

# Aboriginal community continues to amaze

**ABORIGINAL art has plenty of admirers. Not least Robert Hughes who hailed it as the last great art movement of the 20th century, writes Samantha Lewis.**

For although it has its roots in unbroken tradition trailing back thousands of years, it is continually developing and extending its boundaries.

The wide range of variation in Aboriginal art is partly due to the numerous Aboriginal communities which have their own different languages, ceremonies and ways of painting ranging from the intricate bark-painters of Arnhem land to the Dot-and-Circle painters of the Central Desert.

One of the most re-

markable painting communities to develop in recent years is at Ngukurr on the Roper in the Northern Territory.

Artists from Ngukurr have developed a style that combines broadly conventional representation with bold acrylic colours.

Gertie Huddlestone is one of the community's most exciting artists and her first exhibition outside Australia takes place in the UK this month at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery in London (7th-September 2nd).

Huddlestone was born

in 1933, "about a mile down the road" from Ngukurr.

But Huddlestone did not begin painting until much later on in life — in 1992.

Before this she attended a mission school until she was 14, when she left to tend her family's goats, and married soon after World War Two.

She now has nine children and the "biggest mob" of grandchildren she encourages to paint.

Huddlestone's people are the Ngameratjara, fresh water people. And one of her favourite pastimes is to go fishing in the rivers and billabongs.

Indeed, in her paint-

ings Huddlestone uses such everyday activities and sights of the country life — fishing trips, food-gathering, local flora and fauna — as the subjects.

But she infuses them with a mystical, often religious sense of wonder.

Huddlestone's world is one where insects and plants dwarf the human inhabitants and the colours seem to vibrate to the pulse of life.

So although, like other Aboriginal painters, her paintings are linked by a common mythology — the Dream Time — it has its own highly distinct form — well worth seeing if you are in London.

● For more details contact the Rebecca Hossack Gallery at 35 Windmill Street on 0171-436-4899.



An exhibition of the work of Aboriginal artist Gertie Huddlestone can be seen in the UK this month at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery in London.

# Aussie men at work



Australia's comedy duo Lano & Woodley perform this month at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

It's been nearly a year since *Australian News* reported on Aussies Lano & Woodley who won last year's Perrier Award. But don't worry if you missed them — they're back for a tour of the UK!

The hysterical duo, whose funny antics have been compared to those of Laurel and Hardy can be seen at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and at London's South Bank from September 21st.

Lano, the handsome one (or so he thinks) gets the girls and Woodley (the buffoon) pretends he does.

The pair, virtually unknowns last year are now also preparing to hit New York.

● Phone 0131-226-2428 for tickets at the Fringe.

# Art in Australia House

**L**ONDON'S Australia House, opened by King George V in 1918, has long been a work of art with its Hall, built of marble and wood specially brought over from Australia.

But it was recently tailored to modern museum standards and now provides a superb venue for major exhibitions of Australian art.

The inaugural exhibition will be of tapestries from the world renowned Victorian Tapestry Work-

shop and can be seen until November 1st.

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop is possibly the world's leading creator of contemporary tapestries with all its weavers being trained as fine artists rather than textile workers.

The tapestries are all hand woven in Australian wool. And although the techniques are traditional, the results are vibrant and contemporary.

The exhibition brings together

tapestries designed by major British artists such as Alan Davie and Patrick Heron with those by leading Australian artists such as John Olsen and William Robertson.

The work of Aboriginal artists, including Jimmy Pike and Gloria Petyarre, is also represented.

Another feature of the exhibition is *Terra Australis*, a magnificent tapestry designed by Martin Sharp one of the founders of *Oz* magazine.