

April 9, 2025  
Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation

## Echoes Unveiled Art by First Nations Women from Australia

June 24 [Tue.]–September 21 [Sun.], 2025



Yhonnie SCARCE, *Hollowing Earth*, 2017, Hand-blown uranium glass, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation © Courtesy the Artist and THIS IS NO FANTASY

The Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation (Director: ISHIBASHI Hiroshi), presents *Echoes Unveiled: Art by First Nations Women from Australia*.

Art by First Nations artists from Australia is being given more importance and exposure than before as part of the recent international trend in contemporary art to reconsider works created in deeply rooted regional contexts. At the 60th Venice Biennale, in 2024, the Australian Pavilion presented a solo exhibition by an Aboriginal artist and was awarded the Golden Lion for Best National Participation, an achievement that indicates the height of global evaluation and interest. Moreover, within the Australian contemporary art world, many women artists with First Nations backgrounds are becoming renowned and have established international acclaim.

In 2006, we held *Prism: Contemporary Australian Art* and have been continuing to collect in that field ever since. *Echoes Unveiled: Art by First Nations Women from Australia* is the first group exhibition in Japan to focus on First Nations women artists from Australia. The groups of works on display are by seven individual artists and one collective, and include four artists with works in the Ishibashi Foundation Collection. It explores the enduring presence of traditional culture in Aboriginal art and examines how these artists practice decolonization in today's Australian society, and how this process intersects with creativity, shaping the complex and multifaceted expression in contemporary First Nations Australian art.

## Highlights

### 1) Japan's first exhibition of art by First Nations women from Australia

Many First Nations women artists have become forerunners in today's Australian art scene and also an increasingly powerful presence in contemporary art worldwide. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, when contemporary Aboriginal art was emerging, the focus was on male artists, leaving women artists largely unrecognized. How did these women overturn this situation and come to steer the direction of Aboriginal art and Australian contemporary art? This exhibition, the first of its kind in Japan, focuses on First Nations women artists and explores today's Australian contemporary art through the works of seven individual artists and one collective, whose backgrounds span multiple generations and regions.

### 2) Aboriginal art Now

A distinctive feature of contemporary Aboriginal Art is the variety of techniques, themes, and materials being employed. Women artists have made important contributions to the creative breadth and richness it displays. Examples include mediums such as batik, jewelry, and weaving, as well as subjects exploring outside traditional Aboriginal mythology (The Dreaming). Formerly not regarded as works of art, these women's creations have now been elevated to the status of art. Furthermore, the artists featured in this exhibition address a wide variety of topics including social and environmental issues, colonial history, and the reclamation of lost cultures. Through their work, these women artists are actively engaging with and contributing to the discourse of decolonization in Australia. By thoughtfully displaying the breadth of their creative work, this exhibition highlights the vibrancy of today's First Nations art in Australia.

### 3) Introducing artists from across Australia

The diversity of First Nations art reflects the sheer size of Australia itself. One key to understanding the works created by these artists is, therefore, to appreciate their locality, their association with different parts of this vast nation. This exhibition includes works by artists from remote communities, including Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Mirdidigkingathi Juwarnda, Sally Gabori, Nongirrnga Marawili (Nonggirnga Marawili), and the collective known as Tjanpi Desert Weavers. In contemporary Australian society, where 80 percent of the First Nations population live in urban areas, artists who are from or work in cities must not be overlooked. Here we include works by Maree Clarke, Julie Gough, Yhonnie Scarce, and Judy Watson.

# Artists

Where they are from and where they are active.



Photograph Eugene Hyland

## Maree CLARKE (1961–)

Starting her artistic career with jewelry making in the 1980s, Clarke has been actively involved in reviving south-east Australian Aboriginal art practices that had been lost during the colonial period through her creative work. Her recent works span a wide range, from multimedia installations using photographic techniques such as lenticular prints, 3D photography, and holograms to sculptures, three-dimensional works, and video installations.



Left: Maree CLARKE, *Walert – gurn barerarerungar: Tipperary, Ireland Dunstable, Britain Yorta Yorta Trawlwoolway Boonwurrung, Mutti Mutti, Wamba Wamba*, 2020-21, National Gallery of Victoria © Maree Clarke

Right: Maree CLARKE, *now you see me: seeing the invisible* (detail), 2023, photographic microscopy prints on acetate, Courtesy the Artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery

Installation view of *Between Waves*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne. Photo; courtesy Andrew Curtis © Maree Clarke



## Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally GABORI (c. 1924–2015)

Originally from an Aboriginal community called Kaiadilt, she began painting in 2005 when she was over 80 years old and created approximately 2,000 works. Her reputation grew with solo exhibitions at the Queensland Art Gallery and National Gallery of Victoria in 2016-17. In 2022, a retrospective exhibition was held at the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Paris (which later traveled to the Milan Triennale in 2023).

