than the Continent, or should that be further west than America. There must have been more Australian artists showing work here this year than in the previous 199 added together.

As its title suggests, 'Paintings of the Dreaming' at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery features contemporary Aboriginal artists and specifically those from Papunya Tula. Each of the 10 paintings here are by different artists although, since all employ the same format and style, to the untrained eye they could be the work of the same hand. Ochres, rust-reds and generally subdued, earthy colours predominate and presumably relate back to the ancient Aboriginal techniques in sand-painting. Now however, the colours are sprinkled down in dots of acrylic paint on canvas, arranged in wavy parallel lines and more or less regular concentric rings, reminiscent of the patterns in onyx and agates.

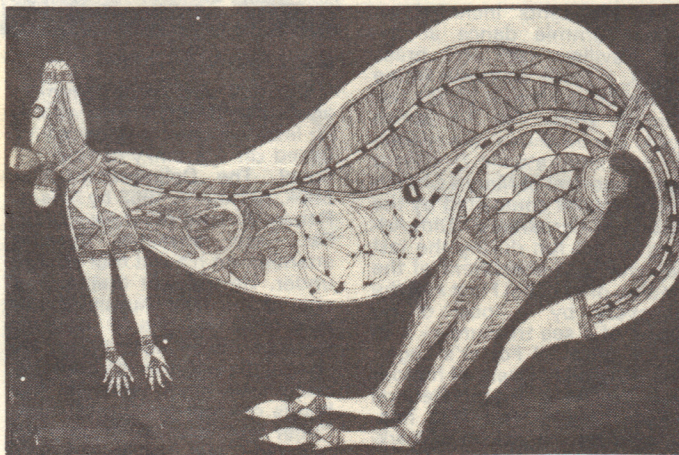
That such simple elements can combine to produce such a series of uniquely beautiful pictures reveals the acute visual perception of these artists. But then these are more than just

pretty designs, each work being based on specific, traditional images and stories adapted in a modern media for a modern audience.

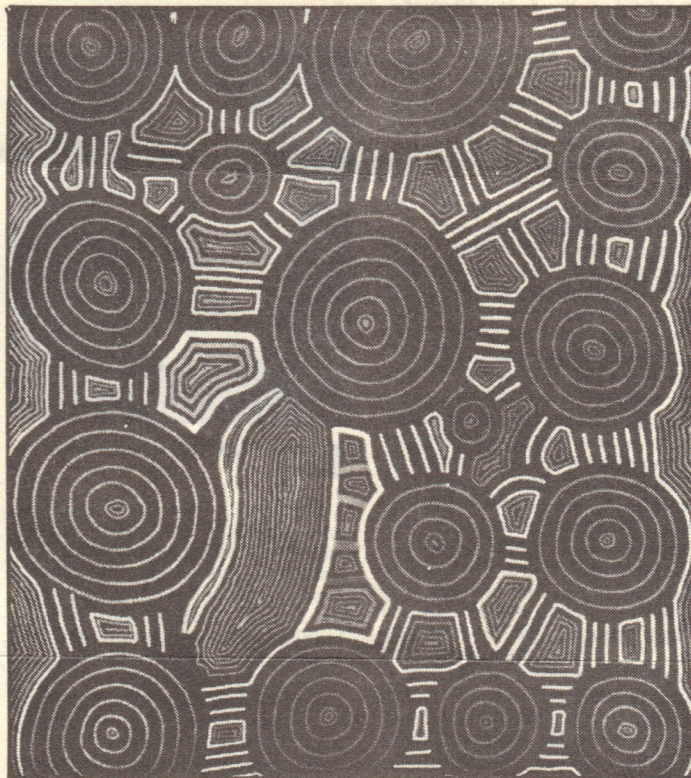
Whether this makes them Modern Art is perhaps a matter for debate, for while they have entered the commercial art world (exchanging hands for modern prices among dealers and buyers, if not necessarily the artists) their presentation in the gallery setting is slightly uneasy.

Both here and previously at the ICA, labels accompanying the paintings provide a title but also offer some brief explanation on the meaning of the work. As soon as this is attempted the impossibility of the task becomes apparent: symbols have multiple meanings and anyway, the artists have no intention of revealing the full magic of the sacred ceremonies and knowledge behind the images.

