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Chrischona Schmidt

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Rodney Gooch's Role and Influence in the Development of the Utopia Art Movement: A History of the Art Movement and Rodney Gooch's Role within it

Chrischona Schmidt, Australian National University, ACT, Australia

Abstract: In the late 1970s the women of Utopia, Central Australia, began creating batik as part of an adult education program. A decade later painting on canvas was introduced to the artists by the art coordinator at the time Rodney Gooch and a major shift to working with that medium followed. Since the beginning, art and craft making have become some of the major activities in the community with the artworks being nationally and internationally recognised. Although over the three decades many different art coordinators have worked with the artists from the Utopia community, no one has left such a mark as Rodney Gooch in regards to the interaction of the artists with the wider art world as well as in terms of the development and innovation within the art works. This paper examines the particularities of Gooch's engagement with the artists by contextualising his visions tangible in the group projects into the broader history of the art movement.

Keywords: Aboriginal Art, Central Australia, Anthropology of Art, Visual Anthropology, Art History, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Utopia, Rodney Gooch

THE ART MOVEMENT of the Utopia region is related to the Indigenous art movement throughout the desert of Australia beginning to emerge in the 1970s. Despite being part of that wider history the development in Utopia differs in many ways. These differences are visible in the art works, for example in their continuities in style and thematic choice as well as in the dynamic innovation in the same art works inspired by negotiations with the wider art world. Unlike many other communities, in Utopia no continuing art centre supporting the artists within the community has existed over the past three decades; this points to the fact that artists from this region had to develop a different system to deal with the art world. However, art coordinators have left their imprint in one way or another in the development of the art movement; most notably Rodney Gooch, whose participation in it marked a major turning point in the history of Utopia art.

While in Papunya in the early 1970s painting on board and canvas was introduced by the art teacher Geoffrey Bardon to the community¹. In Utopia the first art technique acquired by the community members was batik². Bardon emphasized that the artists painted their Dreamings³ as he was himself interested and fascinated by these representations of ancestor

¹ Geoffrey Bardon and James Bardon: Papunya – A Place Made After the Story, The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press 2004, p.20 ff

² Jenny Green: Singing the silk: Utopia Batik, in Judith Ryan and Robyn Healy: Raiki Wara – Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait, National Gallery of Victoria 1998, p. 39ff

³ When writing Dreaming in capitals I refer to the individual ancestor stories of Indigenous Australians with which they are connected through birth, parents and initiations. The Dreamtime or Altyerre (in Anmatyerre) is the creation time of the world for Indigenous Australians and manifests their ontology.

stories. Under his guidance mainly men took to painting within the community. Only after a while the option of selling the art works started to take shape and painting became an economic avenue⁴. On the contrary in Utopia, clothes were designed with batiks and then sold at “frequent school picture nights” and football games in order to buy new products and to keep the classes running⁵. Jenny Green, who came to Utopia as an adult education teacher, taught mainly women how to do tie-dye as well as woodblock batiks. Her classes originally encompassed literacy and numeracy classes as well as driving and sewing lessons⁶. Batik started as a fun activity, which allowed for everyone being together around the hot wax pan and creating new designs whilst also imitating ones seen in shops in Alice Springs⁷. Green’s university friend Julia Murray came up from Melbourne to Utopia in 1978 to help out for a little while, yet ended up staying five years and became the first art coordinator in Utopia. Green helped out when the group was in need but mostly started pursuing her interests in the languages of the region⁸. Although both Green and Murray had an interest in art and were ‘artistic’⁹, unlike Geoffrey Bardon in Papunya, neither of them had formal training in fine art or as an art teacher.

The growing interest in creating batiks and the desire to learn more about it inspired the workshop run by Ernabella art coordinator Suzanne Bryce in 1977. Bryce had worked with the Ernabella community for a while and making batiks was a highly specialized area of their art production¹⁰. As a result from the workshop and the continuous engaging with batik, the idea of an exhibition arose and took place in Alice Springs in 1980¹¹. Green exhibited some of her own works along with the batiks of the Utopia women¹². Working as an art co-ordinator at the time was an arduous job and Murray was only paid very little for her hours, having to ask for every bit of funding and struggling to get more batiks sold¹³. After she left, the production of art went through a quiet period. Even though several art coordinators followed on from Murray, none of them was able to generate greater interest in the Utopia community works within the art market¹⁴.