© Courtesy: Brisbane Festival  
 © The Estate of the Sally Gabori and Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne



- ★ Left: Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally GABORI, *My Grandfather's Country*, 2011, Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation © Copyright Agency, Sydney & JASPAR, Tokyo, 2025 C4919
- ★ Right: Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally GABORI, *Nyinyilki*, 2010, Synthetic polymer paint on linen, Private Collection, Melbourne © Copyright Agency, Sydney & JASPAR, Tokyo, 2025 C4919



Image by Lucy Parakhina

## Julie GOUGH (1965–)

Gough has Tasmanian Aboriginal ancestry on her maternal side but reportedly did not know much about her indigenous background until adulthood. While exploring her own identity through creative activities, she produces works that empathize with Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, history, and the experiences and emotions of her ancestors, using various media (video, site-specific installations, and natural materials sourced from the Tasmanian region), backed by meticulous research.



Left: Julie GOUGH, *Some Tasmanian Aboriginal children living with non-Aboriginal people before 1840*, 2008, found wooden chair with burnt tea tree sticks, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra © Julie Gough

Right: Julie GOUGH, *Dark Valley, Van Diemen's Land* 2008, Tasmanian Fingal Valley coal, nylon, Northern Midlands Tasmania dropped antlers, Tasmanian oak, Art Gallery of New South Wales © Julie Gough  
 Image © Art Gallery of New South Wales



© Mayumi Uchida

## Emily Kame KNGWARREYE (c. 1910–1996)

Kngwarreye, who had a retrospective exhibition in Japan in 2008, is one of the most successful Aboriginal artists and has established high international acclaim. She began creating paintings in acrylics on canvas in 1988-89 and produced over 3,000 works during the eight years until her death in 1996. A major retrospective exhibition is scheduled to be held at the Tate Modern in 2025.



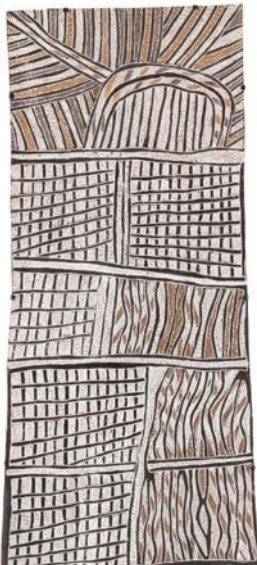
- ★ Left: Emily Kame KNGWARREYE, *Spring Landscape*, 1993, Synthetic polymer paint on canvas, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation © Copyright Agency, Sydney & JASPAR, Tokyo, 2025 C4919
- ★ Right: Emily Kame KNGWARREYE, *Untitled (Final Series)*, 1996, Synthetic polymer paint on Belgian linen, Private Collection, Australia © Copyright Agency, Sydney & JASPAR, Tokyo, 2025 C4919



## Nonggirrja MARAWILI (Nonggirnga MARAWILI) (c. 1938–2023)

Originally from a community in the Arnhem Land region, which occupies the northeastern part of the Northern Territory. In Arnhem Land, bark painting, a painting technique using natural pigments on eucalyptus bark, has become the mainstream art form. Marawili pioneered new possibilities for bark painting through not only traditional imagery but also motifs based on her own sensibility and innovative techniques.

© Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre, photograph by David Wickens



Left: Nonggirrja MARAWILI (Nonggirnga MARAWILI), *Bolngu*, 2016, Natural ochres on bark, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation © the artist % Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

Center: Nonggirrja MARAWILI (Nonggirnga MARAWILI), *Baratjala (a Madarrpa clan estate adjacent to Djarrakpi)*, 2019, Natural earth pigments, recycled cartridge ink on stringy bark, Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth © the artist % Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre

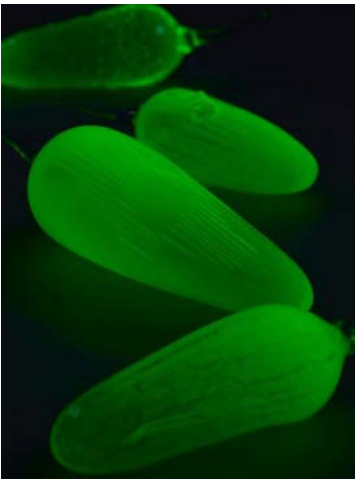
Right: Nonggirrja MARAWILI (Nonggirnga MARAWILI), *Baratjala* 2018, Natural earth pigments, cartridge ink on bark, Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth © the artist % Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre



## Yhonnie SCARCE (1973–)

Specializing in glassmaking at the School of Visual Arts, University of South Australia, Scarce is known for her blown glass installations that convey the colonial experiences of her ancestors, the use of her ancestral homeland as a nuclear testing site during the Cold War, and the ongoing excavation of the land through mining. Her work has received widespread acclaim both domestically and internationally, celebrated for its delicate forms and simple designs, as well as its powerful thematic focus on her community's history and Australia's social and environmental issues.