The purpose of the labels, to enhance some mystic exoticism or confer the dots with some extra, essential validity is spurious at best. The abstracts of Jackson Pollock would not be improved if we suddenly learned that contained within all his drops were descriptions of the New York subway system.



Eclecticism is the order of the day at Fischer Fine Art's Bicentennial Exhibition. As well as work from Aboriginal artists like this Totemic Kangaroo by Lofty Nabadayal, there are some exquisite flower paintings by Sidney Nolan and familiar fantasies from the crazy world of Arthur Boyd. Presaging well for the future is the youngest of the dozen artists here, Daniel Mafe, who has developed an intriguing faux-naif style to revitalise the modern interior.



Tingari Men's Dreaming

Australian Bicentennial Exhibition at Fischer Fine Art, 30 King St SW1 (839 3942) until September 3, Mon-Fri, 10-5.30

STATE OF THE ART

BARBICAN ART GALLERY Barbican Centre, Silk St, EC2 (638 4141)

Art or Nature: 20th Century French Photography: splendid survey show that shows the impact of Surrealists like Man Ray on the reportage of Kertész, Brassai, Cartier-Bresson and a host of others

Until July 17, Mon-Sat 10-6.30, Sun 12-5.30, adm £3, conc £1.50

AUSTIN DESMOND FINE ART 15A Bloomsbury Sq WC1 (242 4443)

Vanessa Pooley's white stoneware sculptures and Michael Cullimore's watercolours of flowers and landscapes

Until July 29, Mon-Fri 10.30-6.30, Sat 10-2.30

GIMPEL FILS GALLERY 30 Davies St, W1 (493 2248)

Niki de Saint Phalle: brightly coloured paintings and sculptures

Until Sept 10, Mon-Fri 9.30, Sat 10-1

GOETHE INSTITUTE 50 Princes Gate SW7 (581 3344)

War A cycle of grim and powerful etchings created by Otto Dix during the 1920s

Until August 13, Mon-Fri 12-6

HAYWARD GALLERY South Bank Centre, Belvedere Rd, SE1 (261 0127)

Angry Penguins & Realist Painting in Melbourne in the 1940s: featuring Arthur Boyd and Sidney Nolan from the avant garde and Yosi Bergner and Noel Counihan of social realists

+ **Washington's Phillips Collection:** selections including Bonnards, Braques, Renoirs, Ingres and many more stars

Until Aug 14, Mon-Wed 10-8, Thurs-Sat 10-6, Sun 12-6, adm £3, conc & all day Mon; Tues-Wed 6-8, £1.50

NATIONAL GALLERY Trafalgar Square WC2 (839 3321)

French Paintings from the USSR: Renior, Van Gogh and Matisse are among the artists represented in this loan exhibition from the Hermitage and Pushkin Museum.

Until September 18, Mon-Sat 10-6, Sun 2-6

ROYAL ACADEMY Piccadilly, W1 (734 9052)

220th Summer Exhibition: 1500 paintings, sculptures and prints: loved or loathed for its middle-of-the-road conservatism

Until Aug 7, adm £2.80/£1.90

+ **Cezanne: The Early Years:** a look at the youthful output of portraits, still lifes, landscapes and fantasies from the man who became the father of modern art

Until Aug 21, adm £3/£2

Open every day 10-6, joint ticket to both shows £5.20, conc & Sun before 1.30, £3.50

SERPENTINE GALLERY Kensington Gardens W2 (402 6075)

A Bottle of Notes and Some Voyages — sculptures from one of the old timers of American Pop Art, Claes Oldenburg

Until August 29 Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat & Sun 10-7

TATE GALLERY Millbank SW1 (821 1313)

Late Picasso: Paintings, sculpture, drawings and prints 1953-72. A chance to see what Picasso was up to in his 70s and 80s.

Until September 18 Mon-Sat 10-5.30, Sun 2-5.30

WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY, Whitechapel High St E1 (377 0107)

Lucio Fontana (1899-1968) a general look at the highly experimental Italian artist with sculptures in neon, TV, and various mixed media plus the famous slashed and punctured canvases

Until September 18, Tue-Sun 11-5, Wed 11-8