One of the issues the batik artists were struggling with was the notion that batik was a craft. Being sold as a craft item meant that the money gained from it would always be less than what the artists in Papunya for example would earn for their acrylic canvases. In 1987

⁴ Geoffrey Bardon and James Bardon: *Papunya – A Place Made After the Story, The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press 2004, p. 29ff and 36ff

⁵ Jenny Green: *Singing the silk: Utopia Batik*, in Judith Ryan and Robyn Healy: *Raiki Wara – Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria 1998, p. 39, and personal communication with Jenny Green, January 2010.

⁶ Jenny Green: *Singing the silk: Utopia Batik*, in Judith Ryan and Robyn Healy: *Raiki Wara – Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria 1998, p. 39

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.42-43

⁸ Personal communication with Jenny Green, January 2010.

⁹ Julia Murray: *Drawn Together: The Utopia Batik Phenomenon*, in Judith Ryan (et al.): *Across the Desert – Aboriginal Batik from Central Australia*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 2008, p.119

¹⁰ Jenny Green: *Singing the silk: Utopia Batik*, in Judith Ryan and Robyn Healy: *Raiki Wara – Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria 1998, p. 40

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 42

¹² Green only learnt the techniques of creating batiks with cantings and cap together with the women of Utopia in some workshops (Personal communication with Jenny Green, January 2010).

¹³ Jenny Green: *Singing the silk: Utopia Batik*, in Judith Ryan and Robyn Healy: *Raiki Wara – Long Cloth from Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait*, National Gallery of Victoria 1998, p. 40

¹⁴ For a detailed account refer to Michael Boulter: *The Art of Utopia*, Sydney: Craftsman House 1991

Rodney Gooch, at the time working for CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association), was asked by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to take over the guidance of the Utopia Women's Batik Group¹⁵. Gooch was working in the CAAMA Shop and ended up splitting his weeks, working in the shop as well as driving out to the various outstations of Utopia. When he drove out to the outstations he noticed the labour put in producing the batiks. His first steps, assumingly through his contacts via the CAAMA Shop were to establish connections with possible buyers or outlets around the country. Rather than leaving the focus on the CAAMA Shop as the only outlet for Utopia art works, Gooch started to build up a network of artists, art dealers, collectors and curators. He approached artists and collectors as well as art gallery owners with batiks from Utopia. Christopher Hodges recalls how he first got involved with Utopia by meeting a CAAMA representative at an exhibition in Canberra and then offering her to try and sell some Utopia batiks. Gooch sent him a few and asked him to show them around, which resulted in an exhibition¹⁶. Some of these artists and collectors decided to establish their own galleries and promote art from Utopia¹⁷. Through these varied approaches Gooch engaged very diverse members of the art world: these were mainly people who were not part of the Indigenous art world and were rather interested in fine modern art. This network is Gooch's remaining legacy and became crucial in the promotion of Utopia art as contemporary fine art.

One of the major steps for the Utopia Women's Batik Group was that the Holmes à Court Collection in Perth commissioned a set of 88 batiks, *A Picture Story*. The collection was exhibited and travelled widely accompanied by a publication in English and Anmatyerr/Alyawarr¹⁸. Through this move the art works of Utopia artists were put into a national and international focus. With all the sudden media attention curators, collectors and art connoisseurs took notice. Shortly after this group project Gooch recognised the unavoidable: that 'craft' would never sell in the same price range as 'fine art'¹⁹. Therefore for the next group project he commissioned a set of acrylic paintings on canvas. He distributed 100 canvases, collected about 82 of them after a week and exhibited them in Perth. Most of these art works were again bought by the Holmes à Court Collection and their own in-house curator Anne-Marie Brody²⁰.

Gooch's approach to *A Summer Project* was unprecedented: the artists were given four colours, ochre, black, white and red. The canvases were all of the same size; and Gooch

¹⁵ Rodney Gooch quoted in Michelle McDonald: *Selling Utopia – Marketing the art of the women of Utopia*, MA thesis (unpublished), Macquarie University 1999, p.59; and Philip Batty: *The Gooch Effect – Rodney Gooch and the art of the art advisor*, in *Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert*, Flinders University Art Museum and Riddoch Art Gallery 2008, p. 28

¹⁶ Personal communication with Christopher Hodges (August 2008).