Janelle Low - Yhonnie Scarce -  
©JL\_20161010\_Yhonnie\_headshots-140-1



Yhonnie SCARCE, *Hollowing Earth*, 2017, Hand-blown uranium glass,  
Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation  
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## Tjanpi Desert Weavers

An artist collective belonging to communities in the Central and Western desert regions. Using native desert grasses as their main material and employing traditional techniques, they create three-dimensional works and also make video works depicting everyday objects and daily events of communities living in contemporary society. For Aboriginal people who have collectively maintained their traditions and culture, this collective form of creation has become one of the important elements of their work.



Left: Tjanpi Desert Weavers, *Tangki – Donkey*, 2021, Video, Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council © Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council

Right: Tjanpi Desert Weavers, *Ngayuku Papa: Bluey and Big Boy*, 2018, Video, Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council Image by Jonathan Daw.  
© Tjanpi Desert Weavers, NPY Women's Council



## Judy WATSON (1959–)

In 1997, Watson, along with Emily Kame Kngwarreye, was selected to represent Australia in the Australian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, becoming the first Aboriginal artists to do so. Her wide-ranging artistic practice includes painting, printmaking, drawing, sculpture, and multi-media. Watson explores the history and culture of Australian society from an Aboriginal perspective, examining official documents and archival materials from the British colonial period. Through this she reveals how the experiences, voices, and perspectives of First Nations were marginalized or overlooked in mainstream historical narratives.

Judy Watson, 2022. Photo by Rhett Hammerton. Image courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Meanjin / Brisbane



Left: Judy WATSON, *red tides*, 1997, Pigment and pastel on canvas, Art Gallery of New South Wales

© Judy Watson / Copyright Agency, Image © Art Gallery of New South Wales

Right: Judy WATSON, *gulf of memory*, 2023, natural indigo, graphite, chinagraph pencil, synthetic polymer paint on linen, Courtesy the Artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane, Meeanjin, Australia © Courtesy the Artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane, Meeanjin, Australia. Photography by Carl Warner.

## Learning Program

### Gallery Talks by Artists

Maree Clarke, Julie Gough, Yhonnie Scarce, Judy Watson

[Schedule] June 27 [Fri.] 15:30–16:30, 18:30–19:30  
[Venue] Artizon Museum 6, 5F Gallery

- \* Details will be announced on the website at a later date.
- \* Advance reservations not required
- \* Both with consecutive interpretation

\* Please check the museum website for the latest information.

<https://www.artizon.museum/program>

## Exhibition Overview

Exhibition title: Echoes Unveiled: Art by First Nations Women from Australia  
Exhibition period: June 24 [Tue.]–September 21 [Sun.], 2025  
Opening hours: 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays)  
\*Last entry 30 minutes before closing.  
Closed: Mondays (except July 21, August 11, September 15), July 22, August 12, September 16  
Venue: Artizon Museum, 6, 5F Galleries  
Organizer: Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation  
Official Support: Australian Embassy Tokyo  
Admission (incl. tax): Timed entry system  
(Online booking starts from May 24, 2025)  
Online ticket: 1,800 yen  
In-Person ticket (purchase at museum): 2,000 yen  
Students: Free entry (Advance online booking required.)  
\*In-Person ticket may be purchased at the museum, if the time slot is not full.  
\*Advance booking is not required for children up to junior high school age.  
\*This admission fee gives the visitor access to the concurrent exhibition.  
Curators: UEDA Anna, KAGAWA Kyoko

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<https://www.artizon.museum/en/>

Directions: 5 minutes on foot from JR Tokyo Station (Yaesu Central Exit); Tokyo Metro Ginza Line Kyobashi Station (No.6, 7 Exit); Tokyo Metro Ginza Line, Tozai Line, Toei Asakusa Line Nihombashi Station (B1 Exit)

## Concurrent exhibition

### The Ishibashi Foundation Collection Highlights



This exhibition showcases masterpieces from the Ishibashi Foundation Collection, including nineteenth- and twentieth-century modern Western art, art from the early twentieth century to the present day with a focus on Abstract Expressionism, and Japanese modern and contemporary art.

Claude MONET, *Water Lily Pond*, 1907, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation

Exhibition period: June 10 [Tue.]–September 21 [Sun.], 2025  
Opening hours: 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays)  
\*Last entry 30 minutes before closing.  
Closed: Mondays (except July 21, August 11, September 15), July 22, August 12, September 16



Venue: Artizon Museum, 4F Gallery  
Organizer: Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation

Before the opening of *Echoes Unveiled: Art by First Nations Women from Australia*, from June 10 [Tue] to June 22 [Sun], only the 4F gallery (*The Ishibashi Foundation Collection Highlights*) will be open; the 5F and 6F galleries will be closed.

Admission (incl. tax): \* June 10 [Tue.]–June 22 [Sun.], 2025  
Timed entry system  
(Online booking starts from May 10 [Sat.], 2025)  
Online ticket: 500 yen  
In-Person ticket (purchase at museum): 500 yen  
Students: Free entry (Advance online booking required.)  
\*In-Person ticket may be purchased at the museum, if the time slot is not full.  
\*Advance booking is not required for children up to junior high school age.

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<https://www.artpr.jp/artizon/echoesunveiled>



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