



REBECCA HOSSACK: ART AMBASSADOR

Art dealer and gallerist Rebecca Hossack, 45, is a revered figure on the London art scene, thanks to a combination of approachability, legal savvy – she's a qualified barrister – and unbridled, knowledgeable enthusiasm. While her eponymous gallery in Central London's Windmill Street has showcased European and non-European artists whose work might have remained unnoticed, Hossack has also been mainly responsible for Britain's increased interest in Aboriginal art.

Many of her seasons are attended by the artists themselves; these have included close friends Ginger Riley and Clifford Possum. She continues to visit different Aboriginal communities in search of the best new work. "Although Aboriginal art as a genre is no longer valid," she cautions. "We just say they were born in Australia. The work can stand on its own two feet."

Hossack arrived in London from Melbourne to study law in 1980, armed with two degrees and an overnight bag. When her love of aesthetics got the better of her, she switched careers, training at Christie's before being awarded a studentship at the Venice Cuggenheim. Back in London, she set about opening British eyes to the quality of antipodean art. At first, she admits, the only paintings that sold were the ones with soft, muted colours. "But now that Australia has become a cheaper holiday destination, people are relishing that wonderful colour. And Britons are, on the whole, much more literate in the visual arts."

After a much-praised stint as cultural attaché at Australia House, Hossack opened a second Central London gallery in Charlotte Street earlier this year. Featuring new international artists, it exemplifies its owner's *raison d'être*. "You should see a work of art and feel joyful. Coming from a country with such wonderful space," she adds, "gives you a lack of angst and a sense that anything is possible."