¹⁷ Examples for these are Utopia Art Sydney established by Christopher Hodges and Helen Eager, and Alcaston Gallery established by Beverly Knight. Personal communication Christopher Hodges (August 2008) and Beverly Knight (March 2009).

¹⁸ See the publication: *A Picture Story – 88 Silk Batiks from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection*, Heytesbury 1990 and Christopher Hodges: *A golden age, in Utopia – ancient cultures, new forms*, The Holmes à Court Collection in association with the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Heytesbury 1999, p.21

¹⁹ Philip Batty: *The Gooch Effect – Rodney Gooch and the art of the art advisor*, in *Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert*, 2008, p. 28

²⁰ Louise Haigh talks to Rodney Gooch, in *Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert*, Flinders University Art Museum and Riddoch Art Gallery 2008, p.21, and personal communication Anne-Marie Brody, March 2009.

gave everyone the freedom of choice for a topic or theme for the painting²¹. The fact that there was no topic, such as plants or Dreaming stories – like in the *A Picture Story* project²² – given to the artists meant a completely free choice also in terms of their individual styles. This was new in his approach towards group projects. Generally he had a topic, which is also apparent in group projects in later years, for example hunting, Dreaming or bushtucker stories. Therefore this approach with set colours and one size canvas for everyone was a real novelty in Utopia if not at the time in general in Indigenous art centres across Australia. The painting most often discussed from this first group work of paintings is Emily Kame Ngwarreye's *Emu Woman* (Image 1)²³. Gooch made no difference in payments for any art work, however, when he saw *Emu Woman*, as Anne-Marie Brody recalled it, he pointed it out towards her and was struck by it²⁴. *Emu Woman* shows qualities familiar from batiks, such as the layering of the paint and the motifs as well as the dots from the drips of wax. On the other hand this painting shows a clear yet interwoven composition.

After the batik group project and the painting group project Gooch facilitated many more group projects across different media: among them were a water colour project, an etching group project (*The Utopia Suite*); as well as painted objets trouvés such as car doors and bonnets; children's books with hunting stories and finally, after Gooch had already quit his job as a community art coordinator and worked independently, a group of Awely²⁵ performing papier maché figures was created²⁶. Gooch inspired people to try out different media and to work with them in multiple ways. Further he never excluded anyone. Rather he struggled with the fact that other art dealers became interested in the developments within the community. It was extremely difficult to monitor the distribution and sale of art works as Gooch was based in Alice Springs and not in the community²⁷. As soon as the artists started to utilize canvases, other art dealers made their way into the community and bought art works

²¹ This collection has rarely been exhibited in its entirety and aside from a small catalogue for the first shows in 1990 no catalogue has been produced. Observations are based on collection visits to The Holmes à Court Collection, Heytesbury in March 2009.

²² *A Picture Story* – 88 Silk Batiks from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, Heytesbury 1990 and Christopher Hodges: A golden age, in Utopia – ancient cultures, new forms, The Holmes à Court Collection in association with the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Heytesbury 1999, p.21

²³ The last time it was showcased during the *Utopia: the Genius of Emily Kame Ngwarreye* exhibition at the National Museum of Australia in 2008 (see Margo Neale (ed.): *Utopia: the Genius of Emily Kame Ngwarreye*, National Museum of Australia Press 2008, p. 60-61). Prior to this the painting was exhibited as the major first work on canvas by Ngwarreye during the exhibition *One Sun One Moon – Aboriginal Art in Australia* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2007 (see Jenny Green: *Holding the Country: Art from Utopia and the Sandover*, in *One Sun One Moon – Aboriginal Art in Australia*, Art Gallery of New South Wales Press 2007, p.20). These are only two of the most recent major art exhibitions, in which the painting had reserved a significant place as Ngwarreye's first acrylic painting on canvas.

²⁴ Personal communication with Anne-Marie Brody, March 2009.

²⁵ Jenny Green explains awely as the following: "Through the singing, painting and dancing associated with *awely*, women exercise their particular responsibilities towards the country. The women perform *awely* to look after country, promoting feelings of happiness, health and well-being in the community. They sing to ensure that bush plants continue to grow in abundance, bush animals proliferate, and to make babies healthy and fat. The younger women and girls are taught the songs and dances which have been revealed to the generations of women before them, thus ensuring the continuity of culture and Law." (Jenny Green: *The Enigma of Emily Ngwarreye*, in Max Charlesworth, Françoise Dussart and Howard Morphy: *Aboriginal Religions in Australia – An Anthology of Recent Writings*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd 2005, p.189)

²⁶ These different group projects are mainly held at the two collections of Rodney Gooch at the Flinders University Art Museum and the Riddoch Art Gallery in Mt Gambier.

²⁷ Personal communication with Christopher Hodges, August 2008.

from them. For examples for *A Summer Project* Gooch handed out 100 canvases but was only able to collect 82 as the others had already been sold. These issues led to Gooch resigning from his position and working from an independent stand.

He was followed by Allan Glaetzer and later by Jan Ross-Manly as art coordinator. Ross-Manly focussed in her position on batik rather than painting and therefore inspired a revival of batik in the community²⁸. After Ross-Manly left, the Central Land Council initiated Sandover Arts, an art centre for the entire Sandover Region, including Utopia and the further north community of Ampilatwatja. Simon Turner and Narayan Kozeluh were the art coordinators for this enterprise, which had shifted to focus to painting once again and in this way resonated more with the art market demands. However, in 2002 this endeavour shut down as well and since then there has been no art advisor or coordinator nor an art centre²⁹.

As with many Aboriginal art movements the influences of the art coordinators or art centres are to some extent visible in the art works³⁰. But in Utopia the input of Rodney Gooch seems particularly striking. When he took up the position as an art coordinator the *Utopia Women's Batik Group* was facing great financial problems³¹. Gooch's strategy of setting up a national network of art dealers and liaising with them about the art works marked a major change for the Utopia art movement. Furthermore the fact that the Holmes à Court family commissioned the first large group project and sent it on a travelling exhibition shows Gooch's skills as an entrepreneur and his ability in negotiating with the art world. It brought Utopia art on an international platform and exposed it to a wider audience.

Under his guidance major shifts in the art works took place. Figurative representations of flowers, plants and the environment slowly made way to more abstract interpretations of 'country' and allusions to 'country'. Gooch pushed the artists to their limits: he made them experiment, not only in various materials and techniques but also in style and depiction of topics³². As mentioned above, he never intended to favour artists by way of paying more for an art work from a more acclaimed artist than for one from a less successful artist³³. He encouraged everyone to be creative, inspiring many to take up painting or carving. Before Gooch experiments with other media had also taken place. For example jewellery making with seeds and carvings had been made for quite a while in the community. Yet the array of techniques tried out under his guidance remains unequalled in the history of the art movement as well as the variety of styles apparent and the amount of people being creative. This is especially visible in the group of men taking up carving and painting in the late 1980s, and by

²⁸ This is particularly visible in the collections of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, with which Jan Ross-Manly organized a trip of the Utopia women to the Festival of Dreaming in 1997. (see also Michelle McDonald: *Selling Utopia – Marketing the art of the women of Utopia*, MA thesis (unpublished), Macquarie University 1999, p.89ff).

²⁹ Personal communication with John Oster, Director of DESART, September 2008.

³⁰ Above-mentioned was Geoffrey Bardon's particular interest in rituals and the meaning behind the art works, which greatly influenced the early art works and their secret-sacred contents (see Geoffrey Bardon and James Bardon: *Papunya – A Place Made After the Story, The Beginnings of the Western Desert Painting Movement*, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press 2004, p. xxii).

³¹ Philip Batty: *The Gooch Effect – Rodney Gooch and the art of the art advisor*, in Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert, 2008, p. 28.

³² Personal communication with Anne-Marie Brody, March 2009 and Christopher Hodges, August 2008.

³³ Louise Haigh talks to Rodney Gooch, in Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert, Flinders University Art Museum and Riddoch Art Gallery 2008, p.21.

doing so moving the focus of the art movement away from the women to a more gender-balanced art production³⁴.

Continuities and Dynamic Changes in the Art of Utopia Under Rodney Gooch's Influence: The Two Major Group Projects *A Picture Story* and *A Summer Project*

The two main projects Gooch initiated during his time as an art coordinator were the above-mentioned *A Picture Story* and *A Summer Project*. The first acrylic paintings on canvas from *A Summer Project* are often considered a turning point for Utopia art³⁵. The change in media is understood as a change in style. Yet when analysing them closely and comparing them to the batiks created in the years prior to *A Summer Project* similarities are more striking than differences between the art works in different media. When making batiks Utopia artists would apply wax with brushes. Thus they were already familiar with the process of 'drawing' lines (Image 2). When creating a batik one works with several layers of colours. By doing so one creates an effect that in the end it seems as if the background is dark, even though that is the last applied colour and the layering of colours results in the darker colours. Most of the early paintings have either a dark brown or black background, which works to accentuate the figures and motives in the foreground³⁶. This is only one way in which the paintings appear similar to the batiks. A further similarity lies in the choice and representation of topics. For example, flowers or plants are among the most prominent figurative elements in both paintings and batiks. Sometimes flowers are interspersed in between other plants and at times turn into the overarching topic of the whole batik. Thus the motif is repeated on the cloth many times for example through painting it on with a brush or with the canting, which draws even finer lines than a brush.

The choice of colours in the first group of paintings seems very different to the ones used in batiks and actually gives the whole collection overall a rather sombre appearance (Image 3). This stands in dramatic contrast to the bright and powerful colours of the batiks, however, it falls into one line of the ochre-toned paintings coming from the Western Desert. Thus this deliberate decision to use the four colours associated with traditional body painting and decoration of boomerangs and spears, I argue, was influenced by the marketability of art works that were painted in this colour range³⁷. As mentioned, Gooch introduced canvas and acrylic paint because the batiks did not yield the profits expected of them³⁸. So by trying

³⁴ Fiona Salmon: Gooch's Utopia, in Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert, Flinders University Art Museum and Riddoch Art Gallery 2008, p.14

³⁵ Christopher Hodges: A golden age, in Utopia – ancient cultures, new forms, The Holmes à Court Collection in association with the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Heytesbury 1999, p.22

³⁶ Jenny Green refers to the similarities in Emily Ngwararay's early paintings and her batiks in terms of the layering of 'colours and images'. See Jenny Green: The Enigma of Emily Ngwararay, in Max Charlesworth, Françoise Dussart and Howard Morphy: Aboriginal Religions in Australia – An Anthology of Recent Writings, Ashgate Publishing Ltd 2005, p.187

³⁷ At the time Indigenous artists were encouraged to use 'traditional', which means ochre colours in their works. Art works in non-traditional colour ranges were not considered authentic and only authentic, ethnographic-looking art works sold well (see Howard Morphy: Aboriginal Art, Phaidon: London 1998, p.289ff, 316; Fred Myers: Painting Culture – The making of an Aboriginal high art, Duke University Press: Durham 2002, p.20).

³⁸ Philip Batty: The Gooch Effect – Rodney Gooch and the art of the art advisor, in Gooch's Utopia – collected works from the Central Desert, Flinders University Art Museum and Riddoch Art Gallery 2008, p. 28

something 'new' for the community he did it within the parameters of other successful examples.

The 'loss' of 12 canvases for *A Summer Project* indicates that Gooch was certainly not the only person working with the artists in the community at the time. Already in those early days of success for the Utopia art movement other art dealers had become interested and made their way into the community to buy art works. Nevertheless innovation was pushed by Gooch and his strong emphasis on experimentation led to the most outstanding changes in the Utopia art movement. For example in the early 1990s artists like Gloria Petyarre and her sister Kathleen Petyarre have developed styles, which have become their trademarks: Gloria Petyarre and her *L eaves* (Image 4) and Kathleen Petyarre with her *Mountain Devil Lizard* stories (Image 5). These themes emerged as the dominant motifs for the artists concerned and almost developed into 'trademarks'. Rodney Gooch created an environment in which innovations occurred. Yet, subsequently, without the close working relationship with such an art coordinator the artists have produced fewer innovations in terms of topics. Rather they have leant towards a deeper exploration and refinement of the same topics.

Rodney Gooch's Achievement in his Interactions with the Utopia Art Movement

Through my analysis of art works from the Utopia region of the past three decades I observe that Rodney Gooch's vision for the Utopia artists drove his work. His vision can be described as a move from the positioning of Utopia art in the craft art world of Indigenous art and souvenir art into the fine art world. This move was also marked by a change in style, which is a sign of the negotiations between the artists and the art market. After he left the community and became an independent art dealer and wholesaler in 1991 he still engaged with Utopia art but in a different way. He focused instead on a few individuals and worked closely with them, experimented with them and in the case of some even built up a one-on-one artist-dealer relationship with major contemporary art galleries around Australia³⁹. To this date art connoisseurs differentiate between Utopia art sourced from the former galleries affiliated with Rodney Gooch or from other sources. They hold onto his legacy in trying to innovate, experiment and push the boundaries of Utopia art.

On the other hand a large market has opened up; a market that seemingly is more interested in the production of art works but not less in their individuality, a market that led to Rodney Gooch resigning⁴⁰. Hence the pressures of the art market have become too visible in repetitive themes and styles of Utopia art works over the past decade⁴¹. Art dealers tend to buy art works by driving into the community or by setting up workshops, yet only very few of them spend a similar amount of time with the artists discussing, negotiating and experimenting or even investing or fostering new talents as Rodney Gooch did.

³⁹ An example for that would be the liaison between Niagara Galleries and Angelina Pwerle.

⁴⁰ Through my visits to a variety of corporate, public and private galleries and collections I have seen a streamlining of art works, of and artists only being represented by a few styles and themes. Works, which do not fit into these general categories, are excluded from these collections.

⁴¹ This was particularly emphasized by art dealers in interviews with me as well as exhibition visitors to Utopia: the Genius of Emily Kame Ngwarreye in 2008 at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra and to Gooch's Utopia: collected works from the Central Desert, at the Flinders University Art Museum in Adelaide, October 2008.

The last decade has been a period in Utopia art, in which few young artists have taken up painting or carving, not to mention batik⁴². The old hands still work together with their art dealers and their networks but arguably this almost static system has led to little input in terms of style, media or developments of topics. Artists are in need of a change of this system in order to become innovative again and to explore their artistic possibilities.

Images

Image 1
Emily Kame Kngwarreye
Emu Woman
1988-89
92 x 61 cm
Synthetic polymer paint on linen
Janet Holmes à Court Collection
© Emily Kame Kngwarreye/Licensed by Viscopy, 2011

⁴² Rodney Gooch passed away in 2001 and kept working with the artists from Utopia until his demise.

Image 2

Gloria Tamerre Petyarr
Emu dreaming at Atnangkere
1988
silk batik
236 x 117 cm
Janet Holmes à Court Collection
© Gloria Petyarre/Licensed by Viscopy, 2011.

Image 3

Jeannie Petyarre

Wild bananas, sacred grasses and body paint designs (detail)

1988-89

Synthetic polymer paint on linen

92 x 61 cm

Janet Holmes à Court Collection

© Jeannie Petyarre 2011 licensed by Aboriginal Artists Agency

Image 4

Gloria Petyarre
Untitled (Akaye Soakage)
1996, Utopia
100 x 70.5 cm
Synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Riddoch Art Gallery, Mt Gambier
© Gloria Petyarre/Licensed by Viscopy, 2011

Image 5

Kathleen Petyarre

Australia, c.1940

Anmatyerre/Alyawarre people, Northern Territory

Mountain devil lizard Dreaming (with winter sandstorm)

1996, Utopia, Northern Territory

184 x 184.5 x 3.0 cm

Synthetic polymer paint on canvas

Aileen Thompson Bequest Fund through the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation 1996

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

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About the Author

Chrischona Schmidt

Chrischona is currently doing her PhD at the Research School of Humanities and the Arts. And this research was funded by The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Her focus is the art movement of the Central Australian community Utopia and its development over the past 30 years. Before coming to the ANU, Chrischona undertook her studies in Freiburg (Germany), Paris and Perugia as well as Sydney. She is particularly interested in a cross-cultural art history and the anthropology of art.

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